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**Sarah Hitch and Ian Rutherford, eds., *Animal Sacrifice in the Ancient Greek World*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2017. Pp. 348. Cloth (ISBN 978-0-521-19103-6) \$99.99.**

Nancy Evans  
*Wheaton College*

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Sarah Hitch and Ian Rutherford, eds.,  
*Animal Sacrifice in the Ancient Greek World.*

Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2017. Pp. 348. Cloth  
(ISBN 978-0-521-19103-6) \$99.99.

The twentieth century witnessed successive generations of thinkers whose “grand theories” of animal sacrifice advanced research begun in the Victorian era. Hitch and Rutherford’s collection of twelve recent essays captures the current state of research on this aspect of Greek religion, as scholars from varied specialties re-evaluate their structuralist ancestors. While nineteenth- and early twentieth-century research, starting with Robertson-Smith and Frazer, worked within a largely comparative tradition, this collection showcases the wide variety of disciplines and methods applied to a topic that continues to excite debate. Classical scholars now approach the study of sacrifice in the Greek world using tools from literary and historical studies, art history, religious studies, archaeology, epigraphy, and even philosophy. In lieu of sustained comparative analyses, these essays center on the rich details of localized practice in the Greek world itself or on the edges of it.

The introduction to the volume, jointly authored by volume editors Sarah Hitch and Ian Rutherford along with contributor Fred Naiden, orients the reader to the topic and scope of the essays. Their overview of the dominant scholarly framework benefits from a succinct discussion of typical sacrificial “scripts”; equally welcome is the editors’ prescription that the horizontal and vertical axes of sacrificial ritual—sociological and theological—consistently be analyzed together. In the decades since the most visible proponents of the “grand theories” (e.g., Detienne and Vernant; Burkert) were most active, scholarship has moved away from approaches that focus mainly on *polis* religion. With this in mind, the editors organize the essays around four themes: *Victims*, *Procedure*, *Representation*, *Margins*. A substantial bibliography is followed by a full *index locorum*.

Prior critiques of late twentieth-century studies of sacrificial practice identified a bias favoring Athens based largely on the availability of evidence. Once new types of evidence were gathered, scholars began analyzing local variation in areas beyond Attica; the current volume continues that commendable work. The opening four essays explore sacrificial victims and ritual procedures through the analysis of bones—whether zooarchaeology (Ekroth, Ch. 1), archaeozoology (Larson, Ch. 2), or

osteology (Villing, Ch. 3, and Georgoudi, Ch. 4). Analysis of altar debris and bone deposits in sanctuaries throughout the Greek world give insight into actual practices, economic realities, and environmental forces—a much-needed corrective to the idealized depictions of sacrificial ritual well-known from literature and the visual arts. The possibilities to study the consumption of dogs and horses (Ekroth), deer (Larson) and birds (Villing) in sanctuaries, alongside the more expected sacrifice of cows, sheep, goats, and pigs, move scholars away from stereotypes and binaries, and closer to the adaptive flexibility of lived religion. While communal responses to ritual impurity and *miasma* may overlap with sacrificial practices, sacrifice and purification are not coextensive; their relationship to each other is more complex than we may realize (Georgoudi). The power of religious practice lies in its polysemy.

Several essays (Chs. 5-9) remain embedded in material evidence from Attica, or focused on a more traditional mode of literary analysis. An examination of a scene from the *Homeric Hymn to Hermes* (Thomas, Ch. 7) offers a template for how to use literary sources to uncover *aetia* and local knowledge in the co-evolution of literary performance and ritual practices outside of Athens. Chapters 5, 6, and 8 turn to material evidence for ritual practices from Attica (Naiden, Ch. 5; Klöckner, Ch. 8), or Attica and Ionia (Carbon, Ch. 6). Informed analyses of inscriptions and votive reliefs uncover complex representations of symmetry and reciprocity within Greek society. Regulated privileges and political hierarchies operated within the sphere of the *polis*, and yet exhibit a homogeneity that reached across *polis* boundaries (Naiden and Carbon). The representation of Athenian sacrificial ritual in votive reliefs (Klöckner) communicated not so much a mirror image of actual practice, but an expressive and deliberative choice made by individuals that attests to the cultural importance of the ritual. Another literary analysis of a scene from Aeschylus' *Seven* (Seaford, Ch. 9) likewise focuses on the emotional impact of ritual, and the powerful subjective experience of those depicted making public sacrifices and oaths in Attic drama. The power of ritual on the stage is carried over to the audience in performance.

Any familiar Athenian frame for the study of sacrifice, or any preference for classical literary sources, is thoroughly swept away in the final three essays' examination of evidence both early (16th century BCE) and late (4th century CE). Working at the "margins" of the Greek world, scholars discuss sacrifice in Hittite, Egyptian, Roman, and "pagan" contexts. After taking Burkert to task for his universalizing theory of ritual violence in *Homo Necans* (Mouton, Ch. 10), a thick description of Hittite practices does indeed point to some common ground between Hittite and later Greek customs, especially in the notion of gift-giving, and the significance of the victim's vital organs. Similar common ground appears to have existed between

Greeks, Romans, and Egyptians in Greco-Roman Egypt (Rutherford, Ch. 11); although the knowledge of Egyptian customs among Classical/Hellenistic Greeks and Romans may not have been entirely reliable, abundant literary evidence for a “transcultural conversation” holds out the possibility for knowledge of the other not entirely based on ethnic stereotyping. The final essay (Knipe, Ch. 12) vaults the reader forward into the age of Shapur and Julian, complete with a detailed discussion of Julian’s brand of Neoplatonic theurgy. In this late antique world of Persia and the Byzantine Empire, sacrificial cult in the eastern Mediterranean used symbols and symbolic actions to elevate the human soul. In this the Greeks—and Romans—were no different than other traditional Mediterranean ritual systems at the threshold of Christianity.

While each essay offers evidence that often forces the reader to shift her perspective on Greek sacrificial practices, the volume’s two most compelling arguments come in early chapters. The work of Jennifer Larson (Ch. 2) and Stella Georgoudi (Ch. 4) strongly engages the insights of Detienne, Vernant, Burkert, Parker, as well as the recently deceased scholar of religion J. Z. Smith, exemplifying fruitful new directions for scholarship. Larson’s critical rereading of French structuralism invites scholars to look at the wider systems that Greek sacrifice existed within—systems that were not simply based in the *polis* but were framed by resource availability, market forces, and environmental limitations. Villing’s conclusion (Ch. 3) for bird sacrifice and changing ritual practices reinforces Larson’s point about food production and the alimentary system. Scholarship in Religious Studies (cf. Smith) challenged scholars to question their categorization of phenomena labeled *religious*; bringing environmental and economic concerns alongside traditional worship of the gods illustrates one advantage of Smith’s approach. The future of the study of sacrifice perhaps lies in this area, encouraging scholars to develop a sensitivity to how ritual practices changed in view of environmental and economic concerns. Finally, scholars who work with material from Greek antiquity face one recurring challenge. Rutherford (Ch. 11) discusses the bias of ancient Greek writers trying to understand Egypt; this quietly begs the question of how far we have advanced in our own methods and awareness of biases. Separating ritual practices into the binaries *Greek* and *non-Greek*—whether that means Roman, Egyptian, Hittite, Jewish, “Near Eastern”, or “pagan”—does not simply label and categorize these other traditions, it can also marginalize them by assuming—perhaps implicitly supporting—a notion of some purely Greek substrate of practice. Georgoudi deftly moves beyond this conundrum by evoking the *poikilia* of Greek practices. Her analysis of the *poikilia* entailed in sacrificial and purificatory rituals reminds the reader that attention to the details

of practice combined with theoretical grounding can lead to deeper overall understanding. The Greek world indeed was a crossroads of culture and practice, and these twelve essays capture the possibility for new insights when scholars include evidence and perspectives unexplored in the past.

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Nancy Evans  
Wheaton College (Norton, MA)



Paulin Ismard, Jane Marie Todd, trans.,  
*Democracy's Slaves: A Political History of Ancient Greece.*

Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2017. Pp. 208. Cloth  
(ISBN 978-0-674-66007-6) \$35.00.

This work, originally published in French as *La démocratie contre les experts: Les esclaves publics en Grèce ancienne* (2015), is the first book-length treatment of ancient Greek public slavery since Oscar Jacob's *Les esclaves publics à Athènes* appeared in 1928—an astounding interval, given the importance of the subject. In classical Athens, there were probably well over a thousand public slaves (*dēmosioi*) who did much of the day-to-day work of *polis* administration, handling everything from filing documents in the public archives to serving as the city's police force. And while the ancient evidence on public slavery is depressingly scanty, Ismard's book shows just how much can be said about it. Admittedly, many of the conclusions Ismard draws are speculative, and his use of sources is in some instances open to challenge, but this is, nonetheless, a tremendously valuable book.

Although Ismard's focus is democratic Athens, he attempts a comparative perspective and draws on material not only from other Greek city-states but from throughout history and across the globe. Despite fairly numerous typos, a few obvious mistranslations from the French, and other errors, the book is engagingly and even thrillingly written, carrying the reader to such far-flung destinations as seventeenth-century Malacca, the nineteenth-century Sokoto Caliphate in West Africa, and Athens, Georgia, during the American Civil War. *Democracy's Slaves* unites breadth with brevity, a combination that will no doubt frustrate some classicists while attracting the well-deserved interest of less specialized readers. This book is