**abstract:**

In this article, we will discuss a collection of rabbinic traditions about Moses and Aaron, which are characterized by their addressing questions of hierarchy, status, and relations of envy and fraternity between the brothers.

This article will suggest that understanding the characteristics of the periods in which the traditions about Aaron were written and their places of origin, adds an important and central dimension to understanding them. We will see that analyzing the content of the traditions alongside other sources of information about the social and religious challenges of the era, helps sketch a picture of the social dynamics at the end of the Second Temple period, and later in the periods of the Mishna and Talmud. Analyzing the traditions in this manner will reveal a hidden aspect of the nature of the leadership crisis, and will show the positions and desires of the emerging heirs to the leadership.

The historicist approach—which constitutes the basis of the current article and relies on the paradigm proposed in the literature regarding Aaron’s character—will allow an optimal understanding of the trends which attended the treatment of these traditions among the Sages in the Land of Israel.

Key words:

Priest

Moses

Aharon

Rabbinic Literature

The status of the priests

The status of the sages

Mishnah and Talmudic period