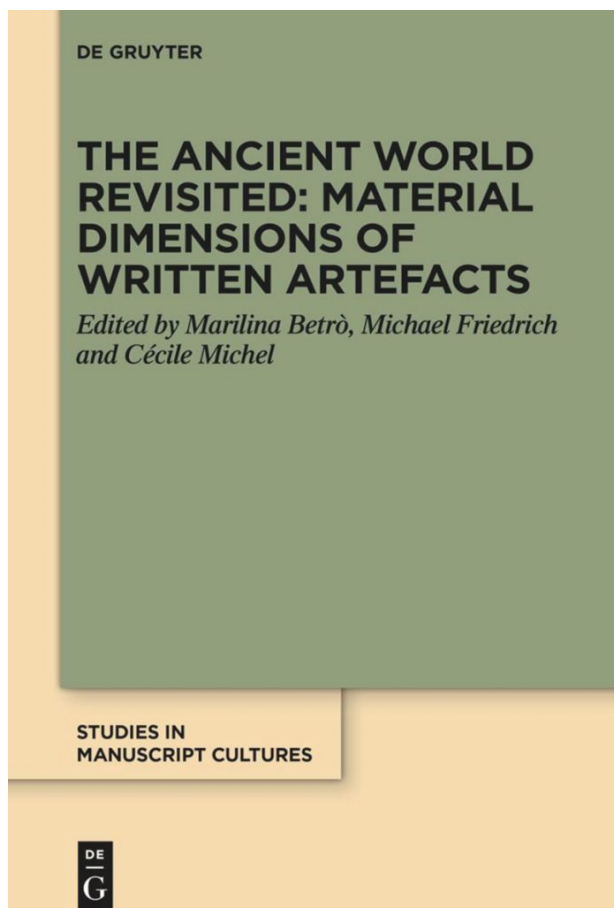


Publication : The Ancient World Revisited: Material Dimensions of Written Artefacts, edited by Marilina Betrò, Michael Friedrich, and Cécile Michel



The Ancient World Revisited:
Material Dimensions of Written
Artefacts

Edited by Marilina Betrò, Michael Friedrich, and Cécile Michel

In cooperation with Jesper Eidem and Gianluca Miniaci, Studies
in Manuscript Cultures 37, Berlin: De Gruyter.

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1515/9783111360805>

En Open Access :

Written artefacts are traditionally studied because of their content. Material aspects of these artefacts enrich the study of ancient history in many ways. Eleven case studies in five sections on the ancient world, including the Near East, Egypt, the Mediterranean, China and India, demonstrate the impact of a holistic approach that considers materiality and content alike.

Following an introductory sketch of relevant research, the first section, 'Methodological Considerations', critically examines the limitations the evidence available imposes on our understanding. 'Early Uses of Writing' addresses material and spatial aspects of inscriptions, and their communicative functions over the textual ones. The third section, 'Material Features', deals with clay, wooden and papyrus manuscripts and demonstrates the importance of an integrated approach. The contributions to 'Co-presence of Written Artefacts' take into account that written artefacts come in clusters. The final section, 'Cultural Encounters', presents studies on the interactions between social strata and ethnic groups, challenging previous ideas.

The volume contributes to the comparative study of written artefacts in ancient history, stimulating cross-disciplinary and -cultural research.

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