

More Facts About Islam's Pagan Origins.

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- Muslims today make great boasts of how Islam is the purest monotheistic religion on the planet. Yes, Islam, is a monotheistic religion, but then again, Pharaoh Akhenaten was also the inventor of a monotheistic religion in 1362 BC. But what Muslims don't realize, is that all their rituals of the Hajj (the pilgrimage to Mecca, where they circle the black stone 7 times etc.) are of purely pagan origin. Although Muslims will claim that these rituals were practiced by Adam, Noah and Abraham as Muslims perform them today, this is nothing but pure myth, totally unsupported by history. In fact, the Hajj is documented in history as being solely of Arab pagan origin. Muslim myth says that Abraham performed the Hajj but it was corrupted down through the ages and then Muhammad came along and restored it to its original purity. But this also is myth because the history of the Hajj has ONLY a pagan history before Muhammad. It is clear that Muhammad took these pagan practices and assigned them new meanings, never before imagined. The Arabs, have perpetuated these myths ever since, even though history proves otherwise.

Note: These quotes below are in no particular order:

- "We used to consider (i.e. going around) them a [pagan] custom of the Pre-islamic period of Ignorance, so when Islam came, we gave up going around them. Then Allah revealed" "Verily, Safa and Marwa (i.e. two mountains at Mecca) are among the Symbols of Allah. So it is not harmful of those who perform the Hajj of the House (of Allah) or perform the Umra to ambulate (Tawaf) between them." (2.158) (Hadith, al-Bukhari Volume 6, Book 60, Number 22-23)
- Regarding the two little hills of Safa and Marwa, "Unfortunately the Pagan Arabs had placed a male and a female idol here, and their gross and superstitious rites caused offence to the early Muslims. They felt some hesitation in going round these places during the Pilgrimage. As a matter of fact they should have known that the Ka'ba (the House of God) had been itself defiled with idols, and was sanctified again by the purity of Muhammad's life and teaching. (The holy Qur'an, text, translation and commentary, by Abdullah Yusuf Ali. 1872-1952, First published in 1938, 1973 ed., p. 62, footnote 160, commenting on 2:158)

* I do not agree with many of the views displayed on www.bible.ca. However, I still chose to present this article because it offers some valid points to consider.

- Ibn al 'Arabi (A.H. 543) reports from ibn Sihab that 'Urwa said: "I asked 'Aisha, "What is your view of Q 2:158?: 'There shall be no blame on him who performs tawaf between Safsa and Marwa.' Surely there can be no blame on anyone who does not perform this tawaf?" 'Aisha replied that were the case as 'Urwa supposed, the verse would read: 'There shall be no blame on him who does not perform the tawaf.' The Ansar, feeling certain scruples about this ceremony, on account of the locality's former association with idols, consulted the Prophet. God revealed Q 2.158. The Prophet then laid down the sunna of performing the tawaf. It is thus incumbent upon pilgrims not to omit it. (Abu Bakr Muhammad b. 'Abdulla b. al 'Arabi, Ahkam al Qur'an, 4 vols (Cairo, 1957/1376), vol 1, p.46, quoted by John Burton, The Collection of the Qur'an, p. 12)
- "One of the companions said to Anas ibn Malik, 'Did you use to hate running between the Safa and Marwa?' He said, 'Yes, because it was part of the pre-Islamic rituals until God gave Muhammad this verse and proclaimed that it was also one of God's ceremonial rites'" (refer to Sahih of al-Bukhari, volume 2, page 195).
- Narrated Ibn 'Abbas: To run along the valley between two green pillars of Safa and Marwa (mountains) was not Sunna, but the people in the pre-islamic period of ignorance used to run along it, and used to say: "We do not cross this rain stream except running strongly. " (Hadith, al-Bukhari, Volume 5, Book 58, Number 186)
- Narrated Urwa: I said to 'Aisha, the wife of the Prophet, and I was at that time a young boy, "How do you interpret the Statement of Allah: "Verily, Safa and Marwa (i.e. two mountains at Mecca) are among the Symbols of Allah." So it is not harmful of those who perform the Hajj to the House of Allah) or perform the Umra, to ambulate (Tawaf) between them. In my opinion it is not sinful for one not to ambulate (Tawaf) between them." 'Aisha said, "Your interpretation is wrong for as you say, the Verse should have been: "So it is not harmful of those who perform the Hajj or Umra to the House, not to ambulate (Tawaf) between them.' This Verse was revealed in connection with the Ansar who (during the Pre-Islamic Period) used to visit Manat (i.e. an idol) after assuming their Ihram, and it was situated near Qudaid (i.e. a place at Mecca), and they used to regard it sinful to ambulate between Safa and Marwa after embracing Islam. When Islam came, they asked Allah's Apostle about it, whereupon Allah revealed:-- "Verily, Safa and Marwa (i.e. two mountains at Mecca) are among the Symbols of Allah. So it is

- not harmful of those who perform the Hajj of the House (of Allah) or perform the Umra, to ambulate (Tawaf) between them." "Narrated 'Asim bin Sulaiman: I asked Anas bin Malik about Safa and Marwa. Anas replied, "We used to consider (i.e. going around) them a custom of the Pre-Islamic period of Ignorance, so when Islam came, we gave up going around them. Then Allah revealed" "Verily, Safa and Marwa (i.e. two mountains at Mecca) are among the Symbols of Allah. So it is not harmful of those who perform the Hajj of the House (of Allah) or perform the Umra to ambulate (Tawaf) between them." (2.158) (Hadith, al-Bukhari Volume 6, Book 60, Number 22-23)
- Narrated 'Asim: I asked Anas bin Malik: "Did you use to dislike to perform Tawaf between Safa and Marwa?" He said, "Yes, as it was of the ceremonies of the days of the Pre-Islamic period of ignorance, till Allah revealed: 'Verily! (The two mountains) As-Safa and Al-Marwa are among the symbols of Allah. It is therefore no sin for him who performs the pilgrimage to the Ka'ba, or performs 'Umra, to perform Tawaf between them.' " Narrated Ibn Abbas: Allah's Apostle performed Tawaf of the Ka'ba and the Sa'i of Safa and Marwa so as to show his strength to the pagans. (Hadith, al-Bukhari, Volume 2, Book 26, Number 710-711)
 - "The demons in the Jahiliyya used to circumnavigate all night around these two mountains. The idols (were erected) between them. When Islam came, they (Muslims) said, 'O, apostle of God, we would never run between the Safa and Marwa because this is an unfavorable matter which we were accustomed to do in the Jahiliyya.' Thus, God gave this verse" (refer to Asbab al-Nuzul by Suyuti, page 27).
 - "Asaf and Nayelah, the former the image of a man, the latter of a woman, were also two idols brought with Hobal from Syria, and placed the one on Mount Safa, and the other on Mount Merwa" (Preliminary Discourse to the Koran, Sale, p. 22, 1801).
 - The ramial-jimar ceremony at Mina, like many other ceremonies in the Hajj, places a great emphasis on stones - further evidence of pagan Arab practices surviving to this day for the pre-Islamic idol-worshippers worshipped not only stones but had a stone-throwing ceremony in their rites." (Muhammad and the Religion of Islam, by John Gilchrist, 1984)
 - The custom of stone throwing has of old maintained itself outside the Muna Valley, where Islam has legalised the throwing on to three stone heaps. (Mekka in the Latter Part of the 19th Century, Hurgronje, p.96; quoted in Muhammad and the Religion of Islam, John Gilchrist)

- At the small village of Mina each pilgrim must, on the third day of the Hajj, cast seven small pebbles at a stone pillar known as Jamratul-Aqabah as a sign of his rejection of the ways and influence of the devil. For this reason the pillar has become known as ash-Shaytanul-Kabir ("the Great Satan"). It used to be a simple pillar at ground level but, the crowds to Mecca being what they are these days, it is now a huge pillar with platforms at different levels to accommodate the hundreds of thousands of pilgrims who endeavour to pelt it. Each pilgrim must collect sixty-three small stones while at Muzdalifah for, when the final tawaf is completed, he must return to Mina to once again stone the pillar as well as two others nearby, known as Jamratul-Awla and Jamratul-Wusta respectively (though some gather only forty-nine stones and others seventy. The number must be a multiple of seven as seven pebbles are to be cast at each pillar in turn). Like many other rites in the Hajj, this one too has been dislocated from its pre-Islamic pagan status and is now said to be an act of piety which follows the example of Abraham who supposedly thrice stoned Satan as he tried to stop him sacrificing his son (believed by the Muslims to have taken place in the valley where Mina is situated) Muhammad and the Religion of Islam, John Gilchrist)
- "curious set of ceremonies of pagan Arab origin which Mohammed has incorporated into his religion" (Hurgronje, Mohammedanism, p. 160)
- The rites of the Kaaba were retained, but stripped of all idolatrous tendency, they still hang, a strange unmeaning shroud, around the living theism of Islam. (The Original Sources of the Qur'an, William St. Clair Tisdall, 1905)
- Muslim scholars have also been constrained to admit that Muhammad adopted the pagan Arab pilgrimage en bloc into Islam, seeking to justify it on the historical fiction that Abraham was its originator and that later generations perverted its monotheistic origin and emphasis. (Muhammad and the Religion of Islam, John Gilchrist)
- We cannot accept, however, the claim that the ceremonies as practiced today were first performed by Abraham. It is historically illogical to assume that they survived unchanged through centuries of pagan Arab custom while idol-worship became the order of the day. The most probable reasons for Muhammad's acceptance of the Hajj ceremonies have already been given in this book - the honour bestowed on him before his mission when he was appointed to replace the Black Stone in the Ka'aba and his constant search for a means whereby he might

reconcile himself to his pagan countrymen. It is highly significant that Meccan opposition to Muhammad's cause collapsed immediately after he and his followers had performed the pilgrimage - the exact rites performed by the pagan Arabs, excluding the worship of their idols - a year after the Treaty of Hudaibiyah had allowed them to do so. (Muhammad and the Religion of Islam, John Gilchrist)

- "It is, therefore, in these absurd rites of the Hajj that Islam finds its severest condemnation, and the falsity of Muhammad's pretended revelations is amply demonstrated. The Hajj was Muhammad's compromise with Arabian Paganism." (The Sources of Islam, Blair, p. 162; quoted in Muhammad and the Religion of Islam, John Gilchrist)
- Perhaps the greatest irony of this whole ceremony is that its origin should be attributed to Abraham, a man who, according to the Qur'an, detested idols made of stone and destroyed them (Surah 37. 91-93). For the whole emphasis of the pilgrimage falls on stones. The Muslims circumambulate the Ka'aba, an empty shrine made of stones, kiss the Black Stone built into it, and pray at the maqam-i-Ibrahim in front of which stands a small shrine containing another stone (the qadam-i-Ibrahim) on which Abraham allegedly stood while building the Ka'aba (it is supposed to bear his footprint). Arafat is a plain on which the Mount of Mercy stands - covered with stones and a stone monolith commemorating Muhammad's farewell sermon. At Mina the pilgrims throw small stones at larger stone pillars. Surely it is almost ridiculous to believe that the great patriarch - the exemplar of true faith in those very early days - was the author of ceremonies whose rites were vested in stones, the very things from which the pagan idols were made. (Muhammad and the Religion of Islam, John Gilchrist)
- "This last was a magnificent stroke of policy, besides satisfying his own insuppressible hankering after Mecca and its fetish, for it bound the Meccans, and the Mecca-visiting Arabs to the new regime and faith as nothing else could have done." (The Reproach of Islam, Gairdner, p.71, referring to Muhammad's choice to perform the pagan pilgrimage; quoted in Muhammad and the Religion of Islam, John Gilchrist)
- The Ka'bah was then the holy of holies of paganism and securely protected against any attack against its authorities or sanctity. (The Life of Muhammad, Haykal, p. 43; quoted in Muhammad and the Religion of Islam, John Gilchrist)

- "the Arabian situation was polytheistic at the time of the first surviving records of it. (Britannica, Arabian Religions, p1059, 1979)
- Commenting on the evolution of religion in Arabia: "Another significant change was that a monotheistic religion, with "the Lord of Heaven and Earth" as the sole god, had become the faith of the state. Formerly the religion of South Arabia had been basically stellar, with 'Athtar holding the senior place as the patron of land and agriculture and, in Ma'in, even of trade. Each state or tribe had had its own moon god under a national or local name. The temples had been centres of religious life, and the priests of the moon gods had normally provided oracle services. Pilgrimage had been performed to certain temples of the moon gods, with rituals similar in many details to those of the pre-Islamic and Islamic pilgrimage to Mecca. Minor deities of agriculture and irrigation had been known, especially in Saba', as well as house gods and genies. The tribe Amir had practiced a semi-monotheistic religion-that of Dhii-Samdwi (Lord of Heavens). They worshipped no other god, although they paid homage to the gods of other communities in which they occasionally found themselves. The god's name resembles that of the "Lord of Heaven and Earth" of the monotheistic religion that emerged in the 5th century, but it is not known whether the latter developed from it." (Britannica, Arabia, History of, p1045, 1979)
- The question of pilgrimage which was an element foreign to nomadic civilization and of a late date among Semitic peoples (Studies on Islam, edited by Merlin L. Swartz, Pre-Islamic Bedouin Religion, by Joseph Henninger, 1981, p 3-22)
- IV. The Ka'ba In Legend And Superstition. The alleged religion of Abraham gave a basis for the esteem in which the Muslims held the Ka'ba. Legend attached itself to the Kur'anic statements and spun them out. As Snouck Ilurgronje has proved in his Mekkaansche Feest against Dozy's hypotheses (see his Israelielen in Mekka), there can be no question of a local Meccan tradition in this connection. There was, it is true, a local tradition, but it consists of semi-historical reminiscences of the last few centuries before Islam. But all that tradition relates regarding the origin of the Ka'ba and its connections with Biblical personages, belongs to Islamic legend. (First Encyclopedia of Islam, E.J. Brill, 1987, Islam, p. 587-591)
- On the other hand Muslim legend has developed the passage, Sura iii. 90: "Truly, the first temple that was founded for men is that in Bakka; a blessed house and a guidance for (all)

- creatures". The ambiguous expression according to which Ibrahim and Isma'il "raised" the foundations of the Ka'ba left room for the view that the foundations already existed on which he erected the building. (First Encyclopedia of Islam, E.J. Brill, 1987, Islam, p. 587-591)
- This legendary story of the origin of the Ka'ba was easily brought into conformity with the cosmological views current among Christians and Jews in the East, the central point of which was the sanctuary itself. Muslim tradition at first adopted this cosmology completely, as is evident from the statements which are still wholly under the influence of the predominance of Jerusalem. They were however not content with this and transferred a considerable part of these sayings to Mecca. (First Encyclopedia of Islam, E.J. Brill, 1987, Islam, p. 587-591)
 - The Islamic tradition furnishes several clues about the possible anthro-pological origins of the Ka'ba. Like several other shrines in Arabia, it was part of a haram, or sacred area, where intertribal fighting was forbidden in order to facilitate trade. The temple was evidently at the centre of a cult involving idol worship. The presiding deity was Hubal, a large carnelian statue kept inside the temple; 360 other idols were ranged outside. The three goddesses described in the Quran as the 'daughters of Allah' - Allat, 'Uzza and Manat - were also worshipped in the vicinity. By the Prophet's time Christian influences were making themselves felt. (Islam in the World, Malise Ruthven, 1984, p 28-48)
 - Like the Quran itself, the earliest Muslim sources suggest that the pre-Islamic cult of the Ka'ba had some astronomical significance. The historian Mas'udi (896-956) stated that certain people had regarded the Ka'ba as a temple dedicated to the Sun, Moon and the five visible planets (making up the mystical figure of seven, the number of circumambulations required for each tawaf). The story that there were exactly 360 idols placed round the temple also points to an astronomical significance. Among the votive gifts said to have been offered to the idols were golden suns and moons. (Islam in the World, Malise Ruthven, 1984, p 28-48)
 - They may then drink and fill their jars with Zamzam water before proceeding to the sa'i - running between the hillocks of Safa and Marwa, in imitation of Hagar's plight. The whole distance, some 460 metres, has to be covered seven times at something between a walk and a jog. (Islam in the World, Malise Ruthven, 1984, p 28-48)

- The strain of performing the sa'i, in which the pilgrim must travel some 3.5 kilometres, has been to some extent relieved by the architects who have enclosed the whole passage inside a long air-conditioned gallery. The marble-flanked walkway includes a special corridor where the old, infirm or disabled can be pushed along in wheelchairs. (Islam in the World, Malise Ruthven, 1984, p 28-48)
- The pilgrim who continues to make the Hajj, which only takes place at the appointed season, leaves the haram area after performing the sa'i and makes for the plain of 'Arafat, a vast natural amphitheatre surrounded by hills about 11 kilometres from Mecca. (Islam in the World, Malise Ruthven, 1984, p 28-48)
- Before the Saudis banned the use of private cars the journey could amount to ten or more hours of nightmarish struggle between traffic and pedestrians. In recent years the Saudis have tried to alleviate the situation by banning vehicles carrying less than nine passengers, but the confusion is still considerable. (Islam in the World, Malise Ruthven, 1984, p 28-48)
- At Muzdalifa - 'the place where one makes oneself agreeable' - the pilgrims collect the small pebbles, 49 in all, to be used in the most complicated and arcane of the Hajj ceremonies, the ritual stoning of the three pillars, or Jamarat, at Mina. The pebbles, each of which is supposed to be the size of a chick-pea, are thrown in sequences of seven at each of the three pillars situated about 300 metres apart along the road between Mina and Mecca, where a huge two-tier walkway has been constructed enabling the people to stone the pillars from either level. The ritual is purely pagan, and there is no reference to it in the Quran. The pilgrims perform it only because, according to the hadith traditions, the Prophet himself did so during his Farewell Pilgrimage. There is no mention in the canonical texts of the popular belief that the ceremonies involve the 'stoning of Satan'. Nevertheless the belief is held universally throughout the Muslim world, and is said to account for the violence with which many pilgrims attack the pillars. Ali Shariati, the Iranian radical, gives the ceremony an unabashed revolutionary symbolism: These pebbles will be used as your weapons to kill your enemy . . . What does the pebble represent? It represents a bullet ... Each soldier in Ibrahim's army has to shoot seventy bullets at the enemies in Mina. They are to be fired at the head, trunk and heart of the enemy. Only those which hit the enemy will be counted. If you are not an expert select more bullets to compensate for your lack of skill . . . If you hit one less than the

recommended number, you are not considered a soldier nor is your Hajj valid . (Islam in the World, Malise Ruthven, 1984, p 28-48)

- At Mina the wastage of meat has up till now been appalling, since most of it has had to be destroyed in lime-pits soon after the killing. Today the Saudi authorities are investing in freezer-plants and other ways of preserving the animal products. The animals are counted in 'sheep-units', rating from one for a sheep or goat up to seven for a fully grown cow or camel. In 1981 about one million 'sheep-units' were sacrificed, seventy per cent of them during the first day of sacrifice, and of these, about half between morning and midday. (Islam in the World, Malise Ruthven, 1984, p 28-48)
- The pagan background of all these rites, from the standing at t'Arafat to the Feast of Sacrifice, is still obscure. Muslim authorities are understandably reticent on the subject, while, for obvious reasons, archaeologists are unlikely to be admitted to the area in the foreseeable future. (Islam in the World, Malise Ruthven, 1984, p 28-48)
- Some anthropologists have seen in the standing at 'Arafat relics of an ancient rainmaking cult. (Islam in the World, Malise Ruthven, 1984, p 28-48)
- The 'ifada from 'Arafat to Muzdalifa, which in pre-Islamic times began before nightfall, may have represented the 'persecution' of the dying sun. The stone-throwing at Mina, according to the earliest Muslim sources, only occurred after the sun had passed the meridian, suggesting a ritual pursuit of the sun-demon, whose harsh rule ends with the summer. (Islam in the World, Malise Ruthven, 1984, p 28-48)
- Just as the Quran did not suddenly appear out of nowhere in a strange and incomprehensible language, but was assembled from existing verbal materials, so the central ritual of Islam, the Hajj, was arranged out of existing cultic practices. The actions themselves were almost unchanged, but their meaning was transformed to fit a new, vastly expanded, cosmic vision. The result was a religious and ideological tour de force. By abolishing the intercalary month, Muhammad freed the rituals from their seasonal connections: from now on the Hajj could fall at any time of the year, for the cosmic deity to whom all the rituals were to be addressed was the same God in autumn and spring, summer and winter. Similarly, the sanctuaries associated with particular localities were not abolished, but included within a set of rituals covering the whole area. 'The whole of 'Arafat is a place for standing, the whole of Muzdalifa is a place for stopping,

the whole of Mina is a place for sacrifice,' the Prophet is related to have said on the Farewell Pilgrimage. Similar effects were achieved by subtly adjusting the timing of the ancient ceremonies. Ancient taboos associated with the rituals were deliberately violated to demonstrate the impotence of the pagan gods and the inefficacy of the rituals when dedicated to them. But the forms of the rituals were preserved because the Prophet was fully aware of the importance they held for his people. Beyond that, he knew that the rituals formed part of a universal language composed of bodily movements as well as verbal utterances, by means of which human beings express their deepest needs and apprehensions. The remarkable expansion of Islam, especially in the Far East and tropical Africa, long after its initial political and military impetus had exhausted itself, was in no small measure due to the ease with which it absorbed local cults and then directed them towards the broader social and cosmological purpose of the monotheistic vision. (Islam in the World, Malise Ruthven, 1984, p 28-48)

- But being constantly exposed to torrents, it was destroyed, and was rebuilt by Qusaib ibn Kilab, who put a top to it. Up to this time it is said to have been open at the roof. (A Dictionary Of Islam, Thomas Patrick Hughes, 1965, Kaba, p 256)
- The roof was supported within by six pillars, and the statue of Hubal was placed over a wall then existing within the Ka'bah. This took place during the youth of Muhammad. Al-Azraqi, quoted by Burckhardt, says that the figure of the Virgin Mary and the infant Jesus was sculptured as a deity upon one of the six pillars nearest the gate. (A Dictionary Of Islam, Thomas Patrick Hughes, 1965, Kaba, p 256)
- According to the Traditions and the inventive genius of Muslim writers, the Ka'bah was first constructed in heaven (where a model of it still remains, called the Baitu 'l-Ma'mur) two thousand years before the creation of the world. Adam erected the Ka'bah on earth exactly below the spot its perfect model occupies in heaven, and selected the stones from the five sacred mountains, Sinai, al-Judi, Hire, Olivet, and Lebanon. Ten thousand angels were appointed to guard the structure; but, as Burckhardt remarks, they appear to have been often most remiss in their duty! At the Deluge the Sacred House was destroyed. But the Almighty is said to have instructed Abraham to rebuild it. In its reconstruction Abraham was assisted by his son Ishmael, who with his mother Hagar were at the time residents of Makkah, Abraham having journeyed from Syria in order to obey the commands of God. Upon digging they found

the original foundations of the building. But wanting a stone to mark the corner of the building, Ishmael started in search of one, and as he was going in the direction of Jabal Qubais, the angel Gabriel met him, and gave him the famous black stone. Ibn 'Abbas relates that the Prophet said, the black stone when it came down from Paradise was whiter than milk, but that it has become black from the sin of those who have touched it. (MisWf, book II. Ch. iv. pt. 2.) (A Dictionary Of Islam, Thomas Patrick Hughes, 1965, Kaba, p 256)

- The pagan Arabs practiced polytheism. They worshipped nature, stones, angels and demons. Particular reverence was accorded the three 'daughters of God', and various national, local and family idols. Each tribe gave allegiance to a special protector: one god to whom it turned in time of distress. Our modern altars may have had their beginnings in the stone worship of the ancients. One stone still holds a revered spot in the Arab heart. This is the stone that fell from paradise at the fall of Adam. Pure white it was and housed in a temple built by Seth, Adam's son, until a great flood ravaged the land, destroyed the temple, and buried it under the mud and debris. Tradition relates that the stone remained hidden until Abraham sent his wife Hagar into the desert with their infant son Ishmael. One day, weakened by thirst, Hagar laid her baby on the sand to rest. His fitful thrashings uncovered a spring of clear water near the site of the lost relic. It is told that an angel descended from heaven and helped recover the sacred stone and that Ishmael rebuilt the holy house of Seth with the assistance of Abraham and the archangel Gabriel. This, in brief, is the story of the Kaaba, holiest building in Islam. (Islam and the Arabs, Rom Landau, 1958 p 11-21)
- It is clear from these and similar Quranic texts that the original pilgrimage rituals were not so much being described to Abraham as alluded to for the benefit of a Meccan audience that was already quite familiar with them.' It was once again left for later commentators to fill in the details, not of the Hajj, to be sure, which was well known to all, but of Abraham and Ishmael's connection with it. (The Hajj, F. E. Peters, p 3-41, 1994)
- In this passage he describes how Abraham, at God's urging, performed that original pilgrimage ritual. Abu al-Walid related to us ... (from) Uthman ibn Saj: Muhammad ibn Ishaq reported to me: When Abraham the Friend of the Merciful finished building the sacred House, Gabriel came and said: "Circle it seven times!" and he circumambulated it seven times with Ishmael, touching all the corners during each circumambulation. When they had

- completed seven, he and Ishmael prayed two prostrations behind the stone [maqam]. He said: Gabriel got up with them and showed him all the ritual stations: al-Safa, al-Marwa, Mina, Muzdalifa, and Arafat. (The Hajj, F. E. Peters, p 3-41, 1994)
- As these accounts attempt to demonstrate, the complex ritual the Muslims call the Hajj or Pilgrimage can be traced back, in general and in each specific detail, to Adam and, more proximately, to Abraham, whose intent and practices Muhammad was to restore so many centuries later. For the non-Muslim, however, the Meccan rituals are striking remnants of a pagan, albeit Semitic, past in Arabia, which the Prophet of Islam permitted to survive by incorporating them into his own prescriptions. (The Hajj, F. E. Peters, p 3-41, 1994)
 - It was the Zamzam, then, or perhaps the two high places called Safa and Marwa, that established the sanctity of the site of Mecca, though how long before Qusayy we cannot say. (The Hajj, F. E. Peters, p 3-41, 1994)
 - As for archeological evidence, it is sparse indeed, particularly from Arabia, where excavation is still in its very early stage and the sparse results are speculative in the extreme. (The Hajj, F. E. Peters, p 3-41, 1994)
 - In a chapter entitled "The Building of the Ka'ba by the Quraysh in the Age of Barbarism," the Meccan historian at-Azi-aqi (d. 834 C.F.) collected some of the traditions still extant on the early appearance of the House before its substantial reconstruction during the early manhood of Muhammad. Some men from Quraysh sat in the sanctuary ... and were remembering the building of the Ka'ba and they described how it was before that time. It was built of dried [unmortared] stones and not with clay or mud. Its door was on ground level and it had no roof or ceiling. The curtain (kiswa) was hung on its wall on one side and was tied to the top of the center of the wall. On the right as one entered the Ka'ba there was a pit where gifts of money and goods for the Ka'ba were deposited. In this pit sat a snake to guard it, which God had sent at the time of the (tribe of) Jurhum.... The horns of the ram that Abraham had slaughtered (in place of Isaac or Ishmael) were hanging on the wall facing the entrance. The were ornaments hanging in it which had been given as gifts. (Azraqi 1858: 106) Tabari tells a story from Ibn Ishaq that casts a little more light on the earlier building: The reason for their [the Quraysh's] demolition of the ka'ba (early in the seventh century C.E.) was that at this time it consisted of loose stones rising to somewhat above a man's height, and they wished to make it higher and roof it over since some men,

- Quraysh and others, had stolen the treasure of the Ka'ba, which was kept in a well in its interior. (Tabai-i, Annals 1.1130 = Tabari vi: 51) By this account the Ka'ba does not appear to be a house at all but rather some kind of enclosure built around a pit or dry well, an enclosure that was, however, draped with a cloth curtain (kiswa) in a manner to give it the appearance of a tent. ... A tent like structure makes more sense, and it has been plausibly suggested that the later cubiform stone building, the ancestor of the one that stands in Mecca today, succeeded a square or quadrangular tent and so was distinguished from the round tents of the inhabitants of the settlement.¹⁹ The sequence would not be very different, then, from the Israelite one: the Ark of the desert wanderings continued to be housed in a tent even after its transfer to urban Jerusalem (2 Samuel 6: 17); and when it was finally housed in a stone building, that "holy of holies" was likewise a ka'ba, twenty cubits in length and width and height (1 Kings 6: 20). (The Hajj, F. E. Peters, p 3-41, 1994)
- Nor was Mecca's the only Such building in Arabia. An early Muslim historian of the antiquities, Hisham ibn al-Kalbi, reported the presence of other ka'bas in and around the peninsula: The Banu al-Harith Ibn Ka'b had in Najran a ka'ba which they venerated. ... The Iyad had another ka'ba in Sindad, (which is located) in a region between Kufa and Basra (in Iraq). (The Hajj, F. E. Peters, p 3-41, 1994)
 - We cannot say, then, how typical the obviously crude Meccan structure was. But whether typical or not, its primitive and makeshift architecture comes as no surprise: not only was it situated in a wadi, and so vulnerable to the normal destructive consequences; but the Meccan Ka'ba was also built to serve people who were originally nomads and who had, even by the late sixth century, so little skill at construction that they required the assistance of a foreign carpenter to put a timber roof on the edifice. But for all that, it was a temple and had all the primary characteristics of such: a quadrangular cella oriented to the cardinal compass points, 20 a sacred rock and sacred spring, a characteristic haram with the usual privileges of the right of asylum, and so on. (The Hajj, F. E. Peters, p 3-41, 1994)
 - Although it is true that the primary liturgy connected with the Mecca building, the ritual circumambulation, was performed outside, there is almost no trace, either before or under Islam, of the notion that the interior of the Ka'ba was in any way more sacred than the surrounding Haram. Access to it was controlled, as we shall have many occasions to see, but exclusively, it would appear, on the grounds of political privilege. ...The Ka'ba was

- not, then, a more sacred haram within the larger Haram that surrounded it. (The Hajj, F. E. Peters, p 3-41, 1994)
- According to Muslim tradition, this had been a part, though not a structural part, of the building from the beginning, that is to say, from Adam's original construction of the House of God. But the tradition also remembered that the stone had come from Abu Qubays, a mountain overlooking Mecca." The two strands of tradition were harmonized in an account whereby the stone was concealed on Abu Qubays during the era of the Flood, when Adam's original Ka'ba was destroyed, and then restored to Abraham for inclusion in his version of the Ka'ba. But the harmonization was not perfect. Other traditions recollected that the Black Stone, or at least its inclusion in the Ka'ba, was of much more recent origin. Ibn Sa'd says that the Quraysh brought it down from Abu Qubays only four years before Muhammad's first revelation. 21 In another account, from al-Fakihi, it is traced back to the Quraysh's first reconstruction of the building, possibly at the time of Qusayy. (The Hajj, F. E. Peters, p 3-41, 1994)
 - But if, as seems equally likely, the stone was originally one of the portable betyls of the early settlers at Mecca, its incorporation into the structure of the Ka'bal like the depiction of similar stones on the walls of temples at Madain Salih and elsewhere, would signal the decision of nomads to make a fixed settlement." (The Hajj, F. E. Peters, p 3-41, 1994)
 - It has been suggested, for example, that a low wall, and so the hijr enclosure, once surrounded the Ka'ba on all sides and marked the area within which the idols were worshiped through sacrifice,³¹ or, more enticingly but less convincingly, that the hatim represents the remains of the apse of a Christian church oriented toward Jerusalem, which, it will be seen, was the direction in which once Muhammad prayed while he was still at Mecca. The word hijr itself means "inviolable" or "taboo," and it occurs once in that sense in the Quran (6:137-139), in reference not to the area near the Ka'ba but to animals and crops earmarked as belonging to the gods, a sense that supports the contention that the hijr, whatever its original extent, may have served as a pen for the animals destined for sacrifice to the idols around the Ka'ba.³³ Whether it was so used in Muhammad's own lifetime seems doubtful, however, at least on the evidence of the Muslim authorities. As the hijr is portrayed in Muhammad's day, it was a place of common assembly where political matters were discussed, or people prayed, or, as it appears, slept. (The Hajj, F. E. Peters, p 3-41, 1994)

- Al-Fakihi then records a tradition traced back to Ibn Abbas stating that there is an inscription on the maqam saying: "This is the House of God, He put it on the quadrangles of His throne, its sustenance will come from this and that, its people will be the first to suspend its sanctity." (The Hajj, F. E. Peters, p 3-41, 1994)
- If pilgrims are drawn to it, so too are historians, who see in the source called Zamzam a plausible explanation of why there was a sanctuary in the wadi of Mecca in the first place. In the nineteenth century Julius Wellhausen pronounced the Zamzam "the only spring of Mecca and so likely the origin of the holy place as well as the city," and other authorities have generally been inclined to agree. There are problems, however. Other wells quenched Mecca," as Ibn Ishaq reveals when speaking of the Zamzam. Zamzam utterly eclipsed the other wells from which the pilgrims used to get their water, and the people went to it because it was in the sacred enclosure and because its water was superior to any other; and also because it was the well of Ishmael, son of Abraham. Because of it the Banu Abd Manaf behaved boastfully towards the Quraysh and the other Arabs. (Ibn Ishaq 1955: 65) The Zamzam was not, then, unique; it was simply superior, and the basis of that superiority-leaving aside the debated question of the quality of its water-was that its origin went back to Abrahamic days, when, as we have seen, it was miraculously discovered and saved the life of Ishmael. Zamzam, it was argued, was thus mentioned in the Bible, particularly if one accepted its identification with the miraculous life-saving spring mentioned in Genesis 21:19. (The Hajj, F. E. Peters, p 3-41, 1994)
- Safa and Marwa ... This is as much as the Quran says. But the Muslim tradition offers two explanations for the practice, one "pagan" and one "Abrahamic." As we have already seen, the latter simply identifies Hagar's frantic search for water for the infant Ishmael with the ritual running between the hills before her providential discovery of the Zamzam. What is obviously an older and more primitive explanation has to do with two humans named Asaf and Na'ila, members of the jurhum: (The Quraysh) adopted Asaf (or Isaf) and Na'ila by the place of Zamzam, sacrificing beside them. They were (originally) a man and a woman of jurhum ... who copulated in the Ka'ba so God transformed them into two stones But God alone knows whether this is the truth. (Ibn Ishaq 1955: 37) Despite Ibn Ishaq's explicit misgivings, the colorful story became current in the Muslim authors and has been the point of departure for a

wide variety of attempts to explain the reality, if any, behind the story and its connection with the "running" ritual .17 The names, which have to do with stones, appear to be Aramaic rather than Arabic and so have suggested foreign origins. What were transparently sacred stones, or perhaps stone idols-the jurhum story may reflect an etiological myth or be a distant echo of some form of ritual prostitution at the Ka'ba or nearby 48 were originally worshiped atop the "high places" of Safa and Marwa and then brought down somewhere in the vicinity of the Ka'ba by Qusayy himself. The circumambulation ritual continued to be performed at the two hills, but thereafter sacrifices were offered at the new sites of the idols. (The Hajj, F. E. Peters, p 3-41, 1994)

- The construction of the Ka'ba is described in the Quran as the work of Abraham and Ishmael (2:127), and the circumstantial evidence suggests that this may have been a common belief among the pre-Islamic Quraysh. Yet there is no evidence, Quranic or circumstantial, that such a claim was made by Muhammad or had been accepted by the pagan Quraysh for the various Hajj rituals. Their association with Abraham appears to have occurred well after the Hajj had been embraced as an acceptable and meritorious way for a Muslim to worship God (Quran 2:197; 3:97). Absent the Abrahamic motif, the Hajj of Muhammad's Mecca disintegrates into an obscure series of acts centering not on Mecca but on the mountain called Arafat, eleven miles east of the city. The Hajj, it has been maintained, originally had nothing to do with Mecca, as even the Islamic version of the ritual testifies: the climax of the Muslim Hajj was and is the "standing" at Arafat, followed by a procession to Mina and sacrifice there, after which the pilgrim was free to remove the ritual vestments." More, it was common knowledge that not the Quraysh but the Sufa, and later the Tamim, held the religious offices, the so-called "permission" (ijaza), at Arafat and Mina." And not only was Mecca not part of the original Hajj; there may have been no trading in the city in connection with its own rituals. Such, at any rate, one might conclude from the fact that the famous pilgrimage fairs-and Mecca is never numbered among them-are associated with Arafat and Mina and that the Quraysh seem to play no major role in them. 14 Thus the Meccan ritual was at some point joined to the Hajj, probably by Muhammad himself. (The Hajj, F. E. Peters, p 3-41, 1994)
- It may well have been Muhammad himself who determined that the Arafat ritual was the "Great Hajj" and the Umra the "Lesser," a distinction nowhere apparent in pre-Islamic times. The

distinction between Umra and Hajj is already present in the Quran (2:197), but the latter ritual, which became an obligation for every Muslim, may be a composite of several different cult activities some at Mecca, some at shrines outside the city, woven, whether by Muhammad or by someone earlier, into a single liturgical act. The "running" between Safa and Marwa, for example, originally belonged to neither the Umra nor the Hajj, and some Muslims in fact protested its inclusion in either, objections that were presumably silenced by the revelation of Quran 2:158. There is no evidence that Muhammad substantially altered any of the basic rituals of the Meccan pilgrimages, whereas he did modify the chaotic "overflowing" (ifada) from Arafat and the time of the departure from Muzdalifa for Mina." So we may assume that the donning of special clothing and the entering into a taboo state was practiced in pre-Islamic Mecca as it was elsewhere in the Semitic world. The ritual in the Haram had chiefly to do with a circumambulation of the Ka'ba, which in Islamic days included the "greeting of the Black Stone," a gesture of touching, pressing, or kissing with abundant precedents in pre-Islamic practice, though of a very different import, as we shall see. Outside the Haram, ritual required the devotee to run back and forth, another type of "circumambulation," between the two hills of Safa and Marwa, the sites of the well-known idols of Asaf and Na'ila in pre-Islamic days. This latter ritual ended with the offering of sacrifices at Marwa." (The Hajj, F. E. Peters, p 3-41, 1994)

- Nor could they circumambulate the House except in the garment of the Hums. If they had no such garments they had to go round naked. If any man or woman felt scruples when they had no Hums garments, then they could go round in their ordinary clothes; but they had to throw them away afterwards so that neither they nor anyone else could make use of them. The Arabs called these clothes "the cast-off " They imposed all these restrictions on the Arabs, who accepted them and halted at Arafat, hastened from it, and circumambulated the House naked. The men at least went naked, while the women laid aside all their clothes except a shift wide open back and front. (Ibn Ishaq 1955: 87-88) (The Hajj, F. E. Peters, p 3-41, 1994)
- The pagan Ka'bah, which became the Palladium of Islam, was an unpretentious cube-like (hence the name) building of primitive simplicity, originally roofless, serving as a shelter for a black meteorite which was venerated as a fetish. At the birth of Islam the structure was that rebuilt in 608 probably by an Abyssinian from the wreckage of a Byzantine or Abyssinian ship destroyed

on the shore of the Red Sea. (History Of The Arabs, Philip K. Hitti, 1937, p 96-101)

- Each pilgrim makes the tawaf or ritual circumambulation of the Ka'ba, a ceremony that has changed little, if at all, since pre-Islamic times. He will make seven circuits of the building, in an anti-clockwise movement, during which he will try to kiss, touch or otherwise greet the famous Black Stone which is set in a silver casing in the eastern corner. Muslims are taught that this is a fragment of the original temple, for the Ka'ba is said to have been rebuilt several times, before, during and after the Prophet's lifetime. (Islam in the World, Malise Ruthven, 1984, p 28-48)
- I intend to put forward some of the evidence which has led me to think that the way in which the question is usually answered, both in the traditional Muslim literature and in works of modern scholarship, produces an inadequate account of the origins and development of the Muslim sanctuary, and I wish to propose the outlines of an alternative way of envisaging the islamization of the Meccan sanctuary. ... The process of islamization is not seen to involve any radical changes in the organization of the sanctuary, nor in the ceremonies associated with it. ... the Muslim sanctuary at Mecca continues to be seen as basically a continuation of the sanctuary of pagan times in the same place, and the islamization of that sanctuary continues to be associated with the prophetic career of Muhammad. (Studies On The First Century Of Islamic Society, Editor G.H.A. Juynboll, Chapter 2: The Origins of the Muslim Sanctuary at Mecca, G.R. Hawting, p23-48)
- The evidence which I wish to concentrate upon in this paper, and which I think is difficult to reconcile with the generally accepted version of the islamization of the Meccan sanctuary, is provided by the use in the Muslim literature of certain terms or names which are connected with the sanctuary at Mecca. ... These names or terms, it must be emphasized, are now applied to some of the most important features of the Muslim sanctuary at Mecca, but the evidence seems to show that they originated independently of that sanctuary and only later came to be used to designate features of it. (Studies On The First Century Of Islamic Society, Editor G.H.A. Juynboll, Chapter 2: The Origins of the Muslim Sanctuary at Mecca, G.R. Hawting, p23-48)
- Snouck Hurgronje's argument, which has become one of the most widely accepted ideas of modern scholarship on the beginnings of Islam, was that the adoption of the Meccan sanctuary by Muhammad has to be seen as a reaction to the rejection of him by the Jews of Medina. Only in the face of this,

rejection, according to Snouck Hurgronje, did Muhammad move towards the arabization of his religion, a move in which the adoption of the Meccan sanctuary was an important step. And only at this time did Muhammad begin to formulate the doctrine that the Meccan sanctuary had been founded by Abraham, an idea which grew out of his contact with the Jews of Medina. (Studies On The First Century Of Islamic Society, Editor G.H.A. Juynboll, Chapter 2: The Origins of the Muslim Sanctuary at Mecca, G.R. Hawting, p23-48)

- It seems that the Muslim sanctuary at Mecca is the result of a sort of compromise between a pre-existing pagan sanctuary and sanctuary ideas which had developed first in a Jewish milieu. ... At a certain stage in the development of the new religion the need arose to assert its independence, and one of the most obvious ways in which this could be done was by establishing a specifically Muslim sanctuary. (Studies On The First Century Of Islamic Society, Editor G.H.A. Juynboll, Chapter 2: The Origins of the Muslim Sanctuary at Mecca, G.R. Hawting, p23-48)
- The Ka'ba itself is frequently said to have been demolished and rebuilt.⁷ The Black Stone is on a number of occasions removed from the Ka'ba and then restored to its place.⁸ The stone called Maqam Ibrahim is moved around by floods and by human actions.⁹ The well of Zamzam is "discovered" on two separate occasions.¹⁰ Al-Masjid al-Varam, explained as the mosque containing the Ka'ba at Mecca, is several times rebuilt and enlarged. (Studies On The First Century Of Islamic Society, Editor G.H.A. Juynboll, Chapter 2: The Origins of the Muslim Sanctuary at Mecca, G.R. Hawting, p23-48)
- even Muslim tradition recognized that the history of the sanctuary and its incorporation by Islam could not be presented as a simple, straightforward development. ... Furthermore, the traditional material on the history of the sanctuary is hardly of a sort to inspire confidence in it as a record of historical events. Sometimes we find the same basic material being made to refer to two allegedly separate events (Studies On The First Century Of Islamic Society, Editor G.H.A. Juynboll, Chapter 2: The Origins of the Muslim Sanctuary at Mecca, G.R. Hawting, p23-48)
- Even if we could discount the information which is obviously legendary or unhistorical in character, then, the contradictions, overlapping and duplications which occur in the traditions about the history of the Meccan sanctuary would make it a hazardous, in my view, impossible, undertaking to write a straightforward narrative history of the sanctuary and its islamization. (Studies

On The First Century Of Islamic Society, Editor G.H.A. Juynboll, Chapter 2: The Origins of the Muslim Sanctuary at Mecca, G.R. Hawting, p23-48)

- If we now look more closely at the use of a number of important names or terms in the traditions, it appears that on some occasions it is only with difficulty that they can be understood in the sense in which they are now used with reference to the Muslim sanctuary at Mecca. It seems that they have been redefined at some stage so that they have come to be used in a sense which is not their original one. (Studies On The First Century Of Islamic Society, Editor G.H.A. Juynboll, Chapter 2: The Origins of the Muslim Sanctuary at Mecca, G.R. Hawting, p23-48)
- Leaving this question on one side, however, it seems clear that, whether the references are to al-Maqam or Maqam Ibrahim, there is frequently some difficulty in reconciling the references with the Meccan sanctuary as we know it, or some suggestion that they are not to the stone which now bears the name Maqam Ibrahim. ... The name has then been reinterpreted and applied to the stone which is now so called. (Studies On The First Century Of Islamic Society, Editor G.H.A. Juynboll, Chapter 2: The Origins of the Muslim Sanctuary at Mecca, G.R. Hawting, p23-48)
- "The Holy Monument. "In Arabic, Al Mashar al haram. It is a mountain in the farther part of Muzdalifa, where it is said Muhammad stood praying and praising God, till his face became extremely shining." - Sale. This legend is probably adapted from the story of the the shining of Moses face on Sinai." (A Comprehensive Commentary on the Koran, E. M. Wherry, 1896, p 362)
- Every nature cult is inclined to regard a sacred object as a personal human being. When possible, this tendency often finds expression in clumsy attempts to interpret the sacred object anthropomorphically. Hence several of the Arabian stone fetishes were in process of becoming idols. Al-Galsad looked like 'the torso of a man of white stone with a black head.' In the Ka'ba there was an actual idol representing the God Hubal. The sacred stone image was surrounded by consecrated territory, a Hima, which often contained rich vegetation and a natural water-supply. In the sacred grove there was frequently a spring. Thus, on one side of the Ka'ba was the well Zemzem, whose very salty and disagreeable water is still regarded by Mohammedans as particularly holy. Within a Hima an animal could not be killed, nor a tree felled. Tame animals which fled into it could not be

recovered, and some animals which had to be withdrawn from secular use because of ancient taboos—for example, female camels which had brought forth male colts for a number of years in succession—were placed in these sacred enclosures. As in other lands, so in Arabia, sacrifice was the method of establishing contact with the divinity. First the sinews of the hind-legs of the sacrificial animal, usually a camel, were severed, so that it fell over; thereupon its throat was cut with an archaic knife, and the blood was made to drop upon the sacred stone. The flesh was usually eaten by the sacrificer, but sometimes it was shared by guests whom he had invited to the feast. However, some sacrifices were consecrated entirely to the divinity. The sacrificial animal had then to be left lying upon the sacred place, to feed the beasts and birds of prey. Some sacrifices were prescribed by traditional customs. (Mohammed: The man and his faith, Tor Andrae, 1936, Translated by Theophil Menzel, 1960, p13-30)

- When a boy attained the age of seven a sheep was sacrificed, and the 'pagan hair,' aqīqa, of the boy was cut, from which act the whole custom, which Islam also adopted, receives its name. In offering a sacrifice a large number of taboos had to be observed until the sacrifice had been completed: such as no drinking of wine, no washing or combing, no sex contact with women, wearing nothing upon the head, and carrying no weapons. In connection with the annual sacrifices another cult form was retained, especially at the Ka'ba. During a certain month the Arabs of the vicinity assembled to walk around the sanctuary. This circumambulation, the tawaf, which even to-day constitutes the climax of the Mohammedan pilgrimage, began and ended at the sacred stone, and was supposed to proceed toward the right, that is, counter sun-wise. At the beginning or at the end of the ceremony the black stone was sometimes kissed, or a bow was made with outstretched arms toward the wall between the stone and the Eastern door. This usage is obviously related to the ritual dance or the circling of the sacred object, the sacred tree, the Maypole, or the fire—the purpose apparently being to come into close contact with the power residing in the cult object, or to evoke an especially strong response from it. In addition, this sacred encircling is a very typical example of the shifting of motive which often takes place within the same magico-religious rite. That is to say, the act is performed not merely in order to obtain power from the cult object, but also in order to bind with the divinity or power, to compel it or to surround it a protective magic circle.

(Mohammed: The man and his faith, Tor Andrae, 1936, Translated by Theophil Menzel, 1960, p13-30)

- Originally the valley between Safa and Marwa, the two small hills north of the Ka'ba, also belonged to the tawaf. Another ceremony, which was not connected with the rites of the Ka'ba before the rise of Islam, is the Hajj, the annual pilgrimage to 'Arafat, about two miles east of Mecca, toward Mina. This took place in a different month from the tawaf. Those making it gathered and waited for the signal of the leader before beginning the journey to Muzdalifa, where the night was spent in watching. just at daybreak they all proceeded to Mina. On the way they passed three stone-heaps, upon which every participant cast a stone. At Mina an animal was sacrificed, and when the rite was completed the participants cut off their hair and put on their everyday clothes as a sign that they were now leaving the Ihram. In the main this is still included in the pilgrimage to Mecca prescribed by Mohammed. Thus the rites of 'Arafat and Mina are so combined with it that the pilgrims must, after they have cut off their hair, go back to Mecca and perform a tawaf. (Mohammed: The man and his faith, Tor Andrae, 1936, Translated by Theophil Menzel, 1960, p13-30)
- So the ancient paganism of Arabia may in general be regarded as an undeveloped polytheism, in which a development had just barely begun which would have gradually produced a pantheon consisting of a hierarchy of gods, formed by associating together a number of independent individual divinities. (Mohammed: The man and his faith, Tor Andrae, 1936, Translated by Theophil Menzel, 1960, p13-30)
- "The rites and ceremonies connected with the Hajj and Umrah are exceedingly puerile, and decidedly inconsistent with the spirit of Islam. The idolatrous customs of the ancient Arabs, though sanctified by the teaching of the Qur'an and the example of Muhammad, but poorly comport with the monotheistic teaching of the reformer of Makkah, and come far short of "confirming the former Scriptures." Its sanction by Muhammad is one of the darkest plots on his religion, and shows at the same time how far the politician of Madina differed from the preacher of Makkah. How his apologists fail to see the inconsistency of his conduct and teaching here, not only with the dignity of a prophet of God, but with the character of an honest man, is beyond our comprehension. The kissing of the Black Stone and the Yamani Pillar was so manifestly inconsistent with the doctrine. of Islam, that naught but the example of the prophet and the implicit obedience of his followers secured its perpetuation. The fiery

Omar, kissing the stone, said, "Verily I know that thou art a stone; thou dost no good or harm in the world, and if it was not that I saw the prophet kiss thee, I would not kiss thee !" Matthews' Mishqat ul Masabih, book 11. chap. 4. part 3. (A Comprehensive Commentary on the Koran, E. M. Wherry, 1896, p 360, quoting Matthews)

- "Remember him, &c. The heathen customs of circling; round the Kaabah, kissing the Black Stone, capering between Arafat and Muzdalifa, and throwing pebbles in Mina, are to be sanctified by prayers and praise to Allah, The skeleton of Arab stone-worship and magianism was thus clothed in the habiliments of Islam. See, on this subject, Muir's, Life of Mahomet, vol. i., introduction, pp. ccxiii. and ccxiii." (A Comprehensive Commentary on the Koran, E. M. Wherry, 1896, p 362)
- "Jalaluddin says this passage was revealed because the followers of Muhammad made a scruple of going round these mountains as the idolaters did. But the true reason of his allowing this relic of ancient superstition seems to be the difficulty he found in preventing it . . . The Tafsir-i-Raufi and Tafsir Fatah al aziz relate that in former times two pillars were erected on these two hills to commemorate the judgment of God upon two notable sinners, Asaf, a man, and Naila, a woman, who had committed adultery in the holy Kasbah. When the people fell into idolatry they worshipped these as images of God. (A Comprehensive Commentary on the Qur'an, E. M. Wherry, Vol. 1, p.347).
- Anyone who has studied comparative religion cannot fail to be struck by the similarities between the Temple of Judaism and the Ka'aba of Islam. (John Gilchrist, The Temple, The Ka'aba, and the Christ, 1980)
- It was only as a result of the opposition in Medina from the Jews that Muhammad changed his qiblah to Mecca. What is most significant about this incident is that the Prophet of Islam himself, nearly six hundred years after the destruction of the Temple in Jerusalem, chose this place as his initial qiblah - and that, according to the Qur'an, at God's command. (John Gilchrist, The Temple, The Ka'aba, and the Christ, 1980)
- secular history in no way supports the Qur'an's claim that the Ka'aba was ever a place of monotheistic, non-idolatrous worship. The first mention of the Ka'aba is found in the writings of Diodorus Siculus who, about 60 BC, described it as a "temple greatly revered by the Arabs". Accordingly the Ka'aba dates back at least to before the time of Christ. (John Gilchrist, The Temple, The Ka'aba, and the Christ, 1980)

- We do have clear evidence, however, that the Ka'aba is not of monotheistic origin. We refer to the black stone built into its east corner known as al-hajarul-aswad. Before Muhammad's time the Arabs worshiped stones and the black stone was one of these objects of worship. Not only was the kissing of this stone incorporated into Islam, but the whole form of the Hajj Pilgrimage today is fundamentally that of the Arabs before Islam. Muhammad only changed the meaning of the formalities - he made no attempt to change the forms and rites of the pilgrimage themselves. (John Gilchrist, *The Temple, The Ka'aba, and the Christ*, 1980)
- Secular history knows of only one form of pre-Islamic veneration of the Ka'aba and that is the idolatry of the pagan Arabs. There is no corroborative evidence whatsoever for the Qur'an's claim that the Ka'aba was initially a house of monotheistic worship. Instead there certainly is evidence as far back as history can trace the origins and worship of the Ka'aba that it was thoroughly pagan and idolatrous in content and emphasis. (John Gilchrist, *The Temple, The Ka'aba, and the Christ*, 1980)
- Similar shrines existed all over Arabia at the time of Muhammad. One still stands at the al-Kabir mosque in Yemen. It is strikingly similar to the Ka'aba in Mecca. (John Gilchrist, *The Temple, The Ka'aba, and the Christ*, 1980)
- Al-Kindi, one of the early Christian apologists against Islam, pointed out that Islam and its god Allah did not come from the Bible but from the paganism of the Sabeans. They did not worship the God of the Bible but the moon-god and his daughters al-Uzza, al-Lat, and Manat (Three Early Christian-Muslim Debates, ed. by N. A. Newman, Hatfield, PA, IBRI, 1994, pp.357, 413, 426).
- "Islam proved itself to be ... a separate and antagonistic religion which had sprung up from idolatry" (Three Early Christian-Muslim Debates, ed. by N. A. Newman, Hatfield, PA, IBRI, 1994, p 719)
- "In *Bulugh al-'Arab fi Ahwal al-'Arab*, we read, 'The four sacred months, Rajab, Dhu al-Qa'da, Dhu al-Hijja and Muharram, had been considered sacred during the pre-Islamic period [Jahiliya]. Raids, taking revenge, war, fighting and disputes were forbidden during them. If a man were to meet his enemy who killed his father or brother during these months, he would not quarrel with him... During the sacred months, [the people] were under restriction not to fight or make raids, and had to remove [their] spearheads as a sign that they would avoid fighting at all costs.' Obviously, Islam borrowed the hallowing of these months from

Pre-Islamic Arabs and introduced nothing new into the world." (Is the Qur'an Infallible?, 'Abdallah 'Abd al-Fadi, Light of Life, , p. 127, non-muslim)

- "The Romans and Abyssinians were identified with Christianity. Whole tribes and districts held up the banner of Judaism and waged war in its propagation. The Persian power was the exponent of fire-worship; and the Arabs in general were devoted to that native idolatry which had its center in the national sanctuary of the Kaaba...The religion most widely prevalent in Arabia, when Muhammad began life, was a species of heathenism or idol-worship, which had its local center in Mecca and its temple... According to a theory held by many, this temple had been sourceally connected with the ancient worship of the sun, moon and stars, and its circumambulation by the worshippers had a symbolical reference to the rotation of the heavenly bodies. Within its precincts and in its neighborhood there were found many idols, such as Hubal, Lat, Ozza, Manah, Wadd, Sawa, Yaghut, Nasr, Isaf, Naila, etc. A black stone in the temple wall was regarded with superstitious awe as eminently sacred...The attempt of the Mussulmans to derive it direct from a stone altar or pillar, erected by Abraham and his son Ishmael, in that identical locality, is altogether unsupported by history, and, in fact, flagrantly contrary to the Biblical record of the life of Abraham and his son. The pagan character of the temple is sufficiently marked by the statement of Muhammadan writers that before its purification by their Prophet, it contained no less than 360 idols, as many as there were days in their year; and that on its walls were painted the figures of angels, prophets, saints, including those of Abraham and Ishmael, and even of the Virgin Mary with her infant Son...Muhammad, with great practical insight and shrewdness, seized on this advantage and retained the heathen shrine of his native city as the local center of Islam. He sanctioned it by his own example as a place of religious pilgrimage for all his followers. (Muhammad and Muhammadanism, S.W. Koelle, 1889, p. 17-19)
- "The customs of heathenism have left an indelible mark on Islam, notably in the rites of the pilgrimage (on which more will be said later), so that for this reason alone something ought to be said about the chief characteristics of Arabian paganism. (Islam, Alfred Guillaume, 1956, p 6-7)
- "Islam for its part ensured the survival of these pre-Islamic constituents, endowed them with a universal significance, and provided them with a context within which they have enjoyed a most remarkable longevity. Some of these significant

constituents, nomadic and sedentary, the pre-Islamic roots which have formed the persistent heritage, deserve to be noted and discussed... The pre-Islamic Pilgrimage in its essential features survives, indeed is built into the very structure of Islam as one of its Five Pillars of Faith." (The Cambridge History of Islam, Vol. I, ed. P.M. Holt, 1970, p. 27)

- "That Islam was conceived in idolatry is shown by the fact that many rituals performed in the name of Allah were connected with the pagan worship that existed before Islam. And today, millions of Moslems pray towards Mecca, where the famous revered black stone is located. 1. Before Islam Allah was reported to be know as: the supreme of a pantheon of gods; the name of a god whom the Arabs worshipped; the chief god of the pantheon; Ali-ilah; the god; the supreme; the all-powerful; all-knowing; and totally unknowable; the predeterminer of everyone's life destiny; chief of the gods; the special deity of the Quraish; having three daughters: Al Uzzah (Venus), Manah (Destiny), and Alat; having the idol temple at Mecca under his name (House of Allah).; the mate of Alat, the goddess of fate. 2. Because the Ka'aba, the sacred shrine which contains the Black Stone, in Mecca was used for pagan idol worship before Islam and even called the House of Allah at that time. 3. Because the rituals involved with the Islamic Pilgrimage are either identical or very close to the pre-Islamic pagan idol worship at Mecca. 4. Because of other Arabian history which points to heathen worship of the sun, moon, and the stars, as well as other gods, of which I believe Allah was in some way connected to. This then would prove to us that Allah is not the same as the true God of the Bible whom we worship, because God never changes." (Is Allah The Same God As The God Of The Bible?, M. J. Afshari, p 6, 8-9)
- In addition to the sun, moon and the star Al-Zuhara, the Arabs worshipped the planets Saturn, Mercury, and Jupiter, the stars Sirius and Canopus and the constellations of Orion, Ursa Major and Minor, and the seven Pleiades. Some stars and planets were given human characters,. According to legend, Al-Dabaran, one of the stars in the Hyades group, fell deeply in love with Al-Thurayya, the fairest of the Pleiades stars. With the approval of the Moon, he asked for her hand in marriage." (Fabled Cities, Princes & Jin from Arab Myths and Legends, Khairt al-Saeh, 1985, p. 28-30.)
- Certain places where divine presence manifested itself became sacred. Bounds were set, and inside these no living creature could be killed. As a result they became places of asylum, where

those pursued by an avenger could take refuge. They were tended by priestly families. Homage was paid to the divinity with offerings and the sacrifice of animals and perhaps, occasionally, of human beings. Certain sanctuaries were the object of pilgrimage (hajj) at which a variety of rituals were performed, consisting notably of ceremonial processions around the sacred object. Certain prohibitions had to be observed during these rites, such as in many cases abstention from sexual relations. The blood taboo was particularly widespread. Boys were ceremoniously circumcised. The Arabs practised divination from the flight of birds, or from the direction taken by animals. They sought oracles from the gods by shooting arrows. The truth could be discovered by means of ordeals. Magic was common. People feared the evil eye and protected themselves with amulets. (Mohammed, Maxime Rodinson, 1961, translated by Anne Carter, 1971, p 16-17)

- This religion was the result of a long development. Prominent among the objects worshipped originally were stones and trees. These were sometimes regarded not as the divinities but as their house or dwelling. (Muhammad at Mecca, W. Montgomery Watt, 1953, p 23-29)
- Five other gods are mentioned in an account of Noah (71.23): Wadd, Suwd', Yaghuth, Ya'uq Nasr; around 600 AD they were worshipped in Arabia, predominantly by South Arabian tribes, and seem to have been masculine. (Muhammad's Mecca, W. Montgomery Watt, Chapter 3: Religion In Pre-Islamic Arabia, p26-45)
- In so far as they were originally fertility deities, they would cease to have much meaning for those Arabs who abandoned agriculture for the life of the desert, since little of the regularity of nature was experienced there. On the other hand, many religious rites and practices were observed, especially pilgrimage. (Muhammad's Mecca, W. Montgomery Watt, Chapter 3: Religion In Pre-Islamic Arabia, p26-45)
- On the other hand, certain practices continued, such as pilgrimages to sacred spots in and around Mecca; the haram or sacred area of Mecca was respected, but the violations during the war of the Fijir are probably signs of declining belief. In the crisis of the Meccan state Abfa- Sufyin took the goddesses al-Lit and Al-'Uzzi into battle against the Muslims at Uhud; this recalls how the Israelites took the ark into battle with them, and suggests that the remnants of pagan belief in Arabia were now at the level of magic. In this sense many old ceremonies seem to have remained, but they are to be reckoned as superstition

- rather than religion. (Muhammad at Mecca, W. Montgomery Watt, 1953, p 23-29)
- "196/2 The Pilgrimage: Ar. hajj; a pre-Islamic Arabian custom taken over by Islam with some modifications; the present verse is doubtless about the same time as the change of qibla, when the actual performance of the pilgrimage would be difficult at least for Muslims who had emigrated from Mecca." (Companion to the Qur'an, W. Montgomery Watt, p 38)
 - Pre-Islamic deities. Pre-Islamic Arabian religion is commonly understood to be polytheistic. (Britannica, Arabian Religions, p1057, 1979)
 - Ceremonies and customs. A principal public celebration of the Arabians was an annual pilgrimage, in which tribes who shared a common bond of worship of a deity at a specific sanctuary would reunite there. A pattern of ceremonial procession around the baetyl was common, and this pattern may be seen in the surviving Islamic custom of the pilgrimage to Mecca. Processions played a great part in ritual, and divine images were sometimes brought out of the sanctuary and carried in them. Another practice that left its influence on Islam was ceremonial abstinence. The South Arabian festival of Halfan was a moratorium on the use of weapons. Certain times were specified for fasting and abstention from sexual relations. Burnt offerings and sacrifices were common. Some inscriptions mention numbers of animals sacrificed as high as 30 to 40. Sacrifices sometimes took place in a pilgrimage context, following the ceremonial procession around the baetyl; the blood of the animal victim, or in some instances milk as a substitute, was placed on the altar or baetyl. Incense and libations also were used. (Britannica, Arabian Religions, p1059, 1979)
 - In northern Arabia, certain tribes looked after particular sanctuaries. In the role of custodian, a man would be known as a kahin "priest," but such personnel were not, as far as is known, set apart by ordination. (Britannica, Arabian Religions, p1059, 1979)
 - "The rites and ceremonies connected with the Hajj and Umrah are exceedingly puerile, and decidedly inconsistent with the spirit of Islam The idolatrous customs of the ancient Arabs, though sanctified by the teaching of the Qur'an and the example of Muhammad, but poorly comport with the monotheistic teaching of the reformer of Makkah, and come far short of "confirming the former Scriptures." Its sanction by Muhammad is one of the darkest plots on his religion, and shows at the same time how far the politician of Madina differed from the preacher of Makkah.

How his apologists fail to see the inconsistency of his conduct and teaching here, not only with the dignity of a prophet of God, but with the character of an honest man, is beyond our comprehension. The kissing of the Black Stone and the Yamani Pillar was so manifestly inconsistent with the doctrine of Islam, that naught but the example of the prophet and the implicit obedience of his followers secured its perpetuation. The fiery Omar, kissing the stone, said, "Verily I know that thou art a stone; thou dost no good or harm in the world, and if it was not that I saw the prophet kiss thee, I would not kiss thee." (Mishqat ul Masabih, Matthews, book 11. chapter 4, part 3)

- "According to D. Nielsen, the starting point of the religion of the Semitic nomads was marked by the astral triad, Sun-Moon-Venus, the moon being more important for the nomads and the sun more important for the settled tribes. (Studies on Islam. Merlin L. Swartz, (New York, Oxford, 1981), p. 7.)
- The sheer volume of this literature would seem to contradict the remark made earlier that the documentation is meager and that it is thus difficult to paint a complete picture of pre-Islamic Bedouin religion. The difficulty, however, is real. Works dealing with this subject contain a large number of inferences (more or less justifiable) by which the authors have attempted to compensate for the lacunae in the existing data. On the other hand, scholars frequently speak of Arabs or even Semites without always distinguishing between nomads and sedentary peoples .21 in general, however, most of the authors do differentiate clearly between the more developed civilizations of South Arabia and those in other parts of the peninsula. (Studies on Islam, edited by Merlin L. Swartz, Pre-Islamic Bedouin Religion, by Joseph Henninger, 1981, p 3-22)
- We turn now to a consideration of the other tendency which considers the Bedouin religion to be older than that of the settled peoples. It assumes an evolution from the less developed to the more developed. (Studies on Islam, edited by Merlin L. Swartz, Pre-Islamic Bedouin Religion, by Joseph Henninger, 1981, p 3-22)
- Another view which originated in the field of Semitic studies under the influence of E. B. Tylor and gained recognition was that of animism. According to this theory, in the most primitive phases of the development of religion there were no gods bearing distinct personalities, but only spirits, that is, collective and anonymous beings. The jinn are interpreted as representing this primitive phase, and the origin of a belief in them is often attributed to the Bedouin, whereas the settled people are

- credited with the creation of individual gods. (Studies on Islam, edited by Merlin L. Swartz, Pre-Islamic Bedouin Religion, by Joseph Henninger, 1981, p 3-22)
- According to D. Nielsen, the starting point of the religion of the Semitic nomads was marked by the astral triad, Sun-Moon-Venus, the moon being more important for the nomads and the sun more important for the settled tribes. (Studies on Islam, edited by Merlin L. Swartz, Pre-Islamic Bedouin Religion, by Joseph Henninger, 1981, p 3-22)
 - The persistence in the Quran of a belief in the jinn and the testimony of pre-Islamic as well as Islamic literature adequately demonstrate its importance at the beginning of the seventh century. (Studies on Islam, edited by Merlin L. Swartz, Pre-Islamic Bedouin Religion, by Joseph Henninger, 1981, p 3-22)
 - Let us now examine these local divinities, which Muslim authors call "idols" (asnam) or "companions" (shuraka') -supposedly companions mistakenly associated with Allah -local divinities because their cult was restricted to a certain place or to a particular tribe. In most cases we have very little information about them. We scarcely know their names or the places where they were worshipped (and often not even the real name but a surname meaning, for example, "lord of such and such a place"). The myths which might have been able to illuminate the character of these gods are almost entirely lost.' In view of this one can see why it is difficult to decide in each case whether the god in question owes its origin to the Bedouin or to sedentary peoples. It is undeniable that the Bedouin often borrowed gods from the latter but, on the other hand, one cannot exclude the possibility that the Bedouin also had their own gods, as in the case of a god called after the name of a mountain. (Studies on Islam, edited by Merlin L. Swartz, Pre-Islamic Bedouin Religion, by Joseph Henninger, 1981, p 3-22)
 - If the ceremonies of pouring and sprinkling the blood are not in any way peculiar to a nomadic civilization, the interdiction against breaking the bones,' on the other hand, can only be explained by an ideological complex which is still very much alive among hunters and stock farmers of northern Asia. This custom is based on the belief that the animal can be regenerated if the bones remain intact. (Studies on Islam, edited by Merlin L. Swartz, Pre-Islamic Bedouin Religion, by Joseph Henninger, 1981, p 3-22)
 - The same is true for the festivals of springtime 86 as far as the sacrifice of the firstborn is concerned. There are solid reasons for believing that the Arabic feast of the month of Rajab, for which

- originally the firstborn of the herd were sacrificed, and the Jewish Passover have a common origin. Both are derived from a spring festival common to nomadic Semites (although after the exodus from Egypt, the Passover was given a new significance). (Studies on Islam, edited by Merlin L. Swartz, Pre-Islamic Bedouin Religion, by Joseph Henninger, 1981, p 3-22)
- one cannot speak of polytheism in proto-Semitic civilization, but one does find the belief in a supreme being, coupled with animism. 98 I am inclined to accept this formula, with a few slight modifications, for pre-Islamic Bedouin religion. It seems to me that one must attribute a little less importance to animism (belief in nature spirits), and emphasize ancestor worship a little more. Here then are the elements of this religion: Allah, creator of the world, supreme and undisputed lord, but relegated to the background in the cultic and practical life of the people; next, manifesting the rudiments of a polytheism, several astral divinities (at least that of the planet Venus) and atmospheric divinities (perhaps the attributes of a creator god which have been hypostatized); 99 finally, ancestors and jinn, these last having more importance in the belief system than in the cult. All of this, moreover, is somewhat vague and far from being organized into a real pantheon or hierarchical system. (Studies on Islam, edited by Merlin L. Swartz, Pre-Islamic Bedouin Religion, by Joseph Henninger, 1981, p 3-22)
 - Islam which followed this religion did not grow out of a void, nor was it of purely foreign origin. It was not a Bedouin religion, for its principal roots are to be found in the biblical religions; however, in Arabia it found not only human values but also religious values it could and did incorporate. (Studies on Islam, edited by Merlin L. Swartz, Pre-Islamic Bedouin Religion, by Joseph Henninger, 1981, p 3-22)
 - "the Ka'aba was dedicated to al-Ilah, the High God of the pagan Arabs, despite the presiding effigy of Hubal. By the beginning of the seventh century, al-Ilah had become more important than before in the religious life many of the Arabs. Many primitive religions develop a belief in a High God, who is sometimes called the Sky God...But they also carried on worshipping the other gods, who remained deeply important to them." (Karen Armstrong, Muhammad, (New York: San Francisco, 1992) p. 69.)