

Ancient Jewish Texts and the ‘Literary’
14,15 March 2012
Institute of Jewish Studies (University of Antwerp)

The Institute of Jewish Studies (University of Antwerp) in collaboration with Ghent University is happy to announce an international seminar on Ancient Jewish Texts and the ‘Literary.’ The aim is to bring together scholars working on various ancient Jewish texts and their distinct textual – often called literary - features. The goal is to exchange ideas on the ‘literary’ in these works and stimulate future research and collaboration.

Invited keynote speakers:

Prof. Dr. Scott Noegel, University of Washington (United States of America) (confirmed)

Prof. Dr. Ellen Van Wolde, Radboud Universiteit Nijmegen (Netherlands)

Prof. Dr. Wilfred Watson, Newcastle University (United Kingdom)

Prof. Dr. Robert Gordon, Cambridge University (United Kingdom)

Since the 60s and 70s of the previous century the form and exact wording of ancient Jewish texts has been the focus of attention of a literary approach within biblical/Jewish studies. This subfield relies on the insights of narratology on the one hand and rhetoric on the other. Resulting from this approach any research involving the creative use of language, e.g. in the Hebrew Bible, is considered literary.

In recent years this term has increasingly been questioned as being a presupposition rather than the result of research. ‘Literary’ therefore should be understood as the common though not necessarily apt umbrella term for all studies focusing on the form of ancient texts. Contributors are encouraged to interpret the term either in defense of literariness or against it.

We invite participants from all related fields: Jewish studies, biblical studies, ancient Near Eastern studies, classical studies, literary studies, and stylistics. Possible approaches include among others analyses of the Hebrew Bible, its old translations, early commentaries and retellings, as long as they can be considered ancient (i.e., pre-medieval) and Jewish (i.e., written by Jews or in a Jewish setting).

Proposals up to 300 words can be submitted no later than July 31 2011, to Karolien Vermeulen (karolien.vermeulen@ua.ac.be or karolien.vermeulen@ugent.be).