

International conference

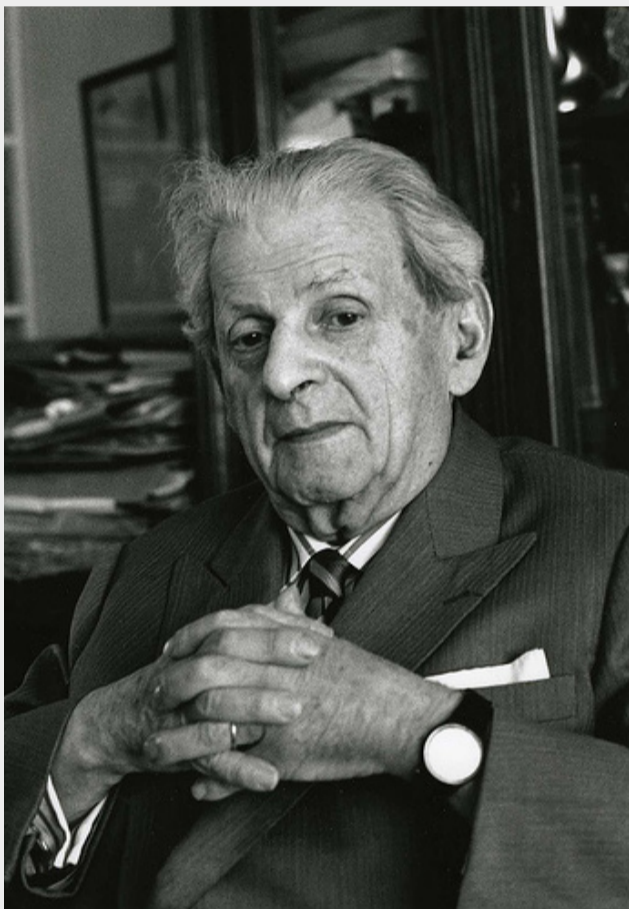
# Levinas, Law and Literature

January 20th - 22nd 2016

University of Antwerp | Hof van Liere  
Prinsstraat 13b | 2000 Antwerpen

Conference in English and French

Registration required: <http://www.uantwerpen.be/en/rg/ijs/enroll>



One cannot effectively approach Emmanuel Levinas's philosophical works without recognizing the importance modern literature plays in his writings. From Baudelaire to Dostojevski, from Blanchot to Celan, and from Kafka to Grossman, the references to major modern and contemporary writers are manifest throughout Levinas's reflections. Whether as a source of inspiration or as metaphoric expression of his thoughts, these references mark a constitutive element of the articulation and development of his own philosophy. This is all the more astonishing given that Levinas has many reasons to distrust the ambivalences of literary works. Indeed, his entire philosophy intends to overcome the tragic model (with its origins in Aristotle) so as to understand being; moreover, he rejects the idea that mimetic representation constitutes a modality for adequate description of the human condition. Levinas states that the meaning of the ethical commandment exceeds all metaphoric and poetic expression, and, at crucial moments in his philosophy, he quotes Talmudic verses as if they are philosophical arguments.

It would seem that Levinas is, in his own way, challenging the Western concept of literature. It may be that he agrees with Jacques Derrida's idea of the Biblical origin of this concept, yet questions remain as to how Levinas understands this idea and how his philosophy transforms the concept of literature. Answering these key questions will be the general aim of a three-day conference organized by the Institute of Jewish Studies in collaboration with the Center for European Philosophy.

Special attention will be given to the poems, novel fragments, and reflections on metaphor and literature in the recently published volumes of the *Oeuvres Complètes*.

## Wednesday 20 January 2016

14.00-14.30 Welcome and Introduction

14.30-15.30 **Keynote lecture: *Levinas and the Sun***  
**Richard Cohen** (University at Buffalo)  
Respondent: **Arthur Cools** (University of Antwerp)

15.30-16.00 Coffee break

16.00-17.30 **Session I: *Levinas and the Concept of Literature***  
Chair: **Arthur Cools** (University of Antwerp)

16.00-16.30 *If Hölderlin is allowed, why not the Talmud? The Significance of the Talmud in the Philosophy of Levinas*  
**Marcel Poorthuis** (Tilburg School of Theology)

16.30-17.00 *Ethical Interpretation of Literary Works. Literal Reading of Levinas's Writings on Ethics*  
**Hanoch Ben Pazi** (Bar Ilan University)

17.00-17.30 *The Literary Consciousness: from il y a AND from/to the Other*  
**Rossitsa V. Borkowski** (University of Amsterdam)

20.00 **Keynote lecture: *A World without Contours: Levinas's Critiques of Literary Freedom***  
**Sarah Hammerschlag** (University of Chicago Divinity School)  
Respondent: **Vivian Liska** (Institute of Jewish Studies, University of Antwerp)  
followed by a reception

## Thursday 21 January 2016

9.00-10.00 **Keynote lecture: *L'écriture du survivant***  
**François-David Sebbah** (Université Paris Ouest Nanterre)

10.00-10.30 Coffee break

10.30-12.30 **Session II: *Levinas and Poetry***  
Chair: **Luc Anckaert** (KU Leuven)

10.30-11.00 *"Call it poetry or whatever" – On the Relation of Art to Poetry in Levinas*  
**Akos Krassoy** (KU Leuven)

11.00-11.30 *Enigma vs. Metaphor*  
**Shira Wolosky** (Hebrew University of Jerusalem)

- 11.30-12.00 *Langage poétique et langage prophétique dans l'œuvre de Levinas* [sous réserve]  
**Eric Hoppenot** (Université Paris Sorbonne-ESPE)
- 12.00-12.30 *Levinas et la parole poétique*  
**Annelies Schulte Nordholt** (Leiden University)
- 12.30-14.00 Lunch
- 14.00-16.00** **Session III: Levinas and Rhetoric**  
Chair: **Vivian Liska** (IJS, University of Antwerp)
- 14.00-14.30 *Levinas's Literary Style*  
**Annabel Herzog** (University of Haifa)
- 14.30-15.00 *Totality and Infinity as Philosophical Prose: The Literary Aesthetics of Emmanuel Levinas's Argumentation*  
**Orr Scharf** (The Open University of Israel)
- 15.00-15.30 *"le vrai Jugement dernier": Levinas and Benjamin on Theory, the Poetic Word, and the Event in Proust*  
**Ashraf Noor** (Universität Düsseldorf)
- 15.30-16.00 *De l'Eros au discours sur la mort de Dieu*  
**Michaël de Saint-Chéron** (Histara/Ecole Pratique des Hautes Etudes)
- 16.00-16.30 Coffee break
- 16.30-17.30** **Parallel Session - Emerging scholars panel**  
Chairs: **Arthur Cools and Vivian Liska** (University of Antwerp)
- 16.30-17.00 *Toward a Literary Judaism: A Contemporary Case in Literary Ethics*  
**Jonathon Catlin** (KU Leuven)
- Le "bourgeois" dans la pensée d'Emmanuel Levinas : un héritage littéraire*  
**Yoann Colin** (Université de Strasbourg)
- 17.00-17.30 *"Poems are laws grown feral": Messianism and Literature in Levinas*  
**Michael Saunders** (Kingston University)
- The Destitution of Words - The Aporia of Writing in Totality and Infinity*  
**Jakub Kowalewski** (University of Essex)
- 18.00 Conference dinner (Speakers only)

## Friday 22 January 2016

- 9.00-10.00 **Keynote lecture: Emmanuel Levinas. *La littérature comme expression de l'altérité et de la rencontre***  
**Christian Godin** (Université Blaise Pascal, Clermont-Ferrand)
- 10.00-10.30 Coffee break
- 10.30-12.00** **Session IV: Levinas and Talmud**  
Chair: **Dennis Baert** (IJS, University of Antwerp)
- 10.30-11.00 *The Genesis of Totality and Infinity: Biblical Narrative as Transcendental Ontogenesis*  
**Michael Fagenblat** (Open University of Israel)
- 11.00-11.30 *Levinas's Hermeneutics – A Modern Midrash*  
**Elisabeth Goldwyn** (University of Haifa)
- 11.30-12.00 *Testimony as Description: The Phenomenological “Justification” of the Biblical Verse in Levinas*  
**Cameron Doody** (Camilo José Cela University)
- 12.00-12.30 *“Until the rains fall down on the corpses...” Reading Gender in Levinas’s “Toward the Other”*  
**Claire Katz** (Texas A&M University)
- 12.30-13.30 Lunch
- 13.30-15.00** **Session V: Levinas and the Social**  
Chair: **Arthur Cools** (University of Antwerp)
- 13.30-14.00 *Goodness without Hope. Hope without Promise. Emmanuel Levinas and Vasily Grossman*  
**Luc Anckaert** (KU Leuven)
- 14.00-14.30 *Levinas, Derrida and the Politics of Reproduction*  
**Mihail Evans** (Institute for Advanced Study/New Europe College)
- 14.30-15.00 *L'action humaine et l'oeuvre littéraire - Levinas, Bloch et Kosik*  
**Jan Bierhanzl** (Institute of Philosophy of the Academy of Sciences of the Czech Republic)

We gratefully acknowledge the financial support of FWO Research Foundation Flanders, Institutum Iudaicum, the University and Community Department and the Departments of Philosophy and Literature of the University of Antwerp.



## Registration & contact

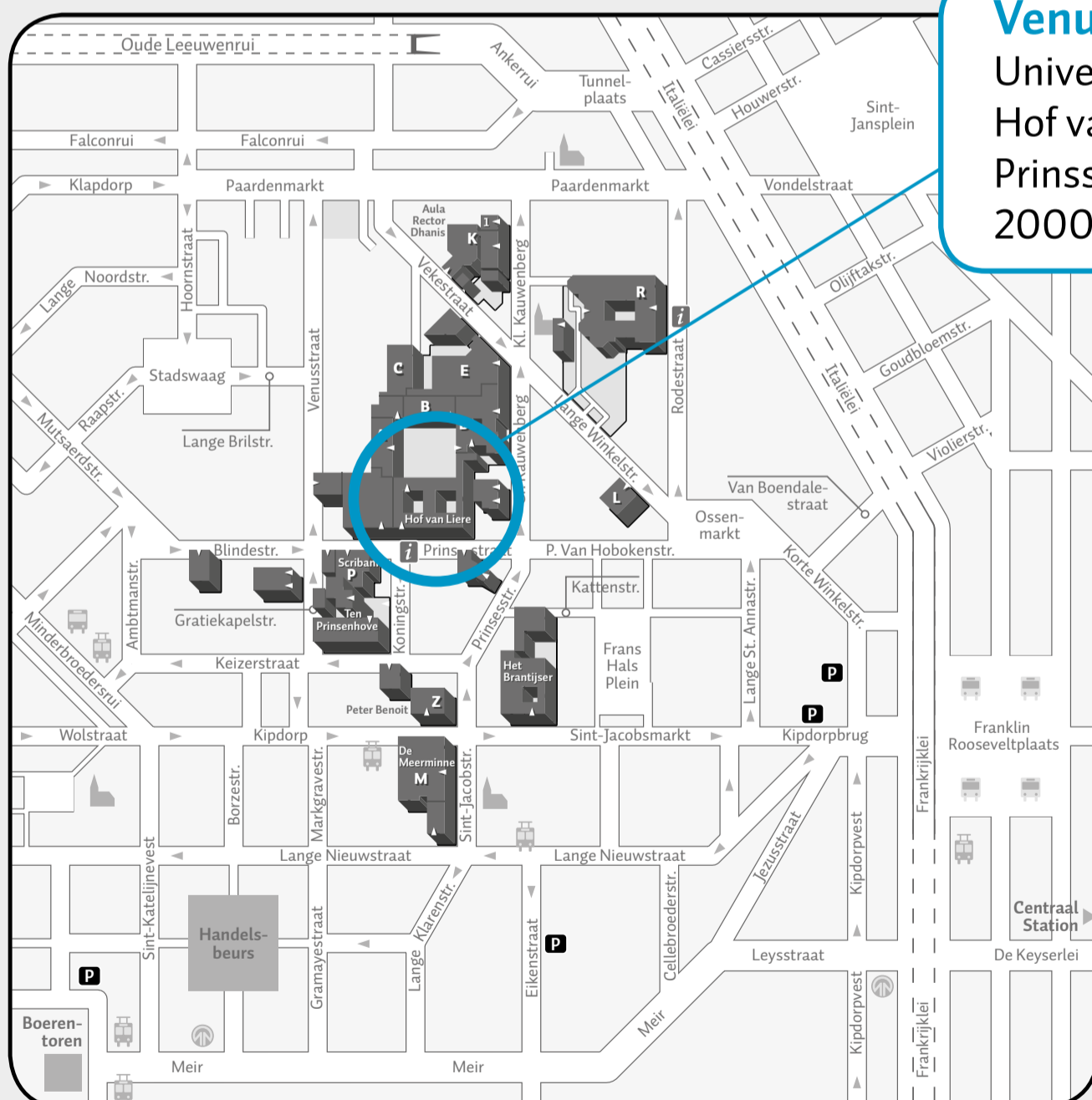
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### Venue

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