



The *CENTER FOR EASTERN MEDITERRANEAN STUDIES*
cordially invites you to the fifth lecture of its
twelfth *COLLOQUIUM SERIES*
organized jointly with the Center for Religious
Studies

Aleš Chalupa

| Masaryk University

Connecting the Dots: Delphic Oracle and the Cult of Asclepius from the Perspective of Cognitive Historiography

The traditional historiography of religions can be positively stimulated by insights coming from the recently established discipline of cognitive historiography. Cognitive historiography tries to apply various theories, which originate in the field of cognitive sciences, to the study of historical phenomena and thus to achieve deeper understanding of historical events and practices. The merit of cognitive historiography will be demonstrated here through two independent case studies. The first one deals with the mantic procedure performed at the Delphic oracle and focuses especially on the role of Pythiai, female priestesses of Apollo, and their state of consciousness during oracular sessions. The second case study concentrates on healing practices offered to patients in the temples of Asclepius, especially on the possible contribution of incubation (sleeping in the temple in hope of being healed or receiving therapeutic instructions from a deity) to the fidelity of long-term transmission of patients' memories.



Dr. Aleš Chalupa is Assistant Professor at the Department for the Study of Religions at Masaryk University, Brno, Czech Republic. Since 2011 he also acts as the head of this Department. His field of research covers ancient religions, especially Roman religion and the Roman cult of Mithras, and cognitive science of religion. In recent years, he has become one of the propagators of cognitive historiography of religion. He is also currently exploring possible merits of various computational and network analysis approaches in the study of ancient religions. He is a co-founder of LEVYNA (Laboratory for the Experimental Research of Religion) and a principal investigator of the GEHIR project (Generative History of Ancient Religions), funded by the Masaryk University Grant Agency (2015-2017).

**Thu
Oct 27**

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**Gellner
room
nádor 9**

**Reception to
follow**