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The Open University of Israel, Raanana

Abstracts

Wednesday, June 7, 2023

10:00-11:30 Session 1: **Genres and Categories**

Francesco Padovani (Alexander von Humboldt-Stiftung Post-Doctoral Fellow, Eberhard-Karls-Universität Tübingen): Plutarch as Author of Platonic Dialogues: Reflections on a Hybrid Literary Genre

Plutarch was the most eminent writer of Platonic dialogues of his time; nonetheless, only scarce critical attention has been devoted to his relationship with the Platonic model. The paper starts from the conviction that the ancients perceived Plato not only as a thinker, but above all as a writer of dialogues. Thus, in the Early Imperial Age, Plato represents a dynamic model for the development of further formal, stylistic and philosophical innovations, which are enhanced by the hybridity of the Platonic dialogue as a literary genre. The adoption of a specific literary genre is never neutral; instead, it implies a precise strategy of communication within the literary tradition and the cultural context to which it refers. First of all, the role played by Plutarch as both author and character inside his dialogues represents a crucial turning point which distances him from Plato, and indicates an effort to build up a different approach to knowledge. The rethinking of the Platonic model concerns crucial aspects of the dialogue, i.e. the role of the author, the characterization of the main figures, the settings, the hybridization with other literary genres, the resort to myth. As a result, the paper will clarify Plutarch's position as an author of Platonic dialogues within the context of the Second Sophistic and his relationship with other writers of dialogues of his time, first of all Lucian. The analysis of the transformation of the Platonic dialogue in Plutarch will also lead to the comprehension of the strategies adopted by Plutarch to strengthen

his intellectual authority within his Greco-Roman circle in Chaeronea and within the heated debate about Plato among the so-called Middle-Platonists.

Peter B. Martin (Dan David Post-Doctoral Fellow, Tel Aviv University): The Power of Speech in Ancient Histories

Direct speeches constitute a major proportion of Classical Greek, Hellenistic, Roman Late Republican and Roman Triumviral historical narratives. This is no longer the case in histories about the Roman Principate and Dominate. For instance, when Dio Cassius' narrative moves from the history of the Roman Republic to the history of post-Augustan Rome, he all but stops including set-piece speeches. My talk analyses the power of public speech, as presented by ancient historians who write about the Roman Principate and Dominate. I examine the way in which deliberative and epideictic public speeches give way to private speeches, conversations and aphoristic remarks. I argue that the speech-writing practices of Josephus, Tacitus, Dio Cassius, Herodian and Ammianus Marcellinus are distinct from those of prior historians.

There is not one, monolithic style of speechwriting within classical historiography. Historians during the time of Quintilian have a different concept of public rhetoric from historians during the time of Aristotle. I examine not just the political but also cultural contexts that help bring about the shift in speechwriting, such as the effect Roman declamation, with its focus on publicity and display, has on the construction of historiographical speeches. My goal is to trace significant shifts in the way ancient historians wrote and made use of speeches within their narratives. In this way, I aim to bring historical change into the analysis of public rhetoric in classical historiography.

Benjamin Wilck (Martin Buber Society of Fellows in the Humanities and Social Sciences, Hebrew University of Jerusalem): Epistemology in Euclid: a philosophical analysis of the *Elements'* order of definitions

In this paper, I analyze and explain the order of definitions in Euclid's *Elements* (in total 183). I argue that the *Elements'* sequences of definitions are strictly ordered—i.e., both irreflexive and transitive, and hence also asymmetric—, and I propose that the order of Euclid's definitions can be philosophically explained by a certain epistemological theory of conceptual dependence (a.k.a. conceptual priority, such that *A* is conceptually prior to *B* if, and only if, *A* is defined / definable without reference to *B*, whereas *B* is not defined / definable without reference to *A*.) For instance, Euclid's order of definitions can be explained by conceptual priority of

- (1) genera over species;
- (2) differentiae over species;
- (3) genera over qualities;
- (4) genera over relatives;
- (5) wholes over parts;
- (6) lower- over higher-dimensional generic geometrical objects;
- (7) specific host figures over their specific geometrical limits;
- (8) specific figures with a less over those with a greater number of boundaries; and
- (9) less over more complex mathematical objects in general.

An analysis of the *Elements'* order of definitions thus reveals conceptual hierarchies among hundreds of mathematical objects, and

ontologically different kinds of mathematical object. Euclid's actual mathematical practice yields a much richer and more elaborate picture than Aristotle's philosophical theory of conceptual priority in *Categories* 12 and *Metaphysics* Δ.11, and also than Aristotle's own scientific practice as displayed, most notably, in *Physics* V.3.

Moreover, I argue that the order of Euclid's definitions can ultimately be explained by the epistemological requirement for a scientific definition to include in the definiens only those terms which are conceptually prior to the definiendum. That is to say, I argue that the order of Euclid's definitions can be explained also, and especially, by conceptual priority

(10) of each of the terms included in the definiens over the definiendum.

Furthermore, I point out some significant meta-mathematical purposes of Euclid's order of definitions. In particular, I suggest that Euclid's taxonomy of definitions, besides reflecting conceptual hierarchies obtaining among the terms occurring in his definitions, determines the direction of explanation in mathematical proof.

Finally, I anticipate and block various strategies to undermine the view that the *Elements'* strictly ordered sequences of definitions can be explained by conceptual dependence relations.

11:45-12:45 Session 2: [Greek Literature](#)

Denis Keyer (University of Bern): Does the future 'lie behind'? Homeric idiom, cultural studies and the linguistics of deixis

It is widely believed by classical scholars that ancient Greeks regarded the future as lying behind their back since it was invisible (thus, e.g. LSJ s.v. ὀπίσσω). This opinion was influenced by schol. A. in *Il.* 1. 303 (et sim.) and Eustath. in *Il.* 3. 109.

The same perception of time is attributed to many other peoples and cultures on the grounds that in different languages the same word is used in the sense of 'behind' and 'in the future' (cf. לפני and אחרית for Hebrew). Though in each case it was regarded by scholars as a peculiar feature, it is in fact a universal semantic model.

The premise that the future was described as 'unseen' is wrong. The concepts of the future and the past in different languages develop from relative temporal concepts ('earlier' and 'later events') that, in turn, are based on the spatial image of two persons moving in the same direction: the one going ahead (in front) comes earlier and the one following him (behind) comes later.

Since 1980s cognitive studies achieved great success in discovering fundamental principles that provide for possible strategies of expressing spatial relationships in language and cognition (known as *deixis*). Their terminology, in particular the distinction between the *relative* and *intrinsic frames of reference*, helps us to grasp the actual difference between ancient languages and "average European" ones in the usage of relative temporal adverbs as well as to define the mistake of the popular conception that the future was perceived as "lying behind one's back".

The Homeric idiom 'to look ahead and back' (*Il.* 1. 343, 3. 109, 18. 250 = *Od.* 24. 252), debated as early as in antiquity, implies spatial circumspection as a sign of prudence rather than the insight into the future and the past.

Lola Bos (University of Amsterdam): “Sophocles’ *Trachiniae*: the theatrical power of narrative.”

In *Trachiniae*, Heracles falls in love with a woman he has taken captive. His wife Deianeira resorts to a magic potion in an attempt to restore her marriage, with fatal consequences. Scholars used to consider the tragedy inferior and peculiar – too flawed, even, to have been written by Sophocles. The frequent presence of embedded narrative in particular was regarded as the play’s primary imperfection. Only recently has this tragedy been re-evaluated as a ‘classic’.

The many narratives of *Trachiniae* remain understudied, however. Following Aristotle, their presence was often dismissed as undramatic, or at best interpreted as a convenient practical solution. Although today it is no longer argued that tragedians only turned to embedded narrative to overcome limited stage techniques (miracles could not be displayed) and to meet religious norms (it was forbidden to show murders on stage), a satisfactory answer to the question why those narratives are present is still lacking. I argue that the narratives of *Trachiniae* are not a dramatic shortcoming, nor merely a practical solution, but that they have their own theatrical power and allowed Sophocles to experiment, innovate, and to engage his spectators.

The theatrical power of the narratives in *Trachiniae* is best understood by considering them not merely as texts but as staged stories in a play that progressed linearly. While scholars can page back and forth through the text, contemporary spectators couldn’t – narrative devices thus also engaged them differently. This ‘linear’ approach not only provides insight into the role of narrative in Sophocles’ skillful gradual release of information, but also sheds new light on the much-debated problem of Deianeira’s guilt: did she intentionally kill Heracles? Most importantly, it shows how embedded narratives allowed the audience to more profoundly internalize the play’s main message: that hearsay is unreliable and knowledge remains elusive.

14:00-15:30 Session 3: **Greek History**

Karolina Sekita (Tel Aviv University): God, hero, or shade? Herakles in the Underworld of the *Odyssey* 11, Panyassis’ *Herakleia*, and Greek (?) Cult

In this paper I shall focus first on the passage from the *Odyssey* 11 with particular attention paid to lines 601-604 in order to show that these lines, athetised by Onomakritos (according to the scholia), might in fact be a part of the ‘original’ narrative, which fits Odysseus’ story very well, while eliding these lines disrupts the narrative as a whole. My aim in this paper, however, is to show that Herakles’ divine status might have preceded the introduction of his hero cult in Greece. I shall do this by re-examining the written sources (Panyassis, Herodotus, and others) combined with archaeological finds, and via comparison with ontologically similar figures, *i.e.* Dionysos.

Janek Kucharski (University of Silesia in Katowice): “Punishment and the democratic hierarchies in classical Athens.”

Political equality was a principal tenet of Athenian democracy, at least within the relatively small group of male citizens in full possession of their civic rights. Within this group no individual, unless discharging an official duty, could claim authority over another. Authority, however, is a defining feature of punishment which is predicated on a hierarchical relationship between its agent and

patient. A parent can punish her child, a teacher – his student, or an executive – her subordinate. When it comes to legal offences, it is the sovereign that has the authority to punish wrongdoers, and in a democracy, this sovereignty lies with the entire state; no individual can have any claim to act as an agent of punishment.

The actors on the forensic stage of classical Athens were well aware of this exclusive prerogative of the state. In their abstract reflections on the administration of justice, the orators pin the punitive authority on the laws, the judges, or the entire polis, all the while rejecting any claims to it on the part of an individual (Dem. 21.29, 44; 23.32, 69, 71; Lyc. 1.4). And yet their specific arguments about punishing wrongdoers do not correspond with these tenets. Time and again we find the individual represented as the agent of punishment and thus – apparently – vested with the authority explicitly denied to him on the more abstract level of argumentation.

In this paper, I approach this discrepancy from the cognitive perspective. I argue that the question of authority, although recognized, never entered the framework which shaped the discourse of punishment in classical Athens. The prominent role of the individual in the punitive process, on the other hand, seems to suggest a very different cognitive model, one based on democratic participation rather than democratic hierarchies.

Mario C. D. Paganini (Austrian Academy of Sciences): The contribution of onomastics to the study of migration in Hellenistic Egypt

The value of onomastics for the study of the ancient world at large is by now considered a given and analytical research on personal names has been progressively facilitated by monumental lexica and by digital tools. In multicultural societies such as that of Hellenistic Egypt, the choice of names comes with wide-ranging ramifications and acts as gauge of diverse socio-cultural phenomena. For instance, recent studies on the onomastics of Judaeans settlers in Egypt by S. Honigman have offered fruitful investigative models and proven how onomastic data can be usefully mobilised to analyse patterns of migration. By adopting a similar model and by applying it to the other groups of migrants recorded in the sources from Hellenistic Egypt, this paper highlights how the analysis of onomastic data contributes to the study of migration on at least two levels. 1. It provides an external parameter for testing quantitatively the potential reliability of ethnic indicators in the sources and thus helps to partially overcome some of their problematics. 2. It allows to identify possible timeframes of migration and to map some of the migrants' cultural developments in the host country. The migrants tended to develop a complex outlook and to adopt markers of identity typical of and meaningful for their social groups *in* Egypt, progressively becoming more 'at home' in their new country. This paper presents some lines of study and preliminary results of an on-going project that investigates how migrants adapted themselves and the local socio-cultural environment in the process of making Egypt their new home and how they in fact became – consciously or unconsciously – 'insiders' as constitutive components of the multifaceted society of the longest-lasting Hellenistic Kingdom.

15:45-16:45 Session 4: [Approaches to the Ancient Economy](#)

Lev Cosijns (University of Oxford) and Haggai Olshanetsky (University of Basel): Roman-Sasanian Relationships and the Rise and Fall of Indo-Roman Trade

The trade between the Roman Empire and India grew throughout the 1st century BCE and CE. It is believed that a considerable volume of wealth travelled through it, yet this trade started to decline in the second century CE, possibly never to return to its former peak. However, East-West trade remained relevant in later centuries, not only for the Romans but also for the Sasanians, as a major part of this trade went through their territories and was an important source of revenue for the Persian Empire. Accordingly, the current paper wishes to examine the fluctuations in Indo-Roman trade and to trace the origin of the changes in the volume of this trade in different periods. Many have searched for reasons for the decline in the 2nd – 3rd centuries CE, with strong attempts to connect this decline to climate and plague. Similarly, there was a decline in this trade during the 5th – 6th centuries, and although there were fewer studies on Indo-Roman trade during the Late Roman Empire, some of the studies also attempted to attribute this decline in trade to climate or plague. However, in both cases, there is no clear proof connecting these declines to climate or plague. On the other hand, the paper will show that the fluctuations in the volume of this trade over time are in complete tandem with the relationship between the Persians and Romans in each period. It will show the changes in this trade at a greater resolution and will offer a coherent explanation for the changes that were, in our opinion, most probably man-made. The examination will show that changes in trends, trade routes, and politics, especially conflicts between the empires, played a vital role in the changes in the volume of this trade. Another factor which was also affected was the preference of the trade routes. This may have especially affected the Egyptian Eastern Desert and may also have been the main cause of its decline.

Emmanuel Nantet (University of Haifa): The myriophoroi: the largest merchantmen in the ancient Mediterranean

Ancient literary sources often mention a specific typology of merchantmen, called *myriophoroi*. The word, made of *myrias*, reveals that those ships could carry up to 10.000 units, or at least a huge quantity. They were known as the largest vessels in the ancient Mediterranean. The ship's tonnage is a significant issue in economic history and deserves close consideration. However, scholars have long disagreed about the ancient unit to which ancient writers were referring. Identifying the metrological unit strongly impacts these large merchantmen's capacity. Our investigation will offer an extensive review of all the written evidence, including texts that were not examined previously. We will compare them with the data collected in underwater excavations over the past decades, or more recently, such as the Caesarea shipwreck, which we fully excavated in two seasons in 2017 and 2018.

17:00-18:00 Session 5: [Late Antiquity and Reception History](#)

Sabrina Inowlocki (Marie Skłodowska-Curie Fellow, Katholieke Universiteit Leuven): Pamphilus' Library at Caesarea, Between Myth and Reality

Ancient libraries, and the library of Alexandria in particular, have haunted Western imagination for more than two thousand of years. They have provided the foundation for the history of Western culture, real or imagined. Closer to us, another library has enjoyed a similar fame: the Christian library

of Caesarea, allegedly founded by Pamphilus the martyr and teacher of the famous Eusebius of Caesarea, the so-called father of church history.

Often represented in scholarship as a Christian version of the Hellenistic library of Alexandria, it is traditionally depicted as a vast collection of Greek works, Christian, Jewish and “Pagan”, with a universal scope, benefitting from the patronage of emperor Constantine himself. This representation relies notably on the presence of numerous quotations of Greek historians and philosophers (Plato, Numenius, Porphyry, Alexander Polyhistor, and many others) as well as Christian writers in Eusebius’ *Historia ecclesiastica* and *Praeparatio evangelica* (see Carriker, *The Library of Eusebius of Caesarea*, Brill, 2006).

In addition, it has recently been argued that the library must have included an imposing scriptorium which made the codicological innovations of Eusebius possible (Grafton-Williams, *Christianity and the Transformation of the Book*, Harvard Univ. Press, 2006). This would also presumably explain the role of the library as an important center of textual transmission for the works of Philo of Alexandria and Origen, among others. However, just as many of the stories told about the famous library of Alexandria need to be taken with a grain of salt, the same can be and should be said about the library of Caesarea.

Re-examining some of the most ancient evidence (mainly Eusebius, Jerome and some late antique colophons), this paper will question common assumptions on the library of Caesarea conveyed in secondary literature. It will suggest that the proportions, the functions and purposes of this library were probably different than what is usually thought.

Donna Shalev (Hebrew University of Jerusalem): Greek Athletic and Gymnasial Survivals: Cultural Transmission through the Prism of Medieval Arabic Translations

- (a) Classical texts abound with references to athletic competition, training, sports medicine, equipment, and related broader cultural themes such as the social, intellectual, ritual and other settings for activities in the gymnasium, the race-track, the clinic, and within one’s dreams. This central, possibly defining, feature of Classical culture is represented in thought-provokingly uneven doses in cultures which have interacted with it. Interesting dynamics and attitudes are attested within Greek culture and vis-à-vis developments at Rome, as well as in Early Christianity and Jewish Hellenism (and even a 20th-century Yiddish perspective of ancient Greek society).
- (b) I examine the case of medieval Arabic culture, featuring a seeming disparity between the wealth and centrality of athletic references in Greek sources and extremely limited representation in medieval Arabic sources (there is no entry on athletics in the *Encyclopedia of Islam*). This disparity may turn out not to be so extreme: the corpus of Arabic translations of Greek texts offers an unexplored trove of attestations, in Arabic, to gymnasial, athletic and related activity. This corpus can serve as a foothold to a wider-scale study of representation of athletics in medieval Arabic sources and culture, under the impact of Greek, and beyond it.
- (c) The pool of evidence in this cross-section is limited by the authors and works whose Arabic translations survive (mostly non-literary, e.g., Aristotle, Galen, Artemidorus, but also the *Alexander Romance*), yet rich insights into the reception, adoption and absorption of athletic

notions, realia and concomitant cultural settings can be better understood through studying the strategies, compromises and omissions encountered in the Arabic versions.

In the talk I briefly present and illustrate the background outlined above: (a) the question, (b) the scope for evidence through this unique prism of Arabic translations of Greek sources, and (c) the constraints which the corpus of surviving translations imposes on the comparison of representations in the two cultures, and devote most of the talk to (d) a presentation of two specific terminological instances and one case of omission:

- The term μονομάχος in Galen (*Anatomical Administrations*, *alibi*), and Artemidorus (*Oneirocritica*), focusing on varied strategies of Arabic translation within each work and between them, and questions such as translating compounds, and translator identity.
- Arabic pendants for Greek terms such as γυμνάσιον or παλαίστρα in translations of works by Aristotle, and in Imperial Roman times by Artemidorus and Galen, briefly considering whether the translations reflect the evolving functions and structure of such spaces over time.
- The omission of the chariot race in the Arabic versions in the *Alexander Romance* (α recension I.18ff, *alibi*).

Each case of Graeco-Arabic transmission — in this case of athletic themes — poses a set of terminological, formal and culture-specific notional and attitudinal challenges and dynamics. Examining passages where this theme is represented within their textual and cultural contexts provides evidence for a fuller appreciation of the transmission and reception of athletic notions and practices, and of constraints and variations on a central cultural theme as reflected in its crossing over barriers of language.

Thursday, June 8, 2023

9:30-11:30 Session 6 (in Hebrew and English)

Noam Bar-David (Bar-ilan University), Sapir Asoulin (Holon Institute of Technology), Stéphanie Binder (Bar-ilan University), Moshe Lavee (University of Haifa) and Jonathan Schler (Holon Institute of Technology): Nicolaus of Damascus's writings through the lens of Flavius Josephus: rationale, methods and first insights

Nicolaus of Damascus, whose original work in ancient Greek is mostly lost, is the main source for Jewish history during the Hasmonean Period and Herod's reign. As Herod's secretary and counsellor in the 1st century BC, he was an eyewitness to many of the events he recounted and had first-hand information concerning others as well as access to archives. Roughly one generation later, the Jewish historian Flavius Josephus used Nicolaus's writings. Since Josephus's agenda and positions were quite different from his source's, it is interesting to inquire into the way he adopted or rewrote the information he found.

To analyse the passages attributed to Nicolaus in Josephus's texts, rather than relying solely on our subjective intuitions and understanding as well as on classical methods of source analysis, our team mobilizes in addition

artificial intelligence and develops special digital tools. Those tools enable us to better track linguistic features characteristic of text reuse by Josephus, not only in the case of Nicolaus but concerning the way this author handles his sources in general; to compare text snippets to the ID established for each author and to evaluate to which of them they are closer; to discover parts of text that Josephus presents as his own but might have actually been inspired by other sources, and to investigate other questions stemming from the data obtained through computerized research.

This presentation is the occasion to discuss the dynamics of modelling research questions from the field of the Humanities in a way which can be digitally processed, to describe the methods we use or reject, adapt or develop, and to present preliminary outcomes alongside the explanation of their interest and contribution to both Classical Studies and Computer Sciences.

נעם בר דוד (אוניברסיטת בר-אילן), **סטפני בינדר** (אוניברסיטת בר-אילן), **משה לביא** (אוניברסיטת חיפה) וצוות פרויקט מס' 822/22 "כתבי ניקולאוס" של הקרן הלאומית למדע: כתבי ניקולאוס איש דמשק תחת ידו של יוסף בן מתתיהו רציונל, שיטות דיגיטליות ותוצרים ראשוניים

כתבי ניקולאוס איש דמשק ביוונית עתיקה, אשר רובם אבדו, מהווים את המקור העיקרי לתולדות ישראל בתקופת החשמונאים ובית הורדוס. בתור מזכירו ויועצו הקרוב של המלך הורדוס במאה ה-1 לפנה"ס, ניקולאוס חווה ישירות אירועים רבים שעליהם הוא מדווח, ולגבי אחרים הייתה לו גישה למידע ממקור ראשון ולארכיוני החצר. כשנות דור אחריו, ההיסטוריון היהודי יוסף בן מתתיהו, הידוע כיוספוס פלאביוס, השתמש בכתביו. מכיוון שמטרתו ועמדותיו של יוספוס היו שונות למדי מאלה של המקור שלו, מעניין לבחון את האופן בו הוא אימץ או שכתב את המידע שהוא מצא.

כדי לנתח את הקטעים מתוך כתביו של יוספוס שיוחסו לניקולאוס, במקום להישען אך ורק על האינטואיציה וההבנה הסובייקטיבית שלנו או על שיטות מקובלות לניתוח מקורות, הצוות שלנו מגייס בנוסף כלים מעולם הבינה המלאכותית ומפתח כלים דיגיטליים ייעודיים. כלים אלה מאפשרים לנו לעקוב בצורה יעילה יותר אחר קוים לשוניים המאפיינים שימוש חוזר בטקסט קיים על ידי יוספוס. הם שימושיים לא רק במקרה של ניקולאוס אלא גם כדי לברר באופן כללי איך מחבר זה מנצל את מקורותיו. בעזרת הכלים אפשר גם להשוות קטעי טקסט קצרים ל"תעודת הזהות" שנקבעה עבור כל מחבר ולהעריך לכתבים של איזה מהמחברים קטעים אלה דומים יותר. יתרה מזאת, הם מקנים יכולת לגלות חלקי טקסט שיוספוס מציג כפרי עטו אך מסתמנים בפועל ככתובים בהשראת מקורות חיצוניים. מתוך המידע המופק מהמחקר הדיגיטלי עולות שאלות נוספות הדורשות עיון.

הרצאה זו היא הזדמנות לדון בדינמיקה של עיצוב שאלות מחקר ממדעי הרוח בצורה המאפשרת מתן פתרונות בעזרת כלים דיגיטליים. נציג את השיטות שאנחנו מאמצים או דוחים, מעבדים או מפתחים ואת התוצרים הראשוניים תוך כדי מתן הסבר על עניינם ותרומתם לתחומים של הלימודים הקלאסיים ושל מדעי המחשב גם יחד.

Noam Ritbo (Tel Aviv University): *Firmarent velut foedus* (Tac. Ann. 6.30):

The Language of Compromise in Rome

When Lentulus Gaetulicus, the popular governor of Germania Superior under emperor Tiberius, was accused on account of his former friendship with the disgraced Sejanus, he reportedly confronted the emperor in a letter. After professedly asserting his loyalty and stressing that the appointment of another in his stead would be considered a death sentence, he presented Tiberius with a compromise: the emperor shall keep his rule over the empire, and Gaetulicus would keep his province. The historian Tacitus described this with the unusual expression *velut foedus*, "as if a peace-treaty", revealing an apparent linguistic difficulty (Ann. 6.30).

Compromise, a consensual settlement of differences achieved by mutual concessions, is a basic and crucial concept in politics. In fact, no political system can function properly without compromises. Underlining primarily the legal aspects of compromise, Latin vocabulary lacks an appropriate term to denote political compromises in the sense outlined above. Nevertheless, in Roman politics, compromises were negotiated and reached in both domestic and foreign affairs to resolve social and political conflicts, end wars, and forge alliances. Among the many examples are the laws passed to end the Struggle of the Orders, the mutual agreements that formed the *Triumvirates*, certain aspects of the Augustan settlements, and "imperial pardons".

If compromises were not depicted as such, then how were they referred to – as friendship? Forgiveness? Peace treaties? What circumstances determined the terminology used to discuss such political arrangements? By tackling key case studies from the Late Republic and the Early Principate, specifically in relation to the language and symbolism used in depicting these instances of compromise, I will try to show that despite this lack of a specific term, and in as much as Roman politics was characterized by high-octane, often violent, conflicts, compromises served as important dynamic tools affording reasonable alternatives to violence.

נעם ריטבו (אוניברסיטת תל אביב) "תהי נא כברית כרותה ביניהם" (טקיטוס, ספרי השנים, ו', ל'): פשרות ואופן הדיבור עליהן ברומא

בשנת 34, כשלוש שנים לאחר הוצאתו להורג של סיאנוס, מפקד המשמר המושמץ של הקיסר טיבריוס, הואשם המושל הפופולרי של גרמניה עילית לנטולוס גאיטוליקוס על קשרי הידידות שהיו לו עם סיאנוס. בניגוד לרבים מחבריו האחרים של סיאנוס, גאיטוליקוס העז להתעמת עם הקיסר. באיגרת ששלח לטיבריוס הוא הצהיר על נאמנותו והבהיר שמינוי אדם אחר כמושל במקומו יתפרש כגזר דין מוות. על כן, הוא הציע לטיבריוס פשרה: הקיסר ימשיך למשול על האימפריה, ואילו גאיטוליקוס ימשיך להחזיק בפרובינקיה. ההיסטוריון טקיטוס תיאר את ההצעה באמצעות הביטוי יוצא הדופן *velut foedus*, "כאילו ברית", ובכך חשף כביכול קושי לשוני מסוים בהתייחסו לפשרה (ספרי השנים, ו', ל').

פשרה, הסדר של חילוקי דעות שהושג באמצעות הסכמה הדידית על תנאים וויתורים, היא מושג בסיסי ומרכזי בפוליטיקה. למעשה, שום מערכת פוליטית לא יכולה לפעול כראוי ללא פשרות. לאוצר המילים הלטיני ששם דגש בעיקר על ההיבטים המשפטיים של הפשרה, אין מונח מובחן לציון פשרות במובן שהוצג לעיל. אף על פי כן, פשרות נידונו ונערכו בפוליטיקה הרומית הן בענייני פנים והן בענייני חוץ במטרה לפתור משברים חברתיים ופוליטיים, לסיים מלחמות ולכרות בריתות. בין הדוגמאות הרבות ניתן להצביע על סיום המאבקים בין הפטריקים לפלבאים, ההסכמים ההדדיים שיצרו את הטרימווירט הראשון והשני, היבטים מסוימים בהסדרים של אוגוסטוס, ו"חנינות מטעם הקיסר".

אם פשרות לא הוצגו ככאלה, אז כיצד התייחסו אליהן? במונחים כמו ידידות (*amicitia*), פיוס (*in gratiam redire*), הסכמי שלום (*foedera*)? אילו נסיבות קבעו את הטרמינולוגיה שבאמצעותה דנו בהסדרים הפוליטיים הללו? במסגרת ההרצאה אנתח מספר מקרי בוחן מרכזיים מתקופת הרפובליקה המאוחרת והפרינקיפט המוקדם, תוך דגש על השפה והסמלים שבאמצעותם תוארו הסכמי פשרה אלו. אני אטען שלמרות היעדרו של מונח ספציפי לייצוג פשרות במרחב הפוליטי, ועל אף שהפוליטיקה הרומית אופיינה במחלוקות קשות ולעיתים אלימות, פשרות היו כלי חשוב ודינמי שאפשר חלופה סבירה ומעשית לאלימות.

Itamar Levin (Brown University): The Return of the Living-Dead: Erroneous Declarations of Death in Absentia in Ancient Greece and Jewish Law

Classical antiquity provides several cases of men who returned home only to find that their family has thought they had died on their journey. What were

the legal ramifications of such instances? To answer this question, the paper offers a comparative study between ancient Greece and Rabbinic Judaism.

After presenting several contemporary examples, the paper will look at two case studies from the Greek tradition: a testimony of a fourth-century BC trierarch (Is. fr. 15 = Dion. Hal. Is. 5) and the new comedy *Aspis* by Menander. These examples suggest that a premature declaration of death *in absentia* created legal difficulties, yet their exact nature remains obscure. The accounts of Plutarch (*Quaest. Rom.* 5) and Hesychius (*Lex.* δ 746 Latte–Cunningham), on the other hand, show that those who returned home after a cenotaph was erected in their honor were considered polluted as corpses. This Greek convention will be contrasted with the Jewish laws concerning anchored women (נָשִׁים עָגוּנוֹת). If their husbands returned home after they had remarried, they lost all matrimonial rights and their children of both marriages were considered bastards (*Mishnah*, Yevamot 10:1).

The comparison will show that in both cultures, the return of the living-dead created a morass of legal conundrums. Nevertheless, each society dealt with this scenario differently; in Greece, the returning man is himself inflicted with religious (and potentially also legal) sanctions. In contrast, according to Jewish law, the one who may suffer social penalty is the woman. The Greeks, unlike the Jews, had the institution of cenotaphs—empty graves—which served as a declaration of death *in absentia* that validated inheritance and widowhood.

איתמר לוין (אוניברסיטת בראון): שובו של האל-מת: הכרזה מוטעית על מות נעדר ביוון העתיקה וביהדות המשנאית

מוות משפטי של אנשים חיים מייצר סבך בעיות משפטיות ופיננסיות בחברות מודרניות. אף בעת העתיקה היו מקרים של אנשים אשר חזרו לביתם וגילו שמשפחתם סברה שהם מתו בזמן היעדרותם. מה היו ההשלכות המשפטיות של מקרים אלו? על מנת לענות על שאלה זו, המאמר מציע מחקר השוואתי בין יוון העתיקה והיהדות המשנאית. לאחר סקירה קצרה של מספר מקרים מתקופתנו, המאמר יציג דוגמאות ספרותיות והיסטוריות מיוון העתיקה: עדות משפטית מהמאה הרביעית לפנה"ס (Is. fr. 15 = Dion. Hal. Is. 5) כמו גם עלילת הקומדיה החדשה **המגן** מאת מנדרוס. מקרי מבחן אלו מציעים כי מוות בניכר היווה מקור לחששות ולעיסוק חוזר ונשנה. ברם אף שהמקורות מרמזים על בעיות משפטיות, מלוא חומרתן אינו מפורט. מנגד, פלוטראקוס (5) (*Quaest. Rom.*) והסיכיוס איש-אלכסנדריה (Lex. δ 746 Latte-Cunningham) מפרטים בכתיבה כי אנשים אשר חזרו לביתם לאחר שנערכה עבורם לוויה והוקם קנוטף נחשבו בעלי טומאת-המת. מנהג זה של היוונים עומד בניגוד לחוק המשנאי העוסק בנשים עגונות; על פי מסכת **יבמות** (יא), אם הבעל חוזר לביתו לאחר שאשתו התחתנה מחדש וילדה ילדים, היא מאבדת את מעמדה כאישה נשואה, וילדיה משתי מערכות הנישואים נחשבים לממזרים. מתוך השוואה זו עולה כי בשתי התרבויות, שובו של האל-מת יצר קושי חברתי, אך טיבו של אותו קושי היה שונה בתכלית. ביוון העתיקה היה זה הנעדר עצמו שסבל מסנקציות דתיות שהצריכו טקסי טהרה. ייתכן שהנידוי הדתי אף מרמז על אובדן המעמד החברתי והזכות לרכוש. לעומת זאת, בקרב היהודים הייתה זו האישה אשר נחשבה זו שהפרה את נדריה ונאלצה לסבול מסנקציות חברתיות ומשפטיות ארוכות טווח. ליוונים, בניגוד ליהודים, הייתה מסורת של הקמת קברים ריקים עבור אלו שמתו בניכר. מוסד זה היה בחזקת הכרזה על מוות בהיעדר גופה אשר נתן תוקף דתי ומשפטי לקביעת המוות ולהליכים המשפטיים שבאו בעקבותיה בנושאי התאלמנות וירושה.

Simeon D. Ehrlich (Post-Doctoral Fellow, Fulbright U.S. Scholar Program, Institute of Archaeology, Hebrew University of Jerusalem): The Overeager Archaeology of Prostitution in the Holy Land

The identification of prostitution in the archaeological record is a fraught exercise. In recent decades archaeologists have identified two late antique “brothels” at sites in Israel: the Grid 38 Bathhouse at Ashkelon (*Ascalon*) and the Sigma Building at Beit She’an (*Scythopolis*). I contend that these two interpretations are spurious. In neither case do the architectural, iconographic, epigraphic, or ceramic remains *necessarily* suggest the presence of a brothel. At Ashkelon they point to the absence of one; at Beit She’an, the evidence simply does not allow for as precise an interpretation as scholars might wish. In both cases, we see examples of the scholarly imagination coming into conflict with the limits of material interpretation.

The two discoveries progressed along similar trajectories: excavation was followed by assertions in scholarly and popular media that the buildings were *not* brothels; continued public engagement prompted increasingly adamant assertions that the buildings were *indeed* brothels; ultimately, the buildings were accepted to be brothels in both academic and public media, and so they remain in the popular imagination. Most interesting is the changing evidence used to substantiate the increasingly sensationalized interpretations: cautious readings of excavated material give way to assumptions, mischaracterizations, speculations, and impositions of modern mores on ancient societies.

At heart, these case studies are a cautionary tale of how efforts to hold public interest can perpetuate false narratives, undermining our attempts to understand the ancient world and the lives of its people. An alternate pressure might be the need to present exciting finds in order to sustain – or even justify – a project’s funding. As archaeologists, we must be careful not to cast our hypotheses as fact until we have found sufficient evidence to substantiate them.

14:15-15:5

Keynote speaker

Prof. Irene J. F. de Jong (University of Amsterdam): Beginnings in Herodotus’ *Histories*

Herodotus displays a great fascination for beginnings. Right at the beginning of his work he thematizes the importance of beginnings and shows that the question ‘who started’ also implies ‘who is responsible’. Halfway he once more thematizes a beginning, this time the Ionian revolt as the beginning of troubles for both Greeks and Persians (5.28 and 97). In my paper I will analyse these two important passages and show their ramifications in and for the entire *Histories*. I will also argue that Herodotus’ fascination with the topic not only has Homeric roots, but also reflects contemporary intellectual interests.

15:15-16:45

Session 7: **Panel in Memory of Prof. Moshe Fischer** (in Hebrew)

לא קם כמשה: מושב לזכרו של משה פישר ז"ל

Orit Peleg-Barkat (Hebrew University of Jerusalem): With a Capital M: The Contribution of the Late Prof. Moshe Fisher to the Study of Classical Architectural Decoration in Hellenistic and Roman Palestine

Few Israeli researchers have chosen to specialize in the study of Classical architectural decoration. This field of research requires the researcher to have

a solid foundation in art history and Classical architecture, and a thorough understanding of design principles, construction technologies and raw materials. However, the ability to notice and analyze small and intricate details and proportions is especially important. The late Prof. Moshe Fisher had these skills and talents and beyond them he also had a broad perception and the ability to collaborate in the field and in the laboratory, which led him to become one of the leaders in this field.

His doctoral thesis, which focused on the development of the Corinthian capital in the Land of Israel from its first appearance in the Hellenistic period to the time of Constantine (published as a book in 1990), was a milestone in the study of Classical architectural decoration in Israel in particular and in the southern Levant in general and served as a model for the studies that followed. Test cases where Prof. Fischer's contribution is particularly important are the capitals that decorated the synagogue in Capernaum, the date of which is in dispute, the capitals of Caesarea and those of the Severan basilica in Ashkelon. His contribution is also important for understanding the introduction of Classical decoration into this region in the Hellenistic period and one of the last articles he wrote concerns a unique set of Ionic capitals from Hellenistic Marisa.

In this lecture we will follow the various stations in Prof. Fisher's research in the field of architectural decoration and examine the vast contribution they made to the study of the region's past during the Hellenistic and Roman period.

אורית פלג-ברקת (האוניברסיטה העברית): עלה לכותרות: תרומתו של פרופ' משה פישר ז"ל לחקר העיטור האדריכלי הקלאסי בארץ-ישראל

מעטים הם החוקרים הישראלים שבחרו להתמחות בחקר העיטור האדריכלי הקלאסי. ענף מחקר זה מחייב מן החוקר בסיס איתן בתולדות האמנות ובאדריכלות קלאסית, והבנה מעמיקה בעקרונות העיצוב, טכנולוגיות בנייה וחומרי גלם. אולם חשובה במיוחד יכולתו לשים לב ולנתח פרטים קטנים ועדינים ויחסי גדלים בין מרכיבים שונים במערך העיטורי. לפרופ' משה פישר ז"ל היו כישורים וכישרונות אלו ומעבר להם הייתה לו גם תפיסה רחבה ויכולת לשיתופי פעולה בשטח ובמעבדה, שהובילו אותו להיות אחד המובילים בתחום זה. עבודת הדוקטורט שלו שהתמקדה בהתפתחות הכותרת הקורינתית בארץ ישראל החל מהופעתה הראשונה בתקופה ההלניסטית וכלה בימי קונסטנטינוס והתפרסמה כספר בשנת 1990 היוותה אבן דרך במחקר העיטור האדריכלי הקלאסי בארץ בפרט ובדרום הלבנט בכלל ושימשה מודל למחקרים שהגיעו בעקבותיה. מקרי מבחן שבהם תרומתו של פרופ' פישר חשובה במיוחד הם הכותרות שעיטרו את בית הכנסת בכפר נחום שתארכיו נתון במחלוקת, הכותרות של קיסריה ואלו של הבזיליקה הסוורית באשקלון. תרומתו חשובה גם להבנת ראשיתה של חדירת העיטור הקלאסי לארץ ישראל בתקופה ההלניסטית ואחד המאמרים האחרונים שכתב נוגע למכלול ייחודי של כותרות יוניות ממרשה ההלניסטית. בהרצאה זו נעקוב אחר התחנות השונות במחקרו של פרופ' פישר בתחום העיטור האדריכלי ונבחן את התרומה הגדולה שהעלו לחקר עברה של הארץ בתקופה ההלניסטית והרומית.

Itamar Taxel (Archaeological Research Department, Israel Antiquities Authority): When Fischer Met Petrus, Or the Yavneh–Yavneh-Yam Region in Late Antiquity

This lecture reviews the years-long work of the late Prof. Moshe Fischer at the site of Yavneh-Yam and the surrounding area, including ancient inland Yavneh, regarding the 4th to 7th centuries CE, namely the time-period between the later Roman and the beginning of the Early Islamic period. Moshe's scholarly work, alongside his partners and followers (including the present

speaker), included initiated excavations at Yavneh-Yam, where substantial remains attributed to the discussed time-period have been unearthed, and a systematic survey of the Map of Yavneh (as part of the Archaeological Survey of Israel Project) during which numerous sites representing many periods have been documented. These projects are presented here also in light of earlier and more recent research projects in the region.

The 4th century, which constituted a transitional ideological-cultural period between Roman and Byzantine times, is rather artificially represented in the region in terms of archaeological finds. These include a few remains in Yavneh-Yam, in the city of Yavneh (notably in the recent excavations there) and in their rural hinterland, and thus far no find that may reflect the first institutionalized penetration of Christianity into the local society was revealed.

The 5th and 6th centuries no doubt represent a settlement, material and economic climax in the Yavneh–Yavneh-Yam region, as in other parts of the country. Yavneh-Yam is known as the place where the Georgian bishop Petrus the Iberian spent his last years until his death in 491 CE. Petrus was a protégé of the Empress Eudocia, who built in Yavneh-Yam a church and inn. The site's excavations revealed remains of Byzantine-period residential, artisanal and storage buildings, a bathhouse, a hermitage cave and burial caves, which testify for a prosperous town with a large natural anchorage that served a gate to the Mediterranean for inland Yavneh and the rest of the region's settlements. The literary sources, and to a certain degree also the archaeological evidence, indicate that during this period Yavneh-Yam was inhabited by Christians, Samaritans and Jews. A similar prosperity, alongside religious-ethnic diversity, existed at the same time also in the countryside area between Yavneh and Yavneh-Yam and in Yavneh itself, which became a regional center of wine production, perhaps under Church hegemony.

The first half of the 7th century, apparently slightly after the Muslim conquest, represents a direct continuation of the settlement and economic activity of the previous centuries. Nevertheless, the second half of that century was characterized by sharp changes, including the establishment of a Muslim military-religious stronghold (*ribat*) at Yavneh-Yam, which contributed to the gradual abandonment of the civil harbor town, and a severe earthquake and perhaps also ideological pressure which brought about a decline in Yavneh's wine industry and a start of a change in the city's physical and social nature.

איתמר טקסל (תחום מחקר והתמחויות, רשות העתיקות): כשפישר פגש את פטרוס, או מרחב יבנה–יבנה-ים בשלהי העת העתיקה

הרצאה זו סוקרת את עבודתו רבת השנים של משה פישר ז"ל באתר יבנה-ים ובמרחב היבשתי הסובב אותו, הכולל את אתרה של יבנה הקדומה, בהתייחס למאות ה-4 עד ה-7 לסה"נ, היינו לפרק הזמן שבין שלהי התקופה הרומית לראשית התקופה האסלאמית הקדומה. עבודתו של משה, לצד שותפים וממשיכי דרכו (בהם הח"מ), כללה חפירות יזומות ביבנה-ים, בהן נחשפו בין היתר שרידים מגוונים המתוארכים לפרק הזמן הנ"ל, וסקר שיטתי של "מפת יבנה" (כחלק ממפעל הסקר הארכיאולוגי של ישראל), במהלכו תועדו אתרים רבים מאוד מתקופות שונות. פרויקטים אלה יסקרו גם לאור מחקרים קודמים וחדשים יותר באזור. המאה ה-4 לסה"נ, המהווה תקופת מעבר אידיאולוגית-תרבותית בין התקופות הרומית והביזנטית, מיוצגת מבחינה ארכיאולוגית במרחב הנ"ל באופן שטחי למדי, הכולל שרידים מעטים ביבנה-ים וביבנה הפנימית (לרבות בחפירות השנים האחרונות) וייצוג דליל במרחב הכפרי, ועד כה טרם נתגלה באזור ממצא כלשהו המשקף למשל את ראשית חדירתה הממוסדת של הנצרות לחברה המקומית.

המאות ה-5 וה-6 לסה"נ מייצגות, ללא ספק, שיא יישובי, חומרי וכלכלי במרחב יבנה–יבנה-ים, כבאזורים אחרים בארץ. יבנה-ים ידועה כמקום בו בחר להתגורר בשנותיו האחרונות, עד למותו בשנת 491 לסה"נ, הבישוף הגיאורגי פטרוס האיברי, בן-חסותה של

הקיסרית אודוקיה, שאף הקימה ביישוב כנסייה ואכסנייה. בחפירות יבנה-ים נחשפו שרידי מבני מגורים, מלאכה ואחסון, בית מרחץ, מערת התבודדות של נזירים ומערות קבורה, המעידים על יישוב משגשג שהתקיים לצד מעגן טבעי גדול שהיווה מוצא אל הים התיכון עבור יבנה היבשתית ויתר יישובי האזור. המקורות ההיסטוריים, ובמידה מסוימת גם הממצא הארכיאולוגי, מעידים כי בתקופה זו התגוררו ביבנה-ים נוצרים, שומרונים ויהודים. פריחה יישובית דומה, לצד גיוון אתני-דתי, התקיימו באותה עת גם במרחב הכפרי שבין יבנה-ים ויבנה, וכן ביבנה עצמה, שהפכה למרכז אזרחי לייצור יין עליו חלשה אולי הכנסייה המקומית. מחציתה הראשונה של המאה ה-7 לסה"נ, כפי הנראה עד מעט לאחר הכיבוש המוסלמי, מהווה המשך ישיר לפעילות היישובית והכלכלית של המאות הקודמות. עם זאת, את מחציתה השנייה של מאה זו מציינים שינויים חדים, ובהם הפיכתה של יבנה-ים למאחז צבאי-דתי מוסלמי (רבאט), אשר הביא לנטישתה ההדרגתית של עיר הנמל האזרחית, ורעידת אדמה קשה ואולי גם לחצים אידאולוגיים אשר הביאו לפגיעה בתעשיית היין של יבנה ולתחילתו של שינוי באופייה הפיזי והחברתי של העיר.

Yuval Shahar (Tel Aviv University), On the High Road: Talmudic Reflections on Moshe Fischer's Studies of Emmaus, Ḥorvat Eqed and Ḥorvat Meṣad

In 1977 Mordechai Gichon initiated a regional research programme investigating Emmaus, its environment and the ancient roads to Jerusalem. Moshe Fischer joined him in the excavation of a Roman bathhouse at Emmaus, and then led the excavations and publications of Ḥorvat Eqed and Ḥorvat Meṣad.

Fischer also took a central part in research into the Roman roads from Jaffa to Jerusalem, which he published with his colleagues Israel Roll and Benjamin Isaac.

The archaeological-historical picture is of a central highway ascending from the *Shephelah* towards the mountains and city of Jerusalem. This was an important route during the Hellenistic, Hasmonean, early Roman and late Byzantine periods. Fischer's excavations at Ḥorvat Eqed unearthed Bacchides' fortifications from the Hasmonean revolt and, subsequently those of Bar-Kochba's soldiers and their hide-outs, as well as evidence of the battle which took place at this site. Ḥorvat Meṣad served as a road station during the Hasmonean, Herodian and late Byzantine periods, and Roman soldiers patrolled the road there during the late first century. Units from the *Legio V Macedonica* were stationed at Emmaus in the late first century, and the cohort *VI Ulpia Petraeorum* during the second century. The Roman bathhouse there testifies to the Roman city of Emmaus/Nicopolis in the 3rd-4th centuries.

How can the Talmudic literature contribute to this regional historical and archaeological picture? These sources point to the central role of Emmaus in Jewish pilgrimage in the Second Temple period. Fischer's finds in Ḥorvat Meṣad of a public road; a *miqveh* (ritual bath) and a trench nearby; a cistern; and a cave correspond with Talmudic accounts of public preparations from the 15th of the month *Adar* for the *Three Pilgrimage Festivals* (*M Sheqalim* 1.1, *Tos. Sheqalim* 1.1, 4-5). The Talmudic sources further inform us that Roman guards were placed in Emmaus by the Emperor Vespasian, and continued to perform this duty during the time of Trajan and Hadrian (*Lamentations Rabbah* I, 52). In particular, they are recorded as blocking the road there as part of Roman operations against the rebellion of Bar Kokhba (*Lamentations Rabbah* I, 45). The city of Emmaus is also described as 'a beautiful place with good water' (*Avot de-Rabbi Nathan*, Version B, XIX; Version A, XIV), which hints at the finds of the bathhouse and the aqueducts at Emmaus, dated to the 3rd-4th centuries.

The paper will also discuss the issues of the historical reliability of Talmudic sources as an a-historical genre, on the one hand, and the selectivity of the Jewish Talmudic memory, on the other.

יובל שחר (אוניברסיטת תל אביב), במעלה הדרך הראשית- הארות תלמודיות בעקבות מחקריו של משה באמאוס, חורבת עקד וחורבת מצד

ב-1977 יזם מרדכי גיחון מחקר אזורי במרחב אמאוס והדרכים הקדומות משם לירושלים. משה פישר חבר אליו לחפירת בית מרחץ רומי באמאוס, והוביל את החפירות והפרסומים של חורבת עקד וחורבת מצד. הוא גם נטל חלק מרכזי במחקר ובפרסום של הכבישים הרומיים מיפו לירושלים, בשיתוף עמיתיו ישראל רול ובנימין איזק.

התמונה ההיסטורית-ארכיאולוגית מלמדת על נתיב מרכזי במעלה מן השפלה אל הר ירושלים, בואכה העיר עצמה וחשיבותו בעיקר בתקופות ההלניסטית, החשמונאית, הרומית המוקדמת והביזנטית המאוחרת. בחורבת עקד נחשפו 'ביצורי בקידיס' כנגד מרד החשמונאים והתבצרות לוחמים במלחמת בן כוסבה, כולל מערכות מסתור ולחימה בתוכן. חורבת מצד שימשה כתחנת דרך בתקופות החשמונאית, ההרודיאנית והביזנטית המאוחרת, וחיילים רומים פיטרלו שם בשלהי המאה הראשונה לסה"נ. באמאוס חנו יחידות של הלגיון החמישי מקדוניה בשלהי המאה הראשונה, והקוהורטה *VI Ulpia Petraeorum* במהלך המאה השנייה. בית המרחץ הרומי מעיד על הפוליס ניקופוליס, ששכנה במקום במאות השלישית והרביעית.

מה יודעים היהודים לספר לנו על המרחב הזה באמצעות הספרות התלמודית? ובכן, הם מספרים לנו על מרכזיותה של אמאוס לעולי הרגל לירושלים בתקופת הבית השני; חפירות מצד- הדרך, המקווה ואמת-המים הסמוכה, בור-המים ומערת הקבר תואמים את ההכנות הציבוריות בחמישה-עשר באדר לקראת העליות לרגל (משנה, שקלים א,א, תוספתא, שקלים א,א, ד-ה); משמרות רומים הוצבו באמאוס בימי הקיסר וספסיאנוס, והתמידו בכך בימי שלטונם של טריאנוס והדריאנוס (איכה רבה א, נב), ובעיקר, חסמו שם את הדרך, כחלק מן המהלכים הרומים כנגד מרד בר-כוכבא. העיר אמאוס מוצגת כ'מקום מים יפים' (אדר"נ נו"ב כט, נו"א יד), כעדות הארכיאולוגית של בית המרחץ ומערכת אמות המים, שנחשפו באתר ותוארכו למאות 3-4.

בהרצאה נעמוד על מרכיבי האמינות התלמודית השזורים בספרות א-היסטורית, מכאן, ועל הסלקטיביות של עיצוב הזיכרון היהודי-תלמודי, מכאן.