

The Newsletter of the  
European Society for  
the Study of Western  
Esotericism

# ESSWE Newsletter

Spring 2012  
Volume 3, number 1

## Words from the editor

—Per Faxneld



### *In this Newsletter*

- *Words from the editor (p. 1)*
- *Ph.D. Projects of ESSWE members (pp. 2–3)*
- *Conference report: INASWE 2 (pp. 4–6)*
- *Scholar interviews (pp.7–9 )*
- *News from the three major centres for the study of Western esotericism (pp. 9–12)*

Welcome to the spring 2012 Newsletter. Aside from the features present in every issue (Ph.D. project presentations and scholar interviews), we also have a report from the second INASWE conference and news from the three major centres for the scholarly study of Western esotericism. The latter has a new format, which will hopefully make it easier to get an overview of what is going on.

I expect to see many of you readers at the Contemporary Esotericism conference in Stockholm this August, and hope that you will take the opportunity to approach me with any ideas that you might have for improving the Newsletter. For those of you not being present to discuss such matters with me over coffee or beer in the “Venice of Scandinavia”, you are of course equally welcome to contact me via e-mail ([per.faxneld@rel.su.se](mailto:per.faxneld@rel.su.se)). ♦

## Ph.D. projects of ESSWE members

### A Babylonian Mage in 19<sup>th</sup> Century Paris: The Mythopoeia of Joséphin Péladan (1858-1918)

–Sasha Chaitow, University of Essex, UK.



The core of my thesis explores the notion of mythic history and mythopoeia in relation to Illuminism in general, and the work of Joséphin Péladan (1858-1918) in particular. Péladan has been hard-done-by in most treatments of his work, which have either dismissed its esoteric content altogether, or have focused far more on his eccentricities than an objective exploration of his writings. I had initially intended to re-examine his work from the perspective of the history of Western esotericism, but soon realised that a rigid historical approach did not allow for the exploration of the actual content and implications of Péladan's œuvre, especially with regard to the philosophy of history which forms its core. Hence, my central argument identifies Illuminist notions of mythic history as the basis for Péladan's worldview, and a

process of conscious mythopoeia as his *modus operandi*. This also raises questions about the philosophy of history and the function of myth in relation to the wider field of Western esotericism.

Key influences received by Péladan as a result of his unusual upbringing, include the output of Sinologist-Assyriologist Charles-Hippolyte de Paravey (1787-1871), a regular visitor to Péladan's family home, Antoine Fabre d'Olivet (1767-1825), and Pierre-Simon Ballanche (1776-1847). Drawing on these and other influences, Péladan dedicated both his life and work to the construction of an esoteric-aesthetic philosophy aimed at the spiritual regeneration of society.

I have been able to document the fact that Péladan's eccentric decisions and behaviours, that were also to be his downfall, stemmed from an attempt to live out his esoteric beliefs, following a theory called *kaloprosopia* according to which one should exteriorise and manifest 'the character one claims for oneself'. By Péladan's own admission, his literary offerings were deliberately constructed as a mythopoeia through which he hoped to influence society, while his theoretical writings were designed to play a more exegetical role for the intellectual reader. His novels, styled as an *éthopée* (a rhetorical device designed to offer moral teachings), and populated with quasi-autobiographical, quasi-archetypal, quasi-idealised characters, were designed to transmit his esoteric cosmology and ideology, each forming a variation on a specific theme central to his ideology, indicating a cohesive cosmology and purpose underlying and motivating his entire literary production.

Following the discussion and justification of the interdisciplinary theoretical framework I have chosen to utilise, my thesis then covers the key cultural influences that Péladan received, showing him to be an interesting representative of Romantic and Illuminist thought standing at the cusp of Modernism. The bulk of the thesis is then dedicated to exploring the content of his work in view of these influences, followed by a chapter on his influence on the Symbolist movement, and a conclusion questioning the measure of his success both in terms of his own intentions as far as they can be discerned, and of his broader influence. The notion of mythic history and the practice of mythopoeia as central elements of the brand of Illuminist thought espoused by Péladan is central to my argument throughout.

## Alchemy and Pietism, c. 1610–1760

–Mike A. Zuber, University of Amsterdam, NL (from September 2012).



Due to the movement's very history, Pietism—and especially its radical wing—would seem to have strong ties to alchemical pursuits. If Paracelsus may only count as a distant forefather, the influence of Johann Arndt and Jacob Boehme cannot be questioned. And alongside being the most successful devotional writer of the early-modern period, Arndt was also a Paracelsian alchemist who wrote an interpretation of Heinrich Khunrath's famous engravings. While the Lutheran orthodoxy, represented by Ehregott Daniel Colberg and Friedrich Christian Bücher, came to reject myths of ancient wisdom and pagan influences within Christianity, many Pietists did not join these attacks. Moreover, especially among those inspired by the German tradition of spiritualism, indebted to Valentin Weigel, it was a matter of course that there were unmediated, divine revelations; hence it was only to be assumed that God had revealed himself in one way or another to the pagan sages of old, including the mythical inventor of alchemy, Hermes Trismegistus.

Throughout the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries, there were many Pietists practising, or writing on, alchemy in various ways, and surprisingly many of them have hardly been scrutinized by modern scholarship. A virtually unknown figure, Wilhelm Christoph Kriegsman (d. 1679) wrote extensively on alchemy and other occult sciences while also promoting the Pietist cause as a lay theologian. Johann Georg Gichtel (d. 1710) further developed the spiritual consequences of Boehme's alchemical cosmology and anthropology. And in his quest for the philosopher's stone, Johann Conrad Dippel (d. 1734) found collaborators in Johann Georg Rosenbach (d. 1747)

and Johann Samuel Carl (d. 1757). At the University of Halle, in turn, Carl was a student of the famous G. E. Stahl, whose medical theory has been described as Pietist. In the very same town, at A. H. Francke's Orphanage, Pietists engaged with alchemy at its most practical, producing medication at a large scale from the early eighteenth century. From there, it has been suggested, the Richter brothers passed on their alchemical knowledge to Sincerus Renatus (Samuel Richter, d. after 1722), who provided inspiration for the Order of the Golden and Rosy Cross. Thus, a long and neglected history leads up to the more familiar cases of Friedrich Christoph Oetinger and the young J. W. Goethe's dabbings with alchemy.

Through the cases just mentioned, this PhD project sets out to fill the blanks that separate Khunrath, Arndt and Boehme from Oetinger and Goethe by exploring the intricate relations between alchemy and Pietism. Close attention will be paid to different kinds of alchemical pursuits, ranging from chrysopeitic and spiritual to medical and even industrial. Contrary to the assumption of an alchemy/chemistry dichotomy underlying most previous research, the emphasis will lie on the continuities of different alchemical pursuits. Moreover, while using Pietism as a tentative key term, this study will also investigate its aptness and point to the gradual overlap of, and shared interests among, Pietists, radical Pietists, theosophers and spiritualists more generally.



## Conference Report:

### INASWE Second Annual Conference, University of Haifa, Israel, March 22, 2012.

—Yossi Chajes

A little over a year ago, Boaz Huss, Yuval Harari, and J. H. (Yossi) Chajes joined together to found INASWE – the Israeli Network for the Academic Study of Western Esotericism. The founding conference last spring at Ben Gurion University of the Negev, with its diverse and interdisciplinary program, was a very special event. Wouter Hanegraaff and Mark Sedgwick were special guest participants representing ESSWE, and apparently they were so charming that a stunningly large Israeli contingent found its way last summer to Szeged for the somewhat grander scale ESSWE gathering. Following up on these auspicious beginnings, a second annual conference was held on 22 March 2012 at the University of Haifa. This time, the day was roughly organized around two clusters of topics: Esotericism and Science, and Demonology.

The first morning session featured two speakers who were new to INASWE and the Western esotericism world, so to speak. Reimund Leicht, an expert on medieval astrology based at the Hebrew University, and Yossi Ziegler, whose expertise is in learned medieval physiognomy, each took advantage of the opportunity to rethink the relationship between these disciplines and esotericism. Although it's fair to say that both speakers "pushed back" anachronistic esotericist understandings of the learned, officially sanctioned, and often university-based disciplines they discussed, each reached a nuanced conclusion that clearly benefited from the engagement with the "problem" of esotericism.

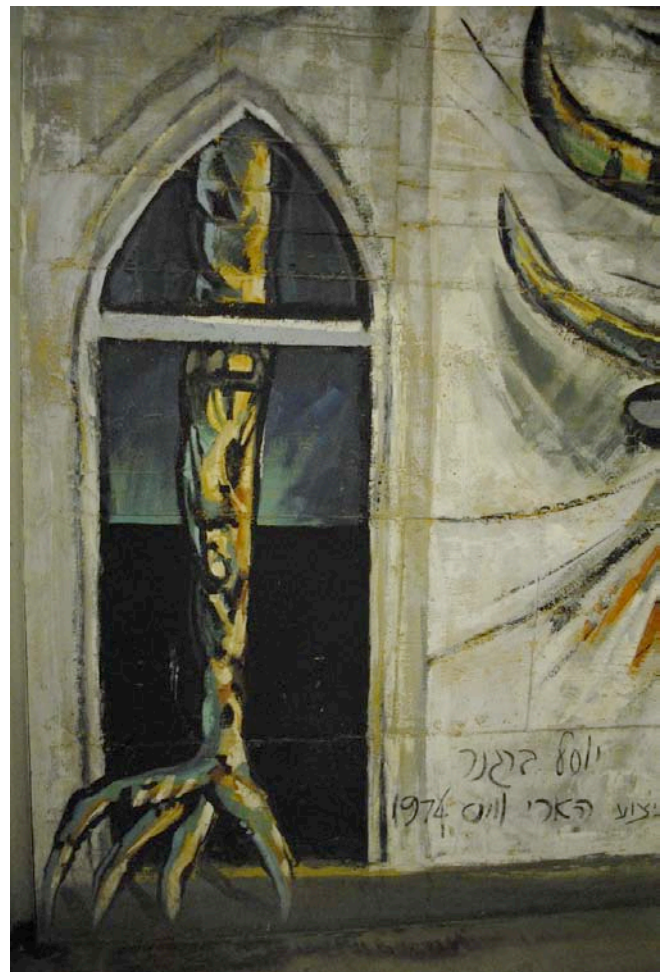
The subsequent morning session featured a special guest from ESSWE's world headquarters, Peter Forshaw. Peter gave an extremely colorful and learned presentation on the intersection of alchemy, kabbalah, and science in the early modern period. The eye-candy continued with a presentation by Yossi Chajes that explored the reasons for the fascination of so many early modern natural philosophers in kabbalah generally, and in Lurianic kabbalah in particular. Leveraging a wealth of graphic materials from his current project on kabbalistic diagramming, he emphasized the conventions of representation shared by astronomical and kabbalistic literature from this period.

The afternoon session was devoted to demonology, past and present. Tami Herzog was to have presented on an early modern controversy concerning the invocation of demons, but she was unable to attend at the last minute. Graciously stepping in for her, Gideon Bohak delivered a fascinating, concise "short history of Jewish demonology." Gidi was followed by a second guest from the ESSWE mothership, Per Faxneld. He gave a presentation that was at once learned and risqué, on the place of Lilith in

modern Satanism and New Age thought, which had the suggestive and apt subtitle, "First Feminist, Patron Saint of Abortions—and Bride of Satan." The session concluded with Yuval Harari's intriguing "field report" describing his journey to make sense of a modern "curse pot" fished out of the Sea of Galilee just decades ago, shortly after its creation.

We ended the conference day with a special guest lecture by Moshe Idel. Moshe shared the remarkable, indeed quite nearly unbelievable, story of a rabbi-kabbalist—and apparently also Freemason—who taught kabbalah to Romanian government ministers in Bucharest during World War II. Finally, allow me to note that our ESSWE visitors—Pete and Per—were also the special guests of the University of Haifa's now annual Contemporary Spiritual Conference, which was held just two days before the INASWE event. Many of the INASWE lectures are now online for your viewing pleasure:

<http://actv.haifa.ac.il/programs/List.aspx?li=125&lang=en-US>

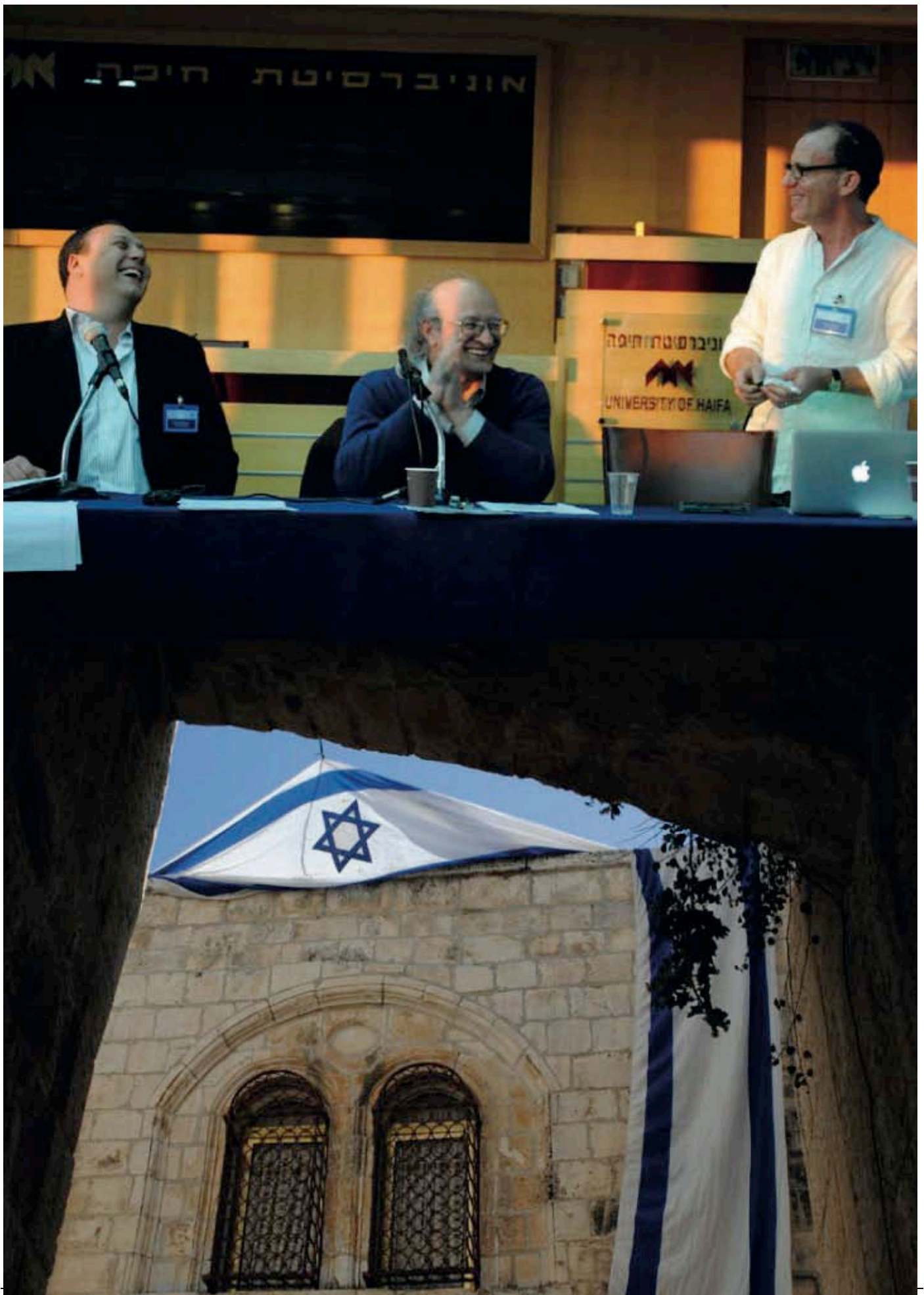


Conference photos on pp. 5–6 by Per Faxneld.









## Scholar interviews

–Per Faxneld

*In every issue of the newsletter a senior and a junior scholar of Western Esotericism are interviewed. They are asked the same questions, and we will be able to partake in both their personal perspectives and insights gleaned from their up-and-coming or nestorial position in the field, respectively.*

**Kocku von Stuckrad,**  
**Professor of Religious Studies,**  
**University of Groningen,**  
**The Netherlands.**



*How did you come to be interested in Western esotericism?*

When I studied Comparative Religion, Philosophy, and Jewish Studies at the Universities of Bonn and Cologne (1991–1995), I was lucky enough to be introduced to themes in Western esotericism, even though the term was not yet established then. Two professors in particular made a strong impression on me: Karl Hoheisel gave classes on topics such as “Magic in Monotheistic Context” or “History of Anthroposophy”; Johann Maier introduced me to “Jewish Mysticism and Kabbalah,” as well as to the world of ancient Judaism and the Hekhalot literature. Both professors

supervised my Master thesis on astrology in the bible, Qumran, and early rabbinic literature. This was the beginning of my long-lasting fascination with the history of astrology and esoteric discourses from the ancient world through today.

*What do you feel are the major challenges for our field at present and in the future?*

The major challenge that I see is what you can call the discipline’s self-ostracizing. Presenting ourselves as those who study what others have thrown into the garbage can of history, or fashioning ourselves as advocates of the underdogs and the marginalized, is not very helpful. It is a kind of identity work that I perceive in the study of esotericism, but also in “pagan studies” and related fields of research. This identity work often leads to a neglect of critical methodological reflection, which I find problematic. What we need is an active collaboration with as many colleagues as possible, no matter whether or not we like their definitions of esotericism, in order to build up networks that can make research into these historical and cultural dynamics sustainable for the future. If we study these phenomena as part of the cultural history of Europe and North America, in an increasingly globalized perspective, we will be able to integrate the field of ‘Western esotericism’ in larger research structures and critical scholarship. This will also help students who enroll in our programs to find a job after their studies.

*What is the most fun memory so far from your time in the field?*

During my time in Amsterdam, I regularly taught classes together with Rob Pauls, who is one of the best teachers I’ve had the pleasure of working with so far. If you think that I am a constructionist, you haven’t met Rob: in almost every class he engaged in highly critical discussion with the students and with me as his co-teacher, which led to stimulating and extremely funny discussions. Nothing escaped Rob’s smart deconstruction! After class, we usually went on discussing the issues with the students over beer.

*What are your interests aside from Western esotericism?*

I love sports. When I lived in Germany, I did free climbing and whitewater canoeing. No chance to do this here in the Netherlands! So I turned to cycling. I also try to be in the gym four times a week to stay fit. In my free time I listen to music, particularly Jazz, Rock, Country, and some classical music. I also like vegetarian cooking and seeing friends.



*What are the worst things about having this as your specialty?*

The most difficult thing is that we have to explain a lot before people (hopefully) understand what we are actually studying. The prejudices can work against us when we apply for jobs or at other points in our career.

*What are the best things about having this as your specialty?*

**Egil Asprem**  
**Doctoral research fellow,**  
**University of Amsterdam,**  
**The Netherlands**



*How did you come to be interested in Western esotericism?*

I am of a generation where you are likely to come across "esoteric" references through popular culture. I suppose my interest started as a vague fascination for magic and occultism sparked in particular by role-playing games. I recall having the feeling that there was "something more" behind the references, something "real" in a historical sense, and starting to look up things at the public library and on the internet. This was how I first came across John Dee's angel conversations, which of course were deeply fascinating to a 16-year-old role playing geek. They still are, although perhaps for different reasons. Around the same time I also remember coming across a group of contemporary alchemists and practicing spagyrist online, and soon found myself reading up on Fulcanelli. Gradually the plot thickened,

The nicest thing is that we continuously challenge assumptions and identities that constitute "Europé" or "the West." Hence, European culture becomes more complex, and studying esotericism is a good way of reminding us of the fact that there is no such thing as 'the history' of Europe but that the place of religion in European culture has always been contested, ambivalent, and tied to systems of philosophy, science, art, law, or politics.

of course, and by the age of 17 or 18 I had started collecting "weird" books from the local antiquaries, anything from the Gnostic gospels and apocrypha, to Cornelius Agrippa and John Dee, to Rudolf Steiner. Having grown up with lots of friends in Steiner schools, I was actually quite thrilled to find out that the whole thing was based on occultism. And nobody seemed to know what was going on! That was perhaps the best part.

These adolescent fascinations formed a good basis for a more thoroughly academic interest as I entered university, although I didn't really know that at first. I was doing classical languages and linguistics at first, before switching to religious studies and philosophy, then pondering to continue with philosophy, or even switch to archaeology. When I was given the opportunity to choose my own topic for a sociology of religion course, I decided to track down some ritual magicians. I ended up interviewing some local Thelemites about conjuring demons and elementals, and travelling on the astral plane. That paper eventually resulted in my first published article, and the interest that developed while working on it made me decide going to Amsterdam to pursue an MA in Western esotericism.

*What do you feel are the major challenges for our field at present and in the future?*

I see two major challenges that are perhaps hard to solve together, without one defeating the purpose of the other. On the one hand, you often hear that the field has now matured, but when you look for some of the signs that characterise a mature academic field it is hard to see them in practice. I am particularly thinking of the lack of agreement on fundamental issues, such as "what is it", "how do we study it", "what's its importance", and "how is it related to the broad spectrum of human activity". If you pick up the three most popular introduction books to the field, you'll find three very different ways of handling these fundamental questions. From the outside, I think that the persistence of this kind of disagreement is going to rise some – I have to say quite justified – scepticism. And sure, other fields and even whole disciplines have or have had similar problems (think about the constant problematics of defining "religion" in religious studies, not to say how to approach "it"). But that does not make it any less of a problem for esotericism scholars.

The second challenge I see concerns interdisciplinarity, and it stands in a somewhat difficult relation to the first challenge. I still think we need much more real interdisciplinary work, and especially in collaboration with the social sciences. While everybody seems to agree that interdisciplinarity is important, it is sometimes harder to see what that should entail in practice. Personally I think the only plausible way to start is by making direct attempts at reaching out to other disciplines, to invite them in, ask them



for their perspectives. This requires less protectionism and provincialism, in a sense, and means that we need to be open-minded about the exact boundaries, definitions, and delimitations of the field. Now you see the tension: to be taken seriously as a mature field, we need stricter delimitations; to reach out and invite in perspectives from other disciplines, we need a certain open-mindedness. Which place the field will have in the academy in 20 years depends on how we negotiate these concerns. The worst thing that could happen is an unholy alliance between protectionism and a refusal to deal with internal differences of theory and methodology.

*What is the most fun memory so far from your time in the field?*

I couldn't really point out a single memory, but there are plenty of them. You meet a lot of great people, lots of *strange* people, and have the most amazing conversations about topics that could hardly have taken place anywhere else. The best occasions for these kinds of memories have certainly been the conferences, particularly the ESSWE conferences. Or I should rather say, the "shadow conferences" that run on parallel days, but at night.

*What are your interests aside from Western esotericism?*

First of all I have lots of other *academic* interests, besides esotericism. Philosophy, psychology, sociology, anything that has to do with how people think, and why, how they construct their identities, how groups function, etc. And anything that deals with the intersection of politics, science, and religion. Esotericism is just one interesting way to have most of this at once. It touches on a lot of spheres that I am interested in. Outside of academic life, I have the usual interests. I try to go to the cinema at least once a week, and to keep playing music. At the moment I am involved with a micro-band project experimenting with some dark psychedelic folk.

*What are the worst things about having this as your specialty?*

Explaining to others what you do. No matter how well-educated the person you are talking with is, you will always have to guard heavily against misunderstandings. I have found that this requires adopting an "esoteric" strategy of communication, serving little lies towards the truth. A gradual unveiling of the secret, adjusted to the other's level of initiation...

*What are the best things about having this as your specialty?*

It is a specialty that gives you the unique possibility of actually discovering something new and neglected – a rare prospect in the humanities. It also touches on a great many interesting and highly relevant processes in Western history and society. Finally, the social aspect of being in this field is great – you do meet a lot of interesting people, and you are unlikely to get bored. ♦

## News from the three major centres for the study of Western esotericism

**Ecole Pratique des Hautes Etudes, Section des Sciences religieuses, Sorbonne, Paris, France.**

<http://www.ephe.sorbonne.fr>

### Staff

♦Prof. Dr. Jean-Pierre Brach, Chair

### Programs:

Programme des Conférences/Conference  
Enseignements du Master SHPR/ HPRS Master's (MA)  
Programmes

**NB:** A Bachelor level programme is not being taught at the EPHE. Please also note that an MA programme entirely devoted to the History of Western Esotericism does not exist as such at the EPHE but that the research seminars given by the Chair may be included as a specific module within the more general framework of an EPHE Master's syllabus, which features a number of optional as well as mandatory modules, to be validated over a two-year period. During the same period of time, students are furthermore expected to complete a final *Mémoire de Master* (MA Dissertation), for which they may freely choose their topic and supervisor.

Topics of current seminars include the study of unpublished latin ms. by William Postel (1510-81) in which he advocates the use of Platonic and Kabbalistic materials, as well as mathematical symbolism, in order to establish a universal religious concord, based on the fundamental tenets of the Christian faith. Independently, we have looked into the works of some French spiritualist Magnetizers (from the second half of the 19th century) who would transform Mesmerism into what they term *Magie Magnétique*, and their influence on certain later occultists.

### Completed MA theses

None in 2010–2012.

### Completed PhDs (2010-2012)

♦Francesco Baroni, "Tommaso Palamidessi (1915-1983) et l'"Archéosophie". Recherches sur l'ésotérisme chrétien dans l'Italie contemporaine" (2010)

♦Flavia Buzzetta, "Aspetti della *magia naturalis* e della *scientia cabalæ* nel pensiero di Giovanni Pico della Mirandola (1486-1487)" (2011; co-directed with Prof. P. Palumbo, University of Palermo)

♦Emmanuel Kreis, "*Quis ut Deus?* Antijudéo-maçonnisme et occultisme en France sous la III<sup>e</sup> République" (2012)

♦Stefano Salzani, "Luigi Valli (1878-1931). Contributo alla storia delle interpretazioni esoteriche dell'opera di Dante" (2012; co-directed with Prof. A. Cavarero, University of Verona)

**Current PhDs**

- ◆B. Bérard, "Un philosophe et théologien occultisant au XIX<sup>e</sup> siècle: l'abbé P.-F.-G. Lacuria (1806-1890)"
- ◆J.-C. Boucly, "Médecine magnétique et mysticisme chrétien chez quelques disciples de Nizier Anthelme Philippe (1890-1945)"
- ◆Jacques Rondat, "La correspondance naçonnique entre C.-F. Achard (1751-1809) et J.-B. Willermoz (1730-1824). Edition critique et annotation"

**NB:** Alongside the classic *Doctorat* (PhD), the EPHE also delivers its own *Diplôme d'établissement* (a research diploma specific to the EPHE) as well as a highly specialized post-doctoral research diploma.

**Completed EPHE Diplomas (2010-2012)**

- ◆Benjamin Barret, "La "science cabalistique" de Lazare Lenain (1793-1877). Etude d'un système magico-astrologique au début du XIX<sup>e</sup> siècle" (2010)
- ◆Patrick Ringgenberg, "Les notions de " Tradition Primordiale" chez René Guénon (1886-1951) et de *Sophia Perennis* chez Frithjof Schuon (1907-1998). Filiation – Comparaison – Bilan" (2010).

**Current EPHE Diplomas**

- ◆D. Clairembault, "La correspondance théosophique entre L.-C. de Saint-Martin (1743-1803) et le baron N.-A. Kirchberger (1739-1799). Edition critique annotée et commentée, d'après les différents manuscrits";
- ◆Michel Thiollat, "Esotérisme musical et art dans la synthèse "archéométrique" de Saint-Yves d'Alveydre (1842-1909)";
- ◆Jean Iozia, "C. Jinarajadasa (1902-1953), sa vie, son œuvre et ses activités d'ordre ésotérique au sein de la Société Théosophique";
- ◆Gilles Bucherie, "F.-Ch. Barlet (Albert Faucheux, 1838-1921). Sa vie, son oeuvre, son influence sur le monde occultiste de son temps".

## Center for History of Hermetic Philosophy and Related Currents, University of Center for History of Hermetic Philosophy and Related Currents, University of Amsterdam, The Netherlands.

[www.amsterdamhermetica.nl](http://www.amsterdamhermetica.nl)

**Permanent staff**

- ◆Prof. Dr. Wouter J. Hanegraaff, Professor of History of Hermetic Philosophy and related currents
- ◆Dr. Peter J. Forshaw, Assistant Professor History of Western Esotericism in the Early Modern period
- ◆Dr. Marco Pasi, Assistant Professor History of Western Esotericism from the 18th Century to the Present

**Temporary or part-time staff**

- ◆Dr. Demetrius Waarsenburg, Lecturer Western Esotericism Antiquity-Middle Ages (BA)
- ◆Egil Aspren MA, Ph.D. candidate
- ◆Tessel Bauduin MA, Ph.D. candidate

- ◆J. Christian Greer MA., Ph.D. candidate
- ◆Joyce Pijnenburg MA, Ph.D. candidate
- ◆Drs. Osvald Vasicek, Ph.D. candidate
- ◆Mike Zuber MA, Ph.D candidate

**Program:**

The BA program Religious Studies contains a series of four modules on Western esotericism. The 1-year MA program (in english) is called "Mysticism and Western esotericism" ("Western esotericism" as of September 2012). It is also possible to specialize in Western Esotericism within the the 2-year Research Master (in this case, one receives a diploma "Study of Religion").

**Titles of courses/programs on the Bachelor level (in Dutch)**

- ◆Hermetica I: Introduction Western esotericism (W.J. Hanegraaff) [as of 1 September 2012: "Western Esotericism and Religious Pluralism"]
- ◆Hermetica II: Antiquity-Middle Ages (D. Waarsenburg) [as of 1 September 2012: "Western Esotericism in Antiquity and the Middle Ages"]
- ◆Hermetica III: Early Modern Period (P.J. Forshaw) [as of 1 September 2012: "Western Esotericism in the Early Modern period"]
- ◆Hermetica IV: 18th Century-Present (M. Pasi) [as of 1 September 2012: "Western Esotericism from the Eighteenth Century to the Present"]

**Titles of courses/programs on the Master level**

- ◆Contested Knowledge I/II (W.J. Hanegraaff)
- ◆Renaissance Esotericism I/II (P.J. Forshaw)
- ◆Occult Trajectories I/II (M. Pasi)

*I and II have different contents and alternate per year*

**Completed MA theses**

- ◆Susannah Crockford, "Gender, Ecstasy and Mesmerism" (2010)
- ◆Linda van der Schatte Olivier, "The Deanimation of the World: A small exploration of the reasons underlying the rise and flight of the Anima Mundi" (2010)
- ◆Janne van Berkel, "From Alberuni to Demons of the Flesh: The Historiography of Indian Alchemy" (2011)
- ◆Natalie Dollar: "A More Perfect Union: Swedenborgian Ideas of Love, Sex and Death in the Development of Mormon and Spiritualist Thought" (2011)
- ◆Marga Greuter: "Op de grenzen van twee werelden: Onderzoek en ervaring op het gebied van het hogere leven. Een verkenning van Elise van Calcar-Schiotlings bronnen" (2011)
- ◆Lennart Hofman: "Vergezichten uit wonderland: Spirituele revolutie en psychedelica in de moderne wereld" (2011)
- ◆Matthew Twigg: "Ritual and Ecstasy in Valentinianism" (2011)
- ◆Jules de Waart, "'His only solace': Doubts and uncertainty in the troubled life of Rudolf II (1552-1612)" (2011)
- ◆David Mac Gillavry, "Hvezdarstvi: A translation of and critique on a forgotten manuscript" (2012)
- ◆Susanne Mans, "Matter-Theory in the Dutch Republic: A Case-Study of Steven Blankaart" (in progress for 2012)



**Completed PhDs (2010–2012)**

None in 2010–2012.

**Current PhDs**

- ◆Egil Asprem (Esotericism and Scientific Naturalism in the 20th Century)
- ◆Tessel Bauduin (Surrealism and Western Esotericism)
- ◆J. Christian Greer (Esoteric Discourses in Post-WWII America)
- ◆Gemma Kwantes (Contemporary Jewish Kabbalah)
- ◆Joyce Pijnenburg (Giordano Bruno's *Lampas triginta statuarum*)
- ◆Osvald Vasicek (Johannes Reuchlin's Christian kabbalah)
- ◆Mike Zuber (Pietism and Alchemy)

**Exeter Centre for the Study of Esotericism (EXESES), Department of History, College of Humanities, University of Exeter, UK.**

<http://centres.exeter.ac.uk/exeses/>

**Permanent Staff:**

<http://humanities.exeter.ac.uk/history/staff/>

- ◆Prof. Dr. Nicholas Goodrick-Clarke, Chair of Western Esotericism, Director of EXESES
- ◆Clare Goodrick-Clarke, Lecturer in History (Western Esotericism)
- ◆Dr Hereward Tilton, Lecturer in History (Western Esotericism)

**Honorary University Fellows (Part-Time Staff):**

- ◆Paul Bembridge
- ◆Dr Christopher McIntosh
- ◆Dr Angela Voss

**Temporary Staff (Graduate Teaching Assistant)**

- ◆Georgiana (Jo) Hedesan, MA, PhD candidate

**Programme**

MA in Western Esotericism

**Modules:**

- ◆The Western Esoteric Traditions: Historical Survey and Research Methodology
- ◆Alexandrian Hermeticism, Neo-Platonism, and Astrology
- ◆The Hermetic Art of Alchemy
- ◆Renaissance & Occultist Kabbalah
- ◆Rosicrucianism and Freemasonry
- ◆Theosophy and the Globalisation of Esotericism
- ◆Esoteric Traditions in English Literature and Society, 1550-1650
- ◆The Esoteric Body
- ◆History of Western Astrology
- ◆C.G. Jung and 'The Red Book'

**Completed MA theses**

- ◆Cheryl Ashton, "What synthesis of esoteric thought comprises Rosicrucian wisdom?" (2010)
- ◆Ted Bray, "The influence of occultist Kabbalah on Theosophy" (2010)
- ◆Suzanne Butters, "The significance of W. B. Yeats' *Vision* to modern esotericism" (2010)

- ◆Christopher Fort, "A study of Rudolf Steiner's *Philosophy of Freedom* (1894)" (2010)
- ◆Shawn Gray, "The evolution of Enochian angel magic from the Renaissance to modernity (John Dee to the Golden Dawn)" (2010)
- ◆Derek McKim, "Theology, science and 'second sight' in the work of Rev. Robert Kirk (1641-1692)" (2010)
- ◆Alexandra Laura Payne, "The esoteric aspects of medieval Grail romances" (2010)
- ◆Guido Woudenberg, "The re-emergence of the *qlippoth* in twentieth-century magic from MacGregor Mathers to Kenneth Grant" (2010)
- ◆Christian Giudice, "Kenneth Grant and the Typhonian tradition in post-Crowleyan magick" (2011)
- ◆Jeremy Green, "The esoteric runology of the Rune Guild" (2011)
- ◆Sarah Green, "John Pordage's contribution to seventeenth-century theosophy" (2011)
- ◆Grant Hemingway, "The Plotinian Trinity, the Procline Triads and the Dionysian Hierarchies: The evolution of Neoplatonic emanationist cosmology and its influence on Catholicism" (2011)
- ◆Anthony Holtberg, "The Enochian tradition from John Dee to the Hermetic Order of the Golden Dawn" (2011)
- ◆Judith Mawer, "The alchemy of Thomas Vaughan (1622-1666)" (2011)
- ◆Dominic Montague, "George Russell (Æ), Irish nationalism, and Theosophy" (2011)
- ◆Edward Shuster, "Neopythagorean philosophy in the emblems of Robert Fludd" (2011)
- ◆Steve Smith, "History and symbolism of the Past Master's Jewel in English Freemasonry" (2011)
- ◆Konstantinos Achyrkidis, "Alice A. Bailey's Neotheosophy in relation to Blavatskian Theosophy" (2012)
- ◆Elaine Bailey, "What impact and influence did the teachings of Anna Bonus Kingsford and Edward Maitland have on the magical and mystical groups which were formed in the decades at the end of the nineteenth-century in Britain?" (2012)
- ◆Ian Christie, 'The Allegory of Saturn': Saturn in the alchemical tradition" (2012)
- ◆Samuel Garrard, "The influence of Dion Fortune's Qabalah on the role and development of the Tarot in the magical system of Gareth Knight" (2012)
- ◆Roxani Giannou, "The Talismanic Magic of the Golden Dawn in relation to its Renaissance Sources: Understanding the theory and practice of magic in different historical moments" (2012)
- ◆Jeffrey Heald, "What was the role and legacy of Florence Farr in the development of esoteric Egyptophilia?" (2012)
- ◆Graham Henderson, "The Night Sea Journey: Jung's *Liber novus*, the Aryan Christ myth and fin de siècle Occultism" (2012)
- ◆Timothy Holland, "To what extent does Rudolf Steiner's engagement with science distinguish his theosophy from that of Jacob Boehme?" (2012)
- ◆Nikolaos Kotsopoulos, "Utopia, Evolution, Millenarianism: The Dawn of a New Age in Jena Romanticism" (2012)
- ◆Susan Lewis, "What specific contributions did W. B. Yeats make to Western Esotericism as Poet, Playwright, and Magician?" (2012)
- ◆Mihai Manescu, "The influence of Julius Evola on Mircea Eliade" (2012)
- ◆Jennifer Rimmer, "Anna Bonus Kingsford: her singular contribution to theosophy" (2012)

◆Chadwick Vander Ven, "Unmasked: The Pursuit of Identity in Martinism as a distinctive theosophical system, 1890 to the Present" (2012)

◆Anthony Wilkins, "The Typology of the Fauna of the Unseen World: How did esoteric practitioners' conceptions of intermediary beings develop from the eighteenth to the twentieth century?" (2012)

#### **Completed PhDs (2010-2012)**

◆John Selby, "Dion Fortune and her Inner Plane Contacts: Intermediaries in the Western Esoteric Tradition" (2010)

◆Anthony Charles Fuller, "Anglo-Catholic Clergy and the Golden Dawn: The Ritual Revival and Modern Magical Orders (1887-1940)" (2010)

◆George J. Sieg, "Occult War: The Legacy of Iranian Dualism and its continuing influence upon the Modern Occult Revival" (2010)

◆Richard Berman, "The architects of eighteenth-century English Freemasonry, 1720-1740" (2011)

◆Julie Hall, "The Concept of Reincarnation in Theosophy" (2012)

#### **Current PhDs**

◆Orlando Fernandez, "Esotericism and Quantum Theories, 1960-2010: a study of David Bohm"

◆Tim Rudbøg, "The construction of Helena Blavatsky's Theosophy"

◆Arabella De Steiger-Khandwala, "Neo-Platonic Theories of Universal Harmony in medieval Islamic architecture with special reference to the Madinat al-Zahra, Córdoba"

◆Georgiana (Jo) Hedesan, "The Vision of a "Christian Philosophy": Christianity and Medical Alchemy in the Thought of Jan Baptista Van Helmont (1579-1644)"

◆Dr Simon Magus, "Esoteric Thought in the Life and Work of Henry Rider Haggard"

◆Prof. Malcolm Peet, "Intellectual Biography of John Garth Wilkinson (1812-1899)"

◆Jeffrey D. Lavoie, "Blavatsky's Use of Time: Sources and Implications of Temporality in Modern Theosophy"

◆Lori Lee Oates, "The Transmission of French Occultism to Britain, 1850-1918"