

# ‘My Tongue is the Pen of a Skilful Scribe’ (Psalm 45:2):

## Poetics, Performance, and Philology

A conference co-convened by Hindy Najman, Arjen Bakker, and Rebekah Van Sant  
26-27 April 2026, Oriel College, University of Oxford (Harris Lecture Theatre)

**Sunday, 26 April (Day 1)**

**Chair:** Hindy Najman (Oriel College, Oxford)

**12:30–13:15:** Arjen Bakker (Cambridge), “Between Poetry and Prayer: Composition and Collection of Hymns in the Late Second Temple Period”

**13:15–14:00:** Irene Zwiép (Amsterdam), “From speech to song to poem: the prosody of emotion in early Hebrew poetics”

**14:00–14:45:** Noam Mizrahi (Hebrew University of Jerusalem), “Discerning Order in the Chaos: Poetic Form, Thematic Content, and Historical Context in Deutero-Zechariah”

**14:45–15:00:** Coffee

**Chair:** Rebekah Van Sant (Worcester College, Oxford)

**15:00–15:45:** Emmylou Grosser (University of the Free State), “Building on Unparalleled Poetry: Contributions and Ongoing Research Questions for Biblical Hebrew Poetry”

**15:45–16:30:** Hans Decker (Zurich), “Poetic Brevity and the Idealised Imagination”

**16:30–16:45:** Coffee

**Chair:** Aaron Koller (Cambridge)

**16:45–17:30:** Chip Dobbs-Allsopp (Princeton Theological Seminary), “Song into Lament: A Reading of Psalm 137”

**17:30–18:15:** Yovella Young (Oriel College, Oxford), “‘His Lips are Lilies, Dripping Liquid Myrrh’: Mixing Metaphor in the Song of Songs”



# Monday, 27 April (Day 2)

Harris Lecture Theatre, Oriel College.

**8:15-8:40: Coffee**

**Chair:** Arjen Bakker (Cambridge)

**8:45–9:30:** Rebekah Van Sant (Worcester College, Oxford), “Ambiguity and Poetics in Prophecy: The book of Isaiah”

**9:30–10:15:** Judith Newman (Toronto), “Poetry and Prophecy: Rethinking Early Jewish Poetics”

**10:15–11:00:** Dorota Molin (AMES, Oxford), “Inner landscape and dislocated self: space poetics in the Song of Songs”

**11:00–11:15: Coffee**

**Chair:** Hindy Najman (Oriel College, Oxford)

**11:15–12:00:** Elisabeth Hollender (Frankfurt), “Choices and Agency in Medieval Ashkenazic Liturgy”

**12:00–12:45:** Aaron J. Koller (Cambridge), “Abraham Ibn Ezra’s Use of Poetry in Northern France: Polemical Uses of a Literary Form”

**12:45–13:30:** Joachim Yeshaya (Tilburg), “From Psalm to Piyyut: Abraham Ibn Ezra’s Poetic Engagement with Psalm 139”

**13:30–14:30: Lunch**

**Chair:** Cian Power (Theology and Religion, Oxford)

**14:30–15:15:** Oliver Geffen Obregon (Oriel College, Oxford), “Poetry in Translation: The Task of the Translator, Scripture, and the Word of God”

**15:15–16:00:** Benjamin Pollock (Hebrew University of Jerusalem), “Towards a Poetics of Spoken-Word Bible Translation: Colometry in the Buber-Rosenzweig Bible”

**16:00–16:15: Coffee**

**Chair:** Arjen Bakker (Cambridge)

**16:15–17:00:** Wout van Bekkum (Groningen), “Modern Studies of Hebrew Hymnology as Literature: Conditions and Wishes”

**17:00–17:45:** Hindy Najman (Oriel College, Oxford), “Poetry and Pluriformity in Ancient Jewish Literature”

**18:00-19:15: Reception, Oriel College bar**

