



Vol. 2, Oct. 2009

SAMR NEWSLETTER



Eric Orlin, editor

President's Column

Greetings to all SAMR Members!

I hope you all have enjoyed a restful and yet productive summer. SAMR had a number of exciting events this summer that were very well received. First, on June 28, we held our inaugural meeting at the Pontifical Biblical Institute in Rome. We would like to pay special thanks to Rev. José Abrego De Lacy, the Rector of the PBI, and Fr. Fred Brenk for extending their welcome and assisting us with arrangements.

Thirty-six participants from eight countries (and four continents!) spent the day discussing "What's Religious About Ancient Mediterranean Religions," with nine papers ranging from Pharaonic Egypt through Classical and Hellenistic Greece to Republican and Imperial Rome, and with topics ranging from domestic cult practices and artistic representations of cult to theoretical models of ancient religion. A reception followed the conference at a nearby restaurant, where delicious antipasti and spumanti were enjoyed by all. Over the next week SAMR members went on special site visits to the Underground Basilica at the Porta Maggiore and the Catacombs of Saints Peter and Marcellinus with the invaluable assistance of Marina Piranomonte of the Soprintendenza Archaeologica di Roma and Rafaella Giuliani, the Inspector of Catacombs for the Pontifical Commission for Sacred Archaeology in Rome.

Also in Rome, on July 1 SAMR held a joint panel on "Rome and Religion: A Cross-Disciplinary Dialogue" with the Society of Biblical Literature at its international meeting. The session was part of a three-year inquiry that began at the 2008 annual meeting of the SBL in Boston with a paper by Karl Galinsky, Professor of Classics at the University of Texas, which was entitled "The Roman Cult of the Emperor: Uniter or Divider?" The joint panel in Rome saw classicists, archaeologists, historians, and biblical and religious studies scholars giving papers on topics ranging from theoretical models of Roman religion to specific case studies of Paul in Rome, Rome in Athens, and Trajan in both Pergamon and Ephesus. The conversation will

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CALL FOR PAPERS APA/AIA MEETINGS 2011

The theme of our panel will be **Civil Strife And The Religions Of The Ancient Mediterranean**

Religion has always played a key role in civil wars and factional or dynastic strife. Some well-known examples from antiquity include the use of religious propaganda by Darius to justify his kingship, competition and violence among the Sadducees and Pharisees, and Sulla's reliance on omens and divination. In 2011, the United States will begin a four-year commemoration of the American Civil War. While the political, military, moral and social dimensions of the conflict will receive the most attention, we cannot fully understand this critical episode in American history without acknowledging the central role that religion played: from the grand religious principles invoked by both sides before the conflict began and the belief in both the Union and Confederacy that they were fighting in a just cause with the support of a just God, to the personal displays of piety among soldiers and officers, religious sentiments and practices were manifested in innumerable ways. The cultural importance of the 150th anniversary of the Civil War inspires a new look at the relationship between religion and civil strife. We seek papers that address this theme with reference to ancient texts, art, and material culture, or that consider modern appropriation of ancient world precedents.

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SAMR at the SBL New Orleans, LA, Nov. 2009

The third session of our cross-disciplinary dialogue at the SBL will take place at the SBL Annual Meeting in November. See the President's column to your left for more information.

Note also that SAMR will be having a business meeting in New Orleans to plan panel sessions for future SBL meetings in coordination with the Greco-Roman Religions section.

Come to the meeting and share your ideas with us!

ELECTIONS!

Nominations are now being accepted for the SAMR program committee. We wish to thank Greg Snyder for his yeoman service in organizing not just one panel session at the APA, but the entire conference in Rome as well. It was undoubtedly more than he bargained for, and we all owe him a debt of gratitude (so if you see him in New Orleans, buy him a drink!). He will hand over the reins of the committee to Celia Schultz in January. Lora Holland also remains on the committee.

According to our by-laws, nominations must be supported by at least three members of the Society not from the same institution (a nominator and two seconds). It is the responsibility of the nominators to confirm the willingness of the candidate to serve if elected; self-nominations are allowed, though the nomination must still have two seconds.

Nominations should be sent to Eric Orlin (eorlin@pugetsound.edu) by **December 1, 2009**. You may also make nominations in person in New Orleans, though you will still need two seconds. Voting will take place at the Business Meeting to be held in conjunction with the APA/AIA meeting in Anaheim in January 2010. According to our bylaws, proxy votes are not allowed.

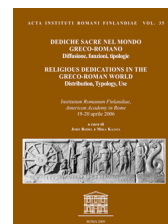
NEWS FROM MEMBERS

John Bodel (Brown) recently co-edited two volumes of interest to members:

Household and Family Religion in Antiquity: Contextual and Comparative Perspectives (Oxford, Blackwell, 2008)

Dediche Sacre nel mondo Greco-Romano: Diffusione, funzioni, tipologie. (Rome, Institutum Romanum Finlandiae, 2009, with papers in Italian and English)

Pat Johnston and Giovanni Casadio just edited *Mystic Cults in Magna Graecia* (UTexas Press, Austin 2009).



Send in news to eorlin@pugetsound.edu!

MEMBERSHIP

Your Secretary-Treasurer would like to take this opportunity to remind members to send in their dues payments for 2010. We have kept dues intentionally low (\$10, \$5 for students) to make membership accessible to all. The funds will be used to defray costs of the Society, especially those associated with holding meetings in conjunction with the APA/AIA and SBL; SAMR conferences will be self-supporting through registration. Only members in good standing are allowed to hold office and vote for officers, and only members are allowed to deliver papers at SAMR-organized panels. You can find a Membership Form on the last page of the newsletter; send it in today! For renewals, you can simply email me and mail in a check; I can also accept membership payments at the SBL or APA/AIA meetings. It is possible to accept payment in foreign currency, but unfortunately the credit card processing fees are too expensive for a small organization such as ours.

SAMR Contact Information

(<http://socamr.wikispaces.com/>)

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continue in New Orleans with papers by Karl Galinsky on "In the Shadow (or not) of the Imperial Cult: A Cooperative Agenda," L. Michael White on "Capitalizing on the Imperial Cult: Some Jewish Perspectives," and Warren Carter on "Roman Imperial Power: A Perspective from the New Testament."

We have some more exciting plans for the future. In late November at the New Orleans meeting we will be deciding on the topic for our first regular SBL paper session under the auspices of the Greco-Roman Religions Section. In early January, we will be holding our first regular APA panel session at the meeting in Anaheim on the topic of "Identity in Greco-Roman Religions." This session will include papers on identity issues in the study of Roman prodigies, animal sacrifice, and Homeric Christianity, as well as case studies of the relationship between identity and religion at various sites, including Lagina, Panamara, and Aphrodisias. We will also hold our regular business meeting at the Anaheim meeting, which will include annual elections, discussion of future paper sessions at the APA and SBL as well as possible expansion to the annual meeting of the American Schools of Oriental Research (ASOR), further discussion of publication plans for our conference proceedings and a SAMR journal and our plans for the next major conference of SAMR.

I would like to thank Eric Orlin, the Secretary-Treasurer of the Society; Greg Snyder, the Chair of the SAMR Program Committee; Carin Green, Celia Schultz, Kim Stratton, and Lora Holland, members of the SAMR Program Committee; and Jonathan Reed and Nancy Evans of the SBL for all their help over the past year. I hope to see many of you soon in New Orleans or Anaheim.

All the best,



Barbette Stanley Spaeth
President, Society of Ancient Mediterranean Religions

CALL for PAPERS (continued from page 1)

Abstracts should be submitted by email attachment as .doc or .rtf files to Eric Orlin at eorlin@pugetsound.edu and should be from 500-600 words in length for a paper to last between 15 to 20 minutes. If A-V equipment will be required, the type should be specified in the abstract.

Abstracts should contain a title and a word count and should not reveal the identity of the author. For further information about abstract format, please see the APA Program Guide. The files containing the abstracts should be given a short but descriptive name related to the title of the paper, e.g., ImperialCultAugustus.doc. The filename itself (i.e., without the .doc or .rtf extension) should not exceed 20 characters and also should not reveal the identity of the author.

All abstracts for papers will be reviewed anonymously by the SAMR program committee. The deadline for submission is **February 12, 2010**. Please note that if your paper is accepted, you must be a member of the APA by March 1, 2010. For further information, please contact Barbette Spaeth, Department of Classical Studies, College of William and Mary, Williamsburg, VA 23187 (bsspa@wm.edu) or Eric Orlin, Department of Classics, University of Puget Sound, Tacoma, WA 98416 (eorlin@pugetsound.edu).

Society for Ancient Mediterranean Religions Membership Form

Check all that apply

☐ New membership ☐ Faculty membership (\$20 year) ☐ Change of Address
☐ Renewal membership ☐ Student membership (\$10 year)

Payment enclosed: \$_____ (limited to five years in advance)

Make checks (in US or foreign currency) payable to: **Society for Ancient Mediterranean Religions**

Please check appropriate title: ☐ Prof. ☐ Dr. ☐ Ms. ☐ Mr. _____ Other (Please specify)

Last Name _____ Other names _____

Mailing
Address _____

City _____ State or Province _____

Postal Code _____ Country _____

email address (please print neatly!): _____

Please indicate to what other scholarly societies (e.g. APA, AIA, SBL, etc.) you belong:

Please indicate your main areas of interest in studying ancient religions:

MAIL TO:

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Forms may also be emailed to: eorlin@ups.edu.