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Concept of Sacrifice in Hinduism and Islam
A comparative Study

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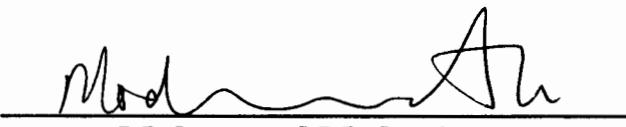
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To my Parents

Acknowledgments

Prays to Allah Who is the Creator and sustainer of the universe, Who is the Ultimate source of knowledge. Allah's mercy upon our worthy and greatest leader Muhammad (May peace and mercy of Allah upon Him), Who is the leader of the knowledge.

First of all, I want to thank my supervisor, Professor Dr. Muhammad Khalifa Hasan Ahmad who guided me and shared with me his wealth of knowledge about comparative religion generally and Hinduism particularly as well as taught me research methodology in comparative religion. I am grateful to my teacher and co-supervisor Muhammad Modasir Ali for his academic guidance and especially for his friendly attitude, always ready to encourage his students psychologically and help them while coping with the burden of academic life. I am also grateful to teachers of the department of *Aqidah* and philosophy, who helped me during the preparation of the synopsis. I am also thankful to my class fellows for their invaluable assistance while correcting the final version of the text.

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ملخص البحث

عنوان البحث: القرابان بين الهندوسية والاسلام، دراسة مقارنة

قضية القرابان في الأديان قديمة جداً كالدين نفسه، وتشكل تفاصيل مناسك القرابان أجزاء كبيرة من النصوص المقدسة، سواء في الديانات السماوية أم غير السماوية. وقد كانت مراسم القرابان عنصراً مركزاً في بعض الديانات وشرطها ضرورياً للنجاة. والقرابان يعتبر نوعاً من العبادة وله صلة مباشرة بالصلوة والمعابد. وللقرابان جانبان: روحاني واجتماعي، فمن الجانب الروحاني هو صلة بالمعبد حيث يحاول الإنسان أن يتقرب إلى الله بتقديم القرابان، ومن الجانب الاجتماعي هو صلة بالخلق؛ حيث إن الإنسان ينفق الأموال على عباد الله ويوزع عليهم من الطعام والأضاحي و القرابين ما سنته شريعته له. ومن ثم أصبحت أيام القرابان سبباً لزيادة إيمان الناس في كلا الجانبين، الجانب الروحي والجانب الاجتماعي.

ولقد جاء هذا البحث في مقدمة، وأربعة فصول، وخاتمة، وأخيراً قائمة المصادر الأساسية التي اعتمد عليها البحث. وفي المقدمة تناول الباحث أهمية الموضوع، وأسباب اختياره، وشكلية البحث، والمنهج المتبع في الدراسة. وجاء الفصل الأول بعنوان: "مفهوم القرابان"؛ هذا الفصل يركز على مفهوم القرابان بشكل عام ببيان وجهة النظر الدينية ، للهندوسية والإسلام، ووجهة النظر للعلوم الحديثة، مثل العلوم الأنثروبولوجية و الاجتماعية. وجاء الفصل الثاني بعنوان: "مفهوم القرابان في الهندوسية"؛ هذا الفصل يهتم أولاً بدراسة مفهوم القرابان في الهندوسية وأهميته، وتاريخ تطوره في الديانة الهندوسية، وكيف تأثرت عملية القرابان عند الهندود بالفلسفات الدينية المتأخرة عنها ، كالబونية والجینية. وجاء الفصل الثالث بعنوان: "مفهوم القرابان في الإسلام"؛ هذا الفصل يهتم بدراسة مفهوم القرابان وأهميته في المجتمع الإسلامي في ضوء القرآن والسنة. وجاء الفصل الرابع وهو الفصل الأخير بعنوان: "دراسة مقارنة لمفهوم القرابان بين الهندوسية والإسلام"؛ في هذا الفصل اهتم الباحث بمقارنة مفهوم القرابان ، وعمليته، وأهميته في كلا الديانتين ، الهندوسية والإسلام. ثم جاءت الخاتمة التي رصد فيها الباحث أهم نتائج التي وصل إليها في بحثه، وأخيراً جاءت قائمة المصادر التي اعتمد عليها الباحث في دراسته.

Transliteration¹

ا	a	ڈ	dh	ف	f	بھ	bh
ب	b	ر	r	ق	q	پھ	ph
پ	p	ڑ	r̥	ک	k	ٹھ	th
ت	t	ز	z	گ	g	ٿھ	th̥
ٿ	th	ڙ	z̥	ل	l	ڃھ	jh
ج	j	ش	sh	م	m	ڇھ	ch
چ	ch	ص	ṣ	ن	n	ڏھ	dh
ھ	h	ض	ḍ	ڻ	ɳ	ڙھ	dh̥
خ	kh	ط	ṭ	و	w/v	کھ	kh
د	d	ظ	z̥	ی	y	گھ	gh
ڈ	d̥	ع	'				
		غ	gh				

LONG VOWELS

ا =	ā
ئ =	ī
و =	ū
و =	ō (kō, dō)
ئ =	ē (kē, sē)

SHORT VOWELS

ا =	a
ئ =	i
و =	u

DIPHTHONGS

او =	aw Arabic (<i>mawlānā</i>)
او =	au Persian/Urdu (<i>nau, naukar</i>)
ئے =	ay (<i>shaykh</i>)
ئے =	ai (<i>main, kaisē, maidān, nāirang</i>)

DOUBLED

وو =	uwwa
ئئے =	iyya

¹ Masud, M. K., & Naeem, M. (Eds.). (1994). *Manual of Style*. Islamabad, Pakistan: Islamic Research Institute.

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Introduction

Religion, at its highest and best, is the devotion of the total self, through service and adoration, to the Almighty Who controls the universe. In this sense all the manifold rites, consecrations, and purification, offerings and sacred feasts, all the working of asceticism and morality are only the indirect expressions of the inner experience of the religion, the experience of trust, surrender, yearning and enthusiasm. Sacrifice, whether that of wealth or desires, is the practical proof of man's devotion to his Creator. It is in fact religion in action.

Sacrifice, which might be minimally defined as the act of giving up something in order to receive something of greater worth has been and remains a fundamental category in the study of religion. As such, sacrifice has sometimes functioned as a kind of paradigmatic or metonymical placeholder for all religious ritual, or as the foundation of all morality and ethics. Sacrifice has even been identified as the origin of civilization itself in the classical works of modern sociology and psychology by Emile Durkheim and Sigmund Freud, and there is a certain sense in which all life-human and non-human, cultural and natural-might be regarded as a series of deaths and rebirths, that is, as a continuous process of sacrifice.

The concept of sacrifice is as old as religion itself. It was one of the main pillars of any religious system, and descriptions of sacrificial rites constitute considerable parts of the sacred text. Sacrificial ceremonies were an integral part of the religious way of life, some time sacrifice was an essential condition for salvation. Nobody can deny the importance of sacrifice and its universality among the human race. It is equally important in revealed and non-revealed religions. While sacrifice itself originates spontaneously in the natural prompting of religious-minded man, the particular rites, dependent on law and custom, display a manifold variety at different times and places. Among the different people the ceremonial of sacrifice offers indeed a much multicolored picture. If we emphasize only that which was general and common to all, the simplest sacrificial rite consists in the mere exposition of gifts in holy place.

Statement of Problem

“Sacrifice plays a very important role in Hinduism and Islam at cosmic, spiritual, and social levels. It is the way through which both religions establish the relation of their followers with Ultimate Supreme. Sacrifice may be the reference point for the understanding of whole phenomena of both traditions.” The right understanding of this ritual is very necessary to

understand the religiosity level in the followers of both religions. So, my work not only focus on understanding of 'sacrifice' as a ritual, but I tried to understand that how does 'sacrifice' work socially.

The term 'sacrifice' is open ended term. It has variety of meanings. In this work the term 'sacrifice' is used as a religious ritual with its specific physical formation. The reader should not confuse it with total mental exercise with out any physical gesture unless it is substituted with ritual itself like Yoga in Hinduism. In this sense the term is used for both bloody; killing human or animals, and non-bloody offerings; offering meal, fruits, and juice. Definitely, like any other religious ritual, it has also two dimensions: spiritual and social. Spiritually, its object being to establish relations between a source of spiritual strength (god) and one in need of such strength, for the benefit of the latter. Socially, on the one hand it has links with the other creatures; as the sacrificer spends his money and distributes the sacrificial things among people and on the other hand sacrificial rites create integration among the followers of the religion. So, sacrifice becomes a source of spiritual strength as well as a source of unity in the lives of the religious people.

My thesis (Sacrifice in Hinduism and Islam) is comprised of the concept of sacrifice and its historical developments in Hinduism. How it was affected by later philosophies i.e. Buddhism and Jainism. This thesis will also deal with the concept of sacrifice as mentioned in *Quran* and *Sunnah*, and the comparison between Hinduism and Islam on the issue of sacrifice.

The thing which compelled us to study this topic is also the conflict between Hindu Muslim communities on the issue of sacrifice. Muslims always try to offer the cow as a sacrifice and the Hindu community opposes it with full strength. We may see so many bloody clashes on this issue. The second thing is, some time modern Hindus denying the animal sacrifice as denying the followers of the Jainism, while in the past animal sacrifice has been offered by Hindus and human sacrifice was very much popular in Hindu society. So, in this regard our topic also covers some dimensions of change and continuity in Hindu tradition.

Basic questions which are treated in this work are the following: Who offers the sacrifice? What is offered? What external forms belong to the act of offering? In what places and what times are sacrifices offered? Who is the recipient of the sacrifice? For what reasons are sacrifices offered? Etc. These questions are discussed by focusing on their spiritual and social contexts.

Reasons behind the selection of this topic

There are five main reasons which compelled me to take this topic:

1. In modern age when everything is going to change, even human behaviour about religion, sacrifice is a religious ritual which is in full swing in both, Muslim and Hindus societies.
2. Sacrifice can be a reference point for the history of religion. The over all behaviour of the followers of any religion can be understood through study of sacrificial rituals, particularly in Hinduism.
3. In contemporary India, there always clash between Muslims and Hindus on the issue of cow sacrifice. Thousands of Muslims have been killed because of this issue. Why Hindus make cow a sacred thing and why Muslims insist on the sacrifice of cow.
4. In contemporary Muslim societies, particularly in Pakistan, some rituals are going on the tombs and shrines in the name of sacrifice. Orthodox Muslims always oppose them and blame that these rituals are the results of Hindu influences on Muslim thought.
5. The claim of Jainism that animal sacrifice is violence and bloody sacrificial ritual basically has a destructive attitude toward our environment.

Literature Review

‘Sacrifice’ as a religious ritual, almost all the writers of history of religion generally and the scholars of Hinduism particularly discussed it in anthropological or historical ways because sacrificial rituals are very much relevant to Man-God relation and scheme of worship. In the study of Hinduism there is no escape from this discussion because the whole idea of Hinduism is mostly dependent on the concept of sacrifice. So when they study the man-god relationship in Hindu tradition, they discuss sacrificial rituals. In Islam the concept of sacrifice is also important but not central like in Hinduism. Therefore, scholars on Islam discussed it as a supporting issue not as a core issue. Hence, we find there are partial works on the topic which may be helpful in the study of my topic. For instance, here I mention some of them.

1. RAWZAT ET TALIBIN

Rawzat et Talibin (روضۃ الطالبین) is a basic book of the legal literature of Shafii school of jurisprudence, one of the jurists schools of *ahl-al sunnah*. This book is written by Mahiudin Abu Zakaria Yahya Ibn Sharif En Nawawi (d. 676 A.H). The author devoted a complete chapter on

the issue of animal sacrifice in Muslim Law, kinds of sacrifices, eligibility for sacrifice, and the important details on its performance. The information is important to understand the legacy of sacrifice in Islam as well as its proper performance.

2. THE HEDAYA

The Hidaya (هداية) is a basic book of the legal literature of Hanafi school of thought. It is written by Burhan-ud-din Ali bin Abi Bakr al-Marghinani (1152-1197 A.D) which is considered widely authoritative as a guide to *Fiqh* amongst Muslims in Central Asia, Afghanistan and India, and is the basis for much of the Anglo-Islamic law in India and Pakistan. Author described the different aspects of ‘sacrifice’ in Islamic law.

3. INDIA BY AL-BIRUNI

The title of the book is *Kitab fi Tahqiq ma li'l Hind min maqala Maqbola fi'l 'Aql ao Mardhula*, properly referred to as *Tarikhul Hind*. Its author was Abu Rihan Muhammad ibn Ahmad, more commonly called Al-Biruni (b. 973 A.D). Al-Biruni travelled India learned the Sanskrit Language to understand Hindu tradition. His book is one of the popular documents on Hinduism. He studied Hindu social organization, civil and religious laws, religious and scientific literature. His book provides details of Hindu concept of sacrifice as it was practiced in India of his time.

4. PRIMITIVE CULTURE

Edward Burnett Tylor (b. 1832) was the first to enter the field with the hypothesis that sacrifice was originally a gift offered to supernatural beings to secure their favour or minimize their hostility. He tried to prove it scientifically. He wrote the book Primitive Culture in 1871. Tylor approached sacrifice with an equally evolutionary frame and hypothesized origin of sacrifice. His “gift- theory” in particular, has framed many of the writings that will appear later in first chapter of this work.

5. THE RELIGION OF THE SEMITES

William Robertson Smith wrote his famous book *The Religion of the Semites* in 1894. In his work he discussed sacrifice and its significance for religion. Like most of his contemporaries (Tylor for example) he believed that all institutions can be explained in terms of their historical development. Totemism is basic concept for Robertson Smith in the study of religion and sacrifice. According to him totemism was the earliest and most basic form of religion and that sacrifice was the primary ritual associated with it.

6. THE GOLDEN BOUGH

James G. Frazer wrote this book in 1890 (ultimately 12 volumes). Perhaps the most famous contribution Frazer made in *The Golden Bough* is his definition of the nature and significance of magic. Like Tylor and Robertson Smith before him, Frazer adopted the dominant intellectual framework of his day and proposed an evolutionary theory of religion. This evolutionary theory leads him to explain the divine kinship through sacrifice.

7. THE ELEMENTARY FORMES OF THE RELIGIOUS LIFE

Emile Durkheim's (b. 1858) understanding of sacrifice derives from his overall position with respect to ritual. Religious rituals are group events, collective activities should understood apart from the ordinary activities. According to him, group activities generate 'collective effervescence' in participants. Sacrifice is also a collective activity which creates solidarity and common behaviour in community members. To demonstrate his theory of religion, Durkheim, like Robertson Smith and Frazer, turns to ethnographies of Australian groups and suggests that totemism represents the 'most primitive' form of religion.

8. SACRIFICE: ITS NATURE AND FUNCTION

Henri Hubert and Marcel Maus wrote this book in French language and its English translation was published in 1964 (Chicago). This book is very important to understand the nature of sacrifice and its relation with other religious activities. The authors tried to explain sacrifice in psychological and historical perspective.

9. AN INTRODUCTION TO THE HISTORY OF RELIGION

Frank Byron Jevons wrote this book in 1896. In this book the history of early religion is investigated on the principle and methods of anthropology. His opinion is that the core of worship is communion. This conception, if it is used in the wide sense of contact, is the fundamental principle underling the most elementary forms of sacrifice.

Methodology

My methodology is, in this thesis, comparative and critical. I emphasized on the collection of the original texts on the concept of sacrifice in both the religions. It is tried to narrate and explain these texts in the light of the tradition of the concerned religion. Then I explained the role of sacrifice in the spiritual and social life of the followers of both religions. At the end I compared both religions to find out the similarities and differences. I tried my best to depend on the original sources in my thesis.

Secondly, I used APA style of citation which is developed by 'The American Psychological Association (APA). APA is now the standard editorial style in many social science and health-related fields, including psychology, sociology, economics, social work, etc.

CHAPTER NO 1

INTRODUCTION TO THE CONCEPT OF SACRIFICE

I. INTRODUCTION

Sacrifice is one of the major forms of expression of religious experience. Yet it has been in all ages and all societies with different style, the act in man's worship of the Divine with specific objectives. Sacrifice, which might be simply defined as the act of giving up something in order to receive something of greater worth has been and remains a fundamental category in the study of religion. The practice of sacrifice is found in the oldest human records, and the archaeological record finds corpses, both animal and human, that show marks of having been sacrificed and have been dated to long before any records. Sacrifice is a common theme in most religions, though the frequency of animal and especially human sacrifices has fallen in modern times in some religions. As such, sacrifice has sometimes functioned as a kind of paradigmatic or model placeholder for all religious ritual, or as the foundation of moral and ethical behaviour. Sacrifice has even been understood as the source of civilization itself in the classical works of modern anthropology, sociology and psychology by E.B. Tylor, Emile Durkheim and Sigmund Freud, and there is a certain sense in which all life-human and non-human, cultural and natural might be regarded as a series of deaths and rebirths, that is, as a continuous process of sacrifice.

After examining theories of sacrifice, within theories of Religion first, and then within theories of society, this chapter will focus mainly on the general idea of sacrifice and its definition with special reference of its religious forms. This will provide the framework for assessing meanings of sacrifice in religious and secular contexts. This chapter will also look at recent anthropological; historical and philosophical works that strive to develop theories of sacrifice that cover the whole range of known sacrificial practices.

II. ETYMOLOGICAL INVESTIGATION OF THE WORD “SACRIFICE”

II.1. Philological study of the word “Sacrifice”

The word “Sacrifice” comes from a Middle English verb which means “to make sacred”. From Old French and Latin word ‘*sacrificium*’: *sacer*, sacred or holy; *facere*, to make¹. Therefore sacrifice means to make something holy. The word “sacrifice” has a variety of meanings because it derives from Latin, which gives more than forty other words from the same root *sac*, “one of the few roots not adopted by metonym or analogy from physical use to describe spiritual processes.”² According to Weber’s International Dictionary, the word ‘sacrifice’ is used as noun as well as verb.³

The use of word “sacrifice” as a noun:

- a. An act or action of making an offering of animal or vegetable life, of food, drink, or incense, or of some precious object to a deity or spiritual being.
- b. Something consecrated and offered to God or to divinity or an immolated victim or an offering of any kind laid on an altar or otherwise presented in the way of religious thanksgiving, atonement, or conciliation.
- c. The Crucifixion of Christ: The voluntary offering by Christ of himself to reconcile God and man.
- d. Often cap: The sacramental repetition of Jesus Christ’s death on the cross held by some Christians to be Christ repeatable offering of himself to God on behalf of men (Eastern Orthodoxy’s bloodless sacrifice).
- e. Destruction or Surrender of something for the sake of something else: giving up of some desirable thing on behalf of higher object.
- f. Something giving up or lost.
- g. Loss, Deprivation. E.g. the lost of a whole regiment of flood victims who suffered the loss of their homes.
- h. Financial loss as incurred from selling goods market down for immediate sale.
- i. Sacrifice Hit in a game.

¹ James, E. (1974). *Encyclopedia of Religion and Ethics* (first ed., Vol. XI). (J. Hastings, Ed.) New York: Charless Scribner’s Sons, p.1

² Yerkes, Royen Keith. (1952). *Sacrifice in Greek and Roman Religions and Early Judaism*, Charles Cribnner’s Sons, New York, p. 6

³ webster, a. m. (Ed.). (1966). *Weber’s Third New International Dictionary of the English Language* (15th ed., Vol. III). Chicago: William Benton, pp.1996,1997

The use of word “sacrifice” as a verb:

- a. To offer (as a sacrificial victim) as a sacrifice: make a sacrifice or religious oblation: immolate, e.g. Abraham about to sacrifice Ismail in Islamic tradition and about to sacrifice Isaac in Jewish tradition.⁴
- b. To suffer loss of, give up, renounce, injure, or destroy often for an ideal or belief or for an advantageous or beneficial end,⁵ e.g. sacrifice lives for the sake of freedom.
- c. To sell at loss as said: The owner sacrificed his house.

The concept of donate ‘sacrifice’ (in English and French) are unclear and have multiple meaning. In other modern languages, the word for ‘sacrifice’ (German *opfer*, Dutch *offer*, etc) is not a scientific concept, but a loan word, formed from the church Latin *operari*, ‘to serve God through works’.⁶ Modern everyday speech, therefore, applies the word ‘sacrifice’, on the one side, in keeping with Christian moral conceptualizations for the designation of non-ritualized, ethical activity, distinguished by ‘renunciation’, by painful loss for a higher end.

Here we can understand that ‘sacrifice’ as a religious ritual cannot be explained by one particular word. In the following lines we shall try to explain the flexibility of this word and provide a conceptual comparison of ancient and modern terms.

II.2. Flexibility of the word ‘sacrifice’

The verity of meanings mentioned above shows that there is transformation and development in the word “sacrifice”. In modern age this word has mostly gained ‘secular’ meaning rather than religious. As we see, from generation to generation, words vary in spelling, in pronunciation and in connotation. Discoveries and inventions, new contacts, new customs,

⁴ Muslim scholarship has different opinion on dispute because it is not mentioned clearly in Qur’ān that who was the victim of this great sacrifice, Ismā’īl or Isaac. Ibn-e-Jarir took the Biblical stand while Ibn Kathir and other commentators of the Qur’ān agreed that the victim was Ismā’īl not Isaac. (Al-Sāffāt, 112, Urdu Tarjuma & Tafseer, Shah Fahd Printing Press, Saudi Aribia) Later opinion is right; if we evaluate the Biblical texts it also supports the later opinion. Isaac was born when Abraham was 100 years old [Dalton, M. J. (1988). *The Holy Bible, The New King James Version*. Nashville: Thomas Nelsons Publishers, p. 12 (Gen. xxi.5)] while Ismā’īl was born to Abraham when Abraham was 86 years old (Gen. xvi. 16). Ismail was therefore 14 years older than Isaac. During his first 14 years Ismā’īl was the only son of Abraham; at no time was Isaac the only son of Abraham. Yet, in speaking of the sacrifice, the Old Testament says (Gen. xxii.2): “And He said, take now thy son, thine only son Isaac, whom thou lovest, and get thee into the land of Moriah: and offer him there for a burnt offering...” (Al-Sāffāt, 103, *The Holy Qur’ān*. (2004). (A. Y. Ali, Trans.) Islamabad, Pakistan: Da’wah Academy)

⁵ Weber’s third New International Dictionary of the English Language, p.1997

⁶ Stuckrad, K. v. (Ed.). (2006). *The Brill Dictionary of Religion* (Vol. IV). (R. R. Barr, Trans.) Leiden. Boston: Brill Academic Publishers, p.1658

new social, economic, political and religious conditions, all influence words to processes of transformation which often reverse their original meaning. The word "doctor" is a familiar instance of this process. Originally the word meant teacher and connoted extraordinary learning, tested by examination, in some field of study. In present-day popular use, it has become synonymous with physician or surgeon, neither of which was originally called doctor.⁷ This process can also be observed in religious vocabularies. In the same way the religious terminologies also transformed through out the history. For example the words *religious* and *spiritual* have so many vague or indistinct connotations that one should define them before using them. So, the word sacrifice also needs to be defined before any discussion.

Sometimes the word 'offering' is also used as synonym of the word 'sacrifice' which has wider sense than the word 'sacrifice'. Distinctions between sacrifice and offering are variously drawn, as for example, that of Jan van Baal: "I call an offering every act of presenting something to a supernatural being, a sacrifice an offering accompanied by the ritual killing of the object of the offering."⁸ W. Robertson Smith mentioned that in English idiom there is a further tendency to narrow the word 'sacrifice' to such oblations as involving the slaughter of a victim. According to him in the Authorized Version of the Bible 'Sacrifice and offering' is the usual translation of the Hebrew *zebah uminha*, that is 'bloody and bloodless oblations'.

For the purposes of the present discussion, however, it seems best to include both kinds of oblation under the term 'sacrifice' for a comprehensive term is necessary, according to W. Robertson Smith, the word offering:

"which naturally suggests itself as an alternative, is somewhat too wide, as it may properly include not only sacrifices but votive offerings, of treasure images and the like, which form a distinct class from offerings at the altar."⁹

In spite of this distinction between 'sacrifice' and 'offering' we cannot restrict the concept of 'sacrifice' to these terms because every religion has its own vocabulary and specific terms to define the concept of sacrificial ritual. Like *Qur'bān* in Islam and *Yājna* in Hinduism. We shall have to be inclining towards these terms for the study of the sacrifice as a ritual in coming chapters.

⁷ Yerkes, Royen Keith. *Sacrifice in Greek and Roman Religions and Early Judaism*, p.2

⁸ Ball, Jan van, "Offering, Sacrifice and Gift." *Numen* 23 (December 1976), p.161

⁹ Smith, W. R. (1889). *Religion of the Semites* (First ed.). New York: D. Appleton and Company, p. 197

Before we discuss the different approaches of the concept of sacrifice it is necessary to elaborate the term 'sacrifice' in historical context.

II.3. Ancient religious use of the term Sacrifice

The understanding of the modern secular concept of sacrifice is the very different and sometime opposite to that of the term used in all ancient religions like Hinduism and Islam. Modern vocabulary of the term 'sacrifice' is different from the vocabulary with which early religious people expressed their ideas and their ideals. Despite many differences of detail, certain common features characterize sacrifice in the Hebrew-Jewish, the Greek, and the Roman, Islamic and Hindu civilizations. Yerkes summarized the issue as following:¹⁰

- a. The word had no secular significance whatever, but strictly described religious rites and things. It is one of the few words which were not transferred from secular to religious use, but from the beginning expressed what we may call spiritual ideas.
- b. The word never suggests or show lack of enthusiasm or deprivation or renunciation of sadness. Sacrifices were occasions of greatest joy and event and thanksgiving, and were gladly performed as expressions of the attitude of men to their gods.
- c. Sacrifices were always as large as possible; the larger they could be made, the greater would be the accompanying joy and celebration.
- d. They were offered by men to their gods; a sacrifice not offered to some person was unimaginable. The stress was upon the giving not upon giving up.
- e. While they were offered to obtain boons from the gods, they were frequently offered after the boon had been received, and as expressions of thanksgiving.
- f. The death of the animal, while a necessary fact preliminary to the sacrifice was not a factor of the sacrifice any more than it is a factor of the dinner. The animal had to be killed for the purpose, as any animal has to be killed before it can be eaten. Slaying for sacrifice was naturally performed with "solemnity proper for the occasion, but no significance was ever attached to the fact that the animal had died."¹¹

¹⁰ Yerkes, Royen Keith. *Sacrifice in Greek and Roman Religions and Early Judaism*, pp.2-5

¹¹ Trumbull, H.C. (1885). *The Blood Covenant*, London, p.286

II.4. Modern secular use of the term Sacrifice

The general and popular use of the term today, with a few esoteric exceptions, "is wholly secular and describes some sort of renunciation, usually destruction of something valuable in order that something more valuable may be obtained."¹² One may sacrifice duty for pleasure or pleasure for duty, or honesty for gain or gain for honesty. One may sacrifice an eye or a limb or a life for one's country or for some other country. One may even sell stocks 'at a sacrifice'. Connotation of sacrifice in modern times, as a noun or as a verb, may be analyzed as follows:

- a. That which is sacrificed may be material (e.g., a fortune or a limb) or it may be immaterial (e.g., pleasure, honesty, fidelity, reputation).
- b. It must be of some value to the person making the sacrifice. One does not sacrifice a pebble or a button or the hair shorn from one's head by a barber.
- c. Sacrifice is constituted by renouncing or giving up the valuable thing. He who makes the sacrifice is, by his act, deprived of the use of that which is sacrificed.
- d. Sacrifice is by somebody, of something, and for something, but never to anybody. In fact, it is usually destroyed. Honesty is not given to anybody; the soldier's arm does not become the possession of the country.
- e. Because of the basic importance of deprivation and destruction, the idea of sacrifice always denotes sadness and some sort of misfortune. It is always 'too bad' that the sacrifice had to be made; it would have been so much better if the boon could have been secured without it. Therefore, we desire to make our sacrifices as small as possible; only a fool sacrifices more than is necessary, and the sacrifice is senseless if the boon can be obtained otherwise.
- f. Because of the natural desire to obtain as much as possible for as little as possible, we frequently compare the cost of the sacrifice with the value of the boon obtained. We are familiar with the statements, 'He sacrificed a great deal for very little,' or, 'He obtained much for little sacrifice'.
- g. The boon for which the sacrifice is made is presumably of greater value than that which is sacrificed, or at least it seems so. This boon may or may not be shared by the one making the sacrifice.

¹² Yerkes, Royen Keith., *Sacrifice in Greek and Roman Religions and Early Judaism*, pp.2-5

The above discussion can be summarized in the following table.

Ancient and Modern use of the term 'sacrifice'

	Religious	Secular
Field of use	Wholly religious. Never used Secularly.	Almost wholly secular; transferred To religious use.
Purpose	Solely a cultic act.	Never a cultic act.
Size of sacrifice	As large as possible.	As small as possible.
Recipient	Always offered to a god, thus indicating recognition of superiority.	Never offered to anyone.
Performance And accompanying emotions	Always performed with joy; came to be identified with thanksgiving.	Always performed with regret; accompanied with sadness.
Significant emphasis.	Emphasis on giving and action. Deprivation, while a necessary fact as with all giving, never a constituent factor of the sacrifice.	Emphasis always on giving up and on deprivation.

II.5. Literal Meaning of Sacrifice as a 'Ritual':

Sacrifice is a religious rite in which an object is offered to a divinity in order to establish, maintain, or restart the relationship of a human being to the sacred order.¹³ In its original usage sacrifice denoted only a religious practice, however, over time, the meaning of the word has expanded. So, 'sacrifice' "is the name given to the religious institution in which an offering of a sacred victim is made for the purpose of establishing beneficial relations between a source of spiritual strength and one in need of such strength."¹⁴

By taking views on, old and new secular, philological and literal meanings of sacrifice we can define sacrifice as following: In a wider sense, "sacrifice means giving up things which are valued or desired. Those things may be tangible, countable like time, wealth or life, or intangible,

¹³ Berjak, R. (2007). *The Quran: An Encyclopaedia*. (O. Leaman, Ed.) USA: Routledge Publishers, p.554

¹⁴ Chambers's Encyclopaedia (Vol. 12). (1970). London: International Learning Systems Corporation Limited, p.128

immeasurable like feelings, attitudes, opinions or aspirations. They are given up for the sake of something that is more worthy or more important or more urgent."

Besides the meanings of sacrifice here in my research I shall focus on tangible and particularly animal sacrifice.

III. NATURE AND THE ORIGIN OF SACRIFICE

After examining the word *Sacrifice* its meaning in ancient and modern times, now it is important to point out its origins. The question of the origin of sacrifice is a disputed matter where religious records and anthropologists differ with each other. Sacrifice as a ritual has been an important manifestation of religious life in earlier records of the revealed and non-revealed religions. Anthropologists also consider it as a foundation stone of civilization but man made institution, and they found it in early human societies from where the human intellectual progress began. At least both, religion and anthropology are agreed that the sacrifice is the oldest ritual in human societies.

III.1. Religious Approaches

Both revealed and non-revealed religions describe sacrifice as a partial custom of faith since life came into existence. Religions consider it as a divine obligation. According to the religious point of view, man-God relationship is based on sacrifice or at least on the emotion of sacrifice, i.e. man should be ready to sacrifice in the way of God.

III.1.1. Revealed Religions

According to Judaism, Christianity and Islam, the offerings of Adam's sons is the first example of sacrifice in the history of man. It shows that the first community of human being, according to these revealed religions, was a sacrificial ritual performing community. Not only this, but sacrifice was the only way to know that God is pleased with someone or not. In Bible this event has been described as follows:

"And in the process of time it came to pass that Cain brought an offerings of the fruit of the ground to the Lord. Abel also brought of the first born of his flock and of their fat. And the Lord accepted Abel and his offering. But He did not accept Cain and his offering. And Cain was very angry, and his countenance fell. So the Lord said to Cain, "Why are you angry? And why has your countenance fallen?"

"If you do well, will you not be accepted? And if you do not do well, sin lies at the door. And its desire for you, but you should rule over it." Now Cain talked with Abel his brother; and it came to pass. When they were in the field, that Cain rose up against Abel his brother and killed him."¹⁵

The Holy Qur'ān narrated the event as following:

"Recite to them the truth of the story of the two sons of Adam. Behold! They each presented a sacrifice (to Allah): It was accepted from one but not from the other. Said the latter:" Be sure I will slay thee. "Surely," said the former, "Allah doth accept of the sacrifice of those who are righteous. If thou dost stretch thy hand against me, to slay me, it is not for me to stretch my hand against thee to slay thee: for I do fear Allah, the cherisher of the world. For me, I intend to let thee draw on thyself my sin as well as thine, for thou wilt be among the companion of the fire. And that is the reward of those who do wrong. The (selfish) soul of the other led him to the murder of his brother: he murdered him, and became (himself) one of the lost one."¹⁶

Both, Bible and Qur'ān, consider sacrifice as a form of worship in first family of human being on the surface of the earth, the family of Adam. It also shows that sacrifice was a standard to verify the righteousness and wrongness of a person. Sometimes it was demanded from Prophets also as Qur'ān narrates: "They (also) said: Allah took our promise not to believe in a Messenger unless He showed us a sacrifice consumed by fire (3:183)." This verses of the Holy Qur'ān shows the importance of sacrifice in previous nations where it was used by people as a checking tool for the prophecy of the Prophets.

III.1.2. Hinduism:

In Hinduism sacrifice was believed to have existed from eternity like the Vedas. The creation of the world itself was even regarded as the fruit of sacrifice performed by the Supreme Being. Similarly, "the orderly progress of the universe had to be kept in motion by sacrifices performed at crucial junctures."¹⁷ The oldest Hindu creation myth, the *purasasukta* of the

¹⁵ Dalton, M. J. (1988). *The Holy Bible, The New King James Version*. Nashville: Thomas Nelsons Publishers, (Genesis 4, 3-8)

¹⁶ *The Holy Qur'ān*. (2004). (A. Y. Ali, Trans.) Islamabad, Pakistan: Da'wah Academy. (5 : 27-30)

¹⁷ Klostermaire, K. K. (2002). *Hinduism: A Short Introduction*. London: Oxford University Press, p.36

Rgveda, describes the origin of humankind as the result of the sacrifice of a cosmic human-shaped being, *purusa*.¹⁸

In the sacrifice of *Purusha*, the Vedic chants were first created. The horses, cows and other animals were born; the Brahmins were made from *Purusha*'s mouth, the *Kshatriyas* from his arms, the *Vaishyas* from his thighs, and the *Shudras* from his feet. Celestial bodies established the Moon was born from his spirit, the Sun from his eyes, the heavens from his skull. From this great sacrifice were born gods, *Indra* and *Agni* emerged from his mouth. This myth is foundational for Hindu society.

III.2. Scientific Approaches:

Previously we have examined the sacred books on the issue of the origin of sacrifice, now we have to discuss the issue with in anthropology, because all other branches of modern knowledge depend on anthropology in the study of the origin and social development of human being. Anthropology examines such topics as how people live, what they think, what they produce, and how they interact with their environments. Anthropologists try to understand the full range of human diversity as well as what all people share in common. Anthropologists take religion as a social phenomenon rather than divine. So their investigation will show us another aspect of the origin of sacrifice.

Anthropologists observed 'sacrifice' as a man made phenomenon which shifted different paradigms in the course of human history. As soon as it became apparent that sacrifice involved a natural desire on the part of man to establish a bond between him and that which he conceived to be sacred, the way was opened for scientific investigation of the rite.¹⁹ Scientific theories usually emphasize partial aspects of sacrificial rituals: the slaying, distribution, and eating of the material of the sacrifice. As a rule, these aspects form components of the 'bloody sacrifice' and their importance can not be ignored in the study of sacrifice.

¹⁸ *The Hymns of Rgveda*. (1986). (R. T. Griffith, & J. L. Shastri, Trans.) India: Motilal Banarsi das Publications.

¹⁹ James, E. O. (1974). *Encyclopedia of Religion and Ethics* (first ed., Vol. XI). (J. Hastings, Ed.) New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, p.1

III.2.1. E.B. Tylor (1832-1917)

E.B. Tylor was the first to enter the field with the hypothesis that sacrifice was originally a gift offered to supernatural beings to secure favor or minimize their hostility. He describes the nature and origin of sacrifice in his popular book *Primitive Culture*:

“Sacrifice has its apparent origin in the same early period of culture and its place in the same animistic scheme as prayer, with which through so long a range of history it has been carried on in the closest connation.”²⁰

According to him as prayer is a request made to a deity as if he were a man, so sacrifice is a gift made to a deity as if he were a man. As this purpose, according to Tylor, gradually became transformed in the mind of the sacrificers, “the dominant note became that of homage, which again passed into that of renunciation.”²¹

Building upon his concept of animism²² he defined sacrifice as gift, formed on the exemplar of human social relations. Tylor approached sacrifice under the influence of revolutionary theory of Darwin and hypothesized that it progressed through developmental phases in its ritual and intentional contexts.²³ Taylor stated:

“But sacrifice, though in its early stages as intelligible as prayer is in early and late stages alike, has passed in the course of religious history into transformed conditions, not only of the rite itself but of the intention with which the worshipper performs it.”²⁴

He pointed out three phases of sacrificial ritual development. According to Tylor these ideas may be broadly distinguished as the gift-theory, the homage-theory, and the abnegation-theory. Along all three the usual ritualistic change may be traced, from practical reality to formal ceremony.

The first phase: (the gift-theory) the origin of sacrifice springs from ordinary gift giving, the giving of something to a superior. Or in this case the giving to a deity as if he were a man.

²⁰ Tylor, E. B. (1920). *Primitive Culture* (6th ed., Vol. 2). London: John Murry, p.380

²¹ James, E. (1974). *Encyclopedia of Religion and Ethics* (Vol. XI). p. 1

²² William Gilmore, George, (2004) *Animism or Thought Current of Primitive People*, Kissinger Publishing, Whitefish. “Animism is by many regarded as the earliest form which religion took, and the soot from which was derived all religious beliefs which the world has known, was also the earliest basic of all that is designed by the name of culture.”

²³ Carter, Jeffrey. (2003). *Understanding religious Sacrifice*, Continuum Int. publishing group, p.12

²⁴ Tylor, Edward. B., *Primitive Culture*, p.374

“The gift-theory, as standing on its own independent basis, properly takes the first place. That most childlike kind of offering, the giving of a gift with as yet no definite thought how the receiver can take and use it, may be the most primitive as it is the most rudimentary sacrifice.”²⁵

As death releases the soul of man, sacrifice allows the “essence the thing given (through its blood or breath each symbolizing life) to be transported to the spirit realm.”²⁶ Hence, in clear intellectual fashion, Taylor understood why sacrifices to earth spirits are buried, those to water gods are drowned, and those to air spirits often burned.

The second phase: of sacrificial practices (homage-theory) developed when people began to believe that the gods care for their well-being, appreciate praises, and asked for favours. Tylor called this the “homage” phase.

“The ruder conception that the deity takes and values the offering for itself, gives place on the one hand to the idea of mere homage expressed by a gift, and on the other to the negative view that the virtue lies in the worshipper depriving himself of something prized.”²⁷

At this stage he noted that sacrificial rituals often included a banquet to honour the deity, a shared meal where the people eat the physical food and god receives the immaterial, spiritual portion of the victim.

The third phase: The final development in sacrificial practices, and the “highest” for Tylor, occurred when the primary motive for sacrificing became the giving up of something valuable. Tylor described this phase as “abnegation,” as a ritual act performed not for the benefit of the spirit (as in the previous phase), but for the sacrificer. He also noted that during this phase various methods of substitution came into practice, (hair instead of the person, for example), the less valuable for the valuable (e.g. animals for humans), and images or representatives (e.g. effigies).

“Along all three the usual ritualistic change may be traced, from practical reality to formal ceremony. The originally valuable offering is compromised for a

²⁵ Ibid.

²⁶ Carter, Jeffrey., *Understanding religious Sacrifice*, p.13

²⁷ Tylor, Edward. B., *Primitive Culture*, p.360

smaller tribute or a cheaper substitute, dwindling at last to a mere trifling token or symbol.”²⁸

So, sacrifice in Tylor’s view started with simple gift offerings then took its way to the concept of homage with god or supernatural and at the end became abnegation form of sacrificial concept.

III.2.2. W. Robertson Smith

Scottish theologian and oriental scholar William Robertson Smith recognized the importance of the sacrificial meal ‘communion’ for the founding of community. Smith saw the animal totem as a symbol of society.

“It is one thing to say that the phenomena of Semitic religion carry us back to totemism, and another thing to say that they are all to be explained from totemism.”²⁹

He suggested that totemism was the earlier and most basic form of religion and that sacrifice was the primary ritual associated with it. He sketched the scenario as following. The first notions of deity were local gods as opposed to abstract celestial beings. They were being fixed to different spheres of nature plants, animals, and other objects and as communities of people settled around particular places. They began to understand themselves as descendants of the gods. “Primitive men” believed that, Robertson Smith claimed, members of their family, particular gods, and certain animals are of “one stock”. Religion, then, was originally a set of practices and beliefs, “where kinship groups maintain a positive relationship with a superhuman being”.³⁰ So religion was understood as a source of social group and its values. Ordinarily, each totemic group respects actual examples of its totem and refrains from killing these material representations of the god. They are “sacred animals”. But when things go wrong (e.g. famines, floods, and other disasters affecting the group), members of the group feel separated from their god, and here we have, according to Robertson Smith, the original basics for sacrifice – a repair to this separation, this now damaged relationship between god and its people.³¹

The diversity of sacrificial phenomena, Robertson Smith explains it by invoking an evolutionary scheme. At the first stage, during sacrificial rituals, the entire community consumes

²⁸ Ibid, p.376

²⁹ Smith, W. Robertson., *Religion of the Semites*, p.131

³⁰ Ibid, p.120

³¹ Ibid, p.453

the whole victim, eating the meat, drinking the blood, and so forth. In the second stage, as the victim came to be considered “too powerful to be eaten”³² religious specialists (priests) alone would eat the sacrificial animal while its blood would be sprinkled on the people. Finally, at the third stage, with the development of a more abstract celestial god, sacrifice involved destroying the entire victim in a holocaust. No one eats, for all of the sacrificial offering goes to the god in the form of smoke.

In all these cases, however, the significance of sacrifice remains the same for Roberson Smith; it is an act of communion between a social group and a superhuman being.

III.2.3. Frank Byron Jevons

Jevons in his *Introduction to the History of Religion* derives inspiration directly from Robertson Smith’s theory, basing his investigation on the assumption that a totemic system was the earliest form of society. He supposes Totemism to have originated in a covenant or alliance between a human society and what the savage conceives as an animal clan organized on the same lines as his own. At this stage, he says:

“It was inevitable, therefore, that man, who imagined all things, animate or inanimate, to think and act and feel like himself, should imagine that the societies of these other spirits was organized like the only society of which he had any knowledge, namely, that form of human society into which he himself was born.”³³

Jevons then argues that, since savage take up a blood-feud against an animal species, therefore they may establish an alliance with them. With the passage of time this relation developed and this blood-feud reinterpreted as a real flesh and blood between man and beast. According to him, the blood-covenant established the rite of sacrifice and the subsequent communion. He supposes that it emerged from the savage thinking that blood is life.

“In the sacrificial rite itself, as an external act of worship, the essential feature is that the worshipper should partake of the offering; but it is only after a time that this central feature disengages itself from the repulsive accessories which were indeed inevitable concomitants of a savage feast, but were no part of the essence of the rite. We may therefore reasonably expect to find the rite on its inward side,

³²Ibid, p.366

³³ Jevons, F. B. (1896). *An Introduction to the History Religion*. London: Matheuen & Co., p.99

i.e. as it presented itself to the worshipper, following a parallel line of development. That the idea of "communication and communion with spiritual beings."³⁴

On this hypothesis the offering of an animal as a gift to superhuman being is the result of the 'domestication of animals'. The victim of sacrificial act, which was originally itself sacred, having degenerated into a mere food animal. The victim was used to cut into the likeness of a human god, assumed to possess anthropomorphic qualities.

III.2.4. James G. Frazer (1854 - 1941)

Like Tylor and Roberson Smith before him, Frazer adopted the dominant intellectual framework of his day and proposed an evolutionary theory of religion. He too sought to explain religion by identifying its origin and then revealing a course of development that has produced the vast diversity of religious phenomena known today.³⁵ For Frazer, the historical movement from "low" to "high", from the "savage" to the "civilized", was a gradual transition from the earliest form, magic, to religion and finally to science.

"If then we consider, on the one hand, the essential similarity of man's chief wants everywhere and at all times, and on the other hand, the wide difference between the means he has adopted to satisfy them in different ages, we shall perhaps be disposed to conclude that the movement of the higher thought, so far as we can trace it, has on the whole been from magic through religion to science."³⁶

This linear evolutionary scheme allows Frazer to explain a number of religious phenomena. Of those, the notion of 'divine king' is particularly important because Frazer's title, *The Golden Bough*, refers to an example of divine kingship from classical Roman mythology, but also because it leads him to a theory of sacrifice. Frazer understood sacrifice as an application of magic.

"In some cases of magic which have come before us we have seen that the operation of spirits is assumed, and that an attempt is made to win their favor by prayer and sacrifice."³⁷

³⁴ Ibid, p.152

³⁵ Carter, Jeffrey., *Understanding religious Sacrifice*, pp.141

³⁶ Frazer, J. *The Golden Bough (The abridge version)*. London: wordsworth Ltd., p.711

³⁷ Ibid, p.48

In the case of human sacrifice, the explanation derives from the model of divine kingship. It is an example of regicide, the killing of a human believed to manifest a particular divine power. Now primitive peoples, as we have seen, sometimes believe that their safety and even that the world is bound up with the life of one of those god-men or human incarnations of the divinity. Naturally, therefore, they take the utmost care of his life, even more than their own. But no amount of care and precaution will prevent the man-god from growing old and feeble and at last dying. So there is only one way of averting these dangers.

“The man-god must be killed as soon as he shows symptoms that his powers are beginning to fail, and his soul must be transformed to a vigorous successor before it has been seriously impaired by the threatened decay.”³⁸

Frazer explains animal sacrifice by invoking the notion of totemism and the idea that a particular species of animal represents, for some, the deity of clan. Periodically, the clan will sacrifice an animal of its totemic species in order to revive the species (i.e. which include its human kin, the members of the community) as a whole. Likewise, the totemic meal can be understood as a desire to distribute the power of the god, embodied in the animal killed, to all those members of the clan, each consuming a portion of the animal. First-fruit, harvest, and other vegetable or plants sacrifices are similarly examples of killing a representative of the divine.

“many communities which have progressed so far as to subsist mainly by agriculture have been in the habit of killing and eating their farinaceous deities either in their proper form of corn, rice, and so forth, or in the borrowed shapes of animals and men.”³⁹

Here we can understand that Frazer also admits the notion of sacrifice as a gift, for some groups, “overshadow”⁴⁰ ideas that the object sacrificed, whether it be human, animal, or vegetable, is a manifestation of the god.

III.2.5. Sigmund Freud (1856-1939)

Psychologist Sigmund Freud is credited with being the founder of psychoanalytic theory and, for some, one of the most important and influential thinkers of the twentieth century.

³⁸ Ibid.

³⁹ Ibid, p.499

⁴⁰ Carter, Jeffrey., *Understanding religious Sacrifice*, p. 78

Religion, according to Freud, is in fact a 'collective neurosis, a social defense mechanism for individual anxieties'.⁴¹ Troubled by feelings of helplessness and a desire for protection in the world, religious people, despite the content of their beliefs, have chosen to address their anxiety by regressing to that period of their infancy or childhood when their father provided love and security, and by 'projecting the existence of a divine father-figure' who can be worship and respected.

According to Freud the religious traditions have their foundation in totemism. He agreed with R. Smith and Frazer that totemism represents the earliest stage of religion and as such can be used as a model for later religious tradition. Freud understands sacrifice parallels his understanding of totemism, much like it does for R. Smith as well.

"Sacrifice, as a ritual that revolves around killing, prohibition, and consumption, is for Freud simply an explicit manifestation of what all religious beliefs and practices share, namely the unconscious, infantile desire of human beings."⁴²

Smith's speculative theory of the origin of the sacrificial meal influenced Freud's psychoanalytical interpretations of sacrifice as the murder of one's father, and anthropophagous (cannibal: somebody who eats human flesh) sacrificial meal.⁴³ Sigmund Freud, in his brief but brilliant reflections on sacrifice at the end of *Totem and Taboo*, understood the sacrificial victim as only *consciously* the "substitute"⁴⁴ for the sacrificer (although the element of the sacrificer's "renunciation"-of the 'egoistic' and selfish will as well as of healthy independence-he found very significant indeed, and characteristic of religion as a whole). He argued, however, that the victim was also an "*unconscious* representation of or substitutes for the deity, the figure of authority, and the idealized all-powerful father figure".⁴⁵ Sacrifice is, for Freud, simultaneously a conscious renunciation of independence (that is, a kind of self-death), performed out of guilt generated from "repressed feelings of hostility and resentment toward the authority figure", and an unconscious display of those same feelings as the authority figure, in the guise of the victim, is slaughtered and consumed (i.e. murdered). We conclude it in Freud's own words. He said:

⁴¹ Ibid, p.141

⁴² Freud, S. (1950). *Totem and Taboo*. (J. Strachey, Trans.) New York: W. W. Norton & Co., p.142

⁴³ Ibid.

⁴⁴ Smith, Brian K., *Sacrifice Substitution: Ritual Mystification and Mythical Demystification*, *Numen*, vol.36, Fasc.2 (Dec., 1989), p.190

⁴⁵ Smith, Brian K., *Sacrifice Substitution: Ritual Mystification and Mythical Demystification*, p.190

"We find that the ambivalence implicit in the father-complex persists in totemism and in religions generally. Totemic religion not only comprised expressions of remorse and attempts at atonement, it also served as a remembrance of the triumph over the father... Thus it became a duty to repeat the crime of parricide again and again in the sacrifice of the totem animal. Whenever, as a result of the changing conditions of life, the cherished fruit of the crime-appropriation of the paternal attributes threatened to disappear."⁴⁶

For Freud, sacrifice is shot through with ambivalence (having good and bad feelings) toward authority, and most especially toward the authority of the father. It is stimulated by guilt stemming from Oedipal wishes, and it alleviates that guilt by providing a means for renouncing such wishes; but it also perpetuates and reproduces guilt by giving expression, through the killing of the substitute, the sacrificial victim, to the Oedipal fantasy of killing the father.

III.2.6. Emile Durkheim (1858 - 1917)

Emile Durkheim was a French social theorist, who was one of the pioneers in the development of modern sociology. Durkheim believed that scientific methods should be applied to the study of society. He proposed that groups had characteristics that were more than, or different from, the sum of the individuals' characteristics or behaviours. He was also concerned with the basis of social stability—the common values shared by a society, such as morality and religion. He founded the Journal "L'Année sociologique" in 1898, a very influential publication that continued for twelve issues producing important essays on such topics as the family, ethics, magic, religion, classification, and sacrifice for the growing discipline of sociology.⁴⁷

To illustrate his theory of religion, Durkheim, like R. Smith and Frazer, turns to ethnographies of Australian groups and suggests that Totemism represents the "most primitive" form of religion. Durkheim's understanding of sacrifice derives from his over all position with respect to ritual.

In the most elementary form that is actually known, all the essential principles of a great religious institution which was destined to become one of the foundation

⁴⁶ Freud, S. (1950). *Totem and Taboo*. (J. Strachey, Trans.) New York: W. W. Norton & Co., p.145

⁴⁷ Carter, Jeffrey., *Understanding religious Sacrifice*, p.126

stones of the positive cult in the superior religions: this is the institution of sacrifice.⁴⁸

According to him religious rituals are group events, collective activities set apart from the ordinary that generate a sense of “collective effervescence”⁴⁹ for participants. “They are symbolic expressions of social realities that serve to strengthen, maintain, and revive group solidarity.”

Sacrifice was not founded to create a bond of artificial kinship between a man and his gods, but to maintain and renew the natural kinship which primitively united them.⁵⁰

Durkheim divided rituals into two main types: the ‘positive’ and the ‘negative’. Negative rituals, what he calls “the negative cult,” are actions designed to keep the sacred separate from the profane. The “positive cult” is the opposite; it aims to bring the sacred and the profane into temporary contact.⁵¹ The example Durkheim uses as illustration is the Australian ritual called the “*INTICHIUMA*.” According to him, “*INTICHIUMA*” means “to instruct” and designates the ceremonies performed before the young man to teach him the traditions of the tribe. It is actually an annual set of ceremonies that include killing the totem and all the members of a clan eating a portion of sacrificial meat. The clan believes that it must periodically perform this ritual to the totem, to assure its prosperity.⁵²

For Durkheim, though, the eating is a secondary expression of the more essential fact that communion is truly established through the assembling of the clan members. They gather together as a group and thereby commune with their god, which, according to Durkheim, is essentially the group itself.⁵³ In opposition to R. Smith, however, Durkheim does not exclude from the *Intichiuma* notions of gift-giving, nor place them at a later stage of development. In sum, Durkheim advocates a theory of sacrifice that understands it as both a communion and a gift.

⁴⁸ Durkheim, E. (1976). *The Elementary Forms of Religious Life*. (J. W. Swain, Trans.) New York: George Alien & Unwin Ltd., p.336

⁴⁹ Ibid, p.35

⁵⁰ Ibid, p.340

⁵¹ Ibid, p.326

⁵² Carter, Jeffrey., *Understanding Religious Sacrifice*, p.128

⁵³ James, E.O., *Sacrifice*, Encyclopedia of Religion and Ethics, vol. XI, p.4

III.2.7. H. Hubert and M. Mauss (1872-1927, 1872-1950)

Herbert and Mauss think that the evidence of Semitic types of sacrifice may be only fragmentary or incomplete, and in any case there is no proof that they are primitive. They hold that the numerous forms of sacrifice cannot be reduced to the unity of a single arbitrarily chosen principle. They defined sacrifice as following:

“Sacrifice is a religious act, which, by the consecration of a victim, modifies the state of the moral person who performs it, or of certain objects in which this person is interested.”⁵⁴

According to them the sacrificial act has two notions. First, it is indeed certain that the sacrifice always implies a consecration; in every sacrifice an object passes from the common into the religious domain. Second, this consecration extends beyond the thing consecrated and it touches the moral person who bears the expenses of the ceremony.

This means for them that “the very nature of sacrifice” is dependent, in fact, on the presence of an intermediary, and we know that with no intermediary there is no sacrifice.⁵⁵ Among other intermediaries so crucial to the sacrificial ritual (including the priest who acts as a buffer and guide between the sacred and profane realms) is the ritual victim. The victim represents or ‘becomes’ (and thus substitutes for) both the invisible divine recipient of the offering and the human being who makes the offering.

“Through this proximity the victim, who already represents the gods, comes to represent the sacrificer also. Indeed, it is not enough to say that it represents him: it is merged in him. The two personalities are fused together.”⁵⁶

Every sacrificial victim, then, symbolizes both the god and the worshipper; every sacrifice is both an ersatz (artificial) self-sacrifice and a dramatization of a deicide (killing a god).⁵⁷ It is through the victim who is the full representative of and substitute for both the giver and the recipient of the sacrifice that the ‘communication’ between the sacred and profane realms is effected. This is the ‘nature and function’ of sacrifice according to Hubert and Mauss. This

⁵⁴ Hubert, H., & Mauss, M. (1964). *Sacrifice: Its Nature and Function*. (W. D. Halls, Trans.) Chicago: Chicago University, p.13

⁵⁵ Ibid, p. 100

⁵⁶ Ibid.

⁵⁷ Smith, Brian K., *Sacrifice Substitution: Ritual Mystification and Mythical Demystification*, p.193

entails a kind of double substitution: the victim stands in for both the sacrificer and the deity and thereby draws them together.

III.2.8. René Girard (b. 1923)

René Girard is a world-renowned French historian, literary critic, and philosopher of social science. His work belongs to the tradition of anthropological philosophy. He is the author of several books, developing the idea that human culture is based on a sacrifice as the way out of mimetic, or imitative violence between rivals.

A more recent work, indebted in many ways to Freud, on sacrifice and substitution is René Girard's *Violence and the Sacred*. Where Hubert and Mauss and Freud saw the victim as doubly representative (of both sacrificer and god in the first instance, and of the object of both love and hate in the second), Girard speaks of a 'double substitution' in the ritual. Following Freud, Girard places substitution at the very centre of sacrifice and sees violence (repressed and expressed) as the key to the ritual. He writes

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 "A fundamental truth about violence; if left unappeased violence will accumulate until it overflows its confines and floods the surrounding area. The role of sacrifice is to stem this rising tide of indiscriminate substitution and redirect violence into 'proper' channels."⁵⁸

According to Girard this re-channeling is accomplished by distancing violence from its true object. Such a displacement is brought about in two stages. First, the violence of the group as a whole is projected onto a scapegoat, a member of the community. This person is to be thrown to the wolves, as it were, to appease their hunger-and the wolves here have human rather than divine faces, being none other than the members of the community itself. But, secondly, a 'ritual victim' is interjected as a substitute for the 'sacrificial' or 'surrogate' victim.⁵⁹ This act will become the substitute for communal violence which always threatens to blast or burst into an endless series of violence.

⁵⁸ Girard, R. (1977). *Violence and the Sacred*. (P. Gregory, Trans.) New York: Baltimore, The Johns Hopkins University Press, p.10

⁵⁹ Ibid.

“Society is seeking to deflect upon a relatively indifferent victim, a ‘sacrificial’ victim, the violence that would otherwise be vented on its own members, and the people it most desires to protect.”⁶⁰

The cycle of violence is thus short-circuited by the double substitution which at once conceals and represents the real victim as it transfers the violence from the real victim to a surrogate and then again to a ritual substitute.⁶¹ According to Girard, the ‘whole human culture’ is unified by this single psychosocial mechanism. This Byzantine chain (complicated) of displacement is summed up thus:

“Ritual sacrifice is founded on a double substitution. The first, which passes unperceived, is the substitution of one member of the community for all, brought about through the operation of the surrogate victim. The second, the only truly ‘ritualistic’ substitution, is superimposed on the first. It is the substitution of a victim belonging to a predetermined sacrificial category for the original victim. The surrogate victim comes from inside the community, and the ritual victim must come from outside.”⁶²

In terms of sacrificial theory, Girard offers a ‘scapegoat theory’ a version of a ‘substitution theory’, the victim accepting the violence that members of society would otherwise inflict upon each other.

By concluding this discussion we can say there are ten major scientific theories about the origin of ‘sacrifice’, which are following:

1. The gift theory
2. The homage theory
3. The abnegation⁶³ theory

These three theories are in Tylor's writings, with the idea of development of one from another.

4. The communion theory
5. The piacular⁶⁴ theory

These two theories are in Robertson Smith's writings which have stimulated many later writers.

⁶⁰ Girard, Rene., *Violence and the Sacred*, p.4

⁶¹ Smith, Brain K., *Sacrifice Substitution: Ritual Mystification and Mythical Demystification*, p.193

⁶² Girard, Rene., *Violence and the Sacred*, p.102

⁶³ Abnegate: to give up or renounce something.

⁶⁴ Piacular: atoning for sin, done or offered in order to make up for a sin or sacrilegious action

6. The rejuvenation⁶⁵ theory

7. The cathartic⁶⁶ theory

These two theories are in Sir James Frazer's writings.

8. The intermediary theory of Hubert & Mauss

9. The symbolic parricide⁶⁷ theory of Freud

10. The escape-goat theory of Rene Girard

It is not necessary that each of these theories should be applicable in every society but we can see the elements of many of these may be discerned in the sacrificial system of any one community.

VI. CLASSIFICATION OF SACRIFICE

The classification of sacrificial rituals is a point where scholars have different opinions. Most of the modern writers divide sacrificial ritual into two main types, Bloody offerings and non-bloody offerings. This division depends on sacrificial material. But there are other aspects of classification where we cannot ignore. For example, if we consider sacrifice as something communal, as R. Smith considered, then we can distinguish in three types of sacrifices.⁶⁸

- a. Honorific Sacrifice.
- b. Piacular (atoning for sin) Sacrifice.
- c. Mystical Sacrifice.

If we analyze the sacrificial act in its most complete form we can distinguish six different elements, though all six are not equally important, and one or more may be lacking or may coincide. These six elements are:⁶⁹

- a. the active person, the sacrificer;
- b. the material of sacrifice, the offering;
- c. place and time of the sacrifice;
- d. the manner of the sacrifice, the sacrificial method;
- e. the recipient of the sacrifice;

⁶⁵ Rejuvenation: return something to original condition: to restore something to its condition when new, or make it more vigorous, dynamic, and effective

⁶⁶ Cathartic: producing a feeling of being purified emotionally, spiritually, or psychologically as a result of an intense emotional experience or therapeutic technique.

⁶⁷ Parricide: the murder of a parent or close relative.

⁶⁸ Smith W. Robertson, *Religion of the Semites*, D., p.409

⁶⁹ Baaren, Th. P. van., *Theoretical speculation on sacrifice*, Numan, vol. 11, Fasc. 1. (Jan., 1964), p.3

f. the motive and the intention of the sacrifice.

Here we can note that these six elements can become the base for the classification of sacrificial ritual. Each element has strength to provide classification. For example, offering is same but the persons are different. We shall see in later that some sacrifices were performed by kings only while others by priests. If we keep the material of sacrifice in mind then we can divide sacrifice into bloody and non-bloody sacrifice or animal and vegetable sacrifices. We can divide sacrifice according to place and time; there are seasonal sacrifices or sacrifices relevant to particular places. The method of sacrifice is another base for its division; some sacrifices are performed through burning while others by slaughtering. Recipient of the sacrifices are not always the same in some religions; sometimes it is made for ancestors, specific god, spiritual, or human. Motive and intention of sacrificer is always not the same; it may be to make contact with deity, to obtain something from the deity, etc. Sacrifice as a ritual has great variety in non-revealed religions compared to revealed religions. Most of the time scholars made classification depending on motive and intention of sacrificer. For me, it is more valid that we should study sacrifice depending on sacrificer intention and motive. As we know, from primitive to modern times, human being is the central figure in sacrificial ritual. With the development of human mind, sacrifice took different modes. So, human being's motive and intention is the most authentic source of understanding sacrifice because other elements (time, place, material etc.) are always used by him. His expressions, intentions, recorded could be understood by us rather than the things can not give understandable expressions. According to intention of sacrificer, the classification of the sacrificial act may be as following:

- (1) A sacred communal meal.
- (2) Solemn burning or burying of a sacred object.
- (3) Rites of fertilization.
- (4) Rites of exorcism and incantation.
- (5) Divination rites and oracles.
- (6) Rites at the wonder moments of life.
- (7) Rites performed with reference to departed persons.

V. CONCLUSION:

Different linguistic usage of word sacrifice and different scientific approaches to the concept of sacrifice give us information about the culture-specific conceptual worlds, and sacrificial ideologies, which cannot be brought over a common denominator.⁷⁰ This diversity of the origin and the nature of sacrifice is what caused the older scientific theories of sacrifice to fail, to extent that they sought to formulate a general 'theory of sacrifice' according to a unitary meaning and end of sacrifice. The unitary nature of sacrifice emerged as an illusion; the theoretical constructions had been especially infiltrated by Christian conceptions.⁷¹ So, sacrifice is a complex phenomenon and seems to me to have five root forms.

1. *Reciprocity*

Sacrifice as a gift which should be followed by a return gift. It belongs entirely to the sphere of reciprocity.

2. *Communion*

We have seen the fundamental principle understanding the most elementary forms of sacrifice. Wherever Totemism is found, a union with the sacred species is affected by physical assimilation of the supernatural qualities of the divine animal or plant.

3. *Conciliation*

Although the most common motive in early conceptions of sacrifice is undoubtedly a desire to enter into sacramental relations with a source of spiritual strength, and expel evil, this idea basically depends on fear. Man tried to gain favour of supernatural powers to sustain in the world.

4. *Symbolic expressions of social realities*

Sometime we saw the sacrifice as a collective activity. In primitive societies we have seen that the whole clan participates in sacrificial ceremonies that serve to strengthen, maintain, and revive group solidarity.

5. *Primordial event*

Sacrifice as the repetition of a primordial event. In certain religious systems there are sacrifices based on fundamental events in the beginning of time, or long ago, which have to be repeated.

⁷⁰ Stuckrad, Kocku Von., The Brill Dictionary Of Religion, Vol. IV, p.1664

⁷¹. Ibid

CHAPTER No. 2

Concept of Sacrifice in Hinduism

I. Introduction

The term Hinduism stands as much for a tradition as for religion. It is not possible to characterise Hinduism in terms of a clearly defined set of concepts. Generally we can say: Hinduism is a religious tradition of Indian origin, comprising the beliefs and practices of Hindus. The word *Hindu* is derived from the river *Sindhu*, or Indus.¹

Hinduism has many dimensions such as historical, cultural, social, and political nature. Throughout the history, Hinduism adopted different ideas from different traditions or developed under the influence of many other traditions. That's why "Hinduism found itself in a situation of cultural and religious pluralism".² This mixture of tradition made Hinduism a complex idea.

The modification or stimulation of Hindu tradition did not accrue at once but it took centuries. To understand Hindu Religion or 'Hinduism' we have to understand these historical developments of this tradition because there is core relationship between conceptual developments and history of Hinduism. But the problem with Indian history is that it, with rare exceptions, has not developed a written history. "It may seem that everything is uncertain in this literature without dates or authors and that the growth of religion in India cannot be scientifically studied."³ We only draw an outline of first written history from Vedic literature, where we find the details of early Aryan society. Much of the history is disconnected, uncertain and unsupported by archaeology: "it is therefore largely hypothetical".⁴ On the other hand the available literature of Hinduism is very much complicated due to its language, *Sanskrit*, and the Hindu attitudes towards writing, as Al-Biruni complained: "the Indian scribes are careless, and do not take pains to produce correct and well-collated copies. In consequence, the highest results of the author's mental development are lost by their negligence."⁵

This chapter on the first hand deals with Hindu concept of sacrifice in literal and technical sense and then discuss it in historical development. After that it will explain the types and performances of 'sacrifice' in Hindu tradition.

¹ Sharma, Arvind. "Hinduism." Microsoft® Student 2007 [DVD]. Redmond, WA: Microsoft Corporation, 2006.

² Klostermaier, K. K. (2007). *A Survey of Hinduism* (3rd ed.). New York: State University of New York Press, p. 3

³ Eliot, S. C. (1962). *Hinduism and Buddhism* (Vol. 1). London: Routledge & Kegan Paul Ltd, p. 52

⁴ Gottschalk, L., Mackinney, L. C., & Pritchard, E. H. (1969). *History of Mankind, Cultural and Scientific Development* (Vol. IV). (G. E. Chilver, & S. Chilver, Trans.) London: George Allen and Unwin Limited, Part one, p.41

⁵ Al-Biruni. (1983). *India*. (E. C. Sachau, Trans.) New Delhi: National Book Trust India, p. 8

II. The Literal Meaning of *Yajna*

There are more than one word used in Hindu tradition for the ritual of sacrifice. Some of them are *yajna*, *agnihotra*, *homa*, *agnihoma*, *havan*, *tyaga*, *yajna*, *Sautramani*, *Pasubandha* etc. But the word *Yajna* or *Yagna* is mostly used for all kinds of offerings in Hinduism. The Sanskrit word *Yajna* is usually translated in English as ‘sacrifice’ but its primary meaning is any kind of worship, especially the one involving certain oblation being put into the sacred fire with the chanting of the mantras. *Yajna* typically refers to any fire-offering or such equivalent ritual of the Vedic Indo-Aryans.⁶

According to the Dictionary of Hinduism, the word *Yajna* means: ‘Obligation’, ‘sacrifice’, or ‘worship’.⁷ *Yajna* is also called “*yaga*”. The root of the word *Yajna* is *Yuj*, “to worship”. In Hinduism, all of life is a sacrifice - called *jivayajna*, a giving of oneself - through which comes true spiritual fulfillment. *Tyaga*, the power of detachment, is an essential quality of true sacrifice.”⁸

From the same word derived the term *yajamana* which means a person who performs a sacrifice’. Sri Sri Sri Chandrasekharendra Saraswathi MahaSwamiji explains the meaning of *Yajna* in his lectures that one who performs a *yajna* or sacrifice spending on the material and *dakshina* is called a ‘*yajamana*’. ‘*Yaj*’ (as we have seen already) means to worship. The root meaning of ‘*yajamana*’ is one who performs a sacrifice.⁹

Here we can say that *Yajna* (sacrificial ritual) sometime presents as a whole concept of worship and sometimes confines into the meaning of a particular ritual. In general, in its purest and simplest form it denoted a dedication of some simple gift as an expression of gratitude for blessing received.

At the most general level; the sacrificial ritual as a whole is a counterpart of the transcendent cosmic one, *Prajāpati* or *Puruṣa*, who has created the ritual as a *pratimā* or *Pratman* of himself; thus the texts repeatedly tell us that ‘the sacrifice is *Prajāpati*’. “When the sun has set, he breaks the silence. Now *Prajpati*, and the year is day and night, since these two

⁶ Klostermaier, Klaus K. *A Survey of Hinduism*, p. 159

⁷ Margaret, & Stutley, J. (1977). *A Dictionary of Hinduism (Its Mythology, Folklore and Development)*. U.K.: Routledge and Kegan Paul, p.343

⁸ Hinduism Dictionary on Sacrifice. <http://www.Onenesscommitment.com>, Accessed 27-10-2008

⁹ Sri Sri Sri Chandrasekharendra Saraswathi MahaSwamiji, (1994). *Hindu Dharma*, <http://www.kamakoti.org/hindudharma/about.html>. Accessed 27-10-2009

revolving produce it.”¹⁰ In other verse of *Satapatha Brahmana* sacrifice is identified with *Prajpati* in the following way: “That (skin) he spread silently; for the black antelope skin is the sacrifice; and the sacrifice is *Prajpati*, and undefined is *Prajpati*.”¹¹ “And so to his bargaining five times: the sacrifice being of equal measure with the year, and there being five seasons in the year, he thus obtains it (the sacrifice, soma) in five (divisions), and therefore he bargains five times.”¹² This shows that the sacrifice and *Prajāpati* are counterparts or counter-forms of each other, and the creator god is no different from the cosmic whole.

The former discussion shows that the term *Yajna* could be understood in four ways. The oblation or sacrifice to a deity, the worship, the giving of oneself - through which comes true spiritual fulfillment, and finally as a counterpart of the cosmic system including *Prajapati*, cosmic one. We can say that *Yajna* is one of the most central Hindu concepts which cover the whole life of a Hindu. Every Hindu throughout his whole life rests his whole hopes on continually offering oblations of some kind to the gods in fire, and the burning of his body at death was held to be the last offering of himself in fire which is called *antya ishti* or *antyeshti*.¹³

III. Technical Sense of *Yajna*:

In a technical sense *yajna* is “making an oblation to a deity in the fire with the chanting of mantras.”¹⁴ According to Dasgupta’s interpretation the mantras themselves constitute the form of the deities invoked. In another sense, the mantras, like the materials placed in the fire, are the sustenance of the celestials invoked. They enhance their powers and serve more than one purpose.

According to Sri Sri Sri Chandrasekharendra Saraswathi MahaSwamiji *Yajna* is “the performance of a religious duty involving Agni, the sacrificial fire, with the chanting of the mantras.” The performance of a *yajna* is also meant to please the *Paramatman* and the various deities. This shows that the word ‘sacrifice’ cannot cover the whole range of meaning relevant to word *Yajna*. As Nirad C. Chaudhuri mentioned: “The Latin word *Sacrificare* exactly means that, i.e. ‘to make something sacred’. Though the *Brahmanic* word does not mean the same thing, the texts throughout suggest that sacrifice is the means of raising all that is profane to the sacred

¹⁰ Eggeling, J. (1978). *The Sacred Books of the East* (Vol. 26). (F. M. Mullar, Ed.) New Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass Publishers, p.37 (Satapatha Brahmana, 3.2.2.4)

¹¹ Ibid, vol. 41, p.215 (Satapatha Brahmana, 6.4.1.6)

¹² Ibid, vol. 26, p.17 (Satapatha Brahmana, 3.3.3.5)

¹³ William, S. M. (2004). *Brahmanism and Hinduism*., p.22

¹⁴ Dasgupta, S. (1992). *A History of Indian Philosophy* (Vol. 1). New Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, p.21

plane".¹⁵ On the other hand if we emphasize on the performing aspect of *Yajna* ritual we find it is a complex but 'mechanical' ritual, "to be a kind of machinery in which every piece must tally with the other".¹⁶ It is so inter-relative that the slightest inconsistency in the performance can make it useless even a minute ritualistic detail , say in the pouring of the melted butter on the fire, or the proper placing of tools employed in the sacrifice, or even the misplacing of a mere straw contrary to the injunctions was sufficient to fail the whole sacrifice with whatsoever earnestness it might be performed. Even if a word was mispronounced the most dreadful results might follow.

According to Jayaram V, "Yagna or *Yajna* is an outer form of worship in which offerings are made to different deities in a prescribed and systematic manner by qualified priests to supplicate them, so that they would assist the worshipper in achieving certain results in life."¹⁷ If we consider *Yajna* as a spiritual practice then it will be all about one's inner-self. As Sri Sri Sri Chandrasekharendra Saraswathi MahaSwamiji explains it. "You must have perfect self-control or self-mastery. Self-control implies both control of the body and control of the mind. Self-control does not mean self-torture. You must lead a well-regulated and disciplined life. You must keep all the senses under your perfect control. The senses are like turbulent and wild horses."¹⁸

By concluding this discussion we can say that in technical sense *Yajna* (Hindu sacrifice) has two aspects. As a visible ritual it has a complex but a 'mechanical' set up and it has been practiced through certain rules and regulations. On the other hand it has been understood as a ritual practice which was the vehicle for spiritual liberation.

IV. Importance of sacrifice in Hinduism

How can someone get free from this metempsychosis or reincarnation and attain the final destination? Al-Biruni explains this question that how this migration of soul, from one stage to the other, lasts until the object aimed at has been completely attained both for the soul and matter. "The lower aim being the disappearance of the shape of matter; higher aim being the

¹⁵ Chaudhuri, N. C. (1979). *Hinduism a Religion to Live By*. London: Oxford University Press, p.75

¹⁶ Dasgupta, S. (1992). *A History of Indian Philosophy* (Vol. 1), p.21

¹⁷ V, Jayaram., *Yajna-The ritual worship in Hinduism*, <http://www.hinduwebsite.com/yagna.asp> , Accessed: 09-02-09

¹⁸ Sri Swami Sivananda, *Excerpt from All About Hinduism*, <http://www.Onenesscommitement.com>, Accessed 27-10-2009

ceasing of the desire of the soul to learn what it did not know before the insight of the soul.”¹⁹ This procedure of freedom called *Moksha*.

To attain *Moksha* or *mukti*, ‘liberation,’ there is one of the oldest and most popular divisions of Hinduism. According to this division there are three paths to attain *Moksha*:²⁰

1. *Karmamarga*: the path of work
2. *Jnanamarg*: the path of knowledge
3. *Bhaktimarga*: the path of loving devotion

These three paths coexisted for a long time and they mix and merge at many points. The practice of average Hindu contains elements of all them with particular emphasis given to one according to his personal preference. Anyhow by following one of them or by all, every Hindu want liberation from the circle of the rebirth. So in this regard each and every important event in the life of a Hindu, who has chosen to lead a normal householder’s life, calls for the performance of certain rites. “These rites are intended mainly to invoke the blessings various gods and ensure success in the performance his ordained duties.”²¹ They are performed during various stages in his life for different ends.

The school of Hindu philosophy called *Mimamsa*, which is especially concerned with ritual, divides all religious activities in Hinduism into three types:²²

- (1) Actions that are performed daily, called *nitya*;
- (2) Actions performed on specific occasions, called *naimittika*; and
- (3) Actions performed voluntarily according to personal desire, called *kāmya*.

Hindus fulfill all three religious activities mentioned above —*nitya*, *naimittika*, and *kāmya*—through three types of ritual.²³ These rituals are:

1. *yajña*, (involving a sacrificial fire);
2. *pūjā* (devotional offerings, usually flowers); and
3. *dhyāna* (meditation).

¹⁹ Al-Biruni. P.17

²⁰ Klostermaier, Klaus. K *A Survey of Hinduism* p. 145

²¹ V, Jayaram., *Yajna-The ritual worship in Hinduism*, <http://www.hinduwebsite.com/yagna.asp>. Accessed: 27-10-2009

²² Acharya, S. (1904). *The Sacred Books of the East (Vedanta-Sutras)* (Vol. XLVIII). (F. M. Mullar, Ed., & G. Thibaut, Trans.) Oxford: Oxford University Press, Part: I, p.10

²³ Sharma, Arvind. "Hinduism." Microsoft® Student 2007 [DVD]. Redmond, WA: Microsoft Corporation, 2006.

From this division we can understand the importance of *Yajna* or *Yagna* in spiritual and social life of a Hindu. Hindu literature reports on *yajna* to which thousands of Brahmins were invited and at which hundreds of sacrificial animals were slaughtered.

Yajnas are “scientific Vedic rituals” which are, according to Hindu tradition, equivalent in power to many lives long of meditation on improving one's *karma*.²⁴ *Yajnas*, can alleviate bad *karma*, remove challenges and obstacles, but also can help people reach their goal and have their wishes come true. *Yajna* in itself is to be seen as the very essence of Veda. From the early times, the ritual had been understood to be the link between the human and the Divine and a vehicle towards liberation. Yet, in its initial form *yajna* practice was in connection with the cyclical natural phenomena particularly the seasons (*ritu*) and the overall order of things perceived in nature.²⁵ The place of human beings within the whole system of things was attentively taken into account. In this manner, from empirical observations, the concept of Cosmic Order or Divine Order (*rita*) developed and the practice of *yajna* became gradually a rite of ontological significance.

Sociologically, the institution of Vedic sacrifice reflects one of the earliest efforts made in India to invest religious beliefs and practices with a definite and organized form.²⁶

V. The Origins of Sacrifice in Hinduism

There are two approaches about the origin of sacrifice, Hindu theological approach and a historical approach.

V.1. *Theological approach to the origin of sacrifice in Hinduism*

History of sacrifice in Hinduism begins with the creation of this universe. Essentially, four types of cosmogonies, study of universe's origin, found in Vedic Literature and other theological works. They may be designed as following²⁷:

- a. Creation by “fecundation”²⁸ of the original water.

²⁴ V. Jayaram., *Yajna-The ritual worship in Hinduism*, <http://www.hinduwebsite.com/yagna.asp>. Accessed: 27-10-2008

²⁵ Devaraja, N. K. (1975). *Hinduism and Modern Age*. New Delhi: Islam and Modern Age Society, p.9

²⁶ Bleeker, C. J., & Widengren, G. (Eds.). (1971). *Historia Religionum* (Vol. 2). Leiden: E. J. Brill, p. 262

²⁷ Eliade, M. (1978). *A History of Religious Ideas* (Vol. 1). Chicago: University of Chicago, p.223

²⁸ Fecundate: make somebody or something productive

- b. Creation by the dismembering of primordial giant, *Parusa*.
- c. Creation out of a unity-totality, at once being and non-being.
- d. Creation by the separation of heaven and earth.

The second point of cosmogony is relevant to us. The Indic sacrifice follows the universal energetic structure of sacrifice everywhere else. Even in the Vedic age they thought that every kind of creation is impossible except through sacrifice. The creation of the world itself was even regarded as the fruit of a sacrifice performed by the Supreme Being. "It exists as 'as an invisible thing at all times and is like the latent power of electricity in an electrifying machine, requiring only the operation of a suitable apparatus in order to be elicited."²⁹

The oldest Hindu creation myth, the *purusasukta* of the *Rgveda*, describes the origin of humankind as the result of the sacrifice of a cosmic human-shaped being, *purusa*. In the Translation of Ralph T.H. Griffith (1896): The Rig Veda/Mandala 10/Hymn 90

1. A thousand heads hath *Purusa*, a thousand eyes, a thousand feet. On every side pervading earth he fills a space ten fingers wide.
2. This *Purusa* is all that yet hath been and all that is to be; The Lord of Immortality which waxes greater still by food.
3. So mighty is his greatness; yea, greater than this is *Purusa*. All creatures are one-fourth of him, three-fourths eternal life in heaven.
4. With three-fourths *Purusa* went up: one fourth of him again was here. Thence he strode out to every side over what eats not and what eats.
5. From him *Viraj* was born; again *Purusa* from *Viraj* was born. As soon as he was born he spread eastward and westward over the earth.
6. When Gods prepared the sacrifice with *Purusa* as their offering, its oil was spring, the holy gift was autumn; summer was the wood.
7. They blamed as victim on the grass *Purusa* born in earliest time. With him the Deities and all *Sadhyas* and *Rsis* sacrificed.
8. From that great general sacrifice the dripping fat was gathered up. He formed the creatures of-the air, and animals both wild and tame.
9. From that great general sacrifice *Rcas* and *Sama-hymns* were born: There from were spells and charms produced; the *Yajus* had its birth from it.

²⁹ Dasgupta, Surendranath, *A history of Indian Philosophy*, vol.1, p.22

10. From it were horses born, from it all cattle with two rows of teeth: From it were generated *kine*, from it the goats and sheep were born.
11. When they divided *Purusa* how many portions did they make? What do they call his mouth, his arms? What do they call his thighs and feet?
12. The Brahman was his mouth, of both his arms was the *Rajanya* made. His thighs became the *Vaisya*; from his feet the *Sudra* was produced.
13. The Moon was gendered from his mind, and from his eye the Sun had birth; Indra and *Agni* from his mouth were born, and *Vayu* from his breath.
14. From his navel came mid-air the sky was fashioned from his head Earth from his feet, and from his ear the regions. Thus they formed the worlds.
15. Seven fencing-sticks had he, thrice seven layers of fuel were prepared, When the Gods, offering sacrifice, bound, as their victim, *Purusa*.
16. Gods, sacrificing, sacrificed the victim these were the earliest holy ordinances. The Mighty Ones attained the height of heaven, there where the *Sidhyas*, Gods of old, are dwelling.³⁰

Purusha is an absolute living thing in Hindu tradition which means man, an absolute man. And this absolute man is offered by gods. Every thing emerged from it, so for Hindus “Life is the only attribute which they give to it.”³¹

V.2. Historical approach to the origin of sacrifice in Hinduism

In historical approach our reference point is the Rig Veda. Most likely the Aryans entered India from the northwest, probably about the middle of the second millennium B.C. with at least some of the religious hymns of the *Rig-Veda* already formed. So we have to consult them as the primitive form of Hinduism. Occasional references to geographic locations in what is now Afghanistan occur, and by considering the most probable lines of travel the Aryans can be traced back to Iran.³²

We have evidences that Hindus took the notion of sacrifice from the Indo-Aryans, forefathers of Hindus and they adopted it from Persian religions. It is not easy to distinguish which sacrificial traditions they brought and which were adapted from the indigenous Dravidian cults

³⁰ *The Hymns of Rigveda*. (1986). (R. T. Griffith, & J. L. Shastri, Trans.) India: Motilal Banarsi Dass Publications, 10.90

³¹ Al-Biruni, p. 19

³² Thomas G. Goman; Ronald S. Laura, *Some Upanisadic puzzles and changing conceptions of sacrifice*, *Numen*, Vol. 19, Fasc. 1. (Apr., 1972), p.55

unless a pure Aryan tradition could be discovered. Although it is almost impossible, a certain amount of useful data can be gained from a comparison with the Iranian religious traditions. "Considerable linguistic data support the connection between these two groups,"³³ but we will develop only those connections directly involving sacrifice.

The creation myth provides the first instance of such a connection. "The Zoroastrians maintained that Zoroaster sacrificed for a thousand years, producing Ahura- Mazda as its result, and *Ahriman* as the result of a doubt about its effectiveness."³⁴

A significant form of sacrifice which can be shown to be common to both was the *Soma* sacrifice (Iran: *Haoma*).³⁵ A developed *Soma* sacrifice is known which incorporated both the liquor (Juice) and the God,³⁶ in which his death by 'pounding' (in a mortar) occur. The SB (Satapatha Brahmana) says "for Soma is a god and they killing him in that they press him."³⁷ Thus the sacrifice is interestingly of a god to himself, with life as the result.³⁸ The basic ingredient of Hindu sacrifice, *Soma* plant, also leads us to the common point between them. Sir moniermonier explains the origin of this plant: "This plant botanically known as *Sarcostema Viminalis*, or *Asclepias Acida* a kind of creeper with a succulent leafless stem which was indigenous in the ancient home of the Aryans, as well as in the soil of India and Persia."³⁹ Word *yajna* has also an Avestan (Zoroastrian scripture) counterpart *Yasna*, indicating Indo-Aryan pre-Vedic Origin.⁴⁰

Secondly, it is evident from historical documents that early religion of the Indo-Aryans was naturalism. They believed in natural forces and they tried to conciliate with them. Though the forces of nature were thought of as controlled by divine persons, such persons were not yet idolized. "There is no evidence from the Vedic hymns that images were actually worshiped, though they appeared to have been occasionally employed."⁴¹ Anthropologically it seems that the mode of divine worship continued to be determined from a consideration of human liking

³³ Ibid, particularly important are the names of gods, especially Varuna, Mitra, and Rta. RV 1.75.

³⁴ Ibid, p.56.

³⁵ Turner, R. L. (1973). *A Comparative Dictionary of Indo-Aryan Languages* (2nd ed.). London: Oxford University Press, p. 601

³⁶ Thomas G. Goman; Ronald S. Laura, *Some Upanisadic puzzles and changing conceptions of sacrifice*, p. 52

³⁷ Eggeling, J. (1978). *The Sacred Books of the East* (Vol. 26). (F. M. Mullar, Ed.) New Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass Publishers, (Satapatha Brahmana, 3.2.2.4)

³⁸ Thomas G. Goman; Ronald S. Laura, *Some Upanisadic puzzles and changing conceptions of sacrifice*, p. 60

³⁹ Williams, Sirmoniermonier, *Brahmanism and Hinduism*, p.12

⁴⁰ Knipe, M. D. (2006). *Encyclopedia of India* (Vol. 4). (S. Wolpert, Ed.) New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, p. 253

⁴¹ Williams, Sirmoniermonier, *Brahmanism and Hinduism*, p.12

and disliking. Every worshipper praised the gods because he liked to be praised himself. He honoured them with offerings because he liked to receive presents himself. He used to feed them because he required food himself. "This appears to have been the simple origin of the sacrificial system, a system which was afterwards closely interwoven with the whole Hindu religion."⁴²

These two arguments, mentioned above, lead us to consider the origin of Hindu sacrifice in Indo-Aryan tradition which is almost derived from central Asian and Iranian traditions.

VI. Motives for Sacrifice in Hindu Tradition

Yajna is a Vedic sacrifice which has an outer aspect and an inner aspect. To the Vedic priests, *Yajna* was the means to invoke gods and seek their blessings and favours. They used to perform these *yajnas* for various purposes and at various times during the year, at the time of sowing, at the time of harvest, at the time of initiating some important social event or before going to wars.⁴³ From the early times, the ritual was understood to be the link between the human and the Divine and a vehicle towards liberation. *Yajnas* were also necessary for the renewal of the universe. As Surendranath Dasgupta explain the nature of sacrifice. "We pay taxes to the government...collected by different offices. There are also different stamp papers for the same. Similarly, for each karma or religious work there is an individual deity, a separate mantra, a particular material, etc. But the ultimate goal of all these is dedication to the Supreme God. We know that different departments are meant for the same government. Similarly, we must realize that the sacrifices performed for the various deities have behind them one goal, the *Paramatman*.⁴⁴ Here he mentioned that sacrifice may take different modes but at the end the goal will be the same which is the realization of *Paramatman*.

Another religious Hindu scholar, Sri Sri Sri Chandrasekharendra Saraswathi MahaSwamiji explains the purpose of sacrifice in the following words:

"If a crop grows in surplus in our place we trade it with what is available in plenty in another and is not produced in our own. The carpenter, the blacksmith and other artisans make useful articles and serve us in many ways. In return we give them what they need for their upkeep. We feed the cow grass and it yields us milk. We pay the government taxes and it gives us protection. The affairs of the world are conducted on the basis of a system

⁴² Ibid.

⁴³ V. Jayaram., *Yajna-The ritual worship in Hinduism*, <http://www.hinduwebsite.com/yagna.asp>. Accessed: 27-10-2009

⁴⁴ Dasgupta, Surendranath., *A history of Indian Philosophy*, Vol.1, p.21

of exchange. Similarly, we conduct an exchange even with worlds other than our own. Engineers and other experts can canalize water obtained from the rains but they cannot produce the rains. If we want the rains to come, we have to dispatch certain goods to the abode of the celestials.”⁴⁵

It is this kind of exchange that the Gita speaks of:⁴⁶ “You keep *devas* satisfied with the performance of sacrifices. And let them look after your welfare by producing rain on earth. Thus, helping each other be more and more prosperous and happy.” Another verse of Gita makes it clearer when speaks: “work done as a sacrifice for *Vineu* has to be performed; otherwise work causes bondage in this material world. Therefore, O son of *Kunté*, perform your prescribed duties for His satisfaction, and in that way you will always remain free from bondage.”

In the light of previous discussion we conclude the purpose of sacrifice in Hinduism under following titles.

VI.1. Protection of the Universe through Supporting the Gods:

Sacrifice is necessary to protect the *Rita*, the universal system. As we know that, in Hindu tradition, the different gods are responsible to keep on this system. Agni and Indra are more important. Indra is the most conspicuous consumer of the soma juice. As he best symbolizes the order of the cosmos and thus its nourish ability, and as such must be kept well-fed with this most nutritious (most energy-containing; most “sacred”) “soma juice”.⁴⁷ Thus, a sacrificer actually offers the sacrifice to make them strong in order to perform their duties easily. Rg Veda speaks about this as following:⁴⁸

1. Come to us, Indra, from afar, conducting us even as a lord of heroes to the gatherings, home, like a King, his heroes' lord. We come with gifts of pleasant food, with juice poured forth, invoking thee, As sons invite a sire, that thou must get thee strength, thee, bounteous, to get thee strength.

2. O Indra, drink the Soma juice pressed out with stones. Poured from the reservoir, as an ox drinks the spring, a very thirsty bulls the spring. For the sweet draught that gladdens thee,

⁴⁵ Sri Sri Sri Chandrasekharendra Saraswathi Maha Swamiji, *Hindu Dharma*, <http://www.kamakoti.org/hindudharma/about.html>. Accessed 27-10-2009

⁴⁶ Prabhudda, A. C. (2004). *Bhagavad-Gita As It Is*. California, USA: Bhaktivedanta Book Trust International, Chapter 3 -Karma-yoga, Text 12.

⁴⁷ Eliade, Mircea., *A History of Religious Ideas*, vol. 1, p. 217

⁴⁸ *The Hymns of Rgveda*. (1986). (R. T. Griffith, & J. L. Shastri, Trans.) India: Motilal Banarsi Dass Publications. Book I, Hymn cxxx

for mightiest freshening of thy strength. Let thy Bay Horses bring thee hither as the Sun, as every day they bring the Sun.

Having had his full share of the most energetically rich soma juice, Indra has energy, has strength, and can thus keep the components of the cosmos well differentiated from each other and running smoothly; Nature's ability to continually offer up the needed nutrients (game, crops, food) is thereby assured.

3. He found the treasure brought from heaven that lay concealed, close-hidden, like the nestling of a bird, in rock, enclosed in never-ending rock. Best Angoras, bolt-armed, he strove to win, as 'twere, the stall of *kine*; So *Indra* hath disclosed the food concealed, disclosed the doors, the food that lay concealed.

4. Thou, *Indra*, without effort hast let loose the floods to run their free course down, like chariots, to the sea, like chariots showing forth their strength. They, reaching hence away, have joined their strength for one eternal end, Even as the cows who poured forth everything for man, yea, poured forth all things for mankind.

VI.2. To Earn the Blessings and Favours of the Deities

When the sacrificer makes strong deities through their sacrifices then gods helps them to overcome their enemies in battle fields. A king of the olden times, says a Hindu chronicler, having caused the grand yajna to be performed before setting out for a war which he was planning against a neighboring ruler.⁴⁹ In scripture this favour is sketched as following:⁵⁰

8. Indra in battles helps his Aryan worshipper, he who hath hundred helps at hand in every fray, in frays that win the light of heaven. Plaguing the lawless he gave up to Manu's seed the dusky skin; Blazing, 'twere, he burns each covetous man away, he burns, the tyrannous away.

9. Waxed strong in might at dawn he tore the Sun's wheel off. Bright red, he steals away their speech, the Lord of Power, their speech he steals away from them,

⁴⁹ Dubois, J. A. (1978). *Hindu Manners, Customs and Ceremonies*. New Delhi: Oxford University Press, p. 514

⁵⁰ *The Hymns of Rgveda*. (1986). (R. T. Griffith, & J. L. Shastri, Trans.) India: Motilal Banarsi Dass Publications. Book I, Hymn cxxx

As thou with eager speed, O Sage, hast come from far away to help,
As winning for thine own all happiness of men, winning all happiness each day.

VI.3. *Happiness in Celestial World*

To ensure that, after our death, we will live happily in the world of the celestials. But our stay in *devaloka*, the celestial world, is not for all time. It will last only until such time as we exhaust the merit earned by us in this world. The joy known in the celestial world is also not full or entire unlike the bliss experienced by great devotees. It is nowhere equal to the bliss of the Atman which is also described as “experiencing” *Isvara*.

“O best of the *Kuru* dynasty, without sacrifice one can never live happily on this planet or in this life: what then of the next?”⁵¹

Sankara has stated in his *Manisa-Pancaka* that the joy that *Indra* knows is no more than a drop in the ocean of *Atma-ananda* or the bliss of Self-realization. However, life in *svarga*, the paradise of the celestials, is a thousand times happier than life on earth with its unceasing sorrows. The third purpose of performing sacrifices is to earn residence in this paradise.⁵²

VI.4. *Self-Realization*

The fourth purpose is the most important and it is achieved by performing sacrifices, as taught by the Gita, without any expectation of reward. But some one performs the sacrifice for self realization only. Here we neither desire happiness in this world nor residence in paradise; we perform sacrifices only because it is our duty to invoke the blessings of Gods for the welfare of the world. In this way our consciousness will be cleansed, a pre-requisite for enlightenment and final liberation. In other words the selfless performance of sacrifices means that we will eventually be dissolved in the *Paramatman*. *Sankara*, who has expounded the ideals of Self-realization and *jnana*, says: “Chant the Vedas every day. Perform with care the sacrifices and other rites they enjoin upon you.”⁵³ The *Acharya* wants us to conduct sacrifices not for happiness in this world, nor for the enjoyment of the pleasure of paradise. Not for any petty rewards.

⁵¹ Prabhudda, A. C., *Bhagvad-Gita As It Is*. Chapter 4, Text 31

⁵² Sri Sri Sri Chandrasekharendra Saraswathi MahaSwamiji, *Hindu Dharma*, <http://www.kamakoti.org/hindudharma/about.html>. Accessed 27-10-2009

⁵³ Ibid.

Sankara exhorts us to carry out Vedic works without our hearts being vitiated by desire. This, according to his teaching, is the way to make our mind pure in order to realize the Self.

VII. Historical Developments of Sacrifice

Traditionally it is understood that the Indo-Aryans and their religion is the basic source of Later Hinduism. But there is no reason to consider Indus Valley Civilization also one of the major sources of Hinduism. But two points in this connection may be said to be beyond doubt, namely,⁵⁴

- That the pre-Vedic religion was different from the Vedic Aryan religion.
- That its similarities with the classical Hindu religion were quite unmistakable.

Aryan invasion did not cease the pre-Vedic tradition completely but it survived in different ways which we will discuss later. But the Ritual of Sacrifice in Hindu tradition seems to be purely Aryan oriented activity. We can see its roots in Vedic religion and later on it survived through out the history of Hinduism in different manner. It also got the central point in practical as well as philosophical discourses.

Although the purpose of practicing *yajna* remains the same, the way of its performing evolved in time along with various layers of Hinduism. *Satapatha Brahmana* narrated the development of sacrifice in this way:

“At first, namely, the gods offered up a man as the victim. When he was offered up, the sacrificial essence went out of him. It entered into the horse. They offered up the horse. When it was offered up the sacrificial essence went out of it. It entered into the ox. They offered up the ox. When it was offered up, the sacrificial essence went out of it. It entered into the sheep. They offered up the sheep. When it was offered up, the sacrificial essence went out of it. It entered into this earth. They searched it for it, by digging. They found it (in the shape of) those two (substances), the rice and barley...”⁵⁵

For a better understanding of the development in *Yajna* ritual we can study it through the following ages:

1. Proto-historic and Early Vedic Period (1200 B.C. To 400 B.C)
2. Classical Hinduism (400 B.C. to 700 A.D)
3. Medieval Hinduism (700 A.D. to 1800 A.D)
4. Modern Hinduism (1800 to onward)

⁵⁴ Bleeker, C. J., & Widengren, G. (Eds.). (1971). *Historia Religiorum* (Vol. 2). Leiden: E. J. Brill, p. 248

⁵⁵ Eggeling, J. *The Sacred Books of the East* (Vol.12). *Satapatha Brahmana*, 1.2.3.5 Part. I, p.50,51

VII.1. Proto-historic and Early Vedic Period: (1200 B.C. To 400 B.C)

Vedism was the first form of the religion of the Indian branch of the great Aryan family, the form which was represented in the songs, invocations, and prayers, collectively called *Veda*, and attributed to the *rishis*, or supposed inspired leaders of religious thought and life in India. In this period they were focused on the worship of ‘defied forces or phenomena of nature’ , such as Fire, Sun, Wind, and Rain. These forces sometime “individualized or thought of as separate divine powers, sometimes gather under one general conception, as one God”.⁵⁶ It is important that the age of *Vedism* and Brahmanism knew neither temple nor image.⁵⁷ That’s why some a number of scholars consider Vedic religion as monotheistic.

Aryans were conqueror, so they propagated their religion. “They imposed their language and their religion on other religions.”⁵⁸ At this age Vedic religion super seated all pre Vedic religions. Sacrifice, *Yajna* became the central point of this religion which was the centre of all religious activities in Vedic tradition.

This stage comprises of *Samhita-Period* (consisting of *Rig Veda*, *Yajur Veda*, *Sama Veda* and *Atharva Veda*). The central figure of the *Samhita* texts is the *rishi*, a heroic visionary figure and poet who was able to experience directly the various gods and powers that pervaded Vedic man’s world. In his quest to commune with these sacred powers, the *rishi* does not seem to have employed ascetic techniques, as later Hindu visionaries were to do. The *rishis* did, however, employ a plant called *Soma*, which was most likely a hallucinogenic mushroom.⁵⁹ Drinking *Soma*, the *rishis* were transported to the realm of the gods. Having experienced the gods, the *rishi* subsequently were inspired to compose hymns in their praise. So *rishis* shared (offered in sense of sacrifice) this *Soma* juice with gods to get direct inspiration and this act was the first kind of sacrifice. The second important sacrifice was the animal sacrifice at this stage. One of them is *Asvamedha*, it was one of the most expensive sacrifices which can only be performed by the greatest of their kings.⁶⁰

⁵⁶ Williams, Sirmoniermonier, *Brahmanism and Hinduism* , p. 2

⁵⁷ Klostermaier, Klaus K, *A Survey of Hinduism*, p.39

⁵⁸ Pareti, L. (1969). *History of Mankind Cultural and Scientific Development* (Vol. II). (G. E. Chilver, & S. Chilver, Trans.) London: George Allen and Unwin Limited. Part one, p.40

⁵⁹ Kinsley, D. R. (1982). *Hinduism a Cultural Perspective*. New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, Inc. Englewood Cliffs, p.11

⁶⁰ Al-Biruni, p.229

God *Agni* was important to sacrificial rituals. He was God on the earth and therefore more accessible than other deities. He was visibly present in every house hold. He was man's domestic friend, the father of the sacrifice, the mediator between men and gods, the bearer of hymns and prayers from every family altar upwards towards heaven.⁶¹

The role of *rishi* was also important in sacrificial ritual. "Complementing visionary dimension of *rishi* in Vedic religion is a priestly, sacrificial cult centered on the great Vedic god *Agni*. *Agni* represents fire and heat. He is present at the sacrificial fire."⁶² In general, at this stage particularly, nearly all Vedic sacrificial rituals aim is "aiding, strengthening, or reinvigorating *Agni* so that the creative and vital powers of the world may remain fresh and strong. So the sacrificial rituals, then, are part of a cyclical pattern. *Agni* representing the divine forces generally diffused himself into the creation for man's benefit. Man in his return sustains and reinvigorates *Agni* and the gods through rituals that enable *Agni* to redistribute himself in the creation periodically. In this ritual scheme the gods and men are partners in maintaining the ongoing creative process of the world.

During the early Vedic period there were five great kinds of sacrifices namely:⁶³

- *Deva-yajna*, the sacrifice to the gods.
- *Pitr-yajna*, the sacrifice to the ancestors.
- *Bhuta-yajna*, sacrifice to all creatures.
- *Manusya-yajna*, the sacrifice to men or hospitality.
- *Brahma-yajna*, the mantra sacrifice or study of the Veda.

They apply to the two manners of performing sacrifice, either the *shrauta* rite that was done by Vedic priests according to *shruti* (i.e. sacred literature of Divine revelation) rules or *grihya* (domestic) rite performed by a householder man in many cases assisted by his wife (*patni*).⁶⁴ However the *shrauta* rite is much elaborated, its aims extending far beyond the purpose of a household. We can call the former congregational and later individual sacrifice. Almost all kinds of substances were used for sacrificial rites at this level. This was the stage of purity and

⁶¹ Williams, Sirmoniermonier, *Brahmanism and Hinduism*, p.10

⁶² Kinsley, D.R., *Hinduism a cultural perspective*, p.11

⁶³ K. S. M. (1993). *Vedic Hermeneutics*. New Delhi: Shri Lal Bhadur Shastri Rashtriya Sanskrit Vidyapeetha, p. 87

⁶⁴ Pathak, V. (1997). *Encyclopaedia of Hinduism* (Vol. 15). (N. K. Singh, Ed.) New Delhi: Centre for Int. Religious Studies & Anmol Publication Pvt. Ltd. p.4369

knowledge when men and women lived their religion under the direct guidance and protection of wise rulers and enlightened teachers.

Towards the end of *Samhita-Period*, the Vedic Aryans had, by and large, become politically stable, economically secure, and socially organized.⁶⁵ So their life style changed and converted from nomadic life to the household life. Here they converted from simple religion to a complex one. So they established elaborate rules and rigidly enforced in connection with the various details of the ritual, such as the proper time and place for sacrifice, the sacred fires, the officiating priests, the sacrificial materials and their recipients, the *mantras*, etc. this stage being called *Brahmanic age*.

Brahmanism grew out of *Vedism*. "It taught the merging of all the forces of Nature in one universal spiritual Being the only real Entity which, when un-manifested and impersonal, was called Brahma (neuter) ; when manifested as a personal creator, was called Brahma (masculine); and when manifested in the highest order of men, was called *Brahmana* (the Brahmans)."⁶⁶ Brahmanism was rather a philosophy than a religion, and in its fundamental doctrine it was spiritual Pantheism. In this age Vedic philology was established which is very much concerned with the correct pronunciation of Vedic Mantras during sacrificial rites.⁶⁷ So at the end of the Vedic age, Aryan religion had become very complex phenomenon which was fully in control of Brahmans. The Brahmans were the custodians of the *Yajna*. The hymns and rites connected with sacrifice handed down orally from generation to generation. This thing created the classification in the society from where the caste system was established.⁶⁸ Only three first castes enjoyed full social and religious rights and could participate in sacrificial rituals and Brahmans had the mastery to perform the sacrifice. They explained the sacrificial system so scientifically that "it comes to be supposed that the sacrificial rituals, if performed in strict accordance with rules and formulas, automatically brought certain benefits to the person concerned,"⁶⁹ i.e. Vedic sacrifice was believed to be an autonomous system. Unfortunately, the extreme obsession of the *ritualists* (professional Brahmans) with the complexities of the actual performance of the sacrifice has tended to overshadow the more significant aspects of the

⁶⁵ Bleeker, C. J., & Widengren, G. (Eds. *Historia Religionum* (Vol. 2), p.259

⁶⁶ Williams, Sirmoniermonier, *Brahmanism and Hinduism*, p.2

⁶⁷ Gottschalk, L., Mackinney, L. C., & Pritchard, E. H. (1969). *History of Mankind, Cultural and Scientific Development* (Vol. IV). (G. E. Chilver, & S. Chilver, Trans.) London: George Allen and Unwin Limited, p.153

⁶⁸ Pareti, L. (1969). *History of Mankind Cultural and Scientific Development* (Vol. II). Part one, p.40

⁶⁹ Devaraja, N.K., *Hinduism and the Modern Age*, p.9

ideology underlying the Vedic sacrifice.⁷⁰ They focused on perfect performance not on perfect notion.

Regarding purpose of sacrifice, there is no difference between early Vedic religion and late Brahmanism.

- At this stage there were two main features of *Yajna*: firstly, sacrifice was the representation of cosmic order and was a necessary condition for the proper working of the cosmic order. Secondly, sacrifice was the doctrine of *bandhuta*, which sought to establish a kind of mystic magic relationship among the various aspects of macrocosm and microcosm.
- At the beginning of this age, the idea of sacrifice was an instrument through which a relation of mutual friendship between a god and his worshippers is established. The later idea, of the sacrifice as a contract between a man and his god, which could be used against a god to force him to perform the will of the sacrificer.⁷¹

VII.2. *Sacrifice in Classical Hindu Age (400 B.C to 700 A.D)*

The period from the 4th century BC to the late 7th century AD is known as classical Hinduism.

Classical age is important for three aspects:

- It is the response of Vedic Brahmanism, in a sense rebel against the authority of Brahmins.
- There is some kind of revivalism of pre-Vedic religious thought.⁷² In this age “many of the greatest Hindu teachers were Dravidians and at the present day it is in the Dravidian regions that the temples are most splendid.”⁷³ So we can see similarities between pre-Vedic religious thoughts and classical Hinduism.
- Construction of New Classical or Historical Hinduism by mixing pre-Vedic, Vedic, Upanishadic, and Jainism & Buddhist notions.

Even as Vedic Hinduism flourished throughout India, various aspects of its world-view had come under challenge by the 6th century BC. This challenge came from *Upanishadic* thinkers and from the rise of new sects including Jainism and Buddhism.

⁷⁰ Bleeker, C. J., & Widengren, G. (Eds.). *Historia Religionum* (Vol. 2). p.262

⁷¹ Wallis, H. W. (1887). *Cosmology of Rg-Veda, An Essay*. London: Stephen Austin and Sons. p. 65

⁷² Bleeker, C. J., & Widengren, G. (Eds.). *Historia Religionum* (Vol. 2). p.244

⁷³ Eliot, Sir Charles., *Hinduism and Buddhism*, (vol. 1), p. xxxiii

The *Upanishadic* thinkers considered themselves the true followers of Vedic seers, while the followers of Buddhism and Jainism tended to question Vedic authority. Both were concerned about release from eternal rebirth and generally agreed that release was obtained not by sacrifice but by meditation and contemplation. What the *Upanishadic* thinkers did is that they constituted an internal revolt against the gross excesses of the cult of sacrifice.⁷⁴ They asserted that the Veda embodied only a lower kind of knowledge (*apara vidya*), and that the *Brahmanic* sacrifice, with emphasis on the 'form' of religion other than on its 'spirit', represented inferior religion.

Thus, from a rite of overt expression of much detail elaboration, the rite evolved around the human being as a central point. The internalization of fire sacrifice into the microcosmic world of the human body becomes predominant during the Classical period of Hinduism dominated by *Jnana Kanda*.⁷⁵ This period emphasized on knowledge as the way to obtain the same fruits that could be procured by the *shrauta* kind of ritual (sacrifice) performed during the early period as above described. Thus, the elaborated *shrauta* rite lost its dominance, in so a new kind of approach to *yajna* taking the front stage.

The important development during this later period is seen in *Brihadaranyaka-Upanishad*.⁷⁶ At this stage *devas* (gods) descend in order to become homologous with the psycho-physiological functions of the human body. The organ of speech (*vak*) (of the sacrificer) is looked upon as *Agni* ('fire'), the eye (*cakshus*) of the sacrificer is *Aditya* ('sun'), the vital force (*prana*) (of the sacrificer) is looked upon as *Vayu* ('air'), the mind (*manas*) of the sacrificer is *Candra* ('moon'). The Self which was seen as of nature of *Hiranyagarbha* ('the golden egg') is identified as being in the heart. The four Vedic priests were also internalized as scriptures points out: speech is the *hotri*, the eye is the *adhvaryu*, the breath is the *udgatri*, mind is the *Brahman*. This change can be understood by table 1.1.

Now, the new kind of sacrificer taking the role of *imago mundi* is no other but the spiritual aspirant himself that strives towards the knowledge (*jnana*) of *Brahman* as the highest reality. Not only the external world finds correspondence within the aspirant's internal world, but also his internal world is reflected in the external world (*lokas*) of magnifying proportions, thus:

⁷⁴ Radhakrishnan, S. (1957). *Indian Philosophy* (Vol. 1). London: Oxford University Press, p.125

⁷⁵ Octavian Sarbatoare, *Yajna, the vedic sacrifice (offering)*, <http://www.hinduwebsite.com/yagna.asp>
Accessed: 27-10-2009

⁷⁶ Muller, F. M. (1879). *The Sacred Books of the East (Upanishads)* (Vol. 1). Oxford: The Clarendon Press. The Upanishads Part II, *Brihadaranyaka-Upanishad* III.1.3. to III.1.17

“the organ of speech (*vak*) itself is the earth, the mind (*manas*) is the sky and the vital force (*prana*) is heaven”⁷⁷

Table: 1.1
Sacrifice In Classical Age of Upanishads

Parts of Yajna	World as Yajna	Rain as Yajna	Earth as Yajna	Man as Yajna	Woman as Yajna
Fire	world	Rain	Earth	man	Woman
Fuel	sun	Air	Year	speech	Sex organ
Smoke	rays	Cloud	Space	breath	Desire
Flame	The day	Lightening	Night	tongue	Vulva
Coals	The moon	Thunder	Quarters	eyes	Friction
Sparks	stars	Thundering	Intermediate quarters	ears	pleasure
Oblation	faith	Soma	Rain	food	Semen
The result	soma	Rain	Food	semen	Fetus

▪ By Jayaram V, <http://www.hinduwebsite.com/yagna.asp>

Yet, the entire interconnectivity of macro and micro universes as seen in the Upanishads does persistently address the issue of spiritual liberation (*kaivalya*) by the means of knowledge. This is how *Garbha Upanishad* sees the correspondence between the outer *yajna* and the inner *yajna* performed with and within the human body:

“The mind and the organs of the senses become the sacrificial vessels; *karmendriyas* (organs of action) are the sacrificial instruments. ... In this (sacrifice), the body is the sacrificial place, the skull of the head is the fire-pit, the hairs are the *kusha* grass; the mouth is the *antarvedi* (the raised platform in sacrifice)”.⁷⁸

It is not surprising that the sexual act of intercourse itself is seen as *yajna*. This is how *Brihadaranyaka Upanishad* describes the correspondence of the bodily parts of a woman and the instrumentality of *yajna*: “Her lower part is the (sacrificial) altar, (her) hairs the (sacrificial)

⁷⁷ Muller, F. Max., *The Sacred Books of the East*, Vol. I, The Upanishads, *Brihadaranyaka-Upanishad*, I.5.4.

⁷⁸ K. N. A. (1979). *Thirty Minor Upanishads*. New Delhi: Akya Book Corporation, p.121

grass, her skin the *soma*-press. The two labia of the vulva are the fire in the middle.”⁷⁹ Thus, the man is the one doing the offering in the form of sexual penetration of the woman and sperm ejaculation as a final offering (*purnahuti*).

At this point we see that the sages of the Upanishads rejected the portions of the Vedas enjoining animal sacrifice. According to the *Mundaka Upanishad*, “The path of sacrifices and rituals are very frail boats, the fools who rate them high and indulge in them enter the cycle of births and deaths again and again.”⁸⁰

The *Upanishadic* criticism provided the space for heterodox or non-Vedic beliefs and practices such as Jainism and Buddhism. The beginnings of many of these beliefs and practices may actually be traced back to common pre-Vedic non-Aryan culture-complex. Buddha made ‘the killing of animals for sacrifice should be discontinued’ the first point of his teachings. Buddhism benefited in the 3rd century BC from the patronage extended to it by King *Ashoka*, who ruled almost all of India. Jainism similarly benefited from royal patrons.⁸¹

But both these movements, *Upanishadic* and Jainism & Buddhism, ignored more or less completely the practical side of spiritual urge of the people. They gave to the people a philosophy, or philosophies, not practical religion. The result of all this was that *Vedism*. Hinduism came back in Gupta’s dynasty. This time *Vedism* had not lost its vitality altogether. The rare-guards of that great religious movement again get together themselves and “made a strong bid to counteract the advance of the non-Vedic religious forces by consolidating, recognizing, and thereby revitalizing the Vedic way of life and thought.”⁸² By the start of the Gupta period, which lasted from about AD 320 to 550,⁸³ Hinduism resurged, having integrated a variety of Buddhist and Jain beliefs and practices. It became the parliament of religions, of which every Indian creed can become a member on conditions of observing some simple rules of the house. These included the doctrine of *ahimsā* (non-violence) and an emphasis on vegetarianism. The Gupta period is celebrated as a glorious epoch of classical Hindu culture. We can observe that the emphasis was, in classical age, on the various branches of the practical knowledge rather

⁷⁹ Radhakrishnan, S. (Ed.). (1974). *The Principle Upanishads* (Fourth ed.). London: George Allen & Unwin Ltd., p.321

⁸⁰ Muller, F. Max. (1879). *The Sacred Books of the East*, (Vol. II), Part II, Mundaka -Upanishad II.1.3.

⁸¹ Pareti, L. (1969). *History of Mankind (Cultural and Scientific Development)* (Vol. 2). (E. F. Chilver, & S. Chilver, Trans.) London: George Allen and Unwin Ltd., Part Two, p.327

⁸² Eliot, Sir Charles., *Hinduism and Buddhism*, vol. 1, p. xxxiii.

⁸³ Pareti, Luigi., *History of Mankind (Cultural and Scientific Development)*, vol. II, Part Three, p.677

than ritual practices. “The various branches of Vedic knowledge, such as phonetics, etymology, grammar, metrics, and astronomy, were systematized in the form of Vedanga-texts.”⁸⁴

Besides *Upanishadic* movement, Jainism & Buddhism, and Vedism there was another energetic force which left strong effect on Hindu tradition in coming times. It was the some pure ideas of pre-Vedic religions, various popular religious cults.⁸⁵ Consequently, most of these popular tribal religions, with the variety of their gods and religious practices, they mixed up with Reformed Vedic thoughts.⁸⁶ Here we can say that classical Hinduism or historical Hinduism got its final destination. So in classical age, under the pressure of changing circumstances, dominances of non-Vedic ideas just like Jainism and Buddhism, the sacrifice reduced to mere symbolic gestures.⁸⁷ Thus

- *Deva-yajna*, the sacrifice to the gods could be performed by thronging a stick wood into the fire.
- *Pitr-yajna*, the sacrifice to the ancestors could be performed by pouring a glass of water onto the floor.
- *bhuta-yajna*, sacrifice to all creatures can be reduced to throwing out a small ball of rice.
- *Manusya-yajna*, the sacrifice to men or hospitality in the widest sense is fulfilled by giving a mouthful of rice to a Brahmin.
- *Brahma-yajna*, the mantra sacrifice or study of the Veda, may consist in recitation of one single line of scripture.

We conclude our debate by describing the main features of this stage:

- Whereas the Vedic sacrifice gives the impression of no emotion, no sign of love and affection, in classical age the emotional content of sacrifice is predominant.
- Vedic gods replaced with super god Brahma, the creator with two other major deities *Visnu*, the preserver; and *Siva*, the destroyer.
- Brahmanism was developed into Hinduism, and later crystallized into two main tendencies, *Visnuism* and *Sivaism*.
- The elaborate sacrificial ritual promoted by the *Brahmanas* was substituted by *Puja*.

⁸⁴ Bleeker, C. Jouco., Widengren, Geo., *Historia Religionum*, vol.II, p.265

⁸⁵ Gottschalk, L., Mackinney, L. C., & Pritchard, E. H. *History of Mankind, Cultural and Scientific Development* (Vol. IV). Part One, p.121

⁸⁶ Bleeker, C. Jouco., Widengren, Geo., *Historia Religionum*, vol.II, p.266

⁸⁷ Klostermaier., Klaus K, *A Survey of Hinduism*, p.54

- They establish a notion of *Bhakti* or personal emotional relationship between the god and his devotee without the help of priests.
- The *Upanishads*, Jainism & Buddhism laid great stress on self-realization (*atmajnana*) as the highest goal of man's spiritual quest. The new Hinduism now emphasized (*lokasamgraha*) on the stability, sustenance, and solidarity of society as the true aim of religion.
- The new Hinduism ideology began to be dominated by the doctrine of *Karmayoga* or activism rather than of *Samnyasa* or renunciation.

As a conclusion with the reference of sacrifice we can say: by the end of classical age sacrifice became the part of *Puja* or substituted by *Puja*. And the aim of *Puja* (sacrifice) becomes stability, sustenance, and solidarity of society rather than support of gods to maintain cosmic order.

V.3. *Sacrifice in Medieval Age of Hinduism (700 A.D. – 1800 A.D.)*:

The medieval period of Hinduism, 700 A.D. to 1800 A.D., is characterized by three developments.

1. The rise of devotional movements with corresponding outburst in the construction of temples.
2. The systemization of Hindu philosophy into six schools dominated by the school of *Advaita Vedanta* (non-dualistic Vedanta).
3. The rise of *Tantrism*, a movement employing ritual techniques to achieve liberation.

In classical Hindu age the supreme God, *Brahma*, was worshipped in the form of *Visnu* by some and in the form of *Siva* by others, and that was all.⁸⁸ These two gods actually were the substitute of Buddha. Buddha had two distinct characters. In his first and earliest character he was the typical ascetic (Sramana), the great teacher of the power to be gained by self-suppression and by conquest of the passions. Second character was the great friend of the common people who advocated universal brotherhood, universal equality, and universal compassion for all forms of animal life. In both these characters the personal god Siva and the incarnated Vishnu were his counterparts, and ultimately superseded him. Siva was the Buddha in his ascetical character. Vishnu was the Buddha in his character of a beneficent and unselfish lover and friend of the

⁸⁸ Paret, Luigi., *History of Mankind (Cultural and Scientific Development)*, vol. II, Part Three, p.827

human race.⁸⁹ And as Saivism and Vaishnavism superseded Buddhism, so they became the chief constituents of medieval and modern Hinduism. All shades and subdivisions of Hindu sectarianism may be included under one or other of these two heads.

In medieval ages these two deities became represented of two independent schools of thoughts or two Hindu sects *Sivas* and *Vishnuas*. At this stage of its history, Hindu tradition divided into five main sects, these are namely:

1. Worshippers of Siva (Saivas).
2. Worshippers of Vishnu (Vaishnavas).
3. Worshippers of the female personifications of divine power, regarded as the wives of the deities (Saktas).
4. Worshippers of Ganesa or Ganapati as god of luck and good fortune (Ganapatyas).
5. Worshippers of the sun (Sauras).⁹⁰

In 1300 A.D. three of them were dominant:

1. Lord Vishnu and his Devotees: Contemporary *Vishnuism* is the largest among Hindu sects. It has sources not only in Vedic religion but also Dravidian traditions and in tribal and local cults.⁹¹
2. Siva: The Grace and the Terror of God. Siva worshipped has been traced back to the Indus civilization. *Lingas* the main object of *Siva* worship to this day, have been found in the sites of Indus Valley.⁹² *Siva* has also some kind of historical relation with *Rudra*, well known deity of Vedas.⁹³
3. The great Goddess *Shakti*: Besides those who worship *Vishnu* as the Lord and those who see in Siva the Supreme Being, millions of Hindus worship *Devi*, the great mother, as a God.⁹⁴ *Saktism* also was not evolved from ancient Brahmanism but is different in tone from *Vishnuism* and *Sivaism*. The rise of *shaktism* was associated with the increase of Tantrism and decline of Buddhism.⁹⁵ *Saktism* has its basis on certain ancient popular

⁸⁹ Williams, Sirmoniermonier, *Brahmanism and Hinduism*, p.59

⁹⁰ Williams, S. (1878). *Non-Christian Religious Systems*. New York: Pott. Young & Co., p. 134

⁹¹ Klostermaier., Klaus K, *A Survey of Hinduism*, p. 228

⁹² Urban, H. B. (2006). *Encyclopaedia of World Religions* (Vol. 1). New York: Thoms Gale, p.331

⁹³ Wheeler, M. (1973). *Speaking of Siva*. U. K.: Harmondswort, Penguin Books, p. 71

⁹⁴ Klostermaier., Klaus K, *A Survey of Hinduism*, p.261

⁹⁵ Gottschalk, L., Mackinney, L. C., & Pritchard, E. H. *History of Mankind, Cultural and Scientific Development* (Vol. IV). Part One, p. 119

worships. With these it has combined much philosophy and has attempted to bring its teaching into conformity with Brahmanism.

Two essential elements are common to both faiths, *Visnuism* and *Sivaism*. One is emotional devotion (*bhakti*) to the god; it can lead to immediate contemplation of the deity (in *Visnuism*) or to the merging and identification of the devotee with it (in *Sivaism*). The other is *parsada*, the grace of the god that brings salvation to the devotee. But there are many parallels between them; one major difference is that *Sivas* still performs animal sacrifices, which *Visnavas* dislike.⁹⁶ *Visnuas* focused on temple worship concentrating on images while *Sivas* wears *linga* around their neck which converts their whole body to the temple and they focused on Yoga practices to attain the final liberation.

Tantraism basically focused on *Siva* and *Shakti*. *Siva* is the cause of bondage and *Shakti* is the force of liberation.⁹⁷ In them *Devi* occupies the supreme place. The Goddess is the common point among three sects *Sivas*, *Visnuas*, and *Tantras*. They developed the concept of *shaktism*, a tradition in which the Goddess is the one supreme principle. So *Visnu* without Sri, Rama without *Sita*, and Krishna without *Radha* are unthinkable. Traditionally a Goddess is called *Devi*.

It is important for us that, at this stage, bloody sacrifices presented to the Goddess, the *Devi*, even today at such times, buffaloes, goats and pigeons are sacrificed to the Goddess in order to appease her. But the worse shape of sacrifice, human sacrifice was very frequently offered to the Goddess. *Kali* is the popular Goddess of Hindus of the medieval ages.

Kali is a feminine form of Sanskrit *kala*, “time” or “dark”.⁹⁸ She is consort of the Hindu god *Shiva* in her manifestation of the power of time. A destructive mother goddess, *Kali* is frequently depicted as a black, laughing, naked hag with blood-stained teeth, a protruding tongue, and a garland of human skulls.⁹⁹ The *Kalika Purana* contains the detailed description of a human sacrifice in honour of the Goddess, it is said that:

“By a human sacrifice attended by the rites laid down, *Devi* remains gratified for a thousand years; and by the sacrifice of three men, one hundred thousand years. By human flesh the Goddess *kamakhaya*’s consort *Bhairava* who assumes my shape, remains pleased three thousand years. Blood consecrated immediately

⁹⁶ Klostermaier., Klaus K, *A Short Introduction to Hinduism*, p.69

⁹⁷ Ibid, p.77

⁹⁸ “Kali.” Microsoft® Student 2007 [DVD]. Redmond, WA: Microsoft Corporation, 2006.

⁹⁹ Suchitra., Samanta, *The "Self-Animal" and Divine Digestion: Goat Sacrifice to the Goddess Kali in Bengal*, The Journal of Asian Studies, Vol. 53, No. 3. (Aug., 1994), p.779.

becomes ambrosia, and since the head and flesh are gratifying, therefore should the head and flesh be offered at the worship of the goddess. The wise should add the flesh free from hair, among food offerings.”¹⁰⁰

The great Siva temple at *Tanjore* contains a shrine of Kali where a human victim, a mail child purchased for the purpose, was sacrificed every Friday evening, until the advent of British rule lead it to the substitution of a sheep.¹⁰¹ There are other temples in Southern India where similar sacrifices were common. While by the sacrifice of animals such as buffaloes, goats, pigs, etc. the Goddess is appeased for a short time, by a human sacrifice, ‘properly performed, the Goddess is pleased for thousand years’.¹⁰² Sacrificial offerings of vegetables and animals are textually prescribed and mandatory in *Kali's* worship and for *Sakti* goddesses in general. Such goddesses, as the active, creative ‘force’ (*Sakti*) in the *Sakta Tantra* version of cosmogony, are mothers of the material universe and complementary to the divinely conscious though inactive god Siva.

The ultimate objective of these practices was liberation through the attainment of union with the goddess. Most of the sacrifices, and perhaps some of the sexual rituals, seem to have been primarily propitiatory, aimed to make the goddess to be kind and helpful rather than cruel and dangerous.

Islam entered in the Subcontinent as a new tradition. By 1300 A.D. all of north India except parts of *Rajputana* was under Muslim control. From the middle of the fourteenth century onward, most of the rest of India except for Orissa and *Rajput* clans was under Muslim rule.¹⁰³ Hindus eventually took over Islamic ideas particularly in dress, ceremonials and other features of Islamic culture. Islam inspite of previous religions, which merged in Hindu tradition, maintained its glory. The interaction between Islam and Hinduism in mysticism, there are exchange of ideas between Sufis of Islam and *Bhakti* movement.¹⁰⁴ Because of this cultural and mystical interaction, leaders then arose in the modern age who tried to unite Muslim and Hindus on common bases of both religions. We should keep in mind that Hinduism responded Buddhism and Jainism, these responses were creative, and advancing the theory and practice of Hinduism but the response to the challenge of Islam was almost totally negative and defensive. Al-Biruni

¹⁰⁰ *Kalika Purana*, translation was published by Blaquier in *Asiatic Researches*, V. (1797), p. 371

¹⁰¹ Gait., E. A. (1974). *Encyclopedia of Religion and Ethics* (first ed., Vol. VI). (J. Hastings, Ed.) New York: Charless Scribner's Sons., p.850

¹⁰² Klostermaier., Klaus K, *A Short Introduction to Hinduism*, p.78

¹⁰³ Ibid, p. 161

¹⁰⁴ Ibid.

also narrated this attitude: "they are not allowed to receive anybody who does not belong to them, even if he wished it, or was inclined to their religion. This, too, renders any connection with them quite impossible, and constitutes the widest gulf between us and them."¹⁰⁵

Therefore, Muslim invention did not affect their sacrificial practices in general but Muslims faced strong opposition against cow sacrifice from Hindus in subcontinent. On the other hand, some shades of Hindu notions regarding god and soul continue in new Muslim population converted to Islam from Hinduism.

By concluding our debate on medieval ages we can say that all the past patrons of sacrifice were practiced in this age at different levels, some are more and others are less. We can observe in this age from human sacrifice to the doctrine of *Ahimsa*, non-violence, from animal sacrifice to *Yoga* practices which is substitution of Vedic sacrifice. The common features of this age are:

- Whereas the Vedic sacrifice gives the impression of transaction in which little or no emotion is involved, in this stage the emotional content of the sacrifice became predominant.
- Hinduism divided into sects, generally devoted to one of the three principle divinities. Siva, the destroyer, Vishnu, the preserver, and the great Goddess *Shakti*
- Conviction of the efficacy of ritualism and hence of sacrifices, pilgrimages, ceremonials, invocation of the deities, etc
- Worship of the productive forces, expressed in ways such as phallic symbols, adoration of female deities, erotic religious literature.
- Practice of all kinds of sacrifices. But vegetarianism almost dominated Hindu thought in this age. Because the majority of Hindus belonged to *Vishnua* sect which is anti bloody sacrifice sect.

V.4. Sacrifice in Modern Age (1800 A.D. to present)

The Hindu reaction to Islam was withdrawal, letting the shutters down, hardening the customs and beliefs, not admitting any change.¹⁰⁶ Hinduism which lost its authoritative and intelligence and the reason all of this is very clear as Al-Biruni described when he mentioned their national

¹⁰⁵ Al-Biruni, p.9

¹⁰⁶ Altekat, A. S. (1949). *Hinduism a Static Structure or a Dynamic Force*. Calcutta: Nehru Abhinandan Granth Committee, p. 421

character “Hindus believe that there is no country like theirs, no nation like theirs, no king like theirs, no religion like theirs, and no science like theirs. They are haughty, foolishly vain, self-conceited, and stolid.”¹⁰⁷ But with arrival of western invaders situation changed. Westerners found the Hindus their natural allies because both were against Muslim rule.

Hindus inspired by Western thoughts and became rationalists. So they tried to maintain their religion according to modern western logic. As Radhakrishnan said “Religion must establish itself as a rational way of living. If ever the spirit is to be at home in this world and not merely a prisoner or a fugitive, secular foundations must be laid deeply and preserved worthily. Religion must express itself in reasonable thought, fruitful and right social institutions.”¹⁰⁸ By confronting this new situation Hindu society divided mainly into two streams:

1. Traditional Hindus, they wanted to preserve the Hindu tradition as it developed through centuries. “They had not given up their beliefs in Siva and Visnu, they did not abandon their images, not ceased to worship in temples, continued *Puja* to be offered in homes.”¹⁰⁹
2. Reformer Hindus, those who wanted to maintain Hinduism according to modern requirements. Reformers further divided into three branches.
 - a. Traditional Reformers: Ram Mohan Roy (1772-1833), who was called the Father of Modern India. He was inspired by Islamic thoughts and later Christian thoughts.¹¹⁰ He was against image worship. He succeeded to win the battle against the practice of *sati* (burning of widows on their husband’s funeral prayer). Five years before his death, he succeeded to organize a religious movement, *Brahmo Samaj*.
 - b. Rational Reformers: their main focus was to maintain balance between religion and modern thoughts. They wanted to escape religion from old orthodoxy and at the same time wanted to be safe from modern thoughts. Swami Vivekananda one of them, said: “there are two great obstacles on our path in India: the Scylla of old orthodoxy and the *Charybdis*¹¹¹ of modern European civilization.”¹¹²

¹⁰⁷ Al-Biruni, p. 10

¹⁰⁸ RadhaKrishnan, S. (1946). *My Search for Truth*. Agra: Agrawala, India, p.6

¹⁰⁹ Klostermaier, Klaus K, *A Survey of Hinduism*, p.387

¹¹⁰ Ibid, p. 389

¹¹¹ Be between Scylla and Charybdis to be faced with the necessity of choosing between two equally undesirable or unpleasant things

¹¹² *Complete Works of Swami Vivekananda* (Vol. 3). (1970). Calcutta: Advaita Ashrama, p.151

- c. Extremist Orthodox Reformers: the response of all these efforts was Arya Smaj, a radical and often fanatical movement. Swami Dayananda Sarasvati (1824-1883) was the founder of this movement. He tried to restore the strict orthodox Vedic religion by rejecting the religion of the epics and the *puranas*, the *samhitas* and the *Agamas*, as corrupt and untrue.¹¹³

Present day Hindu society comprises of different thoughts, mentioned above, which came into existence in response to modern western civilization. So ultimately this division of thought can be observed in modern Hindu practices also. Indeed, nowadays, mainly in India, all forms of *yajna* are still practiced; devoted Hindus still believe in their efficacy and organize them for various purposes, sometimes in public for a social cause or sometimes in private for a personal gain. Whether eventually the outer aspect of *Yajna* would yield place to the inner aspect only time can tell.¹¹⁴ On November 27, 1957, under the headline “*Sadhus* perform *Maha yajna* (public sacrifice) to fight Menace of H-bomb” the *Times of India* reported a public sacrifice arranged by a former governor of Bombay. More than 500 *sadhus* and *pundits* gathered in Bombay a *Maha Yajna* to reconcile *devas* and to increase the spiritual strength of humankind.¹¹⁵

In spite of diversity of opinion about bloody sacrifice between Brahmins, today in Hindu communities, bloody Sacrifices have been offered with full strength. Sacrifice of *Yajnam* which is still held in great honour among modern Brahmins, a ram is the victim usually offered. Thousands of animals were sacrificed in the name of goddess on November 25, 2009 at Gadhima temple premises in Bara, Kathmandu, Nepal.¹¹⁶ These animals were not killed for their flesh and hide, though the two commodities will undoubtedly rake in millions of rupees for the event organizers. The killings were rather perpetuated with the belief that only hot blood of freshly slaughtered animals would persuade mai (the God mother) to fulfill people's long-held wishes. They went to Gadhima on a quest: for a good husband, for a loving wife, for material goods and even for peace of mind. The same reports from Bali, Indonesian Hindu community where animals that are sacrificed range from chicken, duck, goose, pig, dog, turtle, goat, water buffaloes, eagles even tiger.¹¹⁷ The other one is the *shrauta* rite, thousands of people together to

¹¹³ Klostermaier., Klaus K, *A Survey of Hinduism*, p.391

¹¹⁴ Ashby, P. H. (1974). *Modern Trends in Hinduism*. New York: Columbia University Press, p.96

¹¹⁵ Klostermaier., Klaus K, *A Survey of Hinduism*, p.151

¹¹⁶ BBC World Service.com sited on 25-11-2009

¹¹⁷ Animal Sacrifice, http://www.Google Image Result for http--blog_baliwww_com-wp-content-photos-celeng_butuhan_jpg.htm Accessed: 10-12-09

attend, each person could take a personal resolution (*sankalpa*), a wish sent to gods *via* the offerings in oblation.¹¹⁸ But it is very rare in modern age because it is very costly. Yet, the domestic rite (*grihya*) is widely practiced in many households following the tradition within that family.

In modern Hinduism the popular substitute of bloody and non-bloody sacrifices is Yoga. *Yajna* in the form of *yoga* is popular all over the world. It is a fact that incidence of performing the *Yajnas* and other forms of sacrifices is slowly coming down in modern Hindu society, primarily because of the influence of western education, the complexity involved in performing them and the decreasing number of priests who are well versed in the art of performing *Yajna* according to the Vedic injunctions. It must be noted that in the modern day world the texture of Hinduism is changing gradually. Ritualism is giving way spiritualism. It is the desire of many to look modern and spiritual, rather than conventional and ritualistic. The reason behind this is the caste system, in ritualism the cast systems still plays its cruel role and disappointed the hearts many Hindus, while in spiritualism doors are open for all Hindus. In this way everybody is able to perform sacrifice.

So in this regard *Yajna*, in modern age, evolved to be less ritualistic in the form of a total mental attitude of surrender know as *atmarpana*, the offering of every action to *Atma*, the Divine. A systematic practical approach to *yajna* became *yoga* with its many forms and a good methodological approach towards the issue of freedom that is liberation in its spiritual sense.¹¹⁹ This form of *yajna* is better known than any other forms of *yajna*. Yet, the nature and role of Vedic sacrifice in its multiple forms became integrated at the level of the present religious practices in India. As for the importance of *yajna* at the level of humanity, it is acceptable to say that by the practice of *yoga* in many parts of the world, *yajna* has acquired a worldwide recognition as a valuable spiritual inheritance for mankind.

At the end, by concluding the debate on historical development of the concept of sacrifice in Hindu tradition we can say that in the last two periods of the Hindu history, the emphasis from the outer mode of offering shifted towards the internalization of the ritual although old Vedic sacrifices has also been offered with full devotion. The gods and their expressions in the outer form of *yajna* were found to be in the human body itself. In Vedic age householders knew that

¹¹⁸ V, Jayaram., *Yajna-The ritual worship in Hinduism*, <http://www.hinduwebsite.com/yagna.asp>, Accessed: 27-10-09

¹¹⁹ Ashby, P. H., *Modern Trends in Hinduism*, p.96

everything depended on work; what was true for food and drink and shelter was assumed to be true of sunshine and rain, of happiness and ill-luck. Religion for them was works that, when properly done, produce its fruits. From that basic consideration developed an intricate and a theology of sacrifice that explains everything as being the result of ritual, *Yajna*, including the creation of the Universe. But in classical age, under the pressure of changing circumstances, dominances of non-Vedic ideas, the sacrifice reduced to mere symbolic gestures. Thus *Deva-yajna*, the sacrifice to the gods could be performed by thronging a stick wood into the fire. *Pirt-yajna*, the sacrifice to the ancestors could be performed by pouring a glass of water onto the floor. *Bhuta-yajna*, sacrifice to all creatures can be reduced to throwing out a small ball of rice. *Manusya-yajna*, the sacrifice to men or hospitality in the widest sense is fulfilled by giving a mouthful of rice to a Brahmin. *Brahma-yajna*, the mantra sacrifice or study of the Veda, may consist in recitation of one single line of scripture.

In modern age we find almost all kinds of sacrifices working side by side. Bloody sacrifices are still offered to the mother goddess. The followers of Siva sect generally perform it, while non-bloody sacrifices are performed at large scale because Visnuas perform them and they are greater in number than Siva's followers. But the most popular style of 'sacrifice' is *Yoga* which is a systematic and practical approach to *yajna*.

VI. Kinds of Sacrifice & Their Performance

Sacrifice in Hinduism comprises of living victims as well as non-living substances. As Al-Biruni described that they are different in extent.¹²⁰ *Satapatha Brahmana* provides us the detail of these materials.¹²¹ As we know that in Hinduism favourite food of men is also that of the gods, consisting of milk, butter, grain, and the flesh of sheep, goats, and cattle. It is offered to them in the sacrifice.¹²² Manly Vedic sacrifices are of two kinds: congregational and individual. Majority of them belong to the first category and are costly, lengthy and complicated. Former also called *saruta* (public or solemn sacrifice) and the later called *grhya* (domestic) sacrifice.

¹²⁰ Al-Biruni, p. 229

¹²¹ See Chapter no. 2, p. 48

¹²² Macdonell, A.A., (1974), "Vedic Religion" in *Encyclopedia of Religion and Ethics* (vol. XI), p.603

VI.1. Saruta / sharuta (Congregational Sacrifices)

Saruta Yajnas, these congregational sacrifices particularly partook of royal characteristics such as *Ashvamedha*, *Rajasuya* etc. were little heard of during early medieval period in Northern India.¹²³ Al-Biruni confirmed this kind of sacrifice in Hindu tradition: “so that certain of them can only be performed by the greatest of their kings.”¹²⁴ The purpose of these *Yajnas*, which were performed on large scale, was the general welfare of the entire community, to increase fertility of soil, to invite rains, to welcome peace and wealth etc. further, the sacrifices differ in duration, so that only he could perform certain of them who lives a very long life. Depending upon the degree of complexity, these *Yajnas* may last from a few hours to several days. The number of priests participating and conducting the ceremony would depend upon the nature and objective for which it is performed.¹²⁵ The *Saruta* is held outdoor and away from the community settlement. The complex sacrificial rite in this category is composed of the main offering (*pradhāna*) proceeded by the fore-offering (*prayāja*) and followed by the after-offering (*anuyāja*). Four kinds of victims might be offered in sacrifice, namely a horse, a cow, an elephant, or a man. The first was called *ashvamedha*, the second *gomedha*, the third *rajasuya*, and the forth *naramedha*.¹²⁶

VI.2. Grihya (Individual Sacrifices)

Each and every important event in the life of a Hindu, who has chosen to lead a normal householder's life calls for the performance of certain rites. These rites are intended to invoke the blessing of various gods and ensure success in the performance of his ordained duties. They are performed during various stages in his life for different ends. Some of the important rites of Hinduism are described here. The simplest form of *Yajna* is the domestic ritual performed by the householder who would offer simple oblation into the sacred fire lit in his house. A more complicated version involves setting up of three to five fires and pouring of offerings into them such as food grains, ghee or butter, and other vegetable substances by chosen and qualified priests, chanting mantras simultaneously, invoking various gods especially Agni, Indra, Varuna etc.¹²⁷

¹²³ V.S. Pathak., *Vedic Sacrifice*, Encyclopedia of Hinduism, (vol.15), p.4370

¹²⁴ Al-Biruni, p. 229

¹²⁵ Ibid.

¹²⁶ Dubois, Abbe J.A., *Hindu Manners, Customs and Ceremonies*, p.514

¹²⁷ V, Jayaram., *Yajna-The ritual worship in Hinduism*, <http://www.hinduwebsite.com/yagna.asp>,

There are five great daily sacrifices that are to be performed by every householder. They are:

- *Deva-yajna*, the sacrifice to the gods.
- *Pitr-yajna*, the sacrifice to the ancestors.
- *Bhuta-yajna*, sacrifice to all creatures.
- *Manusya-yajna*, the sacrifice to men or hospitality.
- *Brahma-yajna*, the mantra sacrifice or study of the Veda.

These sacrificial rites almost are consisting of simple products of nature, such as flowers, incense, rice, vegetables, and fruits.¹²⁸ Some times these sacrifices are repeated several times every day, in ablutions, and in meditation.

VI.3. *The Performance of Bloody/Animal Sacrifice*

The animal-sacrifice is a part of the Soma-sacrifice and is performed on the day of the soma pressing and -offering. Among the seven *haviryajfias* the animal sacrifice is also separately mentioned as a kind of *haviryajfias* and is named as *Pasubandha* SB, X1.7.1.1. We get a short description of the *Pasubandha*, the animal-sacrifice as a part of the Soma-sacrifice is, however, described in details by SB III.6.4.1. SB XI.7.2.1 explains the distinctive nature of the *Pasubandha* by mentioning the two kinds of the animal sacrifice as follows: "One animal-sacrifice is of the *haviryajna* order and the other of the soma-sacrifice."¹²⁹

The most complicated type is the soma sacrifice, which incorporates both *isitiis* (Non-bloody) and *pasubandhas* (Bloody).¹³⁰ The performance of sacrifice is discussed with detail in Sathapatha Brahmana.¹³¹ The performance of the animal-sacrifice begins with the cutting and up righting of the sacrificial Post (*yupa*). The *adhvaryu* takes a straw and drives the animal up. A noose he throws it over the victim and binds it. Water is sprinkled upon the victim. The *hotr* having sat down upon the *hotr's* seat, urges and thus urged the *adhvaryu* takes the two spoons of ghee. Then the *hotr* recites the eleven *apriverses*. These are the eleven fore-offerings (*prayajas*). The *adhvaryu* takes the chip of the sacrificial post and after anointing both the slaughtering knife and the chip at the top with ghee from the *juhu-spoon*, he touches the sacrificial victim. Then he conceals the chip of the post. The *adhvaryu* orders the *hotr* to recite to *Agni circumbient*; then the

Accessed: 27-10-09

¹²⁸ Dubois, Abbe J.A., *Hindu Manners, Customs and Ceremonies*, p.509

¹²⁹ Ganesh Umakant Thite, *Animal-Sacrifice in the Brahmana texts*, *Numen*, Vol. 17, Fasc. 2. (Aug., 1970), p. 144.

¹³⁰ Heesterman, Jan., "Vedism and Brahmanism" in *Encyclopedia of Religion and Ethics*, (vol.11), p. 228

¹³¹ Eggeling. J., *The Sacred Books of the East*, vol. 26, (SB III.6.4.1 to SB III. 8.5.8)

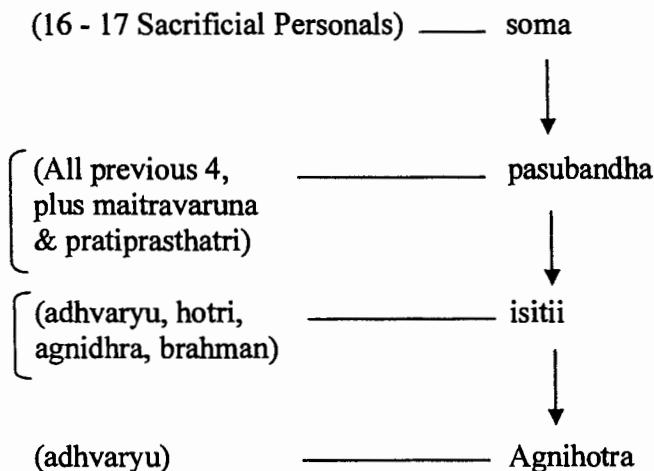
agnidh priest taking a firebrand carries fire around (the victim). He carries it around the place where the victim is cooked. Taking a new firebrand he walks in front of the animal. The animal is led to the slaughtering place. The *pratiprasthatr* holds on to it from behind by means of the two spits; the *adhvaryu* holds on the *pratiprasthatr* and the sacrificer to the *adhvaryu*. In front of the place where the animal is cut up, the *adhvaryu* throws down a stalk of grass. They then step back (to the altar) and sit down turning towards the *ahavaniya*. The animal is smothered to death. Before strangling it the *adhvaryu* makes an offering. When the animal is quieted the sacrificer's wife is called. There she cleanses with the water the openings of the vital airs of the victim. With one half or the whole of the water that is left, the *adhvaryu* and the sacrificer sprinkle the animal. They turn the victim over so that it lies on its back. The *adhvaryu* puts a stalk of grass thereon. The animal is then cut off and then the *omentuin* is pulled out. It is heated on the cooking fire. The *pratiprasthatr* then roasts it. The offering of *omentuin* is made in five layers: the melted butter, then a piece of gold, then the *omentuin*, then again a piece of gold and then again the melted butter. The priests then cleanse themselves over the pit (*cntvdla*). A sacrificial cake for the same deities to which the animal is offered is to be prepared and offered. Then the animal is cut. The *adhvaryu* tells the *sarnitr* (the slaughterer) how to answer the question about whether the sacrificial food is cooked and then asks that question and gets the expected answer. Then after the basting of the heart of the animal with clotted ghee, the animal is taken between the sacrificial post and the *ahavaniya* fire. The *adhvaryu* tells the *hotr* to recite for the offering to the *Manota* deity. Then the portions are made from the various parts of the body of the animal. Then the offering is made to *Agni* and *Soma*. In the interval between the two half-verses of the offering-verses an oblation of grass is made to the *Visvedevas*. Then follow the offerings to the Lord of Forest (Vanaspati), *Agni swistakrt* and the quarters (*disah*). The *adhvaryu* touches what remains of the victim. Then he makes the after offerings (*anuyajas*) and the *pratiprasthatr* the by-offerings (*upayajas*) which are followed by additional by-offerings (*atyupayajas*). Then the *patnisamyajas* are offered with the tail.¹³² Then the *avabhrtha* is symbolically done with the heart-spit.¹³³

The organization of this sacrificial ritual (Soma-sacrifice) involves the services of four specialized chanters (*chandoga*) led by the *udgātri*. Altogether the soma sacrifice needs 16 or,

¹³² Ibid, (SB 111.8.5.6)

¹³³ Ibid. (SB 111.8.5.8)

according to some *sutras*, 17 priests, including the previously mentioned ones, divided into 4 groups according to the 4 Vedas: 4 *adhvaryu* priests (Yajurveda), 4 *hotrakas* (Rigveda), 4 *chandogas* (Sāmaveda), and 4 in the *brahman*'s group (Atharvaveda); the 17th, the *sadasya*, is assigned to the *Brahman*.¹³⁴ The hierarchical classification can be mapped out:



This is the normal animal sacrifice in the normal soma-sacrifice namely *Agnistoma*. Variations about the number of the victims, colours of them, the deities to which they are offered etc.¹³⁵ occur according to the desire with which those animal-sacrifices are performed. But the normal procedure is always the same in essence.

VI.4. the Performance of non-Bloody Sacrifice

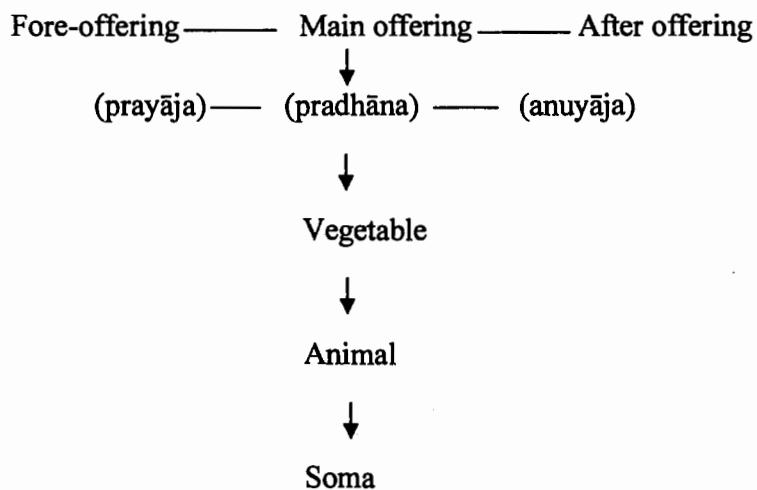
Non-Bloody sacrifices are not very much different from bloody sacrifices in their performances. Very briefly, the simple pouring is performed by only one person, usually the *adhvaryu*, but the more complicated form requires the cooperation of several priests. While standing at the offering fire the *adhvaryu* calls out to the *agnidhra*, "let there be hearing", and the latter answers with "be it, one should hear"; then it is again the turn of the *adhvaryu*, who now calls on the *hotri* to recite the offering verse (*yājyā*). The verse begins with the name of the god to whom the oblation is addressed and is followed by the instruction to "worship" (*yaja*), that is, to recite the appropriate verse; the *hotri* complies, prefixing the words *ye yajāmahe* ("we who

¹³⁴ Heesterman, Jan., *Vedism and Brahmanism*, Encyclopedia of Religion and Ethics, Vol. 15, p.228

¹³⁵ Dubois, Abbe J.A., *Hindu Manners, Customs and Ceremonies*, p.511

worship," also known from Old Iranian) and ending with the word *vausiati*, at which the *adhvaryu* pours the oblation in the fire and the sacrificial patron (*yajamāna*) pronounces the *tyāga* ("abandonment"): "for [name of the god addressed], not for me." i.e. endergonic¹³⁶ and not exergonic,¹³⁷ (observing energy not releasing energy.)¹³⁸

The structure of the Vedic sacrificial ritual system, including bloody and non-bloody, can thus be mapped out on the two axes of metonymy (horizontal) and metaphor (vertical, running down the main offering):



VII. Conclusion

The concept of sacrifice is an ancient and universal one in Hinduism. It is to say that the sacrificial rites were performed from the dawn of Hinduism in various forms and for various purposes. It might be said that the degeneration of Hindu Religion can be traced through an examination of the change in the attitude of its followers and the practices adopted by them in the matter of sacrifice. The rectilinear development of Hindu religion proceeding in an orderly sequence from animism through polytheism to monotheism which was, in the last decades of the

¹³⁶ Absorbing energy: describes a chemical or biochemical reaction that requires energy.

¹³⁷ Releasing energy: describes a spontaneous biochemical reaction that releases energy.

¹³⁸ Heesterman, Jan., *Vedism and Brahmanism*, Encyclopedia of Religion and Ethics, Vol. 15, p.228

19th century, adopted by many scholars.¹³⁹ But inspite of this development, almost all ancient ideas have been practiced in present day Hindu society. This is what we observe in the matter of 'sacrifice'.

The four layers of Veda outline the practice of *yajna* rites according to the scriptural literature at that time. In the course of time, however, the grand idea changed in many ways even some time we saw that sacrifice took the mode of horrible custom, like human sacrifice. It is on the account of the transformation of the Vedic ritual that the Hindu tradition evolved to retain the concept of *yajna* in different forms. The change was mainly related to the gradual internalization of the ritual. Thus, the mechanical religion of Brahmanism provoked a series of rebellions. The pure idea of Vedic sacrifice became degraded in India, and one of the reasons of the degradation of it is the coming of Jainism and Buddhism who challenged the authority of Vedas and freed the people from systematic ritual of Vedic sacrifice. In later Hinduism the notions against animal sacrifice continued although animal sacrifice was also continued.

Vedic ritualism was first and foremost was an exercise of, in its general nature, "homological mode of thought in which resembling 'entities and phenomena' were linked by 'connections' (*bandhus* or *nidinas*)."¹⁴⁰ In this scheme of thought human beings could therefore claim to understand and to exert an influence on the natural, supernatural, and social realms from within the confines of their ritual world. So, in this regard, ritual actions or ritually codified things by means of the connections to work simultaneously and sympathetically on their natural, supernatural, and social spheres.

The Vedic sacrifices continue to this day in one form or another and Vedic ritual is observed by most Hindus on ceremonial occasions. Even to this day all the obligatory duties of the Hindus at birth, marriage, death etc. are performed according to the old Vedic ritual. Even to this day there are persons who bestow immense sums of money for the performance and teaching of Vedic sacrifices and rituals.

¹³⁹ Gonda, J. (1985). *Change and Continuity in Indian Religion*. New Delhi: Monshiram Manoharlal Publishers, p.131

¹⁴⁰ Smith, Brian K., *Sacrifice and Substitution: Ritual Mystification and Mythical Demystification*, *Numen*, Vol.36, Fasc.2. (Dec., 1989), p.196

CHAPTER No. 3

Concept of Sacrifice in Islam

I. Introduction:

Sacrifice in Islam is nothing more, nothing less, and nothing else than a natural, visible expression of homage and gratitude to the creator. It is the spirit of willing devotion and ready obedience underlying sacrifices and offerings that are accepted by Allah Who is the God of righteousness, the very soul of morality. It is only piety of heart or righteousness of conduct, and not any thing in lieu of it that is acceptable to Him. Sacrifice, in Islam, is neither honorific nor peculiar, much less a magical sacrament. In its historical context it has relation with a prophetic personality but it had never been offered to any person or in the favour of a person except Allah.

It has definitely a physical gesture but it is essentially symbolic, an external symbol of an internal dedication and voluntary submission to the Will of the Almighty Allah. In Islamic concept of sacrifice the Divine or the recipient of the sacrifice is absolutely without needs, and all acts of sacrifice and worship are for the benefit of sacrificer himself. We find full consumption of sacrificial material in the favour of man, eating meat of sacrificed animal, using its skin for different purposes. God shares nothing with the materials of the sacrificial substances except the piety of the sacrificer's heart.

The grace of Allah reaches everyone and everywhere and needs only some piety for its reception. So there is no compulsion of gender, caste, colour, or religious status. That's why it is highly recommended that every Muslim should perform his sacrifice by him without any assistance of religious hierocracies.

The ultimate benefit of sacrifice returns to the individual and society in the form of solidarity, sharing wealth with others, and psychological satisfaction.

II. THE LITERAL MEANING OF SACRIFICE:

There are seven different words used in the religion of Islam to express the idea of sacrifice.

II.1. ذبح (dhibh): the word **dhibh** is defined “to split or pierce; to cut the throat of any

creature.”¹ As a verb **dhabaha** means he slaughtered (for food or sacrifice) an animal, or a sheep or goat, or an ox or a cow, and the like.² In the Holy Qur’ān, the word is used for the slaughtering of the heifer by Moses;³ for the slaying of the sons of Israel by Pharaoh⁴; for sacrificing to idols⁵; and for the intention of prophet Abraham (peace be upon him) to sacrifice his son Prophet Ishmael.⁶

II.2. قربان (Qurbān): comes from the word **قربة** (qarūba, qurbatan) signifies nearness, station, or grade, or rank.⁷ As said in Arabic طلبت منه القرابة: sought of him nearness of station. In Islamic (shari’ah) Law a thing whereby one seeks nearness, to bring himself near, to draw near, or approach unto God.⁸ And it is said in Tradition **الصلوة قربان كل تقدى** “the divinely appointed act of prayer is the offering to God of every pious person.”⁹; meaning that whereby the pious seek to bring themselves near unto God. It occurs twice in the Holy Qur’ān, for the sacrifice to be devoured by fire from heaven, which the Jews demanded of Muhammad¹⁰ (peace be upon him); and for the offering of the sons of Adam¹¹ (peace be upon him). It is a word frequently employed in Islam to express the ordinary sacrifice, and the great festival (‘Id) is called in Persian and Urdu languages the ‘Id-i-Qurbān.

¹ Al-Thanawi, M. A. (1996). *Al-Kashāf: An Encyclopedia of Artistic and Scientific Terminologies* (First ed., Vol.1). (D. R. Al-Ajam, Ed., & D. A. Al-Khalidi, Trans.) Berute, Lebanon: Librairie du Libon Publishers, p.822

² Lane., E. W. (1984). *Arabic-English Lexicon* (Vol. 1). Cambridge, England: The Islamic text society, p. 954

³ The Holy Qur’ān (2004). (A. Y. Ali, Trans.) Islamabad, Pakistan: Da’wah Academy. (2:67). “And remember Moses said to His people: Allah commands that ye sacrifice a heifer.”

⁴ The Holy Qur’ān (2:49) “And remember, we delivered you from the people of Pharaoh: they set you hard task and punishments, slaughtered your sons and let your women folk live...”

⁵ The Holy Qur’ān (5:3), “Forbidden to you (for food) are: dead meat, blood, the flesh of swine, ... to slaughter it (in due form); that which is sacrificed on stone (altars)”.

⁶ The Holy Qur’ān (37:102), “Then, when (the son) reached (the age of) serious work with Him, He said: O my son! I see in vision that I offer thee in sacrifice...”

⁷ Lane., Edward William, *Arabic-English Lexicon*, Vol. II, p.2507

⁸ Al-Thanawi, M. A. (1996). *Al-Kashāf: An Encyclopedia of Artistic and Scientific Terminologies*, vol. II, p.1313

⁹ Ṣīḥah Ibn Ḥabbaṇ, Ch: *Fadl u Ṣlawat al Khams*, Hadith No.1720, Editor: Al-Amir ‘Alā ud dīn, Dar al-Kutub al-‘Ilmiyyah, Lebanon, vol. 3, p. 111

¹⁰ . The Holy Qur’ān (3:183), They (also) Said: “Allah took our promise not to believe in a messenger unless He showed us a sacrifice Consumed by fire (from Heaven)...”

¹¹ . The Holy Qur’ān (5:27), “Recite to them the truth of the story of the two sons of Adam. Behold they each presented a sacrifice (to Allah): it was accepted from one, but not from the other...”

II.3. نحر (Nahr): It literally means to slaughter, butcher or kill “to injure the Jugular vein”.¹² It used for stabbing the beast of camel, as in sacrifice, hence the sacrifice itself. **Yawm al-Nahr** (يَوْمُ النَّحْر): the day of the stabbing of the camels. **‘Id al-Nahr** (عِيدُ النَّحْر): the festival of the stabbing of the camels, the tenth of Dhu‘l-Hajj, because then the camels, cows and bulls were brought as offering to Mecca for sacrifice. It occurs once in the Holy Qur’ān.¹³ **‘Id al-Adhā** is also called the **Yawm al-Nahr**.

II.4. أضحية (Uḍhiyah): it is derived from **ḍahw**, **ḍuḥa**, and a word which expresses that means of the day when the sun has risen to considerable height.¹⁴ It is said (**ḍhyu·l-ghanam**) ضحى: the time when the sun has risen to considerable height. **الغنم**: He pastured the sheep, or goats in the time called **الضحى**.¹⁵ **Uḍhiyah** is, therefore, the time sacrifice offered after rising of the sun on the day of **‘Id al-Adhā**. This word is not found in Qur’ān but in several traditions of the Holy Prophet, as one of them supported by Anas bin Mālik that Holy Prophet was used to slaughter two rams and I also slaughter two rams.¹⁶

II.5. هدي (Hady): the root of this word is **hadi** هدي: A camel’s hump, it was bent by much leading and had its soft hair sticking upon it, without its being wounded.¹⁷ In technical sense **Hadyun’** is an animal that is taken by a pilgrim to be sacrificed within the precincts of the K‘aba.¹⁸ The word of **Hadyun’** occurs four times in the Holy Qur’ān; for offering an animal for sacrifice sent to Makkah, when the pilgrim is not able to reach in time.¹⁹

II.6. منسك (Mansak): This word occurs in the Holy Qur’ān in the verses “We have appointed to every nation a rite (mansak)”²⁰; “Show us our rites (manāsik).”²¹ In the technical sense the

¹² Lane., Edward William, *Arabic-English Lexicon*, vol. II, p.2774

¹³ The Holy Qur’ān (108:2), “There fore to thy Lord turn in prayer and sacrifice.”

¹⁴ Al-Bassam, Abdullah bin Abd-ur-Rehman. (2003), *Tawdīh al-Aḥkam min Balogh al-Marām*, Vol.7, *Maṭābah al-Usadiy*, Makkah, p. 71

¹⁵ Lane., Edward William, *Arabic-English Lexicon*, vol. II, p.1773

¹⁶ Shīḥ Al-Bukhari, Hadith: 466, Ch: *Al-Adāhī*, Trans. M. Muhsin Khan, Dar-ul-Fikr, vol. 7, p.330

¹⁷ Lane., Edward William, *Arabic-English Lexicon*, vol. II, p.2825

¹⁸ Karim.,Fazul, (1979). *Al-Hadis*, Translation of *Mishkat·l-Maṣabīḥ*, Malik Sirajuddin & sons, Lahore, Pakistan, vol. III, p. 618

¹⁹ . The Holy Qur’ān (2:196), “And the complete the Hajj or Umrah in the service of allah. But if ye are prevented (from completing it) send an offering for sacrifice...”, The Holy Qur’ān (5:2), “O ye Who believe! Violate not the sanctity of the symbols of allah, nor of the sacred month, nor of the animals brought for sacrifice...”

²⁰ . The Holy Qur’ān (22:34)

²¹ . The Holy Qur’ān (2:128)

mansak means 'Rite' or 'Rites of Pilgrimage'.²² According to al-Baydawi the word means a place of devotion, or a sacrifice which steers a man near to Allah.²³ This word is translated by Prof. Palmer as "rites".²⁴ And the act of sacrifice is a one of the Pilgrim ritual.

II.7. البدن (al-Budna): it applies to the sacrificial animal, particularly camel which is sent to K 'aba for sacrifice. In Holy Qur'an "The sacrificial camels We have made for you as among the symbols from Allah: in them is (much) good for you, then pronounce the name of Allah over them as they line up (for sacrifice)." (Al- Qur'an, 22:36)

III. TECHNICAL MEANING OF SACRIFICE IN ISLAM

Sacrifice simply means to give up things which we love and hold dear, which in our eyes have some value for us. Sacrifice in Islamic terms is "whatever a slave offers to approach Allah's satisfaction and to express gratitude and appreciation for His bounties and favours."²⁵ These things may be tangible and concrete or intangible and abstract. Important among concrete things are time, money, worldly possessions, physical abilities, and life. Important abstract things may include our ties of love and affection, likes and dislikes views and opinions, etc. Giving up something deserves to be called a sacrifice only when we love and value it. Hence, it is difficult to draw a clear line between the concrete and the abstract. But in the final analysis, "every sacrifice is a sacrifice of our love or value."²⁶ When we give away money, or life, or slay an animal for the sake of Allah, what we really give up, and that makes it a 'sacrifice', is our love for money, life or a relative, not the object itself. And this thing is revealed in the Holy Qur'an in following words: "it is not their meat, nor their blood, that reaches Allah. It is your piety that reaches Him." (Al-Qur'an, 22:37)

So, the principle of sacrifice is one which is accepted in one form or another by all nations of the world;²⁷ but it has a deeper meaning in Islam. The outward act is still there, as of old, but it no more conveys the meanings attached to it in ancient religions. In ancient religions e.g. in Hinduism, the basic notion attached to the sacrifice is appeasing the offended deity or serving as atonement for sins. But in Islam the concept of sacrifice is more than this; it signifies

²² Al-Thanawi, M. A. (1996). *Al-Kashāf: An Encyclopedia of Artistic and Scientific Terminologies*, vol. II, p.1313

²³ Al-Qadi Nasir 'd Din al-Bidawi (1955) *Tafseer al-baydawi*, Maktabah Mustafā al-Bābi al-Halabi, Egypt

²⁴ Siddiqi, M. Iqbal. *Animal Sacrifice in Islam*, p.2

²⁵ Berjak, R. (2007). *The Qur'an: An Encyclopaedia*. (O. Leaman, Ed.) USA: Routledge Publishers, p.554

²⁶ Murad, K. (1985). *Sacrifice: The Making of a Muslim*. UK: The Islamic Foundation, p.13

²⁷ The Holy Qur'an (22:34), "To every people did We appoint rites (of sacrifice) ..."

the sacrifice of the sacrificer himself, and becomes thus an outward symbol of his readiness to lay down his life, if required, and to sacrifice all his interests and desires in the cause of Truth.²⁸ This message is revealed by Allah and which is the voice of the heart of every true Muslim: “Say: Truly, my prayer and my service of sacrifice, my life and my death, are (all) for Allah, the Cherisher of the worlds.” (Al-Qur’ān, 6:162)

Thus, in this chapter we shall focus on animal sacrifice in Islam as a religious ritual. It is sometimes obligatory or highly recommended like in pilgrimage and sometimes optional as thanksgiving sacrifices.

IV. IMPORTANCE OF SACRIFICE IN ISLAM

As there are, properly speaking, no temples and no priesthood in Islam, so there is no sacrifice in the ordinary acceptation of the term.²⁹ That’s way Islam has a unique concept of sacrifice. ‘Sacrifice’ in Islam is directly relevant to the one of the five pillars of Islam, Pilgrimage (*Hajj*). Sacrifice is performed by Muslims not only during Hajj festival but throughout the world Muslims celebrate ‘Id festival by slaughtering millions of animals. We can understand the importance of sacrifice in Muslim society from different aspects like their legal status in Islamic Law as well as its social and psychological importance.

The pioneer of pilgrimage (Hajj festival) is Ibrāhīm (Abraham) peace be upon him. “Behold! We gave the site, to Abraham, of the (Sacred) house, (Saying): Associate not anything (in worship) with Me; and sanctify My House for those who compass it round, or stand up, or bow, or prostrate themselves (therein in prayer). And proclaim the Pilgrimage among men: They will come to Thee on foot and (mounted) on every kind of camel, lean on account of journeys through deep and distant mountain highways.” (Al-Qur’ān, 22:26, 27) Muslims practice to for pilgrimage in the response of this call of Abraham (PBUH). Abraham established the institution of Hajj and practiced the ritual sacrifice, so Muslims practice the ritual of sacrifice in the commemoration of their father Abraham as Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) said: “This is commemorative *Sunnah* of your father Abraham”³⁰ So the practice of sacrifice in Muslims links the community with historical event and through which the Muslims pay respect to the Prophet Abraham (PBUH) who is the Prophet of Jews and Christians also. In this context, the annual

²⁸ . Siddiqi, M. Iqbal, *Animal Sacrifice in Islam*, p.4

²⁹ . Weir., T.H. (1974). *Encyclopedia of Religion and Ethics* (first ed., Vol. XI). (J. Hastings, Ed.) New York: Charless Scribner’s Sons, p. 29

³⁰ Tafsir Ibn Kathir, abridged by a group of scholars, Darussalam, Jeddah, Second addition, 2003, Vol.III, p.221

practice of sacrifice in the Muslim world creates a historical joint with other revealed religions when Muslims declare their un-breakable relation with Abraham (P.B.U.H) and his practices.

Muslims all over the world offer animal sacrifices as an obligatory ritual of their faith to show their gratitude to their Lord, Allah. In the same way at the time of child birth in Muslim family they offer animal sacrifice on behalf of the new born child. It is a kind of **Şadaqa**, charity on behalf of the infant aimed at earning the blessing of Allah and averting the misfortune from him.³¹ In order to secure their child for any inconvenient situation in future Muslims perform animal sacrifice. The **Şadaqa**, charity, in the form of sacrificing an animal is more preferable than to give some money in cash.³²

On community level sacrifice is a ritual which shows the solidarity of Muslim nation despite their colour and race. Pilgrimage, *hajj*, is an annual event which is full with this notion of unity. From all over the world people come to pilgrimage of *Makkah*. Animal sacrifice is one of the Hajj rituals, by performing it they show that they are united in the way of Islam. Throughout the world, other Muslims, who are not performing the pilgrimage, also perform animal sacrifice on 10th of *Dh-‘l-Hajj*, to show their affiliation with pilgrims in *Makkah*. Another social aspect of sacrifice in Islam is sharing the wealth with poor through distributing the sacrificial meet. The selling of sacrificial meet is not allowed and even a Muslim can not use it as wages of butchers. Ali reported Allah's Messenger put me in charge of His sacrificial animals, that I should give their flesh, skins and saddle cloths as **Şadaqa** (charity), but not to give anything to the butcher, saying: "We would pay him ourselves."³³

The meat is divided into three parts; about a third for one's family, to send another third to friends and relatives, to send another third to poor.³⁴ It is permissible to give the sacrificial meat to the non-Muslims as well, though it is not lawful to give it in lieu of wages. All this shows that sacrificing animal is not merely an act of slaughtering an animal but it has certain features of social welfare, solidarity and maintain the flow of money from rich to poor in the community.

³¹ Sunan Ibn-Mājah, Hadith No. 3123, *Book of Dabā’ih*, Ch: *Aqīqa*, English Translation by: M. Tufail Ansari, Kazi Publications, Lahore, Pakistan, 1995, Vol. IV, p.379

³² Al-Bassam, Abdüllah bin Abdür Rehman. (2003), *Tawdīh al-Āhkām min Balogh al-Marām*, bāb al-Adāhi, vol.7, p. 72

³³ *Sahīh Muslim*, Hadith: 3019, Ch: DIV, *Kitāb al-Hajj*, Vol. II, p.661

³⁴ Islahi, M. Y. (1990). *Every Day Fiqh* (Vol. 2). Lahore, Pakistan: Islamic Publications, p.199

Psychologically the ritual of sacrifice has deeper sense than of previous. It presents the full sequence of life and death and reminds those who perform it the fake nature of earthly things. It shows the power of a beyond-earthly God.³⁵ What happened in sacrifice? A great ram or other animal is brought in vital and living then is slain. The ritual physically confirms that it is the being of the world – like a ram- that dies. Our life will also be end and we will return to our Lord.

Another important aspect of sacrifice is its legacy in Islam. This legacy can be identified through three basic sources of Islamic law: *Qur'ān*, *Sunnah* (Tradition of the Prophet PBUH), and *Ijmā'* (consensus of Muslim legal scholars). So the tradition of sacrifice (slaughtering an animal) in Islam has sufficient proofs in mentioned sources. All these three sources approve the sacrificial act and the detail is as following: In the Holy Qur'ān Allah ordered the Prophet (P.B.U.H) and his followers: "Therefore to Thy Lord turn in prayer and sacrifice." (Al-Qur'ān, 108:2) According to some interpreters of Qur'ān "nahr" means slaughtering animal as a sacrifice after 'Id prayer.³⁶

There are many traditions of the Holy Prophet that legitimize the sacrificial practice in Islam. Anas reported that the Holy Prophet dwelt at *Medinah* for ten years and performed sacrifice every year.³⁷ At the same time we find consensus of *Ummah* in Islamic jurisprudence developed on this act and throughout the history Muslims have been practicing it with respect and excitement.³⁸

So there is no conflict between Muslim jurists on the legitimacy (مشروعية) of sacrificial act but they have different opinions that the sacrifice is 'obligatory' or 'recommended' practice? On the first hand we have to explain these two terms as understood in Islamic law. The alternate word used for the term 'obligatory' is *wājib* or *Fard*.³⁹ The alternate word used for the term

³⁵ . Combs-Schilling, M. E. (1989). *Sacred Performances - Islam, Sexuality, and Sacrifice*. New York: Columbia University Press, p.231

³⁶ . Muhammad Bin Jarir al-Tabārī, (224-310 H), *Jāmi'-l-Bayān fi Tawil al-Qur'ān*, Surah: 108, Edit by: Ahmed Muhammad Shakir, 2000, www.qurancomplex.com

³⁷ . 'Aridat-'l- Ahwadhi sharḥ Shih al-Tirmidhi, Ibn al-Arabi al-Mālikī, Chapter of *Adahī*, Dar al-Wahi al-Muhammadi, Cairo, vol. 5, p. 289

³⁸ . Ahmad bin Muhammad bin Qudāmah, (541-620 H), Al-Mughnī, Kitāb al- Adahī, Edit by: Dr. Abdullah bin al-Muhsin al-Turki, Dr. Abdul Fattah Muhammad al-Halw, Dar-A'alam-ul-Kutub, 1997, Riadh, Saudi Arabia, 360

³⁹ The literal meaning of *wājib* or *Fard* is, "an act the performance of which is obligatory for the subject. In its technical sense, it is an act whose commission is demanded by the lawgiver in certain and binding terms."³⁹ The rule for the *wājib* or *Fard* is that it must be brought about by the subject and for doing so there is reward (*thawāb*) for

‘recommended not obligatory’ is *mandūb* which means, “A demand by the lawgiver for the commission of an act without making it binding and without assigning any blame for its omission.”⁴⁰

Now, after defining the basic terms, we are able to understand the difference of opinion between Islamic jurists. According to the Hanafi school of thought, which is followed by majority of the Muslims in subcontinent, the ritual of sacrifice in the form of animal slaughtering on the occasion of Hajj and *Īd* is *wājib*; highly recommended for him who has sufficient means to afford it.⁴¹ They use the following saying of the Holy Prophet (P.B.U.H) to support this statement, “He who can afford (sacrifice) but he does not offer it, he should not come near our place of worship.”⁴² It means that if somebody did not offer animal as a sacrifice even he can afford it, he commits sin.

According to other schools of thought like *Shāfiī*, *Mālik*, *Amad ibn Ḥanbal*, and *Ibn Ḥazm*, they consider animal sacrifice *mandūb* or *Sunnah mu'akkadah*. It means if some one does not offer sacrifice if he has sufficient means there is no blame on him for this omission.⁴³ According to *Shāfiī* school of thought, “*Sunnah* has introduced the custom of sacrifices that are obligatory only for the person who has imposed them upon himself as a duty.”⁴⁴ *Ibn Ḥazm* also with the second opinion and supported the argument that sacrifice is not obligatory, “sacrifice recommended as optional act not as obligatory. If some one does not perform if he can afford it, there is no objection upon him.”⁴⁵ The following tradition of the Prophet (P.B.U.H) supports this opinion; narrated Abdullah Ibn ‘Amr ibn al-‘Ās: The Prophet (P.B.U.H) said: I have been commanded to celebrate festival (*Īd*) on the day of sacrifice, which Allah, Most High, has appointed for this community. A man said: If I do not find except a she-goat or a she-camel borrowed for milk or other benefits, should I sacrifice it? He said: No, but you should clip your

him, while omitting it, without a legal excuse, entails a penalty. (Niazi, I. A. (2000). *Islamic Jurisprudence*. Islamabad: Islamic Research Institute, p. 52)

⁴⁰ Ibid, p. 65

⁴¹ al-Zuhaili, W. (1985). *Al-fiqh al- Islāmi wa adillatihū* (Vol. 6). Syria: Dar al-fikr, p.185

⁴² Sunan Ibn-Mājah, Hadith No. 3123, *Book of Dbāih*, Ch: *Aqiqā*, Vol. IV, p.357

⁴³ Al-Bassam, Abdullah bin Abdur Rehman. (2003), *Tawdīh al-Āhkām min Balogh al-Marām*, Bāb al-Adāhī, vol.7, p. 71

⁴⁴ Nawawi, Mahiudin abu Zakaria Yahyā ibn Sharif, *Minhāj-et-Tālibīn*, Translation in English By: E.C. Howard, Law Publishing Company, Lahore, Pakistan, p. 477

⁴⁵ *Ibn Ḥazm*, (died in 456 H), *Al-Muḥallī*, Ch: 7 (*The Book of Adāhī*), Idarah al-Tiba'ah al-Mūniriyah, Egypt, p.355

hair, and nails, trim your moustaches, and shave your pubes. This is all your sacrifice in the eyes of Allah, Most High.”⁴⁶

But we should keep in mind that the *Sunnah mu'akkadah* is a recommended act that was persistently performed by the Prophet (P.B.U.H). He did not give up its persistent performance, except on some occasions.⁴⁷ So, no Muslim can afford to lose *Sunnah mu'akkadah* because of its importance given by Prophet (P.B.U.H) practically. Sacrifice is one of the Prophet's acts which he performed persistently as narrated by Anas: the Holy Prophet dwelt at *Medinah* for ten years and performed sacrifice every year.⁴⁸ Sacrifice in this context has become a sign of Muslim community all over the world and Allah declared the sacrificial animals as the signs of Allah, *sh'ā-er-allah*. (Al-Qur'ān, 22:36) So, the sacrifice in Islam got the status of spiritual and physical gesture of Muslim society which has many religious as well as social features.

V. ORIGINS OF SACRIFICE IN ISLAM

V.1. *Sacrifice in Previous Nations*

The Holy Qur'ān testifies to the historical fact that whatever may be the outward symbols of sacrifice, it has been accepted in one form or another by all the nations of the world. “To every people did we appoint rites (of sacrifice), that they might recite the name of Allah over the sustenance He gave them from animals (fit for food).” (Al-Qur'ān, 22:34) The common feature of sacrifice in all nations, ancient to present, is that sacrifice can only be offered to Allah and only Allah which had been corrupted by many wrong practices and been overlaid by many wrong notions before the advent of Islam.⁴⁹

The first sacrifice was offered to Allah by the two sons of Adam; Qābil (Cain) and Hābil (Abel). The Holy Qur'ān narrated the story of two brothers:

“Recite to them the truth of the story of the two sons of Adam. Behold! They each presented a sacrifice (to Allah). It was accepted from one, but not from the other. Said the later, be sure I will slay thee. Surly, said the former, Allah Doth accept of the sacrifice of those who are righteous.” (Al-Qur'ān, 5:27)

⁴⁶ Sunin Abi Dāwūd, (*Kitab Al-Dhaya*), Hadith 2783, Translation into Eng. By: Ahmad Hasan, 1984, Shah Muhammad Ashraf Publishers, p. 783

⁴⁷ Niazi, I. A. (2000). *Islamic Jurisprudence*. Islamabad: Islamic Research Institute, p. 66

⁴⁸ 'Āridat-ī- Ahwadhi sharḥ Ṣaḥīḥ al-Tirmidhi, Ibn al-Ārabi al-Mālikī, Chapter of Adāhī, Vol. 5, p. 289

⁴⁹ Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim, Introduction of *Kitāb al-adāhī*, by: Abdul Hamid Siddiqi, Vol. III, p. 1081

This tradition of sacrifice had been continuing in the nations after Adam. The Holy Qur'an illustrated it as following:

They (also) said: "(Allah) took Our promise not to believe in an apostle unless He showed us a sacrifice consumed by Fire (from heaven). say: "There came to you apostles before me, with Clear Signs and Even with what ye ask for: why then did ye slay them, if ye speak the truth?" (Al-Qur'an, 3:183)

Some of the Prophets had shown this miracle that when sacrifice or thing was owed to Allah, a fire from heaven came and it burnt or devoured the sacrifice or the thing vowed. It was the sign of acceptance from God. A story of this kind about *Hadrat Sulīmān* is also narrated in the Bible.⁵⁰ Now Jews pretended not to believe any Messenger who did not show such a miracle. And the Jews said that God had made the covenant with them to this effect. This was a great lie because there was no such order in their book, not it is today, and nor it can be proved that every prophet was endowed with this miracle. Prophets endowed with different miracles according to their peculiar conditions and circumstances.⁵¹ So, the sacrifice also shifted its paradigm and now we confront another form of sacrifice where living animal is slaughtered and eaten by sacrificer rather than fire coming from heavens and burning it. It is the sacrifice of Abraham of his son Ishmael.

Sacrifice of animal in Islam is commemorative of Prophet Abraham's offer of his son's life at the command of Allah, who was substituted by a ram, and it has been perpetuated by Islam. It is narrated that once the Companions of the Holy Prophet (peace and blessing of Allah be upon him) asked him about the sacrifice. He replied: "This is a commemorative *Sunnah* of your father Abraham"⁵²

V.2. *Ibrāhīm's Sacrifice of his Son*

Ibrāhīm or Abram: biblical patriarch, according to the Book of Genesis⁵³, progenitor of the Hebrews, who probably lived in the period between 2000 and 1500 BC.⁵⁴ Ibrāhīm (PBUH) is

⁵⁰ Dalton, M. J. (1988). *The Holy Bible, The New King James Version*. Nashville: Thomas Nelsons Publishers, p. 299

⁵¹ Uthmani, S. A. *The Noble Qur'an (Tafseer-e-Uthmani)* (Vol. 1). (M. A. Ahmad, Trans.) Lahore, Pakistan: Al-Amin Publications, p. 290

⁵² Ibn Kathir, Tafsir, Vol. III, p. 221

⁵³ The Holy Bible, Book of Genesis: 11:27-25:10. , pp. 8,9

⁵⁴ "Abraham." Microsoft® Student 2007 [DVD]. Redmond, WA: Microsoft Corporation, 2006.

regarded by Muslims, who call him Ibrāhīm, as an ancestor of the Arabs through Ismā'īl or Ishmael.

Since sacrifice in Islam is connected with the historical incident of Prophet Ibrāhīm's sacrifice of his son Prophet Ismā'īl, it is worthwhile to narrate some facts concerning both these Prophets (peace be upon them). It is a dispute between Muslims and Jews & Christians whether Ishaq/Isaac sacrificed by Ibrāhīm or Ismā'īl. The Holy Qur'ān does not mention any name but the situation and historical facts tell us that it was Ismā'īl not Isaac.⁵⁵

It was almost two thousand seven hundred years before *Hijrah*⁵⁶ that in obedience of Allah's command Prophet Ibrahim (peace be upon him) left Syria accompanied by His wife *Hajirah* (peace be upon her) and his infant son Prophet Ismā'īl (peace be upon him) and alighted on the land of *Makkah* which was then a barren and uninhabited desert utterly devoid of water and vegetation for miles together. Glancing at this howling wilderness of infinite desert, Prophet Ibrāhīm (peace be upon him) prayed to Allah in the following words:

"O our Lord! I have made some of my off spring to dwell in a valley without cultivation, by Thy Sacred House; in order, O our Lord, that they may establish regular prayer: so fill the hearts of some among men with love towards them, and feed them with fruits so that they may give thanks." (Al-Qur'ān, 14:37)

One day, while Prophet Ibrāhīm (peace be upon him) was in *Mash 'ar al-Hārām*⁵⁷ along with his wife and son, he saw in a dream that he was slaughtering his son Prophet Ismā'īl (peace be upon him). As dream used to constitute one of the mediums of spiritual communion between Allah and His Prophets which is called technically in Islam *al-Wahy*.⁵⁸ Prophet Ibrāhīm (peace be upon him) took his dream as the very command of his Lord and prepared himself to fulfil it and decided upon the physical slaughter of his son. The Holy Qur'ān narrates this soul-stirring event in these words:

"Then, when (the son) reached (the age of serious) work with him, he said: O my son! I see in vision that I offer thee in sacrifice; now see what is thy view! (The son) said: O my father! Do as thou art commanded. Allah willing, thou should find me of the steadfast." (Al-Qur'ān, 37:102)

⁵⁵ See Chapter no.1 , p.9

⁵⁶ *Hijrah*: Islamic year which began with the migration of Prophet Muhammad from Makkah to Madenah.

⁵⁷ *Mash 'ar al-Hārām*: About midway between 'Arfāt and Minā is place called *Muzdalifah*.

⁵⁸ al-Šābonī, M. A. (1981). *Al-Tibyān fī Uloom al-Qur'ān*. Peshawar: Al-Maktaba al-Haqqani, p.11

Having heard it Prophet Ibrāhīm (peace be upon him) took a knife and carried Prophet Ismā‘il (peace be upon him) to a place called Mina.

“So when they had both submitted their wills (to Allah), and he had laid him prostrate on his forehead (for sacrifice).” (Al-Qur’ān, 37:103)

Prophet Ibrāhīm (peace be upon him) then moved the knife across Prophet Ismā‘il’s (peace be upon him) neck at that moment Arch Angel Jibrāīl replaced Prophet Ismā‘il (peace be upon him) with a ram whereupon Allah said:

“We called out to him, O Ibrahim! Thou hast indeed fulfilled the vision! Thus indeed do we reward those who do right. For this was obviously a trial We ransomed him with a momentous sacrifice: And We left (this blessing) for him among generations (to come) in later times.” (Al-Qur’ān, 37: 104-108)

When Prophet Ibrāhīm (peace be upon him) untied the mask from his eyes he found Prophet Ismā‘il (peace be upon him) standing safe and a slaughtered ram lying on the ground. Prophet Ibrāhīm (peace be upon him) prostrated thankfully before Allah and took his son to the *Ka’ba*.

In the above quoted verses, the adjective qualifying “sacrifice,” may be understood both in literal figurative sense.⁵⁹ In literal sense it implies that a big ram was substituted. The figurative sense is even more important. It was indeed a great and momentous occasion, when two men with concentrated will ranged themselves in ranks of those to whom self-sacrifice in the service of God was supreme thing in the life. This devotion and worship of Prophet Ibrāhīm (peace be upon him) earned such a great pleasure of Allah that commemoration sacrifice is annually celebrated as a rite of the Hajj. The ‘*Id-al-Adha*, in memory of this sacrifice of Prophet Ibrāhīm and Ismā‘il (peace be upon them). As the Holy Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) said: “This is commemorative *Sunnah* of your father Ibrāhīm”⁶⁰

VI. MOTIVES FOR ANIMAL SACRIFICE IN ISLAM

In Islam the act of sacrifice is the symbol of a Muslim’s readiness to lay down his life, and to sacrifice all his interests and desires in the cause of Truth.⁶¹ The purpose of sacrifice is not fulfilled only by shedding the blood of an animal, but it is really fulfilled when a man submits

⁵⁹ *Sahih Muslim*, Introduction of *Kitāb al-adāhī*, Vol. III, p. 1081

⁶⁰ *Sunan Ibn-i-Mājah*, Hadith No. 3127, *Book of Blood Sacrifices*, Vol. IV, p.368

⁶¹ *Sahih Muslim*, Introduction of *Kitāb al-adāhī*, Vol. III, p. 1081

himself completely to the command of Allah. This core purpose of sacrifice has been clearly laid down in the Holy Qur'ān in the following words: "Neither their flesh, nor their blood reaches Allah, but it is the piety from you that reaches Him." (Al-Qur'ān, 22:37) It is the spirit of willing devotion and cheerful obedience underlying sacrifices that is accepted by Allah Who is fountainhead of all morality. *Tafseer Ibn Kathir* stresses this point: "the man who offers sacrifice should keep this fact uppermost in his mind that the most important motive behind this is the willing submission to Allah."⁶²

This purpose and motive which underlies the shadow of sacrifice as it is practiced by Islam is definitely different from other Semitic and non-Semitic religions. We can elaborate this core motive from different angles.

VII.1. Sheding of blood is unlawful and prohibited in Islam except in the name of God. So Muslims slaughter animals at the day of 'Id-ul-Adha, on this day the shedding of blood is more beloved than any other act. As the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) said: 'Ā'ishā (may Allah be pleased with her) reported that the Apostle of Allah said, "the son of Adam does not do anything of the actions of the day of sacrifice which is more pleasing to Allah than the shedding of blood, and he will come on Resurrection Day with its hairs, horns and hooves; and the blood certainly falls in a place near Allah before it falls down on the ground. So make you purified there with."⁶³ So, a Muslim, by shedding the blood, tries to prove that he will never deviate from any sacrifice in the way of Allah, even shedding the blood. As Abraham got ready to sacrifice His beloved son Ishmael (peace be upon him) in the name of God. Animal sacrifice is a substitution of this act.

VII.2. Muslims perform sacrifice as a commemorative act of Abraham (peace be upon him). When this great servant of God got ready to sacrifice His beloved son Ishmael (peace be upon him) in the name of God, it was most high level of devotion in the way of God as God himself said: "for this was obviously a trial." (Al-Qur'ān, 37:106) This devotion and worship of Prophet Abraham (peace be upon him) earned such a great pleasure of Allah that commemoration sacrifice is annually celebrated as a rite of the Hajj. The 'Id-ul-Adha, in memory of this sacrifice of Prophet Abraham and Ishmael (peace be upon

⁶² Tafseer Ibn Kathir, Vol. VI, p. 183

⁶³ Sunan Ibn-i-Mājah, Hadith No. 3126, *Book of Blood Sacrifices*, Vol. IV, p.359

them). As the Holy Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) said: This is commemorative *Sunnah* of your father Abraham.

VII.3. The third motive of sacrifice, slaughtering animal in the name of God, is to fulfil vow. Muhammad's (PBUH) grandfather Abd-'l- Mut'talib vowed that, if he became the father of ten sons, he would offer up one of them as a sacrifice; and, when his wish was realised, he expiated his vow by a sacrifice of camels instead.⁶⁴ The Holy Prophet (P.B.U.H) was used to proud that he is the son of two sacrificed fathers, Ishmael and Abdullah.⁶⁵ In Islam it is permissible to make vow to God and fulfill it by slaughtering animal.⁶⁶

VII.4. A fourth commonly occurring motive of sacrifice in Islam is 'Compensation' which called in Arabic *jazā* or *kaffārā*.⁶⁷ It is obligatory when a Muslim does something which is unlawful in Islamic code and an example of it is the person who kills game while on pilgrimage.⁶⁸ This kind of sacrifice was there in the time of ignorance. It is a natural inclination of men, when they have done anything of which their conscience disapproves, or which is against the tribal ethics, to punish them by a self-inflicted penalty.⁶⁹

VII.5. The fifth motive of sacrifice in Islam is connected with the instinctive impulse of anyone who has met with a piece of good fortune. An instance of this the sacrifice of a sheep after the birth of a child, is referred to below and named '*aqiqā*'.⁷⁰ Salmān bin 'Āmir (May Allah be please with him) is reported to have said that he heard the Holy Prophet as saying: "*Aqiqā* (shaving head) is essential for the child (male or female). So shed blood (as *Sadāqā*) on his behalf and remove the impurity (of hair) from him (by shaving his head)."⁷¹

⁶⁴ Nomani, A. S. (1975). *Sīrat al-Nabī* (Vol. 1). Lahore, Pakistan: Qur'an Publications, p.168

⁶⁵ al-Shahrastāni, A. K. (2002). *Al-Milal wa al-Nihāl*. Beirut: Dar al-Fikr, p.392

⁶⁶ Shafi, M. M. (2004). *Ma'ariful Qur'ān* (Vol. 6). (M. I. Hussain, Trans.) Karachi: Maktaba Darul Uloom, p.265

⁶⁷ Thanwi, Muhammad Ali, *kashāf Istlahāt al-Fānūn wa al-Uloom*, vol. II, p.1368

⁶⁸ Nawawi, Maḥiudin abu Zakaria Yahya ibn Sharif, *Minhaj-et-Talibin*, Vol. II, p. 454

⁶⁹ Weir., T.H., "Sacrifice" in *Encyclopedia of Religion and Ethics*, vol. XI, p.29

⁷⁰ see Chapter no. 3, p. 94

⁷¹ Sunan Ibn-Mājah, Hadith No. 3164, *Book of Dabā'ih, Ch: Aqīqā*, p.380

VII. HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT OF SACRIFICE

Unlike Hinduism, 'sacrifice' as a ritual, has no historical developments in Islam. It has been performed in Muslim community as practiced by the Prophet of Islam. Materials and way of offering is mentioned in basic sources of Islamic tradition. Sometimes in different cultural settings Muslims perform sacrificial act which might be seen as a developed idea of sacrifice, e.g. offerings on Saint's shrine. On the other hand, Sufis interpretation of sacrificial act may also be different from Islamic jurists. But these two aspects can not be regarded as a development because both work within the limits prescribed by Shari'ah and what sacrificial act violate these limits, simply, is not acceptable as an Islamic 'sacrifice'. My opinion based on the following arguments: firstly, Sufis interpretation essentially focused on the purification of the 'intention' of sacrifice and the lessons one can learn from his offering. None of the Sufis, neither change the material of sacrifice nor the way of offering like Hinduism. Nevertheless, but they were the preserver of the true spirit of sacrifice and maintained the sacrificial rite on its proper place. Secondly, if some practices are being performed on their shrines without true sense of sacrifice, this ignorance on the part of person who making sacrifice not on the part of Sufis, offerings on the annual festivals or '*urs*' can not be considered as what the Sufis did actually want.

VIII. KINDS OF SACRIFICES IN ISLAM

VIII.1. *Sacrifice in Pilgrimage*

The subject of sacrifice is one that is specially related to the Pilgrimage, because every pilgrim must sacrifice an animal. "That they may witness the benefits (provided) for them, and celebrate the name of Allah, through the days appointed, over the cattle which He has provided for them (for sacrifice)." (Al-Qur'ān, 22:28) Miknāf Bin Sulaīm said: we were staying with the apostle of Allah at '*arafāt*'; He said: "O, people, every family must offer a sacrifice and an '*atirah*'.⁷² Do you know what the '*atirah*' is? It is what you call the *Rajab* sacrifice."⁷³

There are three types of Hajj:

1. *Qirān*: *Qirān* should have the intention of both Hajj and *umrah*.⁷⁴

⁷² *Atira*: was a practice of sacrificing a sheep or goat in *Rajab*. This was a practice of the idolatrous Pre-Islamic Arabs. It is said that '*atira*' was continued in the early days of Islam and then abolished.

⁷³ Sunan Ibi Dāwūd, Hadith No. 2782, *Book of Sacrifice*, Ch:1029, Vol. II, p.783

⁷⁴ al-Zuhaili, W. (1985). *Al-fiqh al- Islāmi wa adillatūhū* (Vol. 3). Syria: Dar al-fikr, p.222

2. Tamattū: *Mūtamatti* should have the intention of ‘*umrah* and after its completion should set aside *Ihram* garments, and re-enter then with a fresh intention of Hajj.⁷⁵
3. Ifrād: a *mufrd* should have the intention of only performing Hajj.⁷⁶

Offering of sacrifice is incumbent upon the *Qirān*, who perform Hajj *Qirān*, and the *Mūtamatti*, who performs Hajj *Tamattū*. It is not obligatory upon *Mufrad*, who perform Hajj *Ifrād*. Although the sacrifice is not obligatory upon whom performing Hajj *Ifrād*, but he can offered.⁷⁷ Qur’ān said that the sacrifice should be offered in “appointed days” (Al-Qur’ān, 22:28). There is difference of opinion on appointed days as to their exact identity. Some of the opinions are as follows:

1. The first ten days of *Dh-’l-Hajj*. This view supported by Ibn ‘Abbās, Hassan Baṣri, Qatāda and several other companions and their followers. Imam Abu Hanifa, Shāfi, and Ahmad bin Ḥanbal have also favoured this view.⁷⁸
2. The tenth of *Dh-’l-Hajj* and the three following days. This view is supported by Ibn Abbās, Ibn ‘Umar and Atā. Imam Shāfi and Ahmad are also reported to have favoured this in a saying each.⁷⁹
3. The tenth day of *Dh-’l-Hajj* and two following days. This view has been supported by Ḥazrat ‘Umar, ‘Ali Ibn ‘Umar, Ibn ‘Abbās, Anas bin Mālik, Abu Hūaīra, Sa’id bin Mūsyyab, Sa’id bin Jubāir, Sūfyān Thoūri, Imām Mālik, Imām abu Yūsūf and Imām Muhammad. Hanāfies and Mālikies generally agreed on this.⁸⁰

The tenth day of *Dh-’l-Hajj* is also known as *Yawm al-Nahr*, the day of slaughtering. This day pilgrims offer their sacrifices after throwing stone on *jamārāt*.⁸¹ Shaving the head is obligatory for pilgrim, and it is not allowed before sacrifice.⁸² Qur’ān mentioned it in following words: “And complete The Hajj or ‘*umrah* in the service of Allah. But if ye are prevented (from

⁷⁵ Ibid, p.220

⁷⁶ Ibid, p.215

⁷⁷ Ibid, p.218

⁷⁸ Mawdudi, A. ' (1977). *The Meaning of the Qur'an* (Vol. VII). Lahore: Islamic Publications, p. 96

⁷⁹ Ibid, p. 97

⁸⁰ Ibid.

⁸¹ Al - Zuhaili., Wahba. *Al-fiqh al- Islami wa adillatuhu*, Ch: 5, Vol.3, p.98

⁸² Ibid.

completing it), send an offering for sacrifice, such as ye may find, and do not shave your heads until the offering reaches the place of sacrifice." (Al-Qur'ān, 2:196)

It is not permissible for one who intends to sacrifice the animal to get one's hair or nails cut after beginning of *Dh-'l-Hajj*. Umm Salamah reported the apostle of Allah saying: "If anyone has sacrificial animal and intends to sacrifice it, and he sights the new moon of *Dh-'l-Hajj* j, he must not take any of his hair and nails until he sacrifices."⁸³ Jurists have different opinion on it. According to Imām Ahmad it is obligatory; Imām Shāfi says it is desirable only. Abu Hanifa and Mālik find no harm in getting the hair cut or nails trimmed.⁸⁴

But the man who has not animal to sacrifice, for him he should fast ten days, three at time of *Hajj* and seven on his return. The Qur'ān says: "but he can not offer it, he should fast three days during the *Hajj* and seven days on his return making ten days in all." (Al-Qur'ān, 2:196)

VIII.2. *Sacrifice on 'Id' al-Adha:*

It should be noted that command of sacrifice, as a commemorative act, is not for the pilgrims alone and the performance of sacrifice is not confined *Makkah* alone on the occasion of *Hajj*. It is general command for every Muslim who offered to sacrifice an animal.⁸⁵ Anas reported that the Holy Prophet dwelt at *Medinah* for ten years and performed sacrifice every year.⁸⁶ According to Hanafit school of thought the sacrifice of animal on the occasion '*Id al-Adha*' is *Wājib* (obligatory).⁸⁷ The Muslim who does not offer the sacrifice on the occasion of '*Id al-Adha*' commits a sin, and if he says that the sacrifice is not a divine institution, he is a sinner. It is reported on the authority of Abu Hūraīra (Allah be pleased with him) that the Prophet Muhammad (peace and blessings of Allah be upon Him) said: "He who can afford (sacrifice) but he does not offer it, he should not come near our place of worship."⁸⁸ Sacrifice is, however, not incumbent on either a poor man or a traveller but it is obligatory for free Muslim and has

⁸³ Sunan Abu Dāwūd, Hadith: 2785, Ch: 1031, *The Book of Sacrifice*, Vol. II, p.784

⁸⁴ Mawdudi, A. ' (1977). *The Meaning of the Qur'an* (Vol. VII), p.97

⁸⁵ Sunan Ibn-Mājah, Hadith No. 3123, *Book of Daba'ih*, Ch: *Aqīqa*, Vol. IV, p.357

⁸⁶ 'Āridat-'l- Ahwadhi sharḥ Shāfi'ī al-Tirmidhi, Ibn al-'Arābi al-Mālikī, Chapter of *Adāhī*, vol. 5, p. 289

⁸⁷ Al- Zuhaili., Wahba. *Al-fiqh al- Islami wa adillatuhu*, Ch: 8, Vol.3, p.595

⁸⁸ Sunan Ibn-Mājah, Hadith No. 3123, *Book of Daba'ih*, Ch: *Aqīqa*, Vol. IV, p.357

sufficient means to offer sacrifice.⁸⁹ It should be remembered that this sacrifice of animal is essential and can in no way be substituted by charity in the form of money.⁹⁰

VIII.3. *Sacrifice for Atonement: (Nadhar)*

“And fulfil their vows.”⁹¹ نذر (nadr) is the plural of the word نذر (nadhar) which means a ‘vow’. In Arabic said نذر : He made (a future action) binding, or obligatory on himself.⁹² In technical sense, when a person commits himself verbally to do an act, in order to win the good will of Allah, (which is not otherwise obligatory on him) it becomes a vow, *nadhar*,⁹³ and its performance becomes obligatory for him by consensus of *ummah*.⁹⁴ But the act should not be itself forbidden in Islamic law. If a person makes a vow to do something which is sinful, then he is not bound to fulfil the vow, rather it is impermissible to act upon it, but he must atonement for the unfulfilled vow.⁹⁵ According to Abu Hanifa and other religious jurists the vow must be of an act which is an act of a direct worship, ‘*Ibādah maqṣudah*, in some manner.⁹⁶ So, if some one makes a vow, *nadhr*, for voluntary prayers, fasting, *sadāqah*, sacrifice of animals, etc, and all these vows must be fulfilled in all circumstances. So, Muslims are allowed to make their vows to Allah in the form of animal sacrifice, which should be fulfilled at any cast. The example of this kind of sacrifice is: Muhammad’s (PBUH) grandfather Abd-‘l-Muttalib vowed that, if he became the father of ten sons, he would offer up one of them as a sacrifice; and, when his wish was realised, he expiated his vow by a sacrifice of camels instead.⁹⁷ In Islam it is permissible to make vow to God.

VIII.4. *Sacrifice for Compensation*

(*kaffārah*) Literally *Kaffāra* means expiation, compensation, expiatory gift.⁹⁸ It removes the sin of man who has done something wrong according to Islamic law.⁹⁹ It is obligatory when a

⁸⁹ *Al-Hedaya*. (1975). (C. Hamilton, Trans.) Lahore, Pakistan: Premier Book House, The slaying of Animals for Food, Book XLII, p. 592

⁹⁰ Al-Zuhaili., Wahba. *Al-fiqh al-Islami wa adillatuhu*, Ch: 8, Vol.3, p.595

⁹¹ The Holy Qur’ān (22:29)

⁹² Lane., E. W. (1984). *Arabic-English Lexicon* (Vol. 2). Cambridge, England: The Islamic text society, p.2781

⁹³ Al-Zuhaili., Wahba, *Al-Fiqh al-Islami wa Adillato ho*, Ch: 6, vol. III, p.357

⁹⁴ Shafi., Mufti Muhammad, *Ma’ariful Qur’ān*, vol.6, p.265

⁹⁵ Al-Zuhaili., Wahba, *Al-Fiqh al-Islami wa Adillato ho*, Ch: 6, vol. III, p.469

⁹⁶ Shafi., Mufti Muhammad, *Ma’ariful Qur’ān*, vol.6, p.265

⁹⁷ Nomani, Allamah Shibli., *Seerat-un-Nabi*, Vol.1, p.168

⁹⁸ Thanwi., Muhammad Ali, *kashāf Istlahāt al-Fanūn wa al-‘Ulūm*, vol.II, p.1368

⁹⁹ Al-Zuhaili., Wahba, *Al-Fiqh al-Islami wa Adillato ho*, Ch: 3, vol. III, p.488

Muslim does something which is unlawful in Islamic code and an example of it is the person who kills game while on pilgrimage.

Generally there is no difference between the elements of sacrifice offered as compensation and other sacrifices except the notion of the sacrificer but according to the tradition, it is prohibited for a sacrificer to eat the meet of sacrificial animal which is sacrificed for compensation. Said Ibn 'Umar reported that "the animals slaughtered as a penalty for hunting (illegally) and the animal offered because of a vow should not be eaten by the person who has offered them, but he can eat from other kinds of offerings."¹⁰⁰

VIII.5. *Sacrifice for Aqiqah (Şadāqah)*

عَقِيقَة (Aqiqah) baste noun from 'Aqiq', that signifies a fillet or a bandage at the time of its being rent from a garment, or a piece of cloth, it also denotes the prepuce of a body when he is circumcised, the wool of a sheep in or before its second year,¹⁰¹ the hair of the young one recently borne, that comes part upon his head in his mother's belly. These hairs are shaved on his seven day. This is the literal meaning of 'Aqiqah'.¹⁰²

Therefore, the term applies to the sheep or goat that is slaughtered as sacrifice for the recently born infant on the occasion of the shaving of the infant's hair on the seventh day after his birth.¹⁰³ Salmān bin 'Amir is reported to have said that he heard the Holy Prophet (P.B.U.H) as saying: Aqiqah is essential for the child. So shed blood on his behalf and remove the impurity from him.¹⁰⁴ What should be offered? Another tradition of Prophet explains it. Umm-e-Kurz is reported to have said: I hared the Holy Prophet saying: "For a boy are two goats of equal age and on behalf of a girl, there is one goat (as a *sadaqah*)."¹⁰⁵ The flesh of this slaughtered animal is distributed among the poor as food. It is a kind of *sadaqa*, charity on behalf of the infant aimed at earning the blessing of Allah and averting the misfortune from him.

The *Sunnah* requires for this sacrifice in particular:-

1. That this sacrifice consists of two animals for boy and one animal for girl.
2. That it should be immolated upon the seventh day after the birth of child.

¹⁰⁰ *Sahīh Al-Bukhārī*, Ch: 124, Translation into Eng. By: Dr. M. Muhsin Khan, 1983, Kazi Publications, Lahore, Pakistan, Vol. II, p.451

¹⁰¹ Sunan Ibn-i-Mājah, *Book of Blood Sacrifices*, Ch: *Aqīqah* (foot notes), vol. IV, p.379

¹⁰² Al-Bassam, Abdullah bin Abd-ur-Rehman., *Tawdīh al-Āhkām min Bugh al-Marām*, Vol.7, p. 97

¹⁰³ Sunan Ibn-i-Mājah, *Book of Blood Sacrifices*, Ch: *Aqīqah* (foot notes), vol. IV, p.379

¹⁰⁴ Ibid, Hadith No.3164, Vol. VI, p.380

¹⁰⁵ Ibid, Hadith No.3162, Vol. VI, p.379

3. That on the same day the child should be given a name.
4. That the child's head should be shaved after the sacrifice; and the weight of the hair in gold or silver given to the poor.
5. The boy should be circumcised before the sacrifice.
6. It is permissible to eat the flesh of victim by sacrificer and distribute it to others.

IX. THE ELEMENTS OF SACRIFICE

IX.1. The Sacrificer

Sacrificer is the active person who offers sacrifice in the name of Allah. Apart from pilgrims, offering of the sacrifice is incumbent upon the common Muslim with following two conditions:

1. He should be well-to-do and possessing property over and above his basic needs, amounting up to *Nisāb*, in other words, a person who is required to pay *sadāqah Fitr* ('Id charity) is bound to offer the sacrifice.¹⁰⁶
2. He should be resident at home not on a journey. There is no sacrifice on traveller though he has sufficient means to offer it. If he offered, he will be rewarded by Allah.¹⁰⁷

It is permissible in Islam to offer sacrifice on the behalf of others.

Narrated by Aisha (may Allah be pleased with her): "Allah's Apostle slaughtered some cows as sacrifices on behalf of his wives"¹⁰⁸

Male and female both are eligible to offer sacrifice. There is no gender base division in sacrificial act of Islam. At pilgrim both are required to offer sacrifice. If anyone, irrespective male and female, kills game while on pilgrimage then he or she will offer sacrifice as penalty.

Conditions which should fulfilled by sacrificer in Islam as following:¹⁰⁹

1. He should be Muslim
2. He should not be slave
3. He should be adult
4. He should be sane and mentally fit

¹⁰⁶ Islahi, M. Yusuf, *Animal Sacrifice*, Vol. 2, p.197

¹⁰⁷ Ibid.

¹⁰⁸ *Sahīh Al-Bukhārī*, Hadith: 466, Ch: *Al-Adāhī*, Trans. M. Muhsin Khan, Dar-ul-Fikr, vol. 7, p.330

¹⁰⁹ *Al-Hedaya*, The slaying of Animals for Food, Book XLII, p. 592

5. He should not be traveler
6. He should have capacity to make sacrifice

IX.2. The sacrificial animals

Animals to be sacrificed should all be *halal*, permissible in Islamic Law, and domesticated animals. “One can not immolate by way of sacrifice any other animals but camels, bullocks, and small cattle.”¹¹⁰ Generally goats, sheep, rams, cows, and camels are offered. Sacrificial animal should be chosen from the best kind of animals.¹¹¹ In the Holy Qur’ān “Such and whoever holds in honour the symbols of Allah, (in the sacrifice of animals), such (honour) come truly from piety of heart.” (Al-Qur’ān, 22:32) In the commentary of this verse Ibn Kathir said: Al-hakim said narrating from Miqsam, from Ibn ‘Abbas: “Honouring them means choosing fat, healthy animals (for sacrifice).” The Holy Prophet (P.B.U.H) was used to choose fat and healthy animals for sacrifice. Abu Dāwūd and Ibn Mājah recorded from Jābir: “The Messenger of Allah sacrificed two castrated, fat, horned rams.”¹¹² It matters little if the animal be male or female or castrated.

Besides this there should not be any physical fault in animal. It was said: “The Messenger of Allah commanded us to examine their (sacrificial animals) eyes and ears, and not to sacrifice the *Muqbilah*, the *Mudbirah*, the *Sharqa*, nor the *Kharqa*.”¹¹³ The *Muqabilah* is the one whose ear is cut at the front, *Mudabirah* is the one whose ear cut at the back, the *Shurqa* is the one whose ear is split.¹¹⁴ The *Kharqa*, it is one whose ear is pierced with a hole as Imām Shāfi said.¹¹⁵ It was recorded that Al-Barrā said: The Messenger of Allah said: “Four are not permitted for sacrifice: those that obviously one-eyed, those that are obviously sick, those that are obviously lame and those that have broken bones, which no one would choose.”¹¹⁶ In the same

¹¹⁰ Nawāwī, Maḥiudīn abu Zakaria Yaḥyā ibn Sharīf, Minhāj-et-Ṭalibīn, p. 477

¹¹¹ Al-Zuhailī, Wahba, *Al-Fiqh al-Islāmi wa Adillato ho*, Ch: 8, vol. III, p.611

¹¹² Sunan Ibn-i- Mājah, Hadith: 3144, *Book of Blood Sacrifice*, vol. IV, p.368

¹¹³ Ibid.

¹¹⁴ Tafsīr Ibn Kathīr, (22:32), Vol. 6, p.567

¹¹⁵ Ibid.

¹¹⁶ Sunan Ibn-i- Mājah, Hadith: 3142, *Book of Blood Sacrifice*, vol. IV, p.368

way it is desirable that the animal should be healthy and fat. Abu Umāmā bin Sahl said: We used to fatten our sacrifices at Medina and Muslims also used to fatten theirs.¹¹⁷

The term full-grown animal applies to camel which has completed its five years and is in its sixth year, to a cow, ox or buffalo which has completed its two years and is in its third year, to a goat or lamb which has completed its one year and is in its second year.¹¹⁸ A sheep can be sacrificed at the expiration of six months and the commencement of seventh, but sheep should be of large structure.¹¹⁹

Islamic Jurists agreed that the sacrifice established for one person is a goat, sheep, ram. These animals are sacrificed on behalf of one person and the camel or cow, ox; Buffalo can be scarified on behalf of seven persons.¹²⁰ Jābir (Allah be pleased with him) reported: we set out in the state of *Ihram* for Hajj along with Allah's Messenger. He commanded us that seven person join in a camel or a cow for offering sacrifice.¹²¹

Though a camel or a bullock suffers for seven persons, and one head of small cattle for one person only; it is preferable to immolate a camel on one's own account, a bullock taking the second rank, a sheep the third, and a goat the last. Seven head of small cattle are preferable to a camel. It is commendable to immolate a single head of small cattle on one's own account, rather than to join with others in immolating a camel.¹²²

It was a pre-Islamic custom to mark an animal for sacrifice by inflicting a wound in some portion of its body. The reason is that if it was lost, anybody finding it would take it to the place of sacrifice.¹²³ This practice was retained by the Prophet in a more humanitarian form by marking a sign without wound. Ibn 'Abbās reported that after Allah's Messenger had prayed the Dhūr at *Dh-'l-Hulaīfa* He called for His she-camel, marked it on the right side of its hump, removed the blood from it and tied two sandals on its neck and thereafter rode on his riding beast.¹²⁴

¹¹⁷ Ṣaḥīḥ Al-Bukhārī, Hadith: 460, *The Book of Adāhī*, Vol. VII, p. 327

¹¹⁸ Al-Zuhailu., Wahba, *Al-Fiqh al-Islami wa Adillato ho*, Ch: 8, vol. III, p. 616

¹¹⁹ Al- Hedaya, The slaying of Animals for Food, Book XLII, p. 594

¹²⁰ *Ibid.*

¹²¹ Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim, Hadith: 3024, Ch: DV, *The Book of Hajj*, Translation into Eng. By: Abdul Hamid Siddiqi, 1978, Kazi Publications, Lahore, Pakistan, Vol. II, p. 662

¹²² Nawawi, Mahiudin abu Zakaria Yahya ibn Sharīf, *Minhaj-et-Talibin*, p. 477

¹²³ M. Iqbal Siddiqi, *Animal Sacrifice in Islam*, p.24

¹²⁴ Ṣaḥīḥ Al-Bukhārī, Hadith: 752, *Book of Hajj*, Vol. II, p. 440

‘Ā’isha (Allah be pleased with her) reported that the Prophet brought sheep for sacrifice to the house and garlanded them.¹²⁵ In other tradition ‘Ā’isha reported: “I wove their garlands from carded wool which I had, and then He (The Holy Prophet) sent them with my father (to Makkah).”¹²⁶ This practice of garlanding exists in Muslim world, particularly in subcontinent where sacrificial animals marked with red colour and garlanded. This distinguishes sacrificial animal from other animals.

In the Holy Qur’ān: “You are permitted to derive benefits from the cattle (dedicated for sacrifice) up to an appointed time. Thereafter the (lawful place of their sacrifice) is near the Ancient House.” (Al-Qur’ān, 22:33) Before Islam, Arabs believed that it was unlawful to get any benefit from the animal dedicated for sacrifice. ‘Ikrima narrated that Abū Hūraīra said. “The Prophet saw a man driving a *budna* (sacrificial camel) the Prophet said to him, ‘ride on it’. He replied, ‘it is a *budna*’. The Prophet again said, ‘Ride on it’. Abu Hūraīra added, ‘then I saw that man riding it, showing obedience to the Prophet, and shoe was (hanging) from its neck.’¹²⁷ Jābir bin Abdullah reported that he was asked about riding on a sacrificial animal, and he said: I heard Allah’s Apostle as saying, “Ride on it gently, when you have need for it, until you find (another) mount.”¹²⁸

IX.3. The Recipient of Sacrifice

In Islam the recipient of sacrifice is only Allah almighty without any partner. “To every people did We appoint rites (of sacrifice) that they celebrate the name of Allah over the sustenance He gave them from animals (fit for food) but your Allah is one Allah: submit then your wills to Him and give thou the Good News to those who humble themselves.” (Al-Qur’ān, 22:34) Abū Tūfail ‘Āmir bin Wathila reported: I was in the company of ‘Ali Ibn Abi Ṭālib, when a person came to him, and said: What was it that Allah’s Apostle told you in secret? Thereupon he (‘Ali) was enraged and said: Allah’s Apostle did not tell me anything in secret that He hid from people, except that He told me four things. He said commander of faithful, what are these? He said: Allah cursed him who cursed his father; Allah cursed him who sacrificed for

¹²⁵ Ibid, Hadith: 753, p.441

¹²⁶ Ibid, Hadith: 760, p.443

¹²⁷ Ṣaḥīḥ Al-Bukhārī, Hadith: 763, *Garlanding the Hadi with a shoe*, Vol. II, p.444

¹²⁸ Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim, Ch: DVIII, Hadith: 3050, Vol. II, p. 665

anyone besides Allah; and Allah cursed him who accommodates an innovator (in religion); and Allah cursed him who changed the minarets (the boundary lines) of the land.¹²⁹

IX.4. Time and Place of Sacrifice

The hour of sacrifice on the occasion of the pilgrimage, on the prescribed day called *yaūm nahr*, is that when the sun has reached the height of a lance, after which one must still pray two *raka* and listen to two short sermons before proceeding to the ceremony. It must be finished by the last of the three following days, called *ayyām at tashrīq*, at sunset.¹³⁰

The time of the offering of sacrifice is on the morning of the day of '*Id al-adha*', but it is not lawful for the sacrificers to begin the sacrifice until their Imam shall have finished the *Id* prayer. Narrated Al-Barrā: I heard the Prophet delivering a sermon (*Khūtbā*) saying' "The first thing to be done on this day is to pray; and after returning from the prayer we slaughter our sacrifice and whoever does so, he acted according to our *Sunnah* (Tradition)." ¹³¹ The days of offering the sacrifice are from the 10th to 12th of *Dh-'l-Hajj* till sunset. The best day for the purpose is the 10th of *Zul-Hajj* (the day of '*Id al-adha*'), the next in merit is 11th, and the least 12th.¹³² The sacrificial animal can sacrifice anytime during three days of *Dh-'l-Haj*, in the day and night. A person becomes duty-bound to offer it if he fulfils two conditions of being resident at home and well-to-do financially.

Sacrifice is lawful during three days that is, on the day of the festival, and on the two ensuing days. Shāfiī is of opinion that it is lawful on the three ensuing days. The sacrifice of the day of festival is, however, far superior to any of the others. It is also lawful to sacrifice on the nights of those days, although it be considered as abominable (مکروه).¹³³

There is no place specification in Islam like other religions. There are no altars prepared for sacrificial rites like in Hinduism. A Muslim can perform sacrifice at any place with out any preference because the whole earth is declared by Prophet (PBUH) as a Masjid. Narrated Abu Dhar the Apostle of Allah said: "Wherever the time for the prayer comes upon you, perform the prayer, for all the earth is a place of worshipping for you."¹³⁴

¹²⁹ *Sahīh Muslim*, Hadith: 4876, *Kitab al-Adāhī*, Vol. III, p.1094

¹³⁰ Nawawi, Mahiudin abu Zakaria Yahya ibn Sharīf, *Minhāj-et-Ṭalibīn*, p. 477

¹³¹ *Sahīh Al-Bukhārī*, Hadith: 71, Vol. II, p.37

¹³² Islahi, M. Yusuf, *Animal Sacrifice*, Vol. 2, p.198

¹³³ Al- Hedaya, The slaying of Animals for Food, Book XLII, p. 593

¹³⁴ *Sahīh Al-Bukhārī*, Hadith: 585, Vol. IV, p.383

In another tradition, Narrated Jābir bin ‘Abdullah: The Prophet said, "I have been given five things which were not given to any one else before me."¹³⁵

1. Allah made me victorious by awe, (by His frightening my enemies) for a distance of one month's journey.
2. The earth has been made for me (and for my followers) a place for praying and a thing to perform *Tayammum*, therefore anyone of my followers can pray wherever the time of a prayer is due.
3. The booty has been made Ḥālāl (lawful) for me yet it was not lawful for anyone else before me.
4. I have been given the right of intercession (on the Day of Resurrection).
5. Every Prophet used to be sent to his nation only but I have been sent to all mankind.

Above mentioned traditions of the Holy Prophet illustrate that the whole of earth is purified for Muslims, they can perform prayer so they can offer sacrifice every where.

IX.5. Method of Sacrifice

Narrated Zaid bin jūbair: I saw Ibn ‘Umar passing by a man who had made his *Budnā* (Sacrificial Camel) sit to slaughter it. Ibn ‘Umar said: slaughter it while it is standing with one leg tied up as is the tradition of Muhammad."¹³⁶ While the other animals sheep, goat, cow, ox, buffalo are slaughtered in laying posture. It is desirable to make the face of animal towards Ka ‘ba.¹³⁷

The act of immolation should be accompanied by an intention; except in case of a particular victim, or where one has already uttered the words, "this animal will serve for my sacrifice." A person who does not perform the sacrifice himself may express his intention either at the moment he gives the animal to his agent or when the latter proceeds to the immolation.¹³⁸

"The *Dabīh* is lawful provided the slayer be acquainted with the form of *Tasmeea*, or invocation in the name of God. The nature of *Dabīh*, and the method of cutting the veins of the animal; and it signifies not whether the person be a man or a woman."¹³⁹ Before slaughter the

¹³⁵ *Sahīh Al-Bukhārī*, Hadith: 331, Vol. I, p.199

¹³⁶ *Sahīh Al-Bukhārī*, Hadith: 771, Vol. II, p.447

¹³⁷ *Sunan Abi Dāwūd*, Hadith: 2789, Ch: 1032, *Book of Sacrifice*, Vol. II, p.785

¹³⁸ Nawawi, Mahiudin abu Zakaria Yahya ibn Sharīf, *Minhāj-et-Ṭālibīn*, p. 478

¹³⁹ Al- Hedaya, The slaying of Animals for Food, Book XLII, p. 587

animal it is obligatory to recite or mention the name of Allah. “They should mention the name of Allah over the cattle He has provided them.” (Al-Qur’ān, 22:28) The Qur’ānic verse refers first to the practice of extolling God’s name at the time of the slaughter, highlighting the fact that the whole atmosphere is one of worship, and the purpose of the sacrifice is to get closer to God.¹⁴⁰

The following tradition sketches the method of sacrifice practiced by the Holy Prophet. Jabir bin Abdullah said: The Prophet sacrificed two horned rams which were white with black marking and had been castrated when he made them face to the K ‘aba, He said: I have turned my face towards Him who created the heavens and the earth, following Abraham’s religion, the true in faith, and I am not one of the polytheist. My prayer, and my service of sacrifice, my life and my death are all for Allah, The Lord of the universe, who has not partner. That is what I was commanded to do, and I am one of the Muslim. O, Allah it comes from thee and is given to thee from Muhammad and His people. In the name of Allah and Allah is most great. He then made sacrifice.”¹⁴¹

If some body does not mention the name of Allah over the cattle before slaughtering it then the meat of this animal will be *ḥarām*, impermissible according to Islamic law as Qur’ān declared it, “Forbidden to you (for food) are: dead meat, blood, the flesh of swine, and that which had been invoked the name of other than Allah.” (Al-Qur’ān, 2:173) It is not necessary to express the intent for sacrifice verbally the intention in the mind and heart is enough for the sacrifice to be valid.¹⁴²

The general rule for slaughtering in Islam is described as following, “All animals, the flesh of which is eatable, except fish and locusts, are unlawful, unless they be slain by *Dibh*.”¹⁴³ It is preferable to slaughter the animal by the man who is making sacrifice but he can take assistance from others, Muslims and non-Muslims who believe in revealed books, i.e. Jews and Christians. But the assistance of the people other than Jews and Christian is not allowed.¹⁴⁴ “It must be performed by a Muslim or a *ketābī*, Jew or Christian, although he should not be the

¹⁴⁰ Qutab, Sayyid. 2006, *In The Shades of the Quran*, Trans. By: Adil Salahi, Islamic foundation, U.K, Vol. XII, p.127

¹⁴¹ Sunan Abi Dāwūd, Hadith: 2789, Ch: 1032, *Book of Sacrifice*, Vol. II, p.785

¹⁴² Islahi, M. Yusuf, *Animal Sacrifice*, Vol. 2, p.199

¹⁴³ Al- Hedaya, The slaying of Animals for Food, Book XLII, Pakistan, p. 587

¹⁴⁴ Nawawi, Maḥiudin abu Zakaria Yahya ibn Sharīf, *Minhaj-et-Ṭālibīn*, p. 478

subject of Muslim state.”¹⁴⁵ “It can not be performed by a Magian or Magus¹⁴⁶ because the Prophet (PBUH) said: You may deal with them as well as *ketābī* (the people of the book) but you must not marry their woman, nor eat of animals slain by them.”¹⁴⁷

Shaddād bin Aūs is reported to have said that Allah’s Messenger said: Allah, the mighty and glorious, has made obligatory the best treatment with everything. As you like (a best or a human being) make the act of killing best; and when you slaughter, then slaughter the sacrifice well and everyone of you should sharpen the knife and comfort the sacrifice.”¹⁴⁸ In other tradition of the Holy Prophet which is reported by Ibn ‘Umar that The Prophet (P.B.U.H) said: “when anyone of you slaughters, he should make (enough) arrangements.”¹⁴⁹ It is preferable to slaughter one’s animal oneself; if one cannot do so due to some reason, one should stand at the place; even ladies are required to remain present near their sacrificial animal when it is being slaughtered.¹⁵⁰

In the light of previous discussion on the sacrificial method we can conclude it as following:

In the respect of sacrificial method the *Sunnah* has introduced the following practices relative to the slaughtering the sacrificial animal:-

1. It is preferable to slaughter one’s animal oneself.
2. Camels are killed by cutting the throat near the chest, in the case of bullocks and small cattle the throat is cut higher up.
3. Camels are killed in the standing upon their four legs; as to bullocks and small cattle, they are made to lie on the left side, the right foreleg being free and three others strongly bound.¹⁵¹
4. The slaughtering knife is sharpened.
5. The animal’s head is turned in the direction of the *Ka ‘bah*, Makkah.
6. One should pronounce the formula, *Takbeer*, ‘In the Name of Allah’ and invoke his blessings upon the Prophet (PBUH).

¹⁴⁵ The Hedaya, The slaying of Animals for Food, Book XLII, p. 587

¹⁴⁶ Zoroastrians, fire worshipers

¹⁴⁷ Al- Hedaya, The slaying of Animals for Food, Book XLII, p. 587

¹⁴⁸ Sunan Ibn-Mājah, Hadith No.3170, *Book of Blood Sacrifices*, Vol. VI, p.383

¹⁴⁹ Ibid, p.384

¹⁵⁰ Islahi, M. Yusuf, *Animal Sacrifice*, Vol. 2, p.199

¹⁵¹ Nawawi, Maḥiudin abu Zakaria Yaḥya ibn Sharīf, *Minhaj-et-Ṭalibīn*, p. 476

IX.6. AFTER SACRIFICE

The purpose of sacrifice is not merely to kill animal, but to please family, friends as well as poor. he sacrificer may himself eat the flesh of supererogatory victim, or give it to his guests, even though the latter may be rich enough to pay for their own meal. This purpose of sacrifice is described by the Holy Qur'an as following:

The sacrificial camels we have made for you As among the Symbols from Allah. In them is (much) good for you: then pronounce the name of Allah over them as they line up (for sacrifice): when they are down on their sides (after slaughter), eat ye thereof, and feed such as (beg not but) live in contentment, and such as beg with due humility: Thus have we made animals subject to you, that ye may be grateful. (Al-Qur'an, 22:36)

The meet divided into three parts, about third for one's family, to send another third to friends and relatives, to send another third to poor. In the case of the sacrifice of a cow or buffalo or camel, the whole quantity of flesh is to be divided into seven equal parts and given to the shareholders.¹⁵² It is permissible to give the sacrificial meat to the non-Muslims as well, though it is not lawful to give it in lieu of wages.¹⁵³

The pilgrim is allowed to eat meat of his sacrificial animal. The traditions confirmed that the Holy Prophet ate of his *hady* meat on as well as of other sacrifices offered by him as a *Qirān* or *Mutamatti*. Atā said: I heard Jābir Bin Abdullah saying “we never ate the meat of the *Budan* (sacrificed camels on pilgrimage) for more than three days of *Minā*, later, the Prophet gave us the permission by saying, ‘Eat and take (meat) with you’. So we ate (some) and took (some) with us.”¹⁵⁴

The animal skin should also be given away in charity, or sold and the price given away in charity to the deserving poor. Ali reported Allah's Messenger put me in charge of His sacrificial animals, that I should give their flesh, skins and saddle cloths as *Sadaqah* (charity), but not to give anything to the butcher, saying: “We would pay him ourselves.”¹⁵⁵

It is lawful either to bestow the skin of sacrifice in charity, or to make any utensil of it, such as bucket, sieve, or the like. It is likewise lawful to barter it for any inconsumable article that yields profit in its substance; but it is not allowable to barter it for any thing consumable, as

¹⁵² Islahi, M. Yusuf, *Animal Sacrifice*, Vol. 2, p.199

¹⁵³ Ibid.

¹⁵⁴ *Sahīh Al-Bukhārī*, Hadith: 777, Ch: 124, Vol. II, p.452

¹⁵⁵ *Sahīh Muslim*, Hadith: 3019, Ch: DIV, *Kitab al-Hajj*, Vol. II, p.661

vinegar, and such like.¹⁵⁶ It is also not lawful to give a part of the sacrifice in payment to the butcher.¹⁵⁷

X. CONCLUSION:

As a matter of fact, offering of animal sacrifice has been essential part of the system of worship of all divine laws or *shari'ahs* though the ways and procedures might have been different. Like other religion, Islam maintained this tradition but in different way. No doubt the sacrificial mode described by Qur'ān for early nations, e.g. the sacrifice of Adam's sons, is different from its current style but the notion is same that is 'to show gratitude towards Creator.' Even the Pre-Islamic Arabs, which are called Polytheists, were offered their sacrifices the same notion of gratitude although it took wrong directions as Qur'ān narrated.

On practical side the physical structure of sacrifice in Islamic tradition totally derived from Abraham's sacrifice of His son which was substituted later with a ram. It is said by the Prophet of Islam that the animal sacrifice is commemorative of Abraham's sacrifice. Sacrifice in Islam performed on different occasions but the recipient of sacrifice is only one, Allah, the creator of the universe and everything.

Religiously the sacrifice create a strong relation (*taqwā*: piety) between a Muslim and his Lord, Allah which strengthen him in all other religious practices. In other words the notion of sacrifice is the essence of a Muslim's life. On sociological ground, the sacrifice provides a sense of solidarity when Muslims perform it all over the world at same day. Psychologically it helps the Muslims to recall the whole circle of life and death by performing sacrifice.

¹⁵⁶ Al- Hedaya, The slaying of Animals for Food, Book XLII, p. 594

¹⁵⁷ Ibid.

CHAPTER No. 4

A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF 'SACRIFICE' IN HINDUISM & ISLAM

I. Introduction:

Sacrifice as a ritual has different dimensions, religious, and social. All these aspects of sacrifice are obvious in Hinduism and Islam. Anthropologists, psychologists and scholars of comparative studies looked at the ‘act of sacrifice’ as an activity around which most of the religious activities are woven. Across cultures and throughout history, all human cultures use ‘sacrifice’ as the physical and psychological means for “dealing with the mystery and unpredictability of the natural, social, and cosmic realms”.¹ So the mental and physical involvements are the base of sacrifice and the final aim of sacrifice is to become more secure at cosmic, natural and social levels. Sacrifice is one of the important rituals through which people, ancient and modern, maintain their thinking in these three realms.

In the first chapter we glanced upon the ritual of ‘sacrifice’ with anthropological and social theories while chapter 2 and 3 are about ‘sacrifice’ in Hinduism and Islam. We have seen its importance in both religions. As we know that Hinduism and Islam lived side by side as neighbor, both constitute large communities in Asia. The performance of sacrifice in both religions shows that the grip of these religions upon their followers still is strong and important to their socio-religious attitudes. In this chapter I shall try to understand this ritual by a comparative study which comprises of similarities and differences of the ritual in both traditions.

Before we make any direct comparison between sacrificial acts i.e. the elements of sacrifice in both religions, there are two major issues which should be considered in the beginning for general comparison. These two issues are:

1. The origin of sacrifice
2. The importance of sacrifice at supernatural, natural and social levels

The comparison of these issues will help us to understand sacrifice as a ritual as well as will be useful in the comparison of the elements of the sacrifice.

¹. Davis-Floyd, R. (2008). *Ritual (International Encyclopaedia of Social Sciences)* (Vol. 7). (W. A. jr., Ed.) New York: Macmillan Reference, p. 261

II. The Origin of sacrifice

Hinduism, Islam and modern theories describe different aspects of the origin of the sacrificial act. Anthropologists build their concept of sacrifice on the idea of Animism, for instance Tylor's theory of sacrificial gifts.² Like other beliefs, according to them, sacrifice also has its root in Animism. So the anthropologists find out the origin of sacrificial act in animism although they have different views on the notion of sacrifice.

As Hinduism is considered one of the oldest cultural traditions in modern history, the anthropologists find out the foundation of Hindu sacrificial act in Animism. It has been clearly pointed out in their writings that "Hinduism has not been made, but has grown."³ Further "Hinduism is an unusual combination of animism and pantheism."⁴ Hindu sacrificial activities are evident of this. If animistic people exist no more but the possibility of continuity cannot be rejected because of its flexible nature. Hinduism has always been very much tolerated and welcomed new ideas including those revealed and non-revealed religions. Therefore, historically we find the roots of Hindu ritual of sacrifice in local Dravidian cults as well as Iranian thought which, according to some scholars, brought to India by Aryans.⁵

In regard to Islam, anthropologists have the same opinion. They considered Semitic Religions as the developed shape of polytheism. As Jevon explains in his *Introduction to the History of Religion*:

"If we accept the principle of evolution as applied to religion and the many different forms of religion seem to be best accounted for by the theory of evolution it seems to follow that monotheism was developed out of polytheism. The process of evolution is from the simple and homogeneous to the more complex and highly organized, from lower forms of life to the higher."⁶

According to this theory sacrificial rites were there in early religious societies and continued in developed religions, i.e. Semitic Traditions, with more organized ideologies.

² . see chapter no. 1, pp. 17,18

³ . Tiwari, S. K. (2002). *Triple Roots of Hinduism*. New Delhi, India: Sarup & Sons, p. 99

⁴ . *Ibid.*

⁵ . Bhattacharya, H. (Ed.). (1969). *The Cultural Heritage of India*. Calcutta: The Ramakrishna Mission Institute of Culture, (Vol.4). Preface by Suniti Kumar Chatterjee, p. xvii

⁶ . Jevons, F. B. (1896). *An Introduction to the History of Religion*. London: Matheuen & Co., p. 382

No doubt cosmological facts are always same but at this stage of the history of Religion man began to see these facts in more organize manner. That's why we find the institution of sacrifice in Semitic Religions, from its material to the methods of offering, more organized compared to what we see in non-Semitic religions.

According to Hindu texts, gods are the founder of sacrifice. In Hinduism, we observed that the gods obtained immortality and heaven by sacrifice, that they created the universe by sacrifice, that Prajapati, the creator, is the sacrifice.⁷ According to Rig-Veda the self-sacrificing cosmic being *Purusha* creates not only the world and classes of beings but also the institution of *yajna* (sacrifice) and the first cosmic laws. Sacrifice for Vedic poets and ritualists became the crucial link between human and divine worlds. *Karman*, ritual "work" in *yajna*, was declared a human responsibility, and sacrifice evolved into a complex, highly sophisticated instrument by which the cosmos itself was ritually renewed.⁸ When sacrificial rite took shift from gods to the man in Vedic age, which is earlier period of Hinduism, the idea of animism is quite visible. As Eliot mentioned, "The earliest stratum of Vedic religion is worship of the powers of nature such as the Sun, the Sky, the Dawn, and the Fire which are personified but not localized or depicted."⁹ Without doubt this feeling is strengthened by the intense hold which the doctrine of metempsychosis has on the Hindu mind. It is difficult, as we have already seen, for any believer in Hinduism to draw a line of demarcation between gods, men, and animals. If men depend on animals, so also do the gods; if men are associated with animals, so also are the gods.¹⁰ So, at this stage, the sacrificial act is in Hindu tradition actually performed with the sense of becoming in the footstep of gods. The studies of Hindu texts make clear two things: first; that sacrifice is a divine institution and secondly, the practice of sacrificial rituals was practiced from the dawn of Hinduism. Thus the origin of sacrifice can be identified with the origin of Hinduism itself.

When we reflect on Islam we find that Qur'ān narrates at sacrifice was a God appointed act since the humans sent to the earth. "To every people did we appoint rites

⁷ . *The Hymns of Rgveda*. (1986). (R. T. Griffith, & J. L. Shastri, Trans.) India: Motilal BanarsiDass Publications.

⁸ . Knipe, M. D. (2006). *Encyclopedia of India* (Vol. 4). (S. Wolpert, Ed.) New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, p. 253

⁹ . Eliot, S. C. (1962). *Hinduism and Budhhism* (fourth ed., Vol. 1). London, U.K: Routledge And Kegan Paul Ltd., p. 56

¹⁰ . William, S. M. (2004). *Brahmanism and Hinduism*. New Delhi: CosmoPublications, p.315

(of sacrifice), that they might recite the name of Allah over the sustenance He gave them from animals (fit for food).¹¹ According to Qur'ān Adam was the first man created by Allah and the first human society generated on earth by Adam and Eve. Qur'ān mentioned that the sacrificial act was performed in this earlier society. Qur'ān narrates the story of Adam's two sons, Qābil (Cain) and Hābil (Abel), when they offered sacrifice to their Lord. "Recite to them the truth of the story of the two sons of Adam. Behold! They each presented a sacrifice (to Allah). It was accepted from one, but not from the other. Said the later, be sure I will slay thee. Surely, said the former, Allah doth accept of the sacrifice of those who are righteous." (Al-Qur'ān, 5:27)

Islam never claimed that the sacrifice established by Muhammad (PBUH) first time but it was from the beginning of humanity on the face of earth. Although people are scattered on the earth but Allah sent His guide to every nation "To every people a guide." (Al-Qur'ān, 13:6) Islam has no problem to accept that there were 'Guides' sent by Allah to the people of earlier societies wherever they lived. But Islam rejected the anthropologists' view point that sacrifice is a man made institution but it is a God appointed act (Al-Qur'ān, 22:34). Islam also rejects the Hindu view point on the origin of sacrifice that god or gods themselves offered first sacrifice then by following them man adopted sacrifice as a godly act. In Islamic concept of *Tawhīd* it is far away that man shares some thing with God. According to Hindu theology a sacrifice is basically an act which makes their gods strong and fit to perform their duties.¹² Thus sacrifice was not only represented as some thing which is identical with cosmic order, but it was also a necessary condition for the proper working of the cosmic order.¹³ Islam never accepted this view because sacrifice is nothing more than the gratitude of man to his Lord. "It is not their meat, nor their blood that reaches Allah: it is your piety that reaches Him." (Al-Qur'ān, 22:37) In an other verse Allah explained that he does not need any kind of help from you but He gives you every kind of sustenance. "No sustenance do I require of them, nor do I require that they should feed Me." (Al-Qur'ān, 51:57)

¹¹ . *The Holy Qur'ān*. (2004). (A. Y. Ali, Trans.) Islamabad, Pakistan: Da'wah Academy, (22:34)

¹² . Rig Veda, Book I, Hymn CXXX.

¹³ . Bleeker, C. J., & Widengren, G. (Eds.). (1971). *Historia Religionum* (Vol. 2). Leiden: E. J. Brill, p.262

By concluding our discussion we can say that Hinduism, Islam and anthropologists have some common features on the issue of the origin of sacrifice despite their differences which we discussed above. These features can be concluded as following:

- a. Sacrifice is a ritual which has its origin in pre-historic times and it is found in every cultural group or community on the face of earth.
- b. From its beginning it was a religious activity not a secular one.
- c. It has always been performed with specific notions and aims.
- d. It was an initial kind of worship or permanent part of worship.
- e. It was the symbol of relationship between man and god or the supernatural.

III. Importance of Sacrifice in Hinduism and Islam

III.1. *Importance of Sacrifice at Supernatural or Cosmic Level*

Thinking about our universe and its creator are nearly found in all times and in every culture. Man has always been trying to find out the reality of this puzzle, the creation of the universe. There are some questions which always dominated human mind and every philosopher and religious thinker have thought of these questions. It is all about the very essence of the religious life. The questions are: what is the universe and who is the creator of this universe? What kind of connection he has with this universe? If there is some person really exists beyond this cosmos and he is really creator of this universe then what are his/her characteristics? Etc.¹⁴ The answer of these questions is very important for human being, particularly for his religious as well as his social life.

Sacrifice as a religious act, in Hinduism and Islam, very much concerned with these questions but in reality all other elements of any religion are dependent on the answer of these questions. So when we say 'the importance of sacrifice at cosmic or supernatural level' it means that sacrifice is one of the modes through which man, in Hinduism and Islam, tries to show his relation with the creator of this universe. In the following lines we shall see, what is the importance of sacrifice at supernatural level in both religions?

¹⁴ . Hinton, J. (1872). *Man and His Swelling Place in The Universe*. London: Smith, Elder & Co., p. xx

Hinduism in fact is different from Islam in its supernatural concepts, God in Islam is absolutely one and personal, transcendent, and holy, who reveals Himself in History and acts in History; Hinduism is quite free from any 'absoluteness' affirmations concerning the nature of God, and the core of religion is never felt to depend on the existence or non-existence of God, or whether there is God or many; for it is perfectly possible to be a good Hindu whether one's personal views incline towards monism, monotheism, polytheism, or even atheism, as Al-Biruni differentiated between the belief of educated and uneducated people of India in his time.¹⁵

In Hinduism, the concept of supernatural is connected with the concept of *Brahman*, which is central to the Hindu cosmological view. The relationship of the universe, which Hindus call *brahmānda* or *Brahman*, to the ultimate reality, poses a deep philosophical problem: Whereas *Brahman* represents a permanent reality,¹⁶ the universe is constantly changing. The universe is also eternal, but it is eternally changing, whereas *Brahman* is eternal in another sense in that it is beyond change. "The world of name and form has its roots in *Brahman*, though it does not constitute the nature of *Brahman*. The world is neither one with *Brahman*, nor wholly other than *Brahman*."¹⁷ According to *Vedānta*, *Brahman* alone is real.¹⁸ Such reality as the universe possesses is derived from *Brahman*, just as the light of the Moon really belongs to the Sun.¹⁹ At this level, early Vedic times, we can observe that Hinduism has monotheistic nature and the sacrifice at first hand was the source through which he could access to Divine (*Brahman*) and fulfill the very purpose of the human existence, that being to worship the Divine as the creator of all things.

But the thing which is much concern to us than other details of Hindu creation myth is 'who created the universe? Or how creation began? In the highly influential

¹⁵ . Al-Biruni. (1983). *India*. (E. C. Sachau, Trans.) New Delhi: National Book Trust India, p. 13

¹⁶ . Al-Biruni, p.43

¹⁷ . Radhakrishnan, S. (Ed.). (1974). *The Principle Upanishads* (Fourth ed.). London: George Allen & Unwin Ltd., p. 80

¹⁸ . Mullar, F. M. (Ed.). (1904). "Vedanta-Sutras with the Commentary of Ramanuja" in *The Sacred Books of the East* (Vol. 48). (G. Thibaut, Trans.) Oxford: University Press, First Adhyaya, Pada I. p.22

¹⁹ . Sharma, Arvind. "Hinduism." Microsoft® Student 2007 [DVD]. Redmond, WA: Microsoft Corporation, 2006.

Purusha hymn, Rig Veda 10.90 provides the answer.²⁰ According to this hymn “the self-sacrificing cosmic being *Purusha* creates not only the world and classes of beings but also the institution of *yajna* (sacrifice) and the first cosmic laws. As though, the sacrifice which was performed at supernatural level became the responsible of worldly affairs of the Hindu society. Caste system, natural laws, and religious activities all have their origin in this great sacrifice.

In later times, sacrifice for Vedic poets and ritualists became an important link between human and divine worlds. *Karma*, ritual “work” in *yajna*, was declared a human responsibility, and sacrifice evolved into a managed and complex system which is highly sophisticated instrument by which the cosmos itself was ritually renewed.²¹

On the other hand Islam is a religion of *Tawhīd*, believes in the absolute oneness of God. In previous lines we said that it is perfectly ok to be good Hindu whether one’s personal views incline towards monism or monotheism. We should not confuse the word monotheism with the word of *Tawhīd*. *Tawhīd* means that Allah is the sole creator and owner of everything without support of anybody else. Everything obeying Him, “in His design the sky and it had been (as) smoke: He said to it and to earth: come ye together, willingly or unwillingly. They said: we do come (together) in willing obedience.” (Al-Qur’ān, 41:11) So, human as the creature of Allah is supposed to be obedient to his Lord. This mission statement of a Muslim is stated as following in the Holy Qur’ān: “Say: “Truly, My prayer and My service of sacrifice, My life and My death, are (all) for Allah, the Cherisher of the Worlds.” (Al-Qur’ān, 6:162)

According to this mission statement sacrifice in Islam is an act through which a Muslim shows his gratitude to his Lord and makes evidence that everything given to him is from his Lord and He is the real owner of everything. When He ordered to do something in the name of his Lord, he will be ready to do. So, sacrifice is an act through which a Muslim is inline with whole universe in the obedience of God Almighty. Sacrifice has no impact on cosmological order as believed in Hinduism. It is just man’s acceptance of his Lord’s order over everything in the universe including him. So, he slaughters a creature of Allah in the name of Him by His order.

²⁰ . *The Hymns of Rgveda*. (1986). (R. T. Griffith, & J. L. Shastri, Trans.) India: Motilal Banarsi Dass Publications.

²¹ . Knipe, M. D. *Encyclopedia of India* (Vol. 4). p. 253

The main objective of religious practices in both religions is the connection with Lord or Creator or Ultimate reality which is necessary for the survival of human being. Both religions consider sacrifice one of the way or institution through which man can develop this connection.

III.2. Importance of Sacrifice at Natural Level:

Law and Religion are, however, only expressions of something more fundamental which is beyond these expressions, and that is eternal law that governs all human and non-human existence, what we understand by 'natural law': and this is the law which is 'subtle' and almost impossible to know.

According to Hindu belief the universe, as a living entity, is bound to the everlasting or perpetual cycle of birth, death, and rebirth. All these things, raised from *Brahman*, including gods and human beings are governed by a law.²² This concept of law found in Vedas as '*rita*', cosmic law or order which works in both macro-cosmos and micro-cosmos. This was later transformed into the concept of *dharma*.²³ Vedic sacrifice developed in Vedic cosmology and then evolved in side by side developments of cosmological doctrine. "The earliest stratum of Vedic religion is worship of the powers of nature such as the Sun, the Sky, the Dawn, and the Fire which are personified but not localized or depicted."²⁴ Without doubt this feeling is strengthened by the intense hold which the doctrine of metempsychosis has on the Hindu mind. It is difficult, as we have already seen, for any believer in Hinduism to draw a line of demarcation between gods, men, and animals.²⁵

Hence, in this connection the glorification of the sacrifice, which was the main task of the *Risis*, led them to represent the sacrifice in the light of the supreme cause of all successful action in the world, and it may have been only in consequence of this representation that "they extended its working to the creation and ordering of the universe".²⁶

²² . Bleeker, C. Jouco., Widengren, Geo., *Historia Religiorum*, (Vol. II). p. 253

²³ . Bowes, P. (1977). *The Hindu Religious Tradition*. London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, p.55

²⁴ . Eliot, S. C. *Hinduism and Buddhism* (Vol. 1). p. 56

²⁵ . William, S. M. *Brahmanism and Hinduism*. p.315

²⁶ . Wallis, H. W. (1887). *Cosmology of Rg-Veda, An Essay*. London: Stephen Austin and Sons, p. 64

Keeping in mind the Hindu cosmological and natural view we can say that there are two main features of sacrificial rites at natural level in Hindu tradition:

1. A sacrifice was not only a representation in miniature of the cosmic order, but it was also a necessary condition for the proper working of the cosmic order.²⁷
2. The second important feature of the philosophy of sacrifice is the doctrine of *bandhuta*, which sought to establish a kind of mystic magic relationship among the various aspects of macro-cosmos and micro-cosmos.²⁸

The place of human beings within the whole system of things was attentively taken into account. In this manner, from empirical observations, the concept of Cosmic Order or Divine Order (*rita*) developed and the practice of *yajna* became gradually a rite of ontological significance.

In Islam natural order of the universe observed differently because of its concept of *Tawhīd*. On the one hand Allah is the creator of everything and He is responsible to maintain the universal functions. “Allah is the creator of all things, and He is the guardian and disposer of all affairs.” (Al-Qur’ān, 39: 62) Angles are appointed by Allah to do different jobs. But it does not mean that they are the partner of Allah in the creation of the universe. They are bound to work just like humans. “Angels stern (and) severe, who flinch not (from executing) the commands they receive from Allah, but do (precisely) what they are commanded.” (Al-Qur’ān, 66: 6) We can not compare them with Hindu gods. These angles have no need of human support like Hindu gods to do their works. They have different characteristic than the human. They have no gender as we find in Hindu gods.²⁹ Therefore, sacrifice in Islam offered other than Allah is considered *shirk*, polytheism which is worse sin in Islam. (Al-Qur’ān, 4: 116) So, sacrifice has no influence on natural system of universe like Hinduism.

III.3. Importance of Sacrifice at Social Level

As we know, in modern age ‘Religion’ was primarily conceived as a system of ideas, and religious practices were viewed as expressions of these ideas. In this way

²⁷ . Bleeker, C. Jouco., Widengren, Geo., *Historia Religionum*, (vol. II). p.262

²⁸ . Ibid.

²⁹ . The Holy Qur’ān (37: 150,151) “or that We created the angels female, and they are witnesses? Is it not that they say from their own invention.”

religious practice i.e. ritual becomes social fact.³⁰ The cultural role of 'sacrifice' as a ritual is vital; it includes stimulating belief, maintaining religious strength, motivating economic exchange, enhancing courage, and transforming individual consciousness, often in order to bring it into alignment with group values as well as to increase individual and group activity in social structure. Some researchers have viewed ritual essentially as the means by which culture is passed on from one generation to the next, as the 'key' to traditions.³¹ For others ritual behaviour has been fundamental in establishing individual or social identity. Some other scholars considered ritual basically a safety valve to release psychological or social pressures.³² In this connection, we can say, that sacrifice as a ritual has all these characteristics and benefits at social level in its performance.

With regard to Hinduism, the social importance of sacrifice has more than one dimension. On the one hand where it has positive indicators like creating unity in Hindu community, making strong their belief in gods on the other hand it has some negative feature also, one of them is the social division in the society. Sacrifice is an institution which is directly responsible for this caste system and provides strong base of social discrimination in Hindu society. The popular Rg-Veda hymn of sacrifice provides at the same time the detail of this social classification of the society.

When they divided *Purusa* how many portions did they make? What do they call his mouth, his arms? What do they call his thighs and feet? The Brahman was his mouth, of both his arms was the *Rajanya* made. His thighs became the *Vaisya*; from his feet the *Sudra* was produced.³³

This hymn provides four group organization of the society. In the first group are priests, teachers, scholars, and others who represent knowledge and spirituality. People in this group are called *brahmanas*, or *brahmans*. Those in the second group, called *ksatriyas*, are represented by kings, warriors, government bureaucrats, and others who represent power. Those in the third group, called *vaishyas*, are represented by farmers, traders, merchants, and other skilled workers. Those in the fourth group, called *shudras*, are

³⁰ . Davis-Floyd, R. *Ritual (International Encyclopaedia of Social Sciences)* (Vol. 7). p. 261

³¹ . Asad, T. (1993). *Toward a Genealogy of the Concept of Ritual*. New York: Baltimore, p.56

³² . Stuckrad, K. v. (Ed.). (2006). *The Brill Dictionary of Religion* (Vol. 3). (R. R. Barr, Trans.) Leiden. Boston: Brill Academic Publishers, p.1638

³³ . The hymns of Rg veda, (10.90)

represented by unskilled workers.³⁴ A group sometimes known as untouchables has at times constituted a subcategory within the *shudra* class, sometimes referred to as a fifth group.

Only three first castes enjoyed full social religious rights and can participate in sacrificial rituals.³⁵ The third class *shudras* has no right to participate in sacrificial rites; “*sudra* has no business with sacrifices.”³⁶ So, Brahmins claimed that they are repository of sacred knowledge, and alone privilege to perform sacrifices.³⁷ In addition to these privileges, only they may partake of the sacrificial Soma, and eat the remaining of the sacrifice, no one else being regarded as sufficiently holy to consume food of which the goods have been partaken.³⁸

In the same way we can observe the gender base discrimination in Hindu society which has its roots in sacrificial institution. As Victor Turner describes the general attitudes of Hinduism toward women, “Hinduism has always been a patriarchal religion. Women play a decidedly secondary role in it. This is specially so with regard to ritual activity.”³⁹ The issue narrated in Hindu texts as following; ‘No sacrifice, no vow, no fast must be performed by woman apart (from their) husbands.’⁴⁰

In Islam there is no social classes, every member of Muslim community has right to partake in sacrificial ritual irrespective of gender, colour and social status. In Islam the base of reward is not caste or gender but it is piety of the heart.

“O mankind! We created you from a single (pair) of a male and female, and made you into nations and tribes, that ye may know each other. Verily the most honoured of you in the sight of Allah is (he who is) the most righteous of you.” (Al-Qur’ān, 49:13)

³⁴ . Klostermaier, K. K. (2007). *A Survey of Hinduism* (3rd ed.). New York: State University of New York Press, p.319

³⁵ . Pareti, L. (1969). *History of Mankind (Cultural and Scientific Development)* (Vol. 2). (E. F. Chilver, & S. Chilver, Trans.) London: George Allen and Unwin Ltd., p.40

³⁶ . Buhler, G. (1978). *The Laws of Manu (The Sacred Books of the East)*. (Vol. 25). (F. M. Mullar, Ed.) New Delhi: Oxford University Press, p.430

³⁷ . Margaret, & Stutley, J. (1977). *A Dictionary of Hinduism (Its Mythology, Folklore and Development)*. U.K.: Routledge and Kegan Paul, p.51

³⁸ . Ibid.

³⁹ . Turner, V. (1987). *Sacrifice (Encyclopaedia of Religion)* (Vol. 12). (M. Eliade, Ed.) New York: Macmillian Publishing Company, p.391

⁴⁰ . Buhler, G. *The Laws of Manu (The Sacred Books of the East)*. (Vol. 25). p.196

And in the same way there is no gender base distribution in sacrificial rites. Both perform sacrifices independently. And both get equal reward from Allah.

“If any do deeds of righteousness, be they male or female, and have faith. They will enter Heaven, and not the least injustice will be done to them.”
(Al-Qur’ān, 4:124)

Sacrifice in Islam creates the unity in *Ummah*, and encourages them to prepare to take sacrificial notion as a message of life. To become ready to offer their lives for the sake of Allah, “say: truly, my prayer and my service of sacrifice, my life and my death, are all for Allah, the Cherisher of the worlds.” (Al-Qur’ān, 6:162) This conscious of sacrifice makes a Muslim more active in his social life.

In Hindu tradition, they burn the sacrificial substances in the fire. In animal sacrifice they burnt some portion of animal in the fire while the remaining parts are eaten by Brahmins.⁴¹ So the sacrificial material is actually destroyed and remaining consumed by a class. In Islam it is lawful for sacrificer to eat the meet of sacrificial animals⁴² as well as preferable to distribute it to others including non-Muslims.⁴³

IV. Comparison between Elements of Sacrifice

After knowing the basic doctrines of both traditions which are directly relevant to the idea of sacrifice, now it is easy to make comparison between the basic elements of sacrifice by keeping these ideas in our mind. Sacrifice is a ritual which comprises of mental as well as physical involvement of the person who is going to offer sacrifice. So, in the description of the elements of sacrifice, the sacrificer will be our reference point rather than recipient or material of sacrifice.

There are six basic elements of any offering which are following:

1. Recipient of the sacrifice
2. Active person, the sacrificer

⁴¹ Margaret and James Stutley. *A Dictionary of Hinduism*, p.51

⁴² *Sahih Al-Bukhari*. (1983). (M. M. Khan, Trans.) Lahore, Pakistan: Kazi Publications, Hadith: 777, Ch: 124, Vol. II, p.452

⁴³ Islahi, M. Y. (1990). *Every Day Fiqh* (Vol. 2). (B. A. Kamal, Trans.) Lahore, Pakistan: Islamic Publications, p.199

3. Motive and the intention of the sacrifice
4. Material of sacrifice, the offering
5. Place and Time of the sacrifice
6. Manner of the sacrifice, the sacrificial method

IV.1. *Recipient of Sacrifice:*

The recipient of sacrifice is a personality which is working as a subjective force in sacrificial scheme. If the sacrifice maker is on the one pole then the recipient is on the other and all other activities performed either at this edge or that edge as Edward Tylor said: "sacrifice was originally a gift offered to super natural beings to secure favor or minimize their hostility."⁴⁴ The main purpose of sacrifice is, in both religions, to win the favour of recipient although the nature and function of recipient is different in both religions. The basic characteristic of recipient is that he is other than sacrificer because nobody can offer sacrifice to himself.

In Islam the recipient of sacrifice is only Allah almighty without any partner (Al-Qur'ān, 22:34). God (Allah) in Islam is not a magic, impersonal power but a person whom man may come before Him with a gift. Allah is infinitely powerful but so loving that He allows man to give Him gifts, though He has no need of them. "It is neither their meat nor their blood that reaches Allah: it is your piety that reaches him." (Al-Qur'ān, 22:37)

In Hinduism the recipients of sacrifice are more than one. During the early Vedic period there were five great kinds of sacrifices which had been presented to different recipients.⁴⁵ So, in concept of recipient of sacrifice both religions do not share anything. Sacrifice presented to any other rather than Allah is *Shirk*, polytheism, which is worst sin in Islam. Allah forgives not partners be set up with Him; but He forgives anything else to whom He pleases; to set up partners with Allah is to devise a sin most heinous indeed (Al-Qur'ān, 4:48).

On the other hand in Hindu tradition sacrifice performed is in the favour of different gods and other creatures, like ancestors, goddesses, etc. Their gods, recipient of

⁴⁴. Tylor, E. B. (1920). *Primitive Culture* (6th ed., Vol. 2). London: John Murry, p374

⁴⁵ . K, S. M. (1993). *Vedic Hermeneutics*. New Delhi, India: Shri Lal Bhadur Shastri Rashtriya Sanskrit Vidyapeetha, p. 87

sacrifice, are the integral part of universal system. So the nature of recipient in Hindu tradition is totally different then Islam.

IV.2. Active person, the sacrificer

In sacrifice, on the other hand, the consecration extends beyond the thing consecrated; among other objects, it touches the moral person who bears the expenses of the ceremony. The devotee who provides the victim which is the object of the consecration is not, at the completion of the operation, the same as he was at the beginning.⁴⁶ He has acquired a religious character which he did not have before, or has rid himself of an unfavourable character with which he was affected; he has raised himself to a state of grace or has emerged from a state of sin. In either case he has been religiously transformed. We give the name 'sacrificer' to the subject to whom the benefits of sacrifice thus accrue, or who undergoes its effects. This subject is sometimes an individual, sometimes a collectivity, a family, a clan, a tribe, a nation, a secret society.⁴⁷ When it is a collectivity it may be that the group fulfils collectively the function of the sacrificer, that is, it attends the sacrifice as a body; but sometimes it hands over one of its members who act in its stead and place. Thus the family is generally represented by its head, society by its magistrates.⁴⁸

We can call those sacrifices personal that directly concern the person of the sacrificer himself. From this definition it follows that these all have one prime characteristic in common: since the sacrificer is the beginning and the end of the rite, the act begins and finishes with him. It is a closed cycle about the sacrificer.⁴⁹

When we asked who makes sacrifices? The obvious answer is: man. But obvious is not always enough and we also find divine beings described as bringing sacrifices. We find the conception that man sacrifices in imitation of a divine model inaugurated by gods

⁴⁶ . Hubert, H., & Mauss, M. (1964). *Sacrifice: Its Nature and Function*. (W. D. Halls, Trans.) Chicago: Chicago University, p.10

⁴⁷ . Durkheim, E. (1976). *The Elementary Forms of Religious Life*. (J. W. Swain, Trans.) New York: George Alien & Unwin Ltd., p. 321

⁴⁸ . Hubert, H., & Mauss, M. *Sacrifice: Its Nature and Function*. p.10

⁴⁹ . Ibid, p. 61

themselves.⁵⁰ At the first hand, in Hinduism we do not only find men officiating sacrifice, but also gods. Sacrifice is for more than a simple act on the part of man whereby he pays honour to the gods. The gods themselves, too, practice this sacred function of life which upholds the order of the universe and keeps the individual self in harmony.⁵¹ James quotes the *Taittyriya Brahmana*: "By sacrifice the gods obtained heaven".⁵² According to Hindu tradition man does not himself invent anything new, but he copies what the gods have shown him to do. "The sacrificer is the god Prajapati at his own sacrifice".⁵³

In Islam only human being offer sacrifice, God almighty (Allah) is beyond this kind of compulsion. He does not need any means or support to run the system of universe like Hindu gods. Qur'ān explains it in the following way: "Verily when He intends a thing His command is 'Be' and 'it is!'" (Al-Qur'ān, 36:82) "His throne doth extend over the heavens and the earth and He feels no fatigue in guarding and preserving them." (Al-Qur'ān, 2:255) Allah is the only owner of the universe including man so logically a person cannot offer to himself which he has his own. "To Allah belongs all that is in the heavens and on earth." (Al-Qur'ān, 2:284) So there is only one recipient and He is Allah, and there is only one who offers sacrifice to him and he is human being.

Secondly; we find in Hinduism the caste base and gender base division. Only three first castes enjoyed full social religious rights and can participate in sacrificial rituals.⁵⁴ "The sacrifice may take his pleasure two or three (articles required for sacrifice) from the house of a *sudra*; for a *sudra* has no business with sacrifices."⁵⁵ In the same way woman has no specific place in sacrificial rituals, she works just as an assistant of her husband in domestic kind of *yajnas* which are called *gharya sutras*⁵⁶ "No sacrifice, no vow, no fast must be performed by woman apart (from their) husbands."⁵⁷ Although in later developments when sacrificial mode shifted from physical gesture to the spiritual, there we find that all castes including women enjoy the religious rights. While in Islam

⁵⁰ . Eggeling, J. (1978). *The Sacred Books of the East* (Vol. 26). (F. M. Mullar, Ed.) New Delhi: Motilal Banarsi Dass Publishers, (Satapatha Brahmana, (1.2.3.5)

⁵¹ Van Baaren, Th. P., Theoretical Speculations on Sacrifice, *Numen*, vol. 11, Fasc. 1 (jan., 1964), p. 6

⁵² . James, E. O. (1933). *Origins of Sacrifice, a Study in Comparative Religion*. Oldenburg, p.275

⁵³ . Ibid, p.7

⁵⁴ . Pareti, Luigi., *History of Mankind (Cultural and Scientific Development)*, (Vol. II). Part one, p.40

⁵⁵ . Buhler, G. *The Laws of Manu (The Sacred Books of the East)*. (Vol. 25). p.430

⁵⁶ . Pathak, V. (1997). *Encyclopaedia of Hinduism* (Vol. 15). (N. K. Singh, Ed.) New Delhi: Centre for Int. Religious Studies & Anmol Publication Pvt. Ltd., p. 4369

⁵⁷ . Buhler, G., *The Laws of Manu, (The Sacred Books of the East)*. (Vol. 25). p.196

we do not find any kind of caste or gender base division. Both, male and female, can offer sacrifice independently. They will get equal reward for their sacrifices.

Thirdly; in Hinduism we find congregational sacrifices which are called *saruta Yajnas*, these congregational sacrifices particularly partook of royal characteristics such as *Ashvamedha*, *Rajasuya* etc.⁵⁸ King offered these sacrifices on the behalf of their nation to secure prosperity and godly support. In Islamic tradition the sacrificer makes offering usually on behalf of him but as a head of the household he can offer on behalf of his family. As the tradition of the prophet explains it, Miknāf Bin Sūlaim said: we were staying with the apostle of Allah at 'arafāt'; He said: "O, people, every family must offer a sacrifice and an 'atirah'.⁵⁹ Do you know what the 'atirah' is? It is what you call the *Rajab* sacrifice."⁶⁰ In the same way the head of the state can offer sacrifice on behalf of his nation but it does not mean that the sacrifice will be seized on the other people. It simply means that the head of the state can offer sacrifice on the behalf of those who has not capacity to offer it. As Prophet (PBUH) offered sacrifice on the behalf of *Ummah* the Muslim community.⁶¹ So the concept of sacrifice in Islam which is offered on the behalf of Muslim community is different from the concept of congregational sacrifices in Hinduism.

Fourthly; in Hinduism almost all kinds of sacrifices is assisted by a priest or a group of priests, they are called *Brahmans*. These people are expert in ritual performance. With specific formulas of different *mantras* they arranged the altar and perform the sacrifice. The act of sacrifice centre on the *yajamana* who bears the expenses and to whom the principal fruit accrues.⁶² The *yajamana* is guided in his performance of sacrifice by the priests, who are not hereditary priests but are appointed for this purpose. The most elaborate solemn sacrifices have sixteen priests, a number which represents a totality. These are divided into four groups of four each. The less elaborate sacrifices

⁵⁸. Pathak, V. (1997). *Encyclopaedia of Hinduism* (Vol. 15). p.4370

⁵⁹ . Atira: was a practice of sacrificing a sheep or goat in *Rajab*. This was a practice of the idolatrous Pre-Islamic Arabs. It is said that 'atira was continued in the early days of Islam and then abolished.

⁶⁰ . *Sunan Ibi Dawud*. (1984). (A. Hasan, Trans.) Lahore, Pakistan: Shah Muhammad Ashraf Publishers, Hadith No. 2782, *Book of Sacrifice*, Ch:1029, Vol. II, p.783

⁶¹ . *Sahih Muslim*. (1978). (A. H. Sidiqi, Trans.) Lahore, Pakistan: Kazi Publications, Hadith: 8485, *Kitab Al-Adahi*, Vol. III, p. 1087

⁶² . Das, Veena., *Language of Sacrifice, Man*, New Series, Vol. 18, No. 3. (Sep., 1983), p. 453

have only four priests, but it is easy to show that these four represent the visible one-fourth of a total of which three-fourths remains invisible.⁶³

These priests work in sacrificial act as a witness and the mediators between gods and *yajnaman* (sacrificer). Hindu texts describe their qualities: "Voice, (pleasantness) Form, age, learning, moral character, right conduct are the qualities (required in the *Brahmanas*) who are to be invited there to."⁶⁴

In Islam we do not find any mediatory like Hinduism. If somebody wants take any assistance in his sacrifice he can do it but this assistance has nothing to do with approval or disapproval of the sacrificial act. And if any Muslim some one as a mediator in a sense that he may affect his sacrifice then this intention will be considered as a kind of *shirk*, as Qur'ān mentioned: "Is it not to Allah that sincere devotion due? But those who take for protectors other than Allah (say): 'we only serve them in order that they may bring us near to Allah.' Truly Allah will judge between them in that wherein they differ." (Al-Qur'ān, 39: 3) In Islam it is preferable to slaughter his animal by his own hand but it is also permissible to slaughter on behalf of the others. But there is no sense of mediator.

Lastly; upon whom sacrifice is obligatory? In Hinduism list of exempted persons as following: "Neither a girl, nor a (married) young woman, nor a man of little learning, nor a fool, nor a man in great suffering, nor one uninitiated, shall offer an *Agnihotra*."⁶⁵ On the other hand Islam also guides its followers in regard whom are eligible to offer sacrifice.⁶⁶

Difference between the two is clear i.e. gender and literacy in Hindu tradition, while other elements may be compatible with Islam. For example we can take 'nor a fool' in Hinduism parallel to 'sane and mentally fit' in Islam, 'nor man in great suffering' parallel to 'he should not traveller', and 'uninitiated' parallel to 'has capacity'.

⁶³ . Ibid, p. 454

⁶⁴ . Mullar, F. M. (Ed.). (1978). *The Grihya-Sutras (The Sacred Books of the East)* (Vol. 49). (O. Hermann, Trans.) New Delhi: Oxford University Press, Part-I, p.15

⁶⁵ . Buhler, G., *The Laws of Manu (The Sacred Books of the East)* (Vol. 25) p. 437

⁶⁶ . see chapter no.3, pp. 95, 96

IV.3. Motive and Intention of sacrifice:

The 'motive' means what moves us or causes us to act in a particular way. It can also be understood to mean either that which implies or that which induces us to act in a particular way.⁶⁷ A man's motive may be anger, or jealousy, or fear, or piety, or pleasure, or pain. William Lillie added: a motive may be defined as a conscious mental process which moves a man to act in a particular way.⁶⁸

If the recipient and active person is the two pole of sacrificial scheme then the motive and intention is the course of sacrifice. It is the intention or motive on which the nature of sacrifice dependent. Islam and Hinduism both have great importance of 'motive' in their sacrificial systems.

To the question why man sacrifices? According to the Anthropological and social theories there are three possible answers:

1. To make contact with the deity, to establish or maintain communion with the other world
2. To keep the cosmic action of nature going upon its regular course, to support cosmic order.
3. To obtain something from deity, either in a positive or a negative sense; whether objects of material kind such as food or children, or something of a spiritual nature such as a peace of mind, forgiveness of trespasses committed, etc.⁶⁹

These three purposes are not mutually exclusive. A particular type of sacrifice may include two of them, or even unite all three.

In Hinduism, generally the Vedic sacrifice, *Yajna* is the means to invoke gods and seek their blessings and favours.⁷⁰ In this way it was necessary for the renewal of the universe. Gods perform different duties and they need support from man to continue their performances. So, man provides this necessary support to maintain the universal system. In other word it is a give and take formula. It is all relevant to the second answer given

⁶⁷ . Mackenzie, J. S. (1962). *A Manual of Ethics*. London: University Tutorial Press Ltd., p. 50

⁶⁸ . Lilli, W. (1966). *An Introduction to Ethics* (Third ed.). suffolk, U.K.: Richard Clay (The Chaucer Press), Ltd., p. 29

⁶⁹ . Van Baaren, Th. P., *Theoretical Speculations on Sacrifice*, *Numen*, vol. 11, Fasc. 1 (jan., 1964), p. 11

⁷⁰ . The hymns of Rgveda, Book I, Hymn cxxx.

above that the Hindu sacrifice is to keep the cosmic action of nature going upon its regular course, to support cosmic order. To acquire heavenly blessings animal sacrifice must be performed and motive must be determined before the action.⁷¹

Islam is totally different from Hinduism in this regard, God almighty (Allah) is not in need of any support from human being or any other creatures. He clearly said in His book that “it is neither their meat nor their blood that reaches Allah: it is your piety that reaches Him.” (Al-Qur’ān, 22:37) This verse of Qur’ān clearly defines the purpose of sacrifice in Islam. No motives of sacrifice in Islam are more than one. But all these motives belong to the third answer given above that ‘to obtain something from deity, either in a positive or a negative sense; whether objects of material kind such as food or children, or something of a spiritual nature such as a peace of mind, forgiveness of trespasses committed, etc.

In Islam the reward of every action is entirely dependent on the ‘motive or intention’ as the tradition of the holy Prophet (P.B.U.H) explained: Narrated 'Umar bin Al-Khattāb, I heard Allah's Apostle saying, “The reward of deeds depends upon the intentions and every person will get the reward according to what he has intended...”⁷² So, the act of immolation of sacrificial animal should be accompanied by an intention; except in case of a particular victim, or where one has already uttered the words, “this animal will serve for my sacrifice.” A person who does not perform the sacrifice himself may express his intention either at the moment he gives the animal to his agent or when the latter proceeds to the immolation.⁷³

The physical gesture of the intention in Islam is *Tasmeea*, or invocation in the name of God. Before slaughtering the animal it is obligatory to recite or mention the name of Allah. “They should mention the name of Allah over the cattle He has provided them.” (Al-Qur’ān, 22:28) The Qur’ānic verse refers first to the practice of extolling God’s name at the time of the slaughter, highlighting the fact that the whole atmosphere is one of worship, and the purpose of the sacrifice is to get closer to God.⁷⁴

⁷¹ . Ahmad. Muainuddin, (1925). *Hindu Dharm min Yajna*, Bombay, India, p. 68

⁷² . Sahih al-Bukhari, Hadith: 1, Ch: 1 (Revelation), Vol. I, p. 10

⁷³ . Nawawi, Mahiudin abu Zakaria Yahya ibn Sharif, *Minhaj-et-Talibin*, p. 478

⁷⁴ . Qutab, S. (2006). *In the Shades of the Qur’ān* (Vol. XII). (A. Salahi, Trans.) U.K.: Islamic Foundation, p.127

IV.4. Material of sacrifice, the offering:

In Hindu tradition, inquiring what the offering consists of, we find the answers so many folds that they cannot be summarized. But there are some details of sacrificial materials narrated in *Satapatha Brahmana*:

“At first, namely, the gods offered up a man as the victim. When he was offered up, the sacrificial essence went out of him. It entered into the horse. They offered up the horse. When it was offered up the sacrificial essence went out of it. It entered into the ox. They offered up the ox. When it was offered up, the sacrificial essence went out of it. It entered into the sheep. They offered up the sheep. When it was offered up, the sacrificial essence went out of it. It entered into this earth. They searched it for it, by digging. They found it (in the shape of) those two (substances), the rice and barley...”⁷⁵

The drift of this story is most likely that in former times all these victims had been offered. In the case of horse and oxen, afterwards these sacrifices were discontinued but the sheep and goats they were considered proper victims for sacrifice to still later times. The inclusion of man in this category is significant for each of the five may be the prescribed victim in different sacrifices.⁷⁶ Generally the victims for sacrifice are buffaloes, calves, and also goats and roosters. There is a clear preference for males. Consistent rules may be hard to find, but specific places observe specific rules fairly consistently, for instance, by insisting on roosters and disapproving of hens explicitly.⁷⁷

Here we can observe substitution of sacrificial materials in mentioned categories. When vegetable offerings took the place of bloody victims, these were as efficient as the flesh of animals. We conclude it in following points:

1. Offering materials in Hinduism consists of living and non living substances
2. There is continuous substitution in sacrificial tradition
3. Almost all these kinds of sacrifices have been performed here and there because this substitution never condemned previous form of sacrifice.

⁷⁵ . Eggeling, J., *The Sacred Books of the East*, (Vol. 26). (*Satapatha Brahmana*, 1.2.3.5)

⁷⁶ . Das, Veena., *Language of Sacrifice, Man*, New Series, Vol. 18, No. 3. (Sep., 1983), p. 456

⁷⁷ . Kees W. Bolle, *A World of Sacrifice, History of Religions*, Vol. 23, No. 1. (Aug., 1983), p. 39

4. Cow which is declared as a sacred animal in Hinduism, her family member ox was one of the sacrificial materials in early times. It makes possibility for cow as also a sacrificial substance in the past.

In Islam material of sacrifice consists of living things. Sacrificial animals are mentioned very clearly. The recommended animals for sacrifice in Islam are: Camel, Cow, Buffalo, Goat, sheep. In these animals there is no compulsion of male or female.⁷⁸ The list of sacrificial materials in Hinduism is different from Islam. Horse is not permissible. Hinduism also does not care about gender in sacrificial materials. Particularly in *asvamedha*, horse sacrifice, they select mare.⁷⁹ Beauty and health of the animal was taken in account very carefully. Both religions prefer the best animals but Islam gave more details about sacrificial animals, particularly describing by their ages and faults which make them illegal for sacrifice. These details we do not find in Hinduism.

IV.5. Place and Time of the sacrifice

When we consider sacrifice as a religious ritual then 'place and time' is important for our analysis because as a ritual the sacrificial act is repeated at a particular time and space. If we detach sacrificial act from space and time then there will be no significance for this act. "Mostly their place and time are determined by the situation of the sacrifice."⁸⁰ In regard to 'time and space' we can divide sacrifice into two types:

1. Regular: sacrifices which have become the part of cult they get regular course in space and time, e.g. full moon and new moon sacrifices in Hinduism and Animal sacrifice on *Eid-ul-Adhha* in Islam.
2. Extraordinary: sacrifices which have not incorporated into the cult usually made according to the pressure or invitation of circumstances. They have not fixed calendar, e.g. Vedic *Yajina* in Hinduism and *Aqiqah* in Islamic tradition.

The time when sacrifices are offered in the cult depends on the calendar of religious festivals, and this can not be detached from the whole band of religious conceptions.

⁷⁸ . *Al-Hedaya*. (1975). (C. Hamilton, Trans.) Lahore, Pakistan: Premier Book House, Book XLII, p. 593

⁷⁹ . Al-Biruni, p. 229

⁸⁰ . Van Baaren, Th. P., *Theoretical Speculations on Sacrifice*, *Numen*, vol. 11, Fasc. 1 (jan., 1964), p. 8

Both, Hinduism and Islam, follow the lunar calendar e.g. full moon sacrifices, new moon sacrifices in Hinduism⁸¹ and animals sacrifice on the occasion of 'Īd al-ādha in Dh-'l-Hajj the 12th month of Islamic calendar.

In further detail, particular time in the day is also considered very carefully. As in Hindu tradition: "in the morning, when the sun shines, on the top of the trees, that is the most auspicious time for all kinds of sacrifices, unless there be special rule."⁸²

In the same way Islam is also keen in observing the time in regular scheme of sacrifices as Holy Prophet (PBUH) said about the sacrifice of 'Īd al-ādha: Narrated Al-Barā: I heard the Prophet delivering a sermon (*Khutba*) saying' "The first thing to be done on this day is to pray; and after returning from the prayer we slaughter our sacrifice and wherever does so, he acted according to our *Sunnah* (Tradition)."⁸³ The same thing is about the days of sacrifice.⁸⁴ But there is nothing illegal if some body slaughters his animal as sacrifice in day or night during the mentioned days.⁸⁵

As far as place is concern, Islam is not concerned it because the whole earth is made pure for Muslims so they can perform their religious duties everywhere. "The earth has been made for me (and for my followers) a place for praying and a thing to perform *Tayammūm*, therefore anyone of my followers can pray wherever the time of a prayer is due."⁸⁶ Like prayer sacrifice can also be offered every where. In Hindu tradition specific places are necessary for sacrifice. There are pre-sacrifices of any major sacrifice and these pre-sacrifices mostly comprises of preparation of sacrificial places or building of altars.⁸⁷ In *Grihya-sutra* details are given:

"beginning from the centre of it he should draw a line from west to east, (another line) from south to north which touches that line at its western end, and three lines from west to east (touching the northwards turned line at three different points) in its midst. He then should besprinkle (those lines with water)."⁸⁸

⁸¹ . Klostermaier, Klaus K., *A Survey of Hinduism*, p.159

⁸² . Oldeenberg, Hermann., *The Grihya - Sutras*, I Adhyaya, 3 khanda, Verse: 4, Part-I, (Vol. 49). p.17

⁸³ . Sahih Al-Bukhari, Hadith: 71, (Vol. II). p.37

⁸⁴ . Islahi, M. Yusuf, *Animal Sacrifice*, Every Day Fiqh, (Vol. 2), p.198

⁸⁵ . Al- Hedaya, The slaying of Animals for Food, Book XLII, p. 594

⁸⁶ . Sahih Al-Bukhari, *Rubbing hands and feet with dust (Tayammum)*, Book 1, (Vol. 7). Hadith 330

⁸⁷ . Das, Veena., *Language of Sacrifice*, Man, New Series, Vol. 18, No. 3. (Sep., 1983), pp. 453

⁸⁸ . Oldeenberg, Hermann., *The Grihya - Sutras*, I Adhyaya, 3 khanda, Verse: 9, Part-II, p.14

In this way the *Lakshama* (i.e. the preparation of the place for the sacred fire) is performed every where.⁸⁹

While in Islam there is no such land preparation or altar building activity. But in Islam it is preferable to slay the sacrificial animal at the same place where I'd prayer is offered.

IV.6. The Manner of Sacrifice, the sacrificial method

Sacrifice involves not only a visible gift but an action or gesture that expresses the offering. The method of sacrifice generally depends upon three things:

1. Material to be offered up
2. The nature of the recipient
3. The intention of the offering

The external form of the offering can be determined in many cases by the material of sacrifice. For example living creatures are usually slaughtered. In Islam, animals are always sacrificed because here the killing of the victim is essential part of the act of sacrifice. The same thing is in Hinduism animal is smothered to death.⁹⁰ If the material is not living thing than the sacrificial mode will also be different, i.e. there will offering in different manner as we observed in Hinduism. Of course Islam does not have this kind of (non-living) sacrifice.

The thing which distinguishes Hinduism from Islam is the preparation of sacrificial 'altar' which is called *vedi* in Hindu tradition.⁹¹ The correct building of sacrificial altar is essential part of Hindu sacrifice. The shape of the altar varied but given a symbolic significance; "as to this they say, if the enclosing-stones are the womb, and the sand is seed..."⁹² likening it to a woman. Such symbolism is one of the chief characteristics of Hinduism. In Vedic India the gods were believed to descend into the altar, regarded as situated at the "centre of the world."⁹³

The conception that the offerers have of the recipient and his or her location also helps determine the form of the rite. Islam and Hinduism have different concepts of god

⁸⁹ Ibid.

⁹⁰ Eggeling, J., *The Sacred Books of the East*, part-III, (Vol. 41). (Satapatha Brahmana, III.8.1.16)

⁹¹ Margaret, & Stutley, J. *A Dictionary of Hinduism (Its Mythology, Folklore and Development)*. p.330

⁹² Eggeling, J., *The Sacred Books of the East*, part-III, (Vol. 41). (Satapatha Brahmana, 7.3.1.11)

⁹³ Ibid.

so this affects the method of sacrifice in both traditions. In Hinduism, for example, a very popular goddess of medieval ages, *kali*, she looked as a power of destruction and the followers can get her favour only through bloody sacrifices particularly human sacrifice.⁹⁴

The *Kalika Purana* contains the detailed description of a human sacrifice in honour of the goddess, it is said that:

“Blood consecrated immediately becomes ambrosia, and since the head and flesh are gratifying, therefore should the head and flesh be offered at the worship of the goddess. The wise should add the flesh free from hair, among food offerings.”⁹⁵

In this connection the offering of the skull of human victim particularly to the goddess and plastering the statue or altar with the blood victim become the part of sacrificial act. That's why we find this destructive mother goddess as a black, laughing, naked hag with blood-stained teeth, a protruding tongue, and a garland. They also perform some of the sexual rituals, seem to have been primarily propitiatory, aimed to make the goddess to be kind and helpful rather than cruel and dangerous.⁹⁶

Unlike Hinduism, Islam has different concept of God. God in Islam does not need people help to become strong. Allah very clearly said in Qur'ān: “I seek no livelihood from them, nor do I ask they should feed Me. Lo! Allah! He it is that has given livelihood, the Lord of unbreakable might.” (Al-Qur'ān, 51: 57, 58) So no one of the Muslims believes that his offering is physically needed by Allah but the only piety of the sacrificer reaches Him as Allah Himself mentioned in His book. (Al-Qur'ān, 22:37) So Muslims simply slaughter animal and eat it.

Finally; the intention of the offerers also influences the form of sacrifice. For instance, it is obvious that an offering intended for a deity alone will be very differently presented from a sacrificial meal which the god is held to share with his worshippers.⁹⁷

⁹⁴ . Suchitra Samanta, *The "Self-Animal" and Divine Digestion: Goat Sacrifice to the Goddess Kali in Bengal*, The Journal of Asian Studies, Vol. 53, No. 3. (Aug., 1994), pp. 779.

⁹⁵ . *Kalika Purana*, translation was published by Blaquier in *Asiatic Researches*, V. [1797], pp. 371

⁹⁶ . Gottschalk, L., Mackinney, L. C., & Pritchard, E. H. (1969). *History of Mankind, Cultural and Scientific Development* (Vol. IV). (G. E. Chilver, & S. Chilver, Trans.) London: George Allen and Unwin Limited, p. 121

⁹⁷ . Van Baaren, Th. P., *Theoretical Speculations on Sacrifice*, *Numen*, vol. 11, Fasc. 1 (jan., 1964), p. 10

In Hinduism and Islam the intention of sacrificer may affect the time and selection of sacrificial materials. For example in Islam there is a time compulsion for sacrifice of '*Id-ul-adha*', i.e. month and dates but in sacrifice as *Aqiqah* there is no compulsion like this. In Hinduism we can observe it in the detail of human sacrifice to the Goddess *Kali*.⁹⁸

There is another aspect which makes Hinduism different from Islam in the presentation of sacrifice and that is the physical gesture of sacrificer. In Hinduism details are given for this. "He should perform (the ceremonies) wearing the sacrificial cord on his left shoulder and having sipped water."⁹⁹ In other verse: "He takes as his *yagnapavati* (sacrificial cord) a string, as a garment, or simply a rope of *kusa* grass."¹⁰⁰ "Having besprinkled his feet (with water) let him besprinkle his head. Let him touch the organs of his senses with water."¹⁰¹

This kind of preparation for sacrificer is not required in Islam. He simply is required to recite the name of Allah before slaying the sacrificial animal.

V. CONCLUSION

In the history of religion the most important rite is that of sacrifice. As a matter of history it has been universal; and if the offering of animal sacrifice no longer plays any part in Buddhism, Jainism, and Christianity, still it was customary and important in other religions as we have studied the importance of this ritual in two major living religions, Hinduism and Islam. It was in all the other religions of the world, whether their history is known to us from records and documents, or inferred by means of the Comparative Method."¹⁰²

The sacrifice's significance for the history of religion, however, lies in the fact that by its means men everywhere have sought to establish, renew and maintain communication, and to enjoy communion, with their gods. Such communion is the essential function of religion. Almost social scientist, psychologists, and anthropologists

⁹⁸ . See Chapter no. 2, p. 61

⁹⁹ . Oldenburg, Hermann., *The Grihya - Sutras*, Parpathaka I, Kandika I, Verse: 2, Part-II, p.13

¹⁰⁰ . Oldenburg, Hermann., *The Grihya - Sutras*, 2 khanda, Verse: 1, Part-II, p.16

¹⁰¹ . Ibid.

¹⁰² . Jevons, F.B. (1913). *Comparative Religion*, Cambridge University Press, p. 21

studied the origin of religion through studying the man-god relationship which was almost established by sacrificial notions and rituals. Wherever the rite of sacrifice is found, it is the rite by which the community, as a community, obtains access to its Lord, and comes before his presence. According to the anthropological studies that “the rite of private sacrifice and the use of the rite as a means by which a private individual for his private ends obtains access to the god are plainly later than the public institution.”¹⁰³ Regarding Hinduism it is true but according to the Islamic view point its vis-à-vis, as the Holy Qur’ān describes the story of sacrifice which is offered by two sons of Adam Hābil (Abel) and Qābil (Cain). (Al-Qur’ān, 5:27-30) It was individual and private sacrifice not congregational. In both situations sacrifice is there to establish the relationship between man and his Lord.

Apart from the social and anthropological approaches if we take ‘sacrifice’ as a purely religious act then we have to understand its exact place in religious discourse. Almost every religion generally comprises of three things:

1. Idea: Beliefs
2. Act: Practice according to the beliefs
3. Satisfaction: spiritual or physical result of religious practices

No doubt there are different interpretations of ‘idea’, ‘act’ and ‘satisfaction’ in different religions. But we can see that the ‘Act’ is the mediator between ‘Idea’ and ‘Satisfaction’. It means that the religious practices have double – faced. Followers of the religion not only provide the evidence of their beliefs through their practices but they get the possible results through it. Sacrifice as an act has the place of mediator between idea and result. Despite the difference of ‘idea’ and ‘satisfaction’ the status of sacrifice as a ritual in Hinduism and Islam is same i.e. works as a mediator. So the recipient is there but his nature is different in both religions. In the same way the benefits or results of sacrifice can not be separated from the sacrificial scheme but both traditions explain them in different ways.

The other thing which both religions share is the ‘substitution’ in the sacrificial act. Sacrifice in Islam is the memorial of Abraham’s sacrifice of His son Ishmael which was substituted by the sacrifice of lamb or goat. The same thing with Hinduism but with a

¹⁰³ . Ibid, p. 22

difference that there is not a single substitution but many substitutions took place. It begins with the sacrifice of man who was offered by gods then substituted by horse, horse substituted by ox, then ox by sheep, then sheep by earth, then from earth to the rice and barley.

On the other hand the things which are responsible for the differences between Hinduism and Islam, the first one is the evolutionary nature of Hinduism. As we learnt in previous chapters that there is continuous development in Hindu tradition, this development took place from idea of god to the ritual landscape and we clearly observed that how the cultural change affected the Hindu tradition. This change can be observed in philosophical debates as well as on the practical side. Hinduism shows this flexibility in sacrificial act also that's why we find on one hand sacrifice as mechanical act in which every piece must tally with the other, the slightest inconsistency in the performance of sacrifice makes it a failure. At the same time 'sacrifice' as a spiritual practice where there is no priest, no formalities but it is a complete by mental exercise in the form of *Yoga*. Therefore, we can observe change and continuity in Hindu tradition side by side in the performance of sacrifice. Change in physical forms of sacrifice while continuity in ideological aspect of sacrifice. Vedic ritualism was first and foremost an exercise in and the product of homological mode of thought. Gods are not outside the cosmic order like human and other creatures. So the idea of protecting the universe by strengthening gods through sacrifice was always there in ancient and modern Hindu tradition of sacrifice. We can not find this kind of revolutionary nature in Islam.

Secondly; symbolism creates a big difference between two traditions which affects the entire act of sacrifice from its notion to the material and method. In Hinduism the symbolism of "being there" can not be separated from sacrifice. At the dawn of Hinduism there was not image worship but we observe Hindu tradition was dependent on just natural ideas of natural forces. Later on these concepts symbolized in the forms of different deities. This change in concepts also changed the idea of sacrifice. So in this realm sacrifice was understood as a counter part of natural, supernatural, and social worlds. They confined the realm of these worlds into a symbol which is 'sacrifice'. At the most general level the sacrificial ritual as a whole is understood as a counterpart of the transcendent cosmic one, *Prajapati* or *Purusa*. At the natural level understood as a

counterpart of seasons, and at social level understood as a counterpart of sexual intercourse. While Islam rejects the symbolism. "Naught is as His likeness; and He is the Hearer, the Seer." (Al-Qur'an, 42: 11) So, the sacrifice is understood in Islam as an act of gratitude, that the whole cosmos submissive to Allah so human should be obedient to His Lord. By the order of his Lord a Muslim sacrifices animal in His name.

On its sociological realm, sacrifice played a very important role in Hinduism and Islam. In Hindu tradition, caste system actually established on the sacrificial rites, as the Brahman is caste basically established around the idea of sacrifice. They had been working as priests and they only deserved for religious leadership, while the other castes were dependent on them to make their sacrifices successful. *Sudras*, lower cast of Hinduism, were not allowed to participate in sacrificial ceremonies. Women also subject to work as assistant of her husband. She can not perform sacrifice independently. In this regard, sacrifice in Hinduism played a negative role by dividing the society in different classes instead of integration the society. While in Islam there is no caste system. Every Muslim is equal in the sight of Allah. There is no specification in religious practices. Every Muslim who has means to perform sacrifice, he can and will be equally rewarded irrespective of his caste, colour, language and social status. 'Sacrifice' as a ritual creates integrity between Muslims and makes their relation stronger with their God Almighty.

Hence, all this discussion in theory and practice of sacrifice could be concluded as following:

1. Sacrifice is accepted as an act of homage between man and god in both religions. Although the nature of this homage is different in both traditions.
2. Sacrifice can be a reference point of the history of religions particularly in Hindu tradition. One can understand the development of Hindu tradition by studying the concept of sacrifice.
3. In Islam 'sacrifice' is the mean of spirituality while in Hinduism, sometimes, spirituality is the mean to offer the 'sacrifice'. Because the word 'sacrifice' in Hindu tradition also stands as religion, *dharma*, itself.
4. Bloody sacrifice was always there in Hinduism and still it is offered by many Hindus, the change accrued in it was due to Janis and Buddhist influences. Islam lived also with these religions but never accepted any influence.

5. Human sacrifice survived in Hinduism until today which shows the less importance of human life in Hindu tradition. Just to get long life, wealth, and strength to overcome the enemies a Hindu can kill a human being in the name of sacrifice. Islam is beyond this type of cruelty.
6. Concept of sacrifice in Islam is more comprehensive, socially more beneficial, and naturally more harmonized with human needs than of Hinduism.

Glossary of Hindu Terminologies

Source: Hinduism Dictionary on Sacrifice
<http://www.Onenesscommitement.com>

Agnihotra/Agnihoma: Fire-offering. The name of an important Vedic rite consisting of daily oblation to the domestic and sacrificial fires formed by the householder.

Asvamedha: the horse sacrifice

Ahriman: "Evil spirit" known as *Ahriman* in Zoroastrianism

Acharya: "Going toward;" "approaching." A highly respected teacher. The wise one who practices what he preaches

Anuyāja: sacrifice which offered after *suruta* sacrifices

Antarvedi:

Adhvaryu: one of the priests who take part in sacrificial ritual

Agnidhra: 'kindler,' i.e. the priest who lights the sacrificial fire.

apara vidya: lower kind of knowledge

Bhaktimarga: the path of loving devotion

Bandhuta

Brahman: "Supreme Being; Expansive Spirit." From the root *brih*, "to grow, increase, expand." Name of God or Supreme Deity in the Vedas, where He is described as 1) the Transcendent Absolute, 2) the all-pervading energy and 3) the Supreme Lord or Primal Soul.

Bindu: The universe is a cosmic egg that cycle between expansion and total collapse. It expanded from a concentrated form a point called a *Bindu*.

Brahmānda: The relationship of the universe, which Hindus call *brahmānda*, to the ultimate reality.

Dakshina: A fee or honorarium given to a priest at the completion of any rite; also a gift given to gurus as a token of appreciation for their infinite spiritual blessings.

Dhyāna: meditation

Devas: "Shining one." An angelic being living in the higher astral plane, in a subtle, nonphysical body. Deva is also used in scripture to mean "God" or "Deity."

Devaloka: "Plane of radiant beings." A synonym of Maharloka, the higher astral plane, realm of anahata chakra. The higher Second World, wherein souls take on astral or mental bodies; deep within the First World.

Grihya (domestic) rite performed by a householder man. Household maxims or codes.

Gita: "Song." Foreshortened title of Bhagavad Gita.

Gomedha: sacrifice of cow or ox

Homa: A ceremony dating from Vedic times in which oblations are offered into a fire built according to scriptural injunctions; a ritual to communicate with God, Gods and devas. Also called *yajna* or *havan*.

<i>Havana:</i>	"Making oblations through fire." The Vedic fire ritual. Same as homa. Can also refer to the offering place, or kunda. Havis and havya name the offerings.
<i>Hotri:</i>	'call, invocation' used in ritual and personification as the wife of Agni.
<i>Indra:</i>	"Ruler." Vedic God of rain and thunder, warrior king of the devas.
<i>Isitii:</i>	A great inner-plane being who is invoked in hundreds of Vedic hymns.
<i>Isitii:</i>	non-bloody substances for sacrifice
<i>Jnana Kanda/ Jnanamarg:</i>	'the path of knowledge,' consisting of Aryanikas and Upanisads.
<i>Kusha:</i>	A species of grass commonly called dharba, regarded by Hindus as the most sacred of Indian grass.
<i>Karmayoga:</i>	Yoga
<i>Kāmya:</i>	Actions performed voluntarily according to personal desire.
<i>Karmamarga/Karmakanda:</i>	'the path of work,' consists of Vedic samhitas and Brahmanas.
<i>Kaivalya:</i>	"Absolute oneness, aloneness; perfect detachment, freedom." Liberation. Kaivalya is the term used by Patanjali and others in the yoga tradition to name the goal and fulfillment of yoga, the state of complete detachment from transmigration.
<i>King Ashoka:</i>	The greatest Mauryan Emperor (ca 273-232 bce), grandson of Chandragupta. In his 40-year reign, Buddhism became a world power. The Rock and Pillar Edicts preserve his work and teachings.
<i>Kala:</i>	1) "Time," "calculation." 2) "Black" (of a black or dark blue color); "death."
<i>Kalika Purana:</i>	contains the detailed description of a human sacrifice in honor of the Goddess
<i>Lokas:</i>	"World, habitat, realm, or plane of existence." Fromloc, "to shine, be bright, visible." A place of a particular level of vibration and associated beings, Gods, devas or men. A dimension of manifest existence; cosmic region. Each loka reflects or involves a particular range of consciousness.
<i>Mantras:</i>	"Mystic formula." A sound, syllable, word or phrase endowed with special power, usually drawn from scripture. Mantras are chanted loudly during puja to invoke the Gods and establish a spiritual force field.
<i>Manas:</i>	The Polynesian word for pranic shakti. Supernatural or divine power, miraculous power, believed to reside in a person or thing.
<i>Mimamsa:</i>	"Inquiry." The school of Hindu philosophy
<i>Maitri:</i>	Maitri Upanishad - Belongs to the Maitrayaniya branch of the Krishna Yajur Veda. A later Upanishad covering Aum, outer nature, the Self, control of the mind, etc.
<i>Naramedha:</i>	sacrifice of human being
<i>Nitya:</i>	Actions that are performed daily. Pancha nitya karmas - "Five constant duties." A traditional regimen of religious practice for all Hindus: 1) dharma (virtuous living), 2) upasana (worship), 3) utsava (observance of holy days), 4) tirthayatrai (pilgrimage) and 5) samskaras (observance of sacraments, known as samskaras, such as rites of birth, first feeding, marriage, etc.). While dharma and upasana are daily

<i>Naimittika:</i>	Actions performed on specific occasions.
<i>Pasubandha:</i>	Animal sacrifice
<i>Patni:</i>	wife
<i>Pradhāna:</i>	Main sacrifice in the category of <i>suruta</i> sacrifices
<i>Prayāja:</i>	Sacrifice which offered before <i>suruta</i> sacrifices
<i>Prajāpati:</i>	The creator
<i>Puruṣa:</i>	"The spirit that dwells in the body/in the universe."?Person; spirit; man. Male person in mundane usage, as in purusha dharma.
<i>Pūjā:</i>	"Worship, adoration." An Agamic rite of worship performed in the home, temple or shrine, to the murti, shri paduka, or other consecrated object, or to a person, such as the satguru.
<i>Purusasukta:</i>	of the <i>Rgveda</i>
<i>prana:</i>	It usually refers to the life principle, it sometimes denotes energy, the interrelated odic and actinic forces, the power or the animating force of the cosmos, the sum total of all energy and forces.
<i>Rajasuya:</i>	sacrifice of elephant
<i>Rgveda:</i>	"Veda of verse (rik)." The first and oldest of the four Veda corpora of revealed scriptures (shruti), including a hymn collection (Samhita), priestly explanatory manuals (Brahmanas), forest treatises (Aranyakas) elaborating on the Vedic rites, and philosophical dialogs (Upanishads).
<i>Rishis/ Rsis::</i>	An old and venerated sage or seer, often a visionary who sees beyond the present time. Often refers to the sages, many of whom were householders, who codified dharma thousands of years ago in India.
<i>Ritu/ Rita:</i>	Natural phenomena particularly the seasons. "Sacred order, cosmic law; truth"
<i>Rajanya:</i>	"Ruler ship." A synonym for <i>kshatriya</i> .
<i>Samsara:</i>	the bondage of life, death and re-birth.
<i>Samhita-Period:</i>	"Collection." Any methodically arranged collection of texts or verses. The hymn collection of each of the four Vedas.
<i>Satapatha Brahmana:</i>	sacred text which only describes fully the five great sacrificial ceremonies.
<i>Sautramani:</i>	A practical sacrifice in the honour of Indra.
<i>Sama-hymns:</i>	Sama Veda - "Song of wisdom." Third of the four Vedas
<i>Shrauta:</i>	"Related to hearing; audible." That which is prescribed by or conforms with the Vedas.
<i>Sudra:</i>	the fourth social class in Hindu caste system.
<i>Soma:</i>	a kind of sacrifice in which soma plant used.
<i>Sidhyas:</i>	A term applied certain yogis who have aquired the eight 'siddhis' or supernatural faculties and has reached at the stake of spiritual perfection.
<i>Sankara:</i>	One of Hinduism's most extraordinary monks (788-820) and pre-eminent guru of the Smarta Sampradaya. He is noted for his monistic philosophy of Advaita Vedanta and his many scriptural commentaries.
<i>Sanskrit:</i>	"Well-made, perfected." The classical sacerdotal or religious language of ancient India, considered an excellent vehicle of divine communication.

	Employed today as a religious, literary and scholarly language, but not generally used as a spoken language.
<i>Svarga</i> :	"Celestial (or bright) plane." The third of the seven upper worlds, the mid-astral region (equated in some texts with <i>Svarga</i>), realm of manipura chakra.
<i>Shrauta</i> :	rite that was done by Vedic priests according to <i>shruti</i> (i.e. sacred literature of Divine revelation) rules
<i>Smkhya</i> :	One of the Yoga philosophical systems.
<i>tyaga yajna</i> :	the sacrifice of life, renouncing the worldly life.
<i>Viñeu</i> :	An ancient Indian musical instrument, said to have been the invention of the <i>rishi</i> Narada.
<i>Viraj</i> :	Ruling far and wide universal sovereignty.
<i>Vaisya</i>	
<i>Vayu</i> :	The name of the wind and of its personification
<i>Vedanga</i> :	The Vedas
<i>Yajna</i> :	sacrifice, oblation, worship
<i>Yajamana</i> :	active person in sacrifice, the sacrificer.
<i>Yupa</i> :	sacrificial seat

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