An Examination of *Ḥaǧǧ* in the light of Muslim Marital Regime and Social Realities.

Mohamed S. Mraja

Introduction.

The spiritual, intellectual, economic and political aspects of Muslim Pilgrimage (*ḥaǧǧ*) have been the subject of extensive study by Muslim and non-Muslim writers alike.[1] But hardly do we find works that examines *ḥaǧǧ* as a social and familial endeavour, as well as how it impacts on the rights of married couples. It should be borne in mind that the Prophet performed *ḥaǧǧ* in the 10th year of *Ḥiǧra* in the company of his wives and many other Muslims (including women and children).[2] Moreover, a number of the rites associated with the *ḥaǧǧ* are considered as a "re-enactment of the critical, faith-testing events in the lives of Abraham, the ancient founder of monotheism, his wife Ḥāǧar, and their son 'Ismā'īl."[3]

This paper is an examination of *ḥaǧǧ* activities and the regulations governing them based on the work of Sayyid Sābiq, entitled *Fiqh us-Sunna*.[4] It is an attempt to shed light on the aspects of *ḥaǧg* that touches on matrimonial regime. In particular, the paper, seeks to address the following issues: (1) *istiṭā'at al-ḥaǧǧ*, (2) does a married woman require the permission of her husband in undertaking *ḥaǧǧ*? (3) the issue of *maḥram*. In addition, the rite of *iḥrām*[5] also occupy a central aspect of this analysis. Lastly an exposition on the *ḥaǧǧ* as a status symbol as may be depicted in the acquisition of titles and the use of pilgrimage murals will be considered. It should be noted the last issue is not treated in *Fiqh us-Sunna*, but deemed necessary as it reflects on social realities in Muslim communities, albeit of *bid'a* (innovation) nature. It should also be pointed out that in addition to *Figh us-sunna*, other sources have been consulted with a view of blending Sābiq's "normative" discourse with a glimmer of social reality, as will be referenced.

---

[1] A few examples may be cited here include John L. Esposito (ed.), *The Oxford Encyclopaedia of the Modern Islamic World*, vol. 2, New York: Oxford University Press, 1995, s. v. "*ḥaǧǧ*" (Robert Bianchi), pp. 90b – 91b; B. Lewis, V.L. Ménage, Ch. Pellat and J. Schacht (eds.), *The Encyclopaedia of Islam*, vol. 3, Leiden: Brill, 1971(New Edition), s. v. "*ḥaǧǧ*" (B. Lewis), pp. 37b – 38a; Hassan al-Ahdal (ed.), *The Muslim World League Journal*, vol. 31, No. 12, February 2004, s. v. "*ḥaǧǧ*": its blessings and benefits" (A. Doi), pp. 26 – 29.

[2] Sayyid Sābiq, *Fiqh us-Sunna*, 3 vols., Beirut: Dar al- Kitāb al-'Arabī, 1987, here, vol. 1, pp. 552, 555.

[3] Esposito, *Oxford Encyclopaedia*, p. 89a.

[4] For the entire discourse on this subject, see Sābiq, *Fiqh*, vol. 1, pp. 549 – 678.

[5] The word *iḥrām* literally means prohibiting. In relation to *ḥaǧǧ*, it refers to the pilgrims' dress, and also the state in which the pilgrim is held to be from the time he assumes the distinctive garb until he lays it aside. Thomas P. Hughes, *A Dictionary of Islam*, London: Allen & Co., 1935, 196b.

Istiṭā'at al-ḥaǧǧ

Ḥaǧǧ (Pilgrimage) is the fifth pillar of Islam. It is the annual pilgrimage to Mecca and its vicinities during specified months in the Muslim lunar calendar. It is a duty obligatory on every Muslim man or woman who has reached the age of puberty and is of sound mind to perform the *ḥaǧǧ* once in his or her life provided that they have the means (*istiṭā'a*) to do so. Thus *istiṭā'at al-ḥaǧǧ* implies here, among other things, that a person must be health-wise and physically able to undertake this journey and financially capable to afford it, that is, the expenses of the journey itself and for providing for the dependants while away from home.[1]

The absence of *istiṭā'a* exempts the individual believer from carrying out this obligation. Indeed according to some Muslim jurists, a the fulfilment of one's social or familial responsibilities may occupy a greater priority than the performance of the obligatory *ḥaǧǧ*. For instance, if a person is in need of a dwelling or a servant to help him, he may be classified as not possessing the *istiṭā'a* to perform *ḥaǧǧ*. Likewise, if one needs to take a wife because he fears he may not be able to avoid evil, he must get married, for it is his immediate need.[2] It is not therefore permissible for a person to borrow money or sell ones' property or to use money designated for business (a source of livelihood) in order to undertake *ḥaǧg*.[3] This stipulation is sometimes overlooked by Muslims, who may sale their properties to perform the *ḥaǧg*, with the consequence of returning from the journey poorer and unable to support themselves as well as their dependants.[4] One may opine, thus *istiṭā'a* is a self-determining instrument for performing *ḥaǧǧ*, but a Muslim has to be conscious of the fact that a deliberate non-fulfilment of the obligatory pilgrimage, where one has the means, is a grave sin.[5]

Does A Woman Require the Permission of her Husband to perform the *ḥaǧǧ*?

Ḥaǧǧ, as aforementioned, is incumbent upon men just as it is upon women, if they meet the requisite conditions. One who performs the *ḥaǧǧ* fulfils the right of Allāh. However, since *ḥaǧǧ* involves travelling and leaving ones residence for a period of time, undertaking it has a bearing on the rights of married couples.

---

[1] Cf. Qur'ān 2:197, 3: 97; Sābiq, *Fiqh*, vol.1, pp. 552, 553 – 556; Lewis, *EI²*, vol. 3, p. 33b; Gustav Edmund von Grunebaum, *Muhammadan Festivals*, London: Curzon Press Ltd., 1979 (1951), p. 15.
[2] Sābiq, *Fiqh*, vol. 1, pp. 555 – 556.
[3] Frederick M. Denny, *An Introduction to Islam*, New York: MacMillan, 1985, p. 117.
[4] See Mary B. McDonnell, "Patterns of Muslim Pilgrimage from Malaysia, 1885 – 1985", in Dale F. Eickelman and James Pisctori (eds.), *Muslim Travellers: Pilgrimage, migration, and the religious imagination*, Berkeley: University of California Press, 1990, pp. 111 – 130.
[5] See, Sābiq, *Fiqh*, vol. 1, pp. 555, 562 – 563.

Muslim jurists include as part of the rights of a husband upon his wife the right to restrain her from leaving the matrimonial residence without his permission.[1] Thus, in the case of the obligatory Pilgrimage (*ḥaǧǧ al-farīḍa*) it is desirable (*mustaḥab*) for a married woman to seek her husband's permission. In this regard, she may still proceed to perform the obligatory *ḥaǧǧ* even if the husband refuses to give her the permission. This is based on the premise that such a pilgrimage falls within the prescribed acts of worship (*'ibādāt*) and that "*la ṭā'a li-maḫlūq fī ma'ṣiyat al-ḫalq*" (there is no obedience to anyone in something that involves disobedience to Allāh).[2] Thus, it is merely a matter of tact and formality for a woman to seek her husband's permission to perform *ḥaǧǧ l-Islam*.

The above rule does not apply in case the wife wishes to perform *ḥaǧǧ at-taṭawwu'* (Optional pilgrimage). Where a wife seeks her husbands' permission to perform an optional *ḥaǧǧ*, the husband may refuse to grant her such a permission and the wife must obey her husband.[3] If the wife performs the *ḥaǧǧ at-taṭawwu'* despite the refusal of her husband, she will be regarded as *nuṣūz* (recelicatrant).[4] One may postulate that the rights of Allāh supersedes the rights of individuals. In a matrimonial regime, the conjugal rights of a husband may prevail over the rights of a woman, even in matters spiritual, as long as they fall outside the realm of the obligatory acts. Closely related to the fore discussion is the question of *maḥram*, which we now turn to.

Issue of *Maḥram*

In the case of a Muslim woman, the question of *istiṭā'at al-ḥaǧǧ* is also closely linked to the issue of maḥram.[5] Some '*ulamā'*, among them Abū Ḥanīfa, and Ibn Ḥanbal, are of the opinion that every woman must be accompanied by her husband or some other *maḥram* on the journey for *ḥaǧǧ* or '*umra* (Lesser or Minor Pilgrimage).[6] This stipulation, argues the author of *fiqh us-Sunna*, only underlines something desirable and does not obligate the husband or the *maḥram* to travel with the woman, if there is no one else but him.

---

[1] For a detail discussion on the rights of a husband, see Sābiq, *Fiqh*, vol. 2, pp. 180 – 188.
[2] Sābiq, *Fiqh*, vol. 1, p. 559.
[3] Sābiq, *Fiqh*, vol. 1, p. 559.
[4] See Sābiq, *Fiqh*, vol. 2, p. 188.
[5] The word *maḥram* refers to a close male relative of a woman who is related in such a manner as to be impossible for him to ever marry her, such as brother, son among others.
[6] Sābiq, *Fiqh*, vol. 1, pp. 557 – 558; Hughes, *Dictionary of Islam*, p. 156a; Lewis, *EI²*, p. 33b.

According to Sābiq, no one is obligated to give up his convenience so that another person might do what is required of him (or her).[1]

Other Muslim jurists are of the view that a woman may travel for the *ḥaǧǧ* by herself. Within the upholders of this opinion, there is no unanimity as to the condition under which she may do so, with key concerns revolving on the issue of safety and age of the woman. Some of the scholars have reasoned that a woman is obliged to go for *ḥaǧǧ* even if she has no such *maḥram* relative provided that the way to Mecca is secure and safe. According to the Šāfi'ī school, it is not the company of a *maḥram* by which it becomes permissible for a woman to undertake *ḥaǧg*, but the security of life and honour and it can be assured, apart from the husband and a *maḥram*, in the company of a group of trusted women or just one woman or all by herself. In parenthesis, safety assurance dispels the need for a male relative to accompany a woman during the performance of *ḥaǧǧ* or '*umra*. Others have, however, limited this provision only in the case of an old woman.[2]

One may postulate that the issue of safety seems to be a more plausible consideration in determining whether or not a woman must be accompanied by her husband or a *maḥram* during *ḥaǧǧ*. Historically, it has been argued that until the 18th century, the *ḥaǧǧ* was a physically unsafe, insecure, and unsanitary journey of long duration.[3] The methods of travel available to pilgrims were either sailing ships and/or caravans. The dangers of the journey such as the risk of losing their way in the desert, or being caught in a sandstorm as well as danger of attack, among others, rendered *ḥaǧǧ* a serious undertaking. For this reason, there has been more men than women pilgrims.[4] Arguably, under such circumstances, a husband or a *maḥram* relative granted a woman an added measure of protection while travelling for the *ḥaǧǧ*. With improvement in mode of transportation and security, it is safer and faster for a person to undertake the journey to Mecca today than it was the case in earlier centuries. This has led to an increasing number of women participating in *ḥaǧǧ* now than before.[5] In general, a woman who performs *ḥaǧǧ* alone, without being accompanied by her husband or any

---

[1] Sābiq, *Fiqh*, vol. 1, p. 557ff.

[2] Sābiq, *Fiqh*, vol. 1, p. 558; see also Imam Muslim, *Ṣaḥiḥ Muslim*, vol. 2, Abdul Hamid Siddiqi (tr.), Delhi: Adam Publishers, 1996, p. 311ff, s. v. "Travelling of a woman with her *maḥram* for *ḥaǧǧ*".

[3] See McDonnell, "Muslim Pilgrimage", p. 114.

[4] Lewis, *EI²*, s. v., "The Islamic *ḥaǧǧ*" (Wensinck), pp. 34a – 34b; for the dangers that pilgrims travelling on foot from West Africa, see J. Spenser Trimingham, *Islam in West Africa*, London: Oxford University Press, 1959, pp. 85 - 86.

[5] During the Post-World War II era in Malaysia, for instance, as more families undertook the journey, the number of women increased, and it became popular for pregnant women to perform the *ḥaǧǧ* in the company of their husbands. In 1960, male and female participation drew even. Since then, female participation has markedly increased, exceeding male participation by 5 to 6 per cent. McDonnell, "Muslim Pilgrimage", p.116.

maḥram, her *ḥaǧǧ* is regarded as valid.[1] At this juncture, we need to examine one of the central rites of *ḥaǧǧ*, namely *iḥrām*.

Iḥrām

Among the rituals surrounding *ḥaǧǧ*, the *iḥrām*[2] is not only the starting point of a pilgrims' spiritual journey in Mecca, but the one (or state) in which virtually most of the activities of the *ḥaǧg* need to be undertaken. Moreover, the consequences of *iḥrām* are far reaching as they impact greatly on the "normal" life of pilgrims, especially married couples.

Iḥrām is one of the essential pillars (*rukn*, pl. *arkān*) of *ḥaǧǧ*. It underscores "the intention to perform either *ḥaǧǧ* or '*umra* or both of them."[3] One of the etiquettes of *iḥrām* relates to the mode of dress of a pilgrim. Thus, a male pilgrim is required to divest himself of his clothes and assume a garment that consists of two un-sewn and preferably white sheets, also called *ihrām* – the *izār*, which is wrapped around the waist covering the part of the part of the body from the navel to the knees, and the *ridā'*, which is thrown around the body covering the left shoulder, back and breast, but leaving exposed part of the right arm and the head (which must not be covered). It is not permissible for male pilgrims to wear sewn clothes (such as shirt, trouser etc.), shoes or boots, but one may use sandals.[4] Regarding a female pilgrim, the law does not prescribe any particular dress. In other words, female pilgrims have a greater freedom of dress as long as they remain modest. They are only forbidden to use a veil (*niqāb*) that covers the face (i.e. their faces must be uncovered), and gloves (to cover the hands). Some jurists considers it permissible for women to cover their faces while in the state of *iḥrām*.[5]

The *iḥrām* garb, it has been argued, symbolises the egalitarianism of Islam and the unity of the Muslims. The *izar* and *ridā'* reduces its wearers to an essential oneness of status, erasing their distinctions based on wealth, education, class, language, and ethnicity. The women pilgrims through their great variety of dress symbolize the diverse and creative character of

---

[1] Sābiq, *Fiqh*, vol. 1, p. 558.
[2] For the meaning is this word, refer to p. 1 above
[3] Sābiq, *Fiqh*, vol. 1, p. 575; also Hughes, *Dictionary of Islam*, p. 156a.
[4] Sābiq, *Fiqh*, vol. 1, pp. 576, 596; also Al-Ahdal, *MWLJ*, vol. 31, s. v. "How to perform pilgrimage to Makkah?", p. 13; von Grunebaum, *Festivals*, p.26; Hughes, *Dictionary of Islam*, p. 156b.
[5] Sābiq, *Fiqh*, vol. 1, pp. 593 – 594. Commenting on the use of a mask by some women pilgrims (as opposed to a veil) that keeps the fabric from touching the skin, von Grunebaum argues, that this is a cultural imposition on women to conceal their faces which according to law ought to be uncovered. He posits that when it is considered that this array is the only covering to be worn for many a day and, strictly speaking, also at night, the extremely uncomfortable condition in which such women have to perform the *ḥaǧǧ* will be realized. Von Grunebaum, *Festivals*, p. 27.

Islam as a global community of faith.[1] In short, the *iḥrām* symbolizes the radical humility of all believers before Allāh regardless of worldly differences.[2] It is important at this stage to examine some of the restrictions imposed on a pilgrim in *iḥrām*, which forms the pivot of our analysis of the significance of this rite on the social life of Muslim pilgrims.

Restrictions of *Iḥrām*

The performance of *ḥaǧǧ*, similar to *ṣalāt* (prayer), requires that one must be in a state of purity or consecration, which von Grunebaum describes as a "complete severance of ties with the profane world."[3] The state of consecration in the case of *ḥaǧǧ* is entered through *iḥrām*, whose spiritual significance is seen as a symbolic severance of all wordily connections in response to the Divine Call.[4] It is at the *mawāqit* (stations)[5] that a pilgrim dons the *iḥrām* and makes the *niyyah* (intention) of making the *ḥaǧǧ* or '*umra*. The state of *iḥrām* that a pilgrim thus enters is in keeping with the nature of Mecca, which is known as a *ḥaram* (sanctuary), whose derivation (*ḥ-r-m*) denotes variously "sacredness", "taboo", "purity" or "forbidden ness". One who is in the sacred state of *iḥrām* is called a *muḥrim*.[6]

One may postulate that it is the restrictions of *iḥrām* that underscores the state of consecration under which a pilgrim has to undertake the rites of *ḥaǧg*. An examination of the things prohibited for a *muḥrim* may reveal that Islam took deliberate measures against turning such an annual event into a fair for sensual pleasure, but one devoted to the service of Allāh alone.[7] For instance, it is forbidden for a *muḥrim* to have sexual intercourse and all matters leading to it such as kissing, touching, or talking with one's wife about intercourse or related matters.[8] A *muḥrim* who for a genuine reason is compelled to infringe any of the restrictions of *iḥrām*, with the exception of sexual relations, will have to expiate for such a breach by either sacrifice or feeding six poor people or fasting for three days. The validity of the *ḥaǧǧ* in this case will remain unaffected. Sexual intercourse while in a state of *iḥrām*, on the other hand, renders the *ḥaǧǧ* null and void. Moreover, such pilgrims must perform another

---

[1] Denny, *Islam*, p. 118.
[2] Esposito, *Oxford Encyclopaedia*, vol.2, p. 89.
[3] Von Grunebaum, *Festivals*, pp. 26 – 27.
[4] Al-Ahdal, *MWLJ*, vol. 31, p. 13.
[5] The word *mīqāt* (pl. *mawāqīt*) literally means, "a stated time, or place." Here, it refers to stations that were designated by the Prophet for the purpose of assuming the *iḥrām*, for either *ḥaǧǧ* or '*umrā*. Sabiq, *Fiqh*, vol. 1, pp. 572 – 575; Hughes, *Dictionary of Islam*, p. 350a.
[6] Sābiq, *Fiqh*, vol.1, pp. 605 - 208; Hughes, *Dictionary of Islam*, p. 156b; Denny, *Islam*, p. 119.
[7] See al-Ahdal, *MWLJ*, vol. 31, p. 4, s. v. "Guidance from the Glorious Qur'ān".
[8] Other restrictions placed on a *muḥrim* include the prohibition of shaving, cutting or plucking one's hair, wearing of perfume, disputing, arguing or fighting, discarding the pilgrims' garb or putting on sewn clothes among others. See Sābiq, *Fiqh*, vol. 1, pp. 592 – 598; von Grunebaum, *Festivals*, p. 27; al-Ahdal, *MWLJ*, vol. 31, p. 13.

Pilgrimage in the following year and offer a sacrifice.[1] Some jurists considers it mandatory (*waǧīb*) for such a couple to be kept apart when repeating the *ḥaǧǧ*, lest they violate the ban on sexual relations in *iḥrām* again. Others are of the view that the measure to separate them is only a recommendation.[2]

It is also imperative to note that it is blameless for a *muḥrim* to look at members of the opposite sex.[3] According to Ibn ‘Abbas, a desecration of *iḥrām* (i.e. *ǧanāba*) induced by a *muḥrim* thinking about or looking at a woman must be expiated by slaughtering a sheep, but does not affect the validity of the *ḥaǧǧ*. The Šāfi‘ī school, however, makes a distinction between a state of ritual impurity induced by mere thoughts and one caused by deliberate or physical contact. Thus, if a *muḥrim* had a wet dream or ejaculated by thinking about or looking at a woman, he incurs no penalty. But if one kisses or touches his spouse with sexual desire, while in the state of *iḥrām*, he must offer a sheep in sacrifice regardless of whether he ejaculates or not.[4] The *iḥrām* and the rules of conduct governing it may thus be seen as a pointer to a pilgrims’ reorientation away from the world of vanities to dedication to worship and prayer.

Can a *muḥrim contract* a marriage?

A pilgrim is allowed to engage in legitimate trade during *ḥaǧǧ*, which may be in the interest both of the trader, who can thus meet his own expenses, and of the generality of pilgrims, who would otherwise be greatly inconvenienced for the necessities of life.[5] Although marriage is a civil contract similar to trade, the former has generated divergent views among Muslim jurists regarding it permissibility in *ḥaǧǧ*. According to Mālik, Šāfi‘ī and Aḥmad, it is not permissible for a *muḥrim* to contract a marriage nor engage a woman. Consequently, any

[1] Sābiq, *Fiqh*, vol. 1, pp. 599 – 601.

[2] It should be pointed out that there is no unanimity among the ‘*ulamā*’ as to what stage of *ḥaǧǧ* rituals will the act of having sexual intercourse amount to invalidation. Four positions are discernable, namely: (1) If a *muḥrim* had sexual intercourse before the Day of ‘Arafah (9th of *Dhu ’l-Ḥiǧǧah*), then the *ḥaǧǧ* will be void, and the pilgrim will have to offer a sacrifice. (2) If a pilgrim had sexual intercourse after the Day of ‘Arafah, the *ḥaǧǧ* will not be invalidated, but one will have to offer slaughter a camel. (3) Where the intercourse occurred during a pilgrims’ first break in *iḥram* (on the 10th of *Dhu ’l-Ḥiǧǧah*), following the throwing of pebbles and shaving of one’s head at Mina, it will not invalidate the *ḥaǧǧ*. (4) Making up the *ḥaǧǧ* and offering a sacrifice is mandatory for a *muḥrim* who has sexual intercourse before the completion of all the indispensable (*rukn*) rites of Pilgrimage. Sābiq, *Fiqh*, vol. 1, pp. 601 – 602; also Lewis, *EI²*, vol. 3, p. 36b.

[3] Sābiq, *Fiqh*, vol. 1, p. 588.

[4] Sābiq, *Fiqh*, vol. 1, p. 602.

[5] Cf. Qur’ān 2: 198; Abdullah Yusuf Ali, *The Holy Qur’ān: Translation and Commentary*, Beirut: Ouloom al-Qur’ān Est., 1934, p. 79 ff.

marriage thus contracted is invalid (*bāṭil*). Tirmiḏī, however, does not include in this prohibition the issue of engagement, arguing that the Companions of the Prophet practiced it.[1]

In contradistinction to the above view, the Ḥanafī scholars hold the opinion that a *muḥrim* may contract a marriage, pointing out that in a state of *iḥrām*, what is forbidden is not marriage with a woman, but only the consummation of the marriage. In parenthesis, contracting a marriage is permissible, but sexual intercourse is forbidden.[2] One may thus opine that although the Ḥanafī school liberally endorsed the legality of a marriage contracted by a *muḥrim*, it has remained truthful to the spirit of the sanctity of *iḥrām* by prohibiting intercourse. What follows is a discussion, though outside the scope covered in *fiqh us-Sunna*, but of great social relevance on the impact of *ḥaǧǧ* in Muslim societies.

Ḥaǧǧ as a status symbol: the case of titles and murals

The glamour for titles and the use of pilgrimage murals are actually a post-*ḥaǧǧ* phenomenon, which have no connection with the rites of *ḥaǧǧ*. It is useful to consider each of these social traits separately. It is becoming fashionable for Muslim pilgrims, from different parts of the world, to acquire a title that declares to the public that the bearer has performed the *ḥaǧǧ*. Male pilgrims may be officially referred to as "*ḥāǧǧī*" or "*ḥāǧǧ*"[3] in Arab-speaking countries, or "*alḥaǧi*" in East Africa and West Africa, or as "*ḥaǧǧi"* in Asia. Female pilgrims are called "*ḥaǧiya*" or "*ḥaǧǧa*", in West Africa and Malaysia respectively.[4] Why then would Muslim pilgrims engage in something that was neither sanctioned by the Prophet nor practised by his Companions? Talking the example of Malaysia, McDonnel argues that in a society where it is increasingly important, politically and psychologically, to be identified as a good Muslim, these outward symbols of having been on the *ḥaǧǧ* and the achieved religious status are increasingly desirable. While the general expectation of people who undertake the *ḥaǧǧ* is to be closer to Allāh, and to be a better person, in the sense that the journey will free them from vices as well as help them to be less materialistic and pray better, the status that will accrue to them is also important. They wish to be honoured within their community upon their return,

---

[1] Sābiq, *Fiqh*, vol. 1, p. 595.

[2] The Prophet is reported to have married Maimūna daughter of Ḥāriṯ in a state of *iḥram*. On the controvercy concerning this issue, see Sābiq, *Fiqh*, vol. 1, p. 595.

[3] Hughes, *Dictionary of Islam*, p. 155a.

[4] Some local variations in the names may be found among the people in West Africa. For instance, among the Hausa, the terms *alḥaǧi* and *alḥǧiya* refers to a male and a female person who has done the pilgrimage to Mecca, respectively. See R. C. Abraham, *Dictionary of the Hausa Language*, London: University of London Press Ltd., 1962 (1946), p. 21a; for a detail discussion on this and other physical and psychological impacts of pilgrimage on Malaysian Muslims, see McDonnel, "Muslim Pilgrimage", p. 119.

as evidenced by the high interest they show in the outward symbols of their inwardly-altered condition, such as the use of such titles as "*ḥaǧǧ*".[1]

Part of the presumed inwardly-altered condition of a pilgrim is that related to blessing (*baraka*), a phenomenon that may be typified by the use of pilgrimage murals[2] in Egypt and elsewhere. Campo asserts that murals symbolizes the blessing powers attributed to holy personages and localities by creating a place for them within the domestic spaces of pilgrims and their families. In other words, pilgrimage to Mecca and Medina, and the hope of attaining paradise, are appropriated by Muslims at home in terms of local configurations of meaning. Consequently, pilgrims are believed to acquire extraordinary blessing from transgressing the limits of distant holy places. Much of this acquired blessing is transmitted to pilgrim households, neighbours and associates through the use of murals. Pilgrims as dispensers of blessings, therefore, people flock to meet them when they return hoping to acquire a share of the blessing for themselves.[3] Although the use of pilgrimage murals is not endorsed by religious law, it "is concerned with explicitly linking the familial world of the house with communal symbols of sacred power and space."[4] In general, the majority of Sunnī scholars consider *ḥaǧǧ* murals as not only forbidden, but also being a scandalous innovation (*bid'a*) in religion.[5]

Conclusion

From the foregoing discussion, an attempt has been made to show that *ḥaǧǧ*, as one of the fundamental pillars of Islam, is nevertheless incumbent only upon those who posses *istiṭa'a*. The Islamic concept of *istiṭa'a* has far reaching consequences on the performance of *ḥaǧǧ*, especially in connection with married women. This position is clearly demonstrated by the fact that in addition to being physically able and materially capable, a woman should seek the permission of her husband as well as being accompanied by him or another *maḥram*, if she

---

[1] McDonnel, "Muslim Pilgrimage", pp. 119 – 121. For some of the reasons for why pilgrimage is undertaken by West Africa Muslims, which include the desire to earn reward in the next world, see Trimingham, *Islam in West Africa*, pp. 87 – 88.

[2] *Ḥaǧǧ* murals are colourful paintings drawn on the walls of houses and apartment buildings when one or more of the occupants inside (male or female) makes the obligatory pilgrimage to Mecca. They are said to objectify the individual life experiences of pilgrims by building associations between them and their houses with saints, prophets, Mecca, Medina, and paradise using religious epigraphs and images as bricks and mortars. Juan Eduardo Campo, *The Other Side of Paradise: Explorations into the Religious Meanings of Domestic Space in Islam*, South Carolina: University of South Carolina Press, 1991, pp. 140, 156.

[3] It is arguable that not all visitors seek blessings from returning pilgrims as some come to offer congratulations or hope to receive gifts or memorabilia from the holy land. McDonnel, "Muslim Pilgrimage", p. 120; Campo, *Other Sides of Paradise*, p. 158.

[4] Campo, *Other Sides of Paradise*, p. 165.

[5] Campo, *Other Sides of Paradise*, p. 165; for an analysis of Islamic position on paintings, see Badr Azimabadi, *The Permitted and the Prohibited in Islam*, New Delhi: Kitab Bhavan Publishers, 1994, pp. 101 – 109.

wishes to undertake the Pilgrimage. In essence, marriage accords the husband a greater latitude over the person of his wife, even in matters spiritual (except where there is an infringement of the rights of Allāh). While no attempt has been made in this discussion to give a chronology of all the rites of *ḥaǧǧ*, the selective discourse on *iḥrām* served to illustrate the desire of Islam to draw Muslims closer to the service of Allāh by (temporarily) severing themselves from the mundane world, especially in relation to conjugal relations. Although the ultimate reward for a valid and unblemished Pilgrimage (*ḥaǧǧ 'l-mabrūr*) is paradise[1], some pilgrims undoubtedly harbour personal benefits as typified by the titles of honour and displays of pilgrimage murals.

[1] Sābiq, *Fiqh*, vol. 1, pp. 550 – 551.

References

1. Abraham, R. C.: *Dictionary of the Hausa Language*, London: University of London Press Ltd, 1962 (1946).
2. Al-Ahdal, Hassan (ed.): *The Muslim World League Journal*, vol. 31, No. 12, February 2004.
3. Ali, A. Yusuf: *The Holy Qur'ān: Translation and Commentary,* Beirut: Ouloom al-Qur'ān Est., 1934.
4. Azimabadi, Badr: *The Permitted and the Prohibited in Islam,* New Delhi: Kitab Bahvan Publishers, 1994.
5. Campo, Juan Eduardo: *The Other Side of Paradise: Explorations into the Religious Meanings of Domestic Space in Islam,* South Carolina: University of South Carolina Press, 1991.
6. Denny, Frederick M.: *An Introduction to Islam,* New York: MacMillan, 1985.
7. Eickelman, Dale F. and Pisctori, James (eds.): *Muslim Travellers: Pilgrimage, migration, and the religious imagination*, Berkeley: University of California Press, 1990.
8. Esposito, L. John (ed.): *The Oxford Encyclopaedia of Modern Islamic World*, vol.2, New York: Oxford University Press, 1995.
9. Von Grunebaum, Gustav Edmund: *Muhammadan Festivals*, London: Curzon Press Ltd., 1979 (1951).
10. Hughes, Thomas P.: *A Dictionary of Islam*, London: Allen & Co., 1935.
11. Lewis, B. *et al*.: *The Encyclopaedia of Islam*, vol. 3, Leiden: Brill, 1971.
12. Muslim, A.: *Ṣaḥiḥ Muslim*, vol. 2, with English translation and commentary by Abdul Hamid Siddiqi, Delhi: Adam Publishers, 1996.
13. Trimingham, J. Spenser: *Islam in West Africa*, London: Oxford University Press, 1959.
14. Sābiq, Sayyid: *Fiqh us-Sunna*, Beirut: Dar al-Kitāb al-'Arabī, 1987.