

Spring 2006 REL 622 Sacrifice

Thursdays 12:30-3:15 p.m. in HL 504

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The term "sacrifice" appears widely in both contemporary political and religious cultures and in academic discussions of religion, anthropology, and philosophy. This research seminar will trace the idea of sacrifice along two vectors: the cultural vector which we will pursue backwards from modern to ancient Near Eastern cultures, and the theoretical vector which we will analyze forwards from 19th-century to contemporary theorists of sacrifice.

Course Requirements:

Students are expected to be prepared to discuss in class all the required readings (listed below under **Sources, Culture, and Theory**). In addition, each student will (1) prepare and present a report on one additional book or set of essays (listed after **Report**), and (2) write a substantive and original research paper on a subject related to the course topic, presenting the class with a summary during the last class meeting. The finished research papers are due on or before May 11th. Students' work will be evaluated on the basis of class participation (20%), the oral and written book report (20%), the research presentation (10%) and the final research paper (50%). Undergraduate students may choose, instead of the research paper, to write three additional 5-8 page reports (for a total of four) on an additional book or set of essays (listed below after **Report** and due on the day listed). Late papers and reports will not be eligible for "A" grades.

Texts:

Carter, Jeffrey. *Understanding Religious Sacrifice: a Reader*. London: Continuum, 2003 (= *URS* below)

Ehrenreich, Barbara. *Blood Rites*, New York: Metropolitan, 1997

Green, Miranda. *Dying for the Gods*, Charleston: Tempus, 2001

Most of the source material is available on-line; click on the underlined links below in the on-line syllabus (at <http://web.syr.edu/~jwwatts/REL600s.html>). The articles preceded by an minus (-) in the list below, are available in the course reader which is in the Religion Department lounge and is also available through Bird Library's online reserve. Most of the books are on 2-day reserve or in reference at Bird Library (exceptions marked by * below).

For further resources relevant to the topic of this course, consult the [Bibliography](#) below.

Topics and Readings (for full citations, see [bibliography](#) below):

Day	Topic	Texts:
Jan 19	Introductions	

Jan 26	Contemporary Sacrifice	<p>Sources: - "Crucible of the gods" Kalasha goat sacrifice Supreme Court Ruling on Santeria Animal Sacrifices Sacrifice in 21st Century News Stories</p> <p>Culture: -Draper & Thomas, "Sacrifice" and "Sacrifice in Bible Times" -Moosa, "Sacrifice" -Yerkes, Sacrifice, chap. 1 -Jay, <i>Throughout Your Generations Forever</i>, Introduction & chap. 8.</p> <p>Theory: Carter, <i>URS</i>, 1-11 Tylor & Spencer in <i>URS</i>, chaps. 1-2</p>
Feb 2	Sacrifice in Modern Culture	<p>Sources: Sacrifice in 21st Century Political Rhetoric A "Martyr's" Biography Benito Mussolini, "What is Fascism?" Franklin D. Roosevelt, "A Call for Sacrifice"</p> <p>Culture: -Bellah, "Civil Religion in America" -Bergen, "Blood Sacrifice in the United States," <i>Reading Ritual</i>, chap. 5 -Garber & Zuckerman, "Why do we call the Holocaust 'The Holocaust'?" -Mizruchi, "Introduction," <i>Science of Sacrifice</i></p> <p>Theory: Robertson Smith & Frazer in <i>URS</i>, chaps. 3-4 Reports: Frazer, <i>The Golden Bough</i> or Smith, <i>The Religion of the Semites</i> or Mizruchi, <i>Science of Sacrifice</i></p>
Feb 9	Renaissance and Early Modernity:	<p>Sources: John Knox, "A Vindication of the Doctrine that the Sacrifice of the Mass is Idolatry", esp. 2nd syllogism. Council of Trent, "Doctrine on the Sacrifice of the Mass", "Canons on the Sacrifice of the Mass" Shakespeare, <i>Titus Andronicus</i>, act 1, scene 1. "A Blood Libel Cult: Anderl von Rinn"</p> <p>Culture: -Shuger, <i>Renaissance Bible</i>, chap. 2. -Georgourdi, "Sanctified Slaughter in Modern Greece" - Strenski, <i>Contesting Sacrifice</i>, chaps. 1 & 6.</p> <p>Theory: Hubert & Mauss, and Durkheim in <i>URS</i>, chaps. 5 & 7. Reports: Shuger, <i>Renaissance Bible</i> or Hubert & Mauss, <i>Sacrifice</i> or Strenski, <i>Contesting Sacrifice</i></p>
Feb 16	Europeans in Meso-America	<p>Sources: De Sahagun, General History 1-4, 11-12, 42-56, 78-90 Del Castillo, Discovery and Conquest 187-96, 433-39</p> <p>Culture: Arnold, <i>Eating Landscape</i>, chap. 3 Carrasco, <i>City of Sacrifice</i>, chap. 5</p> <p>Theory: Westermarck & Freud in <i>URS</i>, chaps. 6 & 8 Reports: Freud, <i>Totem and Taboo</i></p>
Feb 23	Middle Ages: Islam, Judaism, Christianity	<p>Sources: Gregory I, Letter to Abbot Mellitus Quran 22:28,30,34-37 (3 parallel translations) & Hadith on Sacrifice</p> <p>Culture: -Chazan, <i>European Jewry</i>, chap. 4.</p> <p>Theory: Bataille & Jensen in <i>URS</i>, chaps. 10 & 11 Reports: *Combs-Shilling, <i>Sacred Performances</i> or Bataille, <i>Theory of Religion</i></p>
		<p>Sources: Diocletian: Edicts Against The Christians "Certificate of Having Sacrificed to the Gods"</p>

Mar 2	Late Antiquity: Jews, Christians, & Pagans	Prohibition on Selling Christians to Pagans for Sacrificial Rites Julian and the Jews 361-363 CE Culture: -Heyman, "Power of Sacrifice," chap. 4 and conclusion O'Donnell, " The Demise of Paganism " Theory: Evans-Pritchard, de Heusch and Lincoln in <i>URS</i> , chaps. 12, 17, 21
Mar 9	Early Christianity	Sources: <i>New Testament</i> : Mark 8:34-37; 9:2-8; 14:1-15:47; John 1:29-34; 3:16-21; 6:1-71; 1 Corinthians 8:1-13; 10:14-33; 11:23-32; Hebrews 5:1-10; 7:11-28; 9:1-10:31; Revelation 4:1-6:17 Gospel of the Ebionites , esp. last 2 paragraphs. Didache , chaps. 13-14. Culture: Chilton, " The Sacrifice of Jesus " -Heyman, "Power of Sacrifice," chap. 3 Daly, "The Power of Sacrifice" in <i>URS</i> , chap. 20 Theory: Girard in <i>URS</i> , chap. 14 Reports: Girard, <i>The Girard Reader</i>
Mar 16	Spring Break	No Class
Mar 23	Hellenism and Second Temple Judaism	Sources: Livy 8.9-10 , 10.27-29 and 10.38 . Accounts of Personal Religion <i>Apocrypha/Deuterocanon</i> : 1 Maccabees 1-2, 2 Maccabees 7 - Miqzat Ma`ase ha-Torah , in <i>Texts and Traditions</i> -" Elephantine Temple Papyrus ," in <i>Texts and Traditions</i> Culture: -North, " Sacrifice and Ritual: Rome " -Heyman, "Power of Sacrifice," 1-113 -Lincoln, " The Druids and Human Sacrifice " -Twyman, " The Celts and Roman Human Sacrifice " Theory: Burkert & J.Z. Smith in <i>URS</i> , chaps. 13-19 Reports: Burkert, <i>Creation of the Sacred</i> ix-55, 102-155.
Mar 30	Sacrifice in the Iron Age: Greece	Sources: Homer, Odyssey, XI, 18-50 Hesiod, Theogony II, 507-560 Accounts of Hellenic Religious Beliefs Culture: -Jameson, " Sacrifice and Ritual: Greece " -Detienne, " The Violence of Wellborn Ladies " -Kitts, " Sacrificial Violence in the Iliad " Theory: Bloch in <i>URS</i> , chaps. 24 Ehrenreich, <i>Blood Rites</i> (all) -Detienne, " Culinary Practices ," 13-20. Reports: *Detienne & Vernant, <i>Cuisine of Sacrifice</i> Due: Paper topics
Apr 6	Sacrifice in the Iron Age: Israel & Phoenicia	Sources: <i>Hebrew Bible</i> : Exodus 13:11-16; Leviticus 1-11, 16-17; 1 Samuel 15; Isaiah 1:1-17; Jeremiah 7:1-34; Ezekiel 20:21-31; Micah 6:6-8; Genesis 4:1-26; 9; 22; Exodus 22:20, 29-30; Judges 11; 2 Kings 3:21-27 -Attridge & Oden, Philo of Byblos , 47-57, 62-63 "The Carthaginian Law of Sacrifices" Culture: -Anderson, " Sacrifice and Sacrificial Offerings (OT) ." <i>ABD</i> 5:870-86 Levenson in <i>URS</i> , chap. 22 Theory: Jay & Beers in <i>URS</i> , chaps. 23, 25 Reports: Jay, <i>Throughout Your Generations Forever</i>

		Levenson, <i>The Death and Resurrection of the Beloved Son</i>
Apr 13	Sacrifice in the Bronze Age?	Sources: - " The 'Aqhatu Legend ," COS 1.103 - Gilgamesh 11.145-169 - Egyptian prayers for offerings Culture: -Berquist, " Bronze Age Sacrificial Koine " - Lambert, " Donations of Food and Drink " Theory: Van der Leew & Van Baal in <i>URS</i> , chaps 9 & 15. - Derrida, " Whom to Give to (Knowing Not to Know) " Due: Paper thesis, bibliography and outline
Apr 20	The Archeology of Human Sacrifice	Sources: - With Escorts to the Afterlife, Pharaohs Proved Their Power - Human Sacrifices in Ancient Egypt & link to " cannibal hymn " Culture: Green, <i>Dying for the Gods</i> Theory: -Strenski, " ...Sacrifice in the 90s. " - Nancy, " The Unsacrificeable " - Robbins, " Sacrifice. " - Watts, " Rhetoric of Sacrifice "
Apr 27 1-5 pm		<i>Oral Paper presentations</i>
May 11		<i>Research Papers Due</i>

Course Bibliography:

(For this bibliography arranged by period, culture or contents, see the [Topical Bibliography on Sacrifice](#))

Anthologies:

- *Altar and Sacrifice: The Proceedings of the Third International Colloquium on the Liturgy (1St-3Rd October 1997)*. Saint Austin Press, 1999.
- *The Cuisine of Sacrifice among the Greeks*. Ed. M. Detienne and J.-P. Vernant. Tr. P. Wissig. Chicago: U. of Chicago, 1989 (French 1979).
- *Ritual and Sacrifice in the Ancient Near East*. Ed. J. Quaegebeur. Leuven: Peeters, 1993.
- *Sacrifice in Religious Experience*. Ed. Albert I. Baumgarten, Leiden: Brill, 2002.
- *Understanding Religious Sacrifice: a Reader*. Ed. Jeffrey Carter. London: Continuum, 2003.

Monographs & articles:

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- Arnold, Philip P. *Eating Landscape: Aztec and European Occupation of Tlalocan*. Boulder: University Press of Colorado, 1999.
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