

On Sacrifice

International Workshop

January 1–2, 2020, at the Van Leer Jerusalem Institute

Sacrifice, as an idea and a praxis, has been part of human life since the beginning of history. Although it has undergone many incarnations and changed almost beyond recognition, a stubborn core of this ancient idea continues to be embodied in new genres and to ignite the imagination even in the modern era. An important aspect of the phenomenon of sacrifice, suggested already by Mauss and Hubert, has been the question of the relation with the transcendent, which is constituted and maintained by the sacrificial act. However, this line of inquiry holds a radical potential – yet to be realized – for understanding the shifting history of the phenomenon of sacrifice as a history of the varying approaches to transcendence.

The workshop will be devoted to various possibilities opened by this understanding. Through an analysis of nodal points in the history of sacrifice we will inquire into the modes by which the idea of sacrifice has mediated shifting concepts of sacredness from ancient to modern times.

Wednesday, January 1

- 9:00–9:15 Greetings:
Shai Lavi, Director of the Van Leer Jerusalem Institute and Tel Aviv University
Omer Michaelis, The Hebrew University of Jerusalem
- 9:15–10:15 Opening lecture: Moshe Halbertal, The Hebrew University of Jerusalem and New York University
Sacrifice: Between Love and Violence
- 10:30–11:30 Kimberley C. Patton, Harvard Divinity School
'If I Were Hungry, I Would Not Tell You': The Gods on Sacrifice
Hila Brokman, Tel Aviv University
Self, Sacrifice, and Self-Sacrifice: The Death of Patroclus
- 12:00–13:00 Josef Stern, University of Chicago
Maimonides on Dying for God and the Aqedah

Ehud Krinis, Ben-Gurion University of the Negev
The Centrality of the Temple's Rites in Judah Halevi's Thought
- 13:00–14:00 Lunch Break
- 14:00–15:00 Gal Katz, Columbia University
Hegel on Self-Sacrifice and the Failure of Liberalism

Michael Feigenblatt, Open University
We, the Sacrifice: Reflections from Heidegger
- 15:30–16:30 Gilad Sharvit, Towson University
Guilt and Rebelliousness: On Sacrifice in Freud

Nehama Verbin, Tel Aviv University
Kierkegaard on Protest, Self-Sacrifice, and the Love of God

17:00–18:30 Guy Stroumsa, The Hebrew University of Jerusalem and Oxford University
Sacrifice Revisited: Uses and Misuses of a Core Concept in the Study Of Religion

Menachem Lorberbaum, Tel Aviv University
Sacrifice Revisited: Thoughts on the Ongoing Allure of Ritual Violence

Hillel Ben Sasson, Jewish Theological Seminary
Sacrificial Atonement and its Alternatives in the Hebrew Bible and Rabbinic Literature

19:00 **Keynote lecture** (Open to the public):
Paul Kahn, Yale University
The Political Economy of Blood
Commentator: July Cooper, Tel Aviv University

Thursday, January 2

9:00–10:30 Uri Gabbay, The Hebrew University of Jerusalem
The Consciousness of the Sacrificial Animal in Ancient Mesopotamian Rituals

Netanel Anor, Friedrich-Schiller-Universität Jena
Sacrifice in Ancient Babylonia: The Sacrificial Body as a Divine Message

Yitzhaq Feder, University of Haifa
Working the Mechanical God: Sacrifice and the Ambiguity of Divine Agency in the Bible and Ancient Near East

11:00–12:30 Lawrence H. Schiffman, New York University
Community as Temple: Sacrifice in the Dead Sea Scrolls

Shlomo Zuckier, Yale University
The “Will” to Sacrifice

Moshe Blidstein, University of Haifa
Time, Presence, and Offering in Christian Fire Rituals of Late Antiquity

12:30–13:30 Lunch Break

13:30–14:15 Nira Pereg, Shenkar College of Engineering, Design and Art
This Red Red Stuff (Video art)

14:30–16:00 Naphtali Meshel, The Hebrew University of Jerusalem
Anand Mishra, Heidelberg University
Hillel Mali, New York University

Classical Indian and Jewish Models for Thinking about Sacrifice

/ Mishra and Meshel

Ashes to Ashes: The Holy Garbage of the Temple and the Idea of Holiness

/ Mali and Meshel

The Obsessive World of Sacrifice: Loipophobia and Diplophobia

/ Meshel, Mishra, and Mali

16:30–18:00 Avigail Manekin, The Hebrew University of Jerusalem
Dangerous Dedications: The Violent Ancient Sacrifice in Text and Material

Yakir Paz and Naresh Keerthi, The Hebrew University of Jerusalem
Marked for the Gods: Branding and Sacrifice in Mesopotamia and India

Elena Mucciarelli, The Hebrew University of Jerusalem
Old Wine in a New Bottle: A Traveling Sacrifice from South India

18:15–19:00

Concluding Session

Orit Malka, Polonsky Academy Fellow, the Van Leer Jerusalem Institute
Ishay-Rosen Zvi, Tel Aviv University

ACADEMIC COMMITTEE:

Yochi Fischer, Uri Gabbay, Moshe Halbertal, Menachem Lorberbaum,
Orit Malka, Omer Michaelis, Ishay-Rosen Zvi, Dafna Schreiber

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