**Popular Occulture in Britain, 1875-1947**

**“The Occult and Popular Social Movements”**



Friday, June 29, 2018

University of Glasgow

4/203 University Gardens

9.00 Registration (Lobby of 4 University Gardens)

9.30-11 **Panel 1: Occult Feminisms**

“Eco-Feminism and the Neo-Pagan Movement”

Dennis Denisoff (University of Tulsa)

Dennis Denisoff is the McFarlin Endowed Chair of English at the University of Tulsa. He is the author of *Sexual Visuality from Literature to Film*, co-editor of *Perennial Decay: On the Aesthetics and Politics of Decadence*, and editor of *The Decadent and Occult Works of Arthur Machen*. His talk is part of his work for his forthcoming book, tentatively entitled *Pagan Ecology in British Literature and Culture: 1860-1920*.

"Lucifer the Liberator: Satanism as a Feminist Strategy in Sylvia Townsend Warner's *Lolly Willowes* (1926)"

Per Faxneld (Södertörn University)

Per Faxneld is senior lecturer in Study of Religions at Södertörn University, Stockholm. In 2014, he obtained his PhD in History of Religions at Stockholm University, with a thesis (*Satanic Feminism: Lucifer as the Liberator of Woman in Nineteenth-Century Culture*) that was subsequently awarded the Donner Institute Prize for Excellent Research into Religion (and republished by Oxford University Press in 2017). He has written extensively on esotericism in exhibition catalogues, academic journals and books issued by for example Palgrave Macmillan, Yale University Press, Routledge, Equinox, Ashgate, Acumen and Brill . A co-organiser of 10 international conferences, Faxneld has also presented papers at more than 30 such events. Most of his writing has focused on nineteenth-century esotericism, in particular the relationship between literature, visual art, politics and esotericism during this period.

11-11.15 Coffee

11.15-12.45 **Panel 2: The Occulture of War**

“Occultists’ Engagement with the First World War: Theosophy, Thought Power, and War Tactics”

Owen Davies (University of Hertfordshire)

Owen Davies is Professor of Social History at the University of Hertfordshire. Much of his

work concerns the belief in witchcraft, magic, ghosts, and popular medicine. He also has

interests in heritage and public history.  He is currently a Co-Investigator for the AHRC

Everyday Lives in War Engagement Centre, and on the Leverhulme Trust funded project,

‘Emotions, Identity, and the Supernatural, 1300–1900’. His most recent works are the *Oxford*

*Illustrated History of Witchcraft and Magic* (2017), and the Wellcome Trust-funded Open

Access book with Francesca Matteoni, *Executing Magic in the Modern Era: Criminal Bodies and*

*the Gallows in Popular Medicine* (2017). His book on supernatural beliefs during the First World

War will be published by Oxford University Press later this year.

“Aleister Crowley and Political Propaganda”

Henrik Bogdan (University of Gothenburg)

**Henrik Bogdan** is Professor in History of Religions at the University of Gothenburg, Sweden. He is the author of *Western Esotericism and Rituals of Initiation*(State University of New York Press, 2007), editor of *Brother Curwen: Brother Crowley: A Correspondence*(Teitan Press, 2010), and co-editor of *Aleister Crowley and Western Esotericism*(Oxford University Press, 2012); *Occultism in a Global Perspective*(Acumen/Routledge, 2013); *Sexuality and New Religious Movements* (Palgrave, 2014); *Handbook on Freemasonry* (Brill, 2014), *Western Esotericism in Scandinavia*(Brill, 2016). He is the editor of ‘Oxford Studies in Western Esotericism’, co-editor of ‘Palgrave Studies in New Religions and Alternative Spiritualities’, and the Secretary of the European Society for the Study of Western Esotericism (ESSWE).

12.45-1.45 Lunch

1.45-3.15 **Panel 3: The Medium is the Message: Occult Communication and Language Reform**

“Deceitful Media and Deceitful Mediums”

Simone Natale (Loughborough University)

Simone Natale is a Lecturer in Communication and Media Studies at Loughborough University. He is the author of *Supernatural Entertainments: Victorian Spiritualism and the Rise of Modern Media Culture* (2016, reprinted as paperback in 2017), and the co-editor with Nicoletta Leonardi of *Photography and Other Media in the Nineteenth Century* (2018), both published by the Penn State University Press.

“From ‘Word Magic’ to Basic English: Language Reform and Magical Thinking in the Interwar Period”

Leigh Wilson (University of Westminster)

Leigh Wilson is Reader in Modern Literature at the University of Westminster. She is the author of *Modernism and Magic: Experiments with Spiritualism, Theosophy and the Occult* (EUP, 2013; paperback 2015) and co-editor of *The Edinburgh Critical Edition of the Selected Writing of Andrew Lang* (2 vols, EUP, 2015).

3.30- 4.30 Visit to the Alchemical and Occult Collections at the University of Glasgow Special Collections.   
Please note: There will be a separate sign up for the Special Collections visit as spaces are limited.

5.00 -6.30 **Closing Reception and Reading with Lorna Gibb, author of**

***A Ghost’s Story* (**[**http://grantabooks.com/a-ghosts-story**](http://grantabooks.com/a-ghosts-story)**)**

*Glasgow Theosophical Society, 17 Queens Crescent, Glasgow, G4 9BL*

Lorna Gibb was born in Belshill, North Lanarkshire, Scotland.  She worked as a dancer in her teens before going to London and Edinburgh Universities.  She has had a variety of jobs both within and outside academia, and in several countries including Qatar, Italy and France. She published her first biography *Lady Hester*(Faber) in 2005 and a biography of Dame Rebecca West, *West’s World* in 2013 (Pan Macmillan).  Her debut novel *A Ghost’s Story* was published by Granta in Nov 2015 and *Childless Voices,* part memoir, part cultural exploration will also be published by them early next year.  Lorna now lives in Greater London with her husband and three rescue cats and works as a part time Senior Lecturer in Creative Writing as Middlesex University as well as writing books.

