

## Perspectives on Virtue: From Qumran to the Qur'an and Beyond

*Time and place:* Wednesday, 8 May 2019 at the Helsinki Collegium for Advanced Studies, Fabianinkatu 24A (Common Room, 3<sup>rd</sup> floor)

*Organizing committee:* Elisa Uusimäki, Anna-Liisa Rafael and Siiri Toiviainen

This workshop explores perspectives on virtue and virtuous living in early Judaism, Christianity, and Islam. As the reference to Qumran and Qur'an in the title suggests, we are interested in cultural and conceptual translation, i.e., the ways in which virtue is discussed by authors who wrote in languages other than Greek and Latin, thus lacking the linguistic categories of *aretē* and *virtus*. In addition, we explore late ancient sources with an aim to understand whether hope is constructed as a virtue in them if we do not read these accounts in the framework of medieval and modern conceptions of hope. By highlighting these translation processes not only as receptive of, but also as contributing to, virtue discourses that took place in the eastern Mediterranean region in (late) antiquity, the workshop serves to illustrate the cultural and intellectual pluriformity of the time under scrutiny. In so doing, it aims at shaking the standard way of analysing the roots of western virtue ethics within the realm of ancient Greek philosophy and its Latin reception.

The workshop is organized as part of Elisa Uusimäki's project 'Conceptions of Virtue in Early Judaism', funded by the University of Helsinki Research Funds, in cooperation with the Academy of Finland CoE 'Reason and Religious Recognition', led by Risto Saarinen.

### Programme

9.15 Welcome

#### Session 1: Translating Virtue

9.30-11.00 Keynote 1: Sophia Vasalou (Birmingham), *Between Scripture and Philosophy: Approaches to the Virtues in the Islamic World*

10.15 Response by Ritva Palmén

10.25 Discussion

11.00-11.30 Coffee break

11.30-12.00 Elisa Uusimäki, *In Search of Virtue: Ancestral Inheritance in the Testament of Qahat*

12.00-12.30 Andrew Crislip, *Disgust as a Virtue in Late Antique Egypt: Moral Purity and the Ascetic Good Life*

12.30-14.00 Lunch at Sunn (for the speakers)

Session 2: Hope and Despair, Virtue and Action?

14.00-15.30 Keynote 2: Ville Vuolanto (Tampere), *Hope as a Virtue, Emotion and Life Strategy? Studying Hope in Late Roman World*

14.45 Response by Elina Pyy

14.55 Response by Risto Saarinen

15.05 Discussion

15.30-16.00 Coffee break

16.00-16.30 Siiri Toiviainen Rø, *Joy Before Joy, Gladness Before Gladness: Hope as a Positive Anticipatory Emotion in Philo of Alexandria and Gregory of Nyssa*

16.30-17.00 Anna-Liisa Rafael, *Competence in the Highest Virtue: The Mother of Seven Sons in Lamentations Rabbah*

17.00- Light dinner at HCAS (for registered participants)

**Registration** by 30.4.2019 via <https://elomake.helsinki.fi/lomakkeet/97279/lomake.html>

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