



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

Gregory Shushan

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In an original and innovative piece of comparative research, Gregory Shushan 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 - as well as a challenge to post-modern scholarly attitudes concerning cross-cultural comparisons in the study of religions. The book was nominated for the 2011 Grawemeyer Award.

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