



Vol. 11.2, October 2018

SAMR NEWSLETTER



Nancy Evans, editor

President's Column

Greetings to all SAMR Members!

Welcome to the start of a new academic year! As the busy summer season comes to an end, we have some terrific SAMR panels on the horizon and an invitation, as always, for your input and announcements as we move into the Fall. Our panels for the year range from archaeology to epic to the end of antiquity; please mark your calendars and keep us in the loop on your own news.

First of all, warm thanks go out to Amelia Brown, who chaired the SAMR panel at the **European Association for the Study of Religions (EASR)** in Bern. This year's EASR conference was dedicated to *Multiple Religious Identities: Individuals, Communities, Traditions*; we were happy to host a session that positioned the question in the ancient Mediterranean, alongside others devoted to living cultures from a range of contexts. Amelia has provided a report of the conference and the SAMR panel, which provided the opportunity for two graduate students, from Italy and Spain, to present their ongoing work on ritual at the intersection of cultures.

We have a busy November ahead, with two panels at the **AAR/SBL in Denver**; full information on the meeting is now available [online: https://www.aarweb.org/annual-meeting/program](https://www.aarweb.org/annual-meeting/program). Our first panel combines paradigms of materiality with urban contexts (remembered and imagined), Bakhtinian inversions, cross-cultural tensions over prophecy, and Christian antipathy to the trade in material tokens. *Twilights of Greek and Roman Religions*, co-sponsored with SAMR, the Greco-Roman Religions section and the Religious World of Late Antiquity, will convene Saturday morning 11/17, 9:00 – 11:30 a.m., Convention Center Room 506, for five papers and a response. Patrick Stange (University of Toronto) leads off the panel with "From Varro to Damascus: Symbolic Reimagining and the Cult of the Martyrs;" Sissel Undheim (Universitetet I Bergen) will explore the *nachleben* of the Vestals with "Redeeming the Vestal Virgins: Afterlife and Reception in Hagiography and Medieval Literature.

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SAMR at the 2018 EASR

Amelia Brown represented SAMR at the 16th Annual Conference of the **European Association for the Study of Religions (EASR)** in Bern, Switzerland, from 17-21 of June 2018. Amelia is also currently serving on the SAMR program committee. There were about 500 papers, mostly by European scholars, and 6 keynote lectures. The conference was also under the wider auspices of the IAHR, of which SAMR is an affiliated society. Amelia chaired the SAMR panel, which in the end consisted only of 2 papers. Francesco Amatruda is working on an MA at Salerno, Italy, and studies the encounter between Celtic religion and Roman culture; he gave a paper on "Encounter or Clash of Cultures in Epona's Case between the wild Celts and the civil Romans." Federica Gatto is working on a PhD focusing on the cult of Bona Dea at the University of Cantabria, Spain. She previously completed her Laurea Magistrale in Archaeology at the University of Siena, Italy, with a thesis on the *Magistrae* and *Ministrae* of Bona Dea. Her paper at the EASR was on "Sacred Reptiles in Bona Dea's Cult," and she had a very persuasive reinterpretation of some inscriptions with images of lizards as related to this cult.

CALL for PAPERS

Dokuz Eylül University – DEU
The Research Center for the Archaeology of Western Anatolia – EKVAM
Colloquia Anatolica et Aegaea
Congressus internationales Smyrnenses XI

Terracotta lamps in the Archaic, Classical, Hellenistic, Roman and Early Byzantine Anatolia: Production, use, typology and distribution. An international symposium

May 16-17, 2019 / Izmir, Turkey

We would be delighted, if you could consider contributing to our symposium and contact us with the required information below before **January 1, 2019**.

Address: DESEM, D.E.Ü. Rektörlük Binası, Cumhuriyet Bulvarı No. 144, Alsancak, TR-35210 Izmir, Turkey.

Websites:

<https://independent.academia.edu/TheLydiaSymposium>

https://www.researchgate.net/profile/The_Lydia_Symposium

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Michele Salzman is going to be a Fellow at the Institute for Advanced Studies in Princeton in the Fall of 2018. She is working on a book entitled, *The 'Falls of Rome': The Transformations of Rome in Late Antiquity*.

Dr. Clovis Karam is pleased to announce the publication of his book *Adonai: Essai de Mythocritique sur les Traditions Phoeniciennes*, published by Éditions Universitaires Européennes.

Morgan Palmer writes that her article, "A Blight on the *Pax Augusta*: The Robigalia in Ovid's *Fasti*" was published in the summer 2018 edition of *Classical World*. An earlier version of this paper was presented on the Society for Ancient Mediterranean Religions panel at the SCS meeting in Toronto.

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Check us out on Facebook as well!

SAMR CALL for LEADERS

Two leadership positions within SAMR – president and secretary – are soon coming to the end of their term, and we warmly invite members to consider volunteering for these posts. Service in SAMR connects you with lively minds, conferences around the world, and opportunities to help shape emerging discussions in the study of religions from one corner of the Mediterranean to another. Please feel free to contact Sandy or Nancy with any questions. We plan to hold the first of the elections in San Diego this January.

Treasurer's Message, October 2018

The annual operating budget for SAMR covers annual administrative fees for memberships in international and US scholarly associations, maintains our internet accounts with Paypal and Wordpress, and funds registrations fees and equipment rentals at annual conferences. In addition, the treasury funds help us host conferences in the US and Europe.

Please remember to renew your dues to SAMR.

Our annual fees are modest, \$20 for faculty and \$10 for students. Dues can be paid through Paypal or by check. As always, drop me an email at socamr@gmail.com if you have any question about the status of your dues.

Nancy Evans, SAMR Secretary-Treasurer

<https://samreligions.org/membership/>

President's Message (continued from page 1)

Jacob Latham (University of Tennessee, Knoxville) will take us to the Western regions of the late empire in "Old Hags and Stags: The New Year in the Late Antique Latin West"; Olivia Stewart Lester (Oxford University) turns to Judaic traditions with "Apollo in Hellenistic Judaism and Early Christianity". Travis Proctor (Northland College) offers the final paper, "Earthly portraits and Heavenly Tombs: Evolving Materialities of Cultic Patronage in the Acts of John." Gerhard van den Heever (University of South Africa) will serve as the panel's respondent: please contact him directly if you would like to read the papers in advance of the session (vdheega@unisa.ac.za). .

Our second panel, co-sponsored with ARRW (Archaeology of Religion in the Roman World) continues the focus on materiality with a series of papers responding to the new publication by Claudia Moser and Jennifer Knust (University of Michigan Press 2017), *Ritual Matters: Materiality in Ancient Religion*. This is session P19-141, meeting on Monday 11/19 9:00 a.m. – 11:30 a.m. in Convention Center 106. Both authors will be present to respond to four papers taking up materiality as a paradigm for exploring ancient religiosity. Katie Rask of Duquesne University will speak on "Material Memory and Phenomenology in Greece: Accumulated Votives as Group-made monuments"; Mark McClay (University of California, Berkeley) will address "Orphic

Bookishness' and Material Religion in Classical Greece.' Scott Possiel (Boston University) continues the focus on texts with "Text as Participant in a Ritual Assemblage: A Material Approach"; Dina Boero (College of New Jersey) will take us into late antiquity with "The Cultural Biography of a Pilgrimage Token: From Hagiographical to Archaeological Evidence."

At the SCS in San Diego this January, we will continue our thematic focus on canonical texts as a source for the investigation of religion, with *Epic Gods, Imperial City: Religion and Ritual in Latin Epic from Beginnings to Late Antiquity*. We begin bright and early at 8:00 a.m. on Friday, January 4. Jeff Brodd (California State University, Sacramento) leads off the panel with "The Aeneid, Book VI: Vergil's Dream of the Afterlife"; Julia Hejduk (Baylor University) will explore "Sacrificial Acrostics and the Fall of Great Cities in Latin Epic." Kira Jones (Emory University) then turns us to the Flavians, with "*Pallas Primamque Deorum*: Minerva in Flavian Epic and Religion"; Anke Walter (Newcastle University) will speak on Festive days in Statius' *Thebaid*. Our concluding paper comes from Laura Roesch (The University of Tennessee, Knoxville), with "Travels with Martyrs: Epic Journey Motifs and Sacred Landscapes in Late Antique Poetry."

We look forward to seeing as many of you as possible at the conferences – and to hearing more from you! Great thanks are due to the Programming Committee (Amelia Brown, Jacob Latham, and Megan Nutzman) who have been inspired, organized, insightful and on time; their work in crafting themes, encouraging submissions and keeping the flow of communication lively makes these sessions possible. Little of the inner workings of the organization would be possible without Nancy Evans, whose work as secretary-treasurer keeps the website, the dues (ahem), the newsletter and our finances flowing.

All the best for a great year ahead-
With best wishes,



Sandy Blakely, President
Society for Ancient Mediterranean Religions

ANNOUNCEMENT

CURSES IN CONTEXT: ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL INQUIRIES INTO THE ANCIENT MEDITERRANEAN CURSE TABLET

Christopher A. Faraone and Sofia Torallas Tovar are hosting a series of four conferences on ancient magic, June 21–24, 2018; September 17–18, 2018; [April 12–14, 2019](#); and June 7–9, 2019.

If you are interested in attending any of the conferences, please contact Chris Faraone by e-mail at cf12@uchicago.edu.

