OXFORD
CENTRE
FOR
HEBREW
AND
JEWISH
STUDIES

## The David Patterson Lectures Week 1

Dr John Screnock (Wycliffe Hall)

## 'To What Text(s) Does the Book of Esther Refer? Or: How I Learned to Stop Worrying about Intertextuality in Esther'

Dr John Screnock is Tutor in Old Testament/Hebrew Bible at Wycliffe Hall. From 2018–2021 he was Research Fellow in Hebrew Bible at Oxford, and from 2015–2018 he was Kennicott Fellow in Hebrew at Oxford. His research interests include the Hebrew Bible, the Psalms, Dead Sea scrolls, Hebrew linguistics, and textual criticism. He is the author of *Traductor Scriptor: The Old Greek Translation of Exodus 1–14 as Scribal Activity* (Brill, 2017), and articles in *Journal of Biblical Literature, Vetus Testamentum, Biblica, Journal of Semitic Studies, Hebrew Studies, Textus, Revue de Qumran*, and *Dead Sea Discoveries*. John's current project, *Reading Psalms in the School of the Scribes* (OUP), examines scribal activity in the textual witnesses to Psalms for insights into the language, poetics, and interpretation of the Psalms.

**Abstract:** Scholars have posited a vast array of texts to which the book of Esther supposedly refers, each with their own personal favorite that, to them, is key to understanding the book. It is impossible, however, for all or even most of these suggestions to be legitimate simultaneously. I suggest that we need to construct a more realistic framework for understanding thematic, structural, and lexical parallels with other texts. Esther was written within a literary tradition that spans centuries, languages, and people groups. It is not surprising that it shares elements with other texts from that tradition. This does not, however, indicate purposeful reference to specific texts; moreover, we must assume there are many other similar texts that are no longer extant today. I consider parallels with Samuel-Kings and the Baal Cycle as a case study.

## Thursday, 18 January 2024 6-7 pm (UK time)

This lecture will be a hybrid session which will be accessible both online (see below) and in person in the Catherine Lewis Lecture Theatre.

No need to register if attending in person.

In order to participate in this lecture online, please register at this link: <a href="https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZUsduygpjspE9LgkAko87Tk">https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZUsduygpjspE9LgkAko87Tk</a> <a href="https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZUsduygpjspE9LgkAko87Tk">Sy2RKsFg60CB</a>

ALL LECTURES ARE OPEN TO THE GENERAL PUBLIC

Refreshments to follow



## SITUO

Clarendon Institute Walton Street Oxford, OX1 2HG

01865 610422 enquiries@ochjs.ac.uk www.ochjs.ac.uk