

ALI SHARIATI

# HAJJ

## REFLECTIONS ON ITS RITUALS

TRANSLATED BY

LALEH BAKHTIAR

INTRODUCTION BY

SAYYID GULZAR HAIDER

INSTITUTE OF TRADITIONAL PSYCHOLOGY

Published by:

**The Institute of Traditional Psychology**

© Laleh Bakhtiar, 1992

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted, in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording or otherwise without the prior permission of the translator.

Library of Congress Cataloging-in Publication Data

Ali Shariati, b. 1934

[Tahlili az manasik-i-hajj. English]

Hajj: Reflections on its Rituals/ Ali Shariati: translated by Laleh Bakhtiar.

p. cm. 22

Translation of: Tahlili az manasik-i-hajj.

Includes bibliographical references (p. )

ISBN 1-871031-03-6

1. Muslim pilgrims and pilgrimages—Arabia—Mecca. 2.

Muslim rituals. I. Laleh Bakhtiar. II. Title.

English

BP 187.3

.S4986

1992

Distributed by:

Kazi Publications, Inc.  
3023-27 W. Belmont Ave.  
Chicago, IL 60618

## CONTENTS

|   |     |
|---|-----|
| DEDICATION  | 5   |
| INTRODUCTION by Sayyid Gulzar Haider  | 7   |
| SHARIATI'S A WORD TO THE READER   | 27  |
| PART ONE: THE SHORTER HAJJ ( <i>umrah</i> )   | 49  |
| * THE SEASON ( <i>mu'sim</i> )*   | 54  |
| * IHRAM AT THE COVENANTED PLACE ( <i>mi'ad</i> )<br>AT THE APPOINTED TIME ( <i>miqat</i> )*                                 | 58  |
| * MAKING YOUR INTENTION KNOWN ( <i>niyyah</i> )*  | 63  |
| * THE RITUAL PRAYER ( <i>salat</i> )<br>IN THE COVENANTED PLACE ( <i>mi'ad</i> )<br>AT THE APPOINTED TIME ( <i>miqat</i> )* | 65  |
| * PROHIBITIONS ( <i>muharramat</i> )*   | 68  |
| * THE KA'BAH*   | 74  |
| * CIRCUMAMBULATION ( <i>tawaf</i> )*  | 82  |
| * THE BLACK STONE ( <i>hajar al-aswad</i> )<br>AND OATH OF ALLEGIANCE ( <i>bayat</i> )*                                     | 86  |
| * THE STATION ( <i>maqam</i> ) OF ABRAHAM*  | 94  |
| * THE SEARCH ( <i>sa'y</i> )*   | 99  |
| * THE END OF THE SHORTER HAJJ*  | 108 |

Hajj: resolve, intention. It means movement and includes the direction of movement, as well. Everything will begin by digging 'you' out from the 'self', from your life and from all your attachments. Are you not a resident in your city? Residency, repose. The hajj negates repose, life, something the goal of which is itself. That is, death. A kind of death which breathes. A living dead. A corpse-like living, a slime-like being.

Hajj: flow!

Life is a rotating movement, a useless rotation, repetitious and futile comings and goings. The major task? Growing old. The real consequence? Deterioration. A monotonous and foolish fluctuation. A torture. Day, the preliminary of night. Night, the preliminary of day. Being occupied with cool and repetitive games of these two black and white mice that gnaw on the thread of life, shortening it until death.

Life? Watchinø. A watching of fruitless and sense-

less mornings and evenings. A flat and inconsequential game. When you do not have, all is anguish, endeavor and anticipation. When you find it and attain it, nothing—absurd, a futile philosophy, nihilism!

And the hajj? Your rebellling against this foolish determinism, this damned destiny. Turning away from vacillation, doubt, the rotation of life, production for consumption. Consumption for production.

Hajj unravels the skein of your being in which you have lost the thread of self. This closed circuit will open with a revolutionary intention. It will become a horizon. It will move on a straight course—migration towards eternity, towards another, towards 'Him'.

A migration from the house of 'self' to the House of God! To the house of the people! And you, whoever you may be—who are you? You have been a human being. You have been a child of Adam. But history, life and the anti-human social system has metamorphosized you. It has alienated you from your 'self', from your primordial nature. It has made you a stranger.

You were a human being in the world of particles. You were God's vice-gerent, a conversant with God, the special trustee of God, the Divine-like in nature, the Family of God. The Spirit of God had blown upon you. You were God's special pupil. God taught you all the Names. He taught you with the pen. God created you in His image. When God created you, He praised His power of creation. When He created you, He placed you erect. He cast down all of His angels, His angels near and far, before your feet. He brought everything into submission to you. He left the earth, heaven and everything in it to your mighty hands. He came to you and

placed His special trust upon your shoulders. He made a covenant with you and placed you on earth. He Himself is within your primordial nature (*fitrah*). He became one within your house, then remained in anticipation to see what you would do.

And you? You took the path of history, setting off down the road, the knapsack of God's trust thrown over your shoulder: the covenant of God in your hand, the Names God taught you in your heart, the Spirit of God within your 'being-ness'. And time is your total capital and you, what is your work? Eating from your capital! Your life's profession? Being a loser. Not a loser of profits but of capital. Loss? And "*By the time, surely the human being is in the way of loss.*" (103:1-2) Yet it is called living. And you, what have you done to this point? You have lived.

What do you have in hand?

The number of years you have lost.

And what have you become? O in the image of God! O responsible for His trust! O who the angels prostrated before! O vice-gerent of Allah upon the earth! In the world!

You have become money. You have become lust. You have become pot-bellied. You have become a lie, a beast, an animal. You have become hollow, absurd, empty! Or, no, full of muck and nothing else! For in the beginning you were a dead corpse. Mucky, putrid clay. God breathed His Spirit in this you. Where is that Spirit? That Divine Spirit, that Divine Soul? O muck-eating raven, emerge from this stilled marsh of self, from this swamp of your existence. Throw yourself suddenly upon the shore.

O putrid corpse? O corpse of slime! Desert this town, garden, village—mingled with disgrace. Head for the peninsula's desert, a sandy, blazing and dry desert under a heaven which rains down revelation. Face towards God. O dry, yellow, hollow cone! Moan from nostalgia, from exile and from alienation. O instrument of joy and happiness of strangers, enemies. O whose tunes are from the lips of others, seek out your own reed bed!

### THE SEASON (*mu'sim*)

Now the time has ripened. It is the moment of meeting. It is the month of Dhihajjah, the month of the pilgrimage, the hajj, the month of reverence. Swords have been quieted. The neigh of the battle horses and the roar of the warriors and the brazen have grown silent in the desert. Fighting, avenging and fearing have given way to the earth for peace, worship and security. The masses have an appointment to meet with God. One should go in season. One must go with people to meet with God. Do you not hear the words to Abraham upon the earth: "*And proclaim the Hajj unto the people. They will come to you on foot and on lean camel, coming from every remote way.*" (22:27)

And you, O slime! Seek the Spirit of God. Return and ask for it from Him. Resolve to seek out His House from your house. He awaits you in His House. He calls loudly to you. Respond affirmatively to His invitation. Say, "*Here I am,*" (*labbayk*). And you, O who are nothing, you who are only a 'becoming' towards Him and that is all.

It is the season (*mu'sim*). Release yourself from this

filthy, disgraceful and humble, narrow life—this world. Save yourself from your suffocating and closed individuality—the ego. Resolve on Him with the sign of the eternal migration of the human being—the perpetual becoming of the human being towards God. Make the hajj!

Pay your debts. Wash away stains. Remove hatred. Make up with those with whom you have quarreled. Pay accounts. Seek the forgiveness of others. Clean the environment of your life, your links, wealth and savings. That is, you die here. It appears that you go, a going without a return. It is an allusion to the moment of the last farewell. It is a sign of the destiny of the human being. It is a drama of disconnecting everything to join eternity.

Thus: make your last will and testament which means death—a death which will forcibly select you one day. Now you make the hajj. Resolve on eternity, an appointment with God, the Day of Reckoning, where action is no longer possible, the time where your ears, your eyes and your heart are put on trial. They will, one by one, be asked: "*The hearing, the sight, the heart—all of these shall be questioned.*" (17:36)

You, body, your body, you are responsible. All are responsible. And you, a helpless victim under the merciless, increasing attack of your deeds. Now that you are in the world of action, prepare yourself for the transfer to the world of reckoning. Practice dying. "Die before you die." Choose death. As a sign of death, choose death now. Intend death. Resolve death.

Make the hajj!

And the hajj, a sign of this return towards Him. He

Who is Eternal, He Who is Infinite, He Who has No End, No Limit, No Similarity.

To return to Him means moving towards Absolute Perfection, Absolute Good, Absolute Beauty, Power, Knowledge and Value. Truth means moving towards the Absolute. It means movement towards Absolute Perfection. That is, Eternal Movement.

This means that you are a perpetual becoming, an infinite movement. God is not your resting place. Rather God is your destination, a destination which will always remain a destination. God is not the final point in the course of your journey. Your journey, your eternal migration, is upon a road, a path which has no end point. It is a road which never ends. It is an absolute move. In this movement of yours in the world of being and in your own being, God is: eternal journeying and migration. Orientation, not place of stay.

Not Sufism! Dying in God and staying in God.

But Islam. Returning towards God. *"Surely we belong to God and unto God is the Return."* (2:156) *"Unto God shall be returned all affairs."* (42:53)

Not annihilation, but movement.

Not in Him but to Him. God is not far from you that you reach unto Him. God is closer to you than you.

To whom?

To you.

And He is farther away than to be reached.

By who? Anyone. Anything.

It is the season. Time has ripened. The time of meeting draws near. Go to the place of the covenant (*mi'ad*) at the appointed time— *miqat*! O you who have been called by God, it is time for the visit! It is the season. It is

the appointed time.

O putrid clay. Visit with God.

You. O Family of God. You before whom the angels prostrated themselves. O human being, confidant of God. *"In a sure abode, in the presence of a King Omnipotent."* (54:55) History has metamorphosized you. Life has made you into a beast. O you who have made a covenant with God to worship Him alone and to rebel against anything other than He, now you are the worshipper of the *taghut*—an arrogant, despotic ruler who rebels against God. You are the servant of idols! *"That which you yourselves carved."* (37:95)

O you who worship and pray to gods of the earth and not God of the Universe, God of the people, God of your own. O oppressor! O ignorant! O merchant of life, loser. The sacrifice of injustice and ignorance, loser to enslavement, abjectness, needs, the trampled upon by fear and greed!

O who life, society and history have made into a wolf or a fox or a rat or a lamb!

It is the season. Make the hajj! Go to the appointed time with the Great Friend of humanity. You have an appointment with He Who created you as a human being.

Flee from palaces of power, treasures of wealth, temples of deceit and degradation, from this herd of sheep whose shepherd is a wolf. Resolve to escape. Make the hajj to the House of God, the house of the people!

**IHRAM AT THE  
COVENANTED PLACE (*mi'ad*)  
AT THE APPOINTED TIME (*miqat*)**

The appointed time, the moment of the beginning of the drama. You who have resolved to meet God and who have now come to the place of the appointed time must change your clothes behind the scene of the drama.

Clothes? That which the you-ness of you, the your-ness of your being human has wound within it, worn; for clothes cover a person and what a great lie that a person wears clothes! The being human of a human is hidden. It shows itself off in the clothes of a wolf, fox, rat or lamb. Clothes are a fraud, a *kufur*, that is, the covering over of the truth.

The word clothes (*libas*) has a very meaningful sense, as well, which is understood in the verb form of *ifti'al*. *Iltibaz* means mistake! To make a mistake! Clothes are a sign, are a separation, a manifestation, a mystery, a degree, a title, a privilege. The color, design and quality of it all mean:

Me!

And me means not you. Not you. Not us. It means distinction and, therefore, discrimination. It means boundary and, thus, separation. And this 'me' is a race. It is a nation. It is a class. It is a group. It is a family. It is a degree. It is a situation. It is a value. It is an individual. It does not mean being human.

Boundaries are numerous in the land of humanity. The sharp blade of the three-fold executioners of history—the children of Cain—has fallen into the midst of the children of Adam and has, piece by piece, cut mankind's

unity into: master-servant, ruler-condemned, full-hungry, rich-poor, master-slave, oppressor-oppressed, colonialist-colonized, exploiter-exploited, brain-washer-brain washed, powerful-weak, wealthy-agent, deceiver-deceived, aristocrat-abased, spiritual-physical, noble-common, landlord-serf, employer-laborer, prosperous-wretched, white-black, eastern-western, civilized-uncivilized, Arab-non-Arab.

Humanness has been divided up into races. Races into nations. Nations into Classes. Classes into sects, groups and families. Inside of each, again, position, reputation, degrees and honorary titles exist. Bit by bit they form an individual, a 'me' and all of these in different clothes.

O actor! Throw them away at the appointed time. Put on the shroud. Wash out all colors. Wear white. Whiten and harmonize with all colors. Become all. Emerge from your me-ness like a snake which sheds its skin. Become the people.

Become a minute particle in mingling with other particles, a drop lost in the sea. Do not be someone who has come to the place of the covenant.

Become like a blade of grass which appears at the appointed time.

Become a being who senses non-being or a non-being who senses being. "Die before you die."

Take off life's clothes.

Put on the clothes of death.

Here is the place of the appointed time.

Whoever you are, throw away all ornaments, signs, colors and patterns which the hand of life has clasped over your body and has nourished you to become:

Wolf,

Fox,

Rat

Or lamb. Throw them all away at the appointed time.  
Become human.

Be as you were in the beginning.

Be one.

Adam.

And as you will become in the end.

One—death.

Wear a two-piece cloth, one piece over your shoulder and one around your waist. A single color. White, unsewn, patternless, colorless, without any sign, without any indication that you are you, that you are not another.

At the place of the appointed time, the cloth worn by everyone, the cloth which you easily mistake with that of your companion.

Wear the cloth that you wear at the beginning of your journey towards God. Wear it now at the beginning of your journey towards the House of God.

Amazing! Here a noun of time has become a noun of place!

What does that mean?

It means there is also movement in a place.

That is, a place is also a movement.

That is, everything means time.

That is, place means time.

That is, never repose.

Yea. Is it not that a human being is not just 'being'? But is also becoming, a becoming towards God. "*Unto God is the ultimate return.*" (24:42) Amazing! Everything

is movement, perfection. Death and life. Life and death. Contradiction, change, direction! "*All things perish except His Face.*" (35:18)

Everything is condemned to deterioration except what is turned towards Him.

And God? Absolute Being. Absolute Perfection. Absolute Eternity. The Absolute of Absolutes, too!

"*Every day He is in a splendid manifestation.*" (55:29)

And the hajj? Movement. Resolving upon a destination.

The sign of the return of mankind towards God.

Dig the grave of all of your me-nesses in *miqat*. Bury your 'self' in it. Bear witness to your own death. Be the pilgrim to your own grave. Create the ultimate fate of your life with your own hands. Die in the place of the appointed time. Be resurrected in the desert between the place of the appointed time and the place of the appointment. It is the place of the Day of Judgment, where, from horizon to horizon, are the shrouded, an agitated flood of the white clothed, the people, all in a single color, single pattern, no one re-recognizing the other, therefore no one re-finding the self. The 'me' has been left behind in the place of the appointed time.

Now they are spirits who have been resurrected. They have taken on form, disregarding race, family, class, without name and without title. It is the place of resurrection, of blending together, of unity. A human manifestation of Divine Oneness, resurrection, fear, enthusiasm, excitement, astonishment, wonder and ecstasy!

Everyone is but a particle in the magnetic field of its givings and takings. God in the *qiblah*. Everybody is



nothing and only— human. All directions are eliminated except for orientation towards Him. All nations, groups, humanity. The humanity of a tribe in the wilderness, having one *qiblah* in existence, in life.

Take off your clothes. Desert all signs which distinguish you. Lose your self in the multitude of the gathering of the crowd of people. Forget whatever life has attached to you. Whatever is a recollection of you. Whatever tells of your system in the uproar of the gathering of the people. Prohibit your 'self' all of these.

Wear the *ihram*. *Ihram*? To make sacred. It is an infinitive used here as a noun and a noun for a kind of dress.

All me's die in the place of the appointed time and all become us.

Everyone sheds a skin and becomes human.

And you also bury your individuality and personality, become people, become the *ummah*. When you negate being 'me'—negate your 'self'—infiltrate into us. Each person becomes a society. The individual becomes an *ummah* as, "Verily, Abraham was an *ummah*." (16:120) And you now go to become Abraham-like.

Everyone becomes the other. One becomes all and all become one. The multitheistic society attains monotheism. It becomes an *ummah* and an *ummah* is a society upon the way. *Umm* means resolve, movement towards a destination, departure towards a *qiblah*, a gathering not to be but to become, not for prosperity but for perfection, not for tranquility, but for movement. As a result, not management but leadership. Not rule but leadership.

And now you and numerous you's and other me's.

What am I saying? Other nothings! From the four corners of the world, all turn from themselves and face towards God. All turn away from the detention camps of the world and face towards the Hereafter. All turn away from relativities and expediencies and face towards the Absolute and the Truth. All turn away from ignorance and tyranny and face consciousness and justice. And, finally, all turn away from multitheism, shirk and face monotheism, *tawhid*.

You have arrived in the place of the appointed time. You have put on the dress of the *ihram*. You will be mistaken for others. It is a gathering. It is a resurrection. Everyone takes a stranger as a friend and a foreigner in place of a relative. Everyone wears each other's shoes. Every *ihram* could be your *ihram*.

All of those who have for years forgotten their being human, all of those who have become alienated by coercion, wealth, position, land or blood, all of those who have felt their cash on hand to be their 'self', who have found their degrees and titles to be their 'self', have now all become their true 'selves', their human self. All have become one person—human being—and other than that, nothing. All one adjective —haj—resolver—and nothing more.

## MAKING YOUR INTENTION KNOWN (*niyyah*)

You are at the threshold of the entrance. You want to begin. Before anything else, you must make your *niyyah*. *Niyyah*? What does it mean? Intending to go some place? *Nawaka'llah*, "May God be with you on your journey and

protect you." *Intawi*—move from place to place, to change from one state to another. *Nawan*—a traveler's destination. *Nib*—an old she-camel. *Niyaz*—granting needs. *Nawan*—date pits. Conceive your fruit. *Niyah*—destination, to stay. *Nawan*—remoteness, the distance the traveler has before him. Intention: resolution. *Niyata*—to be loyally attached to whatever is harmonic with itself. Need. Command. *Naw*—the person who intends to make the self ready for transformation, one who has in hand the belief of a group and the destiny of a society.

You are in the place of the appointed time, at the edge of a great change, a revolutionary alteration and transformation, a transition from your house to the house of the people, from living to love, from self to God, from slavery to freedom, from hypocrisy, deception, deceit, degree, position, class, race to truth and sincerity, from covered to uncovered, from daily clothes to the clothes of eternity, from the clothes of carelessness and recklessness to the clothes of self-sacrifice, commitment and the *ihram*.

Make your intention known, *niyyah*., as a date whose seed conceives. O shell! O absurd! Plant the seed of that consciousness of self in your conscience. Fill your hollow innerness with it. Do not be just a body. Mature as the seed matures. Make your being a shell to surround the seed of your faith. Become a being. Be. Do not be a bubble. Kindle a flame in the darkness of your heart. Glow. Let your 'self' be filled. Overflow. Shine and let the radiance of Essence make you self-less and make you your 'self'. O totally ignorant, always inattentive. Become aware of God. Become aware of people. Become conscious of 'self'.

O you who have always been an instrument of labor. O you who have always been obliged, selected by the job. You have worked but as habit, custom, coercion. Now make your intention known. Freely select consciousness of self. Do so knowingly, with awareness.

A new way.

A new direction.

A new job.

A new being.

And...a new self.

### THE RITUAL PRAYER (*salat*) IN THE COVENANTED PLACE (*mi'ad*) AT THE APPOINTED TIME (*miqat*)

You are in *miqat*. You make your intention known and begin the hajj. That is, you sense that which you have begun. You are aware of what you are doing and why you are doing it. You even remove your clothes. You brush away your 'self', become uncovered and put on the *ihram* and then stand for the ritual prayer. The ritual prayer of the *ihram*.

Offer yourself in your new clothes to God. "Behold, O God, I stand before Thee, no longer the slave of Nimrod or the servant of the *taghut* but in the form of Abraham. No longer in the clothes of coercion, a coercive wolf, deceitful fox, greedy rat, humiliated and submissive lamb but in the clothes of a human being, in the clothes I will wear to meet Thee tomorrow when I shall rise from the dust."

This means: I am aware of my nature. I am nothing. Rather, I am everything for I have become Thy servant

in obedience. I have become free through rebellion from everything and everybody other than Thee. I am aware of the point of the final destiny of my life. I now select myself whatever fate has prescribed for a human being. I practice it.

How amazing is this ritual prayer which means something else in *miqat*, in the white shroud of *ihram*, at the threshold of the place of the covenant! It is as if we hear new words. It is not the repetition of a religious ritual. We are speaking to Him. We feel the heaviness of His presence upon ourselves:

"O Merciful!" for Thou art caressing a friend! "O Compassionate," for the sun of Thy Mercy extends beyond the borders of *kufr* and faith, worthiness and unworthiness, purity and impurity and even friendship and animosity. Yea. I will praise no one but Thee for praise belongs to Thee. I will seek help from no power but Thee. O Thou Who art my only and sole Beloved. O Thou Who art my sole and only Helper. Guide all of us who have fallen into the waywardness of ignorance, who have not thrown away the misleadings of tyranny. We are the toys of our own weaknesses, the toys of powers other than Thee. Guide us upon the way of purity and awareness, truth and perfection, love and beauty. Join us to the group Thou hast loved and blessed with goodness and not those against whom Thou art angry nor those who have gone astray."

Every bowing (*ruku*) in *miqat*, in the white dress of Resurrection Day, *ihram*, is the denial of every time we bowed our head before any fear, greed or false deity. Every prostration (*sajdah*) is a denial of every forehead which we humbly put on the earth before a palace of

power.

The ritual prayer in *miqat*. Every rising and every setting, a message, a covenant that from now onwards, "O God, no rising or setting will be done except for Thee and before Thee.

"Peace be upon you, O Muhammad, peace and the mercy of God be upon him and his household, His servant and Messenger! Peace and the blessings of God be upon you who granted such mercy and blessings to mankind within this life and upon this earth.

"Peace be upon us, upon the pious believers and good-doers of God.

"Peace be upon you..."

These words come to life there.

These pronouns all return to their origins.

All allusions are near.

There, all are present.

Nothing and no one is absent in the place of the appointed time: God, Abraham, the Prophet of Islam, people, spirit, resurrection, paradise, salvation, freedom and love.

And now you are clothed in the clothes of people, in the clothes of unity, colorless, patternless clothes. In white clothes, the clothes of piety and death, the clothes of rebirth. And, finally, the clothes of resurrection!

*Ihram!*

And you, O human being! Rejected of God! Plaything of Iblis! Exiled to the earth! Condemned to the strangeness, loneliness and anguish of the earth! Now you have returned in repentance and apology towards Him, in search of 'self'.

No longer remiss, but released, yet under an obliga-

tion, an obligation which you accepted of your own free will, at the height of your free choice and awareness, a pre-destination you yourself chose. Now you are bound to it. You are responsible. You are in *ihram*, in a sacred place. You are upon the way to the shrine (*haram*). You are upon the way to a sacred place at a sacred time and in the clothes of *ihram*. You are at the sacred boundaries of prohibitions.

What is *ihram*? To make sacred, to forbid.

*Ihram*? What things are forbidden in the state of sacred prohibitions? From what are you prohibited?

### PROHIBITIONS (*muharramat*)

Anything that recalls you to you are prohibitions (*muharramat*). Anything that distinguishes you from others. Anything that represents who you are in life and what you do. And, finally, anything which is a sign of you, a sign of your system of life, a sign of your social system. Whatever is reminiscent of the world, whatever you thought you could not leave behind. Whatever is not humane. Whatever recalls you to anything other than being a human being. Whatever reminds you of the usual day to day things. Whatever smells of your life prior to your *miqat*. Whatever leads you to your past, buried life:

1. Do not look in the mirror so that your eyes fall upon yourself. Let your 'self' be forgotten. Forget your being.

2. Do not use perfume. Do not smell good aromas, so your heart does not recall life's desires, so that desires do not arise within you, so that passions do not overtake

you, so that pleasures are not recalled to you. For here the environment is filled with another perfume. Breathe the fragrance of God. Let the fragrance of love intoxicate you.

3. Do not give orders to anyone. Enliven the sense of brotherhood. Practice equality.

4. Do not bring harm to any creature, not even the tiniest of insects. Bring no harm. Do not even expel by using force. Be like Christ for a few days in this world ruled by the system of Caesars.

5. Pull out no plant from the soil of the sacred area. Break nothing. Practice peace in relation to nature as well. Kill the nature of violence and destruction within yourself.

6. Do not hunt. Kill hard-heartedness within yourself.

7. Sexual intercourse is forbidden. Do not even look with desire so that love not spread itself upon your existence.

8. Do not marry. Do not partake in the marriage ceremonies of others.

9. Do not adorn yourself so that you may sense your 'self' as you really are.

10. Do not use abusive language. Do not debate. Tell no lie. Show no pride.

11. Wear no sewn clothes or clothes similar to ones that are sewn. Do not hold up your sacred clothes even with a thread so that all ways towards distinction in appearances be closed.

12. Take up no weapon but, if necessary, it should not show.

13. Shade not your head from the sun. To seek refuge

under a ceiling, an umbrella, inside a carriage or in a covered automobile is prohibited!

14. Cover not your feet with socks or shoes.
15. Adorn not and carry no adornments.
16. Cover not your head.
17. Cut not your hair.
18. Seek not the shade.
19. Cut not your nails.
20. Use no creams.
21. Bloody not your body or the body of others.
22. Extract no teeth.
23. Swear not upon God.
24. And, you, O woman! Cover not your face.

The hajj has commenced. Move towards the Ka'bah in the sacred clothes of *ihram* under the protection of prohibitions. Hasten towards God. Cry out, "*Labbayk! Labbayk!*" God has invited you. He has called for you to come. Now you have come. Now you respond to Him. "*Labbayk. Yea O Lord. Yea. Praise and blessings belong to Thee and dominion! There is no partner for Thee. Yea.*"

Praise, blessings, dominion! Again negating the same three ruling powers: deception, exploitation and despotism, the trinity that has ruled over history: fox, rat and wolf, ruling over people who are all as lambs of God. The sound of God is heard in the desert. The call comes from every particle. It has filled the entire atmosphere between heaven and earth and all hear it as a call to them. They hear God calling them. They cry from the bottom of their hearts. *Labbayk, allahumma, labbayk.*

And you sense not your feet taking you forward for you are like a tiny particle of iron fillings which is

attracted towards a powerful magnet. You are being carried forward. Your feet drag behind you. You sense your two arms are transformed into two strong wings. You are flying amidst a flock of white birds in space. You move towards the ascent, towards the Simurgh.

The Ka'bah grows close and closer. The excitement increases and becomes more agitated. You rightly hear your heart beat. It is as if a wounded and wild creature is within you beating its head against the wall of your very being, wanting to break out and run away! You feel you are growing larger than yourself. You sense you are overflowing. You no longer fit within your form nor within the pinching shoes upon the feet of your being nor within the tight clothes upon the body of your existence. Tears cannot be restrained. It is as if little by little you sink into a space filled with God.

This presence upon your skin, upon your heart, upon your intellect, in the depths of your primordial nature, in the reflected light of each piece of gravel, on the face of every rock, at the mid part of every mountain in the far ambiguity of every horizon in the depth of the desert. You see only Him. You find only Him. Only He exists. Other than He, all is wave, foam—lie.

Love rains upon the desert and dampens the earth.

And whereas the feet of a man sink into mud, your feet enter love.

You move and sense your own annihilation. You move away from 'self' and near to Him. All become He and you become Him. All and you, nothing—a forgotten memory—which fell off your shoulders in *miqat*. And you, lightened of the burden of self, move towards the place of the covenant. You sense you no longer exist.

A particle of ardency is all that is left. Nothing more. You are only a movement. You are only a direction. You move forward having no right to step back. You face Him. You vanish in Him like a part of a cloud sucked up by the desert sun.

The heart of existence pulsates and space overflows with God. You have overflowed from God.

Love rains upon the desert and dampens the earth.

And whereas the feet of a man sink into mud, your feet enter love.

You arrive at the outskirts of Makkah. The city is near. You reach a sign here, a sign which says, "This is the boundary of the sacred area." Makkah is a sacred area. In this area, war and aggression are forbidden. Whosoever escapes from the enemy and takes refuge in the sacred area is immune from pursuance. The hunting and killing of animals and even the pulling up of plants from the earth is forbidden here.

After the attack of the Prophet upon Makkah to free the Ka'bah from idol-worship, the Prophet himself, with his own hands, once again marked off this area. He strengthened the old tradition to preserve the sacred area, to prohibit aggression and murder in this area.

You pass this border and now you enter the sacred area. Suddenly the tumultuous cries of "*Labbayk*" which have reached their peak, cease.

Silence.

That is, "You have arrived."

He Who calls you is here. You have reached His House. Silence!

A silence in His Presence, in the sacred area, the sacred area of God.

You move forward. The desire for the Ka'bah is oppressive.

But first, the city.

Like a large bowl, all of its surrounding walls—mountains. Every one of its streets, alleys and lanes—a valley, a fissure in the mountain, a cut-away, from all directions pouring down towards the base of this great mountainous nest. Here is the sacred mosque: the Masjid al-Haram and in the center of it, the Ka'bah!

You pass through the mountainous spirals of the town. Step by step you move closer to the Ka'bah. You pour down like a flood and the nameless, the undistinguished flow onto the bed of the valley. A street, towards the depth of the valley, the Masjid al-Haram. It flows and you, a drop!

Step by step you descend. Step by step its greatness nears. In the words of an awakened, sensitive sympathizer, "We always have the habit of climbing upwards, of moving towards heights and loftiness to reach greatness, in particular when greatness is Divine, when words are about the Divine angelic world and here, the opposite. However much you descend from peaks, however much you come down from the heights, you grow closer to God!"

Does it mean that through humility and humbleness you reach greatness and majesty? Attaining great heights through servitude? That is, do not search for God in the heavens, in the meta, but upon this very earth, upon this inferior soil, in the depths of the material of a stone. You can find Him, see Him. You must find the Way correctly. You must learn how to see correctly and perhaps, a secret of the fate of mankind—descending into the dust

and arising before God!

The Ka'bah is close by. Silence. Contemplation. Love.

Each step is more tumultuous. Each breath more fearful. Moment by moment, the weight of His presence, heavier. You dare not blink your eyes. Your breath does not come easily. You are nailed to your vehicle. In a state of silence from head to toe, perplexed, ardent, leaning a little forward, all your body—eyes. You only look forward. In front, opposite you, the *qiblah*. How heavy is the weight of bearing the anticipation of the visit. How difficult is the anticipation of seeing such greatness. How can the thin walls of your feelings and the unsure veil of your heart bear it all?

You find your way down through the twists and turns of the valley. At every curve you pass, your heart leaps. Now the Ka'bah? The Ka'bah, this *qiblah* of existence, faith, love. The direction for our daily and nightly ritual prayers. Towards it we pray every morning, noon, afternoon, evening and night. We die facing it. We are buried facing it. Our home, our grave and now, only a few steps away from it and in a few moments, before it, before my sight:

## THE KA'BAH

You are at the threshold of the Masjid al-Haram. Now the Ka'bah before you! An enormous courtyard and in the center, a hollow cube. Nothing more! You suddenly tremble! Wonder, amazement! Here, there is no one. Here, there is nothing. Nothing to even see.

An empty room, that is all.

Your senses are fixed on a bridge, thinner than a

strand of hair, sharper than the edge of a sharp sword. Is the *qiblah* of our faith, our love, our ritual prayer, our life and our death just this? A pile of dark, rough stones, placed upon each other, spaces unevenly and inexperiencedly filled between with mortar, nothing more!

Suddenly a doubt runs through you.

Where is this? Where have I come? I understand a palace or the beauty of an artistic architecture or a temple. I understand a sacred magnificence and spiritual silence under high, grand, elegant, artistic ceilings. I understand a tomb—the burial place of a great person, a heroic genius, Prophet, Imam!

But this? In the midst of an uncovered area, an empty room! No architecture, no art, no beauty, no inscription, no tile, no plaster-moulding, not even the burial place of a Prophet, an Imam or a grave of an eminent person to whom I can pilgrimage to recall the person that I had come to see so that I can feel a point, a visage, a reality, an object. And, finally, a person, thing, place. Sit and relate.

There is nothing here. There is no one here.

Suddenly you understand how good it is that no one is here! No phenomenon draws your attention. Suddenly you feel the Ka'bah is a roof, a roof from which to ascend, to suddenly leave the Ka'bah behind and open your wings in space. Then you feel absoluteness!

You sense eternity.

That which you never sensed in your divided life, that which you do not find in your world of relativities, that which you cannot feel, you can only philosophize about, can be seen here: absoluteness, eternity, non-direction.

He!

How good that there is no one here. How good it is that the Ka'bah is empty. You gradually realize you did not come to visit a shrine. You have made the hajj. This is not your final destination. The Ka'bah is a sign so the way is not lost. It is only a sign, an arrow. It only shows you direction. You have made the hajj. You have made the resolution, resolved upon the absolute, moving towards eternity, eternal motion, towards Him. Not the Ka'bah. The Ka'bah is not the end of the Way. It is the beginning! Here the end is your own disability, death and your stopping. That which exists here is movement, direction and nothing else.

Here is the place of the covenant, the meeting place of God, Abraham, the Prophet of Islam and people! And you? As long as you are you, you are absent here. Become people. You who are wearing the cloth of the people, the people are the beloved of God. They are the Family of God. God is more zealous of His Family than anyone else. And here, His sacred area, within His sanctuary, His House. "This is the house of the people. Verily the First House made for the people is the one at Makkah, blessed, and a Guidance for (the people) of the world." (3:96)

And as long as you remain you, there is no place for you in the sacred area.

This is the *bayt al-'atiq*. *Atiq* comes from the root 'itq meaning to free a slave. *Atiq*, freed! A house which is free from private ownership, the reign of tyrants and rulers. No one has power over it. The owner of the House is God and the household, the people.

When you travel 48 kilometers from your home,

own or village, you are a traveler and recite a partial ritual prayer, the ritual prayer of a traveler and yet, here, regardless of which corner of the world you have come from, you may recite your prayers in full because you are not a traveler. You have returned to your residence, your town, place, secure, your house. You were a stranger in your country. You were a traveler. Here, O reed torn from its rushy bed! O exile upon the earth! Human being: you have returned to your rushy bed, to your real birthplace.

God and His Family. People, this beloved Family of the world now in their house and you, as long as you are you, are a stranger, without connection, cut off, without refuge, a homeless being. Leave you-ness. Leave self outside. Enter the house. Join the Family. If you have buried yourself in *miqat*, if you have become the people, here, like a relative, friend, close relation, as one of God's Family, you will have entered the House. You will see Abraham at the threshold, this old rebel against history and this denier of all earthly lords, this great lover, humble servant of the God of monotheism.

He laid the foundation of this House with his two hands.

The Ka'bah upon the earth, a secret of God in the universe.

What is it constructed of? How is it decorated? How is it ornamented?

Pieces of dark stones which were cut from Mount 'Ajun near Makkah, laid down simply, one upon another, without any art, special technique or decoration, that is all!

And what is its name, its properties, its titles?



Ka'bah.

A cube. That is all!

Why a cube? Why so simple, without distinction or ornament? God is shapeless, colorless, without similarity. Whatever form or condition mankind selects, sees or imagines is not God.

God is Absolute.

Is without direction.

It is you who take direction before Him.

This is why you direct yourself to the Ka'bah and the Ka'bah itself is directionless. The thoughts of a person cannot conceive of non-direction. Why? Whatever you imagine to be a mystery of His Existence—absolute non-direction—of necessity, you assume a direction. This is not the mystery of God.

How can non-direction be revealed upon the earth?

In this way only—all opposing directions be gathered together.

So that each direction is negated by its opposing side. Then only does the mind understand non-direction.

How many directions are there?

Six.

What form contains these six directions?

The cube!

Its exact secret?

The Ka'bah.

*"Therefore, wherever you turn, there is the Face of God."*

(2:115)

Because of this, inside the Ka'bah, whatever direction you wish to face for the ritual prayer, you face Him and outside the Ka'bah, which ever way you face, you face Him.

What other form—except the cube—faces north, south, east or west, towards the earth or towards the heavens. The Ka'bah faces all, faces none, everywhere and nowhere, all directions and, yet, no direction. God!

His mystery: the Ka'bah!

But wonder! To the west of the Ka'bah is an addition, changing its shape and giving a direction to it.

What is this?

A short, arched wall facing the Ka'bah.

What is it named?

The *hijr* of Ishmael!

*Hijr*? What does that mean?

Skirt! And it actually resembles a skirt. The skirt of a dress, the dress of a woman!

Yea.

An Ethiopian woman.

A slave!

A black slave.

The slave of another woman!

A slave, so humble, that the other woman chose her as her husband's mistress. That is, she was so abased that she will never be considered as being a rival wife.

And her husband slept with her for her to bear a child.

A woman who in human systems lacked every dignity, every honor, and then God united the mystery of her skirt with the mystery of His existence.

This is the skirt of Hagar's dress!

The skirt which nourished Ishmael.

Here is Hagar's home.

Hagar is buried near the third pillar of the Ka'bah.

Amazing! No one, not even a Prophet should be

buried in the mosque.

And here, the House of God, wall to wall with the house of a female slave.

And the House of God, the burial place of a mother. What am I saying?

God's non-direction is only directed from her skirt! The Ka'bah has extended towards her! There is only a small space between this arch and the house. One can pass through this space when circling the House.

But circling around the Ka'bah, the mystery of monotheism, without circling around her skirt is not accepted.

It is not a hajj.

It is a command. A Command of God.

All of humanity, in the always of the ages, all who believe in monotheism, all who have accepted God's invitation, should, in their circumambulation of love around God, around the Ka'bah, circumambulate around the skirt of her dress as well.

Her house, her grave, her skirt, also, are part of the circumambulation, are a part annexed to the Ka'bah.

For the Ka'bah, this absolute, non-direction is only directed towards this skirt.

The Ka'bah is directed towards the skirt of an African slave, a good mother. The perpetual place of circumambulation of humanity.

The God of monotheism, seated alone upon His Omnipotent Throne, rejecting all galaxies behind Him, beyond everything which exists, He is Alone, and, in His heavenly kingdom, Unique.

But it seems as if from among all His creatures, in His infinite Creation, He selected one.

The noblest of His creatures, the human being.

And among all? A woman.

And among all?

A black woman.

And among all?

A black slave woman.

And among all?

A black female slave of a woman.

The most humiliated of His creatures!

He has placed her beside Himself, a place beside His House.

Becomes her neighbor.

And now

Under the roof of this House, two:

One, God,

And the other, Hagar.

The unknown soldier has been so chosen in the nation of monotheism.

All of the hajj is joined to the memory of Hagar.

And *hijrah* or migration, the greatest deed, the greatest command is derived from the word *hajar*.

And *muhajir* or migrator, the greatest Divine-like human being, a Hagar-like person.

And what is migration?

A Hagar-like deed. In Islam, it is to go from savagery towards civilization and this journey means to move from *kufir* to Islam because *t'arub ba'd al-hijrat*, in the language of people, means savagery after becoming civilized. In the words of Islam, it means to return to *kufir* after having found faith. Thus, *kufir* means savagery and religion means civilization.

And *hjr*, an Ethiopian word means town or city in the

language of Hagar and Hagar, a black African, Ethiopian slave woman.

The manifestation of a pre-civilization human being and yet, here, the root of civilization. Thus, a Hagar-like human being means a civilized one. A Hagar-like movement means the movement of humanity towards civilization.

And now, in the movement of humanity around God's House, again, Hagar. Your place of circumambulation, O migrator who has resolved on God, is the Ka'bah of God and the skirt of Hagar.

What do we see?

Our understanding cannot contain it!

The sensitivities of a human being in the age of liberation and humanism have not the power to bear this meaning!

God in the house of a black, African, female slave.

### CIRCUMAMBULATION (*tawaf*)

Now, this is the Ka'bah, in the midst of a whirlpool, a roaring whirlpool which whirls around and circumambulates the Ka'bah, a constant point in the center, and other than this, everything moves in its surroundings, circle-like around it.

Eternal constancy and eternal movement!

A sun in the center and around it, each one, a star, in their sphere, circling around the sun.

Constancy, movement and harmony: circumambulation.

An imagination of a solar system? Or the incarnation of all of the world? In the worldview of monotheism?

God is the Heart of the universe. He is the Axis of existence. He is the Center of the universe which everything circumambulates around and you, in this system, whether in the Ka'bah or the universe, are a particle, a particle in movement and each movement, in a place. You are a continuous movement. Just a state and with each breath, a state constantly in change, in becoming, in circumambulation but always and everywhere your distance from Him and the Ka'bah, constant. There your nearness and farness relates to what ray you have selected in this rotating circle. Whether near or far, you never touch the Ka'bah, never stop by the Ka'bah for there is no pausing because for you there is no constancy, there is no unity of being. Monotheism exists. The whirlpool of human beings rotates around the Ka'bah and that which can be seen is only the human being. It is here that you can see the people and not see man or woman, not see this nor that, me nor him nor you nor them. See universals, not particulars for the individual has been dissolved in the totality of human beings. It is the annihilation of the individual but not in God. Rather in us, in the human being, in people. It is better to say: in the *ummah*! But annihilation in the direction of God, for God, in the circumambulation of God.

It means the annihilation of the individual in people, the survival of the individual in the people. For God and the people are in one orientation, are of one rank. That is, here the way is towards God, passes through the people, from individuality to aloneness. Here is no Way to there. Your monasticism is not in a monastery but is in society. Self-sacrifice, sincerity, self-negation, bearing

bondages, deprivations, tortures, anguishes and accepting dangers in the arenas of clashes and for the sake of people that you reach God. The Prophet has said, "Every religion has a kind of monasticism and the monasticism of my religion is *jihad*."

It is because of this that in circumambulating, you should not turn towards the Ka'bah or enter inside the Ka'bah. Neither should you sit or stand in the Ka'bah. You must enter the group, vanish in the circumambulaters, drown in this human whirlpool. It is in giving of what one oneself needs, self-sacrifice, *ithar*, in leaving the self among the circumambulating masses and in joining the congregation that you make the hajj, become a haj, respond to God's invitation with *labbayk*, find your way to God's sanctuary.

What do you see? The Ka'bah standing. And surrounding it? A white, uniform, single-colored, single-patterned flood, bearing no distinctions, no signs nor symbols, giving no superiority to any individual. No one can be distinguished. It is only here that you see universality with your own eyes.

Outside the Ka'bah the individual is a reality, a particular, is an objective, the universal of a subjective concept. The human being is a meaning, an idea, an intellectual, subjective and logical concept. In the external world, there are only human beings and whoever exists is either Hasan or Husayn, is a man or a woman, is an Easterner or a Westerner. Here all realities have been effaced. A universal concept, intellectual or subjective truth has found external, objective reality. Now it is only human beings who circumambulate the Ka'bah—only people and no one else.

And you, as long as you remain you, you remain outside the circumambulation. You stand still as an observer on the shore of this whirlpool of humanity. You stand still! Therefore you are not. Therefore you are a stranger. You are an individual, a nothing, a particle of a galaxy which has been thrown into space and disappears. You must come into being. Here they teach you that only in the negation of self will you attain proof. Slowly but surely, sacrificing yourself to others, to the *ummah*, will you, little by little, bit by bit, achieve self. Only then will you discover self and realize the true Self. Then, when in self, suddenly, in a revolutionary way, in giving over to death, you will be annihilated in a red death so that when you achieve martyrdom, you become a witness. Martyrdom (*shahadat*) means presence, means life, means whatever or whoever is perpetually present, is perceptible. A martyr is one who perpetually exists, is present, an observer, a visible and objective example, an eternal, living being!

"Reckon not those who were slain upon God's Way to be dead. Nay, they are alive with their Lord, by Him provided." (3:169)

Upon God's Way means the way of the masses. Both are the same. There is no way from individuality to Allah. If you ask, "Then why individual worship?" In order to develop the self, to nourish the self, to reach the threshold of *ithar*, self-sacrifice, to find the merit of putting aside self-interests for the congregation so that you become a human being. When the individual is annihilated, the human being remains. The human being is God's vice-gerent in nature as long as God is God. The human being is His vice-gerent, is His Shadow, is

His Sign, that is, is human. In this eternal dying to self, you are reborn and will remain eternally. A drop isolated from the sea is dew which lives only one night. Its life is just one night. It is a resident which vanishes with the first smile of light.

But it is in joining the stream that you become eternal, find flow to attain the sea.

Why are you standing still? O dew! Beside the fine, rhythmic, wavy whirlpool which harmoniously narrates the story of Creation's system, join the whirlpool. Step forward.

Now you want to join the people. You must make your intention known to become conscious. To know what you are doing, to know why you are doing it. For God, not self. For Truth, not expediency!

For here every action has a reckoning. A precise system governs this continuous movement for the universe is so.

### THE BLACK STONE (*hajar al-aswad*) AND THE OATH OF ALLEGIANCE (*bayat*)

Enter the circumambulation from the corner at the Black Stone (*hajar al-aswad*). It is here that you join the system of the universe. You join the people in the whirlpool of the masses. You vanish like a drop and you remain. You find your sphere. You begin your movement. You are placed in a circuit. In the circuit of God but in the course of the masses.

You must begin by touching the Black Stone. Touch it with your right hand and, without hesitation, give

yourself over to the whirlpool.

This stone is a mystery of the hand, a right hand. Whose hand? The Right Hand of God. "The Black Stone is the Right Hand of God upon the earth."

A lone individual, in order to live, or a lone tribe, in order to have support in the desert, concludes a treaty of friendship and mutual support with a chief of a tribe, with the tribes and forms a confederation with them. People conclude a treaty with a leader for a goal. This treaty is called a *bayat* or allegiance. Its form?

When you form an allegiance with a leader, head of a tribe, you extend your right hand and he places his right hand on yours and in this way you agree together and become allies.

And it was the custom that when you placed your hand within the hand of another in allegiance, you were freed of all previous allegiances. And now the moment of choice is here, choosing your way, your goal and destiny at the beginning of the movement, at the threshold of departure from self and being drowned in others, joining people and becoming harmonious with the congregation. You must give your allegiance to God. God has stretched out His Hand to you. Extend your right hand. Ally yourself with Him. Become His ally. Break all previous treaties and ties. Break your alliances with coercion, wealth and deception. Break your treaties with the lords of the earth, heads of tribes, the aristocratic Quraysh, masters of houses. Leave aside everything. Be freed.

"The Hand of God is above their hands." (48:10)

Sense the Hand of God upon yours. Caress it. This Hand is above their hands—those who tied your hands

in their allegiance.

You are freed from allegiance to others. You have given your hand to God. You have renewed the covenant of your *fitrat* (primordial nature). You have become responsible and an ally of God! Join the masses. Do not stand still. Move. Find your circuit. Select. Give your self to the congregation. This is circumambulation. Enter.

Like a brook which joins a great and powerful river, step by step, you grow distant from your still and separate self. You join the congregation. You circle and endeavor for the ray of your circumambulating circle to grow closer to the House. You sense that you do not go alone but move with the congregation. Little by little, you sense you do not move. It is the congregation that takes you. Your feet, which have always supported your individuality, are being released and are out of work. The power of the congregation, the movement of the congregation, the endeavor of the congregation, the allure of the congregation, the beloveds of the world, have tightly embraced you. You are no longer on your own two feet. You are now under the control of others. You do not exist. Only the congregation exists. The more you move to the inside, the more the pressure of the congregation increases. It presses itself upon you. The congregation cannot bear you who still have me-ness. It destroys you. It magnetizes you. It digests you in the eternal, living, moving body of the congregation: people, human being. You are a drop of blood, living, eternal.

Flowing, not by self but in congregation.

And you join the congregation.

Not as an expediency but for love.

And see the God of Abraham. The connection of a servant with Self is found in the connection of the individual with the congregation. How subtle, beautiful and deep! He allures you to the congregation with the love of Self. You have come to visit God and you find yourself in the midst of the commotion of the masses. He has called you to His House, to the solitude of His visit. Now you have come all this way and He says to you: join the congregation. Go with the congregation. Do not enter the inside of the House. Do not stand beside the House. Do not even face towards the House. Do not circumambulate facing the House. Move shoulder to shoulder with the congregation. Face forward. The Ka'bah is the *qiblah* and in the circumambulation, if you leave the circuit and face the *qiblah*, you have wasted the circumambulation. Do not hesitate. Do not go left or right. Do not turn back. Do not turn your head back. You are beside the Ka'bah. Do not look at the *qiblah* because the *qiblah* is before you.

Now you have become part of the order of creation. You have been located in the circuit of this system. You have entered the gravity of the sun of the universe and, like a star, from left to right, you are circumambulating around God. You whirl and whirl and little by little you sense that you are nothing. You do not recollect your self. You do not recognize your self. Only love and the allurements of love exist. You are magnetized.

You whirl and whirl and nothing exists. There is only He and you are a non-being, a non-being who senses being or an existence who senses non-being. You whirl and whirl and feel that you are a point, that you had previously been a point and in this circumambula-

tion, you, you become a continuous line, a circuit. You are only a movement. You are a circumambulation. You are a haj. His circumambulation, His hajj and you, a submission. You are a trustee, a bestowed upon. Higher than freedom, you are a predeterminism which you yourself have chosen.

Love has reached its peak. Love has reached towards the Absolute and you from your self. You have substracted your self. You have become singular. You realize that little by little you melt in Him. Little by little you vanish in Him. You become head to toe, love, sacrificed.

If love is to be described with movement, how would this movement be?

The butterfly has taught us long ago.

The Ka'bah is the center of love. You are the point of a compass, wandering in this circle.

Hagar has taught us.

The great Beloved, the great Ally of human beings— God orders her: "Take your nursing child. Migrate from the city, land and cultivation. Move to this frightening valley," where even a plant, a thistle, is afraid to appear. She fully surrenders and carries out the Command, the Command which only love can accept and only love can understand.

A woman alone. A child alone. In the depths of a distant valley. In the midst of these dry, burned out, stern mountains where the stones are all solidified lava.

How is it possible without water? Without habitation? With nobody around?

But...He has so Commanded. He has so desired. Trust in Him. Absolute trust. That which intellect, reasoning and logic cannot understand. Life needs water. A

child, milk. A human being, a companion. A woman, a guardian. A mother, a supporter. Alone, a friend. And weak, a helper.

Yea. But love can replace all these non-availabilities. One can live with love if the spirit recognizes love. One can fight with empty hands if a *mujahid* is armed with love. O lonely, weak female slave, child, mother, lean on Him. Secure your life with love, trust.

At the end of the seventh circle, leave the circumambulation.

Seven? Yea.

Here seven is not six plus one. It means, "My circumambulation around God. My self-sacrifice to the masses is everlasting, is infinite."

Continuously circle Him in the way of the masses. It is the hajj, not a visit to a shrine.

Seven recalls the creation of the universe.

And you, in circumambulation, do you not find yourself a particle from the universe? Is not circumambulation around a center, a drama of existence?

The worldview of monotheism, its interpretation through movement.

And now the two cycle ritual prayer here, in the Station of Abraham.

Where is this? The Station of Abraham? A piece of stone with two footprints, the footprints of Abraham. Abraham stood upon this stone and laid the Black Stone of the Ka'bah in place.

He had stood on this stone and had built the Ka'bah.

It shakes you up! Do you understand? It means putting your feet in place of those of Abraham. Who? You.

Ah, what this monotheism does to a person! How difficult it is. Sometimes it makes you nothing and sometimes it makes you everything. Sometimes it does not bear your being you. Sometimes it pulls you to putrid clay. Sometimes it elevates you to the heights of the Divine World so that you kneel, knee to knee, before God. It takes you to the solitary sanctuary of God. It calls you a member of the Divine Family. It sees you as the vice-gerent of God.

It beats you, pounds you, negates you, dissolves you. It annihilates you. It belittles you. It makes you bend your head in servitude. It causes you to place your forehead on the earth in prostration and then it calls to you:

"O friend! O beloved! O companion of My solitude, confident of My sanctuary, My mysteries, bearer of My trust, My audience, Goal of My creation, companion of My privacy!"

An hour before, beside the shore of the circumambulating whirlpool, He had hit you with the rain of His reproach. Standing in the you of your youth, you were placed upon the feet of your individuality, beside the people. You were a spectator of the masses. He called you a valueless particle, putrid clay, dried mud, alluvial flood, like baked earth and a piece of potted clay. The flowing, moving flood has a destination which makes the hajj and does not stand still. It takes on no rottenness. It does not become putrefied but goes, pure, roaring and raging, pounding down. It finds a Way, rock breaker, barrier destroyer and, finally, a garden and habitation, the streams of Paradise in the desert. You who remain from the flood become sedi-

ment, become glued to the earth, turn into dried clay and become hard, rigid and cracked. "*He created the human being from dry clay like that of earthen vessels.*" (55:14)

And you cover the earth, the farms, the flowers and plants. Thousands upon thousands of seeds where in every one the ardency and rapture of regeneration awaits impatiently for the splitting, opening and appearance from the soil to scatter leaves and fruit, to grow tall under the sky, under the sun, to open lips. You bury them under the earth. You make them rot. You make them die. You destroy them.

"*While indeed fails he who pollutes it.*" (91:10)

The flood flows, intoxicated, clear, life-giving and with Christ-like breath.

And if you remain in a hole, isolated in monasticism, in individuality, in the pool of being as you be, isolated, silent and imprisoned, surrounded by your self's individuality, whether you receive pleasure or mortify yourself, you will rot and turn into a swamp. The worms of hundreds of diseases will nest in your heart. It will regenerate, will be reborn, will die in your soul and change the color of your skin. Your features will change. Your perfume will change. You will become the grave of a corpse, become a marsh. You will rot, become a swamp.

"*Putrid clay.*" (15:27)

O how good it is to emerge from a stone.

Moving head to head with the stones.

Moving smoothly if there is a plain.

Descending fast if there is a valley.

Your heart, however,

Is like a swamp—

Stagnant, motionless, calm and silent.



Flow. Become a flood.

Pound, sweep, wash

And arise.

Make the hajj!

Join the whirlpool of circumambulating masses. Circumambulate!

And now, an hour later, after circumambulation, when your head had descended into the sea of annihilation, into the lover masses, into the whirlpool of the circumambulators of humanity, you drowned. You released mortal self—the self which faces itself for survival is in the masses who face towards God. You swarmed in the wave of non-existence. You rotated in the course of the masses upon God's circuit. Then you were placed in the orbit of eternity, in the orbit of the infinite sphere.

Now you have become Abraham!

### THE STATION (*maqam*) OF ABRAHAM

Your Divinely created self, the Spirit of God which was within you, was in the swamp of the you-ness of you! Your head arises from the whirlpool. From where? From the same corner where you began under the Hand of God—the Right Hand of God. Now you have become self. You have attained your real me by annihilating all of your false me's. You are in the pure, white dress of *ihram* in the sanctuary of God, in the role of Abraham.

You stand in the Station of Abraham, step in the footprint of Abraham, stand facing God and recite your ritual prayer for Him.

You are Abraham, history's great idol-destroyer, the

founder of monotheism in the world, who carried the mission to guide the people upon his shoulders, the patient-rebellious, the rebel-guide, a Prophet—anguish in his soul, love in his heart, enlightened mind and—an axe in his hand.

The manifestation of faith arising from out of the heart of infidelity (*kufur*), the gusher of monotheism (*tawhid*) arising from out of the swamp of multitheism (*shirk*).

Abraham—the idol-destroyer of mankind's tribe—from the home of Azar—the idol-carver of his tribe!

The idol-destroyer, Nimrod-slayer, crusher of ignorance and tyranny—Abraham. The enemy of sleep. The rebel against the tranquility of humiliation and the security of oppression. The leader of the tribe. The pioneer of the Movement: life, motion, direction, idea, hope, faith and monotheism.

You are Abraham! Step into the midst of the fire—the fire of tyranny, ignorance—in order to save humanity from the fire—the fire of tyranny, ignorance.

The fire which is part of the destiny of each responsible human being, responsible for illumination and salvation.

But the God of monotheism turns the fire of Nimrodians into a red rose for the Abrahamians!

You will not be burned. You will not turn into ashes. The purpose was that you move through *jihad* by going towards—the fire—so that the self is offered in moving to save the masses from the fire, until the most painful of martyrdoms.

You are Abraham! Sacrifice your Ishmael with your own two hands. Place your knife at his throat in order to

remove the knife from the throat of the masses, the masses who have continuously been slaughtered at the feet of palaces of power built from plundered treasures and at the threshold of deceiving, humiliating temples. Place the blade against the throat of your own Ishmael so that you gain the power to take the blade away from the executioner.

But the God of Abraham Himself pays the ransom for all Ishmaels.

You do not kill. You do not lose your Ishmael. The purpose is to move in the Way of Faith to the point where you have sacrificed your Ishmael with both hands, until the most painful of martyrdoms.

And now, O you who have come from the circumambulation of love, you are standing at the Station of Abraham. You have reached the Station of Abraham!

And when Abraham had reached here, he had passed the many phases of his eventful life from the breaking of idols, the destroying of Nimrod, the bearing of torture, the suffering of the fire, the struggling against Iblis, the sacrificing of Ishmael and—migrations, wanderings, lonelinesses, tortures and passing from prophethood to imamate. "*Behold, I make you an Imam for the people.*" (2:124)

From individuality to the congregation, from being the son of the house of Azar, the idol-carver, to becoming the founder of the House of Monotheism!

And now he stands here, the snow of age upon his head, at the end of a life which resembles a history, appointed to build the House, to install the Black Stone, the Hand of God in the House of God and his partner—

Ishmael—who carries stones and hands them to his father. While standing upon this stone, his father lays the foundation of the House and builds it!

O wonder! Ishmael and Abraham are building the Ka'bah. Ishmael and Abraham—one passed through the fire and the other, the altar of sacrifice. Now, both are agents of God, responsible for the masses, architects of the most ancient temple of monotheism upon the earth, the first House of the People in history, the House of the Free, liberty, the Ka'bah of love, worship, a sanctuary, a mystery among the mysteries of the tent of cover, chastity and the angelic world.

And now you are standing in the Station of Abraham, stepping in the footprints of Abraham, upon the last step of the ladder of Abraham's descent, at the highest peak of Abraham's *miraj*, in the closest distance of Abraham to nearness.

The Station of Abraham!

And you, the founder of the Ka'bah, the architect of the House of Freedom the founder of monotheism, responsible, lover, aware, idol-destroyer, leader of the tribes, opposed to Nimrod's oppression, in combat against the ignorance of multitheism, in *jihad* against the temptations of Iblis, the satan (*khanas*) who places temptation in the breasts of the people.

Bearing homelessness, anguish, danger, fire and the slaughter of your Ishmael, and, now, no longer a House for your 'self' or a base for your 'Ishmael' but a House for the People, a shelter for the shelterless, a place secure for those pursued, the fugitives, the injured, the hunted who, bloodied and in fear, wander the earth, frightened and wounded, who find no shelter for everywhere

Nimrod is in pursuit.

A torch in this dark and longest night of the winter solstice. A cry on this night of tyranny.

A sanctuary, secure, clean and free for humanity, for the Family of God—the people—because everywhere disgrace and insecurity rule. They have made the earth into a grand house of prostitution, a place of murder, where every deed is forbidden except aggression and discrimination. O you who appear in Abraham's role, who stand in Abraham's Station, who stand upon the footsteps of Abraham and who give the hand of allegiance to the Hand of Abraham's God:

Live like Abraham and in your own age, be the architect of the Ka'bah of faith. Move your people out from the stagnant swamp of life, from the dead-like living, from the quiet sleep of the abasement of tyranny and from the darkness of ignorance. Give them direction. Call them to the hajj. Circumambulate.

And you, O ally of God! O in step with Abraham! O you who have come from the circumambulation, from the annihilation of 'self' in the circumambulating masses! You who have emerged in the shape of Abraham, who are standing in the place of the architect of the Ka'bah, founder of the sacred city, the Masjid al-Haram, and face to face with your ally —God!:

Make your land a sacred area  
For you are in the sacred area.  
Make your age a sacred time  
For you are in the sacred time.  
Make the earth into a sacred mosque  
For you are in the Masjid al-Haram.  
For 'the earth is God's mosque'

And you see that:  
It is not.

## THE SEARCH (*sa'y*)

You end your prayers of circumambulation in the Station of Abraham and resolve to go to Mas'a, located between two mountains—Safa and Marwah—a distance of more than 300 meters. You traverse this distance between two mountains seven times. You descend from Safa, walk until you are opposite the Ka'bah. You run, then return to your normal motion. You walk the rest of the way until the foot of Marwah.

The endeavor, the search (*sa'y*) is a struggle, a searching movement having a purpose—hurrying and running.

While circumambulating you were in the role of Hagar and in the Station, as both Abraham and Ishmael. Now that you begin the searching movement, you again return to the role of Hagar!

Everything is one here, all forms, moulds, appearances, titles, characteristics, personalities, limits, boundaries, distances, symbols, colors and patterns have been erased, have vanished—humanity uncovered and uncovered humanity.

Faith and love, belief and deed and nothing more.

Here no word is mentioned about any person, not even Hagar, Abraham or Ishmael for these are merely words and ideas here, not individuals or persons. Whatever exists is movement and constancy, humanity and Divinity and, in the midst, only discipline.

The hajj is this, is making an attempt. It is a continu-

ous movement towards a constant direction and the whole world is this.

And now, a search.

Here you are as Hagar.

A woman from a despised and lowly African race. A female slave. A black Ethiopian woman. The slave girl of a woman: Sarah.

All of these exist in mankind's systems, in a system of *shirk*. But in the system of *tawhid*, this slave woman is addressed by God, is the mother of great Prophets of God, Messengers of God and manifestation of the most magnificent and dearest of values which God creates.

She is the first heroine in the drama of the hajj, the most conspicuous figure and, in the sacred area of God, only the remains of a woman—a mother!

In accordance with the command of love, she left her habited town, house and her family, took her nursing baby and moved to these stern and rocky mountains, alone, without anything, without anyone.

Only with love.

She came as God had Commanded, laid her child on the bed of the valley, a dry, scorched, waterless valley, without plant—nothing. The valley of fear, loneliness, death!

Absolute trust.

O wonder! God so Commanded. God said, "I will guarantee you your child, your life, your future and your needs. O Hagar! Manifestation of submission and obedience! Great heroine of the faith of love, of the trust of love, you are under My care."

Hagar, in submission and obedience, laid down her child in the middle of the valley as God Commanded

and love so desired.

Then, Hagar, the heroine of submission and contentment, hurriedly arose alone and began running in the dry and burned out mountains surrounding Makkah in search of water. Overwhelmed with the effort, movement, endeavor, aspiration, determination and self-reliance, upon her own feet, with her will-power, her thought. A woman, a lonely mother. A migrant, responsible, struggling, searching, lover, faithful, bewildered, anguished. Without support. Without shelter. Without a society. Without a class. Without a family or a race. Homeless. Without hope, yet hopeful. A captive, a stranger, a slave woman, without family. Exiled by hatred. Rejected by the aristocratic system. Abased by people, race, class and even rejected by her family. A black slave woman with a child at her bosom, rejected from her home, town, country of the superior race. A wanderer in a strange desert. The prisoner of remote mountains and, now, alone and diligently, tirelessly determined, unfamiliar with despair, full of struggle, a migrant in the midst of the mountains.

Alone.

Running over the high peaks of soundless mountains in search of water. The Prometheus of the culture of Abraham—not a god but a slave woman. Not the seeker of fire, but of water.

Water? Yes. Water. Not a mysterious thing. Nothing supernatural. Not love. Not submission. Neither surrender nor servitude nor the water of life—no.

The water of the spirit? Spiritual water? Illumination? Heaven? No. No. No.

Drinking water!

Not what rains from the throne but that which gushes up from the earth.

Material materiality. The same liquid which flows over the ground and material life thirsts for. The body is in need of it. It transforms into blood in the body. It transforms into milk in the mother's breast. It is liquid in the mouth of a child.

Struggle in the search for water, a manifestation of the material life, the earthly life. An objective need. The link between humanity and the soil of the earth. The paradise of this earth. An earthly table.

A search. A material work. A material struggle. Struggling and working for water, for bread, to quench your thirst, to satisfy the hunger of your child, to live well. A thirst is awaiting and you are responsible in this scorched desert to find a spring, water, a gift, yea.

A searching movement. A struggle with the soil over the earth in order to secure your needs from the bosom of nature and take water from the depths of stones.

A search, absolute material, need—material deed—material goal—material.

Economy, nature, struggle!

It means need, material, human being.

Absolute intellectuality!

O wonder! It is only a few steps from the circumambulation to the search. A few moments and yet so much distance between.

The distance between two opposites—two contradictions:

Circumambulation: absolute love.

Search: absolute intellect.

Circumambulation: all Him.

Search: all you.

Circumambulation: Divine predetermination and that is all.

Search: humanity's free will and that is all.

Circumambulation: a butterfly rotates around a candle and keeps on rotating round and round until it burns, turns into ashes and goes with the wind. It becomes nothing. It vanishes in love. It dies in light and is negated.

And search: an eagle flies over the peaks of hard and black mountains with the long wings of its will-power in search of food. It snatches its bait from the heart of rocks. Heaven and earth are within its range. Winds are the tamed of its flight. Far horizons limit its sight. All space is a manifestation of its will-power. The expanse of the earth is under its wings. The hard, rocky mountains of the earth are weakened and submit to its two sharp, proud eyes.

Circumambulation is a human being enamored of the Truth.

Search is mankind, the self-developed of reality.

Circumambulation is the exalted human being.

Search is the powerful human being.

Circumambulation is love, worship, spirit, beauty, sacrifice, martyrdom, ethics, goodness, value, spirituality, subjectivity, truth, faith, piety, mortification, humility, servitude, gnosticism, illumination, the heart, submission, Divine Will, meta, heaven, unseen, predetermination, obedience, reliance, others, people, religion, the Hereafter, Resurrection and God—everything which inflames the Eastern spirit.

And search: intellect, logic, need, life, reality, objec-

tivity, earth, material, nature, prosperity, thought, science, industry, policy, profit, pleasure, civilization, economy, instinct, body, free-will, choice, domination, world, power, livelihood and self—everything which causes Western endeavor.

Circumambulation is God and nothing else.

Search is humanity and nothing more.

Circumambulation is the spirit and nothing else.

Search is the flesh and nothing more.

Circumambulation is the pain of existence, the anxiety of heaven.

Search is the pleasure of living, the tranquility of the earth.

The circumambulation is to seek thirst.

The search is to seek water.

The circumambulation is as the butterfly.

The search is as the eagle.

And the hajj is the combination of opposites, the solution to the oppositions that have preoccupied humanity throughout history—material vs. ideal, intellect vs. illumination, this world or the next, pleasure or piety, free-will or decree and, finally, reliance upon God or the self.

The God of Abraham teaches you both. A lesson given not with philosophy, gnosis, science or words but with an example, a human being.

This great lesson of God should be sought and studied by philosophers, gnostics and seekers of faith and truth in the countenance of this human being—a woman, a black Ethiopian woman, a female slave.

Hagar. A mother.

She submits herself absolutely to Him in accordance

with love. She brings her child from the town, country, living place to this scorched, waterless, uninhabited valley. She lays him on its bed.

Disregarding all accountings and reckonings, with absolute trust, solely with the power of faith, with reliance on love and Him and nothing else.

Circumambulating.

But she does not sit beside the child as a pious person awaiting a miracle. She does not wait for a hand to descend from the unseen world to do something or for a table to descend from heaven or for a brook to flow from Paradise or just trust to meet her needs.

She leaves the child to love and immediately begins searching. She runs upon her self-determined feet and seeks with her able hands.

And now, amidst the dry, uninhabited mountains around Makkah, a human being, alone, thirsty, responsible, a stranger, a migrant in a fruitless search for water!

O joy! Are the words about Hagar or about a human being?

But her search ends in failure. She returns to her child in despair.

She sees, O joy! The child, left to love, being impatient in his thirst, has dug out the sandy ground with his feet. At the end of despair, in the final futile effort, in the moment no one could foresee, nobody could expect, suddenly, miraculously.

With the power of need and the mercy of kindness.

A humming.

The sound of the footsteps of water.

Zamzam.

The overflowing, sweet, life-giving water from the

depth of stone!

And the lesson!

Finding water through love and not through search but only after searching.

Reaching Him—not with just effort—O you who trust in love—endeavor as much as you can! Struggle! O you who have relied on love! O you who have absolute faith, absolute trust!

Seven times—exactly as in the circumambulation!

But not in a circle, for a circling effort is as an ass's milling effort, a futile rotation where, at the end, you reach the beginning, a hollow circle. That is, futility, absurdity, without content, without aim, like a zero. Working to eat, eating to work and finally death.

No. Rather, living not for the sake of living but for God. Searching not for the sake of searching but for people. Movement on a straight line and not a rambling one. A way and migration from a beginning to an end and from a point to a destination, from a start to an extreme, from Safa to Marwah. Going and coming seven times. Repetition in odd numbers, not even. Your search will not end in Safa where you would arrive at where you began.

Seven times. It means perpetually, tirelessly, all your life. Reaching towards Marwah is beginning from Safa—sensing pure love towards others—and ending in Marwah—the end of humanness. That is, attaining goodness (*murawat*) and passing with magnanimity over the abnormalities and defects of others.

Which others? Your fellow companions in your search?

How I do not know.

What I know is this:

Raise your head in love from the whirlpool of self-non-existence. Place your footprints upon those of Abraham and then, Hagar-like, O human being, lonely stranger, wanderer, exiled in the desert of the earth! O human being, responsible, thirsty and searcher for water in the mirage of life.

Ascend the hill of Safa. Observe the white stream of wandering, struggling human beings. How restlessly and in thirst do they descend from the heights of Safa. Hurry in search of water over the burned gravel of this desert. Flow towards Marwah. Ascend the high mountain of Marwah and find no water. Return with empty hands, eyes full of anxiety, lips burning with thirst and again arrive at the dry rock of Safa. See that you have arrived at the same place from where you began. You hastily go and again arrive in Marwah where you had been and return to Safa where you had been and hastily go again. Seven times. Till eternity.

Finally, you find no water but reach Marwah.

And you, a drop, throw yourself from the heights of Safa into this white, wandering, struggling, thirst- quenching stream! Drown yourself in them. Descend and search along with others. At the halfway point, opposite the Ka'bah, run in the harmony of others.

## THE END OF THE SHORTER HAJJ

At the end of the seventh endeavor or search upon the heights of Marwah, remove your *ihram*. Cut a piece of hair and put on the clothes of life. Free yourself and depart from Mas'a at Marwah. Go towards your Ishmael, alone, thirsty.

Listen! Do you not hear the humming of water in the distance?

Look! Thirsty birds are flying over this rocky place.

Zamzam has quenched Ishmael's thirst and a tribe from the most remote of places has filled the solitude of this valley.

The thirsty of the earth have come from the far horizons of the desert. They have erected tents around your Zamzam. A town grows from stone. A rain descends from revelation in this dry valley of despair. A house is born from revelation and love. And you, O returned from the search, so thirsty and so lonely.

Your loneliness has ended. Zamzam flourishes at the feet of Ishmael. People have encircled you. And what do you see? God has made a House, wall to your wall. Your skirt has become God's. O exhausted by the search! Lean on love.

O responsible human being! Endeavor, for your Ishmael is thirsty.

O you loving human being! Desire! Love will give you a miracle.

And for you, O pilgrim, who have returned from the search, from the thirsty desert of your being, from the depth of your solidified nature, a spring has opened.

Place your ear by the side of your heart. Press gently. You will hear it humming.

Go towards Zamzam from the rock mountain of Marwah. Drink from it. Wash yourself in it. Take from it. And take some to your land and offer it to your people.