



# SAMR NEWSLETTER



Vol. 3, Sept. 2010

Eric Orlin, editor

## President's Column

Greetings to all SAMR Members!

SAMR has had a very busy year so far in 2010, and next year promises to be just as exciting. In January of this year, we had our first official paper session at the APA meeting in Anaheim on "Identity in Greco-Roman Religions." Five papers were given 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, Panorama, and Aphrodisias. The session was very well attended: we overflowed the room assigned to us, and many people had to stand in the hall to hear the papers. We hope to have a more commodious accommodation at next year's meetings in San Antonio, now that interest in our Affiliated Group has been established with the APA.

Later this year, we will be sponsoring three sessions at the SBL meeting in Atlanta in collaboration with the Greco-Roman Religions Section (see box to the right). After the session on Saturday, we will have a short meeting to decide on a topic for next year's SAMR session at the SBL as well as talk more broadly about formalizing our relationship with the SBL. Finally, two additional SAMR sessions have already been planned for 2011 and 2012. First, in May of 2011, we will sponsor a session on "The Religious Roles of Women in the Ancient Mediterranean World" at the Pacific Northwest Regional AAR/ SBL/ASOR Meeting in Spokane. Secondly, we will off a session on "The Book and the Rock: Textual and Material Evidence in the Study of Ancient Religion" at the January 2012 APA meeting in Philadelphia. Calls for proposals for these sessions have been posted on the SAMR website as well as elsewhere in this newsletter.

Our regular business meeting will be held immediately following the APA paper session in San Antonio this coming January. This meeting will include annual elections, discussion of future paper sessions at the APA and SBL, and the possible expansion of SAMR to other groups, in particular, the AIA. We will talk about whether we want to try for a joint AIA-APA panel in the near future and/or if we wish to pursue becoming an official Interest Group within the AIA.

(continued on page 3)

## SAMR at the APA/AIA

San Antonio, TX, Jan 6-9 2011

Our panel on *Civil Strife and the Ancient Mediterranean* will take place on Friday, January 7, at 8:30 a.m. The session includes an introduction and the following papers:

- Fratricide and Foundation: Romulus, Remus, Ennius, and the Civil Wars
- The Sacred Marriage of El-Gaba'al and the Palladium
- Strategies of Separation: Lactantius and Constantine on Church and State
- Reflections on Civil War, the Body Politic, and the Confederate Memorial at Arlington

Don't forget to join us at the (still to be scheduled) business meeting, at which we will discuss the theme for the 2013 meeting. For the 2012 meeting, see the Call for Papers on page 2!

## SAMR at the SBL

Atlanta, GA, Nov. 20-23 2010

SAMR is involved with a number of sessions at the upcoming SBL meeting in Atlanta.

- On Saturday, Nov. 20, scholars from four different traditions will discuss *What's "Mediterranean" about "Mediterranean Religions?"*
- On Sunday, Karl Galinsky has organized a panel on *Memory in Greco-Roman and Christian Religion*.
- On Monday, the theme of *Civil Strife and the Ancient Mediterranean* will be discussed by scholars focusing on ancient Israel, fifth century BCE Athens, and fifth century CE Rome.

We thank the Greco-Roman Religions section for allowing us to sponsor sessions under their aegis, and we encourage people to attend their other sessions as well as the many other sessions of interest, including those of the Archaeology of Religion in the Roman World and Memory Perspectives on Early Christianity and its Greco-Roman Context.

## SAMR CALLS for PAPERS

SAMR invites papers for panels that we are sponsoring at two upcoming conferences.

- **Pacific Northwest Regional Meeting of the AAR/SBL and ASOR, May 13–15, 2011**

**The Religious Roles of Women in the Ancient Mediterranean World.**

Recent work on women in ancient Mediterranean religions, such as Joan Connolly's *Portrait of a Priestess* and Celia Schultz's *Women's Religious Activity in the Roman Republic*, has shown that women had a far greater role in these religions than had previously been assumed. Women of the ancient Mediterranean had not only an important role in private religious rituals, such as rites of passage, but also had a significant part to play in public rituals, serving, for example, in leadership roles as priestesses and prophetesses, as well participating in a number of important public religious festivals. This session seeks to explore the wide variety of women's religious roles in ancient Mediterranean religions, including Greek, Roman, Egyptian, and ancient Near Eastern religion, as well as early Judaism and Christianity. Papers that seek to compare women's religious roles in different cultures are particularly sought for the session. This panel is offered as part of the Women and Religion section of the Pacific Northwest region of the AAR/SBL, and proposals should be submitted electronically at the region's website (<http://www.pnw-aarsbl.org>). The deadline for submissions is in mid-January. If you have any questions, please contact the co-chairs: Ardy Bass ([bassa@gonzaga.edu](mailto:bassa@gonzaga.edu)) or Valarie Ziegler ([vziegler@depauw.edu](mailto:vziegler@depauw.edu)). For more information visit <http://pnwwomenandreligion.blogspot.com>.

- **APA/AIA ANNUAL MEETING, January 5-8, 2012**

**The Book and the Rock: Textual and material evidence in the study of ancient religion**

The study of the religions of the Ancient Mediterranean has always relied heavily on textual evidence—histories, literature, inscriptions -- sometimes to the point of exclusion of archaeological evidence. There can be little doubt that this textual focus has a distorting effect on our understanding of the religious phenomena we study; the question is to understand the types and extent of these limitations and distortions. To this end, we seek papers that address occasions where an emphasis on written evidence might have led us to understand a religious phenomenon in one way that was subsequently modified, enlarged or overturned by archaeological evidence. For example, archaeological evidence from Volsinii seems to conflict with Livy and the well-known *Senatus Consultum de Bacchanalibus* of 186 BCE, archaeology indicating a longstanding tradition of the cult where literary sources imply its recent introduction. Papers should treat concrete examples of such cases, while raising methodological issues about consonance, conflict, and complementarity where different types of evidence are concerned.

Abstracts should be submitted by email attachment as .doc or .rtf files to [socamr@gmail.com](mailto:socamr@gmail.com) and should be from 500-600 words in length for a paper to last between 15 to 20 minutes. Abstracts should contain a title and a word count, but should not have any information regarding the identity of the submitter. For further information about abstract format, please see the APA Program Guide, at [www.apaclassics.org](http://www.apaclassics.org). The deadline for submission of abstracts is February 15, 2011.

## CALL for NOMINATIONS

There are two positions open this year. My initial term as Secretary-Treasurer expires at the end of the year, and Celia Schultz will be stepping down as chair of the Program committee. Nominations for both positions will be accepted until **Wednesday November 24, 2010**. Nominations must be supported by two seconds not from the same institution; please make sure the nominee is willing to serve before making a formal nomination.

We aim to maintain a diversity of scholarly interests on the Program Committee. Lora Holland (Roman) and Nicola Denzey Lewis (early Christianity) will be continuing on the committee, so in making nominations please consider how to complement their fields of expertise.

Nominations should be sent to Eric Orlin ([eorlin@pugetsound.edu](mailto:eorlin@pugetsound.edu)). If necessary, voting for Secretary Treasurer will take place by mail in December, while voting for the Program Committee will occur at the Business Meeting to be held in conjunction with the APA/AIA meeting in San Antonio. According to our bylaws, proxy votes are not allowed.

## UPCOMING CONFERENCES OF INTEREST

(Conferences are listed in chronological order.)

Registration is now open for the Inaugural Queensland Greek History Conference, **OCTOBER 22ND-23<sup>RD</sup>, 2010**, sponsored by the Classics and Ancient History unit of the University of Queensland, Australia. This year the conference focuses on *Greek Cultural History*, with several papers touching on issues of religion. Information about registration and the program can be found at: <http://www.arts.uq.edu.au/?page=138090&pid=105822>. Next year's conference at UQ will examine the theme 'Maritime Religion in the Ancient Mediterranean,' so keep your eyes open for announcements.

The Centre for the Study of Antiquity and Christianity at Aarhus University in Denmark hosts a seminar from **28-30 OCTOBER 2010** on *'The Transformation of Religious Identity in the Hellenistic-Roman World AD 100-600: The Significance of Conversion and Initiation to the Formation of Religious Identity'*. Speakers include James Rives, Richard Ascough, Roger Beck, Michael Bloemer, Gillian Clark, Richard Gordon, Philip Harland, Charlotte Koeckert, and John North.

The Ancient Society Workshop and the Center for the Study of Ancient Religion presents *Ancient Myth in Private Lives* on **OCTOBER 29-30, 2010** at the University of Chicago. Participants in alphabetical order include: Bjoern Ewald, Thomas Carpenter, Francesco De Angelis, Janet Downie, Christopher A. Faraone, Emanuel Mayer, Patricia Rosenmeyer, Paul Zanker, and Froma Zeitlin. For further information contact Chris Faraone at [cf12@uchicago.edu](mailto:cf12@uchicago.edu).

The Center for the Study of Religion at the Ohio State University, in cooperation with the Melton Center for Jewish Studies at Ohio State, will host a workshop entitled *"Magic and Mysticism: Contested Terms, Material Objects, and Charismatic Figures"* on **THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 24 AND FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 25, 2011**. This year's workshop (the first of three on magic and mysticism) will focus particularly on ancient Mediterranean religions and Abrahamic religions into the early modern period. Participants will include: Ra'anan Boustan, Dick Davis, Matt Goldish, Fritz Graf, Nile Green, Yuval Harari, Wouter Honegraff, Sarah Iles Johnston, Dayna Kalleres, Jeff Kripal, Tina Sessa, Michael Swartz and Hugh Urban. The Workshop will take the form of three interactive panel discussions, rather than formal papers, capped by a key-note address by Ra'anan Boustan. For further information about attending, please contact the Center's administrative associate, Sandra van Kley, at [van-kley.2@osu.edu](mailto:van-kley.2@osu.edu).

The Center for the Study of Ancient Religions at the University of Chicago and the Mid-Western Consortium on Ancient Religion present on **APRIL 8-10, 2011** at the Franke Institute for the Humanities *"Imagined Beginnings: The Poetics and Politics of Cosmogony, Theogony and Anthropogony in the Ancient World."* As the subtitle suggests this conference will focus on how poets/prophets/ priests/magicians made creation stories (poetics) and why ancient cultures found them so attractive and useful (politics). We are also interested in cultures that do not generate or emphasize such primal stories or that focus instead on the creation of a powerful metropolis or empire, rather than the cosmos, the human race or the gods. The conference, we hope, will have papers on Babylonian, Egyptian, Hittite, Jewish, Greek, Roman, Norse, Celtic, Persian creation stories, etc. addressed to specialists and non-specialists alike.

Participants will include Cliff Ando, Mary Bacharova, Gideon Bohak, Maurizio Bettini, Christopher A. Faraone, Sara L Forsdyke, Sarah Johnston, Bruce Lincoln, Carolina Lopez-Ruiz, Boris Maslov, P. Michelowski, Richard Neer, James Redfield, William Sayers, Andrea Seri, Shaul Shaked, Kevin Wanner, Froma Zeitlin, Fritz Graf, Jonathan Hall, and Jeffery Stackert.

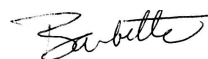
The University of Perugia presents *'Costantino prima di Costantino'* on **28-30 APRIL, 2011**. Speakers include Peter Brown, Averil Cameron, Beatrice Caseau, Giovanni Cecconi, Simon Corcoran, Andrea Giardina, Johannes Hahn, Noel Lenski, Elio Lo Cascio, Francois Paschoud and James Rives.

## President's Message (continued from page 1)

We will also discuss publication plans for the 2009 SAMR Rome conference on "What's Religious About Ancient Mediterranean Religions," and the joint SBL/SAMR panels in 2009-2010 on "Rome and Religion: A Cross-Disciplinary Dialogue," as well as the possibility of publishing papers from our two recent sessions on "Civil Strife and Ancient Mediterranean Religions" at both the APA and the SBL. Finally, we will talk about the next major conference of SAMR. At our last business meeting, we discussed the possibility of holding such a conference either at a domestic venue, such as Ann Arbor, or an international one, such as Athens. We hope to finalize both the location and the date of this conference at this meeting. I encourage you all to come to this meeting and be part of planning the future of SAMR.

I would like to thank Eric Orlin, the Secretary-Treasurer of the Society; Celia Schultz, the Chair of the SAMR Program Committee; Lora Holland and Nicola Denzey, members of the SAMR Program Committee; and Nancy Evans and Jim Hanges of the Greco-Roman Religions Section of the SBL for all their help over the past year. I hope to see many of you soon in Atlanta or San Antonio.

All the best,



Barbetta Stanley Spaeth  
President, Society of Ancient Mediterranean Religions

## NEWS FROM MEMBERS

Stephen P. Ahearne-Kroll, along with his co-editors Paul Holloway and James Kelhoffer, has published *Women and Gender in Ancient Religion: Interdisciplinary Approaches* (WUNT; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2010).

Roger Beck and Luther Martin organized a panel on "*Data from Dead Minds? Challenges on the Interface of History of Religions (in Greco-Roman Antiquity) and the Cognitive Science of Religion*" at the XXth World Congress of the International Association for the History of Religions, held in Toronto in August, 2010. *In addition to the organizers*, Alison Griffith (University of Canterbury, New Zealand), Panayotis Pachis (Aristotle University of Thessaloniki) and Colleen Shantz (University of St. Michael's College) addressed the topic and Edward Slingerland (University of British Columbia) offered a response. The organizers hope to publish the papers together with a few other contributions by scholars working on this interface.

Amelia Brown is chairing a panel along with David Pattegrew at the AIA/APA 2011 Annual Meeting in January on "Travel to Greece between Antiquity and the Grand Tour." The panel is sponsored by the Working Group on Medieval and Post-Medieval Archaeology of Greece, and as part of the panel Amelia will be presenting a paper on "Medieval Pilgrimage to Corinth and Southern Greece."

Eric Orlin published *Foreign Cults in Rome: Creating a Roman Empire* (Oxford, 2010).

## SAMR Contact Information

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

Barbetta Spaeth, President  
Dept. of Classical Studies  
College of William and Mary  
Williamsburg, VA 23187  
[bsspae@wm.edu](mailto:bsspae@wm.edu)

Eric Orlin, Secretary-Treasurer  
University of Puget Sound  
1500 N. Warner, CMB 1061  
Tacoma, WA, 98416  
[eorlin@pugetsound.edu](mailto:eorlin@pugetsound.edu)

