



Molecular and Structural Archaeology :Cosmetic and Therapeutic Chemicals

By Tsoucaris G & Lipkowski J (eds)

Kluwer Academic Publishers, 2003. Paperback. Book Condition: New. xi + 272pp, inc. many figs, laminated card, 8vo new but with signs of shelf wear The book delineates the contours of molecular and structural archaeology as an emergent interdisciplinary field based on structural analysis at the molecular level and examines novel methodologies to reconstruct the synthesis and long-term transformation of materials used in antiquity. The focus of this volume is on cosmetic and therapeutic materials. As such, it casts an entirely new light on the knowledge possessed by the ancients, based on the complete identification of complex materials and preparations found in closed vessels in ancient tombs. It appears that as early as 2000 BCE the necessary technology was available to conduct wet chemical synthesis of new compounds not known as natural products. The materials as we analyze them today, of course, have their own prior history, and disentangling the effects of extreme long-term storage forms part of the puzzle, which may possibly be resolved by means of simulation experiments.



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