

SCRIPTA CLASSICA ISRAELICA

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FOR THE PROMOTION OF CLASSICAL STUDIES

VOLUME XXIX

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CONTENTS

	PAGE
Lisa Ullmann.....	vii
DAVID KOVACS, Herodotus 1.53.1-2: What Were Croesus' Instructions?.....	1
MICHAEL ZIMM, The <i>Chrēsmologoi</i> in Thucydides	5
THOMAS GÄRTNER, Drei kritische Bemerkungen zur ersten Rede des Lysias	13
THOMAS GÄRTNER, Ein Homerzitat im platonischen <i>Kriton</i> ?	17
WERNER ECK, A Second Constitution for the Auxiliary Troops in Judaea in 86 AD.....	21
WERNER ECK, Recht und Politik in den Bürgerrechtskonstitutionen der römischen Kaiserzeit	33
WILLY CLARYSSE, SOFIE REMIJSSEN, MARK DEPAUW, Observing the Sabbath in the Roman Empire: A Case Study	51
FERGUS MILLAR, Jerome and Palestine.....	59
REVIEW ARTICLES	
GABRIEL HERMAN, Periclean Athens.....	81
DAVID SCHAPS, Systems Network Analysis and the Study of the Ancient World.....	91
BOOK REVIEWS	
Nino Luraghi, <i>The Ancient Messenians. Constructions of Ethnicity and Memory</i> (by James Roy).....	99
Emily Greenwood and Elizabeth. K. Irwin (eds.), <i>Reading Herodotus: A Study of the Logoi in Book 5 of Herodotus' Histories</i> (by Eran Almagor)	101
Polly Low, <i>Interstate Relations in Classical Greece. Morality and Power</i> (by Gabriel Herman)	104
Kostas Vlassopoulos, <i>Unthinking the Greek Polis. Ancient Greek History beyond Eurocentrism 600</i> (by Sylvie Honigman)	106
John Marincola (ed.), <i>A Companion to Greek and Roman Historiography</i> (by Jonathan Price).....	109
Catalin Partenie (ed.), <i>Plato's Myths</i> (by Eugenio Benitez)	112
Mark Payne, <i>Theocritus and the Invention of Fiction</i> (by Margalit Finkelberg)	115
Nina Otto, <i>Enargeia. Untersuchung zur charakteristik alexandrinischer Dichtung</i> (by Richard Hunter)	116
Richard Hunter and Ian Rutherford (eds.), <i>Wandering Poets in Ancient Greek Culture: Travel, Locality and Pan-Hellenism</i> (by Jane Lightfoot).....	118
Roger S. Bagnall, <i>Hellenistic and Roman Egypt. Sources and Approaches</i> (by Sylvie Honigman)	121
Caroline Carlier, <i>La Cité de Moïse. Le peuple juif chez Philon d'Alexandrie</i> (by Maren Niehoff).....	124
Joseph Geiger, <i>The First Hall of Fame: A Study of the Statues in the Forum Augustum</i> (by Alexander Yakobson)	126
John Richardson, <i>The Language of Empire: Rome and the Idea of Empire from the Third Century BC to the Second Century AD</i> (by Israel Shatzman)	128
Louise Revell, <i>Roman Imperialism and Local Identities</i> (by Craig Champion)	133
Andrew Harker, <i>Loyalty and Dissidence in Roman Egypt, The Case of the Acta Alexandrinorum</i> (by Gil Gambash)	135

Tønnes Bekker-Nielsen, <i>Urban Life and Local Politics in Roman Bithynia: The Small World of Dion Chrysostomos</i> (by Christina Kuhn)	138
Peter F. Bang, <i>The Roman Bazaar. A Comparative Study of Trade and Markets in a Tributary Empire</i> (by Merav Haklai-Rotenberg).....	140
Karl A.E. Enenkel and Jan Papy (eds.), <i>Petrarch and His Readers in the Renaissance</i> (by Amos Edelheit).....	144
OBITUARIES: ZEEV RUBIN (by Fergus Millar).....	149
MARTIN OSTWALD (by David Schaps).....	151
DISSERTATIONS IN PROGRESS.....	155
PROCEEDINGS: THE ISRAEL SOCIETY FOR THE PROMOTION OF CLASSICAL STUDIES.....	159
CORRIGENDUM.....	161

Lisa Ullmann

The Israel Society for the Promotion of Classical Studies wishes to congratulate its honorary member, Lisa Ullmann, on the occasion of the publication of her translation into Hebrew of Flavius Josephus, *History of the Jewish War against the Romans*, Carmel Publishing House, Jerusalem 2009.



Lisa Ullmann escaped as a girl from Vienna after the Anschluss, leaving behind parents — whom she would never see again — the world she grew up in, and her native tongue. She started her studies at the Hebrew University in Classics and Linguistics relatively late in life, having in the meantime acquired a profession and raised a family. She studied with Haiim Rosén, Chaim Wirszubsky, and Abraham (Addi) Wasserstein — all deceased now — and with Ra'anana Meridor. In a short time she received an MA *summa cum laude* in Classics, and served as a senior teacher of Greek language and literature in the

Department of Classics until her retirement in 1989. She continued teaching as an *emerita* until 1998 and was an editor of *Scripta Classica Israelica* from 1983 to 1995.

In the last ten years she worked on the translation of Flavius Josephus' *Jewish War* into modern literary Hebrew, replacing I.N. Simchoni's archaic translation of 1923. This translation is a landmark in Hebrew translation from classical literature because of the excellence of the translation on the one hand and the significance and magnitude of Josephus' work on the other. The high quality of Lisa Ullmann's translation may be due, at least partly, to her deep identification with her author: 'Josephus, son of this land, born in Jerusalem, witnessed the destruction of Jerusalem and the awful catastrophe which overtook his people, after which he found himself in exile in Rome. His parents perished in Jerusalem. In Rome he found his future and destiny, writing about his own people in the Greek tongue for the Greeks and the Romans. And I? — I witnessed another terrible catastrophe of our people, in the wake of which I was exiled from my home in Europe and immigrated to Israel, to Jerusalem. My parents, left behind, perished in Europe. Here I have learnt Hebrew, and here, eventually, I found my future and my destiny, with the ancient Greek language. And now I am giving back Josephus to his people, to the Hebrew readers of today' (Jerusalem, Van Leer, 27 December 2009).

Hannah M. Cotton, President

Lisa Ullmann was made an honorary member of the Israel Society for the Promotion of Classical Studies in 2009 for her unique contribution to the Society and to Classics in Israel. On the occasion these elegiac verses, in her honour and in honour of her children Edna and Shimon, were presented:

Λυσιὸ Ὀὔλμει*

πῶς ὀνομάζειν χρὴ Ἰουδαίαν ποικιλόμητιν,
 πολλὰ διδάσκουσας, πολλὰ διδασκομένην;
 Λυσιμάθην σε καλῶ, γενεᾶς παιδεύτριαν οὔσαν;
 ἀφνεᾶ θ' ἔδινα πρέπει καὶ σοφίας στέφανος.
 ἴσως Λυσιμάχην, ἣ Ἰώσηφόν γ' ἀθέοισι
 ῥωμαίοις δμηθέντ' ὄνδε δόμον κατάγεις;
 Λυσιγλωσσα μάλ' εἶ, μήτηρ Σκρίπτων Συμειων τε,
 νόσφι σολοικισμῶν οὔλομένων τε λόγων.
 —Δορκάδης

* οὔλμειν, -ενος *n.f.*, Graecae linguae praeclara praeceptorix, cuius nomen a Lat. *ullus* et Ger. *Mann*, cf. Ang. *Everyman*, ortum, ut opinor, ab insigni modestia ad collegas atque studentes adiuvandos parata varioque ingenio ad omnem sapientiam discendam docendamque apto.