



Università
Ca'Foscari
Venezia

PROJECT ACRONYM AND TITLE: EJCM - Early Jewish and Christian Magical Traditions in Comparison and Contact

FUNDING PROGRAMME: H2020

CALL: ERC-2019-STG

KEYWORDS: Magic, Judaism, Christianity, ritual, lived religion

HOST DEPARTMENT: Department of Asian and North African Studies

SCIENTIFIC RESPONSIBLE: Prof. Joseph Sanzo

FINANCIAL DATA:

Project total costs	Overall funding assigned to UNIVE
€ 1 311 355	€ 1 311 355

ABSTRACT: This interdisciplinary project will contribute to the study of both Mediterranean magic and Jewish–Christian relations during late antiquity (III–VII CE) by providing a comparative analysis of the Jewish and Christian magical texts and objects (e.g., amulets and incantation bowls) that is informed by an innovative, synthetic interpretative framework. This project will investigate the contacts between Jewish and Christian practitioners as well as the dynamics of religious assimilation, cooperation, and differentiation in the everyday lives of ancient Jews and Christians. Although scholarly study of the early Jewish and Christian practices, rituals, and texts deemed “magical” has blossomed over the past few decades, this research has tended to be divided along disciplinary lines, with historians of Judaism studying Jewish magic and historians of Christianity studying Christian magic. Independent from this line of inquiry there is a long history of scholarship devoted to early Jewish–Christian relations which has detailed the diverse ways Jews and Christians interacted in the ancient world. However, the study of early Jewish–Christian relations has not taken into serious consideration the “magical” evidence. In short, despite these respective lines of scholarship within and across early Jewish and Christian studies, there has not yet been a sustained analysis of early Jewish and Christian magical traditions in comparison and in contact.

An interdisciplinary team (PI, 1 Postdoc, and 2 PhD students) will address this scholarly gap by examining local and global features of the magical artefacts – and the literary traditions about magic – from late-antique Jewish and Christian communities. In particular, this group will focus on the similarities, differences, and contacts between these traditions in four central areas of their magical practices: biblical texts and traditions; sacred names and titles; the word-image-material relation; and references to illicit rituals.

Planned Start date	Planned End date
1st February 2020	31 st January 2025