

RELI 205H

Sacrifice in the Ancient World



It is hard to overstate the importance of sacrifice in the history of theorizing about religion. Sacrifice has often been viewed—explicitly or implicitly—as the quintessential religious act, not only because of its prevalence among the world’s cultures, but also because it is understood to express some fundamental human or social impulse (such as communion, violence, or exchange, to name a few). In this course we will examine the phenomenon of sacrifice with particular focus on examples from the ancient Mediterranean world—here broadly defined as encompassing ancient Mesopotamia, Anatolia and the Levant (including ancient Israel), Egypt, and Greece. By considering this wide range of primary text material on sacrifice informed by a variety of theoretical perspectives, we will develop modes of close reading and analysis that enable critical reflection on other texts and cultures (including our own).

Joseph Lam
jclam@email.unc.edu

Tuesdays and Thursdays
9:30AM - 10:45AM

General Education Requirements: BN, WB

