

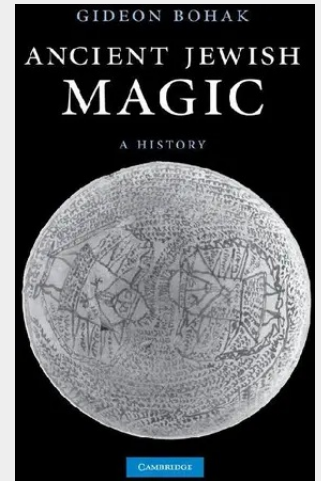
Bohak

Ancient Jewish Magic

A History

This is a pioneering history of ancient Jewish magic, from the Second Temple to the rabbinic period. It is based both on the ancient magicians' own compositions (and products) in Aramaic, Hebrew, and Greek, and on the descriptions and prescriptions of non-magicians, in an effort to reconstruct a historical picture that is as balanced and nuanced as possible. The book's main focus is on the cultural make-up of ancient Jewish magic, with special attention paid to processes of cross-cultural contacts and borrowings between Jews and non-Jews and to inner-Jewish creativity. Another major issue is the place of magic within Jewish society at the time, contemporary Jewish attitudes to magic and the identity of its practitioners. Throughout, it seeks to explain the methodological underpinnings of all sound research in this demanding field, and to point out areas where further research is likely to prove fruitful.

Gideon Bohak gives a pioneering account of the broad history of ancient Jewish magic, from the Second Temple to the rabbinic period. It is based both on ancient magicians' own compositions and products in Aramaic, Hebrew and Greek, and on the descriptions and prescriptions of non-magicians, to reconstruct a historical picture that is as balanced and nuanced as possible. The main focus is on the cultural make-up of ancient Jewish magic, and special attention is paid to the processes of cross-cultural contacts and borrowings between Jews and non-Jews, as well as to inner-Jewish creativity. Other major issues explored include the place of magic within Jewish society, contemporary Jewish attitudes to magic, and the identity of its practitioners. Throughout, the book seeks to explain the methodological underpinnings of all sound research in this demanding field, and to highlight areas where further research is likely to prove fruitful.



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