



FACULTEIT DER GEESTESWETENSCHAPPEN
Afdeling Kunst-, Religie- en Cultuurwetenschappen

**HISTORY OF HERMETIC PHILOSOPHY
AND RELATED CURRENTS**

REPORT 2009



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1. Introduction

The year 2009 one was marked by several transitions. On August 28, GHF celebrated its 10-year anniversary with a successful one-day conference and an anniversary volume; von Stuckrad accepted a full professorship at the University of Groningen and was succeeded by Dr. Peter Forshaw; and Hanegraaff was given the opportunity of a sabbatical during the first semester of the academic year 2009-2010. In this period, his teaching tasks in the bachelor program were taken over by Dr. Hereward Tilton.

2. Personnel

During the spring of 2009, von Stuckrad announced that he had been approached by the University of Groningen about a vacancy for the position of full professor in the study of religion, and had accepted. His new position took effect as of 1 September 2009.

The vacancy for an “Universitair Docent” Western Esotericism in the Early Modern period was announced by the usual channels, and a committee was formed (Prof.Dr. W.J. Hanegraaff [chair], Prof.Dr. J.N. Bremmer [GHF foundation], Dr. M. Pasi [GHF], P. Koopman [ICG], S. van Rossem [student member]). Four international candidates were invited for a personal interview. The committee decided unanimously and with enthusiasm to appoint Dr. P.J. Forshaw, who accepted the appointment and joined the staff of GHF on 1 September 2010.

Peter J. Forshaw's research focuses on the confluence of learned magic, science and religion in early modern Europe. He researched his doctorate in Intellectual History at Birkbeck, University of London, investigating the theosophy, alchemy, magic, and Christian Cabala of Heinrich Khunrath (1560-1609), with a particular consideration of the series of engravings in the *Amphitheatrum Sapientiae Aeternae* (1609). Following this, he was awarded a British Academy Postdoctoral Fellowship for research into the History of Ritual Magic in the Middle Ages and Renaissance. He held fellowships at the universities of Strathclyde and Cambridge, where he worked on projects related to alchemy and astrology. He is elected council member and webmaster of the SRS (Society for Renaissance Studies), SHAC (Society for the History of Alchemy and Chemistry) and ESSWE (European Society for the Study of



Western Esotericism). He is currently preparing a monograph, *The Mage's Images: Occult Theosophy in Heinrich Khunrath's Early Modern Oratory and Laboratory*, for Brill's Studies in Intellectual History and a translation of Khunrath's *The Amphitheatre of Eternal Wisdom* (1609) for Brill's Aries Book Series.

2. Teaching: Program and Levels of Participation

2nd semester 2008-2009

Bachelor

Hermetica II: Westerse Esoterie in de Oudheid en de Middeleeuwen (K. von Stuckrad, J. Pijnenburg). 15 students

Hermetica IV: Westerse Esoterie sinds de Verlichting (M. Pasi). 12 students

Master

Occult Trajectories I: The Esoteric in Modern and Contemporary Art (M. Pasi, T.M. Bauduin), 8 students

Other teaching

Religious Pluralism in Europe (K. von Stuckrad, R. Pauls). 10 students

BA Honoursmodule: KRC Honoursmodule 'Religie Verbeeld/t' (2008-2009). 6 students

1nd semester 2009-2010

Bachelor

Hermetica I: Inleiding Westerse esoterie (M. Pasi, H. Tilton). 60 students

Hermetica III: Westerse esoterie in de vroeg-moderne periode (H. Tilton). 14 students



Master

Contested Knowledge II: Paganism, Images and Christian Identities (P.J. Forshaw). 8 students

Renaissance Esotericism II (P.J. Forshaw). 7 students

Other teaching

Core Module Methods and Theory in the Study of Religion (M. Pasi, coord.). 4 students

Core Module Polemics and Politics of Religious Identity (P.J. Forshaw, G. Wiegers). 4 students.

4. Research

4.1. Research Program

The research program *Western Esotericism: Continuities and Discontinuities* has continued as before. For descriptions of the individual research projects see Report 2006. The individual project(s) of Forshaw will be formulated as part of a revision of the general research program planned for 2010.

4.2. Research Output.

Egil Aspren

“På epleslang i kunnskapens tre: En kritisk drøfting av teori i nyere esoterismeforskning,” *Din: Tidsskrift for religion og kultur* 2-3 (2009), 5-27.

“Parapsykologiens historie,” *Humanist* 2 (2009), 4-27.

“Har vitenskapen glemt det overnaturlige? Et vitenskapshistorisk perspektiv på ‘åndsdebatten’,” *Skepsis*, online: <http://skepsis.no/?p=660> (2009)



“Sub rosa: Om koder, konspirasjoner og en som ikke skrev Shakespeare,” *Skepsis*, online:
<http://skepsis.no/?p=865> (2009)

Tessel M. Bauduin

Review of Exhibition *Heilig Vuur, De Witte Raaf* 23: 137 (2009), 9-10.

Peter J. Forshaw

“Astrology, Ritual and Revolution in the Works of Tommaso Campanella (1568-1639),”
in: Andrea Brady and Emily Butterworth (eds.), *The Uses of the Future in Early
Modern Europe*, New York & Oxford: Routledge (2009), 181-197.

Review of Bruce T. Moran, *Andreas Libavius and the Transformation of Alchemy:
Separating Chemical Cultures with Polemical Fire*, *Isis* 100:1 (2009), 394-395.

Review of Bruce T. Moran, *Distilling Knowledge: Alchemy, Chemistry, and the Scientific
Revolution*, *Magic, Ritual and Witchcraft* 4:1 (2009), 123-124.

Wouter J. Hanegraaff

Ed. with Joyce Pijnenburg, *Hermes in the Academy: Ten Years' Study of Western Esotericism
at the University of Amsterdam*, Amsterdam University Press: Amsterdam 2009. 163
pp.

“Better than Magic: Cornelius Agrippa and Lazzarellian Hermetism,” *Magic, Ritual &
Witchcraft* 4:1 (2009), 1-25.

“Swedenborg en de andere Kant: Over de Droom van de Rede en de geest(en) van de
Verlichting,” *Mededelingen van de Koninklijke Nederlandse Academie van
Wetenschappen* 72:3 (2009). 21 pp.

“Ten Years of Studying and Teaching Western Esotericism,” in: Wouter J. Hanegraaff &
Joyce Pijnenburg (eds.), *Hermes in the Academy: Ten Years' Study of Western
Esotericism at the University of Amsterdam*, Amsterdam: Amsterdam University
Press 2009, 17-29.



“The Pagan Who Came from the East: George Gemistos Plethon and Platonic Orientalism,” in: W.J. Hanegraaff & J. Pijnenburg (eds.), *Hermes in the Academy: Ten Years’ Study of Western Esotericism at the University of Amsterdam*, Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press 2009, 33-49.

“The Seminal Essence of Divinity: Swedenborg’s Understanding of Jesus Christ,” in: Olav Hammer (eds.), *Alternative Christs*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 2009, 131-149.

“New Age Religion,” in: Linda Woodhead, Hiroko Kawanami & Christopher Partridge (eds.), *Religions in the Modern World: Traditions and Transformations*, 2nd ed., Routledge: London / New York 2009, 339-356 (repr.)

Review of Jean-Pierre Brach & Jérôme Rousse-Lacordaire (eds.), *Études d’histoire de l’ésotérisme*, *Aries* 9:2 (2009), 290-292.

Marco Pasi

“The Modernity of Occultism: Reflections on Some Crucial Aspects,” in: W.J. Hanegraaff and J. Pijnenburg (eds.): *Hermes in the Academy: Ten Years’ Study of Western Esotericism at the University of Amsterdam*, Amsterdam University Press: Amsterdam 2009, 59-74.

“In esclusiva per Secretum le *Theses de magia* (I), *Secretum*,” *Scienze saperi forme di cultura* 37 (2009). online at: <http://www.secretum-online.it>

“In esclusiva per Secretum le *Theses de magia* (II), *Secretum*.” *Scienze saperi forme di cultura* 38 (2009). online at: <http://www.secretum-online.it>

“I’ve heard it told that once upon a time:’ The Mysterious Photograph of a Chess Game that never happened,” in: *Um Fernando Pessoa*, online at: <http://files.dropbox.com>. Introduction at: <http://umfernandopessoa.blogspot.com>

“Ouvi contar que outrora:’ A misteriosa fotografia de um jogo de xadrez que nunca aconteceu,” in: *Um Fernando Pessoa*, online at: <http://files.dropbox.com>. Introduction at: <http://umfernandopessoa.blogspot.com>

Review of Stéphane François, *Le nazisme révisité: l’occultisme contre l’histoire*, *Politica Hermetica* 23 (2009), 141-143.



Joyce Pijnenburg

Ed. with Wouter J. Hanegraaff, *Hermes in the Academy: Ten Years' Study of Western Esotericism at the University of Amsterdam*, Amsterdam University Press: Amsterdam 2009. 163 pp.

“Hermes and his Students in Amsterdam,” in: W.J. Hanegraaff & J. Pijnenburg (eds.), *Hermes in the Academy: 10 Years' Study of Western Esotericism at the University of Amsterdam*, Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press 2009, 149-156.

Kocku von Stuckrad

“*Astrologia Hermetica: Astrology, Western Culture, and the Academy*,” in: W.J. Hanegraaff & J. Pijnenburg (red.): *Hermes in the Academy: Ten Years' Study of Western Esotericism at the University of Amsterdam*, Amsterdam University Press: Amsterdam 2009, 51-58.

“Introduction: In Praise of Questions,” in: Jacqueline Braak & Deirdre Malone (eds.), *Van Discussie tot Beleving: Religiestudies aan de UvA*, Amsterdam: Ars Notoria/Religiestudies 2009, viii-xii.

Review of Reimund Leicht, *Astrologumena Judaica: Untersuchungen zur Geschichte der astrologischen Literatur der Juden*, *Aries* 9:1 (2009), 117-119.

Review of Thomas Werner, *Den Irrtum liquidieren: Bücherverbrennungen im Mittelalter*, *Journal of Religion in Europe* 2:1 (2009), 61-62.

Osvald Vasicek

“Heterology in Amsterdam: The Academy takes the Other out to Dinner,” in: W.J. Hanegraaff & J. Pijnenburg (eds.): *Hermes in the Academy: Ten Years' Study of Western Esotericism at the University of Amsterdam*, Amsterdam University Press: Amsterdam 2009, 109-110.

5. Further Activities



5.1. Conference Organization

Tessel Bauduin

Organization of Anniversary Conference *Hermes in the Academy*, Chair History of Hermetic Philosophy and Related Currents, Amsterdam, 28.08.2009.

Peter J. Forshaw

(with Jennifer Rampling), Organization of Conference, *John Dee Quatercentenary*, Cambridge, 21-22.09.2009.

Marco Pasi

Organization of panel 'The presence of esoteric currents and ideas in Italy from the 18th century to our days', for the EASR conference *Religion in the History of European Culture*, University of Messina, 14-17.09.2009.

5.2. Lectures and Conference Participation

Egil Asprem

"Utopia and the Paranormal: Degeneration and Progress in the Parapsychology of William McDougall and J. B. Rhine," 3rd conference of the International Society for the Study of Religion, Nature, and Culture (ISSRNC), Amsterdam, the Netherlands, 23.07.2009.

"Unity of Knowledge? Reflections on the Relation between Science and Esotericism in the Modern Period," Conference: annual meeting of the American Academy of Religion, Montréal, Canada, 31.10.2009.

Tessel M. Bauduin



“Les secrets de l’art magique surréaliste: Elite Knowledge and the Avant-Garde in French Surrealism, 1920s and ‘30s,” Cambridge Centre for Western Esotericism Annual Conference *The Lure of Secrecy: Western Esotericism and the Arts*, Cambridge, United Kingdom, 10.10.2009.

Peter J. Forshaw

“Paracelsian Apocalypse: Alchemy and Prophecy in Early Modern Central Europe,” Conference *Apocalypticism, Millenarianism, and Prophecy: Eschatological Expectations between East-Central and Western Europe, 1560-1670*, Prague, 15.01.2009.

“Astronomia Inferior et Superior: Some Medieval and Renaissance Instances of the Conjunction of Alchemy and Astrology,” Conference *Cosmologies: The Sophia Centre Annual Conference*, Bath, 06.06.2009.

“Isaac Newton and Alchemy,” Conference *Maths, the Universe and Everything: Inside the Mind of Isaac Newton*, The Royal Society, London, 06.10.2009.

“From Jewish Mysticism to Christian Cabala,” *EXESESOS Study Conference*, Exeter, 17.10.2009.

“Heinrich Cornelius Agrippa: Renaissance Magus and Cabalist,” *EXESESOS Study Conference*, Exeter, 18.10.2009.

Wouter J. Hanegraaff

“Monotheïsme en idolatrie,” Stichting BAK (Basis voor Actuele Kunst), Utrecht, 01.03.2009.

“Politics and the Study of Western Esotericism. President’s Address,” 2nd Biannual Conference of the European Society for the Study of Western Esotericism (ESSWE), Strasbourg, 02.07.2009.



“Ten Years of Studying and Teaching Western Esotericism,” 10-year Anniversary Seminar of the chair History of Hermetic Philosophy and Related Currents, University of Amsterdam, 28.08.2009.

Marco Pasi

“Painting Dead Souls: New Discoveries on Aleister Crowley and Art,” Invited lecture, Institut für Grenzgebiete der Psychologie und Psychohygiene, Freiburg, 28.01.2009.

“Il risveglio occultista e neopagano tra la fine dell’Ottocento e gli inizi del Novecento nell’area anglosassone,” Conference *Diavoli goffi con bizzarre streghe: Un convegno di studi tra iconografia e antropologia*, Collegio Ghislieri, University of Pavia, 07.02.2009.

“La presenza della Società Teosofica e della Società Antroposofica in Italia,” EASR conference *Religion in the History of European Culture*, University of Messina, 15.09.2009.

“Esotérisme, modernité, politique: réflexions sur quelques aspects controversés,” Invited lecture, University of Lausanne, 14.12.2009.

“In a Glass Darkly: Art and Occultism,” Lecture in the framework of the exhibition “Heilig Vuur” for the Stedelijk Museum, Nieuwe Kerk, Amsterdam, 21.02.2009.

Presentation of the films *Inauguration of the Pleasure Dome* by Kenneth Anger and *Morning of the Magicians* by Joachim Koester, BAK Basis voor Actuele Kunst, Utrecht, 01.03.2009.

“Anger without Tears: The occult films of Kenneth Anger,” Lectures at the Cinemateca Portuguesa, Lisbon, and Fundação Serralves, Oporto, 04-05.05.2009.

“The World of Magic in Contemporary Europe,” Lecture in the framework of the series *Magie in de 21e eeuw*, CREA, Amsterdam, 26.10.2009.

Joyce Pijnenburg

“Images in Giordano Bruno’s German period work,” Conference: *American Academy of Religion, Annual Meeting*, Chicago, 01.11.2009.



“Valens Acidalius and Janus Gruterus as Possible Students of Giordano Bruno,”
Conference *European Society for the Study of Western Esotericism*, Strasbourg,
04.07.2009.

Kocku von Stuckrad

“Abwehr und Verlangen: Die Genese des modernen westlichen Schamanismus,”
Workshop on Modern Western Shamanism, Cologne, Germany, 14.02.2009.

“Astrologie als onderdeel van de westerse cultuurgeschiedenis,” Lecture for the
“Illustere School”, University of Amsterdam, The Netherlands, 05.03.2009.

“Living Words: Kabbalistic Ontologies of Language,” Conference of the research program
The Future of the Religious Past, dedicated to “Words”, Groningen, The
Netherlands, 15.06.2009.

“Imaginary Landscapes and Shamanic Journeys: Hermann Hesse and Mircea Eliade on
the Borders of Literature, Religion, and Intellectual Escapism,” 2nd International
Conference of the European Society for the Study of Esotericism, Strassburg,
France, 03.07.2009.

5.3. Editorial Activities

Wouter 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) *Religion Compass*, Section “New Religions”.

<http://www.blackwell-compass.com/subject/religion/>

(advisory board) *Esoterica* <http://www.esoteric.msu.edu>

(advisory board) *Journal of Contemporary Religion*. Carfax

(advisory board) *Nova Religio*, University of California Press.

(advisory board) (2008). *Gnostica Series*. London: Equinox Publ.



Peter J. Forshaw

(book review editor) *Intellectual History Review*. Routledge.

(editorial board) *Ambix: Journal of the Society for the History of Alchemy and Chemistry*.
London/Boston: Maney.

Marco Pasi

(book review editor) *Aries: Journal for the Study of Western Esotericism*.

(editorial board) *Politica Hermetica*.

(editorial board) *The Pomegranate: The International Journal of Pagan Studies*.

Kocku von Stuckrad

(editor) *Journal of Religion in Europe*. Leiden and Boston: Brill.

(editor) *Numen Book Series (Studies in the History of Religions)*. Leiden and Boston: Brill.

(editor) *Texts and Sources in the History of Religions*. Leiden and Boston: Brill.

(editor) *Religion and Society*. Berlin and New York: Walter de Gruyter.

(editor) *Gnostica Series*. London: Equinox Publ.

(editorial board) *The Pomegranate: The International Journal of Pagan Studies*. London:
Equinox.

(editorial board) *Journal for the Study of Religion, Nature and Culture*. London: Equinox.