

Magic in the period of Judaism of the second temple and early Christianity

Abstract

The presented work focuses on the history of esotericism in the period of the Second Temple of Judaism and early Christianity, and shows the cultural intersections of magical and religious communities as well as individuals who have studied the art of magic. It points out the main sources of their magical and religious teachings and the origin of magic and magical thinking. It traces the main roots of both religion and magic and describes the development of magical practices in that specific period of the time. Furthermore, after a small analysis, a comparison is made of the five basic cultures living in the territory of the "fertile crescent" just at the time of the Second Temple and their magic. There is also a detailed discussion on the field of demonology and some personalities of the time who were obviously dealing with magic.

The first part describes all of the available magical disciplines and techniques that a mortal can come into contact with during the Second Temple in the region known as "Fertile Crescent". All the disciplines I mention in my work were already known at the time of the Second Temple, but some of them were not that developed, so they were expanded or were elaborated on in a later period. A detailed analysis was also useful when choosing the individual chosen from each culture, for later examination of the magical acts they did. In the analysis of these personalities, I again focused mainly on information that is interesting in terms of magic or on controversial attractions that also were of interest to me.

The second part of the work is focused on the description and comparison of magical techniques or methods from the five already mentioned cultures in the field of "Fertile Crescent". After comparing the magical arts of these cultures, I chose one discipline that seems to be quite widespread in all five named cultures, and I tried to elaborate in a little more detail and compare the methods that were used.