

UPF Dusseldorf, Germany Interreligious Prayer Circle - Islam's Feast of Sacrifice

Anja Brina
July 10, 2023



UPF Düsseldorf hosted an interreligious prayer circle to which Mr. Vahit Arslan, representative of the international MIHR Foundation and its special initiative "Civilization, Wisdom, Charity, Progress" (ZWWA), was invited to give a presentation on: 'The Feast of Sacrifice the origin and significance of the supreme Islamic festival'.

The festival revolves around the story of the prophet Ibrahim (Abraham), who, according to Islamic tradition, was willing to sacrifice his son Ismael (Isaac) as commanded by God. However, at the last minute, Ibrahim was sent a ram to sacrifice instead of Ismael. This story demonstrates the submittal and obedience of Ibrahim and Ismael to God and trust in his mercy.

The Feast of Sacrifice is celebrated with the slaughter of a sheep or a goat, followed by meat distribution amongst family members, friends, and those in need.

The festival lasts four days and is held according to the lunar calendar. During the Feast of Sacrifice, children receive presents and new clothes, and people gather in the mosque to offer unison prayers and listen to speeches. Families and friends meet to share meals, exchange presents, and strengthen mutual bonds of love and support.

In Islam, the Festival of Sacrifice symbolizes important values such as devotion, obedience, gratitude, solidarity, and generosity. It is a reminder that we should put our own needs and desires aside in favor of the well-being of others. It is a time of spiritual growth, reflection on the sacrifices made in life, and strengthening the relationship with Allah and the community. The festival lends the opportunity for togetherness, joy, and prayer.

Mr. Arslan's presentation on the Festival of Sacrifice was extremely impressive and insightful. The prayer stone was passed around during silence and prayer, allowing each participant to speak a prayer accompanied by meditative music.

Then followed a lively exchange as we shared refreshments.

Anja Brina (English: Catriona Valenta).