

METAPHYSICS OF ISLAM: A CRITICAL INQUIRY

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Theology and Ideology: The Overlap in Islam

Aristotle taught us that ‘man is by nature a political animal.’¹ In this regard, religious community and religious institution constituted by human association can also be a *political* association. As Robert Dahl suggests that a citizen encounters politics in every humanly made organization, including the church, as ‘politics is an unavoidable fact of human existence.’² In this respect, the dimensions and boundaries of politics and religion seems to me a fuzzy and artificial one as the western modernist enlightenment tried to bifurcate between the church and the state/politics. Moreover, if politics is primarily concerned with ‘good for man’,³ or a political system is defined in terms of ‘control, influence, power, or authority’⁴ or the space of the ‘political’ is ‘antagonism’⁵ representing contestations between varied ideological worldviews, then the meaning of religion certainly can be expanded. As far as the political dimensions of religion in general and the case of Islam in particular are concerned, the very notion of organized religion in general and Islam in particular is essentially *political*. The possibilities and potentialities of ‘political’ are very much embedded within organized religion. Most organized religions have a sense of ‘good’ and ‘bad’, the concept of ‘evil’ and ‘devil’ as opposed to ‘virtues’ and ‘purity’, the demarcation between morally correct and incorrect and so on. Thus, most organized religions create an internal frontier of antagonism or have multiple forms of antagonisms with the constructions of ‘enemies’ and the ‘other(s)’. These constructions of antagonistic frontiers lead to the *conditions of possibilities* for an emergent conflict, which is basically the starting point of ‘politics’. So, political manipulation or maneuvering religion politically is always open because there is already/always a political space embedded within the very idea of organized religion. In this sense then the separation between religion and politics and demarcating the boundaries of religious versus political realms is contestable. Islam is not exceptional to this peculiar characteristic

of internal frontier of antagonism embedded within its theological edifice. Therefore, the arguments of ‘politicization’ and ‘ideologisation’ of religion in most academic, journalistic and polemical literature dealing with Islam is naïve and unimpressive, precisely because from the very beginning, the constitution of most organized religions is *political*.

In a pre-modern world, religion seemed to be a worldview and in that sense played its role as a political ideology. Interestingly, it is still an ideology for a significant section of world population with the existence of ‘religious fundamentalism’ among most organized religions.⁶ From here, we can ask, why religion is still regarded as a political ideology by a number of persons and surely with the case of Islam, even if there are competing modern ideologies and even if the dominance of modernity has tried to vilify it as an ‘anti-modern’, ‘backward’, ‘regressive’ entity? Is this because organized religion always offers certain *political* visions so that it can be used by a political agency whenever it needs to do so? Thus, it depends exclusively on the particular political actors, how and whether it is using the space of the ‘political’ that is inherent in most organized religions. This political element within religion gets support from the *missionary aspect* of religion to grow further, to spread religion across the world, and hence enhance the number of its members belonging to its own authentic community. This missionary project is also the function of narcissism, self-proclamations and truth claims within organized religion like many political ideologies claiming—‘our path right path’. The narcissism of Islam as the only ‘right path’ can be seen in the Quranic claim of the Final apostle:

O followers of the Bible! Now there has come unto you Our Apostle, to make clear unto you much of what you have been concealing [from yourselves] of the Bible, and to pardon much. Now there has come unto you from God a light, and a clear divine writ, through which God shows unto all that seek His goodly acceptance the paths leading to salvation and, by His grace, brings them out of the depths of darkness into the light and guides them onto a straight way. Indeed, the truth denies they who say, ‘Behold, God is the Christ, son of Mary.’ Say: ‘And who could have prevailed with God in any way had it been His will to destroy the Christ, son of Mary, and his mother, and everyone who is on earth—all of them? For, God’s is the dominion over the heavens and the earth and all that is between them; He creates what He wills: and God has the power to will anything!’ And [both] the Jews and the Christians say, ‘We are God’s children, and His beloved ones.’ Say: ‘Why, then, does He cause you to suffer for your sins? Nay, you are but human beings of His creating. He forgives whom He wills, and He causes to suffer whom He wills: for God’s

is the dominion over the heavens and the earth and all that is between them, and with Him is all journeys' end.' O followers of the Bible! Now, after a long time during which no apostles have appeared, there has come unto you [this] Our Apostle to make [the truth] clear to you, lest you say, 'No bearer of glad tidings has come unto us, nor any warner': for now there has come unto you a bearer of glad tidings and a warner—since God has the power to will anything. And, LO, Moses said unto his people: 'O my people! Remember the blessings which God bestowed upon you when he raised up prophets among you, and made you your own masters, and granted unto you [favours] such as He had not granted to anyone else in the world.'⁷

The missionary aspect of preaching religion to include more people inside its fold while struggling with 'other' competing ideological worldviews, including *other religions* with an aspiration to be dominant is related to the question of *empowerment* and *relative strength* of any organized religion. These are essentially political questions, fundamentally connected to the very concept of power and the desire of a religion to be more powerful than any 'other' entity. If power and ideological worldview are the focal points of politics, then the normative question of how religion 'ought' to be or whether religion *should* be 'political' might encounter an ontological question—whether the *existence* of religion is essentially political or whether the political (id)entity is constitutive of religion, making it difficult for the political theorist to segregate politics from religion. To ignore the political identity of religion and to distinguish between religion and politics by equating religion with the private sphere and politics with the public sphere is, therefore, a futile task and would be a continuation of the erroneous construct of the mainstream of the western Enlightenment.⁸ This Enlightenment separation between religion and politics has in fact shown its limits with the return/re-turn of religion haunting the political spheres of even modern western countries and certainly in contemporary Muslim societies. So, if religion exists in society, then the possibilities of political challenge of religion also exist as well. To locate such political dimensions of Islam, this paper is primarily anchored by two theoretical frameworks: (a) psychoanalysis of Sigmund Freud and Jacques Lacan and (b) post-Marxist combination of Ernesto Laclau and Slavoj Žižek who are indebted to the Freudian and Lacanian psychoanalysis. At the same time, in analyzing the metaphysics of Islam from a critical perspective, let us also take refuge in some children's stories from the *Quran*, and writings on theology and history of Islam.

Stories from the Quran: A Psychoanalytical Deconstruction

Children's stories are not as simple as it appears. It is during the formative years of childhood that faith in religion often becomes deep rooted by following these stories. Therefore, let us have a deeper and matured reading of children's stories. The *Stories from the Quran* series claims that it 'is written for very young children as an introduction to the enchanting and timeless stories found in the Quran.'⁹ One such story is about the creation:

*In the beginning there was only God. God was alone. Then He decided to make everything. He said: 'Be!' And everything was made. God made light from dark. From the light He made angels and in the dark He placed stars. Millions of them! Then He made galaxies and comets, planets and the Milky Way. Then God made Earth. On Earth, God made the sky, to hold the water and the air. From the sky came rain and rain made life. Then God made tall mountains, volcanoes of fire and deep dark valleys. On Earth, God made every kind of plant and animal. From the trees and plants came forests and gardens of fruit and flowers. Yellow and red. Green and orange. Big and small. Round and thin. In the forests lived the animals, insects and birds. And in the seas lived the fish. Whales and elephants and gorillas. Mice and ladybirds and ants. They were all *swimming, crawling, flying, climbing, and creeping*. Then God made Man to care of the forests, trees and plants, the animals, birds, fish and insects. Man's name was Adam. And God looks over *all* of His Creation *all* the time. He never *ever* naps or sleeps!¹⁰*

The story above seems to suggest that before the creation of universe, God was *alone*. Here, one can add that God had his own loneliness and boredom, and albeit some kind of Lacanian *lack*. By *lack*, Lacan means 'want to be'.¹¹ Thus, God only *becomes* God, or if he *wants to become* 'God', then something must have an independent existence than God, which can have a subordinate relation with God. This subordinate relationship of the *created* with the *Creator* is always harped on by theology. Islamic theology like Judeo-Christian traditions of monotheism always tries to make the point that it is 'God', who is *the one and only Creator* and everything else in this universe is *created* by him or in other words, his *creatures*. Therefore, *to become* God, the original *lack* in the *being of God* was instrumental. Otherwise, God would not have been able to *become* God since there would not have been anyone else to acknowledge/recognize Him as God. In this regard, *the becoming* or *coming* (a metonym of emergence) of God depends so much on the proclamation: 'BE', signifying the birth of creatures and creation of universe. So, without creatures, there is no identity of Creator. That is why, Islamic theology

asserts this dichotomy or binary between Creator and creature expressed as a master-servant relationship, where God is the master and the creatures, including humans, are his born slaves, whose purpose is to serve the master by carrying out earthly life by his guidance in revealed texts like the *Torah*, the *Bible* and the *Quran*. We shall later discuss the possibility of the *creation* of God. That is to say how this *Creator* (God) was only *created* by humans and, thus, one might actually have an inverse relationship between the God and the humans. We shall also examine the possibility whether the theological argument of Creator and creation is actually the ‘other way round’ namely: It is not *the* God who is the Creator of humans, but it is actually *humans*, who have created God(s) for several thousand years.

In analysing totemism among primitive societies, Freud gives a psychoanalytical explanation of origins of religion via Darwin’s biological treatise:

There is, of course, no place for the beginnings of totemism in Darwin’s primal horde. All that we find there is a violent and jealous father who keeps all the females for himself and drives away his sons as they grow up. ...One day the brothers who had been driven out came together, killed and devoured their father and so made an end of the patriarchal horde. United, they had the courage to do and succeeded in doing what would have been impossible for them individually. (Some cultural advance, perhaps, command over some new weapon, had given them a sense of superior strength.) Cannibal savages as they were, it goes without saying that they devoured their victim as well as killing him. The violent primal father had doubtless been the feared and envied model of each one of the company of brothers: and in the act of devouring him they accomplished their identification with him, and each one of them acquired a portion of his strength. The totem meal, which is perhaps mankind’s earliest festival, would thus be a repetition and a commemoration of this memorable and criminal deed, which was the beginning of so many things—of social organization, of moral restrictions and of religion. ...[T]he tumultuous mob of brothers were filled with the same contradictory feelings which we can see at work in the ambivalent father-complexes of our children and of our neurotic patients. They hated their father, who presented such a formidable obstacle to their craving for power and their sexual desires; but they loved and admired him too. After they had got rid of him, had satisfied their hatred and had put into effect their wish to identify themselves with him, the affection which had all this time been pushed under was bound to make itself felt. It did so in the form of remorse. A sense of guilt made its appearance, which in this instance coincided with the remorse felt by the whole group. The dead father became stronger than living one had been—for events took the

course we so often see them follow in human affairs to this day. ...They revoked their deed by forbidding the killing of the totem, the substitute for their father; and they renounced its fruits by resigning their claim to the women who had now been set free.¹²

After narrating the story of the 'killing of the father', Freud situates the problem of fratricidal fights among the brothers who killed the father:

Though the brothers had banded together in order to overcome their father, they were all one another's rivals in regard to women. Each of them would have wished, like his father, to have all the women to himself. The new organization would have collapsed in a struggle of all against all, for none of them was of such overmastering strength as to be able to take on his father's part with success. Thus the brothers had no alternative, if they were to live together, but—not, perhaps, until they had passed through many dangerous crises—to institute the law against incest, by which they all alike renounced the women whom they desired and who had been their chief motive for despatching their father. In this way they rescued the organization which had made them strong—and which may have been based on homosexual feelings and acts, originating perhaps during the period of their expulsion from the horde.¹³

In later part of this paper, we shall see how the logic of 'father killing' can be extrapolated to the internecine battles among different clans, and in a much matured stage of civilization, among different groups in society. Now according to Freud, among these primitive men, the totem animal becomes the substitute of father as a taboo:

[T]he claim of totemism to be regarded as a first attempt at a religion is based on the first of these two taboos—that upon taking the life of the totem animal. The animal struck the sons as a natural and obvious substitute for their father; but the treatment of it which they found imposed on themselves expressed more than the need to exhibit their remorse. They could attempt, in their relation to this surrogate father, to allay their burning sense of guilt, to bring about a kind of reconciliation with their father. The totemic system was, as it were, a covenant with their father, in which he promised them everything that a childish imagination may expect from a father—a protection, care and indulgence—while on their side they undertook to respect his life, that is to say, not to repeat the deed which had brought destruction on their real father. Totemism, moreover, contained an attempt at self-justification: 'If our father had treated us in the way the totem does, we should never have felt tempted to kill him.' In this fashion totemism helped to smooth things over and to make it possible to forget the event to which it owed its origin. Features were thus brought into existence which continued thenceforward to have a determining

influence on the nature of religion. Totemic religion arose from the filial sense of guilt, in an attempt to allay that feeling and to appease the father by deferred obedience to him. All later religions are seen to be attempts at solving the same problem.¹⁴

By extending and applying Freud, we can argue that the totem animal was later replaced by idols in ancient religions like Hinduism and in many polytheistic religions like the pre-Christian Greco-Roman pagan traditions. We can call this replacement of totem animal with idols as ‘a return of the repressed’. From a psychoanalytical point of view, the paradoxical nature and moments of failure of repression is disclosed into the fact that what was repressed is revealed but in a distorted form and, thus, the very act of repression invites the ‘return of the repressed’. As Freud says, ‘[R]epression demands a persistent expenditure of force, and if this were to cease the success of the repression would be jeopardized, so that a fresh act of repression would be necessary...[w]ith a return to waking life the repressive cathexes which have been drawn in are once more sent out.’¹⁵ In another instance, Freud proclaims: ‘All phenomena of symptom-formation can be fairly described as ‘the return of the repressed’. The distinctive character of them, however, lies in the extensive distortion the returning elements have undergone, compared with their original form.’¹⁶ In later part of this paper, we shall also see how idolatry remained in pre-Islamic Arabia and how a distorted cum displaced form of idolatry is still present within Islam as a ‘return of the repressed’. However, Freud reminds us about the totem feast—another important taboo of totemic religion:

There is another feature which was already present in totemism and which has been preserved unaltered in religion...[W]e find that the ambivalence implicit in the father-complex persists in totemism and in religions generally. Totemic religion not only comprised expressions of remorse and attempts at atonement, it also served as a remembrance of the triumph over the father. Satisfaction over that triumph led to the institution of the memorial festival of the totem meal, in which the restrictions of deferred obedience no longer held. Thus it became a duty to repeat the crime of parricide again and again in the sacrifice of the totem animal, whenever, as a result of the changing conditions of life, the cherished fruit of the crime—appropriation of the paternal attributes—threatened to disappear. We shall not be surprised to find that the element of filial rebelliousness also emerges, in the *later* products of religion, often in the strangest disguises and transformations. Hitherto we have followed the developments of the *affectionate* current of feeling towards the father, transformed into remorse, as we find them in religion and in moral

ordinances (which are not sharply distinguished in totemism)...To the religiously based prohibition against killing the totem was now added the socially based prohibition against fratricide. It was not until long afterwards that the prohibition ceased to be limited to members of the clan and assumed the simple form: 'Thou shalt do no murder.' The patriarchal horde was replaced in the first instance by the fraternal clan, whose existence was assured by the blood tie. Society was now based on complicity in the common crime; religion was based on the sense of guilt and the remorse attaching to it; while morality was based on the exigencies of this society and partly on the penance demanded by the sense of guilt.¹⁷

This totemic feast is very much part and parcel of Islamic religion even today with the ritual of sacrifice of animal on the occasion of Eid-uz-Zuha to remember the practice of Abraham as we shall observe later in this paper. Let us now accept the story of Freud about the primitive man, the killing of the father, the fratricidal rivalry, the sense of guilt and remorse and subsequent discovery of religion as entry points to the theological story about Cain and Abel. The Genesis chapter of the Bible talks about the Cain and Abel story in the following manner:

And the man knew Eve his wife; and she conceived and bore Cain, and said: 'I have gotten a man with the help of the LORD.' And again she bore his brother Abel. And Abel was a keeper of sheep, but Cain was a tiller of the ground. And in process of time it came to pass, that Cain brought of the fruit of the ground an offering unto the LORD. And Abel, he also brought of the firstlings of his flock and of the fat thereof. And the LORD had respect unto Abel and to his offering; but unto Cain and to his offering He had not respect. And Cain was very wroth, and his countenance fell. And the LORD said unto Cain: 'Why art thou wroth? and why is thy countenance fallen? If thou doest well, shall it not be lifted up? and if thou doest not well, sin coucheth at the door; and unto thee is its desire, but thou mayest rule over it.' And Cain spoke unto Abel his brother. And it came to pass, when they were in the field, that Cain rose up against Abel his brother, and slew him. And the LORD said unto Cain: 'Where is Abel thy brother?' And he said: 'I know not; am I my brother's keeper?' And He said: 'What hast thou done? the voice of thy brother's blood crieth unto Me from the ground. And now cursed art thou from the ground, which hath opened her mouth to receive thy brother's blood from thy hand. When thou tillest the ground, it shall not henceforth yield unto thee her strength; a fugitive and a wanderer shalt thou be in the earth.' And Cain said unto the LORD: 'My punishment is greater than I can bear. Behold, Thou hast driven me out this day from the face of the land; and from Thy face shall I be hid; and I shall be a fugitive and a wanderer in the earth; and it will come to pass, that whosoever findeth me will slay me.' And the LORD said unto him: 'Therefore whosoever slayeth Cain, vengeance shall

be taken on him sevenfold.’ And the LORD set a sign for Cain, lest any finding him should smite him. And Cain went out from the presence of the LORD, and dwelt in the land of Nod, on the east of Eden. And Cain knew his wife; and she conceived, and bore Enoch; and he builded a city, and called the name of the city after the name of his son Enoch.¹⁸

Thus, according to the biblical account, Cain is a crop farmer and his younger brother Abel is a shepherd. Cain is portrayed as sinful; committing the first murder by killing his brother after God rejected his offerings of produce but accepted the animal sacrifices brought by Abel. Accordingly, Abel was the first human to ever die. Cain is mentioned as Adam and Eve’s first child; thus, Cain, according to Scripture, was the first human ever born. A few scholars suggest that the Cain-Abel narratives may have been based on a Sumerian story representing the conflict between nomadic shepherds and settled farmers.¹⁹ Others think that it may refer to the days in which agriculture began to replace the ways of the hunter-gatherer.²⁰ More recent scholarship has produced another theory, where *Abel* is thought to derive from a reconstructed word meaning ‘herdsman’, with the modern Arabic cognate *ibil*, now specifically referring only to ‘camels’. *Cain*, on the other hand, is thought to be cognate to the mid-1st millennium BC South Arabian word *qyn*, meaning ‘metal smith’.²¹ By equating Abel with ‘herdsman’ and Cain with ‘metal smith’, one can argue that *industry* (a metaphor for the ‘metal smith’) kills pre-industrial modes of production (a metaphor for the ‘herdsman’). Also, one can argue by a deeper reading of the theological discourses of Bible that for religious God, pre-industrial form is an ideal society and, hence, Abel is a martyr and a favourite of God, while Cain—the representative of the modern industry in the making is considered villain. But a western modernist secularist would, perhaps, argue that the death of Abel (pre-industrial civilization) was inevitable at the hands of Cain (industrial civilization). Also, Cain was the first rebel against God and, thus, dared to challenge God. His non-fearing attitude was certainly heroic. Thus, the death of God’s obedient religious person, or what, in the 19th century, Nietzsche famously proclaimed the ‘death of God’²² at the hands of the secular godless man, is forecasted in the theological discourses of the Bible.

The *Qisas-ul-Quran (Stories from the Quran)*²³, on the other hand, draws its contents primarily from the Holy *Quran* and embellishes it with relevant commentaries. In the Cain and Abel story, the crux has been borrowed from the Holy *Quran* with additions from Old Testament. In short, the story about Cain and Abel in the *Qisas-ul-*

Quran is of the following: Adam and Eve gave birth to two pairs of children: first, Cain (Qābīl in Islamic tradition) and his twin sister and later, Abel (Hābīl in Islamic tradition) and his twin sister. Then after few years, God commanded Adam that for further progeny and to grow human civilization, Cain should marry Abel's sister and Abel should marry Cain's sister. When this proposal was brought to Cain by Adam, Cain disagreed with his father Adam and expressed his desire to marry his own sister instead of Abel's sister. According to Cain, his twin sister was relatively better looking than Abel's twin sister and he would only marry his own twin sister instead of marrying Abel's sister. Adam asserted that it is not possible as that would be a violation of God's revelation while being disobedient and disloyal to God. But Cain would listen neither to Adam nor to God and, in fact, sticks to the demand of marrying his own sister. In the meantime, Cain murdered his brother Abel out of jealousy and, in that sense, killed his sexual rival. This was the first murder of human societies according to the theological discourses of *Qisas-ul-Quran*. However, after this murder, Cain had a sense of guilt and started repenting while he was thinking about what to do with his brother's body. Then Cain saw how one large black crow was digging the soil to bury another crow. Then he learnt how to bury his brother's body. This murder scene is amply described in *Quran* with a note of caution and consequential punishment for the murderer and any such 'evildoers':

AND CONVEY unto them, setting forth the truth, the story of the two sons of Adam—how each offered a sacrifice, and it was accepted from one of them whereas it was not accepted from the other. [And Cain] said: 'I will surely slay thee!' [Abel] replied: 'Behold, God accepts only from those who are conscious of Him. Even if thou lay thy hand on me to slay me, I shall not lay my hand on thee to slay thee: behold, I fear God, the Sustainer of all the worlds. I am willing, indeed, for thee to bear [the burden of] all sins ever done by me as well as of the sin done by thee: [but] then thou wouldst be destined for the fire, since that is the requital of evildoers!' But the other's passion drove him to slaying his brother; and he slew him: and thus he became one of the lost. Thereupon God sent forth a raven which scratched the earth, to show him how he might conceal the nakedness of his brother's body. [And Cain] cried out: 'Oh, woe is me! Am I then too weak to do what this raven did, and to conceal the nakedness of my brother's body?'—and was thereupon smitten with remorse. Because of this did We ordain unto the children of Israel that if anyone slays a human being—unless it be [in punishment] for murder or for spreading corruption on earth—it shall be as though he had slain all mankind; whereas, if anyone saves a life, it shall be as though he had saved the lives

of all mankind. And, indeed, there came unto them Our apostles with all evidence of the truth: yet, behold, notwithstanding all this, many of them go on committing all manner of excesses on earth. It is just but a recompense for those who make war on God and His apostle, and endeavour to spread corruption on earth, that they are being slain in great numbers, or crucified in great numbers, or have, in result of their perverseness, their hands and feet cut off in great numbers, or are being [entirely] banished from [the face of] the earth: such is their ignominy in this world. But in the life to come [yet more] awesome suffering awaits them—save for such [of them] as repent ere you [O believers] become more powerful than they: for you must know that God is much-forgiving, a dispenser of grace.²⁴

It is amply clear from the Quranic expressions that there was a *killing* and there was *remorse* after the killing, which we also noticed in Freud's story. Moreover, in the story of *Qisas-ul-Quran*, we find even more similarities with Freud's story regarding the conditions of incest and purpose of killing: the sexual desire. In the Cain and Abel story—Cain killed his brother Abel to eradicate the sexual rival of his own sexual desire, namely his own twin sister. As we know from Freud that after killing of the primeval father, the brothers became rivals and were engaged in fratricidal fights before banishing the practice of incest. But the question arises: what about the 'killing of the father' that is missing in the Islamic discourse? The Islamic discourse is silent about killing of the father. In fact, it emphasizes on the killing of the brother, which according to Freud would be the next stage/spate of killing after murdering the father. Now, the clue of killing of the father is very much present even within the Islamic discourses. Since, Islam cannot formally endorse any rebellion against God and Prophets; it might be silent on this issue. From the *Qisas*, we have learnt how Cain actually rebelled against both the God and his father Adam by violating the revelation of God apart from being disobedient to both God and Adam. Adam was the only hindrance to Cain's desire to marry his own twin sister, and the only obstacle to observe the old primitive practice of immediate incest. In fact, the major quarrel was actually between Adam and Cain, where Abel was not an issue and does not figure in the dialogue between Adam and Cain. So, it is logical that the rebellion against father Adam by Cain must have first led to the killing of Adam by Cain. Also, logically, without killing Adam, Cain cannot kill Abel since, Abel as a good obedient boy, would get protection from Adam. Thus, applying the Freudian argument, one can hold that Cain first killed his father Adam and then killed his

brother Abel in order to have a monopoly of all the women (his sisters) in his society. We have already noticed that it was not the *Quran*, which explained the marriage story, and the debates and disputes between father Adam and his son Cain. Rather, it was explained by *Qisas*. Although we have already noticed some similarities between the stories of Freud and the *Quran*, the argument about killing of Adam by Cain is only based on a deeper sub-textual reading of *Qisas*. We have seen earlier that Cain became a disobedient person to God and his Prophet Adam, but at the same time, Cain felt guilty after the murder of his brother Abel, and one can also add—after the murder of his father Adam. This primitive guilt according to Freud was the source of religion. Here, if we apply Freud, then after the guilt, Cain must have taken forward the legacy and message of Adam with a new religion. Therefore, Cain was the first rebel against the God and its Prophet, the first atheist or non-believer in the theological discourses. However, he could have later established a new religion, perhaps a totemic religion in the memory of his dead father, Adam and his slain brother, Abel after the remorse that he experienced.

The Islamic discourses claim that all Prophets have preached Islam. After the death of each Prophet, the religion of Islam was distorted and, thus, a new Prophet with the message of Islam became necessary. Therefore, let us now turn towards another children's story about the next major prophetic figure—Noah:

God told Noah to build a big boat. First Noah planted some trees. Then he chopped the wood. Then he began to build the boat. It was *very* big. Some people laughed at Noah. They thought he had strange ideas. But Noah was a Prophet. When the boat was built, God said: 'Tell the good people to get on board and all the animals, two by two.' Monkeys, parrots and pandas. Giraffes, rhinos and elephants. Lions and tigers. The animals all came running. They all hurried into the boat. Soon, it began to rain and rain. All the land was covered with water. Even the mountains. Nothing was there but the big boat, bobbing up and down! After a long time, the rain stopped. Noah sent a dove to find land. It came back with a leaf from a tree. Land was near! *BUMP!* The boat landed on top of a mountain! The good people were safe. So were the animals.²⁵

In the story of Noah (Nuh in Islamic tradition) and his ark, it is clear that religion seems to now making the bifurcation between believers and non-believers. Moreover, a new politics of antagonism between obedience and Godly path on the one hand and disobedience/disloyalty on the other, a kind of chasm between 'good' and 'bad' seems to emerge within the theological discourses. This tussle

between 'good' and 'bad' is only an extension of the Cain and Abel story. If we further apply Freud's story in the case of Noah, then Noah is actually taking care of totem animals. By saving the life of all the totem animals, and his clan (the believers), Noah on behalf of his forefather, Cain (and Noah as the new head of his clan), actually performed a redemption of the old primitive crime of Cain to murder Adam and Abel. The story of Noah also reveals the missionary aspect of religion to reach out to more people. It can be also seen in another children's story of King Solomon (Sulaiman in Islamic tradition), and how Solomon converts the sun worshipper, Queen of Sheba, to believe in God and Islam with the help of his hoopoe.²⁶

The story of Abraham (Ibrahim in Islamic tradition), as demonstrated below marks that point of human history when the totem animal in Noah's story and a different totemic 'Sun' in the Solomon story are replaced by a place of worship. Such a worship place would be later filled with idols, as we would eventually see in pre-Islamic Arabia.

Abraham had a dream. God told him, 'Take your wife Hajar and your baby son Ismail. Go to the desert. Leave them there'. So they took a camel and water and a sack of dates to eat. Off they went. It was a long journey. In the desert, Abraham left as God had told him to do. Ismail ate all the dates. He drank all the water. He was still very thirsty. He cried and cried. Hajar looked for water. She ran up and down two hills. She ran up and down again. Then *whoosh*, lovely water bubbled out of the ground! They called it ZamZam. Birds came to drink the water. People came too. They put up tents and stayed. Their goats and sheep stayed too. Soon a town grew there. Its name was *Mecca*. Hajar and Ismail lived there. Abraham often came to visit. God told Abraham to build a Holy House in Mecca. Ismail helped his father. An angel brought a special black stone. It was very old. When the Holy House was built, they walked around it and prayed. Abraham asked God to make Mecca a wonderful place. His prayer was answered. *Years passed*. ...Many people came to Mecca from all over the world. Many people wanted to pray there. And to this day millions of people drink from the well of ZamZam.²⁷

In *Qisas*, another dream of Abraham was discussed—the dream of his favourite thing to be sacrificed to God. After this dream, Abraham only found his wilful son Isaac (Ismail in Islamic tradition) as his favourite possession to be sacrificed. When Abraham was about to kill Isaac, he suddenly saw a sheep in place of Isaac. This means that during Abraham's period, the primitive totem feast became a part of more advanced stage of religion. In fact, killing of the father is replaced with a tendency to kill the son, which Freud would probably

not have disagreed since he suggested that the violent and jealous father kept all the females for himself and drives away his sons as they grow up. This simply means that the father used to see his son as a potential sexual rival as pointed out by Freud. Also, in the above Children's story, we see that Abraham visits his wife, Hajar and son Ismail in Mecca. That means, Abraham used to roam around different places or had multiple wives like Sarah and Keturah to look around as supported by Islamic theological discourses. The story of Abraham's dream for sacrificing his son, Ismail confirms that humans at that time followed the dream in real life acts and thought of it as a divine communication. They were unaware about the knowledge of dreams or what the Freudian discovery of unconscious has helped to interpret dreams as a form of either 'wish-fulfilment' or an attempt by the unconscious to resolve a conflict of some sort, whether something recent or from the recesses of the past that was repressed, and how the dream works by the processes of condensation, displacement, representation and symbolism.²⁸

However, in theological discourses of *Qisas*, we find Joseph as a Prophet, who could interpret the dreams and indeed interpreted the dream of Egyptian Pharaoh, almost like a Freudian. The Pharaoh dreamt that seven thin cows were swallowed by seven fat cows and vomited. Joseph interpreted that for the next seven years, Egypt would be very prosperous. From eighth to fourteenth year, Egypt would experience famine. At the onset it would look like as if Joseph was a fortune-teller. But he was actually interpreting the dreams in the same manner as Freud, where dreams represent a non-imaginary unreal space with condensation, displacement, representation and symbolism²⁹ as evident from Joseph's story. Let us now briefly look at the children's story of Jonah (Yunus) before we concentrate on the story of Muhammad:

Jonah was a Prophet. Jonah said, 'People! Be good. Don't steal! Don't cheat!' The bad people did not listen to Jonah. They were angry. They yelled at him! They threw things at him! Potatoes! carrots! eggs! Tomatoes! Fish bones! Jonah was upset. He said 'They don't care! They won't listen to me. I am going to run away. Far, far away.' Jonah found a ship and got on it. Soon a huge storm came. Waves crashed! Winds blew! The captain said, 'God must be angry!' Jonah began to shake and shiver. 'It's me,' he said, 'God is angry with me!' In a flash, the sailors grabbed Jonah and threw him off the ship. Into the sea with the fish, past an octopus, and into the mouth of a whale! It was dark inside the whale, Jonah was very scared. He said to God, '*Nobody* can hide from you! I am very sorry I ran away.' God forgave

Jonah and told the whale to take him back home. The bad people found him. They were sorry too. They said, 'Teach us to be good'.³⁰

From the above story of Jonah (Yunus), we are again confronted with the idea of preaching and religious mission to reach out to more people as we have previously found in the story of Noah and Solomon. However, in this story of Jonah, we can also identify the note of caution and punishment for those who do not bother to follow the path of God or in other words, who escapes religious duties. This construction of an evil/devilish/hellish/dark path is the feature of any organised religion and, thus, we see the antagonistic frontiers of heaven and hell and the so called path between peace, victory and purity as opposed to destruction, violence, impurity, filth etc. in most organised religions. We would later see in this paper how, Islam as an organized religion also seeks to assert these precise boundaries of good versus bad and enlightened versus ignorant.

Freud asserted that both Moses and Christ as eminent father substitutes were killed and later on deified as part of the old 'heir of an unfulfilled wish-phantasy' and a 'reincarnated successor' of the 'most guilty, the leader of the brother horde who had overpowered the Father' and, thus, the 'Mosaic religion had been a Father religion' and 'Christianity became a Son religion'.³¹ We shall follow this Freudian model of killing of the father and its subsequent deification in Islamic history.

Genealogy of Islamic Dogmatism

Islam believes in a shapeless god, namely *Allah*. *Allah* is beyond gender and is neither a son, nor daughter, nor father, nor mother. But according to believers, *Allah* exists as the creator of whole universe. Now, if *Allah* is shapeless, then why central attention is paid to the direction of *Kaba* (a concrete structure in the city of Mecca with a black stone inside it as we have seen previously in Abraham's story) during Muslim prayers? Why the shaped black stone and its shaped container of concrete structure is the central focus during *Haj* rituals (obligatory for all believers who can afford for this holy visit once in her/his lifetime)? Now, prior to the emergence of Islamic faith as preached by Prophet Muhammad in 7th century Arabia, the tribal community of Mecca was idolaters. There were idols inside *Kaba*, which the Meccan *Quraish* tribe used to worship during Muhammad's time. The historian writing about

the time of 6th century A.D. confirms to the idolatrous nature of pre-Islamic Arabia:

Muslim tradition tells us that Muhammad lived in a society dominated by polytheism and idolatry, but it also tells us that monotheists and elements of monotheism leavened the lump of the prevalent paganism. There were individuals who had rejected the dominant heathenism and worshipped the one, true God; there were rituals that although they had been overlaid with polytheistic accretions, had originated as monotheist forms of worship; there was a sanctuary (the Ka'ba at Mecca) that, although it was now the home of idols, had been built by Abraham at God's command; and, although the vast majority of the Arabs worshipped a variety of local and tribal gods and idols, there was a general conception of a supreme god standing over and above them, called Allah. This Allah was associated especially with the Ka'ba, which pilgrimage (*hajj*) participated in by worshippers coming from all over Arabia. It is against this background that the traditional charge of *shirk* is usually understood. That Arabic noun (to which are related the verbal form *ashraka* and the active participle *mushrik*), is, as already indicated, frequently understood as 'idolatry' or 'polytheism' but in a basic, non-religious sense it refers to the idea of 'making someone or something a partner, or associate, of someone else or something else.'³²

Muhammad's followers, who were converted to Islam were driven out of Mecca by the idolaters and took refuge in Medina. In Medina's first Muslim mosque, the Muslims with their Prophet first used to pray in the direction of *Baitul Muqaddis* in Jerusalem, which was a holy site for Jews. Karen Armstrong describes this practice of Muslim prayers in the direction towards Jerusalem:

'Muhammad felt deeply attracted to the Ka'bah. He was drawn by the legend that was probably current in pre-Islamic Arabia that Adam, the first man, had built the earliest shrine on this sacred spot. It was, therefore, the first temple built in God's honor in the whole world. The Meccan Haram had been the site of the Garden of Eden, where Adam had been created, had named the animals, and had been honored by all the angels. Mecca thus represented that lost paradise, which could be momentarily recovered by performing the traditional rites of this holy place. The shrine was later rebuilt by Seth, Adam's son; by Noah after the Flood; and by Abraham and Ishmael. Finally it had been rebuilt by Qusayy ibn Qilab, the ancestor of the Meccan tribe of Qureish. The Ka'bah linked the past with the present, the human with the divine, the internal world with the external. Yet Muhammad taught his first converts to prostrate themselves in prayer before Allah as an outward sign of their interior Islam, he told them to turn away from the Ka'bah to face Jerusalem. The Ka'bah was now contaminated by idols, so Muslims must focus on the spiritual center of

the Jews and Christians who worshipped Allah alone. This *qiblah* ('direction of prayer') marked their new orientation away from their tribe toward the primordial faith of the whole of humanity. It also expressed Muhammad's sense of solidarity and continuity with the *ahl al-kitab*. Then in January 624, when it became clear that most of the Jews of Yathrib would never accept Muhammad, the *ummah* declared its independence of the older traditions. Muhammad made the congregation turn around and pray facing Mecca instead. This change of *qiblah* has been described as one of Muhammad's most creative gestures. It marked a return of the Muslims to the primordial faith of Abraham before it was split into warring sects by the Jews and Christians; it was an attempt to find a lost unity, represented by the primal shrine rebuilt by either Jews or Christians, the Muslims were tacitly declaring that they would bow to none of the established religions but only to God himself. ...The change of *qiblah* was also consoling for the Meccan Muslims who made the *hijrah* to Yathrib and were now living in exile. It healed their sense of dislocation and symbolically directed them toward the sacred associations of home.³³

The Prophet changed the direction of Muslim *qiblah* towards the direction of Meccan *Kaba*, which was still occupied by several idols inside it. Afterwards, the victory of neo-converts led to the destruction of all those idols inside *Kaba*. Now, even if there was no idol, the black stone inside *Kaba* and most importantly, the *Kaba* as a concrete structure, remained as a central focus for all praying rituals. Therefore, the traces of the past—the tribal worship of shaped idols, which evolved from the primitive totem animals, remained even if the idols were destroyed. Thus, Islamic faith, which first questioned the irrationality of 'powerless' idols, in fact, remained silent on asking the same question about the *existence* of two shaped entities of *Kaba* and 'heavenly black stone' inside *Kaba* (most likely a meteor). Thus, the 'faith' which emerged with the help of 'reason' abandons the reasoned processes of introspection as a result of Lacanian *foreclosure*. Foreclosure means an element in the imaginary (visual or mental image) being denied or repudiated, access to the symbolic, which is the field of language. Foreclosure is, thus, a repudiation of access from the imaginary to the symbolic—as if the element in the imaginary (image) had never existed. So, its appearance in the field of language (the symbolic) never arises.³⁴ Precisely because of this collective foreclosed mindset of Muslim believers, it cannot understand that it is actually bowing its head in front of a shaped and man-made creation, namely the *Kaba*, despite the fact that Islam believes in a shapeless God.

This foreclosure among the Muslim believers that leads to abandoning of reason, therefore, starts after Islam secures itself in

the power bloc with a new dogmatism. This abandoning of 'reason' with a new Islamic dogmatism only creates the conditions of possibilities for several other irrational activities in future including *jihad* (holy war) against the *jahiliya* (ignorance of non-Islam) often claimed by leading 20th century Islamists as one of the most important duties of Muslims.³⁵ However, this paper is only hinting that the roots of dogmatism expressed in contemporary Islamism is much older. In fact, it goes back to this dogmatism of idolatry and non-critical approach of Islam while making an antagonistic frontier against the Jews as expressed in the change of direction of daily prayers towards Mecca. Moreover, the construction of an antagonistic frontier against the Jews by Islam is not only limited to the question of changing the *qiblah* but also revealed in the Islamic theological discourses of *Qisas* that Jesus would be born again as a Muslim, as a part of the *ummah* (community of Muslim believers) and as the follower of the Prophet Muhammad. This means that the Islamic discourses are clearly trying to make the Laclauian *logic of equivalence*³⁶ between Christianity and Islam. In other words, Islamic discourses are directly appealing to the Christians that they should now follow the Islamic bandwagon, since their Prophet—Jesus—would himself be reborn as a Muslim, while no such proclamation has been given for Moses—the Prophet of Jews. Rather, in the Islamic discourses of *Quran* and *Hadith* (sayings and practices of Prophet Muhammad), the Jews have been designated as those people who 'perverts', 'conceals', 'twists' and 'transgresses' the scriptures of God.³⁷ In fact, there is meticulous documentation of indisputable evidence that traces a long legacy of uniquely Islamic anti-Semitism within Islamic discourses including the *Quran* that expresses clear hostility towards Jews.³⁸

The lack of self-critical approach within Islam also helps to make it as a narcissist (id)entity like many other organized religions and secular political ideologies. However, we are not discussing the reasons of narcissism of 'other' religions and ideologies but enquiring about the underlying logic of narcissism within Islam. However, this narcissism within Islam comes from the self-gratitude of Islam as the 'final apostle' as we have seen in the Quranic proclamation in the early part of this paper. According to the faith, it is the 'last prophetic religion' with Muhammad as the last prophet of *Allah*, and there would not be or cannot be any other Prophetic religion after Islam. Moreover, no one is permitted to change or amend the holy text or religious practices even if some of its tenets do not suit to address the crisis and problems of contemporary

societies. In Kantian sense, Islam can be identified with *dogmatism* ‘without previous criticism of its own powers.’³⁹ This dogmatic confidence of Islam as the bearer of an ‘absolute truth’ and the right way to life gets shaken when it encounters such challenges like atheism and blasphemy because these trends only ignore the path of Islam and instead critique it for being ‘backward’, ‘oppressive’, ‘irrational’ and ‘regressive’. In the face of such stiff challenges of atheism, blasphemy and consumerist hedonism, Islamists become confused and sometimes take refuge to violence to eliminate its opponent’s claims and opinions—in this case the political articulations of atheism, blasphemy and consumerist hedonism.

Killing of the Father/Leader and Fratricidal Fights in Islamic History

We have already noticed that Freud informed us that Judaism was a father religion and Christianity was a son’s religion. In this regard, Žižek makes an interesting analysis of Islam:

‘[I]n contrast to both Judaism and Christianity, the two other religions of the book, Islam excludes God from the domain of paternal logic: Allah is not a father, not even a symbolic one—God as One is neither born nor does He give birth to creatures: *there is no place for a Holy Family in Islam*. This is why Islam emphasizes so much the fact that Muhammad himself was an orphan; this is why, in Islam, God intervenes precisely at the moments of the suspension, withdrawal, failure, ‘blackout,’ of the paternal function (when the mother or the child are abandoned or ignored by the biological father). What this means is that God remains thoroughly in the domain of the impossible-Real: He is the impossible-Real beyond the father, so that there is a ‘genealogical desert between man and God’. (This was the problem with Islam for Freud, since his entire theory of religion is based on the parallel of God with the father.) More importantly still, this inscribes politics into the very heart of Islam, since the ‘genealogical desert’ renders impossible a grounding of the community in the structures of parenthood or other bonds based on blood: ‘the desert between God and Father is the place where the political institutes itself.’ With Islam, it is no longer possible to ground a community in the mode of *Totem and Taboo*, through the murder of the father, the ensuing guilt bringing brothers together—thence Islam’s unexpected actuality. This problem is at the very heart of the (in)famous *umma*, the Muslim ‘community of believers’; it accounts for the overlapping of the religious and the political (community should be grounded directly on God’s word), as well as for the fact that Islam is ‘at its best’ when it grounds the formation of a community ‘out of nowhere,’ in the genealogical desert, as the egalitarian revolutionary fraternity—no

wonder Islam succeeds when young men find themselves deprived of a traditional familial safety network.⁴⁰

However, Žižek makes a partial and selective reading of both Freud and the Islamic history. Apparently, the killer of the father, who is a 'rebel' and 'hero', is missing in Islam but we see the Islamic subject as the killer of the 'idol' representing the worshiping traditions of polytheism or even monotheistic paganism. We have already seen how the traces of 'idol' remained within Islam by the existence of *Kaba* and the 'black stone' inside *Kaba*. Their existence means that the killing of the 'idolatry' was never complete in Islamic tradition. The killing of the 'idolatry' remained an unfinished task, which the Islamic religion could not historically perform by making alive the *Kaba* as its central focus in moments of daily prayers.

In this respect, we shall now see how the killing of the community leader, who is related to father identification in psychoanalytic terms, later became a part of Islamic history after Muhammad. After Muhammad nominated Abu Bakr as his successor, in 632 AD, after the death of Muhammad, Abu Bakr was elected as a Caliph (representative of Muslim *ummah* and vice-regency of God).⁴¹ Both Prophet Muhammad and Abu Bakr, who was only alive as a Caliph for two years and mostly mourned the death of Prophet during his reign, were not killed. But the repressed desire of killing the leader (killing of the father) can be noticed in the killings of three successive caliphs after Abu Bakr—Umar, Uthman and Ali, all of whom were Muhammad's close disciples and killed by none other than the members of the Muslim *ummah* (community of believers). Abu Bakr was succeeded by his nominee, 'Umar ibn al-Khattab as the second Caliph in the midst of a renewed crisis appended by threats of revolts.⁴² In 644 A.D., at the zenith of his power, Umar was assassinated by a Persian named Abu Lulu, in response to Umar's conquest of Persia.⁴³ This murder of Umar led to the concept of *shura* (consultative council) in Islam as 'on his deathbed he is said to have allocated the choice of his successor to a *shura* and named six leading Muslims to consult together and make a choice from among themselves accordingly.'⁴⁴ Uthman, who was elected by the *shura* designated by Umar as the next caliph, was killed in the summer of 656 A.D. by 'a band of tribesmen from the Egyptian garrison town of Fusat.'⁴⁵ After Uthman's death, Prophet's son-in-law, Ali became the fourth caliph.

In 656 A.D., Ali suppressed the revolt of some members of inner circle (six leading Muslims, who were all Prophet's companions and was chosen by Umar in his death bed) by killing Talha and al-Zubayr

while Aisha the widow of Muhammad was 'taken off back to Medina to be held in limited confinement.'⁴⁶ Ali had to also fight Mu'awiya (the founder of Umayyad dynasty after Ali's death) during 657 A.D. and had to come to truce with him.⁴⁷ Then in 658 A.D., Ali 'achieved a major victory over the Kharijites at the battle of Nahrawan in Iraq, but this, by providing the movement with martyrs, merely intensified the hatred against him.'⁴⁸ As a result, Ali was murdered by a Kharijite, Ibn Muljam in 661 A.D.⁴⁹ Later, all these assassinated caliphs were given pious status in the *Sunni* sect of Islam and we saw the birth of *Shiite* sect as a glorification and deification of Ali. Now, after the killings of Umar, Uthman and Ali, we saw three trends of Islam, slowly evolving and distinguishable from each other: Sunni, Shia and Kharijism. The major differences among these sects were on the issue of leadership to the Muslim world: In other words, who would be the caliph (a Sunni preference) or imam (mostly used in Shiite and Khariji traditions) of the Muslim *Ummah*. In this respect, the observations of an eminent historian, who is an expert in the history of early Islamic civilization on these three distinct trends within Islam, are of the following:

The basic principle of Kharijism was a demand for piety and religious excellence as the only necessary qualification for the imam, and a rejection of the view that he should belong to the family of the Prophet, as the Shi'ites demanded, or to the tribe of the Prophet (Quraysh), as the Sunnis required...Each of these three main Muslim groups came to hold that Islam should be open to all peoples and that all should enjoy the same status within it regarding rights and duties.⁵⁰

If the legitimacy of the Umayyads was questioned too sharply, ammunition might be provided for the Shi'ites, most of whom came to see 'Ali as having been cheated not only by Mu'awiya but also by the first two caliphs, Abu Bakr and 'Umar, who are of central importance for the Sunni concept of the transmission of the Prophet's Sunna to the later community. Furthermore, Mu'awiya himself was a companion of Muhammad, his secretary according to tradition, and one of the characteristics of Sunni Islam is its championing of the companions as sources of authoritative teaching, as against the Shi'ites who viewed them in general with suspicion and as enemies of 'Ali and the imams.⁵¹

Historians inform us that there were civil wars (*Fitna*) among the three groups that led to the killing of Ali in 661 A.D. The end of the first civil war (656-661), which was a rebellion against Ali⁵², was followed by the killing of Ali's sons including the claimant of Muslim leadership, al-Husayn during the second civil war (680-692 A.D.).

Mu'awiya (the first Umayyad Caliph and nephew of the third Sunni Caliph, Uthman)⁵³ attempted to end the continuous crisis over the Caliphate by proclaiming an Umayyad dynasty on the basis of simple patriarchal succession.⁵⁴ The second civil war consolidated the Umayyad dynasty as the Sunni caliphate of the Muslim world, particularly after the death of Ibn al-Zubayr (in 692 A.D.), another prominent challenger of Umayyad dynasty.⁵⁵ Finally, there were further internecine and fratricidal battles among the Muslim *ummah* (also seen as the community of Muslim brothers) during the third civil war (744-747 A.D.) that marked the collapse of the Umayyad caliphate.⁵⁶

The death of Ali marked the beginning of deification of Ali than previous three Caliphs—Abu Bakr, Umar and Uthman among the Shiite discourses. Historian Hawting gives an account how the death of Ali created conditions for the emergence of a new Shiite sect within Islam, first among the supporters of Ali:

In 661 'Ali was murdered in Kufa, reportedly by a Kharijite seeking revenge for the massacre at Nahrawan, and Mu'awiya took advantage of the situation to march into Kufa where he was able, by a combination of tact, money and threat of force, to win the acceptance of most of 'Ali's remaining supporters. In the eyes of some of 'Ali's supporters the successor to 'Ali should have been eldest son, Hasan, but Mu'awiya, it is generally accepted, persuaded Hasan to retract his claim to the imamate and to withdraw into private life in the Hijaz where he died some years later. Naturally, acceptance of Mu'awiya as caliph was not unanimous. He was still opposed by the Kharijites and not all of 'Ali's former supporters accepted him, but they were no longer able to carry out a consistent armed struggle against him. The remnants of 'Ali's party formed the basis of what was to become known as the Shi'a (the 'Party' of 'Ali), supporting the claims of 'Ali and his descendants to the imamate and developing into a number of sub-groups as their religious and political ideas became more elaborate.⁵⁷

It is evident from the above narrations that there were fratricidal and internecine fights among the Muslim *ummah* (who are regarded as Muslim brothers and sisters) after the killing of each community leader, who symbolically represents the 'Father' of Muslim *ummah* in psychoanalytic terms. After each killing of the 'Father', the Muslim brothers became rivals of each other but not primarily with regard to 'women' as in Freud's *Totem and Taboo* but specifically with regard to 'power'. In fact, the community leader/father known as the Caliph of the Muslim world did not have to bother about women since Islamic traditions permit polygamy up to a maximum of four wives at a time and also they were allowed to keep concubines or

slave-girls, especially those women who got captured as prisoners of war.⁵⁸ Umar married a total of nine women in his lifetime with six formal wives and three concubines,⁵⁹ Uthman had eight wives in his lifetime⁶⁰ while Ali had nine wives, some of whom were concubines after the death of his first wife Fatima—a daughter of Prophet Muhammad.⁶¹ After Ali's death, his eldest son, Hasan had 'a brief and inglorious reign of five or six months.'⁶² He was more interested in his 'ever changing harem than on the business of public life,' for his 'vagrant passion gained him the nickname *The Divorcer*, for only by continual divorce could he harmonise his craving for new nuptials with the requirements of the law, which limits freeborn wives to four.'⁶³ Hasan is said to have exercised the power of divorce 'as a matter of simple caprice, seventy (other say ninety) times'.⁶⁴ When the leading men complained to Ali that his son was continually marrying their daughters, and is often divorcing them, Ali said that 'the remedy lay in their own hands; they should refuse to give him their daughters to wife. These divorced wives were irrespective of slave-girls, for whom there is no limit.'⁶⁵ It is interesting to note that Ali was not harsh on Hasan by issuing an ordinance that one cannot divorce frequently and wishfully as was once done by Umar.⁶⁶

The killing of Hasan and al-Husayn and the subsequent mourning till date on the occasion of Muharram are still observed by the Shiites. As historians point out:

[Hasan] met his death by poison at the hand of one of his wives. It was a not unnatural end for 'Hasan the Divorcer'. Alyite tradition, indeed, would have us believe that the lady was bribed to commit the crime, and thus exalts the libertine to the dignity of 'Martyr'. But Muavia had no object in ridding himself of the harmless creature; and the jealousies of Hasan's ever-changing harem afford a sufficient and a likelier reason.⁶⁷

The Umayyad governor of Iraq 'Ubayd Allah b. Ziyad in particular, is associated in tradition with the suppression of Husayn's movement, although the bloodshed is often ascribed to others. The date of the fight at Karbala' was, according to the Muslim *hijri* calendar, 10 Muharram 61 (10 October 680). The event has attained a mythic quality in Muslim, especially Shi'ite, tradition. For the Shi'a Karbala' is the supreme example of the pattern of suffering and martyrdom which has afflicted their imams and the whole of the Shi'ite community. Each year the day of Karbala', 10 Muharram, is marked by Shi'ites as their greatest festival, and the passion plays and flagellants' processions which accompany it illustrate the feeling which memory of the event inspires. It is only to be expected, therefore, that it is virtually impossible to disentangle history from the legend and hagiography with which it is associated. Even Sunni Muslims are moved by

the fate of the Prophet's grandson. It seems unlikely that at the time itself the affair had very much importance for the Umayyads. Husayn's force had been small and was suppressed with relative ease.⁶⁸

The first four caliphs were not elected on the basis of some hereditary rule.⁶⁹ Rather, Umar in his deathbed formed the *shura* (consultation committee) to *choose* or elect the Muslim Caliph among the community of believers. In fact, Islamists like Maududi in the last century have argued that the Caliph among the Muslims should be duly elected through a democratic election and only those can be regarded as potential candidates for the post of caliphate, who are known to have demonstrated the highest moral virtues, dignity, knowledge, and leadership qualities, etc.⁷⁰ It is, however, interesting to note that both Husayn and Umayyads were trying to establish a dynastic rule, which is a complete deviation from the Islamic tradition and principle. Husayn was claiming the seat of Caliphate after his father Ali was killed, while Umayyads successfully established a dynastic rule after the killing of Ali. In fact, Ali himself declared his own Hashemite dynasty and was, therefore, succeeded by his eldest son Hasan and after Hasan's murder, the Hashemite claim to the Caliphate passed to Ali's second son, Husayn.⁷¹ Despite the fact that both Husayn and Umayyads were committing the same crime (establishment of un-Islamic dynastic rule), Husayn has been designated as a martyr within later Islamic discourses in general and Shiite traditions in particular⁷² and not as a person, who just got killed in a power struggle. On the other hand, among Shiite discourses, Umayyads became vilified as evil conspirators. However, this particular mourning of Husayn's martyrdom and Umayyad vilification still becomes evident in Shiite discourses precisely because of the religious sanctions behind it.

Both Ali's sons: Hasan and Husayn as well as the Umayyad Mu'awiya's claim to the seat of power as the Caliph were made in a context when an already available and widely recognized practice of hereditary dynastic rule exists in non-Muslim societies. So, both persons did the same criminal act, craving for power while killing the (Muslim) brothers with the will to establish a dynastic rule that was completely un-Islamic. But one was more vilified than the other in Shiite discourses. On the other hand, the death of Hasan is still mourned among the Shiites while completely forgetting his irresponsible character as a statesman, who was only interested in his harem and not about the daily affairs of the state. Thus, two similar acts are treated differently. The killing of Hasan and Husayn are mourned without questioning their moral character while the

acts of Umayyads were vilified as evil conspirators in the later Shiite discourses.⁷³ This is what can be called as the problem of ‘sanctioned violence’, which is not used here in the same manner as Walter Benjamin calls ‘legal violence’/‘sanctioned force’.⁷⁴

Explicit violence can be seen with naked eyes where force is illegitimately used by one or a group of actors on another. Some examples of explicit violence can be murder, unjust war, physical assault etc. By contrast, sanctioned or implicit violence on the other hand, is structurally inbuilt in a given society, where consensus by the (silent) majority backs such violence to operate in a system. This is precisely connected to the acceptance of the hierarchical nature of the society and allows the majority to keep silent on certain unjust conditions like poverty, economic inequality, unequal opportunities, oppression, marginalisation, exploitation, discrimination, exclusion etc. without challenging or revolting against a given system. Due to the existence of sanctioned violence in modern societies, the majority also *discriminates* between different violent acts because of ideological hegemony that justifies such an unjust and unequal system. For example, huge protests were witnessed against 2003 Iraq war but we kept silent during the judicial mockery of Saddam Hussein that led him to gallows (a capital punishment that is generally unwelcomed in modern societies) although both Iraq war and judicial mockery of Saddam by victor’s justice followed by almost public hanging due to circulation of media images were imperialist acts. Sanctioned violence is a form of violence that is implicit within the very power structure of society. It is located behind the veil of modern structures of power like propaganda, media campaign, advertisements, publicity, imaging/image building mechanisms via image industry etc. Sanctioned violence essentially produces *discrimination* between two similar works or persons committing/performing the same acts. This sanctioned violence is a form of omission/exclusion/silence due to abstraction for generalisation that at the end of the day is (un)conscious suppression while shaping a discourse. The power bloc in any society manipulates the psyche of individuals as well as collectives by imposing a sanctioned violence on the people who might be opposed to the political hegemony of a given power bloc, so that at the end of the day, *differences* and *distinctions* are made between various acts of the power bloc on the one hand, and *discrimination* is produced between myriad responses against the power bloc on the other. Sanctioned violence can be theoretically defined where consent of one agent produces a sub-space as Marx pointed out ‘how human

consent can sometimes stand over against itself and brings forth effects in it turning over against him leaving little room for his further consent' like the worker entering the exploitative system of wage contract by his own consent and thus sanctions his own exploitation.⁷⁵ This system of sanctioned violence is constructed in such a manner of complex power relationship that the society seems to accept such an order of discrimination and inequality as *natural*. Such discrimination and unequal treatment as a result of sanctioned violence can be seen in the Shiite attitudes towards Hasan and Husayn on the one hand and Mu'awiya and the Umayyads on the other hand.

Conclusion

In this paper, what we have seen is that the repressed conditions of idolism as a primitive totem symbol and the killing of the leader (father) as a primitive totem act came as the 'return of the repressed' with idealization/idolization of *Kaba* among the global Muslim *ummah* and the idealization/deification of Ali in Shiism. Thus, the 'idolization' of *Kaba* is the 'original sin' of the entire Muslim *ummah*. The killing of three caliphs and later idealization/deification of Ali is the 'original sin' of the Shiite sect within Islam. Sunnis believe that Shiites are not puritan Muslims and, hence, are sinners because it emphasizes on excessive celebration of Ali and ignores the stature of three previous caliphs before Ali. But both Shias and Sunnis are original sinners by idolizing the *Kaba*, since Islam is a religion of non-idols and shapeless *Allah*.

Now, can the global Muslim *ummah* introspect on this issue of idolizing the *Kaba*? If *Allah* is omnipresent, then why Muslims cannot rethink to pray in whichever direction they like in order to start a more democratic practice. If Islam is a religion of non-idols then why a tribal mode of idolatry practice is still done by giving central attention towards the *Kaba* during daily prayers and *Haj* pilgrimage? Actually, this practice of praying towards the *Kaba* is an important mechanism to make a common bond within the community by invoking a number of similar practices across the world. The similarities of religious practices are helpful in religious identification on the part of the believer and further assist to form a collective identity called the 'Muslim community'. But what if some Muslims today rethink about such issues and question the practice of prayer towards the direction of *Kaba*? In that case, there is a possibility for a battle of hegemony between the reformists and

puritans. The reformist Muslim might argue in favour of rethinking and reformulating several theological practices whereas the puritan can just issue a fatwa or make violent mobilizations against the reformist to discredit her/him within the community. Otherwise, it can just kill the reformist by killing a challenging voice, which threatens the very authority of Islamic religion—a religion that cannot be amended as sanctioned by the puritanical faith. Then there can be confrontations among system of nation-states as well. Saudi Arabia might fundamentally oppose to rethink about changing directions of Muslim prayers since it earns billions of foreign exchange from religious tourism, particularly associated with Muslim visits during *Haj* when *qurbani* (ritual of animal sacrifice) is performed and *umrah* (occasional visit to *Kaba* on a non-*Eid-uz-Zuha* date and visit to Prophet's cemetery in Medina). It would simply lose the money and international attention that it gets if the direction of Muslim prayers is changed according to the wish of each and every believer to start a more democratic practice. Coming back to our original psychoanalytical questions in tracing the roots of Islamic traditions, we can argue that even after several thousand years of evolution, the two important symbols of totemic religion: (a) idolatry as a replacement of old totem animal in the form of praying towards the *Kaba* and (b) totem feast, in the form of *qurbani* (meat of sacrificed animal) in *Eid-uz-Zuha* can be still traced within Islamic traditions.

NOTES

1. Aristotle, *The Politics*, trans. and with an introduction, notes, and glossary by Carnes Lord (London: The University of Chicago Press, 1984), p. 37.
2. Robert A. Dahl, *Modern Political Analysis*, 4th ed. (Englewood Cliffs: Prentice-Hall, 1984), p. 1
3. Aristotle, *The Nichomachean Ethics* with a commentary by H.H. Joachim and ed. D.A. Rees (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1951), p. 26.
4. Dahl, *Modern Political Analysis*, p. 10.
5. Chantal Mouffe, *The Return of the Political* (London: Verso, 1993), pp. 1-7.
6. Martin E. Marty and R. Scott Appleby (eds.), *Fundamentalisms Project, Vols. 1-5* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1991-1995) is a detailed study of religious fundamentalism among Christians, Muslims, Jews, Hindus, Sikhs and Buddhists.
7. 5:15-20 of *The Holy Quran*; source quoted from *The Message of the Qurgn: The Full Account of the Revealed Arabic Text Accompanied by Parallel Transliteration* trans. and explained by Muhammad Asad, complete ed. [2003] (Bristol: The Book Foundation, 2008), pp. 168-170.
8. For Mulhall, the negation of religion, god or any other external being influencing or controlling *human actions* is discarded by the mainstream project of

- Enlightenment since ‘the Enlightenment conception of human self-sufficiency, since such extra-individual structural influences are themselves humanly comprehensible (identifiable and analysable by such thinkers as Marx, Freud, or Darwin); are in many cases the result of human action; and are, anyway, always in principle open to alteration, or at least amelioration, by collective human action. In short, even if the source of our problems lies beyond the individual wrongdoer, it does not lie beyond the human race as such; and so its resolution also lies within human minds.’—Stephen Mulhall, *Philosophical Myths of the Fall* (Oxford: Princeton University Press, 2005), p. 9. The traditional distinction between ‘private’ and ‘public’ was also challenged by Feminism. See Michael Freedman, ‘Feminism: The Recasting of Political Language’ in *Ideologies and Political Theory: A Conceptual Approach* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1996), pp. 488-525.
9. From the back cover of Noura Durkee, *Stories from the Quran Book 1: The Story of the Creation & Noah and the Ark*, illustrated by Shehraz Afzal (London: Hood Hood Books, 1998).
 10. Durkee, *Stories from the Quran Book 1*.
 11. See ‘Translators Note’, in Jacques Lacan, *The Four Fundamental Concepts of Psycho-Analysis*, ed. Jacques-Alain Miller and trans. Alan Sheridan (Harmondsworth, Eng: Penguin Books, 1979), p. 281.
 12. Sigmund Freud, *Totem and Taboo: Some Points of Agreement between the Mental Lives of Savages and Neurotics* [1913], trans. James Strachey, 2nd ed. [1950] (London: Routledge, 2001), pp. 164-166.
 13. *Ibid.*, p. 167.
 14. *Ibid.*, pp. 167-168.
 15. Sigmund Freud, ‘Repression’ in *The Freud Reader*, ed. Peter Gay (London: Vintage Books, 1995), p. 572.
 16. Sigmund Freud, ‘The Return of the Repressed’ in *Moses and Monotheism*, trans. Katherine Jones (New York: Vintage Books, 1967), p. 164.
 17. Freud, *Totem and Taboo*, pp. 168-170.
 18. *The Bible*, Genesis: Chapter 4, Verses, 1-17.
 19. Jeremy Allen Black, Transliteration of original language version: Dumuzid and Enkimdu at *Electronic Text Corpus of Sumerian Literature* (ETCSL); English translation at ‘Chapter IV: Miscellaneous Myths: Inanna prefers the farmer.’ Available at: <http://www.sacred-texts.com/ane/sum/sum09.htm> Retrieved on 09/01/2010.
 20. J. H. Hatfield, *Why Call Me God? The Gospel Seen with a Single Eye* (Frodsham: Capabel Press, 2009).
 21. Richard S. Hess, *Studies in the Personal Names of Genesis 1-11* (Winona Lake, Ind.: Eisenbrauns, 2009), pp. 24-25.
 22. See Book 3, Sections 108 & 125 and Book 5, Section 343 of Friedrich Nietzsche, *The Gay Science: With a Prelude in German Rhymes and an Appendix of Songs*, ed. Bernard Williams; trans. Josefine Nauckhoff; poems trans. Adrian Del Caro (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), pp. 109, 120, 199. Friedrich Nietzsche, *Thus Spake Zarathustra*, trans. Thomas Common with an introduction by Nicholas Davey (London: Wordsworth Classics of World Literature, 1997), pp. 5-6; p. 75.
 23. *Maulana Hifz-ur-Rehman Sevharvi, Qisas-ul-Quran*, trans. Shakir Rizwani and Khalid Mahmood (Lahore: Idara-i-Islamiyat, 2006).
 24. 5:27-34 of *The Holy Quran*; source quoted from *The Message of the Qurgn*, pp. 171-173.
 25. Durkee, *Stories from the Quran Book 1*.

26. Ahmad Bhagat, *Stories from the Holy Qur'an: The Hoopoe of King Solomon*, illustrated by Hilmi Eltouni (London: Shorouk, 1983).
27. Noura Durkee, *Stories from the Quran Book 2: Abraham and the Holy House & Jonah and the Whale*, illustrated by Simon Trethewey (London: Hood Hood Books, 1998).
28. Sigmund Freud, *The Interpretation of Dreams* [1900], trans. and ed. James Strachey, 4th imprint (London: Allen & Unwin, 1971).
29. For such an interpretation of Freud's theorization of dream, see Ajit Chaudhuri, 'From Hegemony to Counter-Hegemony: A Journey in a Non-Imaginary Unreal Space', *Economic and Political Weekly: Review of Political Economy*, Vol. 23, No. 5 (January 30, 1988), pp. 19-23.
30. Durkee, *Stories from the Quran Book 2*.
31. Freud, *Moses and Monotheism*, pp. 108-114.
32. G. R. Hawting, *The Idea of Idolatry and the Emergence of Islam: From Polemic to History* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), p. 21.
33. Karen Armstrong, *Jerusalem: One City, Three Faiths* (London: Harper Collins, 1996), pp. 222-223.
34. See Jacques Lacan, *The Ethics of Psychoanalysis, 1959-1960: The Seminar of Jacques Lacan, Book VII* [1986], ed. Jacques-Alain Miller and trans. with notes by Dennis Porter (London: Routledge, 2008), p. 162.
35. See Sayyed Abul-Ala Maudoodi, *Jihad in Islam* (Lahore: Islamic Publications, 1976).
36. Logic of equivalence in Ernesto Laclau's terms is described as the process of different particular identities making an equivalential relation with each other against a common enemy or antagonistic frontier. For a theoretically engaged discussion on this issue with some concrete examples see Ernesto Laclau and Chantal Mouffe, *Hegemony and Socialist Strategy: Towards a Radical Democratic Politics* (London: Verso, 1985); Ernesto Laclau, *On Populist Reason* (London: Verso, 2005).
37. Theodore Pulcini, *Exegesis as Polemical Discourse: Ibn Hazm on Jewish and Christian Scriptures* (Atlanta: The American Academy of Religion, 1998), pp. 14-16.
38. Andrew G. Bostom (ed.), *The Legacy of Islamic Antisemitism: From Sacred Texts to Solemn History* (Amherst: Prometheus Books, 2008).
39. Immanuel Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason*, trans. Norman Kemp Smith [1929], 2nd impression with corrections (London: Macmillan, 1933), p. 32.
40. Slavoj Žižek, *In Defense of Lost Causes* (London: Verso, 2008), pp. 114-115.
41. Chris Horrie and Peter Chippindale, *What is Islam? A Comprehensive Introduction*, revised and updated ed. [1990] (London: Virgin Books, 2007), p. 68.
42. *Ibid.*, p. 69.
43. Mazheruddin Siddiqi, *Modern Reformist Thought in the Muslim World* (Islamabad: Islamic Research Institute, 1982), p. 147.
44. G. R. Hawting, *The First Dynasty of Islam: The Umayyad Caliphate, AD 661-750*, [1986] 2nd ed. (London: Routledge, 2000), p. 95.
45. *Ibid.*, p. 26.
46. *Ibid.*, p. 27.
47. On this issue see Al-Ṭabarī, *The History of al-Ṭabarī, Vol. XVII: The First Civil War*, trans. G. R. Hawting (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1996).
48. Hawting, *The First Dynasty of Islam*, p. 30.
49. The event of Ali's death can be seen in Al-Ṭabarī, *The History of al-Ṭabarī, Vol. XVII*, pp. 213-227.
50. Hawting, *The First Dynasty of Islam*, pp. 3-4.

51. Ibid., p. 18.
52. Al-Ṭabarī, *The History of al-ṭabarī*, Vo. XVII.
53. John L. Esposito, *The Oxford Dictionary of Islam* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2003), p. 209.
54. Horrie and Chippindale, *What is Islam?*, p. 73.
55. Hawting, *The First Dynasty of Islam*, pp. 46-57.
56. Ibid., pp. 90-103.
57. Ibid., pp. 30-31.
58. See Ida Glaser and Napoleon John, *Partners or Prisoners? Christians thinking about women and Islam* (Carlisle: Solway, 1998).
59. Mark Weston, *Prophets and Princes: Saudi Arabia from Muhammad to the Present* (Hoboken, NJ: John Wiley & Sons Inc., 2008), p. 47.
60. Al-Ṭabarī, *The History of al-ṭabarī*, Vol. XV: *The Crisis of the Early Caliphate*, trans. R. Stephen Humphreys (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1990), p. 254.
61. Al-Ṭabarī, *The History of al-ṭabarī*, Vol. XVII, pp. 227-228.
62. Sir William Muir, *The Caliphate: Its Rise, Decline, and Fall* (Orientalism: Early Sources, Vol. III) [1891] (London: Routledge, 2000), p. 302.
63. Ibid., pp. 302-304.
64. Ibid.
65. Ibid.
66. See Sayyid Abul A'la Maududi, *Purdah and the Status of Woman in Islam* (New Delhi: Markazi Maktaba Islami, 2003).
67. Muir, *The Caliphate*, p. 304.
68. Hawting, *The First Dynasty of Islam*, p. 50.
69. The first four Caliphs reign together for less than thirty years: Abu Bakr (632-634), Umar (634-644), Uthman (644-656) and Ali (656-661). See Abdul Ali, *Islamic Dynasties of the Arab East: State and Civilization During the Later Medieval Times* (New Delhi: MD Publications, 1996), p. 115.
70. Sayyid Abul-Ala Maudoodi, *Political Theory of Islam* (Lahore: Markazi Maktaba Jama'at-I-Islami Pakistan, 1959).
71. Horrie and Chippindale, *What is Islam?*, pp. 71-72.
72. 'Husayn's death is still commemorated by the Shi'ites at Karbala in their most important religious festival of the year—*Ashura'*: Horrie and Chippindale, *What is Islam?*, p. 73.
73. 'The Shi'ites saw the 'Umayyads as Satanic usurpers who had stolen the Caliphate from the Hashemites in order to destroy it': Horrie and Chippindale, *What is Islam?*, p. 73.
74. Walter Benjamin, 'Critique of Violence' in *Walter Benjamin: Selected Writings, Vol. 1, 1913-1926*, ed. Marcus Bullock and Michael W. Jennings (London: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1996), pp. 237-238.
75. Ajit Chaudhury, Dipankar Das and Anjan Chakrabarti, *Margin of Margin: Profile of an Unrepentant Postcolonial Collaborator* (Calcutta: Anustup, 2000), p. 92.