

Scholars Corner – Issue 3
News, Reviews & Publications

Prof. Avi Winitzer on his *Sabbatical at Tantur Ecumenical Institute from The University of Notre Dame*



Caitlin Ryan on her Doctoral thesis: *Bodies, Power, Resistance*



Hannah Hemphill Barrett *on her year at Tantur*



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**Scholars Corner – November 2011
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Prof. Avi Winitzer.

University of Notre Dame, Indiana (USA)

I am here on sabbatical – and delightedly so – from the Tantur’s academic parent, the University of Notre Dame in the U.S. At Notre Dame I teach ancient Near Eastern languages, religion, and history. My main field of study within this broad area is Assyriology, or the study ancient Mesopotamia. More specifically, I am interested in Mesopotamian religion, and it is in that field that I plan to complete a book while here. The work involves my research on Mesopotamian divination from the Old Babylonian period (2000-1600 BC) and the manner by which early divination was recorded and interpreted in long treatises of omens. While here I have also been teaching some, on matters in another area of interest: the ancient Near Eastern mythological background to the Bible particularly the origins of the cosmos in Genesis 1-11 and elsewhere. In this area I am completing several articles on the precursors to the Biblical Garden of Eden, something akin to Tantur’s main courtyard, though with fruits even less desirable than those of the now-gone apricot tree. Finally, as member and former chair of the Tantur Committee at Notre Dame, I am trying to build new initiatives to bring the University and Institute together. Look to find the fruits of these efforts at Tantur in the near future!

Avi comes to Tantur with his wife Rebecca and two children, Sarah and Shammai. Avi can be contacted on avi-winitzer.1@nd.edu,

Caitlin Ryan

University of Limerick, Ireland.

Caitlin Ryan is a PhD student in the Department of Politics and Public Administration at the University of Limerick in Ireland.

Her dissertation project is entitled *Bodies, Power, Resistance*. Caitlin has chosen to approach the topic of Palestinian women’s subjugation and subsequent resistance through an examination of how power, both social and political, operates upon women’s physical bodies. Using both Feminist scholars who have long pointed out the many ways in which women experience power imbalances and are controlled through and upon their bodies, as well as Foucault’s theories of the body and power this project aims to build upon these theories. Caitlin seeks to explore how through their daily lives Palestinian women experience the process of subjugation as a result of the continued Israeli presence in the West Bank along with their positions within their own society. Most importantly, this project will investigate how Palestinian women themselves find ways to resist this subjugation. Caitlin will be visiting East Jerusalem and the West Bank in December and January to meet Palestinian women and listen to their stories.

If you wish to contact Caitlin please email her on caitlin.ryan@ul.ie

Hannah Hemphill Barrett

University of Notre Dame, Indiana (USA)

Hannah Hemphill Barrett is a graduate student in Theology at the University of Notre Dame, South Bend, IN.

During the 2010/11 academic year Hannah lived and studied at Tantur. Although, her preparation for her comprehensive exams was aided by access to the Tantur library and those of other institutes in Jerusalem, her purpose in living at Tantur was to work for the Notre Dame Theology Department. Primarily, she organized and led two trips of Notre Dame undergraduate students to the Holy Land, including the first annual Lenten pilgrimage to the Holy Land. Early planning for a second pilgrimage gives credence to the idea that it indeed will be an annual event!

Hannah topped off a wonderful year at Tantur by marrying Brian Barrett on June 24th at the Church of the Nativity of St. John the Baptist in Ein Kerem.

Back at Notre Dame this year, she is working on a dissertation on the Origen of Alexandria’s ecclesiological thought under the direction of John Cavandini.