

International Hybrid Conference

# The intertwining of magic and knowledge/sciences in the premodern Mediterranean (and beyond)

Paris, 18-19 May 2023



Sponsored and organized by the research network

**Between Encyclopaedia and Epitome:  
Talmudic strategies of knowledge-making in the context of  
ancient medicine and sciences**

(Eberhard Karls Universität Tübingen, University College London,  
Freie Universität Berlin, Paris Institute for Advanced Study)

**Conference organisers:**

Lennart Lehmhaus (*Eberhard Karls Universität Tübingen*), Markham J. Geller (*Institute of Jewish Studies, University College London*), David Hamidovic (*Université de Lausanne*), Wissem Gueddich (*École pratique des hautes études, Paris*), Florentina Badalanova Geller (*Institut d'études avancées de Paris / Royal Anthropological Institute, London*), Judith Olszowy-Schlanger (*École pratique des hautes études, Paris*),

**Participants:**

Emma Abate (*University of Bologna*), Monika Amsler (*University of Bern*), Alessia Bellusci (*Ca Foscari, Venice*), Gideon Bohak (*Tel Aviv University*), Thomas Galoppin (*University of Toulouse*), Wissem Gueddich (*École pratique des hautes études, Paris*), David Hamidovic (*Université de Lausanne*), Lennart Lehmhaus (*Eberhard Karls Universität Tübingen*), Paolo Lucca (*Ca Foscari, Venice*), Yakir Paz (*Hebrew University of Jerusalem*), Caroline Petit (*University of Warwick*), Stefanie Rudolf (*MPIWG, Berlin/ Eberhard Karls Universität Tübingen*), Eleonora Serra (*Université de Lausanne/University College London*)

In past scholarship magic has often been discussed as the “eternal other” or complete opposite of either religion or rationale and scientific thought — or both. These dichotomies have been thoroughly revised during the past decades and researchers substantially broadened and nuanced our understanding of the landscape of ancient magic. Still, the discourse tends to revolve around conceptualizations and questions of applicability or proximity between magic, religion and ritual. This conference highlights a different aspect of magic in the ancient and medieval world. The specific perspective enquires into magic but not as part of any dichotomy. Rather, the focus lies on ‘magic’ as a branch of knowledge of its own which was part of the ancient landscape of sciences, arts, crafts, and general know-how, closely entangled with other fields. Accordingly, papers will discuss how magical texts, artefacts, practices, or concepts intertwine with those (in) other branches of knowledge such as medicine, alchemy, celestial knowledge, liturgy and others. Contributors will examine how ‘magic’ was involved in the often subtle or indirect transmission and transformation of knowledge. Analysis will be based on sources from a variety of magical traditions, from the Near East and Europe in ancient and medieval periods.

**Zoom information:**

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/83489844239?pwd=eGILdTF5NkYyMEMzeDhmejR5TG1ZZz09>

Meeting ID: 834 8984 4239

Passcode: 007464

**For in-person attendance, please register with:**

[journeepaleohebephe@gmail.com](mailto:journeepaleohebephe@gmail.com)

## Conference schedule

### **FIRST CONFERENCE DAY: THURSDAY, 18 MAY 2023**

Co-sponsored by the *Paris Institute for Advanced Study (IEA/IAS)*.

Venue: La Fondation Victor Lyon (Auditorium)

29 Boulevard Jourdan, 75014 Paris,

France

15:30 Arrival/Welcome

16:00 Session 1:

#### **Transmission, Scribal Knowledge and Intertextuality**

David Hamidovic (Université de Lausanne)

*The Ritual of the Woman in Adultery in the Damascus Document (4Q266 12; 4Q2704): An Example of Transmission and Recontextualization*

Eleonora Serra (Université de Lausanne / University College London)

*Intertextuality in the Magic Bowls*

17:30 Break

18:00 Session 2:

#### **Practical Medicine, Recipes and Animal Parts**

Caroline Petit (University of Warwick)

*Galen, Empiricism, and the Fragments of Xenocrates of Aphrodisias*

Lennart Lehmann (Eberhard Karls Universität Tübingen)

*(Don't) Stop the Magic – magic rituals, performance, and expertise as practical medicine in late antique rabbinic texts*

19:30 Dinner (at the FVL): for participants only

**SECOND CONFERENCE DAY, FRIDAY, 19 MAY 2023**

Co-sponsored by *École Pratique des Hautes Études (EPHE)*

Venue: INHA, Institut National d'Histoire de l'art (Salle Vasari)  
2 rue Vivienne, Paris 75002

9:00 Session 4:

**Ritual Techniques and the Knowledge of Animals and Other Species**

Thomas Galoppin (University of Toulouse)

*The Names of the Beasts: Zoological Knowledge and Magical Language*

Paolo Lucca (Ca Foscari, Venice)

*Roaring Demons and Hunting Saints. Typology and function of the historiola in the Armenian magical texts*

10:30 Coffee Break (Salle Warburg)

11:00 Session 5 (zoom):

**Divination, Demons, and Drugs**

Stefanie Rudolf (MPIWG, Berlin/ Eberhard Karls Universität Tübingen)

*Demons of infertility in a pharmacological garden: King Solomon's dialogue with the angel of the spirit in Syriac sources*

Gideon Bohak (Tel Aviv University)

*Divination and Magic in Late-Antique Judaism*

12:30 Lunch Break (Salle Warburg): for participants only

14:00 Session 6:

**Materialities of Magic**

Monika Amsler (University of Bern)

*Some Thoughts on the Materiality and Affordances of Babylonian Incantation Bowls*

Wisseem Gueddich (École Pratique des Hautes Études, Paris)

*A Hebrew Parchment from Clermont l'Hérault?*

15:30 Coffee Break (Salle Warburg)

16:00 Session 7 (zoom):

**Compilation and Appropriation of Traditions and Artefacts**

Emma Abate (University of Bologna)

*Amulets and Recipes: A pinch of Magic from the Hebrew manuscripts collection of the Bibliothèque Nationale de France (BNF)*

Yakir Paz (Hebrew University of Jerusalem)  
*Translating Jannes and Jambres into Rabbinic Literature*

17:30 Short Break

17:45 Session 8

**Sleep Well: Dream Magic in Religion, Liturgy, and Medicine**

Alessia Bellusci (Ca Foscari, Venice)

*The longue durée of dreams in Jewish culture: Between magic, medicine, and religion*

Final Discussion

From 19:00 / 19:30 Conference Dinner at a restaurant (for participants only)