

Charismatic Role of a Religious Minority in the United States

Syed Muhammad Ali Zaidi*

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Abstract *This article is about the nexus of Shi'ia doctrine with academia which will justify its positive role for US society. We see that Shi'ia Diaspora has sought the attention of international scholars towards the part of Shi'ism in the twentieth century as previously not much work has been done on this topic. Still, in upcoming years many renowned scholars have put in their effort and interest in Shi'ism, many are from the US, and numerous universities have started working on Shi'ism and what role it impacts on a country's society, politics and economy. Harvard University has also established Weather head centre for international affairs which is engaged in a project named "Project on Shi'ism and Global Affairs". The importance of this area can be analyzed by this initiative of Harvard University which is one of the world's top-ranking Institute of the contemporary era.*

Key Words: Shi'ism, Hussain, Karbala, Nexus, Diaspora, Social Justice, Oppression, Doctrine, Minority, Shi'ia Centers, Moharram, Ahle bait, Catalyst, Prophet

Introduction

Shi'ia Diaspora has sought the attention of international scholars towards the part of Shi'ism in the twentieth century as previously not much work has been done on this topic. The Shi'ia doctrine is based on the principle of justice and humanity. The fight of Imam Hussain A.S. in Karbala was for social justice against oppression. If we see today's modern world which is a technology-driven with the concept of soft power on one side still, we see injustice, violence, brutality, materialistic gains, disrespect for women, target killings, racism, rape, crime, torture, gender discrimination, violation of human rights, fraud, blackmailing, threat, child abuse etc. and all the social evils and oppression which is existing reality. All the States around the globe and all the Religions around the world have the same motto to bring peace, protect social values, provide social justice, give civil rights, protect human rights by enforcing the law and to get a balanced, peaceful system in which humans can live, there can be the difference in ideologies and socio-political systems. Still, the main objective of state and religion is same, its human who has been involved in wars and violence due to power hunger and ego as per realism its selfish nature of human being which is based on uncountable worldly desires until he or she dies and despite knowing the real humans are engaged in violence started from wars with swords and stone to hybrid wars. The United States of America is a multicultural and multilingual superpower which has attracted all the nationalities from the world to work and earn over there, so it has become a significant economic hub having best universities, multinational companies, brands and so on and every school of thought is present in the U.S. which make it attractive as well as complicated web for people living over there as the youth is sometimes confused due to presence

*PhD Scholar, Area Study Center, Quaid-I-Azam University Islamabad, Pakistan. Email: ali.zaidi@hotmail.com

of multi-religions and multi-cultures so they can become a cocktail in their thoughts. The American system is based on the culture of individualism; the environment is highly competitive due to presence of multinational companies and corporate culture which leads to a capitalistic economy where there will be bipolarity in the financial system and in this scenario many people can't make up to a certain level of the amount due to their health conditions or other reasons because it's a race. In contrast, American liberals are based on supporting the law, protection of human rights, women rights, equality, freedom, justice, non-violent behaviour, peaceful economy and social rights for all but it has been observed that despite having all these liberals still, society suffers from a lot of issues like oppression, rape, crime, no family system, injustice, racism not at a larger scale but if we start observing society we see complicated the United States where the government is trying to impose a system. However, still, we see desperate homeless people in some streets. Many people living in the U.S.A. are far from the religion they don't believe in any ideology. Still, it's surprising to see that they are attracted to Shi'ia practices and name of Imam Hussain A.S. especially when Shi'ia people gather in Moharram and boys wearing shirts on which it is printed "ASK ME" which has become a source of inspiration for the people walking on the roads; secondly, when water and food are distributed for free they get inspired by this ritual as everything is for price in the U.S.A. and when they inquire about the protest and get so much impressed that they convert to Shi'ia Muslims which have been discussed in my research, actually Shi'ia doctrine promotes social justice against oppression, justice, rights of women and humanity which all is narrated via the story of Karbala, numerous U.S.A. based professors and scholars have researched on Shi'ism.

A War for Social Justice Against Oppression

This article is about the positivity regarding presence of Shi'ia people, Shi'ia centers, Shi'ia processions and lectures which are in minority but playing role of catalyst in upgrading the elements of social justice against oppression, improving the graph of human rights and social justice on which government of America is already working and trying to promote as Shi'ia doctrine and school is firm on justice for all humankind, charity to low so that a balanced economic system can be upgraded, respect for women and humanity, rights of oppressed and impoverished, basic needs of human beings etc.. all the social values which a human can think and are also mentioned in U.S. constitutional rights document as five significant rights are freedom of speech, the right to a fair and public trial, the right to due process, the right to vote freely, and the right to worship freely It states "*We the People of the United States, in Order to form a more perfect Union, establish justice, insure domestic Tranquility, provide for the common defense, promote the general Welfare, and secure the Blessings of Liberty to ourselves and our Posterity*" and Shi'ia doctrine is the guardian and promoter of social justice and social values which is preamble of U.S. constitution.

The Role of Shi'ia Centers is remarkable in proliferating this ideology which promotes humanity and selfless approach towards humanity in youth especially age group from 12-19 years as these are peak years in which a child is having rapid changes in body and hormones male and female both develop a mindset and ideology for rest of the coming years of life so if they will learn a sophisticated approach they will be better humans in life because capitalism develops a material system leading towards highly competitive environments in which human become ruthless and selfless and thinks in terms of material so young children in the U.S.A. go to Shi'ia Centers in the U.S. for lectures and attend Sunday Schools to learn about Shi'ia Islam. It very challenging for youth to live in a multicultural and a sort of environment where a normal human being can quickly become a victim of an identity crisis as people belonging to a different school of thoughts ranging from Atheism to Marxism are living in the United States so to convince child regarding Shi'ia values it's a hard nut to crack. Still, Shi'ia centres have convinced even natives along with children's of Shi'ia Community to follow a human path in which can give birth to a peaceful society, a society where no one should sleep hungry and human must not be divided between have and have-nots.

The Shi'ia Ideology has performed a tremendous role by inspiring millions of people towards this ideology. The Shi'ia community of America is active with multiple centres all across the U.S.A. who is

working for every age group regardless of anycast, creed, gender or colour. They are spreading the message of Imam Hussain A.S., which itself is for the prosperity of human values which government of U.S.A. wants for its people to have high social costs and justice in society. The processions take place in the U.S.A. have become a source of attraction for people from other communities as the U.S.A. have human from all over the world which make it a multicultural hub, they ask questions that why Shiites remember the story of Karbala and why are they still crying for Imam Hussain A.S. and his family and when they are updated with the truth they get emotional and attached to this phenomena as who believe in humanity and carries a heart will never go on the wrong, negative or evil side.

Endearment for Hussain Globally

People throughout the globe have fallen in love with the name "Hussain" as when they get to know about high values and morals of Imam Hussain A.S. they pay him great honour and respect. Many of U.S. people who are interested in religious studies have gone through the famous book of Imam Ali A.S Nahjul Balagah and have also performed research on his ideas, and his intellect has impressed them a lot. Some of their Pastors have visited Karbala and are inspired to see the number of visitors is in more than five billion, Still, peace and harmony are maintained with no shortage of food, water or any problem of sanitation in the whole area, which is not so huge. However, still, all people are being facilitated and are at the peak of their soul satisfaction; they are praying to come and visit every year.

Whoever has listened to the story of Karbala if possess a heart and is a human being regardless of any religion, creed, caste or colour can't stop tears in his or her eyes because if a common man is gone through such a misery can't tolerate for a single day or hour, and this is the reasons many U.S. Professors who have done their PhD in Islamic studies are inclined towards Shi'ia Islam and accepted all the faith and believe by heart, they have translated books written by Imam's and also practice religion more than any Shi'ia Muslim by birth. Their concepts are more evident than by birth Shi'ia Muslims because they have studied and researched on every aspect in detail, and they think logically before accepting and practising any belief as it should make sense to them. The people who are converted from general masses are also interviewed who says that their personalities and lifestyle is changed from the people they were before they are glad to become a Shi'ia Muslims as per their conversation in the interviews they said they a fortunate to accept Shi'ia Islam because they are in love with Ahle bait and their way of life they are impressed by the heroes of Karbala and want to be like them. They believe that justice is a key to life, whether at home as a father or mother or in the office if a person can't do justice to others. In relations he or she is not a true Shi'ia, they believe that praying five times a day fasting, doing charity, taking care of orphans and respecting humanity must be an integral part of a Shi'ia Muslim.

They said after converting to a Shi'ia Muslim, they are in deep love with last living Imam Mehdi (A.S.) who is yet to come in this world to eradicate evil and unjust. Hence, they say a true Shi'ia must not hurt any human being and should not confiscate the right of his Muslim brother or sister. They feel themselves a changed human beings with new soul connected to Ahle bait and they want to spend their life for the mission of Imam Hussain A.S. who stood up for the right and negated wrong and for this reason they do Azadari every year which starts from first of Moharram and officially ends every year at ninth of rabiulawal which are Islamic months to remember this sacrifice made by the Prophet Muhammad (P.B.U.H.) grandson for the sake of Islam when it was in danger in the hands of Yazid who was demolishing the true spirit of Islam and misleading people. Still, Imam Hussain A.S. did not join hand with him and sacrificed himself and his family for this noble cause so future generations and the world can carry forward that true Islam.

Everyman's life is a lesson to his followers, and twelve Imam's life is discussed in this dissertation which highlights their childhood till they were martyred, and the last Imam is in occultation. One thing is common in every Imam that they all were pious souls who never hurt or disappointed any human being instead they always use to give what every they possessed to needy and poor who ever visited them with prayers and

in this way people started loving them and this was not tolerable by emperors of that time, and in jealousy, they used evil techniques to murder them, and eleven of them are martyred either by poisoning them or using other unfair means. It has been observed in the world that their enemies envy some people who are friendly and generous or are liked by others and when the level of hatred is increased, they try to kill them directly or indirectly, and this has been observed since centuries.

Challenges to Religious Minority in the U.S.A

Although Shi'ia is in the minority in the U.S.A. and face challenges sometimes as some anti-Shiites elements which are present all around the globe, try to defame this sect which is not hurting or disturbing any other religion or human beings as it has been observed that Harvard university in America has also dedicated a centre whose name is Weatherhead Centre and one of its main projects is "Shi'ism and global affairs" and due to Shi'ia Diaspora and its emerging importance around the globe which is impacting geopolitics, Harvard University has started to work on the understanding of Shi'ia doctrine and when it will be well understood by scholars, policymakers, economists and government officials their decision making process will become more smooth to run the international affairs with the help of think tank and academia.

Shi'ism play a role of strong catalyst in upbringing social values of society as discussed in the article with the help of interviews and case studies it is clear that the message of Imam Hussain A.S. touches the hearts and souls of people, so family system and bond concerning regard of parents and siblings and loving kids which is an integral part of the Shiite school of thought is helping in improving U.S.A. family system which is based on individualism and capitalism; secondly, it's improving the element social justice in United States society as Shi'ia doctrine is based on the fact the fight of Imam Hussain A.S. was a struggle for *social justice against oppression*. The converted Shi'ia people and scholars in the U.S.A. are trying their best to spread this message via using social media platforms, universities, Shi'ia centres, Moharram Majalis or processions in the U.S. and by spreading flyers some times to general masses regarding Imam Hussain A.S. fight for social justice against oppression. The concept of charity in Shi'ia doctrine is emphasized because, under the leadership of Imam Ali A.S., he made sure that no one is sleeping hungry. Poverty must have vanished, and human beings must be given fundamental rights to food, water, education, respect for elders, love with kids, equal opportunities for all but in the battle of Karbala water was shut on Prophet's family they fought thirstily, kids were brutally killed even Yazid's army didn't consider four years old Imam Hussain A.S. daughter BB Sukayna SalamUlla Alpha and six-month-old son Hazrat Ali Asghar A.S. Shiites of all around the globe and the U.S. try to live life according to the footsteps of Prophet Muhammad P.B.U.H., and Imam's so they focus on family values. They are compassionate to live a life which leads to selfless approach, not a selfish approach which gives birth to the concept of peaceful co-existence and helping each other in times of need and raising voice against oppression so it can be concluded that Shi'ia minority of U.S. is helping improve the society in terms of bonding social values and upgrading sense of social justice in society.

Hussain Inspires

Shi'ism has got a lot of social and political significance attached to it if we talk about the concept of Shi'ism in the U.S.A. This ideology has inspired millions of Americans and has taught the sense of family bonding, charity, help, and justice and to fight for right in people. They were already working on these lines, but the concept of Shi'ism has enlightened their mind more towards the concept of the fight against oppressed which can be through patience and tolerance along with other weapons like protest and fight. The public servants when interacted with American Shi'ia scholars they understood the concept of good governance according to Shiite school of thought which differs from the other political and government systems which are based on capitalism which leads to inequality but according to Shi'ia school of thought justice is the main driving force of any system which have given U.S. politicians and policy makers a new school of thought to think and shift their non-flexible policies towards more humanistic approach, actually U.S. market is material driven and competitive and Shi'ism believe in the concept of justice and equality, it doesn't mean that this

concept is against development and economic progress but it more believe in the equal distribution of money and the idea of khums is existing in which rich person who have saved money for one year will give his twenty person amount to a religious authority who will distribute them amongst needy so that a balance can be maintained in society and poverty must not reach the community, Shiite school of thought is pro-technology ,pro-education and pro-advancement but keeping care of other people and family around you and taking care of needy and jobless. These are two different systems which don't match each other as one believes in earning money and becoming economic giant to compete for the world and further believe in the simple, peaceful existence with more importance to social justice than money.

Socially and politically Shiite school of thought has gained favorable position in U.S.A. as human belonging to all walks of life are living in U.S.A. who are of multiple religions and cultures still many care for humanity and even animals around which give the concept of law and rights and material greed is not the only thing which exist in the world but mainly human is self-centered and selfish so Shiite school more believe in philanthropy which is appreciated by human loving people who dislikes the material philosophy so this school of thought and centers who are promoting this ideology are source of attraction for American society and policymakers and due to the vital element of human values and Imam Hussain A.S. universally accepted figure who sacrificed his and his family's life for the cause of right and justice ,American society is inspired and significant number of people are inclined towards Shi'ism and many have also converted to Shi'ia Islam after conducting research and analyzing the in-depth meaning that why human is created and what should be a correct way to lead life and Karbala has taught every human being the true meanings of life.

People in the U.S.A. have become working machines, and the system of material and interest have made them so artificial that the concept of selfishness prevails in the society, the number of selfless people is rarely found in united states and all around the globe, and Imam Hussain A.S was a selfless man who gives him and his family live for the right cause and for the justice against oppressed. This has impacted U.S.A. community to such an extent that people are converted to Shi'ia Islam and started to spread the message of Imam Hussain A.S. The government works according to a different system in which people are in a competitive situation all the time. Everyone wants to become a billionaire, especially youth want money all the time. Still, with this, it is a fact that there are people who are oppressed and have emotional issues due to disoriented families, many are living in poverty and are homeless they can't survive in capitalism and require human care and emotional support rather than a ruthless economic system, so they see the objectives of Shi'ia Islam is to live a simple life, it doesn't mean that it is against human development or technology but with the concept of unity, care, equal rights and charity. The U.S. charter supports the idea of human values and charity but capitalism is a conflicting ideology, so people in the U.S. are confused and depressed sometimes wants to seek a school who deals with the complete code of life. Shi'ism is playing a positive role in the U.S.A. and Shi'ia Scholars, Shi'ia Centers are promoting the message of Imam Hussain A.S., which has a positive impact on the elderly as well as their youth.

Conclusion

American's believe in Humanity, the system have multiple ideologies and mindsets but majority possess a cosmopolitan approach we see that they love pets and are also emotionally attached with them when they listen to the story of Karbala they become fan of Imam Hussain A.S who fought for right and humanity actually they have basic understanding of social ethics and social justice because of education and awareness ,they hate violence and barbarism so they really develop and love and empathy for Imam Hussain's A.S family after reading or listening to what had happened to him and his seventy two companions in Karbala A man who stood for right and was brutally martyred along with his family who consist of women and also children's of four years and even an innocent of six months and still he didn't bowed against a ruthless and sinner dictator Yazeed , whenever any human being regardless of any religion or sect hear what has happened to the grandson of Prophet(P.B.U.H) he or she support the right cause and become fan on

Imam Hussain A.S. American people love to keep pets and really love them , they get possessive for them and care to give food water and vaccine on time and along with this they have animal rights which don't allow to torture or keep any pet thirsty or hungry otherwise they impose fine and punishments who commits this type of crime and what Yazid and his forces did they stopped water and treated Prophet's family worse than animals by slaughtering them without food and water so a normal human being don't need any religion or ideology to differentiate between atrocious and victim so this was what happened fourteen hundred years ago and Shi'ia ideology tries to spread Hussaniat around the globe, this is what the purpose of Shi'ia Centers in US are which has gained attention is last couple of years and this religious minority has charismatic role to play in USA which has changed the public view regarding Shi'ism and their practices as US citizens are not anti-Shia in fact they are trying to learn about the rationale behind them and also creating voice in world that Shi'ia in US are not any threat to economy or society and the beauty of US lies in the pluralistic life style.

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