

Editorial

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Now that the holiday season is behind us, we bring you one last gift: the third volume of *Correspondences*. This volume marks the end of the third year of our open access adventure, a year which has included some important changes for the journal. We began our new publication model in which articles go online in advance form as soon as they are ready (which has proved to be a success); we migrated our webpage to a new server which will stabilise the journal and allow us to add new features which will further help its maintenance in the future; and we welcomed Kennet Granholm as an editorial board member.

The current volume of the journal contains research articles by a junior and a senior scholar in the field of Western esotericism. In “Israel Regardie and the Psychologization of Esoteric Discourse,” Christopher A. Plaisance re-examines and clarifies the relationship between esoteric and psychological discourses in the works of Israel Regardie, thereby contributing to the theoretical discussion on the “psychologisation” of esotericism that has been underway for quite a while. It also provides a historical exposition of Regardie’s life and work. Wouter J. Hanegraaff follows with the “The Globalization of Esotericism,” an expansion of his keynote lecture delivered at the Fifth International Conference of the European Society for the Study of Western Esotericism in Riga (April 2015). After examining the scholarly discussions concerned with letting the study of “Western esotericism” part with its geographical or cultural denominator, Hanegraaff concludes that it is advisable to keep the concept as it was originally construed, “not for reasons of conceptual theory

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but for reasons of historical method.” Together, these two articles provide theoretical discussions that we hope to see more of in forthcoming issues of *Correspondences*, and we are looking forward to any responses they may provoke.

In this volume we also introduce three review articles—a new format for *Correspondences*. The first two both deal with volumes of Christian Clement’s *Rudolf Steiner: Schriften – Kritische Ausgabe*—a venture that has sparked much debate in the German speaking world. Peter Staudenmaier and David W. Wood, respectively, plunge us into the Steiner debate, taking two somewhat different sides on key questions in Rudolf Steiner research; we are happy to present these side by side in this volume. Our book review editor, Egil Asprem, provides the third review article: a final, updated, and standardised version of his essay on Michael Stausberg and Berndt-Christian Otto’s *Defining Magic: A Reader*. We feel that the review article format offers a very good space for providing deeper analysis than fits a more traditional book review, and we are looking forward to exploring this format more in the future.

Alongside the review articles, we are happy to provide a dense book review section with reviews by no less than seven authors. We offer more traditional academic reviews, such as Alessandro Vigorelli Porro’s review of *Giovanni Pico della Mirandola. Mito, Magia, Qabbalah*, but have also decided to include reviews of primary texts such as Thomas Karlsson’s *Amongst Mystics and Magicians in Stockholm*, and scholar-practitioner books, such as Damon Zacharias Lycourinos’s *Occult Traditions*. Ever since its foundation, *Correspondences* has been an academic peer-reviewed journal that has insisted on not being bound by traditional academic publishing models. We deem it important to review books which may not normally be given attention in an academic setting, but which are still important for specialists, researchers and enthusiasts of the study of Western esotericism.

Although we are not committed to a view of “esotericism” as something that exists as an object, it becomes an object when esoteric actors become increasingly familiar with scholarship from the field of Western esotericism.¹ This calls for an increased emphasis on scholarly reflexivity—it is important to remember the role scholars have played, and are playing, in the continual development of “esotericism” as object.² By offering reviews of scholar-

¹ For a discussion of this, see Egil Asprem and Kennet Granholm, “Constructing Esotericisms: Sociological, Historical and Critical Approaches to the Invention of Tradition,” in *Contemporary Esotericism*, eds. Egil Asprem and Kennet Granholm (Sheffield: Equinox, 2013), 43–45.

² Asprem and Granholm, “Constructing Esotericisms,” 48. For a discussion of reflexivity

practitioner books,³ *Correspondences* provides an academic forum in which to critique not only the merits of particular texts, but also the ways in which scholars participate in creating the very object that they have set out to analyse. We think this enables a much-needed awareness of the discursive processes at work. First hand sources may not first and foremost be important on the basis of their academic merit, but can still be reviewed based on what they offer to researchers, or how they may potentially contribute to deepening academic discussion.

Ever since we started this journal we have intended *Correspondences* to form a forum in which meaningful (and non-polemical) interaction between researchers from all disciplines, outlooks and backgrounds can be held. We deem it important to allow researchers from all levels and backgrounds to dialogue with others inside and outside the field, inside and outside the so-called “ivory” tower. We hope that this third volume will provide a good foundation for research as we enter the fourth year of the journal’s existence, and that it will host many new fascinating discussions in forthcoming volumes.

and praxis in Western esotericism and Pagan Studies, see Amy Hale, “Navigating Praxis: Pagan Studies vs. Esoteric Studies,” *The Pomegranate* 15, no. 1–2 (2013): 151–163.

³ For another example of a scholar-practitioner book that we’ve published a review of, see Ethan Doyle White, Review of *Pathways in Modern Western Magic*, edited by Nevill Drury, *Correspondences* 2, no. 1 (2014): 115–118.