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EXTRAIT

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ABRAHAM'S ASSOCIATION WITH THE MECCAN SANCTUARY AND THE PILGRIMAGE IN THE PRE-ISLAMIC AND EARLY ISLAMIC PERIODS

The figure of Abraham appears in the Qur'an dozens of times in tens of chapters¹, but Qur'anic references to Abraham as well as any number of other ancient figures and the legends about them are notably brief. They lack narrative context and detail to such extent that they have been described as merely «... a series of discrete and parabolic utterances»². Indeed, sustained narrative is virtually absent from the Qur'an, with the possible exception of the story of Joseph³, and even those narrative-like sections that can be found in Islamic scripture appear as if they were excerpted from full tellings that no longer exist.

The Qur'anic audience would clearly fail to understand the hundreds of important allusions to biblical figures and legends if it were not already familiar with one of the various cultural settings in which they occurred. Qur'anic revelation therefore presumes a prior familiarity with a series of legends and legendary figures that corresponds roughly with that of Jewish and Christian scripture: the Hebrew Bible and New Testament. In the parlance of literary discourse, the Qur'an is unknowable without knowledge of its biblical subtext⁴. And it is clear today that any literary work presuming a subtext serves at some level as a response to that subtext. It may agree with it, interpret it, revise it, or invalidate it, but it clearly reacts to it. If the Qur'an can be assumed to have been revealed during the lifetime of the Prophet Muhammad⁵, then it must be assumed that its biblical subtext — the many legends about Abraham

¹ Y. MOUBARAC, *Abraham dans Le Coran*, Paris, 1958, p. 27-28.

² J. WANSBROUGH, *Qur'anic Studies: Sources and Methods of Scriptural Interpretation*, Oxford, 1977, p. 1.

³ Sura 12. Yet even the long Qur'anic rendition of the Joseph legend is notably unclear without the benefit of exegesis of the biblical rendering of the story for reference. Western readers familiar with the full text of Genesis supply their own exegesis when reading the Qur'anic rendition and can therefore make sense of it.

⁴ The terms «Bible» and «biblical» are used only for lack of more accurate nomenclature. The Qur'an is not beholden to the Bible, and its subtext referred to here is not the text of the Bible. The «biblical» narratives and references in Islam are not biblical in the sense that they are quotations from biblical texts, but rather than they exhibit clear parallels to biblical texts. Perhaps a better term might be «biblesque».

⁵ Notwithstanding the excellent work of Wansbrough and his students in their view that it is a later document, the approach of this study follows the arguments of Burton and others who suggest that the traditional view is not chronologically inaccurate.

and other figures finding parallels in biblical literature — was extant in pre-Islamic Arabia.

Islamic tradition itself supports this option. Soon after the death of Muhammad, pious Muslims sought out information that would fill in the many lacunae of the qur'anic revelations. These early traditionists collected thousands of narratives about biblical and extra-biblical personages that were being told and retold among the various cultural groupings in and around Arabia at the time.⁶ Many of these were eventually compiled into collections organized around the layout of the Qur'an and which came to represent early forms of scriptural exegesis. The Qur'an has become largely inseparable from its narrative exegesis, whether in written or oral form, ever since. Other forms of organization were also employed among the collections of oral lore, including those of the universal histories which organized narrative material around the historians' concepts of world history, or the collections of hagiographic legends referring to the careers of ancient saints and prophets.⁷ All relied on the large reservoir of early Islamic and pre-Islamic oral lore. Indeed, early Islam recognized no clear distinction between pre-Islamic and Islamic oral tradition. The separation between the two epochs so evident in Medieval Islamic literature evolved out of a historiographic approach that came into existence only after the first Islamic century.⁸

At the same period in which Islamic historiography was evolving and maturing, so too were the various approaches to Islamic law and custom (*shari'at*) coming of age under the early 'Abbasid Caliphate. The raw material providing the authority for Islamic ritual and social behavior also consisted of oral traditions. But these traditions, known at least among the pious if not more generally in Islamic society, were largely centered around the remembrances of the behavior and comments of the Prophet Muhammad and his pious companions (*as-Sahāba*). These oral traditions were eventually transcribed, and because the authority for competing views on Islamic law and custom was based

⁶ R. FIRESTONE, *Journeys in Holy Lands: The Evolution of the Abraham-Ismael Legends in Islamic Exegesis*, Albany, NY, 1990, p. 3-20 (hereafter: FIRESTONE, *Journeys*).
⁷ Other organizing principles were employed as well, such as the collections of tradition organized according to their attributed sources such as the Prophet Muhammad or his companions.

⁸ This may be partly attributable to parallels drawn between Muhammad and the rule of the 'Abbasids on the one hand, and the pre-Islamic period of ignorance and Umayyad rule on the other. See J. LASSON, *Islamic Revolution and Historical Memory: An Inquiry into the Art of Abū al-ʿAbbās al-Aḥmadī* (American Oriental Society Series, 66), 1986, p. xii and 3-36.

on these records, many were said to have been forged in order to support particularist points of view. Early Medieval Muslim scholars themselves noted and condemned the notorious practice of forging traditions in the effort to authenticate support for partizan views, and Western scholarship has repeatedly condemned the reliability of the Islamic tradition literature in general.⁹

In contrast to this real problem concerning the reliability of traditions used to authorize Islamic law and custom (the «halakic» traditions), the early collectors of narrative legends (the «aggadic» traditions) appear to have collected them largely as they found them and with little intentional alteration. Traditionists working in various locations or time periods transcribed the slight variations that naturally accrued as narratives were told and re-told in oral form. The act of recording them effectively froze the evolutionary dynamic of their oral discourse by recording the event almost as a photograph records a visual event.¹⁰ Many of the recorded traditions were then re-recorded into later collections by subsequent traditionists, with the more popular traditions appearing many times in the literature. The many renditions of each narrative available in the sources therefore exhibit greater or lesser degrees of variance, and the number and nature of the various renditions reveal valuable information about the norms and expectations of the culture in which they were known.

Modern literary analysis sometimes seeks to reveal subtexts in order to better understand the targeted text. This study seeks to establish the knowledge about Abraham in the general culture of the late sixth Century Hijaz, the geographical region which includes the cities of Mecca and Medina, as a subtext of the qur'anic revelations about Abraham in Mecca. Ideal typically, those narratives which are repeated often and consistently in the collections of Islamic tradition literature, which exhibit little variety in plot and structure, and which are attributed to a number of different early collectors of tradition would be expected to have been popular narratives told time and again in a given environment. The information contained within them would be expected to be well-known in the culture of discourse. When an oral storyteller, for example, renders a story already well known by the audience, s/he is allowed less room for variation in the repertoire of oral discourse than with a previously unknown story. A well-known and popular narrative

⁹ See I. GILZINGER, *Muslim Studies*, edited and translated by S. M. STERN and C. R. BARBER, London, 1967-71, Vol. 2, J. SCHACHT, *The Origins of Muhammadan Jurisprudence*, Oxford, 1950, p. 38ff.; J. RUSSON, *The Issue in Muslim Tradition*, in *Transactions of the Glasgow University Oriental Society*, 15 (1955), p. 15ff.
¹⁰ A. LEUNG, *Singer of Tales*, Cambridge, MA, 1960, p. 124f.

remaining relatively consistent and stable in its form and meaning would tend to be recorded frequently and consistently by the traditionists who would have heard it in a variety of contexts. Popular legends reflect common cultural norms and can be expected to provide information about values and beliefs of the host culture¹¹. Conversely, those narratives which are found less often in the sources, which exhibit a great inconsistency in form and content, or which are attributed to only one source, cannot be regarded as accurate representations of a culture's norms, values, or beliefs. The greater the variation among the renditions of any legend, the less it can be expected to reflect a consensus of cultural expectations or meaning.

With this basic approach to the literature, the researcher can examine a representative sample of the large corpus of Islamic narrative traditions about Abraham's connection to Mecca and the Pilgrimage and determine its relationship to the qur'anic revelations on the same topic. This, in turn, raises important questions about the image of Abraham in the Qur'an and in the general culture of early and pre-Islamic Arabia. The sample of sources for this study consists of well-known and published Sunni and Shi'ite works dating from the ninth to the fifteenth centuries¹².

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¹¹ W. A. LESSA, 'Discoverer-of-the-sun': *Mythology as a Reflection of Culture*, in M. JANTSCH and J. GREENWAY (eds.), *The Anthropologist Looks at Myth*, Austin, 1972; A. DUNNINGS, *Folk Ideas as Units of World View*, in A. PAREDES and R. BAUMAN (eds.), *Toward New Perspectives in Folklore (American Folklore Society Bibliographical and Special Series, 23)*, Austin, 1972, p. 93-103.

¹² In chronological order: Abū 'Abdallāh Muḥammad Ibn Sa'ūd, *Kitāb al-Tabaqāt al-Kubrī*, Beirut, 1380/1970; Ahmad Ibn HANBAL, *al-Musnad*, Beirut, 1389/1969; Abū al-Walīd Muḥammad b. 'Abdallāh b. al-Mughīra AL-AZRAQI, *Al-kabīr Makka* (Ed. F. WUSTENFELD as *Chroniken der Stadt Mecca*, Leipzig, 1858; repr. ed., *Al-kabīr Makka al-Musharraf*, Beirut, n.d.); Abū 'Abdallāh b. Ismā'īl AL-BUKHĀRĪ, *al-Jāmi' al-Sahīh*, Lahore, 1979; 'Abdallāh b. Muslim Ibn QUTAYBA al-Dīnawarī, *Kitāb al-Ma'ārif*, Cairo, n.d.; Ahmad b. Abī Ya'qūb b. Wādih AL-YA'QŪBĪ, *Tarīkh* (ed. M. T. HOUTSSA as *Historiae*, Leiden, 1969); Abū Is'afar Muḥammad b. Jarīr AL-TABARĪ, *Jāmi' al-Bayān 'an Tarīkh al-Qur'ān*, Beirut, 1403/1984, and *Tarīkh al-Rusul wal-Mulūk* (ed. M. J. DE GUKER as *Annales*, Leiden, 1964); Abū al-Ḥasan 'Alī b. Ibrāhīm al-QUNAWĪ, *Tafsīr al-Qunawī*, Najaf, 1385/1966; Abū Ishāq Ahmad b. Muḥammad AL-ḤA'LA'Ī, *Arā'is al-Majālis*, Cairo, 1374/1954; Radd al-Dīn Abū 'Alī al-Faḍl b. al-Ḥasan Amin al-Dīn AL-TABARSI, *Muḥim al-Bayān fi 'Ulūm al-Qur'ān*, Beirut, n.d.; Muḥammad b. 'Abdallāh AL-ABŪ 'Abdallāh Muḥammad Ibn AL-ATNIN, *al-Kāmil fi al-Tarīkh* (Ed. C. J. TOONBERG as *Ibn-al-Athiri Chronicon quod perfectissimum inscribitur. Historia Antislamica*, Leiden, 1867-77; repr. Beirut, 1385/1965; 'Imād al-Dīn Abū al-Fidā' Ismā'īl Ibn KATHĪR, *Tafsīr al-Qur'ān al-'Azīm* Cairo, n.d., and *Ūyūs al-Anbiyā'*, Beirut, 1402/1982; Muḥib al-Dīn 'Abd al-Rahmān b. Muḥammad Abū al-Yaman AL-HANBALĪ, *al-Uṣul al-Jāmi' bi Tarīkh al-Quds wal-Akhāfi*, Amman, 1973.

The figure of Abraham is associated with Mecca and its holy places repeatedly in the Qur'an. He is called upon to establish the foundations of the Ka'ba, to purify it for those who would pray at it, and is depicted as settling his progeny within its sacred precinct. His name is even given to a particular site or structure in the sanctuary area called the Station of Abraham (*Maqām Ibrāhīm*). Sura 2:125-127 places Abraham fully into the Meccan sanctuary tradition with the words, *Remember, We made the House a place of Sanctuary and safety for humankind. Make the Station of Abraham (Maqām Ibrāhīm) a place of prayer. We enjoined upon Abraham and Ishmael: «Purify My House for those who shall circumambulate it, for those devoted in prostration and prayer». Remember when Abraham said, «O my Lord, make this town safe...» And remember when Abraham raised the foundations of the House with Ishmael...*

Sura 3:96-97 appears to clarify that «the House» (*al-bayt*) refers to the Meccan shrine known elsewhere¹³ as the Ka'ba: *The first house established for humankind was the one at Bakka. [Full of] blessing and guidance for the peoples of the world. In it are clear signs: the Station of Abraham. Whoever enters into it finds security. Pilgrimage to the House is a Godly requirement for those who are able...*

Sura 14:35-36 confirms that the Abraham associated with the Meccan shrines is the famous monotheist. He settles some of his descendants in Mecca so that they might uphold their commitment to God: *Remember, Abraham said, «O Lord, make this land secure, and preserve me and my progeny from worshipping idols!... O our Lord, I have settled some of my offspring in a barren valley by Your Sacred house, in order our Lord, that they establish prayers...». Qur'an 22:26 reiterates Abraham's connection with the Meccan shrine: *Remember, We established Abraham at the site of the House. So do not associate anything with Me, and Purify My House for those who circumambulate it, stand [before it in prayer], and bow and prostrate themselves.**

Despite these unequivocal qur'anic associations of Abraham with Mecca and its sacred sites¹⁴, the Qur'an never explains how Abraham founded the Ka'ba, how he and his progeny arrived in Mecca and from whence they came, nor even what the Station of Abraham was. These

¹³ Qur'an 5:100.

¹⁴ With the possible exception of 14:35-36, these verses are assumed to have been revealed in Medina and appear to reflect a later Medinan interest in the religious shrines of Mecca. For a general discussion of the anthropology and folk lore of sacred sites, see J. A. VOSS, *Antiquity Imagined: Cultural Values in Archaeological Folklore*, in *Folklore*, 98 (1987), p. 80-90.

details were supplied early on from the extant narrative literature available in oral form in the Hijaz as well as elsewhere. The Qur'anic depictions therefore do not represent a unique and unprecedented view in associating Abraham with the holy sites of Mecca, but rather reflect a pre-Islamic association. This is possible to be discerned from the large number of legends about Abraham in Mecca that have been preserved in the form of *ḥadīth*-reports in the various genres of Islamic tradition literature.

The narratives focusing on Abraham's association with Mecca tend to be rather consistent in their many renditions found in the sources. Abraham is portrayed in the collections of early extra-Qur'anic narratives as personally bringing members of his family to Mecca where he established them by the site of the future Ka'ba, as in Qur'an 14:35-36: *Remember, Abraham said, «O Lord, make this land secure, and preserve me and my progeny from worshipping idols!» ... O our Lord, I have settled some of my offspring in a barren valley by Your Sacred House, in order our Lord, that they establish prayers...»*¹⁵. In one series of traditions, Abraham actually lays the foundation of the Ka'ba on this, his first journey to Mecca. Although he returns to Syria (*al-shām*)¹⁶ and is never portrayed as making his home in Mecca, his association with the sacred site continues through his regular visits to his son Ishmael whom he established there¹⁷. A large group of narratives then depict his return to Mecca when Ishmael is a grown man and where together they lay the foundations of the Ka'ba as in Qur'an 2:127: *and remember when Abraham raised the foundations of the house with Ishmael*¹⁸.

¹⁵ BEN SA'D 1:50; IBN HANBAL 1:253, 347-348, 360, 5:121; AL-AZBAQI 1:21-23, 279-80; AL-BUKHĀRĪ 4:372-374, 379-380; IBN QUTAYBA 1:34; AL-YA'QUBĪ 22-23; AL-ṬABARĪ, *History*, 1:275-283; *Commentary*, 1:548-551, 13:229-233; AL-ṬHĀLĀBĪ 81-82; AL-ṬABARĪ, 1:470; AL-KUṢṬĪ 142; IBN AL-ATHĪR 1:103. The reports are given on the authority of such important early figures as Ibn 'Abbās, Mujahid, and 'Alī b. Abī Talīb.

¹⁶ This is the common term in Arabic sources for what might be termed today «Greater Syria», including the land referred to in the West as the Holy Land.

¹⁷ AL-AZBAQI 1:25; AL-BUKHĀRĪ 4:375-377, 381-382; AL-ṬABARĪ, *History*, 1:281-285; *Commentary*, 13:230-231; AL-ṬABARĪ 1:461-462; IBN KATHĪR, *Commentary*, 1:176-177; *History*, 1:225.

¹⁸ AL-AZBAQI 1:25-26; AL-BUKHĀRĪ 4:377-378, 381; AL-ṬABARĪ, *History*, 1:285-286; *Commentary*, 1:550-551, 13:231; AL-ṬABARĪ 1:469; IBN KATHĪR, *Commentary*, 1:177-178; *History*, 1:226-227.

ABRAHAM'S ORIGINAL JOURNEY TO MECCA

The legend of Abraham's first journey to Mecca is recorded in the sources in three forms, the most popular of which being attributed to 'Abdallah Ibn 'Abbās¹⁹. The sequence begins when Sarah's jealousy for Hagar following the birth of Ishmael causes Hagar to flee from her mistress²⁰. Abraham gives Hagar a water skin and then personally brings her and Ishmael to the desolate and rocky spot that would become the future site of the holy Ka'ba. He leaves them in the shade of a large tree and assures the worried Hagar that he is entrusting them to God. Hagar is satisfied with these words, and as Abraham is leaving to return to Syria, he recites Qur'an 14:37: *O Lord! I have made some of my offspring live in an uncultivated Wadi by Your Sacred house, in order, O Lord that they establish regular prayer. So fill the hearts of some with love toward them and feed them with fruits so that they may give thanks.* An angel appears and assures Hagar that she and her child will not perish, for the boy and his father will someday build the House of God on the very spot in which Abraham left them²¹.

The version attributed to 'Alī b. Abī Talīb (d. 661 CE.) has little consciousness of Hagar and Ishmael. It features Abraham journeying to Mecca in response to God's command to establish the sacred Ka'ba there²². Abraham is provided a guide in the form of a supernatural

¹⁹ Died in 687 CE. Full narratives can be found in AL-AZBAQI, 1:22f., and 1:279-80; AL-BUKHĀRĪ, IV, 372-375, and IV, 379-380; AL-ṬABARĪ, *History*, 1:279-281, and 1:282-283; AL-ṬABARĪ, *Commentary*, XIII, 229, and XIII, 230-231; IBN KATHĪR, *Commentary*, 1:176, and 1:177, and *Ūlās al-ḥabshā*, 1:223-224, and 1:227-228. Two incomplete narratives are located in IBN HANBAL, 1:253, and 1:347-8, and five fragments can be found in IBN SA'D, 1:50; IBN HANBAL, 1:360, and V, 121; and AL-AZBAQI, 1:22, and 1:279.

²⁰ The nineteenth tellings of the «Ibn 'Abbās» version exhibit some variation consisting mostly of the inclusion or omission of certain motifs. The rendition given here represents a composite of the sample containing the common features of most tellings.

²¹ The «Ibn 'Abbās» version of the narrative invariably includes a sequence in which Hagar's water runs out and she can no longer nurse her suckling son. When Ishmael begins wailing from thirst, Hagar runs off to a nearby hill to search for water. Finding none, she then runs across to another hill for the same purpose and ends up running between them seven times in her urgent search. These two hills are the hills of al-Safa and al-Marwa in Mecca, between which Muslim Pilgrims run to this day as part of the formal ritual of the Pilgrimage. When the situation is absolutely desperate, she sees an angel who brings forth water from the dry desert floor near her son. This is the well known as Zamzam, another important sacred site which is featured in the ritual of the Pilgrimage. For biblical, post-biblical Jewish, and pre-Islamic Arabian parallels and their significance, see R. FIRESTONE, *Abraham's Journey to Mecca in Islamic Exegesis: A Form-critical Study of a Tradition*, in *Studia Islamica* (forthcoming), (hereafter: FIRESTONE, *Abraham's Journey*).

²² Seventeen renditions are given in AL-AZBAQI, 1:27-29; AL-ṬABARĪ, *History*, 1:275-276, 277; AL-ṬABARĪ, *Commentary*, 1:548-9, 551; AL-ṬHĀLĀBĪ 87-8; IBN KATHĪR, 1:106, 178.

being referred to as the *Sakīna* and described variously as a desert wind sporting two heads or a gigantic floating snake with the head of a cat²¹. In some renditions, a talking cloud specifies the exact measurements for the Ka'ba by casting a shadow over its perimeter, or the *Sakīna* instructs him to build the Ka'ba precisely at the correct location. Hagar and Ishmael are mentioned in only a small number of renditions²².

The third version of the legend is given on the authority of Mujāhid (Ibn Jabr al-Makzūmī)²³. God or the angel Gabriel shows Abraham the site of the Ka'ba, and Ishmael and Hagar join him on his journey there. They travel to Mecca on the supernatural steed, al-Burāq²⁴ with Gabriel as their guide. Upon arrival in Mecca, they find only thorny trees and rocks. Abraham thereupon leaves Hagar and Ishmael at the site of the future Ka'ba and recites Qur'an 14:37²⁵.

The three versions synthesised here represent variations on the legendary theme of Abraham journeying to Mecca in order to establish the site of the holy Ka'ba, and in most renditions, also to establish his progeny in Arabia. The base legend provides an ancient and sacred origin for the holiness of Mecca and its sacred sites through the person of Abraham and his direct relationship with God. Although Abraham may not have been known necessarily by all pre-Islamic inhabitants of the Hijaz as a monotheist, his stature as a holy man traveling from afar to Mecca for the express purpose of founding its sanctuary seems to have been widely known. Certainly among Jews and Christians as well as among Arabian *ḥanīfīs*,²⁶ Abraham was known as a zealous monotheist.

²¹ The name and image most likely evolved out of the rabbinic notion of the *Shrkīna* or "Divine Presence", which is derived from the Hebrew root *sh-k-n* to dwell or abide (God's dwelling presence). The Hebrew meaning merged with the pure Arabic root *s-k-n* which denotes quiet rest or tranquility (compare Qur'an 2:48 with Q. 9:26, 40; Q. 48:4, etc.), but note the secondary Arabic meaning also of *s-k-n*: to abide in or inhabit a place. Although the rabbinic notion of God's divine presence dropped out as the image evolved in its Arabian environment into the form of an Arabian *jinn*, its supernatural and beneficent quality was retained. In all our sources, the *Sakīna* acts as a kind of divinely commissioned guide for Abraham. Cf. I. GOLDZIEHER, *La notion de la Sakīna chez les musulmans*, in *Revue de l'Histoire des Religions*, 27 (1893), p. 296-308. Cf. A. J. WENSLICK, *The Ideas of the Western Semites Concerning the Navel of the Earth*, in *Studies of A. J. Wenslick*, New York, 1978, p. 60-65.

²² These few renditions include the Safa-Marwa sequence outlined in note 21 above.

²³ Died in 772 CE. Four renditions are given on his authority: AL-AZRAQĪ, I, 21. AL-TABARĪ, *History*, I, 278-279; *Commentary*, I, 548, and IAN KATULIS, *Commentary*, I, 179. One rendition is given on the authority of Ibn Ishaq (AL-AZRAQĪ, I, 21-22), and one on the authority of al-Sadiq (AL-TABAṢṬĪ, I, 470).

²⁴ For al-Burāq, see R. PARET, art. *Burāq*, in *Et'.*, I, p. 1310-1311.

²⁵ As in the Ibn 'Abbas version.

²⁶ See U. RUSNAN, 'Hanīfiyya' and Ka'ba. *An Inquiry into the Arabian pre-Islamic Background of 'Dīn Ibrāhīm'*, in *Jerusalem Studies in Arabic and Islam*, 13 (1990), p. 85-112.

Abraham's association with monotheism among a significant part of the pre-Islamic Arabian population is of great importance to Islam because of its history of violent opposition to pre-Islamic pagan religious practice. It would be unseemly for Islam to adopt the very pagan shrines that served as the ritual base for the practices it abhorred — unless these shrines were established as holy sites for worship of the one God but were subsequently corrupted by the backsliding of the Arabs prior to Muhammad. Muhammad claimed merely to purify the sacred shrines from the abhorrent stains of paganism and restore them to their original status²⁹. It is interesting to note that there is no record of Arabian opposition to this particular tenet of Muhammad's teaching, despite opposition to a number of his other teachings³⁰. The legend of Abraham founding the Ka'ba did not appear to invoke cultural dissonance within the early Islamic indigenous Arabian community because it was already familiar with it. The Qur'anic portrayals of Abraham in Mecca, the large corpus of narratives describing his journey there given on the authority of three different traditionists, and the general acceptance of Muhammad's view of the history of the Meccan sanctuary suggests that the association of Abraham with Mecca was a cultural given of the pre-Islamic Hijaz.

All three versions of the legend incorporate motifs familiar to the biblical rendition of the Abraham story along with motifs familiar to pre-Islamic Arabia. The Ibn 'Abbas version, however, exhibits a greater biblical and post-biblical Jewish influence while the 'Alī and Mujahid versions reflect more of the norms of pre-Islamic Arabia³¹. The Ibn 'Abbas version, for example, closely parallels the biblical rendition of Genesis 21:9-21. Certain of its motifs also find direct parallels with post-biblical Jewish legends³², while it contains no supernatural intervention beyond what may be found in the biblical rendition of the legend of Hagar and Ishmael. The 'Alī and Mujahid versions, however, appear to be unaware of the biblical story of Hagar and Ishmael aside from their use of the biblical names. These versions connect Abraham

²⁹ G. R. HAWTING, *The Origins of the Muslim Sanctuary at Mecca*, in G. H. A. JORDAN, *Studies on the First Century of Islamic Society*, Carbondale, Ill., 1982, p. 23; M. WATT, *Muhammad*, Oxford, 1961, p. 205-206 (hereafter: WATT, *Muhammad*); A. GUILLAUME, *The Life of Muhammad: A translation of the Ishaq's Sirat Rasūl Allāh*, Oxford, 1955, p. 565-566, 615-617 (hereafter: GUILLAUME, *Life*); A. J. WENSLICK and J. JONIER, art. *Ka'ba*, in *Et'.*, p. 319-320.

³⁰ See Qur'an 6:25; 21:34-36; 37:13-17; 50:1-15; J. M. WATT, *Muhammad's Mecca: History in the Qur'an*, Edinburgh, 1988, p. 94-98, and WATT, *Muhammad*, p. 70-74.

³¹ FIRESTONE, *Abraham's Journey*, p. 19-22.

³² *Ibid.*, p. 16.

directly to the pre-Islamic Ka'ba through the use of key supernatural motifs finding parallels in indigenous Arabian lore³³. Abraham is known to them as a pious leader who obeys his God, but little more about him is apparent from these versions of the foundation story of the Meccan sanctuary.

Whatever their likely origins and paths of evolution³⁴, the dozens of renditions of Abraham's journey to Mecca fit neatly into three consistent versions. Each version represents a coherent rendering of a popular legend that was told and retold time and time again in the Arabia of early Islam. The popularity, consistency, and coherence of the Abrahamic foundation legend of Mecca strongly suggests that it reflects patterns of thinking and mythic associations that were prevalent in the region during the pre-Islamic period as well.

ABRAHAM VISITS ISHMAEL IN MECCA

The sequence of Abraham's visits to Ishmael in Mecca are attributed to Abdallah Ibn 'Abbas in the Islamic sources³⁵. This segment depicts Abraham coming to Mecca to visit Ishmael in order to inspect his Arabian legacy. Ishmael is not at home when Abraham arrives, but he finds Ishmael's wife who is rude and inhospitable. He asks her to convey the obscure message to her husband that he must «change the threshold of his house». Ishmael returns and senses that his father was there. When he hears his father's coded message, he understands its hidden meaning and dutifully divorces his wife, subsequently marrying again. Abraham returns after a period of time and again, Ishmael is not home. His new wife, however, is friendly and hospitable to Abraham. Abraham calls God's blessing on their home and asks that she convey to her husband that «the threshold is sound». Ishmael returns and again senses his father's presence. When his new wife conveys Abraham's new coded message, Ishmael again understands and replies that she is the threshold.

The seventeen renditions of this sequence exhibit a high degree of narrative consistency. Their attribution to a single source in the person of Ibn 'Abbas, however, suggests that this narrative was not as widely

³³ *Ibid.*, p. 12, 22f.

³⁴ For a detailed study of the evolution of the Abraham legends into the forms found in the Islamic sources, see FIRESTONE, *Journeys*.

³⁵ AL-AZRAQI 25; AL-BUKHARI 4:375-377, 4:381-382; AL-TABARI, *History*, 281-282, 283-285; *Commentary*, 13:230, 13:231; AL-TABARI 1:461; IBN KATHIR, *Commentary*, 1:176, 1:177; *History*, 223.

known as traditions deriving from several sources. Moreover, the attributed authority for the narrative, Ibn 'Abbas, was a highly respected early authority and commentator on the Qur'an but is also known to have collected many traditions from Arabian Jews and Christians³⁶. Indeed, of all segments of the legend of Abraham in Syria and Arabia, his visits to Ishmael draw the closest parallel with Jewish sources³⁷. This fact has been observed previously by scholars of Judaism and Islam and has sparked ongoing discussion regarding its origin and influence³⁸. If this narrative sequence entered Islam from Jewish sources through Ibn 'Abbas or another early Muslim authority as has been suggested, then its pre-Islamic environment would have been limited to the Jewish population and would not have been a common trait of pre-Islamic Arabian culture. Its form, content, and attribution, the nature and accuracy of its parallels with Jewish renditions, and the particular exegetical role of the renditions located in Jewish sources³⁹ suggest that this segment entered into the pool of oral and subsequently written tradition after the beginnings of Islam.

BUILDING THE KA'BA

Like the sequence of Abraham's first journey to Mecca, the legend of his building the Ka'ba is found repeatedly in the sources and each of its three basic forms is attributed to a separate early authority. The Ibn 'Abbas version serves as a continuation of the tale of Abraham's original journey to Mecca and his subsequent visits to Ishmael⁴⁰.

On Abraham's third visit to Ishmael, he finds his son trimming arrows near the well of Zamzam. After greeting each other, Abraham informs Ishmael that God has given the command to build God's House. Abraham points to its proper location on a small rise nearby, and they both begin to build. Ishmael hands Abraham the stones and

³⁶ N. ABBOTT, *Studies in Arabic Literary Papyri. II: Qur'anic Commentary and Tradition*, Chicago, 1967, p. 8-9 (hereafter: ABBOTT, *Studies*).

³⁷ *Pirkei d'Rabbi Eliezer*, 30 (68a-b); *Sefer HaYashar*, Vayera, 55-57; *Yalqut Shim'on*, Genesis 95 (Vayeta) 1:424-425; *Palestinian Targum on Genesis* 21:21.

³⁸ See B. HELLEN, *Muhammedanisches und Anti-muhammedanisches in den Pirke Rabbi Eliezer*, in *Monatschrift für die Geschichte und Wissenschaft des Judentums*, 25 (1925), p. 47-54; J. HENNINGMAN, *Appador veToldotayhen*, Jerusalem, 1974, p. 189ff.; A. SCHESSMAN, *Abraham's Visits to Ishmael - the Jewish Origin and Orientation*, (Hebrew) in *Tarbiz*, 49 (1980), p. 325-345.

³⁹ SCHESSMAN, p. 340-345 (see above n. 38).

⁴⁰ SEITZEN renditions of this version are located in AL-AZRAQI 25-26, AL-BUKHARI 4:377-378, 381; AL-TABARI, *History*, 285-286; *Commentary*, 13:50-551, 13:231; AL-TABARI 1:469; IBN KATHIR, *Commentary*, 1:177-178; *History*, 226-227; AL-HANBALI 38-39.

Abraham puts them in place. As the sides of the building grow too high to reach, Ishmael brings Abraham a large rock upon which he stands. That is the Station of Abraham (*Maqām Ibrāhīm*)⁴¹. As they continue, they recite Qur'an 2:127: *Our lord, accept [this] from us, for you are the all-hearing, the all-knowing.*

The version attributed to 'Alī b. Abī Talīb is likewise connected to the earlier sequence of Abraham's original journey to Mecca⁴². The 'Alī version is organized in the sources in one of two different loci: around Abraham's original journey to Mecca or around his building the Ka'ba, both aspects of which are included in the narrative. Unlike the Ibn 'Abbas version, the 'Alī version portrays Abraham journeying to Mecca one time only for the explicit purpose of building the Ka'ba. He brings Hagar and Ishmael with him in only a few renditions of the narrative and Ishmael never assists his father in the building⁴³. A supernatural guide always shows him the proper location. This guide is either the *Sakīna* or a talking cloud which marks off the correct site of the Ka'ba by casting a shadow over its exact dimensions.

The 'Alī version exhibits a greater variety of tellings of building the Ka'ba than the Ibn 'Abbas version. In one series, the narrator (Alī) begins the narrative in response to a question whether the Ka'ba was the first dwelling place on earth⁴⁴. He answers that it was not the first house, but was the first with the blessing of the *Maqām Ibrāhīm*. 'Alī continues by relating the narrative: God commanded Abraham to build Him a House, but Abraham was anxious because he did not know where to build it. To remedy this, God sent him the *Sakīna*, a gale wind with two heads, which leads him to Mecca. The *Sakīna* marked off the exact site, and Abraham is told by God to build it there. As Abraham is completing the structure and one stone remains, he asks Ishmael who is playing nearby to find a stone. When Ishmael returns, he finds

⁴¹ On the *Maqām Ibrāhīm*, see M. J. KISTER, *Maqām Ibrāhīm: A Stone with an Inscription in Le Mueon*, 84 (1971), p. 477-491, and cf. G. HAWTING, *The Origins of the Muslim Sanctuary at Mecca*, in G. H. A. JUVINBOUL (ed.), *Studies on the First Century of the Islamic Society*, Carbondale, Ill., 1982, p. 40-41.

⁴² Sixteen renditions of this version are located in AL-AZRAQI 27-29; AL-TABARĪ, *History*, 275-277; *Commentary*, 1:548-549, 551, 555; AL-THA'LABI 87-88; IBN KATHĪR, *Commentary*, 1:178.

⁴³ FIRESTONE, *Journeys*, p. 82-87.

⁴⁴ The question derives from Qur'an 3:96f.: *The first house appointed for humankind was that at Bakkā. Full of blessing and guidance for all. There are clear signs in it, [among them] the Maqām Ibrāhīm...*

Abraham mounting the Black Stone⁴⁵. Gabriel had brought it to Abraham from heaven⁴⁶.

In a second series, Abraham is commanded to build the Ka'ba, and comes to Mecca with Hagar and Ishmael. When they reach Mecca, Abraham sees a cloud which speaks to him and tells him to build the Ka'ba on the limits of its shadow. After completing the building, Abraham leaves Hagar and Ishmael in Mecca. In the third series, Abraham comes to Mecca from Armenia with the *Sakīna* as his guide and in the company of Gabriel and a small bird⁴⁷. When they arrive in Mecca, the *Sakīna* marks off the dimensions like a spider spinning a web. In the course of building, the foundations of an earlier structure are exposed⁴⁸. All three co-variants of the 'Alī version exhibit the common elements of a supernatural guide, of Abraham building the Ka'ba on his first journey to Mecca which was undertaken expressly for that purpose, and of Abraham building the Ka'ba alone.

In the version attributed to al-Suddī⁴⁹, God commands Abraham and Ishmael to either build or purify the Ka'ba⁵⁰. Abraham goes to Mecca, and he and Ishmael take pick axes but do not know where to dig the foundations. God sends an unnamed gale wind with two wings and a snake's head, which sweeps around the Ka'ba for them and lays bare the foundations of the first House. Abraham and Ishmael then dig with their tools until they establish the foundations, as in Qur'an 22:26

⁴⁵ *Al-hajar al-aswad*. This is a stone of probable meteoric origin which is one of the focal points of the Pilgrimage in Mecca itself and is regarded as extremely sacred (Gaudesroy-Demombaynes, 41ff.; GUILLAUME, *Life*, p. 84-87; A. J. WENSING, art. *Ka'ba*, in *EP*, IV, p. 317, 321 ff.).

⁴⁶ For an English translation of this and the following, see FIRESTONE, *Journeys*, p. 83.

⁴⁷ *Sarūd*. This is a small bird of prey which is native to the Arabian Nejd region and has been seen as having supernatural properties (*Ibid.*, p. 214 note 29).

⁴⁸ A number of legends describe the original Ka'ba on earth which was established by Adam under the exact location of God's eternal throne. Just as God's throne was circumambulated daily by thousands of angels, the earthly Ka'ba was to be circumambulated on earth. But when the Noahide flood destroyed the world, this Ka'ba was raised up to heaven and the Black stone protected in the heart of the nearby Meccan mountain known as Abu Qubays (AL-AZRAQI 1-20; IBN SA'UD 35ff.; AL-TABARĪ, *History*, 130ff.; AL-THA'LABI 85ff., etc.). This legend seems to be in conflict with the legend assuming Abraham to have built the Ka'ba. Some of the Abrahamic versions therefore equivocate by assuming that Abraham merely rebuilt the Ka'ba on the original Adamic foundations.

⁴⁹ Ismā'īl b. 'Abd al-Rahmān b. Abī Karīm al-Hāshimī al-Suddī (d. 744) was a native of the Hijaz and a well-known Qur'an commentator. He is credited with a commentary that included legendary material such as reproduced here, but which is no longer extant (AL-DAWUD 1:110; ARABITT, *Studies*, p. 95, 99).

⁵⁰ See Qur'an 2:125: *... We enjoined upon Abraham and Ishmael to purify my house ...* Six references of the Suddī version are found in AL-TABARĪ, *Commentary*, 1:550, 17:143; *History*, 276; AL-TABARĪ 497; IBN KATHĪR, *Commentary*, 1:178-179; *History*, 245-246.

Behold! We gave the site of the house to Abraham. When they reach the corner in which the Black Stone is to be set, Ishmael searches for a good stone but Abraham is not satisfied with his choice and sends him back to search again. While Ishmael is absent, Gabriel brings the Black Stone from India. It was originally purely white but was blackened from the sins of humanity or the touch of menstruating women. Ishmael returns and they both complete the building as they recite Qur'an 2:127 O Lord, accept [this] from us, for you are the all-hearing, the all-knowing.

The basic legend of Abraham building the Ka'ba occurs quite often in the sources and is attributed consistently to three well-known authorities in three separate versions. Despite the lack of agreement about a number of minor details, however, virtually all renditions of the legend contain the same basic motifs. Abraham is commanded by God to build God's House. He is brought to Mecca in order to do that. He is given divine guidance about the exact location and dimensions of the shrine. He succeeds in building the holy Ka'ba.

Each of the three versions of the legend has its own approach and agenda that may be partially revealed through analysis. The Ibn 'Abbas version, for example, is careful to portray Abraham building the Ka'ba only after Ishmael is a grown man and is able to assist him, as in Qur'an 2:127a. It also provides an etiology for the stone shrine next to the Ka'ba known as the *Maqām Ibrāhīm*, and it links the entire narrative to the Qur'an through the quotation of Qur'an 2:127b. The 'Ali version, on the other hand, seems to harken back to a highly indigenous pre-Islamic association in its emphasis on beneficent demons guiding the holy man Abraham through the desert to the sacred site. Its failure to mention Ishmael in some renditions and his strikingly peripheral role in all others supports the suggestion that pre-Islamic Arabia had no knowledge of Ishmael³¹. He is never portrayed as actually engaged in the building of the Ka'ba. In addition to this contradiction to Qur'an 2:127, it must be noted that the Qur'an is never quoted in any of the 'Ali renditions³². The 'Ali version's association

³¹ A study of the onomastics of Arabia suggests that the figure of Ishmael became a cultural given in the peninsula only after the propagation of Islam under Muḥammad (R. DAKAKIN, *La Geste d'Ismā'el d'après l'unanimité et la tradition arabe*, Paris, 1981, chapter I, throughout, and esp. p. 377). This is further strengthened by studies of the Qur'anic purifications of Ishmael, which support the view that Ishmael's genealogical relationship with Abraham was unknown until the Medinan period (R. PABET, art. *Ismā'il*, in *EF*, IV, p. 184-185).

³² One series is indeed prefaced with an allusion to a Qur'anic verse, but this is clearly an editorial addition that was not part of the original narrative. For the full text, see FIRESTONE, *Journeys*, p. 83.

with the Black Stone (which itself harkens back to pagan ritual and is never mentioned in the Qur'an), its reliance on the guidance of supernatural creatures, and its innocent disregard for the relevant verses of the Qur'an all point to a pre-Islamic association of Abraham with the founding of the holy Ka'ba in Mecca.

To summarize thus far, the legend of Abraham establishing the site of God's House and his subsequent (or simultaneous) building of the holy Ka'ba represents mythic associations reflecting cultural aspects of the pre-Islamic Hijaz. The base legend continued to evolve in oral form under the influence of Islam; some versions exhibit influence from the revelation of the Qur'an itself. Throughout all this, it retained an early meaning that was in agreement with the Islamic view of Mecca's origins found in the Qur'an and the tradition literature. The popularity of the narratives, the consistency and coherence of the Abrahamic foundation legend, and various particulars of the renditions suggest that they reflect patterns of thinking that were prevalent in the region during the pre-Islamic period.



Abraham's association with the holy sites in Mecca can now be compared with his association with the Pilgrimage, one of the five most basic requirements of Islam known as the Five Pillars (*al-arkān al-khamsa*). The Qur'an connects Abraham intimately to the Pilgrimage in 22:26-27, translated by Yusuf Ali³³ as follows:

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».

The Qur'an refers to the Pilgrimage in a number of other loci which will be examined below, but aside from this citation and the fact that a stone monument within the Sacred Precinct is referred to as the Station of Abraham, the Qur'an does not connect Abraham directly with the Pilgrimage³⁴. This in itself is not particularly significant

³³ *The Meaning of the Glorious Qur'an*, Cairo, 1934, p. 857.

³⁴ Cf. Qur'an 2:158, 189, 196-203; 3:95-99; 5:2-3; 5:98-100; 9:3, 19; 22:26-33. Qur'an 3:95-99 mentions as one of God's signs (*ayāt Allah*) an object or location referred to as the Station of Abraham (*Maqām Ibrāhīm*). This is understood in exegetical comments to be one of the stations of pilgrimage, and today two prostrations are made at a stone known as the Station of Abraham after performing the circumambulations of the Ka'ba.

because qur'anic references to pilgrimage are few, are scattered in a variety of contexts, and were never intended to provide a grounding in sacred history or serve as a prescription for its proper ritual. Qur'an 22:26-27 and the references to the Station of Abraham would therefore appear to support Abraham's association with the Pilgrimage.

Pilgrimage to the sacred sites in the vicinity of Mecca was a fact of life in pre-Islamic Arabia⁵⁵. It was intimately connected to the political stability, social structure, and economy of the region as well as its religious expression, and it can be safely assumed that virtually everyone was in some way connected to it. Pre-Islamic pilgrimage, however, appears not to have been standardized among the Arabs of the Hijaz. Various tribal groups and confederations observed different ritual acts and visited different shrines in the areas, even to the extent that they disputed with one another occasionally over the proper ritual⁵⁶. It is possible that even Jews and Christians associated themselves with the pilgrimages to some extent⁵⁷.

Qur'anic reference to pilgrimage assumes its audience to have been familiar with the various practices incorporated within it. Although the Qur'an states unequivocally in a number of places that pilgrimage is required (eg. 2:196, 3:97, 22:27), it never prescribes its rites in any systematic fashion, despite even the name that came to be applied to Sura 22: *Sūrat al-ḥajj*. Some of the qur'anic references appear to have been revealed in response to questions regarding certain ritual acts of the Pilgrimage practiced during the latter period of Muhammad's life. These questions, in turn, reflect the variety of ritual practiced during

⁵⁵ Certainly in the region of the Hijaz and bordering areas, if not in areas extending further away from the central western region of the peninsula around Mecca. See AL-BATANŪNĪ, Muhammad Labīb, *Al-riḥla al-ḥijāzīya*, Cairo, 1329/1911, p. 101 ff.; GAUDERNEY-DEMEUVĪNES, *Le Pèlerinage à la Mèkka: Étude d'histoire religieuse*, Paris, 1923; and T. FAHD, *Le Pèlerinage de l'Arabie centrale à la veille de l'Ègère*, Paris, 1968, p. 203-247.

⁵⁶ U. RUBIN, *The Great Pilgrimage of Muhammad*, in *Journal of Semitic Studies*, 27 (1982), p. 255f. (hereafter: RUBIN, *The Great Pilgrimage*). See also Ibn Isḥāq's *Sira*, which mentions a variety of practices (GUILLAUME, *Life*, p. 49 ff., 87, 530f., etc.); AL-BUKHĀRĪ, 2:453, 459, etc.

⁵⁷ RUBIN, *The Great Pilgrimage*, p. 243-247. When Samura b. Jundab is attributed with the report that Jews and Christians made the *ḥajj* at the same time, he was probably referring to the Arabization of the Northwest Semitic word *ḥajj*, a cognate with the Arabic *ḥajj* which refers in Hebrew to the Jewish festivals of Sukkot, Passover, and Shavu'ot which were, incidentally, pilgrimage festivals when the Temple in Jerusalem was standing. The pre-Islamic pilgrimage period may have taken place in the fall corresponding to Sukkot or, more likely, in the spring corresponding to Passover and Easter (*ibid.*, p. 244-246). Other evidence supporting Jewish or Christian connection to the holy sites exists in the repeated tradition that pictures of Abraham and/or Jesus and Mary hung in the Ka'ba (A. J. WINSOR and J. JOMIER, art. *Ka'ba*, in *Et.*, p. 320).

that period. Qur'an 2:158, for example, allows for moving back and forth between the two Meccan hills of al-Safa and al-Marwa during the Pilgrimage ritual as if answering a question among those who questioned the propriety of the ritual⁵⁸. Qur'an 2:189 relates to the proper time for making the Pilgrimage and again, presumes a difference of opinion regarding pre-Islamic custom and the Islamic pilgrimage ritual as it was evolving during the lifetime of Muhammad⁵⁹. By taking the plain meaning of the Qur'an verses referring directly to Pilgrimage, we would learn the following basic information⁶⁰.

2:158 Al-Safa and al-Marwa are to be included among the «symbols of God» (*shā'ir Allah*). They may be circumambulated by whomever performs the Hajj or the 'Umra pilgrimages.

2:189 The time for the Pilgrimage is determined by the moon. One should enter one's dwellings by the door (when in a state of ritual consecration for the Pilgrimage) rather than by other means.

2:196 One should complete the Hajj and 'Umra, but if that is not possible, one should send a sacrifice and remain in a state of ritual consecration⁶¹ until it is received. Whoever leaves the state of ritual consecration of the 'Umra part of the pilgrimage before entering it again for the Hajj must provide a sacrifice or fast unless they live in the Sacred Precinct of Mecca⁶².

2:197 Whoever engages in the Pilgrimage must refrain from quarreling and sexual activity of any kind. Provisions for the journey (to the sacred sites) should be taken along.

2:198 The *ifāda* from 'Arafa⁶³ is part of the Hajj ritual, but when pouring forth from 'Arafa⁶⁴, God's name should be invoked at the Sacred Monument (*al-Mash'ar al-ḥarām*).

⁵⁸ Early exegesis assumed that the revelation of this verse was in response to those who would not perform this act because of its association with pre-Islamic polytheism (M. AYOUB, *The Qur'an and its Interpreters*, Albany, 1984, p. 176f. [hereafter: AYOUB, *Qur'an*]).

⁵⁹ AYOUB, *Qur'an*, p. 199-200.

⁶⁰ A great deal of interpretation of the meaning of all of these verses can be found in the exegetical literature, but the list which follows here attempts specifically to derive only the plainest meaning of the qur'anic text. In some cases, the plain meaning of the text is so obscure without assuming some knowledge of current or pre-Islamic practice that generally accepted assumptions have been applied in the summary given here.

⁶¹ Pilgrims enter into a state of ritual consecration (*iḥrām*) before entering into the sacred areas to perform the Hajj ritual.

⁶² Those living within the Sacred Precinct would presumably endure unreasonable hardship if they were bound by this requirement.

⁶³ *Ifāda* is a technical term describing the manner in which pilgrims move from certain locations within the ritual cycle of Pilgrimage. It is sometimes translated as «pouring forth», and refers to the brisk walk of a large group of people moving in unison.

⁶⁴ A folk-etymology is often given in the exegetical literature associating Abraham with various locations in the Pilgrimage cycle. 'Arafa is explained through a homily on the

2:199 The *ifāda* should take place where it was done traditionally.
 2:200 God's name should be invoked upon completion of the ritual stations.

2:203 God's name should be invoked at the proper time.

3:97 One of the clear signs (*ayāt bayyināt*) in Mecca is the Station of Abraham. Pilgrimage to the Ka'ba is a requirement for those who are able.

3:98 The People of the Book do not agree with us about God's «signs» (*ayāt Allah*).

5:2 Hunted animals are forbidden as food while one is in a state of ritual consecration.

5:3 God's symbols (*shu'ā'ir Allah*) and the sacred months should not be profaned, nor should the sacrificial offering (*al-hadya*) nor the practice of placing garlands on the animals destined to be ritual sacrifices (*al-qalā'id*), nor the faithful of the Sacred House (*amīn al-bayt al-harām*). Hunting is allowed when one is not in a state of ritual consecration.

5:98 One who is in a state of ritual consecration may not kill hunted food. One may, however, be absolved from sin for doing so by bringing an acceptable offering to the Ka'ba, giving food to the poor, or fasting.

5:99 Hunted food from the sea is permitted while in a state of ritual consecration, but not hunted food from land.

5:100 God has made the Ka'ba, the Sacred House, a symbolic pillar (*qiyām*) for humanity, and also the sacred months and the sacrifice (*al-hadya*).

9:3-4 From the day of the Great Pilgrimage (*al-hajj al-akbar*), God and His apostle are free from any obligations to non-Muslims except those with which they have a prior pact.

9:19 True religious conviction is more important than giving water to pilgrims and maintaining the Sacred Mosque.

22:26 God's House should be purified for those engaged in its circumambulation or prostrating or standing before it [in ritual observance].

22:27 The Pilgrimage is proclaimed for all humanity, which will come from all over the world to engage in it.

22:28 God's name should be invoked over meat permitted to be eaten during the prescribed days. One may eat of it, but must also feed the poor with it.

22:29 The proper rites (*rafathahum*) should be performed, vows performed, and the ancient House circumambulated.

22:30 Whoever honors God's sacred [Pilgrimage?] ceremonies (*hurumāt Allah*) will prosper. Permitted meat is allowed, except for what is specifically forbidden.

22:32-33 Truly honoring God's symbols (*shu'ā'ir Allah*) is personally beneficial. These are in reference to the ancient House (*Thumma ma'illuhā ila al-bayt al-atīq*).

These two dozen references in five chapters treat the circumambulation of the Ka'ba, the movement between the hills of al-Safa and al-Marwa, entering and exiting the state of ritual consecration for the rites, some of the requirements for being in that state, the pouring out (*ifāda*) from 'Arafa, the making of animal sacrifice, and a few other details. The Qur'anic references to Pilgrimage nevertheless lack many of the basics and most of the details of both current practice and what we know of pre-Islamic practice. The Qur'an omits such basic components as the Halting Ritual (*wuqūf*) at 'Arafa or even the mention of Mina and its ritual stations. The Qur'an clearly does not intend to give definitive instructions regarding the ritual requirements and exceptions, but what information is provided is brought forth without mention of Abraham or any other historical or legendary characters.

As would be expected, however, the exegetical literature tends to fill in the many gaps in the Qur'anic references. Some reports attributed to early authorities provide occasions for the various Qur'anic revelations to Muhammad, many of which are connected to issues of Pilgrimage practice. Others explain the meaning of technical terms or ritual references in a way that gives practical details for making what came to be considered an acceptable Pilgrimage. Many also reveal the intent among the exegetes to anchor what had evolved into current trends of ritual practice to the text of scripture.

As with the exegetical literature treating Abraham's association with Mecca, various genres of exegesis supply a pool of traditional reports describing both Abraham's call to the Pilgrimage (as in Qur'an 22:26-27) and his own quintessential Pilgrimage which, in many narratives, immediately followed. These reports are found in formal Qur'an exegesis (*Tafsīr*), the universal histories (*Tārīkh*), and the hagiographic collections (*Qisās al-anbiyā'*). The same sources which provide narratives

Arabic root *ʿ-r-f* meaning to «know» (See AL-AZARUĀI 1:33; AL-YA'QUBĀI 25; AL-TABARĀI, *Commentary*, 1:554; AL-TABARĀI 2:160; IBN KATHĪR, *Commentary*, 1:184, etc.). The practice of providing etymologies for placenames and personal names is an editorial practice which attempts to derive meaning from a name the original significance of which has been lost.

about Abraham's journeys to Mecca and his connection to its religious shrines often include reports describing Abraham's association with the Pilgrimage.

All reports in the sample relating to the topic were recorded, analyzed, and compared with one another and with the reports relating to Abraham's transfer to Mecca and building its religious shrines. A total of thirty-six reports were identified and recorded⁶⁵. Of this total, twenty-two treat only Abraham's original proclamation of the Pilgrimage, eight treat only Abraham's first and quintessential Pilgrimage, and six treat both. Eleven reports are attributed to Ibn 'Abbas, six to Mujahid, and the remainder to a variety of authorities or appear without attribution.

ABRAHAM CALLS HUMANITY TO THE PILGRIMAGE

Of the reports attributed to Ibn 'Abbas, all but one are brief (three or four lines) and relate only to Abraham's call for the Pilgrimage⁶⁶. In these traditions, Abraham is commanded to call humanity to the Pilgrimage after he had laid the foundations of the Ka'ba⁶⁷. Abraham begins his call or stands upon the stone (*al-hajr*), upon the Station (*al-Muqām*), or climbs up nearby Mt. Abu Qubays. The content of his call varies from «Did your Lord not take a House and command you to make the Pilgrimage to it?» to «O people, the Pilgrimage is prescribed for you!» or «O people, return to your Lord!» In response, humanity answered with the liturgical statement recited throughout the sequence of the Pilgrimage ritual and known as the *talbiya*⁶⁸. In some renditions,

⁶⁵ This number excludes comments by the exegetes themselves or reports whose intentions were to clarify specific points of grammar, meanings of words, etc. This number corresponds roughly with the forty renditions of Abraham's transfer to Mecca and forty-two renditions of his building the Ka'ba.

⁶⁶ AL-TABARĪ, *History*, 286-287; *Commentary*, 17:144-145; AL-TABARĪ 4:97. The only report providing an account of his own Pilgrimage is from IBN KATHĪR, *Commentary*, 1:184 (s.v. Q. 2:128).

⁶⁷ This is mentioned specifically in four reports provided by al-Tabarī (*History*, 286-287, and *Commentary*, 17:144).

⁶⁸ The *talbiya* is a ritual statement of intent invoked throughout the Pilgrimage from the moment of assuming the state of ritual consecration (*ihrām*). Various versions of the statement beginning with *labbayka Allahumma labbayka* were used in both the pre-Islamic and Islamic pilgrimages (A. S. TRATTON, *Notes on Religion in Early Arabia*, in *Le Muséon*, 72 [1959], p. 193-195; N. A. FARIS, *The Book of Ibadat. Being a Translation from the Arabic of the Kitāh al-Amām by Hishām Ibn-Abī-Kalbi*, Princeton, 1952, p. 5 and note 16; M. J. KRISTEN, *Labbayka, Allahumma Labbayka... On a Monothestic Aspect of a Talhiyya Practice, in Jerusalem Studies in Arabic and Islam*, 2 [1980], p. 33-57; A. J. WENSHICK, art. *Talbiya*, in *First Encyclopedia of Islam*, IV, p. 640).

even inanimate objects such as stones, trees and the dust of the earth joined in with the liturgical response. In a few renditions, Abraham voices his concern that his call will not reach all of humanity, but God assures Abraham that He will ensure that the message is heard by all. And indeed, even those not yet born heard the call, assuming all of humanity throughout all time to be formally apprised of the obligation to perform the Pilgrimage.

Five of the six reports attributed to Mujahid also describe Abraham's call for the Pilgrimage⁶⁹. Even shorter than the Ibn 'Abbas renditions (two or three lines), two place him upon the Station (*al-Muqām*) and two give the actual words of his call as the *talbiya*.

The other references to Abraham's call in the sources are also usually quite brief⁷⁰. In some renditions, Abraham calls to the four directions of the compass. In the Shi'ite works of al-Ya'qūbī and al-Qummī, Abraham stands on the *Muqām* which is miraculously raised up higher than the mountains so that his voice could reach all of humanity. Abraham is also portrayed as standing on *al-rukn* of the Ka'ba or upon Mt. Thabir, a few miles to the northeast of Mecca and adjacent to the plain of Mina. Despite the noteworthy brevity of virtually all renditions of this theme, the various renditions of Abraham's call to humanity display a great deal of diversity in where Abraham stands, in the specific message of his call, and in the specifics regarding the response to his call. The only consistent motif in this series of reports is the *talbiya*, usually a response to Abraham's original proclamation, which is found in eighteen of the twenty-eight reports describing Abraham's call to the Pilgrimage.

The textual inconsistency in these reports is striking. No two are alike, even though many are ascribed to the same authoritative source. The great variety suggests that they do not represent a coherent tradition, but rather evolved as exegetical responses to the reading of Qur'an 22:27 in which Abraham is instructed to call all humanity to the Pilgrimage. Each report fills out the Qur'anic reference by describing how Abraham fulfilled God's command to him. The only consistent motif in the entire field of reports is the *talbiya*, the liturgical response recited in the pre-Islamic pilgrimages to the holy sites in the vicinity of Mecca. The incorporation of the *talbiya* in these reports ensured this

⁶⁹ AL-TABARĪ, *History*, 287; *Commentary*, 17:144-145 (cf. AL-AZBAQĪ 1:34). Only IBN KATHĪR, *Commentary*, 1:183-4 (s.v. Q. 2:128) describes Abraham's Pilgrimage.

⁷⁰ With the exception of AL-AZBAQĪ 1:33-34. Cf. IBN SA'D 1:39-40; AL-TABARĪ, *History*, 287; *Commentary*, 1:354, 17:144-145; AL-QUMMĪ 2:83; AL-THA'LABI 88-89; AL-KUĀTĪ 145; IBN AL-ATHĪR 107; IBN KATHĪR, *Commentary*, 1:363.

important liturgical proclamation a place in the Islamic Pilgrimage by providing an acceptable origin in the words of the prophet Abraham or in the response to his primordial call. The decided lack of consistency among the reports, even among those attributed to the same sources, suggests that they do not reflect a coherent early or pre-Islamic tradition associating Abraham with the call to Pilgrimage.

ABRAHAM'S QUINTESENTIAL PILGRIMAGE

The fourteen reports describing Abraham's original Pilgrimage⁷¹ also exhibit a wide variance in their characterization of his acts. The thrust of the portrayals, however, is consistent with what has come to represent acceptable options for Muslims performing the Pilgrimage. Most renditions begin with the Hajj proper, beginning with the Day of Watering.⁷² Some, however, have Abraham commence with circumambulating the House, corresponding to the *tawāf al-quḍūm*, and his doing the «running» ritual (*sa'y*) between al-Safa and al-Marwa. Though not required, the performance of the circumambulations and the Safa and Marwa sequence represents the proper procedure today for those whose intentions are to perform the ritual of both the Hajj and the 'Umra, a type of Pilgrimage sequence known as *ḥajj qirān*.

A majority of reports in the sample portray Abraham leaving Mecca for Mina on the Day of Watering (*yawm al-tarwīya*), where he prays the four required prayers: *al-dhuhr*, *al-ʿaṣr*, *al-maghrib* and *al-ʿiṣhā'*. After spending the night in Mina, he prays the morning prayer (*al-fajr* or *al-ṣubḥ*).

He then leaves for 'Arafa, where he stays until sunset. In some renditions he combines the two prayers, *al-dhuhr* and *al-ʿaṣr*, and engages in the required halting rite (*al-wuqūf*) at 'Arafa. After sunset he moves onward to al-Muzdalifa. In some renditions he combines the two prayers, *al-maghrib* and *al-ʿiṣhā'* at al-Muzdalifa as is expected today, and in some he engages in a second halting (*wuqūf*) also expected today on the morning of the 10th of the month.

⁷¹ AL-AZRAQĪ I:33-34; AL-YA'QŪBĪ 25-26; AL-ṬABARĪ, *History*, I:287-289; *Commentary*, I:553-554; AL-QUMĪ 1:62; AL-ṬHA'LĀBĪ 86; AL-ṬABARĪ I:471-472, 474; AL-KISĀT 145; IBN AL-ATHĪR 107; IBN KATHĪR I:183-184.

⁷² *Yawm al-tarwīya*. Since early in the Islamic period, this day corresponds with the eighth day of the Islamic month, *dhū al-ḥijja*. For an English summary of the current Pilgrimage sequence, see A. KAMAL, *The Sacred Journey*, New York, 1961, or G. E. VAN CIRIENBACH, *Muhammadian Festivals*, New York, 1951.

He then returns to Mina from al-Muzdalifa and performs the lapidation or stone throwing ritual. In some renditions, he then offers a sacrifice and shaves.

Some renditions then depict his return to Mecca where he performs another set of circumambulations, corresponding to what has come to be known as the *tawāf al-ʿiḍāda* or *tawāf al-ziyār*. A few reports then portray his return to Mina a third time, where he «completed his Pilgrimage».

This basic ritual sequence is fully in keeping with the acceptable Pilgrimage ritual today. It raises no questions regarding the proper expectations for an acceptable Pilgrimage according to the four surviving schools of Islamic law and custom. When examining individual renderings of Abraham's Pilgrimage, however, and comparing them to one another as well as to the ritual requirements given by the major schools of Islamic law, one is struck by the fact that Abraham's actions in the various portrayals are far from consistent. The sum of all the renditions is consistent with what has become normative Islamic practice, but the individual portrayals exhibit a surprising variety.

Eight reports begin Abraham's Pilgrimage sequence on the Day of Watering, where he goes to Mina and spends the night before proceeding to 'Arafa the following day. Six reports, however, omit the overnight stop at Mina entirely. Three begin the Pilgrimage with the early circumambulation of the Ka'ba, and two of these proceed directly from there to the running ritual (*al-sa'y*) and then to 'Arafa. Two others begin with the running ritual without his circumambulating the Ka'ba, and continue with a visit to Mina where Abraham is confronted by Satan and throws stones at him *before* proceeding to 'Arafa.

All but two fragmentary renditions include mention of 'Arafa, where the halting ritual (*al-wuqūf*), the central ritual of the Islamic Pilgrimage takes place. Six of these reports, however, do not refer in any way to the halting ritual. Four of these six are more interested in providing an etymological explanation for the name, 'Arafa based on the verb «to know» (*'-r-f*).⁷³ Six renditions report that Abraham combined the *dhuhr* and *ʿaṣr* prayers at 'Arafa (as is done today). One narrative mentions that Abraham built a place of prayer (*masjid*) in 'Arafa upon his arrival there, where he performed his prayers⁷⁴.

⁷³ AL-AZRAQĪ (Ibn Ishaq); AL-YA'QŪBĪ; IBN KATHĪR I:183-3 (Mujahid), I:184 (Ibn 'Abbas).

⁷⁴ AL-YA'QŪBĪ 25. This aspect, like much of al-Ya'qūbī's material on Abraham, reflects an association with biblical motifs, where Abraham is depicted as a founder of religious shrines (Cf. *Genesis* 12:7; 13:4, 13:18; 21:3).

The station at al-Muzdalifa is also portrayed quite differently in the nine accounts including it in Abraham's precedential Pilgrimage. Part of the ambiguity here has to do with the fact that this station is referred to also as Jam' and al-Mash'ar *al-mash'ar al-haram*⁷³. Two renditions report that Abraham went to al-Mash'ar al-Haram after having arrived in al-Muzdalifa, referring therefore to a specific location within al-Muzdalifa.⁷⁴ Abraham combines the *maghrib* and *'isha'* prayers in four renditions, spends the night in four, and then prays the morning prayer referred to as *ghada* in three renditions. He performs the halting ritual in al-Muzdalifa in four reports, three of them taking place at Quzah and one at Jam'.

Seven renditions then bring him back to Mina where he performs the lapidation, and five include him giving a sacrifice and shaving. A number of reports break off after the station in al-Muzdalifa or Mina. Four bring Abraham back to the Ka'ba where he performs the circumambulations corresponding to today's *tawaf al-ifada* or *tawaf al-ziyar*. In three reports, he performs the *ifada* to the Ka'ba. Two bring him back to Mina a third time for the last lapidation at the pillars, ending with the note that he then completed his Pilgrimage.

The fourteen accounts of Abraham's precedential Pilgrimage exhibit a wide variety of depictions of the Pilgrimage ritual and sequence. This fact supports not only the view that pre-Islamic practice varied widely, but also that the earliest Islamic Pilgrimage ritual was hardly standardized. All the ritual sequences are linked to the person of Abraham for authority; the great variety of depictions suggests that they represent attempts to provide an authoritative grounding for particular Pilgrimage practices. If the accounts exhibited a consistency in content, style, language, or use of literary or ritual motifs such as were found among the reports connecting Abraham to the Ka'ba in Mecca, they would reflect the reality of a coherent tradition being passed down largely intact and representing a unified cultural norm. The pool of reports here examined do not exhibit this kind of consistency. They appear, rather, as if they associate Abraham with the Pilgrimage only in order to validate a particular pilgrimage practice, thereby adding further support to the view that Abraham's association with the rites of pilgrimage was not common knowledge in pre-Islamic or perhaps even early Islamic Arabia.

Perhaps the most varied aspect of Abraham's Pilgrimage activities is

in relation to the lapidation, where Abraham's act of throwing stones is closely associated with confronting and defeating Satan⁷⁵. Current and traditional Islamic practice calls for a lapidation ritual in Mina at two separate occasions. The first is on the 10th of the month (of *dhu al-hijja*), when pilgrims throw seven stones at a stone pillar known as al-Jamra al-'Aqaba in Mina after returning there from spending the night at al-Muzdalifa. Pilgrims are expected to return to Mina during the 11th-13th of the month. These days are known as *ayyam al-ashrak*, and one of the ritual expectations during this period is to perform another lapidation by throwing seven pebbles each day at each of three stone pillars.

Fully eleven of the fourteen reports describe Abraham throwing stones in a manner which provides a precedent for the lapidation ritual. Two of the three reports omitting this act are fragmentary⁷⁶. Only al-Ya'qubi offers a full narrative rendering of Abraham's Pilgrimage without mentioning the lapidation, but the intent of this report is largely devoted to establishing the association between Abraham's attempted sacrifice of his son and the Pilgrimage⁷⁷.

Among the eleven reports including Abraham's lapidation can be found a wide variety of depictions of when it took place. Only two follow what has become current practice as outlined above⁷⁸. Three reports portray the lapidation on the first visit to Mina, but it takes place on the way to 'Arafa and one day prior to the Halting Ritual there⁷⁹. Although agreeing with one another about the occurrence of the lapidation before 'Arafa, each of these reports portrays the act quite differently and uses different terminology⁸⁰. Three other reports refer to

⁷³ *Al-shayjan*, or the devil (*shaytan*). The two terms are used interchangeably. The lapidation at al-'Aqaba in Mina is sometimes referred to as 'stoning the devil'.

⁷⁴ AL-QUMUL 1:62, AL-TABASATI 1:471f.

⁷⁵ See R. FIRESTONE, *Abraham's Son as the Intended Sacrifice (Al-Dhabib, Qur'an 37:99-133): Issues in Qur'anic Exegesis*, in *JSS*, 34 (1989), p. 109-110 (hereafter: FIRESTONE, *Abraham's Son*), where motif # 6 should read: «Abraham takes the knife and lays his son down on top of a donkey saddle at Jamrat al-'Aqaba».

⁷⁶ AL-TABASATI 287-88 (attributed to 'Abdallah b. al-Zubayr) and IAN AL-ATIFA (no attribution).

⁷⁷ In current Islamic practice, it occurs in Mina the day after the Halting Ritual in 'Arafa.

⁷⁸ The lapidation in these reports would take place on the 8th of the month. AL-TABASATI 1:54 (al-Suddi) has Abraham stoning Satan at the tree at al-'Aqaba, at al-Jamra al-Thamiya, and at al-Jamra al-Thalitha before arriving at 'Arafa. He repeats the act upon his return to Mina from al-Muzdalifa. IAN KATIFA 1:183-4 (Mujahid) has Abraham confronted by the devil at the tree at al-'Aqaba and then again at al-Jamra al-Wusta, where Gabriel instructs Abraham to say the *talbiya* as he throws the stones. Abraham's act prevented the devil from entering into the Pilgrimage. IAN KATIFA 1:184 (Ibn 'Abbas) has Satan first appearing to Abraham at al-Mas'a even before leaving Mecca, but Abraham

⁷⁹ Cf. Qur'an 2:198.

⁸⁰ AL-YA'QUBI, AL-KISA'.

the first lapidation in Mina after al-Muzdalifa, but end their narrative without reference to a second lapidation⁸⁵. Two reports consist of a brief and nearly identical list of Abraham's ritual stations, the last of which is the «throwing at the Jamras» (*rama al-jimār*) after the *ifāda* from Jam'⁸⁶. And al-Azraqī provides a report in which the devil appears to Abraham at al-Jamra al-'Aqaba, al-Jamra al-Wusta, and al-Jamra al-Sufia in Mina⁸⁷. Gabriel instructs him to throw seven stones at the devil, after which the devil disappears. It is unclear from this narrative whether it takes place before or after the Halting Ritual at 'Arafa.

All these renditions agree about the stoning of the pillars in Mina, a common practice of the pre-Islamic pilgrimage rituals. They exhibit very little agreement, however, about how or when Abraham was involved in the act of stoning the pillars. Adding to the confusion is the fact that other largely unrelated traditions evolved to connect Abraham to the lapidation ritual as well. Two groups of these traditions are centered around Abraham's attempted sacrifice of his son⁸⁸. One group depicts Satan trying to hinder Abraham from carrying out the sacrifice at the very stone pillars in Mina where Satan tries in our sample to deter Abraham from performing the Pilgrimage⁸⁹. Another group omits Satan from the story entirely and is organized around Abraham and his son's attempts to bring the redemptive ram provided by God in place of the son to the altar for sacrifice. The ram, which is not caught in a thicket in the Islamic renditions of the legend, runs away from his would-be captors. In order to capture it, Abraham or his son throws seven stones at it three times; at the location of al-Jamra al-'Ula, al-Jamra al-Wusta, and al-Jamra al-Kubra⁹⁰.

All three groups of legends connect Abraham to the lapidation in Mina. This, however, is virtually the only aspect they hold in common.

bettered him (*zabāhu*). Satan then appeared to Abraham again at Mina where Gabriel had brought him to spend the night before proceeding to 'Arafa. Abraham threw seven stones at him at al-Jamra al-'Aqaba, at al-Jamra al-Wusta, and at al-Jamra al-Quwa.

⁸⁵ AL-TABARĪ, *History*, 289 (the Prophet) has Abraham simply «throwing at the Jamra» (*rumā al-jamra*) after making the *ifāda* from Jam'. AL-TĪH LĀL 88 likewise refers in passing to «throwing at the Jamras» at Mina after the *ifāda* from Quzah in al-Muzdalifa (al-Muzdalifa and Jam' refer to the same area). AL-KISĀT depicts both Abraham and Ishmael throwing seven stones at the devil in Mina, because the devil will disappear whenever a stone is thrown at him.

⁸⁶ AL-TABARĪ 1:553 (Qatada), and AL-TABARĪ 1:474 (Qatada).

⁸⁷ AL-AZRAQĪ 33-34 (attributed to Ibn Ishaq).

⁸⁸ Qur'an 37:99-113.

⁸⁹ See FIRESTONE, *Abraham's Son*, p. 104-106. All are given on the authority of Ibn 'Abbas and are closely related to the reports in our sample.

⁹⁰ See FIRESTONE, *Journeys*, p. 244. These reports are also attributed to Ibn 'Abbas.

Each group is based upon a different narrative, and the use of terminology and narrative style varies quite dramatically between them and even between most of the individual reports in our sample of Abraham's Pilgrimage ritual. The conclusion that must be drawn from this is that the motif of Abraham stoning Satan at the Jamras in Mina does not represent a well-known pre-Islamic tradition that had been taken over and incorporated into Islamic lore. Were it a coherent pre-Islamic legend, it would likely have come into Islam in a far more consistent manner.

The fact that Abraham is associated with the lapidation in three different categories of legend attests to his importance in the mindset of the pre-Islamic and early Islamic periods. As suggested by the consistency and popularity of the legends connecting Abraham to Mecca and the building of the Ka'ba, he is closely in association with the Meccan sanctuary. The early Muslims recognized this known connection and took it a step further by associating him with lapidation in order to find an acceptable justification for continuing this popular pilgrimage custom, re-defining the origin of the act in terms that would be acceptable to the evolving sensibilities of early Islam.

The great variety of ritual behavior attributed to Abraham can be attributed partially to the fact that the goal of these narratives is not to provide the exact requirements for an acceptable Pilgrimage. The narratives nevertheless reveal the ritual expectations of those telling the stories. Some of the variations may also be explained by the fact that the narratives do not regularly provide Abraham's actions to the very end of his Pilgrimage. Some end abruptly after providing an etymological explanation for a name or term such as 'Arafa or *tarwīya*⁹¹. Others appear to be concerned with only one particular item in the ritual sequence and then end without detailing the rest of Abraham's Pilgrimage⁹². The goal of these narratives is to provide acceptable authority for their points of view by associating them with the precedential Pilgrimage of Abraham. Abraham's association with the halting ritual in 'Arafa, the lapidation, or the ritual sacrifice in Mina, all of which are not mentioned in the Qur'an, renders these acts fully within the parameters of Abrahamic monotheism and therefore acceptable to Islam⁹³. It removes the old pagan associations known from the pre-Islamic period that would render such acts unacceptable. Because of Abraham's stature in pre-Islamic Arabia as a holy man, the founder of the Ka'ba,

⁹¹ AL-AZRAQĪ, AL-QUWĪ, *Ibn KATHĪR* 183-4.

⁹² AL-TABARĪ, *History*, 287-8; *Commentary*, 1:554; AL-KISĀT, *Ibn AL-'ATHĪR*.

⁹³ Cf. Qur'an 3:67 [also 2:130, 3:95, 4:125, 6:161, etc.].

and even *ḥanifī* monotheist⁹², it made perfect sense to the early Muslims to associate him also with the rites of the Pilgrimage, thereby rendering what originated as pagan rites fully acceptable to an Islamic world view.

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These conclusions are drawn from analysis of the exegetical literature. We are still left with the problem of Qur'an 22:26-27, which appears to depict God instructing Abraham to call humanity to make the Pilgrimage. A clear Qur'anic association between Abraham and the Pilgrimage would call into question the preceding analysis of the exegetical literature. A careful reading of the Qur'anic text, however, will quickly demonstrate that his association with the Pilgrimage is not at all clear. The Arabic verses read:

wa idh bawwā hā li-ibrāhīm makān al-bayt an lā tushrik bi shay'an waṭahhir baytiya liilāhīn wal-qā'imīn wal-rukka' al-sujūd wa'adh-dhīn fi al-nās bit-taḥjīj ya tūka rīḡālan wa'ā'ā lā kullī dāmīr ya tīna mīn kullī fajjīn 'amīq

My translation follows:

Remember, We established Abraham at the site of the House. So Do not associate anything with Me, and Purify My House for those who circumambulate it, stand [before it in prayer], and bow and prostrate themselves. Proclaim the Pilgrimage among humankind! They will come to you on foot and on all kinds of steeds from every corner [of the world] (Q. 22:26-27).

Most exegetes consider the second part of 22:26 beginning with *So do not associate anything with me* (*an lā tushrik bi shay'an*) and continuing through verse 27 to be directed to Abraham⁹³. The syntax of 22:26, however, coupled with the use of the third person reference to Abraham and the use of the particle *an* with the imperative (in the second person – *an lā tushrik*) suggests that both verses were directed entirely to Muhammad. The imperative form of the verb occurs here in a verb chain in which all are addressed to the same person: *lā tushrik ... waṭahhir ... wa'adh-dhīn*. In fact, the entire pericope was directed to

⁹² U. Rubin, *Ḥanifiyya' and Ka'ba* (see above n. 28).

⁹³ AL-ṬABARĪ, *Commentary*, 17:143-145; AL-QUMĀṢĪ 2:83; AL-ṬABARĪ 4:97; IḤN KATHĪB, *Commentary*, 3:215-216, etc. And indeed, most English renditions of the Qur'an represent the verse differently than in my rendering in order to make this clear. Yusuf Ali has already been quoted. M. M. Pickthall renders it, «And (remember) when We prepared for Abraham the place of the (holy) House, saying: 'Ascribe thou no thing as partner unto Me... And proclaim unto mankind the Pilgrimage'. A. J. Arberry: «And when We settled for Abraham the place of the House: 'Thou shalt not associate with Me anything. And do thou purify My House ... and proclaim among men the Pilgrimage...».

Muhammad who was privy to the original revelation, and with Abraham referred to in the third person. The Qur'anic convention of introducing a verse with the indeclinable noun, (*wa*) *idh* is invariably understood as *udhkur mā kāna*, meaning «Remember what occurred», therefore addressing the section to Muhammad⁹⁴. Abraham's founding of the Ka'ba by God's will was cited to Muhammad in order to emphasize the importance of the following phrase: *so do not associate anything with me*. Abraham's association with the founding of the Ka'ba was recalled here because it was common knowledge in pre-Islamic Mecca. Abraham is referred to in order to emphasize to Muhammad the Ka'ba's originally pure state as a shrine to the one God, and it is followed with the command to Muhammad to refrain from associating any other divinity with God and to purify the originally monotheistic shrine from the corruption of the many idols placed there. It is Muhammad who was the one intended to proclaim the responsibility of pilgrimage to the Ka'ba.

That Muhammad and not Abraham was intended in the command to proclaim the Pilgrimage is presumed by al-Hasan and al-Jabā'ī, though their interpretation is uncommon⁹⁵. The likelihood of this minority opinion may be supported by the fact that aside from this verse, the Qur'an never associates Abraham with the Pilgrimage or its rites⁹⁶. This observation has been supported from the preceding analysis of the exegetical literature. In conclusion, both the Qur'anic and exegetical literature's association of Abraham with the sacred sites of Mecca hearken back to pre-Islamic associations. His association with the Pilgrimage, however is an Islamic innovation that was unknown in pre-Islamic times.

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⁹⁴ J. PENNIEZ, *Dictionary and Glossary of the Koran*, Cambridge, 1970, p. 4.

⁹⁵ AL-ṬABARĪ 4:97 s.v. Q. 22:27. Muhammad Asad follows this view in his English rendition of Q. 22:27 (*The Message of the Qur'an*, Gibraltar, 1980, p. 509).

⁹⁶ Qur'an 2:128 is sometimes understood by Islamic exegetes to refer to the stations of the Pilgrimage. In the context of the Qur'an, however, the verse portrays Abraham asking God to make him and his progeny pious and teach them the proper way to worship (in general terms – not specifically in regard to the Pilgrimage). The commentators read the word *muṣabbiḥ* as either «sacred rites» or «places of worship». *Our Lord, cause us and our progeny to submit to Your will. Show us our places of ritual (wa'arṣūnā manāṣikā) and turn toward us, for You are forgiving, compassionate.*