

## Linking 'Āshūrā Rituals with Political Power: Canetti, Ayoub and Kippenberg's Religious Analysis

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### Abstract

From the threshold of the 1960s, researchers in the western academies gradually explored the connection between Shi'a mourning practices and their political movements. In addition to the anthropological analysis of Shiite mourning rituals in Ashura, this researchers theorized for the first time the connection between Ashura rituals and power relations in Shiite society. Although the contemporary Shias did not yet have political sovereignty in any land, these theorists realized that sooner or later a great political power would arise from among the Ashura mourning circles. This course of studies covers a period of about twenty years, it begins with the study of Ashura rituals along with similar religious rituals in other religions and leads to the understanding of the necessity of focusing more on the detailed study of the small parts of the ritual as well as the symbolic meaning of each of those parts. This one also leads to a change in approaches to further studies and marks the end of the aforementioned study period. The current study is an attempt to recognize the theories proposed in this twenty-year period, to measure their relationship with each other and to recognize the theoretical origin of each. This study aims to show how the first Western Ashura studies led to Shia phobia.

**Keywords:** Ashura; religious studies; Elias Canetti; Mahmoud Mustafa Ayoub; Hans Kippenberg; Islamic Revolution of Iran.

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