

*Religio Nova: Sacrifice, State and the Self in Late Antiquity*

Abstract

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This presentation will reconsider the modifications in the practice of religious sacrifice in the Mediterranean world of Late Antiquity as a result of the Roman state policy before and after the triumph of Christianity under Constantine the Great.

The presentation will argue that the changes in the official attitudes to animal sacrifice have to be analyzed in the context of a growing fascination with human sacrifice represented by the ascetic and the martyrdom traditions of Late Antiquity.

In conclusion, it will be suggested that the official prohibition of animal sacrifice and the reverence for asceticism and martyrdom appeared as two aspects of a new phenomenon: the birth of the religious *self* in Late Antiquity.

Bibliography:

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Stroumsa Guy (2009): *The End of Sacrifice: Religious Transformations in Late Antiquity*