

Call for Articles Semeia Studies volume on Esoteric Readings of Genesis 1-3

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A key text for Jews and Christians is Genesis 1-3, which recounts the story of the creation and of the Garden of Eden. These two episodes have had an enormous effect on subsequent Western thought in terms of the emergence (as well as the rejection) of science, attitudes towards human nature, and the construction of social and cultural norms. For this volume we are interested in papers that discuss, compare, and/or analyze esoteric readings or appropriations of Genesis 1-3 from antiquity to the present, including esoteric literatures such as the Gnostic, Dead Sea, and Nag Hammadi libraries, the Kabbalah and Jewish mysticism, and Hermeticism, as well as esoteric thinkers, such as Jacob Boehme, Emanuel Swedenborg, Eliphas Lévi, Helena Blavatsky, Rudolf Steiner, René Guénon, etc. Possible topics include creation myths, gender, fate and free will, concepts of knowledge/wisdom/gnosis, the origin of good and evil, life and death, the idea of a “fall,” the afterlife, as well as how esoteric interpretations address issues of gender or race, as well as other social categories, and explorations of experiential esoteric approaches of Genesis 1-3. Also welcome are more theoretical-historical oriented contributions discussing the issue of how to integrate esotericism with biblical studies, as well as discussions of what has been done in this respect in the past.

Proposals, including a (provisional) title, short abstract (150-250 words) and biographical note, are due with the editors before the end of January 2010. Articles that are accepted are due before the end of January 2011.

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