

POETRY AND STRONG RELIGIOUS COMMITMENT IN THE ANCIENT WORLD



Radical Habits of the Heart

December 9-11, 2026

University of Bergen

Sydneshaugen

Skole, Auditorium E

This conference explores the relationship between poetry and religion across the ancient Near Eastern and Mediterranean world, focusing on emotions, embodiment, and constructions of the self in models of strong religious commitment.

Poetry is understood broadly as encompassing prayers, psalms, hymns, incantations, and prophetic and apocalyptic literature. Areas covered include ancient Egypt, Mesopotamia, Greece, Rome, the Hebrew Bible, Second Temple and Late Antique Rabbinic Judaism, and Greek, Latin, and later Byzantine Christian poetry.



Contact

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PROGRAMME

Wednesday, December 9

09:00 – 9:30 - Welcome coffee + collection of conference materials

09:30 – 09:45 - [Laura Feldt](#): *Introducing the RADHEART project*

09:45 – 10:30 - [Jan N. Bremmer](#): *Emotions and Religious Commitment in the Homeric Hymn to Demeter and the Eleusinian Mysteries*

10:30 – 11:15 - [Adam Howe](#): *Divine Anger Management: Structured Emotional Expression in Mesopotamian Ritual Incantations*

11:15 – 12:00 - [Silvia Gómez Jiménez](#): *At the Threshold of Commitment: Liminal Epigrams and Religious Performativity*

12:00 – 13:00 - Lunch

13:00 – 13:45 - [Peter Jackson Rova](#): *Radical Habits of the Untrembling Heart. The Resignification of Poetry and Telestic Frenzy in Ancient Philosophy*

13:45 – 14:30 - [Valentino Gasparini](#): *When Strong Religious Commitment Fails. Enforced Devotion and Divine Punishment in Greco-Roman Poetry*

14:30 – 15:15 - [Sofia Bianchi Mancini](#): *Carmina in Corpore: Incantations, Emotions, and the Compromised Male Body in Horace and Ovid*

15:15 – 15:45 - Coffee break

RADHEART team project presentations

15:45 - 16:15 - [Vicente Fischer](#), PhD project presentation: *The Sons of the Martyrs: Narratives at the Heart of Donatist Commitment*

17:30 – Walk and talk in Bergen: meeting point the pavilion at Festplassen

18:30 Dinner

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Thursday, December 10

09:30 – 10:15 - [Laura Lieber](#): *"And You Shall Be Holy": How Yannai Used Lev. 19 to Intensify Religious Commitment*

10:15 – 11:00 - [Philip Lasater](#): *Nomos, Deification, and the Fulfillment of Human Nature in the Wisdom of Solomon*

11:00 – 11:45 - [Laura Feldt](#): *Anxious Hearts on the Straight and Narrow. The Strongly Committed Self, Emotionality and Embodiment in Tehillim 119*

11:45 – 13:00 – Lunch

13:00 – 13:45 - [Jörg Rüpke](#): *Radical Verses: Performing Religious Differences in Mid-Third Century CE Latin Poetry*

13:45 – 14:30 - [Aitor Boada Benito](#): *Words, Wood, and Stone: The Nonhuman, Affect, and the Shaping of Religious Commitment in Late Antique Eastern Hagiography*

14:30 – 15:00 – Coffee break

15:00– 15:45 - *Common conversation with comparative reflections led by* [Ingvild S. Gilhus](#) and [Sissel Undheim](#)

RADHEART team subproject presentations

15:45 – 16:15 - [Magnus B. Lorenzen](#), PhD project presentation: *Mirrors of the Heart: Ezekiel Traditions and Radical Religion in Second Temple Judaism*

16:15 – 16:45 - [Natalie Bloch](#), Postdoc presentation: *Performing the Heart: The High Priest as a Model of Embodied Atonement in Mishna Yoma and the Avodah Liturgy*

18:30 – Dinner

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Friday, December 11

9:00 – 9:45 - [Raquel Martín Hernández](#): *Speaking through Homer: Authority, Religious Commitment, and the Self in Late Antique Centos*

9:45 – 10:30 - [Maria Sole Rigo](#): *The Aesthetics of Piety: Mapping Embodied and Religious Experience in Eudocia's Poetry*

10:30 – 11:15 - [Christian Høgel](#): *The Interpellation to Divine Love in Symeon the New Theologian*

Short break

11:20 – 11:45 - Comparative reflections and practicalities of the publication

Sandwich lunch



More Details About RADHEART

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