

Practical Knowledge and Medical Practice in Ancient Mediterranean Cultures

International Conference, 2–3 November 2015

Convened by

Philip van der Eijk (Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin)
and Markham J. Geller (Freie Universität Berlin)

Organised by

Christine F. Salazar (Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin)
Lennart Lehmhaus (Freie Universität Berlin)
Franziska Desch (BerGSAS Berlin Graduate School of Ancient Studies, TOPOI Excellence Cluster
Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin)

On behalf of

Collaborative Research Center (SFB 980) Episteme in Motion, Research Project A03
The Transfer of Medical Episteme in the 'Encyclopaedic' Compilations of Late Antiquity
Heads: Philip van der Eijk and Markham J. Geller
www.sfb-episteme.de/en/teilprojekte/sagen/A03/index.html

The conference is funded by SFB 980 *Episteme in Motion*



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'Zentrum Grundlagenforschung Alte Welt' of the **Berlin-Brandenburg Academy of Sciences and Humanities**



Brief outline: Practical Knowledge and Medical Practice

To focus this meeting on the theme of Medical Practice will serve as a reminder that – whatever elaborate theories ancient experts might have held – this was not all that mattered in the day-to-day needs of their profession. Given the the paucity of written evidence and archaeological remains, we tend to know more about the intellectual underpinnings of ancient medicine than about the actual medical procedures. Since theory and practice were of equal importance in the constitution and transmission of medical knowledge, it is worthwhile to try and tease out whatever information is available about the reality of medical treatments. The conference presentations will address the different healing practices (diagnosis, bloodletting, surgery and other forms of treatment, including incantations) and the ways in which this practical medical knowledge was gained and transferred via experts, institutions and procedures. The multi-perspective comparative approach to Mesopotamian, Greek, Byzantine, Jewish-Talmudic, Chinese, Persian and Syriac medical traditions will help to sharpen the understanding of practical medicine in the Mediterranean across different periods and in varying socio-cultural contexts.

2



Monday, 2 November 2015

Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin, Institut für Klassische Philologie
Marmorsaal, Room 2249a, Unter den Linden 6, 10099 Berlin-Mitte

Contact: Sekretariat Prof. Philip van der Eijk
Dr. Friederike Herklotz and Katharina Bordiehn
Room 3050, +49 (0)30.2093-70426

9.30 Registration

SESSION I, 10.00 – 12.00

10.00 Conference Opening Welcome by **Philip van der Eijk**

10.15
Karl-Heinz Leven (Erlangen)
„... auch die Ärzte konnten zunächst nicht helfen“ – Pest-Therapien in der Antike und in byzantinischer Zeit,
followed by discussion.
Chair: **Christine Salazar** (Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin)
(This lecture will also count as the Monday Colloquium for 2 November.)

Lunch break (A list of restaurants in the neighbourhood will be available.)

SESSION II, 14.15 – 16.50

14.15 – 15.25
Matteo Martelli (Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin)
Recipes and therapies ascribed to the prophet Esdras in the Byzantine and Syriac tradition.
Chair: **Francesca Corazza** (Excellence Cluster Topoi, Berlin)

Short break

15.40 – 16.50
Dan Levene (Southampton)
Interdigitation of heterodox and orthodox in the living medical tradition of Ethiopia – stimulating thoughts about earlier Near Eastern magico-medical traditions.
Chair: **Lennart Lehmhaus** (Freie Universität Berlin)

Afternoon tea at Foyer Marmorsaal, then we walk over to the Berlin-Brandenburgische Akademie der Wissenschaften together (ca. 15 minutes' walk).



SESSION III, 18.00 – 19.30

Berlin-Brandenburgische Akademie der Wissenschaften, Einstein-Saal
Jägerstraße 22-23, 5th floor, 10117 Berlin-Mitte.

Keynote lecture

Ralph Jackson (British Museum, London)

Medical Instruments in Late Antiquity: Continuity and Change.

Chair: **Roland Wittwer** (Berlin-Brandenburgische Akademie der Wissenschaften)

Tuesday, 3 November 2015

Freie Universität Berlin, TOPOI-Haus, Vortragssaal

Hittorfstraße 18, 14195 Berlin-Dahlem

Contact: Sekretariat Prof. Markham J. Geller: Sabine Büchner, Professur für Wissensgeschichte

Room 108, +49 (0)30.838-58041

from 9.15 Morning coffee at TOPOI Wintergarten

9.45

Welcome address on behalf of SFB 980

Gyburg Uhlmann (Freie Universität Berlin)

SESSION I, 10.00 – 10.45

Strahil V. Panayotov (Freie Universität Berlin)

What do we know about Mesopotamian surgery – and what would we like to know?

Chair: **M. Ossendrijver** (Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin)

Short break

SESSION II, 11.15 – 12.15

Keynote lecture

Nils P. Heeßel (Würzburg)

The domiciliary visit of the Babylonian healer – what do we actually know about the practical side of Babylonian diagnostics?

Chair: **J. Cale Johnson** (Freie Universität Berlin)

Lunch (for speakers/chairs only), served at TOPOI-House



SESSION III, 13.45 – 15.00

Ronit Yoeli-Tlalim (London)

On the practice of bloodletting in the Hebrew medical work Sefer Asaf.

Lennart Lehmhaus (Berlin)

“Red for Red” – bloodletting between medicine and lifestyle in Talmudic sources.

Chair Session IV: **Almut Renger** (Freie Universität Berlin)

Coffee / tea

SESSION IV, 15.30 – 17.00

Shulamit Shinnar (New York)

Rabbinic Techniques for Examining Parturient Tissue: Considering the Place of Graeco-Roman Medical Traditions within the Rabbinic Textual Corpus.

Chair: **Ulrike Steinert** (Freie Universität Berlin)

Stefanie M. Rudolf (Freie Universität Berlin)

The Syriac Medicine man – medical science according to Bar Bahlul.

Chair: **Lucia Raggetti** (Freie Universität Berlin)

Concluding remarks by Markham J. Geller

High tea / refreshments

SESSION V, 18.15 – 19.45

TOPOI-Haus, Vortragssaal

Keynote lecture

Paul U. Unschuld (Charité Berlin)

What Is (Chinese) Medicine?

Chair: **Gerd Graßhoff** (Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin)

Wednesday, 4 November 2015

Workshop, 9.30 – 14.30

Freie Universität Berlin, TOPOI-Haus, Kaminzimmer, Hittorfstraße 18, 14195 Berlin-Dahlem

‘Practical Medicine in Jewish Scriptures and Adjacent Traditions’

Chair: **Franziska Desch** (Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin)

Participants include (among others): **Shulamit Shinnar** (New York), **Igor Itkin** (Berlin), **Lucia Raggetti** (Berlin), **Lennart Lehmhaus** (Berlin).



Sonderforschungsbereich 980
**EPISTEME IN
BEWEGUNG**

Nils P. Heeßel, Julius-Maximilians-Universität Würzburg

Keynote

The domiciliary visit of the Babylonian healer – what do we actually know about the practical side of Babylonian diagnostics?

While in the last century of research we have gained a broad knowledge about Babylonian medicine in general, especially its disease aetiology, theories of healing, and manufacture of medicines, our perceptions of some basic aspects concerning the practical side of the medical craft remain strangely opaque. One of these unresolved issues is the question of how we have to envision the procedure of a medical examination.

The paper tries to detail the sequence of such a medical examination by using evidence from different text groups like medical diagnostic texts, incantations and letters. Considering the nature of the available sources, we might not be able to find out about how real medical examinations took place, but we can reconstruct a model examination as seen by the Babylonians.



6

Nils P Heeßel (Ph.D. Heidelberg 1999) teaches Assyriology at Würzburg University. His research interests revolve around Babylonian and Assyrian scientific texts, their transmission history and metatextuality. He is the author of *Babylonisch-assyrische Diagnostik* (2000), *Pazuzu* (2002) and *Keilschrifttexte aus Assur literarischen Inhalts I and V* (2007 and 2012). Currently, he is working on an edition of the astrological texts from the Assyrian capital Assur. www.altorientalistik.uni-wuerzburg.de/mitarbeiter/nils_p_heessel/



Ralph Jackson, British Museum London

Keynote

Medical Instruments in Late Antiquity: Continuity and Change.

In cooperation with

'Zentrum Grundlagenforschung Alte Welt' of the **Berlin-Brandenburg Academy of Sciences and Humanities** (www.bbaw.de/forschung/galen)

Archaeological finds of ancient medical instruments and apparatus provide material evidence that sheds light on the practice of medicine in antiquity. That evidence is sometimes good enough to allow us to discern the application of surgical procedures and interventions described in contemporary medical texts. Confirmation of that reality is important in its own



right but so, also, is the social context for medical practice and that, too, may occasionally be illuminated by archaeological discoveries.

Instruments placed in graves had the best chance of survival because they were taken out of circulation and placed in a secure, often quite well-dated, context below the ground. That space, as well as being less likely than others of being physically disturbed in the ancient past, also often provided a stable micro-environment that might reach an equilibrium

inhibiting the processes of decay of the instruments. But while the burial context optimised the chances of survival of instruments in a recognisable condition and also assists our identification of individual instruments by their association with others in the group it provides no evidence for the place where those instruments had been used in life. For that we turn to discoveries on settlement sites which offer the possibility of locating medical apparatus in its actual setting. Such finds are usually individual instruments or random small groups but occasionally there are exceptional discoveries of large or very large ranges of instruments *in situ*.

In this paper I examine some key finds of Late Antique medical instrumentation and coax out of them information which permits speculation on the modes, users and places of use of those instruments as well as on their development from earlier instrumentation.

Ralph Jackson is a Senior Curator at the British Museum which he joined in 1977. An archaeology graduate of University College, Cardiff, he has directed archaeological excavations on Roman military and civilian sites and will shortly send to press the account of a fascinating Romano-British temple treasure. He specialises in Roman metalwork but his principal research is in the field of ancient medicine, in particular the archaeological evidence. Since publishing *Doctors and Diseases in the Roman Empire* in 1988 he has focused on the actuality of ancient medicine, from spa therapy to surgery, and above all on the practitioners and their instruments. Current projects include the completion for publication of the catalogue of medical instruments in the British Museum and the preparation of the full report on the instrumentation of the Rimini Domus 'del chirurgo' for Professor Jacopo Ortalli's publication of the site.

www.britishmuseum.org/about_us/departments/staff/prehistory_and_europe/ralph_jackson.aspx

Lennart Lehmhaus, Freie Universität Berlin

“Red for Red” – bloodletting between medicine and lifestyle in Talmudic sources.

The practice of bloodletting, venesection or *phlebotomy* was known already in many ancient medical traditions (Egypt / Greece / Rome) and was applied for various purposes. Besides being used as a therapeutic or curative measure venesection was also practiced for preventive purposes. Thus, especially in the Greek medical tradition and its system of the balance of humours, venesection was used to cure illnesses caused by the overabundance of blood (*plethora*). In general, in Graeco-Roman culture bloodletting became one important element in the day-to-day routine of healthy living, or *diet and regimen*.



Rabbinic traditions and Talmudic sources seem to exhibit a good degree of familiarity with both therapeutic and prophylactic types of venesection. Interestingly, the evidence in the Western, i.e. Palestinian, sources is rather scarce, while the Eastern or Babylonian Talmud is replete with information. This paper will give an overview about the Talmudic discourse on bloodletting in its literary context. Who were those described practitioners? What do the texts tell us about the (medical) circumstances of venesection, and which precautions were taken? Can we identify divergent attitudes of the rabbis towards this particular practice? These questions will help to grasp the complexity of rabbinic medical knowledge in different cultural milieus and may provide a basis for comparison with later developments.

Lennart Lehmhaus is post-doc research associate within the SFB 980 (Freie Universität Berlin). As a member of the project A03 he inquires into medical discourses in Talmudic traditions, Jewish epistemologies and their encyclopedic dimensions in cultural comparison. His first book, based on his doctoral dissertation (Halle/Saale, 2013), about the early medieval Jewish tradition *Seder Eliyahu Zutah* will provide a first-time annotated German translation, bi-lingual edition as well as a comprehensive study on the literary, discursive and socio-cultural dimensions of the work. Currently he is (co-)editing three volumes to be published in 2016/17: *“Even the best physicians go to hell” – transfer and transformation of medical knowledge in Jewish cultures and traditions* (Harrassowitz), *Collecting Recipes. Byzantine and Jewish Pharmacology in Dialogue* (de Gruyter, with M. Martelli), *Female Bodies and Female Practitioners in the Medical Traditions of the Late Antique Mediterranean World* (with C.F. Salazar).

L. Lehmhaus has published several articles on rabbinic texts from Late Antiquity and early medieval time (Midrash), on the intercultural history of rabbinic Judaism, and on Jewish literature and knowledge. His research interests are Jewish texts, tradition and practices from a cultural-historical perspective, analysis based on literary theory, intertextual and socio-cultural readings of texts; and the developments and transformations of Jewish traditions and motifs in the modern and contemporary world (Zionism, Modern Hebrew and Israeli literature and art, Israeli society and culture).

<https://fu-berlin.academia.edu/LennartLehmhaus>

Karl-Heinz Leven, Friedrich-Alexander Universität Erlangen-Nürnberg

"... auch die Ärzte konnten zunächst nicht helfen" – Pest-Therapien in der Antike und in byzantinischer Zeit

" ... at first, physicians were not able to cope with the disease" – plague therapies in ancient and Byzantine times



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For Hippocratic-Galenic physicians, usually accustomed to treat individual patients, plague (*loimos*) emerged as a special challenge. Theoretically, origin and spread of epidemics could be explained by miasmata, but actual plagues ('Plague of Athens', 'Antonine Plague', 'Justinianic Plague') confronted medicine with severe problems. The presentation deals with plague therapies applied by physicians as they are recorded in different genera of ancient and Byzantine literature, starting with Thucydides. On the one hand, plague was regarded by physicians as a disaster, on the other hand there were therapies at least on an individual level. The general helplessness of medicine contrasted to trials of therapy. This ambivalence emerges clearly in non-medical texts, less in medical ones. In early Byzantine hagiography, e.g. the *Miracula S. Demetrii*, the limited means of medicine are contrasted to the effective intervention of saints, fitting thus into a special contemporary concept of plague.

9

Karl-Heinz Leven, MD, Chair of the History of Medicine and Director of the Institute for History and Ethics of Medicine, University Erlangen-Nürnberg, since 2009. University studies in medicine, History and Greek Philology at Düsseldorf and Bonn, 1977-1986, 1987 MD in the History of Medicine (Düsseldorf), 1993 Habilitation in the History of Medicine (Freiburg). 2011 Member of Leopoldina, Nationale Akademie der Wissenschaften (Sektion 23: Wissenschafts- und Medizingeschichte). Research interests: ancient and Byzantine medicine, history of epidemics, medicine in NS-Germany

www.gesch.med.uni-erlangen.de/mitarbeiterinnen/karl-heinz-leven.shtml



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Dan Levene, University of Southampton

Interdigitation of heterodox and orthodox in the living medical tradition of Ethiopia – stimulating thoughts about earlier Near Eastern magico-medical traditions

Like most countries, Ethiopia has long been host to a variety of medical praxis and belief systems. While some are heirs to traditions whose roots might be traced to the early centuries of the first millennium, and the evidence for others suggest later appearance, the introduction of some are very recent.

The reality is that at present 85% of primary healthcare in Ethiopia is provided by so called traditional practitioners. The professional amulet writers, the so called *debtaras*, are the product of traditional schools and academies that have produced the scribal intelligentsia of both Church and state for at least the last 500 hundred years; and probably longer.

These possessors of esoteric knowledge are one of a variety of practitioners who often also dispense various other material medica as part of their praxis. Clearly, these cannot be equated with other earlier practitioners from the near east whose texts are studied by philologists and historians. Yet, the fact, that unlike those other Semitic practitioners the Ethiopian practitioner can be studied in living context: His relation to the Church, as well as to other practitioners such as spirit mediums and various types of sorcerers, Church holy water baptisers as well as the modern medical practitioners who represent the officialdom of the state are informative. Of particular interest to me is the fact that there is a fluidity in the way that he composes his amulets akin to older Aramaic materials I have studied.



10

Dan Levene: I have studied Aramaic incantation from late antiquity for over twenty years now and have published various editions of texts in articles, as well as compilations in two monographs. The latest of these titled Jewish Aramaic curse texts from late-antique Mesopotamia was published in 2013.

In the last two to three years I have been working on Ethiopic magical/healing texts. I am currently the recipient of a number of small grants that include a Wellcome grant for a project titled "Traditional beliefs and chronic non-communicable diseases in Ethiopia", A Gerda Henkel grant for a project titled "The Scribe's Discretion – Textual Variability of Two Popular Ethiopic Texts: The Scroll of Righteousness and The Magic Book of the Disciples", and a John Rylands scholarship to edit their collection of 10 magic scrolls.

www.southampton.ac.uk/history/about/staff/dl3.page

Matteo Martelli, Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin

Recipes and therapies ascribed to the prophet Esdras in the Byzantine and Syriac tradition

In the paper, I shall examine different textual traditions in which the prophet Esdras is credited with the invention of specific formulas for medicines and alchemical compounds. On the one hand, I shall investigate the ancient and Byzantine medical tradition (Archigenes, Aetius of Amida, Paul of Aegina, and Theophanes Chrysobalantes), which preserves several versions of a powerful and multi-purposes antidote attributed to Esdras. On the other hand, a Syriac alchemical collection, which includes an entire book under the name of Esdras, will be taken into consideration. These sources, which are not available in modern editions, will be presented in order to detect and discuss the possible historical and cultural background that led to the attribution of a specific technological expertise to a Jewish scribe and priest.



Foto: Erika Baranby Hansen

11

Matteo Martelli graduated in Classics at the University of Bologna (2002), where he also gained his PhD in Greek Philology (2006). During his doctoral studies he was visiting student at the *Centre d'Histoire des Doctrines de la Fin de l'Antiquité et du Haut Moyen-Age* (CNRS/UPR 76) in Paris. Afterwards, He then enrolled on a second PhD in History of Science (2008-2011) at the University of Pisa, where he defended his dissertation in 2012. He got a post-doc fellowship at the *Chemical Heritage Foundation* (Philadelphia; 2009-2010), and a second post-doc fellowship at Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin, within Philip van der Eijk's research program "Medicine of the Mind, Philosophy of the Body" (2010-2012). Since 2012 he has been a research associate within the SFB project (980) 'Episteme in Bewegung', sub-project 'Der Transfer medizinischer Episteme in den ‚enzyklopädischen‘ Sammelwerken der Spätantike' (Philip van der Eijk and Markham J. Geller).

Among his publications there are: (1) *The Four Books of Pseudo-Democritus*, London 2013; (2) *L'alchimie en syriaque et l'œuvre de Zosime*, in É. Villey (ed.), *Les sciences en Syriaque*, Paris 2014, 191-214; (3) *Galeno grammatico sui nomi stranieri ed il digamma: un passo inedito dal IX libro sui medicamenti semplici*, in 'A.I.O.N.' 34 (2012), 131-146.

www.klassphil.hu-berlin.de/en/avh-professur/staff/martelli/cv



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Strahil V. Panayotov, Freie Universität Berlin

What do we know about Mesopotamian surgery –and what would we like to know?



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The paper discusses Mesopotamian surgery in its basic sense as *chirurgia*, 'hand-work'. In the first part, I will illustrate key examples of what we know about Mesopotamian surgery. This descriptive talk will be mainly based on the evidence from the 1st millenium BC but some earlier examples will be discussed as well. We will take a look at examples that presumably reflect the actual practice based on cuneiform sources and archaeological remains of tools and humans. Among the examples will be treatments of the skull, eyes, temples, incisions, scarification, setting bones, bloodletting, draining abscesses, cutting haemorrhoids, and removing pus from the testicles. We will take a short look at who did this, what instruments the doctors used, and which were the divine patrons of the Mesopotamian surgery.

The second part of the talk will illustrate that the modern scholars who stated that the Mesopotamians did not have surgical texts are tricked by circumstances in believing so. A research conducted by the BabMed team in Berlin proves the opposite. Catalogues of medical texts illustrate that there is more to be expected from the Mesopotamian *chirurgia* in the future.

Strahil V. Panayotov began his studies with ancient history in Sofia, continued with Assyriology, Egyptology and Near Eastern Archaeology in Heidelberg. He also spent some time at the University of Toronto and at the TOPOI Excellence Cluster at the Free University Berlin. His MA and PhD was funded by the *Studienstiftung des deutschen Volkes* and partly by the Graduate Academy of the Heidelberg University. He defended his PhD (2014) in Sofia with a work on Mesopotamian material scribal culture as a communication and symbolic medium based on examples of the so-called amulet-shaped tablets. He has conducted research in various Museums. He currently is a member of the ERC-funded BabMed project based at the Free University of Berlin under the leadership of Prof. Markham J. Geller. Together with M. Geller, Strahil Panayotov is working on an edition of Mesopotamian cuneiform texts concerned with eye diseases. In his research, he also investigates Mesopotamian fumigation practices.
www.geschkult.fu-berlin.de/e/babmed/staff/panayotov.html

12



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**EPISTEME IN
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Stefanie M. Rudolf, Freie Universität Berlin

The Syriac Medicine man – medical science according to Bar Bahlul

Surprisingly, the definition of medicine given by Bar Bahlul, the outstanding Syriac-Arabic lexicographer of the 12th century, does not mention the Galenic academic medicine at all. Notwithstanding the fact that the Syriac scholars were famous for their medical knowledge during the early Islamic times serving the Sassanian emperors as court physicians. His definition rather follows a folk-medical approach. In how far does the Syriac literature reflect this representation? What was the duty of the physician and which is the underlying conception of medicine suggested by Bar Bahlul?

Stefanie M. Rudolf studied Semitic studies, German language and linguistics, and Islamic studies at the Friedrich-Alexander-Universität Erlangen-Nürnberg before obtaining her MA thesis on 'The Dating of Old-Testament texts by the Song of Songs' at Freie Universität. For her PhD thesis within the Excellence Cluster TOPOI (Freie Universität Berlin) under the supervision of Prof. M. Geller and Prof. R. Voigt on 'The astral-divinatory passages of the Syriac Book of Medicines: translation and commentary' she was awarded a *summa cum laude* distinction. Stefanie Rudolf currently works and teaches as research assistant at the Seminar für Semitistik und Arabistik, Freie Universität Berlin.
www.geschkult.fu-berlin.de/e/semiarab/semitistik/mitarbeiterInnen/rudolf/



13



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**EPISTEME IN
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Shulamit Ch. Shinnar, Columbia University New York

Rabbinic Techniques for Examining Parturient Tissue: Considering the Place of Graeco-Roman Medical Traditions within the Rabbinic Textual Corpus.

Talmudic literature prescribes various techniques for examining vaginally secreted tissue in order to discover the nature and cause of these secretions. Specifically, Rabbis are interested in determining whether such tissue is menstrual mucosal tissue, vaginal discharge caused by illness, or parturient tissues relating to birth or miscarriage. In certain cases, the techniques described are detailed and specific. For example, when a woman excretes an unidentifiable mass of tissue, she is instructed to cut open the tissue and examine its contents. The rabbinic texts provide methods for improving the accuracy of this examination including soaking the tissue and choosing the best lighting. In this paper I will focus on a series of Tannaitic and Palestinian Amoraic rabbinic texts from the tractate of *Niddah* that describe techniques for dissecting and examining parturient tissue. I will contextualize these techniques within the broader context of Graeco-Roman medical traditions in late antiquity. Through my inquiry, I will examine rabbinic attitudes towards Graeco-Roman medical traditions and medical professionals. Furthermore, I will consider the way in which these techniques preserved in Talmudic literature can expand our knowledge and inform our understanding of medical practices in the Graeco-Roman world at large.

14



Shulamit Shinnar works on her Ph.D. in Jewish History at Columbia University in New York with Professor Seth Schwartz. After completing her B.A. in Philosophy at Columbia University, she received an M.A. in Talmud and Rabbinics at the Jewish Theological Seminary in New York. Returning to Columbia University, she completed a second M.A. degree in History with the thesis entitled "A Study of the Rabbinic Astronomical Tradition: Reconsidering the New Moon Ritual in the Mishnah Rosh Hashanah". Sh. Shinnar has taught courses as a teaching assistant/fellow at JTS and at Columbia University since 2010. She has held fellowships through the Center for Jewish Law at Cardozo Law School, the Morton Smith Trust for the Study of Antiquity, and the Columbia Institute for Israel and Jewish Studies. Her doctoral dissertation focuses on the engagement of Rabbinic texts with ancient scientific and medical discourses.

history.columbia.edu/graduate/Shinnar.html



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Paul U. Unschuld, Horst-Goertz-Institute for the Theory, History and Ethics of Chinese Life Sciences, Charité-Medical University Berlin

Keynote

What is Medicine – in China?!

(also as part of the BabMed Seminar lectures)

„What is Medicine – in China?!“ focusses on the use of the term "medicine" in medical historiography. Although "medical history/historiography" is an academic field devoted to scientific enquiry, its most central concept, namely the concept of "medicine", lacks a precise definition. "Medicine" is used indiscriminately for "medication", "therapeutics", "health care system", and others both in colloquial, laypeople's usage and in academic contexts. This presentation suggests a more conscious use of the term and concept of "medicine" to enhance the value of the historiography of "medicine" as a scientific pursuit. It will focus on the emergence and nature of "medicine" in a narrow sense in Chinese antiquity and point out facets of this ancient development that are specifically Chinese while others apply to the one and only comparable civilisation that is ancient Greece, as well.

15

Paul U. Unschuld, Ph.D., M.P.H. is Professor and Director of the Horst-Goertz-Institute for the Theory, History and Ethics of Chinese Life Sciences at Charité-Medical University Berlin. After graduating from the School of Pharmacy at Munich University, he studied Chinese Studies and Political Sciences (Dr. phil. 1971, Munich University) and did also a Master of Public Health (M.P.H., 1974) at Johns Hopkins University, Baltimore. There he served as a (visiting) Assistant Professor and a visiting Associate Professor between 1975 and 1985. Before coming to Berlin in 2006 he had acted as professor and director of the Institute for the History of Medicine at Munich University since 1984. In his research he is especially interested in the comparative history of Chinese and European medical traditions and their approaches to ethics/ bioethics as well as in questions of Public Health associated with heterogeneous health care systems in contemporary Western and Non-Western societies. Among his publications are *What is Medicine? Western and Eastern Approaches to Healing*. Berkeley, Los Angeles, London: University of California Press, 2009 (English version of "Was ist Medizin", München: Beck, 2003); *Huang Di Nei Jing Su Wen. Nature, Knowledge, Imagery in an Ancient Chinese Medical Text*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2003; *Medicine in China. A History of Ideas*. Berkeley, Los Angeles: University of California Press, 25th Anniversary Edition with a new preface, 2010; *Chinese Traditional Healing The Berlin Collections of Manuscript Volumes from 16th through the Early 20th Century*. With Zheng Jinsheng, Leiden: Brill, 2012.

hgi.charite.de/institut/mitarbeiter/



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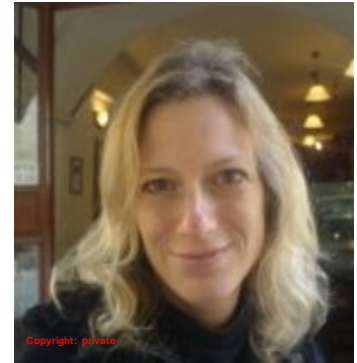
Ronit Yoeli-Tlalim, Goldsmiths, University of London

On the practice of bloodletting in the Hebrew medical work Sefer Asaf.

The discussion on bloodletting appears in *Sefer Asaf* in two contexts: the first is a section dealing with the months of the year in which bloodletting should or should not be performed; what should be consumed in those months; what to eat in case blood is drawn in a month when it should not; and the days of the month in which blood should not be drawn.

The second context is within discussions of bloodletting as treatment of specific illnesses – migraines; melancholy and a type of madness which is a result of too much alcohol and too little food. Whilst the first context does not *necessarily* reflect practical experience, the second one reflects a variety of practical aspects.

This paper will focus on bloodletting as it appears in *Sefer Asaf* and focus particularly on some of the highly practical aspects of the treatment as they are discussed in the text.



16

Ronit Yoeli-Tlalim, Goldsmiths, London: My research deals with the transmission of medical ideas along the so-called 'Silk-Roads'. Within this general scope, I have been working on the history of early Tibetan medicine, based primarily on manuscripts found in the Dunhuang caves. This work followed up on my work which consisted part of the 'Islam and Tibet' project at the Warburg Institute.

My current research project is titled: "Re-Orienting Early Medicine: Bridges of Knowledge between 'east' and 'west'". The main goal of this project is to analyse the ways in which ancient Hebrew medicine, like ancient Tibetan medicine, is a case of 'medical syncretism' deriving from what is termed 'eastern' and 'western' medical traditions. I co-edited three volumes with Anna Akasoy and Charles Burnett: *Rashīd al-Dīn as an Agent and Mediator of Cultural Exchanges in Ilkhanid Iran* (2013); *Islam and Tibet: Interactions along the Musk Routes* (2011) and *Astro-Medicine: Astrology and Medicine, East and West* (2008). I have also co-edited (with Vivienne Lo) the Silk Roads Special Issue of *Asian Medicine: Tradition and Modernity* (2007). I am a Senior Lecturer in the History Department at Goldsmiths, University of London and am the co-founder and co-director of Goldsmiths interdisciplinary Centre of the Body.

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Markham J. Geller is currently Professor für Wissensgeschichte at the FU Berlin, on secondment from University College London (UCL) until 2018, and the Principal Investigator of the ERC-funded project BabMed – Babylonian Medicine, a cooperation of Freie Universität Berlin and Bar-Ilan University, Israel. He completed his studies at Princeton and Brandeis Universities in the USA, as well as at the Hebrew University, Jerusalem, before moving to London in 1973. He joined the UCL Department of Hebrew and



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Christine F. Salazar was born in Vienna, where she also took her undergraduate degree (Mag. phil.) in Italian and Ancient History. She then lived in Tokyo for over a decade, teaching French and German at Kanda Institute of Foreign Languages before achieving her MPhil in History of Medicine, followed by a PhD on 'The Treatment of War Wounds in Graeco-Roman Antiquity' in Classics, both at the University of Cambridge. From 2001 to 2010, she worked freelance for Brill Academic Publishers as editor-in-chief of *Brill's New Pauly*. She was holder of a grant from the Oesterreichische Nationalbank Jubiläumsfonds for the project 'Early Byzantine Medicine – A Sourcebook'. Since January 2010, she has been Research Associate on the 'Towards a Galen in English' project, Newcastle University, preparing a translation with commentary of Galen's 'Commentary on the *Prognostic* of Hippocrates'. She also works as a Research Associate at the Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin, within the SFB 980, 'Episteme in Bewegung. Wissenstransfer von der alten Welt bis in die frühe Neuzeit'.



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Lennart Lehmmaus is post-doc research associate within the SFB 980 (FU Berlin). As a member of the project A03 he inquires into medical discourses in Talmudic traditions, Jewish epistemologies and their encyclopedic dimensions in cultural comparison. He studied Jewish Studies, German Language and Literature, and Political Sciences towards a Magister Artium at the universities of Duisburg, Düsseldorf, and at Hebrew University Jerusalem. Within a scholarship programme he studied also Polish language and culture at Jagiellonen University Kraków, Poland. As a fellowship holder of the international and multidisciplinary Graduate School Society and Culture in Motion, and a research associate of the Seminar for Judaistik (teaching/research) at Martin-Luther-University Halle-Wittenberg he completed his doctoral dissertation (Advisor: Giuseppe Veltri, 2013, *summa cum laude*) and forthcoming monography, about the early medieval Jewish tradition *Seder Eliyahu Zutah*. For other publications, research and



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Franziska Desch earned her MA in Ancient History and Assyriology at Freie Universität Berlin. For her PhD project, she has won a scholarship at the 'Berlin Graduate School of Ancient Studies' (BerGSAS) of the TOPOI Excellence Cluster, Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin. Her thesis researches medicinal plants in cuneiform medical and therapeutic texts, aiming to reconstruct the underlying systematics in this field.

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