

# **Future Scenarios of Arbaeen Hosseini Walking Based on Causal Layers Analysis**

**Zahed Ghaffari Hashjin**

Associate Professor , Department of Political Science and Political  
Studies of Islamic Revolution , Shahed University , Tehran , Iran  
[ghafari@shahed.ac.ir](mailto:ghafari@shahed.ac.ir)

**Ayub Nikunahad**

Ph . D student of Political Studies of Islamic Revolution, Shahed  
University , Tehran , Iran  
[anikunahad@yahoo.com](mailto:anikunahad@yahoo.com)

## **السيناريوهات المستقبلية لمسيرة الأربعين الحسيني بناءً على تحليل الطبقات السببية**

**الاستاذ المشارك الدكتور زاهد غفاري هشجين**

جامعة شاهد - قسم العلوم السياسية والدراسات السياسية للثورة الإسلامية - طهران - إيران

**طالب الدكتوراه أيوب نيكونهاد**

جامعة شاهد - قسم العلوم السياسية والدراسات السياسية للثورة الإسلامية - طهران - إيران

**Abstract:-**

This research seeks to answer the question of what are the causal layers of Arbaeen Hosseini's walk, and what scenarios can be drawn for the future of it? To answer these questions, the method of causal layer analysis in future study has been used. The findings show that at the level of the causal layers, the existence of a political space in Iraq, the provision of infrastructures in the two countries, the role of authority and religious figures, etc. are among the factors influencing the Arbaeen super event in its present and future. In the worldview - discourse layer of the event of Arbaeen Hosseini, one can also refer to the meaning and virtue of Imam Hussein's pilgrimage, as well as the impact of this super event on the authority of Shi'ism in shaping the management of regional order, and ultimately in the myth-metaphor layer, the manifestation of Ashuraism and its ability to be repeated in Shiite culture is considered as one of the main pillars of Arbaeen Hosseini's walk. Three scenarios of transcendence, transformation, and weakening of Arbaeen can be plotted for the future stream by measuring the likelihood or refusal of the shaping layers to this event.

**Key words:** Arbaeen Hosseini Walking, Causal Layers Analysis, Scenario Writing, Shia Political Culture.

**المخلص:**

على الرغم من أن مسيرة الأربعيني الحسيني لها تاريخ طويل في تاريخ الشيعة وثقافتها، فقد أصبحت حدثاً فريداً في السنوات الأخيرة. إقامة هذه الظاهرة الدينية العظيمة في الماضي والحاضر تنبع عن طبقات سببية مختلفة يوصلنا تحليلها إلى ما يصير هذه المسيرة في المستقبل. يسعى هذا البحث للإجابة عن سؤال ما هي الطبقات السببية لمسيرة الأربعيني الحسيني وما هي السيناريوهات التي يمكن رسمها لمستقبلها؟ للإجابة على هذه الأسئلة، تم استخدام طريقة تحليل الطبقة السببية في الدراسة المستقبلية. معلومات البحث مستخرجة من النصوص المتشعبة حول هذه المسيرة، النتائج تشير إلى وجود انفتاح سياسي في العراق وتوفير البنى التحتية في البلدين و دور السلطة والشخصيات الدينية وما إلى ذلك من العوامل المؤثرة في مسيرة الأربعين الحالية والمستقبلية على مستوى الأنظمة السببية، هذا من جهة العوامل الخارجية. واما من حيث العوامل الداخلية وعلى مستوى الرؤية العالمية □ الحوار، يمكن الإشارة إلى طلب الفضل من زيارة الإمام الحسين (ع) وكذلك تأثير هذه الظاهرة على قدرة الشيعة من خلال ادارة النظام على مستوى المنطقة. في طبقة الأسطورة □ الاستعارة، انعكاس التأثير من عا شورا و امكانية تكرارها في الثقافة الشيعية يسوق ويخص إلى مسيرة الاربعين. بالنظر إلى نسبة الوجود وعدم وجود الطبقات المحدثة المتعلقة بالمسيرة، يتوقع ثلاث سيناريوهات لمستقبلها: الارتقاء، التحول والضعف.

**الكلمات المفتاحية:** مسيرة الأربعين الحسيني، تحليل الطبقات السببية، السيناريوهات المستقبلية، الثقافة السياسية الشيعية.

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Arbaeen Hosseini's Walking over the past decade and the emergence of political stability in Iraq and the opening of an open political space in Iraq has become institutionalized as a turning point and a major event in Shiite political culture. For example, according to available statistics, the number of Iranian visa applicants has increased from about 50,000 in 2011 to about two million five hundred thousand in 2018. (Infographic of Arbaeen Iranian Pilgrims Statistics, Young Journalists Club) Although there is no consensus on the number of Arbaeen Hosseini's large gatherings in Iraq so far, the average attendance figures for the last three years indicate large social up to It has about twenty-five million people, which is an unprecedented event in the Muslim world, and even among all the religious practices in the world. Given the quantitative trends outlined above, if the necessary infrastructure is provided at the borders of Iran and Iraq, we will see unprecedented growth in attendance of pilgrims and participants in the coming years. The existence of this religious shrine and its yearly repetition has provided the potential for deepening religious and cultural teachings in Shiite political culture for its administrators (formal and informal institutions).

Utilizing this capacity requires that Arbaeen Hosseini's various angles and aspects be carefully scrutinized so that with a proper and systematic understanding of this rite, a proper planning for its operation can be made, otherwise facial damage to its security, social, cultural, and religious dimensions may affect this rite and turn it from an opportunity into a threat. The formation of this great event is culturally, socially, and politically, with specific contexts that can bond together to form a huge multi-million communities in a particular location annually. In order to better analyze the contexts of the formation of this great event, the use of the causal layer method that is used in the future study of cultural issues is a good way to identify and analyze the layers forming this great event and outlining scenarios and strategies for its future.

In light of the aforementioned points, the present study by using the causal layer analysis method and by means of a taking-note tool to obtain data through environmental scrolling of published texts on Arbaeen Hosseini's Walking, seeks to answer these questions that what are the causal layers of Arbaeen Hosseini's Walking and what scenarios can be drawn for the future of Arbaeen Hosseini's walk?

## 2. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

### 2.1. Layered causal analysis:

Layered causal analysis is one of the relatively new approaches in the field of future study designed by Soheil Inayatullah (1998), in terms of methods, it is qualitative and in terms of approaches, it is in the category of exploration methods. (Khazaei et al., 2013). In the layered causal analysis, understanding a phenomenon or an issue is done by deepening its constituent layers (Enayatullah, 1998). The layers of this method are generally composed of four layers, each layer being more general than the previous one and having more depth epistemically. Inayatullah considers his method of layer analysis to be the product of integration and application of three types of empirical, interpretive and critical futures study. The main claim of this method is that every epistemological and methodological framework allows for a layer-by-layer understanding of the shaping facts of the future. Therefore, one epistemological framework cannot be considered lower or superior than the other. Therefore, a range of quantitative and qualitative methods are employed to identify layers of reality. According to the causal layer approach, when considering future subject matter, a range of objective and subjective layers of the future must be considered. Each of these layers can be identified by means of an epistemological framework as follows (Inayatollah, 2004,11-15).

1. The Litany layer, which looks at the most objective and obvious future level of a phenomenon and does not require specific analytical skills to understand it. In this layer, the existence of the problem and its continuation for a future event is accepted by everyone, and from the quantitative perspective, a lot of information has been published about it in the mass media. In this layer assumptions are rarely questioned. Empirical futures study is the appropriate epistemic framework for understanding this layer.
2. The layer of social systems that look at social, economic, cultural, political, and historical factors. This layer attempts to interpret quantitative data in terms of the correlation of variables, the causal relationship, the application of a particular theory, and the critique of other theories. In this layer, policy researchers and policy makers publish reasoned and documented analyzes of the future in newspapers and magazines. The point of excellence in

these analyzes is the scientific and technical explanation of future events. In this layer, the role of the government and other actors, especially the pressure groups, is highlighted. But the important point is that quantitative data is not subject to questioning and if questioned, the backing paradigm is not challenged, and so this paradigm remains dominant. In this layer too, empirical future study is the appropriate epistemic framework for knowing reality.

3. The third layer deals with understanding the structure, worldview and discourse that, in addition to supporting future epistemic claims, also lends legitimacy to this claim and seeks to explain and identify the social causes of the Litany problem (the first layer). This layer, which is shaped by the framework of deep analysis (Atari et al. 2014: 191), focuses on discovering a big, paradigmatic image, and futurist efforts focus on understanding the cultural, linguistic, and social structures of the future sector and presenting new and deep interpretations of this issue. At this stage, the futurist can explore the various discourses that form the problem by passing through the layers of causal systems that are more structured, and shows how the discourse we use to understand issues plays a role in configuring and shaping the problem itself.
4. The fourth layer seeks to understand the signs and metaphors that are common in the civilized subconscious of a nation, and the futurist has to delve deeper into the civilizational and identity level of the society under study. In this layer, which is complementary to the previous layers, the deepest meta-narratives, schemas and mental images shaping the future are explored. Recognizing this layer is rooted not in thought but in the subconscious feeling of the individual, and the analyst traces the unconscious and mythogenic factors to the possibility of creating the future beyond the rational boundaries.

Thus, in the causal layer method, the futurist can integrate his analysis from a top-down and bottom-up perspective and merge discourses, ways of acquiring knowledge, and worldviews that are effective in shaping the future and thus enrich his/her analysis of the future (Inayatollah, 2008: 9).

## 2.2. Conceptual model of research

Based on the concepts of the Layered causal analysis and quadratic processes for which Soheil Inayatullah has defined, the Inayatullah model is designed in Figure 1.



**Figure 1. Layered causal analysis (Inayatullah, 1998)**

Based on this model, each of the layers concerned with the research topic has been identified using the environmental scrolling of the literature on Arbaeen and the semi-structured interviews of the layers identified and illustrated in the conceptual model of research in Figure 2.

### 3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

After delineating the theoretical and conceptual model of the research, it is attempted to investigate the factors contributing to Arbaeen Hosseini's superstructure in each of these layers.

The first layer, the Litany level, as explained, is a problem which a lot of information has been published about it in the media and does not



**Figure 2. Layered causal analysis of Arbaeen Hoseini's Walking.**

the contexts and webmasters of the large Arbaeen Ceremony. Although the Arbaeen Hosseini's Walking in Iraq has a long history and has been held in various historical periods dedicated to the Shiites of that country, but organizing the Arbaeen in a new style that has become a huge gathering and a great event for Muslims of different nationalities at a particular time and place is a new phenomenon. This enormous and repetitive gathering, which may be considered the largest religious great event in terms of human aggregation at a particular time and place, has various contexts, causes and shaping factors that we will attempt to address in the next layers of research. By recognizing the forming layers of the Arbaeen Hosseini's Walking event, one can make the necessary planning and promotion of the event and make it even more magnificent.

### **3.1. The layer of social systems**

#### **a. The political open atmosphere after the fall of the Ba'athist government and the increase of Iranian influence in Iraq.**

One of the main variables of the formation of Arbaeen Hosseini's walking can be the model of political sovereignty in Iraq, how its sovereignty interacts with its Shiites, and also with neighboring countries, including Iran, as the main Shiite base. This component has been instrumental in the formation of Arbaeen Hosseini's walking ceremonies. For example, due to the rule of the Ba'athist regime in Iraq (1968-2003) and the formation of a Shiite repressive atmosphere for religious ceremonies, the issue of Arbaeen Hosseini's walking was also affected. For this reason, some lovers of Ahlul-Beit and Imam Hussein (AS) have turned to secrecy and some people held this ceremony in places away from government officials, such as their houses and gardens, and they made vows in their homes. (How did the pilgrims visit Arbaeen during Saddam's time? <https://www.shia-news.com/en/news/172668>)) One Interviewees in this interview, drawing on the Iraqi political atmosphere during the years of the Ba'athist regime, stated in the interview that "Although many efforts were made to organize the ceremony as simple and quickly as possible, the organizing bodies were subject to intense pressure. For example, many of the founders and active members of these committees were detained by the security forces and were subjected to various forms of harassment. "

In fact, the policies of the Iraqi Ba'athist regime in those years towards the Shiites were a historical representation of the policy of the non-Shiite rulers to suppress this religion and the prohibition of Karbala and Najaf pilgrimage to both Iraqi Shiites and to Shiites in neighboring countries, including Iran (Hesam Mazaheri, 2018). In the meantime, the victory of the Islamic Revolution and the outbreak of the eight-year war between Iran and Iraq brought cultural ties between the two countries to a minimum, and even on numerous occasions Shiites, as the country's largest ethnic population, were severely repressed by the Ba'athist regime.

The collapse of the Iraqi Ba'athist regime in the political arena of the West Asian region caused by the US invasion in 2003 created major changes in the historical-geographical formations of the Shiite world because, on the one hand, the repression and restrictions of internal closed borders for Iraqi Shiites was removed and on the other hand, the foreign borders of the pilgrims to Iraq were reopened. The reopening of international borders for pilgrims, especially at the Arbaeen Hosseini ceremony, also marked a major economic shift in the country's Shiite community; because of the restrictions and deprivation imposed by the current governments on the Shiite community economically, they were in a low position and the opening of the borders and the influx of immense pilgrims has provided a source of income under the hidden economy of pilgrimage and led to a relative improvement in the situation of the Iraqi people, especially in the Shiite provinces of Karbala and Najaf.

Although Iran-Iraq relations have experienced many ups and downs in historical periods, cultural and civilizational roots between the two nations have a long historical background. It can be said that in none of the countries of the West Asian region are there any remnants of the civilization and forms of Iranian culture, both in ancient Iran and in the Islamic era, as they are today in Iraq. According to historical evidence and maps, northern Iraq during ancient Iran was a major part of the Assyrian Empire, and during the Parthians, this region and the Kurdish regions of Iraq were the religious and commercial center of Iran. All the Kurdish regions of Iraq, Syria, and Turkey until 1514 (separated from Iran by the defeat of the Chaldaran war) were one of the provinces of Iran (Parsapour, 2009: 3). The city of Madden, located twenty kilometers south of

Baghdad, also called Tisfon in Persian, has been the capital of the Iranian government for about a thousand years (Sana'i and Abdollah Pour, 2009: 176). Basra, considered one of the ancient cities of Iraq, is deeply linked to Iranian civilization historically, racially, and religiously. It is now a focal point of Shiite gatherings and the religious customs of its inhabitants are almost similar to those of Iranians (Parsapour, 2009: 6). There is also a common historical tradition between the two countries, such as commemorating of Nowruz celebration, one of the Iraqi national holidays, and various ethnicities celebrate Norouz with Iranians at the same time (Farahani, 2006: 166-165).

Meanwhile, the presence of Persian language and the use of it by ethnicities of Iraqis, as well as the presence of Arab-speaking ethnicity within Iran, have added to the cultural interactions between the two countries. Among the ways in which the Persian language is transmitted and learned among the Iraqi people, it is possible to mention cross-border bilateral communications in various forms as well as the migration of Iranian families to Najaf Ashraf by the clerics and numerous Shiite pilgrimages to Mashhad and Qom (Beigi, 2010: 239). In addition to Iraqi Kurdish cities, the majority of which are able to understand and even speak Persian, due to cultural and linguistic differences, there are also a number of Persian-speaking Shiites in southern Iraqi cities who have always had a strong relationship with Iran (Mar, 2001: 31). Current Iraqi leaders and a number of its leaders, such as the late Iraqi President Jalal Talabani, were among the Persian-speaking leaders of the world who had long lived in Iran during the rule of the Ba'ath Party and the closed political space in Iran. Many Iraqi teens and youths inside Iraq through cultural consultations with the Islamic Republic of Iran in its affiliated educational institutions and many of them are learning Persian at Iranian universities and have replaced Persian as a second language with English (Sana'i and Abdollah Pour, 2009: 177). Also, as the majority of the students of Najaf Ashraf seminary are from Iran, Pakistan, Afghanistan and India, as a result, most of the students in Najaf are proficient in Persian language (Parsapour, 2010: 53).

In addition to civilizational and cultural sharing, one can noted other influential factors in enhancing cultural relations and interactions between the two nations, such as the history of Imam

Khomeini's presence in Iraq during exile, the activities of the Islamic Republic of Iran's cultural-religious organizations such as the Islamic Culture and Communications Organization , The World Assembly for the Approximation of Religions, Ahl Al-Bayt World Assembly, the pilgrimage organization, the presence of Shiites in both countries, and the presence of religious seminaries in both countries, that it has already provided the grounds for solidarity between the two countries. (Soft Power Studies bi-annual, 2015: 54-29). It is because of these civilizational and cultural commonalities that Iranian and Iraqi pilgrims who embark on a pilgrimage to both countries feel the emotional and cultural bonds between the two nations and imagine themselves within a particular intellectual discourse.

### **b. Providing infrastructure to facilitate Arbaeen travel in Iran and Iraq.**

Another formative component of the Arbaeen Hosseini Walking Event is the provision of the necessary infrastructure in Iraq as well as in Iran (with a pilgrimage population of nearly three million). Given the increasing number of participants in the Arbaeen Hosseini Walking Ceremony in recent years, the Islamic Republic of Iran has taken special measures to hold the Arbaeen Hosseini Walking Ceremony that they can be classified into two categories within Iran and within Iraq. Among the internal actions of the Islamic Republic of Iran, one can point out the construction of 400 hectares of parking at the border for pilgrims, increasing the number of consulates issuing visas in previous years, securing the roads leading to the borders, enhancing health services in the borderlands, and increasing 84 kilometers to the main ways at the borders to make it easier for pilgrims to travel (Chief of Staff of Arbaeen Headquarters Interview to Describe Iran's Actions for Facilitating Arbaeen Pilgrims<sup>(1)</sup>).

Also, a nine-member agreement was signed between the Iranian and Iraqi ministers in September 2018 on how to make Arbaeen Hosseini's walk more desirable<sup>(2)</sup>. The role of various executive bodies such as Tehran Municipality and Astan Quds Razavi and other services to pilgrims on Iraq and in the cities of Najaf and Karbala can be mentioned in the context of the Iranian government's assistance in holding Arbaeen Hosseini's ceremonies in Iraq. For example, one can mention the services of Astan Quds Razavi in providing welfare services to pilgrims through the construction of

mobile hospitals, the establishment of kitchens on the outskirts of Iran and Iraq, and the provision of services to pilgrims. The Tehran municipality can also be mentioned that provide services to at the borders as well as across them under the responsibility of the municipalities of Karbala and Najaf in the past years for cleaning, setting up and providing health services, deploying fire brigade teams in The cities of Najaf, Karbala and Kufa as well as environmental advertising by the Beautification Organization, etc.<sup>(3)</sup> However, the relocation of the multi-million population of pilgrims between Iran and Iraq in Arbaeen requires the creation of extensive communications, welfare and transport infrastructure between the two countries. It is appropriate to establish deeper links between the two countries, rail infrastructure projects, strong bus and air lines between the two countries, and encourage people to use inclusive public transport, and Pilgrims can count on public transport capacities to attend the Arbaeen Walk.

Another factor contributing to the Arbaeen Walking Ceremony is its ease of use and low cost compared to other pilgrimage trips. In other words, one of the most important factors affecting tourism demand for a particular place is the costs associated with transportation costs, accommodation, services, etc. (Morovvat et al. 2018: 283-282). According to a study by Bod (2018), one of the reasons for the popularity of Arbaeen travel is that most of the interviewees consider the low cost of Arbaeen travel compared to other trips. Facilities & Services - Free services and many required travel goods and items resulted in the satisfaction of all interviewees in this survey. In the meantime, this study has intensified the satisfaction of Iraqi hospitality and the prevailing culture of respect for pilgrims on the interactions between Iraqis and travelers (Bod 2018: 45).

At the same time, one of the identities of Arabs is their hospitality. And in relation to Arbaeen they believe that these pilgrims are the guest of Aba Abdullah (AS). So, in their customary culture they have been institutionalized that they should welcome the pilgrims in whatever way they can, meaning that they may not be in financial distress, but offer their services such as massaging their feet, washing their clothes, providing accommodation, etc. to pilgrims on the basis of heart beliefs., that have roots in their history and hospitality. This is doubly assumed at the time of Arbaeen. For

example, visa for travel between the two countries has been eliminated at the time of the Arbaeen ceremony, according to a memorandum of understanding between the governments of Iran and Iraq during the April 2019 visit of the Iranian president.<sup>(4)</sup>

### **C. Media and Video Reflection of Arbaeen Hosseini's Ceremony**

Another component of Arbaeen Hosseini's spiritual gathering is the role of the audio-visual media in how it reflects in the media and encourages its audience to attend the event. Although the Western international media has been trying to portray this massive social movement with policies such as ignorance, exaggeration, and downplaying of political analysis (Ghafari Hashjin & Aghaie ٢٠١٨: 16-15), however, the flow Independent media outlets in the Islamic world (the Shiite world) and on the international scene are trying to cover this big event. Of course, in-country news streams, such as IRIB Broadcasting organization and the Iranian and Iraqi news agencies, play a significant role in preparing the audience for the event. For example, broadcasting the news a few months before the event began, information on anticipated supplies, how to obtain visas and specified routes, even information on government and popular actions on IRIB newsletters and even new social networks have an important role in making the event more glorious in recent years. The media can also encourage people to participate in the rituals of Arbaeen by presenting the characteristics, beauty and spiritual experiences of the event, and by encouraging some of the people who do not intend to attend the Arbaeen rituals with specific media techniques. Official media can also represent Arbaeen news coverage by covering the languages of other countries and conduct audiences of different nations, governments, and cultures by reviewing Arbaeen ritual requirements.

### **d. The Role of Characters and Intellectual References.**

One of the layers forming the collective behavior of a nation is the reference groups and in other words the intellectual references of that society. In fact, one of the most important sources of identity for individuals in a group and even in a society are reference groups, which play a very important role in shaping the worldviews, values and attitudes and orienting the norms and behaviors of individuals in

society. In defining a reference group, Hayman argues that "since one's position, or social status is defined by comparing relative positions with others, so each person's perception of his or her social status depends on a particular group of individuals that he compares himself with them "(Hayman 1968). RafiPur in defining the reference group believes that "it is a group of people whom people compare and evaluate their behavior by their standards" (Rafi Pour, 2003: 133). In fact, individuals seek to satisfy the desires of the people whom they care about in order to adopt a behavior that is usually customary. Since religious leaders and imitation authorities are one of the reference groups in Iranian society (Hatami et al. 2016: 34-38).

About the Role of Reference Groups in Organizing the Arbaeen Hosseini Walking Event, it is possible to cite their comments and encouraging people to attend the Arbaeen Hosseini Walking Event. Although numerous examples of media statements by religious authorities and religious figures on inviting people to participate in this spiritual event are available (Arbaeen's Letter to the First to Twenty-Second Numbers available at: [alarbaeen.ir](http://alarbaeen.ir)), one can more clearly refer to the statements of the Supreme Leader of the Revolution in the course of his jurisprudence on November 15, 2016, coinciding with the events of Arbaeen Hosseini, who stated: "It is Arbaeen's time and blessed are those who are walking Or they will walk and they will come to the pilgrimage to Arbaeen and that blessed Arbaeen pilgrimage prayer They will sing to the Imam. Here, too, we look enthusiastically at these steps:

Thousands of steps are on the way and my eager heart and I are amazed

That I can find the direction inside of me as well

Praise be to Allah, our youth found the way, and millions of our people and non-people alike, the Iraqi people and others, are moving in this direction, and this is one of the great events that the Almighty God blessed us with. And it created this event for us; it became a symbol and ... "(5). Or his remarks on December 9, ۲۰۱۴, during the course of his jurisprudence, referring to the Walking of Arbaeen Hosseini, "We are also envied by Arbaeen pilgrims and wish we were with you". This sentence has been repeatedly re-posted on the social network and has received many reactions from people. Many users

of these mobile networks have announced on social media that they will be their vice-pilgrims to the walking ceremony.

### **3.2. Discourse-worldview layer**

#### **a. Virtue and semantics in Imam Hussein's pilgrimage:**

In the Shi'ite narrative sources there are many meta-narrative hadiths that have emphasized the pilgrimage of Imam Hussein (AS) at various times. One of these times that has reached the upper limit in the hadiths quoted by the Imams (PBUT), is the pilgrimage of Imam Hussein (AS) in the fortieth day of his martyrdom on the twentieth day of Safar. In some sources, Imam Hussein's pilgrimage (AS) is equivalent to twenty Umrahs, a sign of faith, forgiveness for all sins, etc. (Bihar al-Anwar, vol. 44 / Sa'ab al-A'mal / Muntahi al-amal, vol. 1 / Complete Book of Al-Ziyarat Bob 78). Imam Hassan Asgari (AS) says about the importance of commemorating Arbaeen that "Faithful signs are five things: 1- Reading fifty-one rak'ahs of prayer (17 rak'ahs of obligatory prayer + 11 rak'ahs of night prayer + 23 nawafel) 2- Pilgrimage of Arbaeen 3- Ring on right hand 4- Existence of prostration on forehead 5- Bismillah in prayer (Bihar al-Anwar, vol. 101). Another group of narrations refer to the pilgrimage of Imam Hussein (AS) to the city of Karbala and emphasize the virtue of being in Karbala and worshiping its soil; The pilgrimage of none of the infallible Imams is as emphasized as that of Hussein ibn Ali (AS) in the land of Karbala.

The number of hadiths in this regard is so great that even for the pilgrimage of the Prophet Mohammad (PBUH), it is not all command. In some traditions, the pilgrimage (Karbala) is sometimes higher and higher than the pilgrimage to God's house. Rewards equal to tens and hundreds of Hajjes and Umrah have been expressed for Sayyid al-Shohada's pilgrimage. And the traditions raise the necessity of pilgrimage anyway, consider it as a religious obligation for a Shiite and a follower of the Imam, considers it very obscene to abandon it and does not accept any excuse, excuse or fear and danger. (Kamel al-Ziarat, corrected 1978: p. 142, 146, 207 and 294). A number of other traditions have emphasized the double virtue of Imam Hussein (AS) pilgrimage on the day of Arbaeen, and have given special virtue for walking on the Karbala route, including the narration of Imam Sadeq (as). Says: "Whoever walks on the pilgrimage to Imam

Hussein (AS), at every step he takes, God writes a good deed to him and removes a sin from him and raises him to an upper rank, When he goes on a pilgrimage, God assigns the right of transcendence to two angels who write what is good and do not write what is bad and when he returns, they bid farewell to him and say to him: O chosen of God! Your sins are forgiven and you belong to the Party of God and the Party of His Prophet and the Party of His Family. I swear to God! You will never see the fire, and the fire will never see you nor prey you” (Kamel al-Ziarat p. 134).

Although it is possible for pilgrimage to be a religious denomination that can be viewed from the standpoint of phenomenological theories (focusing on religious experience, feelings and emotions), functionalist religious theories (integrating individual and community bonds), emotional theory (the function of psychologically evacuating religion) and many other functions for it, in the semantic view that is the subject of this study, pilgrimage can be defined as a journey where a person with a specific goal and meaning moves towards a goal or ideally moves to a place (Norman, 2009: 53). Other scholars like Geertz believe that sacred places and rituals that are macro symbols that help individuals interpret the meaning of their lives (Shojaee Zand 1380: 68). From this point of view, therefore, religion can be seen as a unifying and meaningful force that can assist believers in their tangible interpretations of life and their connection to the world. In religious journeys, meaningfulness and godliness are their fundamental goals. For example, one of the philosophies of travel has been enumerated from Imam Ali's point of view as a step in reforming the Hereafter. Based on researches based on life experiences with pilgrims on trips on foot (Warsaw et al. 2018; Moaven et al., 2017; Bod, 2016), and other available researches, meaningfulness (meaningful experience and the sacredness of the journey) was considered one of the goals and aspects of these trips.

In fact, the decline of fears and threats have always been the motives of pilgrimage trips throughout the history of human life, and religious cities and places have been places where pilgrims have traveled for divine purposes. From the pilgrims' point of view, the sacred places are the point of connection between the material world and the world of meaning. In a spiritualist view, the pilgrim believes

that the Prophet or the Imam whom he has visited, though hidden from the outward senses, being present in his shrine means being present in the Imams assembly (preacher 2015: 219). In fact, this sacred spiritual experience provided to pilgrims by immersing themselves in a large community and their desire to be repeat it and to represent and redefine it for the whole believers upon return, makes it possible for people to participate in this great event more widely.

### **b. Shiite authority in the management of regional order in the Muslim world:**

The West Asian region has always been one of the main focal points in global politics for a number of reasons. such as the world's largest energy reserves, religious diversity and its resulting colonial policies, and so on. Following the triumph of the Islamic Revolution and the disruption of the balance of regional power (shifting Iran's status from a passive to an independent active activist), there have been various plans to change the regional order and degrade the status of Iran in the regional power pyramid. One of the main components of the Islamic Republic of Iran's power to thwart the designs of the domination system in order to prevent the change of the order of the region and to impose the desired order on them, has been the use of soft power in the form of discourse and symbolism and its proper use by Iran. The use of soft power in the political structure in both domestic and foreign policy is conducive to cost reduction (Imamzadeh, 2010: 42). By providing a definition of soft power as the ability to shape others' priorities through persuasion rather than coercion, Nye (2006 :136) considers components such as cultural attraction, ideology, and international institutions as sources of a country's soft power. It is on the basis of the existence of soft power that some believe that a new geopolitical discourse has emerged in the Islamic Republic of Iran with Shiites and Shiite groups in the West Asian region (Cohen, 2008: 715; Nasr, 2006: 36). Understanding these geopolitics will only be possible when we are well aware of its real empowering sources and these sources rooted in pure Shiite beliefs, symbols and principles.

One of the most powerful ideological symbols in Shiite political culture is the formation of the world's largest political-spiritual gathering, the Arbaeen Hussein's Walking Event. Founded on the

basis of cultural attraction and rooted in Shiite Muslim beliefs, this Great Event has become one of the components of Shiite soft discourse power across the Islamic world and the international system that, in addition to interactive and unifying functions between Shiites can have many political functions for Shiite rulers. In recent years, that the West Asian region has witnessed the birth of Salafist-Takfiri groups that have been in crisis and even on the brink of collapse, with countries such as Syria and Iraq at the center of resistance to the hegemonic system, the Great Event of Arbaeen Hosseini with a population of more than 20 million, despite threats from these groups, contained specific political and strategic messages for the countries that support them. They were using their tools to change the balance of power for the benefit of their supporters. In the discourse of regional order management, Arbaeen Hosseini's Walking Event on the sidelines shows that without Shiite wills and Shiite sovereignties, regional order will never change.

### **3.3. The myth-metaphor layer:**

#### **a. Ashuraism and its Repetition in Shiite Culture:**

Emil Durkheim is one of the sociologists whose work explains religious studies and can explain the relationship between religion and communal conscience in religious practice. Durkheim believes that in any religion there can be different sets of rituals and systems of worship whose order and hierarchy constitute the ultimate formulation of religion and believe that this order It is not fixed but variable and dependent on the modes of social life. Although Durkheim in his definition of religion considers its constituent elements to include beliefs and rituals, he attaches importance to the practice of religious life as the main conduit for religious experience and the acquisition of religious faith and the consequences of religious life for believers. Durkheim, 2004, 216).

In his discussion of rituals, he emphasizes communal debates, above all on communal rituals and theorizing based on them, and does not refer to any individual rituals. Durkheim's main theory can be summarized as religious beliefs and practices that are symbolic manifestations of social reality. With its emphasis on sacred symbols and their functions, Durkheim believes that the permanent distribution and presence of these symbols in society contributes to social continuity and social life (Durkheim, 220). In his view, the

proliferation of religious symbols and images in society makes these images the central focus of the stage of life and inevitably become its symbol. Durkheim's ideas generally point out that religious symbols are merely representations of society and that their function is the continuation of social life in a symbolic and religious way. For him, religious symbols also have a reflective character. In addition to representing social life, these symbols also contribute to its construction. Symbolic symbols for each group are a form of gathering and harmony that make social unity more commonplace. (Durkheim, 2004, 388). Religious symbols and their application to the daily life of society, in addition to being self-conscious of the community, are also needed to build and sustain it. Individuals are reunited with the world of collective life and collective conscience and collective consciousness in the context of everyday rituals of individualistic life, and reproduce and reinforce their position and duty towards society. Therefore, these rituals actually sustain and reproduce the social solidarity and moral authority associated with it (Durkheim, 283).

In this context, the more general, more important the rituals are, the greater their influence on believers and the Durkheim's intended function. In any religion or community, usually one of the religious rituals that have a general, widespread and centralized belief system has the most role to play in reproducing social identity, in the words of Durkheim, the collective conscience and the collective consciousness of believers.

There are many religious rituals in the Shiite religion, such as the births and deaths of the Prophet (PBUH) or the births and testimonies of the Imams (AS) to represent or reflect the collective consciousness and collective consciousness of the believers. However, the Shiite history after the martyrdom of Imam Ali (AS) and the Ashura incident on 61 AHS in Karbala and the oppressed martyrdom of Imam Hussein (AS) went through another process. However, the whole case of the testimony of Imam Hussein (AS) is similar to the fate of other Imams, this imam's testimony and supremacy in the Shiites' minds took a higher place than a purely historical one and, as Thual interpreted, became the essential chapter of Shiite history. (Thual, 2003: 31). The use of the word "The oppressed martyr Imam" for the Ashura incident and the testimony of Imam Hussein (AS) creates a special meaning in the Shiite political culture and, in the subconscious minds of the believers and supporters, causes the effects and consequences.

The concept of Shi'a Imam's oppression is not just a mournful concept, it represents the Shiite historical and collective memory and emphasizing it not only highlights the otherness foundations of identity, but also sharply represents the cohesion of the Shiite community around the ultimate goal of Shi'ism (Imam's rule). This otherness, at first, emphasizes the two principles of right and wrong, the right associated with wrongdoing and the oppression and falsehood that has caused such wrongdoing and oppression. At the same time, this oppression not only represents the right of usurpation and the numerous oppressions of the infallible Imam during his lifetime, but also a particular kind of representation of the infallible death that has political reasons that have been incurred by angered government systems. The state of simple and purposeless death has become a purposeful, sacred, transcendent affair called martyrdom (Fayyaz & Rahmani, 2007: 119-101).

In Islamic political culture, especially Shiites, there are many sublime concepts and practices such as jihad, self-sacrifice, enjoining right and forbidding wrong, rejection of cruelty and denial of domination, martyrdom for the right, and so on that in addition to being value concepts, they also have a political character. And it has many capabilities, such as the creation of cohesion and solidarity among believers, the ability to stimulate and mobilize (redefine) social identities, and to redefine these concepts in social life. Arbaeen Hosseini's Walking Event is one of the many religious rituals that have become a symbol and Arbaeen Hosseini's Hiking Event is one of the many religious rituals that have become a symbol and have the ability to perform the specific tasks mentioned above.

In fact, mourning is one of the most important social activities of the Shiite community, through which Shiite society repeatedly reproduces its collective identity and reinforces its collective consciousness and Strengthens its conscience. Therefore, Shi'ism cannot be identified in a context that is devoid of political meaning and if we separate the sublime concepts and themes of Shi'ism that have a predominantly socioeconomic character, that religion will have a semantic void. Even the use of the word and the concept of oppression for the infallible Imam, rather than having the mystical and moral character, has a political character that reproduces Shi'a identity and collective conscience through mourning.

Reproducing these concepts in the Shi'a subconscious through mourning rituals such as the annual Arbaeen Hosseini walking or the presence of different nationalities and religions, in addition to enhancing internal cohesion and solidarity among Muslims, can lead to repeated reprisals of the oppressed in political literature, an increase in the spirit of protest against injustice and inequality, and a strengthening of martyrdom. . Repeated reproduction of these concepts in the Shi'a collective mind can evoke this common expression of "Every day is Ashura, and the whole earth is Karbala." in Shiite literature and in similar circumstances, the Ashura action may be repeated in history.

### 3.4. Future scenarios of Arbaeen Hosseini Walking:

In the present study, based on the causal layered analysis method, which is one of the common methods of future study, it was attempted to examine the layers forming the largest religious community in the world, Arbaeen Hosseini's Walking Event. After explaining the propositions, now using these layers, it is attempted to map future scenarios of the Arbaeen Walking Ceremony. Based on the layers identified in this superstructure, three scenarios of transcendence, transformation and weakening can be traced to the future of Arbaeen Walking. The following table discusses the possibility of or refusal of each scenario.

Drivers and Forming Layers	Scenarios		
	Transcendence	Transformation	Weakening
Opening up the political space in Iraq in the years of increasing Iranian influence	✓	x	x
Providing infrastructure in Iran and Iraq and facilitating travel	✓	x	x
Media reflection and visualization of events in the media	✓	✓	✓
The Role of Characters and Intellectual References	✓	x	x
The Meaning and Virtue of Imam Hussein's Pilgrimage	✓	x	x
Shiite authority in the management of regional order in the Islamic world	✓	✓	✓
Ashourism in Shia political culture	✓	x	x

Table No.1 The Possibility of Or Refusal of Scenario

### **a. Ideal scenario: Arbaeen Hosseini's Walking Transcendence**

Based on the analysis of the forming layers of Arbaeen Hosseini's Walking Event as well as the examination of the conditions of the possibility or refusal of the layers, it can be said that at no time in the history of Shiite and the formation Arbaeen Hosseini's Ceremony, Arbaeen Hosseini's Walking excellence conditions and requirements have not been provided for nearly a decade. According to the proper and impediment rule for continuity and affirmation an affair there must be "existing expedient and the missing impediment ". (Glossary of Principles of Jurisprudence, 2010: 624). Evidence and data reviewed indicate that all the requirements of Arbaeen Hosseini's Walking transcendence have been met for the future and it is expected that with the measures taken, as well as the elimination of visas between Iran and Iraq during the era of Arbaeen Hosseini, the number of pilgrims will reach more than 30 million and even higher in coming years.

### **b. Possible Scenario: Transforming the Arbaeen Hosseini Walking Ceremony**

Although the research evidence suggests that the optimal scenario for the future of Arbaeen Hosseini Walking course is that of transcendence, but it can be said that some of the drivers that are shaping this great event may turn against it if they fail to properly plan to exploit the capacity of this process and transform the whole event. Among these factors that are both positive for transcendence of Arbaeen Hosseini walking (drivers) and can act as an obstacle, are Media reflection of the ceremony, as well as the facilitating factors of this pilgrimage-tourism trip. The media's weak point is the imperialism that the West has been able to create it for itself over the decades. The Western media is trying to transform this great event by employing techniques such as trivializing this unique gathering or reversing its facts and messages. At the same time, it should be noted that the Arbaeen Hosseini walking is a popular and spontaneous event, and the excessive interference of governments and states, even in facilitating travel (Formal - ritual changes of this flow towards the upscale and luxurious amenities) may overwhelmed by their own interests and benefits and make it an organized government and entertainment event. Therefore, assuming a

transformation scenario for the future of Arbaeen Hosseini walking, the pathology of these events and practical thinking in the academic and seminary circles are essential for it.

### **c. Possible Scenario: Weakening of Arbaeen Hosseini's Great Event**

Due to the necessary drivers that have instituted the Arbaeen Hosseini Walking, and while this event has a long history, this scenario is virtually impossible because in spite of the existence of repressive and despotic governments, this spontaneous movement of faith has never stopped and the supporters and followers of Abu Abdullah Hussein, and even the world's freedom-seeking people, have participated in Arbaeen Hussein's ceremonies in the worst cases. What is likely to undermine the flow of Arbaeen Hosseini's walking is the inappropriate perceptions and non-religious narratives of this unique spiritual and religious gathering. The use of words such as "Shiite invasion of Karbala" or "occupation of Iraq by the Iranians" and so on, which is usually on the agenda by the dominating media these days, all are to undermine this great event. It may be effective in the public opinion of the world, through the media's dominance of Western liberal systems today, to apply these inappropriate interpretations to people who are unable to grasp the meanings behind this great spiritual event, but because of their civilizational background and the shared culture of the two countries, Iran and Iraq, and the Shiite public's familiarity with the methods and means of the enemies, it seems unlikely that false propaganda and biased and politicized interpretations could undermine this great event.

## **4. Conclusion:**

In the current study, it was attempted to analyze the layers of the Arbaeen Hosseini Walking Ceremony based on the Causal Layered Analysis method, which is of particular use in cultural futures research. In order to answer the question of what layers are forming Arbaeen Hosseini's Great Event, according to the conceptual model of research, four layers of problem were investigated. The first layer, which is the Litany layer, describes the existence and/or absence of the problem. Arbaeen Hosseini Walking is an undeniable fact that creates enormous potential for Shi'ite discourse, and the context of exploiting this capacity requires understanding all aspects of this

enormous cultural-spiritual event. In the social systems layer, the underlying factors or drivers of Arbaeen Hosseini's super event were discussed. The analysis of causal systems forming Arbaeen Hosseini shows that after the collapse of the Ba'athist regime and the opening of the political space in Iraq due to the cultural influences of Iran and Iraq, as well as bilateral agreements and services to pilgrims, and the role of the media in the country and even the international media alongside the role of references and influential figures, Arbaeen Hosseini's walking in recent years has become an unparalleled global community. At the layer of worldview – discourse, the discourses that shaped this super event include the significance and virtue of Imam Hussein's (AS) pilgrimage for the Shiites as well as the Shiites' power through the march of Arbaeen Hosseini to stabilize their role and position and the impact on the current events of the West Asian region and the Islamic world. At the level of the myth-metaphor layer one can also regard the mass mourning march of Arbaeen Hosseini as the subconscious collective mind of the Shiites for their rejection of cruelty and domination and a culture of resistance that if their dignity is endangered by aliens, they will be able to replicate that historic event by reproducing their identity.

Since performing a causal layer analysis method requires scenario writing, three scenarios of transcendence, transformation, and weakening based on possible drivers and obstacles have been drawn for the future of Arbaeen Hosseini's walking course. Then the probability or refusal conditions of each scenario were evaluated in relation to the layers forming the Arbaeen Hosseini super event, that the Scenario of Transcendence was the preferred scenario for the Arbaeen Hosseini Walking Super Event and possible and probable scenarios were plotted as transformation and weakening scenarios, respectively.

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