

## Junior Scholars' Conference ON THE OUTLOOK: FIGURES OF THE MESSIANIC

### Organizers

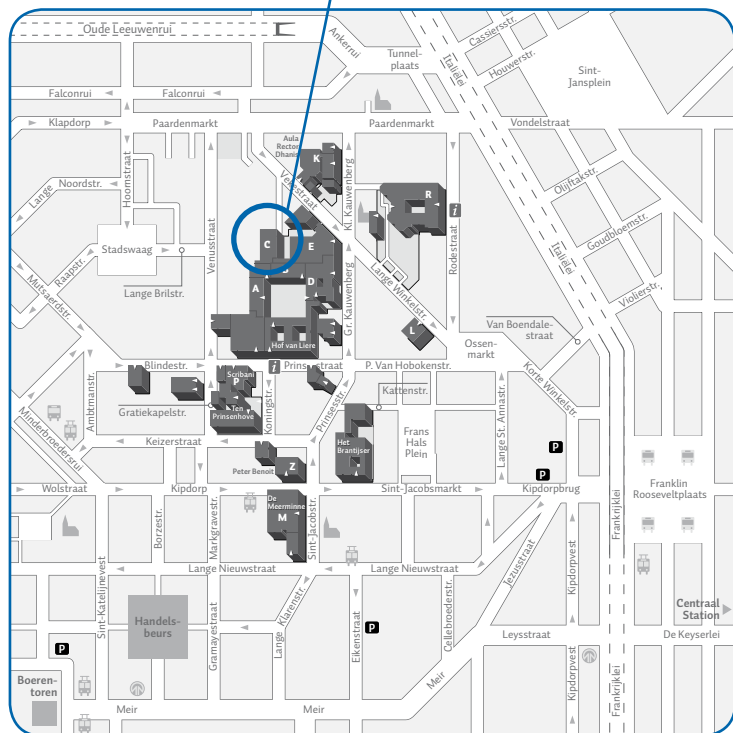
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### Registration & Contact

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### Venue

University of Antwerp - City Campus - Auditorium C.104  
Prinsstraat 13 - BE-2000 Antwerpen



## Junior Scholars' Conference

## ON THE OUTLOOK: FIGURES OF THE MESSIANIC

Antwerp, 10-11 May 2006 - University of Antwerp

This junior scholars' conference will focus on the present state of research into the modes, functions and stakes of messianic thinking in twentieth- and twenty-first-century theory. In recent years, messianic figures of thought are frequently evoked not only in areas that are traditionally connected to it, such as theology and politics, but also in philosophy of history, sociology, philosophy of language, art and literature. It is therefore highly promising to investigate current approaches to the relationship between these more recent writings and the Judeo-Christian legacy as well as the present use of this tradition in various areas.

Particular attention will be paid to new discoveries about the diverse contexts in which messianic thinking emerged, to messianic conceptualizations of discontinuous historiographies developed as a reaction against the concept of linear time and universal history, to the impact of messianic thinking on theories of language and literature, politics and the law and to notions of interruption, human progress and messianic arrest in the philosophical writings of Benjamin, Lévinas, Derrida and other thinkers of the past century. Furthermore, the conference will focus on some of the fundamental controversies, ambiguities and tensions in messianic thinking (human agency vs. divine intervention; passive awaiting vs. active participation; transcendental event vs. revolutionary act; particularist vs. universalist salvation; subjection under the law vs. anarchism and others.)

In gathering a group of international younger scholars, the conference intends to draw the contours of the present state of messianic thinking and to indicate the direction this tradition could possibly take in the future.

## Wednesday, 10 May 2006

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- 10:00-10:30 Registration and Coffee
- 10:30-11:00 Welcome  
**Vivian Liska** (Director, Institute of Jewish Studies)  
Opening Remarks  
**Thomas Crombez** (University of Antwerp)  
**Katrien Vloeberghs** (Institute of Jewish Studies, University of Antwerp)
- 11:00-12:30 **HISTORICAL CONTEXTS OF MESSIANISM**  
**Joost de Bloois** (Universiteit van Amsterdam)  
*Italy's Melancholic Messianism:  
Giorgio Agamben's and Erri De Luca's Reminiscences of Revolution*  
**Lisa Marie Anderson** (Duke University)  
*Adam's Return to the Garden:  
The Political Messianic in Early Twentieth-Century German Thought*  
**Stephen Whelan** (University of Nottingham)  
*Abandoned Identities and the Aesthetics of Uncertainty*
- 12:30-14:00 Lunch Break
- 14:00-16:00 **DISCONTINUOUS HISTORIOGRAPHIES**  
**Anya Topolski** (Katholieke Universiteit Leuven)  
*A Non-Catholic Universal Politics?  
A Talmudically Inspired Reading of Emmanuel Levinas' Messianic Texts*  
**Pieter Vermeulen** (Katholieke Universiteit Leuven)  
*"Keeping the dead alive, that is deadly":  
Walter Benjamin, Critical Theory, and the Promise of Loss*  
**Eddis Miller** (University of Pennsylvania)  
*Jacques Derrida and the Problem of the Secularized Messianic*  
**Ingrid Anderson** (Boston University)  
*Revelation and Renewal: Notions of History, Human Progress, and the  
Messianic Idea in the Thought of Hermann Cohen and Franz Rosenzweig*
- 16:00-16:30 Coffee Break

## 16:30-18:30 THE POETICS OF MESSIANISM

- Jason Peck and J.D. Mininger** (University of Minnesota)  
*Paul Celan's "Mandorla" and the Poetics of Messianism*  
**Patricia De Keersmaecker** (Universiteit Antwerpen)  
*"Nothing happens, nobody comes, nobody goes, it's awful!":  
Gilles Deleuze and Samuel Beckett: Everything Happens Betwixt*  
**Bram Even** (Universiteit Leiden)  
*Khôra Politics and Karma Police: Messianicity in Jacques Derrida's Political Work*  
**Thomas Crombez** (Universiteit Antwerpen)  
*Reading God's Book to the End: Antinomianism and the Avant-Garde*

## Thursday, 11 May 2006

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- 9:00-10:30 **HUMAN AGENCY AND THE COMING OF THE MESSIAH**  
**Tammy Lynn Castelein** (Katholieke Universiteit Leuven)  
*Actively Messianic?  
Gershom Scholem on Walter Benjamin's Theory of the Messianic*  
**Melissa Blackie** (University of Toronto)  
*Messianic Progress: Continuity and Interruption in Hermann Cohen,  
Ernst Bloch and Walter Benjamin*  
**Katrien Vloeberghs** (Universiteit Antwerpen)  
*Chosen. The Messianic in Contemporary Fantasy Fiction for the Young*
- 10:30-11:00 Coffee Break
- 11:00-12:00 **OBSERVING AND SUBVERTING THE LAW**  
**Job De Meyere** (Universiteit van Tilburg)  
*"There must be some way out of here":  
The Messianic Experience and the Arrest of the Sovereignty of Language*  
**Ayala Agranat** (Independent Scholar, Antwerp)  
*"Beyond Impotentiality":  
Agamben's Messianism "after Auschwitz" and the (Un)doing of Adornian Law*
- 12:00-12:15 Closing Remarks