

SCRIPTA CLASSICA ISRAELICA

YEARBOOK OF THE ISRAEL SOCIETY
FOR THE PROMOTION OF CLASSICAL STUDIES

VOLUME XLV

2026

ISSN 0334-4509 (PRINT)

2731-2933 (ONLINE)

The publication of this volume has been made possible by the support of

Bar-Ilan University
Ben-Gurion University of the Negev
The Hebrew University of Jerusalem
The Open University
Tel Aviv University
University of Haifa

PUBLISHED BY
THE ISRAEL SOCIETY FOR THE PROMOTION OF CLASSICAL STUDIES
<http://www.israel-classics.org>

Manuscripts in the form of e-mail attachments should be sent to the e-mail address scriptaclassica.editors@gmail.com. For reviews, contact fassberg@tauex.tau.ac.il.

Price \$50

© 2026 The Israel Society for the Promotion of Classical Studies
All Rights Reserved

Camera-ready copy produced by the editorial staff of *Scripta Classica Israelica*
Printed in Israel by Magnes Press, Jerusalem

SCRIPTA CLASSICA ISRAELICA

YEARBOOK OF THE ISRAEL SOCIETY
FOR THE
PROMOTION OF CLASSICAL STUDIES

Editor-in-Chief: ORNA HARARI

Editorial Board:
ORY AMITAY
ALEXANDER YAKOBSON
TEDDY FASSBERG

Assistant Editor: HILA BROKMAN

VOLUME XLV

2026

INTERNATIONAL ADVISORY BOARD
OF *SCRIPTA CLASSICA ISRAELICA*

François de Callataÿ, École Pratique des Hautes Études, Paris
Hannah M. Cotton, The Hebrew University of Jerusalem
Ephraim David, University of Haifa
Werner Eck, Universität zu Köln
Denis Feeney, Princeton University
Margalit Finkelberg, Tel Aviv University
Erich Gruen, University of California, Berkeley
Benjamin Isaac, Tel Aviv University
Ranon Katzoff, Bar-Ilan University
Jaap Mansfeld, Utrecht University
Doron Mendels, The Hebrew University of Jerusalem
Maren Niehoff, The Hebrew University of Jerusalem
Brent Shaw, Princeton University
Greg Woolf, The Institute for the Study of the Ancient World, NYU

THE ISRAEL SOCIETY FOR THE PROMOTION
OF CLASSICAL STUDIES

OFFICERS 2025–2026

<i>President:</i>	YULIA USTINOVA
<i>Secretary:</i>	MERAV HAKLAI
<i>Treasurer:</i>	BAR LESHEM

COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Stephanie Binder
Moshe Blidstein
Yaakov Dolgopolsky-Geva
Merav Haklai
Yakir Paz
Karolina Sekita

HONORARY MEMBERS OF THE SOCIETY

Hannah Cotton	Ranon Katzoff
Joseph Geiger	

CONTENTS

	PAGE
FILIP DE DECKER, Aspectual Distinctions in the Future Passive: Lysias 19.61.....	1
ROBERT MAYHEW, Eudemos' Objection to the Ash-Argument for the Existence of the Void.....	21
WERNER ECK AND ANDREAS PANGERL, Zwei neue Konstitutionen für das Heer von Iudaea in der Zeit Domitians.....	31
RIVKA ELIZUR-LEIMAN, A Roman Military Bread Stamp from Ḥorbat Naḥal Yatir.....	49
MATAN SCHAPIRO, Eternal Recurrence and the Identity of Indiscernibles.....	59
MARIE-LAURE REBORA, From the Four Corners of the Mediterranean Sea: Testimonies of Non-Roman Jews in Late Ancient Rome (2 nd –4 th cent. CE)	73
OFER POGORELSKY, The Date of Eusebius' Onomasticon Revisited.....	87
ZOHAR SLANEY, The Palmette Decoration on Galilean Oil Lamps: Transformation of a Classical Motif.....	105
GIACOMO LOI, There is no Analogy in History: On the Use of Myth in Early Hebrew Holocaust Fiction.....	127
BOOK REVIEWS	
Fotis Georgiadis and Anastasia Gadolou, <i>In the Cave: Stories from Darkness Brought to Light</i> (by Erica Angliker).....	153
Bernardo Ballesteros, <i>Divine Assemblies in Early Greek and Babylonian Epic</i> (by Nathan Wasserman).....	156
Sebastian Scharff, <i>Hellenistic Athletes: Agonistic Culture and Self-Presentation</i> (by Michael Poliakoff).....	159
Merav Haklai, <i>Money in Imperial Rome: Legal Diversity and Systemic Complexity</i> (by Amit Gvaryahu).....	163
James Q. Whitman, <i>From Masters of Slaves to Lords of Lands: The Transformation of Ownership in the Western World</i> (by Punsara Amarasinghe).....	166
Alexander Treiger, <i>The Church Fathers in Arabic Translations</i> (by Tanja Werthmann)	168
Vered Lev Kanaan and Patricia A. Rosenmeyer, <i>Classics Transformed in Jewish, Israeli, and Palestinian Receptions</i> (by Reviel Netz).....	172
OBITUARIES: NURIT YAARI (BY YAIR LIPSHITZ).....	
ROSA LAST (BY ORNA HARARI).....	175
DAME AVERIL CAMERON (BY GUY G. STROUMSA).....	179
DISSERTATIONS IN PROGRESS.....	
PROCEEDINGS: THE ISRAEL SOCIETY FOR THE PROMOTION OF CLASSICAL STUDIES.....	
	185
	193

BOOK REVIEWS

Fotis Georgiadis and Anastasia Gadolou (eds.), *In the Cave: Stories from Darkness Brought to Light*, Athens: Melissa Publishing House, 2025. 336 pp. ISBN: 9789602044728.

Cave archaeology began to develop in Greece as early as the nineteenth century and became a defined field of research in 1977 with the establishment of the Ephorate of Palaeoanthropology-Speleology (EPS). To date, more than 10,000 caves have been recorded in Greece, yet thousands remain unexplored.¹ Although caves have long been investigated by Greek archaeologists, only in recent decades have they received broader attention beyond specialist circles. As the urgency of topics linked to ecology and to the significance of nature has increased, scholarly interest has expanded beyond purely archaeological documentation, bringing the study of natural elements and their relationship to cultic spaces and practices in ancient Greece to the forefront. Thus, nature is no longer regarded as a passive backdrop for religious practice, and elements such as the sea, rivers, rocks, and vegetation are increasingly recognized as active and often integral components of ancient cultic experiences. Within this framework, caves have assumed particular importance in terms of encapsulating cultural and environmental evidence that is essential for understanding human engagement with past landscapes. Recent research on caves has advanced the understanding of their multiple uses by incorporating perspectives from neuroscience and cognitive psychology, thereby enriching interpretations of ancient activity.²

The volume *In the Cave: Stories from Darkness Brought to Light* makes a significant contribution to this burgeoning field. Produced as the catalogue for the eponymous exhibition—the first museum exhibition devoted exclusively to caves—it was curated by Anastasia Gadolou, Director General of the Archaeological Museum of Thessaloniki (AMTh), and Fotis Georgiadis, Head of the Northern Greece Department, EPS. The exhibition was on display at the Archaeological Museum of Thessaloniki from May 2025 to May 2026.

Presented as a bilingual volume in modern Greek and English, the catalogue makes the material in the exhibition accessible to a wide audience. It bridges scholarly research and public engagement, situating this groundbreaking display within broad debates about the cultural, ecological, and ritual significance of caves, museological choices, and issues relating to tourism. The catalogue, created by numerous archaeologists specializing in various topics, documents 265 objects used in the exhibition. Most of the archaeological remains derive from the collections of the EPS, with additional contributions from eleven other Ephorates of Antiquities and three museums beyond the Archaeological Museum of Thessaloniki. Serving as both a visual and scholarly record,

¹ K. Adamopoulos, 'The deepest and the longest caves in Greece', Proceedings of the *14th International Congress of Speleology* (Athens, Kalamos, Greece), 2025. Available at: <www.selas.org/download/deep-caves05en.pdf> [Accessed March 2026].

² Y. Ustinova, *Caves and the Ancient Greek Mind: Descending Underground in the Search for Ultimate Truth*, Oxford: University Press, 2009. Also worthy of mention in this context is S. Katsarou and A. Nagel, *Cave and Worship in Ancient Greece: New Approaches to Landscape and Ritual*, Abingdon: Routledge, 2021.

the catalogue provides detailed descriptions of the 265 objects, which are from thirty northern caves, rock shelters, and chasms. Many are displayed to the public for the first time. Most originated from northern Greece—Epirus, Thessaly, Macedonia, Thrace, and the northeastern Aegean islands—in sites that are often inaccessible. In addition to documenting the objects, the volume includes twelve scientific articles by specialists in cave studies that explore various aspects of the multifaceted uses of these spaces. The rich illustrations include images of all of the exhibition objects, extensive illustrations in the scholarly chapters, and numerous maps that locate the caves and provide a clear sense of their geography.

The three forewords stress the exhibition's interdisciplinary scope (Lina Mendoni, Olympia Vikatou, Niki Manou-Andreadis). In the Introduction, Anastasia Gadoulou and Fotis Georgiadis define the aim of exploring the enduring relationship between humans and caves. The volume also includes essays on the museological project by Angeliki Koukouvou, Agni Apostolidou, Katerina Bechti, Ourania Palli, Evanthia Papadopoulou, Evangelia Tsangaraki, and Anna Kouloumvaki, Pantelis Feleris, Foivos Papageorgiou, and Ilia Papageorgiou.

Following the introductory chapters on the project and museology are twelve chapters organized into three main sections on the archaeology of the caves, their uses in more recent times, and the geological and ecological features that shaped human activity. The first section, 'The Archaeology of Caves', encompassing Chapters 1–7, explores the uses of caves as prehistoric sites of ritual activity, ancient sanctuaries, and places for artistic expression and ascetic communities, highlighting both their cultural and historical significance. The first four chapters focus on the use of caves in prehistoric times. Chapter 1, by Andreas I. Darlas, examines one of the most important caves in northern Greece, where fossilized bones and an exceptionally well-preserved human skull have attracted international attention. Chapter 2, by Nina Kyparissi-Apostolika, highlights the continuous use of the Theopetra Cave from the Middle Palaeolithic to the Neolithic, including evidence of fire, human remains, plant and animal exploitation, and early ceramics. She shows that the strategic location of this cave supported social organization, symbolic practices, and cultural continuity across millennia. In Chapter 3, Zoe Intze, Michalis Kontos, Christina Michelaki, and Anastasios Siros present archaeological findings documenting human presence, tool use, and environmental adaptation in caves in northern Greece. In Chapter 4, 'Caves and Ritual Activity in Prehistory', Stella Katsarou provides a perceptive and carefully articulated analysis of caves as loci of ritual in prehistoric Greece that is notable for her analytical precision and lucid treatment of the methodological complexities inherent in identifying ritual behaviour in prehistoric cave contexts.

Chapter 5, by Fotis Georgiadis, is particularly valuable for its methodological clarity, especially regarding the distinction between caves that have merely yielded cultic material and those that functioned as organized sanctuaries. Georgiadis's presentation of the principal cave sanctuaries in northern Greece demonstrates that most of them flourished in the Archaic and Classical periods, hosting rituals for Olympian gods and nymphs that included offerings, sacrifices, and communal feasts. His emphasis on the role of Greek colonization as a catalyst for the establishment and diffusion of cave cults in the region adds an important historical dimension in terms of grounding religious practice in broader socio-political processes. Chapter 6 by Giorgos Kavvadias presents

the painted wooden panels from the Pitsa Cave (560–510 BC), the earliest surviving Greek panel paintings, which provide rare insight into Archaic Corinthian art beyond vase decoration.

In Chapter 7, Christina Michelaki and Andreas N. Tsokas offer a nuanced and elegantly argued account of ascetic life in the caves of Prespes and explain how the region's karstic geomorphology fostered the organization of hermitic communities around central cave-churches. Situating Prespes in the broad Greek tradition of cave monasticism at sites such as Mount Athos and Meteora, the authors skilfully integrate archaeological evidence, landscape analysis, and historical interpretation.

In the second section of the volume, titled 'The Other Side of Caves', encompassing Chapters 8–9, the focus shifts from the archaeological and historical evidence to the cultural, symbolic, and modern uses of caves. In Chapter 8, Agni Karadimou and Michalis Kontos examine their use during the Greek Civil War, focusing on the medical facilities established by the Democratic Army of Greece in the caves of western Macedonia. Drawing on archival and archaeological evidence, the authors illuminate a lesser-known chapter of modern history by demonstrating that caves in this period as well served as spaces of refuge and survival, in this case, in response to urgent wartime needs. In Chapter 9, Aikaterini Polymerou-Kamilaki offers a compelling exploration of caves from the perspective of myth and folklore, demonstrating how they symbolize thresholds to the unknown. Her cross-cultural synthesis of traditions is particularly valuable, enriching the understanding of the enduring symbolic significance of caves by showing that, despite geographic differences, they consistently embody sacredness, liminality, and nurturing.

The third and final section, 'Cave Environment', comprises three chapters on the geology, ecosystems, and fossil faunas of caves. In Chapter 10, Christos Pennos describes how caves form, detailing the three essential conditions for karstic caves, which are carbonate rock, fractures for water infiltration, and adequate precipitation. As the author shows, Greece's geology—which is characterized by carbonate-rich rocks from the Tethys seabed, intense tectonic activity that creates faults, and a Mediterranean climate—makes it an exceptionally favourable region for caves to develop. In Chapter 11, Alexandra Oikonomou examines cave ecosystems, emphasizing the delicate balance between access to visitors and environmental preservation. She provides a thorough analysis of the challenges posed by tourism, particularly the growth of lampenflora on stalactites and stalagmites as a result of artificial lighting, and outlines effective strategies for managing caves while protecting their unique microclimates and biological communities. Oikonomou's chapter is commendable for the combination of scientific rigor and practical guidance in providing a clear and well-structured framework for sustainable cave management that bridges ecological research and real-world conservation needs. In Chapter 12, Athanassios Athanassiou and Katerina Trantalidou present the fossil fauna of caves and highlight their role as natural archives of past biodiversity. Their concise yet insightful overview of three key Macedonian sites—Petalona Cave (Chalkidiki), Arkoudospilia (Loutro Loutakiou, and Pella), and the Cave of Piges Aggitis (Maara and Drama) — explains how protected cave environments preserve fossils and enable the reconstruction of ancient ecosystems. Particularly noteworthy is their emphasis on the importance of safeguarding these sites and their linking of careful conservation with the potential for future research.

Following these chapters, a detailed catalogue compiled by a large team of archaeologists documents the 265 objects presented in the exhibition. Each entry provides a general description of the object, its date, and its provenance. The volume concludes with an up-to-date bibliography featuring especially relevant cave studies, ranging from archaeological reports to theoretical interpretations of caves.

This book will be of interest to a wide range of readers, including archaeologists, historians, anthropologists, geologists, ecologists, scholars of religious and cultural studies, museum professionals, and students of human-environment interactions. Its interdisciplinary approach, situating caves not merely as archaeological sites but as dynamic spaces in which natural, cultural, and symbolic dimensions intersect, is particularly significant. By combining rigorous scientific research with accessible exposition, richly illustrated documentation, and reflections on conservation, the book illuminates the multifaceted roles of caves across time. In addition, it provides a foundation and inspiration for further studies, encouraging scholars to continue exploring the complex interactions between humans and subterranean environments. As such, *Cave Stories from Darkness: Brought to Light* offers a comprehensive framework for understanding caves as both natural archives and cultural landscapes along with valuable insights for anyone interested in the enduring significance of these unique spaces.

Erica Angliker

University of Sao Paulo
erica.angliker@gmail.com

Bernardo Ballesteros, *Divine Assemblies in Early Greek and Babylonian Epic*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2024. 496 pp. ISBN: 9780198924593.

As Liverpool FC's anthem reminds us, gods never walk alone. Deities in many ancient mythologies are portrayed sitting together—dining, getting drunk, disputing, and taking counsel. The book under review, a revised version of the author's 2018 Oxford PhD thesis, focuses on the institution of divine assemblies, examining them as a shared theme in Greek and Mesopotamian epic and myth. In doing so, it positions itself at the intersection of Near Eastern literary studies, classical philology, and comparative mythology.

The book begins with a historical survey of the study of cultural and literary contacts between the ancient Near East and the Aegean, and a detailed methodological discussion of how to approach similarities between divine councils across ancient Mesopotamian and ancient Greek literature. Should one see these contacts as based on borrowing, or, to use the author's term, 'monogenesis', or as cases of independent development ('polygenesis')? The question is not definitively answered, but the methodological discussion is eye-opening.

In Part I of the book (chapters 1–5), the two corpora at the heart of this study are surveyed and analyzed. On the Mesopotamian side, Ballesteros lists Sumerian and Akkadian narratives, mainly the Epic of Gilgameš and the myths of Atrahasis, Enūma eliš, Erra and Išum, as well as city laments. On the Greek side, the main compositions that are treated are the Homeric epics, the Homeric Hymns, and Hesiod.