

1 Symbolist Movement: The Ancient Cultures - Mesopotamia, Egypt, Anatolia and the Bible.



The Assyrian, Mikhail Vrubel.

Symbolist Movement: The Ancient Cultures - Mesopotamia, Egypt, Anatolia and the Bible.

The interpretation of ancient cultures and the Bible in various forms of art (visual arts, literature, and music) at the end of the 19th century and the beginning of the 20th century.

**Organizer: Rosina Neginsky,
University of Illinois, USA**

Conference Dates

September 23 - September 25, 2026

The conference will take place at the Cliff Dwellers Club located at 200 South Michigan Ave, Chicago, Illinois

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Program

23 September, 2026

**Gathering at 1.30 pm at the Institute of the Study of Ancient Cultures,
University of Chicago**

5 pm: dinner together in Hyde Park

24 September, 2026

10 am-10.30 am

Introductory word

Session One

10:30 am-12:30 am

Moderator: Anastasia Aksenova , Université Lumière Lyon 2, Université Jean Moulin Lyon 3, France

10.30-11.00 am

Vladimir Paperni, University of Haifa, Israel

Andrei Bely's Biblical Code: The Book of Genesis in Bely's The Return: The Third Symphony

11.00 - 11.30 am

Maria Aivialoti , Independent Scholar, Greece

Revisiting the Bible: a fin de siècle approach in the work of the Greek symbolist artists

11.30 am- 12:00 pm

Rosina Neginsky, University of Illinois, USA

Biblical Prophets in Mikhail Vrubel's Painting

12.00-12.30 pm

Discussion

12.30-2 pm

Lunch

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Session Two

2.00 pm – 4.00 pm

Moderator: Kharadi, Delnaaz Noshir, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, USA

2.00- 2.30 pm

Anastasia Aksenova, Université Lumière Lyon 2, Université Jean Moulin Lyon 3, France

Egypt between the university and symbolism: syncretic forms of knowledge in Russia at the turn of the 19th and 20th centuries.

2:30 - 3:00 pm

Patrick Thériault, University of Toronto, Canada

'The X of a Problem and of an Ideal': Isiac Symbolism in Isis by Villiers de l'Isle-Adam

3:00 - 3:30 pm

Elizabeth Kosmetatou, University of Illinois – Springfield, USA

Latmos at Thornfield: Ancient Myth, Moral Suspension, and the Prehistory of Symbolist Stasis in *Jane Eyre*

3:30 pm - 4pm

Discussion

4:00 - 4:15

Break

Session Three

4:15 – 6.00 pm

Moderator: Kharadi, Delnaaz Noshir , University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, USA

4:15-4:45 pm

Cassandra Sciortino, UC Berkeley Extension Art & Design Program ~ Diablo Valley College, USA

Eden without Babylon: Old Testament Interiority and a Neglected Current of Symbolist Idealism

4:45-5:15

Jana Kantorikova, Sorbonne University, Paris, France

Assyrian traces in Czech symbolism

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5:15-5:45

Discussion

25 September, 2026

10.00-10.15 am

Gathering and socializing

Session Four

10:15am - 12.15 pm

Moderator: Rosina Neginsky, University of Illinois, USA

10: 15- 10:45 am

Jeffrey Howe, Boston College, USA

The Sphinx of Brussels: Fernand Khnopff

10.45- 11.15 am

Irene Kossowski, Nicolaus Copernicus University in Torun, Poland

Cultural Syncretism in Polish Symbolism: Malczewski's Mythical Hybrids and Wyspiański's Homeric Imagination

11.15 am - 11:45 am

Géraldine Masson, Musée d'Orsay, France

Félix Bracquemond, *Portrait of my grandmother. Reading the Bible*, 1851

11:45 - 12.15 pm

Discussion

12:15-1.45 pm

Lunch

Session Five

1.45 - 3:45 pm

Moderator: Patrick Thériault, University of Toronto, Canada

1:45-2:15 pm

Michèle Fornhoff-Levitt, Université libre de Bruxelles / Sorbonne Université, Belgium

The Orient Inhabited: From Symbolist Orientalism to Jewish Symbolic Modernism.

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2:15-2:45

Kharadi, Delnaaz Noshir, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, USA

Christological Zoroaster: Symbolist Sacred in British India

2:45 - 3:15 pm

Antonia Liftsits, University of Chicago, USA

Alexander Ivanov's Biblical Sketches and Archaeological Discoveries of Ancient Assyria

3:15-3.45 pm

Discussion

3:45-4:00 pm

Break

4:00 pm - 5:00 pm

Introduction: Rosina Neginsky

Keynote speaker

Albert Alhadeff, University of Colorado Boulder

George Minne: an *art neuf* in Ancient Egypt