

Conceptions of the Afterlife in Early Civilizations: Universalism, Constructivism and Near-Death Experience (Continuum Advances in Religious Studies)

Gregory Shushan

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Gregory Shushan challenges post-modern scholarly attitudes concerning cross-cultural comparisons in the study of religions. In an original and innovative piece of comparative research, he analyses afterlife conceptions in five ancient civilisations (Old and Middle Kingdom Egypt, Sumerian and Old Babylonian Mesopotamia, Vedic India, pre-Buddhist China, and pre-Columbian Mesoamerica).

These are considered in light of historical and contemporary reports of near-death experiences, and shamanic afterlife 'journeys'. *Conceptions of the Afterlife in Early Civilizations* is a significant study, for it presents a comprehensive new comparative framework for the cross-cultural study of myth and religion, while at the same time providing a fascinating exploration of the interface between belief and experience.



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