

READING THE BIBLE IN AMSTERDAM: TEXTS, TRADITIONS AND INTERPRETATION

Course level	Advanced Bachelor/Master
Advised course combination	Syriac Christianity in Context
Block	1
Coordinating lecturer	Prof. Bert Jan Lietaert Peerbolte
Other lecturers involved	Prof. Eep Talstra, Prof. Lourens de Vries, Prof. Joep Dubbink, Prof. Peter-Ben Smit, Dr. Eveline van Staaldoune-Sulman, Dr. Jan Krans, Dr. Arie Zwiep, invited lecturer(s).
Form(s) of tuition	Lectures, seminars, excursion
Form(s) of assessment	Course portfolio
Contact hours	40
Tuition fee	€1200

For students from which disciplines may this course be of interest?

Students of Religious Studies, Theology, Divinity, Biblical Studies, Classics, Philosophy, History, Linguistics and Translation Studies.

Course content

The course deals with the complex interrelationships between texts, traditions, and interpretations in the field of biblical studies. The topics addressed in the course range from issues related to textual criticism (what texts exist, how were they used, and how were they published?), to topics related to their transmission and translation, as well as the establishment of interpretative traditions, to questions related to philosophical and theological hermeneutics (what is the role of reading communities, how 'objective' is the interpretation of a text, etc.). By discussing these various aspects of biblical interpretation in the context of one course, an interdisciplinary view of biblical interpretation can be achieved that is otherwise hardly possible.

The professors in Biblical Studies of VU University Amsterdam combine their expertise to create this unique course. The setting of Amsterdam and VU gives an extra impetus to the questions at stake in the course: while VU University has strong ties with Christian theology, the postmodern and postsecular setting of Amsterdam, and the broad academic setting in which the Faculty of Theology of VU University is located provides a context that invites exploring new questions and going beyond disciplinary and theological boundaries. Tradition and innovation meet in new and exciting ways.

Learning objectives

Having taken this course, a student will:

- Have a broad understanding of the (hermeneutical) issues at stake in Biblical Studies when it comes to the interrelationship between text, traditions, and interpretation.
- Have an understanding of the challenges posed to biblical interpretation in the setting of VU University Amsterdam.
- Be able to interrelate important aspects of biblical interpretation in a historically, hermeneutically, and theologically reflected way.

Course reading

To be announced.

Excursions

Leiden Papyrological Institute and the Dutch Bible Society