



FACULTEIT DER GEESTESWETENSCHAPPEN
Afdeling Geschiedenis, Europese Studies & Religiestudies

**HISTORY OF HERMETIC PHILOSOPHY
AND RELATED CURRENTS**

REPORT 2014



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1. Introduction

For HHP this has been a somewhat unusual year due to the temporary absence of several permanent or temporary staff members. Marco Pasi spent the first semester of the academic year 2014-2015 (September-December) at the Eidgenössische Technische Hochschule (Swiss Federal Institute of Technology), Zürich, Switzerland, where he held the prestigious temporary De Sanctis Professorship for Italian Literature and Culture. By commuting between Zürich and Amsterdam he was able to combine this with his normal teaching duties, next to his regular research activities. During the same period, Peter Forshaw has been enjoying a research leave that will allow him to finish two major publications: his monograph on Heinrich Khunrath and his annotated translation of Khunrath's famous *Amphitheatrum Sapientiae Aeternae*. The manuscripts of both books will be finished in July 2015. Finally, J. Christian Greer has spent the semester doing research for his dissertation in the Timothy Leary Archives at the New York Public Library. During the First Semester, Peter Forshaw's Bachelor module was taken over by Mike Zuber, and his Master module by Mike Zuber and Wouter Hanegraaff, who also taught the Research Master module "Polemics and Politics of Religious Identity" with Prof.Dr. Gerard Wiegers.

2. Personnel

There have been no personnel changes.

3. Teaching: Program and Levels of Participation

1st semester 2013-2104, block 3

Master

Western Esotericism and Its Scholars (W.J. Hanegraaff), 9 students

2nd semester 2013-2014, block 1-2



Bachelor

Hermetica II: Westerse Esoterie in de Oudheid en de Middeleeuwen (D. Waarsenburg). 10 students

Hermetica IV: Westerse Esoterie sinds de Verlichting (M. Pasi). 13 students

Master

Occult Trajectories II: Modern Western Esotericism and Politics (M. Pasi, J.C. Greer), 20 students

1st semester 2014-2015, block 1-2

Bachelor

Westerse Esoterie en Religieus Pluralisme (W.J. Hanegraaff). 29 students

Westerse esoterie in de vroeg-moderne periode (M.A. Zuber). 7 students

Master

Contested Knowledge I: Gnosis and Alterations of Consciousness (W.J. Hanegraaff). 20 students

Renaissance Esotericism I: Alchemy between Science and Religion (W.J. Hanegraaff, M.A. Zuber). 12 students

Other teaching

Master

Core Module Methods and Theory in the Study of Religion (M. Pasi). 10 students

Core Module Polemics and Politics of Religious Identity (W.J. Hanegraaff, G.A. Wiegers). 10 students.



4. Research

4.1. Research Program

No new projects were started (for the current projects, see description in previous Annual Reports).

4.2. Research Output.

Peter J. Forshaw

“The Genesis of Christian Cabala: Early Modern Speculations on the Work of Creation,” in: Susanne Scholz & Caroline Vander Stichele (eds), *Hidden Truths from Eden: Esoteric Readings of Genesis 1-3*, Atlanta: Semeia Studies, 2014, 121-144.

“The Occult Middle Ages,” in: Christopher Partridge (ed.), *The Occult World*, London: Routledge 2014, 34-48.

“Kabbalah,” in: Christopher Partridge (ed.), *The Occult World*, London: Routledge 2014, 541-551.

“*Concealed Mysteries and Unheard-of-Curiosities: Jacques Gaffarel’s Defence of Celestial Writing and Divine Kabbalah*,” in: Hiro Hirai (ed.), *Jacques Gaffarel: Between Magic and Science*, Bruniana & Campanelliana Supplementi, XXXIX. Studi, 17, Pisa: Fabrizio Serra Editore, 2014, 13-26.

“*Geheime Figuren: Sophia*,” in: José Bouman & Cis van Heertum (eds.), *Divine Wisdom - Divine Nature: The Message of the Rosicrucian Manifestoes in the Visual Language of the Seventeenth Century*, Amsterdam: In de Pelikaan, 2014, 154-157.

“De mens als geestelijk wezen- Gezien vanuit een hermetisch perspectief”/“Man as a Spiritual Being - Seen from a ‘Hermetic’ perspective,” in: *Symposion: De mens als geestelijk wezen. Tweektalig symposion over de hermetische visie 1600-2014*, Haarlem: Rozekruis Pers, 2014, 10-31/70-83.

J. Christian Greer

“Hakim Bey,” in: Christopher Partridge (ed.), *The Occult World*, London: Routledge 2014, 424-426.

Review of Carole M. Cusack’s *Invented Religions: Imagination, Fiction and Faith, Correspondences 2.1* (2014), 109–114.

Wouter J. Hanegraaff



“Innig vermählt mit den Göttern der Natur: Der Graf von Gabalis und die Entzauberung der Welt,” Preface to: Abbé de Villars (Henri de Montfaucon de Villars), *Der Graf von Gabalis: Gespräche über die verborgenen Wissenschaften. Ein Rosenkreuzer-Roman*, Hamburg: Aurinia Verlag 2014, 7-19.

“A Visual World: Leonora Carrington and the Occult,” *Abraxas: International Journal of Esoteric Studies* 6 (2014), 101-112.

“Heinrich Cornelius Agrippa,” in: Christopher Partridge (ed.), *The Occult World*, London: Routledge 2014, 91-98.

“Jacob Boehme and Christian Theosophy,” in: Christopher Partridge (ed.), *The Occult World*, London: Routledge 2014, 119-127.

Review of Bernd-Christian Otto, *Magie: Rezeptions- und diskursgeschichtliche Analysen von der Antike bis zur Neuzeit*, *Aries* 14 (2014), 114-120.

Marco Pasi

Aleister Crowley and the Temptation of Politics, Durham: Acumen 2014, xiii + 253.

“Hilma af Klint, el esoterismo occidental y el problema de la creatividad artística moderna,” *Boletín de Arte* 35 (2014), 37-53.

“Introduction,” in: José Bouman, Reinold Fäth & Cis van Heertum (eds.), *Beauty as the Imprint of the Cosmos: An Exhibition of Graphic Art and Printed Books*, Amsterdam: In de Pelikaan 2014, 8-11. (Dutch version: “Inleiding”, in: id., *Schoonheid als de afdruk van de kosmos. Tentoonstelling van tekeningen, grafische kunst en drukken*, Amsterdam: In de Pelikaan 2014, 8-11).

“The Challenge of the Academic Soul: Promises and Risks in the Study of Western Esotericism,” *Theosofia* 115:1 (March 2014), 18-25 (Text in English and Dutch).

“Vidya Gastaldon,” in: *L'illusione della luce / The Illusion of Light / L'illusion des lumières*, catalogue of the exhibition at Palazzo Grassi (Venice), Milan: Electa 2014, 122-125 (Text in Italian, English and French).

Mike A. Zuber

“Copernican Cosmotheism: Johann Jacob Zimmermann and the Mystical Light,” *Aries* 14:2 (2014), 215-45.

“Between Alchemy and Pietism: Wilhelm Christoph Kriegsman's Philological Quest for Ancient Wisdom,” *Correspondences* 2:1 (2014), 67-104.



Review of Daniel Stolzenberg, *Egyptian Oedipus: Athanasius Kircher and the Secrets of Antiquity*, *Aries* 14:1 (2014), 121–124.

5. Public Activities

Peter J. Forshaw

Lectures

“Speaking Pictures & Seeing Words,” *Illustere School Workshop*, Amsterdam, 7 February 2014.

“A Theo-Alchemical Androgyne: The Union of Alchemy and Religion,” Lecture at International Conference *Scientiae 2014: Disciplines of Knowing in the Early Modern World*, Vienna (Austria), 23-25 April, 2014.

“*Opus Visionis*: The Magician in Search of Truth,” Invited Lecture at Conference *Scripted Forms of Magic Knowledge: Grimoires in the Matrix of Western Cultures*, Jerusalem (Israel), 8-11 June, 2014.

“Transmissions and Transmutations of Alchemical Texts,” Keynote Lecture at *SHAC Postgraduate Workshop: Geographies of Alchemy and Chemistry*, Amsterdam, October 24, 2014.

“John Dee and the Stars (Astrology, Magic, and Alchemy),” Invited Lecture at Colloquium *The Alchemist and the Royal Typographer: John Dee and Willem Sylvius*, Antwerpen (Belgium), 26 October, 2014.

“Alchemy in the Context of Boehme’s Work,” Invited Lecture at Conference *Jacob Boehme and His World*, Görlitz (Germany), 4-6 July, 2014.

“Kabala, Magia, Alchymia Coniugendae: Necessary Combinations in Heinrich Khunrath’s Theosophy,” Invited Lecture at Conference *Um 1600 Konstellationen zwischen Schulmetaphysik, Konfessionalisierung und hermetischer Spekulation*, Munich (Germany), 19-20 November, 2014.

Workshop Organization

ESSWE Thesis Workshop: “Alterations of Consciousness,” Amsterdam, May 10, 2014.

Outreach

DVD Participation: *Reise ins Unerwartete: Fama Fraternitatis. Rosenkreuzer-Manifeste 1614-2014. Eine Spurensuche*. Ein Film von Wolfgang Jung und Reinhard Eichelbeck. Delfin Film, 2014.

Online Interview with Esther Ritman: Infinite Fire Interview Series: Conference “Around 1600.”



J. Christian Greer

Lectures

- “Beneath the Underground: The Dissemination of The Church of The SubGenius Through the ‘Marginal Press’,” *INFORM 30th Anniversary Conference*, London School of Economics, London (United Kingdom), 31 January – 2 February, 2014.
- “How I Learned to Stop Worrying and Love the Illuminati: Ben Stewart's ‘Esoteric Agenda’ and American Conspiracy Culture,” Humboldt State University, Humboldt CA. (USA), 21 April, 2013.
- “Illustrating Californian Occultism: The Occult Oeuvre of Jay Kinney,” Conference on *Religion in California*, University of California, Berkeley (USA), 24-25 April, 2014
- “Underground Publishing From 1956-1991: The Alternative Press, Comix, and Zines,” *Zine Camp, WORM*, Rotterdam, 24 May, 2014.
- “Anatomy of a Paper Tiger: Chaos Magick Zines as Esoteric Practice,” *Fifth International Conference of the Association for the Study of Esotericism*, Colgate University, Hamilton (USA), 23 July, 2014.
- “How to Ruin your Life with Consciousness Hacking: Experimenting with Negative Epistemology,” *Consciousness Hacking NYC*, The New School University, New York City (USA), 29 October, 2014.

Wouter J. Hanegraaff

Lectures

- “Anti-Eclectic Historiography: Western Esotericism and the History of the Humanities,” Lecture at the *Center for History of Humanities and Science*, University of Amsterdam, 10 March, 2014.
- “How Hermetic was Renaissance Hermetism?,” Invited Public Lecture, Warburg Institute, London (United Kingdom), 19 March, 2014.
- “Gnosis and Alterations of Consciousness,” ESSWE Thesis Workshop, Amsterdam, 10 May, 2014.
- “Open Access to the Absolute: Hermetic Gnosis and the Concept of Religion,” Engelsberg Seminar *Religion*, Ax:son Johnson Foundation, Avesta Manor (Sweden), 12-14 June, 2014.



“The Transformation of Desire in Machen’s and Waite’s *House of the Hidden Light*”, *Fifth International Conference of the Association for the Study of Esotericism*, Colgate University, New York (USA), 19-22 June, 2014.

“Final Conclusions”, Invited presentation at Conference *Jacob Böhme and His World*, Görlitz (Germany), 4-6 July, 2014.

“The Historical Imagination,” *The Imaginal Symposium*, Esalen Institute (USA), 19-24 October, 2014.

Marco Pasi

Lectures

“L’inspiration gênante: L’art à l’épreuve des esprits,” Invited lecture for the Ecole Supérieure d’Art Villa Arson, Nice (France), 29 January.

“Disturbing Inspiration: An Inquiry into Radical Spirits and Their Creative Work,” Invited lecture for the *Radical Enlightenment Symposium*, Adelaide (Australia), 1 March, 2014.

“Western Esotericism and Artistic Creativity: Searching for a New Interpretive Model,” Keynote lecture at the conference *Visions of Enchantment: Occultism, Spirituality and Visual Culture*, University of Cambridge (United Kingdom), 18 March, 2014.

“The Challenge of the Academic Soul: Promises and Risks in the Study of Western Esotericism,” Invited lecture for symposium *De uitdaging van de ziel: Waarheid, weten en wijsheid*, Theosofische Vereniging in Nederland, Amsterdam, 29 March, 2014.

“Viri loquentes perversa: Esoteric Assumptions in the Repression of Catholic Modernism,” Paper for the annual congress of the *European Association for the Study of Religion* (EASR), University of Groningen, 13 May, 2014.

“Esoteric Experiences and Critical Ethnocentrism: Losses and Gains in the Study of Western Esotericism,” Invited lecture for the Engelsberg Seminar *Religion*, Axel and Margaret Ax:son Johnson Foundation, Avesta Manor (Sweden), 14 June, 2014.

“The Curious Case of Georgiana Houghton’s Spirits”. Invited lecture for the *I:MAGE* conference at the Warburg Institute, London (United Kingdom), 25 October, 2014.

“Il movimento teosofico nella cultura italiana,” Invited lecture for the *Società Dante Alighieri* in Zurich (Switzerland), 6 November, 2014.



Interviews

Interview with Luca Bernasconi: "Alla ricerca dello spirituale contemporaneo, tra religione e scienza. A colloquio con Marco Pasi, professore di storia della filosofia ermetica," *Corriere degli Italiani*, 1 Oct. 2014, 11.

Interview with Elio Ferraris, "La letteratura esoterica tra segreto e disvelamento," *La Civetta della Liguria d'Occidente: Bimestrale glocal del Circolo degli Inquieti* XIX:5 (Oct.-Nov. 2014), 3-4.

Webinars

Three webinars for the "Infinite Fire" series, produced by the Bibliotheca Philosophica Hermetica (Ritman Library) in collaboration with the HHP centre, Amsterdam, 2014:
Infinite Fire VII: "Gustav Meyrink and His Esoteric Novels"
Infinite Fire VIII: "The Theosophical Movement" (in two parts)
Infinite Fire IX: "Arthur Edward Waite"

Mike A. Zuber

Lectures

"God's Extraordinary Messengers': Comets, New Prophets and Johann Jacob Zimmermann's Millenarianism," Paper presented at *Revisiting Early Modern Prophecies (c. 1500-c. 1815)*, Goldsmiths, University of London (United Kingdom), 26-28 June, 2014.

"Between Boehme and Goethe: Georg von Welling's Magic, Alchemy and Theosophy," Invited lecture at conference *Jacob Böhme and His World*, Oberlausitzische Bibliothek der Wissenschaften, Görlitz (Germany), 4-6 July, 2014.

Conference organization.

"Geographies of Alchemy and Chemistry: 5th SHAC Postgraduate Workshop." University of Amsterdam, 24 October, 2014 (In collaboration with Judith Mawer)

6. Editorial Activities

Peter J. Forshaw

(editor in chief) *Aries: Journal for the Study of Western Esotericism*. Leiden/Boston: Brill
(editorial board) *Ambix: Journal of the Society for the History of Alchemy and Chemistry*. London: Maney
(editorial board) *Universal Reform: Studies in Intellectual History, 1550-1700*, Aldershot: Ashgate



(editorial board) *Apocalypticism: Cross-Disciplinary Explorations*, Bern: Peter Lang
(editorial board) *Oxford Studies in Western Esotericism*, Oxford: Oxford University Press
(editorial board) *Correspondences: Online Journal for the Academic Study of Western Esotericism*
(editorial board) *História Revista*
(advisory board) *Magic, Ritual, & Witchcraft*, Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press

Wouter J. Hanegraaff

(editorial board) *Religion*. Elsevier.
(editorial board) *Aries: Journal for the Study of Western Esotericism*. Leiden / Boston: Brill.
(editorial board) *Aries Book Series: Texts and Studies in Western Esotericism*. Leiden / Boston: Brill.
(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) (2008). *Gnostica Series*. London: Equinox Publ.

Marco Pasi

(editor) *Aries Book Series: Texts and Studies in Western Esotericism*. Leiden / Boston: Brill.
(editorial board) *Aries: Journal for the Study of Western Esotericism*. Leiden / Boston: Brill.
(editorial board) *Politica Hermetica*.
(editorial board) *The Pomegranate: The International Journal of Pagan Studies*.
(editorial board) *International Journal for the Study of New Religions*.
(editorial board) *Pessoa Plural. An International Journal of Pessoa Studies*.