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Muhammad and the Formation of Sacrifice
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A long time’s critical interest for and love of the Islamic culture is crystallised in this book. Ever since my first conscious awareness of the Afghani culture during my youth I have been curious about the “otherness” of Muslims from the Middle East and, later, about Norway’s new Muslim citizens. “Curiosity for otherness” does not suffice for academic research, but it has definitely been a good friend that kept me on the track when various difficulties in the writing process challenged me.

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Gerd Marie Ådna
# Table of Contents

Acknowledgements ........................................................................................................v

Note on Transliteration, Dates and Technical Standards ...........................................xiii

Chapter 1: Sacrifice in Islam? ...................................................................................1

Chapter 2: Theoretical and Research Historical Perspectives ...............................5
  2.1 Islamic sacrificial rituals seen in the light of Roy A. Rappaport’s *Religion and Rituals in the Making of Humanity* ..................................................5
  2.1.1 Ritual orders and self-referential and canonical messages .....................6
  2.1.2 Ultimate Sacred Postulates .....................................................................8
  2.1.3 Sanctified expressions and *logos* .........................................................9
  2.1.4 Analogue and digital time ..................................................................10
  2.2 From the history of the study of sacrifice .................................................12
    2.2.1 Sacrificial terms and schemes ..............................................................12
      2.2.1.1 Sacrifice and terminology ..........................................................12
      2.2.1.2 The terms “sacrifice”, “offering”, “victim”, “immolation” and “slaughtering” .................................................13
      2.2.1.3 Sacrificial schemes .................................................................15
      2.2.1.4 Sacrifice, communion and communication ..........................17
    2.2.2 Sacrifice, community and gender ...................................................23
    2.2.3 Sacred and profane .................................................................25
    2.2.4 Complementary ideas about sacrifice ...........................................27
  2.3 Primary sources of the Islamic reception of sacrifice ...............................32
  2.4 The Islamic sacrifice in scholarly discussions ............................................32
    2.4.1 Historical and religious analyses of the pilgrimage to Mecca ........33
    2.4.2 Studies of pre-Islamic and Islamic sacrifice in the Qurʾān and *hadith* .............................................................................................................35
    2.4.3 Discussions of the two sons and the Feast of Sacrifice, ʿīd al-ʿadḥā ...........................39
    2.4.4 Judicial analyses of the role of sacrifice and slaughtering in Islam ..........42

Chapter 3: The Qurʾān ..............................................................................................45
  3.1 Selection of texts .......................................................................................45
  3.2 The offering of Ibrāhīm’s son according to Q 37 ....................................45
3.2.1 Context of the narrative ..............................................................45
3.2.2 Q 37:99–113 ..................................................................................47
3.2.3 Episodes linked to the portrait of Ibrāhīm .....................................59
  3.2.3.1 Q 17:31–33 and Q 6:136–137, “You shall not kill” ..............59
  3.2.3.2 Q 3:96–97a, Ibrāhīm’s religion and signs .........................60
  3.2.3.3 Q 6:162, Prayer and service of sacrifice .........................61
3.3 Other texts ....................................................................................61
  3.3.1 Sacrificial rituals .................................................................61
    3.3.1.1 Q 22:26–35, Sacred rites and animal ..........................61
    3.3.1.2 Q 22:36–38, “Their flesh and blood does not reach
                   God” ........................................................................65
    3.3.1.3 Q 2:67–73, Mūsā sacrifices a cow ..............................66
    3.3.1.4 Q 5:1–4, Permitted and non-permitted animals ..........68
    3.3.1.5 Q 5:30–32, The offerings by Adam’s two sons .........70
  3.3.2 Compensation .......................................................................72
    3.3.2.1 Q 2:196 and 48:25, 27, Ḥajj and sacrifice, fasting
                   and almsgiving .........................................................72
    3.3.2.2 Q 5:95–103, Killing or sacrifice ..................................78
  3.3.3 Positive and negative statements .........................................80
    3.3.3.1 Q 108:1–3, “Pray to your Lord and sacrifice to Him” ...80
    3.3.3.2 Q 3:183 and 46:28, Sacrifice and signs ...................84
    3.3.3.3 Q 9:99, Coming close or sacrifice .........................85

Chapter 4: Pre-Islamic Sacrifices ....................................................87
4.1 Introduction ................................................................................87
4.2 Ibn al-Kalbi’s description of the sacrificial rituals associated with
    pre-Islamic deities .........................................................................88
  4.2.1 Deities and the superiority of Mecca ..................................88
  4.2.2 Other idols that were worshipped according to Ibn al-Kalbi ..94
  4.2.3 Divination arrows and oracles ..............................................98
  4.2.4 Deities, sacrifices and altars .................................................101
4.3 Ibn Ishāq’s and Ibn Hishām’s descriptions ............................103
  4.3.1 Pre-Islamic Mecca and its surroundings ..........................103
  4.3.2 Sacrifices and deities, and their abolition .........................105
  4.3.3 Ḥajj and sacred time in pre-Islamic Makka according to
        Ibn Ishāq ..............................................................................107
  4.3.4 The Zamzam well and sacrifice ...........................................107
4.4 Pre-Islamic and Islamic sacrifices described by al-Ṭabarī ........110
Chapter 5: The Sacrifice of Ibrāhīm ..................................................125
  5.1 Introduction ...................................................................................125
  5.2 Al-Ya`qūbī ....................................................................................125
  5.3 Al-Ṭabarī ........................................................................................127
    5.3.1 Ibrāhīm ....................................................................................127
    5.3.2 Ibrāhīm and his family in Mecca ............................................130
    5.3.3 Son of the two sacrifices – versions by al-Ṭabarī
        and al-Shahrastānī .................................................................132
    5.3.4 The near sacrifice of Ibrāhīm’s son ...........................................134
      5.3.4.1 Version A ........................................................................134
      5.3.4.2 Version B ........................................................................136
      5.3.4.3 Version C ........................................................................138
      5.3.4.4 Version D ........................................................................139
      5.3.4.5 An interlude .....................................................................140
      5.3.4.6 Version E, a poetic version .............................................141
      5.3.4.7 Version F ........................................................................143
  5.4 Al-Kisāʾī’s and al-Thaʿlabī’s versions – some notes ......................144

Chapter 6: ʿAbd al-Muṭṭalib’s Sacrifice ..............................................147
  6.1 Introduction ....................................................................................147
  6.2 Ibn Ishāq and Ibn Ḥishām ............................................................148
  6.3 Al-Ṭabarī: Taʿrīkh .......................................................................150
    6.3.1 Introduction ............................................................................150
    6.3.2 The first version .....................................................................150
    6.3.3 An interlude ............................................................................152
    6.3.4 The second version ................................................................153
    6.3.5 Comparison and comments ..................................................155
    6.3.6 The narratives’ participants ..................................................156
      6.3.6.1 God, gods and goddesses .................................................156
6.3.6.2 The father ..............................................................157
6.3.6.3 The sons and the youngest one ..................................158
6.3.6.4 The Quraysh and other tribes .................................158
6.3.6.5 The custodian and the oracle .................................159
6.3.6.6 The two women .....................................................160
6.3.6.7 The camels .............................................................160
6.3.7 Vows and oaths ..........................................................161
6.3.8 The place .................................................................162
6.3.9 Words used for sacrifice and offerings .........................162
6.3.10 Are two or more traditions combined? .........................163
6.3.11 The conclusion, radiance and prophets ........................164
6.4 Al-Shahrastānī ................................................................165
6.5 Ibn Kathīr ......................................................................167

Chapter 7: Sacrifices during Muḥammad’s Pilgrimages ..........169
7.1 Introduction .................................................................169
7.2 Slaughterings associated with the Ḥudaybiya treaty in the year
   6/628, ‘umrat al-Qaḍiyya in the year 7/629 and ‘umrat al-Ḥirrāna
   in 8/630 .........................................................................170
   7.2.1 Ibn Ishaq and al-Ṭabarî ..........................................170
   7.2.2 Al-Waqīdī and Ibn Kathīr ........................................172
7.3 Abū Bakr’s hajj in the year 9/631 ......................................176
   7.3.1 Ibn Ishaq ...............................................................176
   7.3.2 Al-Waqīdī .............................................................176
   7.3.3 Ibn Kathīr .............................................................178
7.4 Ḥajjat al-wadā’ in the year 10/632 ......................................179
   7.4.1 Ibn Ishaq ...............................................................179
   7.4.2 Al-Waqīdī with some references to Ibn Saʿd, al-Ṭabarî and
         Ibn Kathīr ..................................................................181
7.5 Some comments on the sacrificial rituals practised during the six
   last years of the Prophet ..................................................188

Chapter 8: Prescriptive Views on Sacrifice ...........................193
8.1 Introduction ..................................................................193
8.2 Slaughtering of animals .................................................193
8.3 ‘aqīqa ........................................................................195
8.4 Slaughtering of animals during hajj and ‘Īd al-‘adḥā .........198
8.4.1 Introduction ........................................................................................198
8.4.2 Game (sayd) ........................................................................................198
8.4.3 Sacrificial animals .............................................................................200
8.4.4 Do all animals have the same sacrificial value? ...........................204
8.5 The division and storage of meat ...............................................................206
8.6 The proper place for sacrifice .................................................................208
8.7 The pilgrim and the pilgrimage ...............................................................209
  8.7.1 Limitations, and a substitute for transgressions while in ihram 209
  8.7.2 Prevention from fulfilling the hajj (ihṣār) .....................................211
8.8 Vows and substitutes .............................................................................213
8.9 Time and order ..........................................................................................215

Chapter 9: Islamic Sacrifice and Ultimate Sacred Postulates ..........217
  9.1 Islamic sacrifice and ritual orders, self-referential and
      canonical messages .............................................................................217
  9.2 Sacrifice, ritual and efficacy in communication .................................221
  9.3 The sacrificer and the sacrificer ............................................................224
  9.4 Sanctified expressions .........................................................................226
  9.5 Ultimate Sacred Concern and Postulates .........................................230
  9.6 Community and communion ...............................................................231
  9.7 Hierarchy, simultaneity and Muhammad’s role ..................................232
  9.8 Rituals make the human being human; the ritual of hajj, including
      sacrifice, confirms the Muslim as a Muslim .................................234
  9.9 The sacred place ....................................................................................236
  9.10 Partial or complete sanctification? ...................................................237
  9.11 The obedient believer ........................................................................239
  9.12 Muhammad’s authority and example; he is the son of the
      two sacrifices ....................................................................................241
  9.13 When is the proper time for Islamic rituals? ....................................244
  9.14 Substance of sacrifice in Islam – a critical assessment ..................248

Bibliography ................................................................................................255
  1. Sources ..................................................................................................255
     1.1 The Qurān .......................................................................................255
     1.2 Other Source Texts .......................................................................255
  2. Secondary Literature .............................................................................260
Note on Transliteration, Dates and Technical Standards

The transliteration follows in general the *Encyclopaedia of Islam* system with the two modifications customary in works in English (i.e., q instead of k and j instead of dj). Also in quotations taken from the *Encyclopaedia of Islam* I have made this modification. Still, due to varying transliteration customs prevailing in different languages and to changes during the last two centuries, there will be some deviating transliterations.

Sometimes, the a of the definite article al- is omitted in a continuous Arabic transcription. I have chosen to write all nouns ending with a ta’marbūta without the h at the end of the word.

Arabic names are predominantly written in full, in the transcribed way, as, e.g., Mūsā (Moses). However, some of the often mentioned city names are written in their regular Anglicized version: Mecca (Makka), Medina (Madīna), Mina (Minā). I have chosen to use “God” and “Allāh” interchangeably.

Dates are usually given according to both the Islamic calendar, viz. Ḥijrī = “AH”, and to the Christian calendar, viz. Anno Domini = “AD”, e.g., “Ibn Iṣḥāq (d. 150/767)”.

The numbering of Qurʾānic verses differs in some Qurʾān editions and in some translations. Therefore, sometimes there will be written two numbers, like “14 (15)”.

Only few abbreviations are used throughout the text; in the bibliography, the *Encyclopedia of Islam* is called EI.
Chapter 1
Sacrifice in Islam?

A festival of sacrifice, ʿīd al-ʿadḥā, takes up a prominent position in Islam, celebrated annually in the month of pilgrimage, dhū l-ḥijja. At the same time as the hajj and the sacrificial ritual take place in Mecca, sheep, goats, camels and cows are slaughtered all over the Muslim world. The performance of this sacrificial ritual in a religion that regards God as totally omnipotent and in no need of offerings, gives cause to many questions, some of which will be discussed in this study.

There are many possibilities for anyone who intends to study sacrifice in Islam. My approach has been delimited by a chosen theme (the formation of sacrificial rituals in early Islam), a certain body of texts (the Qurʾān and some early Muslim writers), and a clearly defined analytical perspective (ritual theory as it has been formulated by Roy A. Rappaport). On the following pages, I will introduce my points of departure: the theme, the texts, and the perspective.

I would like to begin by presenting some of the questions related to the development of the ʿumra, the hajj (including the Farewell-ḥajj of Muḥammad some months before he died in 10/632), and ʿīd al-ʿadḥā that I will pose, and try to answer, in this study. First, does the Islamic offering really contain a sacrifice in the sense the concept is usually used in the history of religions, like Widengren defines it, for example?

As a sacrifice one designates the religious act, the ritual, which through the consecration of a living creature or a species of plant, or a liquid substance or an object to a deity – in case of a living creature, with or without killing – establishes a connection between this deity and the person who performs the ritual. It is thereby assumed that the ritual is able to influence the deity in a way hoped for by the sacrificer.1

Alternatively, are the aspects of fellowship among the believers, loyalty towards Muḥammad’s example and the idea of charity the essential base and goals?

What reasons are there for obeying Allāh through sacrificial rituals similar to those Muhammad performed during his first and only hajj in Islamic times? Further, why does a sacrificial ritual take place in Islam at all? How important is this sacrificial part of the pilgrimage ritual, which is to be undertaken to fulfil the iḥrām-status of the Muslim? What obstacles might affect or even hinder the practice of sacrifice? Why is a sacrifice required in the Islamic ritual when a bloody sacrifice seems to have no ability to change God and his actions? Does early Islam see the sacrifice as something more than an isolated ritual slaughtering? Has the sacrificial ritual become an empty ritual or is it a ritual that expresses something else, for instance, something different from a regular slaughtering in Allāh’s name?

How did the pre-Islamic sacrifices that were undertaken in Mecca and Mina, influence the idea of the Islamic sacrifice during hajj and ʿid al-ʿadḥā? Why is any ritually clean animal a valid victim in the feast’s sacrificial ritual when Allāh found a ram for Ibrāhīm’s son in the first place? What is Muḥammad’s role in this and the later sacrificial act during hajj? Is his life to be compared to Ibrāhīm’s life – or to Ibrāhīm’s son’s life? Is there an idea of a sacrificial prototype behind the immolation and the rituals connected to it?

My assumption is that the early Islamic sacrifice is related to the complexity of hajj and its model narratives – where the biography of Muhammad and his family and friends is immensely important. These texts and narratives are developed through the rituals (ʿibadāt) and through the regulations (manāsik) for the pilgrimage and the sacrificial rituals in Mecca and Mina, but also more and more in connection with the rituals of ʿid al-ʿadḥā all over the Muslim world.

In early Islamic literature, there are several narratives and smaller texts, which tell about sacrificial rituals or comment on sacrificial matters. The story about Ibrāhīm almost sacrificing his son (Qurʾān 37) and the attributed interpretations, which during the early years of Islam were divided on the question whether Ishaq or Ismāʿīl was the intended sacrifice, are significant.

Another sacrifice to which I refer, is found in the narrative of the Prophet Muḥammad’s father, ʿAbd Allāh, who was nearly sacrificed by his father ʿAbd al-Muṭṭalib ibn Hishām. Admittedly of less significance than Ibrāhīm’s sacrifice, it is still important for the later evaluation of Muḥammad’s status. But it is

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2 I have chosen to use the term “Islamic sacrifice” and not the more extensive “Arabic sacrifice” that Chelhod (1955) uses already in the title, Le sacrifice chez les arabes, of his book. Even if I draw examples from pre-Islamic sacrifices, they are described by Muslims in an Islamic context. The majority of examples Chelhod brings are Islamic, and he emphasises that “libations” and “funeral traditions” among “the Arabs” are “Arabic sacrifices” and not solely “Islamic” (Chelhod 1955: 140–143).
relevant to ask why the symbolic narrative of the near sacrifice of Muḥammad’s father is seldom taken into consideration regarding the ḥajj and ‘id al-adḥa even though it has many similarities with the Abrahamic sacrifice.

Al-Ṭabarī (d. 310/923) is – as far as I know – the oldest source for the following sentence addressed to Muḥammad, “O son of the two sacrifices (yā ʿibn al-dhabīḥayni)!” Later, al-Shahrastānī (d. 548/1153) takes up the same idea and says, “The Prophet is glorious, peace be upon him, and he said: ‘I am the son of the two sacrifices (anā ʾibnu l-dhabīḥayni)’.” In the late 19th century, the often quoted historian, al-Ālūsī, refers that Muḥammad said about himself, “I am the son of the two sacrifices (anā ʾibnu al-dhabīḥayni).” Most often these two sacrifices seem to be understood as the near sacrifices of Ibrāḥīm and ʿAbd al-Muṭṭalib. Consequently, I want to examine these narratives that are found in different early Islamic sources.

Additionally, other texts that interact with these texts, either thematically or symbolically, will be considered. The Qurān (suwar 2, 22, 108 and more) will contribute to the understanding of the two sacrifices and the sacrificial activity during ‘id al-adḥa. One last relevant question linked to these sacrifices is what sort of sanctity, hierarchy and understanding of time is defined in these sacrificial rituals. Here, the sources are in addition to those mentioned above, al-Wāqidi’s (d. 207/822) important work about the challenger Muḥammad. This study aims at answering these and other questions, and these answers will hopefully enlighten my main subject of inquiry: Is there one ultimate concern behind the two sacrifices?

Moreover, Islamic texts from the five first centuries AH will be subjects of my investigation, in particular the above mentioned narratives from al-Ṭabarī’s History of the Messengers and the Kings from the beginning of the 10th century AD, but also other texts, for instance by the early hadīth collector and jurist

3 Rubin (1990: 105) points to an early source al-Azraqī, Akbar Makka. However, the last Arabic edition that Wüstenfeld uses for his edition (1861) is from the transmitter Abū Hassan Muḥammad ibn Nūfīr al-Khuzaʿī who died after 350/961 according to Fück (1960: 826–827). Hence, al-Ṭabarī is earlier even if they partly use the same sources.

4 Al-Ṭabarī (d. 310/923) 1987 vol. 2: 83 [Arabic vol. 1: 291].


6 Al-Ālūsī (d. 1924) 1896 (1883?): vol. 3: 46–49. S.P. Stetkevych (1993: 38) only mentions the al-Ālūsī-source when she refers to the saying of the Prophet.

7 Even if the ‘id is never mentioned in the Qurān.

Mālik ibn Anas (d. 179/795), the historian al-Yaʿqūbī (d. ca. 293/905), and the historian Ibn al-Kalbī (d. 206/821) with his exciting text about pre-Islam, *The Book of the Idols*. The literature in the genre of the Histories of the Prophets (*Qiṣṣāṣ al-anbīyāʾ*) put down in writing in the 10th and 11th centuries AD is also interesting regarding the development of the reception of the tradition of the sacrificial rituals. In a few cases Ibn Rushd (d. 595/1198), Ibn Kathīr (d. 774/1373), and others are consulted to see whether the views of Mālik ibn Anas in particular, are still taken into consideration in the 6th/14th Century. All this literature will contribute to a new comprehension of the formation of sacrifice in early Islam.

This work is based on studies of Arabic texts and the application of ritual and sacrificial theories, especially with the help of some major analytical concepts found in the monograph *Ritual and Religion in the Making of Humanity* by the late Roy A. Rappaport. During the 20th century, the research on ritual and sacrifice has looked upon the sacrificial rituals within the Abrahamic and other religions in different ways. Recent contributions (e.g. J. Drexler, B. Gladigow and H. Seiwert) are especially pointing at the complexity of sacrificial rituals. Rappaport goes even further and combines anthropological and religious ritual theories into a meaningful whole, which will be used to illuminate the Muslim sacrificial praxis as found in early Islamic writings.

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10. Al-Yaʿqūbī (d. ca 293/905) 1960.
2.1 Islamic sacrificial rituals seen in the light of Roy A. Rappaport’s \textit{Religion and Rituals in the Making of Humanity}

Islam is not one of the main religions dealt with in Roy A. Rappaport’s \textit{Ritual and Religion in the Making of Humanity}. He hardly mentions early Islam, and does not comment on Islam’s sacrificial practices at all. Instead, his main examples are taken from his research among the Maring people of Papua New Guinea, from the rituals and related activities of Jews, American Indians and a variety of other ethnic and religious groups, and from rituals associated with secular institutions such as the Olympic Games and certain theatrical traditions.\(^1\)

Rappaport compares various elements of both religious and social rituals. The connections that he identifies promise to be a useful tool in my description and analysis of the Islamic material. Although his discussion is in some respects unfinished, due to the fact that his monograph was published posthumously in 1999,\(^2\) it is nevertheless of broad scope and considerable interest, and I shall therefore use it to throw some light on the Islamic rituals connected to pilgrimage and sacrifice.

Viewed in the light of the broader academic discussion about ritual, I have chosen some of Rappaport’s terms that are likely to enrich my discussion about sacrifice in Islam. These fall into various groups of concepts: firstly, \textit{ritual order}, self-referential and canonical messages, secondly, \textit{Ultimate Sacred Postulates} and sanctified expressions, and thirdly, the contrasted ideas of \textit{analogue} and \textit{digital time}, eternity and mundane time, hierarchy and simultaneity.

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\(^1\) Rappaport 1999: 25; 259–260.
\(^2\) Rappaport died from cancer in 1997.
2.1.1 Ritual orders and self-referential and canonical messages

Let me begin with a quotation that presents Rappaport’s perspective on liturgical order, since this might serve as a suitable and valid theoretical starting point for the discussion of sacrifices in early Islam. “It is simple, that liturgical orders can and do organize, or even construct socially, the temporal orders of at least some societies, and that ‘temporal’ orders, when organized by ritual, make a place for eternity as well as for mundane time.”³

This perspective offers an approach to many aspects of sacred and mundane time and the rituals that cover both these aspects of religious and worldly life. The development of the rituals of sacrifice relating to the Islamic hajj seems to demonstrate an increasingly settled, prescribed order. The hajj became a far more complex affair than ever the rituals of Ibrāhīm and ‘Abd al-Muṭṭalib had been. In this context it is legitimate to ask whether early Islamic teaching actively transformed pre-Islamic texts to account for this complexity.

Rappaport has defined ritual as “the performance of more or less invariant sequences of formal acts and utterances not entirely encoded by the performers”.⁴ Evidently, this is a rather open definition that leaves the performer facing an intricate task, namely, to discover the profounder significance of his or her ritual. Rappaport “privileges ritual over belief, form over content, and general, abstract argument over the interpretation of the historically particular”.⁵ This illustrates an important aspect of his research, which allows for the ritual of the Islamic pilgrimage to be as important as the theologically formed teaching about it, although the aspect of dogma will not be overlooked in this study.

Rappaport’s theory of liturgical orders provides a background for an analysis of the Islamic pilgrimage (hajj and manāsik) and of sacrificial rituals,⁶ in terms of the system that constitutes this liturgical order. In Rappaport’s terminology “liturgical order” does not refer to individual rituals in isolation, but to “the more or less invariant sequences of rituals that make up cycles and other series as well”.⁷

In keeping with Rappaport’s definition, I will call the hajj rituals of early Islam “liturgical orders”, since the elements of the hajj constitute a complete

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3 Rappaport 1999: 175.
5 Lambek 2001: 248.
6 ḫibḥ is one of the main Arabic words for ‘sacrifice’, while ʿibādāt means ‘Islamic religious rituals’.
7 Rappaport 1999: 169. This opinion is opposed to van Gennep, who uses this term of liturgical order in a more precise sense. See van Gennep (1909) 1960.
liturgy with essential religious and liturgical signs. In this system, time (the month of dhū l-hijja), and place (Mecca and Mina, or wherever Muslims happen to be celebrating the festival of ḩīd al-ʿadḥā) are essential. This will be discussed with the help of Rappaport’s idea of placing “ritual over belief, form over content”.8 He states that “liturgical orders, even those performed in solitude, are public orders and participation in them constitutes an acceptance of a public order regardless of the private state of the belief of the performer”.9

This raises a question with regard to the intention (niyya) that the Muslim is supposed to utter, even if only silently, before and often during the pilgrimage ritual (despite receiving no mention in the Qurʾān and my other main sources). Is participation in the pilgrimage and sacrificial ritual a public Muslim act even when the pilgrim does not understand the content of the rituals and does not anticipate the consequences of what he or she is doing? What sort of attitude is required according to our texts? Rappaport says that “acceptance is not a private state, but a public act, visible both to witnesses and to performers themselves”.10

To describe the double stream of messages that rituals involve, Rappaport uses the terms self-referential and canonical messages.11 These he compares respectively with doing and saying. Self-referential messages are shown through actions, while canonical messages are realised through utterances.12 Self-referential messages express something about the participants, and can be classified according to three levels, which are characterised as orders of meaning: “low” (referring to distinction), “middle” (referring to similarities) and “high” (referring to identity). These orders can be distinguished but not separated.13 There is not just a hierarchy of subjectivity but also one of integration. Self-referential messages are transmitted through participation.14 “Self-referential messages are sanctified, which is to say certified, through their association with the highly invariant canonical stream.”15

Concerning “canon”16 and “canonical messages”, which carry the self-referential messages through the rituals to the public and to the participants themselves, Rappaport says,

8 Lambek 2001: 248.
9 Rappaport 1999: 121.
10 Rappaport 1999: 120.
13 Rappaport 1999: 72–73.
14 Rappaport 1999: 83.
16 Rappaport 1999: 224: “Canon – the punctiliously recurring and therefore apparently unchanging spine of liturgical order.”
Without canon, self-referential messages would be meaningless or even non-existent as such. [...] The canonical guides, limits and indeed, defines the self-referential. But this does not mean that the self-referential is unambiguously subordinated to the canonical.17

When words are uttered in a ritual, they “bring conventional states of affairs, or ‘institutional facts’ into being, and having been brought into being they are real as ‘brute facts’”.18 The canon that underlies the ritual and the words actually spoken are intertwined, and the “‘magical power of words’ may be related to their illocutionary force or performativeness”.19

2.1.2 Ultimate Sacred Postulates

“Cosmological axioms are manifested in social and physical phenomena”; they “can be changed” and they “serve as the logical basis from which both specific rules of conduct and the proprieties of social life can be derived”.20 Cosmological axioms, like mathematical or other scientific axioms, are different from what Rappaport calls “Ultimate Sacred Postulates”. In Islam this postulate is the shahāda, the credo that says that Allāh is the only God and that Muḥammad is his messenger.21 Such postulates are “deeper than logic and beyond logic’s reach, upon which cosmological structures can change—expand, contract, or even be radically altered structurally”.22 Ultimate Sacred Postulates are characterised as “more vague” with regard to their social content.23 They do not stipulate the actions to be undertaken in particular circumstances, nor do they even specify the general principles to be used in the rituals in which these actions should be undertaken. They do, however, provide the ground for those principles.24 The Ultimate Sacred Postulates are “not fully of this world and can be regarded as eternal verities”,25 they are “beyond empirical verification”26 and can be “falsified neither logically nor empirically”.27

17 Rappaport 1999: 106.
18 Rappaport 1999: 117.
19 Rappaport 1999: 117.
20 Rappaport 1999: 288.
21 See Qurʾān 112.
22 Rappaport 1999: 265.
23 Rappaport 1999: 265.
26 Rappaport 1999: 280.
Does this correspond to the religious rituals of prayer and physical activities in the Muslim *hajj* rituals? It can be asked whether people can be participants in the rituals if they are unwilling to be followers and lack the right to question *and* change the actual rituals. Can they be believers and followers if they are merely silent marionettes? Rituals might be changed even if they are said not to be! Those who participate in the rituals have a varying ability to perceive the various elements they involve. However, Rappaport states that participation in a ritual underlines the performer’s acceptance of it.28

2.1.3 Sanctified expressions and *logos*

Rappaport does not flinch from using terms such as “sacred”, “holy”,29 “divine”30 and “sanctified”, which some scholars avoid.31 “Sacred” we have already encountered above, in the expression “Ultimate Sacred Postulates”. When it comes to the term “sanctified” and its cognates, they are closely related to Rappaport’s thesis about how rituals change their object. “Ritual [...] sanctifies whatever it encodes” and “sanctity is a product of ritual”.32 He also explicitly states that “there is, first, the *sacred*, a category composed entirely of Ultimate Sacred Postulates. Secondly, there is the *sanctified*, a category of expressions associated with Ultimate Sacred Postulates but not themselves ultimately sacred”.33 Interestingly, he explains, “The concept of the sacred may be as old as language, which is a way of saying as old as humanity itself.”34 Sanctity is also a “quality of religious discourse rather than of objects of that discourse”.35

Rituals almost always involve words and utterances. Rappaport divides these uses of language into fourteen different groups, which I take to be groups that belong among the concerns characterised as “ultimately sacred”. He calls

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29 Rappaport 1999: 405: “In the Holy – the union of the sacred and the numinous – the most abstract of conceptions are bound to the most immediate and substantial of experiences.”
30 Rappaport 1999: 304: “The God of Word may have first been created in the ritual that first established the truth of the Word of God. This is to suggest that the notion of the divine, like the idea of the sacred, is as old as language.” See also Rappaport 1999: 378 (on Durkheim and divinity).
31 For example Flood (1999: 5, 71, 112), who uses “sacred” and “sacredness” only when discussing Otto and Eliade, scholars to whom Rappaport (1999: 371–373) also refers.
32 Rappaport 1999: 323.
34 Rappaport 1999: 286. Italics by the author.
35 Rappaport 1999: 345; see also 281–282.
these utterances not sacred, but sanctified expressions, and orders them in the following way:

1) myths; 2) cosmological axioms; 3) rules ordaining ritual performances and constituting taboos; 4) socially transforming fictive acts and utterances (e.g. rites of passage); 5) privileged exegeses; 6) prophecies, auguries, divinations and oracles; 7) acts and utterances mobilising occult efficacy to achieve physical effects; 8) social directives; 9) taxonomies; 10) expressions establishing authorities; 11) directives of sanctified authorities; 12) testimony; 13) commissives; 14) ritually transmitted self-referential information (which may also be indexically signalled).36

Rappaport explains that this listing does not mean that the various modes of expression, for instance myths, are always sanctified or sacred. “It is clear that although ritual may be the locus of the sacred and, as such, the font of sanctity, sanctity escapes from ritual and may flow to all of the expressions through which a society is regulated.”37 He continually emphasises that there are different levels in language and employs the Greek term logos in his theory to refer “generally to the cosmic orders represented by liturgical orders”.38 Liturgical orders are thus sanctified by the Ultimate Sacred Postulates, and they “re-present themselves”; they are also “meta-orders”.39 Hence, the use of the expression logos is Rappaport’s attempt to co-ordinate all aspects of rituals, and it completes the central idea of Ritual and Religion in the Making of Humanity.40

2.1.4 Analogue and digital time

A further interesting aspect of Rappaport’s work is his remarks on the themes of time and of hierarchy and simultaneity, which are also very relevant to the study of Islamic sacrifice and ritual. These concepts serve to digitalise continuously running time, or analogue time.41 Rappaport writes: “Analogic processes can be, and often are, represented digitally. Although time is continuous, and may even

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40 Rappaport 1999: 351.
41 Rappaport 1999: 86. He (1999: 87) says further: “The term ‘analogic’ refers to entities and processes in which values can change through continuous imperceptible gradations in, for instance, temperature, distance, velocity, influence, maturation, mood, prestige and worthiness. Signals, like other phenomena, may be analogic. [...] The term ‘digital’, in contrast, refers to entities or processes whose values change not through continuous infinitesimal gradations but by discontinuous laps.”
be conceived as such, it can be represented digitally, and is on many watches; so can distance.”

It is, however, “unfortunate” to speak about “punctual” time, Rappaport argues. All time is durational time, but there are two temporal conditions, mundane or profane time on the one hand, and extraordinary or sacred time on the other. There is a change from one time to the other. Rappaport’s ideas help to clarify certain aspects of the ʿīd al-ʿaḍḥā. In the feast profane and sacred time in Islam come together and merge. Its digital time becomes sacred time. Through the rituals time is digitalised. Thereby, a difference between sacred and non-sacred is created.

Rappaport says that there is no “time between times”, in contrast to van Gennep and Turner, who talk about liminal, marginal or infinitesimal periods. What is time more than continuous time? There is no time without duration; there is in effect no punctual time. However, rituals are different. They “stop” time and create what tend to be precise boundaries; they are distinctive and repetitive. They are sharply formed, and different from natural forms and processes. Liturgy divides time into periods (natural ones according to year, age etc.). They may succeed each other and become part of a greater whole. Thus time is constructed. When time is constituted in the heavens (and not in the mundane world), the distinction between time itself and significant changes in the world is clearer. We might talk of either cyclical or progressive (continuous) time, the latter being illusory.

When I intend to analyse the Islamic pilgrimage rituals, especially the sacrificial elements, in the light of Rappaport’s ideas of continuity and process, of analogic and digital time, I do it knowing that time and the lunar calendar are of extreme importance in Islam. Muslims’ anxiety ahead of the fasting or the pilgrimage month, not knowing when – today or tomorrow – it will begin, is adequate to consider here illuminated from the perspective of intention (niyya).

Time in Mecca and Mina is continuous, but can be represented digitally by the rituals that interpose sharp boundaries between beginnings and ends. What is

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42 Rappaport 1999: 87.
43 Rappaport 1999: 181.
44 Rappaport 1999: 225: “‘Liturgical time,’ ‘sacred time,’ ‘extraordinary time,’ is literally time out of ordinary social time, for the temporal region characteristic of mundane social interaction is vacated.”
47 Rappaport 1999: 178.
48 Rappaport 1999: 179.
49 Rappaport 1999: 183.
time outside these two places, one might ask. Rappaport says that there are digital aspects of ritual communication, but ritual communication is not only digital.\textsuperscript{50} This world’s “changeability” is compared with the lack of change in the sacred world, which is “neither coming nor passing away”.\textsuperscript{51}

When I try to understand the Islamic rituals (ʿibadāt) according to the system that constructs its liturgical order, I shall include therein the aspects of time (the month of dhū l-hijja) and place (Mecca and all the places where Muslims celebrate the festival). This means that a celebration of the festival in Cairo is conducted with the same matter of course as in Mecca. This involves ethical regulations of many kinds. In all places people meet face to face and are confronted with the regulations contained in the written and oral law. Traditions and unspoken expectations are an especially important part of the less centralised rituals, i.e., those rituals that in Mecca are performed outside the Ka'ba area.

\section*{2.2 From the history of the study of sacrifice}

\subsection*{2.2.1 Sacrificial terms and schemes}

\subsubsection*{2.2.1.1 Sacrifice and terminology}

Whereas rituals and liturgical orders have been defined above according to Rappaport’s proposals, the rite of sacrifice needs further theoretical discussion. A number of standard works have been written about sacrificial rites. My intention is not to present a new extensive survey of these theories, but to pick out those elements that I think will illuminate the analysis of Islamic sacrifice. Even where these elements are taken from Greek sacrifices,\textsuperscript{52} the Nuer,\textsuperscript{53} or others, they will be used to help in the analysis of Islamic sacrifice.

For Tylor\textsuperscript{54}, sacrifice is tribute; for Robertson Smith\textsuperscript{55}, it is a communal meal with the gods. Frazer\textsuperscript{56} sees the death of the priest / king as the destruction of an envelope

\textsuperscript{50} Rappaport 1999: 89.
\textsuperscript{51} Rappaport 1999: 176; see also 203.
\textsuperscript{52} Among the most important works on Greek sacrifice are those by Burkert 1972 and 1983. Cavallin (2003: 49) points out that Burkert’s idea of sacrifice is implicit in the title of his book, the Killing Man (Homo Necans). “He deduces from this axiom the conclusion that violence is therefore also at the core of religious traditions, and more specifically that the sacred is derived from sacrificial killing.”
\textsuperscript{53} Evans-Pritchard 1954 and 1956.
\textsuperscript{54} Tylor (1871) 1970.
\textsuperscript{55} Robertson Smith (1889; 1901) 1927.
of power, in order to release that power. Hubert and Mauss\textsuperscript{57} portray sacrifice as the knife’s edge that balances the sacred and the profane. Evans-Pritchard\textsuperscript{58} stresses rather the banishment of the divine by sacrificial means, while de Heusch\textsuperscript{59} understands sacrifice as a mimesis of death and rebirth.\textsuperscript{60}

This is how Bruce Chilton sums up the most important sacrificial theories from the end of the 19th century onwards. The theme could be dismissed with this quotation. But of course, there are relevant and important topics that remain to be discussed.

2.2.1.2 The terms “sacrifice”, “offering”, “victim”, “immolation” and “slaughtering”

The word \textit{sacrifice} is derived from the Latin \textit{sacrificium}, which can be divided into \textit{sacer}, ‘dedicated’ or ‘consecrated to a divinity, holy, sacred’,\textsuperscript{61} and \textit{facere} from \textit{facio}, ‘to create’ or, in the context of ritual, ‘to perform a religious rite; to offer sacrifice; make an offering; to sacrifice’\textsuperscript{62}. The combined meaning then becomes ‘to bring something into the sphere of the sacred’.\textsuperscript{63} The word is, however, used in two ways, either to denote the sacrificial \textit{act}, or to denote the \textit{victim}, the person, animal or thing to be sacrificed. The words \textit{offer} and \textit{offering}, and the German words for sacrifice, \textit{Opfer}, derived from the Old German \textit{opfarn}, may have been borrowed from Latin \textit{operari}, originally from \textit{operatio}, ‘performing’ or ‘bringing of offerings’. One of the Christian meanings that developed is ‘beneficence’ or ‘charity’.\textsuperscript{64} However, also the Latin \textit{offere}, ‘to bring before and to present’,\textsuperscript{65} contributes to the sense of the English ‘offer’, which is more suggestive of ‘bringing a gift’. In scholarly discourse, however, the use of both \textit{offer} and \textit{sacrifice} as terms has obscured the discussion.\textsuperscript{66} In the English and French tradition, \textit{sacrifice} has often been understood as ‘the immolated victim’, while \textit{offer} and \textit{offering} have been understood as ‘the gift that is given to the gods or God’.\textsuperscript{67} Henri Hubert (1872–1927) and Marcel

\begin{thebibliography}{99}
\bibitem{57} Hubert and Mauss (1898) 1964.
\bibitem{58} Evans-Pritchard 1954 and 1956.
\bibitem{59} de Heusch 1985.
\bibitem{60} Chilton 1992: 13.
\bibitem{61} Lewis (1879) 1980: 1610.
\bibitem{62} Lewis (1879) 1980: 716–717. See also Seiwert 1998: 270.
\bibitem{63} Seiwert 1998: 270.
\bibitem{64} Lewis (1879) 1980: 1267.
\bibitem{65} Lewis (1879) 1980: 1259.
\bibitem{66} Seiwert 1998: 269.
\bibitem{67} In his interesting monograph about Vedic sacrifice, Clemens Cavallin (2003: 1, n. 1) maintains that “it is hard to draw a clear line between offering and sacrifice”. He refers
\end{thebibliography}
Mauss (1872–1950) explicitly designate sacrifice as “destroyed” victims and rituals “where blood is shed”\textsuperscript{68} Nevertheless, they admit that in many cases the two meanings are intertwined\textsuperscript{69}.

The word victim has been used both in a ritual sense, as in the context of sacrifice, but more often to describe someone who has been involuntarily subjected to any negative influence or illness. When I use victim here, I use it exclusively about the ritual object or about an animal that is sacrificed. This is in fact the original Latin meaning of the word\textsuperscript{70}.

Two words that are important in the scholarly discussion and for this study of Islamic sacrifice are the nouns immolation and slaughter. Immolation is derived from Latin immolatio (noun) and immolo (verb), meaning respectively ‘a sacrificing; a sacrifice; an offering’ and ‘to bring as an offering, to sacrifice’,\textsuperscript{71} while “slaughter” comes from Old Norse slatr, meaning ‘to slay’ (verb).\textsuperscript{72} There might, however, be ritual slayings or slaughterings that are not part of a sacrifice.\textsuperscript{73} Today, both words can be used to describe acts that may be part of either a religious ritual or an ordinary everyday act in an official slaughterhouse or in a private courtyard.

Regardless of the Latin background of the word, Hubert and Mauss defined sacrifice as “a religious act which, through the consecration of a victim, modifies the condition of the moral person who accomplishes it or that of certain objects with which he is concerned”.\textsuperscript{74} With regard to the “objects of sacrifice”, Hubert and Mauss defined them as “those things for whose sake the sacrifice takes place”.\textsuperscript{75} The Encyclopaedia Britannica defined in 1977 sacrifice as “a cultic act in which objects were set apart or consecrated and offered to a god or

to Raymond Firth who “treats sacrifice as a subtype of offering, the differentia being that sacrifice implies a substantial offering and that the resources are limited; sacrifice is thus ‘giving up something at a cost’.” Firth ([1963] 1996: 97–101) refers to “the economic and ecological contexts, and the distinction between sacrifice and offering is thus relative to factors outside the ritual realm proper”.

\textsuperscript{68} Hubert and Mauss (1898) 1964: 12.
\textsuperscript{69} Hubert and Mauss (1898) 1964: 12.
\textsuperscript{70} Lewis (1879) 1980: 1987: “victima, a beast for sacrifice adorned with the fillet (vitta), a sacrifice, victim”.
\textsuperscript{71} Lewis (1879) 1980: 894.
\textsuperscript{73} Henninger 1987: 545: “Eliminatory rites, though they may include the slaying of a living being or the destruction of an inanimate object, are not directed to a personal recipient and thus should not be described as sacrifices.”
\textsuperscript{74} Hubert and Mauss (1898) 1964: 15.
\textsuperscript{75} Hubert and Mauss (1898) 1964: 10.