

# Ancient Cultures of Sciences and Knowledge

Edited by Markham J. Geller, Paul J. Kosmin, Lennart Lehmhaus, Matteo Martelli, Heidi Marx, Tanja Pommerening, Bernd U. Schipper, and Sabine Schmidtke

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This new series attempts to study ancient histories of knowledge and their entanglement with religious, cultural and socio-political aspects, while paying attention to the historicity and cultural relativity of specific figurations of knowledge. On purpose, the editors define knowledge broadly as a cultural assemblage or formation of theoretical and practical concepts and approaches that try to delineate, negotiate and structure human experience of and interaction with the world. This encompasses but is not limited to various sciences and to the following aspects: natural and celestial worlds, creation and creatures, the body, illness and healing, philosophical and anthropological ideas, concepts of law and truth, language, the senses, spatiality and time, or ethnographic approaches.

The series will explore the complex and often-subtler processes of reception, adaptation and production of knowledge together with the practices, protagonists and institutions involved. The scope includes ancient Near Eastern, Mesopotamian, Egyptian, or Graeco-Roman cultures as well as Jewish, Early Christian (Greek, Syriac, Coptic, Armenian, Arabic etc.), early Byzantine and Slavonic, and Irano-Persian or early Islamicate traditions – and ranges from ancient time to the medieval period. The series aims to offer a comparative perspective by keeping an eye on the embeddedness of knowledge discourses and practices that will help to grasp the particular cultural or religious (e.g., Mesopotamian, Jewish, Christian, Graeco-Roman etc.) character of the specific epistemologies and the knowledge generated through exchanges and transfers. Focusing on the interaction in and between various discourses, such as sciences, philosophy, religion, law, literature and many more, contributions to the series may address different strategies (e.g. borrowing, camouflage, negation etc.), formats (e.g. lists, narratives, exegesis or commentary, disputes and dialogues, compilations) and epistemic dimensions (e.g. embodied knowledge, empirical approaches, models, taxonomies, theorization, or exegetical and other text/tradition-related forms of knowledge). This will help to flesh out a transcultural history of sciences and knowledge and their complex interlacing with ancient religions and cultures. The series aims at a wide range of readers including specialists from different fields of ancient and religious studies, history of science, medicine and cultural studies as well as those interested more broadly in the entangled histories of pre-modern knowledge cultures, sciences, epistemology and religion. As a forum for pertaining research, studies will be published mainly as monographs (including dissertation and habilitation projects), and thematically coherent edited volumes but also as critical editions, translations and commentaries of relevant material.

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# Living Bodies, Dead Bodies, and the Cosmos

## Culturally Specific and Universal Concepts

Edited by Chiara Ferella, Tanja Pommerening, Ulrike Steinert

2024. Approx. 480 pages.  
forthcoming in May

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This volume presents a collection of essays exploring transculturally and historically recurring conceptions of the human body and the natural world. Sixteen case studies from a range of disciplines, including psychology and history, delve into concepts related to the living body, the dead body, and the cosmos found in the cultural traditions of different eras and world regions, from ancient times to the present. The contributions highlight the mutual interrelations of human conceptions of the body and the cosmos; they explore the role of physically grounded experiences in shaping such concepts and investigate different factors contributing to the universality as well as the historical variability of these concepts.

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# Female Bodies and Female Practitioners

## Gynaecology, Women's Bodies, and Expertise in the Ancient to Medieval Mediterranean and Middle East

Edited by Lennart Lehmmaus

Volume 2  
2023. XIII, 520 pages.  
forthcoming in April

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eBook PDF

The contributions collected here discuss the emergence, transfer and transformations of theoretical and practical gynaecologic knowledge in ancient medical and other traditions. The authors investigate the cultural practices and socio-religious norms that enabled and constrained the production and application of gynaecologic knowledge and know-how – for example, concepts of the female body, ritual im/purity, or myth. Some studies focus more on the role and function of female patients and medical specialists – female doctors, healers, midwives or wet-nurses – as objects and subjects within ancient medical discourses.

The interdisciplinary nature of the studies provides ample opportunity for a comparative exploration of female bodies and medical expertise on them across the geographically diverse but culturally often closely entangled Ancient Mesopotamian, Egyptian, Graeco-Roman, Persian, Byzantine, early Christian, Jewish-Talmudic, and Syriac cultures. Similarities and differences can be discerned in the various realms – ranging from the adoption of medical terminology or development of loanwords/calques, and the transfer and appropriation of certain gynaecologic theories, metaphors and concepts to more structural questions about the discursive representation of such knowledge and its (con)textual incorporation. The volume aims to help stimulate a fruitful interdisciplinary and trans-generational exchange about the topic, drawing on a wide range of methodological and theoretical tools, including philology, linguistics, narratology/close reading, literary and discursive analysis, material culture, socio-historical perspectives, gender studies, or cultural and religious history.

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## Science in Qumran Aramaic Texts

Edited by Ida Fröhlich

Volume 1  
2022. XII, 262 pages.

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sewn paper 99,00 €

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Qumran Aramaic texts were not written on the spot. Dated to various times, they represent fragments of biblical books, works related to biblical traditions, and several texts citing biblical passages. The texts contain a number of Mesopotamian elements. By the 7th century BC Mesopotamia had become bilingual, and Aramaic became the mediating language that conveyed cuneiform literature and science to foreign groups living in Mesopotamia and abroad. In the present volume, science is understood as human knowledge about the natural and human world that had been described, systematized, and transmitted. Thus, traditional fields of science are expanded by astrology, magical healing, and others. The contributors show that Qumran Aramaic texts reflect the incorporation and adaptation of Mesopotamian science into the culture of Jewish diaspora communities. They express a new scientific worldview created by these groups as well as their self-definition, and show a new face to the community that preserved them.

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