

Esotericism, Religion and Nature

ASE Third International Conference:

May 29 - June 1, 2008

Conference Schedule

Thursday, May 29

Registration 4:00 – 6:00 PM (Lobby Physician's Auditorium)

6:00 – 7:00 PM Gathering of Participants (Lobby Physician's Auditorium)

7:00 PM, Plenary Session (Physician's Auditorium)

Opening Introduction: Lee Irwin, College of Charleston

Keynote Lecture: Barbara Newman, Northwestern University

“Charles Williams and the Companions of the Co-inherence.”

Friday, May 30

8:30 – 9:00 AM Refreshments at the Tate Center Gallery (Suite 200, 2nd floor)

9:00 AM – 10:30 AM, Morning Sessions

Session 1 [Tate 132, first floor] *Delineating Esoteric Traditions in Neoplatonism*

Presider: Arthur Versluis, Michigan State University

“Iamblichus on the Esoteric Experience of Nature.”

Leonard George, Capilano University

“Eros and Psyche in Neoplatonism.”

Christian Coseru, College of Charleston

Session 2 [Tate 131, first floor] *Medieval and Early Modern Kabbalah*

Presider: Claire Fanger, Independent Scholar

“Creation, Emanation, and the Mystery of the Cosmos in Medieval Kabbalah.”

Hartley Lachter, Muhlenberg College

“The Platonist Element in Thomistic Metaphysics and Renaissance Cabalist Angel Magic Theory.”

Ted Hand, Graduate Theological Union

Session 3 [Beatty 214 2nd floor] *Reconsidering Gurdjieff I*

Presider: Melinda Weinstein, Lawrence Tech University

“G.I. Gurdjieff: Religion and its Discontents.”

Michael Pittman, Albany College of Pharmacy

“Gurdjieff and Ouspensky on Recurrence.”

Joseph Azize, University of Technology, Sydney

“Gurdjieff as Magus: Omissions and Redefinitions of the Work.”

Sophia Wellbeloved, Centre for the Study of Western Esotericism

Session 4 [Tate 133, first floor] *Contemporary Esoteric Practices and Nature*

Presider: Eric Thomas, College of Charleston

“Contemporary Magic and Approaches to Nature.”

Kenneth Granholm, Universiteit van Amsterdam

“Playing with Fire: Alchemical Performance at the Pagan Festival.”

Jason Winslade, Northwestern University

“‘A Lively Place’: Nature in Waldorf Education.”

Sarah W. Whedon, Simmons College

10:30 – 10:45PM Refreshments, compliments of ASE, Tate Center Gallery (Suite 200)

10:45 – 12:15 PM, Mid-Morning Sessions

Session 5 [Beatty 214] *Esoteric Currents in the Middle Ages*

Presider: Claire Fanger, Independent Scholar

“The Birds' Head Haggadah: Nature, the Esoteric, and the Inner Jew.”

Marc Epstein, Vassar College

“The Flowering Desert: Imagery of God’s Ground in the Thought of Meister Eckhart.”

Nell Champoux, Syracuse University

“Magic and Miracles: Categorizing the Supernatural in Medieval Theology.”

Robert Ticknor, Tulane University

Session 6 [Tate 131] *Esoteric Currents and Movements in America: .*

Presider: John Richards, West Virginia State University

“Jesus, the Therapeutic Adept: The Emmanuel Movement, Liberal Protestantism, and the Science of Prayer.”

Eric Thomas, College of Charleston

“Approaches to Biblical Truth: The Influence of Swedenborg’s Biblical Hermeneutics on the New Thought Movement.”

J. Gordon Melton, Institute for the Study of American Religion

Session 7 [Tate 132] *Reconsidering Gurdjieff II*

Presider: Melinda Weinstein, Lawrence Tech University

“Gurdjieff and Ecology: The Astral Ecosphere in Beelzebub’s Tales to His Grandson.”

Richard Smoley, Independent Scholar

“The cruel radiance of what is”: Gurdjieff and American Nature in Let Us Now Praise Famous Men

Jon Woodson, Howard University

Session 8 [Tate 133] *Esoteric Philosophies and Philosophical Esotericisms*

Presider: Christian Coseru, College of Charleston

“Nature, Esotericism, and Economics.”

Jean-Christophe Faudot, Independent Scholar

“How Long?: An Esoteric Measure of Henry David Thoreau.”

Kevin Dann, State University of New York, Plattsburgh

“On the Will in Nature: Schopenhauer, Animal Magnetism and Magic.”

Glenn A. Magee, Long Island University

12:15 – 1:30 pm, Lunch [Free time]

1:30 PM – 3:00 PM, Afternoon Sessions

Session 9 [Tate 131] *Early Modern Esotericism: Key Concepts and Texts*

Presider: Lee Irwin, College of Charleston

“The Coming of the Sun: Mercury and the Hermetic Expectations of World Restoration in the Renaissance.”

Delia Georgiana Hedesan, University of Exeter (read by Deborah Forman)

“The Reception of Agrippa von Nettesheim’s *Three Books of Occult Philosophy* in Early Modern England.”

Ariel Hessayon, University of London

L’École Abstraite: Coincidentia Oppositorum as a Dialectic of Love, 16th-18th Centuries

Kathryn LaFevers Evans

Session 10 [Beatty 214] *Crossing Cultural Boundaries: Esotericisms Imported and Exported*

Presider: Arthur Versluis, Michigan State University

“Masonic Vedanta: Swami Vivekananda and his Vision of Universal Brotherhood.”
Guy Beck, Tulane University

“An Unexpected Legacy: The Rosicrucian Enlightenment in Australia.”
Leigh Penman, University of Melbourne

“Red Shambhala: Esotericism and the Quest for Sacred Tibet in the 1920s Soviet Union.”
Andrei Znamenski, University of Memphis

Session 11 [Tate 133] *Esotericism in Art, Theater, and Film*

Presider: Elijah Siegler, College of Charleston

“Grimoire of the Entangled Thicket: The Esoteric Worldview of Ithell Colquhoun.”
Amy Hale, University of Maryland University College

“Shadowplay.”
Giovanna Costantini, University of Michigan

“The Gothic Cosmos of Guillermo del Toro.”
Victoria Nelson, Goddard College

3:00 - 4:00 PM Refreshments, compliments of ASE, Tate Center Gallery (Suite 200)

4:00 - 5:00 PM, Concert (Room 115 Wachovia Auditorium)

Sacred Music of India
Performed by Dr. Guy Beck of Tulane University

6:00 PM, Banquet (Stern Center / Ballroom, 4th Floor)

Saturday, May 31

8:30 – 9:00 AM
Refreshments in the Tate Center Gallery (Suite 200)

9:00 – 10:30 AM, Morning Sessions

Session 12 [Tate 133] *Esoteric Music and The Mundus Imaginalis*

Presider: Allison Coudert, University of California, Davis

“Is There a Tone of Nature?”
Joscelyn Godwin, Colgate University

“Embodying Corbin’s *Mundus Imaginalis*.”
Noah Gardiner, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor

Session 13 [Tate 131] *Modern Reception of Earlier Esoteric Texts*

Presider: John Richards, West Virginia State University

“The *Book of Changes* as a Text of Western Esotericism.”

Geoffrey Redmond, M.D., Center for Health Research

“The Great Spiritualist Revival of the 20th Century: Blavatsky's Egg and the Cabala Which Hatched It.”

June Leavitt, Ben Gurion University of the Negev, Israel

“The Use of Ancient Gnostic Texts in Modern Esoteric Movements: The Case of Samael Aun Weor.”

Franz Winter, University of Vienna

Session 14 [Tate 132] *Varieties of 19th Century Esotericism*

Presider: Claire Fanger, Independent Scholar

“Ernest Loomis and Occult Force in Late Nineteenth Century Chicago.”

Melvyn Lloyd Draper, University of California, Davis

“The Irish Paganism of George W. Russell (A.E.).”

Susan Johnston Graf, Pennsylvania State University

Session 15 [Beatty 214] *Non-Western Esotericisms I*

Presider: Melinda Weinstein, Lawrence Tech University

“Is There an Eastern Esotericism? Siddhis, Magicians and Spiritual Bodies in some Bengali Yogic Traditions.”

June McDaniel, College of Charleston

“Magic: Its Nature and Meaning in the Traditional Akan Society of Ghana.”

Samuel Awuah-Nyamekye, University of Cape Coast, Ghana

10:30 – 10:45 PM Refreshments, compliments of ASE, Tate Center Gallery (Suite 200)

10:45 – 12:15 PM, Mid-Morning Sessions

Session 16 [Tate 131] *Nature and Alchemy*

Presider: Lee Irwin, College of Charleston

“Natural Methods: Examining the Biases of Ancient Alchemists and Those who Study Them.”

Shannon Grimes, Meredith College

“Picturing Nature: Alchemical Images of Mother Earth.”

M. E. Warlick, University of Denver

“The Alchemist and the Worship of Nature: Three Case Studies from the Seventeenth Century.”

Kerry Koitzsch, Independent Scholar

Session 17 [Tate 133] *Aleister Crowley and Twentieth Century Magic*

Presider: Guy Beck Tulane University

“A Fork in the Road: Distinguishing the Right-Hand and Left-Hand Paths in 20th Century Western Magic.”

Nevill Drury, University of Newcastle, Australia

“Thelemic Education, Esoteric Organizations, and the Earth Community.”

David L. Foster, Newcastle University, NSW

“Solve et Coagula: Attitudes toward the Ambrosial Aspects of Human Seed in Certain Yogic Traditions and in the Sexual Magick of Aleister Crowley.”

Gordan Djurdjevic, University of British Columbia

Session 18 [Beatty 214] *Non-Western Esotericism II*

Presider: June McDaniel, College of Charleston

“The Indo-Mediterranean Caduceus and the Worship of the Tree, the Serpent and the Mother Goddess in the South of India.”

Patrizia Granziera, Universidad Autonoma del Estado de Morelos

“Shaivism: East and West.”

Melinda Weinstein, Lawrence Technological University

Lunch 12:15 – 1:30 pm [Free Time]

1:30 – 3:00 PM, Afternoon Sessions

Session 19 [Tate 131] *Esotericism and Identity in Contemporary Practices*

Presider: Elijah Siegler, College of Charleston

“ ‘Real’ Vampirism.”

Joe Laycock, Independent Scholar

“Neoshamanism as Esoteric.”

Arthur Versluis, Michigan State University

Session 20 [Beatty 214] *Appalachian Magic*

Presider: Eric Thomas, College of Charleston

“The Green Side of Life: Appalachian Magic as a Site of Resistance.”

Rodger Cunningham, Alice Lloyd College

“The Gift of Second Sight: From Ulster to Appalachia.”

John Richards, West Virginia State University

Session 21 [Tate 133] *The Tarot in Art and Esotericism*

Presider: Kathryn LaFevers Evans, Independent Scholar

“Tarot Images and Fifteenth-Century Renaissance Art.”
Robert M. Place, Independent Scholar

“The Necklace of Harmonia: The Sola-Busca Tarocchi as a Book of Ritual Initiation.”
Nadya Chishty-Mujahid, Drake University

3:00 – 4:00 PM Refreshments, compliments of ASE, Tate Center Gallery

4:00 - 5:00 PM, Dramatic Performance (Room 115 / Wachovia Auditorium)

"Certain Explanations: Magical Walking"
Dr. Lance Gharavi, Arizona State University

Sunday, June 1

8:30 – 9:00 AM
Refreshments in Tate Center Gallery

9:00 AM – 10:30 AM Plenary Session (Room 115 / Wachovia Auditorium)

Session 22 *Pushing the Envelope: Thinking Esoterically in Relation to non-esoteric Knowledge Models*

Presider: Allison Coudert, University of California, Davis

“Rewriting the Book of Nature: Kabbalistic Structures in Contemporary Life Sciences.”
Kocku von Stuckrad, University of Amsterdam

“Natural Law and the Soul: Esoteric Guidelines for a Good Society.”
Nicholas Goodrick-Clarke, University of Exeter

“A World Full of Gods: Panpsychism and the Paradigms of Esotericism.”
Lee Irwin, College of Charleston

10:45 AM – 11:00 AM Refreshments, Tate Center Gallery

11:00 AM – 12:00 PM, Keynote Lecture (Room 115 / Wachovia Auditorium)

Presider: Arthur Versluis, Michigan State University

“Will-Erich Peuckert and the Light of Nature.”
Wouter Hanegraaff, University of Amsterdam

(A question period engaging the morning presentations will be followed by a brief general discussion and response to the conference as a whole, moderated by Arthur Versluis.)

12:30 PM
Closure and Farewell