



FACULTEIT DER GEESTESWETENSCHAPPEN
Afdeling Kunst-, Religie- en Cultuurwetenschappen

**HISTORY OF HERMETIC PHILOSOPHY
AND RELATED CURRENTS**

REPORT 2007



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1. Introduction

The year 2007 has been a solid and good one both in terms of research and of teaching. As a research group, GHF enjoys an excellent reputation in the context of the Institute for Culture and History; and likewise, the teaching programs on the Bachelor and Master level are very well regarded by the Teaching Institute and the Graduate School of Humanities. Internationally, GHF maintains an uncontested leadership role in the field of Western esotericism as a field of academic research. All in all, the situation of stability and consistent quality that was created in previous years is maintained during 2007 as well.

2. Personnel

Unfortunately Roelie van Kreijl's position as Ph.D. student has had to be discontinued before termination of her period of appointment. A standard procedure for selecting her successor was initiated after the summer, and has resulted in the appointment of Tessel Bauduin, who has started in 2008 and will therefore be further introduced in the next annual report.

Dr. Kennet Granholm (Finland) is spending a year at GHF as an unaffiliated researcher. He is working on a book about contemporary "Left-Hand" magical orders.

3. Teaching

3.1. Teaching Program

Like last year, the BA minor "Westerse esoterie" consisted of four modules: Hermetica I: Inleiding Westerse esoterie (taught by Hanegraaff, Pasi, von Stuckrad), Hermetica II: Oudheid/Middeleeuwen (taught by von Stuckrad), Hermetica III: Vroeg moderne periode (taught by Hanegraaff) and Hermetica IV: 18e/20e eeuw (taught by Pasi). Furthermore, von Stuckrad has again taught the introductory course religious studies (now titled "Religiestudies: Methoden en Thema's") in the Bachelor.



As for the MA “Mysticism and Western Esotericism”, Hanegraaff taught “Contested Knowledge II: Paganism, Images, and Christian Identities”; von Stuckrad taught “Renaissance Esotericism II: Secrets of Nature”; and Pasi taught “Occult Trajectories II: Western Esotericism in the Mirror of Modern Literature”. In addition, Pasi coordinated the MA core module “Method and Theories in the Study of Religion” and von Stuckrad taught the module “Religious Pluralism in Europe” (with Rob Pauls).

3.2. Level of participation

2nd semester 2006-2007

- Bachelor

Hermetica II	Kocku von Stuckrad	13 students
Hermetica IV	Marco Pasi	13 students
Religiestudies: Meth&Thema's	Kocku von Stuckrad	23 students

- Master Trajectory Mysticism and Western Esotericism

Occult Trajectories II	Marco Pasi	18 studenten
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1st semester 2007-2008

- Bachelor

Hermetica I	Wouter Hanegraaff, Marco Pasi,	57 students
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	Kocku von Stuckrad	
Hermetica III	Wouter Hanegraaff	12 students

- Master Trajectory Mysticism and Western Esotericism

Contested Knowledge II	Wouter Hanegraaff	15 students
Renaissance Esotericism II	Kocku von Stuckrad	17 students

- Research Master Religious Studies

Methods and Theory in the

Study of Religion	Marco Pasi (coord.)	7 studenten
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Religious Pluralism in Europe	Kocku von Stuckrad, Rob Pauls)	21 studenten
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4. Research

4.1. Research Program

The research program *Western Esotericism: Continuities and Discontinuities* has continued as normal. For descriptions of the individual research projects see Report 2006, and for the research output, see section 4.2.

4.2. Research Output.

W.J. Hanegraaff

Swedenborg, Oetinger, Kant: Three Perspectives on the Secrets of Heaven (Swedenborg Studies 18), West Chester, Pennsylvania: The Swedenborg Foundation 2007.
170 pp.



Fiction in the Desert of the Real: Lovecraft's Cthulhu Mythos. *Aries* 7:1 (2007), pp. 85-109.

Giovanni da Correggio's *De Quercu, sive de lapide philosophico*. In: Lawrence M. Principe (ed.): *Chymists and Chymistry: Studies in the History of Alchemy and Early Modern Chemistry*. Sagamore Beach: Watson Publishing International LLC (2007), pp. 101-112.

The Trouble with Images: Anti-Image Polemics and Western Esotericism. In: Olav Hammer & Kocku von Stuckrad (eds.), *Polemical Encounters: Esotericism and its Others*, Leiden / Boston: Brill 2007, pp. 107-136.

The New Age Movement and Western Esotericism. In: Daren Kemp & James R. Lewis (eds.), *Handbook of New Age*. Leiden / Boston: Brill 2007, pp. 25-50.

Hermetische tradities en de natuurwetenschappen: Tussen beeldvorming en complexiteit. In: Frans J. Meijman, Stephen Snelders & Onno de Wit (eds.), *Leonardo voor het publiek: Een geschiedenis van de wetenschaps- en techniekcommunicatie*. Amsterdam: VU University Press & Da Vinci Institute 2007, pp. 295-305.

Review of Paolo Lucentini, Ilaria Parri & Vittoria Perrone Compagni, "Hermetism from Late Antiquity to Humanism / La tradizione Ermetica dal mondo tardoantico all'umanesima: Atti del Convegno internazionale di studi, Napoli, 20-24 novembre 2001." *Aries* 7:2 (2007), pp. 227-229.

M. Pasi

Arthur Machen's Panic Fears: Western Esotericism and the Irruption of Negative Epistemology, *Aries* 7:1 (2007), pp. 63-83.

Review of Kennet Granholm, "Embracing the Dark: The Magic Order of the Dragon Rouge", *Numen* 54 (2007), pp. 216-221.

C.K.M. von Stuckrad



- História da Astrologia: da Antigüidade aos nossos dias*. Translated by Kelly Passos. Sao Paulo: Editora Globo 2007.
- (ed. with Olav Hammer) *Polemical Encounters: Esoteric Discourse and Its Others*. Leiden: Brill 2007. 325 pp.
- Finding Data: Some Reflections on Ontologies and Normativities. *Journal for the Study of Religion, Nature, and Culture* 1.1 (2007), pp. 39-46.
- Ideas of Nature and Their Cultural Impact: The Work of Ruth and Dieter Groh (Review Essay). *Journal for the Study of Religion, Nature, and Culture* 1.3 (2007), pp. 395-400.
- Wissenschaftliche und religiöse Transfers im Mittelalter: Das Beispiel der Astrologie. In: Christoph Auffarth (ed.): *Religiöser Pluralismus im Mittelalter? Besichtigung einer Epoche der europäischen Religionsgeschichte*. Münster: LIT 2007, pp. 39-58.
- (with Olav Hammer) Introduction: Western Esotericism and Polemics. In: Olav Hammer and Kocku von Stuckrad (eds.): *Polemical Encounters: Esoteric Discourse and Its Others*. Leiden: Brill 2007, pp. vii-xxii.
- Christian Kabbalah and Anti-Jewish Polemics: Pico in Context. In: Olav Hammer and Kocku von Stuckrad (eds.): *Polemical Encounters: Esoteric Discourse and Its Others*. Leiden: Brill 2007, pp. 3-23.
- Geloof. In: Jonneke Bekkenkamp (ed.): *ZinAtlas*. Amsterdam: Zin & Zaken 2007, pp. 91-97.
- S.v. Aberglaube, Astrologie, Dämonen, Esoterik, Magie, New Age, Schamanismus. In: Friedrich Wilhelm Horn & Friederike Nüssel (eds.): *Taschenlexikon Religion und Theologie*, 4 vols., Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht 2007.
- Review of Steven vanden Broecke, "The Limits of Influence: Pico, Louvain, and the Crisis of Renaissance Astrology." *Aries* 7:1 (2007), pp. 113-115.
- Review of Stephen D. O'Leary and Glen S. McGhee (eds.), "War in Heaven - Heaven on Earth: Theories of the Apocalyptic." *Numen* 54 (2007), pp. 96-98.
- Review of Hermann Geyer, "Verborgene Weisheit: Johann Arndts 'Vier Bücher vom Wahren Christentum' als Programm einer spiritualistisch-hermetischen Tradition." *Aries* 7:2 (2007), pp. 239-241.



Review of Marco Pasi, "Aleister Crowley und die Versuchung der Politik." *The Pomegranate: The International Journal of Pagan Studies* 9:2 (2007), pp. 194-196.

5. Further Activities

5.1. Conference Organization

W.J. Hanegraaff & Jeffrey J. Kripal. Organization of Conference *Secret States: Altered States of Consciousness and Western Esotericism*, Esalen Institute (California), 14-17.05.2007.

M. Pasi, M., C.K.M. von Stuckrad & B. Hus. Organization of Conference *Kabbalah and Modernity*, University of Amsterdam, 4-6.6.2007.

5.2. Lectures and Conference Participation

W.J. Hanegraaff

'Closing Remarks'. Conference *The Occult in 20th Century Russia: Metaphysical Roots of Soviet Civilization*, The European Academy, Berlin, Germany, 13.3.2007.

'The Platonic Frenzies in Ficino'. Conference *53rd Meeting of the Renaissance Society of America*, Miami, USA, 23.3.2007.

'Ecstatic Knowledge: Hermetic Gnosis and Platonic Frenzies in the Work of Ficino'. Invited lecture University of Pisa, Italy, 27.3.2007.

'Altered States of Knowledge: Gnosis in the Hermetica'. Conference *Secret States: Altered States of Consciousness and Western Esotericism*, Esalen Institute, California, 14.5.2007.

'The Beginnings of Occultist Kabbalah: Adolphe Franck and Eliphas Lévi'. Conference *Kabbalah and Modernity*, University of Amsterdam, The Netherlands, 5.7.2007.

'Western Esotericism in Enlightenment Historiography: The Case of Jacob Brucker'. *Constructing Tradition: Means and Myths of Transmission in Western Esotericism*,



Inaugural Conference of the European Society for the Study of Western Esotericism (ESSWE), Tübingen, Germany, 20.7.2007.

'Superstition as a Shifting Polemical Concept'. Conference *Religion and Identity Politics: "Acceptable" Religion and its Negative Others*, University of Southern Denmark, Odense, Denmark, 24.8.2007.

'The Birth of Esotericism from the Spirit of Protestantism'. Conference *Forme e correnti dell'esoterismo occidentale*, Fondazione Cini, Venice, 30.10.2007.

'Utopias of the Mind'. Conference *Visions of Utopia: Masonic, Religious & Esoteric*, 9th International Conference Canonbury Masonic Research Center, London, 3.11.2007.

M. Pasi

'Lo studio storico dell'esoterismo: concetti e problemi', Invited lecture at the University of Turin, 26.3.2007.

'Varieties of magical experience: Aleister Crowley and the Psychologisation of Occult Practice', Conference: *Secret States: Altered States of Consciousness and Western Esotericism*, Esalen Institute (California), 17.5.2007.

'The Uses of Kabbalah in English Occultism: Interpretations and Transformations', Conference: *Kabbalah and Modernity*, University of Amsterdam, 6.7.2007.

'Konx Om Pax: The Mystery of the Mysteries in the 18th Century', *Constructing Tradition: Means and Myths of Transmission in Western Esotericism*, Inaugural Conference of the European Society for the Study of Western Esotericism (ESSWE), Tübingen, Germany, 22.7.2007.

'Il problema della definizione dell'esoterismo: esame critico e proposte per la ricerca futura', Conference: *Forme e correnti dell'esoterismo occidentale*, Fondazione Cini, Venice, 30.10.2007.

Participation in round table 'Kabbale, religion, science: comment inspirer l'art?', in the framework of Anselm Kiefer's Monumenta exhibition 'La chute des étoiles', Grand Palais, Paris, France, 28.6.2007.



C.K.M. von Stuckrad

- 'Jewish Astrology in Late Antiquity'. Conference *Ancient Astrology*, Warburg Institute, London, UK, 17.2.2007.
- 'The Status of the Picatrix in Marsilio Ficino's *De Vita*: Continuities and Changes'. *Annual meeting of the Renaissance Society of America*, Miami, Florida, USA, 22.3.2007.
- 'The Scholar and the Irrational: Shamanism, Secret Experiences, and the Trope of Academic Neutrality'. Conference *Secret States: Altered States of Consciousness and Western Esotericism*, Esalen Institute, California, USA, 16.6.2007.
- 'Die Esoterik im Bezugfeld europäischer Religionsgeschichte'. *Graduiertenkolleg Religionswissenschaft*, University of Erfurt, Germany, 21.6.2007.
- 'Madonna the Shekhinah: The Playful Transgression of Gender Roles in Popular Culture'. Conference *Kabbalah and Modernity*, University of Amsterdam, The Netherlands, 6.7.2007.
- 'Secrecy as Social Capital'. *Conference of the European Society for the Study of Western Esotericism*, Tübingen, Germany, 20.7.2007.
- 'Esoteric Discourse and the European History of Religion: The Emergence of a New Interpretational Framework'. Conference *Western Esotericism*, Donner Institute, Turku / Åbo, Finland, 16.8.2007.
- 'New Approaches to the Study of Religion in Europe'. Conference *European History of Religion*, University of Southern Denmark, Odense, Denmark, 13.9.2007.
- 'Die Bedeutung und das Ende der Zeit: Die Interpretation von Großen Konjunktionen in Islam, Judentum und Christentum zwischen Mittelalter und Früher Neuzeit'. *International Astrology Congress and 60th Anniversary of the Deutscher Astrologen-Verband*, Karlsruhe, Germany, 7.10.2007.
- 'Wisdom beyond Demonstration: Experiential Knowledge From Late Antiquity to the 13th Century in Interreligious Perspective'. Conference *Forms and Currents of Western Esotericism*, Venice, Italy, 30.10.2007.



O. Vasicek

'Johannes Reuchlin's Use of the Concept of the Sefirot', Inaugural Conference
European Society for the Study of Western Esotericism, Tübingen, Germany,
20.7.2007.

5.3. Editorial Activities

W.J. Hanegraaff

(editor) *Aries: Journal for the Study of Western Esotericism*. Leiden / Boston: Brill.
(editor) *Aries Book Series: Texts and Studies in Western Esotericism*. Leiden / Boston: Brill.
(editorial board) *Religion*. Elsevier.
(editorial board) *Numen*. Leiden / Boston: Brill.
(advisory board) *Esoterica* <http://www.esoteric.msu.edu>
(advisory board) *Journal of Contemporary Religion*. Carfax
(advisory board) *Nova Religio*, University of California Press.
(editorial board) *Religion Compass*, Section "New Religions".
<http://www.blackwell-compass.com/subject/religion/>

M. Pasi

(book review editor) *Aries: Journal for the Study of Western Esotericism*, Leiden /
Boston: Brill.
(editorial board) *Politica Hermetica*. Lausanne: L'Age d'Homme
(editorial board) *The Pomegranate: The International Journal of Pagan Studies*.

C. K. M. von Stuckrad

(editor, with H.G. Kippenberg) *Journal of Religion in Europe*. Leiden: Brill.



(editor, Gustavo Benavides) *Religion and Society*. Berlin & New York: Walter de Gruyter.

(editor, with Steven Engler, Richard King and Gerard Wiegers) *Numen Book Series (Studies in the History of Religions)*. Leiden: Brill.

(editor, with Gary Trompf & Iain Gardner) *Gnostica Series*. London: Equinox Publ.

6. Other

The new GHF website, built by Webspaces Design, was put online early in 2007 and is working to full satisfaction.