

**Dion Fortune and her Inner Plane Contacts:
Intermediaries in the Western Esoteric Tradition**

Volume 1 of 2

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Abstract

Whereas occultists of the standing of H. P. Blavatsky, Annie Besant, C. W. Leadbeater, and especially Aleister Crowley have been well served by academic enquiry and by published accounts of their lives and work, Violet Evans, neé Firth (aka 'Dion Fortune'), has suffered comparative neglect, as has her concept of the 'Masters' who inspired and informed her work. These factors, alongside the longevity of her Society of the Inner Light (still flourishing), are the catalysts for my embarking on this thesis.

Chapter 1 discusses the method of approach, covers Fortune's definitions of frequent occult terms, and compares observations of her work by fellow occultists and outside observers. Chapter 2 is a comprehensive review of mainly recent academic research into the role of intermediaries in magic and religion from ancient times, and serves as a background to Fortune's own esoteric philosophy, showing that she was heir to a tradition with a long history. Chapter 3 reviews those features of her early history relevant to her occult involvement to and her literary output and training, with special reference to her teachers and collaborators.

The composition and content of the Inner Worlds is contained in Fortune's understanding of the Kabbalah and the glyph of the Tree of Life, which served as a most important framework for classifying the range of beings said to inhabit the invisible worlds. Chapter 4 therefore clarifies her contribution to Western Esoteric Kabbalah by comparing it with the work of others, showing how she consolidated and added to existing knowledge, producing what was acknowledged as a groundbreaking exegesis in its day. Chapter 5 compares Fortune's viewpoint with that of major British occultists concerning the identity, nature and tasks of the Masters of Wisdom, leading into Chapter 6, which investigates techniques and methods that Fortune and others have found favourable for contacting them. Chapter 7 concludes by emphasising once again the relative neglect of Fortune's work in contrast to that of Helena Blavatsky, and the major role in occultism that both Fortune and the Masters played.

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Chapter 1: Background, Resources, and Method

Introduction

The history of late nineteenth- to early twentieth-century occultism has been dominated by the names of Helena Blavatsky (1831-91), S. L. MacGregor Mathers (1854-1918), Aleister Crowley (1875-1947) and, to a much lesser extent, Israel Regardie (1907-85) and Dion Fortune (1890-1946); and it is to the former three that the preponderance of recent research has been directed. The present thesis argues that the work and philosophy of Dion Fortune, although firmly founded on that of her predecessors, is of at least comparable significance to theirs, as shown by the tributes paid – especially to her fiction – by practising occultists and also by those magicians and organisations whose work she inspired. I shall therefore chiefly examine that which she regarded as crucial to the efficacy of her work – her contact with, and relationship to, a range of forces or beings, particularly those intermediaries that she terms ‘the Inner Plane Adepts’, ‘the Masters’,¹ or the ‘Elder Brethren’, whom she considers to hold independent existence in an invisible world or universe parallel to, or interpenetrating with, or higher than, the material everyday world susceptible to scientific investigation. More broadly, the ‘contacts’ referred to in the thesis title are those postulated denizens of the subtle planes that aspirants, disciples, spiritualists, occultists, or psychic investigators may be able to communicate with, generally after some form of occult or Mystery School training in psychic or spiritual sensitivity. I therefore address the development of Fortune’s philosophy and practice through her life (the content of the first part of this thesis), and give a detailed discussion of the Masters – who they might be, what was their function, and how communication with them was facilitated (the content of the second and main section), thus providing a

¹ In common with Regardie, Fortune, and other major writers on the Masters, I shall retain the capitalised form throughout this thesis.

new understanding of the significance and function of Fortune's intermediaries, and their importance to her and those following in her tradition.

There are many other features of her work that might at first appear to be of at least equal weight,² but the matter of the existence of spiritually advanced invisible entities, guides, or helpers such as her Masters of Wisdom was of the greatest import not only to Fortune but to other occultists of influence at the time, e.g. to Helena Blavatsky, co-founder³ of the Theosophical Society, and S. L. MacGregor Mathers, co-founder⁴, prime researcher and motivator of the Hermetic Order of the Golden Dawn, whose mysterious 'Third Order' composed only of 'Secret Chiefs', was said to lie behind the Order's outward activities to inspire its knowledge papers and guide its rituals. We shall see that Fortune was closely associated with both of these societies, and was also a trance medium and lay psychotherapist, aware of the then latest psychological theories of Sigmund Freud (1856-1939), Alfred Adler (1870-1937), and towards the end of her life, of Carl Gustav Jung (1875-1961).⁵ However, rather than thinking of a Master as being either a kind of spiritualist guide or manifestation of the

² e.g. her contribution to the study of Kabbalah in Western Occultism; her belief in the centrality of the doctrine of reincarnation; her interpretation of cosmology; the balance that she was able to strike between Christianity and paganism; or her emphasis upon the Divine Feminine and the equal status of women at a time when they were still regarded very much as second-class citizens. Some of these areas nevertheless overlap the main focus of the thesis, and will be commented on as necessary.

³ With Col. Olcott in 1875.

⁴ With Rev. Dr Woodman and W. W. Westcott in 1888. Regardie notes that the history of the Golden Dawn is so 'confused and muddled' that the true facts are unlikely ever to emerge. Israel Regardie, *What You Should Know about the Golden Dawn* (Phoenix, AZ: Falcon Press, 1983), p. 18. However, since Regardie wrote (1936), further material has emerged which goes some way towards completing the picture. Although Ellic Howe agrees that its literature is an 'almost impenetrable jungle', his account, supported by material supplied in the 'Foreword' by Gerald Yorke, is an invaluable and detailed study. Ellic Howe, *The Magicians of the Golden Dawn: A Documentary History of a Magical Order, 1887-1923* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1972). Also the detailed researches of Robert Gilbert, e.g. R. A. Gilbert, *Revelations of the Golden Dawn: the Rise and Fall of a Magical Order* (London: Quantum, 1997); R. A. Gilbert, *The Sorcerer and His Apprentice: The Unknown Hermetic Writings of S. L. MacGregor Mathers and J. W. Brodie-Innes* (Wellingborough: Aquarian Press, 1987), etc.

⁵ Gareth Knight mentions that Fortune was in correspondence with the founder of the Eranos Institute in Switzerland, Olga Froebe-Kapteyn, for a number of years. Gareth Knight, *Dion Fortune and the Inner Light* (Loughborough: Thoth Publications, 2000), p. 217. See also Hans Thomas Hackl, *Der verborgene Geist von Eranos. Unbekannte Begegnungen von Wissenschaft und Esoterik. Eine alternative Geistesgeschichte des 20. Jahrhunderts (Taschenbuch)* (Gaggenau: scientia nova, 2001).

‘Wise Old Man’ archetype,⁶ she deemed them to be humans who had advanced beyond the need to incarnate, but who had elected to remain in contact with those still in the flesh in order to help humanity,⁷ working primarily through various occult groups to train their members to become skilled in the specialisms of occult activity.⁸ Fortune emphasises that the work of an occult or magical group is only of merit to the extent that it is guided and energised by the Masters who are in charge of it, and from whom the group receives its sole authority. Without such contact, the group’s work is relatively fruitless other than as a teaching organisation or, at best, a mechanism for psychological betterment. This is a view that many would contest.⁹ The prominent Kabbalist Israel Regardie castigates Fortune for her ‘baseless view that Magic and the Golden Dawn System were devoted to “picking up the contacts” of the Masters [. . .] neither *The Tree of Life*, nor the Golden Dawn system itself were concerned in any way with Masters or their “contacts”¹⁰ but for Fortune and those who follow in her tradition, the position of the Masters within a group is indispensable.

Of the early twentieth-century English occultists such as those mentioned above, whose activities are still widely acknowledged by those interested in esoteric

⁶ As described by C. G. Jung, *Memories, Dreams, Reflections* (London: Collins and Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1963), p. 175.

⁷ Cf. the concept in Mahayana Buddhism of the Bodhisattva, who having reached the threshold of enlightenment, nevertheless elects to turn back to help those who have yet to reach that state rather than passing on to higher stages of consciousness themselves. This concept may well have been the trigger for Blavatsky’s reformulation of the ‘Brothers’ to which she had first referred in 1875 and known under Egyptian names, into the ‘Mahatmas’ or ‘Masters’ of Indian origin. See Nicholas Goodrick-Clarke, *The Coming of the Masters: The Evolutionary Reformulation of Spiritual Intermediaries in Modern Theosophy* (Presented at the inaugural conference of the European Society for the Study of Western Esotericism (ESSWE) at Tübingen, Baden-Württemberg, 22nd July 2007).

⁸ Gareth Knight in Dion Fortune, *The Secrets of Dr Taverner* (St Paul Minnesota: Llewellyn, 1962, [1926]), pp. 17-20.

⁹ Such a group may, for example, specialise in charity work, reading and lecturing, or mutual support.

¹⁰ Regardie, *What You Should Know*, p. 53. See Dion Fortune, ‘Ceremonial Magic Unveiled’, *Occult Review*, January 1933, reprinted in *Inner Light*, 24: 1 (2003), 12-21. Regardie understood the work of ritual only as a very valuable psychological tool. For further discussion see Chapter 5.

matters,¹¹ the work of Dion Fortune is one of the least thoroughly examined by academics, and research into at least one aspect of her philosophy is long overdue.

Born 6 December 1890 at Llandudno, North Wales, Violet Mary Firth eventually adopted a contraction of her family motto 'Deo Non Fortuna' (by God, not by luck) as her pen-name.¹² The epithet 'Dion Fortune' is now so well known and used in occult literature that it is most convenient to retain its use here¹³ in preference to her mundane name. Most of what has been pieced together about her personal life can be gleaned from her own semi-autobiographical writings, for other records are few. She began her professional career training as a psychotherapist, and spent most of her subsequent life in south-east England teaching and practising magic. It may well be thought that alongside such figures as H. P. Blavatsky and Aleister Crowley, both of them prominent occultists of their time and well-known even among those not especially drawn to occultism, little attention need be paid to the far less well-known figure of Dion Fortune. There are grounds, however, for giving her more attention than she has elicited so far, because of her substantial contributions to both the theoretical and practical aspects of approaching the Masters.¹⁴ In some respects, she was something of a pioneer by virtue of her positive stance for women and by having to work against the downturn in interest in the occult after the seemingly almost inevitable scenario of adverse occurrences and press reports concerning, in their turn, the Theosophical Society, The Order of the Golden Dawn and, especially, the activities of Aleister Crowley, which lasted throughout the 1920s to 1940s.¹⁵

¹¹ By magicians because she was the inheritor of the magical Golden Dawn tradition, and by wiccans and neo-pagans because of her pioneering stance towards women and the feminine, as summed up in her writings on the Goddess Isis.

¹² And which she used as one of her magical names or mottos when officiating within the Fraternity that she founded.

¹³ In the shortened form of 'Fortune'.

¹⁴ This is the preferred term for these inner beings during the course of the thesis.

¹⁵ See, for example, the following recent studies. For an overall account of these movements, Alex Owen, *The Place of Enchantment: British Occultism and the Culture of the Modern* (London: University of Chicago Press, 2004); for the Theosophical Society, see Bruce F. Campbell, *Ancient Wisdom Revived: A History of the Theosophical Movement* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1980); Sylvia Cranston, *HPB: The Extraordinary Life and Influence of Helena Blavatsky, Founder of the Modern Theosophical Movement* (New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1993), or Jean Overton Fuller, *Blavatsky and her Teachers* (London: Theosophical Publishing House, 1988),

After reviewing the resources and methods undertaken, this chapter will continue by examining at length the most frequently-used terms in Fortune's vocabulary, then take stock of the informed opinions of those practitioners, commentators and academics who encourage us to believe that Fortune's contribution is well worth extended study. Her understanding of the broad background of the Western esoteric tradition in England is discussed here, supported by those who knew her, or who trained in that tradition, and who confirm her as an eminent occultist, most notably by virtue of her texts and novels and the attempts she made to break down the barriers of secrecy traditionally closely guarded by the esoteric groups of her time.

Chapter 2, a critical review of the contributions of previous studies, will trace the concept of spiritual intermediaries in Western esotericism from archaic times through significant epochs of history up until the beginning of the twentieth century as recorded, discussed and interpreted by recent academic research. This review of scholarly literature is intended to show that Fortune was not alone in postulating the existence of a particular variety of intermediary. Indeed, it underlines the enormous significance in an unbroken line over millennia, certainly in Western Europe, of the concept of, or belief in, or communication with, intermediaries of one kind or another among the educated as much as among the common people. The extent and variety of this area of study is such that by virtue of the volume of both the primary and secondary source material, only this one aspect of Fortune's involvement can be satisfactorily investigated here – the factor that she regarded as most significant in her occult practice: an awareness of powers and presences existing in the inner worlds, or upon higher planes.¹⁶ We shall find in Chapter 3 that she disseminated whatever she felt was important and useful (however abstruse or controversial) for those of esoteric

especially pp. 144, 159, 166-174; for the Hermetic Order of the Golden Dawn see R. A. Gilbert, *Revelations of the Golden Dawn* or Francis King, *Ritual Magic in England* (London: Neville Spearman, 1970), especially pp. 70-83; and for Aleister Crowley see Gerald Suster, *The Legacy of the Beast: The Life, Work and Influence of Aleister Crowley* (London: W. H. Allen, 1998); Kenneth Grant, *Remembering Aleister Crowley* (London: W. H. Allen, 1991), P. R. Stephenson and Israel Regardie, *The Legend of Aleister Crowley* (St Paul, MN: Llewellyn, 1970), or more recently, Marco Parsi, *Aleister Crowley und die Versuchung der Politik* (Graz, Österreich: Ares Verlag, 2006).

¹⁶ Or, as we might propose nowadays, 'levels of awareness' or even 'parallel universes'.

inclination who felt an inner calling to serve the Masters in the way that she felt she herself had done.

Chapter 3 will consider Fortune's early years, illustrating how she was able to develop a reflective outlook on life with a propensity towards psychic ability which encompassed not only the more familiar activity of contacting the deceased, but also an appreciation that the inner world consists of many disparate and discrete levels of ever-increasing subtlety and spiritual refinement, and that it is from the more refined of those levels that higher powers and higher beings may best be contacted. We will note that as a Christian, she would have to reconcile both Christian and non-Christian elements into her repertoire. The influences of her subsequent training will be discussed and an overview of her literary background provided. Although much of her work was inspirational and self-generated, not following, for example, all of the tenets and intricacies of doctrine set out by Blavatsky, Alice Bailey, or others, I shall show that the conditioning that she received by virtue of her reading, the development of a strong and often psychic sensitivity towards what she felt were various inner conditions and presences, and the expectations and interpretations that she chose to hold to as a result of formal training in the Mysteries, all contrived to establish her as a central figure well within the mainstream of English occultism. This chapter will conclude by identifying individuals and groups qualifying as her successors.

Chapter 4 will give an account not only of the inner beings, but will also define the setting within which Fortune placed them by outlining elements of her cosmology as seen through her understanding of the glyph of the Kabbalistic Tree of Life. A range of influences bear upon this – the Judaic, Renaissance Christian, and occult traditions of Kabbalah; the influence of Blavatsky through her seminal work *The Secret Doctrine* (1888); the complementary work of Alice A. Bailey (1880-1949) during the early decades of the twentieth century;¹⁷ the extensive writings of Rudolf Steiner (1861-1925); Mathers's *The Kabbalah Unveiled* (1887), and Fortune's own

¹⁷ Many volumes from 1922 to 1960, including, for example, Alice A. Bailey's initial *Initiation, Human and Solar* (London: Lucis Press, 1922), and further volumes such as *A Treatise of Cosmic Fire* (London: Lucis Press, 1925) and her 5-volume *Treatise on the Seven Rays* (London: Lucis Press, 1936-60).

The Cosmic Doctrine (channelled between 1923 and 1925) and *The Mystical Qabalah* (1935).¹⁸ Her work has since been both enhanced and modified by that of her successors, – William Ernest Butler, Gareth Knight, William G. Gray, R. J. Stewart, and others, whose views will be introduced as appropriate.¹⁹ Regardie was almost a contemporary of Fortune, and they were familiar with each other's work. Z'ev ben Shimon Halevi, in contrast, represents a Jewish but non-orthodox approach to Kabbalah, since he incorporates elements of both the traditional medieval Jewish school of Gerona and of the Western esoteric tradition. Comparisons with each of these will be made – again, as appropriate, especially where they deal with the topic of the Masters and other denizens of the inner planes. The main emphasis, however, will be to determine Fortune's own understanding and experience.

Chapter 5 will focus more closely on the identity of the Masters as understood by Fortune and various other occultists, esoteric students and scholars of esotericism, especially in regard to the debt that Fortune owes to the Theosophical Society and its own models of the Masters; who – or what – did they believe them to be, and following from that, what did they consider to be their function? Fortune's explanations of the aims and purposes of developing inner contacts will be presented and examined from the points of view of both living occultists on the one hand, and the inner beings themselves on the other. What kinds of benefits did those incarnate believe were available – the search for knowledge and instruction, perhaps in the form of teachings received psychically or inspirationally; training in sensitivity; the mediation of beneficent powers or influences (as patterns, images, ideals, forces or energies); personal development; devotion; or perhaps a search for healing? From my own appreciation of the point of view of the inner plane beings themselves, the sensed

¹⁸ Helena Petrovna Blavatsky, *The Secret Doctrine: The Synthesis of Science, Religion and Philosophy* (London: Theosophical Publishing House, (1950) [1888]); S. L. MacGregor Mathers, *The Kabbalah Unveiled* (London: Arkana, 1991, [1887]); Dion Fortune, *The Cosmic Doctrine* (York Beach, ME: Samuel Weiser, 2000, [1949]); Dion Fortune, *The Mystical Qabalah* (London: Ernest Benn, 1976 [1935]).

¹⁹ W. E. Butler, *Magic and the Qabalah* (London: Aquarian, 1964); Gareth Knight, *A Practical Guide to Qabalistic Symbolism*, 2 vols (Toddington: Helios Books, 1965); William G. Gray, *The Ladder of Lights* (Toddington: Helios Books, 1971); R. J. Stewart, *The Miracle Tree: Demystifying the Qabalah* (Franklin Lakes, NJ: New Page Books, 2003). All these later authors trained and worked within her tradition.

needs might include such considerations as the impressing of pupils with creative ideas; the training of pupils' sensitivity (e.g. through contrived synchronicities); an improvement of (or innovations in) their mediational and magical skills, or the imparting of knowledge. Which of these are apposite to their proclaimed tasks?

Chapter 6 will focus on a comparison of the techniques and methods that Fortune and others have used to establish and maintain communication between the inner and outer worlds, and will include an overview of trance mediumship, meditation routines including visualisation techniques, and ritual methods.

Chapter 7 will summarise Fortune's concepts concerning her intermediaries and will also indicate wide areas of Fortune's activity that have of necessity had to be omitted here, for example how she managed to reconcile the apparent disparities between Christianity and paganism. No attempt will be made at any stage to determine the reality, subjective or objective, of the beings she alleged that she had contacted, for she would be the first to admit that, from an epistemological point of view, she did not know; for her, the journey lay rather in the experience and in the sense of satisfaction that the fruits of that experience were in fact being accomplished.

Resources and Method

Personal Background

My own approach to the research subject is one of personal involvement in a Mystery School beginning in 1955 after having developed an interest in esoteric subjects during school days. My reading at the time included such authors as Paul Brunton (1898-1981) and Swami Vivekananda (1863-1902), who hoped to bring the depth of Eastern traditions to popular notice in the West and stimulate Westerners to undertake similar spiritual activity.²⁰ Theosophical literature and the presence of the Theosophical Society had already prepared the ground for them and for my own studies, but it was not until I encountered Fortune's *The Mystical Qabalah* that I felt sufficiently encouraged by her appeal for Western approaches for Western aspirants, to apply for

²⁰ e.g. Paul Brunton, *The Hidden Teachings Beyond Yoga* (New York: Samuel Weiser, 1941); Swami Vivekananda, *The Complete Works of Swami Vivekananda* (Calcutta: Advaita Ashrama, 1964-71).

serious training – in this case, to the Society of the Inner Light which she had herself founded. What moved me to do so was less intellectual conviction than a feeling of empathy towards Fortune’s style, and a deep sense of ‘this is what I have been looking for’ – not that I really felt that I had especially been looking for anything in particular; I had an inner compulsion, and could see how, by doing useful work ‘behind the scenes’ such as might be done by a religious organisation through prayer, it might possibly be of some benefit to the world at large, with perhaps some beneficial consequences for my own spiritual journey. It also appealed to me that the materials included both Christian and pre-Christian mythologies. After a two-year correspondence course, I was admitted to the First Degree of the Lesser Mysteries, where I remained for seven years until I felt the pressure to resign in order to advance my mundane career through further professional studies and responsibilities. By 1974, having achieved my career aims,²¹ I then felt free to return to esoteric training, this time directly under Gareth Knight who by then had set up his own Mystery School. Seven years later, I was admitted to into the Greater Mysteries of his ‘GK Group’, where I eventually took up a leading position in its organisation and ritual work. In addition to my continuing responsibilities with the GK Group,²² I responded alongside other members to a call in 2002 to apply (or in my case to re-apply) for membership of the Society of the Inner Light in order to share our experience with them. The impulse towards academic research is a much more recent occurrence. In the year 2000, I graduated with a Master of Arts degree from the University of Wales, Lampeter, specialising in Religious Experience, and began research leading towards a similar qualification in Religious Studies at the University of Kent, Canterbury. I subsequently applied to work in the doctoral programme of the Centre for the Study of Esotericism (EXESESO) at the University of Exeter. I thus qualify both as an insider and as an outsider. Having settled on Dion Fortune as my broad research subject, it was no small matter to select which area of her esoteric life to focus on. By her own admission, however, her Society would have no esoteric meaning without a working association

²¹ As headmaster of one of the largest Junior Schools in Essex.

²² Subsequently renamed ‘The Avalon Group’ after Gareth Knight had bequeathed it to the then members and had himself re-joined the Society of the Inner Light.

with her intermediaries, so this became the essential area to tackle. In contrast to the general route of scholars, therefore, my approach into the academic arena has been the result of a long period of maturation after many years of training, exploration and experiment in the practicalities of the magical technology advocated by Fortune, and followed only recently by research into religious experience and, more particularly, Western esotericism, which has in the meantime established itself firmly enough to have already produced a substantial body of scholarly literature. Whereas Fortune had previously seemed to be a rather unique figure, it has become clear that much of her work was foreshadowed in that of Helena Petrovna Blavatsky, and that both owed a great deal to the Western esoteric tradition stretching from the early twentieth century back into antiquity.

Resources

Rather than offering a ‘report from the trenches’ in the form of a sociological or anthropological study of Fortune’s group or practices,²³ my primary sources consist of Fortune’s own texts and novels, which will be discussed in Chapter 3. Also referred to are reprints of her articles from the *Inner Light* (organ of the Society of the Inner Light); channelled materials that were originally intended purely for the use of her inner group;²⁴ novels written with specific underlying magical purposes which Fortune spelled out in her articles; collections of monographs written to redress abuses of occultism that she felt strongly about;²⁵ and the weekly and, later, monthly letters written under blitz conditions of World War II, and containing previously closely

²³ A phrase referring to Margot Adler’s *Drawing Down the Moon* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1986). See Sarah M. Pike, ‘Rationalising the Margins: A Review of Legitimation and Ethnographic Practice in Scholarly Research on Neo-Paganism’ in James R. Lewis, ed., *Magical Religion and Modern Witchcraft* (Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 1996), p. 366. The organisation and ritual practice of a modern Mystery School is a separate broad field of research which has been tackled by some anthropologists such as Tanya M. Luhrmann, *Persuasions of the Witch’s Craft: Ritual Magic in Contemporary England* (London: Picador, 1989), and Susan Greenwood, *Magic, Witchcraft and the Other World* (Oxford: Berg, 2000). Research by specialists in religious experience would be particularly welcome as an alternative approach.

²⁴ The 2000 edition of *The Cosmic Doctrine*, for example, is specifically stated to be the unamended, unedited text just as Fortune recorded in 1923-25. This was not so with the first edition of 1949. Fortune, *Cosmic Doctrine*, n. preceding ‘Millennium Preface’.

guarded teaching on specific meditation techniques that she felt the national emergency permitted her to reveal. Together, I shall use these materials to focus on Fortune's own explorations of the 'inner planes' and their inhabitants. Unfortunately, there is a certain repetition in her writings, many of which were prepared in haste for her magazine, leading to uncorrected errors.²⁶

The materials will be supplemented by comparing them where appropriate with the works of other occultists – forerunners in the esoteric tradition, her contemporaries, and her successors. There will be some comment and evaluation of Fortune's work from those holding similar or contrary viewpoints,²⁷ and from academics whose interests lie in studies of esoteric spirituality.

The archives of the Society of the Inner Light remain confidential to that Society, and access has not been granted to their files, whilst at the same time giving the assurance that, particularly under the Society's renewed commitment to publish Fortune's material in as unedited a form as possible, there is little new to be found.²⁸ Within the strong authoritarian structure of the Society in the past, it is not known how many, or what records were destroyed, it is only certain that they were, and on at least two occasions.²⁹ However, her publications will put us in a good position to gauge the extent of her standing within the occult community to the present day, and give some sense of the contribution she made through her magical activities within her Society, and to a wider audience through her publications.

Chapter 2 comprises the bulk of secondary sources, and includes research carried out mainly within the last twenty years into the frequent incidence of intermediary figures in esoteric traditions from ancient to modern times. This survey is

²⁵ e.g. Dion Fortune, *Sane Occultism* (London: Aquarian, 1967, [1930]).

²⁶ As, for example, in Dion Fortune, *Avalon of the Heart* (London: Aquarian, 1971, [1934]); Gareth Knight in *Dion Fortune and the Inner Light*, p. 115.

²⁷ e.g. Z'ev ben Shimon Halevi, *The Way of Kabbalah* (London: Rider, 1976) on Kabbalah, and various authors on Wicca.

²⁸ '... there are no archives available now. If ever there were in my lifetime (or yours) you would certainly be told.' Private letter to Gareth Knight from the then Warden, Arthur Chichester (8 July 1970).

²⁹ See, for example, Janine Chapman, *Quest for Dion Fortune* (York Beach, ME: Samuel Weiser, 1993), p. 109.

essential in order to place Dion Fortune within a continuing theurgic tradition, and to dispel any consideration of her as a unique and isolated figure without a multiplicity of antecedents in Western esotericism. Subsequent chapters will continue to refer to these sources alongside texts by Fortune's fellow early-twentieth-century practitioners such as H. P. Blavatsky, C. W. Leadbeater, S. L. MacGregor Mathers, and Israel Regardie; and the works of later figures such as W. G. Gray, Gareth Knight and R. J. Stewart.

Method

I take note of Jacob Needleman's call for both practitioners and academics to give due weight to each other's point of view.³⁰ The anthropologist Tanya Luhrmann clearly understands the need to become an insider in order to investigate contemporary magic satisfactorily, and so she undertook full magical training in order to do so, although apart from her statement that in order to be an insider, she had to become one, she spends little time on methodological issues.³¹ Her studies draw attention to the irrational nature of esoteric beliefs, which she attempts to explain in terms of the interdependency of belief and experience.³² Similarly, Susan Greenwood trained as a witch and as a high magician, with the 'deliberately participatory approach [. . .] essential to an understanding of contemporary magicians' otherworlds.'³³ She wrestles with the question of how far it is possible to be both an insider opening up a sometimes extremely intense subjective awareness alongside being an objective outsider, the clash between the two resulting in a feeling of schizophrenia and divided loyalties.³⁴ She also addresses the extent to which the investigator is disturbed by

³⁰ See pp. 24, 28, below and Needleman in Faivre and Needleman, *Modern Esoteric Spirituality*, pp. xxv, xxix.

³¹ Tanya Luhrmann, *Persuasions of the Witch's Craft: Ritual Magic in Contemporary England* (London: Picador, 1994), p. 17.

³² Luhrmann, *Persuasions*, p. 13. Also Sarah M. Pike, 'Rationalising the Margins', p. 366. Christopher McIntosh remarks that 'the human mind abhors the absence of the irrational, just as nature abhors a vacuum.' Christopher McIntosh, *Eliphas Lévi and the French Occult Revival* (London: Rider and Company, 1972), p. 18.

³³ Greenwood, *Magic*, p. 13. It is noteworthy that both Luhrmann and Greenwood both mention their contemplative and imaginative childhood, just as does Knight in respect of Fortune: Luhrmann, *Persuasions*, p. 19; Greenwood, *Magic*, p. ix; Gareth Knight, *Dion Fortune and the Inner Light*, p. 14.

³⁴ Greenwood, *Magic*, pp. 14-16.

engaging wholeheartedly in the magical processes, and takes some comfort in suggestions by Anthony Cohen and Nigel Rapport who suggest that researchers' insights about their own consciousness could well be applied to the interpretation of the culture under investigation as in a dialogue, thus avoiding the false dichotomy between researcher and those researched. Greenwood is aware of anthropology's historical rationalistic presuppositions, and aims to bypass them in an approach which she sums up as one of 'biculturalism – of translating the magical otherworld to the academic world'.³⁵

Both Wouter Hanegraaff and Arthur Versluis comment on the complicated nature of esotericism emphasising the importance of an etic approach as essential to lending credence to academic research.³⁶ The terms 'emic' and 'etic' were introduced in 1954 by the linguistic anthropologist Kenneth Pike as more concise terms to designate the points of view of an 'insider' on the one hand (emic), and those of an 'outsider' (etic) on the other, and which began by being applied to the field of anthropology. It is no surprise that as a linguist, Pike derived his terminology from the existing linguistic terms 'phonemic' and 'phonetic'. Emic distinctions are those which are meaningful to members of the culture under study, while etic distinctions such as the wider application of systematic analytical criteria generally well understood by the academic community, are those meaningful to the perspective of scientific observers. Pike adds that both views are subject to limitation and distortion, so any full and correct interpretation of an event should include both.³⁷ Marvin Harris also uses both

³⁵ Greenwood, *Magic*, pp. 11, 12, 19, 24, and Anthony Cohen and Nigel Rapport, eds, *Questions of Consciousness* (London: Routledge, 1955), pp. 9-10, 211.

³⁶ Hanegraaff, 'On the Construction of "Esoteric Traditions"' in Antoine Faivre and Wouter J. Hanegraaff, eds, *Western Esotericism and the Science of Religion* (Leuven: Peeters, 1998), pp. 56-58, 60-61; also Versluis, *What is Esoteric?: Methods in the Study of Western Esotericism*. <http://www.esoteric.msu.edu/VolumeIV/Methods.htm> [accessed 29/01/2002], p. 4: 'this delicate, subtle, and sophisticated field'.

³⁷ Kenneth L. Pike, *A Stereoscopic Window on the World* <http://personalwebs.oakland.edu/~kitchens/150d/pike.html> [accessed 14/04/2008]. His original monograph was Kenneth L. Pike, *Language in Relation to a Unified Theory of the Structure of Human Behaviour* (Glendale, CA: Summer Institute of Linguistics, 1954). James Lett, too, concludes his paper on emic/etic distinctions by emphasising the generally acknowledged necessity for addressing studies from the point of view of both positions. James Lett, *Emic/Etic Distinctions* (<http://faculty.ircc.edu/faculty/jlett/Article> [accessed 02/11/2006])

approaches, but claims that the etic approach is superior to the emic, and is essential to any scientific survey.³⁸ Thomas N. Headland comments that although these terms were in widespread use in anthropology and also in other behavioural sciences by the 1980s, there was little agreement as to their exact meanings, and although he is forgiving regarding this phenomenon because of its inherent usefulness, he nevertheless feels the need for more precision when he organised public dialogue between Pike, Harris and other experts.³⁹ The popularity and usefulness of the two terms has been reiterated in many subsequent papers as for example in Christina Hahn's *Clear-Cut Concepts vs. Methodological Ritual: Etic and Emic Revisited*.⁴⁰

In the field of religion and religious experience, Russell T. McCutcheon's twenty-seven contributors to his compendium consider afresh the approaches of insiders and outsiders as applied to that area of study. The philosopher Alasdair McIntyre, for example, suggests that insiders and outsiders cannot possibly understand each other without being them.⁴¹ Rudolf Otto and Mircea Eliade put forward non-reductionist approaches, whereas Robert A. Segal argues that a reductionist approach is essential for outsiders, but is impossible for insiders.⁴² Ninian Smart and Peter Donovan present positions of neutrality, or methodological

³⁸ Harris's first use of the terms was in his *The Nature of Cultural Things* (NY: Random House, 1964), later followed up with extended discussion of the origins of these terms, and the contributions of subsequent scholars. Marvin Harris, 'The History and Significance of the Emic/Etic Distinction', *Annual Review of Anthropology* 5 (1976), 329-350, (pp. 331-33), and in a major work, *Cultural Materialism: The Struggle for a Science of Culture* (New York: Random House, 1979). <http://faculty.ircc.edu/faculty/jlett/Article%20on%20Emics%20and%20Etics.htm> [accessed 14/04/2008].

³⁹ Thomas N. Headland, Kenneth Pike and Marvin Harris, eds, '*Emics and Etics: The Insider/Outsider Debate*' <http://www.sil.org/~headland/ee-intro.htm> (7 pages) [accessed 20/04/2008].

⁴⁰ Christina Hahn, *Clear-Cut Concepts vs. Methodological Ritual: Etic and Emic Revisited*, Paper presented at the annual meeting of the International Communication Association, Dresden International Congress Centre, Dresden, June 16, 2006. http://www.allacademic.com/meta/p_mla_apa_research_citation/0/9/2/1/2/p92120_in... [accessed 14/04/2008].

⁴¹ Alasdair McIntyre, 'Is Understanding Religion Compatible with Believing?' in Russell T. McCutcheon, *The Insider/Outsider Problem in the Study of Religion* (London: Cassell, 1999), pp. 37-49.

⁴² Rudolf Otto, 'The Idea of the Holy, Chapters 1-11' in McCutcheon, *Insider/Outsider*, pp. 74-81, and Mircea Eliade, 'A New Humanism' in McCutcheon, *Insider/Outsider*, pp. 95-103. Robert A. Segal ('In Defence of Reductionism' in McCutcheon, *Insider/Outsider*, pp. 139-63).

agnosticism; while those arguing for reflexivity suggest that the role and outlook of the researcher him or herself is more pervasive than is often granted.⁴³

The emic/etic debate has also influenced approaches to the study of Western esotericism, although Antoine Faivre does not discuss it at any length, save that we might observe that his six ‘fundamental characteristics’ of esotericism could well be a classic example of the imposition of a purely etic framework upon categories of esoteric thought which in the end might only be capable of being defined satisfactorily in emic terms.⁴⁴ Wouter Hanegraaff refers to Pike’s view that although etic knowledge or interpretations can lead into emic understanding (i.e. as judged by natives), any supposed objective knowledge is ultimately illusory, and adds that scholars cannot help but view the materials through the veil of their own predispositions, the saving grace being that their etic approach is always open to valid challenge by other scholars. Since the term ‘esotericism’ is so imprecise even as used among insiders, scholars necessarily ‘*etically* construe’ its nature in many and varied ways.⁴⁵

Arthur Versluis speaks of Hanegraaff’s ‘continuing and (self-)critical dialectics of emic material and etic interpretation [. . .]’. In other words, “‘sympathetic empiricism” [. . .] the best of both emic and etic approaches,’ for which approach Versluis gives him all due acknowledgement. Versluis also cites the work of Henry Corbin for his distinctly emic approach to Sufi mysticism whereby he almost comes to be regarded as a primary source himself, and possibly falling into the emic vice that Hanegraaff warned against – that of becoming an apologist.⁴⁶ According to Michael Jackson, our task is to throw light on the lived experiences behind explanations,

⁴³ Ninian Smart, ‘Within and Without Religion’ in McCutcheon, *Insider/Outsider*, pp. 221-34, and Peter Donovan, ‘Neutrality in Religious Studies’ in McCutcheon, *Insider/Outsider*, pp. 235-47.

⁴⁴ Antoine Faivre and Jacob Needleman, eds, *Modern Esoteric Spirituality* (London: SCM Press, 1992), pp. xi-xxii.

⁴⁵ Wouter J. Hanegraaff, ‘On the construction of Esoteric Traditions’ in *Western Esotericism and the Science of Religion* edited by Antoine Faivre and Wouter J. Hanegraaff (Leuven: Peeters, 1998), pp. 11-62 (pp. 13-15). Hanegraaff here cites Kenneth Pike, *Language in Relation to a Unified Theory of the Structure of Human Behaviour* (The Hague/Paris: Mouton & Co, 1967). Hanegraaff also briefly discusses the emic/etic distinction in his *New Age Religion and Western Culture: Esotericism in the Mirror of Secular Thought* (Leiden: Brill, 1996), pp. 6,7.

⁴⁶ Versluis, *What is Esoteric?* pp. 3, 4, 9.

whether by insiders or outsiders.⁴⁷ If Margery Wolf warns of the dangers of the researcher becoming too self-absorbed (i.e. too emic),⁴⁸ Wendy Doniger O'Flaherty goes much further: 'all truly creative scholarship [. . .] is autobiographical.'⁴⁹

While recognising the value of both the reductionist and non-reductionist points of view, my own perspective is closer to that of methodological agnosticism, aiming to avoid the vices mentioned above.

So, bearing all these approaches in mind, I have attempted where matters of interpretation arise in this thesis to adopt an objectively neutral, phenomenological approach, where all human constructs have equal weight, bracketing out my own personal religious or esoteric stance, save where I feel that my experience can throw light on the matter in hand.⁵⁰

Since I do not approach the esoteric field as a newcomer, I do not have quite the same practical problems as Luhrmann or Greenwood; emically, I am able to give a genuine non-critical attitude of empathy to the believer's point of view, thus providing as sound a basis of data as possible for later interpretation from an etic viewpoint, making sense of the findings.⁵¹ I thus regard my 'insidership' as a distinct advantage, while at the same time attempting not to allow this fact to prejudge any aspect of Fortune's work. These are bold claims, but it has been an integral part not only of my esoteric training, but also a built-in requirement of my professional educational career over the course of many years to innovate, plan, and execute with the utmost commitment, but then, most importantly, to undertake the exercise of assessment and

⁴⁷ Michael Jackson, 'The Witch as a Category and as a Person' in McCutcheon, *Insider/Outsider*, pp. 311-30.

⁴⁸ Margery Wolf, 'Writing Ethnography: The Poetics and Politics of Culture' in McCutcheon, *Insider/Outsider*, pp. 354-66.

⁴⁹ Wendy Doniger O'Flaherty, 'The Uses and Misuses of Other People's Myths' in McCutcheon, *Insider/Outsider*, pp. 331-49.

⁵⁰ See Greenwood, *Magic*, p. 42, 44-45.

⁵¹ Marvin Harris, *Cultural Materialism: The Struggle for a Science of Culture* (New York: Random House, 1979), who regards etics as an end in themselves, with the potential to lead to objective knowledge. See Arthur Versluis, *What is Esoteric?* pp. 3, 4. See also Wouter J. Hanegraaff, *New Age Religion and Western Culture* (Leiden: Brill, 1996), pp. 4, 6. Also Wouter J. Hanegraaff, 'Introduction: The Birth of a Discipline' in Antoine Faivre & Wouter J. Hanegraaff, eds, *Western Esotericism and the Science of Religion* (Leuven, Peeters, 1998), p. XII, quoted in David S. Katz, *The Occult Tradition: From the Renaissance to the Present Day* (London: Jonathan Cape, 2005), pp. 4-5.

explanation in the most objective ways possible. This was also the method that Fortune advocated. In any case, I am very much aware that there is no certainty that any of my own inner experiences accord in any way with those of other practitioners, even if they appear to be so from the written word. Faivre warns against studies that stress similarities rather than differences, and that researchers should take care not to allow presuppositions to blind them to essential elements.⁵²

Appendix II (pp. 413-415) lists Fortune's texts which include channelled materials, informed comment, practical exercises, and ritual work. Fortune considered both reincarnation and psychism to be essential elements of occult practice, but I will restrict my own discussions to the latter (in Chapter 6), leaving her ideas on reincarnation to subsequent major research.⁵³ First, however, I shall discuss her remarks on esotericism and occultism alongside those of present-day scholars, and note any inconsistencies that she might have betrayed. Close attention is paid to Fortune's self-evaluation of her own practices and writings, including Kabbalah (which she spells 'Qabalah'), and to comparisons with both the findings of recent scholarship and also with present-day magical practice by those in her tradition.

Here would seem to be a suitable place to comment on the various transliterated spellings of 'Kabbalah', which is generally applied when Jewish sources are referred to. 'Cabala' is the generally recognised Renaissance Christian spelling, from c. 1490-1700, returning to 'Kabbalah' as purely Jewish materials were freshly resourced during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. 'Qabalah' is the Western occultist usage during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. There is, however, considerable overlap, seemingly dependent on authors' personal preferences.

The material is handled in both a thematic and a historical way, giving some insight into the antecedents and persistence of esoteric ideas and definitions, as well as comparisons and interactions between the outlooks of contemporary practitioners,

⁵² Antoine Faivre, *Theosophy, Imagination, Tradition* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2000), pp. xxvi-xxvii. I suspect that few studies are totally free from the author's presuppositions.

⁵³ For modifying views, readers may wish to study essays by Paul Edwards and Melvin Harris, setting out the case against reincarnation and regression. Paul Edwards, 'The Case Against Karma and Reincarnation' and Melvin Harris 'Past-Life Regression: The Grand Illusion', both in Robert Basil, ed.,

forming a repertoire of essential descriptive materials that is intended to provide a lasting contribution to scholarly knowledge for future interpretive and theoretical investigation, in order to discover yet more of the true nature of the conditions that lie behind this particular aspect of esotericism.

Esotericism and the Western Esoteric Tradition

It does not seem to have been in Fortune's nature to cultivate a technical vocabulary which was systematic, and like the English occultist A. E. Waite (1857-1942) she uses many terms interchangeably, intending 'esotericism', for example, to include 'all aspects of super-physical science' whose boundaries recede as secular civilisation, technology and science advance. Few other occultists use the word 'esoteric' and its variations as anything more than convenient or alternative nomenclature for 'occult'.⁵⁴

The title of this thesis purposely includes the word 'Western', in order to emphasise that, despite the borrowing, particularly by Theosophists,⁵⁵ of much

Not Necessarily the New Age: Critical Essays (Buffalo, NY: Prometheus Books, 1988), pp. 87-129; 130-144.

⁵⁴ Arthur Edward Waite, *The Occult Sciences* (London: Kegan Paul, Trench, Trübner, 1891), p. 13; Dion Fortune, *The Esoteric Orders and their Work* (York Beach, ME: Samuel Weiser, 2000 [1928, 1962]), p. 15. The following similar phrases are picked from her works almost at random: 'Esoteric Tradition' (Dion Fortune in Dion Fortune and Gareth Knight, *Spiritualism and Occultism* (Loughborough: Thoth Publications, 1999), p. 35); 'esoteric science' (Dion Fortune, *The Magical Battle of Britain* (Bradford on Avon: Golden Gates Press, 1993), p. 29); 'Ancient Wisdom', 'The Secret Tradition', the Western Tradition(s)' (Fortune, *Spiritualism*, p. 41; *Mystical Qabalah*, pp. v, 1, 92); 'Western Esoteric Tradition' (Fortune, *Spiritualism*, p. 53); 'Western Path' (Fortune, *Spiritualism* p. 140); 'Western Mysteries' (Fortune, *Spiritualism*, p. 141), Western Esotericism (Fortune, *Mystical Qabalah*, p. 26); 'Ancient Mysteries' (Fortune, *Battle*, p. 28). Similarly the term 'esotericist' and 'occultist' or even 'magician' do not denote significant differences (Fortune, *Mystical Qabalah*, p. 267). It could be that Fortune coined the term 'Western Esoteric Tradition' herself. In an article that Knight suggests she wrote during 1924, she lets slip the comment 'I have always referred to [it] as the Western Esoteric Tradition.' (Dion Fortune, *Applied Magic*, (York Beach, ME: Samuel Weiser, 2000, [1962]), pp. xvii, 60), and Regardie comments that she 'glibly refers to its [the Golden Dawn's] teachings as the Western Esoteric Tradition.' (Regardie, *What You Should Know*, p. 34).

⁵⁵ Use of the word Theosophy or Theosophist, with capitalisation, denotes the school of thought and organisation (The Theosophical Society) originating from H. P. Blavatsky, in contradistinction to 'theosophy' uncapitalised which distinguishes the more established tradition of mystical philosophers which include such ancient figures as Pythagoras, Plato and Plotinus as well as the more modern Eckhardt, Bruno, Swedenborg, and Jacob Boehme, and which could be said to be particularly relevant to, and underlie, modern Western occultism (see Chapter 2). See also Joscelyn Godwin, *The Theosophical Enlightenment* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1994.)

vocabulary originating from Eastern traditions⁵⁶ and which has now become common currency among Western occultists and followers of the New Age tradition alike, the Western esoteric traditions whether Christian or pagan are now emerging as a vigorous stream of spirituality among a significant minority in the West.

To examine more than a small sample of all the monographs and texts on the definition of 'esoteric/esotericism' even by recent scholars would be beyond the scope of this thesis, save to state that Fortune's own definitions (see below) make little sense within their context.⁵⁷ Faivre acknowledges that his own wide and inclusive definition encompasses features which spill out beyond the bounds of esotericism, particularly into the arts.⁵⁸ While emphasising the primacy of grand mythic elements such as appear in Genesis and the Apocalypse, and the tendency of theosophers to imaginatively enhance less spectacular 'mythemes' such as Sophia, the angels, Lucifer, etc., he pays scant attention to any of the varied mythological elements such as Fortune introduces;⁵⁹ she in her turn might well have difficulty with Faivre's classification of esotericism into six 'receptacles' within which different inner experiences might be located, not because they are wrong, but because Fortune's esotericism included them all.⁶⁰ She might, however, feel much drawn to the more

⁵⁶ Particularly from Buddhist and Hindu traditions, e.g. 'chakra', 'nirvana', 'karma', 'mandala', etc.

⁵⁷ See Hanegraaff's summary of various positions on esotericism taken by scholars, where he says it is not by any means a simple and straightforward subject. It may be 'construed' in various ways depending heavily on the personal preferences and antipathies of the researcher in question and on his/her methodological presuppositions.' Wouter J. Hanegraaff in Antoine Faivre and Wouter J. Hanegraaff, 'On the Construction of "Esoteric Traditions"' in Antoine Faivre and Wouter J. Hanegraaff, *Western Esotericism*, p. 60.

⁵⁸ Antoine Faivre and Jacob Needleman, *Modern Esoteric Spirituality* (London: SCM Press, 1992), pp. xi-xxii. We should note that the role of intuition and the imagination within scientific, and especially mathematical, venture is increasingly being recognised. See also Ted Schultz, 'A Personal Odyssey through the New Age' in Robert Basil, ed., *Not Necessarily the New Age* (Buffalo, New York: Prometheus Books, 1988), pp. 337-360 (p. 352).

⁵⁹ Antoine Faivre, *Theosophy, Imagination, Tradition*, p. 8. One might suggest that modern Theosophy's descriptions of lost continents, cataclysms, and migrations offer a mythic account of origins partly informed by modern scientific speculation derived from prehistory, palaeogeography, etc., closely paralleling constituted mythologies such as in J. R. R. Tolkien, *The Silmarillion* (London: George Allen & Unwin, 1977).

⁶⁰ Faivre's categories have become broadly accepted as useful by students of esotericism, despite detractors such as Versluis (see below, p. 28). They are enumerated by Faivre as 1. Correspondences; 2. multilayered living nature; 3. imagination and mediation; 4. the experience of transmutation; 5.

phenomenologically oriented description by Needleman, who highlights characteristics of esotericism drawn from the experienter's point of view, its 'tone and atmosphere' and its closeness to the modern scientific temperament rather than to religion. He emphasises the attention that esotericists give to the world of nature, and to the Creator's 'multilevel' universe, stressing that by embracing this mode of thought, there is no need to abandon the hard-won advances of science. He also sees, as did Fortune, the psychological potential – the attraction of the esoteric approach in opening up possibilities of the 'immensity of love and wisdom that is inherent in the structure of the human self' without the necessity of subscribing to specific creeds or moral codes – 'to be independent and self-reliant'. Indeed, for Needleman, as for Fortune, esotericism vastly transcends modern psychology.⁶¹

Arthur Versluis, too, emphasises esotericism's 'vertical' component, and suggests that Faivre has not sufficiently stressed the 'gnostic', or experiential, dimension, an element that Versluis considers pivotal to the full understanding of esoteric spirituality.⁶² It certainly validates the course of Fortune's magical career, if not her definitions, of esotericism, for it focuses on what is of immediate concern to any esotericist – direct spiritual insight into the self, into the cosmos, or into the

concordance (commonalities between traditions); and 6. The transmission of teaching from Master to pupil (Faivre in Faivre and Needleman, *Modern Esoteric Spirituality* London: SCM Press, 1992), pp. xv-xx). Cf also Kocku von Stuckrad's criticism of Faivre's 'characteristics' on the grounds that he neglects to consider Jewish and Islamic esotericism and the later oriental imports. Kocku von Stuckrad, *Western Esotericism: A Brief History of Secret Knowledge* (London: Equinox, 2005), p. 5.

It is significant to compare these categories or characteristics with those of Needleman and Versluis. Needleman speaks of esotericism's three general features as i) being closer to the modern scientific temperament than to traditional doctrinal religion; ii) focusing on the 'multilevel universe' of nature (including an interest to 'sacralise the profane'); and iii) addressing the psychological concerns and crises of people today (Needleman in Faivre, *Modern Esoteric Spirituality*, pp. xxiii-xxvi).

Critical of Faivre's categories on account of their breadth, Versluis proposes: i) A focus on a divine feminine figure; ii) focus on direct experience and insight; iii) theosophic, but non-sectarian; iv) groups led by a spiritual leader; v) reference to Jacob Boehme's works; vi) visionary insight into the non-physical. His position is that overall, the major characteristic of esotericism is gnosis – 'direct insight into the nature of the cosmos and oneself.', although it could also be argued that Versluis confines his sample of Western esotericism too narrowly to Christian theosophy. (Arthur Versluis, *What is Esoteric?*, pp. 1, 11).

⁶¹ Needleman in Faivre, *Modern Esoteric Spirituality*, pp. xxiii-xxx.

⁶² It could be argued that Versluis is merely expanding on Faivre's fourth element, 'the experience of transmutation.' See note 60, above.

godhead, i.e. aspects of mystical awareness without which the study of esotericism is valueless.⁶³

Hanegraaff broadly accepts Faivre's characterisation of esotericism, while at the same time wary that, being modelled on Christian theosophy with an early modern worldview, it leaves little room for the emergence of new characteristics.⁶⁴ In any case, Fortune would look for a definition which as well as being able to incorporate new trends also includes reference to those modern mythological elements (such as roots of the Mysteries in Atlantis) which are of such crucial importance to many occultists.

In his review of esotericism, Lee Irwin proposes five characteristics, or 'structural aspects' of esotericism today which, however, neglect to highlight save by implication some highly characteristic features such as its traditional Hermetic background and the prevalence of intermediaries.⁶⁵

Fortune employs a historico-mythological discussion to distinguish successive forms of esoteric spirituality. Whereas the Eastern tradition, characterised by wisdom, stems from the second of three emigrations from Atlantis after its inundation, she asserts that its Western counterpart characterised by love stems from the third and final emigration from Atlantis.⁶⁶ These two streams are distinguished less by their basic doctrines which are identical, than by the spiritual techniques employed to develop the various inner levels and by their differences of language and symbolism.⁶⁷ At the deepest philosophical level, therefore, Western and Eastern esoteric materials together form a single tradition.

⁶³ Versluis, *What is Esoteric?* p. 2.

⁶⁴ Hanegraaff, *New Age*, pp. 401, 403. See also von Stuckrad, *Western Esotericism*, p. 5.

⁶⁵ These are listed as: 1. graded spiritual teaching; 2. initiatic grace as a vehicle for imparting power or insight; 3. personalised and unique theologies; 4. physical disciplines; 5. awareness of the New Physics in all its manifestations. Lee Irwin, *Western Esotericism, Eastern Spirituality, and the Global Future* pp. 5-8. <http://www.esoteric.msu.edu/VolumeIII/HTML/Irwin.html> [accessed 25/09/2001].

⁶⁶ Fortune, *Esoteric Orders*, pp. 26, 30. Blavatsky gave little coherent account of these emigrations. In *The Secret Doctrine*, her references are scattered and brief, e.g. Blavatsky, *Secret Doctrine*, Vol 3, pp. 316, 331, 349. But see E. W. Preston, *The Earth and its Cycles* (Adyar: Madras, The Theosophical Publishing House, 1954 [1931]), where Blavatsky's references have been collated and explained.

⁶⁷ according to a channelled communication by 'Rakoczi' (Fortune, *Spiritualism*, p. 141). With reference to Rakoczi: This Hungarian Master, working through the Seventh Ray of Ceremonial Magic, was said to oversee racial matters in Europe and America, and was also believed to have successively incarnated as Proclus, St. Alban, Roger Bacon, the Comte de Saint Germain, et al. Charles Leadbeater

In *The Training and Work of an Initiate* (1930), Fortune divides the Western system into three 'roots' - the Qabalistic (which is monotheistic, and where the magus represents God), the Egyptian (where initiatory forces are represented by animals), and the Greek (a philosophical system of natural forces), and from these three all subsequent systems derive. In actual practice, she explains, what has come down to us is a blend of each of them, together with a gloss of Eastern esotericism by virtue of the activities of the Theosophical Society.⁶⁸

The Esoteric Orders and Their Work was written at broadly the same time as the above, but here Fortune explains the elements of esotericism in the Theosophical way as the effects over great ranges of time of the influence of the different Rays – 'periodic outpourings of the Logoidal life-impulse'.⁶⁹ Without touching deeply into cosmology at this stage, the West is said to be mainly subject to two Rays – the 'Ray of the Concrete Mind' characterised by the various historical phases of occultism (Hermetic/Egyptian, Kabbalah, Neo-Platonism, Gnosticism), and the 'Ray of the Concrete Spirit', otherwise the Christian ray, representative of Love, Truth, Goodness, etc. In contrast, the 'Ray of Abstract Spirit' is the realm of Raja Yoga, seldom if ever worked in the West save by a few of rare calibre. Fortune here gives the example of St. Theresa, whose contacts were generally made while she was in full trance.⁷⁰ The

described his meeting with him in Rome in 1910. See C. W. Leadbeater, *The Masters and the Path* (Adyar, Madras: The Theosophical Publishing House, 1946), pp. 7, 27, 224; also Alice A Bailey, *Initiation, Human and Solar* (London: Lucis Press Ltd., 1967 [1922]), pp. 46, 49, 58-59.

⁶⁸ Dion Fortune, *The Training and Work of an Initiate* (Wellingborough: Aquarian, 1972 [1930]), pp. 120, 121.

⁶⁹ Fortune, *Esoteric Orders*, p. 37. The Rays are extensively mentioned in the works of Blavatsky and Bailey. They refer to primary impulses originating from the first moments of Creation, and are considered to be seven in number. Alice A. Bailey, *Letters on Occult Meditation* (London: Watkins, 1948 [1922]), Frontis.; Alice A. Bailey, *A Treatise on Cosmic Fire*, p. 113. Fortune variously mentions twelve Rays when speaking of the very beginnings of creation. Fortune, *Cosmic Doctrine*, pp. 29, 49, and also seven, corresponding to 'planes of human consciousness' but not directly numbered according to the seven Planes of creation. Fortune, *Esoteric Orders*, pp. 36-47. Neither do they correspond comfortably with the Theosophical enumeration as listed by Bailey, or by Leadbeater, who admitted that knowledge of the Rays is fragmentary and barely intelligible. C. W. Leadbeater, *The Masters and the Path* (Adyar: The Theosophical Publishing House, 1946 [1925]), p. 215. Neither system fits comfortably with the 10-fold system of the Kabbalah (see Chapter 5). For further comments on Rays, see Chapter 5, pp. 283-85, 288-90.

⁷⁰ 'Distinctive Features of Saint Theresa's Prayer States' in J. B. Hollenback, *Mysticism, Experience, Response and Empowerment* (Pennsylvania: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1996).

Upper Astral, or 'Celtic Ray', is characterised by the aesthetic, the inspiration given to artists, and correlates in the British Isles with child-like Gaelic and fairy lore. The Lower Astral is exemplified by the Norse mysteries, representative of the instincts, heroism, and – in the East – by Kali worship, while the Etheric Ray is concerned with building the matrix within which matter can manifest, and is worked by healers, and in the East by followers of Hatha Yoga.⁷¹

Fortune therefore offers a very close correlation between the Rays and the Planes, both as inner planes of existence in the Macrocosm and as levels of consciousness in the microcosm. In defining them, Fortune enumerates the physical, emotional, mental, and spiritual dimensions of life as four entirely different yet interacting and interpenetrating systems working as part of the human 'aura'.⁷² Each of these is divided into an upper and lower aspect, except the lowest, the physical-etheric plane. Further discussion on the planes and associated rays is included in Chapter 5, where they form a background to the position of the Masters, and in Chapter 6 where they are discussed in relation to forms of communication.⁷³

By 1940, Fortune had found a third way of expressing the diverse elements that make up the Western tradition – a modification, guided by her own interim experience, of the standard model that she had been taught in 1928. Her three 'lines' are now Keltic (sic), characteristic of North-West Britain; Norse (to the East); and Conglomerate (composed of all elements reaching Britain from outside, predominantly from the Mediterranean, and which have now become deep-rooted in British culture).⁷⁴

Occultism

⁷¹ Fortune, *Esoteric Orders*, pp. 36-47.

⁷² Fortune, *Spiritualism*, pp. 11-12, 172-73. For Fortune's views on the aura, see Chapter 3, p. 165.

⁷³ Chapter 5, pp. 288-89 and Chapter 6, pp. 351, 356.

⁷⁴ Fortune, *Battle*, pp. 129-30.

But Fortune was an occultist, and often describes herself as such.⁷⁵ What does she mean by this term? Perhaps she employs the word as yet another synonym of 'esoteric', for she also uses the terms 'occult science' (the link between psychology and religion), and 'occult philosophy'.⁷⁶ That the word 'science' has for several generations of educated readers seemed incongruous in this context is perhaps a phenomenon that is due to change if scholars heed Needleman's desideratum of paying attention to 'vertical' as well to as to the 'horizontal' cultural and historical dimensions,⁷⁷ and his call for more dialogue between scholars and experiencers.⁷⁸ The sincere tone of Fortune's writings fits ill with her wanting to impress or give false credibility to what some may consider a dubious activity. As an aspiring psychotherapist and laboratory technician and with an abiding interest in psychology she would have been no stranger to the broad requirements of scientific method. Her approach could well be compared to that of Dr Anna Kingsford (1846-88), well qualified in medicine. In differentiating occultism from mysticism, Kingsford states that occultism is 'interior to the body but exterior to the soul', the Mysteries being best understood by those with a scientific training, and she defines an occultist as a 'religious scientist'.⁷⁹

Some idea of what Fortune intended to include beneath the occult umbrella can be gained from a glance at her chapter headings, which include topics such as Remembering Past Incarnations, Working out Karma, and Divination (1966).⁸⁰ Or elsewhere, Meditation and Psychism, Astrology and Numerology (1967),⁸¹ Sacred

⁷⁵ Helena Blavatsky had already discussed the term 'occultism', separating the occult arts such as alchemy, mesmerism, and psychism from occultism proper, by means of which the follower of this path strives to become 'a beneficent force in Nature [. . .] not for himself, but for the world he lives.' This is achieved by reducing the personal self to 'to a cypher' enabling union with the Higher Self and allowing the 'brilliant Augoeides' to shine through. Blavatsky, *The Theosophical Glossary*, ed. by G. R. S. Mead (London: Theosophical Publishing Society, 1982), pp. 196-98; Blavatsky, 'Practical Occultism', *Lucifer*, (August 1888), quoted in Cranston, *H.P.B.*, pp. 31-32.

⁷⁶ Fortune, *Sane Occultism*, pp. 24-25; Fortune and Knight, *Spiritualism*, p. 47.

⁷⁷ e.g. Versluis's 'a-historical' continuities. Arthur Versluis, *Wisdom's Children: A Christian Esoteric Tradition* (New York: State University of New York Press, 1999), p. 231.

⁷⁸ Needleman in Faivre and Needleman, *Modern Esoteric Spirituality*, pp. xxv, xxix.

⁷⁹ Edward Maitland, *The Story of Anna Kingsford and Edward Maitland* (Birmingham: The Ruskin Press, 1905, [1893]), pp. 196-97.

⁸⁰ Dion Fortune, *Practical Occultism in Everyday Life* (London: Aquarian, 1966, [1935]).

⁸¹ Fortune, *Sane*, passim.

Centres and Teachings Concerning the Aura (1962).⁸² Ritual, the Group Mind, and Non-humans also feature (2000).⁸³ Astrology and numerology are included among Faivre's 'three rivers'⁸⁴ and most of the other topics can be seen as components of one or other of his four 'streams'.⁸⁵ He might be surprised at their variety; his interest is rather towards the broader panoply of the esoteric, but there appears to be something of a rapprochement with Fortune's overarching view of the occult when he says, 'In the most noble sense, an occultist is simultaneously an esotericist, or a theosopher'.⁸⁶

From a different point of view, and as a refinement of her distinctions between mysticism and the occult, Fortune stresses that the occultist follows the Way of Fulfilment, with the object of obtaining 'complete Mastery over every aspect of created life',⁸⁷ and for that to be anywhere near accomplished, one single incarnation is far too short a time. The mystic follows the ascetic Way of Renunciation by worshipping God 'in unmanifested Essence'.⁸⁸ But although the occultist focuses on the mental level, and the mystic on the spiritual, they come together in that each is able to assist the other in their common work - 'exercising a definite influence in world affairs', a task which is only effectual if both mystics and occultists work co-operatively.⁸⁹

⁸² Dion Fortune, *Aspects of Occultism* (Wellingborough: Aquarian, 1962).

⁸³ Fortune, *Applied*, passim.

⁸⁴ of 'alchemy, astrology, and magic (*magia* [. . .] the science of numbers)' Faivre et al., *Modern Esoteric Spirituality*, p. xiv.

⁸⁵ of Christian Kabbalah; neo-Alexandrian Hermetism; Paracelsus' philosophy of Nature; and theosophy and Rosicrucianism. Faivre, *Modern Esoteric Spirituality*, p. xiv.

⁸⁶ Antoine Faivre, *Access to Western Esotericism* (Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 1994), pp. 33-35. Historically, both Hanegraaff and Faivre see occultism's emergence in the nineteenth-century as intimately related to the rise of a materialistic ('disenchanted') world-view, and occultists making the attempt to integrate it into their own philosophy. Hanegraaff spells out his definition of occultism as 'all attempts by esotericists to come to terms with a disenchanted world', adding that for ordinary people, the occult is one way of approaching the esoteric from the secular. Faivre, *Access*, p. 33; Hanegraaff, *New Age*, pp. 421-23.

⁸⁷ It is highly questionable whether this is at all within anybody's grasp unless as the consequence of many incarnations.

⁸⁸ Fortune, *Applied*, pp. 1-4.

⁸⁹ Fortune, *Battle*, p. 15. This is much in line with Hollenback's argument that there are significant overlaps and similarities between mystics and occultists ('clairvoyants, mediums, and out-of-body travellers') that have hitherto been overlooked by scholars (Hollenback, *Mysticism*, p. 614).

To forestall any fears over possible malevolence attaching to the occult, she emphasises its completely neutral character, any good or evil effect being entirely in the hands, and intentions, of those who use it.⁹⁰

Similarly, she counters what she describes as 'pseudo-occultism, wild theorising, and evidence that cannot stand up to the most cursory examination' by reference to the close match between occultism and the disciplines of psychology and natural science.⁹¹ Perhaps she was a little naive, or over-confident, in that respect; the match may not have been as close as she imagined at the time. In today's milieu of the 'new physics', however, speculations on cosmology by both physicists and occultists might well be drawing somewhat closer.⁹² Unusually for an occultist, she goes so far as to state that psychology is the 'key' to occultism, which could imply that one might as well confine oneself to psychology save that for her, as for Needleman, psychology is but a part of occultism, the experience of which goes much further, is much swifter in application, and provides a philosophy of life.⁹³ One might wonder how she fitted the distant mythological background into her apparently stringent methodology.

To strengthen her case for the integrity of the occult, she points to the consensus of agreement among those who have experienced states of consciousness which transcend the normal - '[. . .] supernatural experience [. . .] perceived by means of [. . .] supernormal faculties' that only a minority seem to develop, although she quotes few examples in support, save a general reference to Bucke's *Cosmic Consciousness*.⁹⁴ She puts her case forward in much the same way as did William James before her, and Versluis after her.⁹⁵ And she underlines two prominent doctrines

⁹⁰ Fortune, *Battle*, 1993, p. 63.

⁹¹ Fortune, *Sane*, pp. 7-8.

⁹² For an overview of the New Physics, see, for example, Gary Zukav, *The Dancing Wu Li Masters* (London: Rider, 1979); John Gribbin, *In Search of Schrödinger's Cat* (London: Corgi Books, 1984); Gerhard, D. Wassermann, *Shadow Matter* (Oxford: Mandrake, 1993); Bart Kosko, *Fuzzy Thinking*, (London: HarperCollins, 1994).

⁹³ Fortune, *Sane*, pp. 11, 191. See p. 28 (above) for Needleman.

⁹⁴ Richard Maurice Bucke, *Cosmic Consciousness* (New York: E. P. Dutton, 1901).

⁹⁵ This embraces the type of experience that would nowadays be studied under the umbrella term 'religious experience', begun with William James, and particularly developed by Alister Hardy, whose Religious Experience Research Centre has amassed some 6000 accounts of incidents that their experiencers term 'religious'. The Centre's two directors Professor Paul Badham and Professor

taught in Mystery Schools – first, that there exist the many invisible planes of existence that we have noted,⁹⁶ and second, that human beings reincarnate – the acceptance of which, she maintains, is enough to change a person's whole attitude to life for the good, and without which the whole process of initiation is meaningless.⁹⁷

Fortune speaks of two 'strands' of occultism. First, that which covers psychic phenomena amenable to scientific investigation, such as ectoplasm, telepathy, hypnotism, etc., and second, experiences of altered states of consciousness, originally an extension of the established religions – Fortune here uses the term 'Sacred Science', an aspect of the occult which is not so amenable to conventional scientific investigation because of its abstruse nature.⁹⁸ Neither of these two aspects characterise the present study exactly, although sensitivity to the Masters and other 'inner plane' entities does pertain to areas of religious experience, to which this study makes a small contribution.

Although psychism, which includes a variety of natural or developed skills such as mediumship, clairvoyance and divination, is often deprecated by trained occultists, Fortune points to a long history of liaison between psychics and Mystery

Xinzhong Yao are presently co-operating on research into a comparison of British and Far Eastern religious experience. See also Versluis's challenging monograph concerning the importance of 'gnosis' ('direct insight into the nature of the cosmos and of oneself'), *What is Esoteric?*.

See also: Hanegraaff, 'On the Construction' in Faivre & Hanegraaff, *Western Esotericism*.

Hanegraaff suggests that esotericism eventually emerged through Romanticism into 'hybrid forms' of occultism, such as spiritualism, and in the end, the New Age (Hanegraaff, *New Age*, pp. 423-41). Occultists do not necessarily identify with the New Age, but, as noted above, there is a considerable overlap of concepts.

⁹⁶ Dion Fortune, *Aspects of Occultism*, p. 71; Dion Fortune, *The Training and Work of an Initiate*, pp. 120, 121.

⁹⁷ Fortune, *Sane*, pp. 8-12; *Battle*, p. 88. Belief in reincarnation was Bailey's 'first postulate' necessary to redress what she considered to be the present wrong attitude to sex, and essential for the 'salvation of the race'. Her further postulates are: to love one's neighbour as oneself; a focus on group responsibilities, from family to international; and the keeping of the law of the land (Alice A. Bailey, *A Treatise on the Seven Rays: Esoteric Psychology*, 2 vols (London: Lucis Press, 1950 [1936]), I, 299-303).

⁹⁸ Fortune, *Sane*, pp. 24-25. Fortune here speaks of 'the desire for the light [. . .] of spiritual development that ends in Divine Union.' This mystical endeavour, she says, was ever the ultimate goal of the Mysteries. 'Occult science [. . .] is the link between psychology and religion', with occultism being simply one means to this end (Fortune, *Sane*, p. 25). A comprehensive investigation of occultism therefore requires that full attention is paid to mysticism.

schools – in Tibet, ancient Egypt, and in Greece as exemplified in the Delphic Oracles. In modern times, Blavatsky guardedly depended on it a great deal during the inception of her Society, and even the hostile S. L. MacGregor Mathers looked to his wife Moina's mediumship during the early days of his Order of the Golden Dawn, which, as much as any significant Mystery School, seemed to depend on an initial psychic input.⁹⁹ As an adult, Fortune had grown out of the natural psychism of her infancy, and was therefore specifically trained into trance mediumship.¹⁰⁰ A similar phenomenon of a group being held together by a strongly psychic member is seen to occur in our own day outside of occultism. The surgeon missionary (certainly not an occultist) Kenneth McAll, pioneer of 'healing through the Eucharist', treated psychism and associated traits as totally unhealthy and undesirable, yet enthusiastically recounted many astonishing instances of his own psychic visions as they arose in his case work in the deliverance ministry, euphemistically terming them examples of 'fantastic visual imagery'.¹⁰¹

Fortune compares three types of 'occultist' – the mystics (searching for union with God), the psychics (receivers of subtle vibrations), and occultists proper, who need, in their search for knowledge, to be somewhat of a receiver, but whose 'primary aim is to be able to control and direct the invisible kingdoms in the same way that the man of science has learnt to control and direct the kingdoms of Nature'.¹⁰² She contrasts this wide ranging brief of the occultist, venturing into all areas of the Tree of Life, with the mystic's steep and direct ascent to the Godhead up the Central Pillar,¹⁰³ and at the same time, like Regardie,¹⁰⁴ corrects Underhill's misreading of the aims of magic by emphasising once again that the ultimate goal of both occultism and

⁹⁹ '[. . .] on the whole, mediumship is most dangerous; and *psychic* experiences when accepted indiscriminately lead only to honestly deceiving others, because the medium is the first self-deceived victim.' H. P. Blavatsky, *Studies in Occultism* (London: White Lion Publishers, 1975), p. 94

¹⁰⁰ Fortune, *Spiritualism*, p. 41.

¹⁰¹ Kenneth McAll, *A Guide to Healing the Family Tree* (Carberry, Scotland: The Handsel Press, 1994). Within a year of his death, the group he held together by his enthusiasm for so long (the 'Family Tree Ministry'), lost its impetus and was disbanded.

¹⁰² Fortune, *Mystical Qabalah*, pp. 233-34. This is a very close match with the methods of Renaissance magi such as Ficino. See Chapter 2.

¹⁰³ See Figure 2, p. 201.

¹⁰⁴ Israel Regardie, *The Tree of Life* (New York: Samuel Weiser, 1969 [1932]), p. 85.

mysticism is indeed one and the same.¹⁰⁵ Underhill and her fellow mystics would, however, be most unwilling to subsist beneath the 'occultist' banner.

Fortune also uses the terms 'Ancient Wisdom' and 'Secret Tradition', terms which were specifically popularised by Theosophy from the 1880s onwards;¹⁰⁶ 'occult teachings'¹⁰⁷ and 'Occult Tradition' (signifying its literature and symbolism),¹⁰⁸ all of these indicating older Renaissance traditions of *prisca theologia* and *philosophia perennis*.

What, then, is Fortune's view of the relationship between occultism and spiritualism, the movement with which it seems to have much in common? Most of this discussion will be left for Chapter 6 when the practicalities of communication are addressed. Suffice it to say here that the 23 April 1942 issue of *Light* magazine contained the first of a short series of articles in which she discussed the relationship between the two approaches to the unseen, stressing on the one hand the mass of 'traditional data' that occultists have access to, and on the other, the unencumbered way in which spiritualists undertake their training and work.¹⁰⁹ There was evidently some friction between them formerly, for in Monthly Letter No 3 (December 1942), she writes that the Masters wish for a rapprochement between the two movements, and are hopeful of them sharing practical experience of each others' meetings and methods. In Fortune's view, spiritualists have the function of 'bringing the subtler forms of existence in touch with the physical plane' whereas occultists go out to operate on the Inner Planes themselves.¹¹⁰ It is a matter of observation that Fortune's ideal of the two working together is still very far from realisation.

¹⁰⁵ Fortune, *Training and Work*, pp. 38-42; 59-74. Underhill's '[. . .] magic wants to get; mysticism wants to give.' Evelyn Underhill, *Mysticism* (London: Methuen, 1930 [1911]), p. 70 is wide of the mark save, perhaps, in the present-day revival of interest in magic spells among teenagers, stimulated by the media.

¹⁰⁶ Fortune in Fortune and Knight, *Spiritualism*, p. 41.

¹⁰⁷ Fortune, *Battle*, p. 86.

¹⁰⁸ Fortune, *Battle*, p. 87.

¹⁰⁹ Fortune in Fortune and Knight, *Spiritualism*, pp. 41-49. *Light* is the quarterly journal of the College of Psychic Studies. During 1942 it was edited by Charles Cammell. Gareth Knight in Fortune and Knight, *Spiritualism*, p. 29.

¹¹⁰ Fortune, *Battle*, p. 102.

Occult training 'ought to produce a clarification of consciousness and heightening of the powers', she says by way of explanation,¹¹¹ but then, somewhat impatiently, 'when all is said and done, occultism is simply the science which deals with extended consciousness, and the experiences which that extended consciousness opens up',¹¹² her tone echoing other practitioners who define occultism – for example, Knight, 'occultism is largely the study of *rejected* science.';¹¹³ and Bonewits, "'occult' means "hidden" or "secret". That's all.'¹¹⁴ One may be forgiven for concluding that according to the emphasis here, occultism is solely a matter of self-improvement.

She also refers on at least one occasion to the 'occult arts'.¹¹⁵ She does not provide a definitive list of what these might be save for such instances as her chapter headings,¹¹⁶ but would probably not be averse to Waite's list of 'secret sciences in connection with magic' as indicated by his own chapter headings: Alchemy, the Elixir of Life, Crystallomancy, The Composition of Talismans, Divination, the Divining Rod, Astrology, Mesmerism and Kabbalism.¹¹⁷ It makes an interesting comparison with Fortune's list. Waite also includes various occult organisations: the Rosicrucians, the Freemasons, Modern Spiritualism, and Theosophy,¹¹⁸ along with some mystics, including Philo (c. 20 BCE – c. 50 CE), Dionysius (c. 500), Meister Eckhart (c. 1260-1327), Paracelsus (1493-1541), Thomas Vaughan (1622-1666), Louis Claude de Saint-Martin (1743-1803), Ralph Waldo Emerson (1803-82) and Thomas Carlyle (1795-1881).¹¹⁹ Significantly, and more typical of Waite's real interest, he describes mysticism itself – in its investigative capacity – as a science: 'the endeavour of the

¹¹¹ Fortune, *Sane*, p. 177.

¹¹² Fortune, *Sane*, p. 141.

¹¹³ Gareth Knight, *Experience of the Inner Worlds* (Toddington: Helios Books, 1975). Cf. "The occult" has been defined as "rejected knowledge". James Webb, *The Occult Establishment* (La Salle, IL, Open Court, 1976), p. 15.

¹¹⁴ Philip Bonewits, *Real Magic* (London: Open Gate Books, 1972), p. 20.

¹¹⁵ E.g. Fortune, *Sane*, p. 52.

¹¹⁶ See p. 32, above.

¹¹⁷ Although Waite writes a great deal on the more spectacular side of magic, he was averse to the practice of magic save in a form very much akin to Christian worship. As an occultist, I have never felt the need to practise any of these areas of activity save for study of the Kabbalah.

¹¹⁸ Waite, *Occult Sciences*, pp. vii, liii.

¹¹⁹ Waite, *Occult Sciences*, pp. 189-97.

human mind to grasp the divine essence or ultimate reality of all things, and to enjoy, while in this life and in this body, the blessedness of an immediate communion with the Highest'.¹²⁰ This is very much in line with Fortune as a mystic rather than as a theurgist, or in her engagements with nature.

But whereas few occultists themselves bother to define occultism, at least two key independent commentators began their investigations into occult subjects as sceptics, displaying commendable scholarly objectivity. Both Christopher McIntosh and Colin Wilson arrived at a point of realising that there were aspects of the occult that contained something of distinct value after all.¹²¹ And even Alan Richardson, Fortune's wry biographer, seems to have reached a deeper appreciation of that art.¹²² An even more striking instance is that of the ex-Jesuit seminarian David Farren, a teacher of philosophy and 'confirmed sceptic', whose examination of magic moved him to acknowledge that it was, after all, worth taking seriously because within it are 'alternative schemes for rational interpretation that are as internally consistent as any of the theories of the scientist'¹²³ – again, an attitude much in line with that of Fortune. Academic monographs do not always acknowledge this. Hanegraaff's interest is focused on the New Age, but at one stage, he defines occultism as a kind of fall-back position – 'all attempts by esotericists to come to terms with a disenchanted world or, alternatively, by people in general to make sense of esotericism from the perspective of a disenchanted world' – occultism being a subcategory of esotericism, although not necessarily the practical side of theoretical esotericism. He seems to see a line of development whereby esotericism develops into the occult through such modern movements as Swedenborgianism, Mesmerism, the 'hybrid form' of spiritualism, Romanticism, and from the occult, developing into the present New Age movement.¹²⁴ As mentioned above, few occultists would see themselves as part of the New Age

¹²⁰ Waite, *Occult Sciences*, p. 192.

¹²¹ Christopher McIntosh, *The Rosy Cross Unveiled* (Wellingborough: Aquarian, 1980), p. 15; Colin Wilson, *Beyond the Occult*, (London: Transworld Publishers, 1988), pp. 27-31.

¹²² Alan Richardson, and Geoff Hughes, *Ancient Magicks for a New Age* (St Paul, Minnesota: Llewellyn, 1989), p. 75.

¹²³ David Farren, *The Return of Magic* (New York: Harper and Row, 1972), pp. 7, 8, 12.

¹²⁴ Hanegraaff, *New Age*, pp. 422-41.

Movement, and few New Agers would necessarily wish to specialise in the occult, a major reason being the amount of time and dedication necessary for its cultivation.

Occult philosophy could well be summed up in what is sometimes called the 'doctrine of signatures', a concept neatly expressed in the Emerald Tablet as 'As above, so below'. God, the cosmos (Nature), and humanity reflect each other perfectly; each can stand for and affect the other analogously; there is a resonance between each. This is the view of Gibbons, who sums up the impact of occultism, whatever its merits or lack of them, as a 'living presence in our own culture' (for example through fictional books and the media), and thus of historical consequence.¹²⁵ Sullivan reminds us of Faivre's agreement with this when he focuses on the distinction between esotericism and occultism drawn by Tiryakian that the 'occult' comprises the intentional harnessing of hidden and hitherto undetected natural forces for particular results such as obtaining knowledge, or changing the course of events.¹²⁶ By 'esoteric' he means the philosophy behind such activities. Faivre points to the considerable overlap that in practice operates between the two terms.¹²⁷ Eliade, while upholding Tiryakian's definition, also draws our attention to the esotericist René Guénon's opposition to the occult because it appeared to him to be so fragmented.¹²⁸

James Webb, though constantly contrasting the 'irrational' with conventional social norms, and sensing that most occultists become trapped in their own private worlds, nevertheless recognises the power of the occultist's unorthodox ideas, and the huge creative value to society of these 'freaks, cranks, originals and odd-men-out'.¹²⁹ That occultism was and is significant in social history is gradually becoming clear: 'the

¹²⁵ B. J. Gibbons, *Spirituality and the Occult* (London: Routledge, 2001), pp. 7-18.

¹²⁶ Lawrence E. Sullivan, *Hidden Truths: Magic, Alchemy and the Occult* (New York: Macmillan, 1987), p. 3; Edward A. Tiryakian, 'Towards a Sociology of Esoteric Culture' in Tiryakian, ed., *On the Margins of the Visible* (New York: Wiley and Sons, 1974), pp. 257-280 (263-66). See also Truzzi, Marcello, 'Definition and Dimensions of the Occult: Towards a Sociological Perspective' in Tiryakian, *Margins*, 243-255.

¹²⁷ Faivre, *Access*, p. 35.

¹²⁸ Mircea Eliade, *Occultism, Witchcraft and Cultural Fashions* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1976), pp. 47-68.

¹²⁹ James Webb, *The Occult Establishment* (La Salle, Illinois: Open Court, 1976), pp. 8-15; 512-15.

occult has never been dead' for 'those willing to recognise its contribution to the making of our world'; it belongs to the mainstream of history, rather than on its manic periphery'.¹³⁰ 'It is deeply rooted in the psyche of man' and 'magic upheld the great civilisations of the ancient world [. . .] freed man from fears, endowed him with a feeling of his power to control the world, sharpened his capacity to imagine, and kept alive his dreams of higher achievement.'¹³¹ Such a sentiment is one that Fortune sought to engender through her publications.

Evaluations and Comments

Colin Campbell coined the phrase 'cultic milieu' to denote 'the sum of unorthodox and deviant belief systems' whose main characteristic was that it attracted high turnovers of membership, continually giving birth to new cults in succeeding generations.¹³² Western esotericism and its disparate subsections are undoubtedly a part of that milieu, save that whereas magical orders in particular are generally ready to disseminate theory, a significant minority are more wary of opening their doors to full membership too widely. Indeed, the necessary training alone significantly reduces the numbers of those qualified to do so. It is my experience that the turnover of membership in the Fraternity of the Inner Light has not been high during the last few years (indeed, active membership has grown), and that its leaders look for quality rather than quantity, a principle that Fortune herself laid down by her own leadership.

Having now sampled some of the major concepts that Fortune held, and how they relate to the recorded opinion of others, we can therefore move on to discuss the more direct question of Fortune's standing as an occultist within Western esotericism, firstly from the point of view of 'insiders', followed by comments from 'outsiders'.

¹³⁰ Michael Edwardes, *The Dark Side of History* (London: Grenada, 1978), preface.

¹³¹ Edwardes, *Dark Side*, p. 323.

¹³² Colin Campbell, 'The Cult, the Cultic Milieu and Secularization' in Michael Hill, ed. *A Sociological Yearbook of Religion in Britain 5* (London: SCM, 1972), pp. 119-136, (pp. 121-22, 134). In a further interesting analysis, he points to many surprising inconsistencies as well as congruences between occult and conventional beliefs and values, and the almost universal acceptance of this 'rejected' knowledge as a form of 'cultural ghetto' among children, which nevertheless must have some effect in later life. Colin Campbell and Shirley McIver, 'Cultural Sources of Support for Contemporary Occultism' in *Social Compass*, XXXIV: I (1987), 41-60.

Observations by Fellow Occultists

In 1968 the *New Dimensions* series of books was inaugurated, a symposium of monographs on practical magic, edited by Basil Wilby (aka Gareth Knight, later Fortune's biographer), and dedicated to her memory. Fittingly, the very first article was 'The Myth of the Table Round' by Fortune herself.¹³³ Although in the end, no further books in the series were ever published besides the first '*Red Book*', this volume, graced by contributors prominent in English esotericism at the time, such as W. E. Butler, Israel Regardie, and William G. Gray, is sufficient to cause us to look for other indications of support for her status within the occult community at the time.

Among those who knew Fortune personally, William Ernest Butler was a long-standing and experienced member of Fortune's Society, who later, with the assistance of Gareth Knight, set up his own esoteric school, the Servants of the Light.¹³⁴ Apart from fondly reminiscing on her character in his books and interviews, he acknowledges Fortune, as one would expect, as a 'great occultist', one (among Eliphas Lévi, Israel Regardie 'and others'), of the 'acknowledged stars of the magical firmament'.¹³⁵

Support also comes from Kenneth Grant, who had also met her frequently during the 1930s. She was, he says, a 'startlingly unorthodox and skilful occultist who succeeded in gaining access to other worlds, other dimensions, through an adaptation of Eastern techniques usually associated with Tantric yoga [. . .] the first major Western occultist actually to demonstrate the role of woman as an active initiator into the Mysteries'.¹³⁶ Alongside her life-long devotion to the Masters, polarity (the role of

¹³³ Basil Wilby, ed. *The New Dimensions Red Book* (Toddington: Helios Book Service, 1968), pp. 1-4.

¹³⁴ 'a school of occult science' Dolores Ashcroft-Nowicki, *The Tree of Ecstasy*, (London: Aquarian/Thorsons, 1991), p. 248. The address is PO Box 215, St. Helier, Jersey, Channel Islands, Great Britain.

¹³⁵ Butler, *Magic and the Qabalah*, p. 105; W. E. Butler, *The Magician: His Training and Work* (London: Aquarian, 1972), preface and p. 16; W. E. Butler, *Practical Magic in the Western Mystery Tradition* (Wellingborough: Aquarian, 1986), p. 85; Butler in Janine Chapman, *Quest for Dion Fortune*, p. 112.

¹³⁶ Chapman, *Quest*, pp. ix, x.

sex in life and in the Lodge) is a key theme of Fortune's magical philosophy and practice, but is not of direct relevance to this present study.

Crowley and Regardie, as prominent representatives of the Western Esoteric Tradition of occultism, were fellow contemporaries to Fortune, both specialising in Kabbalah and magical ceremonial. Fortune indexes thirteen entries for Crowley in *The Mystical Qabalah*¹³⁷ – more even than for Mathers who originated the Kabbalistic system that she and Crowley used; and although at the time, she states that she had never known either of them, she and Crowley were from time to time in correspondence, and there is record of at least one meeting towards the end of her life at Crowley's house in Hastings.¹³⁸

Regardie, once secretary to Aleister Crowley, and later a member of the Stella Matutina Temple (of Golden Dawn heritage),¹³⁹ had already met Fortune in 1932 and exchanged letters in which she praised him for his *The Tree of Life* (1932). If, as she said, this work was so much better than Lévi's¹⁴⁰ or Crowley's,¹⁴¹ we might ask: why did she not give Regardie due credit in *The Mystical Qabalah*, which she was working on at the time? For his part, Regardie later saw fit to praise her own text as a 'frank Masterpiece [. . .] an incomparably fine rendition of the mystical philosophy that underlies the practice of magic'¹⁴² – this in spite of fundamental differences in some basic features of that philosophy, particularly concerning the existence of the Masters, as already noted on p. 11 above.

¹³⁷ The Anglicised transliteration of 'Kabbalah' is not always straightforward. While there are at least three main variations of spelling, they can serve to distinguish without lengthy explanation which era and approach is under discussion. See page 25, above.

¹³⁸ Fortune, *Mystical Qabalah*, p. vi; Chapman, *Quest*, pp. 144-45. Knight, *Dion Fortune and the Inner Light*, p. 279.

¹³⁹ The Hermetic Order of the Golden Dawn virtually closed down after 1909, but some of its members in various parts of the country continued the same kind of work in re-named Lodges, e.g. the Stella Matutina, the Alpha et Omega, etc. These are mentioned in Ithell Colquhoun, *Sword of Wisdom*, (London: Neville Spearman, 1975), passim.

¹⁴⁰ See, for example, Eliphas Lévi, *Transcendental Magic*, (London: Rider, 1968, 1975, [1896]), and his *The Book of Splendours*, (New York: Samuel Weiser, 1873).

¹⁴¹ Knight, *Fortune and the Inner Light*, p. 198.

¹⁴² Israel Regardie, *The Art and Meaning of Magic* (Toddington: Helios, 1971), p. 10.

Of those who never knew Fortune, some had nevertheless been members of her group, the Society of the Inner Light, after her death. Charles Fielding (Alan Adams), for example, once a key member, confesses to having read a great range of occult literature, most of which he declares as 'only fit for burning', but notes as brilliant exceptions five of Fortune's books: *The Mystical Qabalah* (1935), *The Training and Work of an Initiate* (1930), *Sane Occultism* (1930), *The Esoteric Orders and their Work* (1928), and *The Cosmic Doctrine* (1925), even omitting such classics as Regardie's *The Golden Dawn* (1937-40) and Crowley's *Magick* (1929).¹⁴³ Knight himself, an intermittent member of The Society of the Inner Light for half a century, has few direct eulogies for her; presumably it is more than sufficient that he is her biographer, and apologist for so much of her work.

Many subsequent magical practitioners and commentators who never met her also give her due credit. Conway is less enthusiastic about her texts, but still rates them as 'compulsory reading for all would-be magicians'.¹⁴⁴ In complete contrast, the garrulous Edward Peach¹⁴⁵ recommends *The Mystical Qabalah* as a 'profound and erudite book', yet later expresses extreme frustration at the minutiae of impractical theoretical detail.¹⁴⁶ R. J. Stewart remarks, somewhat impatiently perhaps, on the weakness and superficiality of historical biographies of prominent magicians, making the important comment with regard to Fortune that 'she repeatedly asserted in her novels [. . .] how ephemeral the personality and details of one lifetime are in contrast to the overview and timeless consciousness developed through magical arts'.¹⁴⁷ – this, an echo of similar remarks by Richardson.¹⁴⁸

Caitlín and John Matthews refer to Fortune as 'that forthright walker-between-the-worlds', and support their statement by listing the broad range of her teaching, including: sexual morality, training, psychic self-defence, the three-fold path,

¹⁴³ Charles Fielding, *The Practical Qabalah* (York Beach, ME: Samuel Weiser, 1988), p. ix.

¹⁴⁴ David Conway *The Complete Magic Primer* (London: Aquarian, 1988), p. 127.

¹⁴⁵ Ophiel, *The Art and Practice of the Occult* (St Paul, MN: Peach Publishing, 1969), p. 154.

¹⁴⁶ Ophiel, *The Art and Practice of Cabbala Magic* (New York: Samuel Weiser, 1976), p. 55.

¹⁴⁷ R. J. Stewart, *Advanced Magical Arts* (Shaftesbury: Element, 1988), p. 7.

¹⁴⁸ Alan Richardson, ed., *Dancers to the Gods* (Wellingborough: Aquarian, 1985), p. 9.

the problem of evil, and the phenomenon of the 'Masters'; but they do not otherwise comment on Fortune herself as a magician.¹⁴⁹

Vivianne Crowley, a pagan priestess and English university lecturer in religious studies, gives tacit support on behalf of many twentieth-century pagans when she quotes no less than seven separate passages from Fortune's *Sea Priestess*, all to do with the Goddess, although like the Matthews, she does not comment further.¹⁵⁰ It is noteworthy that many wiccans and neo-pagans, whilst used to invoking the pagan gods and goddesses and nature forces, and giving acclaim to Fortune, seem to have little time for her Masters of Wisdom.

Starhawk (Miriam Simos), an American activist in feminism, paganism and ecology, mentions Fortune only in passing, but re-iterates her (Fortune's) own definition of magic no less than three times during the course of her book.¹⁵¹ This definition ('the art of causing changes in consciousness at will') appears in many magical treatises but, curiously, is always unreferenced save but once.¹⁵²

Chic and Sandra Cicero, senior adepts of a legitimate branch of the Hermetic Order of the Golden Dawn founded in collaboration with Israel Regardie in America, refer to Dion Fortune several times. They point to her 1933 article in the *Occult Review* as revealing 'more of the true essence of the Golden Dawn, and to a broader audience, than anyone had done previously.' And they quote from Fortune three times in their *Essential Golden Dawn*, as one obviously capable of encapsulating some of the key concepts they were attempting to explain.¹⁵³

According to Drury, whose thesis rests upon a highlighting of fundamental similarities between Shamanism and Magic, both of which include contacting entities

¹⁴⁹ Caitlín and John Matthews, *The Western Way* (London: Arkana, 1986), vol 2, pp. 9, 11, 39, 122, 159, 221.

¹⁵⁰ Vivianne Crowley, *Living as a Pagan in the 21st Century* (London: Thorsons, 1994).

¹⁵¹ Starhawk, *The Spiral Dance: A Rebirth of the Ancient Religion of the Great Goddess* (San Francisco: HarperCollins, 1989 [1979]).

¹⁵² Marian Green, *Magic for the Aquarian Age* (Wellingborough: Aquarian, 1983), p. 20; W. E. Butler, *Magic, Its Ritual, Power and Purpose* (Wellingborough: Aquarian, 1952), p. 10; Gareth Knight, *A History of White Magic* (London: Mowbray, 1978), p. 8. See Appendix IV, pp. 431-37.

¹⁵³ Chic Cicero and Sandra Tabatha Cicero, *The Essential Golden Dawn* (St. Paul, MN: Llewellyn, 2003), pp. 64, 70, 169, 227.

in the invisible worlds, Fortune's major novels *The Sea Priestess* (1938) and *Moon Magic* (1957) show how some of the techniques which were behind the activities of the Society of the Inner Light can evoke mental imagery and memories very similar to those evoked by the shaman. The British writer Bernard Bromage outlines Fortune's interest in the occult, psychology, 'external rites', and spiritualism.¹⁵⁴ He was not an occultist as such, but was a scholar intensely interested in the subject, and can be thought of as standing half way between practising magicians and outsiders. He casts her as 'one of the most interesting occult personalities of this century', emphasising her versatility, vitality, and 'dynamic curiosity' concerning the occult, and summing up her contribution as 'something new in the way of integration struggling to break out of the clutches of an unimaginative materialism into a realm in which spirit can interpenetrate matter to a fresh issue.' This opinion of one who was for a time Fortune's tutor in psychology and a colleague and friend is one that perhaps should not lightly be dismissed.

Observations by Independent Observers

Literature concerning the occult was not extensive until the impetus of New Age thinking and the revival of interest in all things pagan, magical and holistic during the 1960s, when the cultic milieu as a whole began to be expressed into popular consciousness. To this, was added the renewed popular interest in Eastern spirituality which was spectacularly enhanced by the interest shown in the Maharishi Mahesh Yogi¹⁵⁵ by the British popular music group, the Beatles, and by similar interest taken by other well-known figures in the entertainment world, such as Shirley MacLaine,¹⁵⁶ also by prominent magicians, witches, neopagans and other specialists in that field of interest which is deemed to lie beneath, or beyond, the material. Dealing with neopaganism, Hanegraaff cites such varied commentators as Janet and Stewart Farrar,

¹⁵⁴ Nevill Drury, *The Shaman and the Magician* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1982); Bernard Bromage, 'Dion Fortune', *Light* 80, (1960), 5-12.

¹⁵⁵ J. Forem, *Transcendental Meditation* (New York: Dutton, 1974); J. G. Melton, *The Encyclopedia of American Religions*. 4th ed., (Detroit: Gale, 1993). For a personal, critical view of the Maharishi: Joyce Collins-Smith, *Call No Man Master* (Bath: Gateway Books, 1988), pp 21-193.

¹⁵⁶ e.g., Shirley MacLaine, *Dancing in the Light* (New York: Bantam Books, 1991).

Vivianne Crowley, Starhawk, Z. Budapest, Marian Green, Caitlín and John Matthews, and Murry Hope, but apart from quoting Fortune in two footnotes, does not refer to her further.¹⁵⁷ Describing her as an 'influential occultist', the first reference draws attention to her description of those of her inner 'contacts' generally known as 'Masters of Wisdom' or 'Inner Plane Adepts'; the second is a reference to the number of 'Levels' that the mind may be considered to have.¹⁵⁸ In contrast, Alex Owen mentions her positively as 'one of the most significant clairvoyants and occultists of the postwar period.'¹⁵⁹

Antoine Faivre mentions Fortune as a psychoanalyst who founded an offshoot of the Theosophical Society, called the 'Loge Mystique Chrétienne' (Faivre's translator has failed to give this body its proper English name: 'The Christian Mystic Lodge'), which formally became the Fraternity of the Inner Light in 1928, 'where various forms of sexual and evocatory magic are practised'.¹⁶⁰ But according to both Benham and Knight, the Christian Mystic Lodge was founded by Daisy M. Grove in 1919 as a *bona fide* sub-group within the Theosophical Society.¹⁶¹ In 1928 Fortune, the then president, resigned and set up her own group formally under the banner of the Community of the Inner Light, taking many of the Christian Mystic Lodge's members with her as a nucleus.¹⁶²

Peter Haining describes her as 'an important and underrated occultist [. . .] her time is to come' and her *Mystical Qabalah* as 'of major importance to all students of the occult'. He sees her as a 'forceful, intelligent and dedicated young woman' and states that there were few women of such occult rank, save perhaps Helena

¹⁵⁷ Irwin's monograph 'Western Esotericism, Eastern Spirituality, and the Global Future' in *Esoterica*, III (2001), <http://www.esoteric.msu.edu/VolumeIII/HTML/Irwin.html> [accessed 25/09/2001] while deeming to cover the whole of the Western Esoteric scene, omits to mention Fortune at all. For a bibliography of New Age sources, see Hanegraaff, *New Age*, pp. 525-58.

¹⁵⁸ Hanegraaff, *New Age*, pp. 200, 251.

¹⁵⁹ Alex Owen, *The Place of Enchantment* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2004), p. 227.

¹⁶⁰ Referring, perhaps, to the evocation of spirits, beneficent daemons or, more correctly, the invocation of higher powers and beings, generally in balanced polarity. Faivre, *Access*, p. 104.

¹⁶¹ 'with the object of "Interpreting Christianity in terms of Theosophy and Theosophy in terms of Christianity"', Patrick Benham, *The Avalonians* (Glastonbury: Gothic Image, 1993), p. 255.

¹⁶² Benham, *Avalonians*, p. 255; Chapman, *Quest*, p. 8; Knight, *Dion Fortune and the Inner Light*, pp. 130-38.

Blavatsky.¹⁶³ He comments that her marriage 'somewhat curtailed her magical and mediumistic practices', a view not supported by Knight, who points out the apparent beneficial effect of her husband's medical knowledge when sitting in on her trance addresses inspired by the so-called 'Master of Medicine'.¹⁶⁴ Benham, too, considers that her marriage was of considerable benefit to her work, as does Guiley, who goes on to describe her as 'one of the first occult writers to consider occultism as the key to understanding psychology, and vice versa'.¹⁶⁵

Colin Wilson describes Fortune as 'underestimated', 'a brilliantly talented writer', and 'the last great magician of the 20th century', her *The Mystical Qabalah* being 'one of the two cornerstones of modern occultism' (the other being Crowley's *Magick*); and Luhrmann mentions her as 'one of the most influential twentieth-century magicians'.¹⁶⁶ Ronald Hutton gives her due credit in his history of modern pagan witchcraft as still British occultism's 'foremost female figure'. He contrasts Crowley's university education and wide experience of travel with Fortune's lack of both, and claims that it was this difference that underpinned Crowley's indifference to Atlantis, and Fortune's adherence to it – a view hotly contested by Knight.¹⁶⁷ Hutton outlines Fortune's career in occultism, and comments extensively on her curiously ambivalent attitude in apparently being able to embrace both paganism and Christianity, a subject also included in Knight's own discussion, and which features several times here to reflect the views of both Fortune and some of her followers.¹⁶⁸

Recently, Maggy Anthony has considered Dion Fortune, though never having met Carl Gustav Jung, as worthy of merit for inclusion as one of his circle of women alongside eminent figures such as M. Esther Harding, author of the seminal *Women's Mysteries* (1935), the analyst Jolande Jacobi, and Marie-Louise von Franz, whom Jung

¹⁶³ Peter Haining, *The Magicians* (London: Peter Owen, 1972), pp. 116-17.

¹⁶⁴ Gareth Knight, *Principles of Esoteric Healing* (Oceanside, CA: Sun Chalice Books, 2000), p. 266.

¹⁶⁵ Benham, *Avalonians*, p. 275; Rosemary E. Guiley, *Harper's Encyclopedia of Mystical or Paranormal Experience* (San Francisco: Harper, 1991), p. 213.

¹⁶⁶ Colin Wilson, *The Giant Book of the Supernatural* (London: Magpie Books, 1994), pp. 405, 412; Colin Wilson, *The Occult* (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1971), p. 205; Luhrmann, *Persuasions*, p. 59.

¹⁶⁷ Gareth Knight, *The Wells of Vision* (London: S.I.L. Trading, 2002), pp. 65-78.

¹⁶⁸ Ronald Hutton, *The Triumph of the Moon* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), pp. 181-188.

asked to finish his work on the Grail. Anthony describes many of Fortune's ideas as running parallel to those of Jung, such as the 'sexual interflow between men and women' and Fortune's own description of what sounds very much like the collective unconscious, replete with 'autonomous complexes [. . .] which can occasionally overwhelm us.'¹⁶⁹ Richardson especially values her work in that 'unlike other writers on magic, she was not shy about describing her inner experiences either. Unlike most other writers on magic, she actually *had* inner experiences', and he mentions certain 'sidelights of information concerning the Golden Dawn that she lets slip in her writings', although he gives no hint of what these might be.¹⁷⁰ Strangely, when contrasting Fortune with one of her co-workers, Charles Seymour,¹⁷¹ Richardson, like Hutton, draws attention to her comparative lack of learning, meaning that her writing lacked the conciseness generally displayed by a seasoned academic: 'she was essentially a populariser'.¹⁷² But Richardson is inconsistent in his appreciation of Fortune. He comments that her importance could well be judged by the diversity of views held by those who knew her quite well – too Christian in outlook, too pagan; too sexually predatory, too repressed, and so on – and sums up: 'Dion Fortune created a style and system of magic, and in return her magicians have re-created her in their own images. God had much the same problem'. And he adds, regarding her magical prowess, 'she was a great magician, but not as great a one as some would have it.'¹⁷³ Richardson's *Priestess* (1987) is one of the two standard texts on Fortune's life and magic, and will be referred to in greater detail later when discussing the incidence of her contacts. The other biography, Knight's *Dion Fortune and the Inner Light* (2000), and written from the point of view of an 'insider' covers much the same ground although there are several areas of disagreement between them; one may also have reservations about the overall tone of Richardson's account. Describing the Guild of the Master Jesus, a division within the Society, he speaks of 'the sadness of it all. [. . .]

¹⁶⁹ Maggy Anthony, *Jung's Circle of Women: The Valkyries* (York Beach, ME: Nicholas-Hays, 1999), p. 79.

¹⁷⁰ Richardson in Richardson and Hughes, *Ancient Magicks*, p. 27.

¹⁷¹ Whose Mystery initials, under which he most often wrote, were F. P. D. (Foy pour Devoir).

¹⁷² Alan Richardson, *Priestess*, (Wellingborough: Aquarian, 1987), p. 221.

¹⁷³ Richardson, *Dancers*, pp. 8, 9, 14.

An appeal to the lonely and the hurt who made their way to this highly unorthodox chapel down an undistinguished street in a lonely City on a Sunday morning', and later, describes Fortune in terms of 'a wearied and battered Mrs Evans speaking with the voice of a woman'.¹⁷⁴ Yet the evidence of her writings shows that there remained to her a further ten years of deep involvement and creativity, during which she was noted by Bromage as still of 'surging dynamic curiosity' in a period when she produced *The Sea Priestess* and *Moon Magic*, novels of high repute among her followers.¹⁷⁵

Most of the above comments are positive, and are a clear demonstration that Dion Fortune and her activities as a magician fully able to engage with the Inner Planes, is a figure eminently worthy of deeper and, indeed, continuing investigation. A more concise account of Dion Fortune's personality may be consulted in Appendix VII (pp. 471-77, below).

In order to appreciate the extent to which Fortune's occult activity is characterised by her relationship with her Masters of Wisdom, it should be asked: can this be detected from an overview of the broad aspects of her occult career or will this rather highlight the role of others such as her first teacher Moriarty, who may well have influenced her philosophy, perhaps creating certain expectancies and predispositions which provided her with a particular terminology and framework without which she would not have been able to satisfactorily express her experience of the Masters?

After an overview in Chapter 2 of recent scholarly research on intermediaries as they appear in the history of magic and religion from the earliest times, Chapter 3 will trace Fortune's early career, including her literary and bibliographic background, and consider the extent of the debt she owed to others compared with innovations of her own.

¹⁷⁴ Richardson, *Priestess*, p. 171, 201. Evans was Fortune's married name.

¹⁷⁵ Bromage, 'Dion Fortune', p. 12.

Chapter 2: The Role and Function of Intermediaries in the Western Esoteric Tradition

Introduction

Much of Fortune's work was inspired by her own mediumistic and intuitional revelations. However, she consulted the writings of both her immediate occultist forebears such as Helena Petrovna Blavatsky (1831-1891) and Samuel Liddell Mathers (1854-1918); the anthropologist and scholar of comparative religion James Frazer (1854-1941) and the author Richard Payne Knight (1750-1824); and also figures from antiquity and the Renaissance such as Euripides (c. 480-406 BCE), Iamblichus (c. 245-325 CE), Plotinus (c. 204-270 CE), Heinrich Cornelius Agrippa (1486-1535) and Knorr von Rosenroth (1636-1689), although her references to the ancient sources are far fewer.¹ Only recently have scholars undertaken serious appraisal of historical esoteric materials, so that we are in a much stronger position than Fortune was to determine their impact on modern Western esotericism, and to trace the apparently novel and isolated phenomenon of Fortune's Theosophical 'Masters' and other intermediaries along a thread reaching as far back as Homer.²

One approach is to consider at Faivre's six 'fundamental characteristics' of esotericism, already referred to in Chapter 1.³ As they now form a common vocabulary among students of Western esotericism, it is worth reviewing what those characteristics were, and their relevance to the Theosophical idea of the Masters. Faivre located the idea of spiritual intermediaries within a generalised model of philosophical characteristics, namely: 1. the idea that all parts of the universe can be interpreted in terms of symbolic or real *correspondences* (following the Hermetic dictum 'as above,

¹ See Appendix III (pp. 416-30) for a summary of her balance of interests. Less than 10 % of her titles are primary sources from the ancient world.

² See Roelof van den Broek and Wouter J. Hanegraaff, eds, *Gnosis and Hermeticism from Antiquity to Modern Times* (New York: State University of New York, 1998), p. viii, and Naomi Janowitz, *Magic in the Roman World* (London: Routledge, 2001), p. 33.

³ Faivre in Faivre and Needleman, *Modern Esoteric Spirituality* (London: SCM Press, 1992), pp. xv-xx. See Chapter 1, p. 27, n. 60, above.

so below', e.g. as between the seven metals and the seven planets); 2. that the cosmos is expressed in *Nature, living, multilayered, hierarchical*. It is within the complex background of hierarchies of planes and planets that intermediaries, from gods to ghosts, whether real or postulated, find their home, and within which Madame Blavatsky and her derivatives such as Fortune found and named particular Masters. 3. *Imagination and mediation*, by means of which intermediaries such as angels or daimons may be known and worked with within the compass of Henry Corbin's 'mundus imaginalis';⁴ 4. The *experience of transmutation* or 'metamorphosis' or the search for gnosis, an illuminated form of knowledge leading to spiritual rebirth and personal transformation as found in certain disciplines such as alchemy; Faivre also added two further characteristics of esoteric philosophy: 5. The practice of *concordance*, by which he signified the tendency to look for comparable forms of this 'all-encompassing gnosis' within the various esoteric traditions; and 6. the *transmission* of teachings from master to pupil.⁵

It should be noted that nearly all of these incorporate the idea of intermediary intervention: as part of the idea of *correspondence* (1) Faivre mentions concordance between nature and Scripture (which includes history, and the characters and indispensable intermediaries within it). The idea of *Living Nature* (2) introduces us to the hierarchical nature of the cosmos, from which follows an immense hierarchy of

⁴ Corbin derived his concept of the *mundus imaginalis* from twelfth/thirteenth-century Iranian Sufism, which held to a three-tiered universe (1. Intellect; 2. Ideas/images; 3. Material) in a world where an objective intermediate world of ideas and images, or creative imagination (the *mundus imaginalis*), had been almost entirely neglected in the West. The active imagination, the 'organ of theophanic perception' 'transmutes sensory data (e.g. the burning bush) into symbols' (e.g. the presence of God). The concepts resonate in the Western Esoteric Tradition with those of Boehme, Gichtel, Weigel, Swedenborg, etc. Henry Corbin, *Alone with the Alone: Creative Imagination in the Sufism of Ibn Arabi*, Bollingen Series XCI (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1969), pp. 4, 21, 80, 90. See also Antoine Faivre, *Theosophy, Imagination, Tradition* (Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 2000), p. 30.

⁵ Antoine Faivre, 'Introduction I', in Antoine Faivre & Jacob Needleman, eds, *Modern Esoteric Spirituality* (London: SCM Press, 1992), pp. xv-xx. Although Faivre refers here to teachings passed on through the traditions of the mundane group concerned, and initiation by an earthly master, he does not make it clear that his 'channels' may also refer to the continued inspired revelations from intermediaries to members of the group, and to the tradition that the real initiator is also an intermediary mediated by the earthly practitioner. Neither does he mention that it is not only teaching that is so transmitted, but supposedly power as well.

inner beings, powers or presences to inhabit it; the idea of *imagination and mediation* (3) recalls the same inner cosmos, now seen as a scenario within which the aspirant or practitioner may enter into significant relationships with members of those hierarchies; the *experience of transmutation* (4) links the individual with a parallel transmutation of Nature (from which cannot be excluded humanity and intermediaries); the practice of *concordance* (5), a strong feature of Renaissance speculation between Hermetic, neo-Platonic and Kabbalistic traditions, emphasises similarities between parallel religious and esoteric traditions. In the twentieth century, such concordance can assimilate a belief in intermediaries within, say, British or Oriental folk traditions into the arena of Western esotericism. 6. The idea of *transmission* between master and pupil can be extended to any inner spiritual initiator. Faivre and other scholars have not highlighted the extent to which intermediaries are encapsulated within these six characteristics. My thesis therefore proposes to open a new chapter in the history of intermediaries, adding to Faivre's work, and serving to underscore their renewed significance in the study of Western esotericism, without which Western esotericism is deprived of a dimension that is absolutely essential to its fuller understanding.

This chapter therefore highlights recent research into the occurrence and significance of intermediaries along this time-line, and places Fortune's inner contacts firmly within a continuous history of theurgic and daimonic activity in the history of Western religion.

Roelof van den Broek⁶ explains *daimons*⁷ as immortal divine powers, good and evil, found in both humanity and nature, able to assist in magical operations and empower oracles.⁸ Plato understood them to be essential and ever-present mediators between god and man, and according to Georg Luck, it was not until late Hellenistic

⁶ Roelof van den Broek, 'Intermediary Beings I: Antiquity' in Wouter J. Hanegraaff et al, *Dictionary of Gnosis and Western Esotericism*, 2 vols (Leiden: Brill, 2005), II, 616-19.

⁷ The word from which the modern word 'demon', with its negative connotation was derived. *Daimonion* is the neutral form of the word.

⁸ According to Janowitz, Homer used the terms daimon and god interchangeably. Naomi Janowitz, *Magic in the Roman World*, p. 33.

times that the daimon came to be considered as solely evil.⁹ The association of angels with demons, ghosts, heroes and gods led to a great deal of confusion and overlap between them, especially as the lower inner entities were deemed to be able to disguise themselves as their higher counterparts.¹⁰ Van den Broek also includes spirits of the dead and a range of lesser spirits, often personifications of good or evil influences on humanity such as ill fortune or accident.¹¹ Dion Fortune's principle of an individual

⁹ For example, Socrates was frequently prevented from making mistakes by his *daimonion*, 'Good angel' or 'spirit guide', termed by Dodds the 'suprational personality'. See E. R. Dodds, *The Ancient Concept of Progress* (Oxford: Cleveland Press, 1973), p. 192, n.5. See also Georg Luck, *Arcana Mundi: Magic and the Occult in the Greek and Roman Worlds* (London: Crucible, 1987), pp. 163, 186-87, where he quotes Plato's description of Socrates' daimon as his 'private oracle'. Plato, *Apology of Socrates* 33B8-E8; 39C1-40C3. See also Plato, *Symposium* 202E 'every daimon is something between a god and a mortal'). James Hillman discusses the ambiguity of the term, suggesting a dozen analogous English terms, tending towards 'the call' whilst avoiding giving it any moral significance. James Hillman, *The Soul's Code: In Search of Character and Calling* (New York: Warner Books, 1997), pp. 8-11, 257-59. The eighteenth-century J. G. Herder (1744-1803) applied the idea of the daimon to his country in the form of 'Volkgeist', or spirit of the nation. Johann Gottfried Herder, *Ideen zur Philosophie der Geschichte der Menschheit* 4 vols (1784-91). Also Clare Goodrick-Clarke and Nicholas Goodrick-Clarke, eds, *G. R. S. Mead and the Gnostic Quest* (Berkeley, CA: North Atlantic Books, 2005), pp. 193-94, where the *daimon* is defined as 'the knowing one', and as 'a stage in the descent of essences and a grade in the ascent of souls'. The concept of individual guardian spirits was a common belief, as it is among many magicians now. See also the discussion below (Chapter 4, p. 255) on the 'inner shaman' and the 'shaman within'.

¹⁰ Luck, *Arcana*, pp. 63-74. See Mircea Eliade, *A History of Religious Ideas: From the Stone Age to the Eleusinian Mysteries* (London: Collins, 1979), pp. 284-89 for a discussion on heroes. For entities masquerading as Christ, see Wouter J. Hanegraaff, *New Age Religion and Western Culture: Esotericism in the Mirror of Secular Thought* (Leiden: Brill, 1996), p. 201. Plotinus uses the term 'the gods' predominantly as a figure of speech, signifying lofty beings or stars or souls of the worthy. Stephen MacKenna, *Plotinus: The Enneads* (London: Faber & Faber, 1956), p. xxix.

In Fortune's tradition it is of little concern whether an image is historical, mythic, or fictional as long as it is deemed fit for its purpose. In Greek literature, the blurring of differences between gods, heroes, witches, and spirits leaves an impression of a varied selection of dynamic inner figures that the magician can relate to, whatever their origin. In the higher Lodges of present-day magical practice, any 'event', whether historical, mythological, or fictional, can be written up into ritual form according to the sensed needs of the time. It is worthy of note that, as part of the 'more reasoned criticism' (Michael Goulder, *Incarnation and Myth: the Debate Continued* (London: SCM Press, 1979) p. vii) following the publication of *The Myth of God Incarnate*, edited by John Hick (London: SCM Press, 1977), the distinction between myth and reality was not seen as one that can be drawn too sharply. 'For Popper, non-scientific statements are not the senseless grunts which the Logical Positivists supposed', cit. John Rodwell, 'Myth and Truth in Scientific Enquiry' in Michael Goulder, ed., *Incarnation and Myth* (London, SCM Press, 1979), pp. 64-73 (p. 71).

¹¹ Roelof van den Broek, 'Intermediary Beings I: Antiquity', in Wouter J. Hanegraaff, ed., *Dictionary*, II, 617. Spirits of the dead also acted as either guides or chastisers to the living. See also Naomi Janowitz

indwelling ‘Divine Spark’¹² had already appeared in Plato’s writings,¹³ and in Stoic philosophy as the *nous* and *logos* of man’s inner psyche, and exemplified in the *Corpus Hermeticum*.¹⁴

Kieckhefer draws attention to the distinction between magic that invoked the assistance of daimonic energies and that which accessed the intrinsic ‘natural’ essences of the artefacts used in the magical process. Arabic science tended to consider that most magic was natural, working by virtue of the power of suggestion or of the stars save where daimons were expressly invoked. Thomas Aquinas, on the other hand, felt that magic, even ‘astral magic’¹⁵ almost always entailed co-operation from daimons.¹⁶

Considering them in a New Age context under the term ‘meta-empirical’ beings, Hanegraaff discusses the wide variety of intermediaries ranging from God down to channelled entities, including elementals (*devas*) closely related to nature and part of a long alchemical tradition, as well as spirit or angelic guides, higher parts of the soul,

Magic in the Roman World, pp. 27-35, who quotes ample evidence of the belief in the existence of angels and daemons among Jews, Christians, and pagans alike in Roman times, emphasising once again that the two terms were used interchangeably (see Augustine, *Civitas Dei*, 9.19.), and that their activities were so diverse as to be held responsible for almost any occurrence.

¹² Correlated by Fortune with the Supernal Triangle on the Kabbalistic Tree of Life. Dion Fortune, *The Mystical Qabalah* (London: Ernest Benn, 1935), p. 258. See also Chapter 4, p. 205, n. 133.

¹³ See Peter Kingsley, *Ancient Philosophy, Mystery and Magic: Empedocles and Pythagorean Tradition* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1995), p. 109. Plato was himself the recipient of a long oral tradition from Pythagorean sources rather than, or as well as, being an innovator in his own right.

¹⁴ These were designated: 1. the body; 2. *pneuma* (astral body); 3. *psyche* (soul); 4. *logos* (reason); and 5. *nous* (mind, consciousness of which is only obtained at death). Van den Broek, ‘Intermediary Beings I’, in *Dictionary of Gnosis and Western Esotericism*, II, 617 cites Plato *Republic*, X, 617e; Marcus Aurelius *Meditations*, V, 27; Plutarch, *Quaestiones Rom.*, 51. Also Van den Broek, ‘Hermetism 4’, in Hanegraaff, *Dictionary of Gnosis and Western Esotericism*, I, 564, referring to *Corpus Hermeticum X*.

¹⁵ i.e. magic of the stars, best exemplified in the recipes of the *Picatrix* a medieval Arab text.

¹⁶ Thomas Aquinas, *Summa contra gentiles*, III, 104-07. It is interesting that Kieckhefer notes the readiness of Aquinas to agree that the *daimons* could, in fact, do the things they were reported as able to do. See Richard Kieckhefer, *Magic in the Middle Ages* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), pp. 132, 182-86, 200. Aquinas also had a stoical acceptance of demons in that he maintained that the Devil should not be blamed for every ill. The quality of life depends also upon free will. Timothy McDermott, ed., *St. Thomas Aquinas: A Concise Translation* (London: Eyre & Spottiswode, 1989), pp. 2, 3, 114, 158.

and inner teachers, all of these being features of ancient and medieval magic as will be shown below.¹⁷

Here, I shall focus on the most significant examples of intermediaries and hierarchies that recent research has brought to light;¹⁸ a more comprehensive survey must await further investigation.

Ancient Religions and their Intermediaries

Kocku von Stuckrad states that modern esotericism is rooted firmly in the religions of antiquity.¹⁹ It will be seen below that Hellenistic religion in particular, probably deriving ideas from further East,²⁰ established a broad foundation of belief for subsequent movements, whose demonology is often purely a restatement or elaboration of pre-existing classical and non-classical sources.

Zoroastrianism

Zoroaster (sixth century BCE) is seldom omitted from the list of ‘great initiates’ or ‘avatars’ of civilisation in modern occult and New Age circles.²¹ Duncan Greenlees

¹⁷ Wouter J. Hanegraaff, *New Age Religion and Western Culture: Esotericism in the Mirror of Secular Thought* (Leiden: Brill, 1996), pp. 182-203. His mention of *devas* and ‘elementals’ is on page 199. Empedocles (490-430 BCE) was the first to reduce the components of existence to the four elements – air (Zeus); earth (Hera); fire (Hades); water (Nestis). See Peter Kingsley, *Ancient Philosophy*, pp. 13, 42, 45, 47.

¹⁸ There is, of necessity, discussion of how some of these hierarchies came into being and their place in creation. The wider though related fields of cosmology, mythology, life after death, the geography of the inner worlds, the inner constitution of the individual psyche, and comparisons of these with the constructs of Dion Fortune, must be left to subsequent research.

¹⁹ Kocku von Stuckrad, *Western Esotericism: A Brief History of Secret Knowledge* (London: Equinox Publishing, 2005), p. 12.

²⁰ E.g. Persia and the Magi of Zoroastrianism.

²¹ Hanegraaff, *New Age Religion*, pp. 315, 394. Hanegraaff also lists Buddha, Krishna, Lao-Tsu, Hermes, Moses, Orpheus, etc., stating that Western esoteric philosophers tended to see each of these figures as links in a chain of sages forming the perennial tradition. See also van den Broek and Wouter J. Hanegraaff, eds, *Gnosis and Hermeticism from Antiquity to Modern Times* (New York: State University of New York Press, 1998), p. 2, where they indicate that early Gnostics appealed to the wisdom of Zoroaster among others (Porphyry, *Life of Plotinus*, 16.). See also Antoine Faivre, *The Eternal Hermes*:

emphasises the strength of his importance as a forerunner not only for Judaism,²² Christianity and Islam, but also for Neo-Platonism and Hermeticism.²³ Such regard reaches back to the ancients and to the Renaissance scholars who created the idea of a chain of initiates transmitting the *prisca theologia*. Antoine Faivre makes passing reference to the high esteem in which Zoroaster was held by Renaissance magi such as Ficino and Pico, as an early representative of the *philosophia perennis*;²⁴ Georg Luck, citing Apuleius, refers to similar feeling among Greeks and Romans who credited Zoroaster and the god Ahura Mazda with the invention of magic and of bequeathing his system of demonology to Greeks, Jews and Christians.²⁵ Tobias Churton speaks of the creation of companies of beneficent and malefic spirits equivalent to our angels and evil demons,²⁶ and Luck cites H. W. F. Saggs's evidence for a Mesopotamian organisation of daimons into hierarchies and categories according to function.²⁷

from Greek God to Alchemical Magus, tr. by Joscelyn Godwin (Grand Rapids, MI: Phanes Press, 1995), p. 39, which includes Enoch, Abraham, Noah, Zoroaster, Moses, Hermes Trismegistus, etc . . .

²² In dualist form, as evidenced by the *Manual of Discipline* of the Jewish sect of the Dead Sea Scrolls, see Zaehner, 'Zoroastrianism' in R. C. Zaehner, *The Hutchinson Encyclopaedia of Living Faiths* (London: Hutchinson, 1988), p. 205.

²³ Duncan Greenlees, *The Gospel of Zarathushtra* (Adyar, Madras, India: Theosophical Publishing House, 1951), p. xiv. He selects two prime concepts of Zoroastrianism: 1. 'the wholly ethical nature of the future life', and 2. 'man's work as God's co-agent in building on earth the Kingdom of Righteousness' (a concept much in line with a magician of Fortune's experience) (Greenlees, *Gospel*, p. lxxxix).

²⁴ Antoine Faivre, *Theosophy, Imagination, Tradition* (Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 2000) pp. 179, 233. The sages who were said to have transmitted this knowledge were, particularly, Zoroaster, Hermes Trismegistus, Orpheus, Moses, Pythagoras, and Plato. See also Frances Yates, *Giordano Bruno and the Hermetic Tradition* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1972), p. 15

²⁵ Apuleius, *Apology* ch. 25; Georg Luck, *Arcana Mundi*, pp. 6, 25, 111.

²⁶ Tobias Churton, *Gnostic Philosophy: From Ancient Persia to Modern Times* (Rochester, VT: Inner Traditions, 2005), p. 13. Although Greenlees agrees in that God and humankind were seen as entirely distinct, he points out that where God is ultimately omnipotent, evil is limited, so there can be no real dualism (Greenlees, *Gospel*, p. xcvi.). Kurt Rudolph speaks of the kingdom of light and the kingdom of darkness which existed from the beginning, and he points to the Nag Hammadi Codex VIII.1, entitled 'Zostrianos, the Teaching of the Truth of Zostrianos, God of Truth; the Teaching of Zoroaster' which describes one of Zoroaster's heavenly journeys. Kurt Rudolph, *Gnosis, the Nature and History of an Ancient religion*, translation edited by Robert McLachlan Wilson (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1983), pp. 47, 65. Zoroastrianism encompassed both dualistic and monotheistic points of view according to Zaehner, 'Zoroastrianism', pp. 200-14.

²⁷ Luck, *Arcana*, p. 165, citing H. W. F. Saggs, *The Greatness that was Babylon* (London: Sidgwick and Jackson, 1962), pp. 302ff.

Greenlees places seven personifications of the deity at the highest level.²⁸ Below them a multitude of *Yazatas* acted as humanity's loving guides and protectors, including various forces of nature and more specific entities such as the lord of Victory, friend of soldiers. At a yet lower level, when incarnate,²⁹ were the *Fravashis*, guardian angels to both individuals and nations,³⁰ servants of God from before Creation.³¹ There were also (evil) demons supposedly unknown to man, and whose task was to punish the wicked after death,³² yet Seligmann points out the vast accumulation of magical techniques already in use, predominantly to counteract the evil effects of such demons in everyday life.³³

Egypt

Sir E. A. Wallis Budge states that all levels of Egyptian society were involved in healing and in exorcism. The evil demons were thought to be much like humans, resentful at being expelled but willing in the end to negotiate the best possible terms with the superior being in whose name they were being exorcised.³⁴ A. Rosalie David shows that the Pyramid texts depict the most famous of the creation myths, which was that of Heliopolis, whose hierarchy consisted of two groups of nine gods, supreme intermediaries centred round the sun god Ra.³⁵ Later, other hierarchies predominated,³⁶

²⁸ Greenlees, *Gospel*, pp. 38-41. These levels of beings are, like the Aeons of Gnosticism, more in the nature of a recitation of the qualities of God than a separate hierarchy.

²⁹ Their usual home was in the heavens.

³⁰ A modern example would be the figure of St George.

³¹ Greenlees, *Gospel*, pp. 47, 67.

³² Greenlees, *Gospel*, p. 129. For more recent comment on the religion of Zarathustra, and its intermediaries, see Yuri Stoyanov, *The Hidden Tradition in Europe* (London: Arkana, 1994), pp. 6-12.

³³ Kurt Seligmann, *Magic, Supernaturalism and Religion* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1948), pp. 3-4, 17, 53-54.

³⁴ Sir E. A. Wallace Budge, *Egyptian Magic* (Secaucus, NJ: University Books, 1899, recent reprint, n.d.), p. 213; Seligmann, *Magic*, pp. 32-42. Also A. Rosalie David, *The Ancient Egyptians: Religious Beliefs and Practices* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1982), p. 143. Also Manfred Lurker, *The Gods and Symbols of Ancient Egypt: an Illustrated Dictionary* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1980), pp. 45-46.

³⁵ Parallel hierarchies existed at other centres such as at Memphis, where Ptah was creator, and at Hermopolis, where four syzygies were worshipped. E. A. Wallis Budge, *The Gods of the Egyptians* (New York: Dover Publications, 1969 [1904]), I, 403.

and by the Ptolemaic period all had emerged as vital elements of popular belief, even the common people being prepared to face the ‘forty-two assessors’ after death.³⁷ A major feature of these gods was that they were depicted as human with heads of animals, posing the question of how far they were gods, demons, or lower spirits much akin to the ‘power animals’ of shamanic Native American cultures.³⁸ Daniel Ogden emphasises that Egyptian magic was derived from shamanic activities such as sojourns underground, and, following Heliodorus, he categorises Egyptian wisdom as of two kinds concerned on the one hand with ghosts, necromancy, plants and incantations; and on the other with the invocation of gods and close observation of heavenly bodies.³⁹

Greece

Jane Harrison, whose work appears in Fortune’s bibliography, was one of the first academics to correct our view of the Greeks as purely intellectual, stating that Homer was the exception to the rule of the majority who still clung to their preliterate customs and to an everyday involvement with the underworld.⁴⁰ Luck enumerates the abundance of primary sources for magical practices, including, for example, curse tablets, hymns, oracles and incantations; and magical handbooks of rituals for initiation and the evocation of demons, usually for the purpose of harassing an enemy.⁴¹

John Hull draws attention to the implicit acceptance of a range of intermediaries who assisted in Greek magical practice,⁴² and following Hesiod, Virgil and Ovid, Lowe lists the most prominent deities invoked by magicians, particularly

³⁶ Faivre records the myth of Osiris as holding great fascination for Plutarch. Antoine Faivre and Jacob Needleman, *Modern Esoteric Spirituality* (London: SCM Press, 199), p. 2.

³⁷ David, *Ancient Egyptians*, pp. 49-52, 98, 121, 143.

³⁸ See Chapter 4, p. 250, 253.

³⁹ Heliodorus, *Aethiopica*, 3.16 in Daniel Ogden, *Magic, Witchcraft and Ghosts in the Greek and Roman Worlds* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), pp. 50-60.

⁴⁰ Robert Ackerman in Jane Harrison, *Prolegomena to the Study of Greek Religion* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1991 [1903]), p. xix. Fortune had access to the 1908 edition. See Appendix III, pp. 416-30.

⁴¹ Hymns such as the Homeric and Orphic Hymns; incantations as used in weather magic and in medicine. Luck, *Arcana*, pp. 3-53.

⁴² e.g. gods, angels, demons, and the souls of heroes.

Hecate, Chaos, Pluto, and Mercury, who by virtue of their sympathetic links with natural objects such as particular animals, plants and seasons, could be induced to effect changes in life.⁴³ They had bodies, and could on occasion speak, and the most dangerous hid within human beings or deep in the earth causing disease.⁴⁴ Overall control of physical creation was in the hands of the angels, who could be manipulated through their names, and who were associated with planets and stars.⁴⁵ Although in modern advanced magic the identity and objectives of the power being contacted is considered more a matter of intuition and intention than of a precise name, novices are still encouraged to use precise terminology. However, Hull records the opinion of Iamblichus that successful invocation did not depend on will or intention, but on the precise ordering and setting up of the symbols used.⁴⁶ Hull's outline of the magical processes of the time suggests that they corresponded closely to those of a magical lodge or conventional church service of today.⁴⁷

Harold Willoughby records that from the fifth century BCE until well into the second century CE the hero-gods were, like Christian saints, regarded as formerly incarnate, and therefore deemed to be of greater help in day-to-day affairs than the more remote gods.⁴⁸ According to Fortune, her Theosophical Masters of Wisdom were also

⁴³ Chaos was deemed to be the origin of all things. J. E. Lowe, *Magic in Greek and Latin Literature* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1929) pp. 61-66. Also E. R. Dodds, *Pagan and Christian in an Age of Anxiety* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1965), p. 38.

⁴⁴ See Janowitz, *Magic in the Roman World*, p. 35.

⁴⁵ John M. Hull, *Hellenistic Magic and the Synoptic Tradition* (London: SCM Press, 1974), pp. 37-39.

e.g. to exorcise demons, or in Black Magic, to make use of the demons' bad temper by first engendering it, then diverting it onto an enemy.

⁴⁶ Fortune could well have related to his idea that it was a matter of carefully setting up relationships between the physical symbols to assist in opening channels in the mind to the appropriate inner forces.

⁴⁷ Alongside various offerings such as incense, food and/or money, it consisted of: invocation, using the appropriate name, a description and eulogy; recitations of the achievements of the god (e.g. from the Scriptures), and the request itself. Hull, *Hellenistic Magic*, pp. 41-44. Money is rarely explicitly mentioned in the studies as a component of the rites and sacrifices although it must have been one of the preferred offerings where goods in kind were not readily available. Dickie records a sorceress who was paid in wine, and, on another occasion, with a drachma and some bread, with wine to drink while performing the ritual. See Matthew W. Dickie, *Magic and Magicians in the Greco-Roman World* (London: Routledge, 2001), p. 190.

⁴⁸ Hero gods such as Asclepius the healer and the very popular Heracles. Harold R. Willoughby, *Pagan Regeneration* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1929), pp. 19-22.

once incarnate, and therefore bore a close correspondence to saints and heroes rather than to gods or ordinary discarnate souls.⁴⁹

The bodies of earthbound shades in Hades retained some residue of life-force, but were rarely used as intermediaries for divination.⁵⁰ Necromancy was condemned by figures such as Plato and Pliny, and it is not a feature of any magical activity attributable to Fortune, although the converse could be argued on the basis of contacts with inner figures such as H. G. Wells, David Carstairs, and Fortune herself by members of her Fraternity since her demise.⁵¹

Daniel Ogden does not consider Luck's documentary evidence for ancient magical activity to be very strong, and emphasises ghosts as the prime area of interest, alongside sorcerers, mages and witch figures such as Medea and Circe, both of whom enlisted the help of inner beings,⁵² and were evoked in their turn by later practitioners,⁵³ suggesting the idea of a historical chain of invokers who in their turn are evoked in later ages.⁵⁴

Fictional accounts of magical operations were popular especially where they involved necromancy.⁵⁵ Three major fictional intermediaries were Euripides's Medea,⁵⁶ Prometheus, and Hecate, favourite of Zeus.⁵⁷ But accounts of magic such as the raising

⁴⁹ The Masters of Wisdom were introduced in Chapter 1, p. 9, and are discussed at length in Chapter 5.

⁵⁰ The 'unquiet dead'. Although some notable accounts may be found in Homer's *Odyssey*; and in Virgil's *Aeneid*. Dramatic magical episodes occur with Odysseus's meetings with Circe – a dynamic witch second only to Medea according to J. E. Lowe, *Magic*, p. 87 – e.g. Odysseus's venture to the underworld to consult with Tiresias; also Aeneas' visit to the Underworld. See also Dodds, *Ancient Concept*, pp. 39-57, 206; Luck, *Arcana*, pp. 163-174; J. E. Lowe, *Magic*, p. 13. Todd Klutz is of the opinion that necromancy in Biblical times was the last resort after the failure of other methods. Todd E. Klutz, *Magic in the Biblical World: from the Rod of Aaron to the Ring of Solomon* (London: T & T Clark, 2003), p. 48.

⁵¹ See Chapter 5, p. 321.

⁵² As in Homer *Odyssey* 10.488, 11.13-149, where Odysseus is sent to consult the ghost of Tiresias.

⁵³ Ogden, *Magic*, pp. 4, 5, 124, 125, 78-100.

⁵⁴ Much as the celebrated attempted invocation of Apollonius of Tyana by Eliphas Lévi in 1854, and as in the example above where Dion Fortune might herself be invoked.

⁵⁵ Luck, *Arcana*, pp. 1-45.

⁵⁶ Lowe considers Medea 'without question, the queen of witches of all ages [. . .] young, beautiful, fascinating, even when she is most repellent.' Lowe, *Magic*, p. 67.

⁵⁷ Aeschylus: *Prometheus Bound*; Hesiod, *Theogony*; Apollonius of Rhodes, *Argonautica*.

of the ghost of Oedipus's murderer, complete with natural disturbances, are rare; the magical practices of ordinary people were overwhelmingly directed towards immediate day-to-day comforts, often involving contact with Hecate in her role as bestower of riches, prowess and fertility. Others included Pluto, Chaos⁵⁸ and Mercury, sender of dreams and guide to the Underworld.⁵⁹ According to Celsus (second century), heroes and ancestors appeared in dreams, to heal or to predict, although Tertullian warned of evil demons communicating spurious dream material.⁶⁰

The Mystery Religions

Willoughby illustrates the importance of the Greek Mystery religions in their intermediary function of initiation with reference to Eleusis, where the drama of Demeter and Kore was enacted in such a way as to evoke the immediate presence and powers of those divinities within the candidates, resulting in a life-changing experience of death and resurrection, and an assurance of immortality.⁶¹

⁵⁸ Like Hecate, identified with the Underworld. Kingsley, *Ancient Philosophy*, pp. 245-47, 251, 288-89, considers Empedocles's ritual death at the mouth of a volcano a reference to the mysteries of Hecate, a most important underworld figure associated with the Pythagorean theme of descent as a prelude to ascent. Descent, or ritual 'death', is a major feature of initiation in modern magical lodges today, see Chapter 4, pages 241-43 where various underworld contacts and environments are discussed, particularly in relation to the work of R. J. Stewart who emphasises this as an essential factor in magical operation.

⁵⁹ Lowe, *Magic*, pp. 14-66.

⁶⁰ Tertullian, *De anima*, 47.2., in Dodds, *Ancient Concept*, pp. 39-68. Spirit mediums were variously categorised as *prophetai* (speaking on behalf of the inner beings); *entheoi* (filled with God); *daemonontes* (demon-ridden, like epileptics); or acting normally *ekstatikoi*. In the early Church, the *prophetai* spoke by the authority of the Holy Spirit (e.g. Acts 13:2). There is the interesting example of Montanus, who spoke with a voice not his own, but of the Lord God Almighty. The same voice later spoke through two women mediums and dictated a third Testament concerning the building of a New Jerusalem well away from the Holy Land. These states of 'prophetai', etc. relate more to religion than to modern magic. Only very occasionally is an extempore mediated discourse a feature of lodge work, when opportunity is made for it during the ritual. In the Society of the Inner Light, Dion Fortune was the first to give extended trance addresses. On her death in 1946, this duty was taken over by her successor, the 'pythoness' Margaret Lumley-Brown until the early 1960s when the custom of trance addresses was discontinued, (Gareth Knight, *Pythoness: The Life and Work of Margaret Lumley Brown* (Oceanside, CA: Sun Chalice Books, 2000), p. 7. For further details of the contribution of Margaret Lumley Brown, see Chapter 6, p. 337-38.

⁶¹ Apuleius gives hints of such an occurrence, e.g. Lucius Apuleius, *The Golden Ass* (Harmondsworth, Middlesex: Penguin Books, 1950), p. 241. Such close liaison results in *sympathia* with the divinities

Similarly today, initiatory rites continue to imply death and resurrection, and also seek to make present, or to channel, the forces represented by the chosen intermediaries both in the candidate and in the world, with the difference that salvation is considered to be a very long-term process covering several or many lifetimes, during the course of which other useful work can be done with the help of the intermediaries to improve world conditions.

Lionel Mitchell states that the Mystery religions foreshadowed Christianity;⁶² their successors from the nineteenth century to the present day largely encompass both Christian and pagan symbolism, and are therefore open to an even wider range of intermediaries.⁶³ Faivre does not see any incompatibility between certain Neo-Platonic ideas and early esoteric elements in Christianity, including the idea of mediatory spirits, or, quoting Origen (c. 185-254 CE), the gradual transforming of the soul upwards

whose moral and spiritual examples were sought. S. Angus, *The Mystery-Religions and Christianity: A Study in the Religious Background of Early Christianity* (London: John Murray, 1925), pp. 117-21.

See also Willoughby, *Pagan Regeneration*, pp. 60-62, 80, 190. An initiate having undergone symbolic death and resurrection in the Isiac Mysteries, was treated as the god Osiris-Ra himself. Cf. in Christianity, mere participation is insufficient; the doctrine of Paul is that although we die with Christ, our resurrection is for the far future, Lionel L. Mitchell, *The Meaning of Ritual* (New York: Paulist Press, 1977), pp. 48-52. Kingsley, *Ancient Philosophy*, p. 369 emphasises that in the esoteric tradition, it is not the doctrines that are considered of consequence, but the ability of practitioners to discover for themselves the inner realities that hold true for them. Faivre suggests that we need to recognize intermediaries (which we must get to know generally under the guise of angels) as guideposts along the way of initiation, the 'active imagination' being the prime tool. Antoine Faivre, *Access to Western Esotericism* (Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 1994), pp. 20, 21.

⁶² By the beginning of the fourth century, elements of Greek philosophy, and the vocabulary and imagery of the Mysteries appear in Christianity as it attempted to reach out into the pagan world. Interestingly, the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* confirms the recent introduction of the term 'initiation', applying it especially to the Sacrament of Baptism. Geoffrey Chapman, tr., *Catechism of the Catholic Church* (London: Geoffrey Chapman, 1994), p. 276. See also Maxwell E. Johnson, *The Rites of Christian Initiation: Their Evolution and Interpretation* (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 1999), pp. xv-xvii. Johnson recapitulates the four stages (separation, liminality, the rites of initiation and period of mystagogy/explanation of the mysteries) experienced in rites of passage in pre-literate societies as interpreted by Van Gennep, and contrasts the pagan initiations (where initiation into a new level of membership of a community is undertaken by those who in some way already belong to that community), with Christian initiation where, by virtue of conversion and faith, the participant enters a new community that s/he did not already belong to. See also Arnold van Gennep, *The Rites of Passage* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1960, [1908]), pp. 10-12.

⁶³ In Fortune's view, as in the theosophical current throughout, Christian and non-Christian experiences are not mutually exclusive.

towards God through initiatory stages.⁶⁴ Demons and angels feature in the writings of Clement (an acknowledged upholder of *gnosis*) and Cyprian; and the three figures of Chalcidius (c. 300), Synesius (c. 370-430), and Nemesius (c. 400) also betray an esoteric background to Christianity.⁶⁵

Scholars working within the religionist perspective have added a certain universalism with respect to intermediaries. For example, Arthur Versluis traces the universal Cosmic Tree as an initiatory symbol in several traditions – Buddhist, Norse, Judaic, etc., showing it to be an in-built feature of the cosmos and the human psyche, and functioning as a prime mediator facilitating ascension to the spiritual heights. Mircea Eliade even sympathetically correlates the Cosmic Tree with the Cross of Calvary, also said to reside at the centre of the world, acting as a prime intermediary symbol.⁶⁶

⁶⁴ e.g. Origen's 'the Word [. . .] is revealed [. . .] according to one's level of progress towards saintliness', Origen, *Against Celsus* 4.16. Faivre outlines the Neo-Platonic strands in Origen's philosophy, including his enumeration of three levels of scriptural interpretation: carnal (literal), psychic (moral), and spiritual (mystical). Antoine Faivre in Faivre and Needleman, eds, 'Ancient and Medieval Sources of Modern Esoteric movements' in Faivre and Needleman, *Modern Esoteric Spirituality*, pp. 1-70 (p. 16).

⁶⁵ Antoine Faivre, 'Ancient and Medieval Sources of Modern Esoteric movements' in Faivre and Needleman, *Modern Esoteric Spirituality*, pp. 10-70 (pp. 12-18). Christ is, of course, the supreme intermediary for Christians.

⁶⁶ Similarly, the world axis remained important even to sophisticated religions (implicit, for example in Isaiah, 14: 12ff), the 'Divine Ray of [. . .] Creation', and contemplation of the Holy Cross is an accepted Christian meditation discipline. See Mircea Eliade, *Birth and Rebirth*, (London: Harvill, 1961), pp. 17-20; Alan Bates, *The Real Middle-Earth* (London: Sidgwick & Jackson, 2002), p 54; Arthur Versluis, *Song of the Cosmos* (Bridport: Prism Press, 1991), pp. 15-34. Versluis defines the Tree as the stabilising cosmic background against which the drama of existence is played out, and as a focus on the one hand for effort on our part, and on the other for the descent of Divine Grace. It is part and parcel of our psyche, reflecting the 'above' within the 'below', and is paramount in all traditions, forming a map of the spirit encompassing the three realms which may be explored by the trained shaman – the heavens, man, and the underworld (See Bates, *Middle-Earth*, p. 54). This theme is followed through and developed in a practical way in the present-day Western Mysteries by two occultists well versed in the school of Fortune: R. J. Stewart, *The Underworld Initiation* (Wellingborough: The Aquarian Press, 1985) and *The Miracle Tree* (Franklin Lakes, NJ: New Page Books, 2003); also John Matthews, *The Celtic Shaman* (Shaftesbury: Element Books, 1991).

*Gods, Angels and Demons among Christians, Jews and Pagans
of the First Four Centuries CE*

Judaism and Christianity

Angus suggests that St Paul absorbed much of Graeco-Roman religion into Christianity. However, Paul never considered himself as divinised, or as absorbed into his deity as in the Mysteries, but as made one with the *historical* person of Jesus. Angus notably contrasts the historical intermediary Jesus with the abstractness of the mythological intermediaries of the Mystery religions.⁶⁷

Old Testament angels were the benign messengers of God, or even aspects of JHWH himself.⁶⁸ Seven Archangels are referred to by name: Michael, Gabriel, Raphael, Uriel, Raguel, Sariel, and Remiel,⁶⁹ the first four of which are almost without fail still invoked at the commencement of any ritual conducted in the Society of the Inner Light. Groups of angels are also mentioned, such as Thrones, Sovereigns, etc., later systemised by theologians of the Middle Ages.⁷⁰ Accounts of angels gradually increased in number and function, and included guardians of nations and individuals, an idea seemingly taken from the Greek personal *daimon*, an aspect of the Pythagorean *eidolon*, the fluid form of the deceased's soul in the afterlife. Thus there was a heavenly counterpart mirroring each level of society,⁷¹ and angels with special functions such as at the Annunciation.⁷²

⁶⁷ Angus, *Mystery Religions*, pp. 235-36, 291-311. However, Angus was writing from a Western and Christian point of view. Neither do we know how many of the ancient mythological figures were once incarnate. Like Jesus, some spoke of their mission from God, and performed significant mediatory and symbolic acts, and underwent trials. What is important for Eliade, for example, is that Jesus was one of the most recent powerful spiritual avatars, and therefore most likely to be relevant to the present (Eliade, *Birth and Rebirth*, pp. 116-18).

⁶⁸ Those of Qumran were described on the one hand according to function, such as the Watchers (1 Enoch, 6: 2), the angel of death, etc.; and on the other, according to specific name, such as Raphael, Gabriel, Ratziel and Samael. See also *Revelation of St John*.

⁶⁹ See 1 Enoch 20:1 and 7.

⁷⁰ Colossians 1:16; 1 Corinthians 15:5. See below, pp. 85-87.

⁷¹ See Matthew 18:10; Acts 12:15. Of especial interest in Judaic magic was the *Sepher Ha-Razim* an exhaustive list of the names of angelic beings relating to each of the several subdivisions of the Seven Heavens. The major Heavens or Firmaments comprised 1. (lowest level) seven 'encampments' each ruled

After the Exile, belief in the opposing Princes of Light and of Darkness and their retinues increased,⁷³ gradually being identified individually by name as their popularity grew, even being appropriated for use in Greek magical texts.⁷⁴ Antoine Faivre notes that the Jewish philosopher Philo of Alexandria (20 BCE-54 CE) foreshadowed some later Neo-Platonic ideas such as that of God's requirement that intermediaries – attributes of the godhead as well as demons and angels – be an indispensable element in assisting the soul's ascent to the Deity.⁷⁵

The view that demons were ethically neutral was attacked by Augustine and the early Church Fathers, claiming that demons were the instructors and motivating force behind magic.⁷⁶ Richard Kieckhefer cites the view of Origen who considered that magical power rested in the knowledge and manipulation of divine names.⁷⁷ Kieckhefer also draws a distinction between magical actions which focus on supplicating the divine (and are therefore religious acts), or upon coercing it (magical acts). He alerts us

by an 'angelic overseer'; 2. consisting of twelve levels, each with between nine and twenty angels; 3. ruled by three angels, together with 'serving angels'; 4. divided between thirty-one 'angelic princes and their 'encampments'; 5. ruled by twelve princes of glory (the twelve months of the year); 6. divided between an eastern and a western overlord, each with about thirty angelic leaders; 7 (the highest) the divine throne. The names of all the angelic powers are listed (Michael A. Morgan, tr., *Sepher Ha-Razim: The Book of Mysteries* (Chico, California: Scholastic Press, 1983), pp. 6, 7.)

⁷² Luke 1: 26-38. Roelof van den Broek, 'Intermediary Beings I: Antiquity, 3B Israel, Judaism, Christianity', in Wouter J. Hanegraaff, *Dictionary*, II, 618, 619. Also Hull, *Hellenistic Magic*, p. 87 for a complete list.

⁷³ *Community Rule* of Qumran, 3, 13-26.

⁷⁴ Roelof van den Broek, 'Intermediary Beings I: Antiquity, 3A Greece', in Wouter J. Hanegraaff, *Dictionary*, II, 618. John Hull notes that already in the third century, gospel texts appear in spells and amulets. Hull, *Hellenistic Magic*, p. 20. Jars containing long lists of first-century CE Syrian and Hebrew demons and spirits were unearthed in Babylonia (J. A. Montgomery, *Aramaic Incantation Texts from Nippur* (1913) in Joseph Dan, 'Magic', in *Encyclopaedia Judaica*, (Jerusalem: Keter Publishing House, 1971), XI, 706.

⁷⁵ Faivre, 'Ancient and Medieval Sources', in Faivre and Needleman, eds, *Modern Esoteric Spirituality*, pp. 1-70 (pp. 2-3).

⁷⁶ Augustine, *Concerning the City of God*, pp. 298-426.

⁷⁷ Richard Kieckhefer, *Magic in the Middle Ages* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), pp. 38-39.

too, to the twin dangers of projecting the views of our own time and culture, and of judging the whole population according to the ideas and practices of the literate few.⁷⁸

Roelof van den Broek points to Biblical sources which condemn all foreign gods as evil demons,⁷⁹ but which also include angels such as the Destroyer or Destroying Angel who were correctly carrying out God's will.⁸⁰ Satan, although originally one of God's servants, only later developed into the figure of evil we think of nowadays.⁸¹

John Hull discusses the Jewish lack of distinction between miracle and magic, which raises the question of Jesus as a magician, important here because of the traditional role of demons in exorcism.⁸² He also draws attention to the scriptural classification of demons into classes.⁸³

The Pagan World

Kurt Rudolph has shown that from the third century BCE, the ancient Egyptian idea of a three-tier cosmos - heaven, earth and underworld - was gradually being replaced by the concept of a central earth surrounded by concentric spherical envelopes of levels incorporating planets, stars, and spirits of all kinds.⁸⁴ Although God himself had

⁷⁸ Kieckhefer, *Magic*, pp. 10-16; also Garth Fowden, *The Egyptian Hermes: A Historical Approach to the Late Pagan Mind* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986), pp. 79-81; also Kingsley, *Ancient Philosophy*, p. 306.

⁷⁹ As in Psalm 96: 5. Paul acknowledges the existence of entities that were termed 'gods', at the same time emphasising the supremacy of the One (1 Corinthians 8: 1-6; 10: 20), but confirms them as real presences to be reckoned with rather than disempowering them. No demon was thenceforth regarded as beneficent, and exorcisms proliferated, later formalised as an essential component of baptism.

⁸⁰ Genesis 12: 23; 2 Samuel 24: 16; 1 Chronicles 21: 15. Faivre notes that the idea of intermediaries such as was held by Neo-Platonism is not contrary to the teachings of Jesus. Even Bishop Cyprian was a former demonic magician. Faivre, 'Ancient and Medieval Sources' in Faivre and Needleman, *Modern Esoteric Spirituality*, pp. 1-70 (pp. 12, 15).

⁸¹ 1 Chronicles 21: 1. For the evolution of the idea of Satan, see Elaine Pagels, *The Origin of Satan* (London: Allen Lane The Penguin Press, 1996). See also Jeffrey Burton Russell, *The Devil: Perceptions of Evil from Antiquity to Primitive Christianity* (New York: Cornell University Press, 1987).

⁸² e.g. Mark 1: 32-34.

⁸³ e.g. the 36 World Rulers. Hull, *Hellenistic Magic*, p. 45; 96-104. These demons are perhaps analogous to the 'choirs' of angels.

⁸⁴ Kurt Rudolph, tr, *Gnosis*, p. 69.

thereby apparently become remote, the people could now relate to innumerable spirits within these spheres instead. Some were considered souls of the dead, others as ghosts of the wicked, and yet others offspring of ‘sons of God and the daughters of men’.⁸⁵

By the time of Augustus, when state religion was in decline, the bulk of the populace sought salvation individually through union with the Lord of whichever cult they chose to follow, many through the mystical experience of initiation in the now easily accessible Mystery religions. Gods such as the Great Mother, the Persian Ahura Mazda or the underworld Persephone were regarded as supremely powerful intermediaries, and were approached through their lesser representatives such as Attis or Mithra.⁸⁶

Van den Broek highlights Plutarch’s *On the Decline of Oracles* as an indispensable storehouse of information regarding ancient demonology.⁸⁷ Plutarch (46-120 CE) considered demons to be spiritual beings whose thoughts produced vibrations in the air, and thus to be telepathic to suitably sensitive humans. He valued them for their help in handling daily life rather than as collaborators in magic, and those in the higher spheres for their spirituality. They were thought to grow old and die, so any oracle that they were in charge of died with them. Bishop Eusebius, too (d. c. 340 CE) included them in his flexible categorisation of inner beings, viz.: gods, angels, daemons, heroes, and souls.⁸⁸ Hellenistic religion and magic depended greatly on such interrelated texts as the *Chaldaean Oracles*, the *Corpus Hermeticum*, and also those of Gnosticism and Neo-Platonism, which contain many similarities as well as distinct differences, even within single texts.⁸⁹

⁸⁵ As in Genesis 6: 1-4. Janowitz, *Magic in the Roman World*, pp. 27-31.

⁸⁶ Willoughby, *Pagan Regeneration*, pp. 267-74

⁸⁷ It was Plutarch’s opinion that the decline in demons was the crucial factor in the demise of the oracles. Roelof van den Broek, ‘Intermediary Beings I: Antiquity, 2A Greece’, in Wouter J. Hanegraaff et al, *Dictionary*, ii, 617.

⁸⁸ Luck, *Arcana Mundi*, p. 276.

⁸⁹ Kocku von Stuckrad, *Western Esotericism: A Brief History of Secret Knowledge*, (London: Equinox Publications, 2005), p. 12. A prime difference being the optimism of Hermetism as against the negativism of Gnosticism, Faivre et al, *Modern Esoteric Spirituality*, pp. 3, 7, although, interestingly, Christopher McIntosh puts the case for a ‘playful, celebratory’ view of Gnosticism. Christopher McIntosh, *The Rosicrucians: The History, Mythology, and Rituals of an Esoteric Order* San Francisco,

The Chaldaean Oracles

The second century *Chaldaean Oracles* contain rites for the calling down of a god into a statue or to speak through a medium to assist the process of ascent. Hans Lewy investigates the *Oracles* through the works of previous commentators such as Porphyry and Proclus.⁹⁰ Although he sees no consistency among the stated ladders of emanations, he finds that the angels and demons tended to specialise in certain tasks, e.g., the archangels who surround the Father; the cherubs and seraphs who praise God and bear his throne; and the ubiquitous ministering and communicating angels.⁹¹ Various classes of demons work for the Deity under the direction of Hecate,⁹² and a group of demons that Paracelsus and modern tradition might well term ‘elementals’ – water spirits; ‘wombs’ (elemental spirits of earth and air); male and female lunar spirits filling the

CA: Weiser Books, 1998), p. 138. Roelof van den Broek sets out a clear comparison of Gnosticism and Hermetism in Roelof van den Broek, ‘Gnosticism and Hermetism in Antiquity: Two Roads to Salvation’ in Roelof van den Broek and Wouter J. Hanegraaff, eds, *Gnosis and Hermeticism from Antiquity to Modern Times* (Albany, NY: State University of New York, 1998), pp. 1-13. Copenhaver lists some Hermetic texts that are a part of the otherwise Gnostic Nag Hammadi Codices: “*The Discourse on the Eighth and Ninth*” (VI.6); “*The Prayer of Thanksgiving*” (VI.7); the “*Scribal Note*” (VI.7a); and “*Asclepius 21-29*” (VI.8). See Brian P. Copenhaver, *Hermetica: The Greek ‘Corpus Hermeticum’ and the Latin ‘Asclepius’ in a new English translation, with notes and introduction* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992), pp. xxxix, xliv.

⁹⁰ Hans Lewy, *Chaldaean Oracles and Theurgy: Mysticism, Magic and Platonism in the Later Roman Empire* (Paris: Études Augustiniennes, 1978). See, for example, his table comparing the Platonic, Orphic, and Chaldaean systems, pp. 483, 484.

⁹¹ Lewy, *Oracles*, pp. 14, 28, 29, 162. But his correlations are not distinct. Compare the above with: 1. Supreme Father (noetic primordial Fire); 2. the feminine principle (Vigour of Strength: First Intellect); 3. The Intellect (*nous*), the Creator, the Artisan (Lewy, *Oracles* p. 13). Also Porphyry’s interpretation: 1. the Father in the Intelligible world above the planetary and stary spheres, composed of pure Fire, who issues 2. the Intellect, the Mother. 3. That which generates Ideas (the Power of the Father). Level 4. is termed ‘Life’ or the ‘World-Soul’, governed by Hecate/Psyche, created by the Father without intermediary (Lewy, *Oracles*, pp. 77-85). Proclus, *Timaeus* II. 57.9 gives 1. the Empyrean, the Intelligible World (in an outermost circle); 2. the Ethereal World of the fixed stars and planets; 3. the Hylic World – sublunar, including the earth. They can be correlated with 1. Aion; 2. the Sun; 3. the Moon/Hecate, and with St Paul’s 1. love, 2. truth, and 3. faith. Lewy, *Oracles*, pp. 137, 142-46. The Father, Aion, and Hecate are designated as the ‘Transmundane’ gods; and the planetary gods as ‘mere satellites of God’. Lewy, *Oracles*, pp. 158, 162.

⁹² e.g. those who deter the unworthy from progressing too far.

space between the planets and the sublunar world, the earth, and the ‘caverns below’; and terrestrial demons, the ‘offspring of evil matter’.⁹³

The *Oracles* seem to suggest that ascent is more easily achieved by means of breathing techniques together with the assistance of angels,⁹⁴ a formula similar to that in the culminating section of the *Poimandres*, which suggests that closing off the senses eases ascension,⁹⁵ or alternatively by imagining the cosmos to be within oneself. Many rituals for gaining immortality can be found in, for example, *The Book of Secrets (Sefer ha-Razim)*, probably dated to the end of the first century, and the Greek Magical Papyri.⁹⁶

The Hermetica and Corpus Hermeticum

The ‘technical’ Hermetica contains advice on practical aspects of magic such as astrology, while the *Corpus Hermeticum* (first to third century) contains philosophical writings and suggests the possibility of humanity ascending to become divinity within the current lifetime.⁹⁷ In comparison with Gnostic texts, the *Corpus* contains few references to intermediaries, save the *Nous* itself, the supreme Hermetic intermediary.⁹⁸ Demons are, however, mentioned as responsible for crime and for weighing, judging,

⁹³ Lewy, *Oracles*, pp. 267-69.

⁹⁴ In the Jewish Hekhalot literature the ascent is effected by means of angelic hymn-singing, a liturgy that repeats the same words, and the recitation of divine names in order to empower the hymns. The recitation of the Kedusha (Isa 6:3) (of which the Greek version is probably older), assists this process. Janowitz, *Magic in the Roman World*, pp. 80, 81. It might be noted that singing involves considerable breath control.

⁹⁵ Even to the extent of hating the body. Copenhaver, *Hermetica*, IV.7; XIII.7.

⁹⁶ Janowitz, *Magic in the Roman World*, pp. 47-53, 81-85; Copenhaver, *Hermetica*, IV.7.

⁹⁷ Willoughby, *Pagan Regeneration*, pp. 197, 207.

⁹⁸ A useful, though imperfect tool for moving towards divinity. Van den Broek ‘Gnosis and Hermetism in Antiquity’ in Van den Broek and Hanegraaff, eds, *Gnosis and Hermetism from Antiquity to Modern Times*, (Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 1998), p. 7. Faivre indicates Hermes as sometimes standing for a god, a sage, or as a disciple of the *Nous* (Divine Intellect), and therefore a supreme intermediary. He was also credited as the founder of alchemy. Among Christians, he was variously accepted as either a devil or the image of Christ, see Faivre, *The Eternal Hermes*, pp. 20-22.

and punishing souls after death.⁹⁹ Troops of demons are said to be organised by the sun, with each star allocated an equal number, who act according to that star's nature.¹⁰⁰

One model of the hierarchy is that of 'Intelligible essence' governing heaven; Heaven governing the gods; and demons governing humans.¹⁰¹ During a successful ascent of the soul various negative character traits are surrendered at each stage from the lowest to the seventh zone after which it enters the highest sphere, the Ogdoad, empowered and in joy, later to rise to the father and enter into the supreme good.¹⁰²

Garth Fowden highlights the fundamental importance of the spheres in their intermediary function as described in a second-century Greek papyrus which gives an alternative form of ascent consisting of invocation; envisioning ascent through the heavenly bodies; dismissing demons; prayer and envisioning self as a star; encountering Helios and a vision of Aion resulting in witnessing a sequence of Egyptian gods; an epiphany of the supreme god; and the demanding of an oracle.¹⁰³

Of especial interest because of its resonance with Fortune's *Cosmic Doctrine* is the first treatise of the *Corpus Hermeticum* which sets out a comparable cosmology.¹⁰⁴

⁹⁹ Copenhaver, *Hermetica*, II. 17; IX. 3; X. 18, 20; and Asclepius 28.

¹⁰⁰ Copenhaver, *Hermetica*, XVI. 14. Also Fowden, *The Egyptian Hermes*, pp. 75-78, where he also indicates that it is necessary for the aspirant to transcend the influence of the demons, the personified energies deriving from the stars, also termed 'Fate', before unity with God can be achieved.

¹⁰¹ Copenhaver, *Hermetica*, XVI. 17, 18.

¹⁰² involving exercises such as 1. call to repentance; 2. instruction (which was less addressed to the mind than to the emotions); 3. self-preparation (with an emphasis on hating the body in order to come to love the spirit – a process dependent in the final analysis on the grace of God); 4. silent meditation; and 5. some mental confusion. The result is ecstasy, 'expressed in terms of light' and perhaps including a vision, all resulting in a spiritual birth, the acquisition of *nous*, and endorsed by a form of baptism which brought with it '*gnosis*', an experience of the divine, freeing one from illusion and giving insight into the God and his purposes. The lasting result of this was moral resurgence, and deification, becoming a physically mortal god with an indestructible spiritual body. See Willoughby, *Pagan Regeneration*, 211-23; Copenhaver, *Hermetica*, XIII. Also Copenhaver, *Hermetica*, I. 24-26.

¹⁰³ P. Graec. Mag. IV in A. Dietrich, *Eine Mithrasliturgie* (Leipzig, 1923), pp 475-750, encapsulated in Garth Fowden, *The Egyptian Hermes: A Historical Approach to the Late Pagan Mind* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986), pp. 83-84.

¹⁰⁴ Subsequent researchers may wish to carry out a full comparison.

Mead's commentary 'Concerning the Shepherd of Hermes the Thrice-Greatest' is an invaluable guide.¹⁰⁵

Gnosticism

In broad terms *gnosis* may be regarded as a tradition or stream of religious experience characteristic of esotericism from ancient times to the present, and owing its name to Gnostic sects of early Christianity.¹⁰⁶ Beside angels and demons, van den Broek includes Jewish wisdom literature and the 'personified attributes of the godhead' of Gnostic aeonology in all its complexity.¹⁰⁷

G. R. S. Mead, though an 'insider' to Theosophy, nevertheless displays a thorough academic approach to Gnosticism. Of particular use to set beside Fortune's interpretation of the Tree of Life is his analysis, including a diagram, of Simon Magus's theosophy which he identifies with modern Theosophy.¹⁰⁸ His use of Theosophical terms also emphasises the continuity of the Gnostic stream mentioned above. Here, the prime intermediary beings are the Aeons (divine qualities and attributes, but also aspects of time and space), cognate with the flexible term 'Archangels', and collectively known as the Pleroma.

As documents from the Nag Hammadi library have now shown, the variety of Gnostic systems is now realised as enormous and complex.¹⁰⁹ Figure 1 (page 73) is based on the outline given by Mead of a Valentinian system from the *Pistis Sophia*. It is

¹⁰⁵ See G. R. S. Mead, 'Concerning the Shepherd of Hermes' in Clare Goodrick-Clarke and Nicholas Goodrick-Clarke eds, *G. R. S. Mead and the Gnostic Quest*, pp. 127-134. Yet Mead, as Copenhagen warns (*Hermetica*, p. li), should be read with caution. Indeed, Mead confesses his ulterior motive thus: 'The whole of my essays, papers, articles and notes are designed for the single purpose of demonstrating the *sameness* [author's emphasis] of the endeavour made by all who followed the spiritual life [. . .]'. (Mead, p. 128). While recognising that Mead is both insider and objective researcher, this remark seems a little incautious.

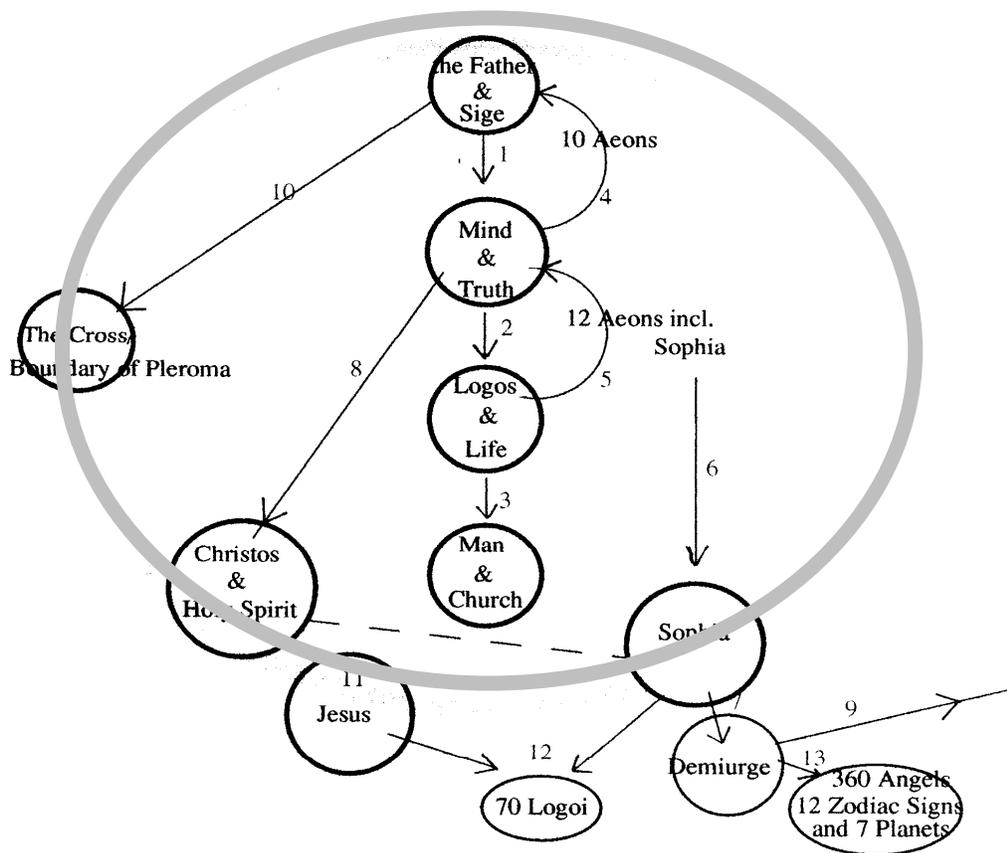
¹⁰⁶ Further defined below, Chapter 4. It is the whole theme in Churton, *Gnostic Philosophy*.

¹⁰⁷ Van den Broek, *Dictionary*, p. 617.

¹⁰⁸ Goodrick-Clarke and Goodrick-Clarke, eds, *G. R. S. Mead and the Gnostic Quest*, pp. 102-09.

¹⁰⁹ Kurt Rudolf, *Gnosis*, p. 51.

primarily an exposition of the Creation,¹¹⁰ but includes information on the genesis of intermediaries such as the seven planets.¹¹¹ According to Pétrement, the planets are



In the beginning, the Father, together with Sige (silence) emanated Mind and Truth, who emanated Logos and Life, who emanated Man and Church. In gratitude, Mind and Truth gave 10 Aeons to the Father, and Logos and Life gave to Mind and Truth 12 Aeons, the youngest of whom was Sophia, who daring to emulate the creativity of the Father, brought forth the Abortion/Demiurge. In response, Mind and Truth emanated Christos and the Holy Spirit to comfort Sophia, and evict the Abortion from the Pleroma. The Father created Stauros (the Cross) as the Boundary of the Pleroma. Finally, all the Aeons created the 'Common Fruit' (Jesus), who with Sophia emanated 70 Logoi. In turn, the Demiurge created 360 angels including the 12 signs of the Zodiac and the 7 Planets.

Figure 1. A Valentinian System of Emanations

Compiled from Clare Goodrick-Clarke and Nicholas Goodrick-Clarke (eds),
G. R. S. Mead and the Gnostic Quest, pp. 69-75; 226.

related to the Archons (and therefore detrimental), the Seven Creator Angels assisting the Demiurge to create the world and humanity.¹¹²

Although almost thirty years older than Fortune, Mead's work was practically contemporary with her own. Her bibliography does not refer specifically to any of his works, but she mentions his name as a recommended author.¹¹³

Neo-Platonism

For Plotinus (c. 205-70 CE) and the later Neo-Platonists of the third and fourth centuries such as Iamblichus (c. 240-c. 325 CE), it was up to people to prevent demons from controlling the world.¹¹⁴ Seligmann notes that Plotinus was against the use of spells, magic, and exorcism, but accepted influence from the stars, and the ultimate harmony of the universe.¹¹⁵ But as Fowden points out, even Plotinus himself was

Chapters on the personal nature of the planets, e.g. Book III, Chapter 7 has instructions for the adoration of planets; Book IV, Chapter 2 has prayers to the moon and the signs of the Zodiac (Helmut Ritter and Martin Plessner tr, *Picatrix: Das Ziel des Weisen von Pseudo-Magriti* (London: Warburg Institute, 1962), pp. lxx, lxxii.

¹¹² Simone Pétrement, *A Separate God: The Christian Origins of Gnosticism* (London: Darton, Longman and Todd, 1991), p. 51, 72. Rudolph, referring to the Book of Jeu, ch. 52, says that at death, the soul is surrounded by seven angelic archons ('the Seven') as well as 'angels of light'. Rudolph, *Gnosis*, p. 173.

¹¹³ Most research into Gnosticism today focuses on the Nag Hammadi library, only brought to light in 1945, twelve years after Mead's death.

¹¹⁴ Luck, *Arcana*, p. 45. Both pagans and Christians sought guidance in dealing with demons.

¹¹⁵ According to Faivre, divine beings had no communication with humans, and were indifferent to them. For Plotinus, one may communicate with them through philosophy. Faivre, 'Ancient and Medieval Sources

willing to condone the use of magic at times.¹¹⁶ Later still, Proclus (412-85 CE) recorded that all religions at a popular level continued to practise some form of magic.¹¹⁷ He suggested three classes of demons – the more spiritual, the more rational (such as the guides of Socrates and Plotinus), and the more unreasoning,¹¹⁸ although according to Naomi Janowitz he enumerated many levels of angels arranged according to function as the servants of particular gods. Such hierarchies, however, were eclectic and flexible even in the mind of a single author.¹¹⁹ Iamblichus, for example, lists intermediaries several times in his discourse *On the Mysteries of Egypt*. His first is of just five levels,¹²⁰ which he later expands to contain all the invisible entities attending ceremonies of initiation and ascent, each level imparting different qualities:

The gods
 Archangels
 Angels
 Good demons (some of whom specialise in certain tasks,
e.g. guardians of the Mysteries)¹²¹
 Avenging demons
 Evil demons
 Cosmic archons
 Archons of the realm of matter
 The Soul of the World, an undivided formless fire.

of Modern Esoteric Movements’ in Faivre and Needleman, *Modern Esoteric Spirituality*, pp. 1-70 (pp. 9-10).

¹¹⁶ Kurt Seligmann, *Magic, Supernaturalism and Religion*, pp. 71-2; Fowden, *Egyptian Hermes*, p. 129.

¹¹⁷ Hans Dieter Betz, ‘Magic in Greek and Roman Antiquity’, in Lawrence E. Sullivan, ed., *Hidden Truths: Magic, Alchemy and the Occult* (New York: Macmillan, 1987), pp. 102-109. Faivre classes Proclus as ‘one of the first representatives of Western esotericism’, concerned as much with transforming the world as with personal salvation, and postulating a mediatory “subtle body” between the spirit and the physical body for every person. Antoine Faivre, ‘Ancient and Medieval Sources of Modern Esoteric Movements’ in Faivre and Needleman, *Modern Esoteric Spirituality*, pp. 1-70 (p. 11).

¹¹⁸ Alexander Wilder, tr, *Theurgia or the Egyptian Mysteries* (New York: The Metaphysical Publishing Co., 1911), p. 172n.

¹¹⁹ Janowitz, *Magic in the Roman World*, p. 34. For this feature in the New Age context, see Hanegraaff, *New Age Religion*, p. 198. But although it is nowadays deemed that the gods are brought into being by the human mind, they are nevertheless thought to encapsulate particular objective aspects of powers and presences, and are not purely subjective aspects of the psyche. Hanegraaff, *New Age Religion*, p. 195.

¹²⁰ The One; The Invisible Gods; Demons, which cause the gods to become visible; Heroes and demigods; and uncontaminated souls. See Thomas Taylor tr, *Iamblichus on the Mysteries* (London: Stuart and Watkins, 1985, 1968, [1821]), pp. 22-26; 30-35; 65.

¹²¹ Taylor, *Iamblichus*, p. 282.

Purified souls (presumably encompassing the heroes)
 Impure souls.¹²²

Iamblichus also warns of lower orders specialising in the powers of deception. Against the main thrust of the mystic philosopher Plotinus, though perhaps not of Porphyry, Iamblichus recommends theurgic rites – i.e. the rites of high white magic – to assist the ascent towards the Godhead in the initial stages.¹²³

Janowitz cites Plutarch, like Xenocrates before him, as attempting to categorise and account for the demonic hosts by confirming Plato's statement in the *Symposium* that demons were intermediaries that could provide an inner ladder of ascent, in a similar way to the categorisation of angels according to their places in the first six heavens, as given in the Hebrew *The Book of Secrets*. Apuleius suggested that demons could be human souls or disembodied spirits, but that angels were too remote having few human characteristics; practitioners much preferred the passions and jealousies of demons. Most writers' speculations differed, and with the rise of Christianity all demons became scapegoats for misfortune and evil.¹²⁴

But in spite of the remoteness of the Deity, it was nevertheless believed possible for Jews, Christians, and pagans to undergo various techniques leading through the realms of angels and demons to a condition of divinity.¹²⁵ The beginnings of esoteric Christianity, along with esotericism as a whole, merge and blend against the background of previous and subsequent philosophies.

¹²² Taylor, *Iamblichus*, pp. 97-99.

¹²³ Taylor, *Iamblichus*, pp. 108-11.

¹²⁴ Janowitz, *Magic in the Roman World*, pp. 33-35.

¹²⁵ Janowitz gives the examples of the Judaic prayers, hymns, and priestly blessings; the Roman burial and cremation; and the Christian devout life of morality and hymn singing, by which means Clement maintains that humans can thereby become gods, equal to the angels. Janowitz, *Magic in the Roman World*, pp. 71-79. The more direct approach, however, was that of the mystic, bypassing interaction with intermediaries. Faivre emphasises the difference between mystics who in their approach to Deity eschew imagery, and esotericists, who create imagery imaginatively and use it as a 'Jacob's Ladder' to ascend and, importantly, descend as well. Antoine Faivre 'Introduction I', in Faivre and Needleman eds, *Modern Esoteric Spirituality*, p. xvii. Also Hanegraaff, *New Age Religion*, p. 399.

Intermediary Beings during the Middle Ages

Angels and Demons in Judaism

The background to Judaic theological speculation concerning ascent during the Middle Ages is the Biblical account of the experience of Enoch (third century BCE), which Martha Himmelfarb notes included travel across the globe accompanied by angels, who, like priests, not only offered praise but sacrifice as well.¹²⁶ Michael Fishbane comments on the experiences of Daniel, to whom God spoke through an oracle, although it required an angelic intermediary to interpret its truly esoteric meaning.¹²⁷

Gershom Scholem refers to Josephus's account of the Essenes as possessing magical and angelological literature as did the community at Qumran, who saw themselves as a sanctuary for the divine spirit, overseen and protected by angels.¹²⁸ Their esoteric literature included topics such as the nature of the interior worlds and their inhabitants – teachings which were almost identical with the speculations of *ma'aseh merkabah*.¹²⁹ The Merkabah mystics concerned themselves with the ascent in the chariot of Ezekiel through the seven palaces and angelic intermediaries to the One, as described in the *Heikhalot Rabbati*, which also included instructions on how to avoid the 'angels of destruction'.¹³⁰ This system derives from Ezekiel Chapter 1, and, as

¹²⁶ I Enoch 14. 8, 18, 20; I Enoch 1-36 (the *Book of Watchers*), Martha Himmelfarb, 'From Prophecy to Apocalypse: The *Book of the Watchers* and Tours of Heaven', in Arthur Green, ed., *Jewish Spirituality: From the Bible through the Middle Ages* (London: SCM Press, 1985), pp. 145-70 (pp. 145, 152).

¹²⁷ Daniel 10:4-19. Michael Fishbane, 'Biblical Prophecy as a Religious Phenomenon', in Arthur Green, (ed.), *Jewish Spirituality: Middle Ages*, pp. 62-81 (pp. 79-80).

¹²⁸ Gershom Scholem, *Kabbalah* (Jerusalem: Keter Publishing House, 1974), p. 10. See also Steven D. Fraade, 'Ascetical Aspects of Ancient Judaism' in Arthur Green, ed., *Jewish Spirituality: Middle Ages*, p. 267; also Robin Lane Fox, *Pagans and Christians* (London: Penguin Books, 1986), p. 380.

¹²⁹ 'The Work of the Chariot'. After due preparation, the mystic was able to 'descend in the chariot' through the seven heavenly halls, each with fiery angelic guardians, later described in the *Sefer Ha-Razim* (a book of secrets revealed to Adam), to be turned into an angel, with insight into the Divine and with the acquisition of magical power. Alan Unterman, *Dictionary of Jewish Lore and Legend* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1991), pp. 124, 164. For a historical introduction, see Gershom Scholem, *Origins of the Kabbalah* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1990 [1962]), pp. 18-24.

¹³⁰ Scholem, *Kabbalah*, p. 17.

mentioned above, is associated with Enoch in other strands of the tradition, and developed into speculations on the design and components of the Chariot, which became intermediary symbols in themselves.¹³¹ Scholem notes that although the Jewish mystical literature covers angelology at length, there were many differing systems, often merging with, and applying equally to, the names usually applied to God.¹³² He also draws attention to the intermediary nature of the ten Holy Sefirot, as described in the Kabbalistic *Sefer Yetzirah* (third to sixth Centuries), which were described variously as servants, ‘living creatures’, or even dimensions of existence.¹³³ Moshe Idel demonstrates that from the twelfth century CE, intermediary beings were termed ‘forms’ correlating with angels, and he gives examples of parallels with Gnostic philosophy. The shapes of the Hebrew letters, especially in the Torah, were deemed to be manifestations of Divinity in the form of angels. The supreme intermediary, however, was the angel Sandalphon.¹³⁴

In late medieval times, in Judaism as in Christianity, angelology and demonology burgeoned,¹³⁵ in the Jewish case serving as a basis for *gematria*. The 72 x 3-lettered names of God became the subject of much prayer and speculation for they were in themselves of intermediary significance.¹³⁶ Scholem also notes the concept of the *Kavod*, a kind of Demiurge in the shape of a cherub or angel, which represented the revealed aspect of God, a sign of reassurance to the mystic that he had reached a certain level of ascent.¹³⁷ He also notes the origin of humanity as heralding from a sphere above

¹³¹ Genesis 5:22. Scholem, *Kabbalah*, pp. 378, 373.

¹³² Scholem, *Kabbalah*, pp. 19, 118. See also Gershom G. Scholem, *Major Trends in Jewish Mysticism*, (New York: Schocken Books, 1974), p. 42, where he notes that the ‘living creatures’ in Ezekiel’s vision were sometimes thought of as angels.

¹³³ Scholem, *Kabbalah*, pp. 24, 27.

¹³⁴ Moshe Idel, *Kabbalah: New Perspectives* (Yale: Yale University Press, 1988), pp. 122-25, 188-92, 337, n. 137. Certain practices such as prayer were directed both to raising Malkuth up to Kether, and also to drawing the influence of the angel of the countenance down through the Sefirot much as in pagan practice, where a god was drawn down into a statue in order to impart wisdom (see above, p. 69). Idel, *Kabbalah*, p. 168, 169.

¹³⁵ See below, pp. 85-87.

¹³⁶ Scholem, *Kabbalah*, pp. 30-34.

¹³⁷ Scholem, *Kabbalah*, p. 40. Also Gershom Scholem, *On the Shape of the Godhead: Basic Concepts in the Kabbalah* (New York: Schocken Books, 1991), pp. 21, 154, 157, 258-59.

and beyond that of the angels.¹³⁸ Nevertheless, it was still necessary for angels, or ‘sacred souls’, to mediate divine messages particularly through the *maggid*, a heavenly mentor or inner spiritual director, a concept introduced after the Spanish exodus in 1492.¹³⁹

Angels of major importance were Metatron, who, as the angel of the Lord in Exodus 23:21, was almost a second deity; and Samael, an alternative name for Satan, and other angels such as the angel of death.¹⁴⁰

Although the glyph of the Tree of Life depicts a complete ladder of ascent in itself, Scholem suggests that by the sixteenth century, Kabbalah had absorbed much of the philosophies of Aristotle and Neo-Platonism – for example, the concept of the Four Worlds: *azilut* the highest, *beri'ah*, *yezirah*, with *asiyyah* the lowest, where *yezirah*, the world of formation, is the region said to encompass the angels.¹⁴¹

A demonology as complex as that of the angels also flourished during the Middle Ages.¹⁴² In the *Zohar* (thirteenth century) and as expressed by Isaac ha-Kohen at the time, there developed the theory of an evil counterpart of the Tree of Life that demonstrated the *sitra ahra* (the ‘other side’, the kingdom of the *klippot*, the demonic powers), although one view of these powers was that rather than being intrinsically evil, each lower level might be seen to be a *klippot* or ‘shell’ only when surpassed and seen from above.¹⁴³ The demons were not generally specifically named save for Metatron

¹³⁸ Scholem, *Kabbalah*, p. 157.

¹³⁹ Scholem, *Kabbalah*, p. 72. The best known is the one who spoke through Joseph Caro (1488-1575), Unterman, *Dictionary*, p. 125.

¹⁴⁰ Scholem, *Kabbalah*, pp. 377-81; 385-88.

¹⁴¹ Scholem, *Kabbalah*, p. 119; Scholem, *Major Trends*, p. 272. See also Figures 2 and 3, pp. 201, 202, below. Paul Fenton also suggests a strong influence from Sufism on Judaic philosophy. Paul B. Fenton, ‘Judaism and Sufism’ in Sayyed Hossein Nasr and Oliver Leaman eds, *History of Islamic Philosophy Part I* (London: Routledge, 2001), pp. 755-768. See also Alfred L. Ivry ‘Neoplatonic Currents in Maimonides’ Thought’ in Joel Kraemer ed., *Perspectives on Maimonides: Philosophical and Historical Studies* (Oxford: Oxford, 1991), pp. 115-140. Maimonides (1135-1204) wrote his most influential treatise the *Guide for the Perplexed* in Arabic.

¹⁴² Scholem, *Kabbalah*, p. 31.

¹⁴³ Scholem, *Major Trends*, p. 236

(also the angel of the Lord) and Samael as already mentioned, and the female Lilith.¹⁴⁴ Though widely practised, the use of *klippot* by sorcerers for illicit means such as personal gain was officially forbidden save in their legitimate employment in exorcism or as forces with which to subdue those considered more dangerous.¹⁴⁵

Lilith was the central female demon known as seducer or succubus and as strangler of newborn babies, and variously identified as the first wife of Adam or else the Queen of Sheba.¹⁴⁶ Raphael Patai recounts her Sumerian origins (third millennium BCE), and gives an exhaustive account of prayers and amulets protective against her. Of especial interest is her intermediary function for those she favours as a ‘ladder on which one can ascend to the rungs of prophecy’, and her eventual rise to become God’s consort.¹⁴⁷ Patai compares Lilith with Matronit, the Shekinah, ‘the Goddess of the Kabbalah’.¹⁴⁸ Scholem records his surprise at the *Zohar* which on the one hand, contrasts Lilith and the Shekinah; but on the other, by making the Shekinah the mother of two female demons, sees some congruence between them.¹⁴⁹

Scholem notes some inclusions of Kabbalistic demonology from Central European pagan folklore, later extended into Arabic and Christian traditions where the specific names of demons were drawn from Arabic sources, and he lists their supposed properties.¹⁵⁰ They were said to herald from the evil Sefirot and inhabit the sublunar world. The *Zohar* divides demons into many different categories, e.g. according to the hour of day or night; or according to the three-fold categorization of: 1. those similar to angels; 2. those who resemble humans and submit to the Torah; and 3. those who

¹⁴⁴ Scholem, *Kabbalah*, pp. 55, 79, 123, 125. Samael, or Satan, was sometimes identified with the angel of death, ‘chief of the tempters’, or the archangel of Mars. He could thus be aligned with Geburah on the Tree of Life. Scholem, *Kabbalah*, pp. 385-88.

¹⁴⁵ Scholem, *Kabbalah*, p. 184.

¹⁴⁶ Scholem, *Kabbalah*, pp. 325, 356-61. This doctrine emanated from Babylonia, and was also absorbed into Arabic demonology. Scholem, *Kabbalah*, p. 357

¹⁴⁷ Raphael Patai, *The Hebrew Goddess* (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1990), pp. 221-54.

¹⁴⁸ Patai, *Hebrew Goddess*, pp. 135-55 (for his account of Matronit); pp. 96-112 (for the Shekinah).

¹⁴⁹ Scholem, *Shape of the Godhead*, pp. 193, 194.

¹⁵⁰ Scholem, *Kabbalah*, p. 320, 323. e.g. they fly, and though composed of fire and air, are cold (after Nahmanides’ commentary on Leviticus 17:7). The terms ‘incubi’ and ‘succubi’ are more akin to Christian demonology, but the concept is similar.

behave like animals and have no fear of God. They are deemed to originate as the offspring of human and devil generally as a result of voluntary or involuntary nocturnal activity, the demon's nocturnal activities reminiscent of the Witches' Sabbath of Christian legend.¹⁵¹ Certain 'Jewish demons' were thought to be friendly towards men.¹⁵²

A further aspect of demonology mentioned by Scholem is that of the folkloric spirit, the *dibbuk*, an alien personality, perhaps a demon, or the spirit of a deceased person denied reincarnation, who seeks refuge in the body of a living person and causes them mental illness or distress.¹⁵³

Angels and Demons in Christianity

Robin Lane Fox emphasises the strength of the prevailing culture of angels, as exemplified in Acts 12:15. He gives the example of the first Christian hermit, St. Anthony (c. 251-356) who was able to distinguish angels from demons by the kind of emotion they aroused – whether of fear, or of fear followed by joy.¹⁵⁴ Claire Fanger draws attention to the close association between the private conjurations of people in their lives outside the church, and the ecclesiastical and liturgical background against which they conducted such rites and which provided the matrix to which their intermediary contacts conformed.¹⁵⁵ She points out the increasingly common practice as the Middle Ages progressed, in Christianity as in Judaism, of attributing names to angels.¹⁵⁶ But she notes that newly coined angelic names were often considered suspect,

¹⁵¹ Scholem, *Kabbalah*, p. 323. The three-fold categorization is reminiscent of Porphyry's three grades of angels: 1. the all-powerful, 2. the most Kingly and sole father of mortals; and 3. blessed immortals. See Fox, *Pagans and Christians*, p. 191.

¹⁵² Scholem, *Kabbalah*, pp. 320-25. For an overview of medieval Kabbalah and esotericism, see Kocku von Stuckrad, *Western Esotericism*, pp. 32-41.

¹⁵³ Scholem, *Kabbalah*, pp. 349, 350.

¹⁵⁴ Fox, *Pagans and Christians*, pp. 416, 417.

¹⁵⁵ Claire Fanger, 'Intermediary Beings II: Middle Ages' in Hanegraaff, *Dictionary of Gnosis*, II, 619-20.

¹⁵⁶ though, according to Jean-Claude Schmitt, names were not specific to any one angel, but rather indicated a function. Jean-Claude Schmitt, *Ghosts in the Middle Ages: the Living and the Dead in Medieval Society*, tr. Teresa Lavender Fagan (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1998), p. 90, referring

perhaps disguising a demon – a consideration that in the end depended on the judgement of the individual concerned. She also notes the contemporary disquiet over the validity of appearances of even the saints wherever the invocatory prayers were non-liturgical. Could the same invocations be used for demons and ghosts as well as for saints and angels, for example? Most private invocations, however, attempted to divine information concerning hidden treasure or other monetary or personal gain. Fanger also introduces the planetary angels, especially important during the Renaissance.¹⁵⁷

Whereas liturgical exorcism was accomplished according to prescribed ritual, forbidding direct communication with the entities, exorcisms performed outside the church involved questioning the demon.¹⁵⁸ Fanger gives the example of the increase in the later Middle Ages of contacts with ghosts, citing the example recorded by the prior Jean Gobi of the ghost of Gui of Corvo. Dealing with the ghost much as he would a demon, i.e. conjuring it, then commanding it to remain until dismissed, he ensured that it was beneficent, neither demon nor angel, and against official advice questioned it generally regarding the mechanism of communication and nature of the other world. John of Morigny (fl. 1304-18) compiled a precise ritual, the *Liber Visionum*, based upon traditional liturgy, for the invocation of the by then traditional nine orders of angels and the Virgin Mary for the purpose of obtaining knowledge. Fanger reports that not everyone even at the time felt that the presences so evoked were necessarily genuine.¹⁵⁹ After 1440, the reporting of sorcery increased significantly, e.g. ‘the demonic transportation of human beings from one place to another’.¹⁶⁰

to Gervaise of Tilbury, ‘De mortuo qui apparet virgini, mira dicit et annunciat’ in *Otia imperialia*, III, chap. cIII, pp. 994-1000.

¹⁵⁷ Fanger, ‘Intermediary Beings II: Middle Ages I’, subheading ‘Intermediary Beings with a Clear Relation to Liturgical Sources’ in Hanegraaff, *Dictionary of Gnosis*, II, 620.

¹⁵⁸ *Ibid.* II, 621. For the nine orders of angels, see pp. 85-87 below.

¹⁵⁹ Fanger, Claire, ‘Intermediary beings II: Middle Ages, I.’, in Hanegraaff, *Dictionary*, II, 620-21. See also her ‘Plundering the Egyptian Treasure: John the Monk’s *Book of Visions* and its relation to the *Ars Notoria* of Solomon’ in Claire Fanger, Richard Kieckhefer and Nicholas Watson, *Conjuring Spirits: Texts and Traditions of Medieval Ritual Magic* (Punnsylvania University Press, 1998), pp. 216-249.

¹⁶⁰ H. C. Lea, *Materials towards a History of Witchcraft*, I (Austin: 1957), pp. 189-91 in Edward Peters ‘The Medieval Church and State on Superstition, Magic and Witchcraft: from Augustine to the Sixteenth Century’, in Bengt Ankarloo and Stuart Clark, eds, *Witchcraft and Magic in Europe: The Middle Ages* (London: The Athlone Press, 2002), p. 238.

The Veneration of the Saints

However, the litany of saints in the Roman Catholic ritual (or indeed the multiplicity of the names of Mary, denoting various aspects of her nature) could well be called upon instead. Even the revised *Roman Missal* of 1959, broadly unchanged since the institution of the Tridentine Mass in 1570, lists 377 Feasts of the Saints and includes the invocation of Mary and twenty-four saints and martyrs before the consecration during the Canon of the Mass, and a further fifteen names of saints after the consecration.¹⁶¹ John McKenzie speaks of the devotion during the Middle Ages to an ever-increasing number, not only of angels and demons, but of saints as mediators, which in the eyes of authority, particularly Protestant authority, usurped the ‘total mediation’ of Christ.¹⁶² Grant Loomis gives examples of typical miracles that saints performed, and shows a close correlation between saint and hero, his examples covering the recorded activities of over 900 saints.¹⁶³ According to Ernst Benz, veneration of the saints was held to be most effective, and led to the concepts of patron saints; saints as helpers and protectors; the veneration of relics; and, in the Eastern Orthodox Church, the tradition of ikon production as surrogate intermediaries, windows ‘between the heavenly and earthly realms’.¹⁶⁴ Yet McKenzie records that the Roman Catholic Church

¹⁶¹ *The Roman Missal*, revised by J. Rea (London: Burns and Oates, 1959), pp. 562, 568. The ‘Litany of the Saints’ includes fifty of them (p. 64); the ‘Litany of the Sacred Heart of Jesus’ includes 33 of its aspects (p. 1535); and the ‘Litany of the Blessed Virgin Mary’ includes 48 of her aspects (p. 1541). The major reform and simplification of the Mass occurred in 1962.

¹⁶² John L. McKenzie, ‘Roman Catholicism: V. Worship. The Cult of the Saints’ in *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, 15th edn (Chicago: Encyclopaedia Britannica, Inc., 1977) xv, 999, 1000.

¹⁶³ Predominantly, in order of occurrence of incidents: Cuthbert, Columba, Colette, Benedict, and Comgall. C. Grant Loomis, *White Magic: An Introduction to the Folklore of Christian Legend*, (Cambridge, MA: The Mediaeval Academy of America, 1948), pp. 12-23. See also his comprehensive Index of all the saints he mentions.

¹⁶⁴ Ernst Benz, ‘Christianity: Major traditional doctrinal issues, the church. Veneration of Saints’ in *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, IV, 501-2. He also reports that the cult of saints’ relics was recorded in Polycarp (d. 156/167). It may be remarked that present day magical practice employs Tarot cards, which depict archetypal figures that can take on independent existence in the mind of the magician for much the same ends. Both these and saints’ relics are elaborate talismans.

concedes that the saintly figures felt to be so strongly present by the devout may be purely ‘the products of the imagination.’¹⁶⁵

Demons and Other Entities

Jean-Claude Schmitt records the early fifth-century view of Saint Augustine that apart from apparitions of saints, there should be no contact between the living and the dead save through the mediation of angels. However, the common opinion was that the dead, in the form of ghosts, did not require angelic intermediaries and were more corporeal than Augustine thought. Schmitt cites Alcher of Clairvaux (d. 1165) who considered that the dead did have a legitimate interest in the living, and he grants as much discussion space to the spirits of the dead as to angels and demons.¹⁶⁶

Based on the work of Michael Psellus (1018-78), Girolamo Menghi (1529-1609) lists six orders of demons, all of them experienced in subterfuge and cognisant of the weaknesses of human nature.¹⁶⁷ Saints on the other hand, acted to comfort, to warn against sin, to prepare for death, and to encourage good works, whereas the ordinary dead, as temporary intermediaries, were much more concerned with their own salvation or the unfinished business of their earth life.¹⁶⁸ According to Augustine, the mechanism of their perception was the ‘mediating imagination’ or ‘spiritual vision’ which should be subjected to the judgement of reason before acceptance,¹⁶⁹ although heroes such as Arthur, sometime termed ‘King of the Dead’ were often demonised by the Church because they could act like fallen angels by imprinting false images during dreams.¹⁷⁰

¹⁶⁵ In the sense of being non-existent or, perhaps, purely subjective. John L. McKenzie, ‘Roman Catholicism: V. Worship. Cult of the Saints’ in *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, xv, 1000.

¹⁶⁶ Schmitt, *Ghosts*, pp. 21, 22, 27, 28, 90-91.

¹⁶⁷ They are: 1. Leliureon (fiery ones); 2. Aerea (present in the air); 3. Terreo (Earthly); 4. Acquatile (causing danger in water); 5. Sotteranei (causing earthquakes, toppling buildings, etc.); 6. Lucifogo (flee from the light). Girolamo Menghi, *The Devil’s Scourge: Exorcism during the Italian Renaissance*, Translation, Introduction, and Commentary by Gaetano Paxia, (York Beach, ME: Weiser Books, 2002), pp. 20, 21.

¹⁶⁸ Schmitt, *Ghosts*, pp. 41, 47;

¹⁶⁹ Schmitt, *Ghosts*, p. 22. This sound practice was strongly advocated by Fortune.

¹⁷⁰ Schmitt, *Ghosts*, pp. 30, 119.

Both the angels who lived in the highest heaven, and demons from the dark air just above the earth, were spiritual beings sometimes able to take bodily form. The hierarchies of devils were increasingly perceived as menacing, especially their leader Satan, considered by the clergy to be expertly deceptive and powerful, e.g. appearing as ladies of easy virtue or as animals,¹⁷¹ and any magician who invoked a demon for assistance was considered to have entered a pact.¹⁷² This did nothing to halt the increase in demon evocation, and such was the interest and the belief in the efficacy of using the correct name that many angelic name lists were published, e.g. as in Michael Scot's (c. 1198-1236) *Liber introductorius*, in the *Lemegeton*, and the *Lesser Key of Solomon* (c. 1260s), which included scores of names of the major demons, together with their specific tasks and powers.¹⁷³ However, although the operations were generally carried out for personal or selfish reasons, all demons were ideally commanded under the aegis of God's own power, and conducted within a religious framework, including careful preparatory rites of prayer, fasting, chastity, and purification of self and instruments. By the thirteenth century, some magicians were said to have practised luring demons by means of sacrificing animals, to which demons were thought to be partial.¹⁷⁴

Pseudo Dionysius

Norman Cohn sees the influence of Pseudo Dionysius (c. 500) as also growing increasingly important during the Middle Ages, his work being endorsed by Aquinas.¹⁷⁵ Arthur Versluis, too, emphasises the enormous importance of Dionysius to later writers such as Aquinas and the Renaissance practitioners Pico della Mirandola and Marsilio Ficino, and as no less than 'the cornerstone of Western esotericism' by reason of his

¹⁷¹ Norman Cohn, *Europe's Inner Demons: the Demonization of Christians in Medieval Christendom* (London: Pimlico, 1993, [1975]), pp. 22-29.

¹⁷² Edward Peters, 'The Medieval Church', p. 228.

¹⁷³ See Reginald Scot, *The Discoverie of Witchcraft* (1584), pp. 378-89. As in the case of angelic invocation, the correct choice and pronunciation of the names of the entities was deemed highly important. Kieckhefer, *Magic*, pp. 37-39.

¹⁷⁴ Cohn, *Europe's Inner Demons*, pp. 103, 105-11.

¹⁷⁵ Cohn, *Europe's Inner Demons*, p. 24.

effective use of symbolism as an intermediary imaginative faculty yet still granting the absolute transcendence of God, reachable only by the *via negativa*.¹⁷⁶ Versluis also draws attention to Dionysius's emphasis on the angelic Intelligences as both absorbers of the divine light and as irradiators of it towards men.¹⁷⁷ He also draws a parallel with Ibn Arabi's categorization of angels – those superior to men; those, like the *jinn* ('terrestrial angels') much like man; and those corresponding to the seven planets, each planet giving human-like characteristics, mediating these to man, and acting as superior states of consciousness or being, thus indicative of initiatory stages of ascent.¹⁷⁸ David Luscombe points to the four levels of the Dionysian hierarchy: the Deity; the Superior Intelligences (angels); the Planetary Intelligences; and the Lower Intelligences, and Versluis, like Luscombe, highlights their mediatory function, acting as prisms between God and man.¹⁷⁹

Andrew Louth records that the nine orders of Angels of Dionysius were based on Neo-Platonic sources – Proclus's 'three triads of intelligible gods', or from Porphyry's account of a Chaldaean hymn which mentions an oracle of three orders of angels.¹⁸⁰ He also points out that the hierarchy embraces the properties of grace and providence, and so is not the kind of ladder where one is required to struggle up.¹⁸¹ Dionysius's designation of the orders are set out and fully described in his *Celestial Hierarchy*, where, like Dante (1265-1321), he is at pains to emphasise their infinite

¹⁷⁶ Arthur Versluis, 'Dionysius the Areopagite', *Journal of Esoteric Studies*, Volume II, 2000, <http://www.esoteric.msu.edu/Archive/Dionysius.html> [accessed 27/11/2001]

¹⁷⁷ Arthur Versluis, *Song of the Cosmos* (Bridport, Dorset: Prism Press, 1991), p. 91, referring to Dionysius, *Celestial Hierarchy*, IV, 108B.

¹⁷⁸ Versluis, *Song of the Cosmos*, pp. 92, 93, 98. See also René Guénon, *The Multiple States of the Being* (New York: Burdett, 1984), chapter 13, p. 106, quoted in Versluis, *Song*, p. 93. Titus Burckhardt says, 'The seven planets [. . .] represent the cosmic intermediaries between the immutable world of archetypes and the earthly centre.' Titus Burckhardt, *Mystical Astrology according to Ibn Arabi* tr. B. Rauf (London: Beshara, 1977), Cap. III, p. 26, quoted in Versluis, *Song of the Cosmos*, p. 93.

¹⁷⁹ David Luscombe, 'Dionysius, Areopagita (Pseudo), ca. 500', in Hanegraaff, *Dictionary*, i, 312. The idea of reflecting mirrors (Luscombe), or of 'prisms' (Versluis) had already been floated by Fortune, 'The gods [. . .] are lenses that wise men have made through which to focus the great natural forces.' Dion Fortune, *The Winged Bull* (London: Wyndham, 1976 [1936]), p. 84.

¹⁸⁰ Proclus, *Commentary of the Timaeus*, ed. E. Diehl, vol I (Leipzig, 1903), p. 308, 1.21. See also H. Lewy, *Chaldaean Oracles and Pagan Theurgy* (revised edn, Paris, 1978), pp. 13, 14 (text: n. 31), both quoted in Andrew Louth, *Denys the Areopagite* (London: Geoffrey Chapman, 1989), pp. 35-37.

¹⁸¹ Louth, *Denys*, p. 41.

numbers: '[. . .] the angels number a thousand times a thousand and ten thousand times ten thousand'.¹⁸² This concept is precisely echoed in Dante's archetypal and extended ladder of descent and ascent, the *Divine Comedy*.¹⁸³ Reynolds sets out his (Dionysian) sequence of angelic orders used in that work alongside those of Gregory the Great (Pope 590-604) and Dante's own slightly different sequence in his *Convivio*.¹⁸⁴

Dorothy Sayers notes that Aquinas treats the subject at length in his *Summa contra gentiles*.¹⁸⁵ She also lists Dante's seven angelic guardians of the Cornices of Purgatory (e.g. Angel of Humility, guardian of the First Cornice; Angel of Liberality, guardian of the Fifth Cornice, etc.).¹⁸⁶

No survey of the ubiquitous impact of angels on medieval society would be complete without David Keck's exhaustive studies covering all those mentioned above, including their impact on the Church.¹⁸⁷

Further Hierarchies

Of great significance during the Middle Ages and Renaissance were the seven special angels associated with the planets, as in the *Sepher ha Razim*.¹⁸⁸ Kieckhefer names these, and indicates that each was in charge of a subsidiary cohort of assistants.¹⁸⁹ These name lists were circulated throughout the later Middle Ages and into the Renaissance, e.g. in the works of Agrippa and Trithemius and in the *Liber Juratus*,

¹⁸² *The Celestial Hierarchy*, Chapter Fourteen, 321A in *Pseudo-Dionysius: The Complete Works*, tr. Colm Luibheid (London: SPCK, 1987), pp. 181; 145-91.

¹⁸³ 'The angelic nature in number doth extend so far beyond the range of mortal mind, no tongue or thought has ever reached the end.' Dante, *The Comedy of Dante Alighieri the Florentine: Cantica III Paradise*, tr. Dorothy Sayers and Barbara Reynolds, (Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1976), Canto XXIX, lines 130-32, p. 313.

¹⁸⁴ Barbara Reynolds, 'Commentary' in *The Comedy: Paradise*, p. 308 and Diagram X Empyrean, p. 401, which shows the correlation between the planetary spheres and the angelic orders.

¹⁸⁵ Thomas Aquinas, *Summa contra gentiles*, Part I, question 108.

¹⁸⁶ Dante, *The Comedy of Dante Alighieri the Florentine: Cantica II Purgatory*, tr. Dorothy L. Sayers (Harmondsworth, Middlesex: Penguin Books, 1976), p. 352.

¹⁸⁷ Although he concedes that after Aquinas and Bonaventure, there remains little to explore. David Keck, *Angels and Angelology in the Middle Ages* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998), p. 113.

¹⁸⁸ See p. 65, n. 71, above

¹⁸⁹ Raphael, Gabriel, Michael, Anael, Satquiel, Samael and Casziel, Captiel or Caffiel. Kieckhefer, *Forbidden Rites*, p. 296ff. in Fanger 'Intermediary Beings II in Hanegraaff, *Dictionary*, II, 622.

which Robert Mathiesen points out makes clear the important distinction between the nine orders of angels whose only master is God, and the angels of the planetary spheres who are open to influence from men.¹⁹⁰ Fanger also includes mention of the *Book of the Essence of Spirits* (from an Arabic twelfth-century source) which makes much of those lesser entities (under the control of the planetary angels, who can be invoked, and either compelled, entreated, or trapped into matter like a genie) and who were not ‘forces’, but who were seemingly individuals in their own right. She also points out that the focus of attention by practitioners in regard to the intermediate hierarchies was less on any theory of their organization than on the practicalities of their manipulation.¹⁹¹

More recently, Matthew Fox and Rupert Sheldrake draw attention to the near universality of angelic themes, and, basing their research on Dionysius, Thomas Aquinas and Hildegard of Bingen (1098-1179), comprehensively list the angelic characteristics.¹⁹² Fox and Sheldrake consider that the Nine Orders are best seen as a ‘nested hierarchy’ composed of levels within levels, or spheres within spheres rather than as a ladder, thus counteracting any tendency towards dualism¹⁹³

Necromancy was practised during the Middle Ages, although Fanger cites Kieckhefer’s comment that the spirits so invoked were not necessarily evil, being in a kind of intermediate state between heaven and hell.¹⁹⁴ Invocations were carried out

¹⁹⁰ Robert Mathiesen, ‘A Thirteenth-Century Ritual to attain the Beatific Vision from the *Sworn Book of Honorius of Thebes*’, p. 151 in Fanger, *Conjuring Spirits, Texts and Traditions of Medieval Ritual Magic*

(Stroud, Gloucestershire: Sutton Publishing, 1988), pp. 143-62. See Fanger ‘Intermediary Beings II’, in Hanegraaff, *Dictionary*, II, 622.

¹⁹¹ Fanger ‘Intermediary Beings II. Middle Ages, 2. Intermediary Beings with Backgrounds in Sources Outside the Liturgy in Hanegraaff, *Dictionary*, II, 622-23.

¹⁹² E.g. their power and awesomeness; their intuitive understanding and love; their praise; their work alongside humans; and their propensity to make us happy. Matthew Fox and Rupert Sheldrake, *The Physics of Angels: Exploring the Realm where Science and Spirit Meet* (San Francisco: HarperSan Francisco, 1996), pp. 1-5, 26, 193, 194.

¹⁹³ Fox and Sheldrake, *Physics of Angels*, pp. 10, 35, 37, 49, 148.

¹⁹⁴ Claire Fanger, ‘Intermediary Beings II: Middle Ages: Intermediary Beings with Backgrounds in Sources Outside the Liturgy’ in Hanegraaff, *Dictionary*, II, 622, referring to Richard Kieckhefer, *Forbidden Rites: A Necromancer’s Manual of the Fifteenth Century* (Stroud, Gloucestershire: Sutton Publishing, 1997), p. 219. The majority of necromancers were clerics. Kieckhefer, *Magic in the Middle Ages*, pp. 155, 175.

against a background of hierarchies of angels and demons, sometimes associated with the nine orders of angels, the more powerful at the top, and each named and referred to appropriately.¹⁹⁵ It is notable that some of the most important theurgic practices such as the ascent, the descent, and the personalisation of component symbols persisted across a background of different theologies, and over the course of many years.¹⁹⁶

In sum, Kieckhefer illustrates the wide scope of overlapping beings that practitioners included as intermediaries during the Middle Ages, including all the patriarchs and saints, as noted above.¹⁹⁷ Fairies, however, were, on balance, regarded as demonic.¹⁹⁸

Renaissance to the Seventeenth Century

Just as the main features of the ancient world-view regarding intermediaries were characteristic of the medieval period, so were they also during the Renaissance, especially after the discovery in the West of manuscripts such as the *Corpus Hermeticum*, urgently translated by Marsilio Ficino in 1464.¹⁹⁹ He transformed the

¹⁹⁵ Fanger ‘Intermediary Beings II’, in Hanegraaff, *Dictionary*, II, 622. See also Juris Lidaka, ‘The Book of Angels, Rings, Characters and Images of the Planets’ in Claire Fanger, ed. *Conjuring Spirits: Texts and Traditions of Medieval Ritual Magic* (Stroud, Gloucestershire: Sutton Publishing, 1998), p. 51; also in Kieckhefer, *Forbidden Rites*, p. 291, where he cites the *Lemegeton*. See also Graziella Federici Vescovini, ‘Michael Scot’ in Hanegraaff, *Dictionary*, II, 792, showing Michael Scot’s theory that necromancy was part of astronomy, because the demons were contained in the zodiac and constellations (rather like Gnostic Archons).

¹⁹⁶ See, for example, Idel, *Kabbalah*, p. 45, where, speaking of *devekut* (the ecstatic state of ‘cleaving’ to God), he sees a close relation between medieval and Renaissance Neo-Platonism.

¹⁹⁷ E.g. p. 77, above. In one particular instance of protection from a harmful demon, the following were invoked: the ‘Trinity, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, all the patriarchs, prophets, apostles, martyrs, confessors, virgins, and all the saints of God.’ These intermediary figures were also used in necromancy, together with a recitation of the names of God and of the thirty-three ‘angels who are powerful in the air’. Kieckhefer, *Magic in the Middle Ages*, pp. 9, 72, 167.

¹⁹⁸ See Kieckhefer, *Magic in the Middle Ages*, where he refers to Kenneth Hurlstone Jackson (ed.), *A Celtic Miscellany: Translations from the Celtic Literature* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1971), pp. 143-45; 164-65, revised edition. Fairies, like extra-terrestrials, are an important and persistent form of intermediary, requiring future careful research. See, for example, W. Y. Evans-Wentz, *The Fairy Faith in Celtic Countries* (Gerrards Cross: Colin Smythe, 1977, [1911]).

¹⁹⁹ Antoine Faivre describes the end of the sixteenth, and the duration of the seventeenth century as the ‘birth of the first golden age of the theosophical current’ and ‘a prefiguration of the modern Western esoteric landscape’. Antoine Faivre, *Theosophy, Imagination*, p. 5.

medieval tradition with a spiritual quality of magic characteristic of the classical Neo-Platonic, Pythagorean tradition, which remained the background to many parallel streams of esotericism from the fifteenth century onwards.²⁰⁰ And still, as in medieval times, it was understood that virtually nothing was impossible because all occurrences were seen as part of the natural order; all levels or layers of the universe were intimately related and all were replete with creatures of many kinds.²⁰¹

Angels and Hierarchies

Jean-Pierre Brach explains the importance of angels, especially Metatron, in the writings of Renaissance Christian Cabalists such as Pico della Mirandola (1463-94), Johannes Reuchlin (1455-1522) and Knorr von Rosenroth (1636-89).²⁰²

Wayne Shumaker notes that the nine celestial spheres matched the nine orders of angels, and that the innumerable orders of spirits were encapsulated within the traditional three-fold cosmic framework of supercelestial, celestial, and mundane spheres.²⁰³ The angelic orders also correlated with the Sefirot of the Tree of Life;²⁰⁴ the

²⁰⁰ Kocku von Stuckrad mentions this continuity, kept alive especially through Muslim interest. He contrasts the approach of the Jews' 'unilinear model' where all intermediaries stem from Moses, with that of Ficino's 'multilinear model' of many illuminaries contributing to the whole. Pico represented a median stage of attributing value to figures such as Orpheus, but deprecating Chaldaean and Egyptian sources. Von Stuckrad, *Western Esotericism*, pp. 46-47; 57-59. See also Peter J. French, *John Dee*, p. 83: 'There was never a complete break between medieval and Renaissance magic.' - an opinion taken from Frances A. Yates, *Giordano Bruno*, p. 81, where she speaks of an 'absolute continuity', but - and this is worthy of note - Ficino transmuted the 'barbarised form' of medieval tradition and 'reinvested [it] with classical form' through Neo-Platonism and other classical sources. Walker also suggests that this transformation was achieved as a result of that 'fundamental influence on all medieval and Renaissance magic', the mass. D. P. Walker, *Spiritual and Demonic Magic*, p. 36.

²⁰¹ Jean-Pierre Brach, 'Intermediary Beings III: Renaissance, 2. Individual Angels and Hierarchies', in Hanegraaff, *Dictionary of Gnosis*, II, 623.

²⁰² Metatron was often linked with Raziel, and was popularised through the *Picatrix*, the *Sefer ha Razim*, and the *Sefer Raziel*. Brach mentions Raziel as Adam's teacher in paradise who, although a lofty being, was also a spiritual instructor to humanity. Brach, 'Intermediary Beings III: Renaissance, 2. Individual Angels and Hierarchies', in Hanegraaff, *Dictionary of Gnosis*, II, 624.

²⁰³ Wayne Shumaker, *The Occult Sciences in the Renaissance: A Study in Intellectual Patterns* (Berkeley, Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1972), p. 157.

²⁰⁴ He enumerates them according to the planetary attributions, e.g. Dominations - Jupiter; Powers - Mars; Virtues - Sun; Principalities - Venus; Archangels - Mercury; Angels - Moon. Shumaker, *Occult Sciences*, p. 148.

planets were thought of as ‘gods’, and the pagan fauns, satyrs, heroes and saints were termed ‘demi-gods’²⁰⁵ From Agrippa, Shumaker notes guardian angels, and from Milton, territorial angels, and states that angels were believed to enable humans to become like themselves responsible for all lower forms of life.²⁰⁶ He notes that saints, apostles, kings, princes and pontiffs were also regarded as intermediary healing spirits, and discusses the ‘Anima Mundi’, citing Agrippa and Ficino, who explained this World-Soul as a radiating energy from the sun which may be absorbed by means of ritual.²⁰⁷

Brach also discusses a link between the ‘universal intellect’ and man’s ‘perfect nature in angelic guise’, which suggests that the inner intelligences were not impersonal forces; demons were certainly regarded as personal and intelligent able to interact with magi and ordinary people alike.²⁰⁸ But for Brach, the whole concept of intermediate beings is ambiguous, particularly in the application of theory to practice, especially if it involved possible censure from the church; and the most paradoxical ‘intermediary’ of them all, is man.²⁰⁹

Demons

²⁰⁵ Shumaker, *Occult Sciences*, p. 157.

²⁰⁶ Shumaker, *Occult Sciences*, pp. 151, 245. He is referring to Agrippa Bk I, Ch xviii-xix, lxxiv, p. 588 and to Milton, *The Works of John Milton*, xii (New York: Columbia University Press, 1931), p. 12. The edition of Agrippa’s works consulted here is *Henry Cornelius Agrippa: Three Books of Occult Philosophy*, edited by Donald Tyson (St. Paul, MN: Llewellyn Publications, 1993).

²⁰⁷ Shumaker, *Occult Sciences*, pp. 85, 152, 153, referring to Francesco Maria Guazzo, *Compendium maleficarum*, tr. E. A. Ashwin (London: John Rodker, 1929), p. 73. Ashwin lists six types of daemons: ‘fiery, aerial, terrestrial, aquatic, subterranean, and lucifugous or light-fleeing’. For Agrippa, see below, p. 92. See also M. Ficino, *De vita coelitus comparanda* (1489), chapter xi in Shumaker, *Occult Sciences*, pp. 121-24, 130-31. Also Donald Tyson (ed.), *Henry Cornelius Agrippa of Nettesheim: Three Books of Occult Philosophy* (St Paul, MN: Llewellyn Publications, 1993), I, xi, 93. See also Marsilio Ficino, ‘The Book of the Sun’, in Ficino, *Opera* (pp. 965-975), translated by Geoffrey Cornelius, Darby Costello, Graeme Toby, Angela Voss and Vernon Wells, Book 3 Chapters V and XII. This article originally appeared in *Sphinx: A Journal for Archetypal Psychology and the Arts*, 6 (1994).

²⁰⁸ Brach, ‘Intermediary Beings III: Renaissance, 2. Individual Angels and Hierarchies’, in Hanegraaff, *Dictionary of Gnosis*, II, 624, where he refers to the *Picatrix*, III, VI, 5.

²⁰⁹ Brach, ‘Intermediary Beings III: Renaissance, 2. Individual Angels and Hierarchies’, in Hanegraaff, *Dictionary of Gnosis*, II, 627.

Jan R. Veenstra, quoting Stuart Clark, states that all spiritual existences were generally deemed legitimate, including demons in hell or in the air who were always ready to distract humans. But it was believed that the demons worked within and according to natural laws, so Renaissance philosophers felt relatively comfortable investigating them, regardless of orthodox Christian doctrine.²¹⁰

Brach sets out Giordano Bruno's familiarity with fallen angels in their Agrippan categorisation as 1. *supracælestes*, similar to the Greek daimon; 2. *mundanos*, pertaining to the planets and zodiac; and 3. *subterranei*, connected with the elements.²¹¹

Veenstra contrasts the positive approaches of Aquinas and Ficino with that of the inquisitor Heinrich Kramer who demonstrated excessive fear of a 'demonic invasion'. For Ficino, quality of life depended on finding one's star/demon/guardian angel and drawing down beneficent influences through Orphic dancing.²¹² Only later did Trithemius and Agrippa, for example, indulge in demonic magic and appeal to angels and demons directly. The focus of Veenstra's thesis is in the nascent speculative psychology inherent in the growing opinion among inquisitors and other demonologists concerning the ability of demons to influence the human imagination.²¹³

Of inestimable value for the study of intermediaries in all phases of Western esoteric history is the recent and excellently cross-referenced, *Dictionary of Deities and Demons in the Bible*. While scripturally based, it also includes intermediaries from other religions of the Near East where they have influenced Scripture, and also includes humans who subsequently rose to divine status such as Moses and Elijah.²¹⁴

²¹⁰ Stuart Clark, 'Thinking with Demons: the Idea of Witchcraft in Early Modern Europe' (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1977), pp. 157-58, 161-78 in Jan R. Veenstra, 'Stretching the imagination: Demons between Man's Body and Soul', in Rudolf Suntrup and Jan R. Veenstra, eds, *Tradition and Innovation in an Era of Change* (Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang, 2001), pp. 206-08.

²¹¹ Brach, 'Intermediary Beings III: Renaissance, 2. Individual Angels and Hierarchies' in Hanegraaff, *Dictionary of Gnosis*, II, 626.

²¹² Jan R. Veenstra, 'Stretching the Imagination' in Suntrup and Veenstra, *Tradition and Innovation*, pp. 217-20, 222. Kramer and Jacob Sprenger authored the *Malleus Maleficarum* in 1486.

²¹³ Suntrup and Veenstra, *Tradition and Innovation*, p. 13.

²¹⁴ Some entries might seem somewhat out of place, e.g. Euphrates pp. 594-99; Jason p. 870-73; Ptah pp. 1261-63; Strong Drink pp. 1550-53; and an extended entry for Zeus pp. 1758-11. Others are indispensable for reference. These include: Angel pp. 81-96, Demon pp. 445-55; particular angelic names, and the

Miscellaneous Entities and Ghosts

Although magical rites and divination were common practice and generally harmless, Stuart Clark records the written opinion of the time that witches and all intermediate beings were diabolical.²¹⁵ H. R. Trevor-Roper shows that the traditional concept of demons in the Neo-Platonic sense became tainted after the Inquisition and led to the suspicion that magi who invoked angels could well be invoking devils.²¹⁶

Jean-Pierre Brach alludes to a few of the innumerable dubious entities such as larvae, incubi and succubi, wraiths, heroes, phantoms, etc., and also to the soulless spirits of the four elements, quite distinct from evil demons.²¹⁷ Urs Leo Gantenbein records Paracelsus's view that the magical language of spells reflected that of angels and spirits, although, like Ficino, he did not practise demonic magic. He nevertheless

elusive Watchers, of which it says 'interest in such intermediary beings was widespread in pagan as well as Jewish circles . . .', and later, 'Zeus has thrice ten thousand spirits, watchers of mortal men [. . .].' Karel van der Toorn, Bob Becking, Pieter W. van der Horst, eds, *Dictionary of Deities and Demons in the Bible* (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1995), pp. 1681-85. The most common cross-referenced names are Angel, Baal, El, Jesus, and Zeus. See also Gustav Davidson's *Dictionary of Angels* (New York: The Free Press, 1967), particularly the Appendix (pp. 336-57) which sets out orders and rulers of intermediaries from many sources side by side. Although he does not comment, he is sometimes more helpful than the *DDD*. His entry on Watchers, for example, lists the names and characteristics of eleven of them. Gustav Davidson, *A Dictionary of Angels* (New York: The Free Press, 1967), pp. 336-57.

²¹⁵ e.g. witches were mad, or senile or ill women who required spiritual counselling. Johann Weyer, *De Praestigii Daemonum* (On the Tricks of Devils) 1563. See J. Weyer, ed. by G. Mora, trans. by J. Shea, *Weyer, J. Witches, Devils and Doctors in the Renaissance: Johann Weyer, De Praestigio daemonum* (New York: Binghamton, 1991), cited in Bengt Ankarloo, Stuart Clark, and William Monter, eds, *Witchcraft and Magic in Europe, The Period of the Witch Trials* (London: Athlone Press, 2002), pp. 103, 123-125.

²¹⁶ although Keith Thomas speaks of a 'presumed connection between magic and holiness' in the light of magicians' interest in angels. Keith Thomas, *Religion and the Decline of Magic: Studies in Popular Beliefs in Sixteenth- and Seventeenth-Century England* (Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1984 [1971]), pp. 323, 458. See H. R. Trevor-Roper, *The European Witch-Craze of the 16th and 17th Centuries* (London: Penguin Books, 1990 [1967]), pp. 19, 24, 41, 61. In traditional witchcraft, there existed no coherent hierarchies of intermediaries. Trevor-Roper, *European Witch-Craze*, p. 114. See also Keith Thomas, *Religion and the Decline of Magic*, pp. 526-66.

²¹⁷ Brach, 'Intermediate Beings III: Renaissance, 6. Elementals and Disincarnated Entities', in Hanegraaff, *Dictionary of Gnosis*, II, 626-27. Brach notes here that the elementals gained popularity in *Le Comte de Gabalais* (1670) by Montfaucon de Villars (?1635-1763).

mentioned fairies, elementals and monsters, which may indicate his awareness of forms of intermediary below the angels.²¹⁸

Agrippa listed sixteen different kinds of nature spirits, and described how best to invoke them. He also discussed views of the ancients concerning ghosts and the souls of the dead.²¹⁹ Keith Thomas records that although fairies, elves and goblins were seen as malevolent, cunning folk used them as a source of supernatural power in their healing work. Later, they were thought of as little people of the woods and barrows, often aggravating, sometimes used as scapegoats, but with whom one might build a relationship. Interestingly, Thomas notes that commentators nearly always set belief in fairies in the past.²²⁰ He also records that spirits were conjured for recovering lost goods, for contacting supernatural beings, and for acquisitive purposes.²²¹

Belief in ghosts was strongly held during Elizabethan times, and appropriate rites and exorcisms existed to deal with them.²²² The Catholic Church considered them to be souls in purgatory who might return for a particular purpose, e.g. to restore relationships, find lost goods, denounce a wrongdoer, etc., but who were more likely to be evil spirits. In contrast, Protestants considered the soul went directly to heaven or hell, never to return; ghosts were therefore not the souls of the dead.²²³

The following are examples of recent research into Renaissance magi and their intermediaries in approximate chronological order.²²⁴

²¹⁸ Gantenbein warns that some of Paracelsus's writings may be spurious. Urs Leo Gantenbein, 'Paracelsus (ps. of Theophrastus Bombast von Hohenheim), 5. Magic' in Hanegraaff, *Dictionary of Gnosis*, II, 928-30.

²¹⁹ such as fairies, dryades, satyrs and sylvani. Agrippa, *Occult Philosophy*, p. 567.

²²⁰ Keith Thomas, *Religion and the Decline of Magic*, pp. 726-28, 731-32.

²²¹ Keith Thomas, *Religion and the Decline of Magic*, pp. 256-72. James Webb records Thomas Lake Harris's doctrine of fairies, whom he described as evolving towards human status. James Webb, *Flight from Reason: Volume I of the Age of the Irrational* (London: Macdonald, 1971), pp. 105, 107.

²²² Keith Thomas, *Religion and the Decline of Magic*, pp. 326, 706-09.

²²³ Keith Thomas, *Religion and the Decline of Magic*, pp. 701-04, 712-17.

The Renaissance Magi

Marsilio Ficino (1433-1499)

Michael J. B. Allen states that Ficino held many ancient and medieval figures in high esteem.²²⁵ And it is worthy of note that he was the first of the Renaissance magi to accept the idea of a hierarchic chain of World Soul, World Spirit, and World Body.²²⁶ Each power or demon was under the presidency of a corresponding planet, which Ficino attempted to influence by aromas, Orphic hymns, and shades and colours of crystalline light, but the key to his understanding of demons lay in the geometry of optics.²²⁷

Ficino occupies the greater part of D. P. Walker's groundbreaking study of Renaissance magic, emphasising Ficino's indecision regarding the desirability of invoking demons, whose influences nevertheless overlapped with the more impersonal planetary influences that Ficino contended he worked with.²²⁸ Walker also cites several of Ficino's detractors, e.g. Jean Bodin, who argued that demons, though carrying out God's will as avengers, were evil and that all magic, especially that of the *Orphic Hymns*, was dangerous and demonic and therefore utterly reprehensible.²²⁹

²²⁴ As opposed to those such as Reuchlin, Khunrath and Maier, whose main interests lay in areas such as alchemy, astrology, or Cabala.

²²⁵ Including Zoroaster, to whom he attributed *the Chaldaean Oracles*; Orpheus and Hermes; Pseudo-Dionysius and Plotinus. Michael J. B. Allen, 'Ficino, Marsilio' in Hanegraaff, *Dictionary of Gnosis*, 1, 362, 3.

²²⁶ He also set much store by Iamblichus's theurgy and the hierarchies he described. See p. 75, above.

²²⁷ Allen, 'Ficino', in Hanegraaff, *Dictionary of Gnosis*, 1, 361, 364, 366. Allen refers to Hesiod's count of thirty thousand or more angels, commanding virtually innumerable legions ruled over by the princes of the Zodiacal signs, and dwelling in the upper, fiery air, or aethyr. He also identified the sound of cicadas as indicative of achieved philosophers about to enter the intellectual heaven. Allen, 'Ficino', in Hanegraaff, *Dictionary of Gnosis*, 1, 365. See also Michael J. B. Allen, *Plato's Third Eye: Studies in Ficino's Metaphysics and Its Sources* (Aldershot: Variorum, 1995).

²²⁸ D. P. Walker, *Spiritual and Demonic Magic*, pp. 47, 49-51. In the *Apologia* to his *De Triplici Vita*, Ficino denied that he practised demonic magic, but while his *De vita coelitus comparanda* outlined a magic employing only the *spiritus mundi* or cosmic spirit, or medium between the stars and the world, Walker points out that he nevertheless worked with good planetary demons. Walker, *Spiritual and Demonic Magic*, p. 53. Charles G. Nauert notes that Ficino was not averse to invoking good demons in private. Charles G. Nauert, Jr. *Agrippa and the Crisis of Renaissance Thought* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1965), p. 230.

²²⁹ Walker, *Spiritual and Demonic Magic*, pp. 12-13, 171-77.

Pico della Mirandola (1463-1494)

Fabrizio Lelli writes that Pico sought divinity by summoning angels by name, being conversant with the powers they represented.²³⁰ According to S. A. Farmer, while Pico employed many methods beyond Ficino's use of the *spiritus mundi*, he specifically

avoided the practice of enticing demons into idols.²³¹ His wide repertoire was part of a syncretistic project of re-interpreting ancient sources, and introducing Cabala into Renaissance Christianity.²³² Pico acknowledged a variety of intermediaries which appeared in many guises and at many levels, but he also arranged the angelic hierarchies to fit a tight nine-fold structure correlating with Cabala. Farmer comments that these hierarchies generally grew in complexity over time, perhaps matching similar processes underlying all human thinking.²³³ On the basis of Pico's famous Renaissance manifesto for the new estimate of man's status, 'The Oration on the Dignity of Man' (1487), many scholars remark that he saw humanity as the supreme intermediary between worlds.²³⁴

Johannes Trithemius (1462-1516)

²³⁰ Fabrizio Lelli, 'Pico della Mirandola, Giovanni', in Hanegraaff, *Dictionary of Gnosis*, II, 951.

²³¹ Frances Yates states that Pico's magic was the same as Ficino's. Yates, *Giordano Bruno*, pp. 41, 90, but Farmer's close examination of Pico's work leads him to deny this. S. A. Farmer, *Syncretism in the West: Pico's 900 Theses (1486): The Evolution of Traditional Religious and Philosophical Systems* (Tempe, Arizona: Medieval and Renaissance Texts and Studies, 1998), clxvii, 121-25, 128.

²³² Farmer, *Syncretism*, pp. 11, 20-21, 85, 87, 347. Farmer here cites E. R. Dodds, *Proclus: The Elements of Theology*, ed. and tr. E. R. Dodds, 2nd edition (London: 1963), pp. 259-60 for Proclus's detailed classification of deities. On Pico's syncretism see Farmer, *Syncretism*, pp. 70-76, 93, 120, 121.

²³³ Farmer, *Syncretism*, p. 92, where he is referring to Barry E. Stein and M. Alex Meredith *The Merging of the Senses* (Cambridge, MA: 1993). This is a parallel idea to that of Veenstra (p. 92, above). The fractal nature of Pico's system is well illustrated in the diagram from Nicholas LeFèvre's French translation of Pico's *Heptaplus* (1579), which includes angelic, planetary and elemental hierarchies, well illustrating the then common understanding that everything exists within everything. Farmer, *Syncretism*, pp. 194, 195.

²³⁴ The human being is the 'central point of cosmic perception'. Von Stuckrad, *Western Esotericism*, p. 61. See also Farmer, *Syncretism*, p. 118; Yates, *Giordano Bruno*, p. 222.

Clulee records that Trithemius appealed directly to Biblically-inspired angels and demons, not through the *spiritus* as in Ficino's magic.²³⁵ God delegated power directly to seven 'secondary intelligences' associated with the planets, who, assisted by

subordinate spirits, ruled for particular historical cycles.²³⁶ Later writers such as Giorgio and Kircher added many ranks of subordinates.²³⁷ Brach draws attention to a parallel system of seven divine spirits generated from the revelations of João da Silva e Menezes (1431-82) and Antonio Lo Duca (1491-1564), later incorporated into the liturgy of the church, which from 1608, also sanctioned the worship of the 'holy guardian angel'.²³⁸

Later speculations concerning the seven divine spirits emphasised particular traits, such as the role of Raphael in healing; and they also featured in the writings of Jacob Boehme.²³⁹ Joscelyn Godwin illustrates Kircher's speculative system of twelve

²³⁵ Nicholas H. Clulee, *John Dee's Natural Philosophy: Between Science and Religion* (London: Routledge, 1988), p. 129. Trithemius also warns of the dangers of so doing. Von Stuckrad, *Western Esotericism*, p. 75. Book 1 of his *Steganographia* (c. 1500; publ. 1606) discussed the dangerous spirits of air, who needed compelling; Book 2 concerned spirits of the hours of the day; and Book 3 dealt with the spirits of the seven planets.

²³⁶ The cabalistic names that he adopted for the seven spirits were: Orifiel (Saturn), Anael (Venus), Zachariel (Jupiter), Raphael (Mercury), Samael (Mars), Gabriel (Moon), Michael (Sun). This was the basis of his cosmographical-chronological scheme and inner communications system of subservient spirits accessible by means of his steganographical, or encoded, invocations, with the aim of enabling the soul to reach heaven. Noel L. Brann, 'Trithemius, Johannes, 2. Theory of Magic' in Hanegraaff, *Dictionary of Gnosis*, II, 1137-39. See also Noel L. Brann, *Trithemius and Magical Theology: A Chapter in the Controversy of Occult Studies in Early Modern Europe* (Albany, NY: State University of New York, 1999).

²³⁷ Brach, 'Intermediate Beings III Renaissance 4. The Seven Divine Spirits', in Hanegraaff *Dictionary of Gnosis*, II, 625. Like many Renaissance magi, Trithemius relied heavily on medieval texts such as the *clavicula Solomnis* and the *Sefer Razi'el* as sources for names.

²³⁸ Brach, 'Intermediary Beings III, Renaissance, 4. The Seven Divine Spirits', in Hanegraaff, *Dictionary of Gnosis*, II, 625. The seven Spirits of God of Revelation, 4.5 (the seven 'angels of the presence') are not to be correlated with sevenfold hierarchy of the medieval tradition, which pertained each to a planet. *The Jerusalem Bible*, (London: Darton, Longman and Todd, 1966), p. 435, n. e. See also Tobit 12:15, which mentions Raphael, one of the angels of the presence, which prompts the commentator to remark that only three angels' names appear in the Bible. 'The apocrypha fill up the list of the seven in their own extravagant way', *Jerusalem Bible*, p. 617, note d.

²³⁹ Brach, 'Intermediary Beings III, Renaissance, 4. The Seven Divine Spirits' in Hanegraaff, *Dictionary of Gnosis*, II, 626.

gods in their active and passive roles, and also gives a woodcut by Rosello of Isis, Mother of the Gods with sixteen attributes as given in Apuleius's *Golden Ass*.²⁴⁰

Heinrich Cornelius Agrippa (1486-1535)

The *Three Books of Occult Philosophy* by Cornelius Agrippa were perhaps the major Renaissance source for magical practice. Space forbids their full treatment here, but Donald Tyson appends informative explanatory notes to most of Agrippa's chapters.²⁴¹ Two of the major themes discussed by Tyson are firstly, The Soul of the World, deriving from Plato, which Tyson equates with the feminine potency of Mother Nature, Gaea, and Shakti; and secondly, The Elements, deriving from Ocellus (c. 400 CE).²⁴² Willis F. Whitehead records Agrippa's emphasis on the ubiquity of the Four Elements, which are eternal and form the building-blocks of all things including the stars, devils,

²⁴⁰ Joscelyn Godwin, *Athanasius Kircher: A Renaissance Man and the Quest for Lost Knowledge* (London: Thames & Hudson, 1979), pp. 43, 58.

²⁴¹ Some chapter headings may suffice to indicate the richness of Agrippa's listings: Book I, Chapter viii: 'How the elements are in the heavens, in stars, in devils, in angels, and lastly in God himself' (p. 26); Chapter xiv: 'The Spirit of the World, what it is, and how by way of media it unites occult virtues to their subjects' (p. 44); Book II, Chapter Iv: 'Of the Soul of the World, and of the Celestials, according to the traditions of the poets and philosophers' (p. 417); Book III, Chapter xi: 'Of the Divine Names and their power and virtue' (p. 474); Chapter xvi: 'Of intelligences and spirits, and of the threefold kinds of them, and their divine names, and of their infernal and subterranean spirits' (pp. 499-501); Chapter xviii: 'Of the orders of evil spirits, and of their fall and diverse natures' (p. 509); Chapter xxiv: 'Of the names of the spirits, and their various imposition; and of the spirits that are set over the stars, signs, corners of the heaven, and the elements' (pp. 532-33); Chapter xxxii: 'How good spirits may be called up by us, and how evil spirits may be overcome by us' (pp. 566-68). This last theme is taken up by Wayne Shumaker, who accepts these 'vestigial forms of paganism' as either friendly, hostile, or indifferent, and who may be overcome by humans who are in a state of grace through the help of good demons. Shumaker, *Occult Sciences*, pp. 73, 152. The edition of Agrippa's work consulted here is *Henry Cornelius Agrippa of Nettesheim: Three Books of Occult Philosophy* ed. Donald Tyson (St Paul, MN: Llewellyn Publications, 1993), a work, incidentally, that Yates considers 'trivial'. Yates, *Giordano Bruno*, pp. 130, 258.

²⁴² *Agrippa, Occult Philosophy*, Appendix II, pp. 713-18; *Agrippa, Occult Philosophy*, Appendix III, pp. 719-27.

angels, heaven, and even God.²⁴³ Wayne Shumaker gives many listings from *The Three Books*.²⁴⁴

Charles Nauert, Jr. reviews Agrippa's discussions concerning angelology and demonology, stressing his emphasis on the power of sound, and thus the correct naming of intelligences, although their true names were supposedly known to God alone.²⁴⁵ He also points to the relative incoherence of Agrippa's system in contrast to that of Bruno.²⁴⁶ Walker notes that Agrippa used herbs and artefacts to attract good demons into statues as in the *Asclepius*.²⁴⁷

Giordano Bruno (1548-1600)

According to Michele Ciliberto, Bruno believed that the success of magic should be measured by the extent to which it breaks down hierarchy.²⁴⁸ Yates, nevertheless, records Bruno's sequence of: God, gods, stars, demons, elements, sense, 'whole animal', and his conviction of the necessity of calling on demons for magical power. She also records his orders of angels corresponding to the Hebrew Sefirot, the tenth being 'Issim', separated souls and heroes, and she tabulates his Twelve Principles which give the background explaining his purpose of aiming for a magical and political reformation.²⁴⁹ Although Yates deplores the complexity of Bruno's combination of

²⁴³ Willis F. Whitehead ed., *Henry Cornelius Agrippa, Book One: Natural Magic* (New York: Samuel Weiser, 1971), pp. 39, 55.

²⁴⁴ E.g. the Scriptural angelic names from Chapters xxv – xxviii; the nature of spirits from Chapters xxix – xxxi. Shumaker, *Occult Sciences*, p. 151.

²⁴⁵ Nauert, *Agrippa*, pp. 243-58; 262, 266-70, 277.

²⁴⁶ There is no clear explanation, for example, of the concept of the relationship between the ethereal or astral vehicle of the soul (Ficino's '*idolum*') and the '*spiritus*', a material, yet very refined, entity functioning, perhaps, like the Jungian collective unconscious. Nauert, *Agrippa*, pp. 262, 281-82. Nauert also highlights Agrippa's access to a wide variety of sources both ancient and more recent such as the *Picatrix* and other Neo-Platonic writings, as well as upon sundry Church Fathers and magi such as Roger Bacon, Robert Grosseteste, Pietro d'Abano, and upon other figures such as Albertus Magnus, Ficino and Pico della Mirandola. Nauert, *Agrippa*, pp. 122, 128, 138. Nauert also notes that according to Agrippa, God created bodies and other matter by means of intermediate deities. Nauert, *Agrippa*, p. 272.

²⁴⁷ Walker, *Spiritual and Demonic Magic*, p. 92.

²⁴⁸ Michele Ciliberto, 'Bruno, Giordano (Filippo)' in Hanegraaff, *Dictionary*, I, 209, 212.

²⁴⁹ Yates, *Giordano Bruno*, pp. 264-66, 259, 326-33. See also Brach 'Intermediary Beings III, Renaissance, 2. Individual Angels and Hierarchies, in Hanegraaff, *Dictionary*, II, 624.

Egyptian Magia and Cabala, she notes his recognition of the gods as also being various powers of man's inner universe.²⁵⁰

Karen Silvia de Léon-Jones's approach is to emphasise the extent of Bruno's innovation in Cabala, which she considers Yates underplays.²⁵¹ Bruno broadly accepted Agrippa's hierarchies of angels and demons, the Cabala as a ladder of ascent, and the ancient correlation of Chokmah with Sofia.²⁵² Léon-Jones's Figure 1 clearly tabulates the correlations that Bruno made between the Sefirot, the Angels, and the angelic orders; and her Figure 2 adds the Muses as inspirational intermediaries who lead the uncomprehending 'blind' aspirant in the ascent resulting in both individual and cosmic renewal, or 'apocalyptic regeneration'.²⁵³

John Dee (1527-1609)

Nicholas H. Clulee records that Dee's aim was direct contact with spirits who would transmit universal wisdom useful to humnity, although Gerald Suster notes that many of the messages that he did receive were often contradictory.²⁵⁴ Dee also held converse, through the indispensable mediumship of his assistant Edward Kelley (1555-1597) with territorial angels and angels of various levels of creation set out in hierarchies of sevens. Clulee describes Dee's sources as 'a vast, overlapping, and confusing angelology and demonology culled from sources such as Trithemius, Albano, Reuchlin and the Bible, and lacking any substantial theological background such as the Kabbalah or Neo-

²⁵⁰ Yates, *Giordano Bruno*, pp. 560-62, 220, 206.

²⁵¹ Karen Silvia de Léon-Jones, *Giordano Bruno and the Kabbalah: Prophets, Magicians, and Rabbis* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1997), pp. 5, 17, 20.

²⁵² Léon-Jones, *Giordano Bruno*, pp. 40-41, 52

²⁵³ Léon-Jones, *Giordano Bruno*, pp. 45, 79, 175.

²⁵⁴ Gerald Suster, *John Dee: Essential Readings* (London: Crucible, 1986), p. 67. In addition to learning the secrets of nature, Dee's further purpose was, like the ancients, to discover the 'star-demon within' and become Divinity. French, *John Dee*, pp. 62-88, 111. To ensure concourse with entities of only the highest quality, Dee safeguarded his invocations by fervent prayer. Stuart Clark in Bengt Ankarloo, Stuart Clark, William Monter, eds, *Witchcraft and Magic in Europe: The Period of the Witch Trials*, p. 153; also Brach, 'Intermediary Beings III, Individual Angels and Hierarchies', in Hanegraaff, *Dictionary of Gnosis*, II, 625. Suster notes that Kelley had warned Dee from the beginning that the contacts were diabolical and could not be relied upon. Suster, *John Dee*, p. 138.

Platonism.²⁵⁵ Both Stuart Clark and Brach discuss Dee's retrieval of the primordial angelic language considered so essential for understanding God.²⁵⁶ Peter J. French's account speaks of Dee's interest in Trithemius's instructions in *Steganographia* for dialogue with territorial angels, time-angels, and planetary angels against the background of the all-pervading *spiritus mundi*.²⁵⁷ According to Dee, angels absorb divine light directly, whereas man's intermediary is the sun.²⁵⁸ French also discusses how Dee related mathematics to angelic names according to Cabalistic *gematria*.²⁵⁹

György E. Szónyi considers Dee's innovative glyph of the Heiroglyphic Monad as an enabling intermediary symbol for those meditating on it, and also highlights Dee's hope that recovery of the original angelic language will restore man's dignity lost at the fall.²⁶⁰

Dee's diaries of 1583-87 were examined by Gerald Suster, who noted their variable literary style, which improved to a high standard after Dee and Kelley agreed to share their wives.²⁶¹

Robert Fludd (1574-1637)

²⁵⁵ Clulee, *John Dee's Natural Philosophy*, pp. 208-11, 214. Agrippa's third book was also an important resource for Dee. French, *John Dee*, p. 113. Yates also reports and comments on Dee's angelic contacts. Frances A. Yates, *The Occult Philosophy in the Elizabethan Age* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1979), p. 82.

²⁵⁶ e.g. Jean-Pierre Brach, 'Intermediary Beings III: Renaissance, 2. Individual Angels and Hierarchies' in Wouter J. Hanegraaff, ed., *Dictionary of Gnosis*, II, 625.

²⁵⁷ French, *John Dee*, pp. 36, 37, 83.

²⁵⁸ He refers to the sun here as the demiurge of the *Asclepius*. See French's reference to John Colet, *Two Treatises on the Hierarchies of Dionysius*, tr. J. H. Lupton (Ridgewood, New Jersey: 1966), p. 3., in French, *John Dee*, p. 101.

²⁵⁹ French, *John Dee*, p. 114.

²⁶⁰ The hieroglyphic monad was '[. . .] a condensed mystical image, the purpose of which was to lead the meditating beholder to revelative illumination.' György E. Szónyi, 'Dee, John' in Hanegraaff, *Dictionary of Gnosis* I, 301-09, esp. pp. 305, 306. See also György E. Szónyi, *John Dee's Occultism: Magical Exaltation through Powerful Signs* (Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 2004).

²⁶¹ Suster, *John Dee*, pp. 86, 88.

Joscelyn Godwin characterises Fludd as one of the last in the line of Renaissance scholars, within a lineage of Western esotericism stretching from Origen to Rudolf Steiner.²⁶² William Huffman notes that Fludd followed Reuchlin in accepting that all bodies ‘celestial and terrestrial’ (stars, animals, vegetables, and minerals) have spiritual directors of varying status.²⁶³ But Fludd’s greatest efforts were directed towards his cosmographical diagrams. As a Neo-Platonist, Fludd intended these as vital intermediary symbols to assist the aspirant in the task of ascent; one mentioned by Sylvie Edighoffer depicts Fludd’s original idea of intersecting pyramids representing ascent and descent, indicating the angelic hierarchy’s true home as the Empyrean even while active throughout the universe, stars and planets. The diagrams expressed Fludd’s fascination with cosmology and the creation – above all, the figure of Nature, or the World Soul, the major intermediary through which God influences creation.²⁶⁴ He considered illness to be an imbalance in the good and evil spirits which entered the body through the breath; the horoscope diagnosed the nature of the spirits concerned, and the remedy one of inducing the presence of counteracting healing spirits through the use of herbs. Like earlier magi Fludd saw God as pervading the universe, personalised as the Platonic Anima Mundi or the Kabbalistic Metatron and allied to an entire chain of angelic beings from the highest plane to the lowest.²⁶⁵

Christian Theosophy

Seventeenth-century Christian theosophy, defined below in terms of its major characteristics, was exemplified by three prime figures: Jacob Boehme (1575-1624);

²⁶² e.g. including Origen, Hildegard, Eckhart, Ficino, Boehme, Emerson, and Steiner. Joscelyn Godwin, *Robert Fludd: Hermetic Philosopher and Surveyor of Two Worlds* (London: Thames & Hudson, 1979), pp. 5, 19.

²⁶³ William H. Huffman, *Robert Fludd and the End of the Renaissance* (London: Routledge, 1988), p. 128.

²⁶⁴ Sylvie Edighoffer, ‘Fludd, Robert’, in Hanegraaff, *Dictionary*, II, 371-75. Joscelyn Godwin, *Robert Fludd: Hermetic Philosopher and Surveyor of Two Worlds* (London: Thames & Hudson, 1979), p. 44. Godwin compares the World Soul with Shakti, the power of feminine creativity. Joscelyn Godwin, *Robert Fludd*, pp. 22, 23.

²⁶⁵ Huffman, *Robert Fludd*, pp. 60, 108, 130, 132.

John Pordage (1607-81); and Johann Georg Gichtel (1638-1710). According to Faivre, Boehme was a pivotal figure defining the character of theosophy, standing as he did between medieval mysticism, Paracelsus, and direct religious experience.²⁶⁶ Robin Waterfield shows how Boehme followed such previous magi in phrasing much of his imagery in mathematical terms, e.g. seven stages of divine manifestation, and a Trinity of Principles. Boehme was also conversant with Alchemy, Astrology, and the mathematical implications of Cabala.²⁶⁷ Of particular interest in Waterfield's book are his Appendices which reproduce Boehme's *Four Tables of Divine Revelation*, together with the *Brief Explication* of each, setting out his concept of the structure of creation, divine qualities, and intermediary beings associated with its various parts. Table I, for example, shows his framework of three-fold existence of 1. the Trinity and its characteristics, 2. the world of 'Eternal Nature', the abode of angels, and 3. the 'external World, which as well as the stars, earthly creatures and the four Elements, also includes a version of Heaven which appears to straddle the world of Nature and the visible world.²⁶⁸ Andrew Weeks notes the 'extraordinary complexity' of Boehme's attempted harmonisation of various areas of knowledge consequent on both his reading and personal revelation.²⁶⁹

It is this three-fold classification that Faivre terms the 'God/Human/Nature Triangle', together with the complex internal relationships within it, as one of his defining characteristics of Christian Theosophy. His other two categories are no less

²⁶⁶ Antoine Faivre, *Theosophy, Imagination, Tradition*, pp. xvi, 7.

²⁶⁷ Robin Waterfield, *Jacob Boehme: Essential Readings* (Wellingborough: Crucible, 1989), pp. 28-30, 35-37.

²⁶⁸ Waterfield, *Jacob Boehme*, pp. 213-39. For a short history of the Boehmenist movement, see Pierre Deghaye, 'Jacob Boehme and His Followers', in Antoine Faivre and Jacob Needleman, eds, *Modern Esoteric Spirituality* (London: SCM Press, 1992), pp. 210-47. Boehme and Gichtel are two major German mystics who were highly influential upon the Pietist movement which continued through the eighteenth to the nineteenth centuries. See Faivre, *Theosophy, Imagination, Tradition*, p. 63.

²⁶⁹ Both Fludd and Boehme attempted this synthesis of all knowledge, at a time when the limitations of knowledge made it almost possible. Andrew Weeks, 'Boehme, Jacob', in Hanegraaff, *Dictionary of Gnosis*, I, 185-92, (pp. 188, 189). Concerning Boehme's direct religious experience, Charles I of England is said to have exclaimed, presumably in English, 'Dieu soit loué, il y a encore des hommes qui peuvent donner un témoignage vivant, par experience, de Dieu et de sa parole!' cited by Grunsky, *Jacob Boehme*

important: the role of the creative imagination, especially in relation to figures such as Sophia, the angels, and other great mythological themes such as the Fall; and the potential faculty in people for direct access to inner worlds through the use of the imagination.²⁷⁰

Arthur Versluis records some of the visionary experiences of that ‘most important English theosopher of the seventeenth century’, John Pordage, amongst which was his initial contact with inner beings and the accompanying terror, allayed only by the presence of a company of angels, and unusual in that they were also witnessed by both Pordage and by those present at the time. Although presences both good and beneficent continued to impinge on the household in various physical ways for some time afterwards, Pordage also records his passage through the flames of hell to ascend and experience the angelic spirits and the inexpressible delights of heaven. But of special interest is his description of Eternal Nature, ‘the fruitful Mother of all Things’, originating in the world of Forms, touching on the Nothingness of God. He describes the Virgin Sophia, recorded in his work *Sophia* (ca. 1675), as ‘co-essential’ and ‘co-eternal’ with the Holy Trinity but not ‘co-equal’ with them, only their Glory and Mirror. Versluis particularly notes Pordage’s challenging remark that divine wisdom can only be attained by *descent* inwards rather than striving to rise upwards out of oneself.²⁷¹ Later, in his major and visionary work *Göttliche und Wahre Metaphysica* (Divine and True Metaphysics, 1715), he discusses the importance of the world of Nature and

(Stuttgart: 1956), p. 10 in Antoine Faivre, *L’Esotérisme au XVIIIe siècle en France et en Allemagne* (Paris: Seghers, 1973), p. 9.

²⁷⁰ Faivre, *Theosophy*, pp. xvi, 7-8. Also Antoine Faivre, ‘Christian Theosophy’, in Hanegraaff (ed.), *Dictionary*, I, 258-67, which traces the rise and decline of the theosophical current from the seventeenth to the nineteenth centuries.

²⁷¹ Arthur Versluis, ‘Christian Theosophic Literature of the 17th and 18th Centuries’, in Roelof van den Broek and Wouter J. Hanegraaff eds, *Gnosis and Hermeticism from Antiquity to Modern Times* (Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 1998), pp. 217-35, (p. 222). See also Arthur Versluis, *Wisdom’s Children: A Christian Esoteric Tradition* (Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 1999), pp. 39-56. Kabbalistic and other literature is also ambivalent in respect of whether the journey is one of descent or ascent. See p. 62, n. 58, and p. 77, n. 129.

comprehensively examines both angelic and demonic (fallen) intermediaries, the latter within an eventual redeemed milieu.²⁷²

The first religious experience of Johann Georg Gichtel was similarly cognate to that of Pordage, as one of exaltation and release at the appearance of the Lord after ‘wrestling with Satan’. His prime inner contacts and motivations were the feminine divine Wisdom (Sophia) who restored the soul to wholeness.²⁷³ But whereas Boehme’s imagery appeared to be symbolic, for Gichtel they were real existential occurrences seeming to emphasise the almost corporeal nature of spiritual renewal, discerned by means of the imagination through similar mythological themes to those favoured by Boehme and Pordage.²⁷⁴ Later representatives of the theosophical current were more varied in their approach. The strength of Louis Claude de Saint-Martin (1743-1803), for example, was towards the speculative, rather than the experiential; and Swedenborg (see below) held to a unique, simplified view of the universe with few types of intermediary. The further development of esotericism was characterised by the rise of initiatory societies such as the Elus Coëns of Martinès de Pasqually (1727-74) and the Theosophical Society (established in 1875), both discussed in greater detail below.

Christian Cabala

Frances A. Yates outlines the work of Renaissance magi, including Pico della Mirandola, Johannes Reuchlin, Francesco Giorgi, and Cornelius Agrippa, all of whom were Christian Cabalists.²⁷⁵ Pico the mystic, for example, ascended by means of the Cabala and invocations of its archangels; Reuchlin invoked angels against the background of Cabala;²⁷⁶ Francesco Giorgi of Venice (1466-1540) correlated Christian

²⁷² The angels had their own language, yet possessed but one ear, one eye, and one breath, their ‘food and drink being power from the Trinity’. Arthur Versluis, ‘Pordage, John’, in Hanegraaff, *Dictionary of Gnosis*, II, 966-70.

²⁷³ Arthur Versluis, ‘Gichtel, Johann Georg’ in Hanegraaff, *Dictionary of Gnosis*, I, 392-95. Also Versluis, *Wisdom’s Children*, pp. 30-38. See also Waterfield, *Jacob Boehme*, pp. 40-42.

²⁷⁴ Faivre, *Theosophy*, pp. 61-63.

²⁷⁵ Yates, *The Occult Philosophy*, PART I, pp. 9-75, where she stresses the greatly underestimated influence of Christian Cabala on the history of religion, (p. 1.).

²⁷⁶ Yates, *Occult Philosophy*, pp. 20, 21, 24.

with Hebrew angelology and the planetary spheres, all planets being benign; and Agrippa manipulated Hebrew letters and numbers.²⁷⁷ The Judaeo-Christian Kabbalah being of such importance in Blavatsky's Theosophy and, even more so in the teachings of both the Order of the Golden Dawn and Dion Fortune's own Fraternity, this subject will be discussed in greater depth in Chapter 4.

Thus the Renaissance Magi dug deeply into Ancient and recent sources, rejecting or accepting according to their understanding and inspiration, nearly always building in complexity and ambiguity, but all generally attempting the work of magician as priest, striving towards the light of the One.

Eighteenth to Early Twentieth Centuries

1. The Eighteenth Century

Hanegraaff comments on the ambiguity of a belief in disembodied angels and demons which persisted throughout the Enlightenment until the onset of materialism and atheism in the nineteenth century. More recently, this has resolved for some into a psychological understanding of intermediaries as existing subjectively between incarnate humanity and his own 'higher Self', thus placing them all within the category of human souls who themselves stand at some level on the ascent to Divinity. He also addresses the case of spirits of the departed, who being 'nearer' to God were thought to be in a good position to relay messages to the incarnate.²⁷⁸

Emanuel Swedenborg

Leaving aside the ensuing plethora of channelled entities since the birth of modern spiritualism in 1848, both Hanegraaff and Kocku von Stuckrad refer to the critical importance of the spirituality of Emanuel Swedenborg (1688-1772), mentioned also by Antoine Faivre alongside others such as Martinès de Pasqually (1727-74), as one of the

²⁷⁷ Yates, *Occult Philosophy*, pp. 30, 33.

²⁷⁸ Wouter J. Hanegraaff 'Intermediary Beings IV: 18th Century – Present, 1. Introduction', in Hanegraaff, *Dictionary of Gnosis*, II, 628.

‘Great Theosophers’.²⁷⁹ Indeed, the new impetus then given by that kind of quality channelling could be seen as a prelude to the work of later trance mediums such as Helena Blavatsky and Dion Fortune herself, both of whom were in dialogue with quality intermediaries. Swedenborg was almost unique in denying any difference between angels and spirits (late human beings) who after death gravitated to a level that matched their inner moral condition, the discarnate angels and demons thereafter influencing humans for good or ill. Swedenborg was granted the privilege of walking and talking with them in the after-death realms, himself being the sole intermediary able to exchange information between worlds.²⁸⁰

²⁷⁹ Kocku von Stuckrad, *Western Esotericism*, pp. 99-100. Antoine Faivre, *Access*, pp. 72-73. For de Pasqually, see p. 110, below. Spiritualism was later acknowledged by its instigators, the Fox sisters, to have been contrived. Von Stuckrad, *Western Esotericism*, p. 124. The judgement of worth of channelled messages is not always easy to make. An extended, coherent, and clearly worked out ‘inner’ scenario, for all its subsequent following, could be of less worth than a few snatched sentences received in passing by an aspirant while meditating or, on the other hand, it could be completely misleading. Almost any kind of conceivable intelligence may be channelled. The wide selection of diverse entities discussed in this chapter almost pales into insignificance beside those of New Age practitioners as listed by Hanegraaff: ‘Not only such entities as ascended masters, spirit guides, angels, extraterrestrials, various historical personalities, [. . .] God [. . .], gods and goddesses of antiquity, and the collective unconscious or Universal Mind, but also “group entities”, incarnate or discarnate animals [. . .], nature spirits or “devas”, gnomes, fairies, plants, and finally the “higher self” of the channel. One particular channeller even claimed to be in contact with “The Committee”, a geometrical consciousness comprised of a line, a spiral and a multidimensional triangle. Kathryn Ridall, *Channeling: How to Reach out to Your Spirit Guides* (London: Bantam, 1988), p. 9 in Hanegraaff, *New Age Religion*, p. 23, n. 2. Jane Williams-Hogan criticises Faivre both in Antoine Faivre and Jacob Needleman, eds, *Modern Esoteric Spirituality* (London: SCM Press Ltd, 1993) and elsewhere for his inadequate treatment of Swedenborg. Jane Williams-Hogan, ‘The Place of Emanuel Swedenborg in Modern Western Esotericism’, in Antoine Faivre and Wouter J. Hanegraaff, eds, *Western Esotericism and the Science of Religion: Selected Papers presented at the 17th Congress of the International Association for the History of Religions, Mexico City 1995* (Leuven: Peeters, 1998), pp. 201-51, where she seeks to redress this omission. While glossing over Swedenborg’s encounters with intermediaries, she links him with later esotericists such as Rudolf Steiner (pp. 249-51).

²⁸⁰ Wouter J. Hanegraaff ‘Intermediary Beings IV: 18th Century – Present, 2. Spirits’, in Hanegraaff, *Dictionary of Gnosis*, II, 629. Also Ernst Benz, *Emanuel Swedenborg: Visionary Savant in the Age of Reason*, introduction and translated by Nicholas Goodrick-Clarke (West Chester, Pennsylvania: Swedenborg Foundation, 2002), p. 388. Also Michael Stanley (ed.), *Emanuel Swedenborg: Essential Readings* (Wellingborough: Crucible, 1988), p. 167. Concerning the similarity of angels and men, Rudolf Steiner stated that the Angels, Archangels, etc., passed ‘in earlier times’ through the stage of being human. The hierarchy above the human consists of Angels (Spirits of Twilight); Archangels (Fire-Spirits); Archai (Original Forces or Spirits of Personality); and Spirits of Form. See Rudolf Steiner, *Universe, Earth and Man* (London: The Rudolf Steiner Publishing Co., 1955), pp. 47-55.

Ernst Benz describes how Swedenborg based his visions firmly on Scripture, yet also attributed illness to the influence of demons.²⁸¹ The spirits inspired him, often with material too difficult to express, using him as a medium writing at speed and often for weeks at a time.²⁸² Benz records his use of prayer but no invocations; all communications were the result of grace and related to problems he was currently working on; and whereas Hildegard of Bingen (1098-1179), for example, saw herself only as a spectator in her visions, Swedenborg felt himself to be actually present as if in a waking dream.²⁸³

Andrew Jackson Davis (1826-1910), a leading American spiritualist and clairvoyant, later channelled both Galen and Swedenborg, and Phillip Charles Lucas states that Davis should be acknowledged as the major theologian of spiritualism and the first in a line of esoteric writers whose inner figures communicated material which incorporated speculative themes and conceptual esoteric frameworks much in the style of later figures such as H. P. Blavatsky, Alice Bailey, and Jane Roberts.²⁸⁴ Davis's material closely followed Swedenborg's teaching but declared that besides Swedenborg himself, it was also open to any of the souls nearest to earth after death to communicate through any medium until they began their own further evolution through the spheres to the sixth, the most spiritual.²⁸⁵

The Rosicrucian Movement

²⁸¹ Benz, *Swedenborg*, pp. 207, 223. Also Williams-Hogan, 'The Place of Emanuel Swedenborg', pp. 206, 207.

²⁸² Benz, *Swedenborg*, pp. 263, 264, 266, 269, 320. Swedenborg listed five states of alertness: 1. with open eyes; 2. with open eyes and a loosening of the inner and outer senses; 3. closest to awake; 4. sees apparitions with closed eyes; 5. dream visions. Benz, *Swedenborg*, pp. 278-80. Benz notes that Swedenborg suspected that some of his visionary experiences or revelations could have been sent by evil spirits, Benz, *Swedenborg*, p. 291.

²⁸³ Benz, *Swedenborg*, pp. 318, 320, 305, 326.

²⁸⁴ See Chapter 6, *passim*.

²⁸⁵ Phillip Charles Lucas, 'Davis, Andrew Jackson', in Hanegraaff, *Dictionary of Gnosis*, I, 299-301. The communicators being no higher than the lowest spheres closest to earth would account for lack of spiritual authority in their messages. Wouter J. Hanegraaff 'Intermediary Beings IV: 18th Century – Present, 2. Spirits', in Hanegraaff, *Dictionary of Gnosis*, II, 629.

Although Boehme makes no reference to Rosicrucianism, Fludd had been heavily influenced by it, in particular by its notion of an ideal society and the ultimate unity of all religions which, as Frances A. Yates notes, was sustained by strong belief in angelic support; contact with angels was ‘a hallmark of the Rosicrucian’.²⁸⁶ Roland Edighoffer, too, points out that the *Fama Fraternitatis* (1614) itself includes respectful mention of Paracelsus and his belief in elementary beings, angels and spirits. Such was the importance of angelology in Rosicrucian circles that even the ideal city had its angelic guards and tutors. Although the figure of Christian Rosenkreutz himself is purely allegorical, he has since been considered a significant intermediary himself, particularly in the light of his supposed periodic return to earth.²⁸⁷

Similarly, Jean Overton Fuller sketches another figure, the Comte de Saint-Germain (d. 1784), alchemist, musician and nobleman of mysterious origin whose career eventually became clouded by myth, and whom the Neo-Theosophist Annie Besant claimed as an incarnation of, among others, Christian Rosenkreutz, of John Hunyadi, the fifteenth-century Magyar statesman and warrior from Transylvania, and Francis Bacon.²⁸⁸ Furthermore, Charles Leadbeater maintained that he had met Saint-Germain in modern dress in 1910 in Rome, and Annie Besant speculated that he was ‘Prince Rakoczi’, a seventeenth-century Transylvanian prince and one of the seven Masters, and termed by Alice Bailey ‘head of the seventh ray’.²⁸⁹ These attributes were

²⁸⁶ Frances A. Yates, *The Rosicrucian Enlightenment* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1972), pp. 223, 166-69.

²⁸⁷ Roland Edighoffer, ‘Rosicrucianism I: First half of the 17th Century’, in Hanegraaff, *Dictionary of Gnosis*, II, 1009-14, especially pages 1010, 1013. For the historical position of Rosicrucianism, see also Roland Edighoffer ‘Rosicrucianism: From the Seventeenth to the Twentieth Century’ in Antoine Faivre and Jacob Needleman, eds, *Modern Esoteric Spirituality* (London: SCM Press, 1992), pp. 186-209. After 1900, Rudolf Steiner was influenced profoundly by the myth of Christian Rosenkreutz, who is also still regarded as a substantial intermediary by the Society of the Inner Light. See also Cees Leijenhorst, ‘Steiner, Rudolf’, in Wouter J. Hanegraaff, ed. *Dictionary*, II, 1087. For Steiner, see also pp. 116-17.

²⁸⁸ Christopher McIntosh compares him with Apollonius of Tyana and Christian Rosenkreutz. Christopher McIntosh, *Eliphas Lévi and the French Occult Revival* (London: Rider, 1972), p. 18.

²⁸⁹ Jean Overton Fuller, ‘Saint-Germain, Le Comte de’, in Hanegraaff, *Dictionary of Gnosis*, II, 1023. See Chapter 5, pp. 299-300. See also Voltaire: ‘He is a man who never dies and who knows everything.’ Benchot’s edition of Voltaire: *Oeuvres*, vol. LVIII, p. 360, letter number CXVIII, referred to in Fr. Wittemans, *A New and Authentic History of the Rosicrucians* (London: Rider & Company, 1938), pp. 133-

later Theosophical interpretations posited after the incorporation of the role of evolution and reincarnation as factors in the development of the Masters.²⁹⁰

Edighoffer gives an extended account of the revival, development, and decline of Rosicrucianism during the eighteenth century under the new designation of ‘Society of the Golden and Rosy Cross’. He nevertheless gives no hint of any intermediary beings behind the organisation such as Steiner later highlighted.²⁹¹ But Massimo Introvigne, tracing the institution of the Hermetic Order of the Golden Dawn to the autonomous Societas Rosicruciana in Anglia (1865-66), infers that the inspiration for *The Rosicrucian Cosmo-Conception* (1909), the major work of the Danish Theosophist Max Heindel (Carl Louis von Grasshof, 1865-1919), was the meeting between Heindel and the mysterious “Elder brother of the Rose Cross” in Central Europe.²⁹² Like James Webb, Alex Owen suggests that the Golden Dawn’s concept of the Secret Chiefs was taken from the Societas Rosicruciana in Anglia and/or the Martinist order in France.²⁹³

High-Grade Free Masonry

Antoine Faivre briefly highlights Martinès de Pasqually (1709 or 1726/7-1774) who inaugurated the Order of Elect Coëns in or about the year 1760, which Faivre uses as an

39. See also the ‘Key Diagram of Solar and Planetary Hierarchies’ in Alice A. Bailey, *Initiation, Human and Solar* (New York: Lucis Publishing Company, 1967 [1922]), pp. 49, 58-9. Also Figure 3, p. 202.

²⁹⁰ See Chapter 5, p. 299.

²⁹¹ Roland Edighofer, ‘Rosicrucianism II: 18th Century’, in Hanegraaff, *Dictionary of Gnosis*, II, 1014-17.

²⁹² Massimo Introvigne, ‘Rosicrucianism III: 19th-20th Century’, in Hanegraaff, *Dictionary of Gnosis*, II, 1018-20. The meeting recalls that of MacGregor Mathers who contacted a Secret Chief in the Bois de Boulogne, (See Chapter 5, p. 266, n. 7), and that of Rudolf Steiner and the herb gatherer, Felix Kogutzki, (see p. 121). Heindel clearly supported the tradition of a Rosicrucian Brotherhood of seven who assist in the everyday world; five who never leave the temple; and a thirteenth who is the Head of the Order, with links to a ‘Central Council’. Max Heindel, ‘The Order of Rosicrucians’ in Edward A. Tiryakian (ed.), *On the Margins of the Visible: Sociology, the Esoteric, and the Occult* (New York: Wiley and Sons, 1974), pp. 147-51. Cf. Rudolf Steiner’s view that seven Masters are in incarnation, five remaining in the spirit world, all parts of a single being. Rudolf Steiner, *From the History and Contents of the First Section of the Esoteric School, 1904-1914*, edited by Hella Wiesberger (Hudson, NY: Anthroposophic Press, 1998), p. 192.

²⁹³ Alex Owen, *The Place of Enchantment: British Occultism and the Culture of the Modern* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2004), p. 57. See p. 111 below for James Webb’s comment.

example of the blending of imaginal activity and theurgy.²⁹⁴ De Pasqually's system incorporated several elements, among which was a 'register' of 2,400 names of angels, archangels and other beneficent spirits who were invoked with quasi-masonic ritual.²⁹⁵ The angels were considered by de Pasqually's successor Jean-Baptiste Willermoz (1730-1824) to exist in four circles, part of a much more complex hierarchical system as can be seen in Robert Amadou's recent summary.²⁹⁶ Like Swedenborg, de Pasqually professed to have been inspired from a higher source.²⁹⁷ Speculations regarding Christian Cabala and the invocation of divine names remained peculiar to some of the higher degrees of Masonry such as those of the Rose-Croix with a background of Hermeticism. It is unclear, however, how far reference to figures such as Noah, Solomon, Hiram Abiff, etc., were purely symbolic, or were regarded as genuine intermediary contacts.²⁹⁸

A further Masonic figure, possibly an intermediary like the legendary Saint-Germain and who generated much speculation was Alessandro di Cagliostro (1743?-95). Massimo Introvigne records the possibility that Cagliostro was able to resurrect, just as Cagliostro himself had asserted, to become an 'elected master' with healing, theurgic and initiatory skills including the evocation of spirits, all received as matters of

²⁹⁴ Thus bridging theosophy and theurgy.

²⁹⁵ Antoine Faivre, *Theosophy, Imagination*, p. 161. The French title of this order was 'Ordre des Chevaliers Maçons Élus Cohens de l'Univers'. See Jean-François Var, 'Pasqually, Martinès de', in Hanegraaff, *Dictionary of Gnosis*, II, 931-36, and Michelle Nahon, 'Élus Coëns' in Hanegraaff, *Dictionary of Gnosis*, I, 332-34. For a manuscript extract of this Register, see Antoine Faivre, *L'Esotérisme au XVIII^e siècle*, p. 30.

²⁹⁶ A circle of superior denary spirits; eight major octonary spirits; seven inferior septenary spirits; and three minor ternary spirits who create matter. See Jean-Jean-François Var, 'Martinism: First Period, I. The Doctrine', in Hanegraaff, *Dictionary of Gnosis*, II, 770-75. Summaries by Robert Amadou can be found in, e.g. Robert Amadou, *Les Leçons de Lyon aux Elus Coëns, un cours d'illumination au XVIII^e siècle par Louis-Claude de Saint-Martin, Jean-Jacques Du Roy d'Hauterive, Jean Baptiste Willermoz* (Paris: Dervy, 1999). Faivre's cosmographic diagram helps to clarify details of Pasqually's symbolism. Antoine Faivre, 'The Temple of Solomon in Eighteenth-Century Masonic Theosophy', in Antoine Faivre, *Access to Western Esotericism*, pp. 147-62 (p. 158).

²⁹⁷ De Pasqually claimed that one of the 'un-earthly' beings effected a magical cure on his wife. Christopher McIntosh, *Eliphas Lévi*, pp. 20-21.

²⁹⁸ Edmond Mazet, 'Freemasonry and Esotericism', in Faivre and Needleman, eds, *Modern Esoteric Spirituality*, pp. 248-76 (pp. 252, 264, 268). The Renaissance Neo-Platonist Ficino also thought of symbols as intermediaries, but the distinction is seldom clear in formal ceremonial groups.

divine grace. Training included two forty-day retreats of ritual and prayer leading to communication with the ‘seven primeval angels’, known by their seals and numbers.²⁹⁹ De Pasqually and Willermoz were undoubtedly key figures in a unique systemisation of intermediary beings, whereas Cagliostro was considered by some to be at a comparable level to the unknown superiors.

James Webb suggests that it was the Martinist Orders of speculative Masonry, deriving from de Pasqually’s Order of Elect Cohens that inaugurated the concept of invisible superiors in the secret societies and esoteric orders of the modern period.³⁰⁰ Similarly, Ellic Howe records that the third degree of the ‘Strikte Observanz’ Masons of Baron von Hund (1722-1776) also deferred to ‘Superiores Incogniti’³⁰¹ Faivre lists at least twenty Masonic systems of the eighteenth century with esoteric content, but it is not known how many of these took seriously the existence of unknown superiors.³⁰² Hanegraaff, however, traces a strong precedent for the Theosophical Masters in these ‘Unknown Superiors’, who are represented as powerful adepts working in secret for people’s wellbeing, and he also touches on Rudolf Steiner’s interpretation of the Christian Incarnation as a supreme example.³⁰³ In my discussions below, however, I shall indicate that the similarity between Masters and Unknown Superiors was not necessarily as strong as appears at first sight.

²⁹⁹ Massimo Introvigne, ‘Cagliostro, Alessandro di’, in Hanegraaff, *Dictionary of Gnosis*, I, 226-27. The second retreat was directed to rejuvenation of the body, a process which, like alchemy, could be interpreted at more than one level.

³⁰⁰ James Webb, *The Flight from Reason*, p. 147.

³⁰¹ Ellic Howe, *The Magicians of the Golden Dawn, 1887-1923* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1972), p. 7.

³⁰² Faivre, *Access*, pp. 79-80.

³⁰³ Wouter J. Hanegraaff, ‘Intermediary Beings IV: 18th Century – Present, 4. Masters’, in Hanegraaff, *Dictionary of Gnosis*, II, 630. Also Pierre Mollier, ‘Neo-Templar Traditions’, in Hanegraaff, *Dictionary of Gnosis*, II, 851. The links with the original Order of Templars were later questioned, and the organisations connected with it declined, only to be revived during the nineteenth century by René Guénon and others after instruction from the spirit of Jacques de Molay during a séance. Christian Bernard, the then Grand Master of the Ancient and Mystical Order of the Rose-Croix was also moved to found an inner group after meeting a mysterious ‘Cardinal Blanc’, presumed to be one of the ‘Unknown Superiors’. In an interesting comment, Mollier says ‘It matters little whether the survival of the Templars is an invention, or not.’ Mollier, ‘Neo-Templar Traditions’, p. 853. See my remark below, p. 116, n. 317.

2. *The Nineteenth Century*

Suffice it to record here just a few of the major figures associated with intermediaries during this period. Hanegraaff opens his overview of the nineteenth century with Francis Barrett's *The Magus* (1801), based predominantly on the works of Cornelius Agrippa, inspiring later occult works such as Bulwer-Lytton's novel *Zanoni* (1842), and also giving rise to considerable speculation regarding otherworld intermediaries.³⁰⁴ A notable mediator of high-level teachings concerning vast and complex hierarchies including Arsaphs, Eons, Arch-Eons, Antarphim, etc., was Paschal Beverly Randolph (1825-75) the black American Rosicrucian who recognised the superior beings as the only real Rosicrucians, as set out in his 'most masterful theoretical work' *Dealings with the Dead* (1862).³⁰⁵ John Hamill introduces us to the English Rosicrucian occultist Frederick

³⁰⁴ For English occultism '[. . .] the first comprehensive survey of magic to be compiled by an avowed practitioner [. . .]' Robert A. Gilbert, 'Barrett, Francis', in Hanegraaff, *Dictionary of Gnosis*, I, 163. Bulwer-Lytton was a practising occultist. The background of *Zanoni* (1842) is one of many levels of existence intensely populated by invisible beings from elementals (Paracelsus's Gnomes, Undines, Sylphs and Salamanders) up to a hierarchy of superior beings akin to the Theosophical Masters, which they preceded. A notable innovation was the concept of the 'Dweller on the Threshold', the personification of a human being's past misdeeds which must one day be faced. This concept is one that has since been taken up by the occult establishment. Joscelyn Godwin, 'Bulwer-Lytton, Edward George,' in Hanegraaff, *Dictionary of Gnosis*, I, 213-17. See also Joscelyn Godwin, *The Theosophical Enlightenment* (Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 1994), pp. 125-29. Faivre highlights Alphonse-Louis Constant (alias Eliphas Lévi, 1810-75) as a pioneer of present-day practical occultism, who with Bulwer-Lytton and one or more others evoked the spirit of Apollonius of Tyana in 1854. Faivre, *Access*, p. 88. In this date, he agrees with Laurant, although Godwin gives 1861. Previously, Faivre had mentioned both 1854 and 1861 as the year of the evocation in question. (Faivre, *Modern Esoteric Spirituality*, p. 281. See also Jean-Pierre Laurant, 'Lévi, Eliphas' in Hanegraaff, *Dictionary of Gnosis*, II, 690, 691 and Joscelyn Godwin, 'Bulwer-Lytton, Edward George', in Hanegraaff, *Dictionary of Gnosis*, I, 215. The full account, transcribed from Lévi's extended diary entry, with only minor omissions, is given in Christopher McIntosh, *Eliphas Lévi*, pp. 101-04. Lévi's unedited account, confirming the date as 1854 but indicating that he conducted the ceremony alone, can be found in Eliphas Lévi, *Transcendental Magic* (London: Rider and Company, 1968 [1836]), pp. 121-25. Lévi's account of this evocation was translated by H. P. Blavatsky, together with some explanatory remarks. *H. P. Blavatsky: Collected Writings* Volume I 1874-78, 2nd edn (Wheaton, IL: The Theosophical Publishing House, 1977), pp. 144-50.

³⁰⁵ The Rosicrucian [i.e. Paschal Beverly Randolph], *Dealings with the Dead: The Human Soul, Its Migrations And Its Transmigrations* (Utica, NY: Mary Randolph, 1862), p. 151 and his *Eulis! The History of Love* (Toledo, OH: Randolph Publishing Co., 1874), both of which emphasised immense numbers of beings with superhuman, or god-like powers, usurping the Christian personal God. Wouter J. Hanegraaff, 'Intermediary Beings IV: 18th Century – Present, 3. Hierarchies', in Hanegraaff, *Dictionary of Gnosis*, II, 629, 630. Also John Patrick Deveney, 'Randolph, Paschal Beverly' in Hanegraaff, *Dictionary of Gnosis* II, 976-79. Randolph gives seven kinds of ghosts, and includes 'Gnomes, Dwarfs, Sylphs, Salamanders,

Hockley (1808-85), who, like Dee, communicated with the spirits through crystal and mirror, employing the services of young female seers remarkable for the quality and depth of the philosophical materials they relayed.³⁰⁶ James Webb records the founder of Mormonism, Joseph Smith's recovery of golden plates containing cyphered scriptures following directions from the angel Moroni,³⁰⁷ also of Stanislas de Guaita (1860-98) and Joséphin Péladin (1858-1918) who revived a Rosicrucian Brotherhood in 1885 under the direction of a council of twelve intermediaries, six of whom were (probably fictional) 'Hidden Chiefs'.³⁰⁸

Finally, Jean-Pierre Laurant gives us a flavour of the increasingly varied nature of mediated wisdom, citing four figures: Pierre-Michel Vintras (1807-75), who received visions of the ubiquitous intermediary the Virgin Mary; Helena Petrovna Blavatsky (1831-91), co-founder of the Theosophical Society and her Masters; Lady Caithness (1832-95) who channelled Mary Queen of Scots; but also Anna Kingsford (1846-88) who eschewed any idea of the existence of Masters, but held intimate conversations with her inner 'angel-genius',³⁰⁹ this last example foreshadowing the psychological

Nereids, Dryads and Fays.' among the lower demons. Paschal B. Randolph, *The Wonderful Story of Ravalette* (Boston: Randolph Publishing Company, 1876), pp. 22-23, quoted in John Patrick Deveney, *Paschal Beverly Randolph: A Nineteenth-Century Black American Spiritualist, Rosicrucian, and Sex Magician* (Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 1997), p. 125.

³⁰⁶ Even under protective invocations to Christ, however, and his insistence on continually testing the spirits, evil demons sometimes appeared, to be rapidly dismissed. John Hamill, ed., *The Rosicrucian Seer: Magical Writings of Frederick Hockley* (Wellingborough: The Aquarian Press, 1986), pp. 11-25, 165, 166. Hockley records an encounter with an evil spirit in the *Spiritualist* (2 July 1880) and reprinted in *Lucifer*, vol. 6 No 31. (15th March 1890), reproduced in John Hamill, *The Rosicrucian Seer*, pp. 129-31. By the time of Christ, there were 5, 500 Angels, guardian spirits of mortals, increasing as the population increased such that to the time of Hockley, there were half the number of Angels as mortals, with family members sharing. Hamill, *The Rosicrucian Seer*, pp. 119-120. Hockley also lists some of the many kinds of spirits as: Angels, Planetary Spirits, Atmospheric Spirits, Wandering Spirits, Spirits that animate the body, and Ministering Spirits. Hamill, *The Rosicrucian Seer*, p. 174.

³⁰⁷ These may have been forged or derived from previous writings. For an extended discussion, see David S. Katz, *The Occult Tradition* (London: Jonathan Cape, 2005), pp. 99-109.

³⁰⁸ James Webb, *The Flight from Reason*, pp. 75, 105, 107. Smith's stones corresponded to the Urim and Thummim, and were to be used for deciphering the text inscribed on the plates. James Webb, *Flight from Reason*, p. 71.

³⁰⁹ Jean-Pierre Laurant, 'The Primitive Character of Nineteenth-Century Esotericism' in Faivre and Needleman eds, *Modern Esoteric Spirituality*, pp. 282-87. Also Owen, *The Place of Enchantment*, pp. 162-63, 177

approach of twentieth-century occultists such as Aleister Crowley and Israel Regardie, both one-time members of the Hermetic Order of the Golden Dawn.

3. *Late Nineteenth- and Early Twentieth-Century*

The Hermetic Order of the Golden Dawn

Godwin credits the Brotherhood of Light of Frances G. Irwin (1823-98), which numbered Hockley among its members and which featured ‘Unknown Superiors’, as a significant fore-runner of the Golden Dawn.³¹⁰ An account of the ‘Secret Chiefs’ of the Hermetic Order of the Golden Dawn is given in Chapter 5; Mathers kept them a closely guarded secret, and access to them was not encouraged. Nevertheless, Mary K. Greer records that Florence Farr was eventually contacted at the British Museum by, unusually, a female Egyptian adept, giving her the assurance that such contacts continued to take place; and Annie Horniman contacted a figure called the ‘Purple Adept’ in 1902.³¹¹ Despite there being no curriculum for invoking presences, Ellic Howe records an occasion during 1896 of the evocation into visible appearance of the spirit of Mercury, and Mathers’s reported communications with the Secret Chiefs undertaken by clairaudience and pendulum divination.³¹² These Secret Chiefs, who were not in incarnation, belonged to the upper grades of the Golden Dawn system beyond Adeptus Exemptus.³¹³ However, Macgregor Mathers stated that he believed them to be living humans, though with ‘terrible superhuman powers’, all appointments for meetings

³¹⁰ Joscelyn Godwin, *The Theosophical Enlightenment*, p. 222. An account of the inter-relations among the late nineteenth-century occult organisations can be found in Godwin, *The Theosophical Enlightenment*, pp. 272-92.

³¹¹ Mary K. Greer, *Women of the Golden Dawn* (Rochester, VT: Park Street press, 1995), pp. 164, 167-68, 265. Greer includes an account of the evocation into visible appearance of the spirit Taphthartharath, and Florence Farr’s evocative description of her experience of his indwelling presence. Greer, *Women of the Golden Dawn*, pp. 171-73.

³¹² Ellic Howe, *Magicians*, pp. 106-09, 130-31. Alex Owen says that the Second Order taught the invocation of nonhuman spirits or deities. Owen, *Place of Enchantment*, p. 76. Daniel von Egmont also maintains that the Zelator Adeptus Minor initiation taught the initiate how to use the Neophyte ritual to evoke spirits, and generate other occult effects. Daniel von Egmont, ‘Western Esoteric Schools’ in van den Broek and Hanegraaff, eds, *Gnosis and Hermeticism from Antiquity*, p. 331.

³¹³ These upper grades correspond to the three topmost sefirot on the Tree of Life: Kether, Chokmah, and Binah. Ellic Howe, *Magicians*, p. 17.

being arranged astrally, and for Mathers alone.³¹⁴ From time to time, the membership became restless for obvious contact with the Secret Chiefs, and around 1908, Dr R. W. Felkin received contact with Ara Ben Shemesh, a ‘Sun Master’, one of the ‘Sons of Fire’, who soon revealed that it was Christian Rosenkreutz (‘C.R.C.’) who was head of their Inner Order. Contacts were to be made by entering the Vault of the Adepts alone or in company to receive instruction.³¹⁵ Annie Horniman also ran a ‘Sphere’ group whose twelve members took up astral stations about a sphere, with a supervising Egyptian astral form at the centre.³¹⁶

By 1915, however, W. W. Westcott, one of the senior members of the Order wrote that ‘no supra-normal beings or Masters have divulged any secret knowledge for the last 10 years at least [. . .]’ – i.e. contact with the ‘Great White Lodge’ had been lost.³¹⁷ The remarks of Israel Regardie made in 1936 concerning the irrelevance of contacts with the Masters should also be borne in mind.³¹⁸

It is interesting to note the similarity between the methods of Madame Blavatsky and MacGregor Mathers regarding access to secret knowledge from the inner brethren, Masters or Secret Chiefs, each using a species of concentration and psychic sensitivity empowered by intention.³¹⁹ Later, the use by Aleister Crowley (1875-1947)

³¹⁴ Ellic Howe, *Magicians*, pp. 129, 209.

³¹⁵ Ellic Howe, *Magicians*, pp. 240, 260, 274. The hierarchy was given as: Sixth Order (Kether): C.R.C.; Fifth Order (Chokmah/Binah): Members on earth but secluded; Fourth Order (Daath): can be contacted; Third order (Chesed/Geburah); Second Order (Tiphareth); First Order (remaining Spheres/stages); Ben Shemesh intimated that C.R.C. would ‘manifest again before long.’ Ellic Howe, *Magicians*, pp. 274-75.

³¹⁶ Owen, *Place of Enchantment*, p. 130.

³¹⁷ Ellic Howe, *Magicians*, pp. 283-84. In a 1917 lecture, Brodie-Innes pragmatically stated ‘Whether the Gods, the Qliphothic forces or even the Secret Chiefs really exist is comparatively unimportant: the point is that the universe behaves as though they do.’ Francis King, *Ritual Magic in England: 1887 to the Present Day* (London: New English Library, 1972), pp. 44, 45. See also note 303, above, regarding Mollier’s similar feeling.

³¹⁸ ‘[. . .] neither the *Tree of Life* or the Golden Dawn system itself were concerned in any way with Masters or their “contacts”’, Israel Regardie, *What You Should Know about the Golden Dawn* (Phoenix, AZ: Falcon Press, 1983), p. 53.

³¹⁹ Daniel von Egmont, ‘Western Esoteric Schools’, in Van den Broek and Hanegraaff, eds, *Gnosis and Hermeticism*, 1998), p. 330. See also H. P. Blavatsky: ‘[. . .] if I need a reference or information from some book, I fix my mind intently, and the astral counterpart of the book appears [. . .]’. Countess Constance Wachmeister et al, *Reminiscences of H. P. Blavatsky and ‘The Secret Doctrine’* (London: Wheaton, 1976), p. 25, quoted in von Egmont, ‘Western Esoteric Schools’, p. 330. Similarly, Mathers

of sex magic enabled him to invoke sublime intermediaries such as Pan, and he 'took dictation' from his Holy Guardian Angel, Aiwass.³²⁰ Faivre also records Crowley's use of *The Sacred Magic of Abra-Melin the Mage* where, during a six-month retreat, a multitude of inner demons are deliberately evoked, then each banished by name.³²¹

The Theosophical Society

Von Stuckrad terms the Esoteric Section of the Theosophical Society as the model for all subsequent initiatory societies. Madame Blavatsky had been aware of her Master, whether distinguished individual or a 'subtle force of energy', since childhood, only meeting him much later as an adult.³²² We have seen that this was not the first example of contact with what Hanegraaff loosely terms 'elevated beings'.³²³ These had surfaced a century earlier in the Rosicrucian and Masonic milieu, but Blavatsky's own contacts, even though inspired from Rosicrucian sources, betrayed some significant differences from those of the eighteenth century.³²⁴ Daniel von Egmont points out that her Masters

says: 'almost the whole of the Second Order knowledge has been obtained from [the Secret Chiefs] in various ways [. . .] at times copied from books brought before me, I knew not how – and which disappeared from my vision when the transcription was finished [. . .].' Frances King, *Rites of Modern Occult Magic*, p. 45, in von Egmont 'Western Esoteric Schools', p. 330. These instances may usefully be compared to the methods used by Dion Fortune outlined in Chapter 6.

³²⁰ Owen, *Place of Enchantment*, pp. 198, 212.

³²¹ S. L. MacGregor Mathers, *The Book of the Sacred Magic of Abra-Melin the Mage* (New York: Dover Publications, 1900). 'This is the best description of *angelic magic* that we know of' Cris Popenoe, *Inner Development* (Harmondsworth, Middlesex: Penguin Books Ltd., 1979), p. 453. Faivre suggests (*Access*, p. 91) that this ritual was often practised by members of the Golden Dawn, but this was very unlikely, for 'No one really cared a fig for Magic and spiritual development. No one strived for mastery of any technique. Grades, and grades alone, were the goal.' Regardie, *What You Should Know*, p. 105.

³²² Von Stuckrad, *Western Esotericism*, p. 123.

³²³ See Hanegraaff, *New Age Religion*, pp. 435-41. Is this another example of Versluis's 'a-historical continuity'? Arthur Versluis, *Wisdom's Children*, p. 231.

³²⁴ 'A Few Questions to Hiram', *H. P. Blavatsky: Collected Writings*, (London: Wheaton, Theosophical Publishing House, 1950-91), I, 101-18. Also: 'M. brings orders to form a Society – a secret society like the Rosicrucian Lodge', *Ibid.*, 73, 120; 406-40. 'The very concept of the Masters can be seen to derive via high-grade Freemasonry from the Rosicrucian idea of invisible and secret adepts, working for the

were less ideal than those of the past, and whilst in possession of supernormal wisdom and powers, were also much more down-to-earth, somewhat like the Gods of ancient Greece, and displayed the whole breadth of human emotions to such an extent that von Egmont is convinced of their physicality.³²⁵ And although it was the Oriental adepts, particularly the Masters Kuthumi and Morya who were prominent in energizing her conception of the Theosophical Society, and who constituted the highest degree of its Esoteric Section, her contacts prior to 1875 were not the Eastern Mahatmas, but those associated with the Brotherhood of Luxor. She spoke only of the ‘Brothers’ John King, Serapis and Tuitit Bey.³²⁶ Even two years after the Society’s foundation, her *Isis Unveiled* (1877) continued to carry a distinctly Egyptian or Middle Eastern emphasis.³²⁷ The further figure she refers to, ‘M’, cannot with any certainty be linked with Morya, who is not introduced by name until 1881.³²⁸ And it was after 1880 and her conversion to Buddhism that she had access to what she felt were the more precise Eastern concepts and vocabularies pertaining to the detail of hierarchy and inner consciousness, and which she used in *The Secret Doctrine* (1888).

advancement of humanity.’ Nicholas Goodrick-Clarke, ed., *Helena Blavatsky* (Berkeley, CA: North Atlantic Books, 2004), p. 6.

³²⁵ von Stuckrad, *Western Esotericism*, p. 128. Also Daniel von Egmont, ‘Western Esoteric Schools in the Late Nineteenth and Early Twentieth Centuries’ in Roelof van den Broek and Wouter J. Hanegraaff, eds, *Gnosis and Hermeticism from Antiquity to Modern Times* (Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 1998), pp. 310-19 (p. 313). For K. Paul Johnson’s researches, see Chapter 5, pp. 307-07.

³²⁶ The Brotherhood had its headquarters in the East. *H. P. Blavatsky: Collected Writings*, i, 87. See also Nicholas Goodrick-Clarke, *Helena Blavatsky*, pp. 33-34; 63.

³²⁷ Michael Edwardes, *The Dark Side of History* (London: Grenada Publishing, 1978), p. 164. Von Egmont, ‘Western Esoteric Schools’, p. 318. Faivre, *Modern Esoteric Spirituality*, p. 313. *The Mahatma Letters to A. P. Sinnett*, transcribed and compiled by A. T. Barker, third edition (Adyar: The Theosophical Publishing House, 1979) contains over one hundred letters sent between 1880 and 1884 from the Masters M. and K. H. to A. P. Sinnett. Together with the supplementary materials included, this comprises a most valuable primary source. The account of Blavatsky’s demeanour whilst in the flow of writing is of considerable interest in the light of later discussions on the technology of inner plane communication. See Chapter 6 and Nicholas Goodrick-Clarke, *Helena Blavatsky*, p. 8.

³²⁸ Although a certain Eastern emphasis to the Brotherhood had been introduced from about 1876, the first of the Mahatma Letters sent to A. P. Sinnett did not commence until October 1880, and it was not until approximately one year later, in Letter No 104, that the Master Morya was introduced by Kuthumi (also not identified by name until the first of the Mahatma letters) as a fellow correspondent to Allan O. Hume and A. P. Sinnett. A. T. Barker, tr., *The Mahatma Letters to A. P. Sinnett*, pp. 1-6; 433. Also Geoffrey A.

Citing Carl T. Jackson, Emmette Coleman and Bruce F. Campbell, Hanegraaff also argues for Western as well as Eastern sources for Theosophy, and refers especially to von Glasenapp's evaluation that the concepts of the sevenfold human constitution and of the Akasha as an original name for the *anima mundi*, for example, are more characteristic of Paracelsus and Agrippa than of oriental thought.³²⁹ Certainly in her *Isis Unveiled* she holds to the ancient and Renaissance concept of a three-fold nature to man, as against the Hindu five-fold, and her apparently Eastern septenary systems derive from Western sources.³³⁰ Chapter 4 expands on what is one of the fundamental structures characterising Theosophy.

As in man, so in the universe; both can be seen as animated by a series of levels, powers, or 'an almost endless series of Hierarchies of sentient Beings, each having a mission to perform', and in the universe each Being either was, or is preparing as a result of the evolutionary process of reincarnation, to incarnate as human during one or several of many cosmic epochs.³³¹ Was this, perhaps, a considered response to the

Barborka, *The Mahatmas and their Letters* (Adyar, Madras: The Theosophical Publishing House, 1973), pp. 102-07.

³²⁹ Carl T. Jackson, *Oriental Religions and American Thought: Nineteenth Century Explorations* (Westport: Greenwood Press, 1981), p. 161; Emmette Coleman, 'The Sources of Madame Blavatsky's Writings' in Vsevolod Sergyeevich Solovyoff, *A Modern Priestess of Isis* (London: Longmans, Green & Co., 1895), appendix, pp. 353-66; Bruce F. Campbell, *Ancient Wisdom Revived: A History of the Theosophical Movement* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1980), pp. 32 ff. See also Helmuth von Glasenapp, *Das Indienbild deutscher Denken* (Stuttgart: K. F. Koehler, 1960). Hanegraaff, *New Age Religion*, pp. 452-55. See J. W. Hauer's correlation of the Akasha Record with Paracelsus' *anima mundi* in Glasenapp, *Indienbild*, p. 200. A range of apparently oriental ideas, such as evolutionary reincarnationism, the Trinity, the logos, and hierarchies of intermediaries are all indebted to the Western esoteric tradition. The way of looking at Kabbalah as a seven-fold system (three Supernals + the seven lower Sephiroth) is described by Paul Krzok, who quotes the term 'the seven Sephiroth of construction', and from the Sepher Yetzirah, '[. . .] the Seven Heavens, the Seven Earths, the Seven Sabbaths: for this cause He has loved and blessed the number Seven, more than all things under Heaven.' Westcott, W. W., 'An Introduction to the Study of the Kabbalah' (Hastings: Metaphysical Research Group, 1978), p. 87 in Paul Krzok, 'The Sevenfold Kabbalah', *Hermetic Journal* 37 (Autumn 1987), 40-44.

³³⁰ Goodrick-Clarke, *Helena Blavatsky*, pp. 148-50. Rudolf Steiner emphasised the initial Western inspiration for the Theosophical Society in Blavatsky's *Isis Unveiled: A Master Key to the Mysteries of Ancient and Modern Science and Theology* (Los Angeles: Theosophy Company, 1931 [1877]). Rudolf Steiner and Marie Steiner-von Sivers, *Correspondence and Documents 1901-1925* (London: Rudolf Steiner Press, 1988), p. 17.

³³¹ Geoffrey A. Barborka, *The Divine Plan* (Adyar, Madras: The Theosophical Publishing House, 2nd ed., 1964.), p. 74

evolutionary theory proposed not long before in Darwin's *Origin of Species* (1859), and vigorously taken up by Leadbeater and Besant? This key concept distinguishes not only Blavatsky's Masters, but all of her inner beings from those of the past, and almost inevitably gave rise to a complicated Theosophical cosmology involving many millions of years of planetary and human evolution, encompassing but going far beyond the then conventional science in its scope.³³²

Barborka gives a diagram of Blavatsky's Hierarchy of Compassion, beings at varying levels of consciousness who oversee and provide a systemic spiritual model of ascent. Out of the triple upper reaches of spirit, there descend seven Sons of Light, depicted as seven primordial rays, each having a characteristic colour, and from them are built the succeeding levels of hierarchy.³³³ Once again, Blavatsky reinforced the seven-fold systems inherent in her own structures of Masters (Dhayani Chohans), globes in the planetary chain, etc., by an inherent acknowledgement of previous systems such as those of Gnosticism and Kabbalah, but also against the firm background of scientifically-based geological and archaeological evolutionary theory.³³⁴ Although later Theosophists such as Annie Besant (1847-1933) and C. W. Leadbeater (1854-1934) developed alternative aspects of Theosophy, the two themes of special interest here – the seven-fold hierarchical nature of both microcosm and macrocosm, and the essential

³³² The evolution of the spirit as it reincarnates and becomes subject to karma is emphasised by Goodrick-Clarke as one of the main contributions of Theosophy to Western esotericism. Nicholas Goodrick-Clarke, *The Coming of the Masters: The Evolutionary Reformulation of Spiritual Intermediaries in Modern Theosophy* (Presented at the inaugural conference of the European Society for the Study of Western Esotericism (ESSWE) at Tübingen, Baden-Württemberg, 22nd July 2007), and Goodrick-Clarke, *Blavatsky*, p. 175. See also E. W. Preston, *The Earth and its Cycles: A Comparison between the results of Modern Geological and Archaeological Research and the Statements of the Secret Doctrine* (Adyar, India: The Theosophical Publishing House, 1954 [1931]).

³³³ This sevenfold emanation has resonances with the sevenfold personification of the Deity in Zoroastrianism, see pp. 56-58, above. Yet the whole Hierarchy is, strangely, a nine-fold one reminiscent of the Dionysian, and listed as: 1. Adi-Buddhi; 2. Universal Buddhi; 3. Universal Light or Life; 4. Seven Sons of Light; 5. Dhyanis-Buddhas; 6. Dhyanis-Bodhisattvas; 7. Super-terrestrial Bodhisattvas; 8. Terrestrial Buddhas; 9. Men. Barbourka, *Divine Plan*, pp. 66-69. See also Goodrick-Clarke, *The Coming of the Masters*, p. 21.

³³⁴ The link between Kabbalah and Hindu teachings is emphasised by Goodrick-Clarke, who quotes Blavatsky's descriptive and diagrammatic comparison between the two in her *Isis Unveiled*, II, 38-42; 263-65.

evolutionary background to all life-forms, visible and invisible – were continued, resulting in a minutiae of detail concerning the Masters, their places in the Hierarchy, and their daily functions. Annie Besant's *The Ancient Wisdom* (1897) which deeply influenced Fortune is a comprehensive digest of Blavatsky's cosmological teachings including accounts of the inhabitants of heavens and hells and the doctrine of reincarnation.³³⁵ Of particular relevance to Leadbeater's interpretation of intermediary beings is his *The Masters and the Path* (1925) which includes a diagram suggestive of the relationships between the *Chohans*, or Lords, and clear tabulations of the Rays and their characteristics.³³⁶ Leadbeater correlates the planetary Logoi with the 'Seven Spirits of God' of Revelation, the Builders of St. Denys (recalling the persistent influence of pseudo-Dionysius on the Western esoteric intermediary tradition), and the angels who stand in the presence of God. The powers of the Rays are reflected through the Heads of the Rays, the named Masters of Theosophical literature.³³⁷ A former member of the Theosophical Society, and therefore heavily influenced by its teachings was Alice Bailey (1880-1949), whose *Treatise on Cosmic Fire* (1925) includes, among others, diagrams on the Evolution of Matter; Evolution of a Solar Logos; the Egoic Lotus and the Centres; and Solar and Planetary Hierarchies, which add to Blavatsky's own work and can be compared to similar diagrams and tables by Leadbeater, who wrote at the same time.³³⁸ The contributions of these later authors towards an understanding of the Theosophical intermediaries are more closely examined in Chapter 5.

Rudolf Steiner (1861-1925) and after

³³⁵ Annie Besant, *The Ancient Wisdom* (London: Theosophical Publishing Company, 1897).

³³⁶ C. W. Leadbeater, *The Masters and the Path*, 2nd edn. (Adyar, Madras: The Theosophical Publishing House, 1946, [1925]), pp. 213-31. Each Ray has seven sub-divisions. His Diagram 6 is between his pages 232 and 233.

³³⁷ Leadbeater, *Masters*, pp. 216-18, 221-24. It may well be that Leadbeater was influenced in this by Alice Bailey's *Initiation, Human and Solar*, published some three years earlier in 1922. See especially her sevenfold diagram: 'The Seven Planes of the Solar System' and her tabulation 'The Constitution of Man' (pages xiv, xv). See also my Figure 4, p. 279, which correlates the traditional layout of the Planetary Hierarchy according to Leadbeater and Bailey.

³³⁸ Alice Bailey, *A Treatise on Cosmic Fire* (London: Lucis Press Ltd., 1925), pp. 56, 344, 817, 1238.

Cees Leijenhorst gives an account of the pivotal meeting in about 1880 between Rudolf Steiner and the herb-gatherer Felix Kogutzki, who acted as ‘emissary’ of the ‘M’, one of two Masters who initiated Steiner, the other being Christian Rosenkretz himself.³³⁹ Kogutzki appears to be much as Madame Blavatsky first thought of Masters – lofty spiritual beings alive on earth, but ‘M’ is a much more shadowy figure.³⁴⁰ Steiner nevertheless gave supreme prominence in his esoteric hierarchy to Christ, a direct experience of whom transformed his life at the age of thirty-nine, at about the same time that he began a decade of membership in the Theosophical Society. Steiner’s subsequent esoteric teachings after his break with Theosophy in 1912 included a developed cosmology with roles for many intermediary beings such as Krishna, Buddha, the Christ, and angelic beings such as Lucifer and Michael. He distinguished Lucifer, for example, as one who led people to spirituality but without free will, and Ahriman as one who attempted to block out man’s consciousness of his spirituality.³⁴¹ With an obvious debt to Pseudo-Dionysius, Steiner stressed the work of many different angelic hierarchies who participated in the formulation of man’s ‘sheaths’ and, as did Theosophy, he emphasised the differences in humanity that evolution had made.³⁴² His

³³⁹ Rudolf Steiner and Marie Steiner-von Sivers, *Correspondence and Documents 1901-1925*, pp. 9-10.

³⁴⁰ Cees Leijenhorst, ‘Steiner, Rudolf’ in Hanegraaff, *Dictionary*, II, 1084-91. ‘M’ set Steiner the task of studying the German idealist philosopher Johann Gottlieb Fichte (1762-1814) as a basis for a life’s work of transforming materialism. Robert A. McDermott, ‘Rudolf Steiner and Anthroposophy’ in Faivre and Needleman, eds, *Modern Esoteric Spirituality*, p. 291.

³⁴¹ Rudolf Steiner, *The Work of the Angels in Man’s Astral Body*, 2nd edn (London: Rudolf Steiner Press, 1972 [1960]), pp. 15-16.

³⁴² ‘One of the [. . .] principal sources of confusion [. . .] is failure to pay heed to [. . .] world evolution’. Steiner, *Work of Angels*, p. 4. Concerning the similarity of angels and men, Rudolf Steiner stated that the Angels, Archangels, etc., passed ‘in earlier times’ through the stage of being human. The hierarchy above humanity consists of Angels (Spirits of Twilight); Archangels (Fire-Spirits); Archai (Original Forces or Spirits of Personality); Spirits of Form. See Rudolf Steiner, *Universe, Earth and Man*, pp. 47-55. This book contains eleven of Rudolf Steiner’s lectures given in 1908. See also Rudolf Steiner, *The Spiritual Hierarchies and their Reflection in the Physical World: Ten Lectures*, 1909 (New York: Anthroposophical Press, 1970). This is a detailed explanation, with diagrams, of the cosmological history and functions of the Orders of Angels. He also speaks at length of the mode of functioning of the higher orders of Angels in Rudolf Steiner, *The Mission of Christian Rosenkretz: its Character and Purpose* (London: Rudolf Steiner Publishing Co, 1950), pp. 96-101. An overview of Rudolf Steiner’s complicated hierarchies and intermediaries is provided in the charts and tabulations of Edwar Reaugh Smith, *The Burning Bush [Rudolf Steiner, Anthroposophy and the Holy Scriptures. Terms and Phrases: Volume I]*, revised edition (Great Barrington, MA: Anthroposophic Press, 2001), pp. 550-57, 565, and passim. Goodrick-Clarke shows how

clairvoyant investigation led him to understand that after the destruction of Atlantis, seven *rishis*, or spiritual masters, communicated their accumulated wisdom to subsequent early civilisations.³⁴³ Kocku von Stuckrad highlights the importance for Steiner of Johann Wolfgang von Goethe (1749-1832) as a pivotal figure representing a holistic view of nature where nature itself was the intermediary.³⁴⁴ Von Egmont notes that although Steiner claimed originality for his teachings, a considerable amount was identical to that of Madame Blavatsky, and even to Masonry, upon both of which Steiner founded Anthroposophy.³⁴⁵ However, he placed Christian Rosenkreutz and Jesus immediately after the Masters Morya and Koot Hoomi whom he continued to refer to in his Esoteric School until 1906 after which he emphasised Christ, CR and Zarathustra as supreme Masters, and he later abandoned the Eastern Masters altogether.³⁴⁶

Faivre highlights William W. Westcott (1848-1925), G.R.S. Mead (1863-1933), Arthur Edward Waite (1857-1942) and Piotr D. Ouspensky (1878-1947) as

Steiner modified the Theosophical model of a series of seven globes through which life evolved by substituting a series of ‘seven planetary incarnations’, assisted by ‘an immense hierarchy of intermediaries’ culled from pre-Theosophical sources. Nicholas Goodrick-Clarke, *Theosophy and the Globalisation of Esotericism* (forthcoming), pp. 98-102.

³⁴³ McDermott, ‘Rudolf Steiner’ in Faivre and Needleman, *Modern Esoteric Spirituality*, pp. 292, 296, 300. See also Rudolf Steiner’s lectures on Christian Rosenkreutz given during the years 1911- 12 in Rudolf Steiner, *The Mission of Christian Rosenkreutz*, p. 15.

³⁴⁴ Kocku von Stuckrad, *Western Esotericism*, pp. 107-09. Here he cites Friedrich Wilhelm Joseph Schelling (1775-1854) and quotes Gotthilf Heinrich von Schubert who saw nature as ‘an embodied dreamworld, a prophetic language in living hieroglyphs.’ Gotthilf Heinrich von Schubert, *History of the Soul* (1830). It was only a short step to consideration of the earth as a living being, an idea expanded by, eg. James Lovelock, *Gaia: A New Look at Life on Earth* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1987, 1989) and Rupert Sheldrake, *Seven Experiments That Could Change the World* (London: Fourth Estate, 1994), etc. See Wouter J. Hanegraaff, *New Age Religion and Western Culture*, pp. 62-76. Steiner combined the ‘phenomenological’ epistemology of Goethe with the non-empirical ideas of Fichte. Cees Leijenhorst, ‘Steiner, Rudolf’ in Hanegraaff, *Dictionary*, II, 1085.

³⁴⁵ Steiner was a leading member of the Esoteric Section of the Theosophical Society from 1904, even mediating the thoughts of the Eastern Masters such as Morya. Von Egmont, ‘Western Esoteric Schools’, pp. 333, 334

³⁴⁶ Rudolf Steiner, *From the History & Contents of the First Section of the Esoteric School, 1904-1914*, pp. 191-205; 232; 207-27. He also states that after 1380, Christian Rosenkreutz and the Master Jesus incarnate in turns every century. Rudolf Steiner, *From the History*, p. 225.

important commentators on, if not practitioners of, theurgy and initiatory societies.³⁴⁷ In contrast Hanegraaff concludes his account of intermediaries by reference to extraterrestrials in the works of Swedenborg and Jakob Lorber (1800-64); the Theosophical adepts from Venus; and the highly spiritually advanced ETs of the post-war UFO traditions.³⁴⁸ In his *New Age Religion and Western Culture*, Hanegraaff also accounts for many other intermediaries such as the Goddess, the Christ principle,³⁴⁹ angels, demons, and fairies,³⁵⁰ and following Jean Houston gives an example of how an adherent to New-Age culture might contact a Master Teacher – without the

conjurations, prayers, calls, or other impedimenta that characterised Renaissance and previous magi.³⁵¹

Dion Fortune was heir to each of the Theosophical writers above, including Rudolf Steiner, as well as immersing herself in the wider panoply of Western esotericism as previously outlined in this Chapter; they provided the original stimulus for her own direct inner experience of two of the Masters, and the inspiration for her own re-interpretations of the Theosophical stream.³⁵² Subsequent Chapters will examine the new formulations, especially in respect of the character of intermediary beings, that Fortune created.

4. *A Re-evaluation*

³⁴⁷ Faivre, *Access*, p. 89. According to Joscelyn Godwin, Mead was sceptical about the Masters. Joscelyn Godwin, 'Mead, George Robert Stowe' in Hanegraaff, ed., *Dictionary of Gnosis*, II, 785-86.

³⁴⁸ Wouter J. Hanegraaff, 'Intermediary Beings IV: 18th Century – Present, 5. Extraterrestrials', in Wouter J. Hanegraaff, *Dictionary of Gnosis*, II, 630. See also Hanegraaff, *New Age Religion*, p. 95. Here he states the influence of A. A. Bailey on the UFO movement to have been pervasive, especially in its early phase.

³⁴⁹ A New Age concept derived from Rudolf Steiner. Hanegraaff, *New Age Religion*, p. 190.

³⁵⁰ Hanegraaff, *New Age Religion*, pp. 197-202.

³⁵¹ Hanegraaff, *New Age Religion*, p. 253. Jean Houston, *The Possible Human: A Course in Extending your Physical, Mental and Creative Abilities* (Los Angeles: J. P. Treacher Inc., 1982).

³⁵² See Chapter 3, p. 135.

Our re-examination of Faivre's six characteristics of Western esotericism has already revealed the unexpected presence of intermediaries encapsulated within each one, and has given ample reason for this timely survey of their presence and importance throughout the history of Western esotericism and also shows the great extent to which research on them has already been carried out. What is further highlighted here are some of the changes in the type and function of intermediary, especially during the last two hundred years.

Hanegraaff's own survey concludes with a *mélange* of barely distinctive intermediary figures, which this thesis argues should be differentiated according to some very fundamental and significant criteria, hitherto neglected. First, and bearing in mind Fortune's major characteristic of Masters that they were once incarnate, but are no longer so, we should look at what kinds of intermediaries were considered to have been incarnate, and at what periods of history such a concept was held, and by whom. During seven hundred years of Greek culture, for example, the hero-gods were taken to be formerly human.³⁵³ With the ancient three-tier model of the Cosmos giving way to the later scheme of invisible spheres encompassing the globe, this then gave room for the presence therein of innumerable spirits in addition to the planets and stars, all characterised by their relationship to the sphere – or level – that they matched, whether from the Supreme, from the Ogdoad, or in lesser roles as messengers or protectors of humans from demonic activity.³⁵⁴ Similarly, in the Judaic and Christian milieu of the Middle Ages and Renaissance, angels and demons proliferated alongside the nature-spirits of Paracelsus and Agrippa, none having been incarnate save the patriarchs such as Moses and Elijah, and the Christian saints, who also became identified with localities. A major development in Western esoteric thought was inaugurated by Swedenborg, however, who gave his almost unique opinion that men and women transformed into angels, who thereafter acted much as a person's 'guardian angel'.

³⁵³ Harold R. Willoughby, *Pagan Regeneration*, pp. 19-22. It seemed, too, that gods and philosophers were very human in their behaviour, and also related to specific geographical locations, e.g. the gods actually lived and quarrelled on Olympus, and Empedocles was closely associated with Mount Etna and the Underworld.

³⁵⁴ See, for example, the sections above on ancient and medieval hierarchies.

All these categories may be considered to be products of a static world-view, popular and alleviatory in their actions, communications and effects – the gods, heroes, angels, demons, and nature spirits all remained within their appointed spheres of operation as though enacting predetermined roles as helpers and mediators to individual human beings, and identified as much by their names and their geographical and hierarchical location rather than by any kind of developing character over time. During the eighteenth century, however, a different kind of intermediary re-emerged, either Biblical, or a figure of fiction or myth such as Christian Rosenkreutz, one of the first and best-known of these, and some vaguely termed ‘unknown superiors’ whose special tasks were to oversee and inspire specific esoteric groups or secret societies.³⁵⁵ However, these intermediary ‘superiors’ still functioned within a comparatively static cosmos derived from Renaissance and early modern spiritual hierarchies. The ‘unknown superiors’ exercised spiritual authority but appeared to exist outside the human framework and had not themselves progressed in any developmental sense; they did not possess the same dynamic quality as the Masters later envisaged by Blavatsky, Bailey, and Fortune. Like saints and heroes, some of these figures were deemed to have been once incarnate, but there the similarity ends.

However, Blavatsky placed them within the comparatively recent paradigm of Darwin’s evolutionary theory, which set these entities (and also human beings) against the background of evolutionary and reincarnational development, with a commission to supervise specific specialised groups, and to operate on behalf of the whole of humanity – a revival of the Rosicrucian ethos, and a new emphasis in the history of Western esotericism, not only in cosmological terms, but also in terms of the Masters’ origin, development and functions.³⁵⁶ We saw that it was from this new setting replete with multiple levels of hierarchy, heavily emphasised in Blavatsky’s works and in the subsequent literature of Leadbeater, Besant, Bailey, and Steiner, that Fortune’s own Masters and higher beings are derived. Charles Darwin and his theory of evolution as

³⁵⁵ Rosenkreutz was highly esteemed by both Rudolf Steiner and Dion Fortune.

³⁵⁶ ‘The Chiefs want a “Brotherhood of Humanity”, a real Universal Fraternity [. . .]’ A. T. Barker, compil., *The Mahatma Letters to A. P. Sinnett* (Adyar: The Theosophical Publishing House, 3rd edn, 1962 [1923]), p. 24.

proposed in the *Origin of Species* (1859) was thus the spur for the transformation of daimons within a static hierarchical cosmos into the Masters who had evolved within a dynamic universe. Chapters 4 and 5 clarify and discuss the change in function of those of Fortune's intermediaries called Masters, looking to their origin in Theosophy, how they relate to the broadly agreed-upon cosmological hierarchy and to certain ideas of Mahayana Buddhism, and which aspects Fortune selected and emphasised in order to bring about a new phase within the Theosophical tradition.

Increasingly since the early twentieth century, as we have seen, scholars have taken Western esotericism as a phenomenon eminently worthy of study, no more so than the persistence among some esotericists of the idea of a category of rare and informed beings, said to be capable of inspiring groups and individuals to engage on the one hand in heavenly ascent, and on the other, in magical or similar action for the betterment and further evolution of the human race. It is these shadowy intermediaries, real or imagined, as seen through the eyes of Dion Fortune, whose links with that tradition will be emphasised in the following Chapters, that are the subject of the present thesis.

Chapter 3: The Life and Work of Dion Fortune: A Survey

Introduction

The question of the kinds of circumstance that led Fortune to becoming aware of the inner planes now needs to be addressed. What were the factors, one may ask, that led her eventually to experience what was, certainly up until then, the spiritual high point of her life? Was the stunning impact of her first contact with what she felt were lofty inner plane beings the key impulse or were there accompanying factors that led her to reduce an interest that she had developed in psychoanalytical work and give her the impetus for increased involvement in occultism to the point of eventually inaugurating her own magical fraternity, and successfully running it for over twenty years? Some would argue that a good indicator that her work was worthwhile is that her organisation, The Society of the Inner Light, still flourishes, and, in addition to ensuring that Fortune's (and, she would argue, the Masters') works are available, continues to publish her quarterly magazine, *Inner Light*, first issued in 1927. Furthermore, the specialist practical inner or magical work of her Society, founded as it is on the deemed reality of objective inner entities, could well be said to have increased in richness by

virtue of received teachings after Fortune's death and through the work of various successor groups founded by former members of the Society, each emphasising a slightly different aspect of her work.¹ Since the majority of the practitioners involved would credit their continued occult activity (which also includes much mundane administrative and organisational work which the members themselves undertake) almost solely to the influence of these inner plane entities – particularly the gods, archangels and the Masters of Wisdom – the tracing of the predispositions to Fortune's occult career, and the consequences which emerged from it, is perhaps well justified. Readers may wish to refer to Appendix I, pp. 409-412 for Dion Fortune's Chronology, and to Appendix V, pp. 438-452 for a more detailed outline of her character.

Preparation

Fortune's Early Years

Accounts of Fortune's early life show her to be a sensitive young child, who spent much time alone writing poetry of sufficient merit as to be considered worthy of publication, her later work in adolescence being particularly accomplished for a person of her age;² examples are given by both Fielding & Collins and by Knight.³ She was thus no stranger to that level of creativity familiar to all artists, including mathematicians and

¹ E.g. through the work of Margaret Lumley Brown, outlined below in Chapter 6, p. 337-8. See Gareth Knight, *Pythonesse; The Life and Work of Margaret Lumley Brown* (Oceanside, CA: Sun Chalice Books, 2000); also as it appears intermittently throughout the works of those trained in the disciplines of the Society of the Inner Light. The following is a small selection of the works of these authors: Dolores Ashcroft-Nowicki, *The Ritual Magic Workbook* (Wellingborough: Aquarian, 1986); Dolores Ashcroft-Nowicki, *The Initiate's Book of Pathworkings* (York Beach, ME: Samuel Weiser, 1999); W. E. Butler, *Practical Magic in the Western Mystery Tradition* (Wellingborough: Aquarian, 1952-1990); W. G. Gray, *Magical Ritual Methods* (Toddington: Helios, 1969); Gareth Knight, *A Practical Guide to Qabalistic Symbolism* 2 vols. (Toddington: Helios, 1965); R. J. Stewart, *Earth Light: the Ancient Path to Transformation* (Shaftesbury: Element Books, 1992); Nicholas Whitehead, *Patterns in Magical Christianity* (Albuquerque, NM: Sun Chalice Books, 1996). The subsequent regular channelled communications by various mediums within the Society of the Inner Light also comprise a varied compendium of teaching and practical advice which sprung from the foundations that Fortune laid. These are confidential to the Society.

² Alan Richardson, *Priestess* (Wellingborough: Aquarian, 1987), p. 30.

³ Charles Fielding, and Carr Collins, *The Story of Dion Fortune* (Loughborough: Thoth, 1998), p. 21; Gareth Knight, *Dion Fortune and the Inner Light* (Loughborough: Thoth, 2000), pp. 13-20.

scientists.⁴ That this is true of those who never had the slightest inclination to pursue the study and practice of magic may cause us to ask what could have been some of the factors that caused Fortune to turn to the Mysteries rather than to, say, art, literature, or science as a life-long work? We could even ask, did her preoccupation with the Masters deflect her from such work to her detriment?

Both Richardson and Knight stress Fortune's childhood sensitivity. Richardson considers it unlikely that she developed any significant signs of psychism at that time, although he later contradicts himself by quoting in full the account that she wrote as an adult concerning certain spontaneous mental images which she had received at the age of four, and which she later considered to be memories of a former life in Atlantis.⁵ One might wonder why this should occur at that particular age, and at no other time in her childhood. Of the two thousand or so cases of past life memories investigated by Dr Ian Stevenson, professor of psychiatry and director of the Department of Parapsychology at the University of Virginia, most were of children between two and four years of age whose stories of former lives, generally in an Eastern country with a tradition of reincarnation, were said to have been confirmed in ninety per cent of cases.⁶ We are in no position to determine whether Fortune's childhood experience was a genuine memory of the past or a disturbance in Rupert Sheldrake's 'morphogenic field',⁷ the intrusion of an 'alternate personality',⁸ or just a childhood fantasy. Schwartz

⁴ Gary Zukav, *The Dancing Wu Li Masters* (London: Rider, 1979), Foreword.

⁵ Richardson, *Priestess*, pp. 20-34. Her account is reproduced from an article by Fortune, 'Atlantean memories' in *Inner Light*, II: 8 (May 1929).

⁶ Jonathan Cott, *The Search for Omm Sety* (London: Rider, 1987), p. 208. A finding not entirely supported by Stevenson's colleague Haroldsen. The whole area remains the subject of much speculation. Grof suggests that there are no boundaries, and that access and information can be obtained about anyone who has ever lived. Thus there is no objectivity in past life memory, its usefulness resting solely in its therapeutic value. Stanislav Grof, *The Stormy search for the Self* (London: Thorsons, 1995). See also Jim Tucker, who cautiously suggests that among several possible explanations for apparent past life memory, that of reincarnation is possibly the best. He broadly agrees with Stevenson, while admitting that reported past life memories may be unique, i.e. not applicable outside those cases. Jim B. Tucker, *Life Before Life: A Scientific Investigation of Children's Memories of Previous Lives* (London: Piatkus, 2006), pp. 211, 213.

⁷ See Rupert Sheldrake, *A New Science of Life* (London: Blond and Briggs, 1981)

⁸ This is extensively covered in Jane Roberts, *Adventures in Consciousness* (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, 1975).

suggests that such memories might be the result of dipping into the unconscious, or perhaps a case of 'remote viewing'⁹ – a much lesser possibility here since there is scant evidence of Atlantis ever having existed physically. Richardson is able to encompass the idea of Atlantis by counting it as existing within the 'psychic geography' of those magicians who believe in it.¹⁰ Fielding and Collins suggest that it was Fortune's parents' tendency to stress their daughter's superiority over her classmates that denied her many friends, and caused her to develop a propensity towards snobbishness, and to foster a more comfortable relationship with horses and ponies.¹¹ This, coupled with a withdrawn life of reading and daydreaming, may well have led to the development of latent mediumistic powers, which became sufficiently visible as to alarm her parents ('guardians'), and her neighbours.¹² Extended contact with adults rather than with children of her own age could well have made it difficult for her to socialise with others of her own age, but it could also, of course, have sharpened the edge of her inner and outer self-confidence.

It has been suggested that acquaintance with Alice Buckton, a friend of the family, was one inspiration for Fortune's interest in Glastonbury and its attendant mythology of the Grail, but the evidence for this, although strong, is not conclusive. Fortune's parents had met Buckton when living in the garden city of Letchworth in 1903, and the friendship between themselves, Buckton and also Kitty Tudor-Pole developed from there. Knight feels that Fortune's feminism and her love for Glastonbury, if not for magic, could well have been picked up from the older, ardently enthusiastic Buckton.¹³ From the turn of the century, both Letchworth and Glastonbury had served as foci for the expression of alternative and experimental culture. The first Garden City, Letchworth had been founded in 1903 by the Quaker Ebenezer Howard (1850-1928) seeking to establish a co-operative settlement near London for 'people of advanced ideas' looking to the ideal of living in harmony with nature. Consequently, it

⁹ Cott, *Search*, p. 210.

¹⁰ Richardson, *Priestess*, p. 100.

¹¹ Fielding and Collins, *Story*, pp. 19-22.

¹² Anne Bancroft, *Twentieth Century Mystics and Sages* (London: Heinemann, 1976).

¹³ Knight, *Dion Fortune and the Inner Light*, p. 19.

attracted organisations such as the Theosophical Society and its School, the Alpha Union for Universal Brotherhood, the Esperanto Association, and a variety of advanced educational and arts and crafts movements.¹⁴ In parallel with this, Glastonbury hosted artists, musicians such as Rutland Boughton, and writers such as Alice Buckton herself, the visionary poet and educator, who purchased Chalice Well in 1921. A certain Dr. John Goodchild followed the fortunes of a bowl and platter with supposed Grail associations that he had buried at St. Bride's Well, Glastonbury and which was later discovered after instructions received psychically by two friends of the environmentalist and spiritual enquirer Wellesley Tudor Pole, Kitty's brother.¹⁵ Frederick Bligh Bond, the archaeologist and psychic was a significant figure in relation to Glastonbury Abbey, and Fortune was known to have acted as medium for him on at least one occasion.¹⁶ Thus the London-Letchworth-Glastonbury triangle could be seen as a progressive, sometimes psychically-oriented cradle within which Fortune was partly nurtured.

Fortune suffered a significant psychological setback later in early adulthood and according to Richardson, gives a somewhat exaggerated account of the incident in which the warden of the Studley Agricultural College that she was then attending subjected her to a thirty-hour (sic) tirade of words that led to Fortune's physical and mental breakdown, the effects of which lasted for three years.¹⁷ Richardson terms it 'a complete destruction of her ego', a condition that led her to take a step backwards as far as her future interest in magic was concerned – the decision to study psychology.¹⁸

The above incidents in Fortune's childhood and early womanhood might well be considered in the light of Rabinovitch's research into Canadian witchcraft, which

¹⁴ James Webb, *The Occult Establishment* (La Salle, IL: Open Court, 1976), pp. 103-5, 405. See Ebenezer Howard, *Tomorrow: A Peaceful Path to Real Reform* (London: Swann Sonnenschein, 1898) re-issued as *Garden Cities of Tomorrow* in 1902.

¹⁵ Patrick Benham, *The Avalonians* (Glastonbury: Gothic Image, 1993), pp. 46-50.

¹⁶ See Frederick Bligh Bond, *The Gate of Remembrance: The Story of the Psychological Experiment which Resulted in the Discovery of the Edgar Chapel at Glastonbury* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1918).

¹⁷ Dion Fortune, *Psychic Self-defence* (Wellingborough: Aquarian, 1974 [1930]), pp. 12-18. Cf. Israel Regardie's words, 'you *can't* be magically attacked unless you *want* to be magically attacked.' Gerald Suster, *Crowley's Apprentice: The Life and Ideas of Israel Regardie* (London: Rider, 1989), p. 163.

found that of sixty-seven Neo-pagans interviewed, fifty-nine of them had undergone some form of severe trauma in childhood, many of them also being subjected to some form of abuse.¹⁹ Fortune's withdrawn childhood could be considered as bordering on the unusually difficult, even slightly disturbed, and the incident that precipitated her breakdown as definitely traumatic. Fortune only departs from Rabinovitch's pattern in that the majority of incidents recounted in the Canadian research took place before the subjects had reached the age of twenty years, after which the problems dropped away in almost all cases. That Fortune was twenty-two years of age when her own attack and breakdown occurred might well be a reflection of her degree of sensitivity – or, indeed, the determination, persistence and expertise of her tormentor.

By 1913 Fortune was a lay analyst at the Medico-Psychological Clinic in London's Brunswick Square, open from 1913 to 1922. It is important to realise that she was there for three years at most, primarily in a student capacity, lecturing and attending to patients, and that she left without any formal qualification.²⁰ And yet Bernard Bromage could still confirm that twenty years later, Fortune believed most of her magical practice to be founded on psychological principles.²¹ The Medico-Psychological Clinic was founded by Jessie Murray and Julia Turner in 1913, the first organisation to offer psychoanalytic training in Britain boasting many eminent figures among both students and staff, some with a strong feminist stance. The clinic developed its own innovative and eclectic range of therapies particularly suitable for shell-shocked soldiers, and it was with some reluctance that they eventually gave way to a strict Freudian approach.²² In her slim booklet *Machinery of the Mind* (1922),

¹⁸ Richardson, *Priestess*, pp. 23, 49-52.

¹⁹ Siân Reid, 'As I do Will, so Mote it be: Magic as Metaphor in Neo-Pagan Witchcraft' in James R. Lewis, ed, *Magical Religion and Modern Witchcraft* (Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 1996), p. 147.

²⁰ Knight, *Dion Fortune and the Inner Light*, p. 30.

²¹ Bernard Bromage, 'Dion Fortune', *Light* 80 (1960), 7. The journal *Light* was a leading spiritualist magazine of the time and should not be confused with Fortune's *Inner Light* journal.

²² The therapies offered included Psychological Analysis, Psycho-Analysis, Therapeutic Conversation and Persuasion, Re-Education and Suggestion, and psychological re-education involving a range of social and occupational activities. Eminent figures included Percy Nunn, Hugh Crichton-Miller, vice-president of the C. G. Jung Institute, the social psychologist William McDougall, and Francis Aveling, Professor of

Fortune mentions the close connections between Freud, Adler and Jung and the practices of Tantra and Qabalah, recognising a distinct danger of Freud having laid too much emphasis upon the past and upon abnormal psychology rather than addressing the needs of 'advanced souls'.²³ And still in 1930, she re-stated the interpretation of her own experiences in the light of both psychology and occultism, since each counterchecked and explained the other.²⁴ Richardson suggests, quite reasonably, that Fortune used psychological terms because it enabled her to introduce the principles of occultism to the public more easily, and, relying on Bromage, considers she must have followed Freud not only because his name was foremost in the field at the time, but also because of the sexual emphasis in his work; it was only later that she turned to the more mystical, magical Jung.²⁵ However, even in 1922, she does seem to give as much, if not more, weight to Jung's word association as to Freud's dream interpretation.²⁶

It was during her time at the Medico-Psychological Clinic that Fortune attended a session of a Theosophical meditation class especially mounted for youngsters, and underwent her first and unsettling experience of the power of thought transference, which, after due experimentation with thought-reading among her patients, she realised was a method of discovering dissociated complexes that was far

Psychology at King's College, London. Despite its short existence, it had a profound effect on the development of British psychoanalysis. Suzanne Raith, 'Early British Psychoanalysis and the Medico-Psychological Clinic' in *History Workshop Journal*, 58: 1, (2004), 63-85.

²³ Violet M. Firth, *Machinery of the Mind* (London: Rider, 1922), pp. 60, 68.

²⁴ Fortune, *Psychic Self-defence*, (Wellingborough: Aquarian, 1974 [1931]), p. 19.

²⁵ Richardson, *Priestess*, pp. 55-56.

²⁶ Firth, *Machinery*, pp. 58-60. It is beyond the scope of this thesis to venture into questions of the extent to which Fortune related to, or based her theory of magic on, the work of Freud, Jung or Adler. She gives few references to any in her texts; almost none for Adler. All of them, until 1944, are passing references, and less than a dozen in number for Jung (calling attention, for example, to the myth-making faculty of the unconscious). Her references to Freud are thrice as many, going as far as to designate the primacy of 'the Tantra, the Qabalah, and Freudian psycho-analysis' as the solution to psychological derangement and as a viable ground-plan for occult activity. This was in September 1939. Dion Fortune and Gareth Knight, *The Circuit of Force* (Loughborough: Tho'th, 1998 [1940]), p. 76. However, in her Monthly Letter to associates in May 1944, she records her eventual realisation of the incompleteness of the theories of both Freud and Adler, and recommends to budding occultists her own *Mystical Qabalah* (London: Ernest Benn, 1976, [1935]) alongside Jolande Jacobi, *The Psychology of C. G. Jung* (London: New Haven, 1962) as the minimum requirement for study. Dion Fortune, *The Magical Battle of Britain* (Bradford on Avon: Golden Gates Press, 1993 [1942]), pp. 133-36).

less cumbersome than the psycho-analytical methods that she was using up until then.²⁷ This occurrence must have been somewhat in the nature of a revelation, and is an example of how occult contacts can sometimes work out in life – in this case, causing her to abandon her psychological practice in favour of a life of physical activity and helping out with the war effort with the Women's Land Army for a period, according to her own reckonings, of one or perhaps three years. She nevertheless felt that she owed a debt to her psycho-analytical training for the insight that it had given her into the workings of the mind, and to those of life's problems which might have been responsible for imbalances. Psycho-analysis could indeed diagnose, but offered no remedies, and 'in actual practice did not get results'.²⁸ Speaking of it afterwards, she mentions the 'power' that came with the initial contact, which she felt was indicative of the interest of the Masters behind the Theosophical Society (an organisation for which she had little sympathy)²⁹ who had duly responded to her desire for knowledge.³⁰

First Intimation of Psychism and Transfer to Magic

The sudden change of career, followed by a period of monotonous activity in a Board of Agriculture research laboratory supervising bacteriological cultures and researching the soya bean as a potential alternative food source seemed to have made Fortune turn mentally inwards, causing an 'alarming' break-through into a different dimension of mental perception.³¹ 'The astral light suddenly opened' she says, adding that any patient who inadvertently came across this area of the mind would undoubtedly panic, with severe repercussions to their psychological health. In her case, she had already been prepared for it somewhat by her acquaintance with the Theosophical milieu into which she had drifted.³²

²⁷ Richardson, *Priestess*, p. 67.

²⁸ Dion Fortune, 'The Novels of Dion Fortune, *Inner Light*, x: 2 (November 1936), 32.

²⁹ Patrick Benham, *The Avalonians* (Glastonbury: Gothic Image Publications, 1993), p. 254.

³⁰ Richardson, *Priestess*, p. 75.

³¹ Gareth Knight, *Dion Fortune and the Inner Light*, pp. 37-38.

³² Richardson, *Priestess*, p. 68.

Subsequent reading in the Theosophical Library (in particular a passage of Annie Besant's *Ancient Wisdom*³³ concerning the Masters, or Inner Plane Adepts) engendered in her the sudden overwhelming desire to contact these beings – 'I went bareheaded in my quest of the Masters' – this, within the context of experiencing an almost constant hypnogogic state over a period of ten days. At the end of this period, she dreamed lucidly (she describes it as a 'vision') of 'kneeling at the feet of two Masters', suitably impressively robed – Jesus, and 'one of the Lords of Mind [. . .] a Lord of Hermetic wisdom and ceremonial magic'.³⁴ Richardson suggests that the authoritative figure empowering Fortune's magical career was Melchizedek, who featured as a Manu, a 'Lord of Flame and also of Mind' from Venus, and as the Grand Master of Mysteries that she worked, although he also suggested the Theosophical Master Rakoczi, or the Comte de Saint-Germain, as the enigmatic second figure.³⁵ As would be imagined, Jesus evoked in her feelings of awe and reverence; the latter, of fear and adoration and of wanting to serve him. In the cold light of day she records her completely open mind regarding the experience – whether subjective, objective, whether dream or vision – and judged its validity solely by the extent to which her inner and outer life circumstances so radically changed. Further memories of past

³³ Besant, Annie, *The Ancient Wisdom* (Wheaton, IL: Theosophical Publishing House, 1897), pp. 37, 38.

³⁴ Dion Fortune, *The Cosmic Doctrine*, (York beach, ME: Samuel Weiser, 2000 [1949]), pp. 2-6. Also recorded in Knight, *Dion Fortune and the Inner Light*, p. 39. But see in Charles Fielding's account that Fortune had in reality experienced two visions one month apart. The first contained a third inner figure representative of the Green Ray. This she suppressed because she felt that the glamour and ease that she felt at working with elementals could well lead to a neglect of the development of the other two Rays – the Devotional and the Hermetic - in her future Fraternity. Charles Fielding and Carr Collins, *The Story of Dion Fortune* (Loughborough: Thoos, 1985), pp. 28-30.

³⁵ Melchizedek apparently incarnated, appearing to Abraham after the battle against the Kings of Edom, bringing bread and wine, and to whom Abraham granted a tenth of the spoils (Genesis 14: 18). For Richardson's suggestion, see Alan Richardson, ed., *Dancers to the Gods* (Wellingborough: Aquarian, 1985), p. 33; Richardson, *Priestess*, pp. 72, 132-33. Fortune defined a Manu as a founder of a racial culture, incarnating in Atlantean days, and inculcating a sensitivity to the subtler planes among small groups of disciples before withdrawing. Fortune, *Esoteric Orders*, pp. 22, 23. There is considerably more complication in Theosophical speculation: the first Manu is Swambhuva, progenitor of mankind, a 'personified idea of the 'Thought Divine', offspring of 'the Spirit of Humanity'. The Manu represents the spirit of the first human races at the beginning of the first round. The seventh Manu is Vaivasvata, or Noah. *Theosophy*, 47: 2 (December 1958), 78-82. For Rakoczi, see p. 29, n. 67, and p. 300, n. 138.

incarnations back to Atlantis were recovered, together with a significant amount of the complex Mystery teaching she had received over that time. This, at the age of some twenty-seven years, appeared to put her in a position of mastery of her subject without having had to undertake the onerous and time-consuming periods of study during her lifetime. Only through subsequent reading was she gradually able to broadly confirm the reliability of the materials that she had received so precipitately in vision. Rather than occurring as a sudden and unexplainable breakthrough, it seems that her life circumstances over a period of years amounting to a quarter of a century had sometimes subtly, sometimes grossly, prepared her inner sensitivity for just such an experience – after her Atlantean intimations at the age of four, and a later penchant for creative writing, she had her breakdown at the age of twenty-two; at twenty-five she experienced her first intimation of the reality of telepathy, and by twenty-seven, had already begun to work alongside the occultist Theodore Moriarty (1873-1923).³⁶ The next year she would join the Alpha et Omega Temple of the Order of the Golden Dawn, and by the time she was thirty would be experimenting with trance mediumship with her friend Maiya Curtis-Webb (later Mrs Tranchell-Hayes), with Frederick Bligh Bond the clairvoyant archaeologist of Glastonbury Abbey (1864-1945) during 1921-22,³⁷ and with her fellow worker Charles Loveday (1874-1946). These were the sessions that led to her being contacted by an inner group, 'The Company of Avalon' during the following year, 1922, and it is from this incident rather than from any later outer or organisational occurrence, that the Society of the Inner Light counts its true foundation. By the age of thirty-two, an important cosmology, *The Cosmic Doctrine* (1923-1925, though not published until 1949), would begin to be channelled through her. In 1925 she joined the Theosophical Society, and the following year at the age of thirty-five, she would take part in a breathtaking, chanted 'elemental dance' on Glastonbury Tor, after which she would continue to channel material which she subsequently made available

³⁶ See below, p. 143-46.

³⁷ Knight, *Dion Fortune and the Inner Light*, p. 62.

to her students through the pages of *Inner Light* and in papers confidential to members.³⁸

It is the aforementioned first contact with the Masters that Richardson counts as the crucial turning point of Fortune's life, which later led to her formal training in the Mysteries.³⁹ Whether or not her revelations did align with subsequent reading, we have no way of knowing, save that she wrote of the Mysteries with a conviction that, as we have seen, satisfied the (more than a dozen) commentators already quoted.

Training: Fortune's Teachers and Collaborators

Fortune did not invent her system of magic single-handed; neither did she inherit it fully formed. Nor did her immediate forerunners create their system entirely from their own imaginations or purely as a result of inspiration. As we have seen, the origins of the Western esoteric tradition are said to stretch back beyond Judaism to Babylonia and beyond Greece to Egypt, even back to the Bronze Age.⁴⁰ We already outlined the prevalence of magical practice during those times, showing that its distant history has now been well documented by students of anthropology, history, and religious experience; and various stances have been taken, particularly towards the phenomenon of magic, from the 'armchair' position of James Frazer to the more favourable stance taken by recent commentators in the light of the many further and deeper academic studies discussed.⁴¹ To place Fortune within her immediate historical context, however, it is necessary to look again at the contributions of prominent late-nineteenth and early twentieth-century occultists, and observe the degree to which they interacted. Knight

³⁸ See Appendix I (pp. 409-12) for a chronology.

³⁹ Richardson, *Priestess*, pp. 65-71.

⁴⁰ Michael Edwardes, *The Dark Side of History* (London: Grenada, 1978).

⁴¹ One might include, for example, Christine Hartley, *The Western Mystery Tradition* (London: The Aquarian Press, 1968), and Caitlín and John Matthews, *The Western Way*, 2 vols (London: Arkana, 1986), as informed 'insider' accounts, and Kocku von Stuckrad, *Western Esotericism: A Brief History of Secret Knowledge*, translated and Foreword by Nicholas Goodrick-Clarke (London: Equinox, 2005 as a particularly comprehensive overview of Western esotericism from an academic point of view.

mentions Francis Barrett, (a new appreciation of whose work has recently appeared),⁴² Edward Bulwer-Lytton, Anna Bonus Kingsford, S. L. MacGregor Mathers, John W. Brodie-Innes and others.⁴³ The most prominent of such influences are discussed in the following sections.

Some of these figures were not only esotericists but Freemasons as well. Tobias Churton points to an oral freemasonic tradition far earlier than its official institution in 1717, and that it is inherently, but not obviously, an esoteric movement.⁴⁴ Freemasonic societies which were specifically esoteric, however, began to proliferate from the 1760's onwards, one of the most significant being the Ordre des Élus Coëns of Martinès de Pasqually (1708-1774), which was an early esoteric form of Masonic rite where higher beings (intermediaries) were invoked with the aim of facilitating 'reconciliation' with the Deity.⁴⁵ A parallel stream of thought beginning in 1614 with the publication of the anonymous *Fama Fraternalitatis* in Tübingen was that of Rosicrucianism, which was of deep interest to a few Freemasons such as Elias Ashmole (1617-1692) and so it has been conjectured that one organisation arose out of the other, an idea that Churton resolves by pointing to the genesis of both 'in the spirit of the Renaissance'.⁴⁶ With no formal organisation, the Rosicrucian ideals were nevertheless potent, and were represented in England by the Hermetic, Paracelsian Doctor Robert Fludd (1574-1637), the mathematician and magician John Dee (1527-1608), and the visit to this country by Michael Maier in 1611.⁴⁷ But even Christopher McIntosh struggles to find any early documented link between Rosicrucians and Freemasons.⁴⁸ Nevertheless, according to Roland Edighofer, Rosicrucianism played a primary role in

⁴² Alison Butler, 'Beyond Attribution: The Importance of Barrett's *Magus*' in *Journal for the Academic Study of Magic*, 1. (Oxford: Mandrake, 2003).

⁴³ Knight, *Dion Fortune and the Inner Light*, p. 318.

⁴⁴ Tobias Churton, *Freemasonry: The Reality* (Hersham, Surrey: Lewis Masonic, 2007), pp. xxiv, 257. This point is discussed at length in Roger Dachez, 'Freemasonry: 1. Freemasonry as an Esoteric Society' in Hanegraaff, ed, *Dictionary of Gnosis and Western Esotericism* (Leiden: Brill, 2005), I, 383-85.

⁴⁵ Roger Dachez, 'Freemasonry. 4. Secret Doctrines and Freemasonry' in Hanegraaff, *Dictionary*, I, 386.

⁴⁶ Churton, *Freemasonry*, pp. 188-211 (p. 191).

⁴⁷ Churton, *Freemasonry*, pp. 192-94.

⁴⁸ Christopher McIntosh, *The Rosicrucians: The History, Mythology, and Rituals of an Esoteric Order* (San Francisco, CA: Weiser Books, 1998), pp. 42-43.

Masonry during the eighteenth century.⁴⁹ MacGregor Mathers joined the Freemasons at twenty-three years of age, and five years later moved into the Masonic Rosicrucian *Societas Rosicruciana In Anglia* (established 1865), a group of Master Masons interested in Western esotericism.⁵⁰ But it was the felt need for an avenue of practical application that led to the foundation of the Hermetic Order of the Golden Dawn whose inner order of magical operations was named the ‘*Rosae Rubiae et Aurae Crucis*,’ thus cementing Masonic and Rosicrucian traditions together for several subsequent generations of Western occultists. Notwithstanding the fictitious manifestos of Rosicrucianism and the concocted ‘cypher manuscripts’ of the Golden Dawn,⁵¹ they still, according to Colin Wilson, appear to have struck a deep chord touching on ‘the profoundest problem of the human race’ – the quest for and recapture of a state of perfection barely imaginable, and recognisable in our own day as the search for spirituality.⁵² Thus, both Masonry and Rosicrucianism have made substantial contributions to the philosophy and techniques of all high white magicians since Mathers' day including Rudolf Steiner’s Anthroposophy⁵³ and Fortune's Society of the Inner Light, and although there is no direct parallel with the Masters of the Theosophical and later traditions, the main player on the Rosicrucian stage, the mythological Christian Rosenkreutz, is understood by both Steiner and Fortune to be among those figures designated as Masters.⁵⁴

Richard Cavendish describes Eliphas Lévi (1810-75) as ‘the most influential single figure in the modern revival of high magic’, and so we must count him as one of

⁴⁹ Roland Edighofer, ‘Rosicrucianism II: 18th Century’ in Hanegraaff, *Dictionary*, II, 1016.

⁵⁰ Similar international foundations during the twentieth century were the Rosicrucian Fellowship (founded by Max Heindel in 1909), AMORC (founded by Harvey Spencer Lewis in 1915), and the Lectorium Rosicrucianum (founded by the Leene brothers in 1924).

⁵¹ As certainly appears to be the latter's case. See Gerald York in Ellic Howe, *Magicians of the Golden Dawn, 1887-1923* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1972), pp. xvii, xviii.

⁵² Wilson in McIntosh, Christopher, *The Rosy Cross Unveiled* (Wellingborough: Aquarian, 1980), p. 14.

⁵³ McIntosh, *Rosicrucians*, pp. 134-135. McIntosh also details the Rose Croix Degree of Freemasonry, *Rosicrucians*, pp. 141-144.

⁵⁴ For other figures, see, for example, E. M. Butler, *The Myth of the Magus* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993 [1948]).

Fortune's immediate forebears.⁵⁵ Lévi's background reading contained a mixture of Kabbalah and the eighteenth century theosophy of Swedenborg and Jacob Boehme, leading towards his publishing in 1856 of *Le Dogme et Rituel de la Haute Magie*. Yet although his sources were second-hand and his understanding of even the Hebrew letters inaccurate to the extent of being misleading, his work had the power to galvanize students of magic into action, and to impress prominent figures in the arts such as Victor Hugo (1802-1885) and Charles Baudelaire (1821-1867).⁵⁶ Once again such shortcomings do not seem to modify the strength of later spiritual movements; even in Fortune's case, there is no way of determining with any precision how far she, either deliberately or mistakenly, embroidered the results of her initial contact with her inner Masters for greater effect. Richardson alludes more than once to the propensity of magicians to exaggerate.⁵⁷

Lévi's key doctrine, apart from Kabbalah, was that of the 'astral light', 'the instrument of thaumaturgy and divination'⁵⁸ which is related to the Light of Genesis and out of which the 'astral body' (at the level of the astral light, the invisible simulacrum of the physical) is made.⁵⁹ It is the magician who by its manipulation is able to control the powers of nature. Surprisingly, Lévi is not alone in managing to reconcile this kind of knowledge with Christianity.⁶⁰ As we have seen, medieval magi such as Roger Bacon (1214-94), Marsilio Ficino (1433-99), Pico della Mirandola (1463-94), Giordano Bruno

⁵⁵ Cavendish, *History*, p. 134. See also Christopher McIntosh, *Eliphas Lévi and the French Occult Revival* (London: Rider & Co., 1972).

⁵⁶ A. E. Waite, *The Doctrine and Literature of the Kabbalah* (London, 1902; repr. Montana: Kessinger, n.d.), p. 407. Jean-Pierre Laurant, 'Lévi Eliphas' in Hanegraaff, *Dictionary*, II, 689-692.

⁵⁷ Richardson, *Priestess*, p. 15; Alan Richardson and Geoff Hughes, *Ancient Magicks for a New Age* (St Paul, Minnesota: Llewellyn, 1989), p. 8.

⁵⁸ Which pertains to the *astral plane* 'A medieval term for the plane of nature between the physical and the mental plane. This plane is called in the Ottoman Sufi philosophy, the "world of similitudes"; in the Kabbalah, "the world of formation" [. . .] the astral plane is the field, or medium, of the desires, sensations, passions, and instincts of the lower nature.' (G. A. Gaskell, *Dictionary of all Scriptures and Myths* (New York: Avenel Books, 1960, 1980). It will be apposite to the discussions in Chapter 6 regarding the various mechanisms of communication with the Masters that can be adopted.

⁵⁹ Eliphas Lévi, *The Key of the Mysteries* (London: Rider, 1969), pp. 83, 86, 158.

⁶⁰ Lévi was an ordained Catholic deacon.

(1548-1600)⁶¹, and later occultists such as Anna Kingsford, Mathers, Moriarty, Besant, Waite and Fortune also extended the brief of Christianity to include esoteric elements.⁶²

Lévi's influence passed down through Bulwer-Lytton (invited to be honorary Grand Patron of the *Societas Rosicruciana in Anglia*), Helena Petrovna Blavatsky and the founders of the Golden Dawn. Fortune makes passing reference to Lévi's *History of Magic* in her volume of short stories *The Secrets of Dr. Taverner*.⁶³ Knight, too, specifically praises Lévi's essay in *Transcendental Magic* (1968 [1896]) concerning the astral light (a term which Lévi preferred to Mesmer's – and Fortune's later – use of the term 'magnetism') as of significant use to succeeding generations of occultists.⁶⁴

S. L. MacGregor Mathers dedicated his seminal work, *The Kabbalah Unveiled* (1887) to Anna Bonus Kingsford (1846-88) and her mentor Edward Maitland. Both Mathers and W. W. Westcott were deeply impressed with her recent *The Perfect Way* (1881) and had given lectures at Kingsford's 'Hermetic Society' (founded in May 1884), which organisation may well have been the inspiration behind their own decision to inaugurate the Hermetic Order of the Golden Dawn four years later.⁶⁵ Like Annie Besant (1847-1933), Kingsford was a vegan, and a prime mover in the cause of women's liberation. Like Dion Fortune, she was imaginative from her early years, later

⁶¹ Bruno was burnt at the stake for heresy in the year 1600.

⁶² Cavendish, *History*, p. 136.

⁶³ Dion Fortune, *The Secrets of Dr. Taverner* (St Paul, Minnesota: Llewellyn, 1962 [1926]).

⁶⁴ Lévi, *Key*, p. 147; Fortune in Fortune and Knight, *Circuit*, pp. 110-14; 177-87. Yet it is salutary to read the results of Ouspensky's venture into the 'inner world'. It was, he said, unlike anything he could have expected, not corresponding in any way to the inner constructs of Christianity, of Theosophy, of spiritualism, or mythology, or to any of the descriptions he had read about, such as the Akashic Records (supposedly held within the Astral Light and termed by Hanegraaff 'the universal cosmic "memory bank"' Hanegraaff: *New Age*, p. 454), descriptions of Atlantis, etc., even though at the time he believed in the astral world. He writes later that in his altered state, most of these things did not actually exist. Neither 'Reincarnation' nor 'scientific evolution' had any meaning. The world he 'entered' was one of 'very complicated mathematical relations' which, while he was in it, appeared to be the only reality – all else being mere imagination. He later acknowledges that his experience may well not have been the same as that of other inner investigators, each attempting to explain the impossible in their varying ways. What may call these results into question is that he purposely declines to describe the actual methods employed in order to enter those states (P. D. Ouspensky, *A New Model of the Universe* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, [1912-1929], 1938 pp. 308-43).

⁶⁵ Alex Owen, *The Place of Enchantment: British Occultism and the Culture of the Modern* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2004), pp. 40, 46.

psychic, and was one of the first to teach modern Christian Qabalah. She promoted a strongly esoteric Christianity although she attended the Roman Catholic sacrament of the Mass for the opportunity of reaching high levels of mystical experience. Like Fortune, she was associated with the Theosophical Society before leaving to form a Lodge of her own.⁶⁶ There was much interaction between the major figures, Kingsford, Mathers and Blavatsky, all of whose major occult inputs were before Fortune's time. In spite of the apparent dissonance between Eastern (Theosophical) and Western (Golden Dawn) approaches to the occult, both Mathers and Kingsford were members of the Theosophical Society; in line with what the Masters later advised Fortune to do, and in line also with the similarity of their ultimate aims, they looked beyond the technicalities' of East versus West.⁶⁷ There must have been considerable fruitful cross-fertilisation in such parallel memberships.⁶⁸ It had been rumoured that the Mathers (MacGregor and his wife Moina, born of Jewish parents) were Roman Catholics – was this, too, the result of further influence by Kingsford? Even though, as Colquhoun suggests, Kingsford had no time for Masters, Secret Chiefs, or Inner Plane Adepts, cordial relations between herself on the one hand and Blavatsky and Mathers on the other seemed to be maintained regardless of what appears to be this major philosophical and practical stumbling-block.⁶⁹

Theodore Moriarty (1873-1923) was Fortune's first magical tutor, and therefore was probably her most formative. A Dublin-born Irishman who had obtained a doctorate at Heidelberg, he spent time abroad as a surveyor and Customs officer

⁶⁶ See Jean Overton Fuller, *Blavatsky and her Teachers* (London: The Theosophical Publishing House, 1988, pp. 121-123). See also Fortune, *Battle*, p. 102.

⁶⁷ “[...] the Great Work – which is, to purify and exalt my Spiritual Nature so that with the Divine Aid I may at length attain to be more than human, and thus gradually raise and unite myself to my Higher and Divine Genius[...]” With this one oath we have the object not only of the work of the Golden Dawn but of any system of occult teaching – be it Eastern or Western, ancient or modern, basically physical or psychological. *To become more than human – that is the Great Work!* Carl L. Weschcke, in Regardie, Israel, *The Golden Dawn An Account of the Teachings, Rites and Ceremonies of the Order of the Golden Dawn*, 4 vols, (St Paul, MN: Llewellyn, 1978 [1937-40]), I, publisher's Preface.

⁶⁸ Ithell Colquhoun, *Sword of Wisdom* (London: Neville Spearman, 1975), pp. 76ff.

⁶⁹ Colquhoun, *Sword*, p. 168; Gareth Knight, *The Wells of Vision* (London: S.I.L. (Trading), 2002), pp. 111-26.

before returning to England during the war to work as a freelance healer. As full an account of his life as may be obtained appears in Richardson, and in Knight.⁷⁰ Having gathered a large repertoire of occult lore through his travels in Europe and South Africa, he was able to teach it both here and in America. From the magical, or ceremonial, point of view it is of interest to note his initiation into Freemasonry in 1903. He was by all accounts a man of 'enormous magnetism' and was, Richardson suggests, the model for characters in Fortune's novels – overall positive in *The Secrets of Doctor Taverner* (although Knight reports Maiya Curtis-Webb's husband as also contributing to Taverner's character), and contrastingly negative in the early chapters of *The Demon Lover* (1927).⁷¹ Incidents from Moriarty's practice are recounted in *Psychic Self-Defence* and *The Goat-Foot God*. Thus Fortune reports Moriarty as a healer who often used occult rather than psychological techniques in his treatment of the disturbed. Richardson emphasises the constant theme of Atlantis which ran through Moriarty's lectures, and his belief in Christianity as a 'Universal Theosophy' which was first taught in Atlantis.⁷² Fortune's Christianity varied; it was linked to the Master Jesus as much as to Christ; it was intimately connected to the land, but did not appear to stretch to links with Atlantis, save through the common denominator of the mythology of Glastonbury and Avalon.⁷³ Moriarty was apparently an exemplar of compassion and the Christian virtues, and it was he who may have developed Fortune's inner propensity towards Christian experiences early in her occult career.⁷⁴ He also lectured on various aspects of creation and 'cosmic principles'. These lectures, later recorded in book form⁷⁵, are said to bear comparison with Fortune's own work on cosmology.

Although both Richardson and Knight quote Fortune extensively (without clear references), Richardson appears to show that Fortune turned to the occult as a result of her experience of telepathy, while Knight seems to show that it was after her

⁷⁰ Richardson, *Priestess*, pp. 79-83; Knight, *Dion Fortune and the Inner Light*, pp. 41-45.

⁷¹ Knight, *Dion Fortune and the Inner Light*, p. 57.

⁷² Richardson, *Priestess*, pp. 98, 100.

⁷³ Dion Fortune, *Avalon of the Heart* (London: Aquarian, 1971 [1934]), pp. 100-04.

⁷⁴ Richardson, *Priestess*, p. 100.

⁷⁵ Theodore Moriarty, *Aphorisms of Creation and Cosmic Principles*. Cyclostyled, n.d.

witnessing the spectacular effects of Moriarty's cure of cases by occult means, and realisation that psychoanalysis was far too cumbersome by comparison.⁷⁶ We do not know what these cases were, and we should be wary of those recounted as fiction in Fortune's *Secrets of Dr. Taverner*.⁷⁷ This was in 1916, when Fortune was twenty-five. The timing is not clear, even in Fortune's own account, but it seems that she had already become familiar with Moriarty's work by 1916, so perhaps it was the combined effect of each trigger – Moriarty's rapid cures, and the impact of her own inner experience – that precipitated her decision to combine occultism with her existing psychological approach. Only later did she begin work with Moriarty formally, and did not join his Masonic order (which admitted women after the manner of Co-Masonry and Mathers' Order of the Golden Dawn) until 1919. Fortune understood Moriarty's faults as well as his virtues (comparing supposed references to him in *Taverner* and *Demon Lover*); for example, Knight quotes her observations of how untidy about the house he became when under inner pressure.⁷⁸ But she was under no illusions about how much she owed to Moriarty's influence and tuition: 'Without "Dr Taverner"' (Moriarty), she says, 'there would have been no "Dion Fortune"'.⁷⁹ In magical terms, Richardson boldly sums up Moriarty's character as a 'manifestation of Christ himself' when working in full priesthood, and Dion Fortune as the Great Goddess Isis! Lacking independent witness or record of their role in ceremonies save that of Bromage, this assessment should be treated with the utmost caution.⁸⁰

The relationship between Fortune and Charles Loveday (1874-1948) is said to have been similar to that between the younger Anna Kingsford and the older Edward Maitland, or indeed between Christine Hartley and Colonel Seymour (both of whom drifted away from the Society of the Inner Light, although not before making valuable

⁷⁶ Richardson, *Priestess*, p. 67; Knight, *Dion Fortune and the Inner Light*, pp. 34-35.

⁷⁷ Fortune herself warns that, although *based on fact*, they should not be taken at face value (Fortune, *Taverner*, p. 5).

⁷⁸ Knight, *Dion Fortune and the Inner Light*, p. 228.

⁷⁹ Fortune, *Taverner*, p. 6.

⁸⁰ Richardson, *Priestess*, p. 101; Bromage, 'Dion Fortune', p. 8.

lecturing and literary contributions to it)⁸¹ – not so much as pupil to teacher, but as representing a kind of complementarity between occultists of differing specialist skills, which are somehow strengthened by the physical age difference. Loveday met Fortune under evocatively magical rather than romantic circumstances – a moonlit night at Glastonbury – and they commenced their life of occultism together in August 1922 with the series of trance workings.⁸² They worked in a small group of three, with Fortune as the medium, their (unplanned) contacts being the discarnate group who called themselves the 'Company of Avalon'. The impetus of this contact carried Fortune's group forwards, depending not a little on Loveday's financial, organisational, and ceremonial skills; it was he who later organised the acquisition of properties from which the Society of the Inner Light could operate – in Bayswater and at the foot of the Tor at Glastonbury. Nonetheless, Fortune continued to be a member of the Alpha et Omega Temple of the Golden Dawn until 1927, and also of Moriarty's group. From 1925 she was president of the Theosophical Christian Mystic Lodge, out of which she formed the independent Community (later, 'Fraternity') of the Inner Light, with herself, her husband Thomas Penry-Evans, and Loveday as the senior officers, with Loveday fully supporting Fortune's programme of public lectures – giving, for example, what must have been enlightening comparisons between Fortune's *The Cosmic Doctrine* and Blavatsky's *Secret Doctrine*. At the Vernal Equinox 1936, Loveday was declared by Fortune 'Priest of the Church of the Graal' in that section of the Society which was devoted to the activity of the 'Purple (Devotional or Christian) Ray' through the Master Jesus – one of the three divisions into which the Society was from then on formally divided, with Fortune and her husband leading the other two Rays (the Hermetic, and the Green (Nature or Pagan) Ray).⁸³

⁸¹ Knight, *Dion Fortune and the Inner Light*, p. 16. See also Richardson, *Dancers* and Dolores Ashcroft-Nowicki, *The Forgotten Mage* (Loughborough: Thoht, 1999).

⁸² p. 137, above.

⁸³ Knight, *Dion Fortune and the Inner Light*, pp. 188, 234.

Theosophical literature indicates that there are seven ‘Rays’ in total, ‘seven types of force which demonstrate to us the seven qualities of Deity’⁸⁴ each affecting the matter and forms which make up the physical universe, of which the Second Ray is considered to be as close to the Solar Logos as Jesus was to Christ, and the strongest of all the Rays. Rays II, III, V and VII are presently most active on Earth.⁸⁵ Although Fortune never attempts such an exercise, the Purple Ray might well correlate with Ray VI,⁸⁶ the Hermetic with Ray V, with the Green Ray as Ray VII.⁸⁷

Short mention must be made of that group of people termed ‘the Avalonians’, of whom Alice Buckton was a prominent member. Glastonbury is of particular moment because it was the venue of a series of powerful visualisations incorporating the Masters, which Fortune recommended for use by members and associates of her Society during World War II. Fortune had stayed with Alice Buckton when visiting Glastonbury during the 1920s. But Knight is of the opinion that she may well have been influenced into the direction of magic and a lifelong interest in the holiness of Glastonbury not only by Buckton but also by her friends the Tudor-Poles.⁸⁸ It was at Glastonbury that the first ‘well prepared’ trance meeting is recorded as being held on 11th January 1921, with Maiya Curtis-Webb and a male third. Eight months later, Fortune and her mother assisted Frederick Bligh Bond at a further trance meeting in an attempt to contact representatives of an ancient people who maintained that they had visited Glastonbury in prehistoric times and brought the fresh impetus of new ideas into

⁸⁴ Fortune uses the term ‘outpourings’ (Dion Fortune, *The Cosmic Doctrine*, (York Beach, ME: Samuel Weiser, 1924, 2000), p. 37). Blavatsky’s references to the Rays are piecemeal and scattered in *The Secret Doctrine*. See, for example, her vol. I, 331; II, 240, n. 1; 297; III, 79. We owe it to later authors e.g. Alice Bailey, *A Treatise on the Seven Rays: Esoteric Psychology* (London: Lucis Press, 1950, [1936]); Douglas Baker, *The Seven Rays* (Wellingborough: Aquarian, 1977); and Fortune herself to give clearer interpretations. Cf Bailey’s definition of the rays: ‘The seven rays are therefore embodiments of seven types of force which demonstrate to us the seven qualities of Deity. These seven *qualities* have consequently a sevenfold effect upon the matter and forms to be found in all parts of the universe, and have also a sevenfold interrelation between themselves.’ (Bailey, *Treatise*, p. 19).

⁸⁵ Bailey, *Treatise*, pp. 19, 23, 26.

⁸⁶ ‘Passing rapidly out of manifestation’ since 1625 A.D. (Bailey, *Treatise*, p. 26).

⁸⁷ See Chapter 5, pp. 283-86 for further discussion.

the land. It is difficult, however, to place the communicators into the specific category of Master. They were stated as being discarnate monks, not particularly concerned with organising or overseeing any kind of occult group, which is a Master's special brief. A particularly significant series of trance meetings was also held there from July 1923 to February 1925 which formed the substance of her above-mentioned cosmology *The Cosmic Doctrine*, the text of which was circulated in stages among her students until published in book form in 1949.⁸⁹

It is important to recognise the scholarship of S. L. MacGregor Mathers (1854-1919), the major figure in the establishment of the Order of the Golden Dawn because the magic of Fortune and others of Mathers' successors depended, and still depends, upon what he derived from his own translation of Knorr von Rosenroth's version of sections of the Zohar; upon his adaptation of Masonic ritual for purposefully spiritual ends; and upon his skill in blending the disparate components of Renaissance Christian Cabala, Tarot, alchemy, astrology, numerology, divination, Masonic symbolism, visionary experience and ritual magic into a coherent system.⁹⁰ Fortune joined the Alpha et Omega Temple in the same year that Mathers died, 1919, perhaps as a consequence of her initial contact with the Masters, but although they never met, she undoubtedly enjoyed the fruits of his years of scholarship through that Temple's reportedly imposing rituals and systems of correspondences, although she expresses a great disappointment with the standard of ceremonial in the Lodge she had joined, and with the teaching – for example, learning data (often data freely available elsewhere) by rote, with no explanations given.⁹¹ But it was Mathers' contributions to Qabalah that Fortune valued most.⁹²

⁸⁸ See pp. 131-32, above. WellesleyTudor-Pole was a psycho-spiritual investigator and benefactor who instigated the institution of the Big Ben Silent Minute in remembrance of the war dead, and founded the Chalice Well Trust in 1959. <http://www.chalicewell.org.uk> [accessed 8th June 2008].

⁸⁹ Knight, *Dion Fortune and the Inner Light*, pp. 62, 92-98.

⁹⁰ Cavendish, *History*, pp. 143-44.

⁹¹ Richardson, *Priestess*, p. 112; Fortune in Dion Fortune and Gareth Knight: *Spiritualism and Occultism* (Loughborough: Thoos, 1999), p. 45.

⁹² Dion Fortune, 'Ceremonial Magic Unveiled' *The Inner Light*, 24: 1 (2003, [1933]), 12-21.

The history of the Hermetic Order of the Golden Dawn has been well documented by Regardie (1983), Torrens (1969), Colquhoun (1975), Howe (1972) and Gilbert (1983), with subsequent researches by Prinke (1987) Schuchard (1987), and Cicero.⁹³ Briefly, the Isis-Urania Temple of the Order of the Golden Dawn (henceforth referred to here as the Golden Dawn) was established in 1888 by three initiates of the Societas Rosicruciana in Anglia, Dr William Wynn Westcott, S. L. MacGregor Mathers, and the Revd A. F.A Woodford, all Master Masons, with the intention that its procedures would enable them all the more easily to reconcile themselves with God.⁹⁴ The Order also claimed the membership of such renowned figures as Eliphas Lévi, the prominent French magician mentioned above,⁹⁵ Kenneth M. Mackenzie, author of a Masonic Encyclopedia,⁹⁶ and Frederick Hockley,⁹⁷ all of whom were deemed to follow a tradition back to the Fratres Rosea Crucis of Germany, 'founded by one Christian Rosenkreutz about the year 1398 A D [. . .]' itself tracing a line back to the patriarchs of the Old Testament.⁹⁸ This further example of 'a-historical continuity' is one that constantly appears in the histories of occult societies.⁹⁹ Nevertheless, it was, as we have

⁹³ Israel Regardie, *What You Should Know about the Golden Dawn* (Phoenix, Arizona: Falcon Press, 1983 [1936]); T. G. Torrens, *The Inner Teachings of the Golden Dawn* (London: Neville Spearman, 1969); Colquhoun, *Sword* (1975); Howe, *Magicians* (1972); R. A. Gilbert, *The Golden Dawn: Twilight of the Magicians* (Wellingborough: Aquarian, 1983); Rafal T. Prinke, 'Deeper Roots of the Golden Dawn', *Hermetic Journal*, 36 (1987); Marsha Keith Schuchard, 'Yeats and the Unknown Superiors', *Hermetic Journal*, 37 (1987), 14-20. Chick Cicero, too, was instrumental in assisting Israel Regardie to re-institute the Order of the Golden Dawn in America in the early 1980s, and together with his wife Sandra Tabatha, has published several authoritative texts on the Golden Dawn, e.g. *The Essential Golden Dawn* (St Paul, MN: Llewellyn, 2003) and edited Regardie's own works, e.g. *The Tree of Life* (St Paul, MN, Llewellyn, 2001).

⁹⁴ Colquhoun, *Sword*, pp. 69-70.

⁹⁵ See McIntosh, *Eliphas Lévi*, for a full account of Lévi's work and influence.

⁹⁶ Kenneth H. Mackenzie, *The Royal Masonic Cyclopaedia*. (Wellingborough: The Aquarian Press, 1987 [1877]).

⁹⁷ See John Hamill, ed., *The Rosicrucian Seer: Magical Writings of Frederick Hockley* (Wellingborough: The Aquarian Press, 1986).

⁹⁸ Regardie, *What You Should know*, p. 7.

⁹⁹ For 'a-historical continuity', see Arthur Versluis, *Wisdom's Children: a Christian Esoteric View* (Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 1999), p. 231. See also Ronald Hutton, *The Triumph of the Moon* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), pp. 301-06; *The Pagan Religions of the Ancient British Isles* (London: Basil Blackwell, 1991), pp. 205-40 for a full discussion. For informed comment, see Jani Farrell-Roberts, 'A New or Old Western Paganism?' in *Cauldron*, 108 (May 2003), 2-16, together with follow-up debate (Hutton et al.) in *Cauldron*, 109 (August 2003), 18-23.

seen, the fashion of the time to justify the commencement of any occult society by reference to ancient roots, or, as in the case of the Golden Dawn, to some kind of enabling charter (genuine or not) passed down from a supposedly well-established group, even including Fortune's all-embracing tracing of the beginnings of the 'Western Mystery Tradition' as a whole back to Atlantis. In their chronology of the Golden Dawn, the earliest date that Greer and Künz cite is that of the birth of Christian Rosenkreutz in 1378, ending with an entry for 1994, indicating the continuance of the Golden Dawn tradition well beyond its recorded apparent demise.¹⁰⁰ Perhaps it is this (largely unproveable but dearly-held) assumption of longevity that brings Regardie to the opinion that the Golden Dawn was at the time 'the sole repository of magical knowledge, the only Occult Order of any real worth that the West in our time has known [. . .]'.¹⁰¹ If this were indeed so, Fortune was wise to look to the Golden Dawn and its Secret Chiefs for her magical training. Even though the original Order had succumbed to interior schism in 1900, and to outside scheming in 1903, it was the persistence of succeeding offshoots that kept the practices and opportunities for training available¹⁰² – in Fortune's instance, under the tutelage of Mathers' wife, Moina.

Fortune was twenty-eight years old when she joined the Alpha et Omega Temple of the Golden Dawn in 1919 (this was the same year that she began formal training under Moriarty), at a time when one might have expected her to have joined the Theosophical Society because of the psychic (or, perhaps, religious) experiences that she had undergone while within its premises. It was then that she adopted the magical Name which she shortened for everyday purposes to the familiar Dion Fortune. And it was here that she at last felt that the damage to her aura sustained at the Agricultural College some seven or eight years before was now healed.¹⁰³ Although the

¹⁰⁰ Mary K. Greer and Darcy Künz, *The Chronology of the Golden Dawn: Being a Chronological History of a Magical Order, 1378 – 1994* (Edmonds, WA: Holmes Publishing Group, 1999).

¹⁰¹ Regardie, *What You Should know*, p. 8.

¹⁰² There is a curious parallel here with the Society of the Inner Light, which from the early 1960s lost many of its most able members to form other groups, and it almost 'lost its contacts' (failed to heed or develop the Masters' advice concerning both ritual and daily life) until some thirty years later a former Adept of the Society, Gareth Knight, was invited to re-join as Tutelary Magus to assist in the re-vitalisation of the Society's magical expertise.

¹⁰³ See above, p. 132.

novelist J. W. Brodie-Innes was its head at the time, she was under the tutorship of her old friend Maiya Curtis-Webb, learning the basics of Kabbalah – specifically, the glyph of the Tree of Life, which bore fruit some eleven years later in the particularly vivid meditation sequences which precipitated *The Mystical Qabalah* ('her magnum opus' according to Knight.)¹⁰⁴ Fortune later wrote that she had great respect for Brodie-Innes as an esotericist and felt privileged to have served under him.¹⁰⁵ However, she could not have known him long, for King explains that by 1920, Brodie-Innes had returned to his native Scotland, and Fortune had transferred to an adjacent London Temple under the direction of MacGregor Mathers' widow, Moina. Convinced that the curriculum of the Temple was perfunctory, Fortune suggested a project to attract new blood by instituting an introductory 'Outer Court', which operated from 1922, appropriating, in fact, the auspices of the Theosophical Society's Christian Mystic Lodge in order to do so.¹⁰⁶ Once Moina Mathers had begun to realise the success that Fortune was having in expanding this group, she attempted to expel her on various pretexts until, according to Fortune's account, Mathers launched a psychic attack on her in order to bring this about.¹⁰⁷ Fortune must nevertheless have felt that there were still valuable things to be learned from the Order, and joined a separate branch, the Stella Matutina in 1930 for a period of ten years before being expelled for supporting Regardie in his deprecation of a parallel Temple in Bristol.¹⁰⁸ Neither were afraid to stick by their principles even if such a stand invoked bad feeling from the membership of their respective Temples. One may wonder if this emotional reaction emanated from some impersonal force that enfolds each organisation, from the Masters themselves, or from the inner psyche of the two individuals concerned, sometimes spoken of in terms of re-adjustment, or 'conscience'.

¹⁰⁴ Knight, *Dion Fortune and the Inner Light*, p. 115.

¹⁰⁵ Knight, *Dion Fortune and the Inner Light*, p. 49.

¹⁰⁶ King, *Ritual Magic*, pp. 112-21.

¹⁰⁷ Fortune, *Psychic*, pp. 152-55.

¹⁰⁸ Knight, *Dion Fortune and the Inner Light*, p. 205. Fortune was soon re-instated by her old friend Maiya Tranchell-Hayes.

It is interesting to note that Fortune was not averse to belonging to three Lodges concurrently – the Theosophical Society, the Golden Dawn, and her own Society. Many prominent magicians of the day followed the same pattern although for many years the Society of the Inner Light has forbidden members from belonging to other similar esoteric groups.¹⁰⁹

Most Golden Dawn temples closed down after Regardie's publication of their rituals and Knowledge Papers.¹¹⁰ During the Order's existence, many figures of distinction had joined, including W.B. Yeats, Algernon Blackwood, Evelyn Underhill, Charles Williams, and possibly Edith Nesbit, but it is difficult to know how they inter-related, or if Fortune met any of them.¹¹¹ Since the 1960s, however, and especially since the advent of the Internet, advanced esoteric students throughout the world appear to have satisfied themselves, perhaps with some justification, that they have once more recovered the Golden Dawn 'contacts',¹¹² and so it continues to attract students largely, one suspects, because of the fame that has accrued to the original name.

Fortune must have developed a firm friendship with Maiya Tranchell-Hayes (née Curtis-Webb), well-versed in the mysteries, in psycho-pathology, and a lifelong friend of the family for Maiya detected in Fortune the potential to become an accomplished magician, and had acted as Fortune's mentor at her initiation into the Alpha et Omega Temple in London in 1919, the year after Fortune's first contact with the Masters. The Alpha et Omega, it will be remembered, was the main subsidiary group of the Stella Matutina which was set up to mitigate the damaging effects that the main Order of the Golden Dawn had suffered from bad publicity in 1903. In 1921,

¹⁰⁹ Colquhoun, *Sword*, p. 118. *The Society of the Inner Light, its Work and Aims*. (On application to 38, Steele's Road, London, NW3 4RG), p. 34: 'If a member joins another esoteric group his membership of this Fraternity will automatically cease. It follows that members who found Groups of their own will automatically terminate their membership of this one.' This requirement has recently been rescinded.

¹¹⁰ Israel Regardie, *The Golden Dawn*, 4 vols, (St Paul, MN: Llewellyn, 1971 [1937-40]).

¹¹¹ Colquhoun, *Sword*, pp. 210-39.

¹¹² E.g. Chic and Sandra Cicero, 'True Initiation', *Mezlim* (Candlemas, 1993). See <http://hermeticgoldendawn.org/document/Essays/true.htm> [accessed 27/10/07]. But they do not appropriate the contacts solely to themselves. Association with 'an officially recognised temple has no bearing on [. . .] spiritual fulfilment and magical growth.' <http://www.hermeticgoldendawn.org/true.htm> [accessed 05/02/02].

Tranchell-Hayes and Fortune were conducting trance experiments, with Tranchell-Hayes invigilating. Bromage mentions the reservations that Tranchell-Hayes experienced in later years concerning Fortune's activities as a spiritualist medium. Knight wonders at this because both were heavily involved in mediumship at the start and also towards the end of Fortune's magical career.¹¹³ Surely what Tranchell-Hayes objected to was the public element, not the actual practice, of Fortune's mediumship. After Regardie published the Golden Dawn rituals, Tranchell-Hayes was inactive magically until 1940 when she resumed trance sessions with Fortune, resulting in what Knight regards as particularly significant work – the bringing through of the 'Arthurian Formula', or esoteric teachings concerning the Arthurian myth that informed the work of the Society of the Inner Light from 1940 until 1960.¹¹⁴ This lasting contribution to the Society (still of significance in the training of members today) was probably the most fruitful that Tranchell-Hayes made, save for the great support she gave to Fortune especially in the early days. Bromage suspects that Tranchell-Hayes was, in fact, the model that Fortune used in her novel *The Sea Priestess* (1938), although both Richardson and Colquhoun prefer to credit Fortune herself with that role.¹¹⁵

Studies surrounding Aleister Crowley (1875-1947), the self-styled 'wickedest man in the world' (an epithet of Crowley's own creation that falls far short of the mark)¹¹⁶ show him to have set out, through his Bohemian approach, to jerk his listeners and readers into the direction of some sort of dawning awareness of the reality of the 'inner worlds',¹¹⁷ but that in the end, they completely misunderstood his intentions by not accepting him against the background of the circles he moved in. Richardson recognises Fortune's distinctiveness by terming her 'woman's answer to Aleister

¹¹³ *Light*, 1960; Knight, *Dion Fortune and the Inner Light*, p. 192.

¹¹⁴ Gareth Knight, *The Secret Tradition in Arthurian Legend* (Wellingborough: Thoth, 1983), passim; Gareth Knight, *Dion Fortune and the Three-fold Way* (London: S.I.L. (Trading), 2002), pp. 21-26.

¹¹⁵ Richardson, *Priestess*, p. 207; Colquhoun, *Sword*, p. 218.

¹¹⁶ As Vivienne Browning remarks, Crowley was known 'by those who did not know him [my italics], [as] a Black Magician.' Vivienne Browning, *My Browning Family Album*. (London: Springwood Books, 1979).

¹¹⁷ Bradford J. M. Verter, 'Dark Star Rising: The Emergence of Modern Occultism, 1800-1950' (unpublished doctoral thesis, Princeton University, 1998), p. 243.

Crowley'.¹¹⁸ But presumably to allay fears among her readers, Fortune specifically states in *The Mystical Qabalah* that although she frequently quotes from both Mathers and Crowley, whose scholarly work she certainly values, she had never associated with either.¹¹⁹ In a letter to Regardie in 1932, she speaks of her 'sneaking regard' for Crowley, who, as if in return, presented her with a copy of his *Book of Thoth* (1944) very favourably inscribed. Fortune certainly visited him in his retirement at Hastings in 1942, and corresponded with him during 1945.¹²⁰ Both had an abiding interest in the occult and in the inner contacts, particularly Crowley's 'Guardian Angel', Aiwass.¹²¹

Verter highlights their differences by contrasting Crowley's emphasis on Androgyny, Free Love, License, and Degradation as against Fortune's emphasis on Sexual Polarisation, Eugenic Mating, Restraint, and Transcendence, by referral to two of Fortune's fictional characters who are supposed to represent Crowley and herself – the unsavoury character Hugo Astley in *The Demon Lover* (Crowley) on the one hand, and the achieved adept Brangwyn (Fortune) on the other. But this may well be too simplistic, too harsh a contrast in view of their later meetings, and also, in that Astley, be it remembered, was supposed to have carried some of the character traits of Moriarty, her first teacher. Both Crowley and Fortune shared a common interest in Kabbalah, and initiation into the Western mysteries. It did seem, however, that while Crowley was indeed, at least in his outward behaviour, Bohemian bisexual and mysogynistic, Fortune was normative heterosexual where the female was motivator, and able to empower both parties in a relationship.¹²²

Israel Regardie (1907- 85) was one of the later prominent workers of magic that Fortune in her turn assisted. Her surviving letters of 1932 give evidence of cordial relations between them, Fortune praising his two books on the Kabbalah, *The Tree of*

¹¹⁸ Richardson, *Priestess*, p. 13.

¹¹⁹ Fortune, *Mystical Qabalah*, p. vi.

¹²⁰ Knight, *Dion Fortune and the Inner Light*, pp. 80, 200, 237-39, 279. Aleister Crowley, *The Book of Thoth* (New York: Samuel Weiser, 1944).

¹²¹ Aleister Crowley, *Magick without Tears* (St Paul, MN: Llewellyn, 1973 [1954]), pp. 314-34.

¹²² Verter, 'Dark Star Rising: The Emergence of Modern Occultism, 1800-1950' (unpublished doctoral thesis, Princeton University, 1998), pp. 339-43.

Life (1932) and *Garden of Pomegranates* (1932), for being bold enough to disseminate what had up until then been secrets of the Golden Dawn. She supported him again in 1940 after he had published virtually all the secrets of the Golden Dawn, which support precipitated her own exclusion from the Lodge she was attending at the time. However, Regardie, whilst holding the utmost respect for Fortune, warns us of a possible duplicity in her attitude in that although being 'a pungent writer with a facile pen' who stated the need for more openness, she did nothing to divulge any teachings for a period of ten further years, (thus assisting in the growth of her own group!) until the publication in 1935 of *The Mystical Qabalah*, a work which, nevertheless, Regardie acknowledges as 'an extraordinary lucid and learned exposition of certain ideas fundamental to the Order philosophy [. . .] a Masterpiece'.¹²³

Fortune's two prime religious experiences both took place on the premises of a group whose philosophy she felt somewhat at odds with - the Theosophical Society, with its 'irresponsible talk', 'arrogance', and 'foolishness'.¹²⁴ And yet it was Annie Besant's account of the 'brotherhood of the Great White Lodge' ('the Masters') that in 1918 had triggered the huge emotional impact in Fortune, the desire to contact that brotherhood, and the subsequent sense of presence of two of them. Richardson dares to consider that this incident must have had 'much the same' effect on Fortune as Saul's Damascus vision had on him, it was so poignant.¹²⁵ One might have expected Fortune to have immediately joined the Theosophical Society, but this was not to happen for a further eight years.¹²⁶ One factor of her reluctance could well have been, despite Fortune's much-expressed admiration for Blavatsky, the deep disagreement with her concerning the latter's insistence on the physicality of the Masters.¹²⁷ After a short and contentious spell as President of the Christian Mystic Lodge of the Theosophical Society, Fortune tendered her resignation, and, taking several members of the Lodge

¹²³ Regardie, *What You Should Know*, pp. 35-41.

¹²⁴ Above, pp. 135. Richardson calls the second 'an initiation'. Alan Richardson, *Priestess* (Wellingborough, Aquarian, 1987), p. 72.

¹²⁵ Richardson, *Priestess*, pp. 64-72.

¹²⁶ *Transactions of the Christian Mystic Lodge* No 48, (1927), 4 in Richardson, *Priestess*, p. 122; Knight, *Dion Fortune and the Inner Light*, p. 129

with her, formally instituted her own Community (as it began) of the Inner Light, devoted entirely to Western, rather than to Eastern, mysteries.

C. W. Leadbeater (1854-1934) was a leading member of the Theosophical Society, an accomplished psychic, and a priest within the Liberal Catholic Church. His books,¹²⁸ with which Fortune was well acquainted, well illustrate the clarity of his psychic perception, and they have become a kind of world-wide standard against which all subsequent students and psychics tend to gauge their own perceptions and studies. This is unfortunate, for, genuine as those perceptions appeared to Leadbeater, they were solely the perceptions of one man in one place and in one time, which, had he been living today, might well have been completely different. Fortune says she was 'much put off by Bishop Leadbeater's system of pipe-lines for relaying spiritual power [. . .]' trusting more in her own researches.¹²⁹

The reasons for her resignation from the Christian Mystic Lodge in 1927 after only two years' membership were both philosophical and ethical. Philosophically, she and her inner contacts had become alarmed at Leadbeater and Besant's continued grooming of Krishnamurti to become the new Messiah. This was repugnant to her, for she still held allegiance to the Master Jesus as Lord and Saviour, against the Theosophical Society's cultivation of the imminent second coming of the Lord Maitreya. Some years before, in 1918, the occultist Rudolf Steiner, general secretary of the German Theosophical Society, had broken with the Esoteric School of the parent Theosophical Society in 1907, and withdrew completely from the Society in 1912 for the very same reason – rejection of the Theosophical stance regarding the imminent

¹²⁷ Patrick Benham, *The Avalonians* (Glastonbury: Gothic Image Publications, 1993), p. 255.

¹²⁸ Charles W. Leadbeater, *Man, Visible and Invisible*. (London: Theosophical Publishing, 1902).

Idem, *The Hidden Side of Things* (London: Theosophical Publishing House, 1913)

Idem, *The Astral Plane* (London: Theosophical Publishing Co., 1915).

Idem, *The Chakras* (London: Theosophical Publishing, 1927) (his most popular book). Also: Annie Besant and Charles Leadbeater, *Thought Forms* (Adyar, Madras: Theosophical Publishing House, 1901).

¹²⁹ Fortune in Dion Fortune and Gareth Knight, *An Introduction to Ritual Magic* (Loughborough: Thoth, 1997), p. 163.

appearance of the coming Lord Maitreya.¹³⁰ Whilst being guided on the one hand by her inner advisors/Masters as to the kind of action she should be taking in that matter, Fortune also felt on the other that the leadership of the Theosophical Society had become corrupt, and that her efforts in the Christian Mystic Lodge were being blocked. Nevertheless, in the light of her previous upsets with Moina Mathers and others¹³¹ one has the suspicion that this could well have provided the sensitive and, at that time, harassed Fortune with yet another opportunity to escape from a difficult situation.

It seems that Fortune, rather than abandoning psychology completely after 1916, still retained an interest in it for some years. We hear of her attending lectures in ‘The Literature of the Occult’ being given by Bernard Bromage in 1936 at the University of London. He testifies to Fortune’s continued attendance at many psychology courses at that institution, and he became a close friend of hers, being invited to her headquarters in Bayswater, where they discussed psychology and Tantra, and where he ran a series of lectures on parapsychology in fiction. He also hosted discussion groups on occult subjects to an audience of friends and acquaintances, including the London bookseller Christina Foyle. However, in spite of being invited to witness Fortune’s ‘Rite of Isis’ on one occasion, Bromage was never an active magician, only a close observer and fellow student who helped keep Fortune’s interest in psychology alive.¹³²

The Building of a Lasting Tradition: Literary Output

Fortune’s published works have been reviewed, assessed, and placed in context by Richardson, Knight, and others.¹³³ More detailed discussion of the way she deals with

¹³⁰ Rom Landau, *God is my Adventure* (London: Theosophical Publishing House, 1963 [1935]), p. 53.

¹³¹ Knight, *Dion Fortune and the Inner Light*, pp. 38, 53, 130-41.

¹³² Bromage, ‘Dion Fortune’ 80 (1960), 5, 7; Knight, *Dion Fortune and the Inner Light*, p. 235.

¹³³ Richardson, *Priestess*; Knight, *Dion Fortune and the Inner Light*, and others such as, e.g., Chas. S. Clifton, ‘A Goddess Arrives: The Novels of Dion Fortune and the Development of Gardnerian Witchcraft’, *Gnosis*, 9 (Fall 1988). <http://www.Monmouth.com/-equinoxbook/arrives.html> [accessed 15/01/02]; Bradford Verter, ‘Dark Star Rising’; Alex Sumner, ‘The Occult Novels of Dion Fortune’, *Journal of the Western Mystery Tradition*, 0 (2001), <http://www.jwmt.org/v1n0/dfortune.html> [accessed 30/04/03].

her inner contacts will be taken up below, but in the meantime, we may ask: what was the broad range of topics that she popularised? How much of her literary output was concerned with the Masters – does this topic have a major or only minor place in her repertoire? In order to address these questions, only brief details of her literary output are necessary here, supplementing the list of Fortune's works in Appendix II, and indicating the range of topics within which her inner activity is set. According to Knight, there remains little of her work of any significance that has not already appeared in print, and the Society of the Inner Light has ensured that all her books on occult themes are now available.¹³⁴ Thus, most of her serialised articles from the pages of the then relatively widely read *Inner Light* (the in-house magazine of the Society of the Inner Light) which she edited from 1927 to 1940, are now available in such publications as, for example, Fortune and Knight's, *The Circuit of Force* (1998), and *The Magical Battle of Britain* (1993) to name but two.

In Appendix II, (pp. 413-15) Fortune's works are listed according to the following categories:

1. Psychological texts (under her given name of Violet Firth)
2. Miscellaneous early works (also by Violet Firth)
3. Works concerning the Occult
4. Theological works
5. Occult fiction
6. Non-occult fiction (under the pen name of V. M. Steele)

Mention should also be made of the *Occult Review*, the leading serious esoteric magazine of its day to which Fortune contributed articles, some of which were also later included in one or other of her texts.

Psychological and Miscellaneous Texts

¹³⁴ Private communication, July 1997.

Machinery of the Mind, published in 1922 with a foreword by the English botanist and psychologist A. G. Tansley, F. R. S.,¹³⁵ was based on the lectures Fortune gave as a student between 1914 and 1916 at the Society for the Study of Orthopsychics (the training arm of the Medico-Psychological Clinic extant 1914-1922 and both of Brunswick Square), whose training she took up. Both organisations were concerned with 'Medical Hygiene' and counselling. During this time, Fortune underwent psychoanalysis, attended and gave lectures, and supervised patients, most of whom, she believed, suffered from sexual repression.¹³⁶ While this first book was an overview of the comparatively unrefined psychology of the time, the *Problem of Purity* (1927) attempted to give more practical advice to the many patients she met who lacked satisfactory outlet for their sexual energies. Richardson disparages her main solution, given after much practical day-to-day advice on sexual hygiene, and consisting of what he calls an act of 'magical masturbation',¹³⁷ and what Knight, bearing in mind that Fortune had not really begun serious study of the occult by 1916, considers an almost ground-breaking visualisation exercise to effect sublimation of sexual desire.¹³⁸ By 1927, however, she had become thoroughly immersed in occultism, and although her book concerned work she had undertaken ten years earlier, the sublimation exercise may have originated from her teacher Moriarty, from the Alpha et Omega Temple, or from Theosophical sources.

Richardson describes these two early books, together with *The Psychology of the Servant Problem* (1925) as 'dismal', in contrast to her 'luminous' books on magic,

¹³⁵ Tansley's own work, hailed as the best introduction to the subject at the time was entitled *The New Psychology and Its Relation to Life* (London: Allen and Unwin, 1920), and appears on Fortune's list of recommended reading (see Appendix V, p. 425). She does not seem to have been aware of his coining in 1935 of the word 'ecosystem'.

¹³⁶ *Machinery of the Mind* was recommended by Israel Regardie as 'easy to understand'. Israel Regardie, *The Golden Dawn*, I, 178. For details of the clinic, see p. 133, above.

¹³⁷ Richardson, *Priestess*, pp. 45-54, 149. See Dion Fortune, *The Problem of Purity* (London: Rider, 1927)

¹³⁸ Knight, *Dion Fortune and the Inner Light*, pp. 31, 32. Fortune's process has recently been somewhat vindicated by a former G. P. who suggests: 'When the creative urge is suppressed, disease can manifest in this [sexual] organ [. . .]. One cannot provide a partner to release these sexual energies, but they can be released by taking them into the throat chakra and allowing them to be used in the creative expression of oneself.' Christine R. Page, *Frontiers of Health* (Saffron Walden: C.W. Daniel, 1992), p. 148.

whilst at the same time, giving all due respect to her for her realisation of the frustrations that people suffered in a time of repressed sexual attitudes, and of her attempted elevation of sex to sacredness.¹³⁹ The 'servant problem' that she identified in her later book was one of lack of respect by upper class employers for the needs of the workers. A particular instance of this led her on one occasion into taking direct action, which had its desired effect, but it was this incident that resulted in her removal to the lonely research laboratory, where her creativity nevertheless found an outlet in uncovering a process for making soya milk.¹⁴⁰ It would seem that by then she had conquered her sensitivity and reclusiveness, and was well able to step forward and take a lead on behalf of others. Her parents at the time were engaged in pioneering work in the processing of soya beans for a variety of vegetarian products, and Fortune published her booklet *The Soya Bean – an Appeal to Humanitarians* (1925) in order to promote it.¹⁴¹

Texts Concerning the Occult

The *Cosmic Doctrine*, first published in 1949, was the result of channelled communications by various discarnate beings (inner plane adepts), lasting from July 1923 to February 1925, with just Fortune and her magical companion Loveday attending most of the channelled sessions. It was made available to students of the Society of the Inner Light very soon afterwards, but did not reach the public until the edited version of 1949. It is a cosmology in the same tradition as Blavatsky's *Secret Doctrine* (1888), but on a more slender scale, and is said to be related to Moriarty's own *Aphorisms of Creation and Cosmic Principles*.¹⁴² It is difficult to know how far

¹³⁹ Richardson, *Priestess*, pp. 149-51, 156. However Alison Light was recently pleased to cite Violet Firth's *Psychology of the Servant Problem* in her own work *Mrs Woolf and the Servants: The Hidden Heart of Domestic Service* (London: Penguin, 2007), p. 187.

¹⁴⁰ Firth, *The Psychology of the Servant Problem* (London: Rider, 1925); Knight, *Dion Fortune and the Inner Light*, pp. 37-38. See page 135, above.

¹⁴¹ Knight, *Dion Fortune and the Inner Light*, p. 38.

¹⁴² Richardson, *Priestess*, p. 144. Contrary to general opinion, Richardson considers that Fortune's *Cosmic Doctrine* was 'incomparably superior to anything else that Dion Fortune wrote throughout her

Fortune's text is a reflection, a development, or an imperfect recall of what she had been taught. There would, in any case, be certain similarities of constructs and terminology, although in Knight's view a fresh approach has been made in Fortune's texts enhancing and extending Moriarty's work.¹⁴³ It is particularly valuable for the two Introductory Chapters relating the story of how Fortune first contacted her Masters.¹⁴⁴

In the meantime she had produced *The Esoteric Philosophy of Love and Marriage* (1924), a bridging work between her psychological and occult interests, perhaps following in the wake of similar (though non-esoteric) work by Annie Besant (1847-1933) and Marie Stopes (1880-1958), whose *Married Love* was published in 1918 and followed by many of a like nature. The contents of Fortune's book almost caused her superior, Moina Mathers, to expel her from the Alpha et Omega Temple on the grounds that she had betrayed its higher-level teachings, and for this reason it might repay detailed investigation to discover what those secrets might have been. If, indeed, there were any, they could only have come independently from Fortune's researches since in the organisation of which she was then a member, she had not yet reached the grade entitling her access to them.¹⁴⁵

At a time when such recondite matters as entry into the membership of an esoteric society were often carried out with much subterfuge, Fortune produced two

life', and was, moreover, 'firmly based' on Moriarty's Aphorisms. He quotes some of his 'Principles of Manifestation' as an example: Correspondence; Law and Order; Vibration; Rhythm; Cyclicity; Polarity and Sex (Richardson, *Priestess*, p. 104). Chapman considers that these in turn, correspond with the spheres of the Tree of Life, and strongly resemble *the Stanzas of Dzyan*. Janine Chapman, *Quest for Dion Fortune* (York Beach, Maine: Samuel Weiser, 1993), pp. 126, 127. Moriarty's *The Mystery of Man* (Middlesex: Blackburn Business Services, 1976) is a largely anthropological account of the evolutionary development of religions from Atlantean times onwards, relying on a mixture of academic (e.g. Darwinian) and esoteric sources (e.g. Scott-Elliott, *The Story of Atlantis and Lost Lemuria* (London: Theosophical Publishing House, 1940); Max Heindel, *The Rosicrucian Cosmo-conception* (Oceanside, CA: Rosicrucian Fellowship, 1909); Ignatius Donnelly, *Atlantis: the Ante-diluvian World* (New York: Harper, 1882, 1902). Chapters include accounts of developing consciousness, the universality of myths (including Christianity), the necessity of the existence of a 'universal mind', and the three psychological processes – suggestion, sympathy, and imitation.

¹⁴³ Knight, *Dion Fortune and the Inner Light*, p. 94. There is scope here for extended comparisons to be made in future between the cosmologies of various occultists of the time – Blavatsky, Bailey, Fortune, Steiner, and Heindel, to name but a few.

¹⁴⁴ See pp. 135-36, above.

complementary volumes in 1928: *The Esoteric Orders and their Work* and *The Training and Work of an Initiate* as essential background reading for serious enquirers. Indeed, Fortune recommended to her students that discussion of the ideas they contained provided 'the best way of getting into contact with the Tradition' and with the Masters.¹⁴⁶ Alongside these, she brought together a series of articles from the *Occult Review* under the title of *Sane Occultism* (1930) dealing with various abuses in occultism from credulity and secrecy to psychic pathology and the inappropriateness of Eastern methods for Westerners, all of which she had experienced within one or other of the groups to which she belonged.¹⁴⁷ At the end of 1930, *Psychic Self-Defence* (which even by 1974 had reached its fifteenth impression such was its popularity), gave an account of all that can go wrong in occultism, again based on Fortune's personal particularly sensitive experiences, with illustrative examples of hauntings, psychic attacks and disturbances, poltergeist activity, etc. and how they were best dealt with. This work stands alongside similar accounts expressed in fictional form in *The Secrets of Dr Taverner* (1926) of cases undertaken by her teacher Moriarty. Hammer highlights the care with which Fortune leads the reader to consider the root causes of disturbance before taking action, rather than relying on pre-packaged formulae.¹⁴⁸ It is interesting to compare these accounts with a similar work, *The Casebook of a Working Occultist* (1972) produced some forty years later by another trained occultist, E. A. St. George (Sandra West), and consisting of some 20 cases presented in fictional form, ranging from hauntings, obsessions, and possession, to reincarnation and curses.¹⁴⁹ As in Fortune's *Psychic Self-defence* and *Taverner*, it is in the end up to readers to decide for themselves whether the stories possess any credibility.¹⁵⁰

¹⁴⁵ Knight, *Dion Fortune and the Inner Light*, p. 80.

¹⁴⁶ Knight, *Dion Fortune and the Inner Light*, p. 186.

¹⁴⁷ Knight, *Dion Fortune and the Inner Light*, p. 182. *Sane Occultism* is now published as *What is Occultism?* (Boston, MA: Weiser Books, 2001).

¹⁴⁸ Mike Hammer, *Meet Dion Fortune*, (1998) <http://mindwings.com> [accessed 07/05/03]

¹⁴⁹ E. A. St George, *The Casebook of a Working Occultist* (London: Rigel Press, 1972)

¹⁵⁰ Compare: [*Psychic Self-Defence*] 'is a unique book, though one that is not always to be believed.' Richardson, *Priestess*, p. 43, with '[. . .] some of the stories had to be written down rather than written up, before they were fit for popular consumption.' Knight, *Dion Fortune and the Inner Light*, p. 35.

A further collection of articles that were first serialised in the *Inner Light* magazine during 1929, were published under the title *Spiritualism in the Light of Occult Science* (1931). In its first edition, it made an unfavourable comparison between the mediumship of a trained occultist, and that of the spiritualist churches of her day.¹⁵¹ She distinguished between the ‘negative trance’ of the spiritualist and the ‘positive trance’ of the occultist, warning that the former was open to serious abuse among the unscrupulous or inexperienced and should therefore be used with caution, although ten years later in her Monthly Letter of December 1942, she retracted many of her former criticisms to the extent of stating that trance mediumship was a key technique to gain access to the Ancient Mysteries, and that even contacting the recently departed could be of some help to the bereaved. She also remarks that although it was customary to deprecate the use of trance mediumship in occult circles, it was nevertheless at that time fairly commonplace.¹⁵² In 1932, her companion volume appeared, *Through the Gates of Death*, aiming to help those recently bereaved.¹⁵³

Avalon of the Heart (1934) is a collection of essays about Glastonbury,¹⁵⁴ laying the foundations, perhaps, for her later work in the Arthurian tradition. It is similar in tone to Eleanor Merry's *The Flaming Door* (1936) and Christine Hartley's

¹⁵¹ Knight, *Dion Fortune and the Inner Light*, pp. 180, 191-96, 273.

¹⁵² For the drawbacks see Dion Fortune, *The Training and Work of an Initiate* (Wellingborough: Aquarian, 1930), p. 80 and Dion Fortune and Gareth Knight, *Spiritualism and Occultism*, p. 41. For her attitude to contacting the dead, see Gareth Knight, *Dion Fortune and the Inner Light*, pp. 194-45. For her later stance, see Dion Fortune and Gareth Knight, *Spiritualism and Occultism* (Loughborough: Thoth, 1999), pp. 41, 45.

¹⁵³ Dion Fortune, *Spiritualism in the Light of Occult Science* (London, Rider & Co, 1931). This has been re-edited by Gareth Knight with commentaries as: Dion Fortune and Gareth Knight, *Spiritualism and Occultism*. For her companion book, see Dion Fortune, *Through the Gates of Death* (London: Aquarian, 1968 [1932]).

¹⁵⁴ This series of essays ‘Although obviously also written off the top of her head, for they contain a number of factual inaccuracies, [. . .] were obviously also written straight from the heart.’ (Knight, *Dion Fortune and the Inner Light* p. 115). Also: ‘[. . .] *Avalon of the Heart*, for all its real value and poetic appeal, is chock full of charming inaccuracies and simplifications [. . .]’ Benham, *Avalonians*, p. 26.

The Western Mystery Tradition (1968), although both of these range much further afield across the whole of Britain.¹⁵⁵

Practical Occultism in Daily Life was a slim volume intended for a more general readership, containing chapters on topics such as past lives, divination, and sexual ethics. This appeared in 1935, in the same year as Fortune's 'Tour de Force' *The Mystical Qabalah*, a complementary work to *The Cosmic Doctrine*, each of these two expressing through alternative models the same cosmological framework within which the inner beings operate.

In 1962, two further collections of *Inner Light* articles were published under the titles: *Aspects of Occultism*, and *Applied Magic*, dealing with a variety of subjects such as, in the first: Sacred Centres, the Worship of Isis (a poetically evocative exposition, useful for meditative purposes), and Spiritual Healing; and in the second: The Group Mind, the Psychology of Ritual, Black Magic, and an esoteric Glossary – topics which give an indication, perhaps, of the direction of the Society's thinking during the 1960s when the book was compiled. The only substantial reference to possible elevated contacts is in Chapter I (pages 1-12) of *Aspects of Occultism*, which explains how the pagan gods fit into Fortune's pantheon alongside Christianity.

The Society has also published the letters which Fortune sent to her students each week during the 1939-45 period of the Second World War. Knight suggests that, because of the need of the hour, the letters reveal much more of magical practice than was customary and form a useful casebook with little held back. And he also comments on Fortune's sense of destiny; she believed that to be fully effective occult practices should be balanced by a willing acceptance of a full range of mundane chores such as the fire-watching consequent on the air raids, in the belief that it is on that stage where destiny has to be worked out.¹⁵⁶ A similar remark might even more appositely be made

¹⁵⁵ Eleanor Merry, *The Flaming Door* (East Grinstead: New Knowledge Books, 1962 [1936]); Christine Hartley, *The Western Mystery Tradition* (London: Aquarian, 1968). Hartley was a trained by Fortune, and was for some time a medium for the Society – see Alan Richardson, *Dancers*, passim.

¹⁵⁶ Knight in Fortune and Knight, *Battle*, Introduction.

concerning any channelled material of which there is nowadays such an abundance waiting to be applied in daily life.

It was not until the year 2000 that one particular series of trance communications concerning medical treatment by esoteric means was published – in edited form and with a commentary – under the title *Principles of Esoteric Healing*. These communications with an 'inner' entity called the Master of Medicine began in January 1921 and continued very sporadically including a six year gap until 1942, so they ran parallel with trance addresses on completely different topics, such as Fortune's visionary experiences prior to writing her textbook on the Tree of Life. There do not appear to be the same constraints of time in the inner worlds such as exist in the mundane world (although the ability to continue complex explanations with coherence alongside other demanding mental tasks may, of course, be purely a reflection of the capability of the human mind), and communicators can often comfortably pick up from the exact point at which they finished previously, however long ago that was. This is not unusual; it occurs, for example, in Jane Roberts's channelled material *Seth Speaks* (1972), and *The Nature of Personal Reality* (1974),¹⁵⁷ whose substance was developed by Roberts into a comprehensive paradigm, 'Aspect Psychology', intended to provide 'a framework through which previously denied psychic elements of life can be viewed as proper, beneficial, and natural conditions of consciousness'. Roberts's experiences led her to the view that so-called psychic events have only been relegated to the category of the unnatural because of the materialist bias of our education, and suggest that the evidence for the components of personality being but aspects of a greater source is inescapable.¹⁵⁸ We are forced to ask, is the material channelled by Fortune capable of being fitted into Roberts's paradigm or did Fortune really communicate with advanced souls? Some comparisons between the views of Roberts and Fortune will be made in Chapter 6, although no examination of *Esoteric Healing* and the Masters behind the

¹⁵⁷ Jane Roberts, *Seth Speaks* (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, 1972), p. xxiii; Jane Roberts, *The Nature of Personal Reality* (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, 1974) - 'undisputed "classics" of modern channelling' (Wouter J. Hanegraaff, *New Age Religion and Western Culture* (Leiden: Brill, 1996), p. 37).

¹⁵⁸ Roberts, *Adventures*, pp. v-vii.

communications will be made because a full appreciation of its rather technical content requires specialist medical knowledge.

Articles by Fortune from monthly issues of the *Inner Light* magazine of 1930-40 concerning the modus operandi of Ritual Magic were published in 1997 with commentaries and up-to-date examples by Knight under the title *Introduction to Ritual Magic*. These are invaluable for providing recent examples of contact with Fortune's Masters by practitioners trained in her tradition, and will provide some substance to discussions on methods in Chapter 5. Fortune's *Circuit of Force* articles concerning the aura (from 1939-40) were published in 1998.

Acknowledging her debt to both Madame Blavatsky and Sir John Woodroffe, Fortune speaks of the aura as a manifestation of energies in the 'etheric body', the physical body's magnetic field into which higher forces flow through centres termed 'chakras', or centres of exchange of energies.¹⁵⁹ She was aware of C. W. Leadbeater's striking and colourful illustrations in his *Man, Visible and Invisible* (1902) and *The Chakras* (1927), but was more restrained in her own descriptions. She points out Woodroffe's criticisms of Leadbeater, whose system does not accord with traditional Tantra, for example, in the location of the chakras and the number of petals they are said to have.¹⁶⁰

Fortune and Knight's *Principles of Hermetic Philosophy* (1999) contains two series from her monthly letters to members, which she instituted after she had discontinued the weekly war letters: '*The Esoteric Philosophy of Astrology*' (1942– 43)

¹⁵⁹ 'the aura is the channel of an alternating current that flashes from heaven to earth and back again.' , but states that 'different psychics report different things.' Dion Fortune and Gareth Knight, *The Circuit of Force* (Loughborough: Thoთ, 1998), pp. 53-54, 62, 74, 113.

¹⁶⁰ See C. W. Leadbeater, *Man, Visible and Invisible: Examples of Different Types of Men as seen by Means of Trained Clairvoyance* (London: Theosophical Publications, 1902) and his *The Chakras* (London: Theosophical Publications, 1927). It is of interest that Leadbeater states that inanimate objects such as cathedrals, cities, museums, ruins, sacred palaces, etc. also have auras (a word that Woodroffe criticises as of Western origin). C. W. Leadbeater, *The Hidden Side of Things* (Adyar: Theosophical Publishing House, 1913), I, 172-211 and *The Inner Life*, First Series, pp. 443-78. For Woodroffe's comments on this, see Arthur Avalon *The Serpent Power: being the Chakra-Nirupana and Paduka-Panchaka: Two Works on Laya Yoga*, 3rd ed., translated from the Sanskrit (Madras: Ganesh & Co., 1931), pp. 6-19.

and *'The Principles of Hermetic Philosophy'* (1943-1944). All of the last five items have been edited together with commentaries by Knight.

To this list must also be added Knight's *The Secret Tradition in Arthurian Legend* (1983) which is an interpretation of channelled teachings from the fifteen or so sessions held between April 1941 and February 1942 with Maiya Tranchell-Hayes, Dion Fortune, and W. K. Creasy, and which was further developed by leading Society members.¹⁶¹

As can be seen, few of her works deal directly with her Masters. Perhaps she felt that Chapters V and XII of *Esoteric Orders* sufficed for general publication until the exigencies of war urged her to release to anyone of like mind the more precise techniques for contacting specific higher entities in her *War Letters*. On the other hand, much of her work was channelled by one or other of her Masters, chief among them *The Cosmic Doctrine*, although most such communications are unavailable to the public.

Theological Works

Mystical Meditations on the Collects first published in 1930, served to provide material for those of Fortune's members following the devotional rather than the Hermetic or Nature Paths.¹⁶² In her Introduction, she pays tribute to the mystics, with the proviso that they make their findings comprehensible to the non-specialist, and she also refers to the fruits of her own personal experience for a resulting blend of esotericism and Christianity that characterised her devotions.¹⁶³ Although such figures as Anna Kingsford (1881) and Annie Besant (1901) had already published works on esoteric Christianity, Fortune terms her approach to Christianity 'intellectual mysticism', by which she means a tempering of intellect with spirit and a clarifying of religious

¹⁶¹ Knight, *Dion Fortune and the Inner Light*, p. 298. The mediated scripts are now published as Dion Fortune, Margaret Lumley Brown and Gareth Knight, *The Arthurian Formula* (Loughborough: Thoth Publications, 2006), pp. 34-91.

¹⁶² Knight, *Dion Fortune and the Inner Light*, p. 315.

¹⁶³ Dion Fortune, *Mystical Meditations on the Collects* (York Beach, ME: Samuel Weiser, 1991 [1930]), pp. 6-7.

experience with intellectual interpretation. Thus she speaks of the 'Inner Light of mystical consciousness' and 'the living Presence of the Christ within' as crucial to the difference between Christianity and churchgoing; but apart from one or two references to the higher self, most churchgoers would find little in her meditations to disagree with.¹⁶⁴

Occult Fiction

John Hollwitz remarks that C. S. Lewis believed that religious truths are more effectively transmitted through fiction than through dogma, in Lewis's case continuing the traditions of alchemy and the Grail.¹⁶⁵ It should be remarked at the outset that Fortune was one of the first Western esotericist to write a substantial amount of fiction imparting bona fide magical ideas and principles. As Fortune herself says, '*The Mystical Qabalah* gives the theory, but the novels give the practice [. . .] those who study *The Mystical Qabalah* with the help of the novels get the keys of the Temple put into their hands'.¹⁶⁶ As an 'insider' Hammer considers her novels 'absolutely mind-blowing', meaty affairs compared to the general run of New Age writings, teasing the reader with much of value between the lines, encouraging a feeling of familiarity with the material.¹⁶⁷ Apart from some reservation regarding *The Winged Bull* (1935), Richardson speaks well of Fortune's novels, bravely rating her final two, *The Sea Priestess* and *Moon Magic*, as supreme examples of magical literature.¹⁶⁸ Since the chapters in *The Secrets of Doctor Taverner* (1922) consist of a series of possibly heavily fictionalised psychological case-studies based on work that she had been

¹⁶⁴ Fortune, *Meditations*, pp. 6, 32, 89.

¹⁶⁵ John Charles Hollwitz, 'The mythopoeic art of C. S. Lewis' (unpublished doctoral dissertation, Northwestern University, 1980).

¹⁶⁶ Fortune, 'The Winged Bull: A Study', III. *Inner Light*, XI: 1 (October 1937), 8.

¹⁶⁷ Hammer, *Meet*, p. 2.

¹⁶⁸ Richardson, *Priestess*, p. 197. He attributes some of the success of her novels to the prepared atmosphere of her new acquisition The Belfry, a former Church of Scotland chapel that the spiritualist Lady Caillard (Mrs Zoe Oakley Maud) had converted into her home in 1923, where she conducted séances and subsequently (c. 1935) giving Fortune first refusal to take up the lease. Alan Richardson, *Priestess*, pp. 196-213. See also Zöe Caillard, *Sir Vincent Caillard Speaks from the Spirit Worlds* (London: Rider, 1932).

involved with as a student of magic under the tutelage of Moriarty, they need not detain us here.¹⁶⁹ Similarly, Fortune's own assessment of *The Demon Lover* was that, whilst being a thriller, it was also a 'kind of saga of the purification of the soul through initiation'.¹⁷⁰ One may be forgiven for thinking that we should follow Fortune into the sometimes lurid and sensational scenes that she introduces to us, and we are left wondering in what respect we should take the novels as examples of effective practice. The most outstanding passages deal with a specialised form of magic involving the raising of power by means of 'magnetism' generated between members of the opposite sex. Since it did not involve physical sex, but only subtler vibrations, it would perhaps be more apposite to term it 'polarity magic' in order not to mislead. Did the Masters or other inner plane contacts feature prominently here?

To answer this, we must look carefully into her last four novels, where the concept of a figure on the inner planes is more fully developed. The essential feature here is the introduction of a 'third force'¹⁷¹ – a high adept on the inner planes representative of an 'inner plane Master' who helps to maintain or restore balance. Knight highlights the importance of this triangular relationship inherent in each of the novels – a priest/priestess duality of the main characters, together with the distant third

¹⁶⁹ See pp. 143-44, above.

¹⁷⁰ Fortune, 'The Novels of Dion Fortune' *Inner Light*, x : 2 (November 1936), 31.

¹⁷¹ This feature matches well with the patterns of the triangles on the Tree of Life (see Chapter 4, pp. 175-78), where a pair of concepts represented as opposites may be resolved by a ('higher') third. One is reminded of Mathers' 'Third Order' (comprising his mundane Order's inner plane communicators), and Blavatsky's 'Masters'. Ouspensky, too, although completely disowning any of the traditional models of the Inner Worlds recognised by occultists, nevertheless speaks of a 'third element': 'Everywhere and in every case there were not two but three elements. There were not only "yes" and "no", but "yes", "no", and something else besides. And it was precisely the nature of this "third" element, inaccessible to understanding, which made all ordinary reasonings unsuitable and demanded a change in basic method. I saw that the solution of all problems always came from a *third*, unknown, element, that is to say, it came from a *third* and unknown side, and that without this *third* element it was impossible to arrive at the right solution.' And later, speaking of questioning: 'As soon as I understood clearly what was wrong in my question, *I saw the answer*. But the answer always included a *third element* which I could not see before, because my question was always built upon *two* elements only, thesis and antithesis.' Ouspensky, *New Model of the Universe*, p. 332. See also p. 141, n. 63, above.

– one well-versed in the Mysteries who acts as advisor and operations executive.¹⁷² All the novels depict both sexes making magic together, as for example, in Moriarty's Lodge, in the Order of the Golden Dawn, and in Co-Masonry, unlike the single-sex practice of traditional Masonry.

Fortune herself comments on her next three books after *The Demon Lover* as a coherent whole.¹⁷³ In her view, a reading of *The Winged Bull*, together with the two subsequent books, could by its method of speaking directly to the subconscious as in a dramatised day-dream, have much the same effect as an initiation or even as a psycho-analysis particularly if the reader identifies with the hero or heroine as appropriate. This is because it was her stated aim to deliberately write the books according to the same rules as writing a ritual, which rules are revealed in her text *The Mystical Qabalah*. She also acknowledges that many other novels of her time (quoting *Tarzan of the Apes* (1912) and *The Lore of the Lariat* (1931) among others) had the same effect that she herself was trying to achieve because the readers live the book imaginatively rather than just 'read' it.¹⁷⁴ Fortune describes her method of writing as one where the images are so much alive that they almost write themselves.¹⁷⁵ Like any creative artist, she was in touch with a 'higher' aspect of herself (or was it a Master?) not normally available, but whether this was an aspect of her own unconscious, or the result of impressions from an inner plane entity is, as she herself concedes, open to conjecture. One could argue that all successful novelists employ similar methods.¹⁷⁶ The English Theosophist, musician, and occultist Cyril Scott is more credulous, speaking of writers being 'telepathically impressed' by higher invisible beings from spiritual realms, or even

¹⁷² for example, Brangwyn in *The Winged Bull*, the Senior of Seven in *The Demon Lover* (London, Aquarian Press, 1957 [1927]), and the Moon Priest (Merlin) in *The Sea Priestess* (York Beach, ME: Samuel Weiser, 1957 [1938], p. 199). See also Knight, *Dion Fortune and the Inner Light*, p. 229.

¹⁷³ Fortune, 'The Novels of Dion Fortune', pp. 30-36.

¹⁷⁴ *Tarzan of the Apes* by Edgar Rice Burroughs has been an enduring success to this day. *The Lore of the Lariat* is actually *The Law o' the Lariat* by Oliver Strange. It has fared less well than *Tarzan*, although by 1950, it had reached its tenth edition. I have not included either in Fortune's own bibliography.

¹⁷⁵ Fortune, 'The Novels of Dion Fortune', pp. 36-38.

¹⁷⁶ See Neale Donald Walsch, *Conversations with God* (London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1997), Introduction. Although the author does not by any means count this as a novel, his comments on his creative processes are instructive.

‘overshadowed’ by a now disembodied expert in the relevant activity. Very often, says Scott, the power emanates from *devas*, and he cites well-inspired poets and musical conductors as examples.¹⁷⁷ In our own time, readers are much more aware of the mechanism of allowing the mind to construct its own images – a method which applies to almost any gripping story, but especially to science fiction, or epics such as *The Lord of the Rings*, written as a response to images arising spontaneously within the imagination.¹⁷⁸ The significant difference between these authors and Fortune is that, according to her, they would not necessarily be aware of the particular mental mechanism they are using, or, if they are aware, not able, or even needing, to explain their technique to their reading public in esoteric or any other terms. She speaks of the way that the characters of a novel have a life of their own, and do not easily respond to the author's will; she understands how the characters are built in the first place upon some characteristic of someone she saw or knew; and she recognises that each character, good or bad, carries a part of herself.¹⁷⁹

Fortune was of the opinion that *The Winged Bull* was esoterically replete with symbolism and she detailed its many features between the pages of *Inner Light*, (August - October 1937), yet Richardson considers it her worst book, clumsy and unexciting, though important for its characterization of her husband Penry Evans and her Fraternity colleagues.¹⁸⁰ Briefly, the two main characters realise that there are aspects of their own personalities which need attention – lack of compassion towards women in the man's case, and a need to value the importance of a healthy sex-life in the woman's. Each in the end realises and exercises compassion, sacrificing themselves

¹⁷⁷ Cyril Scott, *An Outline of Modern Occultism* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1949, [1935]), pp. 138-46. For *devas*, see Chapter 4, p. 235.

¹⁷⁸ Gareth Knight remarks that J. R. R. Tolkien was using his mind magically, i.e. calling on the ‘incredible power and range of the human imagination’, and that Tolkien realised that he was tapping deep into an imaginative level that had its own reality. Knight compares this to ‘reading the Akashic records’ as did Blavatsky, Steiner, Fortune and many others. It was not in his case, however, entirely free-ranging since Tolkien deliberately intended to reassemble myths and legends to which he had deeply responded as a child. Gareth Knight, *The Magical World of the Inklings: J. R. R. Tolkien, C. S. Lewis, Charles Williams, Owen Barfield* (Shaftesbury, Dorset: Element Books, 1990), pp. 127-131.

¹⁷⁹ Fortune, ‘The Winged Bull: A Study’ II, *Inner Light* x: 12 (September 1937), 228.

¹⁸⁰ The Society of the Inner Light was previously named the Fraternity of the Inner Light.

for each other, and creating a balance between male and female.¹⁸¹ The power of the sexual dynamic of magical practice is graphically illustrated, together with some appreciation of the danger of exacerbating a condition rather than curing it. She nevertheless spells out that one of the secrets of magic was no less than to 'Bring the Godhead down into manhood, and take the manhood up into Godhead', thus symbolically linking 'bull' (physicality) and 'wings' (the divine life of the higher spiritual realms) in daily life.¹⁸² An underlying component of all her novels is the stress on the idea of the 'magnetic' side of marriage – that a deep and lasting satisfaction in a relationship is the result of the magnetic factor between two people, not necessarily in the physical consummation. There is, too, the insistence that magical work, as well as psychological well-being, is only satisfactory where two complementary poles, male and female, are both present and both active.¹⁸³

The Goat-Foot God (1936) carries a similar message. A couple, several-times reincarnated, rediscover each other's joy in living by undertaking an adventurous magical training, leading to a culminating Rite of Pan. The larger picture of a reconciliation between earth and heaven (in the shape of the spirit of a reincarnated monk),¹⁸⁴ and between male and female upon a plane higher than that of earth is perhaps of greater import, although a less obvious theme.¹⁸⁵

There is a change of style in Fortune's *The Sea Priestess* (1938). Now, the female half of the partnership is herself of adept status, a reincarnating Sea Priestess of Atlantis with links to Britain. Her present (and also reincarnated) partner Wilfrid learns from her the real power of magnetic sex appeal, something which he later has to inject into his own dull marriage by invoking the Goddess Isis by means of ritual in order to effect the necessary healing for both himself and his inept wife. Through Fortune's now

¹⁸¹ See also Sumner, 'Occult Novels', p. 5.

¹⁸² Dion Fortune, *The Winged Bull*, (London: Wyndham, 1976 [1935]), p. 184.

¹⁸³ Mike Hammer, *Meet Dion Fortune*, p. 4.

¹⁸⁴ Probably not a Master.

¹⁸⁵ Richardson, *Priestess*, pp. 202, 206.

poetic use of prose, the concepts of the previous books outlined above are re-vitalised.¹⁸⁶

The concluding rite depicted in Fortune's posthumously published *Moon Magic* (1956), is once again, one of spiritual sex-magic where the main male character is to represent 'all men', and the woman 'all women'; and it is supposedly a rite designed to benefit the whole of mankind.¹⁸⁷

Verter sums up a two-fold effect of Fortune's novels – that by rejecting Crowley, she rejected his 'many-faceted' sexuality, and also asserted a 'new and active role for female spirituality'.¹⁸⁸ The novels certainly echo the texts, particularly the one which disturbed Moira Mathers so much – *The Esoteric Philosophy of Love and Marriage*, which, together with *The Circuit of Force*, is Fortune's definitive text on polarity and sex, and to be read alongside the novels. But it is salutary to read of Fortune's own assessment of them:

The novels have quite definitely spoken to the subconsciousness of their readers [. . .] They have failed in large measure, however, to accomplish their main object, which was the linking up of consciousness and subconsciousness, bringing both to bear simultaneously upon certain things, and also bringing them to bear upon each other.¹⁸⁹

Bibliographic Background: Fortune's Own Reading

We have already noted that Fortune frequented the Theosophical Library when in her twenties. Later, she was able to use the library facilities of the Alpha et Omega Temple, and also to build up her own Fraternity's library. We have heard from Bromage how keen she was to keep abreast of the latest psychological researches, so it would not be wrong to count her as very well-read in both esoteric and psychological literature.¹⁹⁰

¹⁸⁶ Sumner, 'Occult Novels', pp. 6-8.

¹⁸⁷ Dion Fortune, *The Sea Priestess* (York Beach, ME: Samuel Weiser, 1957, [1938]), pp. 5-8.

¹⁸⁸ Verter, 'Dark Star', p. 342.

¹⁸⁹ Fortune, 'The Winged Bull: A Study' I, *Inner Light*, x: 11 (August 1937), 212.

¹⁹⁰ Bromage, 'Dion Fortune', pp. 31, 38.

Scattered throughout her texts and novels are references to works that she must have deemed sufficiently worthy to bring to the notice of her readership, making some sixty references to texts directly by title. These are listed in Appendix IIIa, pp. 416-21. In her major text, *The Mystical Qabalah*, her most frequent reference is to Aleister Crowley; of eleven references to him, seven are to Crowley's compendium of esoteric symbolism, *777* (1909); it is his system of Qabalistic attributions that she uses, supplementing that of Mathers, Westcott, and Waite.¹⁹¹ She makes almost as many references to Blavatsky (seven), but no less than ten to Wynn Westcott's translation of the *Sepher Yetzirah*.

In a special series in the *Inner Light*, however, Fortune makes particular reference to the titles then available that she felt assiduous students of the Mysteries should work their way through.¹⁹² Although only representing a fraction of her whole reading regime, the list, here tabulated as Appendix IIIb (pp. 421-28), is an instructive one. Of the 92 authors listed, 30 are double or more entries, leaving a total of 62 authors mentioned.¹⁹³

Of her fifteen categories, the most replete (24 entries) is that on Witchcraft, followed by magical texts and books on Atlantis (19 each). Hatha Yoga has 17 entries, followed by psychological texts, books on meditation and 'Some Books of Mystical Beauty' (16 entries each). Here the balance is on practice rather than theory

The most cited author is Algernon Blackwood (twelve mentions), followed by Annie Besant with nine, Fiona McLeod and Fortune herself with seven, Vivekananda with six, A. E. Waite with five, and C. W. Leadbeater, Eliphas Lévi, Lewis Spence, Rudolf Steiner, and W. L. Wilmshurst with four entries each. Her reliance on the Neo-Theosophy of Annie Besant, C. W. Leadbeater and also on A. E. Waite is made obvious from this analysis. A high proportion of the works are fiction although it does not appear so on the list because of multiple entries scattered among non-fiction works.

¹⁹¹ Fortune, *Mystical Qabalah*, p. 22.

¹⁹² For the monthly *Inner Light* articles entitled the 'Literature of Illuminism', see *Inner Light*, II (July 1929) to III (Sept 1930).

¹⁹³ An exact count cannot be made because of several entries guiding the student to 'books by [. . .]'.

Books listed more than twice are Vivekananda's *Raja Yoga* (four times); and C. W. Leadbeater's *Chakras*, Charles Baudouin's *Suggestion and Autosuggestion*, and Mudoon and Carrington's *Projection of the Astral Body* (three times each), which point up her interest in Yoga, suggestion and astral plane work. This statistic confirms her emphasis on practice. There are some surprises. I would not have expected Max Heindel's *The Rosicrucian Cosmo-Conception* to have been recommended as a beginner's book. Only four Qabalistic texts are cited, and neither Regardie's nor her own text had yet been published. The whole of the occult novels section is made up of Algernon Blackwood's novels. This is deceptive, because more works of fiction are included in other sections.¹⁹⁴ The Hermetic Path is represented by sections *II, III, V, XI*, and *XII*; the Pagan by sections *IX, XII, and XIV*; the Christian by section *VII*. Her choice for the psychological section *X* contains a well-chosen selection of notable texts of her day, together with *XIII*, this last overlapping with occult meditation, There is necessarily much overlap of categories in so varied a topic – the Meditation section contains texts relating to the physical, as do sections *XI The Anatomy of the Soul*, and *XV Hatha Yoga*. Her interest in Tantra is reflected in the texts from India, and her Glastonbury and English landscape connections in section *VII Some Books of Mystical Beauty*, overlapping with *IX The Old Gods of England*. The list is a comprehensive one, the product of a wide range of reading, a recognition of the multi-dimensional nature of the esoteric experience, and one containing much of value for the student of the Mysteries generally.

Heirs to Fortune's Philosophy

It remains in this chapter – as much to substantiate the claim here that Fortune is worthy of study, and that the work of her Masters is not moribund – to ask who, if any, might be considered as Fortune's successors in that area of magical practice that incorporates contact with inner or higher beings. The most prominent will be introduced here prior to their further mention in subsequent chapters.

¹⁹⁴ For example, in the *VIII. Ceremonial Magic* and *XIV. Witchcraft* sections.

First and foremost is her Society of the Inner Light which, prompted by one of her inner contacts, she formally instituted in 1924, and which continues as a training school to enable its members to raise consciousness, and move towards a truly integrated life-style, by which is meant, in symbolic terms, the integration of the Higher Self, the unit of the psyche that reincarnates, with the Lower Self, or earthly personality, which only endures for one lifetime. The mechanism for this is a series of study courses, and a structure of three ceremonial ‘degrees’ based loosely upon Masonic symbolism. These constitute the Lesser Mysteries, through which members may progress to more specialised work in the Greater Mysteries under the direction of the Society’s inner plane contacts, or Masters.¹⁹⁵ More detail concerning these Masters will be given in Chapters 5 and 6.

Knight speaks of the meeting of Fortune and her co-worker Loveday as a ‘union of esoteric parenthood’ (with no mention of the Masters), out of which sprang not only her own Society, but, since the 1960s, a host of offshoots, ‘outgoing seeds’ some of which, it must be observed, found no fertile ground in which to flourish.¹⁹⁶ Of the sixteen that he names, many maintained their existence until their leader passed away, others managed the tricky hand-over to a new leader, others failed because of the pressure of outside commitments of their members; but as long as they operated, all attempted to maintain their contacts with the Masters without whom, as we have seen, a magical group is dead. Of particular interest are the Sangreal Foundation, the Servants of the Light, and the Gareth Knight Group together with its own offspring, Magical Christianity and the Avalon Group.

The Sangreal Foundation was the eventual foundation of the English ritual magician William Gray (1913-1992), near the close of a lifetime of service to the Mysteries. Although he studied under the Society of the Inner Light, he never became a firm member,¹⁹⁷ but went on to author some novel and stimulating texts concerning

¹⁹⁵ See The Society of the Inner Light’s own publication, *Work and Aims*, A5 brochure, 2000.

¹⁹⁶ Knight, *Dion Fortune and the Inner Light*, p. 318.

¹⁹⁷ Although he did undergo an initiation ceremony after which he hastily withdrew. For William Gray’s life and work, see Alan Richardson and Marcus Claridge, *The Old Sod* (London: Ignatus, 2003), passim and pp. 166-71.

magic, reacting against the formalisations of Crowley and simplifying the whole approach by doing away with the Hebrew alphabet (hitherto considered a *sine qua non*) and introducing similar innovations in straightforwardness whilst retaining the material's effectiveness.¹⁹⁸ He already felt that the spirit of Fortune was guiding him¹⁹⁹ – had she now become a Master? As for other inner guides, he declared himself totally distrustful of them, yet was convinced that they needed to be recognised in some role.²⁰⁰

The Servants of the Light group was a development of Gareth Knight's Helios Course on the practical Qabalah. W. E. Butler, who was a former member of the Society of the Inner Light and guided the Servants for many years, eventually handed the organisation over to Dolores Ashcroft-Nowicki (born 1929), and it is now an international group. Regarding the Masters, she has explained that the group mind of an organisation (its 'team spirit') may become ensouled by a Master or an angelic being, the group thereafter being known as a 'contacted' group.²⁰¹

Gareth Knight (born 1930), having been trained in the Society of the Inner Light and received special contact with Dion Fortune at his initiation, left in 1960 and later formed his own group,²⁰² later relinquishing it to leaders that he had trained personally. It is worthy of note that the Masters behind his, and the successor group²⁰³ are identical with those of the Society of the Inner Light, whereas this is not necessarily true of the Servants of the Light who have developed their own contacts. Nicholas Whitehead's *Magical Christianity* is a further seeding from the Gareth Knight Group in the United States.²⁰⁴

¹⁹⁸ e.g. his *Magical Ritual Methods* (1969)

¹⁹⁹ Richardson and Claridge, *The Old Sod*, p. 168.

²⁰⁰ *Ibid.* p. 203.

²⁰¹ Ashcroft-Nowicki, *Ritual Magic*, p. 137.

²⁰² The Gareth Knight Group, which under his leadership continued for 25 years (1973-1998).

²⁰³ The Avalon Group.

²⁰⁴ See Nicholas Whitehead, *Patterns in Magical Christianity*, 1996. Whitehead is now known as Coleston Brown.

The present Chapter has been careful to stress the link between the inner and outer worlds of the occultists concerned. However, Fortune and her followers worked with many different kinds of entity, from gods and archangels to ancestors and fairies, all of which she felt able to classify according to their level of operation in the Cosmos. Her model for this was, as is usual in the Western Magical Tradition, the Tree of Life of Qabalah, the knowledge of which she received from the works of MacGregor Mathers and Aleister Crowley, greatly enhanced by her own meditations. We shall now discuss the levels of the inner worlds as depicted on the Tree of Life, matching the entities mentioned above to their appropriate spheres, and comparing the approaches of other leading occultists.

Chapter 4: The Created World of the Inner Planes: Beings in Contact with Mundane Consciousness

Introduction

We must now examine Fortune's concept of the 'Inner Planes' in order to form a clearer idea of Fortune's concept of what kinds of powers or presences she believed inhabited intermediary realms. Her cosmology is set out most comprehensively in her two parallel works, *The Mystical Qabalah* (1935), an exegesis of the glyph of the Tree of Life, and *The Cosmic Doctrine* (1925), a series of channelled communications concerning the evolution and design of the Cosmos from the Creation to the formation of the material universe and of humankind. Fortune was nurtured in the Masonic-style esotericism of her first teacher, Theodore Moriarty,¹ and of the Alpha et Omega and Stella Matutina Lodges.² However, she was also deeply influenced through her continuing informal contact with the Theosophical Society and admiration for Blavatsky's *Secret Doctrine*,³ seemingly founded on Eastern premises. Some comparisons can therefore be made with Blavatsky's previous cosmology.⁴ Discussions concerning the nature of beings inhabiting realms beyond the physical are necessarily conducted against the background of a suitably selected ground-plan or model such as the Platonic three-fold universe, or the alternative construct of concentric spheres of medieval, Renaissance and theosophical speculation. In Fortune's case, her ground-plan was the glyph of the Tree of Life of the Kabbalah, the principles of which she had been introduced to certainly by 1919 when she was admitted into the Alpha et Omega temple.⁵ She defined the planes as 'conditions of being', or 'states of consciousness', which 'although they developed successively in time, they occur simultaneously in

¹ Of whom few records exist, and whose elusive *Aphorisms of Creation* are mentioned by Richardson, *Priestess*, and whose only available works are a co-edited Masonic Dictionary, and *The Mystery of Man*, Vol I, (Middlesex: Blackburn Business Services Ltd., 1976), a turgid rendering of his lectures given between 1921 and 1923.

² Two of the major branches of the Hermetic Order of the Golden Dawn formed after that Order ceased operations.

³ Dion Fortune, *The Mystical Qabalah* (London: Ernest Benn, 1976 [1935]), p. 41.

⁴ There is room for more discussion on this in the light of Anna Kingsford's claim to precedence, and the contention by Nicholas Goodrick-Clarke that the case for an Eastern origin may not be so clear-cut. Nicholas Goodrick-Clarke, ed., *Helena Blavatsky* (Berkeley, CA: North Atlantic Books, 2004), p. 141. See also Gershom Scholem, *Major Trends in Jewish Mysticism* (New York: Schocken Books, 1995), pp. 398, 399n., for his contention that her *Stanzas of Dzyan* owe considerably to the *Sifra Di-Tseniutha* (The Book of the Concealed Mystery). Fortune herself may well have overstated the case for Eastern origins to Blavatsky's work in order to provide the impetus for renewed interest in the Western Mysteries.

⁵ Knight, *Dion Fortune and the Inner Light*, p. 212.

space [. . .]’⁶ The inner plane beings, though later described in seeming isolation in her exposition, can hardly be separated from the environment they inhabited, and although Fortune had not yet formulated the in-depth approach of her *Mystical Qabalah* by the time she discussed inner beings, the Tree of Life (as I argue on page 221, below), must have been a constant reference-point. It is an essential background to her thought in much the same way as Stanislav Grof and Ken Wilber have felt the need to construct non-traditional yet all-embracing ‘cartographies of consciousness’ to facilitate understanding of various levels of subjective and objective consciousness. Fortune came to a firmer understanding of the Tree itself as an intermediary glyph in 1931 (as I make clear on pages 255-57), but she tended to adhere to traditional symbolism as interpreted through nineteenth-century writers, particularly Mathers, reserving her own realisations for her private meditation diary. Given its pervasive influence among practising occultists at the turn of the century, the ‘Western’ Kabbalah is the essential background to a fuller understanding of her teaching concerning inner beings.

This Chapter will therefore begin by discussing the Jewish mystical and Kabbalistic tradition through the eyes of several major scholars of Kabbalah. It will consist less of a straightforward historical account (which can more easily be easily consulted in works such as Joseph Dan’s *Kabbalah: A Very Short Introduction*, 2006)⁷ than a brief survey and examination of the approaches of the scholars cited, and an attempt to uncover the most prominent ideas first in Jewish, then in Christian Kabbalah (Cabala) at different times in its development. This will provide a background against which to appreciate Fortune’s exposition of Western Kabbalah (or ‘Qabalah’ as she spells it) before moving on to the main theme of her categorisation of the range of beings and/or forces that she believed to inhabit the Inner Planes and more closely delineating her concepts concerning the Masters, together with any other entities with which these Masters might be identified or confused. Such questions have become more poignant since her death with the growth in public awareness of a variety of reported contacts ranging from spirit guides to alien beings from other worlds, and the

⁶ Fortune, *Mystical Qabalah*, p. 27. Also C. W. Leadbeater, *Man, Visible and Invisible: Examples of Different Types of Man as Seen by Means of Trained Clairvoyance* (London: Theosophical Publishing, 1927), p. 12. The term ‘plane’ is a Theosophical one taken up by most subsequent Western esotericists.

beginnings of some subsequent academic research attempting to identify and categorise them.⁸

Kabbalah and the Tree of Life

'Kabbalah is the inner and mystical aspect of Judaism.'⁹ It is the perennial teaching about the Attributes of the Divine, the nature of the universe and the destiny of man, in Judaic terms',¹⁰ and it is upon this and its Christian derivative, that much modern Western esotericism is founded.¹¹ Even though Fortune was well aware of Western esoteric roots extending much further back than the Judaic, e.g. Greek, Chaldaean, and her reliance on an Atlantean civilisation, Fortune herself states unequivocally that the Western occultism of her day was founded upon the mysticism of Israel.¹² She therefore specifically recommends to her students certain supporting literature on Qabalah that

⁷ Joseph Dan, *Kabbalah: A Very Short Introduction* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006).

⁸ See, for example, Sally Palmer, 'Close Encounters of the Religious Kind? Identifying the religious components in the literature of the alien close encounter phenomenon' (unpublished doctoral thesis, University of Kent, Canterbury, 2000).

⁹ In order to signify and make clear the historical distinctions between the Kabbalah as interpreted by the Jews, Renaissance Christians, and Fortune, the conventions of different transliterations have been preserved here as far as possible – 'Kabbalah' for the Jewish tradition, 'Cabala' for the Christian tradition during the Renaissance, and 'Qabalah' for Fortune's usage (following Lévi). There is, of necessity, some overlap. Mathers, for example, uses 'Kabbalah' for headings, but follows Lévi's use of 'Qabalah' within his text, as does Crowley. Blavatsky generally used 'Kabalah'. Halevi, the most prominent contemporary author combining Jewish with innovative approaches, uses 'Kabbalah' in line with other Jewish scholars such as Scholem. There is a similar difficulty in the usage of many other transliterated spellings not only as between Jewish and Christian usage, but between scholars themselves. Here I shall follow the usage of the scholar or tradition concerned, e.g. 'sefira' for Jewish Kabbalah; 'Sephirah' for Christian Cabala, and so on.

¹⁰ Z'ev ben Shimon Halevi, *Kabbalah: Tradition of Hidden Knowledge* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1979), p. 4.

¹¹ Fortune, *Mystical Qabalah*, p. 2.

¹² 'The Mysticism of Israel supplies the foundation of modern Western occultism.' But Fortune also emphasises the need for the re-interpretation of the doctrines of 'the Rabbis who lived before Christ' and for re-formulation of its methods for our own times. Fortune, *Mystical Qabalah*, p. 2. Cf. Waite's definition of Magic as 'the science of the ancient Magi [. . .] its doctrine is contained in Kabbalism,' and his statement: '[. . .] he who possesses the Keys of Solomon can communicate with spirits of all grades.' A. E. Waite, in Eliphas Levi (Alphonse Louis Constant), *The History of Magic: Including a Clear and Precise Exposition of its Procedure, its Rites and its Mysteries*, translated by A. E. Waite (London: Rider & Co, 1955 [1913], Preface; p. 102n. Merkabah mysticism, for example, used the mental construct of a Chariot for heavenly ascent in much the same way as later mystics used the Tree of Life of the Kabbalah. See pp. 76-77, above and Gershom Scholem, *Origins of the Kabbalah* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1990).

she was familiar with, particularly Israel Regardie, *The Garden of Pomegranates* and *The Tree of Life*, and McGregor Mathers, *The Kabbalah Unveiled* from which both Crowley and Fortune drew direct.¹³

*Scholarly Interpretations of Kabbalah, Jewish and Christian*¹⁴

Recent studies of Kabbalah written in English may be said to begin with Adolphe Franck's *The Kabbalah*, first published in 1843, and translated by I. Sossnitz into English in 1926. He sets little store by the exegeses of either Pico della Mirandola (1463-1494) or Johannes Reuchlin (1455-1522), the first for his superficiality, the second for his inventiveness.¹⁵ In contrast, and despite its 'gaps and numerous imperfections' he praises Knorr von Rosenroth's (1631-1689) translation *Kabbalah Unveiled* for raising the status of the study of Kabbalah.¹⁶ Franck analyses the system of numbers and letters which form the basis of the text of the *Sefer Yetzirah* (The Book of Creation) and the six directions, the two modes of time (Past and future), and the two modes of existence (good and evil) which correlate with the first ten numbers.¹⁷ The *Sefer Yetzirah* does not suggest a specific diagram for the Tree of Life, but in its examination of God and the beginnings of creation, concentrates almost exclusively on the shapes and symbolism of the Hebrew letters and numbers and their significance.¹⁸ It is of interest that, in discussing the *Zohar* Franck quotes the Christian Origen in support

¹³ Dion Fortune, 'Ceremonial Magic Unveiled' (Occult Gazette, January 1933), repr. in *Inner Light*, 24: 1 (2003), 13.

¹⁴ The word 'Kabbalah' refers to anything that is received, from heavenly inspiration to a receipt for money or goods. See: Dan Cohn-Sherbok, *Jewish Mysticism: an Anthology* (Oxford: Oneworld Publications, 1995); Moshe Idel, *Kabbalah: New Perspectives* (New York: Yale University Press, 1988); Daniel C. Matt, *The Essential Kabbalah* (Edison, NJ: Castle Books, 1997), pp. 1-17; Gershom Scholem, *Kabbalah* (Jerusalem: Keter Publishing House, 1974).

¹⁵ Joseph Dan pays tribute to the uniqueness and empathy of Reuchlin's work, which influenced Giordano Bruno, Francis Bacon, Robert Fludd and John Dee, but which by its reliance on non-biblical Hebrew texts, distorted Kabbalah's true message. Joseph Dan, 'The Kabbalah of Johannes Reuchlin and Its Historical Significance' in Joseph Dan, ed., *The Christian Kabbalah: Jewish Mystical Books and their Christian Interpreters* (Cambridge, MS: Harvard College Library, 1997), pp. 55-96 (pp. 80-83).

¹⁶ Adolphe Franck, *The Kabbalah, or, The Religious Philosophy of the Hebrews* translated by I. Sossnitz (New York: The Kabbalah Publishing Company, 1926 [1843]), pp. xxxii, xliii.

¹⁷ Franck, *Kabbalah*, pp. 132-139.

¹⁸ But see Aryeh Kaplan's Tree diagrams derived from the *Sefer Yetzirah* in his *Sefer Yetzirah: The Book of Creation* (Northvale, NJ: Jason Aronson, 1995), pp. 24-31.

of the importance of the allegorical rather than the literal meaning of the scriptures,¹⁹ and sees the *Zohar* as an analysis of the nature of God, the world and the human soul. Looking to origins, he draws comparisons between the philosophy of the *Zohar* and that of Plato in respect, for example, of the use of numbers as intermediaries, and the pre-existence of souls, but concludes that neither Platonism nor Greek Alexandrian Neo-Platonism nor the syncretist Philo feature as forebears of Kabbalah.²⁰ He further suggests that the principles antedate Christian dogma,²¹ and leaps further east to the Zoroastrian Babylonia and Chaldaea, land of the Israeli captivity, whose *Zend Avesta* encapsulates ‘nearly all the elements of the Kabbalah’.²²

The scholarly work most noticeable by its absence in Fortune’s recommendations is Christian G. Ginsburg’s *The Kabbalah* (1863), which was reprinted in 1925, and, like Franck’s *The Kabbalah*, must have been available to her. Indeed, MacGregor Mathers quotes extensively from Ginsburg in his *The Kabbalah Unveiled*.²³ It is interesting that Ginsburg, like Franck, validates his study of the subject at the very beginning of his monograph by citing Renaissance Christian Kabbalists before taking up his central theme beginning with the reception of the Kabbalah by the angels from God, and recounting its transmission through the patriarchs down to Rabbi Simon ben Jochai (fl. 70-110) who, Ginsburg believed, wrote the *Zohar*.²⁴ Ginsburg’s assessment of the *Book Jetzirah* (*Sefer Yetzirah*) is that it has nothing to do with the central tenets of the Kabbalah, lacking any mention of En Soph or the Sephiroth (or Spheres), and proposes that its language and ideas suggest a date of composition of about the ninth century CE.²⁵ He further deliberates on the *Commentary of the Ten Sephiroth* (c. 1200) as the ‘most ancient document embodying the doctrines of the Kabbalah’,²⁶ before concluding with a comparison of the Schools of Gerona and

¹⁹ Franck, *Kabbalah*, pp. 142-43.

²⁰ Franck, *Kabbalah*, pp. 217-70.

²¹ Franck, *Kabbalah*, p. 271.

²² Franck, *Kabbalah*, p. 283.

²³ S. L. MacGregor Mathers, tr., *The Kabbalah Unveiled* (London: G. Redway, 1887), pp. 4-6.

²⁴ Christian G. Ginsburg, *The Kabbalah: Its Doctrines, Development and Literature* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul), 1925, 1955 [1863]), pp. 83-85.

²⁵ Ginsburg, *The Kabbalah*, pp. 157-58.

²⁶ Ginsburg, *The Kabbalah*, p. 176.

Segovia. He was aware of Franck's work, but did not have the advantage of recent scholarship, and does not mention the twelfth-century work the *Sefer ha-Bahir* at all.

Ginsburg summarises the cardinal doctrines of Kabbalah as:

1. The boundlessness of the Supreme Being 'En Soph'; the Tree of Life with its ten Sephiroth or Spheres arranged as three Pillars, together with a tabulation of their names and angelic and bodily attributions. Ginsburg shows diagrams of the Tree of Life.²⁷
2. The grouping of the Spheres in the four 'worlds': *Atziluthic*, comprising the qualities of God; *Briatic*, comprising pure spirits; *Jetziratic* or World of Formation; and the World of action, *Assiah*, each depicted as a complete set of ten Spheres, all part of the 'garment of God'.²⁸
3. Each of the three lower 'worlds' is inhabited by various grades of intermediaries, e.g. angelic hosts in the *Jetziratic* world, and demons or 'shells' in the lowest, *Assiatic* World and also arranged as a further hierarchy of ten even deeper levels.²⁹ According to tradition, humans were androgynous before separating into the sexes for incarnation.³⁰
4. Human destiny is to gather experience over a maximum of three lifetimes and return to Deity in pure form aided by the fourth and fifth Spheres (Love on the right hand Pillar of Mercy designated Abraham and Fear on the left hand Pillar of Justice, designated Isaac). The Middle Pillar is represented by Jacob.³¹
5. With regard to the relationship between Kabbalah, the Old Testament and Christianity, Ginsburg, like Franck, cites Origen's warning against any literal interpretation of the scriptures.³² Indeed the Kabbalists, like earlier Jewish scholars, propound no less than four levels of interpretation.³³ Ginsburg also argues that distinguished Jewish scholars deduce the doctrine of the Trinity and even the Messiah's

²⁷ Ginsburg, *The Kabbalah*, pp. 87-102.

²⁸ Ginsburg, *The Kabbalah*, pp. 102-08. This is best seen in diagram form in Z'en ben Shimon Halevi, *Kabbalah: Tradition of Hidden Knowledge* (London: Thames & Hudson, 1979), p. 41.

²⁹ Ginsburg, *The Kabbalah*, pp. 108-10.

³⁰ Ginsburg, *The Kabbalah*, p. 118. Cf. Blavatsky, *Secret Doctrine*, II, 112; III, 180; IV, 186.

³¹ Ginsburg, *The Kabbalah*, pp. 119-23; 125.

³² Ginsburg, *The Kabbalah*, p. 128, n. 26; 130-137.

³³ P'shat (literal), Remez (implied meaning), D'rash (allegorical), and Sod (hidden or spiritual). Rabbi Joseph Saltoun, 'Understanding Jewish Thought' in *Jewish Independent*, <http://www.JewishIndependent.ca/Archives/Oct05> [accessed 08/06/2008]

atonement from passages of the Old Testament and the *Zohar*, although he acknowledges that some of the linguistic attempts at proving this discredit the Christians who attempt it.³⁴

Bernhard Pick (1913) is careful to distinguish between Kabbalah and Jewish mysticism, for which he proposes much earlier beginnings, just as Joseph Dan later tended to see the application of the term ‘mysticism’ to Judaic Kabbalah as invalid, whilst acknowledging that any mystics are generally to be found within the ranks of Kabbalists.³⁵ Pick argues, *contra* Franck, that much of Kabbalah is derived from Philo, the Neo-Platonists, and Neo-Pythagoreans, together with some Gnostic influences, and he traces the course of Kabbalah through from Rabbi Akiba (c. 50-c. 135), to the appearance of the *Book of Creation (Sepher Yetzirah)*, which he, like Ginsburg, takes to be a work of the eighth- or ninth-century, and he closely examines its thirty-two paths of secret wisdom and the significance of the Hebrew letters.³⁶ Again like Ginsburg, Pick takes up discussion of Azriel’s *Commentaries* but unlike Ginsburg does not neglect the *Sefer ha-Bahir* (‘Book of Illumination or Brilliance’, c. 1176) which was the first publication to suggest the Tree of Life as a framework for the Sephiroth.³⁷ It is described as a ‘tree of emanation’ or the ‘tree of the *sefirot*’ which from the fourteenth century onwards is depicted as a detailed diagram listing the basic symbols appropriate to each *sefira*, with the tree growing downwards from its roots in the first *sefira Keter*. Accordingly, this later literature together with speculators and mystics such as Joseph Gikatilla (1248-c.1307) and Isaac Luria (1534-1572) greatly extended the scope and structural diagrams of the Tree.³⁸ Pick continues his historical review with an account of Rabbi Moses ben Nachman (Nachmanides) (1194-1270) who attracted many followers, and the exuberant Abraham ben Samuel Abulafia (1240-1292) the enthusiastic theurgist who chanted Divine Names and used special breathing

³⁴ Ginsburg, *The Kabbalah*, pp. 140-44.

³⁵ Bernhard Pick, *The Cabala: Its Influence on Judaism and Christianity* (London: Open Court, 1913), pp. 10-11. Dan, *Kabbalah: A Very Short Introduction*, p. 12.

³⁶ Pick, *The Cabala*, p. 20.

³⁷ See particularly, *The Bahir*, translated, and with an extensive commentary, by Aryeh Kaplan (York Beach, ME: Samuel Weiser, 1979).

³⁸ Particularly in *The Bahir* and *The Zohar*.

techniques and many other ecstatic practices, eventually attempting to convert Pope Martin IV in 1281, and declaring himself Messiah. His disciple Joseph Gikatilla (1248-c.1307) followed similar practices, and wrote the *Ginnath egos* (Garden of Nuts, 1615). Pick emphasises the influence of Moses de Leon (1250-1305) and that it was he and not Simon ben Jochai who authored the *Sefer ha-Zohar* (Book of Splendour, c. 1285), and agrees with Franck that the best introduction to Kabbalah is Knorr von Rosenroth's *Kabbala Denudata* (1684). Pick analyses the make-up of the *Zohar* focusing on eleven specific dissertations within it concerning a range of topics such as the Hebrew alphabet, the Divine names and the great variety of traditional stories.³⁹ According to Pick the *Zohar* stimulated the imaginative faculties, which unfortunately also tended to strengthen belief in Satan and the forces of evil. Pick deplors the many quibbling interpretations and focuses on Kabbalah's most important doctrines: the emanations of the ten *sefiroth* or Spheres, the Four Worlds, the concept of Adam Kadmon aligned with the whole Tree in *Atziluth*, the three pillars, the male and female principles, and the problem of evil depicted as the dark *sefiroth* of the left-hand side (*sitra ahra*).⁴⁰ Pick was confident that when evil is eventually overcome, aided by God's agent man, the Messiah will appear and *tikkun* (the original state) will be achieved.⁴¹

As with Origen and Plato, the *Zohar* teaches the pre-existence of the soul, which reincarnates periodically, but to a maximum of three times in all. The mystical path includes speculations on the letters of the Hebrew alphabet and the numbers appertaining to them which according to Pick, resulted in misuse of the Old Testament through wild and unjustified permutations of both letters and numbers.⁴² He does not mention the first Latin translation by Paulo Ricci, the *Portae Lucis* (1516), but resumes his historical overview of the post-Zoharic period with the *Pardes Rim-monim* (Garden of Pomegranates (1591) by Moses Cordovero (1522-1570), and the Messianic teachings of Isaac Luria (1534-1572), both of Palestine.⁴³ Pick expresses his utmost disapproval

³⁹ Pick, *The Cabala*, p. 45, 52.

⁴⁰ Pick, *The Cabala*, pp. 66-78.

⁴¹ Pick, *The Cabala*, p. 78.

⁴² Pick, *The Cabala*, pp. 93-94.

⁴³ Pick, *The Cabala*, pp. 58-63. Other Kabbalists were to follow who also considered themselves Messiahs, e.g. Sabbatai Zebi (1641-1676).

for the ‘heathenish ideas’ such as that of emanation that tainted the pure Judaism of the Bible and the Talmud alike; and observes that any initial over-enthusiasm for linking Judaism and Christianity through Kabbalah had by his time rightly subsided.⁴⁴

Of the many texts concerning Kabbalah and Jewish mysticism by the authoritative Gershom Scholem (1897-1982), the most relevant here are his *Major Trends in Jewish Mysticism* (1941), *Kabbalah* (1974), *Origins of Kabbalah* (1987), *On the Mystical Shape of the Godhead: Basic Concepts in the Kabbalah* (1991 [1962]) and *On the Kabbalah and Its Symbolism* (1965). Although it was written in English, Fortune never mentioned his *Major Trends*, and if she were aware of it, might well have felt that it would do little to enhance her practice. Also, since it was a work of mysticism and not of Kabbalah, it contained no mention of the *Sefer Yetzirah* or the *Bahir*. It was not until well after Fortune’s death that Scholem in his *Kabbalah* (1974) made available a concise yet comprehensive account in English of its history, ideas, topics, and personalities. Here he identifies two major features of Kabbalah: mysticism (or ‘intuition’) and ‘tradition’,⁴⁵ an idea that Fortune would have been completely in tune with in her own distinction between the paths of the mystic and of the occultist.⁴⁶ Scholem lists the various components of Kabbalah: the mystical idea of transcendence and immanence; the theosophical element; its esoteric character closely ‘akin to the spirit of Gnosticism’⁴⁷ including speculation, intermediary presences, and rites; but above all, its compendium of symbols which when elucidated, reveal the mysteries of God.⁴⁸ He traces the history of Kabbalah in the *Heikhalot* literature in great detail from the *Ma’aseh bereshit* (The Work of Creation), a cosmogony based on Genesis 1 and 2 and the *Ma’aseh merkavah* (The Work of the Chariot, based on Ezekiel 1:22), containing distinctly poetical imagery of the ‘descent’ in the Chariot through the heights of the palaces to a deity who is almost entirely transcendent.⁴⁹ A particularly detailed description of the heavenly journey was given in the *Greater Book of*

⁴⁴ Pick, *The Cabala*, p. 104.

⁴⁵ Gershom Scholem, *Kabbalah* (Jerusalem: Keter Publishing House, 1974), p. 3.

⁴⁶ Fortune, *The Training and Work of an Initiate* (Wellingborough: Aquarian, 1972 [1930]), pp. 38-40.

⁴⁷ Especially in respect of the *Sefer ha-Bahir*. Scholem, *Kabbalah*, p. 5.

⁴⁸ Scholem, *Kabbalah*, pp. 4-6.

⁴⁹ Scholem, *Kabbalah*, pp. 14-21.

Heikhalot of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries (attributed to the second-century Rabbi Ishmael), an account of the mystic's descent through seven levels of heavenly halls or palaces, penetrating to heavenly secrets, thereupon entering paradise or returning to earth.⁵⁰ As Fortune was to do later in respect of the Tree of Life, Scholem touches on the dangers of this journey for the unprepared, and the need for various 'passports' and key-words especially as the higher states were reached. Preparation included fasting, ablution, and invocations in the name of God (i.e. formal ritual actions similar to those presently undertaken in Western magic), and severe penalties resulted from indiscreet broadcasting of his realisations to the unworthy.⁵¹ Scholem introduces the *Sepher Yetzirah*, discussing in detail the *sefirot*, the paths, and the Hebrew letters – the three 'mother letters', the seven 'double letters', and the 12 'simple letters',⁵² and suggests a date of between the third and sixth centuries for its composition.⁵³ Further milestones explained by Scholem are the establishment of Kabbalah in Provence between 1150 and 1200, where the *Sefer ha-Bahir* was composed, a major component of which is a commentary developing the ideas of the *Sefer yetzirah* into the Tree of Life, although he leaves its authorship an open question.⁵⁴ Aryeh Kaplan was later ready to argue for an early date for the *Bahir*'s composition (first century CE), and that its author was Rabbi Nehunia ben HaKana, a prominent first century mystic.⁵⁵ A leading figure in Provence was the mystic Isaac the Blind (d. 1235) whose commentaries on the *Sefer yetzirah* were distinctly Neo-Platonic in character, distinguishing them radically from

⁵⁰ Gershom Scholem, *Origins of the Kabbalah*, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1987), pp. 23-24; Dan and Lavinia Cohn-Sherbok, *Jewish and Christian Mysticism* (New York: Continuum, 1994), p. 24.

⁵¹ Gershom G. Scholem, *Kabbalah* (Jerusalem: Keter Publishing House, 1974), pp. 55, 56.

⁵² The 'matrices' being alef, mem, and shin. The 'double letters' are aligned with the planets, days of the week, etc., and the 'simple letters' aligning with the zodiac, the months, the limbs, etc. Scholem, *Kabbalah*, p. 25.

⁵³ Scholem, *Kabbalah*, p. 28. More recently, Aryeh Kaplan has neatly summarised in tabular form the range of 'Historical opinions as to when *Sefer Yetzirah* was written'. The dates suggested range from before 100 BCE to 800-900 CE. Aryeh Kaplan, *Sefer Yetzirah: The Book of Creation* (Northvale, NJ: Jason Aronson, 1995), Table 1., pp. xxii-xxiii.

⁵⁴ Scholem, *Kabbalah*, p. 315.

⁵⁵ Kaplan, *Bahir*, p. xi, and p. 185, n. 5: 'Even though the *Bahir* cites many things found in *Sefer Yetzirah*, it might actually have been written earlier.'

those of the *Bahir*.⁵⁶ By the beginning of the thirteenth century, Kabbalah had spread to Gerona, and flourished under Ezra ben Solomon (c. 1175-c. 1240) also influenced by Neo-Platonism; Rabbi Azriel (c. 1160-c. 1238) whom Scholem counts as the prime figure of the group; and Rabbi Moses ben Nahman (Nachmanides) (1194-c. 1270).⁵⁷ Scholem traces a ‘gnostic reaction’, a refuge in theurgy, in the work of the brothers Jacob and Isaac ha-Kohen of Soria, and Todros ben Joseph Abulafia (1234-1305), who emphasised the intermediary (particularly demonic) element in Kabbalah.⁵⁸ Abraham ben Samuel Abulafia (1240-c.1292) exemplified the practical nature of Kabbalah as described by Pick. At this point, Scholem notes that the three streams of the Kabbalah of Gerona, of the *Zohar*, and that of Abulafia became united in the work of Joseph Gikatilla (c. 1248-c.1307), whose work ran parallel with that of Moses de Leon (1250-1305) author of the *Zohar* (1286).⁵⁹ In 1492 the Jews were expelled from Spain and established a centre in Safed, north of Jerusalem, which flowered under the ‘main systematic theologian of the Kabbalah’ Moses Cordovero (1522-1570), and Isaac Luria (1534-1572), the profundity and depth of whose work Scholem considers second only to the *Zohar* itself.⁶⁰ The remainder of Scholem’s account of Lurianic Kabbalism is more easily told from the synopsis given by Joseph Dan, who acknowledges the benchmark work by Scholem and Isiah Tishby in 1941.⁶¹ He sets out the prime concepts as:

1. The idea of *zimzum*, a mechanism of withdrawal within the Godhead to set in motion the actions necessary to remedy an initial deific crisis. Into the empty space so created, there shone a line of light which gradually took the shape of the *sefirot* and into which poured so much divine essence that the *sefirotic* vessels could not contain it, so giving rise to a ‘breaking of the vessels’, and allowing negative forces to manifest.

⁵⁶ Scholem, *Kabbalah*, p. 46.

⁵⁷ Scholem, *Kabbalah*, p. 49.

⁵⁸ Scholem, *Kabbalah*, p. 55.

⁵⁹ Scholem, *Kabbalah*, pp 57-61.

⁶⁰ Scholem, *Kabbalah*, pp. 74-75.

⁶¹ Isiah Tishby, *The Wisdom of the Zohar: An Anthology of Texts Systematically Arranged* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1989). 3 vols.

2. *Tikkun*, or the mending of the vessels, is the aim of creation – the bringing of perfection to God, to the self, to Israel, to humanity and to all creation. This is conceived of as a collective responsibility. Evil is kept in sway because of a number of sparks (individuals) trapped (exiled) within the shards of the broken vessels. Eventually, *tikkun* will redeem them and therefore all evil.
3. The pattern of the ten *sefirot* as the model for all aspects of existence.
4. *Gilgul*, or reincarnation as a central doctrine. Each of the five parts of the human psyche seemed to operate independently, and meet intermittently over long periods of time in different mixes in different incarnations.
5. The overall concern is the ‘tension between exile and redemption’ and the sense of shared responsibility to hasten *tikkun*.⁶²

Scholem features four topics that are of particular interest to this thesis since they pertain to intermediaries, viz. Demonology in Kabbalah, Lilith, Metatron, and Samael. In Kabbalah, the tendency was to collect many names of demonic entities from Arabic, Christian and folk sources and to systematise them into their own understanding of the created world. In early Spain, demons were conceived of as made from fire and air, and were most likely to be found among cold ruins towards the north, able to relay predictions of the near future. Among the Kabbalists of Castile, they were considered to be remnants from the *sitra ahra* and in the service of Samael and Lilith, while in the *Zohar* they were also considered to be the offspring of liaisons between demons and humans, filling the air in the sub-lunar zone in various classes or levels, though not always harmful to humans. Scholem notes some overlap with the Christian concepts of incubi and succubi, and of the ‘Witches’ Sabbath. Further angels and demons were considered to be in charge of the days of the week, or the hours. The ‘shells’ of unbalanced force were considered dangerous, but were generally unnamed.⁶³ Any human at risk could acquire protection from demons such as this by means of amulets, and they could also be controlled by incantations and incense. The female Lilith, probably of Babylonian origin, was considered to strangle new-born babies and

⁶² Dan, *Kabbalah*, pp. 73-84.

⁶³ Scholem, *Kabbalah*, pp. 320-326.

beget children from men at night and was identified with the Queen of Sheba.⁶⁴ Metatron, almost at a level with the Deity itself, was either created at the beginning of time, or else was identified with Enoch who was translated to heaven.⁶⁵ Samael was equated with Satan, sometimes the angel of death or of tempters, and in the *Zohar* is partnered with Lilith.⁶⁶

Moshe Idel separates out two major trends in Kabbalah: The ‘theosophical-theurgic’ on the one hand, concerned with ritual and the structure of divinity through the *sefirot*, and the ‘ecstatic’ on the other, concerned with individual mystical ascent through *devekut* (cleaving, or the *unio mystica* of Hasidism) and letter-combinations, the former being more characteristic of Christian Cabala.⁶⁷ He surveys the extent and quality of scholarship relating to Kabbalah in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, and reminds us of the problem that much kabbalistic lore was communicated orally, so is now lost to us, distorting our appreciation of the whole picture.⁶⁸ In his meticulous reviews of previous research, he also warns of certain dangers, for example, of misreading Heikalot literature as accounts of ecstatic experience when they may be reworkings of previous materials. He nevertheless stresses that Kabbalah is essentially concerned with practical application and not only theory, so calling for phenomenological as well as historical perspectives.⁶⁹ It is interesting that rather than seeing Gnosticism as a factor in Jewish mysticism, he argues for Jewish mysticism as a factor in Gnosticism.⁷⁰ He examines some of the practices such as weeping, the ascent, letter combinations, and ‘visualisation of colours and Kabbalistic prayer’,⁷¹ and stresses the ability of the imagination to bring down divine powers as well as to assist the mystical process, arguing that it is the practical and experiential facets of Kabbalah that have hitherto been neglected.

⁶⁴ Scholem, *Kabbalah*, pp. 356-361.

⁶⁵ Scholem, *Kabbalah*, pp. 377-381.

⁶⁶ Scholem, *Kabbalah*, pp. 385-388.

⁶⁷ Moshe Idel, *Kabbalah: New Perspectives* (Guilford, CT: Yale University Press, 1988), pp. xi-xvii.

⁶⁸ Moshe Idel, *Kabbalah*, pp. 14-22.

⁶⁹ Moshe Idel, *Kabbalah*, pp. 27-28.

⁷⁰ Moshe Idel, *Kabbalah*, pp. 30-32.

⁷¹ Moshe Idel, *Kabbalah*, pp. 74-111.

Further aspects of Kabbalah that Idel discusses are the inherent erotic and sexual themes, which were also a strong element in Fortune's philosophy, which she designated 'polarity', the magical use of which she spelled out in her novels.⁷² In his discussion of ritual, Idel makes much more of the distinction between theurgy and magic than was customary in the past, basing Jewish theurgy on 'accepted religious values'.⁷³ In Ancient Jewish theurgy, he distinguishes three approaches: 1. Augmentation theurgy, where the power of the Deity depends on the acts of man, 2. 'drawing-down' theurgy, where divinity is assisted to dwell among the people, and 3. 'universe-maintenance' activity. Within the confines of Judaism, however, any of these paths were only ever open to mature married males, a limitation that Mathers, Moriarty (an enthusiast for Co-Masonry) and Fortune did their best to remedy.

A sector of Kabbalah which was little dealt with by the previous commentators is that of the *Shekinah*, the Divine Presence. This aspect of Western magic was especially important to Fortune in view of her feminism and strong adherence to the Goddess Isis, which she deemed to include all female goddess figures.⁷⁴ Ginsburg, for example, only mentions it in passing as a name for the tenth *sefirah* Malkuth.⁷⁵ There are more scattered references in Scholem's *Kabbalah* than can be traced here, but no sustained analysis. His mention of the Shekinah as the divine providence or divine presence in Malkuth;⁷⁶ his identification of an exposition in a *Midrash* of the Middle Ages concerning a connection between the Shekinah and Divine Wisdom but distinct from God; and the theme of the exile of the Shekinah from her husband because of sin, are just a few examples.⁷⁷ Idel continues the theme in his discussion of 'drawing-down theurgy'. The sin of Adam caused the Divine Presence, the Shekinah, to ascend to heaven, its subsequent descent assisted by human action culminating in the building of

⁷² Moshe Idel, *Kabbalah*, pp. 128-136. See also pp. 205, 213, below.

⁷³ Moshe Idel, *Kabbalah*, p. 157.

⁷⁴ Dion Fortune, *The Sea Priestess* (London: Aquarian, 1957), pp. 172, 214.

⁷⁵ Ginsburg, *Kabbalah*, p. 92.

⁷⁶ Ginsburg, *Kabbalah*, p. 382.

⁷⁷ Ginsburg, *Kabbalah*, pp. 31, 35, 164. But see Kocku von Stuckrad: '[in the *Zohar*] the feminine aspect of divinity was [. . .] strongly emphasised.' Kocku von Stuckrad, *Western Esotericism: A Brief History of Secret Knowledge* (London: Equinox, 2005), p. 39.

the Temple of Solomon and its associated rituals. Idel also describes the special case of the Shekinah indwelling the human body, sometimes through use of the divine name in prayer, sometimes by virtue of heavenly grace resulting from good deeds.⁷⁸

Christian Cabala from the Renaissance

While Jewish Kabbalah went on to develop its own further history, it is Christian Cabala that now takes centre stage as a major feature of Western esotericism. As the Renaissance peaked towards the end of the fifteenth century, Count Giovanni Pico della Mirandola (1463-1494) authored his nine hundred *Conclusiones Philosophicae Cabalisticae et Theologiae* (1486) among which featured seventy-two Kabbalistic theses which he considered confirmed the truth of Christianity. Frances Yates pays due respect to Pico as the founder of Christian Cabala and as one of the earliest scholars in Western esotericism. She describes in detail his understanding of and enthusiasm for both mystical and magical aspects of Cabala, declaring it to be a phenomenon eminently worthy of scholarly research.⁷⁹ Significant studies by François Secret, and Ernst Benz's useful summary, have since supplemented Yates's work in this field.⁸⁰ Fortune never mentioned Pico, but she would surely have been impressed that he considered magic and the cabala as essential to the successful exercise of Christianity. Two influential works, *De Verbo Mirifico* ('The Wonder-working Word', 1494) which emphasised the sanctity of the Hebrew language) and *De Arte kabbalistica* ('On the Science of the Kabbalah', 1517) were published by Pico's disciple Johannes Reuchlin (1455-1522). Their work included many non-kabbalistic texts and they seldom referred to the *Zohar*, thus omitting discussions of creation, of the Sefiroth, of the feminine *shekinah*, of the tension between good and evil, and of mystical experiences. Prominent among their interests were language and numerology, although according to Scholem, it was Henry Cornelius Agrippa's (1496-1535) *De Occulta Philosophia* (1531) that may

⁷⁸ Idel, *Kabbalah*, pp. 166-70.

⁷⁹ Frances A. Yates, *Giordano Bruno and the Hermetic Tradition* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1972), pp. 94-113.

⁸⁰ François Secret, *Les Kabbalistes Chrétiens de la Renaissance* (Paris: Dunod, 1964; Milan: Arché, 1985) and Ernst Benz, *Christian Kabbalah: Neglected Child of Theology*, translated by Kenneth W. Wesche and edited by Robert Faas (St. Paul, MN: Grailstone Press, 2004).

have placed Cabala into some disrepute on account of its apparent emphasis on demons and witchcraft.⁸¹ Yates, too, outlines Reuchlin's contribution and also those of Agrippa, and the two Englishmen John Dee (1527-1608), advisor to Elizabeth I, and Robert Fludd (1574-1637), declaring that Christian Cabala was a popular movement, the main philosophy of its age.⁸² Jacob Boehme (1548-1600), also a pivotal figure during the Renaissance,⁸³ based his knowledge of Cabala predominantly on the work of Cornelius Agrippa, and worked a demonic magic without the traditional safeguards required by Jewish mystics or the reservations voiced by Ficino, even omitting the protection of the angelic hierarchies and preferring the use of Egyptian language over the Hebrew. Taking his cue from Agrippa,⁸⁴ Giordano Bruno (1548-1600) used the authority of the Tetragrammaton and the names of the seventy-two archangels, which he classed as demons, to induce superior demons to control lesser demons, his chief mechanism – interesting in the light of its re-emergence in present-day practice – being the use of the imagination, with the ultimate aim of re-establishing communication with divine nature and the eventual establishment of an ideal society.⁸⁵ The Cambridge Platonist Henry More (1614-87) also included Kabbalah among his wide-ranging studies, collaborating with Knorr von Rosenroth (1636-89) on the *Kabbala Denudata* (1679), Latin translations of portions of the *Zohar*.⁸⁶ Scholem pays high tribute to Knorr for this work. Like Franck, he considers that it contains many errors and mistranslations but acknowledges that it does not seriously misrepresent Kabbalah; it was, in any case, the prime source of Kabbalistic literature for most students and occultists until the beginning of the twentieth century.⁸⁷ Scholem particularly emphasises Franz Joseph Molitor (1779-1861) who first inspired him to study Kabbalah.

⁸¹ Scholem, *Kabbalah*, p. 198.

⁸² Yates, *Giordano Bruno*, p. 179.

⁸³ Discussed on pp. 96-97, above.

⁸⁴ Agrippa, *De Occult. Phil.*, III, 25.

⁸⁵ Frances A. Yates, *Giordano Bruno and the Hermetic Tradition* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1964), pp. 258, 263, 265 n. 2, 266, 269-70.

⁸⁶ Sarah Hutton, 'More, Henry' in Hanegraaff, ed., *Dictionary of Gnosis and Western Esotericism*, II, 802.

⁸⁷ Scholem, *Kabbalah*, pp. 416-17, and A. E. Waite, *Doctrine and Literature of the Kabbalah* (London: Theosophical Publishing Society, 1902; reprint Montana: Kessinger, n.d.), p. 380.

It might be thought that Fortune and her forebears such as A. E. Waite placed undue emphasis on a Christian interpretation of a cosmological model that was entirely Jewish in origin, and it was indeed their lack of understanding of Hebrew that forced them to rely on Christian sources. It is significant, however, that even Adolphe Franck had begun his account of Jewish Kabbalah with a summary of the Christian form in which it appeared during the Renaissance.⁸⁸

Kabbalah – the Nineteenth Century and Beyond

To resume the overview of the Kabbalistic tradition of which Fortune would have been aware, we can effectively place nineteenth-century occultism and its interest in Kabbalah as beginning with the French occultist Eliphas Lévi (1810-15) who became the supreme catalyst inspiring fresh interest not only in occultism, but also in Kabbalah. Both Waite and Scholem criticise Lévi and other occultists for inaccuracies and blunders, and Scholem accuses both of them of displaying such infinitesimal knowledge of Kabbalah that they were reduced to drawing freely on their own imaginations.⁸⁹ Yet the encouragement of a careful use of that same imagination by Fortune and subsequent occultists has served as a practical avenue of approach to the use of Kabbalah as a transformative tool, complementing Scholem's scholastic approach. Mathers, though a keen scholar, quotes the inspirational, though less than scholarly, Lévi at length in his 'Introduction' to *The Kabbalah Unveiled*.⁹⁰

A major text for members of the Order of the Golden Dawn and other Hermetic and esoteric societies was Westcott's 1878 version of the *Sepher Yetzirah*.⁹¹ Although Westcott included the short commentaries or 'Yetziratic Texts' attached to each of the Sephiroth, he doubted their value, they having been translated and retranslated several times. Nevertheless, they have been and still are used extensively to this day by students of Fortune and Knight to stimulate and inform those students' own intuitions concerning the Sephiroth, dismissing (or more likely, unaware of) Scholem's

⁸⁸ Idel, *Kabbalah*, p. 263.

⁸⁹ Waite, *Doctrine and Literature*, pp. 399-407; Scholem, *Kabbalah*, p. 203.

⁹⁰ S. L. MacGregor Mathers, *The Kabbalah Unveiled* (London: Arkana, 1991 [1887]), pp. 20-22.

⁹¹ *Sepher Yetzirah*, ed. by Darcy Künz, (Edmonds, WA: Holmes Publishing Group, 1996), p. 8.

enigmatic observation: 'the English translations by W. Westcott 1893 and K. Stenring 1923 contain some rather fantastic passages.'⁹²

Mathers himself translated three major sections of the *Zohar* from Knorr von Rosenroth's questionably reliable Latin version of 1684. His translation, *The Kabbalah Unveiled* (1887), mentioned above, was the best available at the time, although even Knight considers the material it translates as much too obtuse to be at all helpful.⁹³ One suspects, however, that because of this obscurity and its alien nature,⁹⁴ it was not to the main content, but to Mathers's informative explanatory 'Introduction' that students turned; it must certainly have helped lay the foundations for those who followed him (including Crowley, Fortune, Knight and others). Indeed, Fortune gives it great praise (though not as much as she gives Regardie for his *Garden of Pomegranates* and his *The Tree of Life* of the same year)⁹⁵ for highlighting parallels between psychology, metaphysics, and psychism.⁹⁶ Blavatsky referred to Mathers as 'a learned Western Kabbalist',⁹⁷ whilst at the same time – and with some justification according to Scholem⁹⁸ – casting much doubt upon the fidelity of his, or indeed any, translations

⁹² Gershom Scholem, *Major Trends in Jewish Mysticism* (New York: Schocken Books, 1995 [1941]), p. 368, n. 127.

⁹³ Gareth Knight, *The Wells of Vision* (London: S.I.L. Trading Ltd., 2002), p. 91.

⁹⁴ What is one to make, for example, of the minutiae and lengthy description and allegory of the various parts of the head of the Macroposopus - the skull, moustache, hair, beard, etc.? (Mathers, *Kabbalah Unveiled*). This approach may hark back to the tradition of Sh'iur Komah, which describes God's body and its dimensions. Gershom Scholem, *On the Kabbalah and its Symbolism* (New York: Schocken Books, 1960, 1965), p. 128.

⁹⁵ Fortune describes Mathers' *Introduction* as 'an excellent epitome of Qabalistic teaching'. *The Inner Light*, III: 2 (November 1929), 16. Regardie, *Pomegranates*, named after *the Pardis Rimoni* by the sixteenth century Rabbi Moses Cordovero; Israel Regardie, *The Tree of Life* (New York: Samuel Weiser, 1969 [1932]).

⁹⁶ [referring to Israel Regardie's *The Tree of Life* and Alister Crowley's *Magick*] 'The third person in this unholy trinity of revealers of the Mysteries' (alongside Regardie and Crowley) 'is my humble self'. Dion Fortune, 'Ceremonial Magic Unveiled' *Occult Review*, January 1933. She accounts for the similarities in Regardie's two works, Aleister Crowley's *Magick* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1973, [1929]) and her own *Tree of Life*, by drawing attention to the fact that all three draw from the same source – Crowley and herself directly from Mathers, Regardie from Mathers through Crowley.

⁹⁷ Helena Petrovna Blavatsky, *The Secret Doctrine: The Synthesis of Science, Religion and Philosophy*, 6 vols, (London: Theosophical Publishing House, 1950 [1888]), v, 208.

⁹⁸ Scholem, *Kabbalah*, p. 201.

unless made from the original Hebrew.⁹⁹ Despite the respect that Fortune held for Blavatsky, we must question the nature of the Kabbalistic knowledge that she, Fortune, was able to glean from the complexities of Blavatsky's writings.

Although Blavatsky listed over 200 direct references to Kabbalah in *The Secret Doctrine*, she dealt mainly with the process of creation and the first chapters of Genesis, and therefore somewhat disappointingly concentrated almost solely on the three Supernal Sephiroth save for one or two passing references, e.g. that the seven planets refer to the seven lower Sephiroth.¹⁰⁰ However, speaking of the 'seven souls of the Egyptologists', she charts the Kabbalistic and Heiroglyphic names of the human principles together:

<u>Kabbalah</u>	<u>Plane</u>	<u>Heiroglyphs</u>
Yechida	VII	Chu – Divine Spirit
Chayah	VI	Cheybi – Spiritual Soul
Neshamah	V	Bai – Intellectual soul, the Intelligence
Ruach	IV	Ab Hati – the Heart, Feeling, Animal Soul
Nephesh	III	Ka – the Astral Body, Evestrum, Sidereal Man
Kuch of Guf	II	Vital Forces, Archaeus, Mumis
Guf	I	Chat – the Elementary Body

We must grant, however, that Kabbalah is not an easy subject to discuss, all the more so in Blavatsky's time when so little source literature was available and her

⁹⁹ Blavatsky, *Secret Doctrine*, II, 106. In fact, she had no real confidence in its literature: 'Rosenroth's Kabbalah is no guide, but very often a puzzle' (Blavatsky, *Secret Doctrine*, I, 262). She sees the *Zohar*, 'rearranged' by Moses de Leon, as now hardly less exoteric than the Bible itself [. . .]' (Blavatsky, *Secret Doctrine*, I, 242, 261; IV, 197; V, 178, 180).

¹⁰⁰ Blavatsky, *S.D.* V, 439.

opus was so wide-ranging. As with some of Fortune's work, she was perhaps intending to train her readers' minds rather than inform them.¹⁰¹

Blavatsky appeared to value the *Zohar* (together with its secret signs written in the margins which themselves must be fully comprehended before any kind of understanding of the text is possible!),¹⁰² but was careful to stress the essentially oral nature of the tradition, also mentioned by Fortune.¹⁰³ Yet Blavatsky would still rely on Kabbalah rather than science for explaining Creation, or for clarifying the Scriptures generally.¹⁰⁴ That the interpretation and use of Kabbalistic literature has seldom stood still in the past may surely give hope to modern Kabbalistic magicians, who are apt to use the constructs particularly freely.

Perhaps to cover herself for lack of coherence in her explanations, Blavatsky somewhat vehemently stressed that there are as many as seven levels of meaning within Kabbalah in all, although she only named two – the astronomical and the numerical, intimating that the other five would be too shocking to reveal.¹⁰⁵ Fortune refers to

¹⁰¹ Blavatsky *S.D.* IV, 204-05. She is summarising data from Franz Lambert's series of remarkable articles in the *Sphinx*. Probably: Franz Lambert, 'Die alt-ägyptische Seelenlehre. Eine kulturgeschichtlich-vergleichende Studie. Mit Abbildungen.' [The old-Egyptian soul doctrine. A history of civilization comparative study. With illustrations.]. *Sphinx*, 4: 23 (Nov. 1887) or Franz Lambert, 'Weisheit der Ägypter. Der Lebensbaum bei den Ägyptern (fig. 1), bei den Assyriern (fig. 3) und bei den Babyloniern (fig. 2). III. Wiederverkörperung. [Wisdom of the Egyptians. The tree of life with the Egyptians (fig. 1), with the Assyrians (fig. 3) and with the Babylonians (fig. 2). III. Reincarnation.]. *Sphinx*, 7: 40 (April 1889), which would have appeared before later editions of the *Secret Doctrine*. See also Dion Fortune, *The Sea Priestess* (York Beach, Maine: Samuel Weiser, 1957, [1938]), p. vii.

¹⁰² See also Jane Roberts, where Seth mentions such marginal symbols, some of them illustrated, as having been used in early Christian literature. Rather than appearing in the margin, the symbols were carefully hidden in the text, intended to guide the informed reader which passages were to be taken as valid, and which were blinds (Jane Roberts, *Seth Speaks* (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, 1972), pp. 443-48.

¹⁰³ H. P. Blavatsky, *Isis Unveiled: A Master-Key to the Mysteries of Ancient and Modern* (Los Angeles: The Theosophy Company, 1931, [1887]), pp. 348, 350-51.

¹⁰⁴ Blavatsky, *S.D.*, II, 230, v, 192. It has been argued in Chapter 2 that Blavatsky's subsequent interest in Eastern religion has obscured Theosophy's predominantly Western origins from Hermetic, Kabbalistic and theosophical traditions, particularly those relating to the origin of her intermediaries. Nicholas Goodrick-Clarke, ed. *Helena Blavatsky*, pp. 75-76; 141-42.

¹⁰⁵ Blavatsky, *S.D.*, IV, 109.

Blavatsky's work many times in *The Mystical Qabalah*,¹⁰⁶ and it seems that she and subsequent occultists using Kabbalah, such as Regardie, conveniently and sensibly ignored all the above drawbacks, and began with the bare bones of the system, to build what was virtually a new English tradition.

Blavatsky's major and elaborate cosmic hierarchy included many geological time-scales, and many levels of life form analogous to them and to the make-up of man. In the first instance she accepted the broad Platonic three- (or four-) fold model similar to both Anna Kingsford's system, and on the Tree, to that of Halevi's 'Jacob's Ladder'. Blavatsky later elaborated this into the now familiar seven-fold system of Theosophy, which can also be correlated with the Sephiroth in varying ways.¹⁰⁷

Waite, it will be remembered, was the leader of a specifically Christian offshoot of the Golden Dawn. His work was well known to Fortune, who praised his *The Holy Kabbalah* as a 'massive and scholarly work', particularly valuable for its review of Kabbalistic literature, and 'exceedingly interesting explanation of the Shekinah Doctrine as containing the illuminated teaching upon the esoteric aspects of sex [. . .].'¹⁰⁸ Unfortunately, Waite's *The Doctrine and Literature of the Kabbalah* (1902) is quoted by Scholem as an example of complete misunderstanding of the Jewish mystical stance because of his reliance on an inadequate French translation of the *Zohar* by De Pauly.¹⁰⁹ However, he does credit Waite's *The Secret Doctrine in*

¹⁰⁶ E.g. Fortune, *Mystical Qabalah*, 27, 38, etc.

¹⁰⁷ See her diagram III in Helena Blavatsky, *The Secret Doctrine* (London: The Theosophical Publishing House, 4th (Adyar) edn, 1950), I, 249. Also Nicholas Goodrick-Clarke, *Theosophy and the Globalisation of Esotericism* (forthcoming), pp. 72-73. He notes that Blavatsky (perhaps inspired by Lévi) founded both her seven-fold cosmology and the make-up of the human being on Kabbalistic tradition (the three Supernals, together with the seven Sephiroth of the created world) rather than on Eastern sources. He notes Subba Row's opinion that there was scant evidence of any sevenfold system in either Buddhism or Vedanta. Goodrick-Clarke, *Theosophy*, p. 76-77. Also Nicholas Goodrick-Clarke, ed., *Helena Blavatsky*, pp. 75-77.

¹⁰⁸ Dion Fortune, *The Inner Light*, III: 2 (November 1929), 16.

¹⁰⁹ Jean de Pauly, *Le Livre de la Splendeur* (Paris, 1906-11) 6 vols. 'One of the great scandals in the history of scholarship' incorporating 'brazen ignorance' and 'unabashed forgeries' R. J. Z Werblovsky, 'Judaica mystica et non mystica' in *Numen*, XXXI, 148-151 (p. 149).

Israel (1913) as a serious attempt to grasp the significance of the Zohar, and as containing 'real insight into the world of Kabbalism'.¹¹⁰

Although studying for a time under Mathers' wife Moina, Fortune had met few of the above, but of those she did come into contact with there was mutual respect – tentative in the case of Crowley, but much less tentative – indeed, friendship – in the case of Regardie.¹¹¹ Mention has already been made of the debt that Fortune owed to Crowley, who gives a succinct appraisal of what he considers the Qabalah to be – briefly: an unsectarian language; a symbol-system similar to mathematics enabling one to proceed from the known to the unknown, a system of classification; and a system by which to gauge the worth of ideas and discoveries.¹¹²

As for Regardie, he, like Fortune, was one of the first authors seriously attempting to integrate psychology and magic.¹¹³ He acknowledged his debt to previous authors, even to Lévi (despite much 'meaningless drivel' in his work), and the – to him – much misunderstood Crowley.¹¹⁴ And many years later, in the Introduction to a reprint of Crowley's 777, Regardie praised Fortune's 'masterpiece' *The Mystical Qabalah*, Gray's *Ladder of Lights* (1971), and their development in Gareth Knight's *Practical Guide to Qabalistic Symbolism* (1965). In his early handbook *A Garden of Pomegranates*, Regardie systematically described the Tree as Fortune did later, and explained his understanding of the nature of the soul, which he later went on to expand in *The Middle Pillar*.¹¹⁵ But it is in practical work (meditation and magic) where his true interests lie. In a discerning passage, he discussed the almost insurmountable

¹¹⁰ Scholem, *Kabbalah*, p. 203; *Major Trends*, pp. 212, 400, n. 25. Waite's *Doctrine and Literature of the Kabbalah* (1902) was later incorporated with *The Secret Doctrine in Israel* (1913) in *The Holy Kabbalah* (1929).

¹¹¹ Gareth Knight, *Dion Fortune and the Inner Light* (Loughborough: Thoთ Publications, 2000), pp. 197-205; 279-80.

¹¹² Israel Regardie, ed., *777 and Other Qabalistic Writings of Aleister Crowley* (York Beach, ME: Samuel Weiser, 1996), pp. 125-26.

¹¹³ Chris and David Griffin Monastre, 'Israel Regardie, The Golden Dawn, and Psychotherapy', *Gnosis* 37 (1995), 36-42.

¹¹⁴ Israel Regardie, *The Tree of Life* (New York: Samuel Weiser, 1932, 1969), pp. 39-41. Israel Regardie, *The Middle Pillar* (Chicago: The Aires Press, 1938).

¹¹⁵ Israel Regardie, *The Middle Pillar* (Chicago: The Aires Press, 1938); Regardie, *Pomegranates*, pp. i; 43-59; 73-80; 152-53.

difficulty of understanding philosophical terms such as 'soul' or 'mind', and, like Fortune, argued strongly against the use of difficult Eastern terms, which rarely correlate exactly with Western ones. He concluded that by discarding all dogmatic Rabbinical interpretations and reverting to the bare bones of the Tree of Life diagram (which is a perfectly good system of inner relationships), it could be used by many as a practical psychological tool towards transformation.¹¹⁶ This, too, is what Fortune was attempting to do.

Dion Fortune's Exposition of the Glyph of the Tree of Life

So Fortune was heir to a storehouse of Kabbalistic literature, much of it remote and confusing, most of it of which she was unaware. The question of Fortune's antecedents in the study of Kabbalah has been partially answered in the previous sections. Out of this, and aided by her immediate forebears and her own revelations, she moulded a system which, though still in the process of modification and enhancement, is still in use today, and for which she has been recognised as laying down a definitive baseline for a fresh approach. At the time, Fortune recognised Judaism as the root of the Western esoteric tradition (although it is almost certain she had no Hebrew beyond a recognition of its letters), and suggested that students would find it far more fruitful to follow this 'native' spiritual route rather than an Eastern one.¹¹⁷ For her, the Christian Gnosis is based on Qabalah whose cosmogony might be compared with that described in the Stanzas of 'Dyzan' (sic), the foundation of Blavatsky's *Secret Doctrine*. The Qabalah holds the key to the Scriptures, especially to the prophetic books, and may therefore be termed 'The Yoga of the West', and its philosophy as the 'esotericism of the West'.¹¹⁸ This may be questionable in the case of Blavatsky, since her later sources

¹¹⁶ Regardie, *Pomegranates*, pp. 33-35;

¹¹⁷ Although it was not appreciated at the time how much reliance Blavatsky had placed on Western sources. Nicholas Goodrick-Clarke, ed., *Helena Blavatsky*, p. 141. It is worth noting that William Gray carried this further by attributing English, rather than Hebrew letters to the Tree of Life. William Gray, *Magical Ritual Methods* (Toddington: Helios, 1969), p. 101. However, I am not aware of anyone using his system in practice.

¹¹⁸ Fortune, *Mystical Qabalah*, pp. 2, 27.

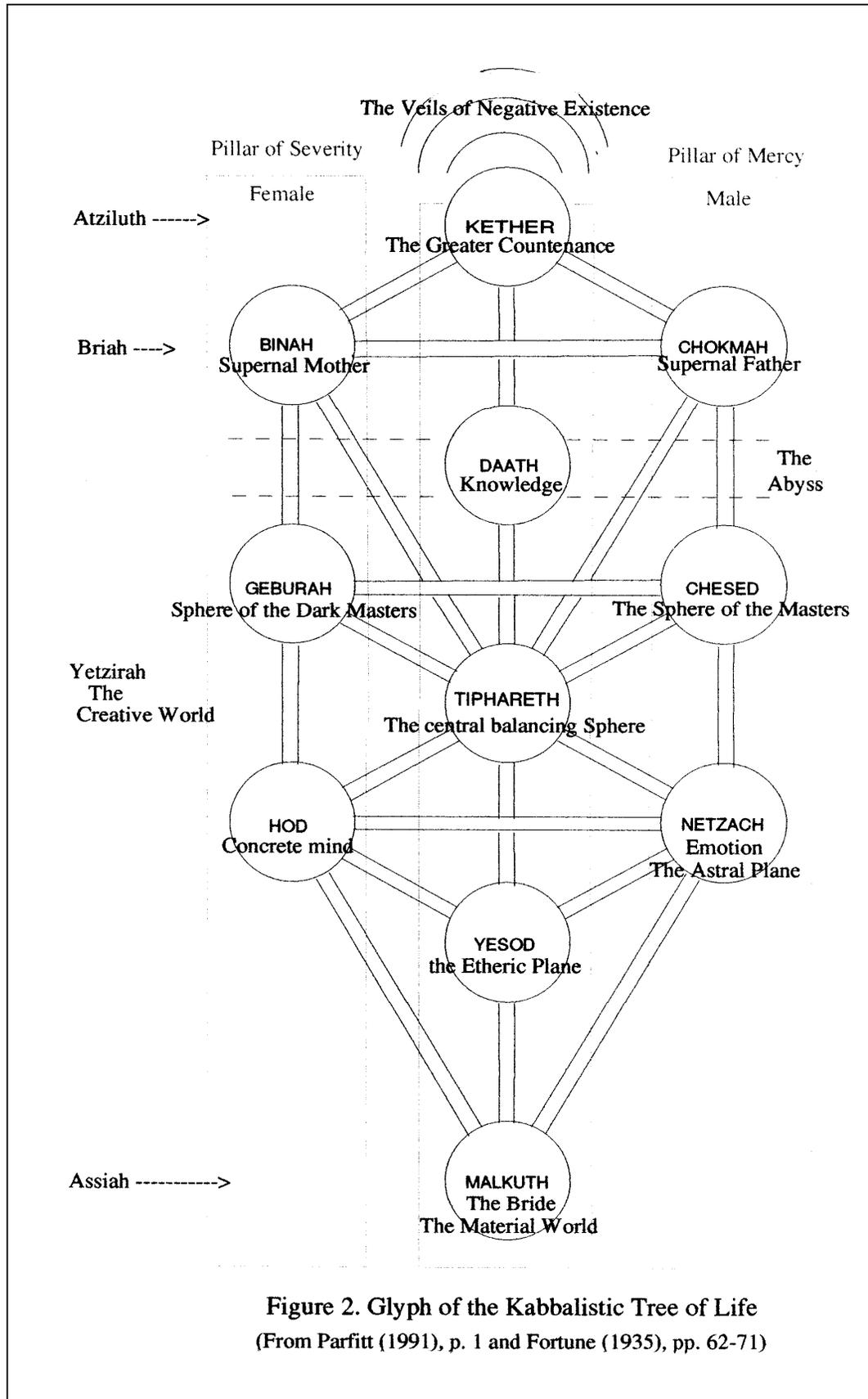


Figure 2. Glyph of the Kabbalistic Tree of Life
 (From Parfitt (1991), p. 1 and Fortune (1935), pp. 62-71)

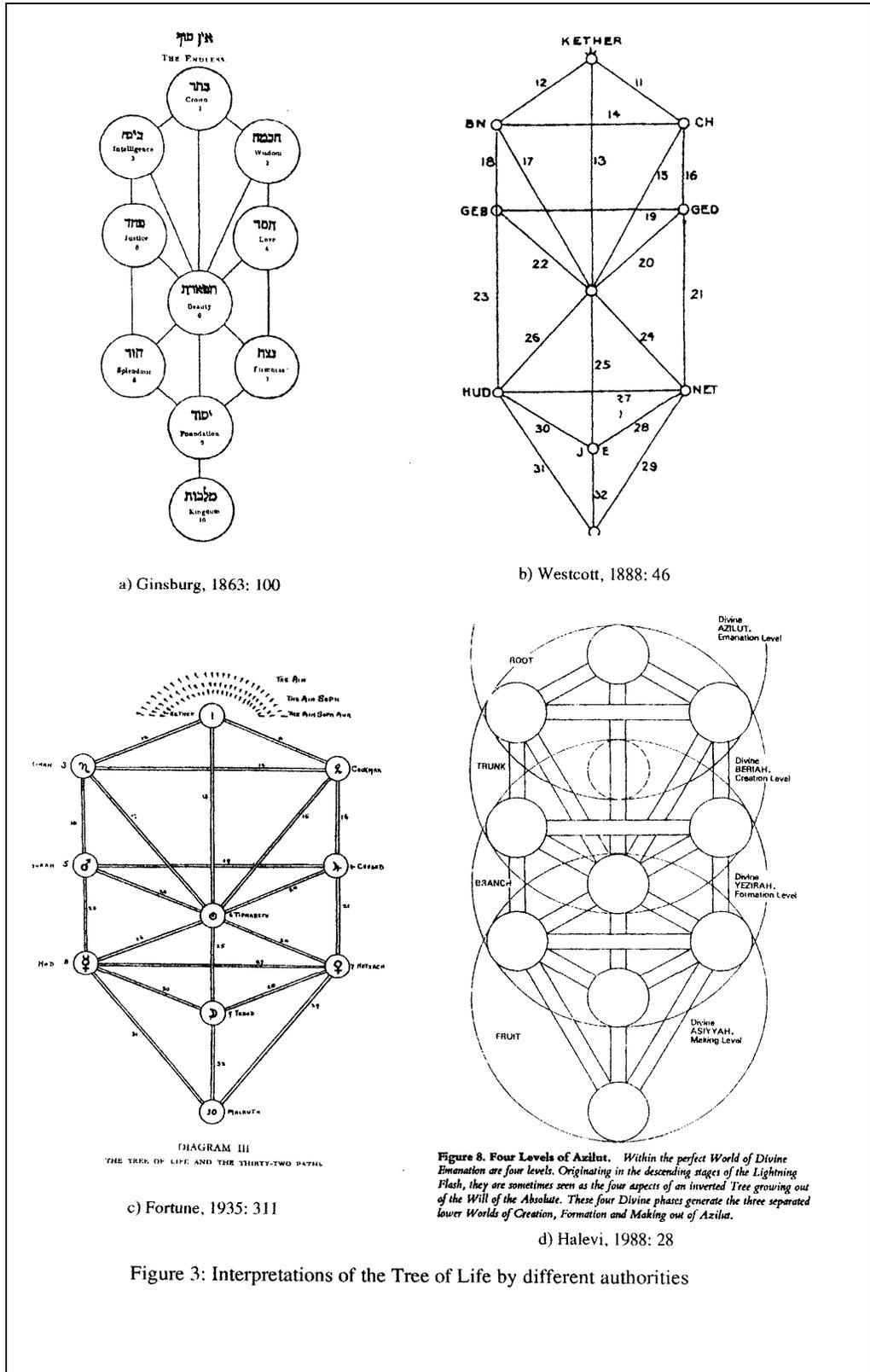


Figure 8. Four Levels of Azilut. Within the perfect World of Divine Emanation are four levels. Originating in the descending stages of the Lightning Flash, they are sometimes seen as the four aspects of an inverted Tree growing out of the Will of the Absolute. These four Divine phases generate the three separated lower Worlds of Creation, Formation and Making out of Azilut.

rely (but only apparently) on Eastern, particularly Buddhist, doctrines.¹¹⁹

Compared to previous texts on the Kabbalah (e.g. those of Eliphas Lévi),¹²⁰ it is Fortune's systematic approach to the Tree sphere by sphere that led *The Mystical Qabalah* to be regarded as one of the cornerstones of modern esoteric Kabbalah.¹²¹ Acknowledging her debt to Mathers and Crowley, from whom she derived her material,¹²² Fortune was one of the first to produce a readily understood text on Kabbalah that was suitable for the non-Jewish beginner, and which is also said to combine 'common sense' with an awareness of the psychological theories of her day.¹²³ It became something of a standard work among students of the Western Mysteries, and is 'generally considered the finest in-depth study of Kabbalah ever made.'¹²⁴ Although Ophiel expresses his exasperation that Fortune gives no practical work and declares most of the attributions to be useless for everyday life, he nevertheless recommends a thorough study of her text as the most coherent available at the time for its value as a meditation tool.¹²⁵

The contours of the Tree of Life, which Fortune considers as practically identical with 'the Qabalah', are intended as a comprehensive meditation symbol of the soul, of creation, and the intra-deical life of God; they are nowadays immediately recognisable, and are here depicted in Figure 2 on page 201. Nevertheless, it is strange to return to Fortune's own illustrations at the back of her book, to see them so weak and ill-proportioned, with a squashed appearance compared to their nowadays accepted configuration.¹²⁶ Tiphareth, for example, as the centre point of balance on the Tree, should be the centre of a circle described by Geburah, Hod, Netzach and Chesed; and

¹¹⁹ See discussion below (Chapter 5, pp. 272-73) concerning Blavatsky's debt to Western sources.

¹²⁰ Eliphas Lévi, *Transcendental Magic: Its Doctrine and Ritual* (London: Rider, 1968 [1896]), pp. 95-103.

¹²¹ Colin Wilson, *The Occult* (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1971), p. 204.

¹²² Fortune, *Mystical Qabalah*, p. v.

¹²³ Gareth Knight, *A History of White Magic* (London: Mowbray, 1978), p. 172.

¹²⁴ Cris Popenoe, *Inner Development* (Harmondsworth, Middlesex: Penguin, 1979), p. 449. More recent texts might well be considered to usurp that sentiment, although *The Mystical Qabalah* is still in use as the basis of the introductory study course of the Society of the Inner Light.

¹²⁵ Ophiel, *The Art and Practice of Caballa Magic* (New York: Samuel Weiser, 1976), pp. 50, 55.

¹²⁶ Compare Figures 3c and 3d, p. 202.

Malkuth should be double that distance from Tiphareth thus indicating its fallen nature.¹²⁷ But close comparison with Mathers's personal notebook makes it quite evident that her illustrations were copied directly from his own Tree diagram, which hers so closely follows.¹²⁸ The insiders Ginsburg and Westcott had already published outlines of the Tree, but neither of these conform well to the shape that not long afterwards became standard.¹²⁹

As accepted by Fortune, the Tree of Life consists of ten spheres, or Sephiroth (*sefirot*), and twenty-two interconnecting Paths. Lurianic and modern esoteric tradition suggests that there is also an eleventh invisible sphere between Kether and Tiphareth called Daath (Knowledge), which, however, other practitioners such as Regardie consider does not and should not exist, the *Sepher Yetzirah* itself categorically denying the existence of more than ten Sephiroth.¹³⁰ Yet Fortune emphasises that this sphere is a key Sephirah especially when seen in the light of Tantra, which embodies a full consideration of positive and negative energies, and of which she was cognisant. In this, the spine of the human body is aligned with the central Sephiroth and with Kundalini, which is said to rise as far as Daath at the central point of the Abyss, the

¹²⁷ Fortune, *Mystical Qabalah*, p. 311.

¹²⁸ Kathleen Raine, *Yeats the Initiate: Essays on Certain Themes in the Writings of W. B. Yeats* (London: George Allen & Unwin, 1986), p. 191, Fig. 59. The proportions of the glyph are exactly the same as that in Fortune, *Mystical Qabalah*, p. 311, strongly suggesting that it was traced by Fortune or her teacher directly from Mathers's notebook, or an intermediary copy. She says, 'I am quite unable to write anything about the "Mystical Qabalah" without my ancient and battered "Tree of Life" beside me. It is also interesting to note that when this Tree of Life, which was originally prepared for me by someone else, became so dingy as to be almost indecipherable, I repainted it myself, and found thereafter that it immediately took on a marked increase in magnetism [. . .].' Dion Fortune, *The Mystical Qabalah* (London: Ernest Benn, 1935), pp. 279-80.

¹²⁹ Christian D. Ginsburg, *The Essenes. The Kabbalah* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1955 [1863]), p. 100; Westcott, *Sepher Yetzirah, The Book of Formation*, p. 46. See Figure 3, p. 202. Halevi, *Kabbalah*, pp. 72, 73 reproduces a nineteenth-century Polish scroll depicting some of the many variations the diagram was thought to possess both pre- and post-Isaac Luria (1534-72).

¹³⁰ Israel Regardie, *A Garden of Pomegranates* (St. Paul, MN: Llewellyn, 1970 [1932]), p. 102. See also Westcott, *Sepher Yetzirah*, chapter 1, Section 4: 'Ten is the number of the Ineffable Sephiroth, ten and not nine, ten and not eleven.' But also Halevi, *The Way of Kabbalah* (London: Rider & Co., 1976), p. 21, where he makes a connection between the Tree of Life and the Menorah in the Temple, incorporating this eleventh Sephirah. See also the Kabbalist and former Orthodox Jew, who also considers Daath essential: Shulamit Elson, *Kabbalah of Prayer: Sacred Sounds and the Soul's Journey* (Great Barrington, MA: Lindisfarne Books, 2004), pp. 96-98.

highest point of consciousness that an individual can reach whilst in incarnation.¹³¹

Others, like Knight, see it as a mystical sphere, existing perhaps in another dimension.¹³² Fortune systematically elucidates the Spheres, Paths, and the three ‘Pillars’ suggested by the upright alignment of the side Spheres – two Pillars of Action, positive to the right, negative to the left (these representing the duality, the principle of polarity, in all things), and a Pillar of Equilibrium, or of Consciousness, at the centre.

The Tree may also be considered horizontally as consisting of certain significant realms of being: the top three Sephiroth being the realm of the spirit and designated as the Supernal Triangle, home of the Divine Spark, or Holy Guardian Angel;¹³³ the next three as the Ethical Triangle, the realm of the higher reaches of the Self; and the next lower three as the Astral, or Magical Triangle.¹³⁴ She also highlights the traditional division of the Tree into Four Worlds, or levels of manifestation: Atziluth, the Archetypal World in Kether; Briah, the Creative World in Chokmah and

¹³¹ Fortune, *Mystical Qabalah*, pp. 47-48. For a diagrammatic representation of this, see Fortune, *Cosmic Doctrine*, p. 221, Figure 20.

¹³² Gareth Knight, *A Practical Guide to Qabalistic Symbolism*, 2 vols (Toddington: Helios Books, 1965), I, 101-12.

¹³³ There is a great deal of confusion concerning these components of the psyche. Plato referred to *daimones* pervading nature and in man, forming a kind of web of inter-related presences between God and man, impinging on both. Scholem says: ‘[. . .] the *Sefirah Binah* truly deserves to be called the human soul, for it is a divine spark, one that was created from nothingness, to be sure, but from a nothingness that belongs nonetheless to the realm of the Godhead itself.’ Gershom Scholem, *Kabbalah* (Jerusalem: Keter Publishing House, 1974), p. 156. Fortune makes several references to the Divine Spark, ‘nuclei of the spirits of men’, relating it, as ‘Pure Spirit’ on the 7th Plane, to Kether. Dion Fortune and Gareth Knight, *Principles of Hermetic Philosophy* (Loughborough, Thoth Publications, 1999), pp. 35, 166, 175. The Higher Self, however, is said to reside in Tiphareth, mediating between the Divine Self and the daily personality. ‘It is sometimes referred to as the Holy Guardian Angel, the Lower Genius, or the Augoides.’ Chic Cicero, ed., in Israel Regardie, *The Tree of Life: An Illustrated Study in Magic* (St. Paul, MN: Llewellyn, 2001), p. 37, n. 12. See also Fortune, *Mystical Qabalah*, p. 197. Although early in life Crowley regarded the Holy Guardian Angel as a hidden part of the self, he later regarded it as an objective being separate from the self, following Mathers in attributing the term to Abramelin the Mage. Aleister Crowley, *Magick without Tears*, edited by Israel Regardie (St. Paul, MN: Llewellyn Publications, 1973 [1954]), pp. 276, 465. (The lesser ‘guardian angel’ of common knowledge is a presence, or aspect of the self, that whilst in close touch with the higher realms, has its home adjacent to earth.) Another source attributes the term to either the fifteenth-century French Cabalist Abraham of Würzburg, or else to MacGregor Mathers in his translation of *The Book of the Sacred Magic of Abramelin the Mage* (Wellingborough: Thorsons Publishers, 1976 [1903]), p. 164. See <http://www.en.Wikipedia.org> [accessed 02/04/2007], which reliably draws attention to the invocation of the Holy Guardian Angel as a major feature of magic from the *Picatrix* to the system of Martinès de Pasqually.

¹³⁴ Fortune, *Mystical Qabalah*, pp. 43-54.

Binah; Yetzirah, the Formative World of the next six Sephiroth; and Assiah, the Material World in Malkuth.¹³⁵ The Tree is credited with four 'colour scales' corresponding to the Four Worlds, although generally it is only the bold colours of Briah that are used in illustrations.¹³⁶ There are several variations on the way that the Four Worlds, or levels, or states of consciousness are depicted. Instead of being placed all onto one glyph, both Mathers and Knight depict four complete Trees one above the other, making for improved clarity.¹³⁷ Drury gives a slightly modified diagram of the Tree to emphasise that the levels of consciousness are associated with certain colours. This is particularly useful in highlighting the three stages of i) the Supernal Sephiroth (white); ii) the seven coloured central Sephiroth (including Daath in violet); and iii) the Sphere of the physical world (Malkuth) in black, describing the whole as a mandala 'containing all the qualities of the rainbow' which the shaman integrates into white. Consciousness descends the Tree from white through violet, yellow, indigo to black, balanced by the complementary pairs of colours (or forces) on each side.¹³⁸

It is interesting to compare the development of the Four Worlds idea as depicted by a modern follower of the Judaic school of Toledo, Z'ev ben Shimon Halevi (Warren Kenton). Halevi has a quite distinctive approach derived from Biblical sources, far-reaching in its flexibility and in its application to Creation and to the human Soul.¹³⁹ Each of the Trees emerges out of the centre of the one above, the lower Kether from the upper Tree's Tiphareth, thus allowing the Yesod (Foundation) of an

¹³⁵ Fortune, *Mystical Qabalah*, pp. 62-71. Peter Lombard agrees with Dionysius's similar classification of Archangelic Orders as they might be arranged on the Tree, the three subsets reflecting the Holy Trinity. Marcia L. Colish, *Peter Lombard* (Leiden: Brill, 1994), p. 351. See also Mathers's Plate IV for a tabulation. S. L. MacGregor Mathers, *The Kabbalah Unveiled* (London: Penguin Books, 1991), between pages 30 and 31.

¹³⁶ See, for example, Ophiel, (Edward C. Peach), *The Art and Practice of Caballa Magic*, (New York: Samuel Weiser, 1976), Fig 1a., and Israel Regardie, *The Golden Dawn*, 4 vols (St Paul, MN: Llewellyn, 1937-40, 1971), I, 147.

¹³⁷ Figures 2, 3d, pp. 201, 202, above. Mathers, *Kabbalah*, Plate IX. Also Gareth Knight, *Experience of the Inner Worlds* (Toddington: Helios Books, 1975), p. 77.

¹³⁸ Nevill Drury, *Inner Visions* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1979), p. 66.

¹³⁹ See Genesis 28, vv 12-19 and Ezekiel, 1.

upper Tree to coincide with the Daath (Abyss) of its lower Tree, neatly matching the Genesis story.¹⁴⁰

This results in a 'Jacob's Ladder' of overlapping spheres and paths, shown to much better effect in his book *Kabbalah* (1979), where he uses the colours specified in Exodus 26 – white (radiance) for Atziluth, blue (heaven) for Briah, purple (union of heaven and earth) for Yetzirah, and red (blood and earth) for Assiah.¹⁴¹ This arrangement, a marked improvement on previous attempts to place the whole of created existence on the ten Sephiroth of one Tree, also makes possible a consideration of Five Gardens, or Faces, the kite-shaped areas on the Ladder which represent distinct stages or conditions existing in the now more realistically overlapping Four Worlds.¹⁴²

Following Mathers, Fortune gives an important place to the designation of Kether as the Macroprosopus, the Greater Countenance, which manifests as Chokmah the Supernal Father, and Binah the Supernal Mother. The six Sephiroth of Yetzirah belong to the Microprosopus, the Lesser Countenance, with Assiah, or Malkuth, as the Bride.¹⁴³

Paths said to connect the Sephiroth are numbered from 11 to 32.¹⁴⁴ Traditionally, Hebrew letters are assigned to each of them, and are considered to

¹⁴⁰ Halevi, *The Way of Kabbalah*, pp. 40, 41.

¹⁴¹ Halevi, *Kabbalah*, p. 41. See Appendix VI, p. 468.

¹⁴² Halevi, *The Way of Kabbalah*, p. 123; Gareth Knight, *The Abbey Papers* (London: S.I.L. Trading, 2002), p. 210.

¹⁴³ Fortune, *Mystical Qabalah*, pp. 59-61.

¹⁴⁴ See Figure 3b, p. 202, above. This is the system of attributions adopted by MacGregor Mathers, as shown in his 'Diagram of Paths and Grades' in his notebook. See Kathleen Raine, *Yeats the Initiate: Essays on Certain Themes in the Writings of W. B. Yeats* (London: George Allen & Unwin, 1986), p. 191. It dates back to the beginnings of medieval Kabbalah, when, however, even the earliest texts disagreed over the attributions of numbers and letters to the Tree. Nevertheless, Mathers may well have been guided in this by the eclectic Renaissance scholar Athanasius Kircher (1602-80), whose numbering of the Paths is the same as Mathers's save that Kircher begins again at One after completing the ten Sefirot. See Kircher's illustration of the Tree and its attributions in his *Oedipus Aegyptiacus*, 3 vols. (Rome: 1642-44), II, i, 289, in Joscelyn Godwin, *Athanasius Kircher: A Renaissance Man and the Quest for Lost Knowledge* (London: Thames & Hudson, 1979), p. 61; also, with some translation of phraseology, in Charles Poncé, *Kabbalah: An Introduction and Illumination for the World Today* (London: Garnstone Press, 1974), p. 92. The illustration in Israel Regardie, *The Golden Dawn* (St. Paul, MN, Llewellyn, 1978), p. 123 also has the same numbering and lettering of the Paths as does Mathers's own diagram of the Tree in his personal diary. Raine: *Yeats*, p. 191.

encapsulate the essence of their meaning.¹⁴⁵ The spiritual significance of each Path is further elucidated by its Astrological Sign and, in the Western esoteric tradition only, by a Tarot trump, whose attributions, though taken seriously by esotericists, have been a source of controversy ever since they first appeared in the late nineteenth century.¹⁴⁶ Fortune clarifies all these attributions in her text, and they form the basis of the imaginative journeys from Sefirah to Sefirah undertaken by Western magicians.

The cross-paths, said to represent definite stages up the central Pillar of Consciousness, are not always drawn the same – Regardie, Achad, Halevi and Love draw their cross-paths in front because they indicate certain definite stages up the tree; Fortune and Knight behind; Gray behind or in front in different texts.¹⁴⁷

Her chapters concerning the Sephiroth are prefaced with a comprehensive table of attributes, including nomenclature, images, virtues and vices, and, no less important, the spiritual experience characteristic of each. She nevertheless emphasises that no Sefirah can be considered in isolation, and, warning that purely intellectual approaches are barren, recommends certain practical techniques such as intoning and

¹⁴⁵ There are several systems relating to the numbering of the Paths. 1. their enumeration from 11 to 22 following on from the 10 Spheres; 2. the numerical value of the Hebrew letter attributed to each path, running from 1 to 400; 3. the suggestion given in the *Sepher Yetzirah* whereby the twenty-two sounds or letters are arranged on the Tree such that their totals are 231 (the sum of 1 to 21) which would seem to suggest a third number sequence beginning with 0 not 1 as is customary. *Sepher Yetzirah*, translated by Wm. Wynn Westcott (New York: Samuel Weiser, 1980 [1887]), p. 18. But see also Christian G. Ginsburg, *The Kabbalah: Its Doctrines, Development and Literature* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1955 [1863]), pp. 154-55.

¹⁴⁶ The first to attempt a correlation between Kabbalah and the Tarot was Éliphas Lévi (1810-75). ‘It was Lévi who made the Tarot a prime ingredient in magical lore;’ Ronald Decker, Thierry Depaulis and Michael Dummett, *A Wicked Pack of Cards: The Origins of the Occult Tarot* (New York: St. Martin’s Press, 1996), pp. 166-74; ‘The [i.e. Lévi’s] fundamental [contribution] was his achievement in integrating the Tarot into the Western magical tradition, as received by all his successors.’ Decker et al., *Wicked Pack*, pp. 185-91. Though broadly following Fortune, Stewart posits an innovatory attribution of Tarot cards to the Paths based upon Underworld and Merlin traditions. R. J. Stewart, *The Miracle Tree: Demystifying the Qabalah*, (Franklin Lakes, NJ: New Page Books, 2003), p. 44.

¹⁴⁷ Regardie, *Pomegranates*, p. 68; Frater Achad (Charles Stansfield Jones), *The Anatomy of the Body of God* (New York: Samuel Weiser, 1972 [1923]), p. 35; Halevi, *Way of Kabbalah*, p. 13; Jeff Love, *The Quantum Gods* (Tisbury: Compton Russell Element, 1976), p. 165; Fortune, *Mystical Qabalah*, p. 311; Knight, *Practical Guide*, II, frontis.; Gray – compare W. G. Gray, *The Ladder of Lights* (Toddington: Helios, 1971), frontis. with his *The Tree of Evil* (Toddington: Helios, 1974), p. 6.

meditation on the Divine Letters and Names, as necessary to reach full understanding; but nowhere does she go into detail about these practicalities.¹⁴⁸

Fortune also includes a discussion of the Qliphoth, or negative forces, which are the result of advance from one stage in evolution or growth to another. As power becomes available for the next stage of development, and before it is firmly established in its new environment – as, for example, in the transition of a child into adulthood – there is an inevitable temporary imbalance of character. In cosmic terms, this is seen as each Sephiroth's residual and ever-present quota of unbalanced force.¹⁴⁹

To demonstrate the flexibility of the Tree, Fortune is able to explain the distinctive approaches of mystic and occultist in terms of the Tree of Life in two different ways – firstly, by contrasting Netzach (Venus - representing the higher elemental forces as the way of the mystic), and its opposite number, Hod (Mercury, the mental plane, as the way of the occultist), 'synthesising in the elemental Yesod'; and secondly by comparing the winding way up the Tree from side to side, visiting all the Spheres, as the way of the occultist (or magician), with the mystic's Way of Illumination as the path directly up the central pillar. This neatly recapitulates Faivre's scholarly distinction between the esotericist's preferences for hierarchies and intermediate beings and the mystic's direct communion with God.¹⁵⁰

In this respect it is relevant to note here the various polarities on the Tree – inside and between the three Triangles, between the Pillars, and among the Sephiroth themselves, which are positive or negative according to function – all the while remembering that the Tree is said to represent both the 'Universe' (really, all of creation) and the workings of the individual psyche, both of which are said to be susceptible to manipulation through the imaginative faculty of the mind. This faculty is discussed in Chapter 6 as one method of accessing inner beings. In spite of her psychological training, Fortune hastens to point out that the Angelic forces and the Gods of other systems are certainly not, as some argued, the repressed complexes of the

¹⁴⁸ Fortune, *Mystical Qabalah*, pp. 69, 109; Elson, *Kabbalah of Prayer*, pp. 107-9.

¹⁴⁹ Fortune, *Mystical Qabalah*, pp. 297-304.

¹⁵⁰ Fortune, *Mystical Qabalah*, pp. 59, 83-84; Faivre, *Modern Esoteric Spirituality*, p. xvii.

seeker concerned. She defines the Tree in words famous among the esoteric fraternity as an 'all-embracing glyph of the soul of man and of the universe', and the universe as 'a thought-form projected from the mind of God'.¹⁵¹ Each part of the Tree represents a cosmic force or factor, manifesting as Macrocosm *and* its replica the Microcosm, by means of which aspirants can establish links from their own souls to that of the 'world-soul', using the occult tradition of analogy, or correspondences.¹⁵² In applying non-intrinsic symbols to the Tree (e.g. the chakras), and bearing in mind Blavatsky's Eastern terminology, Fortune looks more to first principles than to any kind of tidy intellectual arrangement on the Tree which may distort meanings through lack of flexibility, and she disdains any easy tables of correspondences between disparate religious terms in spite of relying so much on Crowley's tabulations.¹⁵³

The orthodox Protestant tradition is accustomed to a view of the universe which emphasises the immediacy of the relationship between humanity and God (to the relative neglect of what may be termed the 'world of nature'), and largely excludes much consideration of what, in the light of the speculations of Kabbalists, seems to be a huge and complex universe of many levels and many unfamiliar life-forms intermediate between humans and God. This world of hierarchies and intermediaries is the proper subject of esoteric, as opposed to mystical, philosophy and has received scholarly attention from such commentators as Henry Corbin, Antoine Faivre, etc.; indeed, it is the hallmark of esotericism.¹⁵⁴ Moreover, the conjectures of recent occultists, as reviewed here, have served to alert us to some of these possibilities, overtaken only in more recent years by the advent of science fiction, which, as itself the product of the imagination, is well capable of precipitating novel and fruitful realisations concerning the true nature of the Cosmos.¹⁵⁵

¹⁵¹ Fortune, *Mystical Qabalah*, p. 17.

¹⁵² Fortune, *Mystical Qabalah*, pp. 14, 17, 18.

¹⁵³ Fortune, *Mystical Qabalah*, p. 81.

¹⁵⁴ Henry Corbin, *Creative Imagination in the Sufism of Ibn 'Arabi* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1969). (Re-issued in 1998 as *Alone with the Alone*.) Antoine Faivre, *Access*, pp. 98-99.

¹⁵⁵ Including consideration of such concepts as its multidimensionality, and its likeness to a hologram.

The Tree of Life, being a ready-made map of levels of existence in creation, is thus a workable framework upon which to superimpose inner hierarchies of intermediaries. Microcosmically, it distinguishes levels of consciousness. Hanegraaff has selected two examples of contemporary ‘cartographies of consciousness’ – those of Stanislav Grof and Ken Wilber - which illustrate the extent of inner landscapes extending from mundane consciousness to the heights of the Pleroma. But Hanegraaff did not refer to Kabbalah in this connection, and only dealt with it incidentally because of its peripheral relevance to New Age religion, yet at the same time acknowledging its tremendous importance in Western esotericism, particularly in the operations of magic.¹⁵⁶ In this respect, the Kabbalah remains an important element of modern magical and esoteric practice derived from traditional Renaissance and Christian sources. It is correspondingly notable that it features much less in the practices and teachings of contemporary neopagan groups, which usually emphasise nativist, non-Judeo-Christian sources. In the work of Dion Fortune, the glyph of the Tree of Life is comparable as a traditional ground-plan of inner states to the schemes of Grof and Wilber, since it provides a stable background to much magical and consciousness work today and is constantly being re-interpreted in the light of modern psychological and scientific speculation.

Hierarchies of Inner Plane Beings

Having discussed the various levels or planes of existence in traditional Kabbalah and also late nineteenth- and early twentieth- century Christian Cabala, it is as well to review Fortune’s simplified tabulation of the planes outside of the Kabbalistic framework, and compare her colleague Charles Loveday’s diagrammatic interpretation with the Theosophical model as understood by C. W. Leadbeater and others. This explanation should be read in conjunction with the later discussion of the Rays, since there is a strong correlation between the Rays and the Planes.¹⁵⁷ Fortune herself

¹⁵⁶ Hanegraaff, *New Age Religion*, pp. 246-55, 395-96.

¹⁵⁷ See below, Chapter 5, pp. 289-91. Dion Fortune, *Esoteric Orders and their Work*. (York Beach, ME, 2000), p. 37.

specifies a simplified schema of Planes as follows, correlating them with the development of the ‘Races’ of former times:

7.)	Spiritual	Abstract	7 th Race
6.)		Concrete	6 th Race

5.)	Mental	Abstract	5 th Race (Aryan)
4.)		Concrete	4 th Race (Atlantean)

3.)	Astral	Upper	3 rd Race
2.)		Lower	2 nd Race

1.	Physical		1 st Race ¹⁵⁸

This is a radical simplification of a highly complex and abstract mechanism by which a cosmos and then a solar system are formed and how they evolve, as set out in her channelled text *The Cosmic Doctrine*, a taut cosmology on the lines of Madame Blavatsky’s voluminously expansive *The Secret Doctrine*. It might be hazarded that both Fortune and Leadbeater felt the need for a more concise exegesis than Blavatsky’s, and while explaining that the planes interpenetrated one another, nevertheless always tabled them one above the other for ease of understanding; in Leadbeater’s case, with Eastern names, and corresponding to the invisible bodies in man:

Mahâparanirvânic plane
 Paranirvânic plane
 Nirvânic plane
 Buddhic plane (which includes the ‘reincarnating soul’)
 Mental plane
 Astral plane Higher: Arupa (no form) and Lower: Rupa (form)
 Physical plane Etheric and Dense¹⁵⁹

The lowest five are described in detail by Annie Besant in the *Ancient Wisdom*, the book that made so much impression on Fortune in 1918.

¹⁵⁸ Dion Fortune, *Aspects of Occultism* (Wellingborough, Aquarian, 1962), p. 71. Consideration of the past and future ‘Races’ of humanity is well outside the scope of this thesis.

¹⁵⁹ C. W. Leadbeater, *Man Visible and Invisible: Examples of Different types of Men as Seen by Means of Trained Clairvoyance* (London: Theosophical Publishing, 1902), Figure II, between pages 20 and 21.

A further development was Alice Bailey's diagram of the 'Seven Planes of Our Solar System' also entitled 'The Constitution of Man'.¹⁶⁰ She shows seven Planes each subdivided into a further seven, the whole constituting the 49 Planes of just the 'Cosmic Physical Plane':

1. Divine (Plane of the Logos) - Contains the three aspects of Deity: Will or Power (The Father), Love-Wisdom (The Son) and Active Intelligence (The Holy Spirit).
2. Monadic (Anupadaka) - The Monad in Man, the pure Spirit, reflects the Divine Trinity
3. Spiritual (Atmic)
4. Intuitional (Buddhic)
5. Mental (Manasic)
6. Emotional (Astral)
7. Physical

The Higher Self (which she terms 'ego') is anchored in the highest subplanes of the Mental, Intuitional, and Spiritual Planes .

The Personality or Lower Self is anchored in the highest sub-plane of the Physical Plane, the highest of the Astral plane and reaches to the fourth sub-plane of the Mental Plane.

Fortune's colleague Charles Loveday's illustration of the planes is more inventive than either of these. It is sketched as a lyre with, anomalously, horizontal strings to represent the Planes, to each of which is attributed a note of the musical scale from c to b. Superimposed on this is the Caduceus of Hermes, the heads of the intertwined serpents reaching to the fifth (abstract mental) Plane, above which spread the wings on the lower Spiritual Plane. The turns of the caduceus are intended to signify the change of polarity as each next higher Plane is reached. Each Plane is designated by its inhabitants:

- | | |
|---|---------------|
| 7 | Christis |
| 6 | Archangels |
| 5 | Angels |
| 4 | Masters |
| 3 | Saints |
| 2 | Nature Forces |
| 1 | Man |

Further, Fortune treats the glyph of the Planes more dynamically than Leadbeater or Bailey by designating one serpent branch of the Caduceus as on the

¹⁶⁰ Alice Bailey, *Initiation, Human and Solar* (England: Lucis press, 1922), p. xiv.

‘involutionary arc’ (Wilber’s ‘pre-personal’ state), the downflowing tide of life, its intertwining indicating the opportunity to be made aware of higher aspects of life on the same plane, and the other on the ‘evolutionary arc’ (Wilber’s ‘transpersonal’ state) upflowing, and ministering to the downflowing life tide on the same plane. Madame Blavatsky has already explained and illustrated the same idea.¹⁶¹

The nature and functions of the various classes of intermediaries were apparent in our earlier historical overview. On the one hand, some inner classes of figure such as ghosts and souls of the dead have been seen in much the same light from ancient times up until the present; others, such as the Goddess have emerged with new emphasis in comparatively recent times.¹⁶² One persistent feature of intermediaries is their multiplicity,¹⁶³ and another is the ambiguity of their character and function, with some commentators unclear, or at variance, as to their real nature, and the unlettered more concerned with any results that they may effect than who or what they may be.¹⁶⁴ Although any comparisons and analyses made here are therefore tentative and conjectural, it is nevertheless worth summarising their distribution in historical terms.

Broadly speaking, the recorded occurrence of intermediaries in ancient times reflects a panoply of gods and of goddess/witch figures, mythical or fictional, set in hierarchies with good and bad demons, collectively termed ‘daimons’, which were related to planets and had specialised tasks, such as the Angel of Death, or the Seven Angelic Archons of Gnosticism. They assisted in magical operations such as healings and exorcisms; empowered oracles; guided and protected both nations and individuals; and, working for the Deity - under Hecate or the Devil for example – judged and punished wicked souls after death. Christians, particularly, regarded demons as ready

¹⁶¹ Fortune, *The Cosmic Doctrine*, (York Beach, ME: Samuel Weiser, 2000), pp. 134, 171, 221 (Fig 20), 223, (Fig 26). Blavatsky, *The Secret Doctrine*, II, pp. 237-38.

¹⁶² The attitude of different Christian denominations towards ghosts varied. See pp. 82-83, 92.

¹⁶³ E.g., the multiplication of angels and demons in Jewish demonology and the proliferation of saints among Christians in Medieval times; the enumeration of hierarchies of elementals by Paracelsus and the increased attention given to the specific tasks of angels by scholars such as Agrippa during the Renaissance; and the continuing attention given to these intermediaries during the Enlightenment by representative esoteric figures such as Martinès de Pasqually – all these phases discussed in Chapter 2.

¹⁶⁴ Fanger ‘Intermediary Beings II. Middle Ages, 2. Intermediary Beings with Backgrounds in Sources Outside the Liturgy’ in Hanegraaff, *Dictionary*, II, 622-23.

scapegoats for misfortune. They were generally thought, like guardian angels, to have telepathic capability towards humans, assisting in daily life, but sometimes giving spurious dreams. Innumerable good demons, or Angels, controlled creation, and in early Judaism and Christianity were often known by name as representatives of the seven heavens, or else seen as aspects of God.

By the Middle Ages, the West had fully assimilated its Judaeo-Christian culture. Angels and demons were henceforth considered separately; Jewish tradition developed a demonology, accompanied by comprehensive but variable name lists, personalising virtually all human frailties and wickednesses, yet providing powerful inner figures with which to control lesser demons. Christians also accepted hierarchies of demons, often appealing to them for personal gain. The Dionysian angelic hierarchies, still correlated with planetary spheres, had become relatively standard and later featured in the vernacular literature of Dante. While name lists flourished, any unusual or foreign names were suspect; local heroes and miracle-workers were increasingly accorded sainthood; and necromancy was increasingly used during medieval to Elizabethan times.

During the Renaissance, inquiry into demonology, generally by sincere and devout theologians, evoked a polarisation of views among practitioners and commentators alike, with some, such as Pico, Trithemius and Agrippa content to work with personal and intelligent demons as part of the natural order of things; others, such as Ficino, warily settled for natural rather than demonic magic; while yet others condemned all such operations – whether conducted in the name of witchcraft or of Christendom – as the work of the Devil, and therefore calling for exorcism or punishment. The Seven Secondary Intelligences ruled over the cycles of creation; indeed, a seven-fold structure developed alongside the nine-fold already established. The overarching figure of Christ was regarded as the supreme intermediary.

A further category of intermediary consisted of ‘inanimate’ objects, works of art, religious symbols, diagrams, and charts. Their appearance is exemplified at popular level by the use from ancient times to the present day of amulets and talismans, and at a deeper level by specific meditation symbols such as the Cosmic Tree; the Judaic Merkabah Chariot, including all its separate component parts; the Tree of Life and the

Sefirot; the Hebrew letters; the design and decoration of cathedrals; religious ikons; the ritual enactments of Ficino; and later, the more precise diagrammatic renderings of the inner worlds by Giordano Bruno and Robert Fludd.¹⁶⁵ All of these, as with the ‘animate’ classes already outlined, were designed as mechanisms of ascent, and to enhance the already wide range of accessible models of varying effectiveness for the present-day practitioner to engage in.

The Impact of Spiritualism

Across the centuries an eccentric assortment of sensitives had habitually taken part in mediumistic activities, for the most part unrecorded; but particularly from the eighteenth century onwards written accounts by intelligentsia who experienced spiritualistic contact with inner figures became more common.

So before moving on to discuss the great variety of intermediaries with which Fortune was acquainted, we should examine certain features of eighteenth- and nineteenth-century esotericism more closely than we have done hitherto if we are not to neglect one of the most pivotal phenomena giving enormous impetus to the development of Western esotericism as we know it today. That feature is the rise of modern spiritualism, especially foreshadowed by early figures such as Emanuel Swedenborg (1688-1772), Anton Mesmer (1734-1815), and Andrew Jackson Davis (1826-1910).

Hanegraaff emphasises that Swedenborg always maintained a trained scientific approach to the higher realms even after the onset of his visions in 1745. Though he was formerly considered unfamiliar with any traditional esoteric literature, links have now been found which connect Swedenborg with Rosicrucian and Christian Kabbalistic strands, and which endorse him as firmly within that esoteric stream, save that, as a scientist, he considered matter as inert, and therefore as harbouring no divinity, even while mirroring the inner worlds. This dualism is quite foreign, certainly to the Hermetic philosophy which is characteristic of teaching in contemporary Mystery schools, though not, as Hanegraaff observes, of New Age religion, of which those

¹⁶⁵ See, for example, D. P. Walker, *Spiritual and Demonic Magic*, pp. 47, 49-51, and Sylvie Edighoffer,

schools can sometimes be considered a part.¹⁶⁶ In contrast to Swedenborg, Franz Anton Mesmer posited a ‘subtle invisible fluid’ permeating nature, which became a workable and publicly acceptable hypothesis for the mechanism behind many successful healings by Mesmer and his followers, and which Hanegraaff stresses as an essential element of modern occultism, leading the way to validation of Neo-Platonic ideas concerning the astral body.¹⁶⁷

Hanegraaff suggests that these two figures are the major precursors of the spiritualist movement, adding that communications during the latter half of the eighteenth century with the spirits of the dead by many small spiritualist groups, and communications with ‘elevated beings’ by organisations such as Martinès de Pasqually’s *Élus-Coëns* or Dom Antoine-Joseph Pernety’s *Illuminés d’Avignon* cannot be left out of account, since these movements could well have been prompted by familiarity with the practices of Swedenborg and Mesmer. Andrew Jackson Davis, who channelled figures such as Galen, and even Swedenborg himself prior to the rapid growth of American spiritualism after the 1848 Hydesville rappings, was a popular and talented medium giving great impetus to spiritualism in both its practice and theory, largely based on Swedenborgian theology save that the practices and inner contacts were now considered to be available to everybody not only to Swedenborg alone. Hanegraaff thus places this new-found ease of communication with intermediaries against the background of the spiritualistic influences outlined above and credits it with creating a viable framework upon which occult theory and practice could be carried out with conviction.¹⁶⁸

Jon Klimo goes further, and defines channelling as an enduring historical phenomenon from ancient to modern times, and covers much the same ground as the survey of intermediaries in Chapter Two above, for, of course, without channellers there can be no awareness of intermediaries. He emphasises the persistence of shamanism, the importance of the Greek concept of the Muse, and of graphical Biblical

‘Fludd, Robert’, in Hanegraaff, *Dictionary*, II, 371-75.

¹⁶⁶ Hanegraaff, *New Age Religion*, pp. 424-29.

¹⁶⁷ Hanegraaff, *New Age Religion*, pp. 430-35.

¹⁶⁸ Hanegraaff, *New Age Religion*, pp. 435-43.

instances such as Moses' contact with Yahweh; the channelling of Samuel by the Witch of Endor; Paul on the road to Damascus; and the channelling of Revelation by John the Divine. His enumeration of figures from the twelfth century until the spiritualist era includes a miscellany of mystics, such as Hildegard of Bingen, prophets such as Nostradamus, and the more recent figures of Swedenborg and Joseph Smith already mentioned.¹⁶⁹ In the spiritualist era, channellers were termed mediums, and channelled the spirits of the dead. The psychical researcher F. W. H. Myers (1843-1901) worked with William Stainton Moses (1839-92) who channelled quality teachings from several 'controls' – 'Imperator', 'Rector', 'Doctor' and others. Over a period of thirty years, Myers researched mediumship, concluding that he had amassed sufficient evidence to prove survival after death and the reality of post-mortem communication. He was also responsible for founding the London Society for Psychical Research in 1883.¹⁷⁰

Klimo includes H. P. Blavatsky among the ranks of channellers – channelling, it may be remarked, incarnate spirits;¹⁷¹ Frederick Bligh Bond (1864-1945), who worked for a very short time alongside Fortune; Edgar Cayce (1877-1945), the 'sleeping prophet' who tended to dictate material normally characteristic of the esoteric tradition and much out of keeping with his formal Christian background; Alice Bailey; Dion Fortune; Grace Cooke who channelled White Eagle, supposedly related to her in a former incarnation; and Ruth Norman and her husband who claimed to be archangels themselves.¹⁷²

New Age channelling has features in common with both spiritualism and occultism. Here many kinds of entity, or intermediary, are contacted – including ascended masters, spirit guides, gods and goddesses, nature spirits, and the higher self of the channeller – in trance, automatic writing, or by inner prompting and similar actions, all the sources considered to originate from outside of normal consciousness. Contact with the recently departed, however, is more characteristic of spiritualism

¹⁶⁹ Jon Klimo, *Channeling: Investigations on Receiving Information from Paranormal Sources* (Wellingborough: The Aquarian Press, 1988), pp. 76-94.

¹⁷⁰ Klimo, *Channeling*, pp. 95-107. See also F. W. H. Myers, *Human Personality and Its Survival of Bodily Death*, 2 vols (New York: Longmans, Green & Co., 1954 [1903]).

¹⁷¹ Seemingly an oblique reference to Blavatsky's Mahatmas. Klimo, *Channeling*, p. 105.

¹⁷² Klimo, *Channeling*, pp. 108-28.

alone. The suggestion by previous scholars that channelling is a form of inspiration, or revelation, on the grounds that we do not understand enough about the process to be able to attribute it to any one single process, is a definition that Hanegraaff rejects as too loose a definition.¹⁷³ Extended discussion of Hanegraaff's outline of channelling is undertaken in Chapter 6, where the recently devised scholarly 'cartographies of consciousness' mentioned above will be more closely considered.

Intermediary Beings and the Tree of Life

But alongside the emergence of spiritualism, the focus of attention among the more astute esoteric groups, lodges and secret societies had shifted. Almost unobtrusively, alongside a sharp awareness of angels among the emerging Mystery Schools, and of the recently deceased of spiritualism, a new kind of intermediary had made an appearance, that of the 'Secret Chiefs', soon merging into the 'Ascended Masters', whose brief now extended beyond the closed orders of the secret societies to the uplifting of humanity as a whole.¹⁷⁴ Such is their uniqueness among intermediaries in the history and practice of Western esotericism from 1880-1920, as indicated in Chapter 2, that here I shall emphasise once more the dynamic nature of the now seen-to-be evolving macrocosm, a principle which according to Hermetic tradition also applied to all its life-forms, living and apparently dead, and I shall explore the broad outlines of Fortune's own hierarchical scheme in so far as it involves consideration of the Theosophical Masters and their derivatives, whose literature she was so well acquainted with – that of Blavatsky, Leadbeater, Bailey, and Steiner.¹⁷⁵

Whereas the glyph of the Tree of Life forms an essential background to Fortune's concept of the inner worlds, apart from the confessed following of Mathers and Crowley, she gives few indications as to how and where upon the Tree the various

¹⁷³ Hanegraaff, *New Age Religion*, pp. 23-27. He concludes by designating 'channelling' as the emic word referring to 'the general etic category of 'articulated revelations.' (Hanegraaff's emphasis).

¹⁷⁴ Nicholas Goodrick-Clarke, *Helena Blavatsky*, p. 6.

¹⁷⁵ From the writings of H. P. Blavatsky herself as well as those of the 'Neo-Theosophists' Annie Besant and C. W. Leadbeater. Less directly, Alice Bailey clearly sets out the Tibetan's teaching regarding the Lodge of the Masters in *Initiation, Human and Solar*, pp. 50-62.

life-forms are said to exist, save in general terms.¹⁷⁶ Her interest is more closely focused on the symbolism of the Tree and its use as a meditation tool. Where she has been more precise, I have indicated these instances below. Since Fortune's time, and to the present, students in her tradition – for example in the Society of the Inner Light, and the Servants of the Light – have been required, like Fortune, to meditate on the Tree of Life and from their own intuition elucidate significant features of the Sephiroth and the Paths, thus adding not only to their own store of realisations, but also to an expanding subliminal reservoir of concepts appertaining to the various structures of the Tree, which are then considered to become more easily accessible to subsequent meditators who use it. Some of Fortune's successors have extended her work by describing or adapting these experiences, or expanding their inner activity through the use of novel magical techniques.¹⁷⁷ Other insiders, particularly John and Caitlín Matthews, have become prolific writers on most aspects of Western esotericism, and are therefore teachers in their own right, guided by their own fresh insights alongside some careful research. So, in addition to examples of the work of Fortune's forebears, the experiences of several of the most important of her successors are included in this chapter to give a picture of the evolution of some of the ideas regarding intermediaries that have been set in motion since the early nineteenth century, and which are continuing to this day. Both Dolores Ashcroft-Nowicki and W. G. Gray, for example, were trained by the Society of the Inner Light, and Gray in turn trained R. J. Stewart in meditational and magical methods. Gareth Knight was a senior member of the Society of the Inner Light, and later founded his own school, the Gareth Knight Group, based upon that Society's best practice. John and Caitlín Matthews, together with the above, participated over a number of years during the 1980s in practical occult workshops organised by Gareth Knight at Hawkwood College, Stroud. Here they shared and

¹⁷⁶ '[. . .] she [Dion Fortune] could have written a highly presentable account of the Order [of the Golden Dawn] teaching [. . .]. Yet [. . .] she has done no more than throw out an occasional hint, accompanied by the merest fragment of Order teaching.' Israel Regardie, *What You Should Know about the Golden Dawn* (Phoenix, AZ, Falcon Press, 1983) p. 36.

¹⁷⁷ such as Stewart's use of music as applied to the Tree of Life. R. J. Stewart, *Music and the Elemental Psyche* (Wellingborough: Aquarian, 1987), and Shulamit Elson's emphasis on the power of sound in Kabbalistic prayer (Shulamit Elson, *Kabbalah of Prayer: Sacred Sounds and the Soul's Journey* (Great Barrington, MA: Lindisfarne Books, 2004), pp. 107-56.

developed various practical applications of the Western tradition, and were one of the groups subject to in-depth research by the anthropologist Tanya Luhrmann, who attempted to determine the reasons for otherwise intelligent people using magic, an irrational activity generally considered futile, although she nowhere dealt with the kinds of intermediary beings that most high magicians consider so important to their work.¹⁷⁸ This chapter goes some way towards remedying that omission by once again stepping outside of the etic approach, and entering the emic narratives of the major primary sources derived firstly from Fortune's precursors such as the above-mentioned Lévi, Blavatsky, Leadbeater, and Waite; then from her successors such as Knight, the Matthews, Stewart, and Richardson, who, as 'insiders' to her tradition, each postulate in their own way the possible status and traits of the intermediaries and give accounts of teachings or other kinds of contact such as raised consciousness or a sense of power, which modified their pictures of inner-world presences, and influenced their practices.

The Inhabitants of the Unseen

Although the following categorisation of inner beings is from an earlier period (1929-1930) than the *Mystical Qabalah* (1935), and does not mention the relationship between the two, it seems reasonable to assume that Fortune chose to adopt a more straightforward style of presentation here in deference to her more general readers, only a few of whom would have had any acquaintance with the Kabbalistic Tree of Life.¹⁷⁹ And although Kabbalah had long been the basis for her approach to the theory of the Unseen worlds, she might well have lacked sufficient confidence to draw firm relationships between them until her unusually concentrated work on the Tree during the years 1931-35. Indeed, one could envisage the possibility that it was her very

¹⁷⁸ Tanya M. Luhrmann, *Persuasions of the Witch's Craft: Ritual Magic in Contemporary England* (London: Picador, 1994 [1989]), pp. 167-69; 221-27.

¹⁷⁹ She was careful not to assume public knowledge of Kabbalah even several years after the publication of her relatively popular *Mystical Qabalah*. As she says cautiously in one of her War Letters in 1939 in connection with a particular visualisation, 'If you have any knowledge of the Qabalistic method, place your meditation on the Tree.' [my emphasis]. Knight, *Dion Fortune and the Inner Light*, p. 245.

exposition of the Inhabitants of the Unseen that triggered the realisation of a need for a comprehensive volume on the Kabbalah (i.e. the *Mystical Qabalah*) as a background.

Fortune herself divides 'inner plane contacts' into Elder Brethren on the one hand, and Beings of Other Evolutions on the other.¹⁸⁰ More formally, she enumerates seven categories of 'inhabitants of the unseen':

I. The Souls of the Departed, who are the easiest to contact. They divide into

a) those who are between incarnations, and generally contacted through séance. Contact with them may be comforting to both sides, allaying the fear of death, and should not be ignored; they are ordinary people like ourselves.

b) liberated souls who have passed on to higher realms, and

c) those who have passed beyond the need to incarnate, but stay in touch with those in incarnation who are able to respond to them in order to help the planet and those living on it. These are the Inner Plane Guides or Masters that dedicated magicians would want to co-operate with.

II. Projections of the Living, generally the 'astro-etheric forms', or ghosts, of human beings.

III. The Angelic Hierarchies

IV. Elementals

V. Nature Spirits

VI. The Qliphoth or Demons

VII. Thought-forms, or artificial elementals.¹⁸¹

¹⁸⁰ 'The Elder Brethren [. . .] usually referred to generically as the Masters,' Dion Fortune, *The Training and Work of an Initiate* (Wellingborough: Aquarian, 1972, [1930]), pp. 76-77.

¹⁸¹ See Dion Fortune, *Spiritualism in the Light of Occult Science* (London: Rider & Co., 1931), pp. 92-111. Also Dion Fortune and Gareth Knight, *Spiritualism and Occultism* (Loughborough: Thoth Publications, 1999 [1929-30]), pp. 116-27. This list may usefully be compared to that given by Iamblichus on p. 75 above. It should be noted that the list given in *Applied Magic* (Wellingborough: The Aquarian Press, 1962) pp. 34-41 excludes the Qliphoth or Demons, which had already featured in her *Spiritualism in the Light of Occult Science*, pp. 104-06.

It is edifying to compare this categorisation with that of Halevi who points out that the various figures or apparent personalities of the lower unconscious are self-created parts of ourselves, who make their presence felt as soon as the spiritual aspirant begins to persist in his/her quest, resulting in a crisis, which is best handled under the tutelage of an experienced teacher; and secondly, that there are the angels and demons of Kabbalistic tradition, which are archetypes associated with the various Sephiroth, such as Apollo of Tiphareth, and Jupiter of Chesed. It is these that give rise to informative and motivational dreams and urges, and because of their inherent power should be treated with the utmost caution and respect if met with. Outside of the individual psyche, Halevi speaks of entities, both negative and positive, who inhabit the lower Yetziratic world, and whom we are advised to treat as one would treat animals or plants in the physical world.¹⁸² Some of these intelligences are especially looking to disrupt genuine inner work, but are said to be shadowed by corresponding patrols who control their activities.¹⁸³ Halevi warns that some of the disruptive entities are difficult to identify because of their pretence of being genuine helpers. Neither does he place as much store by spiritualism as Fortune; for him, the souls of the departed may sometimes communicate with us if it is deemed necessary on occasion, otherwise they should be left alone.¹⁸⁴ It is worthy of note that Halevi refers constantly to the Tree of Life and uses many illustrations to clarify his text, whereas Fortune does not.¹⁸⁵ There may be several reasons for this: there was formerly no tradition of multiple drawings of the Tree to illustrate different features, and they would have taken considerable time and care to reproduce in those days; the *Mystical Qabalah* was the result of

¹⁸² The 'Four Worlds' of Kabbalah (or dimensions of existence) range from Assiah, the material world, Yetzirah, the psychic world, Briah, the creative world, domain of the Archangels, to Atziluth, which consists of the qualities of God. See Figure 2, p. 201.

¹⁸³ Also confirmed by Fortune as the intermediary group termed 'The Occult Police', a body organised on a national basis on the Inner planes to counter detrimental occult activity – the results of their work often appearing, for example, as newspaper exposés. Dion Fortune, *Psychic Self-defence* (Wellingborough: Aquarian, 1974), pp. 199-204.

¹⁸⁴ Z'ev ben Shimon Halevi *School of Soul* (Bath: Gateway Books, 1993 [1985]), pp. 137-41.

¹⁸⁵ Fortune only ever showed three illustrations in total – those on pp. 307-11 of *The Mystical Qabalah*. Halevi's *The Way of Kabbalah* alone contains 31 illustrations of the Tree of Life to clarify levels of creation, states of consciousness, etc. Z'ev ben Shimon Halevi, *The Way of Kabbalah*, (London: Rider & Company, 1976), *passim*.

concentrated meditation on each Sephirah and the Tree as a whole, resulting in experience as much as knowledge; an initiate's realisations were generally noted in a magical diary, held to be extremely confidential,¹⁸⁶ and Fortune considered the glyph of the Tree of Life, like a pack of Tarot cards, as of great talismanic and intermediary value which was therefore *required* to be treated circumspectly. As she says herself, she was reluctant to give too much away, perhaps because of the 'constraints of traditional occult secrecy'.¹⁸⁷ The strength of her book rests on character formation, on 'philosophy, psychism, and magic' and on symbolism that she admits 'will never yield their significance to conscious meditation alone';¹⁸⁸ and while the basic traditional angelic and archangelic attributions are included, references to the relationship between the Tree of Life and the many other kinds of intermediary beings that she had *previously* categorised independently of the Tree of Life, as listed above, are disappointingly low.¹⁸⁹

Gods and Goddesses, Archangels, Angels, and the racial Manus – exalted beings such as Krishna, Christ (and Melchizedek, a contact specially valued by the Society of the Inner Light), who supervise groups of Masters – are already familiar from our historical survey in Chapter 2 as inhabitants of that world of intermediary beings which form an essential element in the cosmology of the Western esoteric traditions.¹⁹⁰ Their remoteness leads us to suspect the claims of some to have contacted

¹⁸⁶ On her death, Fortune caused her personal effects and papers to be destroyed. Maggie Anthony, *Jung's Circle of Women: The Valkyries* (York Beach, ME: Nicolas-Hays, 1999), p. 77.

¹⁸⁷ Knight, *Dion Fortune and the Inner Light*, p. 219.

¹⁸⁸ Fortune, *Mystical Qabalah*, pp. 95-96.

¹⁸⁹ She intends her work to encourage us to use the Tree as a tool – a methodological key - with which we may discover relationships for ourselves, e.g. with the gods of other systems, and she contents herself with referring us to works such as Blavatsky's *Secret Doctrine* and *Isis Unveiled* and Frazer's *Golden Bough*. Fortune, *Mystical Qabalah*, p. 93, 97.

¹⁹⁰ The 'gods', for example, are figures that are generated by human group minds of differing (though generally comparable) cultural traditions, reflecting similarities in human needs the world over. They are nevertheless 'immensely powerful as vehicles for linking microcosm with macrocosm.' See Dion Fortune, *The Cosmic Doctrine* (York Beach, ME: Samuel Weiser, 2000, [1949]) pp. 219-20. She adds that all the god-forms are also vehicles for the forces of Nature. Contact with Pan, for example, who may be positioned at Chokmah on the Tree of Life, could bring an understanding of the sex force and the powers of the Kundalini (Fortune, *Training and Work*, p. 92; *Applied Magic*, pp. 47, 98). Chapter 2 has already introduced us to the gods of Zarathustrian religion, of Egypt, and of Greece. The *Chaldaean Oracles*, we saw, even contain instructions for inducing gods into statues. The medieval Jewish and Christian world

them, although in the final analysis, the finer the forces involved, the more likely is true paradox, as well as self-deception, to appear.¹⁹¹

I shall now examine in detail Fortune's categories in the order that she gives, omitting Ia) souls who are between incarnations and Ib) those have passed to higher realms out of reach of earth. These are not of major relevance to the kinds of intermediary under discussion in this chapter, and so I shall begin with her third subdivision, Ic), those who have passed beyond the need to incarnate.

Ic. The Inner Plane Guides or Masters

As I have already emphasised, Fortune holds that those special guides, beings, contacts, or units of consciousness, imagined or subjectively real, that she variously terms the Elder Brethren, the Masters of Wisdom, or Inner Plane Adepts, are of crucial importance in the hierarchy of inner plane contacts, and to the kind of magic that she wished to conduct. The question of the identities and functions of the Masters is taken up in detail in Chapter 5, but we shall look at them here in their role as a part of inner creation, and with particular reference to Fortune's understanding of Kabbalah. In general terms, Fortune defines a Master as one who has evolved beyond the need for incarnation, and who is in a position to advise humanity on a range of topics such as individual and group development, concerns of the nation, and ancient history.¹⁹² The company of Masters, sometimes termed 'The Lodge of the Masters', 'The Great White

held little place for gods, but we have noted Joscelyn Godwin's mention of Kircher's speculative system of twelve gods during the Renaissance, and Bruno's inclusion of a category of 'gods' beneath God in his hierarchy. See Frances Yates, *Giordano Bruno*, pp. 264-66, 259, 326-33.

For Fortune's definition of angels, see her *Mystical Qabalah*, pp. 68, 69. She gives some indication of their character and work in *Applied Magic*, pp. 38, 47, 90, 100, and *Spiritualism and Occultism*, pp. 119-20). For Archangels, see her *Mystical Qabalah*, pp. 63, 98; *Applied Magic*, pp. 45, 99, 109.

For Fortune's account of Manus, see her *The Esoteric Orders and their Work*, (York Beach, Maine: Samuel Weiser, 1928), pp. 22-26; 49-56. They were often in the past regarded as gods, but are not the same as the personifications of natural forces. Alice Bailey sets out her teaching concerning the Manus and their work in *Initiation, Human and Solar*, pp. 41-43. For a Theosophical view, see p. 136, n. 35.

¹⁹¹ The breakthrough in quantum mechanics by Niels Bohr (1885-1962) and the discovery in 1927 of the 'uncertainty principle' by Werner Heisenberg (1901-76) – incidentally at about the same date as the channelled cosmologies of Bailey, Leadbeater and Fortune – should alert us to the dangers of ever hoping to resolve the mysteries of the higher planes in terms of anything other than paradox.

¹⁹² Fortune, *Esoteric Orders*, p. 48.

Lodge' and other epithets mentioned from time to time below, consists of both Greater Masters (who are direct pupils of the Manus), and Lesser Masters. Whereas the Greater Masters are those who reached adepthood in early civilisations, and incarnate very rarely if at all, the Lesser Masters ('Exempt Adepts' – i.e. exempt from the need to incarnate) may sometimes volunteer to incarnate whenever it might become necessary.¹⁹³ The College of the Adepts, as the Great White Lodge is also sometimes called, works through Orders which are said to exist on the Inner Planes, transmitting 'powerful psychic forces' through to earthly Fraternities rather than to individuals, in order to boost the training and sensitivity of Fraternity members.¹⁹⁴ In Qabalistic terms, part of their work is to bring the abstract ideas of the Logos and the Archetypal World (Atziluth, the highest of the Four Worlds, representative of the qualities of God) into the more concrete form of the World of Briah; or, seen in another way, impressing those qualities or principles into Chesed, the Sphere generally considered to be the domain of the Masters. Fortune also hints that Chesed is somehow counterbalanced by 'Dark Masters' of Geburah, but declines to enlarge upon this.¹⁹⁵ She posits many differing types and grades of Master, including those known to the exoteric Church as the saints, the 'just men made perfect' who constitute the 'Church behind the church' (or the 'Church of the Grail'),¹⁹⁶ and who, besides offering teaching, are, she boldly claims, the generators of the exoteric Church's power. They and the Greater Masters are the 'lenses' through which great cosmic forces are concentrated and stepped down to suit humanity's capability of handling them.¹⁹⁷ The means whereby this might be achieved are further discussed in Chapter 6.

¹⁹³ Fortune and Knight, *Spiritualism*, p. 134. But compare her previous comment (1928) '[. . .] in these pages, the word Master is never applied to a being incarnated on the physical plane, but is reserved for Those who no longer need to incarnate for the performance of their work.' Dion Fortune, *Esoteric Orders and their Work* (York Beach, ME: Samuel Weiser, 2000), p. 48. This is somewhat resolved by her statement: 'When a Master has incarnated as Redeemer and passed through the sacrificial death, *He does not reincarnate* [. . .]' (Fortune's emphasis). Fortune, *Esoteric Orders*, p. 53.

¹⁹⁴ Fortune and Knight, *Spiritualism*, pp. 135, 136.

¹⁹⁵ Fortune, *Mystical Qabalah*, pp. 166-7.

¹⁹⁶ Influenced, perhaps, by A. E. Waite, *The Hidden Church of the Holy Grail* (London: Rebman, 1909).

¹⁹⁷ Fortune, *Esoteric Orders*, pp. 56-57. Her 'lenses' remind us of Versluis's 'prisms' through which the Higher Intelligences work in the same manner. See, for example Versluis, *Song of the Cosmos*, pp. 90-98.

Fortune stresses that, normally, no individual having achieved a certain state of advancement would be advised to hark back to a previous condition; thus, souls who are (relatively) perfected have, by virtue of that achievement, already contributed their measure of benefit to the human race, and then pass on up into higher and higher realms of consciousness. Those qualified souls who elect to turn back for a while to engage further with humanity and add further positive karma to the race¹⁹⁸ are regarded as a kind of anomaly – ‘a peculiar modification of evolution’ in that they do not continue the smooth path upwards – this, despite the well-known doctrine of the Bodhisatva, a being who has achieved enlightenment but realised that no one is really ‘saved’ or ‘enlightened’ unless all have achieved this state.¹⁹⁹ Such beings forego their next evolutionary steps, and as long as there are souls in need of help, turn back to take up that work.

In considering the great religious figures of history, Fortune terms those forerunners of civilisation who perfected their evolution in the phase immediately prior to our own the 'Lords of Humanity', and at each stage of humanity's advance, one of their number incarnates, living an ideal life to seed new ideas and patterns for the next evolutionary phase, and to act as Saviours. It might be asked, if they do not save sinners in the conventional sense, what is it they do save? According to Fortune, it is a process of 'healing by substitution', whereby a Crucifixion, for example, abreacts the totality of unbalanced forces and shortcomings accruing from the immediately prior phase, after which that Saviour moves on to become the 'Star Logos of His Ray, one of the Seven Spirits before the Throne'. He may, from time to time, project an (astro-etheric) 'personification' onto the earth plane such that some disciples mistakenly declare him to be physically incarnated at a particular place. The Star Logos is actually working here at

¹⁹⁸ Fortune's use of the term 'race' and the constructs behind it require further research for which there is no space here. Suffice it to say that she considered the invoked forces as necessarily flowing through and informing the individual, then through that individual's racial consciousness, before it is able to reach humanity as a whole. Work that attempts to directly benefit the wider field without routing it through one's own racial unconscious is considered, in this tradition, to be ineffective. For *karma*, see Chapter 6, pp. 333, n. 29.

¹⁹⁹ Fortune, *Cosmic Doctrine*, p. 139.

an abstract level of consciousness (Briah), which the sensitive disciple is in this case confusing with the astral (Yetzirah).²⁰⁰

According to Fortune, Jesus now stands alongside the Manus Krishna and Osiris, above the level of the Greater Masters, whereas other esoteric groups tend to combine all the Lesser Masters together at one level, perhaps lacking Fortune's sensitivity to differing grades of being at the higher levels.²⁰¹ Even Fortune, however, frequently employs the term 'Master Jesus', and although arguing that he is the Master for the Western world for the time being, does not always sufficiently distinguish him from other Masters by title, if that was her belief.

Each school, or fraternity, is said to be allotted its own Master or group of Masters, who tend only to communicate with those trained in their own tradition. Spiritualism, for example, tends to work under different Masters (if indeed its members are at all aware of them) from those of the occult schools, although by 1942, Fortune was alerted to a pressing need for greater co-operation between the approaches of these two branches of the tradition, as also between the religious philosophies of East and West.²⁰²

It is a firmly held belief among spiritualists that those who have passed on are still alive on the inner planes, and can communicate to, particularly, their living relatives. But spiritualists rarely claim that communication is held with so-called 'advanced' souls, save in special circumstances or through particular mediums.²⁰³ Among occult groups claiming contact with Masters, however, the emphasis is firmly upon as many members of a group becoming sensitive enough to communicate individually with one or several of the 'Hidden Masters' who are said to be behind that

²⁰⁰ Fortune, *Esoteric Orders*, p. 53.

²⁰¹ Fortune, *Esoteric Orders*, pp. 52-59.

²⁰² Fortune and Knight, *Spiritualism*, pp. 26, 59, 84.

²⁰³ The writings of W. Stainton Moses ('M.A. (Oxon)') were some of the first high quality channelled communications. He is quoted at length by Blavatsky for his defence of 'the truly esoteric science of spiritualism' as against popular 'exoteric spiritualism' (Blavatsky, *Isis*, II, p. 638). See, for example, his *Spirit Teachings* (London: Spiritualist Alliance, 1937, [1883]). Again, in a séance on 26 November 1941, Fortune's communicator 'N' mentions Moses' own communicator, 'Imperator', as especially above average (transcript in Fortune and Knight, *Spiritualism*, p. 36). Knight additionally comments that 'Imperator' is 'a consistent and intelligent Neo-Platonist. Knight in Fortune and Knight, *Spiritualism*, p. 40.

group. Concerning the reality or otherwise of these 'Hidden Masters', Caitlín and John Matthews count as useful Fortune's principle of the magician behaving as *though* they were real, pragmatically comparing this attitude to the function of the mathematical 'x'.²⁰⁴ The contacts, in all their multiplicity, 'act as way-showers and companions on our way to inner understanding', but need to be treated circumspectly, their reliability not being beyond question. Broadly, however, the Matthews concur with Fortune's overall assessment of these figures, whom they link with the Jewish mystic's *maggid* or inner spiritual teacher, and, quoting Schweighardt (1984), emphasise that such a contact may be established by the commonplace (and thus generally overlooked) activities of meditation, prayer, and an ethical life-style.²⁰⁵ Yet they are somewhat critical of Fortune's (and also of Bailey's and Theosophy's) tidy concept of humanity's even progression up through the inner spheres and planes.²⁰⁶ Fortune and these former occultists were of a generation that existed before the discoveries of quantum physics were such common knowledge and before imaginative science fiction had prepared our minds for the ready acceptance of new concepts such as non-linear time.²⁰⁷ Late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century occultism, exemplified by figures such as Blavatsky and Waite, presented itself as a deeply serious undertaking involving rigorous study and hard discipline. As its techniques were considered to hold substantial amounts of power this needed to be so. But although Fortune ensured rigorous discipline in the work of the Fraternity – 'Only the best is good enough for the

²⁰⁴ Caitlín and John Matthews, *The Western Way* (London: Arkana, 1986), p. 149.

²⁰⁵ For Theophilus Schweighardt, see 'The Fourth Rosicrucian Manifesto? The Mirror of Wisdom of Theophilus Schweighardt,' translated and introduced by Adam McLean, *Hermetic Journal* 25, (1984), 17-34.

²⁰⁶ Fortune, *Training and Work*, pp. 19, 31.

²⁰⁷ Only later did Roberts radically expand our view of the possibilities of synchronous incarnations, 'probable selves', and multidimensional consciousness, cutting right across the idea of a smooth evolutionary path up the planes one after another. Roberts, *Seth*, pp. 54, 247, 275, 468; Jane Roberts, *The 'Unknown' Reality I* (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, 1977), pp. 69-71. Roberts also says: 'Some ancient tales [. . .] tell of [. . .] other levels of reality and stages of consciousness. Astral levels are neatly laid out, numbered and categorised. There are tests to pass before entry. There are rituals to be acted out. Now, all this is highly distorted. Any attempts to so rigorously and precisely express inner reality is bound to be abortive, highly misleading, and in your terms sometimes dangerous; for you do create your own reality and live it in accordance with your own inner beliefs. Therefore, be careful also of those beliefs that you accept.' (Roberts, *Seth*, p. 405). This critique would also include the carefully-structured cosmology of the Western esoteric tradition.

Masters' – she conducted much of the day-to-day business with joyful enthusiasm as well as efficiency.²⁰⁸ By contrast, a modern channelled entity, Jane Roberts' Seth, speaks of 'pompous seriousness' over, for example, the question of finding a 'soul mate', killing all spiritual progress through an excess of earnestness, and he emphasises the spirit's creativity and playfulness: 'Forget the dusty old records and feel your reality in the moment as you are.'²⁰⁹

The Matthews are not averse to calling the multiplicity of available contacts 'archetypes' in a general sense, their list including traditional gods and goddesses such as Apollo and Demeter, as well as historical figures such as Dante and Our Lady. But they warn that each is a dynamic power centre whose handling cannot altogether be 'encompassed in a psychological workshop'.²¹⁰

It was Blavatsky's seven-fold cosmological scheme – and the impact of Darwinian evolution – that set the scene for her eventual acceptance in 1882 of the concept within occultism of reincarnation, coupled with karma (in its positive, Western guise), as the fundamental mechanism by means of which souls might evolve to higher states of consciousness.²¹¹

The Mahatma Letters 12 to 25 to A. P. Sinnett of 1881-83 give a great deal of very detailed information concerning levels of the cosmos and the evolution of its inhabitants, again based on the principle of sevens – seven globes, seven root races,

²⁰⁸ Janine Chapman, *Quest for Dion Fortune* (York Beach, ME: Samuel Weiser, 1993), p. 123.

²⁰⁹ Roberts, 'Unknown' Reality, pp. 557-58, 779. See also Wouter J. Hanegraaff, *New Age Religion and Western Culture* (Leiden: Brill, 1996), pp. 215, 261, etc. speaking of Roberts's 'radical metaphysics which reminds one at every page that the medium in question started her career as a science-fiction writer.' There is no acknowledgement here that channelling and creative writing are closely related, call for broadly similar skills, and are not easily distinguished. See also Chapter 6.

²¹⁰ Matthews, *The Western Way*, 2, pp. 162-85.

²¹¹ Goodrick-Clarke, *Theosophy*, pp. 73-74. It may be remarked that novices in Western esoteric concepts tend to regard reincarnation and karma as of Eastern origin. Goodrick-Clarke emphasises that the progressive aspect of Blavatsky's interpretation of reincarnation is distinctly Western. The clearest statement of Fortune's stance on reincarnation is that it is 'logically satisfying, inspires noble living, and gives hope and courage in adversity.' Dion Fortune, *Sane Occultism* (London: Rider & Co., 1930), p. 60. See also Annie Besant, *The Ancient Wisdom* (Adyar: The Theosophical Publishing House, 7th ed. 1966 [1897]) which describes the planes of the cosmos in concise detail, and includes chapters on reincarnation, the workings of karma, and the short-circuiting of the otherwise slow evolutionary process by accepting the aid of higher beings (p. 231). In man, ascent is achieved through sacrifice, watched by the Masters (pp. 317, 326).

seven sub-races, etc.²¹² This persistence of the seven-fold principle in Western esotericism is well-illustrated by a perusal of various listings in the works of Cornelius Agrippa, and passages from Giordano Bruno, e.g. from his *Spaccio della bestia trionfante* (1585), emphasising this fundamental aspect of creation.²¹³ Hanegraaff, too, draws attention to Glasenapp's investigations comparing Eastern and Western concepts in spirituality, where he pointed out that many of those concepts had no parallel in the East – for example, the memory-bank of the Akashic records – and Wichmann highlights certain fundamental differences between Eastern and Western concepts of karma.²¹⁴

II. Projections of the Living, Ghosts of Human Beings

We have seen in Chapter 2 that, despite a continuous history of confusion between daimons, ghosts and heroes, both Luck and Ogden emphasise the importance of ghosts to the ancients; Fanger points out the increase in attention to ghosts during the late Middle Ages, and Thomas records the continued interest into Elizabethan times.²¹⁵ Although it is fairly common for the form of a human soul to briefly appear to sensitive

²¹² A. T. Barker, comp., *The Mahatma Letters to A. P. Sinnett* (Adyar: The Theosophical Publishing House, 1979), pp. 66-200. Geological and other scientific references are used liberally. Blavatsky's own material was based on these letters. See also A. P. Sinnett, *Esoteric Buddhism* (Adyar: The Theosophical Publishing House, 1883) for a synopsis. For graphic comparisons of geological and occult interpretations, see E. W. Preston, *The Earth and its Cycles* (Adyar: The Theosophical Publishing House, 2nd ed., 1954). Here, the psychic data upon which the occult interpretation is based accepts the now discredited Swanscombe remains as genuine and as an Atlantean. Neither does it include any mention of the phenomenon of continental drift (or its modern variant, plate tectonics), suggesting that the conventional scientific views of the time had been absorbed to such an extent that they impinged too heavily on the minds of the seers.

²¹³ Quoted in Yates, *Giordano Bruno*, p. 268. The principle of the seven days of creation – hence the seven days of the week, is also enshrined in the Bible. The seven-fold principle is also given much prominence in the *Sepher Yetzirah* as the seven double letters of the Hebrew alphabet, aligned with the planets, days of the week, the seven directions, and the 'Gates of the soul (the orifices of perception) in Man'. Also aligned with 'the Seven Heavens, the Seven Earths, the Seven Sabbaths'. *Sepher Yetzirah*, translated by Wm. Wynn Westcott (New York: Samuel Weiser, 1980 [1887]), pp. 22, 24.

²¹⁴ Helmuth von Glasenapp, 'Indienbild deutscher Denker' (Stuttgart: K. F. Koehler, 1960), pp. 196-202; and Jörg Wichmann 'Das theosophische Menschenbild und seine indischen Wurzeln', pp. 12-33 quoted in Hanegraaff, *New Age Religion*, pp. 454-55.

²¹⁵ Luck, *Arcana Mundi*, p. 169. Ogden, *Ghosts*, pp. 5, 149-66. Claire Fanger, 'Intermediary beings II: Middle Ages' in Hanegraaff, *Dictionary of Gnosis*, II, 619-20. Keith Thomas, *Religion and the Decline of Magic*, pp. 326, 706-09. See the section on *Miscellaneous Entities and Ghosts*, Chapter 2, pp. 93-94.

sight at the point of death, Fortune also briefly cites the very rare cases of an etheric simulacrum sometimes appearing at a séance, having been projected by a trained occultist, and barely able to maintain its focus of attention long enough for telepathic communication to take place.²¹⁶ This phenomenon is somewhat akin to the ‘thought-form’, which, when projected by a medium under stress, may result in a haunting.²¹⁷

III. The Archangelic and Angelic Hierarchy

There has been a great deal of speculation over the nature and place of angels in mystical literature, and traces of it appear in the Bible itself, in Jewish Kabbalah, and the conjectures of Dionysius the Areopagite. Chapter 2 has emphasised the definitive importance of the Dionysian hierarchy, its persistence within Christian cosmology, and its subsequent minor modifications by Gregory the Great, Aquinas, and Dante.²¹⁸ Magicians and seers such as John Dee, Jacob Boehme, and Emanuel Swedenborg also enjoyed communication with angels.²¹⁹ But by the eighteenth century, the emphasis of interest had altered. Swedenborg, not content with theorising about broad sweeps of angelic hierarchies, walked and talked with angels familiar to him, describing their appearance and conversations in great detail. Similarly, Martinès de Pasqually, Frederick Hockley (much as did Dee), Joseph Smith and Aleister Crowley held

²¹⁶ Fortune, *Applied Magic*, pp. 36, 37. This takes place within the Sphere of Yesod.

²¹⁷ Fortune in Fortune and Knight, *Spiritualism and Occultism* (Loughborough: Thoth Publications, 1999), pp. 124-27. See also ‘Thought-forms and Artificial Elementals’, section VII below.

²¹⁸ See Dionysius the Areopagite, *Mystical Theology and the Celestial Hierarchies* (Brook: The Shrine of Wisdom, 1923); Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae* (London: Eyre and Spottiswoode, 1963); Dante, trans. Dorothy L. Sayers, *The Divine Comedy* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1962); and discussions above, Chapter 2, p. 86. A comprehensive summary of the nature and work of angels according to the sketchy work of his predecessors, together with his own fresh coherent views, is given by Peter Lombard (c. 1095-1160) in Marcia L. Colish, *Peter Lombard* (Leiden: Brill, 1994), pp. 343-53. For a modern if heretical Jewish interpretation of the place of angels in the cosmos, see Z’ev ben Shimon Halevi, *A Kabbalistic Universe* (Bath: Gateway Books, 1977, 1988), pp. 55-72. See also some varied approaches in Maria Parisen, *Angels and Mortals, their Co-Creative Power* (Wheaton, IL: Quest Books, 1990); William Bloom, *Working with Angels, Fairies and Nature Spirits* (London: BCA, 1998).

²¹⁹ There was a propensity at this time for the publication of many and varied name lists of both angels and demons. These were later deemed to be of great practical use to operators such as de Pasqually in the eighteenth century, who generated his own extensive lists, and Aleister Crowley in the twentieth, who kept to Kabbalistic sources. See for example, Aleister Crowley, *777*, ed. by Israel Regardie (York Beach, ME: Samuel Weiser, 1973), p. 79.

converse with angels, though each in their different ways; and it is no less of a problem here than in ancient times to clarify the nature of these entities termed angels, but who might just as well have masked trickster spirits, souls of the dead, or, as in Crowley's case, the operator's own supposedly 'higher' self, or 'Holy Guardian Angel'.²²⁰

However, modern popular esoteric interest in archangels, angels, and angelic orders did not begin until the impetus provided by spiritualism and the modern occult revival at the turn of the twentieth century. Mathers, Fortune and Halevi ascribe an archangel and order of angels each to a particular Sphere on the Tree of Life, seen as a model of the Universe, although there is no direct correlation between the Jewish system of ten orders of angels and the traditional Christian nine.²²¹

The archangels and orders of angels represent a vast evolution of beings of many levels of rank. They are perfect, the first of God's created beings, but unlike humans, do not evolve, and are non-intellectual.²²² Although each has a specific area of responsibility, they never engage directly in the material world.²²³ Interestingly, Fortune suggests that both angels and humans were originally of the same kind, the former choosing to remain perfect, the latter choosing to fall to the depths, with the later opportunity to rise to even greater heights than is ever possible for angels. She comments that because of their remoteness, such exalted beings as archangels (or indeed, Christ) are rarely seen in vision, although we may well expect to be in receipt of

²²⁰ For discussion of the various definitions of this term, see p. 205, n. 133.

²²¹ Save for Bruno's insertion of 'Issim' as the tenth. Yates, *Giordano Bruno*, p. 259. Peter Lombard denied the place of humanity as a tenth Order (Marcia L. Colish, *Peter Lombard* (Leiden: Brill, 1994), p. 351. This Order also appears in S. L. MacGregor Mathers, *The Kabbalah Unveiled* (London: Penguin Group, 1991), Plate IV between pages 30 and 31. See also Fortune, *Mystical Qabalah*, p. 98; Halevi, *Kabbalistic Universe*, p. 64.

²²² Fortune calls them 'divine Robots.' (Fortune, *Applied Magic*, p. 38). However, speaking of the Archangel Sandalphon, an intelligence appointed to guide the Planet during its evolution, she says 'He, too, is developing [. . .]' Fortune, *Cosmic Doctrine*, p. 210. Peter Lombard's view was that whilst their knowledge of God is complete, they grow in knowledge of events, suggesting that they do evolve in some sense. Colish, *Peter Lombard*, p. 351.

²²³ Fortune, *Applied Magic*, pp. 37-38. This is contrary to Swedenborg. See Wouter J. Hanegraaff 'Intermediary Beings IV: 18th Century–Present, 2. Spirits', in Hanegraaff, *Dictionary of Gnosis*, II, 629. In Lombard's opinion, good angels are able to take visible form if necessary, so may intervene in human affairs. He presumably had in mind the special cases of Biblical appearances, such as of the Archangel Gabriel (Luke 1:26-38). Colish, *Peter Lombard*, p. 350.

their divine influence.²²⁴ In *The Cosmic Doctrine*, Fortune identifies the Archangels of the Spheres on the Tree of Life with Lords of Flame or 'Intelligences of the Spheres', and attempts to outline their specific duties, and ways that they can be visualised.²²⁵

Anthony Duncan, the Anglican priest and Christian interpreter of Fortune's Qabalistic works, also possessed some considerable degree of psychism, which during the 1970s precipitated him into an arresting experience of conversing with his guardian angel. Both he and the angel – and also Pan who subsequently appeared – professed total commitment to Christ, though, like so many occultists, declared themselves exasperated by the institutionalism of the Church.²²⁶ The record of their conversations covers such varied subjects as Qabalah, prayer, the evolution of consciousness, thought-forms,²²⁷ the redemption of the world by our Lord, and the world as experienced by Pan here designated as Lord of plant life (animals being the responsibility of people). In the light of the supposed major function of angels as transmitters of wisdom, it is interesting that almost all the exchange was conducted by means of question and answer – the Angel eliciting the answers from Duncan himself.²²⁸

Much concerning the angels as 'intermediaries between the magician and divinity' can be gleaned from Susan Greenwood's teachers, who outline their attributes in the traditional Qabalistic way. Archangels are defined as 'beings of pure consciousness, unlimited by time or space', who 'bathe in the radiant energy emanating from the Godhead', each one a 'focus of power, wisdom, beauty and love.'²²⁹ This is the

²²⁴ Fortune, *Applied Magic*, pp. 47-48.

²²⁵ E.g. Tzaphkiel, the Archangel of the Sphere of Binah, whose activities lie behind mystic cults, 'envisaged as a vast Presence shining with a certain living darkness with a rose-coloured glow in the centre.' Fortune, *Cosmic Doctrine*, pp. 204-06. See also page 237, below regarding their role as Regents of the Elements.

²²⁶ This must have been the attitude of Ficino, who was forced to use convoluted arguments to justify his interest in demonology. Walker, *Spiritual and Demonic Magic*, p. 51. Bruno attempted the same approach, which led him to the stake. Yates, *Giordano Bruno*, p. 348.

²²⁷ which the Angel considered were seldom used by demonic forces (Anthony Duncan, *The Sword in the Sun: Dialogue with an Angel* (Albuquerque: Sun Chalice, 1997), p. 50.

²²⁸ Duncan, *Sword in the Sun*.

²²⁹ Susan Greenwood, *Magic, Witchcraft and the Other World* (Oxford: Berg, 2000), pp. 30, 76.

usual reassuring text-book definition of what by all accounts²³⁰ can be tremendously awesome and indeed, immensely overpowering presences.²³¹ Hanegraaff's research leads him to conclude that in the New Age context (which admittedly stands apart from occultism, but employs many of the same concepts), no systematic differentiation can be made between angels and non-incarnate 'highly-evolved' human beings, because different authorities ascribe to them such varying characteristics.²³²

IV. and V. Elementals, Devas and Faeries

This and the following three sections pertain to an intermediate otherworld state of a less rarefied kind, less divinely attuned, than that inhabited by angels and Masters. Dan Merkur quotes Gershom G. Scholem's explanation of *Kawwanah* (intention) in early Kabbalah as only a foreshadowing of the idea of an astral world seemingly close to, and shadowing the physical.²³³ The concept of an independent and real Otherworld, replete with every imaginable form of life, came to be introduced into Western esotericism, exclusively, in the late twelfth century via Islamic spirituality, firstly through the Sufi philosopher-mystic Suhrawardi Maqtul, taken up by Ibn al-Arabi in Spain, thence systematised in Kabbalah through the Sefirot.²³⁴ Paracelsus recognised this ethereal or astral world as a legitimate component of nature subject to natural laws, and from which he postulated, and popularised, the concept of Elementals, or creatures of the four elements: Pygmies or gnomes (earth); nymphs or undines (water); sylphs or

²³⁰ '[. . .] they are control points in the adaptation of Power, on an unimaginable scale, to different units of creation.' W. G. Gray, *The Ladder of Lights*, (Toddington: Helios Books, 1971), p. 20.

²³¹ 'Regrettably, we live in an age when the idea of angels is ruthlessly trivialised and commercialised on the one hand, or rendered intellectually obscure and unapproachable on the other.' R. J. Stewart, *The Miracle Tree*, p. 100.

²³² Hanegraaff, *New Age*, p. 198. See, particularly, Swedenborg's view that all angels are souls of the dead. Wouter J. Hanegraaff 'Intermediary Beings IV: 18th Century – Present, 2. Spirits', in Hanegraaff, *Dictionary of Gnosis*, II, 629.

²³³ Gershom G. Scholem, *Origins of the Kabbalah* (Princeton, Princeton University Press, 1987), pp. 416-17. Dan Merkur, 'The Otherworld as a Western Esoteric Category' in Antoine Faivre and Wouter J. Hanegraaff, eds, *Western Esotericism and the Science of Religion* (Leuven: Peeters, 1998), pp. 75-79. Merkur argues that the gods and spirits of other cultures and of the West prior to the High Middle Ages were always associated with the everyday world that we are familiar with.

sylvestres (air); and salamanders or vulcans (fire). Subsequently, Eliphas Lévi renamed the Otherworld the 'astral plane'.²³⁵

Whereas the word 'elemental' is taken to refer to a creature of the four elements, the word 'deva' is more often applied to a guardian spirit belonging to the plant kingdom.²³⁶ Fortune herself makes this distinction, using the phrase 'nature spirits' rather than 'devas'. She speaks of 'oversouls' of each species of living creature and of distinctive physical features of the landscape, such as a mountain or cleft in the rock, relating these to the ancient concept of gods of places.²³⁷ Leadbeater gave a detailed description of the life and character of nature spirits, elementals and fairies, and tabulated them diagrammatically according to an evolutionary scheme whereby elementals eventually evolve into angels.²³⁸ Fortune's concept of their development, however, only partly stems from earth conditions. Fortune, employing the evolutionary paradigm, enumerates three levels, or waves, of human being who have completed their earthly evolution, and passed on.²³⁹ The earliest of these are the 'Lords of Flame', who constitute the Archangels (attributed to the Creative World of Briah on the Tree of Life) who are behind the laws of physics, and, as overseers of natural forces, are also in charge of the elementals, the thought-forms which arise from the conditions that the Lords of Flame built up during the course of their work, and which, as natural 'co-

²³⁴ Merkur, 'Otherworld', p. 89, 92. Elementals such as in the form of fauns and satyrs were recognised in ancient times; the Chaldaean Oracles mention the male and female lunar spirits, terrestrial demons, etc See Lewy, *Chaldaean Oracles and Theurgy*, pp. 28-29; 162; 267-69.

²³⁵ Merkur, 'Otherworld', p. 91, 92.

²³⁶ Wouter J. Hanegraaff, *New Age Religion and Western Culture* (Leiden: Brill, 1996), p. 199. The word Deva is of ancient origin, subsisting in Zoroastrianism and in religions of the East. Originally applied to any of the gods in the Vedas, it had already been downgraded in Zoroastrian religion. Egerton Sykes, *Everyman's Dictionary of Non-Classical Mythology* (London: J. M. Dent & Sons Ltd, 1961 [1952]), p. 58. It is used in New Age circles to refer to the elementals of the fairy race who protect and nurture plant life. Blavatsky mentioned the scriptural battle between the Devas (Hindu) and the Asuras (Iranian). H. P. Blavatsky, *Isis Unveiled* (Los Angeles, CA: The Theosophy Company, 1931 [1877]), p. 12.

²³⁷ Fortune, *Spiritualism and Occultism*, p. 122. Also Fortune, *Applied Magic*, pp. 45-46.

²³⁸ C. W. Leadbeater, *The Hidden Side of Things*, 2 vols (Adyar: The Theosophical Publishing House, 1913), i, pp. 115-69. His diagram appears between pages 116 and 117. James Webb records Thomas Lake Harris's alternative view that fairies evolve into humans. James Webb, *Flight from Reason*, pp. 105, 107. See also a fuller description of nature-spirits in Annie Besant, *The Ancient Wisdom: an Outline of Theosophical Teachings* (Adyar: The Theosophical Publishing House, 1966 [1897]), pp. 72-77.

ordinated systems of magnetic stresses' begin to take on a life of their own.²⁴⁰ These elementals are said to 'develop a personality' but, unlike humans who are constructed from the Divine Spark downwards, as it were,²⁴¹ they are being built up from below, and so have no soul, Individuality, or Higher Self. It is because of this that, though not deliberately malevolent, they have in the past been designated as evil spirits, demons, and familiars. Humans who wish to work with them are recommended to approach them from 'above', through their originators the Lords of Flame as a safeguard. It is these Lords of Flame who exist on the highest planes as Regents of the Elements, and who are traditionally invoked by name during ritual as a protection when working with the Elements. Failing this action, it is possible for the magician's own personality to be overtaken by that of an Elemental, who from then on hankers for a return back to their own elemental place of origin, in the meantime causing deep distress among all whom he/she/it touches.²⁴² It is also said to be possible for humans to mate with an Elemental, a further circumstance which can cause emotional disturbance through an unrequited companionship which can only be consummated on the etheric level.²⁴³ Fortune describes the Elementals, attributed to the sphere of Malkuth on the Tree of Life, as manifestations of 'the mind side of the material phenomena'.²⁴⁴ Over time, they become aware that they will eventually cease their existence once the conditions they were created to sustain come to an end. By interacting with, and giving service to initiated

²³⁹ Fortune, *Cosmic Doctrine*, pp. 97-103.

²⁴⁰ Knight, *Practical Guide*, p. 44. Knight also indicates here that the 'Flame' referred to is 'Divine Fire, [. . .] a highly abstract condition of Will'. The other major cohorts are the Lords of Form, who are behind the laws of chemistry, and the Lords of Mind, who are behind the laws of biology. Fortune, *Cosmic Doctrine*, p. 139.

²⁴¹ 'Made in the image and likeness of God.'

²⁴² Observers may comment in such circumstances that the individual has been 'taken by the fairies'.

²⁴³ Fortune, *Cosmic Doctrine*, pp. 136-40; *Applied Magic*, pp. 31-41.

²⁴⁴ Gareth Knight, *A Practical Guide to Qabalistic Symbolism* (Toddington: Helios Book Service, 1965), I, p. 200. They 'represent the co-ordinated, purposive, and intelligent action of these four properties of matter', used by magicians. Like pets, they can be 'imbued with a consciousness of a human type.' (Fortune and Knight, *Spiritualism*, p. 122). They are an integral part of the philosophy and science of Paracelsus, who consolidated alchemical ideas then extant. See Urs Leo Gantenbein, 'Paracelsus, 5. Magic' in Hanegraaff, *Dictionary*, II, p. 928. Also Jeffrey Raff, *Jung and the Alchemical Imagination* (York Beach, ME: Nicolas-Hays, 2000.)

magicians, they are enabled to develop a divine spark of consciousness or Higher Self of their own and become relatively immortal.²⁴⁵

The Elemental Kingdom is one of beauty and power, which appealed intensely to Fortune, and she used the powers of the Elements in helping to restructure her earthly day-to-day personality²⁴⁶ in order to strengthen the link between personality and Spirit: Earth for endurance, Air for freedom, Fire for the driving force (or destruction of the effete), and Water for adaptability.²⁴⁷

Passing mention has already been made of the occasion when an apparently spontaneous upsurge of Elemental forces on Glastonbury Tor made such a crucial impact on Fortune and two of her companions, that they broke into spontaneous dance.²⁴⁸ A subsequent communication from the Master known as 'the Greek' emphasised that, in spite of the risk, undertaking ritual work without tapping the power of the Elements was relatively fruitless, and Fortune was encouraged to continue to use her verbal rendering of the occasion (the so-called 'Chant of the Elements') to invoke those Elemental powers on future occasions.²⁴⁹ The Lords of the Elements, they were told, are highly intelligent, dedicated to the Masters, and would respond to polite requests for assistance.²⁵⁰ Fortune gives a further powerful description of the impact of elemental life in *The Secrets of Dr Taverner* (1926):

As I lay helpless in the heather, my heart pounding in my throat, I seemed to see a great streaming procession like an undisciplined army, passing across the sky. Ragged banners flapped and waved; wild, discordant but maddening music broke here and there from the motley rout. Furry snouts on human faces, clawed paws on human limbs, green, vine-like hair falling over flashing eyes that gleamed as green, and here and there, half-frightened but half-

²⁴⁵ Fortune, *Applied Magic*, pp. 39-46. As mentioned above, the magician must be at least of the grade of Tiphareth, the Christ centre, or at least working at or near that grade for the duration of the ritual in order to relate to them effectively; approached from below, there is no overarching spiritual principle to control the process. Fortune, *Mystical Qabalah*, pp. 208-10.

²⁴⁶ originally intended as 'a chalice for the indwelling spirit' Fortune, *Spiritualism*, p. 142.

²⁴⁷ Fortune and Knight, *Spiritualism*, pp. 142-44.

²⁴⁸ Knight, *Dion Fortune and the Inner Light*, pp. 116-21.

²⁴⁹ I have taken part in two rituals incorporating adaptations of this Chant as recently as 2004.

²⁵⁰ Knight, *Dion Fortune*, pp. 115-22.

fascinated human faces, some hanging back though lured along, others giving themselves up to the flight in a wild abandonment of glamour.²⁵¹

Perhaps inspired by Fortune, Ashcroft-Nowicki describes them in a similarly evocative passage:

Through the misty twilight [. . .] there approaches a cavalcade of beings such as the earth seldom sees [. . .] a procession of breathtakingly beautiful people, some walking, some on horses, and some carried on litters of silks and velvets. Attended by their servants from the fairy folk, the Lords of the Hollow Hills, the Sidhe come riding. First come the fairy drummers dressed in greens and reds [. . .] then come the pipers in coats made from the glistening scales of rainbow trout [. . .] the trumpeters in suits of shiny black moleskin [. . .] the knights, in armour fashioned from dragonflies wings, shining and iridescent in the fading light [. . .]. The lords and ladies follow, in a rainbow of colour. [. . .] and last of all, golden of hair and fair of skin, Aengus Og, Lord of the Sidhe [. . .].²⁵²

Knight also draws attention to this dimension of the Underworld, Annwn, or World of Faery that is not otherwise well-addressed by Fortune, though it is not easy to determine how he or other writers sense any differences, or degree of overlap, between elementals and faeries.²⁵³ Knight himself blurs the issue by including the whole gamut of beings:

²⁵¹ Fortune, *Secrets of Dr Taverner*, (1962 [1926]) p. 142.

²⁵² Dolores Ashcroft-Nowicki, *The Shining Paths: An Experiential Journey Through the Tree of Life* (Wellingborough, The Aquarian Press, 1983), pp. 61-62. This work is a compendium of imaginative journeys, firstly up the Paths of the Tree of Life and, secondly, of each Sefirah. It brings to life the rather dry theoretical descriptions of Fortune's *The Mystical Qabalah* and Knight's *Practical Guide to Occult Symbolism*, I and II as well as clarifying the positions of the various intermediary beings on the Tree. A prior instance in the same genre is that of Kenneth Grahame's description of Rat and Mole's encounter with the Piper at the Gates of Dawn. Kenneth Grahame, *The Wind in the Willows* (London, Methuen & Co., 1926 [1908]) pp. 88-99. See also Fortune's recommended fiction in Appendix III(b), 'VI. Some Occult Novels', p. 423.

²⁵³ See W. Y. Evans-Wentz, *The Fairy Faith in Celtic Countries* (Gerards Cross: Colin Smythe, 1911, 1977) for a definitive text. Although criticising Evans-Wentz for omitting the 'initiatory and practical aspects' of faery lore, R. J. Stewart nevertheless quotes some of his work, and suspects that his inclusion of these themes in Evans-Wentz's later books on Tibetan Buddhism must have been the result of his previous work running at a particularly deep level. R. J. Stewart, *The Living World of Faery* (Glastonbury: Gothic Image Publications, 1995), p. xvi.

'The word "faerie" is derived from the Latin word *fatare* [. . .] meaning to enchant.' (Serena Roney-Dougal, *Where Science and Magic Meet* (Shaftesbury: Element, 1991), p. 256. See her Chapter 6 for a concise summary of the place of the fairy-faith in country lore and in magic.

[. . .] from faery folk, be they sylphs, undines, salamanders, pixies, elves, hob goblins or whatever. From the "lordly ones of the hollow hills" of the ilk of the Fairy King or Fairy Queen, powerful beings who in tradition can take human beings to another world where another form of time exists. It includes too the various ladies of the lake of Arthurian tradition. All the way down to the gossamer fancies of the nursery. And indeed the giants.²⁵⁴

The inner world is often described as 'fluid', and gives some credibility to the idea that there is much overlap between different modes of existence and between types of being. Nonetheless, the Neo-Theosophist Charles Leadbeater drew a distinction between those nature-spirits (elementals), who are the temporary thought-forms of angels, and 'real' nature-spirits (fairies) who will, over the course of time, pursue their evolution up into the angelic kingdom, though even here he stresses the immense diversity and overlap between these kingdoms, and blurs the distinction even more on account of the perhaps doubtful Theosophical doctrine of smooth evolutionary progress upwards for all forms of life.²⁵⁵ Most frequently, however, the word 'elemental' is restricted to the beings of the Four Elements, while faeries²⁵⁶ appear to be a separate race, parallel to that of humans.²⁵⁷ R. J. Stewart's teacher and initiator was William G.

²⁵⁴ Knight in Fortune and Knight, *An Introduction to Ritual Magic* (Loughborough: Thoth Publications, 1997), p. 104.

²⁵⁵ C. W. Leadbeater, *The Hidden Side of Things* (London: Theosophical Publishing House, 1913), pp. 115-69. For comparison, see Matthews, *Western Way*, II, p. 157: 'We would say, from our own experience, that things are not always so neat and tidy, that progression is not assured. There is, in effect, no merit system of an earthly kind.'

²⁵⁶ In his first major book on faeries, *Robert Kirk, Walker Between Worlds* (Shaftesbury: Element, 1990), R. J. Stewart spelled the word in the commonly accepted way. In the books which followed, he used the spelling 'faery', which is now customary among followers of this branch of the Western tradition.

²⁵⁷ Briggs uses the word to cover 'the whole area of the supernatural which is not claimed by angels, devils or ghosts.' Katharine Briggs, *A Dictionary of Fairies* (London: Allen Lane, 1976), p. xvii. We have seen (p. 84) that the Church generally regarded fairies as demonic, although they were discussed by both Paracelsus and Agrippa, giving the impression of immense numbers. Stewart, R. J., *The Living World of Faery*, pp. xvii-xxii. The Elven Race in J. R. R. Tolkien, *Lord of the Rings* (London: Harper Collins, 1991, [1954]) is considered to be a very close parallel to, if not the same as, the Faery evolution. See also Katharine Briggs, *A Dictionary of Fairies*; C. W. Leadbeater, *The Hidden Side of Things* (London: The Theosophical Publishing House, 1913); Geoffrey Hodson, *The Kingdom of Faerie*, (London: The Theosophical Publishing House, 1927); Caitlín & John Matthews, *The Encyclopaedia of Celtic Wisdom: The Celtic Shaman's Sourcebook* (London: Rider, 1994).

Gray, a former member of Fortune's Society of the Inner Light.²⁵⁸ Stewart has over the past fifteen years almost single-handedly raised awareness of the faery kingdom among his followers, but his work is based less on Qabalah, being an eclectic mixture of shamanism, Hermeticism, and Celtic and other native myth incorporating faery, Goddess and Underworld lore.²⁵⁹ However, this is a direct development of the work of the 'Green Ray', which was one of the three pillars of Fortune's Inner Light structure, and is still considered of crucial importance in the Society's work today.²⁶⁰ Stewart highlights the case of the seventeenth century clergyman Robert Kirk (1644-92), who possessed the 'second sight', and who discovered another dimension situated underground and inhabited by real, though invisible, people (the Faery Race), who are generally associated with some location or feature in the landscape, and possess superhuman powers of seership. It was considered possible for humans to regularly move in and out of this world, although it is not clear in what sense this is meant. Also associated with the Faery Race, though often apart in a different place, are the ancestors, and the spirits of the dead.²⁶¹ The Matthews speak of the 'people of the *sidhe*' (fairy mounds, pron. 'shee'), 'immortal, able to pass between the worlds at will'. They have never been human, they are joyful, and live for the day.²⁶² In *Earth Light*, Stewart describes faery beings as potentially 'powerful allies' who nevertheless, if contacted for the wrong reasons, could be 'terrible opponents.' A major reason for working with them

²⁵⁸ As was Dolores Ashcroft-Nowicki. I have referred to the works of Stewart, Ashcroft-Nowicki, and Matthews particularly because they were heavily influenced by Fortune, and regularly attended Gareth Knight's annual magical workshops through the 1980s.

²⁵⁹ Stewart praises the 'very individual and advanced contacts' still available in the Society of the Inner Light. Stewart, *Power within the Land*, p. 53. His work, apparently based on direct experience, is highly relevant to this hitherto neglected aspect of the Western Tradition. See his *Robert Kirk; Earth Light: The Ancient Path to Transformation* (Shaftesbury: Element, 1992); *Power within the Land* (Shaftesbury: Element, 1992); and *The Living World of Faery*. He confidently claims, 'Faery beings exist whether or not we believe in them.' Stewart, *The Living World*, p. xvi.

²⁶⁰ The Green, or Elemental Ray was worked in Fortune's time by Colonel Seymour. Fielding and Collins reproduce several of his Elemental pathworkings. Charles Fielding and Carr Collins, *The Story of Dion Fortune* (Loughborough: Thoთ Publications, 1998), pp. 138, 175-218. Stewart's underworld approach is endorsed by Knight as essential to effective communication with inner forces or beings. Gareth Knight, 'Is there a Psychic in the house?' *Inner Light*, 22: 3 (Summer Equinox 2002), 13, 14.

²⁶¹ Stewart, *Kirk*, p. 12. See also Michael Hunter, *The Occult Laboratory: Magic, Science and Second Sight in Late Seventeenth-Century Scotland* (Woodbridge: Boydell & Brewer, 2001), which offers a new edition of Robert Kirk's *The Secret Commonwealth* and other texts with an introductory essay.

is to undergo inner transformation as a first step towards helping to restore the sacredness of the land, the environment, and indeed, the planet. He gives a summary of the Underworld/faery tradition, some accounts of his own engagements with that realm, and outlines techniques to enable the serious student to do the same. We are left in no doubt that he speaks from personal and valuable experience.²⁶³ He gives Fortune all due credit for bringing through the results of her own experiments and experiences with visions of the Goddess (who, as the Black Goddess, has strong Earth connections), especially as recounted in her novels;²⁶⁴ but he is able, in a way that perhaps Fortune was reluctant to do in her day, to go well beyond Fortune's pioneering outlines, and gives what appears to be a comprehensive survey of the faery beings – their appearance;²⁶⁵ their various types, orders and hierarchies; their emotional make-up; their laws which are reflective of our own; the possibility of humans building a relationship with faery companions; and other kinds of beings to be found there. He warns that some of these 'allies' of humans can also appear in alien and frightening guise. Since the faery world is lit by an interior 'Earth light', there being no Sun or Moon in their realm, he even enters into discussion of the nature of their non-linear time.²⁶⁶ In *Power Within the Land*, he specifically states that the faery world was the original perfect one from which our own now imperfect world descended (echoing the conjecture concerning the parity of angels and humanity, mentioned above); and he contends that our present imbalances can now only be effectively redressed by immediate contact with that faery realm.²⁶⁷ Against the stream of both occult tradition and New Age speculation, he deplores the push to the higher planes and contact with the Masters, as an escape from responsibility and a rejection of the very forces (in the

²⁶² Matthews, *Encyclopedia*, pp. 391-434.

²⁶³ Stewart, R. J., *Earth Light*, p. xii-xiv.

²⁶⁴ Stewart, *Earth Light*, p. 104.

²⁶⁵ Dakinis, types of faery being, are well-known in Eastern traditions, sometimes appearing as aged women with red or green eyes (David-Neel, Mme. Alexandra, *Initiations and Initiates in Tibet* (London: Rider, 1973, [1931]), p. 125).

²⁶⁶ Stewart, *Earth Light*, pp. 28-40.

²⁶⁷ Stewart, *Power*, p. 13.

Underworld) that can truly effect inner change.²⁶⁸ The sentiment is much the same as the emphasis on the elements given to Fortune in the Chant of the Elements. In support of Stewart, Knight says of this much neglected dimension (the 'etheric medium', 'World Soul' or 'Anima Mundi'), that any rise to the heights without contacting the inner Earth first is to run the risk of 'the disconnected ineffectuality that passes for spirituality in many areas of New Age universalism'.²⁶⁹ This is a particularly important factor to mitigate the heady flights of spiritual realms described by Leadbeater.²⁷⁰ Like other occultists, while deprecating organised patriarchal Christianity, Stewart sees early (esoteric) Christianity as a genuine technology of the Underworld pagan tradition which maintains that many aspects of the ancient wisdom can only come into consciousness by venturing into the Underworld.²⁷¹ Some of these considerations, gathered from oral tradition, folk tales, and ballads, are more developed than Fortune's own thinking, as is his emphasis on the necessity to approach meditation using Underworld techniques; but as Knight suggests, this might have been something that she was working towards, and might well have embraced more fully had she lived on.²⁷² The Tree of Life glyph unfortunately gives the impression that the practitioner has only to rise upwards out of Malkuth. Sphere 9 (the etheric plane), and spheres 7 and 8 (the astral plane), are, however, below Tiphareth, (the Sun) and can be taken to encompass the Underworld, thus involving an obligatory descent prior to subsequent ascent.²⁷³

Hanegraaff draws attention to Marian Green's assessment of the elementals '[. . .] huge, vast, lofty, and expansive. Imagining them as little animal-like spirits diminishes them and demeans their might. They are eternal, awesome, potent and far

²⁶⁸ 'we fear and reject the earth by our crass assumption that spiritual Masters, angels or a Saviour will appear in some external manner to save us from ourselves.' Stewart, *Power*, p. 19.

²⁶⁹ Knight, Gareth, 'Is there a Psychic in the House?' in *The Inner Light*, 22: 3, (2002), 14. Stewart seeks to redress this in R. J. Stewart, *The Underworld Initiation: A Journey towards Transformation* (Wellingborough: Aquarian Press, 1985).

²⁷⁰ See, for example, Leadbeater, *Masters and the Path*, p. 224.

²⁷¹ Stewart, *Power*, pp. 72-73; Matthews, *Encyclopaedia*, pp. 124-26.

²⁷² 'We reject the fundamental energies of the Underworld at our greatest peril' Stewart, *Earth Light*, p. 19; pp. 18-21. See also p. 62, n. 58, which mentions the myth of Empedocles who leaped into the volcano Etna as an entrance to the Underworld.

²⁷³ Dion Fortune, 'Rising on the Planes' in Charles Fielding and Carr Collins, *The Story of Dion Fortune* (Loughborough: Thoth Publications, 1998), pp. 165-74.

wiser than we children of earth.²⁷⁴ In her anthropological approach, Greenwood does not appear to have met experiences connected with the Faery world, and her account suggests that she was not furnished with the wide-ranging approach expected of a present-day experienced working magician.

VI. *The Qliphoth or Demons*

The *Zohar* developed the theory of an evil counterpart of the Tree of Life, the *sitra ahra* (the other side), the kingdom of demonic powers in their negative sense, encompassing comprehensive hierarchies of demons later tabulated by Christian magi during the Renaissance.²⁷⁵ Fortune follows this tradition herself when she describes the Qliphoth as emanations of unbalanced force arising from the formative times in evolution when the Sephiroth were not yet in equilibrium.²⁷⁶ This is one of the few instances where in different and sometimes contradictory ways, she does later correlate inner beings with the Tree of Life, but not until after the publication of *The Mystical Qabalah*. Whereas in *Spiritualism in the Light of Occult Science*, she broadly states that they are developed in the same way as elementals, with any unbalanced force being redressed thereafter by the angels, in *The Mystical Qabalah*, she notes that these ‘Hells of the Averse Sephiroth’ constitute a world *below* Malkuth, as does Mathers.²⁷⁷ She obliquely mentions Bruno’s practice of invoking the help of higher Demons (or angels) to oust lower, more immediate Demons by reference to the ‘initiate of Geburah’ who is

²⁷⁴ Marian Green, *A Witch Alone: Thirteen Moons to Master Natural Magic* (London: The Aquarian Press, 1991, 1995, 2002), p. 84, quoted in Hanegraaff, *New Age*, p. 199.

²⁷⁵ As, for example, in the *Sefer Ha-Razim* and the varied lists in Agrippa, *Celestial Hierarchies*.

²⁷⁶ These forces are to some extent personalised as the Kings of Edom, ‘whose kingdoms are unbalanced force’. Fortune, *Mystical Qabalah*, pp. 3, 18, 53. For Hebrew names of Qliphoth, translated into English and correlated to the 32 Paths of the Tree of Life, see Crowley, *777*, p. 58. See also S. L. MacGregor Mathers, *The Kabbalah Unveiled* (London: Arkana/Penguin Books, 1991 [1926]), Plate IV, between pages 30, 31, which tables the Ten Orders of Demons and Ten Arch-Demons in Assiah the lowest of the Four Worlds, and correlated with the Sephiroth.

²⁷⁷ *Spiritualism in the Light of Occult Science*, pp. 104, 105, where she also notes that many black magicians have brought them under their control in the past; Fortune, *Mystical Qabalah*, p.⁵³, 62. Mathers illustrates the Qliphoth as descending below Assiah, the lowest of the Four Trees or Worlds, though it is to be noted that he also correlates them with the World of Assiah itself. Mathers, *The Kabbalah Unveiled*, pp. 29-30; Table IX, between pp. 50, 51.

himself able to do this.²⁷⁸ In her particularly full chapter on the Qliphoth, Fortune further illustrates this by reference to the ritual processes of *The Book of the Sacred Magic of Abra-Melin the Mage*, where both angelic and demonic forces are evoked, and records that his system is a ‘singularly safe one’ if carried out in its entirety.²⁷⁹ But, having described the Qliphoth as elementals, she also applies the term to adverse aspects of the sephiroth themselves, stating that rather than forming a negative Tree below Malkuth, as does Mathers, they constitute the reverse aspect of but one single Tree.²⁸⁰ But she then also speaks of two Trees, Divine and Infernal, visualised as taking positions one on each side of a sphere and, in a further example, defines them as overbalances in character rather than objective entities, ascribing a vice to each sephirah save the first two.²⁸¹ It is the overbalances of each stage of evolution which are the nuclei that attract the thought-forms of evil, exacerbating humanity’s own unbalanced characteristics and behaviours, and for that reason are said to be of interest to black magicians, who then become channels for Qliphoth who are able to ‘ensoul’ those negative thought-forms.²⁸² In magical working, e.g. meditating on a single Sphere of the Tree of Life, the operator may come across one or more, and the magician must be of such a stage of integration as to be confident that s/he is able to control them, or, in other terms, ‘equilibrate’ the forces contacted. As we have seen, they appear

²⁷⁸ ‘He takes that two-headed giant of the Qliphoth, Thaumiel, the Dual Contending Forces, knocks his heads together and says, “A plague on both your houses! Keep God’s peace or it will be the worse for you.” *Mystical Qabalah*, p.187.

²⁷⁹ Fortune, *Mystical Qabalah*, p. 297-304. Fortune, *Applied Magic*, pp. 48-49. *The Book of the Sacred Magic* was written in 1458 CE. Mathers’s translation was from a French version. His Appendix B. is a description of how Cagliostro employed a child clairvoyant; Appendix C gives examples of other methods of angelic evocation, including ‘An Invocation of the Good Spirits’ and a protective prayer. S. L. MacGregor Mathers, *The Book of the Sacred Magic of Abra-Melin the Mage* (Wellingborough, Northamptonshire: Thorsons, 1976), pp. xx, xlii, xliii-xlviii. See also Israel Regardie, *The Tree of Life: An Illustrated Study in Magic*, edited and annotated by Chic Cicero and Sandra Tabatha Cicero (St. Paul, MN: Llewellyn, 2001[1932]), pp. 263-89. See also William Bloom’s account of personally carrying out this ceremony in 1972, using Mathers’s translation as his guide. William Bloom, *The Sacred Magician: a Ceremonial Diary* (Glastonbury: Gothic Image Publications, 1992).

²⁸⁰ ‘There are, in fact, not two Trees, but one Tree.’ Fortune, *Mystical Qabalah*, p. 298. As noted above, Mathers confusingly places the Qliphoth in Assiah, and as a separate realm below Assiah.

²⁸¹ Fortune, *Mystical Qabalah*, pp. 299-301

²⁸² Fortune, *Mystical Qabalah*, pp. 303-04. In less negative mode, they can mischief-make in annoying ways, or contribute to the well-known phenomenon among young imaginative children of ‘invisible playmates’. Fortune and Knight, *Spiritualism*, pp. 123-26.

occasionally among esoterically aware Masons, and, despite his earnest prayer, in the mediations of Frederick Hockley.²⁸³ As long as we are incarnate, we are subject to both Trees, which provide the challenges by virtue of which we evolve.²⁸⁴ Fortune's suggested method of dealing with evil is to absorb and harmonise it, since Lucifer is ultimately the Light-bearer.²⁸⁵ Fortune may well have adopted this concept from Blavatsky, who also noted the positive function of Satan, identifying him with Michael.²⁸⁶

Rather than list names for Orders of Demons or Arch-Devils as do, particularly, medieval magicians, and later taken up in the nineteenth century by Mathers, Regardie and others, Fortune appends a characteristic vice to each sephirah save for Kether and Chokmah which are generally considered to be too close to the Godhead to be so tainted. One suspects that she was well aware that these names were readily available, but cautiously did not wish to proliferate knowledge or use of their negative powers, for, as aspects of Unbalanced Force, the Qliphoth were the adverse aspect of each sephirah, and although situated in Assiah according to Mathers, were perhaps better placed on an inverse Tree *below* Assiah after all.²⁸⁷

²⁸³ John Hamill, *The Rosicrucian Seer*, pp. 129-31. Also Chapter 2, p. 113, n. 306.

²⁸⁴ Fortune, *Mystical Qabalah*, p. 301. She had already demonstrated this in a practical way during the episode when she absorbed the artificial elemental in the shape of a wolf. Fortune, *Psychic Self-defence*, pp. 52-55. See the following section on thought-forms.

²⁸⁵ Fortune, *Mystical Qabalah*, pp. 300, 302

²⁸⁶ Blavatsky, *Secret Doctrine*, I, 248; II, 130; III, 377; IV, 76

²⁸⁷ Fortune, *Mystical Qabalah*, pp. 53, 62, 297, 302. Eliphas Lévi shows The Star of Despotism (Kether); The Dog of Fanaticism (Chokmah); the Ass of Limited Stupidity (Binah); the Goat of Obscure Love (Chesed); The Stone of Inflexible Rigor (Geburah); The Horse - Triumph of the Beast (Tiphareth); The Cock of Foolish Pride (Netzach); The Hen of Fatal Maternity (Hod); the Impure Lingam (Yesod); The Peacock – the Proud World (Malkuth). Eliphas Lévi, *The Mysteries of the Qabalah or The Occult Agreement of the Two Testaments* (Wellingborough: The Aquarian Press, 1974 [1920]). The major list of the early twentieth century was Aleister Crowley's compendium 777. Israel Regardie, ed., *777 and other Qabalistic Writings of Aleister Crowley* (York Beach, ME: Samuel Weiser, 1973 [1907]). Fortune's own list includes Avarice (Binah), Hypocrisy (Chesed), Cruelty, Fear (Geburah), Pride (Tiphareth), Lust (Netzach), Dishonesty (Hod), Idleness (Yesod), and Inertia (Malkuth). For Mathers's list, see S. L. MacGregor Mathers, *The Kabbalah Unveiled* (London: Arkana, 1991 [1926]), Plate iv. For Regardie, see Israel Regardie, *The Golden Dawn: An Account of the Teachings, Rites and Ceremonies of the Order of the Golden Dawn* (St. Paul, MN: Llewellyn Publications, 1978 [1937-40]), I, 163. William Gray approached the subject of evil by considering the Tree of Life as having a contrasting Tree of Evil with the attributes of the Sephiroth as follows: 0. Darkness; 1. Atheism; 2. Stupidity; 3. Antipathy; 4.

Nevertheless, Mathers had already given a systematic list of the ten Orders of Demons and ten Arch Devils which apply to the sephiroth.²⁸⁸ Regardie's similar list does not entirely match Mathers's, and Knight and Gray translate their demonic forces into vices, with Knight following Fortune in omitting Kether and Chokmah from the list as too refined to be tainted.²⁸⁹ Like Gray, Halevi attributes negative qualities to the sephiroth – in his case the seven deadly sins – again, like Fortune and Knight, omitting the Supernal Triad. He regards the Devil as a metaphor for disorder whose function is one of testing for weakness although, following Kabbalistic tradition, he does give credence to 'The Opposition' who oppose keen aspirants and groups, and the *dibbukim*, who attach themselves to unbalanced personalities.²⁹⁰ Halevi suggests that the remnants of the destruction of previous universes are characterised as Archdemons, which he places around and about the lower three Worlds of the Tree.²⁹¹

Thus there is and always has been during the development of Kabbalah intense speculation concerning the Qliphoth and how they relate to the Tree both as a macrocosmic and a microcosmic glyph, calling on the intuitive capabilities of the practitioner to divine satisfactory and workable answers, albeit only temporary.

VII. Thought-forms and Artificial Elementals

Artificial elementals, or 'thought-forms', are so termed because they are 'created' purely as a result of voluntary or involuntary imaginative activity by humans; although they are not 'real', they have definite existence on the Inner Planes, and are considered to be able to assist the magician to attract or focus the forces that the elemental represents. At the conclusion of a magical operation involving them, any thought-forms should be efficiently banished, else they remain for unwary passers-by to pick up, or for the more knowledgeable to seek out and misuse. Fortune's most startling and therefore one of her

Apathy; 5. Cruelty; 6. Ugliness, Inharmony; 7. Lust; 8. Greed; 9. Instability; 10. Materialism. William G. Gray, *The Tree of Evil* (Toddington, Glos.: Helios Book Service, 1974), p. 18.

²⁸⁸ Mathers, *Kabbalah Unveiled*, Plate IV.

²⁸⁹ Knight, *Practical Guide to Qabalistic Symbolism*, 1, *passim*; Gray, *The Tree of Evil*, p. 62

²⁹⁰ Z'ev ben Shimon Halevi, *School of Soul: Its Path and its Pitfalls* (Bath: Gateway Books, 1993 [1985]), pp. 60, 72; Halevi, *The Work of the Kabbalist* (Bath: Gateway Books, 1993 [1984]), p. 140.

²⁹¹ Halevi, *Adam and the Kabbalistic Tree*, p. 235-37; *The Work of the Kabbalist*, pp. 144, 153.

most popular of books is *Psychic Self-Defence* (1930). One must assume in this materialistic age that it is purchased as much for its entertainment value as for any need to diagnose and employ methods of defence against psychic attack. Nevertheless, in the delicate phase of life she was in at the time, she saw her case-studies, methods of diagnosis, and treatments as genuine and helpful. Yet she may, as is sometimes suggested of Leadbeater, have fallen into the trap of becoming a victim of over-sensitivity as a result of her breakdown, and of mistaking the clarity of her personal psychic vision as of universal application, rather than a matter of individual interpretation. Like Leadbeater, she was also extraordinarily skilled at working on the astral, tempting the reader through the clarity of her accounts to feel that her experiences took place physically. The book is perhaps most useful for the present-day serious student for its many asides – that, for example, astral journeys are the same as lucid dreams;²⁹² that any act performed with intention becomes a rite;²⁹³ and that – on her own admission – 'psychism, however genuine, is a fruitful cause of self-delusion.'²⁹⁴ One of her most noted experiences is the occasion when, brooding over a wrong done to her, and on the borders of sleep, she happened to visualise the fearsome Nordic wolf Fenris, which she involuntarily extruded into ectoplasmic form, its body leaning heavily against her on the bed. Horrified not only at its snarls, but at the possible consequences to others, she took command, and it gladly responded to her treatment of it as a pet, although it was later seen by others wandering frighteningly about the house howling. Realising that this thought-form might gain enough strength to achieve independent existence, she had the task, not of cursing or exorcising it in a way that might well have been considered appropriate to medieval Christendom, but of re-absorbing it back into her own body, though not without tremendous emotional upheaval. She notes that during the incident, an opportunity for revenge on the person who she felt had wronged her clearly presented itself.²⁹⁵ The incident has remarkable similarity to that of David-Neel, of which she later became aware.²⁹⁶ Fortune maintains

²⁹² Fortune, *Psychic Self-defence*, p. 155.

²⁹³ Fortune, *Psychic Self-defence*, p. 173.

²⁹⁴ Fortune, *Psychic Self-defence*, p. 105.

²⁹⁵ Fortune, *Psychic Self-defence*, pp. 52-55.

²⁹⁶ See next page.

that the lower spheres are replete with everything that anyone has ever imagined, especially in cases where strong emotions or ideals have been generated. In the distant past, some persisting thought-forms have been worshipped as gods and even offered sacrifice, so that in the course of time, they developed a lasting presence of considerable power, despite their ultimate lack of reality.²⁹⁷ Fortune casts doubt on thought-forms actually being present in space as previously described by Besant and Leadbeater in the literature she was very familiar with, but deemed that it was the activity of *visualising* them in space that produced results.²⁹⁸ The images pertain to the lower mental/astral and etheric Spheres on the Tree of Life (Spheres 6-10).

Fortune, as was mentioned, later became familiar with the works of Alexandra David-Neel.²⁹⁹ Tibetan magicians believed that magic was entirely natural and that anything that can be imagined can come to pass;³⁰⁰ they could even obtain the use of non-humans to do their bidding.³⁰¹ In much the same way that Fortune spectacularly tackled the extruded thought-form of the wolf by ‘absorbing’ it, Tibetan shamans resolved matters on the inner planes for which they have detailed mental maps rather than attempting to fight their demons on the ‘outer plane’.³⁰² For example, a lama could build a ‘phantom body’ or ‘puppet’ (*tulku*) in order to carry out tasks in other places.³⁰³ David-Neel’s own experiment over the course of several months to build the thought-form (a *tulpa* – a less permanent form of *tulku*) almost miscarried. The resulting short fat, innocent, jolly monk became a regular member of her party, but had to be dissolved

²⁹⁷ Fortune, *Mystical Qabalah*, pp. 222-25; Fortune and Knight, *Spiritualism*, p. 12.

²⁹⁸ Fortune in Fortune and Knight, *Ritual Magic*, p. 164. She must have been well acquainted with Annie Besant and C. W. Leadbeater, *Thought-Forms* (Adyar, Madras: The Theosophical Publishing House, 1941 [1901]). They describe and provide illustrations of a range of colours evoked by particular emotions – broadly, dull and dark for negative emotions, bright for positive, spiritual ones – and they suggest that the thought-forms surrounding us distort our perceptions of the world as it is. Besant and Leadbeater, *Thought-Forms*, passim. A present day magician would interpret the forms as projections rather than existing in their own right. Knight in Fortune and Knight, *Ritual Magic*, p. 169.

²⁹⁹ Fortune in Fortune and Knight, *The Circuit of Force* (Loughborough: Thoos Publications, 1998), p. 67; Fortune, *Applied Magic* (Wellingborough: The Aquarian Press, 1962), p. 11.

³⁰⁰ Fortune, *Sane Occultism* (London: Aquarian Press, 1967, [1930]), p. 84.

³⁰¹ David-Neel, *Initiations*, pp. 7-8.

³⁰² Fortune, *Psychic*, pp. 52-55 and Mme Alexandra David-Neel, *Magic and Mystery in Tibet* (London: Abacus, 1929, 1977), pp. 38-40.

³⁰³ David-Neel, *Magic*, pp. 92-94.

when it began to change into a mean, mocking figure intent on escape – a process which took twice as long as it did to create it. Fortune would not have disagreed that a workable explanation for all the Tibetan phenomena, as for much of hers, was that of suggestion or auto-suggestion.³⁰⁴ Further discussion on this is reserved for Chapter 6.

Thus, an artificial elemental is not necessarily evil. It is a thought-form that has become ensouled by Elemental essence, either from the Elemental sphere, or from the magus's own aura, and is the more easily built up if accompanied by clear visualisation, concentration, and, especially, emotion. It is the same as a group mind, the accrued atmosphere built up at, for example, a ritual, a football match, a Remembrance Day service, or a hero-worshipping mob, which reinforces the emotions of the participants to a point beyond that which they would normally feel. It can grow to a great size, but quickly disperses if not continually fed. Depending on the character of the elemental, it can either raise human consciousness (e.g. through consideration of the figure of a national hero), or, if it carries a reservoir of negative emotion, lower it.³⁰⁵

Further varieties of intermediary include ancestors, guardians, animals (who may act as guardians, e.g. as in shamanism), and a variety of pathological entities.

Ancestors and Guardians

Ancestors have generally been accorded great respect by their living descendants. One aspect of this is the elevation of some of them to the status of saints or heroes.³⁰⁶ Dodds noted that the ancestors often appeared in dreams, and heroes were listed as a category of intermediary by, for example, Eusebius and Iamblichus, whilst also being demonised by the Church. Shumaker notes that they were often classified as ‘demi-gods’, and Yates drew attention to Bruno’s tenth order of angelic beings, a duty filled, perhaps, by illustrious ancestors.³⁰⁷ Towards the end of the nineteenth century, Anna Kingsford, an overtly Christian occultist, and of a generation before Fortune, spoke of

³⁰⁴ David-Neel, *Magic*, pp. 162, 220-22.

³⁰⁵ Fortune, *Applied*, pp. 13-17, 48.

³⁰⁶ See, for example, Loomis, *White Magic*, pp. 12-23. .

³⁰⁷ Some of the difficulties of identifying the relationships between various kinds of angels and inner beings are given by Kieckhefer, *Magic in the Middle Ages*, pp. 9, 72, 167.

guardian angels as beings who are of the celestial realm but who communicate through the astral. They are inner spiritual directors, generally contra-sexual, who can generally be trusted because of their proximity to God; but they never control, and so cannot prevent evils.³⁰⁸ However, it is difficult to distinguish ‘guardian angels’ from ‘guardians’; on the Tree of Life, the former might well originate from its higher reaches, say, Tiphareth, or Chesed, or Daath, whereas the latter are most commonly related to places or to the initial stages of visualisation, and therefore of a lower sphere, such as the astral Hod-Netzach, or even the etheric Yesod.

Perhaps the best example of Fortune’s mediation of ancestors is demonstrated by communications she received on 5 August 1922 when in the presence of Charles Loveday her fellow worker she mediated Arnolfus, a medieval priest of the abbey church at Glastonbury, one of a body named the Company of Avalon who had made themselves known to herself and Frederick Bligh Bond the previous year.³⁰⁹ Arnolfus characterised Glastonbury as a locus of spiritual power where pagan and Christian belief systems met and blended harmoniously. A day later than the first transmission, one ‘Anselm’, a bishop of Glastonbury, emphasised that the Church at Glastonbury was a truly English church planted by Joseph of Arimathea, and he amplified the role of an uninterrupted line of ancestors (monks and priests) as representatives of the ‘national spirit’ earthed at Glastonbury.³¹⁰ Similar evidence of the continuing presence of ancestors and guardians may still be reported, particularly in the environs of barrows, churches, traditional meeting places, or objects of special significance. These resident guardian spirits may have been purposely set in position in the Sphere of Yesod by consecration, or perhaps centuries ago by virtue of the very nature of its purpose (e.g. a burial urn, or sarcophagus, somehow ‘containing’ a spirit). Three examples from

³⁰⁸ Anna Kingsford and Edward Maitland, *The Perfect Way or the Finding of Christ* (London: John M. Watkins, 1909, [1881]), pp. 76-92. She also speaks of ‘presiding spirits or *genii loci*’ who are elemental or nature-spirits, who guard small enclaves, and are different in kind from the more august inner figures met by Fortune and her followers (see below). Kingsford, *Perfect Way*, p. 84.

³⁰⁹ Knight, *Dion Fortune and the Inner Light*, pp. 62-63, 73-75.

³¹⁰ Gareth Knight, *Dion Fortune and the Three-fold Way* (London: S.I.L. (Trading) Ltd., 2002), pp. 81-83. Knight includes transcripts from Fortune’s mediations.

followers in Fortune's magical tradition will serve to show that similar experiences are still being repeated today, but related to other places.

1. The practitioner Dolores Ashcroft-Nowicki recounts her experience of a Roman soldier still at his post waiting to be relieved, but does not clarify which aspect of the soldier this might have been – his essential spirit (would this have reincarnated, or passed to higher realms?), or his 'shade', or a place memory? He was obviously pleased and surprised to be released, so we must assume that in this case, it was something more than a shade.³¹¹

2. By bringing a careful selection of the Celtic texts to our attention, the Matthews attempt to rekindle our sensitivity to the presence of the ancestors, enabling useful contacts to be made, and access to lost wisdom.³¹²

3. On a site visit, Stewart received in meditation valuable information regarding the 'reality-patterns' of an ancient people whose King is buried at the tomb of Les Monts Grantez, Jersey. The specific concepts, echoing and amplifying those of Fortune's Glastonbury experience, seem alien to our ears, e.g. the dolmen acts as an amplifier of the King's continuing awareness over the centuries; the solar system is in some way 'inside the structure of the stones'; the earth is outside the stars and is a 'gateway to them'; the King was able to relate to modern magical practice;³¹³ and time as we know it does not exist.³¹⁴ In a parallel tradition, the shaman Meadows amplifies several fine distinctions between guardians of different types.³¹⁵

³¹¹ Dolores Ashcroft-Novicki, *Magical Use of Thought Forms* (St Paul, MN: Llewellyn, 2002), p. 163.

³¹² Matthews, *Encyclopaedia*, pp. 94-132.

³¹³ Even to the point of being able to indicate a technical mistake that the operator made.

³¹⁴ 'there is no line of such a shape [. . .]' the King communicated. It is important to state that the ideas received were not in the form of words; Stewart had to frame these unfamiliar concepts into words as best he could. This account appears in Gareth Knight, *The Secret Tradition in Arthurian Legend* (Wellingborough: Aquarian Press, 1983), pp. 158-62.

³¹⁵ It seems important for the explorer of 'inner space' to be able to differentiate between the various grades of inner helper. Meadows distinguishes the shamanic 'guide', an 'energy-pattern that supplies information vital to your growth and development', from the 'guardian', who is one's permanent 'guardian angel'. An 'inner teacher' is an inspirational figure, once human, who channels energy and ancient wisdom to the shaman on the earth-plane. These seem to be equivalent to Fortune's Masters. Meadows also discusses guardians associated with the vegetable kingdom, both inner and outer – for example, trees which appear during a shamanic journey have a significance that the shaman should attempt to discern. Kenneth Meadows, *Shamanic Experience* (Shaftesbury: Element, 1991), pp. 128-33.

Note on Animals and Shamanism

Apart from her negative encounter with the extruded wolf thought-form, Fortune makes no mention of animals as guides or guardians save as they crop up in traditional imagery such as the Tarot, or the God-forms of ancient mythologies such as Anubis of the Egyptians, the winged bull of Assyria, etc., and although she stresses the importance of symbolic animals as intermediaries, and their usefulness for cross-checking the reliability of visions on any particular plane, she does not include any in her sephirothic tabulations.³¹⁶ The popularity of totem beasts or animal guardians is one that has become more evident with the increase in awareness of Native American culture, and has encouraged occultists here to look for similar instances in our own mythology – for example, the white hart that leads the Arthurian knights to new adventures; the bear; the white horse; and the various animals represented in the constellations. They are almost impossible to position on the Tree of Life because of their diversity; and as animals, they are often to be found in the most unlikely places. Some can be personal guardians, like the talking animals in the *Jungle Book*; some, such as the alchemical lion, are more in the nature of archetypes or even, as in Christianity and Egyptian myth, god-forms (the Lamb, the hawk, etc.).³¹⁷ In Celtic tradition, one of the shaman's primary initiations is to find and work with an animal helper, particularly the pre-mammalian species of fish and bird, designated as among

³¹⁶ Fortune gives only the passing examples of the horse (Geburah/Mars), jackal (Yesod/Moon), or doves and spotted beasts (Netzach/Venus). See Fortune, *Mystical Qabalah*, p. 99 for her comments on animal symbolism.

³¹⁷ Gareth Knight, *Magical Images and the Magical Imagination* (Albuquerque, NM: Sun Chalice Books, 1998), pp. 70-72. See also Harner in Ashcroft-Nowicki, *Magical Use*, p. 9; and for a comprehensive list, John Matthews, *The Celtic Shaman* (Shaftesbury: Element, 1991), pp. 51-68.

Such animal guides appear as an essential part of Steinbrecher's meditative discipline for contacting inner states. Edwin C. Steinbrecher, *The Inner Guide Meditation* (Wellingborough: The Aquarian Press, 1998), pp. 54-55. Steinbrecher, much like Fortune in the *Mystical Qabalah*, employs a mix of traditional and innovative usage of the Tarot, and astrological and Jungian meditative constructs. See Chapter 6, pp. 337-39. From the wider perspective, Knight's use of the term 'Magical Image' is an extension of Fortune's usage in her tabulations in the *Mystical Qabalah*, encompassing the concept of intermediaries in the form of physical objects (as talismans), and as images in the imagination, whether animate or inanimate.

the 'Oldest Animals', whose memories³¹⁸ stretch furthest back in time, and can be accessed by the shaman with the help of one or more of his/her other animal helpers.³¹⁹ The 'Esoteric Glossary' in Fortune's *Applied Magic* contains the suggestion that the higher animals were once considered as possible vehicles for humans 'had not their Over-souls failed [. . .]', and she points to the importance of the Four Holy Living Creatures as holding an underlying pattern for the design for man. Attention is also drawn there to the importance of the animal symbolism in the Zodiac and, particularly, the constellation Centaur.³²⁰ Such speculations cannot appeal to the rational mind, but may be triggers to inspire further insights among subsequent students of practical occultism.

Since both animals and faery have been mentioned here separately as contacts for humanity, it should not pass our notice that Stewart sets great store by what he terms the 'Triune Alliance' – the building up of an equal (real, not symbolic) partnership between human, animal, and faery – and he outlines methods for so doing.³²¹ He also describes two kinds of inner creature which he defines, but which are nevertheless difficult to distinguish; Inherent Creatures, which are symbolic indicators of energy and behaviour patterns of the psyche, and Companion Creatures, who are considered to be real living creatures with whom we are able to relate on the inner planes through meditation, and who are able to take us into dimensions of existence normally closed to us.³²²

Drury demonstrates unexpected similarities between the visionary aspects of Western occultism as illustrated by Fortune and her followers, and the similar activities of shamanism. He defines shamanism as 'a universal mode of linking humanity with the

³¹⁸ 'The memory of the animals helps us remember our paradisaic interconnection.' Matthews, *Celtic Shaman*, p. 63.

³¹⁹ Matthews, *Encyclopaedia*, pp. 62-93. Bearing in mind the Egyptian animal priest-masks, the animal forms could well be hiding human characteristics. Fortune's interest in animals was predominantly towards those of myth.

³²⁰ Fortune, *Applied Magic*, p. 106. It should be noted that the 'Esoteric Glossary', though based on Fortune's inner tradition, was largely compiled by Margaret Lumley-Brown, who took over Fortune's role as medium/mediator after Fortune's death, i.e. from 1946-61.

³²¹ Stewart, *Power*, p. 74. The Triune Alliance is one that is actively and regularly celebrated as a key feature of magical work in the Society of the Inner Light today.

³²² R. J. Stewart, *The Way of Merlin* (Wellingborough: Aquarian Press, 1991), pp. 94-104.

cosmos by means of the 'magical journey', correlating the shamanistic inner journey with the 'pathworkings' of Western magic,³²³ and although he describes the technology of inner journeys, his special emphasis is on the techniques of magical trance, at which Fortune and some others of her early fraternity were adept.³²⁴

John Matthews, speaking against a background of some practical experience, distinguishes between the 'shaman within', an inner aspect of oneself which can be activated through training, and the 'inner shaman', who acts as an 'Otherworldly teacher' who takes the training on further by continuing to 'instigate events which, although you may experience them in the Otherworld, have powerful repercussions in this one', and who sounds very similar to what Fortune might have termed a Master.³²⁵ Matthews is uncertain whether these are, in fact, highly evolved beings or aspects of ourselves, but states that the shamanic tradition encompasses them both. The 'shaman within', on the other hand, as a 'second-dimension' self (not, he emphasises, a sub-personality or a 'psychological entity') is the interface by means of which the 'inner shaman' is contacted.³²⁶

The Tree of Life used as an Intermediary Glyph

Fortune's *Mystical Qabalah* remains the standard text for students of her Fraternity, never having been out of print since 1935. It appears to be solely a compendium of steady research, and Fortune acknowledges those authors to whom she owes debt. According to her own account, Fortune began at some time during 1930 and 1931 to mentally address herself in a conscious way to the symbolism of the Tree, including its

³²³ Hanegraaff links pathworkings with guided visualisation, save that pathworking implies a more structured inner journey to and from a particular goal. He refers the reader to Marian Green, *Magic for the Aquarian Age* (Wellingborough: The Aquarian Press, 1983) for examples (Hanegraaff, *New Age*, pp. 252, 254).

³²⁴ Nevill Drury, *The Shaman and the Magician* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1982), pp. xi, 43-47, 63-65.

³²⁵ Matthews, *Celtic Shaman*, pp. 69-70.

³²⁶ Matthews, *Celtic Shaman*, p. 73.

sacred names, and this led to a series of spontaneous visions.³²⁷ One, where her consciousness began to pass into a subjective state to the extent of becoming oblivious to her physical surroundings, though she remained able to maintain mental alertness. This was distinctly different from the trance state that she had entered during the three years beginning in July 1923 in order to channel the *Cosmic Doctrine*.³²⁸ Here, some ten years later, she began a review of the Sephiroth from Kether down the Tree until on reaching the Sephirah Yesod, a significant change took place. The formerly subjective visualisation became alive and there arose before her inner eyes a picture of a sandy shore, of sufficient stability that she felt able to stand within it as a part of the scene. Sounds and colours were for a moment real to her, as was the figure of a vast and serene archangel which formed above her, and which placed a 'physical' symbol in her hand. She closed the meditation by imaginatively entering the purple coloured disc of Yesod depicted on the Tree of life in front of her. However, as she reports:

Then, for some unknown reason, the sphere itself took charge, and seemed to slide right inside the physical body till it took up a position resting on the floor of the pelvis, just in front of the spine, and reaching towards the level of the lowest ribs. I was exceedingly conscious of this disc of quivering purple light in this position, and also of the appearance of my own skeleton, and the sense of the objective reality of this disc still remains with me, in marked distinction from the rest of the Sephiroth which have not been magically formulated.³²⁹

Similar visions occurred with regard to the 32nd Path (between Malkuth and Yesod), and, during a comprehensive overview of the entire Tree, the experience of being robed and in her astral body, taking a stone block out of a temple into the clouds, complete with lighting effects consonant with the changing colours of the Sephiroth as she rose up the Tree, concluding with the vision of herself of gigantic size, standing on the globe of earth, her head in the heavens, with the Tree at her back. Enormous force poured from hands, solar plexus, and forehead, 'raining on the altar in diamond sparkles of

³²⁷ As recorded in the pages of the *Inner Light Magazine*. Significant passages of Fortune's account are cited, with comment, in Knight, *Dion Fortune and the Inner Light*. Also in Gareth Knight, 'Dion Fortune and the Mystical Qabalah', *The Inner Light*, 23: 4 (2003), 2-7.

³²⁸ See a description of this in Chapter 6, pp. 310, 323.

³²⁹ Knight, *Dion Fortune and the Inner Light*, p. 214.

light'.³³⁰ Similar visions occurred subsequently as she studied the remaining Sephiroth. Because of the tradition of secrecy, however, her method was not included as part of her book, leading the reader to believe it was purely the result of intellectual endeavour. Fortune would thus have been the first to declare that the Tree of Life was indeed a 'living system of spiritual development, not an historical curiosity'.³³¹ The intermediary function of the glyph, used as was intended by the Kabbalists who were inspired by it in the beginning, clearly shows Fortune to have picked up, almost independently, on that same closely-guarded method of working. Knight notes that the evident result of this was to inspire Fortune's series of powerful occult novels containing much Yesodic symbolism.³³²

Thus the Tree of Life may be approached mystically as a series of doorways to God; intellectually as in Fortune's exposition of the *Mystical Qabalah*; astrally as in the above examples of the use of the imagination; or mundanely as sound guidance for the construction of rituals, talismans, and astrological charts.³³³

This Chapter began with an outline of the Kabbalah and the Tree of Life as one of the many possible maps of consciousness – of both macrocosm and microcosm. But there is a tension here. Within this envelope or any alternative all-embracing construct, any and all posited forms of life must reside, including those inhabitants of the unseen that were discussed in the second part of the Chapter, i.e. those recognised in the ancient, medieval and Renaissance worlds; those acknowledged by nineteenth-century spiritualists; the beings enumerated within the Theosophical stream; Fortune's own listing along with comment by some of her later followers, who have developed their own understandings; then later, enumerations by New Age and shamanic communities. All of them, including attempts by present-day scholars to create fresh maps of consciousness in the light of recent research, place their intermediary beings

³³⁰ Knight, *Dion Fortune and the Inner Light*, p. 215.

³³¹ Knight, 'Dion Fortune and the Mystical Qabalah', p. 3.

³³² Knight, 'Dion Fortune and the Mystical Qabalah', p. 5. See Appendix I, pp. 409-412 for a chronology. It should be noted that although her method began with imaginative or astral work, it enabled her to 'rise upon the planes' to access more elevated and spiritually robust areas of the Tree towards the top.

³³³ Knight, 'Dion Fortune and the Mystical Qabalah', pp. 6-7.

against some kind of cosmological background, this in many cases – for example the Hermetic Order of the Golden Dawn, and even in Madame Blavatsky's work – being represented by the Tree of Life of the Kabbalah. Whereas most of these systems and practitioners, such as Z'ev ben Shimon Halevi, and even seventeenth-century scholars, attempt to highlight the links between inner levels of consciousness and groups or types of inner beings, Fortune does not save for various sporadic occurrences mentioned incidentally such as I have indicated in my text. This may be perhaps, for reasons of secrecy, since she was under the jurisdiction of her Stella Matutina Lodge and had already been expelled some years previously for allegedly disclosing matters confidential to the Lodge of which she was then a member; or more likely, it was an attempt to avoid confusion over unfamiliar terms and concepts among a readership untrained in Kabbalah.

There is little doubt that Fortune's early formal training revolved around the Kabbalah and the Tree of Life. From an early date, the two most fundamental influences on her work were Kabbalah and the psychic impact of her meeting with the Masters. But as well as the theory and practice of Kabbalah, Fortune worked for mastery of a wide field of operations; cosmology; esoteric psychology; esoteric training of initiates; the relationship of occultism to life; ritual work; the day-to-day administration of a working Fraternity; and the writing of texts and a regularly-produced in-house magazine. It is not surprising therefore that she tended to vary the direction of her interests to suit circumstances or the requirements of her intended audience. For her, cosmology featured strongly in the early twenties; spiritualism at the turn of the decade including what turned out to be her clearest exposition of her understanding of intermediaries written between 1929 and 1930; soon followed by an intense period of work culminating in the *Mystical Qabalah* in 1935 which thereafter seldom appeared in her subsequent texts.

It appears that her categorisation of Inhabitants of the Unseen³³⁴ was set out as a development only apparently independent of her ongoing work on Kabbalah over the previous twelve years, but, just as she wrote of other matters without reference to

³³⁴ Fortune and Knight, *Spiritualism and Occultism*, pp. 116-27; originally published in *The Inner Light*, , III: 2 (November, 1929), 8-12 and III: 3 (December 1929), 6-9.

Kabbalah when she might well have done, neither did she feel the need here to relate it to the intermediaries, resulting in the lack of any systematic account of their relation one to the other.³³⁵ In her own work as a practical magician, she cannot fail to have gradually become aware of correspondences between them, but as we have seen, she did not spell out those correspondences in her writings.

Whether any of the entities described above are objectively real, subjectively real, or solely the products of wishful thinking, is, as Fortune reminds us, for the practitioner to decide. It is not part of our brief – indeed, we do not have the tools – to judge, save to alert ourselves to the possibilities as suggested by those surveyed above who have made their own 'inner journeys'. As observers, we can only note their apparent sincerity and record similarities and differences between their varying approaches and findings, the differences of which do not, in the end, appear to be great. As in the lives of many well-documented 'religious experiencers' of the past, Fortune's mind had been well-stocked with the heady literature of her forebears, and was enthused and motivated by an initial dynamic encounter with entities that she took to be Masters whom she considered real and of help to herself and others in her expressed goal of magic, i.e. beneficial effects in daily life for many, and the eventual achievement of a more refined spiritual consciousness that perceives in terms beyond those of physical or mental images, and reaches up into the abstractions of spirit.³³⁶

³³⁵ See, for example, *The Training and Work of an Initiate* (1930), *Sane Occultism* (1930), or even *Introduction to Ritual Magic* (between c. 1930 and 1940), which do not include more than a handful of passing references.

³³⁶ Fortune, *Spiritualism*, p. 177. In a passage of 1940 entitled 'The Invisible Intelligences', she states that, as a former professional psychologist with a continuing interest in psychology, her first opinion regarding the phenomena of intermediaries and of magic (the method whereby they could be contacted) was fully satisfied by the explanations of analytical psychology. Further experience, however, taught her

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that such rationalisation of magic ‘took all the power out of it. As a psycho-philosophical technique, magic was ineffectual; as good, old-fashioned abracadabra it was startlingly, even alarmingly, efficacious.’ Dion Fortune, *Inner Light*, XIII: 6, (March 1940), 108-10 (p. 109).

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Chapter 5: The Masters: Their Identity, Nature and Tasks

Introduction

The origin of the concept of Masters was discussed earlier as part of the historical overview,¹ and their role as part of the created inner worlds. Here, I will examine the question of the extent to which there is any consensus between Fortune and other occultists in recent Western esotericism concerning the identity and functions of the Masters – whether or not, for example, they were considered to be physical beings, and whether any historical precedents served as models for their character. The sources quoted are mostly primary sources from practitioners and experiencers who influenced Fortune to a considerable degree, and also from those whom she influenced. Though departing from sole reliance on the works of scholars, of which there are few regarding Fortune, important conclusions may still be drawn concerning her understanding of who or what her Masters were, and how they related to her magic and to life. Blavatsky, Besant, Leadbeater, Bailey, and Mark and Elizabeth Prophet are here analysed with respect to their ideas of the Masters, together with secondary authorities such as Jenny Hazelgrove, Kenneth Rayner Johnson, K. Paul Johnson, Nicholas Goodrick-Clarke, A. T. Barborka, and Deb Bodeau. Gareth Knight, as practitioner and Fortune's biographer,

¹ Especially pp. 111-15.

and Alan Richardson, a lifelong commentator on Fortune's work, are also drawn into our analysis.

The previous chapter introduced the Masters as one particular class of intermediary (though the most important for their crucial role in magic) among the many hierarchies of inner beings recognised by Fortune. She attempts to define their basic characteristics against the background of Kabbalah, and introduces examples of similar phenomena as described by other author/practitioners. Here I refer to activities within the Theosophical Society preceding Fortune's own involvement because they were crucial in the building and maintenance of the Society's *egregore*, a postulated build-up of mental/emotional energy characteristic of any long-standing closely-knit group, which provided a ready-made spiritual atmosphere within which newer aspirants could more easily find success in their spiritual development.² It has already been emphasised that the idea of some form of hidden beings or 'secret chiefs' controlling esoteric groups (whether subjective or objective), had been gestating since the eighteenth century long before their commonly acknowledged appearance in modern Theosophy, and that it is one of the defining characteristics of, particularly, the esotericism of the West. Questions addressed here (with special reference to both Fortune and to her immediate circle) concern the attributes of the Masters, the tension between their Eastern and Western colourings, their physicality, and their objectives. Initially, I will look at the salient qualities and attributes which identify certain figures as Masters, and which serve to distinguish them from all other kinds of intermediaries.

It is not impossible that some of the inner figures of the ancient world were regarded in a similar light – i.e. as leaders of small inner groups of devotees, like the *maggid* of medieval esoteric Judaism, although some may perhaps be disqualified because of their relative popularity. Among such examples may be included Zoroaster; the higher and lower guides of Zoroastrianism; the souls of Greek heroes, whether formerly incarnate soldiers, statesmen, or healers; intermediaries working through local shamanistic figures; or figures of myth and fiction such as the ubiquitous Medea and

² For further discussion of 'egregore', see pages 321-22, below.

Circe.³ A stronger case can be made out for medieval saints and martyrs, many of whom were nevertheless only of local interest. Their range of activities was wide, and included help, protection and comfort, warning against sin, preparing souls for death, and generally encouraging good works, but did not ostensibly include supervision of specialist or esoteric groups save in the special cases of enclosed or semi-enclosed orders, of which the Knights Templar are a supreme example.⁴ They may correspond to Bruno's tenth Order of the *Issim*, separated souls and heroes – separated, perhaps, by virtue of choosing to continue to take a legitimate interest in the world they have left rather than take on the full glories of the higher spheres. His inclusion of the Muses is from a different strand of tradition, but highlights the indistinctness of the boundaries between types of intermediary, for they, like Masters, were, or are, considered as fruitful sources of inspiration.

'The question of the Masters is one of the most vexing and contentious issues in any study of magic'.⁵ Mathers maintained that he knew absolutely nothing regarding his own Masters, the 'Secret Chiefs' of the 'Third Order' that lie behind the outer organisation of the Hermetic Order of the Golden Dawn, not even their names.⁶ We have already noted Regardie's scoffing attitude to the idea of secret exalted inner guides, and he particularly casts serious doubts on Fortune's statement in *Sane Occultism* that the student finds a Master on the inner planes before being allotted an earthly teacher.⁷

³ In his recension, Iamblichus includes 'purified souls', who are met in the inner worlds. See p. 75, above. Moses and Elijah are among humans who rose to divine status, but do not appear to have quite the same attributes as a 'Master'. A major difficulty in the ancient recorded hierarchies is that the differences between members is not always a difference in kind, but of closeness to divinity, or in power.

⁴ See John L. McKenzie, 'Roman Catholicism: V. Worship. The Cult of the Saints' in *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, 15th edn, (Chicago: Encyclopaedia Britannica, Inc., 1977) xv, 999-1000.

⁵ Alan Richardson in Alan Richardson and Geoff Hughes, *Ancient Magicks for a New Age* (St. Paul, MN.: Llewellyn, 1989), p. 10.

⁶ Although Colquhoun, after a resumé of that portion of Mathers' brief Manifesto concerning his Secret Chiefs, quotes a Golden Dawn tradition that they were 'a Greek, a Copt, and a Hindou', perhaps a confused reference to Blavatsky's early references to her Masters Hilarion, Paulos Metamon, and M(orya). She also mentions Hugo Alverda the Phrisian, Franciscus de Bry, the Gaul, and Elman Zata the Arab, as figures occurring in the Adeptus ritual, and wonders if they were the same three. Ithell Colquhoun, *Sword of Wisdom* (London: Neville Spearman, 1975), p. 35. See also p. 293, below.

⁷ Dion Fortune, *Sane Occultism* (London: Aquarian Press, 1967 [[1930]], p. 114. 'I also disbelieve the descriptions of Masters provided by Leadbeater and others of that ilk, and the claim of MacGregor Mathers that he met three Adepts in the Bois de Boulogne. These are old wives' tales. But on the other hand, and

Writing in 1935, he claimed that anyone who has contacted the Masters (regardless of Fortune's apparent success) comes to 'psychic or spiritual grief'.⁸ Like Regardie, Anna Kingsford was also reluctant to rely on contacts from beings whose integrity, or even existence, was questionable, and she recommended that students develop reliable inner contacts apart from the Masters of Theosophy.⁹ They are not mentioned in *The Perfect Way*, and are only acknowledged by Maitland as an aside, uncapitalised and in quotation marks when discussing the curious coincidence of those same "Masters" as supposedly those responsible for persuading Blavatsky to include in *The Secret Doctrine* the principles of reincarnation and karma, which Blavatsky was said to have previously omitted from her *Isis Unveiled*, and for which Kingsford claimed the precedent.¹⁰

Fortune's thought is that magical ceremonial (where the ritual acts as a joint venture between those visible and those invisible) is ineffectual without the Masters in attendance, and conversely, that the easiest way for Westerners to contact them is

contrary to those views, I would not dare deny the fact that the Masters may have a physical existence. Undoubtedly there may well be Masters on the Astral.' Israel Regardie, *What You Should Know about the Golden Dawn* (Phoenix, Arizona: Falcon Press, 1983 [1936]), p. 54. However, he declines to acknowledge that they have any role in the Western Mysteries.

⁸ Regardie, *What You Should Know*, pp. 29, 54, 55. This is very similar to Stewart's stance regarding the Masters. See R. J. Stewart, *Power Within the Land* (Shaftesbury, Dorset: Element, 1992), p. 19.

⁹Samuel Hopgood Hart 'Preface to the Fourth Edition' in Anna Kingsford and Edward Maitland, *The Perfect Way or the Finding of Christ* (London: John M. Watkins, 1909 [1881]), pp. xl-xlii.

¹⁰Edward Maitland, *The Story of Anna Kingsford and Edward Maitland* (Birmingham: The Ruskin Press, 1905), pp. 192-93. See also 'A letter addressed to the Fellows of the London Lodge of the Theosophical Society by the President (A. Kingsford) and Vice-President (E. Maitland) of the Lodge' (Shrewsbury: Bunny & Davies, 1883) in Alan Pert, *Red Cactus: The Life of Anna Kingsford* (Watsons Bay, NSW, Books & Writers Network Pty Ltd, 2006), pp. 119, 120, where she wrote: 'Mme Blavatsky calls the 'mahatmas' masters. Her experience and evidence may justify this epithet for her, but they do not justify me in using it. I do not, and will not, apply that term to any earthly being whatsoever.' This accords well with Fortune's view on the matter. See also Gareth Knight, *The Wells of Vision* (London: S. I. L. (Trading) Ltd, 2002), p. 121. Regarding reincarnation, Sylvia Cranston quotes a relevant passage from *Isis Unveiled* which makes it clear that Blavatsky did, in fact, favourably discuss the idea of reincarnation therein, but under the term 'metempsychosis'. Sylvia Cranston, *H. P. B.: The Extraordinary Life and Influence of Helena Blavatsky, Founder of the Modern Theosophical Movement* (New York, Putnam, 1993), p. 165-66.

through ceremonial.¹¹ It is this factor which marks the difference between a 'contacted' group in touch with the Masters at various times and in varying degrees, and an 'uncontacted' group, which may be termed a 'study group' only. The test of their presence is, once again, the quality of the content of their communications.¹² From my own experience, I would add that in the absence of any messages or promptings to certain kinds of action (either of which are quite rare), one may judge the presence of a Master or Masters in a ritual by the amount and quality of power or energy generated – the 'sense of presence' experienced through the body as a kind of deep thrill or excitement; or sometimes, by psychic vision, as judged and noted by gifted individuals of the company in their subsequent Lodge reports. Any group of students of the occult who wish to progress from a study group into a practical working group are advised by Fortune to initiate contact with one or more inner plane Masters, who can influence members to carry out the kinds of work – generally ritual work – that they, the Masters, require.¹³ Having established a foundation of regular contact, the group is then able to train others to make their own contacts with the same or similar inner plane adepts.

Alan Richardson has commented on the awkwardness of the term 'Masters' to the modern ear. The term 'Spirit Guide' is not favoured by magicians as it calls up images of the séance room. He suggests instead, the more neutral term 'contacts'.¹⁴ I shall retain the nomenclature as Fortune and others themselves use it. Since the onset of New Age activities and the burgeoning of contacts ranging from new Secret Chiefs and Ascended Masters, through Guides of many different levels it is evident that these activities largely stem from the popularisation of the Masters in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries by Blavatsky and her followers, and also through the increased activity among spiritualist mediums serving the bereaved after the first World War.¹⁵

¹¹ Fortune, *Esoteric Orders and Their Work* (York Beach, ME: 2000 [1962]), p. 33. Thus echoing Iamblichus's statement that it is not possible to conduct rites effectively without the 'Superior races' (demons, heroes, and 'uncontaminate souls') being present. Thomas Taylor, tr., *Iamblichus on the Mysteries* (London: Stuart & Watkins, 1968 [1821]), pp. 2, 163-65.

¹² Dion Fortune, *The Esoteric Orders and their Work*, p. 85.

¹³ Fortune, *Esoteric Orders* p. 86.

¹⁴ Alan Richardson, ed., *Dancers to the Gods* (Wellingborough: Aquarian Press, 1985), p. 35.

¹⁵ Jenny Hazelgrove, *Spiritualism and British Society between the Wars* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2000), p. 271.

Hazelgrove particularly emphasises the latter in order to modify the notion of an assumed blanket twentieth-century secularity, and she quotes extensively from Fortune's novels as illustration of this, and also of the way that Fortune developed the role of the feminine through the metaphor of the primordial mother as a powerful goddess figure and mediator of inner forces of healing and reconciliation.¹⁶ Presented as we are by a great diversity of figures from the 'other world' transmitting messages ranging from the trivial and misleading to the mystical and sublime, members of the public seeking solace, and students both serious and sometimes credulous in their early stages, all need to exercise great discriminatory powers if they are not misled by names, claims, and capitalisations. Over the course of the last fifty years, channelled scripts have proliferated, many of sufficient import as to interest serious writers and academics.¹⁷

Direct remarks concerning the Masters have so far been limited because any account of these figures would be lacking without proper consideration of the setting within which they were conceived. The immediate nineteenth-century beginnings lie in 1851 in the supposed meeting in Hyde Park by the twenty-one-year old Helena Petrovna Blavatsky with a figure, later famous among Theosophists as Master Morya, who was to have a significant effect on her life. Blavatsky maintained that he was an emissary of the Great White Brotherhood, a band of beneficent spirits, advanced souls able to bi-locate, venturing out from their usual domicile in the Himalayas to appear in the flesh as and when they wished in order to enable humankind to ascend the next rung of the evolutionary ladder.¹⁸ The subsequent unfolding of Blavatsky's life would suggest that this was an incident very similar to that experienced by Fortune almost seventy years later. If the Masters were indeed what they claimed, and if Blavatsky's and Fortune's experience of them was as lofty and powerful beings, it would not be surprising that both felt somewhat overwhelmed by them – in Christian Fortune's case, by Jesus in particular. Suffice it to say for the moment that the impact of these episodes certainly

¹⁶Hazelgrove, *Spiritualism*, p. 277.

¹⁷See, for example, Carl Gustav Jung, *Memories, Dreams, Reflections* (London: Collins and Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1963); Anthony Duncan, *The Priesthood of Man* (London: Geoffrey Bles, 1973); Wouter J. Hanegraaff, *New Age Religion and Western Culture* (Leiden: Brill, 1996), pp. 23-42; Jennifer E. Porter, 'Spiritualists, Aliens and UFOs: Extraterrestrials as Spirit Guides', *Journal of Contemporary Religion*, 11 (1996), 337-353.

appeared to increase their desire to 'serve the Masters' and to evoke within them enough emotional and physical energy to enable them to build an organisation and continue to service it for a number of years until their deaths. Chapter 4 places the Masters within the overall hierarchy of entities deemed to inhabit the subtle planes; Chapter 5 discusses their possible identity, aims and purposes, especially as befits Fortune; and Chapter 6 examines some of the key mechanisms by which various mediums and sensitives became aware of them.

Attributes of the Masters – Some Early Examples

Following the extensive account in Chapter Two of the Masters having emerged as a special category of guides and advanced adepts arising from Rosicrucian and High-grade Freemasonic milieux, I shall focus on them here as representatives of their more specific role as overseers of esoteric societies.

Historical instances of living Western Masters ('torchbearers' or 'Initiates'),¹⁹ and various meetings of Master and pupil are recounted by K. R. Johnson.²⁰ He succinctly describes the qualities of an initiate or magus – particularly well exemplified in the figure of the alchemist – as exceeding even those of the legendary 'Renaissance man', being able by virtue of a 'vast corpus of knowledge' to raise his consciousness to higher planes, giving a superhuman understanding of human beings and their relationship to God and the Universe. It was because the nature of their work was likely to be misunderstood, that these figures often worked in isolation, or else they deliberately used Christian terminology to describe and so conceal their activities from all but genuine students.

Johnson traces the beginnings of the Western stream of alchemy, the discipline which seemed to form a common background to the otherwise wide range of their

¹⁸Richardson, *Priestess*, p. 59.

¹⁹ Cyril Scott terms the living person he regarded as his Master as an 'Initiate'. 'Pupil', *The Initiate* (London: Routledge and Sons, 1920); 'Pupil', *The Initiate in the New World* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1927); 'Pupil', *The Initiate in the Dark Cycle* (London: Routledge and Sons Ltd, 1932).

²⁰ Kenneth Rayner Johnson, *The Fulcanelli Phenomenon* (Jersey: Neville Spearman, 1980), *passim*.

activities, from Michael Scot (1175-c. 1232), theologian, alchemist, scientist and magician, who travelled throughout Europe, came under Sufi influences, and counted the Emperor Frederick II of Sicily as his pupil.²¹ Among other significant figures described by Johnson are the theologian and scientist Albertus Magnus (c. 1193-1280), known for his *Speculum Astronomiae* (c. 1260) and Roger Bacon (c. 1214-1294), scientist and alchemist, both also in contact with Sufi tradition. Bacon acknowledged the otherwise anonymous alchemist Artephius (12th century)²² who in turn owed much to the Sufi Faruddin (d. 1220) and his allegory the *Parliament of Birds*. Other figures include the lesser-known Dominican alchemist Arnold of Villanova (c. 1238-c. 1310); Raymond Lull his pupil (1235-1315); and Duns Scotus (c. 1266-1308), both the latter falling under Sufi influence as well.²³ Johnson cites Nicholas Flamel (b. c. 1330) as coming to alchemy in much the same way as did Jung 700 years later.²⁴ He quotes the endorsement by Manley P. Hall of the Comte de Saint-Germain²⁵ and Francis Bacon as two further outstanding members of the Brotherhood of the Adepts.²⁶ Thus, there is a tantalising underground tradition of Adepts, Masters, or Illuminati extending well before the nineteenth century.²⁷ It should be noted, however, that the distinction between alchemical adepts and the nineteenth-century Masters is not always easy to define. Fortune has clarified it with her insistence that no historical or contemporary living person should be termed Master. Such names as are given by Masters are used in retrospect in order to evoke a suitable image and atmosphere for the human mind to grasp while attempting contact. Although there is evidence of such Masters in some branches of early eighteenth-century Masonry, e.g. the 'Unknown Supermen' of Baron

²¹ See his *super auctorem sphaerae* (Bologna, 1495) and *physiognomia et de hominis procreatione* (1477).

²² See Artephius: *De Vito Propaganda* and *Key to Supreme Wisdom* (1614). Bacon's sources also included the 12th century mystic Suhrawardi. See W. M. Thackston Jnr, *The Mystical Visionary Treatises of Shihabuddin Yaha Suhrawardi* (London: Octagon Press, 1982).

²³ Johnson, *Fulcanelli*, pp. 59, 67, 72.

²⁴ i.e. Johnson lists the parallel factors: a dream of books; an interpreter; a laborious search; and an intermediary who ensured a successful conclusion to the contact. Johnson, *Fulcanelli*, p. 89.

²⁵ Whom Tudor-Pole confessed to having met on the Orient Express. Of Tudor-Pole, Rosamond Lehmann observed, 'Obviously he was a Master.' Lehmann in Johnson, *Fulcanelli*, p. 140. See also Comte de Saint Germain's complicated initiatory allegory, *The Most Holy Trinosophia* (1933 [c. 1750]).

²⁶ Johnson, *Fulcanelli*, pp. 74, 82.

Karl Gotthelf von Hund (1722-76), their origins and tasks do not comfortably correspond with those of the Ascended Masters or Secret Chiefs postulated by Mathers or Blavatsky as will be discussed below.²⁸

The fuller picture, however, has already been sketched out in Chapter 2. Beginning with Emanuel Swedenborg's inner conversations with angels, we find Swedenborg himself being channelled by Andrew Jackson Davis over a century later, mediating high quality material on a par with that of Blavatsky and Bailey.²⁹ Later in the eighteenth century, Martinès de Pasqually claimed to be inspired from a higher source in his Order of Elect Coëns, an important example of the many secret societies of the time. The depth and intricate nature of its concepts and operations proved to be conducive to the origin and spread of the idea of Unknown Superiors among Rosicrucian orders and speculative Masons a full century before the appearance of Helena Blavatsky's Masters, and hence, of Western rather than Eastern origin.³⁰ A hierarchy of (admittedly fictional) superior beings had appeared in Bulwer-Lytton's novel *Zanoni* (1842), and Éliphas Lévi claimed to have evoked the spirit of Apollonius of Tyana in 1854, the two events giving some indication of the spirit of the times. However, the widespread impact of Spiritualism arising as a popular movement in 1848 with the Fox sisters of Hydesville, New York, provided ripe conditions for a flowering of similar practices among

²⁷ Hanegraaff emphasises the frequent blurring of categories of higher being among the sources he investigated. Hanegraaff, *New Age Religion*, p. 200.

²⁸ Ellic Howe suggests that the Secret Chiefs were intended to 'add lustre' to Baron von Hund's 'Strikte Observantz'. Ellic Howe, *The Magicians of the Golden Dawn: A Documentary History of a Magical Order 1887-1923* (York Beach, ME: Samuel Weiser, 1978 [1972]), p. 7. No comment is made by Howe or by Mazet concerning intermediaries save to indicate that the aim of that and similar societies such as Martinès de Pasqually's Élus Coëns, and as in the theosophy of Louis-Claude de Saint-Martin, was the spiritual one of the "Great Work" of re-integration'. Edmond Mazet, 'Chevaliers Bienfaisants de la Cité Sainte' in Hanegraaff, *Dictionary of Gnosis and Western Esotericism*, i, pp. 256-58. See also Edmond Mazet, 'Freemasonry and Esotericism' in Antoine Faivre and Jacob Needleman, eds, *Modern Esoteric Spirituality* (London: SCM Press, 1992), pp. 248-276.

²⁹ Compare the idea of mediators themselves being mediated after death. Daniel Ogden, *Magic, Witchcraft and Ghosts in the Greek and Roman Worlds* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1965), pp. 4, 5, 124, 125, 78-100. Does this make them Masters?

³⁰ An idea supported by both James Webb and Alex Owen, see James Webb, *The Flight from Reason: Volume I of the Age of the Irrational* (London: Macdonald, 1971), p. 147, and Alex Owen, *The Place of Enchantment: British Occultism and the Culture of the Modern* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2004), p. 57.

subsequent Western esoteric groups.³¹ After a decline in spiritualist interest during the early 1870s the respected visionary Paschal Beverly Randolph (1825-1875) re-emphasised the need for mediums, through efficacious practices such as magical activity, to re-assert the positivity of their spiritual will by a careful selection of inner presences of high quality such as gods and demigods, rather than relying exclusively on passivity and lay themselves open to lower or undesirable entities. It was this positive aspect of spiritualism that found favour among occult groups such as the Hermetic Brotherhood of Luxor and the Theosophical Society during the late 1870s.³² In the Theosophical stream, there followed the meeting of Steiner with his master 'M' in about 1880; the revival in 1885 of a Rosicrucian Brotherhood with six hidden chiefs by Joséphin Péladin (1858-1918); and various late nineteenth-century recorded channellings of formerly incarnate beings of high calibre.³³ Blavatsky herself initially acknowledged a Rosicrucian model for her Masters, who, before her visit to India, first emerged as, especially, Egyptian or Greek 'Brothers' over the period 1875 to 1883.³⁴ The hierarchies of Theosophy are greatly indebted to Western esoteric traditions. High entities from Egypt and Greece were also characteristic of channellings by Golden Dawn members after the turn of the century until about 1915.³⁵ Once again, the rationality of these practices needs to be questioned. Alison Butler's review of the intellectual origins of the late Victorian revival of occultism in the shape of the Hermetic Order of the Golden Dawn, ably shows how criticisms of the irrationality of that 'important turning-point in the history of Western magic' were based on misunderstanding, or even misrepresentation, of its historical and academic roots in the growing interest in arcane magical texts by early collectors and scholars. Recently, Frances Yates emphasised the Renaissance mind-set as a valid model with which to interpret and participate in the

³¹ Cranston reminds us that it was not only the credulous who attended such meetings; even distinguished scientists were involved. Sylvia Cranston, *H. P. B.: The Extraordinary Life and Influence of Helena Blavatsky*, pp. 119-22.

³² John Patrick Deveney, 'Spiritualism' in Hanegraaff, ed., *Dictionary of Gnosis*, II, 1074-82 (p. 1078-79).

³³ Anna Kingsford's eschewal of the existence of Masters, but her significant contact with her inner 'angel-genius', raises the question of how she distinguished between them.

³⁴ 'A few Questions to Hiram' *H. P. Blavatsky: Collected Writings* (London: Wheaton, Theosophical Publishing House, 1950-91), pp. 73, 120; 406-40. Also Nicholas Goodrick-Clarke, ed., *Helena Blavatsky* (Berkeley, CA: North Atlantic Books, 2004), p. 6. Also Sylvia Cranston, *H. P. B.*, p. 132.

world, as did Tanya Luhrmann in respect of contemporary magical theory and practice, and similarly endorsed by both Antoine Faivre and Wouter Hanegraaff.³⁶ We must look once again at first-hand information on the Masters from emic sources to enhance the descriptions given in secondary accounts.

The Impact of the Eastern Masters of Theosophy

Helena Blavatsky and Her Masters

Although the concept of the Masters was extant in both Jewish mysticism³⁷ and in Renaissance Rosicrucian and Masonic documents, the idea of their more immediate involvement with students and individuals was given major prominence by Helena Petrovna Blavatsky. After her alleged contact in 1851 with her inner teacher she confessed to becoming ‘unreservedly responsive to His every direction’, studying the Mysteries in various locations abroad, and relaying the materials so received through her *Isis Unveiled* (1877) and *The Secret Doctrine* (1888).³⁸ Since she is the most significant populariser of the existence of the Masters, giving impetus to subsequent interpreters of her work in the Theosophical Society, especially through the works of C. W. Leadbeater, (particularly *The Masters and the Path* (1925), and Cyril Scott,³⁹ *An Outline of Modern Occultism* (1935), neither she nor the Theosophical Society can be ignored as part of Fortune’s initial conditioning.

Blavatsky’s friendship with Henry Steel Olcott (1832-1907), begun in 1874, led to her revealing her previous close involvement with spiritualism and one of her first

³⁵ See Chapter 2, pp. 114-16.

³⁶ Alison Butler, ‘Magical Beginnings: The Intellectual Origins of the Victorian Occult Revival’, *Limina*, 9 (2003), 78-95.

³⁷ At least in their role as inner spiritual directors. See Gershom Scholem, *Kabbalah* (Jerusalem: Keter Publishing House, 1974) p. 157.

³⁸ Ransom in Blavatsky, *The Secret Doctrine: the Synthesis of Science, Religion and Philosophy* (London: Theosophical Publishing House, 1950 [1889]), I, 15.

³⁹ Aka ‘His Pupil’.

spiritualist inner contacts, ‘John King’.⁴⁰ The following year, she publicly disclosed her interests in various aspects of occultism such as Kabbalah and Magic. This appeared in the *Spiritual Scientist* in 1875, three months after first making contact with the Masters (or ‘Brothers’ as they were first termed) Serapis Bey and Tuitit Bey of the inner Brotherhood of Luxor.⁴¹ Blavatsky later claimed that not only had she met ‘the Master of my dreams’ again in 1854, but that already by 1860 she had met the Greek Master Hilarion in Cyprus,⁴² although the first Eastern Master (her Master ‘M’), together with several other Indian figures, did not visit her until approximately 1875, when Blavatsky and Olcott were in America.⁴³ Olcott mentions that among the first Masters that Blavatsky revealed to him were a Copt, a Master of Masters, an English Philosopher, and a Neo-Platonist.⁴⁴ She allegedly met K. H. in 1868 in Tibet.⁴⁵ Later in about the year 1884 the Tibetan Master Djwal Kul outlined to Leadbeater the doctrine of the Seven Rays.⁴⁶ Jean Overton Fuller suggests that the names of the seven Masters may have been disclosed at the same time, although Olcott was not apprised of all of them.

⁴⁰ whom Olcott considered a ‘humberging elemental’. Henry Steel Olcott, *Old Diary Leaves: The History of the Theosophical Society, First Series 1874-78* (Adyar, Chennai: Theosophical Publishing House, 2002 [1895]), p. 11. Blavatsky later acknowledged that John King was a blind to cover her inner Eastern teachers. Blavatsky, *H. P. Blavatsky Collected Writings*, 1: 73, 86, quoted in Cranston, *H. P. B.*, p. 133. See also Marina Cesar Sisson, *Helena Blavatsky and the Enigma of John King* (Blavatsky Archives, Online Edition, 2001) <http://www.blavatskyarchives.com/sisson1.htm>, [accessed 12/11/07], where a cogent argument is put forward for John King being identical with Hilarion, or Illarion, the Coptic Adept Paulos Metamon. See A. L. Rawson, ‘Mme Blavatsky – A Theosophical Occult Apology’, *Theosophical History*, 2: 6 (April 1988), 209.

⁴¹ Nicholas Goodrick-Clarke, ed., *Helena Blavatsky*, (Berkeley, CA: North Atlantic Books, 2004), p. 7.

⁴² Jean Overton Fuller, *Blavatsky and her Teachers* (London: East-West Publications, 1988), pp. 8, 17. See also Cranston, *H. P. B.*, pp. 45-47, 52.

⁴³ Although Cranston records a letter sent to Blavatsky’s aunt from Tibet in the handwriting of the Master K. H., reassuring her as to the safety of HPB when she (HPB) was there, and dated 11 November 1870. HPB later stated that she stayed with K. H. when she was there. Cranston, *H. P. B.*, pp. 99, 103.

⁴⁴ Olcott, *Old Diary Leaves*, p. 19. The Copt may well have been Serapis Bey, whom she met in 1871 in Egypt. The Neo-Platonist might be correlated with Illarion. Jean Overton Fuller, *Blavatsky and her Teachers*, pp. 13-14, 44. But Sylvia Cranston appears to suggest c. 1870 as the date of meeting Hilarion. Cranston, *H. P. B.*, p. 105.

⁴⁵ Blavatsky, ‘Mr. A. Lillie’s Delusions’, *Light*, August 3, 1884., cited in Cranston, *H. P. B.*, p. 99.

⁴⁶ See Leadbeater, *The Masters and the Path*, pp. 214-20.

Whilst at first referred to as ‘Brothers’, the term ‘Mahatma’ was the preferred designation for the Eastern adepts by Theosophists.⁴⁷

Nicholas Goodrick-Clarke draws attention to Blavatsky’s constant reference to the theme of progressive evolution, particularly as exemplified in the concept of the Hierarchy of Compassion, the emanations of a descending hierarchy of Dhyani-Chohans, ‘active intelligences’ who not only assist in creation, but also work towards bringing eventual salvation or enlightenment to humanity. The cosmologies of both Eastern (Northern and Tibetan Buddhist) and Western hierarchies (Neo-Platonic, Gnostic and Hermetic) were combined with the then modern evolutionary theories of science.⁴⁸ Barborka highlights the Theosophical concept of a universe which is composed, not of units of matter, but of units of invisible Beings, foremost among whom are the Dhyani-Chohans, Powers or Forces arranged in three hierarchies as part of the Logos, a collective ‘Creator’ of the universe.⁴⁹ They are ‘lofty beings devoted to the contemplation of the Divine Plan and to the means of unfolding and fulfilling it’ – not gods but ‘intelligent powers in Nature’ supervising the Kosmos. They both affect, and are affected by, terrestrial phenomena.⁵⁰

Barborka’s summary of descending powers in the Hierarchy of Compassion is as follows:

1. Adi-Buddhi (Primeval Wisdom)
2. Maha-Buddhi (Great Wisdom, the root of divine intelligence)

⁴⁷ The close pupil of Blavatsky, Damodar K. Mavalankar, was the first to introduce this term. Blavatsky defines a Mahatma as follows: ‘A Mahatma is a personage, who by special training and education, has evolved those higher faculties and has attained that spiritual knowledge which ordinary humanity will acquire after passing through numberless series of reincarnations during the process of cosmic evolution, provided, of course, that they do not go in the meanwhile, against the purposes of Nature and thus bring on their own annihilation. *H. P. B.*, ‘Mahatmas and Chelas’, *The Theosophist*, July 1884, quoted in Cranston, *H. P. B.*, p. 207.

⁴⁸ Nicholas Goodrick-Clarke, *The Coming of the Masters: The Evolutionary Reformulation of Spiritual Intermediaries in Modern Theosophy* Presented at the inaugural conference of the European Society for the Study of Western Esotericism, 22 July 2007.

⁴⁹ Geoffrey A. Barborka, *The Divine Plan* (Adyar, Madras: Theosophical Publishing House, 1964), pp. 45, 46. It is worthy of note that the concepts of the Trinity, or the Logos, do not feature in Hindu five-fold theology.

⁵⁰ Geoffrey A. Barborka, *The Divine Plan*, pp. 59-61. In Western terms, they would correspond to the Angelic Hosts or Hierarchies.

3. Daiviprakriti (Universal Light, the vital soul within all created forms)
4. Sons of Light, the Primordial Seven
5. Seven Dhayani-Buddhas of every 'Round', incarnating as -
6. Seven Celestial Dhayani-Bodhisatvas (Meditative Ones)
7. Seven Super-Terrestrial Bodhisatvas (each relating to a root-race)
8. Terrestrial Buddhas (each overseeing a sub-race)
9. Human beings (a stage through which all Spiritual intelligences must pass)

Below these, in the 'form-side' of creation, exist innumerable series of hierarchies with specific responsibilities.⁵¹ Together, they recall the similar constructs in medieval theological speculations concerning angelic hierarchies deriving from Pseudo-Dionysius (c. 500), and more anciently, in Zoroastrianism, where seven qualities of God are subtended by a multitude of *Yazatas*, or guides to and protectors of humanity, along with various forces of nature.

A. T. Barker cites a letter by Blavatsky where she gave examples of a chain of Buddhas re-appearing at intervals in history – Gautama being the fourth Buddha of seven; and of the twenty-four Buddhas of the Jains – three mystical, and three groups of seven. Each of the Buddhas was deemed to be purely a reflection of Dhyani Buddha, of which there are an infinite number. The next, or fifth Buddha will reappear as Maitreya.⁵² Barker does not mention any of the names of the Masters familiar to us, but, since Blavatsky always insisted they were men, they must, like ourselves, belong to stage 9 of the above Hierarchy.

But the most striking and controversial phenomenon connected with the Masters during the years 1880 and 1884 was the miraculous relaying of letters from the

⁵¹ Geoffrey A. Barboroka, *The Divine Plan*, pp. 67-76. The term Hierarchy is defined by G. de Purucker as signifying 'the innumerable degrees, grades, and steps of evolving entities in the Kosmos [. . .] every different part of the Universe is under the vital governance of a Divine Being, of a god, of a Spiritual Essence.' The hierarchical series extends infinitely both upwards to the ineffable, and downwards from Man. As an example, he lists the Neo-Platonic Hierarchy of nine grades. G. de Purucker, *Occult Glossary: A Compendium of Oriental and Theosophical Terms* (London, Rider & Co., 1933), pp. 66-68.

⁵² *The Letters of H. P. Blavatsky to A. P. Sinnett*, transcribed and compiled by A. T. Barker (Pasadena, CA: Theosophical University Press, 1973 [1925]), Letter No. CXV, pp. 242-43.

Masters Koot Hoomi and Morya to A. P. Sinnett. Barborka recounts how, in September 1880, Blavatsky was first able to project a letter into the atmosphere, and arrange for a reply to be found in a nearby tree.⁵³ Subsequently, Sinnett, A. O. Hume and others in their turn sent and received well over a hundred letters from those they took to be the Mahatmas.⁵⁴ The most important of these was the second series from 1881 to 1883 the source material for Sinnett's *Esoteric Buddhism* (1883), which contained the ground-plan of Theosophical philosophy as it later appeared in Blavatsky's *Secret Doctrine* (1888) and other writings.

Fortune must have been well aware of the above ideas and occurrences, for, as we have seen, she had become familiar with Theosophical literature, both prior, and subsequent to her own initial contact with the Masters in 1918 at age 27, and so we may not be surprised that there are striking resemblances between some of Fortune's own ideas and those of Blavatsky some forty years earlier. It is thus difficult to determine how much of Fortune's work was attributable to her own revelations or to Blavatsky's, which she repeatedly praises.⁵⁵

The Occult Hierarchies of Charles Leadbeater and Alice A. Bailey

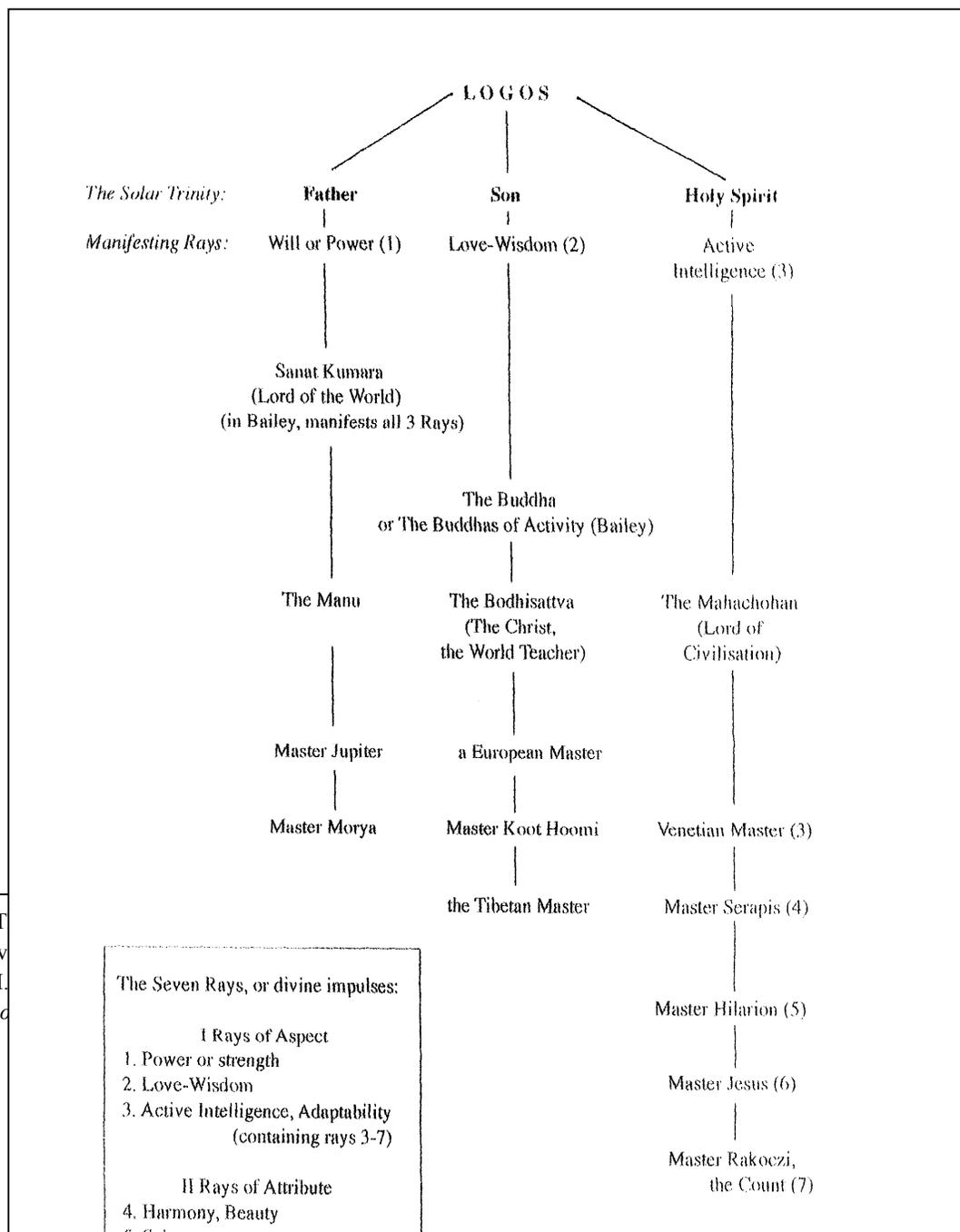
Alice Ann Bailey (1880-1949) later declared that she had already met a Master (Koot Hoomi) by the age fifteen, although it was not until some twenty years later that she began to absorb Theosophical teachings, culminating in the meeting with the Master Djwal Kul in 1919 and the writing of her initial text, *Initiation, Human and Solar* (1922), followed by a series of twenty-four books over the following twenty years. The

⁵³ Barborka, *The Mahatmas and their Letters* (London: Theosophical Publishing House, 1973), p. 50-53.

⁵⁴ See *The Mahatma Letters to A. P. Sinnett*, transcribed and compiled by A. T. Barker (London: Theosophical Publishing House, 1979 [1923]).

⁵⁵ E.g. in her *The Mystical Qabalah*: pp. 27, 41, etc. There are ten indexed references to Blavatsky in this text. Nine of these refer to *The Secret Doctrine*. The only text referred to more frequently is W. Westcott's *Sepher Yetzirah* (eleven instances). In 1930, Fortune termed Blavatsky 'that great pioneer and brave servant of the Masters [. . .]', whilst recognising that she (Blavatsky) had done no more than revitalise an existing native (Western) tradition. Dion Fortune, *Sane Occultism*, p. 116.

framework upon which these books were written was her understanding of seven Rays, and a cosmology whose complexity rivalled that of her pioneering forerunners Blavatsky and Steiner.⁵⁶ As Goodrick-Clarke points out, C. W. Leadbeater (1854-1934) was twenty-six years older than Bailey, but published his seminal *Masters and the Path* (1925) just three years after Bailey's own work, and was probably heavily indebted to it – reference may be made to Leadbeater's diagrammatic representation of the Inner



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Hierarchy, and usefully compared to that of Alice A. Bailey.⁵⁷ Here, they are presented together in simplified form in Figure 4, page 279.

Interestingly, both diagrams are reminiscent of the Kabbalistic Tree of Life, having a three-fold structure, stemming from a Supernal Trinity, the Logos. The components of the Logos are couched in Christian terms in both works.⁵⁸ Thereafter, however, the nomenclature is predominantly Eastern, incorporating Kumaras, Buddhas, Mahachohans, and Manus.⁵⁹ Indeed, this is somewhat of a necessity owing to a dearth of suitable terms in Western cosmology. It is not apposite to investigate these diagrams in detail save at their lower extremities which directly bear on those Masters who are said to be the most easily accessible, and even recognisable through their personalities. They in their turn depend for guidance upon more abstruse Greater Masters, who ‘regenerate’ but do not ‘redeem’ because they have not undergone crucifixion. Moses,

⁵⁷ Nicholas Goodrick-Clarke, *Theosophy and the Globalisation of Esotericism*, p. 86. See also C. W. Leadbeater, *The Masters and the Path* (Adyar: Theosophical Publishing House, 1946), p. 233; Alice Bailey, *A Treatise on Cosmic Fire* (London: Lucis Press Limited, 1964 [1925]), p. 1238.

⁵⁸ Both Leadbeater and Bailey adhered to an esoteric Christian doctrine. See, for example, C. W. Leadbeater, *The Christian Creed: Its Origin and Signification* (London: Theosophical Publishing Society, 1899); C. W. Leadbeater, *The Inner Side of Christian Festivals* (London: St. Alban Press, 1975 [1920]); also Anna Kingsford and Edward Maitland, *The Perfect Way or the Finding of Christ*.

⁵⁹ Fortune makes use of this Eastern term to signify those of the hierarchy who are said to be teachers of the Greater Masters, and who had attained their full development during the previous ‘Cosmic Day’. They subsequently incarnated when humanity was of a condition ‘lower than that of the most primitive savage’ in order to give humanity the impetus (through training selected individuals to carry on the work), to speedily recapitulate the evolutionary stages of previous civilisations in readiness to take up from

Gautama, Mohammed, and Paul are a representative four that Fortune mentions.⁶⁰ The nature and names of the majority can only be guessed at, the broad sweep of their functions being explained in terms of ‘Root Races’ and ‘Rays’, discussion of which is largely outside the scope of this thesis save as they particularly relate to the work of the Masters.⁶¹ It is to be noted that both Leadbeater and Bailey named the same five Masters: The Venetian, Serapis, Hilarion, Jesus and Master ‘R’ (the Count [Comte de Saint-Germain]), all subsumed under the Mahachohan (Lord of Civilisation). Under the Bodhisattva (the Christ, the World Teacher) stands Kuthumi, or K. H., with, in Bailey’s case, the addition of a European Master and her own ‘contact’, D. K. [Djwal Kul], otherwise known as ‘the Tibetan’.⁶² Bailey also included a Master Jupiter above M(orya) but under the Manu. Although he is not included as part of Leadbeater’s diagram, Leadbeater notes that this Master of the first Ray, ‘Guardian of India for the Hierarchy’, assisted Blavatsky to write *Isis Unveiled*, and that Leadbeater and T. Subba Row dined with Jupiter in Adyar.⁶³ One might observe that, despite its tidiness, this outline must be a very skeletal, possibly only a very fragmentary, model of what must be the immensely complex nature of an organisation deemed to administer even that small part of the universe which cradles the planet Earth.⁶⁴

In view of later discussion concerning the question of the physicality of the Masters, it is recorded in Bailey’s *Introduction* that her first meeting with her Tibetan Master was, like Blavatsky’s, in the flesh; this time, in California in 1919, which meeting resulted in her series of planned publications covering the following thirty years.⁶⁵ For the unprepared, her works appear immensely detailed and erudite, yet she

where they (the previous civilisations) left off. Dion Fortune, *The Esoteric Orders*, pp. 22-23, 49.

⁶⁰ Fortune, *Esoteric Orders*, p. 56.

⁶¹ For Fortune’s definition of Root Races, see Fortune, *Applied Magic* (York Beach, ME: Samuel Weiser, 2000 [1962]), pp. 85-87.

⁶² Mentioned as chief pupil of Master K. H. (Leadbeater, *Masters and the Path*, p. 214).

⁶³ Leadbeater, *Masters and the Path*, pp. 7, 221. Liljegren points out that the concept of the ‘Masters’ was post-*Isis Unveiled*. S. B. Liljegren, ‘Bulwer-Lytton’s Novels and *Isis Unveiled*’ in *Uppsala Essays and Studies in English Literature* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1957), XIII, 8-60 (p.9).

⁶⁴ although the existence of many other Masters was acknowledged; e.g. Leadbeater, *Masters and the Path*, p. 199 mentioned the figure of some fifty to sixty said to be in incarnation at the time he wrote.

⁶⁵ ‘[. . .] the monumentally boring writings of Alice A. Bailey [. . .]’ Francis King, *Ritual Magic in England* (London: Neville Spearman, 1972), p. 125. Bailey’s contact was the year following Fortune’s.

spoke of them as mere glimpses of inexpressible spiritual truths, seen through the mind of her teacher. More than Blavatsky, Bailey expressed the inadequacy of the human mind to grasp more than a tiny distorted fraction of the abstractions of life beyond death.⁶⁶ As for the communicator, the Tibetan describes himself as a disciple in incarnation and presiding over a group of lamas in Tibet; as someone who ‘has travelled a little longer upon the Path’, but not ‘Perfect’ as Leadbeater would have us believe.⁶⁷ To cite a contrasting practical example from Fortune’s unpublished trance address received on 12 May 1944, the ‘Magus Innominatus’ actually admitted to ‘a piece of absent-mindedness’ on his part in connection with some oversight during a ritual he was directing, which at the time was apparently very comical: ‘On that occasion we were working well [. . .] and it slipped my mind that I was dead – I forgot that I was borrowing a body.’

The Tibetan referred deferentially to the substance of Bailey’s communicated materials as possibly being correct, true, and useful, or perhaps not, any proof of their worth resting on whether the student’s consciousness is indeed raised through its study to that of the Masters.⁶⁸ It is a common warning expressed by the majority of responsible inner communicators that the student should not be credulous concerning their identity⁶⁹ – ‘guides will choose an identity that will best accomplish what they are here to do, or one that you can most relate to’, and even an apparent Christ can be a mask for a mischievous entity, issuing orders; if genuine, we are told by many mediators, a Master will only ever guide, never impose.⁷⁰

⁶⁶ And yet her works are so detailed, with many charts and tables, that they carry a great (and perhaps greatly misleading) sense of authority.

⁶⁷ ‘The Adept has eliminated the lower self [. . .] there is no flaw in his character’. Leadbeater, *Masters and the Path*, p. 14. See also Clara M. Codd, *The Way of the Disciple* (Adyar: Theosophical Publishing House, 1964), pp. 76-112 for further details of the Masters’ characters. Compare Fortune’s answer received from the Magus Innominatus which confirmed that her Masters evolved. Fortune in Knight, *Dion Fortune and the Inner Light*, p. 284.

⁶⁸ ‘Extract from a Statement by the Tibetan published August 1934’ in Alice A. Bailey, *A Treatise on White Magic or The Way of the Disciple* (Lucis Press, 1934), p. viii.

⁶⁹ Hanegraaff, *New Age Religion*, e.g. ‘When you listen to the radio, what is important is not the radio but the programme on the radio’ Anon. *The Vision of Ramala* (Saffron Walden: C. W. Daniel Co., 1991), p. ix.

⁷⁰ Sanaya Roman and Duane Packer, *Opening a Channel: How to Connect with your Guide* (Tiburon: H. J. Kramer, 1987), p. 37 in Wouter J. Hanegraaff, *New Age Religion and Western Culture* (Leiden: Brill, 1996), p. 201.

Blavatsky was more circumspect concerning the existence of the Masters than her later followers such as Leadbeater, declaring amusingly that she would rather that people thought of ‘Mahatmaland’ as the grey matter of her brain rather than deprecate (or worship) them as much as had been done; whilst in the early days she was indignant at any sign of disbelief of them, she afterwards felt that she may have gone too far, and declared herself neutral.⁷¹ As Bailey and Fortune said after her, the philosophy imparted through her should stand on its own merits regardless of any belief in the existence of Masters.⁷² Yet neither Blavatsky, Bailey, nor Fortune could have brought their teachings to light without a strong personal faith by these pioneers and their followers that the Masters were who they said they were.⁷³

Later Elaborations of the Theosophical Occult Hierarchy

One might wonder whether the ‘Tibetan’ modified the Blavatsky/Leadbeater model greatly since the communications. The even more recent recensions of the Hierarchy by Mark and Elizabeth Prophet are much the same as those of Bailey, but more devotional in tone, and written in a much less detailed and erudite style, but clearly setting out the identities and tasks as summarised in their tabulation of ‘The Lords of the Seven Rays’ reproduced here together with the corresponding Chakras as indicated in the Chapter headings of their Book Two:

<u>Ray</u>	<u>Chakra</u>	<u>Master</u>	<u>Retreat</u>	<u>Gift</u>
I	Throat	El Morya	Darjeeling	Faith in God’s Will

⁷¹ It is significant that the Mahatma Letters formerly sent to Blavatsky, Sinnett and Hume ceased abruptly after Blavatsky was discredited by the Hodgson investigation of 1884 until Besant and Leadbeater resumed communication with them shortly afterwards.

⁷² H. P. Blavatsky, *The Key to Theosophy* (Adelphi, W. C.: Theosophical Publishing Co., 1973 [1889]), p. 298. J. Gordon Melton makes the same point in his ‘A History of the New Age Movement’ in Robert Basil, ed., *Not Necessarily the New Age* (New York: Prometheus Books, 1988), p. 50)

⁷³ [The Masters] ‘are indeed real personalities and their presence is an actual fact.’ Fortune enjoins those who are looking for the ‘sense of reality’ of their presence but who do not have this conviction, to act ‘as if’ it were true, i.e. to exercise faith (Fortune, War Letter No 8 (28 November 1939) in Dion Fortune, *The Magical Battle of Britain* (Bradford on Avon: Golden Gates Press, 1993), p. 15. Clara Codd gives a comprehensive survey of the Theosophical view of the nature of the Masters. Codd, *Way of the Disciple*, pp. 3-19.

	(16 petals)			Word of Wisdom
II	Crown (1000 petals)	Lord Lanto	Grand Teton, Wyoming	Word of Wisdom Word of Knowledge
III	Heart (12 petals)	Paul the Venetian	Southern France Temple of the Sun, NY	Discerning of Spirits
IV	Base of the Spine (4 petals)	Serapis Bey	Luxor, Egypt	Working of Miracles
V	Third Eye (96 petals)	Hilarion	Crete, Greece	Healing
VI	Solar Plexus (10 petals)	Lady Nada	Saudi Arabia	Diverse Kinds of Tongues Interpretation of Tongues
VII	'Seat-of-the-Soul' (6 petals)	Saint Germain	Transylvania, Romania Table Mountain, Wyoming	Prophecy Working of Miracles
VIII	'Secret Chamber of the Heart' (8 petals)	Maha Chohan Lord of the Seven Rays	Ceylon (Sri Lanka)	Free Will, Threefold Flame Initiation of the Chakras All Power in Heaven and in Earth

In view of previous discussion regarding the Eastern or Western origins of the Masters, it may be noticed that the majority of locations listed here are in the West. However, there are many points of agreement between this and Figure 4 (p. 279) so the Prophets are well within the Theosophical Tradition. The major differences are that the Maha Chohan, as Lord of Civilisation and Lord of the Seven Rays has now been allocated to an innovatory Ray VIII; Lord Lanto has taken the position of the Master Koot Hoomi; Nada has now taken over from the Master Jesus, and the chakras are not in order. In detail, El Morya's lineage is given as Akbar the Mogul emperor, Abraham, Melchior, King Arthur, Thomas Becket, and Thomas More.⁷⁴ As we might expect in the light of history alone, the functions or duties of some of the Masters have necessarily changed since Blavatsky's time. At that time, Koot Hoomi and other Masters assisted the Theosophical Society; but since 1958 were said by the Prophets to have moved on to

assist in a specialist group he founded within Prophets's 'Summit Lighthouse' organisation termed 'The Keepers of the Flame' and composed of members whose aspiration is to live according to the highest spiritual principles. His present relationship with the Theosophical Society is not mentioned.⁷⁵

Lord Lanto, not previously mentioned by Blavatsky, Leadbeater or Bailey, with incarnations in Lemuria and Atlantis but of recent Chinese lineage teaches 'universal Christhood' in America, becoming Lord of the Second Ray in 1958 and given leave from his superiors in 1966 to place a 300 foot golden flame of illumination over all the places of learning in America, which students can activate on behalf of those institutions.⁷⁶ The Venetian, who was mentioned by Blavatsky, Leadbeater and Bailey, and who was formerly of Atlantis, was identified as Paolo Veronese, the Italian Renaissance painter; Serapis, a key early Brother of Blavatsky already in New York in 1875 was Leonidas the Spartan though now overseeing the arts and any activity promoting harmony; and Hilarion (earlier mentioned by Blavatsky, Leadbeater and Bailey) was confirmed by the Prophets as having been formerly incarnated as Paul the Apostle. Bearing in mind later discussion concerning female Masters, we may note the Ascended Lady Master Nada, former priestess of Atlantis with a special concern for family life replacing the Master Jesus in 1959. Saint-Germain's lineage takes in Samuel, Saint Joseph, Saint Alban, the inspiration behind Proclus, Merlin,⁷⁷ Roger Bacon,

⁷⁴ Perhaps Fortune's Thomas More was El Morya all along, though she did not seem to be aware of it, or if so, did not divulge it.

⁷⁵ Mark L. and Elizabeth Clare Prophet, *Lords of the Seven Rays: Mirror of Consciousness* (Livingston, MT: Summit University Press, 1986), p. 64.

⁷⁶ M. and E. Prophet, *Lords*, p. 93. A comprehensive account of the subsequent history and development of Summit Lighthouse (Church Universal and Triumphant) is to be found under that heading in Hanegraaff, ed, *Dictionary of Gnosis*, II, 1093-96.

⁷⁷ Stewart specifically denies that Merlin is a 'hidden Master'. Rather, he is an archetype, with 'wisdom from a source that is not personal or human, yet applied to humanity both individually and at large'. R. J. Stewart, *The Prophetic Vision of Merlin* (London: Arkana, 1986), pp. 5, 6. See also R. J. Stewart, *The Way of Merlin* (Wellingborough: Aquarian Press, 1991). Merlin was a figure of prime importance to Richardson and Hughes, and to Seymour who made contact with him in 1937. He stands as the 'Great Initiator of the Western Tradition'. Richardson in Alan Richardson and Geoff Hughes, *Ancient Magicks for a New Age* St. Paul, MN: Llewellyn, 1989), pp. 11-58. But according to Fortune, Merlin is a remote Manu (and Arthur an 'exemplar of the Earth's consciousness'), and as such is part of the background of the evolution of the universe and of the earth. It was only towards the end of her life that she took what was to develop into a deep interest in the Arthurian saga, to the extent that some of her successors in the Society of the Inner

Christopher Columbus, and Francis Bacon. Full descriptions of the above are given by M. & E. Prophet.⁷⁸ There is no mention of Christian Rosenkreutz here, but this tabulation is much the same as Leadbeater's, where Christian Rosenkreutz has supplanted Columbus and linked this particular lineage with the Master Koot Hoomi.⁷⁹

It may be noted that the correspondence of the Masters and Rays with the Chakras appears out of sequence, and the Ajna (Third Eye) centre is given 96 petals instead of Woodroffe's two.⁸⁰ Neither does it correlate well with Bailey's confusing attributes, who relates Ray I to the Head, or Crown centre,⁸¹ or, 'esoterically', to the heart;⁸² Ray II to the Ajna centre,⁸³ the heart, or, 'esoterically', the head,⁸⁴ and Ray III to the Throat centre,⁸⁵ or to the 'centres up the spine'.⁸⁶ These disagreements may be the result of the subtleties of interpretation of those refined spiritual areas, or of some kind of change since 1936. Full tabulations are given in Bailey.⁸⁷

Fortune and the Eastern Masters

What was Fortune's opinion of the Eastern Masters? Were they the basis for her own inner activities? In an article of 1931, she gives due credit to the Theosophical Society for bringing their possible existence to public notice, suggesting at the same time her opinion that they manifested only to psychic vision and did not occupy physical bodies.

Light felt it incumbent on them to extend and enhance her unfinished work in this area. A detailed account of this impetus is given in Gareth Knight, *The Secret Tradition in Arthurian Legend* (Wellingborough: Aquarian Press, 1983); also in Dion Fortune, Margaret Lumley Brown and Gareth Knight, *The Arthurian Formula* (Loughborough: Thoth Publications, 2006).

⁷⁸ M. and E. Prophet, *Lords*, pp. 21–276.

⁷⁹ Leadbeater gives the full lineage of Saint-Germain as: St Alban, Proclus, the Hungarian Master, Roger Bacon, Christian Rosenkreutz, Hunyadi, Robertus the Monk, and Francis Bacon. Thus, of the eight names that Leadbeater and the Prophets each give, they agree on four. Leadbeater, *Masters and the Path*, pp. 222–24.

⁸⁰ Arthur Avalon, *The Serpent Power* (New York: Dover, 1974 [1919]), pp. 103–04)

⁸¹ Alice A. Bailey, *A Treatise on the Seven Rays: Esoteric Psychology*, I, (London: Lucis Press, 1950 [1936]), p. 428

⁸² Bailey, *Treatise*, p. 418.

⁸³ Bailey, *Treatise*, p. 428.

⁸⁴ Bailey, *Treatise*, p. 418.

⁸⁵ Bailey, *Treatise*, p. 428.

⁸⁶ Bailey, *Treatise*, p. 419.

She notes the variability of the messages received, and a general lack of evidence that any Masters indigenous to the West had been contacted. The most notable Western Master that springs to mind is, of course, Jesus, whom the Theosophical Society saw as a virtuous Jew who provided the body for the incarnation of the (Eastern) Lord Maitreya. Rudolf Steiner, who became General Secretary of the Theosophical Society in Germany in 1902, closely followed his Theosophical teachers, and claimed to mediate the Eastern Masters Morya and Koot Hoomi for at least five years. However, he progressively leaned towards Christian Rosenkreutz and Jesus as significant Masters, who subsequently emerged in Steiner's understanding as the two leaders of the Western school, and this precipitated his break with Theosophy in 1913.⁸⁸ Like Steiner, Fortune began by avidly seeking Eastern Masters, but when contact was established, it was with Masters from the West.

During the immediate post-war years, Fortune had no continuous inner contacts of her own and so, when invited by a respected Indian Theosophist, B. P. Wadia, then visiting England, to make contact with the Eastern Masters for the purpose of regenerating the group soul of the British nation, she readily agreed. However, it was not long before she became sensitive to Wadia's underlying dislike of Britain as an imperial power and perceptively he soon invited her to leave the group for it became obvious that she felt at the time that he and his contacts were hostile to her Western racial consciousness. There were synchronous disturbances associated with this incident, perhaps reinforcing Fortune's insistence on Western contacts for Western aspirants.⁸⁹ After accepting membership of the Theosophical Society between 1925 and 1927, as advised by her inner contacts, Fortune then deliberately withdrew as a gesture in her fight to uphold the Western, particularly Christian, contacts. She purposely founded the

⁸⁷ Bailey, *Treatise*, pp. 411-30. See also Fortune's comments on Rays in Chapter 1, pp. 30-31.

⁸⁸ Rudolf Steiner, *Aus den Inhalten der Esoterischen Stunden*, (Dornach, 1995 [1909]) I, p. 221. He is quoted in Daniel von Egmond, 'Western Esoteric Schools in the Late Nineteenth and Early Twentieth Centuries' in Roelof van den Broek and Wouter J. Hanegraaff, eds., *Gnosis and Hermeticism from Antiquity to Modern Times* (New York: State University of New York Press, 1998), p. 335. Christian Rosenkreutz was initiated in the thirteenth century. In 1604, he transferred his pupil and his most intimate friend the Buddha to work on and from the planet Mars. Rudolf Steiner, *The Mission of Christian Rosenkreutz: Its Character and Purpose*, translated by Dorothy Osmond (London: Rudolf Steiner Publishing Co, 1950 [1911, 12]), pp. 81-90.

⁸⁹ Knight, *Dion Fortune and the Inner Light*, pp. 46-52.

Guild of the Master Jesus as a section of her own Fraternity, possibly as a challenge to Annie Besant, president of the Theosophical Society, who was grooming Jiddu Krishnamurti as a future incarnation of the Lord Maitreya.⁹⁰ In so doing Fortune was following in the footsteps of other ‘Westernizing’ Theosophists. Anna Kingsford had also reacted adversely to the Eastern bias of Theosophy by setting up the Hermetic Society in 1884 as a parallel group within the Theosophical Society to emphasise Western elements of the Mysteries, tracing their development through from Egypt, Greece, Judaism and Christianity to astrology and alchemy, and eschewing the concept of Masters altogether. G. R. S Mead, a key figure in Theosophy, had resigned in 1909 to set up the Quest Society which, in its emphasis on the creative imagination as an instrument of the soul, could appeal to a far wider audience; and Rudolf Steiner had also felt obliged to leave in 1912 in early reaction to Krishnamurti as a potential Messiah.⁹¹

Masters of the West

The basis of Fortune’s understanding of the hierarchy rested on her concept of the Rays, discussed at length by Helena Blavatsky in her *Esoteric Instruction No II* of 1889, and, as we have seen above, later developed by other major figures in esotericism such as Alice A. Bailey (1880-1949).⁹² Whereas Blavatsky correlated the Rays with the seven Angelic hierarchies, and the colours of the visible spectrum, Fortune refers to them by name ‘according to the school which saw their highest development’ rather than by number, dismissing the Theosophical correlations of Rays and Planes as facile and misleading. Thus the three essential Rays constituting the Western Tradition are the Devotional (Spiritual), the Nature (Astral), and the Wisdom (Mental) Rays, corresponding to the ‘planes of human consciousness’.⁹³ She designates no special Masters for each Ray, save that: Jesus represents the Christian or Devotional Ray of the 6th Plane of ‘Concrete Spirit’, the highest state which humans can achieve; Pythagoras

⁹⁰ Knight, *Dion Fortune and the Inner Light*, pp. 129-41.

⁹¹ Nicholas Goodrick-Clarke, ‘Hermeticism and Hermetic Societies’ in Hanegraaff, *Dictionary of Gnosis and Western Esotericism*, 1, 550-58 (p. 554).

⁹² See Nicholas Goodrick-Clarke, *Theosophy and the Globalisation of Esotericism*, p. 80.

⁹³ Fortune, *Esoteric Orders*, pp. 31, 36-47.

typifies the plane and Ray of Abstract Mind; Hermes the Ray of Concrete mind (consisting of Egyptian and Kabbalistic systems); Dionysus the Upper Astral Celtic Ray; and the Nordic traditions for the Lower Astral (the name of whose Master she specifically declines to give in case it is used for Black Magic). No figure is given for the Etheric Ray, which is now largely out of manifestation. She mentions that Jesus is the ‘Star Logos’⁹⁴ of our civilisation, ‘the Supreme Word of Power’, the ‘Master of Masters for the West’.⁹⁵ Apart from Jesus, it is noteworthy that these figures are representative of Gods rather than Masters. The outline that she gives in 1928 can be tabulated thus:

Dion Fortune’s Rays and the Planes (1928)

<u>Ray Number</u>	<u>Designated Colour</u>	<u>Ray/Plane</u>	<u>Representative figures/activities</u>
7	-	Buddhic Ray/ Abstract Spirit	Raja Yoga, St Theresa
6	purple	Christian Ray/ Concrete Spirit	Devotion. Jesus, Master of Masters healing
5	indigo	Pythagorean Ray Abstract Mind	Wisdom, intuitive thinking
4	blue	Hermetic Ray Concrete Mind	Egyptian/Cabalistic Mystery Schools
3	green Upper Astral	Celtic/Artist’s Ray initiation of the emotions,	Dionysian Cults, Nature, Imagination. Gaelic/Fairy lore
2	-	Norse Ray Lower Astral	Primitive instincts, Priapic, Kali, Black Magic
1	-	Etheric Ray	Powers of the etheric double.

⁹⁴ His status after the sacrificial death of a redeemer. Fortune, *Esoteric Orders*, p. 53.

⁹⁵ Fortune, *Esoteric Orders*, p. 47.

Hatha Yoga. The laying down of
the Plane of Earth⁹⁶

Confusingly, she later re-defined the rays as: 1. Red, developed under the Lords of Flame; 2. Orange, developed under the Lords of Form; 3. Yellow Ray of wisdom, developed under the Lords of Mind; 4. Green Ray of beauty, representing the Elemental and Nature forces, and developed during Lemurian times; 5. Blue, the Hermetic Ray, developed during Atlantean, Chaldaean and Egyptian times; 6. Indigo, ‘the colour of the night sky before the dawn’, the Gnostic (Aryan) Ray, strengthening the personality and the abstract mind ready for the experience of 7: The Purple Ray of devotion and the spiritual mind. This tabulation, of 1930, is the one that appears the most logical and definitive – perhaps the result of more mature reflection, or, more likely, in response to Madame Blavatsky’s designation of the colours attributed to the ‘Orders and Hierarchies’ which also run from red to violet in the same order.⁹⁷ Fortune’s diagram is reminiscent of a colour wheel, emphasising the balancing effect of the Rays on its opposite sides, and of significance in an initiate’s training. She also draws attention to the twelve Greater Rays, represented by the Zodiac, and the seven Lesser Rays, correlated with the planets, which are also associated with three Secret Rays, making to correlate with the Tree of Life.⁹⁸

Fortune's most common contacts were: ‘Lord E’, usually identified as Thomas Erskine (1750-1823), Lord Chancellor of England from 1806-07, with whom she first made contact on 15 November 1922, and who was identified by Margaret Lumley-

⁹⁶ Fortune deemed the Rays to be outpourings of logoidal force initially building up the planes of manifestation. They correspond to different aspects of consciousness and to the planes. The colours that she gives do not run from red (Plane 1) to violet (Plane 7) as would be expected, although she does refer to the red end of the spectrum as relevant to the lower planes. Neither are the Rays cyclic in that certain Rays only manifest during certain epochs, and also particular cultures may specialise in one or other of the Rays according to their tradition. Fortune, *Esoteric Orders*, pp. 36-47; *Aspects*, pp. 74-75.

In an earlier alternative summary of the nature of the Planes, Fortune gives: 1. Earth/Man; 2. Nature Forces; 3. Saints; 4. Masters; 5. Angels; 6. Archangels; 7. Christs. Fortune, *Cosmic Doctrine* (York Beach, ME: Samuel Weiser, 2000 [1949], pp. 133, 221. She defines ‘Planes’ as ‘conditions of being’, or ‘states of existence’ developed successively in time but occupying the same space. Fortune, *Mystical Qabalah*, p. 38. Although she defines the Norse Ray as that of Black Magic, David Carstairs had maintained previously, in 1928, that the Norse gods were the most easily contacted being ‘native to the soil’. Fortune in Fortune and Knight, *Dion Fortune and the Inner Light*, p. 164.

⁹⁷ Blavatsky, *Secret Doctrine*, V, 461.

Brown in 1958 as a later incarnation of Thomas More; the Greek, contacted on 30 November 1922 and a week later identified more closely as Socrates; and David Carstairs, a young army officer killed on the battlefield during World War I, also contacted on 15th November 1922.⁹⁹ She warns once again that the distinguished nature of some of those names should not prevent those in receipt of their communications from subjecting those materials to the utmost scrutiny and judgement, testing both relevance and quality.¹⁰⁰ Other of her contacts were named as the ‘Master of Medicine’, the ‘Psychologist’, the Young Greek, and the ‘Magus Innominatus’ – Lord Erskine’s preferred title after 1940 and Fortune’s main contact in her later years. Fortune was thus open to other Masters besides her three favourites, in contrast to Bailey, whose sole contact was ‘the Tibetan’.¹⁰¹

Lord Erskine was a brilliant lawyer, working from 1778 until his Chancellorship in 1806 though otherwise he was relatively undistinguished.¹⁰² In fact some confusion reigned among members of the Society of the Inner Light over which

⁹⁸ Dion Fortune, *Inner Light*, III: 8 (May 1930), 11-14.

⁹⁹ Quoted from original scripts channelled by Fortune. Knight, *Dion Fortune and the Inner Light*, pp. 78-80, 82, 86-88. Knight states clearly, presumably on the basis of confidential documentary evidence, that the identification of Thomas Erskine with Thomas More was not one that Fortune was aware of. Knight in *Dion Fortune and the Inner Light*, pp. 86, 210. In similar vein, Thomas More and Socrates have also been compared favourably, More’s biographer describing him as ‘our noble new Socrates’, echoing the opinions of many before and since. Both were friends of the young, both Masters of irony; both gave us their vision of an idealised society, both left remarkable discourses concerning the reasonableness of their being put to death; and the last words of both demonstrated an apparent unconcern with their life’s end.

R. W. Chambers, *Thomas More* (London: Jonathan Cape, 1948), pp. 16-19. A further coincidence of Thomas More and Thomas of Canturbury has also recently been taken up within the Society.

¹⁰⁰ Gareth Knight in Dion Fortune and Gareth Knight, *Spiritualism and Occultism* (Loughborough: Thoთ Publications, 1999), pp. 147, 150; Gareth Knight, *The Abbey Papers* (London: S. I. L. (Trading), 2002), pp. 82-91. See also Hanegraaff’s quotation of Ramala in this respect: ‘everything that we say must be carefully considered before being acted upon. You must always use your God-given powers of discrimination. We would insist that nothing that we say is ever taken as the truth, just because it comes from our side of life.’ Anon., *Vision of Ramala*, p. 19 quoted in Hanegraaff, *New Age Religion*, p. 201.

¹⁰¹ Gareth Knight, *The Abbey Papers*, p. 210.

¹⁰² Erskine’s greatest claim to fame was as a lawyer in the defence of civil liberties. See Francis A. Allen, ‘Erskine, 1st Baron’ in *Encyclopedia Britannica*, 15th ed. (Chicago: Helen Hemingway Benton, 1977) vi, 957; ‘Thomas Erskine was the greatest advocate who ever practised at the English bar’ Lord Birkett, ‘Greatest of them All’ *The Listener*, (June 29, 1961), 1128-30. This sentiment is also supported by Sean Gabb, ‘Thomas Erskine, Advocate of Freedom’, *The Freeman* (July 1989), <http://shell5.ba.best.com/>, [accessed 13/04/99]. Also ‘England’s foremost advocate.’ John Hostettler, *Thomas Erskine and Trial by Jury* (Chichester: Barry Rose, 1996), p. xii.

historical figure ‘Lord E’ was intended to represent. Richardson is right to point out that the Masters cannot be pinned down in any way – ‘they overlap, they assume greater and lesser prominence at different and unpredictable times’.¹⁰³ Margaret Lumley-Brown’s correlation of Lord Erskine with Thomas More was emphasised by the Society after Fortune’s death on account of the much more exemplary life that the latter led. That both were termed ‘The Chancellor’ led to more confusion. However, Fortune always considered ‘Lord E’ to be Thomas Erskine, yet according to Inner Light members Colonel Charles Richard Foster Seymour and his magical partner Christine Hartley, Lord E represented Lord Eldon (1751-1838), Chancellor from 1801 to 1806 and from 1807 to 1827, thus immediately before and immediately after Lord Erskine, and taken to represent the dimension of Love in the Lodge.¹⁰⁴ They considered Lord Eldon to be a reincarnation of Michael Scot (c. 1175-c. 1232), the medieval magician, and as having reincarnated recently as the Theosophist, senior Golden Dawn member and occult novelist John William Brodie-Innes (1848-1923).¹⁰⁵ In his biography of Seymour and Hartley, Alan Richardson gives an uncharacteristically enthusiastic description of Lord E as ‘a crystal within the strata of the national consciousness’, with the capacity to teach us ‘*marvellous*’ things. Two other contacts used by Seymour and Fortune were first, Kha’m-uast, a High Priest of Ptah (and also a son of Rameses II), representing the Power function in the Lodge, and second, Cleomenes III sometime King of Sparta, representing the Wisdom aspect in the Lodge.¹⁰⁶ One feels that there might have been some correlation or resonance between Fortune’s three Masters and those of Seymour.

In view of the reportedly less than exemplary personal qualities of Thomas Erskine, Sally Stuart Dearn argues that we have here a case of mistaken identity, and that the ‘Lord E’ in question is more comfortably identified with Lord Erskine of Linlathen (1788-1870), also a lawyer, and a forward-thinking theologian advocating a ‘spiritual’ Christianity rather than a ‘historical’ one. In writings that Dearn considers were often ‘sublime’, he is more easily aligned with Thomas More and much more of a ‘shining

¹⁰³ Alan Richardson, *Priestess* (Wellingborough: Aquarian, 1987), p. 132.

¹⁰⁴ See R. A. Melikan, *John Scott, Lord Eldon 1751-1838: The Duty of Loyalty* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999) for a biography.

¹⁰⁵ Richardson, *Dancers*, p. 65.

¹⁰⁶ Alan Richardson, *Dancers to the Gods*, pp. 33-39; 1987: 219, 223-24.

example of what one might expect of a follower of Christ' than Erskine the Chancellor.¹⁰⁷ This certainly carries a certain amount of conviction, although disregarded by the Society of the Inner Light at present.

The history of the Masters is replete with entities with multiple names. Once again, the identification of entities with specific historical personages seems to be secondary to the quality of communication. Whether the contacts were who they said they were was never the issue. But in the Preface to the 1926 edition of *The Kabbalah Unveiled*, Mathers's widow Moina supported her late husband's stance regarding the Secret Chiefs by citing Sir Oliver Lodge's support for the existence of many grades of intermediary, among whom were those whose special concern was to nurture and care for humanity.¹⁰⁸ Richardson gives the analogy of tribal chiefs, whose spheres of influence vary over time, and sometimes overlap; they are points of contact of varying integrity over time, but not gods to be worshipped as some Theosophical literature might lead one to believe.¹⁰⁹ He suspects that they could be aspects of ourselves, or even historical figures 'attuned to mythical powers' and responsive to the circumstance of ritual. Knight emphasises that regardless of their reality, Fortune and her students, by believing them to be real, or acting as though they were real, founded one of the most stable, long-lasting, and integral esoteric societies of recent times.¹¹⁰ The most telling passage concerning the Masters' reality was channelled through Fortune:

¹⁰⁷ Sally Stuart Dearn, 'Thomas Erskine of Linlathen' in *Quadriga* 21 (Spring 1982), 4-8. Gareth Knight considers her argument well worth consideration, and expands on Erskine of Linlathen's high standing among fellow theologians, and quotes lengthily in support of it from Bernard Reardon's *From Coleridge to Gore*, (London: Longman, 1971). Gareth Knight, 'The True Thomas?' in *Quadriga* 20 (Winter 1981), 3-7.

¹⁰⁸ S. L. MacGregor Mathers, *The Kabbalah Unveiled* (London: Arkana, 1991 [1887]), p. xi. Mathers was said to have used clairaudience and pendulum to contact them, even though they were supposedly incarnate. Perhaps the confusion over identities is intentional in order to direct our attention to qualities rather than particular personalities.

¹⁰⁹ E.g. Cyril Scott (aka 'his Pupil') speaks of his astral visits in sleep to the Shigatse house of Koot Hoomi, (one of those Masters of Wisdom he had been taught to revere, and had seen clairvoyantly ever since childhood) where 'that impressive and love-radiating being' used to be seen playing at the keyboard of his home-built organ. Pupil, *Dark Cycle*, p. 10. Did he gather this detail from Leadbeater, who also gave an extended description of this organ? Leadbeater, *Masters*, p. 21.

¹¹⁰ Gareth Knight, *Dion Fortune and the Inner Light* (Loughborough: Thoth Publications, 2000), pp. 77-91.

The Masters as you know them, and the Hall of Initiation, are all imagination. I did not say the Masters were imagination. I said the Masters, as you know them; and I imagine myself, and you imagine me, and between us we make a simulacrum on the astral which enables us to get in touch with each other. What I am you cannot realise, and it is a waste of time to try to do so [. . .] although your mental picture is not real or actual, the results of it are real and actual. The Masters, as they are supposed to be in popular would-be esoteric thought, are pure fiction.¹¹¹

The Masters later explain that the visualisation, built by both inner and outer participants, of themselves as they supposedly appeared in their last incarnations provides a useful link with the physical plane to ease communication, and suppress the 'otherness' of the identity they hold now.¹¹² The close parallels mentioned above between Socrates, More and Erskine raise questions as to the reason for the similarities. Are (were) they one and the same spirit? Are these common factors meant to emphasise some desirable character traits, such as those tabulated by Butler, that pupils should emulate?¹¹³

And what are we to make, for example, of communications from figures such as the poet Wilfrid Owen, recorded by Knight in response to a visualisation concerning the First World War? If they had been the results of séance or pedestrian channelling, he says, the communications would not have been of such high standard; as it was, they performed a higher, 'symbolic function' rather than social interchange or reminiscence.¹¹⁴

Biblical or mythological figures, in particular, may represent an office or function that is held by a succession of individuals over time¹¹⁵

¹¹¹ Knight, *Dion Fortune*, pp. 90-91.

¹¹² Knight, *Dion Fortune*, p. 96.

¹¹³ See her enumeration of the ten essential characteristics of what she loosely terms the 'Ritual Hero'. E. M. Butler, *The Myth of the Magus*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993 [1948], pp. 2-3. Also this Chapter, p. 310, n. 180.

¹¹⁴ Gareth Knight in Dion Fortune and Gareth Knight, *Introduction to Ritual Magic* (Loughborough: Thoth Publications, 1997), pp. 65-69.

¹¹⁵ See Fortune's unpublished trance communication of 25 September 1921 where, speaking of St. Joseph's mission to establish a spiritual centre at Glastonbury, she says, 'Joseph of Arimathea was a name – not a person – but a function or office.' Knight, *Dion Fortune and the Inner Light*, p. 62.

One of the reasons for the Masters to divulge their earthly names is that the communicators wished to be counted as reasonably familiar and recognisable individuals or even, in the case of Carstairs, comrades of like mind, who with frequent visualisation on the part of the student, might become almost tangible, giving that feeling of real presence, even a ‘blending of auras’ with the initiates concerned.¹¹⁶ Whereas Theosophists’ main sources were a mixture of Blavatsky’s complex and eclectic doctrines and Leadbeater’s more homely, yet at the same time exotic, descriptions of Eastern Masters,¹¹⁷ Fortune’s contacts are part and parcel of the ‘group mind’ of her own race – i.e. are integral to the cultural heritage of which she was a part, and were therefore more likely to evoke her internal responses than the subtly different vocabulary and symbol-systems that have to be built up from Eastern perspectives around figures of the Far East. These latter, however, could well be incorporated into the magical repertoire of a more experienced practitioner (but only after the initial Western contacts had been firmly established), particularly if that practitioner had some long-standing cultural connection with the East.¹¹⁸ Alongside the traditional Theosophical Masters, those introduced by Fortune continue to be accessible to this day, advising pupils and disseminating teachings – some of a high order, such as those reproduced in Fortune’s *The Magical Battle of Britain* (1993 [1942]) and Knight’s *Abbey Papers* (2002); some less so, such as her Society’s dubious and unpublished ‘AF Papers’ of the 1960s.¹¹⁹ While much material from Fortune’s Masters remains confidential to the Society of the Inner Light, some of the less formal and more recent personal

¹¹⁶ ‘When aura impinges upon aura, if the vibrations are in tune with each other, interchange of magnetism can take place.’ Fortune in Dion Fortune and Gareth Knight, *The Circuit of Force* (Loughborough: Thoth, 1998), p. 106. For additional comment on the aura see Chapter 3, p. 165, above.

¹¹⁷ Leadbeater, *Masters*, pp. 15ff.

¹¹⁸ ‘Those entities whom occultists call the Masters only communicate with those who have been trained in their own tradition [. . .] until he is of a high degree [an initiate] is advised to refuse contact with all others.’ Fortune in Fortune and Knight, *Spiritualism and Occultism*, (Loughborough: Thoth Publications, 1999), p. 26. But contrast, for example, outlines for workings in the Tibetan and Native American Indian traditions, both of which are nowadays considered to have valuable resonances with our native Celtic roots. Gareth Knight, *Evoking the Goddess* (Rochester, VT: Destiny Books, 1993), pp. 146-52.

¹¹⁹ The designation AF stands for ‘Aquarian Formula’. In respect of these AF Papers, King says ‘[. . .] I can only say that if the ‘Inner Plane Adepts’ are responsible for these communications, then these same Adepts are muddled in their thinking, incapable of writing even mediocre English, verbose, sentimental,

communications by pupils of Knight when he was working independently are available. They serve to enhance their Masters' appeal as distinct and approachable personalities; the jocular exchanges between Carstairs and a student as recorded in Fortune and Knight's *Introduction to Ritual Magic* are a good example,¹²⁰ as are the many examples of recent inner exchanges cited in Appendix V (pp. 438-452).

But above and beyond what some may regard as dubious personalities, W. E. Butler reminds us that the Masters often work incognito, inspiring, say, members of an esoteric group by means of the occasional passing remark that sets thinking going in a new and fruitful direction.¹²¹ Neither the person making the remark, nor the recipient, would necessarily be aware of any kind of input from an inner plane adept, and certainly not of his name. Butler warns that in any case, much inner work has to take place before the search for objective contact with a Master can begin; indeed, it was this premature seeking that was said to be a significant factor causing the demise of the Hermetic Order of the Golden Dawn.¹²² Of much greater importance was the question of the use to which such a contact is put, and whether the lifestyle of the aspirant truly indicates that the materials received have, after careful consideration of their authenticity, been taken to heart. And a salutary word of caution is expressed by Knight, 'There is no doubt that it does help to have some kind of personal identification to make and maintain contact. Yet because of the risk of misunderstanding it may be no bad thing to keep that identity to oneself.'¹²³

Masters of the Flesh; Masters of the Spirit

and possessed of much the same religious outlook as a rather backward Sicilian peasant-woman, A. E. Waite writ large, but devoid of Waite's intellectual content.' King, *Ritual Magic*, p. 125.

¹²⁰ Fortune and Knight, *Ritual Magic*, pp. 90-93.

¹²¹ See, for example, Mary-Margaret Moore, when asked who was Bartholomew, her inner contact: 'I don't know and I don't really care. I do what I do, in partnership with this energy, because over the years I have found it helpful to myself and others.' And later, 'It is a part of me but greater than me [. . .] It is energy' which 'has a vast range of perception [. . .] The range, to me, seems "limitless."' Mary-Margaret Moore, in Bartholomew, *I Come as a Brother* (Taos, New Mexico: High Mesa Press, 1986), pp. i-iv.

¹²² Regardie, *What You Should Know*, pp. 50-52; W. E. Butler, *Practical Magic in the Western Mystery Tradition* (Wellingborough: Aquarian Press, 1986), p. 67; Richardson in Richardson and Hughes, *Ancient Magicks*, p. 28.

¹²³ Gareth Knight, *Dion Fortune and the Inner Light*, p. 210.

The question of whether the Masters were beings of the flesh, of the imagination, or of the 'Inner Planes' needs to be examined more closely. At first sight this might be considered purely a matter of definition, save that there is a confusing overlap of characteristics – Blavatsky's and Mathers' (physical) Masters appeared as superhuman beings, just as do Fortune's discarnate ones. Before allegedly meeting them in the flesh in Paris, Mathers first contacted them on the astral (which does not preclude them being incarnate), but, like Blavatsky's, claimed that they lived on the earth in the flesh, he having met and spoken with them (generally after the astrally-arranged appointment). In public places their appearance was such as not to attract attention, although more privately they generally appeared robed; in all cases they exuded great health and vigour. Yet strangely, the meetings were a great strain on Mathers' body, resulting in shortness of breath, and a sense of what it must feel like when struck by lightning, precipitating bouts of nose-bleeds, cold sweats, and bleeding from the ears. Palmer points to the strong parallels between meetings with such traditional figures and modern contacts with extra-terrestrial beings, especially in their capacity to effect far-reaching mental, emotional, and physical changes on the individual concerned. A similar phenomenon has been noted in respect of the first days of spiritualism, after which there occurred a flurry of disturbances where before there had been none. Palmer suggests that all such experiences are subjective to the extent of being needs-based and culturally determined.¹²⁴ Against such a background, a more relaxed and open attitude is beginning to percolate through to even traditional Mystery Schools, such as Fortune's own Society, where the paradigms of her day are now much more freely interpreted.

Mathers maintained that all the Second Order's Knowledge Papers were obtained from his 'Secret Chiefs' through clairvoyance, astral projection, Ouija board, or similar means.¹²⁵ King, however, is of the opinion that Westcott was correct in declaring

¹²⁴ Sally Palmer, 'Close Encounters of the Religious Kind? Identifying the Religious Components in the Literature of the Alien Close Encounter Phenomenon' (unpublished doctoral thesis, University of Kent, Canterbury, 2000), pp. i, ii. One might add that much of the present-day cultural background is strongly media-based.

¹²⁵ The First Order consisted of the Golden Dawn's junior members who had not undertaken the 'Portal' ritual conferring the status of Adeptus Minor. The Second Order were thus senior, and the Knowledge Papers were circulars issued to them. They were supposedly channelled by the Third Order – the non-incarnate beings who guided and inspired the mundane Order. These papers were later published in Israel

that Mathers' Second Degree rituals were not derived from them but from a certain Dr Thilson, a Belgian Martinist.¹²⁶

It may be noted that in the cases of both Olcott, co-founder of the Theosophical Society, and of Fortune, the first contact with a Master, whether in the flesh or out of it, was dependent on a combination of factors – fervour, faith, and grooming – the prior cultivation and building up of an expectancy that such great beings will in fact appear. In some cases, Olcott was unsure if the figure he saw was real or illusory; at others, he records having grasped the Master K.H.'s hand and spoken with him.¹²⁷ At the time, this would have been described as all part of a special impetus from the Hierarchy to be noticed,¹²⁸ which could be said to have come to fruition in today's plethora of channelled Masters though very few, if any, are witnessed as being in the flesh.¹²⁹ We might well feel that the number of opportunities which existed at the time for aspirants to meet such a being as a Master were so few that once they had been drawn into the Theosophical Society, the atmosphere and tension were such as to make it almost inevitable that the Masters impacted or appeared to impact on their members. In the modern Western mysteries exemplified by the Golden Dawn, there was little emphasis on contacting Masters until towards the break-up of the original Order in 1903 even before which some members impatiently instituted their own 'sub-groups' for that purpose.¹³⁰ As previously noted, Regardie's view was that Masters have little place in any magical group, and he specifically castigates Fortune for her opinion that the principal work of Magic and its then major representative, the Golden Dawn, was to

Regardie, *The Golden Dawn*. (St Paul, MN: Llewellyn, 1971, [1937-40]) 4 vols., and in Francis King, ed., *Astral Projection, Ritual Magic and Alchemy* (London: Neville Spearman, 1971).

¹²⁶ King, *Ritual Magic*, pp. 35-37.

¹²⁷ Geoffrey Barborka, *The Mahatmas and their Letters*, pp. 235-36.

¹²⁸ Termed by Bailey, the 'Externalisation of the Hierarchy'. Alice Bailey, *The Rays and the Initiations* (New York: Lucis Publishing Co., 1960), p. 334.

¹²⁹ Many would cite Sai Baba (1926-) as a living Master. He is one of India's most famous gurus, known for his miracles, which aim to draw attention to his purpose of teaching Dharma, the 'proper way to live'. John R. Hinnells, ed., *The Penguin Dictionary of Religions* (London: Penguin Books, 1995), pp. 135, 441.

¹³⁰ E.g. Annie Horniman's contact with the 'Purple Adept', Florence Farr's 'Sphere Group' Egyptian; J. W. Brodie-Innes's own inner masters; and Dr R. W. Felkin's 'Sun Masters', followed by Ara Ben Shemesh and finally Christian Rosenkretz. Crowley's Aiwaz could be considered to be another. Gerald Yorke, 'Foreword' to Ellic Howe, *The Magicians of the Golden Dawn: A Documentary History of a Magical Order 1887-1923* (York Beach, ME: 1978 [1972]), p. xviii-xviv.

contact Masters, an activity for which it had, according to Regardie, no concern.¹³¹ Perhaps her own enthusiasm for the Masters caused her to misread the signs and to detect them in places where they were not.

In Olcott's case, it was Blavatsky who generated in him this 'deep and insatiable yearning [. . .] to seek their society', and it was not long before he was visited by one – though not in the flesh – in his New York apartment, a meeting which fired Olcott with a life-long enthusiasm to strive for the dissemination of 'Aryan wisdom'.¹³² And, as one might suspect, this was the result of the previous psychological build-up, as occurred in Fortune's case. An Oriental figure appeared while he was reading, gave a message of assurance, and left his turban as proof of his visit.¹³³ Geoffrey Barborca cites further accounts by Olcott of visits by one or other of the Mahatmas to Olcott and others in London and India.¹³⁴ In Fortune's case, it was the inspiring words of Besant's read in the atmospheric surroundings of the Theosophical Library that seemed to have created in her expectations conducive to a peak experience which she clothed in the imagery of the higher beings that she had been reading about.¹³⁵ Nowadays, sensitives and others with an interest in meeting superior beings are more likely to have read the literature concerning extra-terrestrials, or beings from the future, having been unconsciously set up by the media to experience contact in that guise.

The beginning of this Chapter introduced Leadbeater's leading role in describing in detail the broad outlines of the Hierarchy. One may note again that his standard text *The Masters and the Path*, was published in 1925, the same year as Bailey's *A Treatise on Cosmic Fire*, and the year after Fortune completed reception of *The Cosmic Doctrine* and wrote her groundbreaking *The Esoteric Philosophy of Love*

¹³¹ Regardie, *What You Should Know*, p. 53.

¹³² Arthur Edward Waite, *The Occult Sciences* (London: Kegan Paul, Trench, Trübner, 1891), pp. 278-79.

¹³³ 'Out of [my resulting] thoughts and resolves developed all my subsequent theosophical activities, and that loyalty to the Masters behind our movement which the rudest shocks and the cruellest disillusioning have never shaken.' Henry Steel Olcott, *Old Diary Leaves*, p. 381.

¹³⁴ Geoffrey A. Barborca, *The Mahatmas and their Letters*, (London: Theosophical Publishing House, 1973), pp. 226-50.

¹³⁵ Dion Fortune, *The Cosmic Doctrine*, pp. 2-6.

and Marriage.¹³⁶ Leadbeater described the Masters' existence, appearance, dwelling places, work, and details of how to contact them, claiming to have met the Comte de Saint-Germain in Rome in 1910, where they walked and talked together.¹³⁷ Jean Overton Fuller has suggested that the correspondence between the Comte de Saint-Germain and Prince Rakoczi, generally now accepted in Theosophical circles, must first have been made by Madame Blavatsky during the 1870s, Annie Besant passing on this information in her book *The Masters* (1912).¹³⁸

Leadbeater said of the Comte de Saint-Germain, 'He employs the services of great Angels, who obey Him implicitly¹³⁹ and rejoice to do his will [. . .] much of His working is in Latin [. . .] and the splendour and rhythm of it is unsurpassed by anything that we know down here.' Notice the capitalisation, and the phrase 'down here' which seems to suggest quite separate levels. Leadbeater also described the richness and magnificence of St. Germain's robes.¹⁴⁰ It is interesting to note that certainly Knight, if not Fortune, did not consider that Master Rakoczi was Saint-Germain as the

¹³⁶ Which early work contains the slight suggestion that, at the time, Fortune was undecided as to the physicality of the Masters: 'These Elder Brethren, *whether still in the flesh or advanced beyond the stage whereat a physical body is worn*, may [. . .] instruct and help those who are worthy of, and capable of benefiting by, such assistance.' (Dion Fortune, *The Esoteric Philosophy of Love and Marriage* (London: Aquarian Press, 1970 [1924]), p. 28 [my italics]).

¹³⁷ Leadbeater, *Masters and the Path*, p.7.

¹³⁸ Jean Overton Fuller, *The Comte de Saint-Germain: Last Scion of the House of Rákóczy* (London: East-West Publications, 1988, p. 301. See the suggestion of a Hungarian Master in Olcott, *Old Diary Leaves*, 1, 275; Besant, *The Masters*, (Adyar: Theosophical Publishing House, 1912), p. 50; Alice A. Bailey, *Initiation, Human and Solar* (England: Lucis Press, Ltd, 1951[1922]), pp. 49, 58-59. The fullest documented account of The Comte is Jean Overton Fuller, *The Comte de Saint-Germain*, especially pp. 300-06, where the identification of the Comte with Rakoczy is discussed. Isobel Cooper-Oakley states that St. Germain was the youngest son of Francis Leopold Rakoczi, who was forced to relinquish the Rakoczi name. Isobel Cooper-Oakley, *The Comte de St. Germain: The Secret of Kings* (Adyar, Madras: Theosophical Publishing House, 1985 [1912]), pp. 12-16. According to E. M. Butler, Saint-Germain declared himself to be Rakoczi in 1779. E. M. Butler, *The Myth of the Magus* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993 [1948]), p. 202. See also Chapter 3, p. 136, n. 35.

¹³⁹ This is quite out of keeping with present-day attitudes of the Western or New Age traditions, although the strength of Fortune's own initial yearnings for contact almost reaches it. Her own opinion was that talk of Mathers' and Leadbeater's physical meetings with the Masters was 'not only folly, but fraud, in confusing the planes, and representing that which was experienced subjectively as having happened in the world of matter.' Dion Fortune, 'Ceremonial Magic Unveiled' *Inner Light*, 24 (2003 [1933]), 12-21, p. 20.

¹⁴⁰ Leadbeater, *Masters and the Path*, p. 224.

Theosophists surmised.¹⁴¹ E. M. Butler adds that whilst glamorous enough to fire the imagination of an admiring public in his time, this 'Saint-Germain, Head of the Seventh Ray' was historically of little note,¹⁴² and yet through Blavatsky's recognition of his apparent identity with the title character of Bulwer-Lytton's *Zanoni* (1842), he became 'the representative magician of his day', 'elevated' by Blavatsky 'to the status of Mahatma'.¹⁴³

Although he argued for flesh-and-blood Masters, it should be noted that Leadbeater possessed great psychic abilities, and may have easily mistaken a strong non-physical (i.e. astro-etheric) appearance for a physical one. Indeed, he confessed that other Masters he met (e.g. Djwal Khul,¹⁴⁴ Kuthumi, and Morya) manifested in the 'subtle body', whilst he at the same time insisted that these three lived physically in a particular ravine in Tibet, where the original manuscript of the *Book of Dzyan* is kept, and upon which Blavatsky based her commentaries, *The Secret Doctrine*.¹⁴⁵ Leadbeater also gave a plan of Master Kuthumi's house, and described his activities indoors in detail. Yet his

¹⁴¹ Gareth Knight 'The Work of the Inner Plane Adepts' in Dion Fortune, *The Esoteric Orders and their Work*, (St Paul, MN: Llewellyn Publications, 1978), p. 23.

¹⁴² 'only one (if perhaps the most eminent) of that swarm of swindlers, charlatans, impostors or pure adventurers whose golden age was the second half of the eighteenth century,' Butler, *Myth of the Magus*, p. 186. But see Stewart's important observation regarding the folly of hasty judgement as to the quality of an individual's spiritual achievements by superficial reference to his/her lifestyle or social standing. R. J. Stewart, *Advanced Magical Arts* (Shaftesbury: Element, 1988), p. 7. See also the remarks of Fortune and Stewart on p. 44, above. Bailey specified Rakoczi as head of the Seventh Ray in 1922. Alice A. Bailey, *Initiation, Human and Solar* (England, Lucis Press, 1967 [1922]), p. 58.

¹⁴³ Butler, *Myth of the Magus*, pp. 213-14, 260, 267-68. See also Joscelyn Godwin, 'Bulwer-Lytton, Edward George' in Hanegraaff, *Dictionary of Gnosis*, pp. 213-17 (p. 216). Macgregor Mathers records that Bulwer-Lytton's description of the adept Mejnour in *Zanoni* was based on that of Abra-Melin. *The Book of the Sacred Magic of Abra-Melin the Mage*, translated by S. L. MacGregor Mathers (Wellingborough: Thorsons Publishers Ltd., 1976), p. xvi. S. B. Liljegren is of the opinion that it was Bulwer-Lytton himself, upon whose novel the edifice of *Isis Unveiled* was erected, that Blavatsky looked up to as her master before she turned away from the Egyptian mysteries to the East. S. B. Liljegren, 'Bulwer-Lytton's Novels and Isis Unveiled' in S. B. Liljegren, ed., *Uppsala Essays and Studies in English Language and Literature* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1957), XVIII, 8-60 (pp. 13-14, 55). Cf. H. P. Blavatsky, *Isis Unveiled: A Master-Key to the Mysteries of Ancient and Modern Science and Theology* (Los Angeles: The Theosophy Company, 1877 [1931]), pp. 285-86.

¹⁴⁴ Said to be responsible for the great mass of communications received through Alice Bailey and published by the Lucis Trust.

¹⁴⁵ Leadbeater, *Masters and the Path*, pp. 3-23. Altogether, nineteen ('out of several hundred') Stanzas are given in Helena Petrovna Blavatsky, *The Secret Doctrine*, I, 91-99; II, 27-33. They do not seem to correspond at all directly with Bailey's thirteen. Alice A. Bailey, *A Treatise on Cosmic Fire*, pp. 11-33.

visits to their secret ravine were made when he was ‘out of the body’, leaving wide open the whole question of the Masters' physicality.¹⁴⁶ Fortune was of the opinion that the atmospheric conditions of the East are such as to favour liaison between the subtle and material planes, and that the term ‘physical’ should not be taken at face value. Also, the Theosophical movement needed to make as wide-ranging an impact as possible, and may well have exaggerated matters to the extent of creating some confusion.¹⁴⁷

The Theosophist Cyril Scott took a broader view of the Masters and felt able to comment on the tendency of the Theosophical Society to appropriate the Masters to themselves.¹⁴⁸ To the psychical researcher Richard Hodgson however,¹⁴⁹ Blavatsky was an impostor, and those of her Masters credited, for example, with being able to materialise correspondence from out of the air, were pure fiction.¹⁵⁰

More recently, however, Mark and Elizabeth Prophet record that on 23 September 1962, all the Lords of the Seven Rays materialised on Mount Shasta, California, to the extent that they left visible footprints. Their stated aim was to express concern for ‘the peril of the times’ by giving the world a special blessing.¹⁵¹ Fortune’s experience led her to deny that the Master Jesus was ever seen to appear in the flesh; rather, any such manifestation was ‘a thought-form in the consciousness of the Star

¹⁴⁶ Leadbeater, *Masters and the Path*, pp. 15-32.

¹⁴⁷ Dion Fortune, *Applied Magic*, p. 109.

¹⁴⁸ Scott, *Initiate in the New World*, p. 129.

¹⁴⁹ Richard Hodgson, ‘Account of Personal Investigation in India, and Discussion of the Authorship of the “Koot Hoomi” Letters’, in: ‘Report of the Committee appointed to Investigate Phenomena Connected with the Theosophical Society’, *Society for Psychical Research: Proceedings* 3 (1885), 207-400. Critics have subsequently cast doubt on the integrity of his work. See Jean Overton Fuller, *Blavatsky and her Teachers*, pp. 165-74. See also Adlai E. Waterman, *The ‘Hodgson Report’ on Madame Blavatsky: Re-examination Discredits the Major Charges Against H. P. Blavatsky* (Adyar, Madras: Theosophical Publishing House, 1963). A re-examination by the *Journal of the Society for Psychical Research* in 1986 had also found the case not proven. Joy Dixon, *The Divine Feminine* (Baltimore, MD: The John Hopkins University Press, 2001), p. 236, n. 2. An account of ‘Hodgson’s Mistake’ is also given in K. Paul Johnson, *Initiates of the Theosophical Masters* (Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 1995), pp. 17-22. Yet the question of Madame Blavatsky’s fabrication of her Mahatmas has not yet been settled.

¹⁵⁰ This kind of feat is also derided by magically adept Tibetans as boring and childish (Mme Alexandra David-Neel, *Initiations and Initiates in Tibet*, (London: Rider, 1973), p. 167. It was David-Neel, too, who stated that her Tibetan teachers considered Blavatsky’s Mahatmas as ‘ridiculous parodies’. K. Paul Johnson, *The Masters Revealed: Madame Blavatsky and the Myth of the Great White Lodge* (Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 1994), p. 204.

¹⁵¹ Mark L. and Elisabeth Claire Prophet, *Lords of the Seven Rays*, p. 13.

Logos' used by the Solar Logos to focus the Devotional Ray and being perceived psychically.¹⁵² Save for the footprints, could this have been the case on Mount Shasta?

The question of the physicality of the Masters (though not necessarily their historicity), is neatly answered by Fortune's definition already given – that although they were once human, they are certainly out of incarnation now, having advanced beyond the need to do so. Those other advanced individuals termed 'Masters' by Blavatsky and others such as Scott, must therefore have been ordinary human adepts, advanced, but otherwise ordinary human beings.¹⁵³ If that is so, they should all by now have passed on, and perhaps qualify for Fortune's definition of Master after all. Nevertheless, although the mythical Christian Rosenkreutz was never incarnate, which excludes him from Fortune's own definition of a Master, he was, on the one hand, strongly rumoured to have incarnated in various personalities, and on the other, was highly regarded by her as a most valuable inner contact, the epitome and *raison d'être* of the Rosicrucian mythos.¹⁵⁴ Concerning the human origins of the Masters, a recent communication by one of them, David Carstairs, gives more detail: they are less than perfect, and are definitely human, a characteristic without which they would be in no position to advise humanity. Most died 'a willing and honourable' death, but in contrast to Fortune's comment, and more recently that of Geoff Hughes that any suitable historical figure could serve as a focus, Carstairs declared it was unthinkable that he could assume a personality that had not been his; yet at the same time he advised that our image of the Masters should not be based upon who they might or might not have been in the past, but upon what they are in the present. Although they had now lost direct control over the physical, they could nevertheless influence physical happenings by engineering synchronicities meaningful to the student. An example of this is given here in Chapter 6 p. 344.

¹⁵² Fortune, *Esoteric Orders*, 1928 (2000 edn), p. 53.

¹⁵³ Fortune, *Esoteric Orders* 1928 (2000 edn.), p. 48. Masters who incarnate voluntarily she terms 'Adepts', 'subject to the limitations of the flesh'. Fortune in Dion Fortune and Gareth Knight, *Spiritualism and Occultism*, (Loughborough: Thoth Publications, 1999), p. 134.

¹⁵⁴ And remains so, not only in her Society of the Inner Light, but is a key figure in many ceremonial esoteric orders of today. See also Rudolf Steiner's comment that Christian Rosenkreutz and the Master Jesus incarnate in turns every century. Rudolf Steiner, *From the History and Contents of the First Section of the Esoteric School, 1904-1914*, p. 225.

Fortune is quite aware that the naming of various Masters as characters in history might well be misleading – there may, for example, only have been some kind of overshadowing or other link between the Master and the historical figure, and the two later confused. She speaks of different ‘degrees’ of incarnation: even an incarnated pupil might be temporarily overshadowed to a greater or lesser extent by a Master for certain work, and, at the other extreme, she gives the possible example of Jesus being overshadowed for the last three years of his life by an aspect of the Christ.¹⁵⁵ The case of the Master David Carstairs, however, is somewhat special. Although his supposed incarnation before and during the First World War up until his death on the Western Front was recent enough for records to exist, no such record has yet been found. Does this invalidate Fortune’s case for identifiable Masters? Richardson’s discussions with Knight suggest several alternative explanations:

- Fortune got the name wrong.
- The contact was activated by the mediator through the visualisation of an image used as a call-sign, not a name.
- The Carstairs image could have been created by an Inner Plane communicator as an effective means of contact.¹⁵⁶

These contentions were later hotly denied by Carstairs himself in a typically lively (and comical) exchange with one of Knight’s students. Carstairs concluded his protest with the advice “Maybe one day I will tell you more, to satisfy your curiosity, but for the moment you must work with me as I am, not as I was”.¹⁵⁷ This kind of repartee is

¹⁵⁵ Fortune, *Applied Magic*, p. 109.

¹⁵⁶ Richardson, *Priestess*, p. 139-41. But late information came to Richardson that Fortune may have corresponded at some time with one of Carstairs’ parents, who remarried. Richardson, *Priestess*, p. 247n. See also Appendix V, p. 452 for Paul Dunne’s alternative suggestion concerning the phenomenon of David Carstairs.

¹⁵⁷ Dion Fortune and Gareth Knight, *An Introduction to Ritual Magic*, pp. 93, 94. Fortune describes this latter process in Fortune, *Spiritualism and Occultism*, p. 135. Carstairs had in fact already given much personal detail about his immediately past incarnation through Fortune in November 1922. Is this the ‘one day’ that he speaks of (time not being sequential in his world)? In that session he gave details of where he lived; his father’s job (a cycle manufacturer); and that he joined the Cycle Corps. In February 1924, he gave further details of his health and family. Dion Fortune, *Spiritualism and Occultism*, pp. 148, 149. In later communications, however, he concentrated on the work of the Fraternity.

a refreshing relief from the heaviness of ‘The Tibetan’s’ transmissions and recalls those of Roberts’s ‘Seth’.¹⁵⁸

Fortune’s Masters, like Blavatsky’s, continue with their own development on the inner planes although, as we have seen, Leadbeater cast doubt on this. But Fortune does allow that in exceptional circumstances and from time to time certain of their number are obliged to incarnate for specific work; but having so incarnated, they become just as susceptible to the distractions of earth as an ordinary person, and may have to retrace some evolutionary steps. Bailey, speaking of the preparations for the Second Coming, suggested that certain Masters will incarnate nearer the time using various mechanisms to do so – through physical birth, or by appropriating a ‘suitable’ body, or, more rarely, by directly creating a body by an act of will. She notes that six have already incarnated in various parts of the world, as soon will the Master Jesus.¹⁵⁹

Scott endorses Fortune’s view of the Masters as having evolved through ‘sustained endeavour’, and as holding unconditional love for humanity, understanding all human weaknesses.¹⁶⁰ But he continues to think of them as residing in physical bodies – the Manu, for example, in a Chinese body, the World Teacher in a Celtic one, and St Paul now a Cretan with the oversight of spiritualism. Jesus, too, conducts healing work in a Lebanese body, but is not the Son of God.¹⁶¹ This flies directly in the face of Fortune’s stance that as Son of God, Jesus is Master of Masters. As we have seen in a previous Chapter, this was the crucial disagreement between Fortune and the Theosophical Society which caused her withdrawal.¹⁶² Speaking more generally, she acknowledged that the turning towards Masters from an Eastern culture was perhaps a ‘reaction against an overdose of dogmatic Christianity’. But her Masters were distinctly Western in origin, as were those of Éliphas Lévi and, eventually, Rudolf Steiner.¹⁶³

¹⁵⁸ See, for example, Jane Roberts, *Seth Speaks* (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, 1972) This lightheartedness is also a fundamental characteristic of Walsch’s ‘God’. Neale Donald Walsch, *Conversations with God* (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1998), Book 3.

¹⁵⁹ Alice Bailey, *A Treatise of Cosmic Fire*, p. 758.

¹⁶⁰ Cyril Scott, *An Outline of Modern Occultism* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1949), p. 15.

¹⁶¹ Scott, *Outline*, pp. 72-80.

¹⁶² Chapter 3, p. 155.

¹⁶³ Dion Fortune in Gareth Knight, *Experience of the Inner Worlds* (Toddington: Helios Books, 1975), pp. 121, 122.

Where, then, does this place the genealogies of these 'Eastern' Masters as given by Leadbeater and the Prophets? On examination, we find that most of their postulated former incarnations were of figures in the Western world, a factor which appears to have been largely forgotten by those who protest at the remoteness of Blavatsky's Mahatmas, and which on the one hand greatly diminishes the force of their Eastern cultural background, and on the other, from the point of view of practical magic, easily opens doors to working with one or other of their former Western incarnations.¹⁶⁴ Perhaps the logic supporting disagreements over the suitability of the varied background is not so strong as is generally held.

In more recent times, Fuller re-examines the biographies of some of Blavatsky's Masters. For example, she pinpoints the Sikh Koot Hoomi (possibly so called after the sage Kuthumi in the *Vishnu Purana*) as attending a meeting in London in 1854, and his superior 'the Chohan' as a tutor and governor of some reputation in Tibet.¹⁶⁵

K. Paul Johnson also examines the question of the historical identity of Blavatsky's Masters, and although admitting that his correlations are speculative, he shows that Blavatsky worked with various reform organisations in India, and tentatively identifies Koot Hoomi with the Thakar Singh Sandhanwalia (1837-1887), a prominent Sikh reformer of the Punjab, and the Master Morya with a prominent defender of religious tolerance, the Maharaja Ranbir Singh (1832-1885) of Kashmir.¹⁶⁶ Letters by Blavatsky clearly indicate that while early in her career she had wanted to stimulate some enthusiasm for the Masters, she later came to deplore the subsequent over-zealousness for them, even to the point of denying outright that she had ever promoted them as supermen. From the moment that her co-worker Olcott met one of the Masters at Bombay in 1879, their reputation as almost level with the gods was already well established. This, together with various cover stories referring to their secret residence in

¹⁶⁴ Leadbeater, *Masters*, p. 224; The Prophets generally follow Leadbeater and Theosophical tradition, M. and E. Prophet, *Lords*, passim, where examples of incarnation chains are given.

¹⁶⁵ Fuller, *Blavatsky and her Teachers*, pp. 83-85; 106-12.

¹⁶⁶ For Thakar Singh Sandhanwalia, see K. Paul Johnson, *Masters Revealed*, pp. 148-75; for Ranbir Singh of Kashmir, see Johnson, *Masters Revealed*, pp. 120-47. Leadbeater identified Morya as a 'Rajput king'. Leadbeater, *Masters and the Path*, p. 24.

Tibet helped to divert attention from their true identity, which Blavatsky was anxious to conceal, perhaps for political reasons. Nevertheless, Johnson shows that most of the individuals that the Masters could have been based on were figures of some standing in their particular spiritual tradition; some were writers, others theologians, some were secret backers of the broad aims and purposes of the Theosophical Society, and others more involved in the political imperative of throwing off the yoke of British imperialism.¹⁶⁷ Blavatsky had culled her early key ideas, such as the belief in an underground source of secret knowledge, from a variety of Western sources – Freemasonry and Rosicrucianism; from Kabbalah and Sufism; and from Isma'ili gnosis – and it was only later that she combined what she had already learned with various Eastern traditions, such as portions of Vedanta and Mahayana Buddhism. In this she was ably assisted by one of the few individuals alive at the time who had sufficient command of those religions, Ranbir Singh, the reigning maharaja of Kashmir from 1857 until 1885, whom she may well have acknowledged under the disguise of 'Master Morya', her chief mentor and the source of the *Mahatma Letters to A. P. Sinnett* (delivered 1880-1884 by Masters Morya and Kuthumi)¹⁶⁸. Johnson notes Blavatsky's sudden decline of interest in, and transmissions from, the Masters after his death as particularly significant.¹⁶⁹ As well as Morya and Koot Hoomi, Johnson's suggested list of so-called Masters includes the Copt Paolos Metamon (possibly Master Serapis Bey who first featured during the early years of the Theosophical Society in New York); the Cypriot Ooton Liatto (the Master Hilarion); the Seikh guru Baba Khem Singh Bedi (The Chohan); and the Punjabi leader Sirdar Dayal Singh Majithia (Master Djwal Khul). But these are only possibilities. Given Blavatsky's eclectic approach, the Master Morya in particular was more likely an amalgam of personalities.¹⁷⁰

¹⁶⁷ K. Paul Johnson, *The Masters Revealed*, pp. 1–15. Note, however, that John Algeo, examining Johnson's exercise in identifying 'fictional Masters based on historical prototypes', found the case not proven. *Theosophical History*, v, Issue 7 (July 1995), 232-248. Johnson's refutation appears in 'Excerpts from an Interview with K. Paul Johnson' in www.katinkahesselink.net [accessed 30/11/07].

¹⁶⁸ First published as *The Mahama Letters to A. P. Sinnett from the Mahatmas M. and K. H., Transcribed and Compiled by A. T. Barker* (London: T. Fisher Unwin, 1923).

¹⁶⁹ Johnson, *Masters Revealed*, pp. 145-47.

¹⁷⁰ Johnson, *Masters Revealed*, pp. xi-xiii.

As we have seen, Knight's emic point of view is that the psychics who first contacted these Masters towards the end of the nineteenth century were mistaken in thinking that they were physical; rather, they were using forms of astral or etheric substance which, though very close to the physical – sometimes being defined as the 'electro-magnetic envelope' which holds the physical body together – is not recognisable as physical by those without any psychic sense.¹⁷¹ So on the one hand, Regardie, Fortune and Knight see them as existing on the etheric or higher planes; on the other hand, Blavatsky, Leadbeater and Scott regarded the Masters as existing on the physical, though freely able to use etheric substance in order to manifest their presence elsewhere.

The Masters and Christianity

It is obvious what might be an orthodox Christian viewpoint on the existence of such Masters. Leadbeater, as one of the foremost psychics of the beginning of the twentieth century, was also a Christian priest, albeit with unorthodox ideas,¹⁷² and embraced the Masters with devotion.¹⁷³ Nearer our own day, the Anglican parish priest and eventual canon Anthony Duncan (d. 2001) also held somewhat unorthodox views. Besides his more conventional ecclesiastical and devotional works, he examined Fortune's exposition of the Qabalah,¹⁷⁴ and recorded his own psychic experiences undergone in early life, but because of their contentious nature, he withheld their publication until his

¹⁷¹ Knight in Fortune, *Esoteric Orders* (1978 edition), pp. 17, 18)

¹⁷² 'Leadbeater, Charles Webster: Consecrated by Bishop Wedgewood at Sydney on 22 July 1916 as Regionary Bishop for Australia. Elected to the office of Presiding Bishop in March 1923. Died 1 March 1934.' From September 1918, the Church officially adopted the name *The Liberal Catholic Church (Old Catholic)*, subsequently known as *The Liberal Catholic Church*. See *The Apostolic Succession within the Liberal Catholic Church: Bishops of the Old Catholic Church in England* (London: The St. Alban Press, 1973), p. 4.

¹⁷³ Which Knight states can not only lead to disappointment and abuses on the part of those in incarnation, possibly leading to an unhealthy dependence on them, but can also be 'a distraction and embarrassment' to the Masters themselves. He warns that anyway 'all communication [. . .] is subject to distortion and other subtle forms of interference.' Knight, *Experience*, pp. 127-28.

Scott embraces the Masters as figures whom they had been taught to 'revere'. He travelled astrally to Koot-Hoomi's house in Shigatse. Cyril Scott, *The Initiate in the Dark Cycle* (London: Routledge and Sons, 1932), p. 10.

¹⁷⁴ See, for example, A. D. Duncan, *The Christ, Psychotherapy and Magic* (Toddington: Helios Books, 1969), and A. D. Duncan, *The Two Qabalas: A Christian Appreciation of Occultism* (Cyclosyled publication, 1973).

retirement.¹⁷⁵ He accepts that the reality of communication from beings no longer in incarnation has been established beyond reasonable doubt, but that the faculty ‘lies below the level of rationality’. As to the Masters, he not only cites Fortune’s own appraisal of them, but adds that at best, communion with such entities, which he thinks of in terms of membership of the Communion of Saints, is ‘part of the Risen Life’. As such, communication must be approached with caution and right intention, its fruits used with all due discrimination, in prayerful thankfulness.¹⁷⁶

Another Christian priest and former member of the Society of the Inner Light was W. E. Butler, who, perhaps with the example of Jesus in mind, is cautious over the concept of degrees or levels of hierarchy among the Masters in spite of his Qabalistic training. ‘The higher a Master is, the nearer he is to you’ and he quotes Blavatsky’s own comment that her followers had idolised the Masters to such an extent that they appeared almost unreachable.¹⁷⁷

To clarify Fortune’s position with regard to the relation between Jesus and Christ: whereas Jesus is Master of Masters, undergoing the sacrificial death during his third and final incarnation, the Christ is not a Master, nor a personality, but ‘simply an aspect of the Logoidal force’ which functions through all world saviours, Eastern or Western.¹⁷⁸ This is criticised by the more conventional Knight who believes that Fortune might well have been confused herself upon this crucial theological point. He disagrees that Jesus was a human – even a Superhuman – carrying a ‘Christ-force’. Even Fortune’s elevation of Jesus over other Masters does not go far enough for Knight, for he holds to

¹⁷⁵ Anthony Duncan, *The Sword in the Sun: Dialogue with an Angel* (Albuquerque: Sun Chalice Books, 1997).

¹⁷⁶ Duncan, *The Christ*, pp. 98-99; A. D. Duncan, *The Priesthood of Man* (London: Geoffrey Bles, 1973), p. 177. I am not sure that Fortune is referring to our ordinary concept of saints when she speaks of the Lodge of the Masters being another name for the ‘body of just men made perfect’. Fortune, *Esoteric Orders*, p. 61. See her remark on the equivalence of Masters, saints and spiritualist controls. Fortune in Fortune and Knight, *Spiritualism and Occultism*, p. 84.

¹⁷⁷ W. E. Butler, *Lords of the Light: the Path of Initiation in the Western Mysteries* (Rochester, VT: Destiny Books, 1990), p. 128. William Ernest Butler (1898-1978) was ordained into the Liberal Catholic Church c. 1950 when in his 50s.

¹⁷⁸ Fortune, *Esoteric Orders*, 1924, (2000 edition), p. 54.

the traditional Christian doctrine of Jesus as wholly God, and wholly man. For him, Jesus was a genuine incarnation of God.¹⁷⁹

The Yardstick

Now that we have reviewed the major commentators, it is tempting to try and apply the yardstick of E. M. Butler's list of ten features common to all ritual heroes in order to judge the authenticity of some of Fortune's Masters.¹⁸⁰ As we have learned, little is known of Carstairs, save that he is said to have been blown to pieces on the battlefield during World War I. Can his subsequent communications from the inner planes be counted as a resurrection? Socrates was tried and infamously put to death, which he faced most courageously, and much the same could be said of Thomas More, and indeed Thomas Becket of Canterbury. E. M. Butler suggests that as well as such heroes mirroring the ancient kingship rituals, they also provide possible parallels to themes of Greek tragedy; and although it is sometimes difficult to draw the line between history and myth, Butler's eventual selection is, in fact, restricted to characters of history, and would therefore qualify under Fortune's definition for the term 'Master'.¹⁸¹

John Greer notes the reservoir of power and inspiration that becomes accessible to members of a contacted Lodge, and sees it as a kind of group mind.¹⁸² Is this a kind of 'incarnation' through the bodies of the membership, much as the Church is said to be the body of Christ? He does not directly address the question of Masters at all, but his

¹⁷⁹ Knight, *Experience*, pp. 121-25.

¹⁸⁰ Butler's features include: 1. A supernatural origin; 2. portents at birth; 3. perils during infancy; 4. an initiation; 5. distant wanderings; 6. a magical contest; 7. a trial or persecution; 8. a last scene; 9. a violent or mysterious death; 10. a resurrection and/or ascension. E. M. Butler, *The Myth of the Magus*, pp. 2-3.

¹⁸¹ Martha J. Shultz, 'The Gnosis Interview with Nicholas Whitehead' *Gnosis* 45 (Fall 1997), 37-40. Butler, *Myth of the Magus*, pp. 3-6. Fortune's definitions of Master are not clear-cut, generally being interjected during the course of discussion and comparison, e.g. [assuming the entity had been once incarnate as a human] 'The title of Master should therefore be given only to those who are free from the wheel of birth and death.' Fortune, *Mystical Qabalah*, p. 166; also 'They are nothing more or less than adepts made perfect, no longer needing to incarnate in matter'. Fortune, *Spiritualism and Occultism*, p. 134. One of her clearest is from the *Inner Light* of April 1938: '[. . .] human souls who have passed beyond adepthood and are not in incarnation.' Fortune, *Spiritualism and Occultism*, p. 128. Butler, *Myth of the Magus*, pp. 3-6.

¹⁸² John Michael Greer, *Inside a Magical Lodge* (St. Paul, MN: Llewellyn, 1998).

contribution is important in that it provides an alternative explanation discussed below.¹⁸³

In an overall positive summary of the work of ten of the Masters, Charles Lazenby nevertheless warns against ‘hundreds of spooks’ masquerading to mediums as named Masters, who give themselves away by the triviality of their messages.¹⁸⁴

The Subjectivity of the Masters

Some mention has already been made as to Fortune’s own attitude to the Masters’ existence, real or imagined.¹⁸⁵ It is part of the larger question of subjectivity in occultism, allied to aspects of depth psychology, matters which are possible avenues of research in the future. Klimo mentions a possible correspondence between Masters, higher selves, the god within, and the Jungian ‘wise old sage’ archetype – the Masters having the additional capacity of being able to manifest as human beings; and this opens up the debate concerning the subjectivity, objectivity, or even divinity, of those Masters. Are they purely a dramatisation of the unconscious, an independent personality, a kind of angel (messenger), or even an aspect of the voice of God?¹⁸⁶ Roberts does not see why such possibilities need be mutually exclusive.¹⁸⁷ Suffice it to say here that Jung himself had contact with such a one – an inner figure whom he considered to be an independent being with superior insight to himself and whom he thought of, not as his ‘anima’ or soul (which would have been feminine) but as his ‘guru’ or Wise Old Man.¹⁸⁸ He did not mention the phenomenon of the inner teacher, or *maggid* of medieval Jewish tradition, but must have known of the Masters of Theosophy who performed a similar function.

¹⁸³ Greer, *Inside a Magical Lodge*, pp. 100-10. See p. 322, below.

¹⁸⁴ Charles Lazenby, *The Work of the Masters* (London: The Path Publishing Co., 1917), p. 3. He suggests that in many cases they might solely represent ‘an animated photograph on the reflecting ether’, adding that even genuine Masters are often bewildered, not always realising the long-term effects of their actions. Lazenby, *The Work of the Masters*, p. 6.

¹⁸⁵ Above, pp. 266-67.

¹⁸⁶ Jon Klimo, *Channeling: Investigations on Receiving Information from Paranormal Sources* (Wellingborough, Aquarian Press, 1988), p. 176.

¹⁸⁷ Jane Roberts, *Seth Speaks* (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, 1972), p. xx.

¹⁸⁸ Called by a succession of names, e.g. ‘Elijah, ‘Philemon’. Jung, *Memories*, pp. 176-78, 214.

*Masters Female*¹⁸⁹

As early as 1883, the question was raised concerning the ability of females to become Adepts (Masters), to which the reply was that there were several already, including one meriting the position of a 'great sage' (Maha-Chohan).¹⁹⁰ We have already noted above the appearance of the Lady Nada as succeeding Jesus on the inner planes. In a channelled communication, Fortune comments briefly that in ancient times, the Masters sometimes manifested in female form on both inner and outer planes, although in Lemurian times¹⁹¹ there was said to be little differentiation between the sexes anyway. Nevertheless, there are 'certain adepts in female bodies who have definite inner plane missions and who are genuine adepts', and their numbers will grow.¹⁹² It is not clear from this whether she is referring to inner Masters, or to outer adepts who might be in training for Mastership later. John Matthews draws attention to the Native rather than Hermetic tradition of chthonic (female) sibyls, who were said to work alongside the (male) prophets as they communed with the celestial realms. Each received and synthesised the 'impulses' generated from the other. This, as a matter of polarity, is of consequence in practical magic, but a subject of research well beyond the parameters of this thesis. Briefly, an impetus can be envisaged as descending from the god at the macrocosmic level, through the 'prophet' on the inner plane, down to 'man' on the microcosmic level. Similarly, it can arise from the goddess, through 'sibyl' to 'woman'. But on the inner plane, any polarities or levels are easily able to inter-relate; the man, for example, is able to relate to the goddess through the sibyl. Matthews correlates 'prophet' and 'sibyl' with Jung's animus and anima, daimon and muse, and incubus and succubus, even identifying them in the end with the traditional Masters, and stresses the necessity of a magician's ability to find and use one of these sources of inspiration. He says:

¹⁸⁹ Leadbeater did not deal with this question directly, save by highlighting the role of the 'World Mother' to satisfy those seeking a female Master. In Christianity, Mary fulfils this role; in other religions, Kwan-Yin, the Shakti, etc. Leadbeater, *Masters*, pp. 235-36.

¹⁹⁰ Cranston: *H. P. B.*, p. 211. See also D. Mavalankar, 'Can Females Become Adepts?' *The Theosophist*, October 1883, 23.

¹⁹¹ The period of evolution pre-dating the 'Atlantean'. For comments on Lady Nada, see pp. 284-85, 312, above.

The sibyls and prophets are the Just men and women made perfect, who hear our despair and pain, who understand our dedication to the Great Work, and who inspire us secretly within our souls. One might think of them as a celestial and chthonic system of communication cables who can put us in touch with any part of the cosmos - past, present, or to come. Any contact we have with them is tenuous, and cannot be long sustained. [. . .] the sibyls and prophets are impersonal, yet their hearts are set on the will of God. A greater understanding of their role might well help revision the rather out-dated concept of the Master in Western esotericism.¹⁹³

So, as in a great deal of occult writing, there is much speculation and generalization in the Matthews's views; but, again, as with the bulk of such exegesis, they suggest that at least it provides material upon which the student might profitably meditate. It may be noted in passing that Florence Farr, a member of the Golden Dawn, was contacted as early as 1896 by a feminine Egyptian Adept.¹⁹⁴

Col. Seymour gives a collection of six meditations on the Moon Mysteries whose object was to link the participants with 'ancient cult memories' within the subconscious mind of the Great Mother. It was his experience that it was the complementarity of polarities that facilitates communication with the inner. He says (*contra* Matthews, above): 'it is the woman that holds the keys to the inner planes for a man.'¹⁹⁵ That Fortune was well aware of this is amply demonstrated in her novels. Would it have been easier for her male Society members to have searched for female Masters?¹⁹⁶ Knight suggests that the maleness of the Masters was partly a reflection of the historical context of the times in which the contacts were made, and partly, in more

¹⁹² Fortune, *Esoteric Orders* (1962 edn), p. 22.

¹⁹³ John and Caitlin Matthews *The Western Way* 2 vols. (London: Arkana, 1986), II, 153-55.

¹⁹⁴ Mary K. Greer, *Women of the Golden Dawn* (Rochester, VT: Park Street Press, 1995) p. 64.

¹⁹⁵ Basil Wilby, ed., *The New Dimensions Red Book* (Toddington: Helios Book Service, 1968), pp. 47-83; Nevill Drury, *The Shaman and the Magician* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1982), p. 75.

¹⁹⁶ In *Moon Magic*, for example, the male hero is led onto the inner planes by a charismatic female mediating an inner priestess. Any difficulties in Fortune's magical practice might have been somewhat mitigated by her frequent performance of the rites of Isis. Bernard Bromage, 'Dion Fortune' *Light*, 80 (1960), 5-12. A god-form, however, was not considered the same as a Master, although even in F.P.D.'s exposition, the two are not clearly differentiated.

modern times, a consequence of the 'psychological process of inner plane communication', most earthly communicators or mediums being female.¹⁹⁷

And, as Fortune surmised, Bailey predicted that some of the Masters incarnating soon will take female bodies for particular reasons, such as assisting in female emancipation in, for example, India.¹⁹⁸ Today, she might well have mentioned certain countries of the Near East where the oppression of women has been equally characteristic, and has only recently begun to ameliorate. This leads us into the discussion of some of the tasks that the Masters as a whole are deemed to undertake.

The Work of the Masters

Much of the nature of the work of the Masters has been described incidentally in our examination of their identities, so it remains to mention aspects of their activities that have received little or no attention so far.¹⁹⁹

As Objects of Devotion, and as World Governors

Although Leadbeater described at length the Masters' physical characteristics, he said less about their especial capabilities, and so left it unclear as to how they carry out their roles.²⁰⁰ The tasks they set their devotees appear to demand prolonged self-sacrifice, and intense study of detailed abstractions onerous in the extreme, particularly as revealed through Bailey, and we are left with the impression that this way of service is only for a tiny proportion of those who might otherwise take an interest in, and be able to contribute to the Mysteries in more casual but still worthwhile ways.

¹⁹⁷ Gareth Knight, *Magical Images and the Magical Imagination* (Albuquerque, NM: Sun Chalice Books, 1998), p. 76.

¹⁹⁸ Alice A. Bailey, *A Treatise on Cosmic Fire* (London: Lucis Press, 1964 [1925]), p. 758.

¹⁹⁹ Rudolf Steiner, in 1905-6, gives a succinct summary of 'nine attributes pertaining to the Master': 1. Truth; 2. Wisdom; 3. Immeasurableness; 4. Goodness; 5. Endlessness; 6. Beauty; 7. Peace; 8. Blessing; 9. Uniformity. More specifically, he lists Morya as Strength; Kut Hoomi as Wisdom; Saint-Germain as a comforter; and Jesus as 'The most intimate side of humankind's character.' Rudolf Steiner, *From the History and Contents of the First Section of the Esoteric School, 1904-1914*, edited by Hella Wiesberger (Hudson, NY: Anthropomorphic Press, 1998), pp. 203, 205.

²⁰⁰ Leadbeater, *Masters*, pp. 23-30.

Annie Besant and Charles Leadbeater developed the idea of the Masters as the last link in a chain of hierarchy reaching up to the highest spiritual realms. Here reside the four ‘Great Kumaras’ (the four sons of Brahma), great sages under whom Manus work, structuring matters on earth such as the configurations of continents and the evolution of man, constituting an ‘inner government’ of the world.²⁰¹ Bailey has developed the idea more politically, speaking of the Government of the great White Lodge influencing the formation and rise of world-wide movements such as the United Nations Organisation.²⁰² Noel Brann reminds us that the idea of the course of history being determined by the intermediary seven ‘secondary intelligences’ that rule the seven planets had already been suggested in the sixteenth century by Johannes Trithemius, who speaks of each planetary intelligence ruling for a period of 354 years.²⁰³ The English magician John Dee valued the work of Trithemius, particularly the *Steganographia* (1606), either for its cryptography or for its angel-magic, which was Dee’s life-long magical preoccupation.²⁰⁴ Dee’s Forty-eight Angelic Keys, or invocations, were intended to be used to bring about an ordered ‘state of perfection’ in the world; his *Book of Knowledge, Help and Earthly Victory* (1585) is a correlation of ‘ninety-one regions of the earth “named by man”’ (roughly following Agrippa) with various angelic hosts, angelic kings, the twelve tribes of Israel and thirty ‘Aires’, or Angels of the Aethers who were said to rule over earthly kings and governments, once again leading the earth towards perfection. Similarly, his *Book of Supplications and Invocations*, which contains cryptic squares consisting of sacred names and their explanation, was directed

²⁰¹ Annie Besant, *The Inner Government of the World* (Lectures delivered at the North India Convention, T. S., Varanasi, September, 1920), pp. 45, 54. http://teosofia.info/Biografia_Besant.htm, [accessed 12/05/2008].

²⁰² Bailey herself uses terms such as ‘Departmental Heads’. Bailey, *Cosmic Fire*, p. 1239. See also Scott, *Outline*, p. 69.

²⁰³ Trithemius designates the planetary angels in order of ruling as 1. Orifiel (Saturn); 2. Anael (Venus); 3. Zachariel (Jupiter); 4. Raphael (Mercury); 5. Samael (Mars); 6. Gabriel (Moon); 7. Michael (Sun). Brann does not make it clear how the period of 354 years and 4 months relates to the Platonic/zodiacal year of 2160 years. Trithemius’s *De septem secundeis* (1508) was inspired by the astronomer Peter of Abano (c. 1250-c. 1315). Noel L. Brann, *Trithemius and Magical Theology: A Chapter in the Controversy over Occult Studies in Early Modern Europe* (Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 1999), pp. 134-35.

²⁰⁴ Robert Turner, compil., *Elizabethan Magic: The Art and the Magus* (Shaftesbury, Dorset: Element Books, 1989), pp. 48-88, 147.

towards apocalyptic angelic figures appearing as regenerators of the earth at all points of the compass – all this the result of a vision by Edward Kelley in 1584.

Leadbeater suggested that aspirants offering themselves in service to a Master should be looking for daily opportunities for ‘helping other people to progress in character and ideals’, and to tidiness and beauty, all of which are an important part of a Master’s business, as are certain organisations such as the Boy Scouts, the Theosophical Society, Co-Masonry and the Liberal Catholic Church – all these things coupled with complete devotion to the Master, for as we have seen, Leadbeater saw them as major figures of devotion, much as an Eastern disciple would regard his/her guru.²⁰⁵ Blavatsky’s assessment was more guarded: they do not even guide the Theosophical Society, but only ‘watch over, and protect it.’²⁰⁶ She seems to be already placing them at arms length with this remark, sensing the inappropriateness and dangers of holding up any one human being for adoration.²⁰⁷

Knight, however, feels that it is a mistake to see the Great White Lodge as an ‘inner plane branch of the Civil Service’ of the world, but that we should understand them as constituting but just one facet of an inner community much like our own, the inner plane Mystery schools having as small (though important) a part to play as initiates do on earth.²⁰⁸

As Agents of Inspiration/Received Messages

The past hundred years has seen a vast publication of high-level received teachings from Blavatsky, Bailey, Steiner, and others.²⁰⁹ Gareth Knight and, interestingly, the Inner

²⁰⁵ Leadbeater, *Masters*, pp. 15, 48, 59. ‘They aid, in countless ways, the progress of humanity. From the highest sphere They shed down light and life on all the world, that they may be taken up and assimilated, as freely as the sunshine [. . .] [They] use the [. . .] religions as reservoirs into which they pour their spiritual energy [. . .] send out thought-forms of high intellectual power to be caught by men of genius [. . .] watching the tendencies of events, correcting and neutralising, as far as law permits, evil currents [. . .]’ Leadbeater, *Masters*, p. 199.

²⁰⁶ H. P. Blavatsky, *The Key to Theosophy* (Adelphi, W. C.: The Theosophical Publishing Co., 1973 [1889]), p. 299.

²⁰⁷ Witness the Beatles’ eventual disillusionment with the Maharishi during the 1960s.

²⁰⁸ Knight, *Experience of the Inner Worlds*, p. 136.

²⁰⁹ e.g. Edgar Cayce (1877-1945), Jane Roberts (1929-84), Helen Schucman, *A Course in Miracles* (New York: Viking, 1975), and David Spangler (of the Findhorn Community).

Plane group of individuals under the collective name of Ramala (1970-79) both make the point that yet more input from the same or similar sources without considered evaluation and putting into practice of what has already been received is mistaken.²¹⁰ As we have seen from the works of Blavatsky, Bailey and even Fortune, a portion of the messages is sometimes confusing, or even outright nonsense, but, as Fortune says, our understanding and acceptance of the material is largely dependent upon the background knowledge we bring to it, and our own powers of discrimination.²¹¹

As Instructors in Occultism and Assistants in the Process of Regeneration

Sylvia Cranston records an interview in 1887 between Madame Blavatsky and her nephew-in-law Charles Johnston, a leading figure in the Indian government, where Blavatsky answers some questions concerning the Masters. She describes them as teaching men's souls direct from the spiritual world 'to give the world at large a right understanding of spiritual things.' And during the last quarter of each century, they send an envoy with a special message, reinforcing the aspirations of men's souls to be more cognisant of the spiritual life, and wary of an upsurge in black magic, particularly under the guise of hypnotism and suggestion.²¹²

Bailey clearly set out the work of the Masters as she understood it:

1. To assist in the development of self-consciousness in all levels of beings, by facilitating the uniting of higher and lower natures in man, and setting the example of 'service, sacrifice, and renunciation'. This approach is now considered by western

²¹⁰ Knight, *Experience*, p. 135; Anon, *Vision*, pp. ix-xiv.

²¹¹ Dion Fortune, *The Sea Priestess* (York Beach, ME: Samuel Weiser, 1957), pp. 291. This is a message repeated *as nauseam* concerning channelled communications, e.g. Anthony Duncan, *The Sword in the Sun*, (Abuquerque: Sun Chalice Books, 1997), p. 50: [. . .] the worst temptation of all is the temptation to abdicate responsibility, and simply 'receive', and defer all judgements to a discarnate 'guru'; be he a genuine human soul or an etheric construction.'

²¹² Charles Johnston, 'Helena Petrovna Blavatsky', *The Theosophical Forum*, New York, v, 12 (April 1900); vi, 1-3 (May-July 1900); Blavatsky, *H. P. Blavatsky, Collected Writings*, VIII, 392-409, quoted in Cranston, *H. P. B.*, pp. 327-32. In today's world, I would suggest, the results formerly attributed to Black Magic occur on a daily basis in, for example, drug dealing, the manipulations of advertising, the connivances of arms dealers, and in political or religious fundamentalism, rather than in the dark practices of any supposed 'Black Lodges'.

magicians as eminently worthy but not particularly appropriate to the western psyche, outlook, or destiny.

2. To develop consciousness in the three lower kingdoms, i.e. in the mineral kingdom, fostering ‘discrimination’ in the sense of building forms at a molecular level; developing the faculty of ‘response to sensation’ in the vegetable kingdom; and in the animal kingdom, developing ‘will and purpose’.

3. To transmit the will of the Solar Logos through the Planetary Logos to humanity, to devas, and to angels.

4. To represent those who have experienced all that life had to offer, and to set an example to humanity in the triumph over matter through the crucifixion of the lower self. This is achieved by offering love, knowledge, experience, purpose, and – important from the magical point of view – the ‘power of sound’.²¹³

According to Scott, the overall aim of the work of the Masters is to ‘guide mankind at large and to give forth such moral, spiritual and ethical ideas as may be required [. . .]’, an aim which is surely too broad – hardly distinguishable from conventional religion.²¹⁴ He later modifies this by explaining that what is required by ‘those on the path’ is a morality divorced from fear or force – a kind of ‘elastic’ morality, or ‘Supermorality’, allowing for changes in attitudes and circumstance.²¹⁵ One senses that he is calling for more responsibility on an individual level. Fortune would agree, but also suggests that any received teachings are quite secondary to the accompanying beneficent forces.²¹⁶

The highest of the Masters that we would recognise as human are the Lords of Humanity, who incarnate to act as exemplars and saviours, living a perfected life, and taking on at death the accumulated burden of unbalanced force left over at the end of that phase of evolution. Jesus was but one example of this process, afterwards ascending to a level above the Greater Masters corresponding to that of the Manus Krishna and

²¹³ Alice Bailey, *Letters on Occult Meditation*, pp. 20-27.

²¹⁴ Scott, *New World*, p. 11.

²¹⁵ Scott, *New World*, p. 14. This is much more in line with the kind of flexible morality advocated in Walsch’s recent and popular *Conversations with God*.

²¹⁶ Fortune, *Esoteric Orders*, 1924 (2000 edition.), p. 126.

Osiris.²¹⁷ It is interesting to note the view of a former member of Fortune's Society that the aims and purposes of the Golden Dawn and the Inner Light, though apparently similar as magical organisations, were at a deeper level quite at variance – the former as investigative magicians striving for 'Knowledge and Conversation of the Holy Guardian Angel', guided by the scholarly work of their earthly leaders with little reference to the so-called 'Third Order' of Masters; the latter concerned with spearheading the next phase in the expansion of human consciousness, guided by the Inner Plane Adepts who were deemed to be forerunners and exemplars of this future state.²¹⁸ By co-operating with these beings, members had the opportunity to become efficient tools in the large-scale regeneration of humanity as a whole (the 'Great Work'), and perhaps only incidentally achieve a modicum of regeneration for oneself whilst doing so.

But the Masters also appear to work on the more restricted personal and group level, encouraging students within a group to bring their personal problems to the Masters' notice to be dealt with first rather than concern themselves with global matters of which the student(s) in question might have little grasp.²¹⁹ For example, in answer to a student's question 'How should I improve my occult studies?' the clear and down-to-earth practical answer given from an inner figure was to study the Tree of Life and meditate more often.²²⁰

Knight criticises Bailey's Tibetan for seeming to confuse the way (but not the ultimate goal) of the occultist with the way of the mystic. Although in the end, both mystic and occultist aim for the same spiritual goal – nothing less than Divine Union – the way of attunement with a Master is not the same as the way to heaven.²²¹ And despite the all-embracing certainty of hierarchical constructs from Blavatsky, Leadbeater and Bailey's Tibetan, they need not be seen as the only convincing way of the Mysteries.

²¹⁷ e.g. Fortune here gives some of the names of the Greater Masters as Moses, Gautama, Mohammed, and Paul. Fortune, *Esoteric Orders*, p. 56. The Lesser Masters may be considered as comprising the Communion of Saints, known in occult circles as the Lodge of the Masters. Fortune, *Esoteric Orders*, p. 57.

²¹⁸ Charles Fielding in Charles Fielding and Carr Collins, *The Story of Dion Fortune* (Loughborough: Thoთ Publications, 1998), pp. 60-61.

²¹⁹ Knight, *Experience*, p. 228.

²²⁰ Knight, *Experience*, p. 232.

²²¹ Fortune, *Esoteric Orders* 1924 (2000 edition.), pp. 116, 117.

They are only of use as stepping-stones to the Inner Worlds insofar as students find them palatable and workable; their tone might indicate that, for the time being, their appeal is to no more than a few specialist aspirants or Mystery schools.²²² If the models appeal, there is much for the student to learn; if not, then, as we have noted, there are today a plethora of alternative models, just as valid for the sincere seeker.

Bailey also set out in great detail the Masters' pupil-centred tasks. They are similar to Fortune's understanding – that of the Masters raising the rate of the pupil's vibration, vitalising his/her psychic centres or chakras, and building a channel or bridge (*antahkarana* in Theosophical usage) between the pupil's lower and higher *Manas* (mind) to enhance his/her sensitivity to communications and influences from the Master, enhancing awareness of the variety of inner plane conditions and the activities of those who inhabit them. By such means, the pupil is prepared for various initiations, which Bailey also discussed in separate works,²²³ as did Leadbeater.²²⁴

Thus, as the aspirant develops this increasing sensitivity, s/he is given various tasks to carry out, such as visiting a location, obtaining a book, making a drawing,²²⁵ writing and conducting a ritual, or even writing a text-book or novel on an esoteric subject. Most tasks, however, remain much more elementary, even boring, such as carrying out a particular kind of meditation for a certain number of minutes a day over a period of days or months.²²⁶ It is part of the sensitivity training of the Avalon Group, for example, to produce a full set of Tarot cards to one's own design, one by one as the fruits of two or three years of daily meditation.

The Master may generate and mediate subtle forces, patterns and images especially during ritual by means of which the pupil is enabled to tune in more readily to his higher vibrations, with any teachings acting primarily as 'carrier waves' for the forces so generated or transmitted.²²⁷ The most comprehensive exposition of this kind of

²²² Knight, *Experience*, p. 135.

²²³ Bailey, *Occult Meditation*, pp. 270-72. See also Alice A. Bailey, *Initiation, Human and Solar*, and Alice A. Bailey, *Treatise on the Seven Rays: The Rays and the Initiations*.

²²⁴ C. W. Leadbeater, *The Inner Side of Christian Festivals* (London: St. Alban Press, 1920), pp. 135-99.

²²⁵ A good example appears in Knight, *Experience*, p. 228.

²²⁶ Fielding and Collins, *Story*, pp. 60-61.

²²⁷ Fortune, *Esoteric Orders* 1928 (2000 edition), p. 126.

inner activity is given by other inspirational writers contemporary with Fortune – Leadbeater, and Bailey, particularly as they relate to the roles of the Masters as holding a level or position within the Planetary Hierarchy.

Blavatsky described the Masters as shedding light and life throughout the world and focusing the life of God. Some have the special work of pouring spiritual energy through the religions, others inspire ‘men of genius’; others generate thought-forms influencing the concrete minds of those living in the heavenly world; some help the dead; and yet others correct the course of world events.²²⁸ As enhancers of a sense of place, some Masters are said to have oversight of the various geographical areas of the world, a task complementing and overlapping the work of those who have oversight of groups of people of a particular type, e.g. artists.²²⁹

Two further questions need be raised for detailed consideration at a later date. One concerns the provenance of ‘intermediate beings’ who are not Masters or guides, but who encapsulate some of the qualities of both. They appear transiently, but powerfully, as the result of both ritual and meditation, enacting roles not normally associated with Masters and surprising in their variety, e.g. Drake,²³⁰ Henry VII,²³¹ Wilfrid Owen,²³² Pocahontas,²³³ H. G. Wells and Kipling as representatives of the ‘lords of story’,²³⁴ Mary Queen of Scots,²³⁵ and King Arthur.²³⁶ They seem to act independently of the well-known Masters, but from my experience seem to inspire analogous feelings and subconscious effects whilst at the same time acting

²²⁸ Leadbeater, *Masters*, p. 199.

²²⁹ Leadbeater, *Masters*, pp. 200, 202. This idea was conceived in the sixteenth century by Johannes Trithemius, whereby under the seven ‘secondary intelligences’, there subtended one group of 31 regional or district spirits, and another group of 24 hourly spirits. The regional spirits had many subsidiary angelic servants, and it was through these that the magician could eventually contact the seven ‘secondary intelligences’. Noel L. Brann, ‘Trithemius, Johannes, 2. Theory of Magic’ in Hanegraaff, *Dictionary of Gnosis*, II, 1137-38.

²³⁰ Tanya Luhrmann, *Persuasions of the Witch’s Craft* (London: Picador, 1989), pp. 222-27.

²³¹ Gareth Knight, unpubl. Lodge report 21st April 1990.

²³² Fortune and Knight, *Introduction*, pp. 92-93.

²³³ Gareth Knight, *Principles of Esoteric Healing* (Oceanside, CA: Sun Chalice Books, 2002), p. 22.

²³⁴ Knight, *Principles*, pp. 33-44; 47-54.

²³⁵ Gareth Knight, *Pythoness: the Life and Work of Margaret Lumley Brown* (Oceanside, CA: Sun Chalice Books, 2002), pp. 25-27.

²³⁶ Knight, *Pythoness*, pp. 27-33.

talismanically to highlight certain principles or archetypes according to the sensed needs of the time.

The further question relates to the greater topic of esoteric psychology, and concerns the relationship between the Masters and parallel concepts such as the ‘egregore’, ‘group mind’, and ‘group soul’.²³⁷ Richardson reveals the extent of his contacts with the Masters and his reaction to them – some (e.g. More and Socrates) leave him unmoved; others like Carstairs, he reacts more favourably towards. Overall, however, he prefers the explanation that each magical group is part of a tribe or clan situated partly on the inner, partly on the outer plane, each clan having its own Chief who relays the hidden wisdom.²³⁸ But the magician Greer speaks only of the ‘egregore’, a kind of overarching personalised shared mental energy reservoir which any group builds by virtue of its activities and which has much in common with the concept of the Masters on the one hand and with Fortune’s hypothesis of the ‘group mind’ or ‘group angel’ on the other. But he does not develop further how it differs from the ‘Secret Chiefs’, save to warn us not to confuse the two.²³⁹ The social scientist Deb Bodeau speaks of all of these (including group ‘Angels’) as ‘metabeings’, distinguishing between them by reference to the Tree of Life and to quotations from Fortune and W. E. Butler, Fortune’s pupil. She is incorrect in designating the spheres above Tiphareth as ‘essentially impersonal’,²⁴⁰ and it is not my experience or part of the Tradition that they can all be classed together save in a very general sense as perceived from the limitations of Malkuth; on their own plane, they operate and see things very differently. But these three approaches are useful in presenting us with an alternative rationale of the hierarchy.

As we have seen, much time can be spent fruitlessly constructing conflicting tables of relationships between the various Masters, and tracing their genealogies. The overall importance for Fortune is that during meditation or ritual, the magician should

²³⁷ See Fortune’s Chapter on ‘The Group Mind’ in Dion Fortune, *Applied Magic* (York beach, ME: Samuel Weiser, 2000), pp. 12-19.

²³⁸ Richardson, *Priestess*, pp. 247, 248.

²³⁹ Greer, *Inside a Magical Lodge*, pp. 100-10.

²⁴⁰ Deb Bodeau, *Metabeings and Individuals: Aids and Obstacles to Growth*, <http://www.gurus.com/dougdeb/Essays/metabeings.html> [accessed 23/04/02], p. 10.

act *as if* they are real regardless of any speculative genealogies or other supposed validations of identity and communicate with them as real beings for the duration of that time. As she says, they may be ‘call signs’ to one’s higher self, or, just possibly, real beings on the inner planes. The mechanisms that facilitate these and other inner contacts are the subject of the next chapter.

Chapter 6: The Technology of Inner Plane Communication

Introduction

This chapter examines typical methods of obtaining the altered states of consciousness as used by practitioners in present-day Western esotericism. It does not address their biological, physical or psychological explanations.¹ The roots of Western psychology extend far into the ancient world, from the soul-fire of Heracleitus (c. 540-c. 480 BCE), through Socrates’s (469-399 BCE) incipient psycho-analytic technique, Plato’s (428-348 BCE) attribution of different emotions to particular parts of the body, Aristotle’s (384-322 BCE) concept of emotional catharsis, and the soul-body dualism of Seneca (c. 4 BCE –65 CE). Many of the medieval figures mentioned earlier, such as Origen, Plotinus

¹ For psychological explanations, see Jon Klimo, *Channeling: Investigations on Receiving Information from Paranormal Sources* (Wellingborough, Aquarian Press, 1988), pp. 205-53; for biological and physical explanations, see Jon Klimo, *Channeling*, pp. 254-99. A surprisingly early modern text was Herbart’s *Lehrbuch der Psychologie* (1816), with an English translation 1894. A further figure of importance in early psychology was Gustav Theodor Fechner (1801-1887), whose two-volume *Elemente der Psychophysik* (1860, Engl. tr. 1966) was an early attempt to explain the body-mind relationship in mathematical terms. ‘Fechner, Gustav Theodor’ in *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, 15th edn (Chicago: Encyclopaedia Britannica, Inc., 1977), IV, 77. Fechner was also endorsed as the first to work with experimental psychology by Michael Wertheimer, *A Brief History of Psychology* (Belmont: Wadsworth, 2000), pp. 13, 49, 55-57. Yet at the same time, Fechner appeared to be very much aware of the medieval notion of the Anima Mundi. ‘The keynote of the Fechnerian philosophy is that the universe is alive’, J. Arthur Hill, ‘A Study in Fechner’, *Bibby’s Annual*, (Liverpool: J. Bibby & Sons, 1915), 111-12.

and Saint Augustine speculated on the inner constitution of man, as did Thomas Aquinas (1225-74) and John Duns Scotus (c. 1265-1308), who gave priority to will, and William of Ockam (c. 1285-1349) who saw the ‘soul’ as the repository of many differing faculties. In the modern era, the dualism of René Descartes (1596-1650), the ‘tabula rasa’ of John Locke (1632-1704), and the first psychological textbook of Johann Friedrich Herbart (1776-1841) represent significant milestones in the development of psychological theory, which at the end of the nineteenth-century witnessed the psychology of power by Friedrich Nietzsche (1844-1900) and Alfred Adler (1870-1937), each contributing to the depth psychology of Sigmund Freud (1856-1939). The phenomenological psychology of Edmund Husserl (1859-1938), and the existential psychology of Martin Heidegger (1889-1976) and Jean-Paul Sartre (1905-1980) represented a reaction to the earlier developments.² Carl Gustav Jung’s relationship with esotericism is not easy to define, but his work represents its interaction with psychology, as he was influenced by German Romantic Naturphilosophie and spiritualism.³ Fortune herself emphasised the importance of looking at magic in the light of psychology, and vice-versa, and recommended some sixteen relevant texts, foremost of which were: her own *Machinery of the Mind* (1922),⁴ B. Hart, *The Psychology of Insanity* (1912), W. Trotter, *The Instincts of the Herd in Peace and War* (1916); Maurice Nicoll, *Dream Psychology* (1917); and Benjamin Kidd, *The Science of Power* (1918). For more advanced understanding, she emphasised the works of Sigmund Freud, particularly his ‘too one-sided and extremist’ *Interpretation of Dreams*, W. H. Stoddart’s *The New Psychiatry* (1915), and, alongside Freud, Jung’s *Psychology of the Unconscious*. Her suggestions are listed in full in Appendix IIIc.⁵

² For this section, see William S. Sahakian ‘Psychology, History of: Philosophical-religious roots’ in *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, 15th edn (Chicago: Encyclopaedia Britannica, Inc., 1977), xv, 151-155. Many are also mentioned in Michael Wertheimer’s *Brief History*.

³ Gerhard Wehr, ‘C. G. Jung in the Context of Christian Esotericism and Cultural History’ in Antoine Faivre and Jacob Needleman, eds, *Modern Esoteric Spirituality* (London: SCM Press, 1992), pp. 381-83.

⁴ Recommended by Israel Regardie, *The Golden Dawn: An Account of the Teachings, Rites and Ceremonies of the Order of the Golden Dawn*, 4 vols, (St Paul, MN: Llewellyn, 1978 [1937-40]), I, 178.

⁵ See below, Appendix IIIc, X, ‘An Outline of Psychology’, pp. 425-26. Nicoll acknowledged his debt to Carl Jung, and used several Jungian concepts, such as the complex, introversion, extroversion, etc. He drew attention to the usefulness of the cartoon rather than a drawing, through which patients may express

Although Fortune developed an esoteric psychology,⁶ our primary interest lies in modes of contact with intermediary beings, especially those entities termed the Masters of Wisdom, although other intermediaries such as guardians and faery beings are also included as essential elements in the work of the Fraternity of the Inner Light.⁷ Despite efforts in Theosophical texts, magazines, and wider occult, and even popular, press of the early twentieth century to popularise the Masters, explanations were rarely offered as to how to communicate with them; the technology was considered too dangerous, or too sacrosanct, for use by anyone outside of an occult lodge, and was kept secret. Similarly, it was an article of faith that to reveal the secrets of confidential rituals to outsiders was to render them useless. Thus both Regardie, who published the papers and rituals of the Golden Dawn, and Fortune, who in the mid-1930s did the same according to her critics but felt that she had not, pioneered the dissemination of formerly closely-guarded techniques.⁸ Later, during the crucial and traumatic times of World War II, Fortune deliberately gave out more precise instructions, and particular images to be visualised – including imagery of the Masters – to all who were interested enough to receive her weekly War Letters, against all her previous advice regarding the need for preliminary training to assist in the harmonisation and balancing of the lower self in order to avoid contacting less desirable entities.⁹

The major activity we are concerned with here is channelling, or, as Hanegraaff designates it, ‘articulated revelations’. He noted four overlapping

their dreams more fruitfully. Maurice Nicoll, *Dream Psychology*, (London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1917), pp. vi, 23-24, 137-162. It may be remarked that ritual is closer to cartoon than to drawing.

⁶ For her own detailed work on esoteric psychology, see Dion Fortune, *The Circuit of Force: Occult Dynamics of the Etheric Vehicle* (Loughborough: Thoთ Publications, 1998 [1940]) and Dion Fortune and Gareth Knight, *The Principles of Hermetic Philosophy* (Loughborough: Thoთ Publications, 1999 [1944]). Future profitable research might well be undertaken in, say, a comparison between these works and Alice Bailey’s very detailed *A Treatise on the Seven Rays, Esoteric Psychology*, vols 1 and 2 (London: Lucis Press, 1936 [1942]).

⁷ R. J. Stewart, for example, has done much to direct attention to the Faery Evolution, fully describing their nature, and giving clear guidelines on methods of contact, especially through what he terms ‘empowered visualisation’, a ‘medium of energy’, putting us in touch with ‘specific people, powers and places’. R. J. Stewart, *Earth Light, the Ancient Path to Transformation* (Shaftesbury: Element, 1992), pp. 28-66.

⁸ Bailey in the United States attempted the same exercise, but without the clarity of these writers.

⁹ Dion Fortune, *Aspects of Occultism* (Wellingborough: Aquarian Press, 1962), p. 7.

procedures - trance; automatism (e.g. automatic writing); clairaudience; and 'open channelling'. This last is Jon Klimo's expression for channelling which includes intuition, inspiration, and imagination (depending on how the particular channelling is interpreted by the channeller), and which is available to all. For many, as for Fortune, the decisive initial contact for a channeller seemingly came as a result of many years of preparation or subtle conditioning through background reading or contact with other channellers. This was perhaps encouraged by a natural aptitude which could be awakened by a temporary displacement of the conscious mind and allowing whatever images or ideas to do so, thus giving rise to real and prolonged channelling later.¹⁰ Conflating Klimo's nine categories into four, Hanegraaff summarises his analysis of the *modus operandi* of channelling as follows:

1. Trance channelling and automatism, similar to shamanic spirit possession;
2. Awareness of inner voices or visions, generally remaining a spontaneous activity, and often associated with mysticism;
3. Sitting quietly with eyes closed, speaking in normal tones, with no symptoms of possession;
4. Unusual cases such as Edgar Cayce's channelling while asleep.¹¹

This classification lacks the requisite detail required for a fuller understanding of the relationship between these mechanisms and the underlying inner landscapes involving various elevated states of mind or inner environments beyond the mundane. Our historical survey of intermediate beings showed that inner states were postulated by Egyptian priests, Neo-Platonic philosophers, medieval magicians and the much more complex models of the Renaissance magi. Transpersonal psychologists nowadays suggest similar inner states, or levels of consciousness where, according to Hanegraaff, it is the mundane rather than any level of inner consciousness that is regarded as illusory. He particularly cites Ken Wilber's *Spectrum of Consciousness* (1977), which

¹⁰ Wouter J. Hanegraaff, *New Age Religion and Western Culture: Esotericism in the Mirror of Secular Thought* (Leiden: Brill 1996), pp. 27-33; Jon Klimo, *Channeling: Investigations on Receiving Information from Paranormal Sources* (Wellingborough: Aquarian Press, 1988), pp. 185-201.

¹¹ Hanegraaff, *New Age Religion*, pp. 33-34. For Klimo's nine categories in full, see Klimo, *Channeling*, pp. 185-201. For Edward Cayce, see for example K. Paul Johnson, *Edgar Cayce in Context: The Readings: Truth and Fiction* (Albany, NY: State University of New York, 1998).

not only maps the totality of the inner terrain of consciousness incorporating a hierarchy of many levels both conscious and unconscious, but also indicates the contemporary loss of awareness of there being many inner levels of consciousness.¹² An important point in Wilber is his distinction between pre-personal and trans-personal states, the former being retrogressive, a consequence of attempting the exploration of inner states before full ego maturity has been achieved, and the latter a full participation in transcendental states based upon a mature ego, or ‘self-conscious’ state. In traditional esoteric lore, these features are spoken of as the ‘involutionary arc’ down into mundane activity, leading to the ‘initiation of the nadir’ (maturity), only after which can productive work be done on the ‘evolutionary arc’ (Wilber’s ‘genuine spirituality’).¹³

¹² Hanegraaff, *New Age Religion*, pp. 246-50. Kocku von Stuckrad also speaks of the sense of loss of the holistic, the ‘disenchantment’ that became evident as the Enlightenment and the subsequent materialism inherent in the mechanisation of living ran its course, eventually to give way to the beginnings of a ‘re-enchantment’ in a fresh search for meaning. Von Stuckrad identifies Carl Jung, Mircea Eliade and Joseph Campbell as occupying a leading role in this search. Kocku von Stuckrad, *Western Esotericism: A Brief History of Secret Knowledge* (London: Equinox Publishing Ltd, 2005), pp. 133-140. Fritjof Capra underlines the initial role of the breakthrough in quantum physics at the beginning of the twentieth century in the consequent opening up the biological and social sciences towards a more holistic, dynamic view of a multilevel participatory universe, where none of its parts is inert. Fritjof Capra, ‘The Emerging New Culture’ interview of Fritjof Capra by Dr. Jeffrey Mishlove. <http://www.intuition.org/txt/Capra.htm> [accessed 03/12/07]. See also Fritjof Capra, *The Turning Point* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1982). Drawing on Berman’s interest in the relation between New Age religion and alchemy, Hanegraaff indicates that it was the “magical worldview” of the Renaissance, particularly, that has provided a precedent for a model for the attitude of “re-enchantment” in New Age religion. Hanegraaff, *New Age Religion*, p. 394, citing Morris Berman, *The Reenchantment of the World* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1981). Neither must the more distant historical conventions of science be omitted, beginning with René Descartes’s (1596-1650) dualism, which prepared the way for a restrictive eighteenth-century Enlightenment. The reaction – a re-enchantment’ of the world – appeared with nineteenth-century Romanticism, creating a philosophical milieu within which esoteric ideas, such as the consideration of nature as a sacred organism, were to flourish. The beginning of the twentieth century saw the publication of Albert Einstein’s general theory of relativity in 1915, and ended with the cosmologist Stephen Hawkins’s *A Brief History of Time: From the Big Bang to Black Holes* (London: Bantam Press, 1988), and his even more succinct *Black Holes and Baby Universes and Other Essays* (London: Bantam Books, 1993), Chapters 6-13. each making their contribution in quantum physics towards an open-ended science bordering on metaphysics and many of the postulates and experiences already voiced by occultists.

¹³ This sequence derives from the cosmology of Theosophy, Wilber’s original inspiration. For example, the root-races of Theosophy described the condition of humankind as having now involved to the point of its deepest materialisation, and thus to be on an ascending path to spiritualisation (Wilber’s ‘trans-personal’ state), being more than half way through the Theosophical seven Rounds, i.e on the fourth globe and of the fifth root-race (out of seven). Goodrick-Clarke, *Theosophy and the Globalisation of Esotericism* (forthcoming), p. 75. Cf. ‘[. . .] instead of making the effort to master matter which is demanded of them in order that they may round the nadir and set out on the return journey to the kingdom

Whereas Wilber's model has fairly well-defined areas, that of Stanislav Grof, like Michael Harner's shamanic world-view, is just two-fold, comprising hylotropic (ordinary) consciousness and holotropic (non-ordinary states of consciousness) which covers all inner states from biological to mystical, containing all the worlds of the intermediaries, gods, angels, and demons alike, that can be accessed through inner journeys helpful for healing and growth.¹⁴

The prime condition for communication with intermediaries and successful inner journeying, whether structured, loosely structured or unstructured, thus requires certain altered states of consciousness. Following Starhawk, Hanegraaff lists four conditions that seem to prompt these states: relaxation; sensory restriction (e.g. closing of the eyes); rhythm (poetry, drumming); and boredom, which is often conducive to trance. Hanegraaff also notes the importance of breathing techniques. These inner journeys give rise to situations which generally involve travelling down through a tunnel or the experience of meeting with inner figures such as a Master Teacher. It is considered that the inner realms exist in their own reality, but are also amenable to manipulation by the experiencer as in a 'waking dream'. Hanegraaff emphasises the importance of the imagination both as a 'tool' to bring about effects in the outer world, and as a communication medium between worlds, resulting in symbolic messages likely to be of use in explaining one's psychological condition, or to enhance one's exchanges with wider metaphysical states such as access to the Theosophical 'Akashic records' or universal memory.¹⁵

of the spirit, [individuals] may shirk the effort involved and double back on their tracks, reverting to an earlier non-intellectual type of mentation [. . .] Fortune in Fortune and Knight, *The Circuit of Force* (Loughborough: Thoth, 1998 [1940]), p. 116. This is Wilber's 'pre-personal' state. For an instructive diagram, see C. W. Leadbeater, *Man Visible and Invisible*, (London: Theosophical Publishing Co., 1902), Plate III between pp. 38-39. For a more precise definition of root-races and Rounds, see *A Dictionary of Some Theosophical Terms* compiled by Powis Houlst (London: Theosophical Publishing Society, 1910), p. 115. Criticism of Wilber's linear model has been made by both Stanislav Grof and Michael Washburn, who understand spiritual development as spiral, and incorporating phases of both descent and ascent – both being necessary stages on the way to transformation. Leon Schlam, 'Ken Wilber's Spectrum Model: Identifying Alternative Soteriological Perspectives,' *Religion* 31 (2001), 19-31, (p. 20). See also Wilber's diagram of the involutory and evolutionary arcs as the spirit migrates down and up the planes. Ken Wilber, *Up from Eden* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1983), p. 303.

¹⁴ Hanegraaff, *New Age Religion*, pp. 250-52.

¹⁵ Hanegraaff, *New Age Religion*, pp. 252-55.

According to Fortune's understanding, the principal mechanisms that may be used to contact higher beings through training are: 1. trance mediumship; 2. meditation and the enhancement of intuition; 3. telepathy; 4. visualisation; 5. ritual; 6. suggestion and intention. Although these broad categories are discussed here, it should be noted that there is considerable overlap between them, to the extent that any vigorous attempt to artificially separate them could well distort our picture of the communication processes. They are best considered as 'strands', which can provide useful starting-points for discussions, and this should be borne in mind below.

1. Trance Mediumship

Like the broad classifications of levels of consciousness put forward by Grof and Harner, Brian Inglis's definition of trance is also wide-ranging, including, for example, almost all states of consciousness from the ecstatic inspirations of the great religious leaders and mystics down through hallucination, sleep, catalepsy, dual personality, mediumship, 'shopper's trance' and 'highway hypnosis.'¹⁶ Because it is so inclusive, his survey is necessarily less detailed than other more specialised accounts. One advantage of this approach is to emphasise the elision of apparently dissimilar phenomena into a historical sequence tracing a path from animal magnetism, through mesmerism, hypnotism, suggestion, early table-turning, to spirit control in mediumship.

F. W. H. Myers (1843-1901), the distinguished English psychical researcher, was the first to establish the idea of a 'subliminal self', manifesting through: 1. vague feelings and intuitions; 2. visions, dreams hallucinations, etc.; and 3. active automatisms such as somnambulism. According to Myers, trance was valuable in allowing the subliminal self to work creatively or inspirationally through the person (whether medium or not), linking this with the inspiration displayed by writers, artists and musicians such as Alfred de Musset, Alphonse de Lamartine, Charles Dickens and Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart, who described their compositions as the result of writing down whatever was precipitated into their conscious minds. Myers listed four possible

¹⁶ Brian Inglis, *Trance: A Natural History of Altered States of Mind* (London: Grafton Books, 1989), pp. 7-10. Michael Harner, *The Way of the Shaman* (London: Bantam, 1982), p. xvi.

sources for such creativity: 1. the recipient's own mind; 2. thoughts picked up from others telepathically; 3. an unknown unembodied intelligence; 4. ideas from the deceased.¹⁷ Marghanita Laski and William James much favoured the first alternative – the idea that all stemmed from within. William James considered normal rationalist consciousness as just one relatively superficial type of consciousness among others.¹⁸ Moreover many occultists at the beginning of the twentieth century considered the mind to be multi-faceted, able to demonstrate many selves, whilst at the same time existing as a unity. Neither the Theosophical Society nor the Order of the Golden Dawn considered any unusual force as supernatural, even if from an unknown or inner source.¹⁹

As Jon Klimo reminds us, many channellers were often triggered into mediumship as a result of an unexpected and unplanned personal religious experience, or else they began by experimenting with one or two methods before settling on one they felt suited them best. Jane Roberts began with automatic writing, assisted by the Ouija board, and by its means channelled 'Frank Withers' – who was later revealed as but a fragment of the famous 'Seth' – before moving on to clairaudience, then light trance, and finally transmitting the great bulk of her work in full trance.²⁰ A recent

¹⁷ Inglis, *Trance*, pp. 122-25. In suggesting that the everyday personality was just one of many possible selves, and positing the possible co-existence of past and future, Myers foreshadowed the teachings of Jane Roberts's Seth. Alex Owen, *The Place of Enchantment: British Occultism and the Culture of the Modern* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2004), pp. 173-77. The phenomenon of secondary personalities was described by Morton Price in 1905 with regard to Christine Beauchamp's apparent three personalities. Ivor Grattan-Guinness, ed., *Psychical Research: A Guide to its History, Principles and Practices in Celebration of 100 Years of the Society for Psychical Research* (Wellingborough: Aquarian Press, 1982), p. 72.

¹⁸ Inglis, *Trance*, pp. 263-65, 277.

¹⁹ Owen, *The Place of Enchantment*, pp. 126, 133.

²⁰ Jane Roberts understood her intermediaries Seth, Seth Two, Cyprus, and Seven as 'all Aspects [. . .] of one multidimensional entity', a 'trans-world' entity, a personagram' Jane Roberts, *Adventures in Consciousness: An Introduction to Aspect Psychology* (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, 1975), pp. 114, 264, and Jon Klimo mentions Roberts's opinion that Seth could well be part of her own 'supraconscious'. Klimo, *Channeling*, p. 30-31. See Jane Roberts, *The Seth Material* (Toronto: Bantam Books, 1970), p. 293. Klimo later cites Margo Chandley's proposed seven stages of development that a channeller goes through: 1. Conceptualisation (encountering some experience of non-physical reality); 2. Preparation (definite contact with non-physical reality resulting in psychological and physiological reactions); 3. Gestation; 4. Recognition (beginning to accept/define the non-physical energy system); 5. Activation (making the conscious choice to be a medium); 6. Integration (a final balancing of the physical and non-physical energy systems and the establishment of trust; and 7. Maturation (actualisation as a

spectacular case is that of J. Z. Knight, who enters a cataleptic trance and allows ‘Ramtha’, an intermediary hailing from Lemurian times, to take over her personality, and display body language quite untypical of the medium herself.²¹

Helena Blavatsky’s mediumship has already been discussed, but the considerable research already devoted to trance mediumship, particularly in the early nineteenth-century, serves to highlight several significant immediate antecedents to both Blavatsky and Fortune’s own practices. Early outstanding figures whose work was favourably cited by the fair but broadly sceptical investigator Frank Podmore were Daniel Dunglas Home (1833-86); Stainton Moses (1839-92); and Mrs Leonora E. Piper (1857-1950) who much impressed the investigator Richard Hodgson in the 1880s. But although Podmore was similarly impressed with the mediatory powers of each, he found no evidence to justify the intervention of spirits to explain them.²² The Theosophical Society, a significant influence on Fortune’s thinking, emerged from a spiritualist context, which itself drew on the twin movements of Swedenborgianism and Mesmerism, both popular in the 1840s. Indeed, many of those attracted to Theosophy

medium). Margo Chandley ‘A Psychological Investigation of the Development of the Mediumistic Process in Personality Function’ (unpublished doctoral dissertation, International College, 1986) in Klimo, *Channeling*, pp. 132-33. This sequence, though far from smooth, is evident in Fortune’s psychic development.

²¹ Klimo, *Channeling*, p. 43. See also J. Gordon Melton, *Finding Enlightenment: Ramtha’s School of Ancient Wisdom* (Hillsboro, OR: Beyond Words Publ., 1998), passim. Melton makes the point that channelling is very common in most religions, and that our inability to determine between truth and falsity in their respective claims should not prevent further researches into it. Melton claims, surely wrongly, that Ramtha’s group is unique in providing specialist training. John Mardas, ‘J. Gordon Melton’s Interview on New Religions’ *Speak Magazine*, No 2 (Summer 2000). http://www.cesnur.org/testi/melton_speak.htm [accessed 19/12/2007].

²² Frank Podmore, *Modern Spiritualism: A History and a Criticism*, 2 vols (London: Methuen & Co., 1902), II, 223-43; 270-87; 329-45. Janet Oppenheim gives a favourable picture of Home as a trance medium and as capable of inducing types of poltergeist phenomena, apparently in well-lit surroundings, before circles of selected members. Janet Oppenheim, *The Other World: Spiritualism and Psychical Research in England, 1850-1914* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985), pp. 11-16. The most comprehensive and recent work on Home is by Peter Lamont, *The First Psychic: The Peculiar Mystery of a Notorious Victorian Wizard* (London: Abacus, 2005), which while drawing on the favourable eye-witness testimony of sceptics nevertheless cannot declare other than that Hume was a remarkable man, either for his powers of deception or for his powers of mediumship. Interestingly, Lamont sees no incompatibility between the two since many gifted mediums of the day themselves admitted deception (e.g. Rosemary Showers). Lamont, *First Psychic*, pp. xiv, 236, 267

during the 1870s and 1880s had previously been practising spiritualists.²³ Like many mediums, Madame Blavatsky's gifts appeared to have developed in early childhood – in her case, at the time of her mother's death – but it was not until age 43 that she began attending séances, attracting messages, predominantly from John King and followed by Serapis Bey, who subsequently sent many letters advising on the work of Col. Olcott. Although spiritualism was Blavatsky's starting-point, it was the overall triviality of the messages received that sent her to study occultism, initially the works of Éliphas Lévi and Hargrave Jennings. In retrospect, Blavatsky maintained that she had been asked to take part in American spiritualism by the Masters in order to 'prove the phenomena and their reality, and show the fallacy of the spiritualistic theory of spirits', whilst emphasising the existence of spiritually advanced intermediaries and the unrealised extent of the 'hidden powers in man [. . .] capable of making a *god* of him on earth', further stating, with great emphasis, that she was perfectly capable of producing spiritualistic phenomena at will anyway.²⁴ Jenny Hazelgrove recounts a similar change of perspective with regard to the recent occultist Olivia Robertson, who although trained at the London College of Psychic Studies, shifted from purely negative mediumship and spirit guides, to working with the more purposive imagination.²⁵ Blavatsky felt that spiritualism dwelt too extensively on the limited concept of survival of the earthly personality, whereas her own 'true and unalloyed' spiritualism taught of the immortal 'individuality' or 'higher self' of a person – in other words, the possibility of communion with those intermediaries whose company and advice she considered to be of significant philosophical worth.²⁶

²³ Owen, *The Place of Enchantment*, p. 39.

²⁴ Quoted in William Kingsland, *The Real H. P. Blavatsky: A Study in Theosophy and a Memoir of a Great Soul* (London: Theosophical Publishing House, 1985 [1928]), pp. 120-21. A case to illustrate this is that of Professor George Owen of the University of Toronto, who purposely invented an inner communicator, complete with his own characteristics and history, and discovered that it behaved exactly as a 'genuine' mediumistic spirit would. Inglis, *Trance*, p. 236.

²⁵ Jenny Hazelgrove, *Spiritualism and British Society between the Wars* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2000), pp. 274, 278.

²⁶ H. P. Blavatsky, *Key to Theosophy*, p. 32 cited in Kingsland, *The Real H. P. Blavatsky*, p. 131. This is a view wholly supported by Stainton Moses, whom Blavatsky saw as 'one of the very few *philosophical* Spiritualists.' Blavatsky, *Key to Theosophy*, p. 31 in Kingsland, *The Real H. P. Blavatsky*, p. 130.

Dion Fortune was trained in mediumship, most probably by her first teacher, Dr Theodore Moriarty, and papers important to her Society known as ‘Words of the Masters’ were later channelled by its means.²⁷ Because it was a technique more often associated with spiritualism, it was largely avoided by occultists to the extent that Fortune, like Madame Blavatsky, did not publicly reveal her twenty-year practice of mediumship until her first *Monthly Letter* dated October 1942.²⁸ She had thus brought through much of her early teaching in full trance, usually with just one or two others in attendance, one of them acting as scribe. Various entities from the Inner Planes were channelled in this way, going under such names as ‘Agent of the Lords of Karma’,²⁹ ‘An Initiate of the Order’, ‘Magus Innominatus’, and so on, but the bulk of the material came through one or other of her main contacts, including one called ‘The English Master’, whose identity remains in doubt.

Over this twenty-year period, Fortune attempted several, not always consistent, descriptions of the trance process. Writing of trance in February 1921, she distinguishes two kinds: the ‘trance of perception’, where the medium closes down on the physical plane, becoming ‘objective upon a higher plane’; and the ‘trance of communication’, itself having two varieties; the first where the medium passes subjectively to a level, then stands aside for the inner entity to assume control; and the preferable method where, after passing subjectively to the chosen level, the medium stands aside to manifest his/her own Higher Self.³⁰ Repetition over time results in ever closer identity

²⁷ Gareth Knight, *Dion Fortune and the Inner Light* (Loughborough: Thoet, 2000), p. 92.

²⁸ Although she had already confessed her mediumship to the readership of the *Inner Light* XI: 7 (April 1938). Gareth Knight, *Dion Fortune and the Inner Light*, p. 92.

²⁹ Blavatsky speaks of the The Lords of Karma as the ‘Lipika’ (Recorders of Karma) who, Besant says, ‘superintend the working out of causes continually set going by our thoughts, desires, and actions.’ They guide incarnating souls into the correct circumstances (race, country, parents, body) according to their needs and intentions, so that negative effects accruing from the past can be worked out. There is individual karma and ‘collective’ karma. Annie Besant, *The Ancient Wisdom* (Adyar: The Theosophical Publishing House, 1966 [1897]), pp. 225, 272, 293-94.

³⁰ Otherwise known as the Holy Guardian Angel, pure consciousness, and having a deep insight built on a ‘hyper-developed intuition’. Fortune, *Mystical Qabalah*, p. 197. Whereas the Lower Self (the everyday personality) dies with the body, the Higher Self, that which projects each of its reincarnated personalities in order to gain experience, is relatively immortal. Fortune, *Aspects of Occultism*, p. 25; *The Circuit of Force*, pp. 198, 200. As we seen above this was one of the many ideas that Fortune absorbed from Theosophy. “‘Every one of you creates for yourself a Master; give Him birth and objective being before you in the Astral Light. If it is a real Master, He will send His voice. If not a real Master, then the voice

with the Higher Self, which brings with it more and more of its accumulated knowledge and skills accrued over the ages. She warns that negative personality traits such as undue desire and repressed wishes easily distort messages received. Outward signs of entering into trance consisted of the medium withdrawing consciousness, seeming to sleep, followed by the sound of the thyroid closing as the trance condition ensues. Raised hands indicate the invocation of power; outstretched hands indicate flowing that power out into the circle; crossing hands on the breast indicate contact with the Master.³¹ In December 1924, she adds that the inner communicator visualises himself as he was in his last incarnation, and impresses that image on the medium's consciousness, often causing the medium to impersonate that inner personality, as described in the case of J. Z. Knight and Ramtha instanced above. The task of the rest of the circle was to feel the energies that the communicator was distributing.³²

Between July 1929 and July 1930, Fortune recast her explanation of the above-mentioned methods of trance, this time under the headings of 1. the Trance of Projection (soul withdraws from the body); 2. the Trance of Vision (the soul opens up to the superconscious); and 3. Mediumistic Trance (the Higher Self makes room for the inner communicator to take over).³³

The Trance of Projection was considerably expanded in her 1938 article entitled 'How Trance Communication is Made'. It was much more detailed, and obviously the fruit of considered personal experience:

1. Complete relaxation, lying prone, in an environment of quiet, and in dim light.

will be that of your Higher Self.”” Words of the Master K. H. quoted by Clara M. Codd, *The Way of the Disciple* (Adyar, Madras: Theosophical Publishing House, 1964), pp. 320-321.

³¹ Fortune in Fortune and Knight, *Spiritualism and Occultism* (Loughborough: Thoht, 1999 [1944]), pp. 98-100. Gareth Knight gives a more detailed account of this process as undertaken by Fortune with a small group on 11th January 1921. Gareth Knight, *Dion Fortune and the Inner Light*, pp. 57-60.

³² Gareth Knight, *Dion Fortune and the Inner Light*, p. 96.

³³ Fortune in Fortune and Knight, *Spiritualism and Occultism*, pp. 65-69 (July 1929); p. 73 (September 1929); pp. 86, 89-92 (July 1930). She discusses the detail of the trance process at length in her sections V to IX of *Spiritualism in the Light of Occult Science*. See Fortune in Fortune and Knight, *Spiritualism and Occultism*, pp. 63-85. These are from July-November 1929. Knight also reproduces Fortune's relevant articles from issues of *The Inner Light* of III: 10 (July 1930) and XI: 7 (April 1938). Fortune in Fortune and Knight, *Spiritualism and Occultism*, pp. 86-98.

2. The building of the image of whatever one wished to contact to the extent of losing consciousness of one's physical surroundings.³⁴

3. Preparedness for some disconcerting sensations, perhaps in the eyes, or a feeling of descending in a lift.³⁵

4. After a brief loss of consciousness, a feeling of floating above the body or behind the head, seeing the individual it is intended to communicate with standing at one's feet.

5. Where communications tend to cause one to move back into the body, this can be prevented by the combined effort of one's own, and the communicator's, higher consciousnesses.

6. The inner communicator superimposes the image of himself upon the medium's physical body, and uses the physical vocal chords to communicate.

7. At the conclusion, there is likely to be some discomfort, or drowsiness, which then gives way to a feeling of vitality. There will be little memory of what has passed, thus necessitating a second person to act as recorder throughout.³⁶

This clear description is largely her retrospective review composed to illustrate 'the basis on which my work has been built up', but it should not be assumed that she used this sequence at all times; the transmission of her major texts appears to have been the result of procedures specific to each occasion. During a communication of 1944 – a question-and-answer session concerning the technique of trance – the communicator drew attention to the need when discussing methods, to take the stage of development of the medium into consideration. It was suggested that in 1923 when *The Cosmic Doctrine* was communicated, Fortune was much less developed as a medium, and required a more detailed and lengthy process, particularly as the inner communicator on that occasion was itself transmitting 'from a very much greater mind than mine'.³⁷ One might assume, therefore, that the procedure for mediating *The Cosmic Doctrine* would

³⁴ According to David-Neel, the secret of developing psychic awareness lies in the development of extreme powers of concentration. Mme Alexandra David-Neel, *Initiation and Initiates in Tibet* (London: Rider, 1973), p. 206.

³⁵ And recalling the metaphor of descent in a Chariot by early Kabbalistic mystics.

³⁶ Fortune in Fortune and Knight, *Spiritualism and Occultism*, pp. 92-98.

have been quite complicated. This was not so; the process was specifically stated not to have involved trance, and was much more akin to the less involved inspiration and telepathy, under which latter heading it is discussed below.

The comment concerning the ‘much greater mind’ highlights a further factor of the increasing difficulties encountered as one attempts to communicate with higher and higher sources. David Carstairs, who acts somewhat like a spiritualist’s ‘control’, had spoken in 1924 concerning the various levels from which particular Masters might be communicating. On a seven-plane basis, most mediums are ‘3rd plane’ (‘upper astral’); Fortune had by then already developed into being able to operate from the ‘4th plane’ (‘lower mental’), and, with some assistance (from the other side, could reach up from there to the 5th (‘abstract mental’). On this plane, Lord E could operate, but it was as difficult for him to reach one plane down as for Fortune to reach one plane up – Lord E’s natural plane was the 6th (‘concrete spiritual’). Carstairs was ‘4th plane’, from which he worked as a kind of mediator or guide, interceding between individuals and facilitating communication between the various levels.³⁸

The 1944 article expands the account of three years previous. Again the three-fold model of 1930 is described, but with less emphasis on physical sensations. As in 1930, she stresses that the inner communicator works as a hypnotist, and transmits telepathically, adding that the medium must be of potential Master status herself, of calm disposition and with a well-stocked mind. It is a following only for the few because the stringent training delays the medium’s own progress; and the communicator stressed the difficulty of training a medium who, unlike the ancient

³⁷ Fortune in Fortune and Knight, *Spiritualism and Occultism*, p. 113.

³⁸ Fortune in Fortune and Knight, *Spiritualism and Occultism*, p. 150. It should be noted that although Fortune generally favoured the use of descriptive names for the Inner Planes, she, or her communicators, also referred to them by number. For examples, see Dion Fortune and Gareth Knight, *Practical Occultism* (Loughborough: Thoth Publications, 2002), p. 85; Fortune, *The Cosmic Doctrine* (York Beach, ME: Samuel Weiser, 2000 [1949]), p. 15, and Knight, *Dion Fortune and the Inner Light*, p. 104. She sets them out very concisely in her *Esoteric Philosophy of Love and Marriage*, pp. 17-19. See also Chapter 5, pp. 288-89, where the planes are discussed. For her simple diagram of the planes, see her *Aspects of Occultism*, p. 71. She also refers to beings who might inhabit those planes: 1. Man; 2. Nature forces; 3. Saints; 4. Masters; 5. Angels; 6. Archangels; 7. Christs. The eighth plane is that of the Divine Spark (microcosmic), or the Logos (macrocosmic). Dion Fortune, *Cosmic Doctrine* p. 133. Her fellow occultist Charles Loveday was responsible for the diagram of the planes in Fortune, *Cosmic Doctrine* (2000 ed.), p. 221. The planes are more fully treated in Chapter 4, pp. 179, 211-13.

Pythoneses who could specialise in that one task to the exclusion of all else, also had her magical work to undertake and develop in addition to daily chores. It was at a difficult time, too, when communication between the Masters and the Mystery Tradition had broken down because of shortcomings in the Golden Dawn and similar Mystery Schools, where competent mediums had not persevered.³⁹

Gareth Knight explains that not only are the techniques more flexible as the medium gains in experience, but that this kind of communication is no longer required anyway; nowadays the mediator (not 'medium') is awake, working through 'conscious visualisation' (or rather, I would suggest, through the inspirational faculty), and any messages now tend to come into consciousness piecemeal, only occasionally as a seeming torrent of words difficult to write. He also comments on Fortune's awareness of impending contact, a subtle change of atmosphere, and a feeling as if a race were about to begin. To obviate the criticism that this is a form of schizophrenia, the magician seeks to ensure that such methods of working with the creative powers are undertaken as controlled acts of intention.⁴⁰ My own similar experience of contact occurs most often during ritual when a particularly evocative passage is about to ensue, and one senses a kind of 'onset of power' which, though superficially similar to reaction to enacted speech, carries subtle overtones immediately obvious to those used to it. Some of these contacts can be so powerful as to be almost overwhelming.

The experience of the artist Rosaleen Norton (1917-79), whose magical approach owed much to her appreciation of Fortune, was that trance led to dimensions almost totally unknown, which were much more real than the everyday world, and where intermediaries existed as profound beings 'in their own right' and where they,

³⁹ Fortune in Fortune and Knight, *Spiritualism and Occultism*, pp. 105-15.

⁴⁰ Gareth Knight, *Magical Images and the Magical Imagination* (Albuquerque, NM: Sun Chalice Books, 1998), pp. 81, 84. e.g. within the structured atmosphere of a formal ceremony or invocatory prayer to the Creator as in the 'spirit actions' of John Dee and Edward Kelley. Cf. the contrasting experiences of Jane Roberts and J. Z. Knight on the one hand, whose spontaneous messages developed into full trance mediumship, and Helen Schucman, author of the *Course in Miracles* (New York: Viking, 1975) on the other, whose channellings remained spontaneous, and were undertaken with great reluctance (Hanegraaff, *New Age Religion*, p. 30).

not she, were in control. This poses the question of what degree of control the magician can actually wield when overtaken by trance.⁴¹

Fortune also lays great emphasis on reliable psychic ability as an essential adjunct to occult activity in order to provide vital feedback to the pupil occultist, to monitor progress, and as a safeguard. Alongside Dion Fortune, Margaret Lumley Brown (affectionately known as ‘MLB’, d. c. 2001), her successor in psychic matters, also had this capability.⁴² After Fortune’s death in 1946, and until the mid-1960s when the Society reduced their reliance on mediumistic communications, MLB was its leading ‘pythoness’, or inner plane communicator. That she was predisposed to a rich psychic awareness, particularly of place memory and hauntings, was well illustrated in her own publication of 1919.⁴³ A series of her articles in *New Dimensions* during 1963 and 1965 contains accounts of her experiences of the Other World, or Elemental Kingdom, and how to contact it, including clairvoyant perception, ‘psychological devices’ such as auto-suggestion, and ceremonial magic. Knight also refers to the ‘vast range and depth’ of her mediumship as official Pythoness for the Society of the Inner Light, and reproduces many of her addresses in his account of her life and work.⁴⁴ Further articles cover such topics as True Thomas as an Otherworld oracle, reflections on healing, and the fabled Theosophical continent of Atlantis.

At the present time the role of Pythoness has lapsed in the Society – a dependence on a strong group egregore appears to be almost sufficient protection from hallucination, misguided action, or misleading abnormal phenomena.⁴⁵ It turns out that

⁴¹ Nevill Drury, *Pan’s Daughter: The Magical World of Rosaleen Norton* (Oxford: Mandrake, 1993 [1988]), pp. 36-37.

⁴² See Gareth Knight, *Pythoness: the Life and Work of Margaret Lumley Brown* (Oceanside, CA: 2000).

⁴³ Margaret Lumley Brown wrote under a pseudonym: Irene Hay, *Both Sides of the Door: a Psychological Sketch* (London: A. H. Stockwell, 1919).

⁴⁴ E.g. addresses on the Elements; the Archangels; aspects of Egyptian and Greek pantheons; and themes related to Judaism and the Grail. See Gareth Knight, *Pythoness*, passim.

⁴⁵ ‘Almost’ because ritual activity often throws up confusion before, during, or after the ceremony, and has to be dealt with (a common experience among creative artists preparing to do work). This may be seen as some kind of test, and once realised and dealt with, is of no further moment. An example is that there might suddenly be an unaccustomed number of visitors at the door delaying the start of ritual work. At other times, it is experienced as distractive elements stemming from one’s own psyche, such as feeling one has other things to do; or from ‘the opposition’, whose aims are to disrupt the work, and create conflict between members. This is also a common experience among some creative artists. The

contrary to what may be thought few occultists are reliably psychic; indeed, any fraternity should nowadays consider itself very lucky to have such a figure within its ranks.⁴⁶ More important for most practitioners is sensitivity to the higher reaches of what some term the ‘Universal Consciousness’,⁴⁷ others, ‘the Muse’; it is engagement with the source of creativity.

Fortune knew Myers’s conjectures regarding possible sources of inspiration, which, as a person well read in the latest psychological theories, she was quite ready to acknowledge. At the same time as an occultist she continued to use psychic and inspirational practices because they and the philosophies they revealed made very good sense to her phenomenologically.⁴⁸ In attempting to clarify the nature of communication with inner entities by separating out the various components into different categories as indicated by the following subheadings, it has become evident that there is considerable overlap of components, and that there is a case to be made for Brian Inglis’s all-inclusive definition of trance as indicated above. The following headings should therefore be understood as particularly fluid, since they are not mutually exclusive. In 1931, for example, she had already referred to the congruence of trance and telepathy, and to the processes of auto-suggestion, auto-hypnosis, and

‘opposition’ (*sitra ahra*) is discussed in Gershom Scholem, *On the Kabbalah and its Symbolism* (New York: Schocken Books, 1965 [1960]), pp. 129 ff.

⁴⁶ See editor’s comments in Charles Fielding and Carr Collins, *The Story of Dion Fortune* (Loughborough: Thoth, 1998 [1985]), pp. 1998: 169-74. It is interesting that even the Elizabethan magician John Dee was wholly dependent on a gifted skryer (Edward Kelley) for his angelic revelations.

⁴⁷ I am indebted to Stuart Wilde for this expression, which alerts us to the more dynamic nature of the unconscious than do the traditional terms. See his *Infinite Self: 33 Steps to Reclaiming your Inner Power* (Paignton: Nightingale Conant, 1995). However, it also occurs in Blavatsky (H. P. Blavatsky, *The Secret Doctrine: The Synthesis of Science, Religion and Philosophy* (London: Theosophical Publishing House, 1950 [1888]), esp. in I, 122, where she attributes it to the German idealist philosopher J. G. Fichte (1762-1814). Blavatsky also includes it as part of a quotation from a Master, and later defines it as one of the Cosmic Principles of the triple-aspected Deity, and also called ‘Universal Latent Ideation’. Blavatsky, *Secret Doctrine*, I, 220; IV, 168.

⁴⁸ ‘Myers’ *Human Personality* is of course a classic with which every student of psychic phenomena ought to be familiar.’ Dion Fortune, *Psychic Self-Defence* (Wellingborough: Aquarian Press, 1930) p. 209.

psycho-analysis as cognate with deliberately induced trance.⁴⁹ The headings merely suggest alternative modes of explanation rather than setting out discrete categories.

2. Meditation and the Enhancement of Intuition

In practice, occultists seldom differentiate between various modes of contact. What is one to make of the difference between inspiration and intuition, for example? Fortune defines meditation as ‘the practice of concentrated and directed thinking designed to build up an attitude of mind’, its cultivation being essential to the development of higher consciousness. She asserts it is important that the student engages in a balanced approach, embracing each of the following four aspects: i) personal development to gain a ‘sense of proportion’; ii) harmonising the soul with God through auto-suggestion;⁵⁰ iii) ‘occult meditation’; and iv) direct mystical striving for union with the Godhead. These disciplines are best undertaken before breakfast or immediately before sleep, being careful to avoid any other practices such as telepathy or astral travel. Noon is a good time to call the Masters to mind and salute them as brothers.⁵¹ This ‘mid-day salutation’ remains a daily requirement for members of the Society of the Inner Light.

As to the desirability of seeking contact with the Masters in the first place, Fortune warns that it is only through the ‘Higher Self’ that contact can be made anyway, and suggests that any particular Master may well be aware of the pupil even before the pupil is sensitive or psychic enough to be aware of that Master’s presence. Optimum contact therefore proceeds from both pupil and Master as a joint effort once an initial desire has arisen in the pupil. Again, this time in 1928, Fortune outlines several stages through which the pupil will pass:

⁴⁹ Fortune in Fortune and Knight, *Spiritualism and Occultism*, pp. 76, 83-4; Fortune, *Cosmic Doctrine*, p. 14.

⁵⁰ pp. 374-76, (below).

⁵¹ Fortune, *Aspects*, pp. 40-46.

1. The formulation of the idea of initiation into the service of a Master, supported by unwavering desire to that end. This is the main feature that attracts the attention of a Master in the first place.
2. A period of conflict, wherein the pupil is tested to determine the extent s/he has outgrown earthly desires. This period may take 'three incarnations of steady effort'. And here, Fortune advises recourse to one who can read the pupil's past incarnations in order to determine his/her stage of attainment.
3. The building up of the 'unswerving determination', and the perfecting of the character throughout the 24 hours of daily life. Whatever field of occult endeavour the pupil is finally called to, the purpose is for the good of humanity, and so the apprentice occultist's supreme and ultimate goal is a spiritual one, as is the goal of the mystic, and the fostering of a selfless love. It is significant that Fortune named her society after the 'Inner Light'. All subsequent occult or magical gifts or achievements are to serve this end alone.
4. Once the pupil has exhausted all the available possibilities through reading, meditation, and other disciplines, s/he will be allotted a Guide,⁵² who liaises between Master and pupil by means of telepathy, and gives support during inner journeys.
5. Should the pupil not be sensitive enough to be trained in this way, the Guide will liaise telepathically with an earthly teacher of noble character and in the service of the same Master for that pupil. Such a teacher will be psychically gifted with the ability to discern the pupil's karma and read his/her aura.⁵³ Fortune emphasises that effective training lies not so much in any doctrines inculcated (which are similar from school to school), but in the quality of such higher energies as can be transmitted. Contact with a teacher of evil intent will taint the pupil irreparably unless the liaison is broken. This does not apply in the case of the Master, to whom the pupil must turn in all circumstances.⁵⁴ In cases where there is some doubt as to the integrity of the earthly teacher, the pupil is recommended to invoke his/her Master on the inner planes for

⁵² Examples of how to contact such guides are given in Knight, *Magical Images*, pp. 84-86), and throughout Edwin Steinbrecher, *The Inner Guide Meditation* (Wellingborough: Aquarian Press, 1988).

⁵³ For additional comment on the aura, see Chapter 3, pp. 165.

help, recognising that the answer may only percolate through into consciousness at a later date. A further safeguard would be to invoke the Master whilst close to the Reserved Sacrament inside a church.⁵⁵

The tone of much of this is reminiscent of the Theosophical stance, or that of Bailey – selling all for the pearl of great price – almost total renunciation for the sake of contact. Few pupils nowadays would rely on a psychic to read his/her karmic record; it is not considered necessary if indeed it were at all feasible – one just has to do what one feels best, which, of course, can be a good test of one's integrity and good judgement.

Although the earthly teacher is supposedly selected by the inner guide, one may wonder how it is possible for contact to be made with a teacher who might be unsuitable. One presumes that this only serves to emphasise the necessity for the pupil never to abandon his/her own discriminative powers, and to 'test the spirits' – dead or alive.

One example of a procedure which eschews the use of trance is the more flexible approach used by Knight and a companion. They sat facing each other and instead of visualising a particular contact, described to each other whatsoever happened to appear to the inner eye and ear. During some of those particular sessions they contacted H. G. Wells whose message at that time was to encourage them to build esoteric structures for the future rather than reconstruct those from the past. It is unsurprising that Wells recommended that this was best achieved through writing – more long-lasting than ritual which, however, carried more immediate impact. Knight's companion remarked that during the exchanges, she felt that the communicator was learning from them as much as they were learning from him.⁵⁶ Neither were the sessions purely given over to the imparting of information; in one, Wells instigated a visualisation within the visualisation, which resulted in Knight experiencing

⁵⁴ Dion Fortune, *The Esoteric Orders and their Work* (York Beach, ME; Samuel Weiser, 2000 [1928]), pp. 109-28.

⁵⁵ Dion Fortune, *Sane Occultism* (London: Aquarian, 1967 [1930]), p. 99. Cf the meticulously elaborate spiritual preparations that John Dee and Edward Kelley made before any operation of angelic magic. Peter J. French, *John Dee: The World of an Elizabethan Magus* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1972), pp. 115-20.

⁵⁶ Cf. the same feeling that Stewart has when contacting the buried king at Les Monts, Grantez, (Chapter 4, p. 252).

‘tremendous power [. . .] my crown chakra was very evident. [My companion] could only see a very bright white light in all of this, and we both had some difficulty getting down into normal consciousness again’, and later, a vision of a huge sword-carrying angel, resulting in a ‘tremendous spiritual contact’, with a feeling of vitality, purifying, protecting, and of dedication. After that, the Wells contact never returned, much as some of Fortune’s contacts withdrew from her, giving way to others. While Knight acknowledges, as would Fortune, that all this could well be a figment of the imagination, he obviously feels the validity of it given that he was sometimes unprepared and even utterly reluctant to begin some of the sessions which nevertheless propelled him into some unaccustomed spiritual heights.⁵⁷

The phenomenon of unexpected cessation of communication is also a feature of the communications of the channelled entity ‘Ramala’ who, with his cohort of about ten inner supporters, purposely withdrew, but only after a period of twenty-one years, stating that enough had been said: the time for action had come.⁵⁸ The technology of communication here was exactly the same as that used by Knight and his partner, save that the materials given were nearly always in response to questions.⁵⁹ This is in contrast to the most popular ‘Seth Material’ books⁶⁰, where the channel, Jane Roberts was nearly always ignorant of the content of the transmissions until she read the transcripts afterwards even though the opportunity was given for sitters to ask questions of the communicator.

In a recent direct exchange with one of Knight’s students, Soror A., David Carstairs (first contacted by Fortune in 1922) gives the homely analogy of the relationship between pupil and Master as similar to that of a small child unconditionally trusting its apparently wiser parent that no harm will come to it and that it will be well guided. Soror A. asked why it was that on one occasion the image of Wilfred Owen, whom she felt was attempting to communicate with her, ‘just stood there’ without

⁵⁷ Gareth Knight, *Wells of Vision* (London: S.I.L. (Trading), 2002), pp. 33-44.

⁵⁸ Anon, *The Vision of Ramala* (Saffron Walden: C. W. Daniel Co., 1991), pp. 320-26.

⁵⁹ Anon, *The Vision of Ramala*, pp. ix-xvi.

⁶⁰ These are mentioned as ‘a fundamental revelatory source for the New Age movement.’ Wouter J. Hanegraaff, *New Age Religion and Western Culture*, (Leiden: Brill, 1996), p. 126, and as such are important to discussion of any facet of the Western esoteric traditions.

speaking.⁶¹ Carstairs suggested that the fault lay in Soror A. herself, who had doubted the firm presence of Owen, making any conversational exchange very difficult if one party was not acknowledged as being present. One has to engender faith, at least for the duration of the episode. In a subsequent passage, communicated in March 1996, Carstairs explains the mechanism by which a 1920s postcard of Ypres⁶² synchronously fell into the hands of that same Soror A when she was undertaking work related to the battle of the Somme in WW I. In two long passages he explains that synchronicities are useful for ‘concentrating the mind’, but that there is no *direct* control of the physical from the Inner.⁶³ This contrasts with the precipitation of messages such as the famous ‘Mahatma Letters’ to A. P. Sinnett, which were considered at the time to have been physically deposited from afar.⁶⁴ Carstairs speaks of the merging of consciousness in mutual concentration setting up a ‘kind of energised imprint which straddles the planes’ acting as ‘a kind of cosmic magnet’ drawing in relevant forces, some of which could precipitate synchronicities or ‘induced coincidences’. The process is not by any means guaranteed to work every time – he likens it to sending a message in a bottle and hoping that it will somehow reach its destination. He also suggests the *possibility* that the card has been wending its way to the student ever since its first purchase, the destiny of both card and student being influenced in retrospect by the Master. Since time on the Inner planes is said not to be linear, the time limitations that we perceive on

⁶¹ cf. the remark by Cyril Scott, who after enumerating the stages through which contact may be fostered, much the same as Fortune’s, also mentions that the Masters sometimes set up ‘chance meetings’. Cyril Scott, *An Outline of Modern Occultism* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1949), p. 202. This almost had to be the mechanism for first contact with the pioneers, e.g. Mathers, Blavatsky, and Fortune. Scott’s stages include: right attitude; control of the higher bodies; aspiration; a receptive mind; unselfishness; balance and discrimination. Scott, *Outline*, pp. 193-200. In the Victorian séance room, the special psychic anticipation was engendered by the medium’s reputation, the darkened room, the theatrical setting, etc., none of which were present in this example.

⁶² which subsequently acted as a strong ‘talismanic link powerfully charged with a sense of [the Master’s] presence’, and used later in ritual. Gareth Knight in Fortune and Knight, *An Introduction to Ritual Magic* (Loughborough: Thoet, 1997), p. 116.

⁶³ This is in agreement with the Tibetan shaman’s view (See below, p. 375, n. 175), but against Blavatsky.

⁶⁴ Page 277, above. It appears to be a far subtler process than the placing of a turban on a table, presumably by a non-physical form, and this action, being much more direct, would have required considerable power to execute. Regarding the turban see page 299, above.

earth make the occurrence only *appear* incongruous; there is no actual manipulation of the ‘past’ as we see it.⁶⁵

In complete contrast to her earlier involvement with trance states as a medium, Blavatsky, though acknowledging her lack of learning, never doubted her ability to write complex volumes working purely from inspiration, apparently making little preparation or research before composing, for example, her *Isis Unveiled*, admitting to copying passages from manuscripts as they were revealed to her psychically, and confessing that she ‘had no more idea than the man in the moon what would come of it [. . .] I knew that I *had to write it*, that was all.’⁶⁶ Her inspiration was supervised by her Master either directly or by stimulating such knowledge within her ‘inner ego’, which thought and wrote for her.⁶⁷ In answer to a question from A. P. Sinnett to the Master K. H. regarding how the process worked, K. H. stated that he photographed in his brain every word that was to be transmitted before impressing, or ‘precipitating’ it into the mind of the amanuensis, who was alerted by him ringing an ‘astral bell’, the sentences thereafter being ‘forced along the astral currents’. Much depended on the clarity of the thoughts propelled by the Master, and much on the openness of the mind receiving them.⁶⁸ Olcott recalls that Blavatsky began *Isis Unveiled* in their New York apartment by writing down passages that she declared that she was ‘ordered’ to write, and thereafter wrote no more until some three months later, when she settled down to

⁶⁵ Knight in Fortune and Knight, *Introduction*, pp. 90-93; 116-20. See section on Time below, pp. 381-84.

⁶⁶ H. P. Blavatsky, *My Books* (Adyar: Theosophical Publishing House, 1917 [1891]), p. 9. She further explained that her lack of education and her deficiency in writing English necessitated very heavy editing by Colonel Olcott, and that even after going to press, many ‘fatal mistakes’ persisted. *Ibid.*, pp. 10-11.

⁶⁷ A. P. Sinnett, ‘Incidents in the Life of Madame Blavatsky’ (London: George Redway, 1886), p. 206 in Michael Gomes, *The Dawning of the Theosophical Movement* (London: Theosophical Publishing House, 1987), p. 125. See also Bruce F. Campbell, *Ancient Wisdom Revived: A History of the Theosophical Movement* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1980), pp. 10-35. Also Diana Basham, *The Trial of Woman: Feminism and the Occult Sciences in Victorian Literature and Society* (London: Macmillan, 1992), p. 203, n. 71. Basham records the gradual realisation of the general triviality of spiritualist messages, and also the huge propensity towards trickery, particularly in relation to the physical phenomena of spiritualism, which nevertheless, as Myers points out, was ‘often the necessary prelude to genuine paranormal effects’ Basham, *Trial of Woman*, pp. 113, 120; F. W. H. Myers, *Human Personality and its Survival of Bodily Death* 2 vols., (London: Longmans, Green, 1903), p. 279.

⁶⁸ See A. P. Sinnett, *The Occult World* (London: Trübner and Co, 1881), pp 143-44; H. P. Blavatsky, ‘The Theosophist, 1883-84, v, p. 64 in H. P. Blavatsky, *Collected Writings 1874-1878* (Wheaton, IL: Theosophical Publishing House, 2002 [1977]) pp. xiii-xiv.

producing twenty-five closely written foolscap pages each day, working well into the night, quoting from ‘hundreds’ of obscure books that she never consulted, save those in Olcott’s own collection. She explained that she was clearly able to ‘see’ the quotations that she required, and only needed to translate them into English where necessary.⁶⁹

Blavatsky otherwise does not go into great detail concerning the technology of contact with the Masters, unlike some of her successors, particularly Jinarajadasa, Bailey, Steiner, and Fortune herself.⁷⁰ The early Theosophist Curuppumullage Jinarajadasa (1875-1953) defines intuition as the substance of its shadow instinct and he gives four ways through which instinct is born: grief and suffering (the most common way); the love of beauty; an intellect used impartially seeking out the real; and devotion.⁷¹

Bailey’s first work, *Initiation, Human and Solar* (1922), was channelled from the Tibetan between the months of May and October 1920, closely followed by *Letters on Occult Meditation* (1922). Both included comprehensive details of the Hierarchy of Masters. It was published shortly before Fortune’s *Cosmic Doctrine* (channelled 1923-25) and Leadbeater’s *The Masters and the Path* (1925), so both would have had ample time to study Bailey’s work before producing their own. After emphasising the

⁶⁹ Sylvia Cranston: *H. P. B.: The Extraordinary Life and Influence of Helena Blavatsky, Founder of the Modern Theosophical Movement* (New York: G. P. Putnam, 1993), pp. 153-54. Olcott, who worked alongside her for two years, recalls that she mainly relied on the Astral Light, her teachers, and her ‘soul senses’. Henry Steel Olcott, *Old Diary Leaves, First Series 1874-78*, (Adyar, Chennai: Theosophical Publishing House, 2002 [1895]), I, 207-08, cited in Cranston, *H. P. B.*, p. 154. It was at that time (c. 1875), that Blavatsky experienced what was apparently the dual overshadowing or indwelling of both her teacher and her ‘higher and luminous Self’. She described the overshadowing as ‘entering me like a kind of volatile essence penetrating my pores and dissolving me. Then we two are able to speak to other people, and then I begin to understand and remember sciences and languages – everything he instructs me in, even when he is not with me any more.’ Blavatsky, *Letters of H. P. Blavatsky*, II, *The Path*, (January 1985), 297-98’, quoted in Cranston, *H. P. B.*, p. 150. This must be placed alongside the contention by William Emmett Coleman that the hundred or so secondary sources that H. P. B. needed for her *Isis Unveiled* and *The Secret Doctrine* were probably within her reach in Olcott’s library. *Helena Blavatsky* edited and introduced by Nicholas Goodrick-Clarke (Berkeley, CA: North Atlantic Books, 2004), pp. 50-52.

⁷⁰ But for a succinct summary of a Theosophical approach to contact with the Masters, see Clara M. Codd, *The Way of the Disciple* (Adyar: The Theosophical Publishing House, 1964), pp. 314-322.

⁷¹ Curuppumullage Jinarajadasa ‘The Power of the Intuition’ *Bibby’s Annual*, (1915), 76-77. In a further article, Clara M. Codd expands on the importance of suffering for spiritual advancement, and the meeting

importance of meditation and various technicalities connected with it (for example: limitations dictated by karma and inner needs; the use of colour, sound and form; and various risks), Bailey discussed the identity of the Masters, and how they may be approached. Unlike Fortune's more straightforward style, much of her explanation was in terms of somewhat obscure analogy.⁷² In sum, however, she would agree that the Masters are advanced souls who elect to work within the Earth sphere, though however elevated their spiritual attainment, their progress never ceases to advance.⁷³

Access to them is made in well-defined stages through a lengthy period of probation where the pupil prepares to contact the Master's group, begins to develop abstract thought, and equip him/herself to pass on whatever s/he is able. Two further stages that the aspirant passes through are 'Accepted Disciple', and 'Sonship of the Master', which involves 'similarity of vibration'.⁷⁴ More precisely, Bailey enumerated three methods of approach:

1. Sanctified service, entailing an entire sacrifice of oneself to the Master through complete control and understanding of each plane (of body, emotions, and lower mind) 'Every power of the mind will be utilised to the uttermost for the furtherance of the plans of evolution'. The curriculum is extremely austere, and few followers of the Western approach would wish to sacrifice themselves to the wishes of any Master. It seems unattractively intense, and there is little room for play;⁷⁵

of the 'One Lover', the 'Man of Sorrows' as manifested in both the microcosm and in the macrocosm. Clara M. Codd, 'The Meaning of Pain' *Bibby's Annual*, (1915), 99-100.

⁷² e.g. A Master is one 'who has [. . .] found the chord of the Ego'; 'who can wield the law in the three worlds'; 'who has passed out of the Hall of Learning into the Hall of Wisdom'; 'who knows the meaning of consciousness, of life, and of spirit'; 'who has resolved Himself from the five into the three, and from the three into the two'; 'who has entrusted to Him [. . .] certain Words of Power', etc. Alice A. Bailey, *Letters on Occult Meditation* (London: Watkins, 1948 [1922]), pp. 255-61.

⁷³ So are not perfect as stated by Leadbeater. It has to be assumed that he intended to mean perfect relative to incarnated human beings. Fortune also uses the word 'perfect' to mean 'no longer needing to incarnate in matter'. Masters continue to evolve 'on the Inner Planes'. Fortune in Fortune and Knight, *Spiritualism and Occultism*, p. 134.

⁷⁴ Bailey, *Letters*, pp. 261-69.

⁷⁵ Lurhmann is one of the first anthropologists to observe and comment on the centrality of play as a feature distinguishing the work of present-day magicians. Tanya M. Lurhmann, *Persuasions of the Witch's Craft* (London: Picador, 1989), p. 13. Seth emphasises the spirit of play (Chapter 4, p. 230), and Christopher McIntosh remarks on the 'quality of playfulness' in the Rosicrucian tradition, and takes a positive 'celebratory' view of the Gnostic tradition from which Rosicrucianism drew. Christopher

2. A balanced development of both love and wisdom.
3. The development and application of intellect to understand and control the emotions.⁷⁶

The works of Rudolf Steiner also deserve separate and close study in this respect. Given the abundance of his lectures, the material is extensive, but the translations from his native German may obscure his meaning, and this could explain the wider reception of Fortune's works in Great Britain.⁷⁷

3. Telepathy

It is quite difficult to justify telepathy as a category separate from either trance or intuition since according to Fortune and her communicators it features strongly in both – one of the many strands or components of the communication process. Nevertheless, the term 'telepathy' was coined by F. W. H. Myers in 1882, and is still regarded as the most prominent of those components.⁷⁸ As we have seen, lower grade Masters may have a teaching brief; some can prophesy, giving a guide to the long-distance planning of initiatives but not precise dates and times; all, however, 'relay the ideas of the Divine mind', a task carried out subconsciously and telepathically as a general passing-on of principles. The task of Fraternity members is to maintain this telepathic contact with the aim of enhancing the whole process of evolutionary progress for all.⁷⁹

It was some six years after her life-changing experience with two powerful inner figures and as a result of a series of interrupted sessions during 1923 and 1925, that Fortune made her most significant contribution to cosmology – the channelling of

McIntosh, *The Rosicrucians: The History, Mythology, and Rituals of an Esoteric Order* (San Francisco, CA: Weiser Books, 1998), p. 138.

⁷⁶ Bailey, *Letters*, pp. 278-83.

⁷⁷ E.g. Rudolf Steiner, *Knowledge of the Higher Worlds and its Attainment* translated by George Metaxa (New York: Anthroposophic Press, 1947 [1904])

⁷⁸ 'the communication of impressions of any kind from one mind to another independent of the recognised channels of sense', Myers, *Human Personality*, I, xxi. Also Alex Owen, *The Place of Enchantment*, pp. 171-180.

⁷⁹ Dion Fortune, *The Magical Battle of Britain* (Bradford on Avon: Golden Gates Press, 1993), pp. 41, 51, 68, 70, 112.

The Cosmic Doctrine by a series of inner communicators.⁸⁰ Her description of the process indicates that it was a surprisingly straightforward process compared with most of her subsequent sessions. She specifically states that these were not trance sessions; her mind was not a blank; neither did she abrogate her will. Communication was established through a stilling of the mind, and intense concentration on the intermediary that she intended to work with, to the extent of shutting out all physical sensations. The entity formulated a sequence of ideas, which were presented to Fortune's subconscious mind as images. She observed them form and flow, and transform into words using her own vocal chords but spoken in an alien voice. As usual, she had the assistance of a scribe. By this means, complex, abstract and unfamiliar ideas were communicated at speed and without the use of reference works.⁸¹ It was a process remarkably similar to that used by Madame Blavatsky writing *Isis Unveiled*.

According to Caitlín and John Matthews, contact with such an inner Teacher is unlikely to be effective without prior training in a mystery school just as Fortune states, but once established the Master will telepathically influence the pupil without imposing ideas or courses of action. He will also be generally reliable, subject to the good judgement of the student and a feeling of 'intuitive rightness'. The pupil needs to develop the skill of being able to distinguish between a Master's 'nudge' and one's ego-tainted wishes. The rewards of such liaison and co-operative working will be a sense of satisfaction in tasks well carried out for God coupled with a strong feeling of love. As the relationship grows stronger, the hidden Masters will at times be more insistent – '[. . .] to bring through certain teachings sets grindingly hard conditions upon sensitives who undertake to mediate these into the outer world. Yet this mediatory work is of such

⁸⁰ First published in 1949 in an edited version. Re-published 2000 verbatim. Several communicators were involved, who identified themselves as: 1. July – August 1923 'the Greek?'; 2. December 1923 – January 1924 'the Psychologist'; 3. January – May 1924 (unknown); 4. November 1924 – February 1925 'the Young Greek'. Knight, *Dion Fortune and the Inner Light*, pp. 92-98. For the account of Fortune's initial contact with the Masters see Chapter 3, pp. 135-36, above.

⁸¹ '[. . .] each chapter took from three-quarters of an hour to an hour and a quarter to dictate'. She emphasises the 'effortless speed', and absence of fatigue with which the process took place, at the same time denying any authority for the teachings transmitted. Fortune, *Cosmic Doctrine*, (2000 edn.), pp. 1, 8, 9. On page 14 of *Cosmic Doctrine*, she declares, 'Communication is performed by telepathy, that is all'. This process, which could just as well have appeared under the title 'Intuition', may be compared to the similar procedures of Swedenborg and Gareth Knight.

importance [. . .]'.⁸² It appears that once a mediator has settled to a mode of working which appears satisfactory, the work develops its own impetus leading to increasing enthusiasm, intensity and involvement.⁸³

The Matthews seem to speak from experience, as does Knight, who gives an example of how *The Abbey Papers* (2002) came to be written. While working on Fortune's War Letters in 1993, and not especially seeking contact, he felt a compulsive nagging from within to begin writing, which he did, 'if only to prove to myself it was all nonsense or of no great consequence'.⁸⁴ His technique differed from that of Fortune, who, as we have seen, generally used trance. He sat alone with a receptive mind tuned in to the communicators and wrote whatever came into his head, sometimes as dictated passages, sometimes as ideas. He was fully conscious throughout and it was not automatic writing, the only remarkable feature being the speed of delivery some two or three times his normal pace. He declines to identify the nature of his source, whether from his own inner resources or from 'wise and influential friends upon the inner planes' (that is Fortune's Lord Chancellor, the Greek, and the First World War officer);

⁸² Caitlín and John Matthews, *The Western Way*, 2 vols, (London: Arkana, 1986), II, 149-53, 155, 157, 159-60.

⁸³ One may cite the voluminous but greatly contrasting works of Emanuel Swedenborg, Alice Bailey, C. W. Leadbeater, Rudolf Steiner, the 'sleeping prophet' Edgar Cayce (1877-1945) and Jane Roberts, for example.

⁸⁴ This type of process was attested by the American the Reverend C. Hammond as far back as 1852. With reference to his account of Thomas Paine's experiences after death, recorded by automatic writing, he claimed 'I had no will to write it, or exercised any other control, than to let my hand be moved by an invisible influence, and write as it would.' Frank Podmore, *Modern Spiritualism* (London: Methuen, 1902), being Volume 6 of *The Rise of Modern Spiritualism*, edited by R. A. Gilbert, (London: Routledge/Thoemmes Press, 2000), p. 269. More typical of, say, Blavatsky's approach is that of Neale Walsch, who says, 'The inspiration either came cleanly, or I simply put the pen down and refused to write – in one case for well over 14 months'. 'All I did, really, was "show up", ask a few questions, then take dictation' – in this case supposedly directly from God. (Neale Donald Walsch, *Conversations with God*, (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1998), III, Introduction. Despite their immense popularity, there is no evidence that Walsch's transmissions do indeed emanate from God, especially as their chatty tone and content is so unlike what we have come to expect from Almighty God through the Scriptures and writings of divines. See also Hanegraaff, *New Age Religion*, pp. 32-33.

however he subtly inclines to the latter while reminding us that the scripts should stand on their own merit.⁸⁵

Telepathy, according to Fortune, was the prime method used by the Manus in their civilising work among early man. She refers to their role as one of planting ideas into the minds of selected individuals by means of ‘suggestion or thought-transference’, and having done their work of seeding the required thoughts, the Manus withdrew to broader work on a higher plane.⁸⁶

There is an early explanation from one of the intermediaries themselves stating that communication with the inner worlds is effected by means of telepathy. After describing how this is achieved between two incarnate beings, ‘the Greek’ went on to draw the analogy of telepathy as between incarnate and excarnate beings. Whereas it is an easy matter to communicate between incarnate and astral beings (or intermediaries acting on the astral, such as are met with in spiritualism), it is much more difficult in relation to work from the 4th and 5th (upper and lower mental) planes. The mind of the medium in this case must necessarily contain as many and varied ideas as possible which the inner communicator can use to combine into new concepts, provided that the medium’s pre-existing ideas are held flexibly. The skill required of the excarnate soul is to imagine itself to be incarnate and conversing with the incarnate person or medium as desired. However, such communication is subject to inaccuracy and incompleteness to the extent that once the communicator has begun to impress his ideas on the medium’s mind he is completely dependent upon the medium being sufficiently receptive so as to reproduce his ideas accurately. ‘Transmitters cannot transcend the mental content of a medium.’ It should be noted that this process is one where aspiration and visualisation are involved, with telepathy the last link in the chain. The Greek enumerates several types of intermediary, and how they communicate with humans:

⁸⁵ Gareth Knight, *The Abbey Papers* (London: S.I.L. (Trading), 2000), Foreword. This has something of a historical precedent in Edward Maitland, who would fall into a receptive trance state on sitting down in front of his typewriter. Basham, *The Trial of Woman*, p. 69

⁸⁶ Fortune, *Esoteric Orders*, p. 50. Fortune refers to the Manus as ‘Cosmic Initiators’, the god-like ‘Divine Founders’ of racial cultures who incarnated in the Atlantean epoch in order to forge links in humanity between earth consciousness and the subtler planes. Fortune, *Esoteric Orders*, pp. 22, 23. See also p. 136, n. 35, above.

1. The earthbound on the 2nd (lower astral) plane, who still retain earthly desires, and who frequently cause sensuality and drunkenness.
2. Those on the 3rd (upper astral) plane who still have ties of love with the Earth, broadly divided into a) incarnate souls functioning out of their bodies in sleep or trance as helpers, and b) Guides, or ‘Ministering Spirits’ – those who will not reincarnate again, but who work on the inner planes for the Masters.
3. The Masters themselves who descend to the 4th plane for the purpose of communicating to the few mediums who are able to reach this level.
4. ‘From the 5th plane intellectual principles are communicated to the subconscious mind of individuals.’
5. ‘From the 6th plane, moral principles are communicated to Group Minds. Hence the value of Group organisation.’
6. ‘On the 7th plane life is communicated to all that exists.’⁸⁷

In her own definitive work concerning the role of telepathy in occultism, Alice Bailey expressed the opinion that the etheric body⁸⁸ of an individual is a contiguous part of not only every other person but of the whole of creation and indeed, of God himself, and therefore it is by means of this body that telepathic contact is made with other energies, generally unconsciously through feeling. Yet it is also the aim of occultists to live in the ‘head centre’ by means of meditation. She spoke of ‘Thinkers’ (our ‘Masters’) who communicate with disciples on earth ‘stepping down’ their vibrations so that eventually the required principles, or new ideas, appear as effects on the physical plane, as, for example, a new scientific idea or a political institution such as the United Nations.⁸⁹ She stressed the universal nature of telepathy which, like the *prima materia* of the alchemists, is integral to all life and therefore of importance as the

⁸⁷ An early unpublished communication from ‘the Greek’, 10 January 1922.

⁸⁸ A form of energy acting as a ‘receiving station’ for incoming influences. Alice A. Bailey, *Telepathy and the Etheric Vehicle*, (London: Lucis Press, 1978 [1950]), p. 2. It is a more physical form of the Alchemist’s *prima materia*.

⁸⁹ and more immediately, organisations such as Greenpeace.

prime mechanism of inspiration especially useful among disciples who are urged, as ever, to work ceaselessly and utterly selflessly.⁹⁰

She went into much detail concerning stages and techniques that need not detain us here, including a discussion about the misleading nature of much that purports to emanate from higher sources but which is dubious, emanating from the personal subconscious rather than from a genuine Master. Interestingly, Bailey deemed true and integrous teachings to comprise a mere 2% of the world's entire telepathic content.⁹¹ In Bailey's case, it was averred⁹² that the coming together of her own mind with that of 'The Tibetan' was such that both functioned as 'a single joint projecting mechanism'. This is difficult to reconcile with the immediately following statement that she was able only to catch mere glimpses of great vistas of spiritual truths that she was almost totally at a loss to communicate. Because of this, she was not at all dogmatic in her work despite its complicated and precise detail, and, aware that the 'Ageless Wisdom' is progressively unfolding, stated her utter willingness to yield to later revelation.⁹³

A further sidelight on inner communication was given in answer to a question that Gareth Knight put to David Carstairs concerning whether he (Carstairs) could speak to two people on earth at the same time. The answer was yes, it was a 'mental knack' of using 'another part of the aura' similar to the bilocation of saints, or to a chess master who can play several games of chess at once, or to driving a car whilst in conversation and listening to the radio.⁹⁴

4. Visualisation and the Role of the Imagination

⁹⁰ Bailey, *Telepathy*, pp. 2-38.

⁹¹ Bailey, *Telepathy*, p. 77.

⁹² By Foster Bailey, (*ibid.*).

⁹³ Foster Bailey in Alice A. Bailey, *A Treatise on Cosmic Fire* (London: Lucis Press, 1964 [1925]), p. vii.

⁹⁴ Gareth Knight, unpublished private paper WOMDC6, dated 5.3.1996. Some might see in this a resonance with the legend of Alessandro di Cagliostro (c. 1743-1795), who died in 1795, but was reputed to continue to live to the nineteenth century. Massimo Introvigne, 'Cagliostro, Alessandro di' in Wouter J. Hanegraaff, *Dictionary of Gnosis and Western Esotericism* (Leiden: Brill, 2005), 1, 225-27.

We now come to visualisation proper, which as a result of modern training and spiritual techniques beginning in the 1930s, has become a prime feature of the standard psychological repertoire of all involved in striving for excellence in the sports arena, in the healing arts, in salesmanship, and not least among the New Age fraternity generally. Picturing a desired object or condition in the imagination, it is suggested, can be a useful procedure towards furthering its achievement in any sphere of life.⁹⁵ Hanegraaff distinguishes two features of the imagination – firstly as a tool by means of which the aspirant organises and improves his/her outer life, and secondly, to create and work within the surroundings of various ‘inner worlds’.⁹⁶ There can be considerable overlap between these two, although it is considered in the Mystery Schools that the more precise the goal (say, winning the lottery; i.e. appropriating to oneself a part of the universe to which one would not normally be ‘entitled’), the more negative karma one may be attracting – and more responsibility, taking one away from one’s self-appointed task as a magician.⁹⁷

Historically, Henry Corbin has shown us the importance of the imaginative sphere, which Ibn ‘Arabī (1165-1240) explained as the material out of which the world

⁹⁵ See, for example, J. H. Brennan, *Getting What You Want*. (Wellingborough: Thorsons, 1985); H. E. Stanton, *The Fantasy Factor* (London: Macdonald & Co., 1985); Shakti Gawain, *Creative Visualisation* (Toronto: Bantam Books, 1979); Napoleon Hill, *The Laws of Success* (Cleveland, OH: Ralston, 1960); Napoleon Hill and Clement Stone, *Success through a Positive Mental Attitude* (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1960). Hanegraaff, citing Robert Fuller’s *Mesmerism and the Cure of Souls* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1982), p. 146, credits Phineas Parkhurst Quimby (1802-1866) with laying the foundations of the New Thought movement, which, from his philosophy of suggestion and ‘right belief’ and their application to material prosperity, later developed into the practice of ‘positive thinking’ and ‘affirmation’ such as are employed by the authors mentioned above. Hanegraaff, *New Age*, pp. 485-490.

⁹⁶ Hanegraaff, *New Age*, p. 254.

⁹⁷ Speaking of the many shades of magic from white, through grey, to black, Fortune gives the following useful rule of thumb: ‘There is one acid test which can be applied to every variety of operation – in white magic the operation is always designed and carried out with due regard to cosmic law; any operation which takes no account of cosmic law but goes its own way regardless of what the spiritual principles of the matter may be, can be classified as grey; and any operation which deliberately defies cosmic law can be classified as black.’ Dion Fortune, *Applied Magic* (York Beach, ME: Samuel Weiser, 2000), p. 52). She leaves it to the operator to decide what is or is not ‘cosmic law’. Contrast this with Bonewits, who, after examining and experiencing the principles and practices of both, found no moral differences between them: ‘the whole idea of White as Good and Black as Evil is purely the result of cultural bigotries.’ Philip Bonewits, *Real Magic* (London: Open Gate Books, 1972), p. 95. This subject holds

of Archetypes is constructed, intermediate between the material and celestial worlds, a concept used practically by the Renaissance Magi, and, for example, Bruno, Boehme, Gichtel, and Swedenborg, all of whom realised the creative potential of the imagination for producing effects in the outside world.⁹⁸ Corbin used the term ‘active imagination’ which was first used by C. G. Jung in 1935, intending it to be used psychologically through imaginative games and also in meditation, where one might contact inner landscapes and inner figures with which one could relate not only to resolve personal problems but also as the basis of creativity.⁹⁹ The use of the imagination to relate to intermediaries is thus part of an ancient tradition.

The methods for enhancing consciousness used in the First [Outer] Order of the Golden Dawn included meditation, visualisation, and ‘emotionally charged ritual incantations’. In the Second [Inner] Order, clairvoyance was fostered by: 1. ‘Skrying in the Spirit Vision, a process whereby the practitioner observed the inner realms by means of a symbolic ‘shew-stone’¹⁰⁰; 2. ‘Travelling in the Spirit Vision’ (astral projection), whereby the practitioner entered the subtle realms to interact with astral beings; and 3. ‘Rising on the Planes’, whereby the practitioner ‘ascended’ the Tree of Life in imagination to experience subtle higher and higher altered states, a method particularly favoured by Dion Fortune.¹⁰¹ The instructions for astral travel as given by

many ramifications (e.g. the purpose of undertaking the so-called ‘Left-hand Path’ in its restricted negative sense; the problem of evil, etc.), that will be of interest to future researchers.

⁹⁸ For Ibn ‘Arabī, see Henry Corbin, *Alone with the Alone: Creative Imagination in the Sufism of Ibn ‘Arabī* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1969), pp. 4, 80, 92, 99, 179, 181-82, 189, 223. Bruno used the imagination as the prime method to attain truth, the divine, and divine powers. Frances Yates, *Giordano Bruno and the Hermetic Tradition* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1972), p. 335.

⁹⁹ Jean Chodorow, *Jung on Active Imagination* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1997), pp. 3-5, 390-97. Jeffrey Raff draws out the links between medieval alchemy and C. G. Jung’s role in the esoteric tradition, and the paramount role of the imaginal world in the task of transcendence. Jeffrey Raff, *Jung and the Alchemical Imagination* (York Beach, ME: Nicholas-Hayes, 2000), pp. xiv, xvi, 4, 32, 40

¹⁰⁰ The ‘shew-stone’ would nowadays be known as a ‘crystal ball’, a crystal or jewel used to facilitate visions (‘skrying in the spirit vision’). John Dee’s shewstone is today on display at the British Museum. Similarly, Frederick Hockley’s revelations were facilitated through the use of a crystal and mirror. John Hamill, ed., *The Rosicrucian Seer: Magical Writings of Frederick Hockley* (Wellingborough: Aquarian, 1986)

¹⁰¹ Macgregor Mathers and others, *Astral Projection, Ritual Magic and Alchemy*, edited by Francis King (London: Neville Spearman, 1971), pp. 61-69. This is the instructional Flying Roll No. XI, referred to in Alex Owen, *The Place of Enchantment: British Occultism and the Culture of the Modern* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2004), pp. 148-50.

Aleister Crowley are particularly direct and to the point.¹⁰² Fortune confirms that mediumship and clairvoyance were used in the higher grades of the Golden Dawn, and that denials of it were something of a smoke-screen. She also endorsed their methods and ceremonies as producing ‘the most remarkable psychic experiences and extensions of consciousness’ and that the ‘aim of these processes was intelligently taught in the higher grades [. . .]’; and yet ever since she joined the Golden Dawn in 1919, her own experience was purely one of copying out the materials to learn by heart purely to pass the grade tests, and she received no explanations, or rationale as to their practical use, from the ‘grey-bearded ancients’ then in charge; it was only by virtue of her previous knowledge and experience that she was able to make the system work spectacularly for her¹⁰³

Concerning the *prima materia*, which in one of its aspects could be correlated with the many-levelled ‘Astral Plane’, corresponding to Netzach on the Tree of Life, Fortune says:

Learn to write novels on the astral because it is by creating a true-to-type thought form that you get in touch with that which transcends thought; and as long as you are a concrete consciousness you will have to use the astral to touch the abstract, and it is the laws of the astral thought form that are taught in occult science.¹⁰⁴

¹⁰² They include transferring consciousness to an imagined simulacrum of yourself; rising in the air; conversing with whatever figures appear, taking great care not to be hoodwinked by negative forces posing as good; and continuing travelling at will until it is desired to return. Crowley’s immediately following paragraph is salutary, reminding us of Blavatsky’s call for positivity in dealings with the inner planes: ‘The previous experiment has little value, and leads to few results of importance. [. . .] The principal use [. . .] is to familiarise the student with every kind of obstacle and every kind of delusion, so that he may be perfect master of every idea that may arise in his brain, to dismiss it, to transmute it, to cause it instantly to obey his will.’ Aleister Crowley, *Magick* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1973 [1911]), pp. 458-59. See also Owen, *The Place of Enchantment*, pp. 152-61.

¹⁰³ Fortune, *Applied Magic*, pp. 63-4. Fortune in Fortune and Knight, *Spiritualism and Occultism*, pp. 41, 45.

¹⁰⁴ Quoted in Knight, *Dion Fortune and the Inner Light*, pp. 90-91.

According to Fortune, the Astral Plane, sometimes termed the Treasure House of Images,¹⁰⁵ is considered to be the raw material that is manipulated by visualisation. Expressed in broad Kabbalistic terms, the Masters' work is concerned with the formulation of abstract or archetypal ideas received telepathically from the mind of God, which are then made ready to be brought down the planes from Chesed (the Sphere on the Tree of Life concerned with the formulation of abstract ideas), through Tiphareth, the Sphere of Equilibrium/Crucifixion into Hod, the Sphere of Mind, where adepts can complete the cycle by assisting in bringing those ideas and patterns into Malkuth by means of ritual, story writing, etc.¹⁰⁶ The adept or mediator should have brought consciousness up to the Tiphareth level, at least for the duration of the operation, in order to avoid the almost inevitable distortions of the 'astro-etheric plane' (Netzach-Yesod, the usual focus of attention by most psychics). Rudolf Steiner was of the opinion that Swedenborg did not do this, i.e he was 'too material' to properly transmit the conditions of the spirit world.¹⁰⁷

The 'likemindedness' or attunement with the Masters is achieved by reading as much as possible of any works associated with the inner beings, whether historical or otherwise, particularly any recent communications channelled by them. Pupils are then able to key in to the feeling for a Master's 'presence', and continue to develop contacts with them in their own ways.¹⁰⁸

Fortune gives a vivid example of the way that visualisation might be used in meditation or ritual to contact even one of the upper echelons of the Hierarchy. Her description of the creation of the universe in *The Cosmic Doctrine* includes an account of 'three Primal Swarms', or 'waves of Cosmic Life', which establish the laws of manifestation, i.e. the structures under which the material universe and humanity can

¹⁰⁵ This expression was used by Col. J. F. C. Fuller to refer to the Zodiac and to the attributes of God in the sub-title to *Liber CMXIII*, first published in 1910. 'Equinox', 1: 3, (1910). Chic Cicero and Sandra Tabatha Cicero, 'Astral Projection and Skrying' in *Llewellyn Encyclopedia*, <http://www.llewellyn.com> [accessed 09/11/07] Gareth Knight applied the term to astral imagery as structured by the Tarot as the title of his text, *The Treasure House of Images* (Wellingborough: The Aquarian Press, 1986).

¹⁰⁶ 'concreted in the light of experience of the concretion of analogous abstract ideas'. Dion Fortune, *The Mystical Qabalah* (London: Ernest Benn, 1976), p. 165.

¹⁰⁷ See Antoine Faivre & Wouter J. Hanegraaff, eds, *Western Esotericism and the Science of Religion* (Leuven: Peeters, 1998), pp. 250-51.

operate. The three Swarms consist of the Lords of Flame, concerned with the Element of Fire; the Lords of Form, concerned with the Element of Earth and Water, and the Lords of Mind, closely connected with the Element of Air, and who are humanity's immediate predecessors. The Lords of Flame and Form might take on imaginative forms that we would recognise as Archangelic, or as one of the Manus, such as Melchizedek, Rama, or Narada of Atlantis. Her suggested procedure for contacting, say, a Lord of Form is vividly described as visualising, with emotion:

[. . .] an amphitheatre under the earth in darkness filled with red flashes from the depths of the inner earth. Through this darkness can be heard a hammer on an anvil – very faint at first for it is very remote. Imagine this sound as gradually coming nearer with a tremendous rhythm, hard, strong, simple. As that rhythmic sound increases in intensity giant forms gradually begin to build in outline – vast forms dimly and only partly seen in outline for they are too huge and too strong to be contained in space as we know it; feel the etheric intensification “behind” the dimly discerned form.¹⁰⁹

The Lords of Form, also known as ‘the Builders’, ‘influence the configuration of the stars, planets, and large land masses’. They are the Lords of Rhythm and of the cycle of Birth and Death, and work with a ‘vast patience which is content to take millions of years over the task it has set itself so that it can be perfectly done [. . .] and ever the great hammer beats and beats and beats through Time – building, unbuilding, and building again; such are the great Regents of the Logos entrusted with this work.’ ‘We can invoke the Lords of Form to help us earn our freedom from form when the time [of death] approaches.’¹¹⁰ Such vast forces can thus

¹⁰⁸ Knight, *Magical Images*, p. 82.

¹⁰⁹ Dion Fortune, *Cosmic Doctrine*, p. 203. The terms ‘Lords of Flame’ and ‘Manu’ are of Theosophical origin. Blavatsky deals only in passing with the Lords of Flame (Blavatsky, *Secret Doctrine* (1888 [1950 ed.], III, 87) but clearly explains the Manus as progenitors of life, the seventh of fourteen being the one responsible for the inception of the humanity of this epoch. Blavatsky, *Secret Doctrine*, III, 321.

¹¹⁰ Fortune, *Cosmic Doctrine*, pp. 191-208. According to Blavatsky, the Builders reconstruct the Cosmos after each Pralaya, and are ‘parallel to the Seven Angels of the Presence’ (Planetary Spirits, or even Elohim), although she does not use the term ‘Lords of Form’. Blavatsky, *SD*, I, 165; I, 284. She correlates Regents with Planets and their Archangels. She also mentions ‘Star Regents’, e.g. ‘the Seven Rishis [. . .] are the Regents of the seven stars of the Great Bear’ which are ‘of the same nature’ as the seven planetary regents (Blavatsky, *Secret Doctrine*, III, 361; III, 318). The *Secret Doctrine* indexes over two hundred entries for ‘Logos’, among which are references to the ‘Deity’ of Pythagoras (*SD*, II, 150), to ‘primeval

apply not only to the macrocosmic formation of stars, planets and continents but to the microcosm, the individual, in daily life as well.

Knight explains the process of contact here as one used by religious devotees of many faiths, of forming an image (e.g. a saint), believing in it implicitly, and investing it with emotion. As indicated above, a corresponding process can then be set in motion by an inner entity, resulting in an overlap of imagery and emotions by means of which genuine contact is able to take place. The difference between the mystical devotee and the magician is that the latter's approach is often more conscious in the use of technique and so is likely to be productive of more precise communications if not overlain, distorted or obscured by interference from the magician's conscious or subconscious mind.¹¹¹ Alexandra David-Neel, a member of Theosophical Lodges in both London and Paris and referred to several times by Fortune also designates the use of imagination as fundamental to the training of Tibetan Buddhist monks.¹¹² She gives extended examples of the imaginative exercises taught, such as the visualisation of the tutelary deity to the point where he is sensible to the touch.¹¹³ Some of these imagined *tulpas* can serve as vehicles of Bodhisatvas (equivalent to an incarnate Western Master), and also appear in any place in any form, animate or inanimate, similar in some ways to Blavatsky's own Masters.¹¹⁴

divine thought (*SD*, IV, 239), and to Brahman/Ahura Mazda, 'the Divine Mind in creative operation.' (*SD* I, 301; I, 170). Blavatsky also hints at a hierarchy of Logoi, of which there are subjective and objective variants (*SD*, I, 81-82).

¹¹¹ Knight, *Magical Images*, p. 77.

¹¹² Joscelyn Godwin, 'Orientalism' in Hanegraaff, *Dictionary of Gnosis II*, 907. Also in K. Paul Johnson, *Initiates of the Theosophical Masters* (Albany, NY: State University of New York, 1995), p. 174, where Alexandra David-Neel is included among his thirty-two most prominent Theosophists and as one of the Great White Sisterhood alongside other major 'initiates' such as Annie Besant (pp. xi-xiii, 183-201, 202). See also John Cooper's review in *High Country Theosophist* 12: 9, (1997), 22-23., http://www.hctheosophist.com/archives/pdf/hc_199709.pdf [accessed 21/12/2007].

¹¹³ The real achievers being those pupils who recognised the presence as illusory. David-Neel, *Initiations*, p. 203. Cf. Fortune's reminder that the Masters' appearance to inner vision is purely illusory. Fortune, *Mystical Qabalah*, p. 168.

¹¹⁴ Mme Alexandra David-Neel, *Magic and Mystery in Tibet* (London: Rider, 1977), pp. 90-94.

Whereas Greenwood claims that it is the will that is the kingpin of magical endeavour,¹¹⁵ Fortune places much more emphasis on the magical images that are built by use of the faculty of visualisation – by auto-suggestion in the first place – which begins by being subjective, but gathers strength, particularly when shared among several participants, and the images ‘become real on their own plane’, channelling tangible forces.¹¹⁶ Again, the process is particularly effective when conducted by one having undergone training in a Mystery School.¹¹⁷ Furthermore, by building mental imagery of a set of symbols, these symbols can express themselves in outer life.¹¹⁸ This can sometimes be pathological as evidenced in Fortune’s novel *The Goat-Foot God* (1936), where the practitioner found himself overwhelmed almost to the detriment of his day-to-day consciousness by the personality and presence of a much disturbed medieval priest. Magically, however, there was an advantage in this case because it was *through* the image and power of the priest that the practitioner was enabled to reach back into an ancient Grecian environment of a much more benign nature where the first stage of resolution of his own psychological turmoil was achieved.¹¹⁹ Later in this case, the god Pan was contacted, resulting in an uprush of repressed emotion, which resulted in further personal harmonisation.¹²⁰

¹¹⁵ Susan Greenwood, *Magic, Witchcraft and the Other World* (Oxford: Berg, 2000), p. 171. Cf. the importance that Crowley attaches to ‘Love under will’. Aleister Crowley, *Magick* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1973), p. 351. Of the imagination, Greenwood says ‘it is the means whereby the magician thinks and feels herself into the otherworld and becomes one with the beings that inhabit its realms.’ Greenwood, *Magic*, p. 26.

¹¹⁶ Cf. Scott: the imagination is ‘a divine ladder built by God, whereby the aspirant may climb to the blissful heights of Realisation’. Cyril Scott, *The Initiate in the New World* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1927), p. 176.

¹¹⁷ Dion Fortune, *Moon Magic* (London: Aquarian Press, 1956), pp. 81, 129, 135. This might well correspond to the numerous conferences or ‘rallys’ held by commercial firms in order to strengthen what Fortune would term their ‘Group Mind’, empowering the salespeople to increase performance. Cf Charles Bray’s explanation of 1841 that ‘bodies give off thought rays which add to a “reservoir of thought” which can be accessed by mediums or other expectant individuals.’ Charles Bray, *The Philosophy of Necessity or The Law of Consequences as applicable to Mental, Moral, and Social Science* (London: Longman, 1841) cited in Podmore, *Modern Spiritualism*, ii, p. 172.

¹¹⁸ Dion Fortune, *The Sea Priestess* (York Beach, ME: Samuel Weiser, 1957), pp. 151; 1956: 129; Dion Fortune, *The Winged Bull* (London: Wyndham Publications, 1976 [1935]), p. 122.

¹¹⁹ Dion Fortune, *The Goat-Foot God* (London: Wyndham Publications, 1976 [1936]), pp. 65, 150.

¹²⁰ Fortune, *Goat-Foot*, pp. 86-87. ‘Panic is what he [Pan] produces in the unprepared, but in those who are prepared [. . .] he produces divine inebriation.’ Fortune, *Winged Bull*, p. 15.

But the contact with a long-dead medieval priest was made not so much through mental imagery as through meditation on what that character had done, and what were his thoughts and feelings – a process of identification with him, absorbing him much as a shaman would absorb for a period the essence of a god. The rationale of the process of reintegration was not mental or logical; it was experiential. It was of no interest whether the monk was the hero's own manifesting spirit, one of his previous incarnations, or an aspect of his own dissociated personality,¹²¹ as long as the benefits of more self-confidence and other positive virtues ensued.¹²² Though couched here in fictional form, Fortune graphically describes one of the ways mentioned above that contact could be made: the use the imagination to picture and emotionally charge a scene or a form of whoever it was one wished to contact, so that the individual so contacted can empower the image from his side.¹²³ A further example from *The Sea Priestess* illustrates the same process:

Night by night, as the wood-smoke rose from the Fire of Azrael, we built up the form of the Priest of the Moon in the drifting shadows till he was as real to us as we were to each other; and though we knew his form was such stuff as dreams were made of, there came through that form the touch of mind on mind, and that was the thing that counted, and no one who felt it could think that he was hallucinated.¹²⁴

This is an extension of the more cautious approach that she expressed in 1935 in her *Mystical Qabalah*, where she then warned that the visualised image, or appearance of Masters to psychic vision is merely a *reflection* of what they really are, seen in the psychic Sphere of Yesod, the sphere of illusion and hallucination that is so open to misunderstanding, calling for the utmost discrimination in interpretation. The

¹²¹ Or indeed, a Master of Wisdom.

¹²² Fortune, *Goat-Foot*, pp. 85, 128.

¹²³ '[. . .] for phantasy is the ass that carries the ark, as they said in the ancient Mysteries.' Fortune, *Sea Priestess*, p. 299. For extended explanation, see Gareth Knight, *Magical Images and the Magical Imagination* (Albuquerque: Sun Chalice Books, 1998).

¹²⁴ Fortune, *Sea Priestess*, p. 298. Azrael, the angel of Death, is used here to evoke memories of things past as well as for poetic effect. The name is said to have originally signified Jewish Ezra, leader of the Jewish people at the end of the Exile. Only later under Islamic doctrine did it become equated with the Angel of Death. See the extensive and detailed website: <http://www.songofazrael.org>. [accessed 17/11/07].

ideal is for the adept to contact the Masters telepathically at the highest level possible in the exalted environment of inspiration represented by Chesed, clear of any illusory content.¹²⁵ For the general run of students, verbal messages like those recorded in Knight's *The Abbey Papers* (2002) are unusual, with most high-level communications nowadays being made at the abstract Chesedic level, resulting perhaps in an inner impulse or urge to conduct certain ritual or literary work.¹²⁶

In an early example of Knight's inner plane contact with Socrates, he considers that part of the reason for his success was regularity in meditation.¹²⁷ Again, like Fortune, he is not concerned as to whether this was the actual historical figure or not, only on the quality of the contact, its message and the resultant feeling – described in this case as 'a very real, warm and living contact'.

He records how in a later session in company with others, some of the questions were answered verbally, but others in pictorial form as an 'impression' or 'image', which had to be briefly interpreted there and then by someone else in the group before the shared atmosphere had dissipated. That particular session was concluded with an explanation concerning the nature of the relationship between inner plane Masters and outer plane students outside of any particular group session. In a similar way to that in which the Church is said to be the Body of Christ, so the physical bodies of the ashram¹²⁸ are said to be the physical body of the Master, a continuous part of his consciousness, and all the more effective for training if the members of the ashram are conscious of that fact.¹²⁹

¹²⁵ Fortune, *Mystical Qabalah*, p. 168. This is the reason for Frederick Hockley's careful preparations in the form of prayers before undertaking the act of scrying. 'The use of the mirror or crystal was essentially a religious experience for Hockley.' John Hamill, *Rosicrucian Seer*, pp.109-114.

¹²⁶ Knight, *Magical Images*, p. 81.

¹²⁷ Knight, *Experience of the Inner Worlds* (Toddington: Helios Books, 1975), p. 223.

¹²⁸ This term is used by a communicator ('X') via 'E', on 28 September 1969. 'E' may well have recently consulted Bailey, where Bailey speaks of the Ashram as a 'united channel for the new energies [. . .] entering this world', streaming 'with potency through the Master at the heart of the Ashram.' Alice A. Bailey, *Telepathy and the Etheric Vehicle*, pp. 194-95. Knight, *Experience*, p. 236.

¹²⁹ Knight, *Experience*, pp. 232-36.

Knight also records a further involuntary visualisation which appeared quite frivolous and unpromising,¹³⁰ but which led to an inner meeting with two senior Masters of Wisdom who dictated serious material, easily distinguished from the usual transmissions of spiritualist mediums by the extent of the use of esoteric terminology and the quality of the ‘spiritual intention or motivation’ behind it.¹³¹ This casual practice might appear to challenge the attitude of dedication and fervour recommended by Bailey and Fortune in early years, but it can be regarded as a ‘stored dedication’ of previous effort and an underlying expectancy that communication might one day occur. Like Swedenborg, until his fifties, Knight had no significant regular communications with identifiable inner beings.¹³² Thereafter his contacts were often unsought, even unwelcome at times, yet at a deeper level calling upon those past thirty

¹³⁰ The initial spontaneous visualisation was of himself sitting in a seaside bar among revellers going to a fancy dress ‘vicars and tarts’ party.

¹³¹ Gareth Knight, *Dion Fortune and the Three-Fold Way* (London: S.I.L. (Trading), 2002), pp. 100-05. Jung interpreted similar phenomena of contact in a different way. His ‘vision figures’ included those he termed Elijah, Philemon, Salome, Ka, etc., which he took to be archetypal images of the collective unconscious. Is this latter the same, perhaps, as the ‘inner planes’ discussed here? While at first sight this identification would appear to reconcile occult and psychological modes of thought, Knight suggests that both concepts are equally limited, and that the field under discussion is the immensely wider concept of the ‘Inner Side of Creation’, part subjectivity, partly a reflection of the physical world, but also ‘a great deal more besides’ Gareth Knight, *Experience of the Inner Worlds* (Toddington: Helios Books, 1975), pp. 130-33. What that ‘great deal more’ is, is perhaps suggested in some of the cosmological constructs discussed in Chapters 2 and 3. However, save for his work on Alchemy, the tenor of Jung’s considerations on the collective unconscious appears to be focused on the past, including both instincts and all that has been forgotten, over and above matters of the future, although those things are also part of it. It is also notable that Jung stresses a chthonic underworld of ancestors rather than a Hermetic ascent through the planetary spheres. He says that he ‘plunged down into dark depths,’ and ‘frequently imagined a steep descent’. Carl G. Jung, *Memories, Dreams, Reflections* (London: Collins and Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1963), pp. 172, 174, 357. Jung identified with the Middle Ages, with Mephistopheles, and the pessimistic philosophies of Schopenhauer and Nietzsche. Jung, *Memories*, pp. 6, 92, 106, 222, 294. Furthermore, Richard Noll suggests that Jung must also have been influenced by the matriarchal theories of Johann Jakob Bachhofen (1815-1887) and by Jules Verne’s *Voyage to the Centre of the Earth* (1864). Richard Noll, *The Jung Cult: The Origins of a Charismatic Movement* (London: Fontana Press, 1996), pp. 161-68, 238-40. In contemporary magical work, the chthonic element of mining the lower strata of the subconscious is introduced into ritual predominantly as the initial springboard that empowers the practitioner in his prime work of ascent to the higher reaches of the Tree of Life. Gerhard Wehr, perhaps having in mind early Kabbalistic literature sees little contradiction between ‘high’ or ‘deep’, it being purely a matter of choice of metaphor. Gerhard Wehr, ‘Jung in the Context of Christian Esotericism in Faivre and Needleman, *Modern Esoteric Spirituality*, p. 397.

¹³² Swedenborg was fifty-five when he entered his spiritual phase. Jane Williams-Hogan, ‘Swedenborg. 2. Spiritual Crisis’ in Hanegraaff, *Dictionary*, II, 1100-1101.

years of endeavour in the Mysteries. As to Fortune's approach, he sums up the key to success as 'likemindedness', entailing the thought that one is only able to contact the level of consciousness that one is able to reach within oneself, and if that level be rudimentary, so will be the inner figures and messages.¹³³

The distinction between an inner guide and a Master is very imprecise, although usually the guide will pass the student on to a higher being. Sometimes the inner guide appears as an animal of some kind, as in myth, leading the student in some inner journey.¹³⁴ This is a strong feature of Native American spirituality, although Fortune does not pursue this line at all in her works. In contrast, Steinbrecher, whose methods stem directly from the Western mystery tradition, specifically looks for an animal at the commencement of any inner journey. He stresses the use of all the inner senses so that one feels as though one were physically there, and also that anyone (even those not trained) can use the process. A brief outline of his suggested visualised steps for contacting a guide is as follows:

1. Sit in the 'pharaoh' posture, upright but relaxed.
2. Imagine yourself in a cave.
3. Move *forward and to the left* to find a door or tunnel to move through. (The sequence of movements appears to be important for Steinbrecher.)
4. In the landscape that appears, call for an animal and ask it to lead you to the *right* to meet an *unknown* human male figure (for both men and women), who often provokes strong emotion. Try to discern details of his dress, demeanour, etc., and ask a series of questions suggested by Steinbrecher to ensure that he is your true guide.

¹³³ Knight, *Magical Images*, p. 81. Cf. Mephistopholes and Lilith in Goethe's *Faust, Part I*.

¹³⁴ Knight, *Magical Images*, pp. 69-74. E.g. the white hart leading Arthurian knights through the forest to new adventures, and also Mowgli, confidant to the jungle boy. Knight, *Magical Images*, pp. 70, 72. But Stewart cautions: 'truth lies not in looking at the Totem Beasts, or in interpretation of their presence, but in pursuing them, in meeting the challenge that their Keeper offers, and in passing on to the deeper experience of encountering their Owner.' R. J. Stewart, *The Underworld Initiation: a Journey Towards Psychic Transformation* (Wellingborough: Aquarian Press, 1985), p. 109. See Chapter 4, pp. 253-54.

5. Ask the Guide to indicate the sun, and ask the sun (archetype of the centre of the Self) to join you (in whatever form it may take), and shed its light and love on you. This may generate in you an extremely emotive reaction.

6. Because Guides will not volunteer information, questions must be asked,¹³⁵ particularly: ‘What do you need from me and from my life to work with me and be my friend?’ or ‘What do you have to give to me that I need from you?’ A genuine guide will not predict, judge, or ask you to do anything against your better nature. Question the Guide about the use of the symbolic object he will give you, and then ask him to place it in the appropriate part of your body.

7. Finally, ask if the energies are now in balance – e.g. what have you given in exchange for the information and gifts?

And over the course of a few years, one may be passed on to as many as seven different guides.¹³⁶ In Steinbrecher’s experience, this way of inner working will not interfere with any other meditation discipline, and will enhance any religious system save the most simplistic and fundamentalist.¹³⁷

Fortune’s much simpler advice, given in 1939, late in her magical career, was to avoid the use of any medium and work alone to visualise the Master and conduct an imaginary conversation with him, silently voicing your concerns and imagining suitable replies. Even if no replies seem to be forthcoming, one may well experience a feeling of peace, and if at night, wake next morning with problems clarified.¹³⁸ Any portrait, speech, text or artefact associated (or even supposedly associated) with the Master in question can act as a talismanic link, enabling communications to take place more

¹³⁵ It was because the knight Perceval failed to ask the ‘Grail question’ that the wound of his host the Fisher King continued to remain unhealed. See the University of Rochester Camelot Project, www.lib.rochester.edu/Camelot/percmenu.htm [accessed 31/05/08].

¹³⁶ Here again, there is clear indication of the persistence of the hebdomadal system of Western esoteric conjecture, including Blavatsky’s, Bailey’s and Fortune’s ‘Seven Rays’. It is also a feature of Roberts’s experience that her usual communicator Seth is only at the lowest, or nearest level, and eventually passes her on to ‘Seth Two’, ‘Cyprus’ and others at more refined levels. Jane Roberts, *Adventures in Consciousness* (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, 1975).

¹³⁷ Edwin C. Steinbrecher, *The Inner Guide Meditation*, pp. 53–74.

¹³⁸ Fortune, *Magical Battle*, p. 16 (*War Letter* No 9, 3 December 1939).

readily.¹³⁹ Socrates, for example, has been rendered in sculpture, even a photograph of which can serve as a focus for visualisation. For those Masters of doubtful historicity, the pencilled likenesses by David Anrias (1932) perform the same function, as also do the uplifting passages of the Prophets' *Lords of the Seven Rays* (1986) (although their messages may be found too heady for those not predisposed to an Eastern bias, unless balanced by the deep underworld journeys such as those suggested by R. J. Stewart).¹⁴⁰ Behind the imagined forms, contact is deemed to be a real coming together of minds with real, though bodiless, individuals. Fortune was particularly aware of their proximity during the Blitz of WW II.¹⁴¹

Hughes succinctly sums up the process of contact with a Master, as we would suspect, as one of visualisation and intention. The process involves choosing *any* historical or mythical personality that one responds to, visualising that person, then proceeding to hold a conversation with him/her in ordinary straightforward language; and this strategy is to be developed over time. Citing Jung's Elijah or Philemon, Hughes warns that it would be restricting to hold on to any one form or image of communicator for too long.¹⁴² In the light of this, we might question the practice of Theosophists on the one hand and the followers of Dion Fortune on the other, who, save for Colonel C. R. F. Seymour,¹⁴³ have adhered to a few very specific inner communicators, or Masters, over what is now a considerable period of time. Have magicians in Fortune's tradition followed the example of the pioneers too slavishly thereby by-passing opportunities to develop wider and possibly more fruitful contacts?

J. B. Hollenback investigates the role of paranormal phenomena in the mystical life. He argues that, contrary to, or neglected by, previous studies, mystical and

¹³⁹ cf. in Tibetan lore, holy relics do not need to be genuine to work. David-Neel, *Magic*, p. 212.

¹⁴⁰ As described, for example, in R. J. Stewart, *Power within the Land* (Shaftesbury: Element, 1992). Anrias suggests that by meditating on his pencilled portraits, one may begin to understand some subtle differences between the Masters, and come to be aware of some of the difficulties they work under, as well as 'different ways that Humanity is likely to react' to their work. David Anrias, *Through the Eyes of the Masters*, (New York: Samuel Weiser, 1932); Mark L. Prophet and Elizabeth Claire Prophet, *Lords of the Seven Rays: Mirror of Consciousness* (Livingston, MT: Summit University Press, 1986).

¹⁴¹ Fortune, *Magical Battle*, pp. 14-15, 39, 41.

¹⁴² Alan Richardson and Geoff Hughes, *Ancient Magicks for a New Age* (St. Paul, MN: Llewellyn, 1989), pp. 207-11.

¹⁴³ Chapter 5, p. 292.

paranormal states are intimately bound together, both being the result of psychological priming, or ‘expectation’ by the experiencer, and having their necessary genesis in a period of quiescence, or the engagement of a meditative state. Further, using the example of David-Neel’s *tulpa*, he has realised that whereas the meditator begins from a state of recollectedness and using the controlled (Fortune would say ‘trained’) imagination,¹⁴⁴ after a time the imagination undergoes a ‘metamorphosis’, becoming ‘empowered’,¹⁴⁵ creating the effect of a meaningful and real entity or scenario.¹⁴⁶ This is exactly in line with Fortune’s experience in the operations of magic – what begins as illusion transforms into an unmistakable feeling of reality.¹⁴⁷

Curiously, Hollenback nowhere refers to the role of suggestion (or auto-suggestion) as a feature of this mystical, or imaginative, process. One of his major theses is that these processes are totally conditioned by history and culture both in the imagery employed and in the interpretation of results. And we are forced to wonder if Fortune was again unduly limited – this time by her chosen vehicle, the occult tradition. Perhaps her background in psychoanalysis protected her from too much adherence to any one line of approach, unlike Theosophists who were often in awe of the minutiae of Blavatsky’s revelation. Since the advent of New Thought and New Age, there is an evident plurality in models or belief systems as evidenced by the multiplicity of new approaches to personal transformation and the plethora of self-help books and courses.¹⁴⁸ As Stewart so appositely says: ‘all models of the world work’; adding, ‘and

¹⁴⁴ Knight clarifies Fortune’s meaning of ‘trained’, as signifying ‘trained in dedication rather than in technicality.’ Gareth Knight in Dion Fortune and Gareth Knight, *The Circuit of Force*, (Loughborough: Thoet, 1998), p. 180.

¹⁴⁵ Hollenback’s ‘enthymesis’, which he defines as the key factor distinguishing genuine mysticism (with or without accompanying paranormal phenomena) from schizoid states or hallucination. J. B. Hollenback, *Mysticism: Experience, Response and Empowerment* (Pennsylvania: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1996), p. 608.

¹⁴⁶ Hollenback, *Mysticism*, pp. 281-82.

¹⁴⁷ Fortune, *Sea Priestess*, p. 298.

¹⁴⁸ E.g. David J. Schwartz, *The Magic of Thinking Big* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1959); Bill Sweetland, *I Will* (No. Hollywood, CA: Wilshire Book Company, 1960); Robert B. Stone, *The Power of Miracle Metaphysics* (Wellingborough: A. Thomas, 1976); Strepthon Caplan Williams, *The Practice of Personal Transformation* (Wellingborough: Aquarian Press, 1986); John Heron, *Confessions of a Janus-Brain* (London: Endymion Press, 1987); and Wilde’s *Infinite Self: 33 Steps to Reclaiming your Inner Power*, to name but a few.

we change according to our participation within any such model.’ Each model has its own particular flavour and its use will affect the practitioner accordingly. Since Fortune’s ground-plan was the Tree of Life, however, she was able to understand and use several methods of communicating with the Masters during her life, guided by the glyph which, in Stewart’s view, does have the capacity for encompassing any other worldview.¹⁴⁹

Warren Kenton (Z’ev ben Shimon Halevi, who represents a contemporary interpretation of the medieval Toledo school of Kabbalah) tells of innocent or over-ambitious students who at the beginning of their studies wish for contact with the highest inner teachers, and he seriously warns that the accompanying powers and responsibilities could ‘crush or explode’ the student.¹⁵⁰ He therefore recommends caution. First, learn to discriminate between different inner levels, e.g. whether the voice heard is one’s own, or of an ‘intruding intelligence’; crude or subtle, the voices or impression need to be recognised, perhaps as unbalanced aspects of one’s own psyche, then ignored. Second, seek the balancing Sphere of Tiphareth, which connects the macrocosmic and microcosmic inner worlds, and treat it as the Inner Teacher, visualising it, perhaps, as a ship’s captain. Inner scrutiny of the appearance of this figure – whether well-dressed, slapdash, or even drunk – can teach us much about our inner situation. He warns that many sessions are needed before the pupil can readily distinguish between his/her psychological processes and ‘real’ contacts. The pupil should observe as much as possible, but not act upon everything suggested – ‘even the captain could be a disguised member of the opposition . . .’¹⁵¹

Halevi’s imaginative sequence in the approach to the *maggid*, or Inner Teacher¹⁵² is more extended than Fortune’s, and once again calls in the use of the imagination:

¹⁴⁹ Adding that even psychology is not so all-inclusive. R. J. Stewart, *The Miracle Tree: Demystifying the Qabalah* (Franklin Lakes, NJ: New Page, 2003), p. 73.

¹⁵⁰ Z’ev ben Shimon Halevi, *School of the Soul* (Bath: Gateway Books, 1993), p. 102.

¹⁵¹ Halevi, *School*, pp. 102-105.

¹⁵² See Chapter 2, p. 78. Lavinia and Dan Cohn-Sherbok draw a distinction between the itinerant preachers from the seventeenth-century Eastern Europe (of which the prime example was the ‘Great Maggid’, the Rabbi Dovber of Mezireh (Rabbi Dov Baer, c. 1707-1772), and leader of the Hassidim after

1. Formulate the question to which an answer is desired.
2. Conduct some elementary but solemnly carried-out ritual actions such as ablution, use of a dedicated space, or the wearing of a symbol ('as a reminder to the lower psyche that you are about to enter another dimension').
3. Ask permission from the Most High.
4. If this is sensed as given, then 'begin the ascent' until you reach the door at the threshold between normal and higher consciousness.
5. Ascend to a position above your body. Look down onto the landscape as though you and it were under the sea (the sea of Yetzirah), then look up through the waters into the vague light of a new reality.
6. Ignoring all distractions, float up through ever more refined densities, always looking up, until your head reaches a point just below the surface of the water.
7. Break the surface into Briah, and swim to shore where a city sits atop a mountain.
8. On the way to the city, visit the house and garden of a holy person. See what happens when the door opens, and you meet your teacher courteously.
9. Notice and be prepared to describe everything that occurs, and that you see.
10. You sit at ease in an upper room, converse with the Teacher, and ask the question.
11. Listen for the answer, and continue until you know it is time to leave.
12. Ask what you can do in return. Listen for the answer for acting on in life.
13. Retrace all the steps above, giving thanks.
14. Record everything, preferably in a special book. Draw the Teacher's room – there may be items from your own past there.

Kenton's further advice is that if one is invited to return, one should make a point of doing so. He also adds that after many visits, most of the above steps can be omitted, and one can travel there directly. The full description is given in Halevi's *The*

the Ba'al ShemTov), and the Kabbalistic inner teacher or supernatural spirit of Halevi. It is interesting that in contrast to exoteric Judaism, Rabbi Dov Baer emphasised ascent to, or union with, God through concentrated prayer and religious experience rather than by way of learning. Lavinia and Dan Cohn-Sherbok. *A Popular Dictionary of Judaism* (Richmond, Surrey: Curzon Press, 1995), p. 105 and 'Baer (Dob) of Meseritz' in *Jewish Encyclopedia.com*, 430-433.

Work of a Kabbalist.¹⁵³ It can be noted that, although seemingly elaborate, this process, as we might expect, has some similar stages to that of Steinbrecher and others (e.g. the sensation of moving through doors, an almost ubiquitous symbol in visualisations indicating moving into different states of consciousness; the importance of observation and of relating as fully as possible to any figures that present themselves). Stewart's visualisations are similarly Kabbalistic: one travels down a valley or into a cave (Yetzirah), meets a figure or figures representing the powers of the Underworld, then rises upwards to the Briatic world to encounter beings of the Empyrean.¹⁵⁴

5. *Ritual*

As few contacts with Inner Plane entities are heard verbatim with the inner ear, most being channelled intuitively or telepathically at a deep (or high) level of abstraction, percolating down through the recipient's subjective mind for casting into verbal form later, a certain degree of personal integration – the cultivation of a balanced personality – is, as we have seen, deemed to be a necessary and continuing part of Mystery training so that distortions of any received messages are reduced to a minimum.¹⁵⁵ This is considered to be the thrust of the work of the Lesser Mysteries, which consists of explorations of the lower Spheres and Paths of the Tree of Life, executed under ritual conditions. It is within the heightened atmosphere of the Lodge room that sensitivity is more easily raised to reach that of the higher beings, whether they be Regents of the Elements, Masters, Angels, or Gods.

Ritual is but one segment of magic. Our historical survey has already indicated the widespread use of magical incantations, techniques, amulets, and statues, from ancient times. Fortune never precisely defined the word 'magic', although she attempted several variations (see Appendix IV, pp. 431-37), and its meaning and the implications

¹⁵³ Z'ev ben Shimon Halevi, *The Work of the Kabbalist* (Bath: Gateway Books, 1993), pp. 106-09.

¹⁵⁴ See, for example, Stewart, *Underworld Initiation*; and his *Power Within the Land*. Much of the work of the Greater Mysteries is concerned, not with contacting the Masters per se, but co-operating with them in setting up balanced mental constructs on the Inner Planes, which the Masters can use in their work of uplifting the racial – and thence the global – consciousness. This work is enhanced by treading some of these patterns out during the ritual.

¹⁵⁵ Charles Fielding and Carr Collins, *The Story of Dion Fortune*, pp. 60-69.

of its practice emerge piecemeal through the abundance of descriptive material spread throughout her books, especially in her so-called War Letters of 1939/40, published as *The Magical Battle of Britain* (1993). In various other texts and articles written ten years earlier, reproduced in Fortune and Knight, *Spiritualism and Occultism* and *An Introduction to Ritual Magic*, she speaks of the purpose of magic rather than defining it: 'the magician lives in a three tier universe. One that is divided into the spiritual, the psychic, and the physical', and she explains that the magician whether in incarnation or as a Master on the inner planes deals in the main with the second.¹⁵⁶ Here, Fortune alludes to the three-tier universe as understood by Agrippa and Dee, and the parallel tradition in Iranian Sufism of the universe composed of Intellect, Ideas, and the Material.¹⁵⁷ She refers to personal development as only one aspect of the aims of ceremonial magic, and reminds us (correcting in passing Evelyn Underhill's misunderstanding),¹⁵⁸ that the magician's underlying purpose and declaration is 'I desire to know in order to serve'.¹⁵⁹ It is best left to Knight, having immersed himself in Fortune's philosophy and practice over the course of many years, to explain how such service might be carried out, and to what ends:

Magic [. . .] is much simpler and less formidable than the popular imagination believes it to be, and is a technique for the utilisation and direction of the astral forces (Fortune's 'psychic universe'), which are the immediate causes behind the world of appearances. Neither of these

¹⁵⁶ This is in addition to the direct telepathic communications from Chesed, through Tiphareth and Hod.

¹⁵⁷ For Agrippa, see p. 97; for Dee, p. 100, and for the Sufi tradition see p. 52, n. 4.

¹⁵⁸ See Chapter 1, p. 36. Underhill remarks that both magic (an 'acquisitive science' much akin to Christian petitionary prayer) and mysticism use the same techniques for apparently similar ends, but whereas in mysticism the ultimate aim is to transcend the sense-world, in magic it is to gain a 'supersensible knowledge' which Underhill deprecates as merely 'self-seeking transcendentalism'. Evelyn Underhill, *Mysticism* (London: Methuen, 1930), p. 71. Although Underhill recognises that the magician's curiosity and desire for knowledge can be a serious attempt to solve the world's travails, founded on a praiseworthy respect for and investigation of invisible planes of being beyond the physical, she is still happy to contrast it unfavourably with the over-riding urge of the mystic towards attainment of the Absolute. Underhill, *Mysticism*, pp. 150-64. She does not seem to be able to grant a secure place for magicians in their specialism alongside mystics in theirs. For her part, Fortune is very keen to stress the spiritual orientation of her work, going so far as to compare astrologer with priest. Fortune, *Practical Occultism*, p. 42.

¹⁵⁹ Fortune and Knight, *Introduction to Ritual Magic*, pp. 137-42. See also W. E. Butler, *The Magician: His Training and Work* (London: Aquarian Press, 1972), p. 25.

powers are spiritual in their nature, and they are neither good nor bad save as they are used, but in dedicated hands they are enormously potent for good, for the healing of body and soul, and for regeneration, not only of individuals, but of races.¹⁶⁰

This may perhaps be compared to the Kabbalistic process of making a Golem, as given in the *Sefer Yetzirah*. Here, in company with at least one other, the magician fashions a model out of pure spring water and fresh earth accompanied to the intoning of several thousand letter-combination sounds referring to parts of the body and to the Tetragrammaton in order to vitalise the Golem, or automaton. According to Abulafia this should be accompanied by various breathing techniques and head motions. Many details are omitted from the written instructions, but Kaplan suggests the exercise to be a meditative technique for strengthening the formation of an imaginative body suitable for ascent to the spiritual realms.¹⁶¹ An alternative kind of magic may be seen in that of the Renaissance *magia naturalis* whereby the natural world itself could be manipulated by experimentation, an activity put into practice and recorded by the polymath Giambattista della Porta (1535-1615) who, in contrast to the spiritual remit of Fortune's 'regeneration', directed it to very specific mundane practical ends.¹⁶² What is common to all of these is that the manipulation of the forces of Nature is considered as natural and spiritual at one and the same time: a living nature through which secrets may be revealed. D. P. Walker speaks of demonic magic (i.e. involving spirits) leading to the 'recklessly unorthodox magic of Agrippa and Paracelsus', but coming together in Tommaso Campanella's (1568-1639) astrological magic deriving from Ficino.¹⁶³ Knorr

¹⁶⁰ Knight in Fortune and Knight, *Spiritualism and Occultism*, p. 133.

¹⁶¹ However, it is conjectured that the enormous energies aroused might have been strong enough to animate a physical form. A golem is an inanimate being akin to a homunculus and made from clay, historically by Jewish mystics employing techniques that are outlined in the *Sefer Yetzirah*. Aryeh Kaplan, *Sefer Yetzirah* (Northvale, NJ: Jason Aronson, 1995), pp. 125-131. The practice gave rise to fictional accounts of physical beings such as the Golem of Prague and Frankenstein's monster that went out of control.

¹⁶² See Giambattista della Porta, *Magia Naturalis* (1658). The Natural Magic of Marsilio Ficino (1433-1499), was so called because it did not involve the invocation of spirits, but did involve astrology, the use of Orphic hymns, etc., with the aim of healing. Natural magic is best represented by alchemy. See Angela Voss, 'The Natural Magic of Marsilio Ficino' in *Historical Dance*, 3: 1 (1992), 25-30.

¹⁶³ D. P. Walker, *Spiritual and Demonic Magic from Ficino to Campanella* (Stroud, Gloucestershire: Sutton Publishing, 2000 [1958]), pp. 75, 205-36.

von Rosenroth's search was for 'religious truth' applied to the political and scientific concerns of the mundane world similar to John Dee's scientific search by means of conversations with angels. Although the mechanical approach to science represented by Sir Isaac Newton seemed to dispense with a Hermetic approach, religion and science continued to be considered together in Protestantism and, for example, in the work of the philosopher Friedrich Schelling (1775-1854) for whom all of nature, spirit and matter, was one. His philosophy foreshadowed the romantic natural philosophers who explained nature as much in terms of analogy and hierarchy as in purely scientific comparisons.¹⁶⁴

Fortune's own definition follows that of Crowley (see Appendix IV), save for the cautious and limiting introduction of the word 'consciousness', thus: 'Magic is the art of causing changes *in consciousness* in conformity with the will.'¹⁶⁵ Changes in consciousness are a necessary preliminary condition but, were that all, much magic might well be considered a failure, for there is the further requirement, certainly for those following Dion Fortune's tradition, that there should indeed be perceptible expressions in the physical world, be they personal, cultural, social, racial or international, in the raised quality of life lived by the magician, by humanity as a whole, by those of other life forms that humanity can relate to such as are encompassed within the realm of animal, plant and faery, and by the land itself.¹⁶⁶ Whereas few of the definitions of magic given refer to the Masters overtly, Knight expresses it thus:

The purpose of a magical group [. . .] is to impress harmonising or healing patterns upon the astral light' [the collective unconscious, via the more immediate 'racial unconscious'¹⁶⁷] 'under the direction of beneficent inner plane guardians and guides, by means of ritual expression, and which should uplift in various ways the national or racial group soul of which the participants form a part.'¹⁶⁸

¹⁶⁴ Von Stuckrad, *Western Esotericism*, pp. 78, 80, 83, 94, 107-08. Dietrich von Engelhardt 'Natural Science in the Age of Romanticism' in Antoine Faivre, *Modern Esoteric Spirituality*, pp. 101-125.

¹⁶⁵ W. E. Butler in Suzanne Ruthven, *What You Call Time* (London: BCM-Writer, 1998), p. 196.

¹⁶⁶ These latter results may be very long-term to the extent of not seeming to occur even during the lifespan of the magician who helped set those forces in motion.

¹⁶⁷ See Israel Regardie, *The Art and Meaning of Magic* (Toddington: Helios Book Service, 1971), p. 88.

¹⁶⁸ Gareth Knight, unpubl. Circular, (1974).

Fortune clearly states that whereas it is possible for *chelas* (aspirants, a Theosophical term for pupils) to contact the Masters by ‘meditation and asceticism’ in the more favourable Eastern physical and mental climate, most Westerners can only do so by means of ritual.¹⁶⁹ As many aids to contact are employed in ritual as possible, including ‘concentrated emotion’; the glamour of the ritual; a figure (e.g. a Master) visualised by all; and the ‘outpouring’ of force into that mental image; all combining to the sensed objectivity of that figure, and an inrush of power through the channel so built up.¹⁷⁰ The effectiveness of any group ritual¹⁷¹ far exceeds the speed, capacity, and potency of individual meditation, and is in direct proportion to the strength of faith in, and contact with, the Masters. In an early communication by ‘Socrates’, he states categorically that ‘without [faith in the Masters], you can do nothing’, and goes on to suggest that by thinking of them one is immediately in touch with them. This accords with the observation by Knight that the reverse is also true – if a Master really wants contact, then contact will indeed be made. In contrast to the contacts of the early twentieth century, the purpose today is generally to arrange to cooperate in ritual rather than to send and receive messages.¹⁷² On a technical note, the communicator of 1924

¹⁶⁹ Fortune, *Esoteric Orders*, p. 33.

¹⁷⁰ Dion Fortune, *The Esoteric Philosophy of Love and Marriage* (London: Aquarian Press, 1970), p. 19.

¹⁷¹ ‘The ritual is simply a piece of psychological machinery’. Fortune in Fortune and Knight, *Introduction*, p. 106.

¹⁷² Fortune in Knight, *Dion Fortune and the Inner Light*, p. 89. Annie Besant had already emphasised the necessity for the student to have ‘faith in the Master and in himself’ in the text that had inspired Fortune to seek the Masters in the first place. Annie Besant, *The Ancient Wisdom* (London: Theosophical Publishing Society, 1897), p. 300. The Theosophical Master Koot Hoomi emphasises the need for faith in the wider sense, ‘[. . .] the faith required to allow your Will to arouse itself in defiance and contempt against your purely worldly intellect [. . .]’. *The Mahatma Letters to A. P. Sinnett: From the Mahatmas M. and K. H.* edited by A. T. Barker (Adyar, Madras: Theosophical Publishing House, 1979 [1923]), Letter No. 62, received 18-7-84, p. 346. Clara Codd contrasts ‘blind faith’ with that of a Master: ‘[. . .] let faith (which is unlearned knowledge) carry you through your life as a bird [. . .] undoubtingly’. This unlearned knowledge is the ‘Voice of our own Divinity,’ giving ‘invincible determination’ The Master K. H. defines it as, ‘Confidence, trust, in the Master and in ourselves.’ Clara M. Codd, *The Way of the Disciple* Adyar, Madras: Theosophical Publishing House, 1964), pp. 199, 249-50, repeated and amplified in C. W. Leadbeater, *The Masters and the Path*, 2nd edition (Adyar, Madras: Theosophical Publishing House, 1946 [1925]), pp. 114, 118, where he clarifies faith as the ‘strong conviction of the operator that the result must follow.’ Antoine Faivre begins his account of the relation between faith and knowledge with the definition given by St. Paul, ‘the substance of things hoped for’. Antoine Faivre, *Access to Western Esotericism* Albany: State University of New York Press, 1994), pp. 113-132.

stated that whereas meditation is best carried out in silence, invocation is best done aloud in order to evoke ‘certain vibrations’.¹⁷³

6. *Suggestion, Autosuggestion and Intention*

a) *Suggestion and Autosuggestion*

In an article of 1939, Fortune declared suggestion to be one of the four main-stays of magic.¹⁷⁴ Both Fortune and David-Neel agree that seemingly supernatural powers are the result of long training and based on the science of autosuggestion,¹⁷⁵ and result predominantly in increased powers of telepathy by means of which any inner plane entity can be contacted in or out of full trance. According to David-Neel, it is accepted that those who do not believe in demons will never be harmed by demons; in other cases it is the fear generated inside the victim by suggestion that creates any damage. Nevertheless, (certainly in the Tibetan culture) that does not preclude the practitioner being aware of methods of protection against not only the created images of others but also those that one has created oneself.¹⁷⁶

¹⁷³ Fortune in Fortune and Knight, *Dion Fortune and the Inner Light*, p. 97.

¹⁷⁴ The four being Sir John Woodroffe’s (Arthur Avalon’s) Tantra, David-Neel’s Tibetan Mysticism; Charles Baudouin *Suggestion and Autosuggestion* translated by Eden and Cedar Paul (London: George Allen & Unwin, 1962 [1920]) and her own rendering of Qabalah as she received it from the Golden Dawn. Fortune, ‘The Circuit of Force Part 4’ in *The Inner Light*, XII: 11 (August 1939), 213 and reproduced in Fortune and Knight, *Circuit*, p. 67. The following month she spoke of the ‘psycho-analytical trinity’ of Tantra, Qabalah and Freudian psycho-analysis which was as effective in ‘admitting to the Mystery temple’ as it was in curing the deranged. ‘The Circuit of Force Part 5’ in *The Inner Light*, XII: 12 (September 1939), 235 and reproduced in Fortune in Fortune and Knight, *Circuit*, p. 76. In 1942, she spoke of the three streams of Yoga, depth psychology and spiritualism as the ‘three keys that open the gates of the Ancient Mysteries to modern thought.’ Dion Fortune: ‘The Secret Tradition II’, *Light* (30 April, 1942), 142, reproduced in Fortune and Knight, *Spiritualism and Occultism*, p. 45. Do these represent genuine changes in emphasis over the years? By 1942, she had certainly reconciled herself to publicly admitting her personal debt to spiritualism in the first of three articles on spiritualism in her Monthly Letters circulated to a wide readership during the war. This is reproduced in Dion Fortune, *The Magical Battle of Britain* (Bradford on Avon: Golden Gates Press, 1993), pp. 89-94. See also Dion Fortune and Gareth Knight *Spiritualism and Occultism*, pp. 56-58.

¹⁷⁵ See above, pp. 249-50, and David-Neel, *Magic*, p. 162. In an interesting comment, David-Neel says that the Tibetan magicians she met ridiculed the idea of physical phenomena such as the letters that were said to have been received from the Mahatmas by Blavatsky and Sinnett through supernatural means (David-Neel, *Magic*, p. 168).

¹⁷⁶ David-Neel, *Magic*, pp. 110, 111, 162.

Fortune recommended Charles Baudouin's *Suggestion and Autosuggestion* (1920), a convincing work which summarises and popularises Émile Coué's (1857-1926) methods of healing by suggestion. The process of autosuggestion, although primarily intended for healing, simply consists of by-passing both the will and the critical faculties by repeating a set positive phrase.¹⁷⁷ It is easy to operate, and applicable to all subjects and all types of case.¹⁷⁸ It was this power, or technique, that Fortune could see in operation in the Lodge, and by extension, in any community with a set of agreed-upon rules and routines such as are used in religious observance. A contact such as that of the fictional Moon Priest mentioned in the *Goat-Foot God*, for example, must begin as auto-suggestion, or even, at a deeper level, as auto-hypnosis.¹⁷⁹ As with the discipline of meditation, regularity in conducting the same or similar rituals deepens the channels of contact, enabling two-way communication, whether in words or 'subtle influences', to be achieved more efficiently.¹⁸⁰ The British occult novelist Algernon Blackwood (1869-1951), whose books Fortune praised, mentioned the importance of suggestion in his novel *Bright Messenger* (1921), and Krishnamurti, too, considered the Masters the result of auto-suggestion, even while continuing to channel the supposedly exalted figures of the Lord Maitreya and the Mahachohan well after 1925.¹⁸¹ Suggestion is, of course, the essential adjunct to hypnosis, widely accepted nowadays in healing and self-improvement circles.

¹⁷⁷ E.g. 'Day by day in every way, I get better and better.' Charles Baudouin, *Suggestion and Autosuggestion*, p. 164. Cf. William of Ockham's (c. 1280-1349) principle of simplicity and of habit, which forms the personality. The psychology of habit was of significance in medieval monastic training, reforming the emotional and physical responses to events. Paul Vincent Spade, *Cambridge Companion to Ockham* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), p. 240.

¹⁷⁸ Healings among patients are recorded as 98% (Baudouin, *Suggestion*, p. 228).

¹⁷⁹ Fortune, *Goat-Foot*, p. 17; *Moon Magic*, p. 141.

¹⁸⁰ Fortune: *Sea Priestess*, p. 151. The Society of the Inner Light often refers to Fortune's concept of 'tracks in space' which result from regularity of practice. Fortune: *Cosmic Doctrine*, (2000), p. 71.

¹⁸¹ Warning of the power of suggestion, Blackwood's character is made to warn 'of auto-suggestion above all.' Later: '[. . .] we have not, I think, sufficiently guarded against one thing — auto-suggestion. The role it plays in life is immense, incalculable; it is in everything we do, I think, above all in everything we believe.' Algernon Blackwood, *The Bright Messenger* (London: Cassell & Co., 1921), pp. 72, 335. See also Krishnamurti's remark that the Masters were founded on auto-suggestion 'projections of one's own

b) The Combined Impact of Intention, Desire, Will, Purpose and Aspiration

It is difficult to distinguish clearly each of these synonymous factors from one another; we depend more on the particular writer's habitual use rather than strict definitions. The underlying inference of them all is that of rousing and harnessing the emotions for the achievement of a religious or psychological goal. Thomas Aquinas, like Socrates, desired (divine) wisdom. Ramon Lull tended to speak of love and will; Boehme of his 'desire and longing for a new birth', and a 'hearty desire for God';¹⁸² Louis Claude de Saint-Martin, heavily influenced by Boehme, also spoke of his fervent desire.¹⁸³ It is desire or will towards the Light, the Deity, or for divine wisdom that is the hallmark of mystic and magus alike; the ultimate aim is identical for each; what differs is their method, and their timing.¹⁸⁴

Although Fortune does not use the word 'intention' as part of the mechanism of contact, this feature is incorporated into every ritual, and indeed, in every church service. The intention of the magus (or minister) is to effect a particular purpose, just as the aim of the ceremony is expressed in a Lodge. This is Fortune and Crowley's meaning of the 'Will' as the essential basic factor in magical skill.¹⁸⁵ But this is the Will without the overtones of effort generally ascribed to it. We may note in this

ideals, and the result of an individual's past experience.' Roland Vernon, *Star in the East: Krishnamurti the Invention of a Messiah* (London: Constable, 2000), p. 129.

¹⁸² As contrasted with 'terrestrial desire'. Rev. William Law, ed., 'A Small Sampler of Extracts from the Teutonic Philosopher Jacob Behmen 1575-1624: Part One, Aurora: The Day-Spring. The Author's Preface, (London: 1764) para 16, 20. www.passtheword.org [accessed 04/12/07]. He linked man's desire with God's reciprocal desire for self-manifestation. The first quality of the Absolute is the Desire or Will to reveal itself to itself. Jacob Boehme, *Threefold Life*, III, 21.

¹⁸³ E.g. 'a glorious desire to renew [men's] alliance with Universal Unity' and a 'burning desire to lead his fellows back to their spiritual source'. 'Great Theosophists: Louis Claude de Saint-Martin' *Theosophy*, vol. 26: 11, (Sep. 1938), 482-88. www.wisdomworld.org [accessed_05/12/07]. Saint-Martin published his *L'homme de désir* in 1790. In Swedenborg's case, it was more of a 'desire to understand the order and purpose of creation'. Jane Williams-Hogan, 'The Place of Emanuel Swedenborg in Modern Western Esotericism' in Antoine Faivre & Wouter J. Hanegraaff (eds), *Western Esotericism and the Science of Religion* (Leuven: Peeters, 1998), pp. 201-52, (p. 212).

¹⁸⁴ A prime example is St John of the Cross, who, alongside the evils of desire, even freedom of desire, speaks much of his desire for God, and of desire satisfied in glory. Saint John of the Cross, *The Complete Works of Saint John of the Cross*, translated and edited by E. Allison Peers (Wheatthampton: Anthony Clarke, 1978 [1935]), I, 60-61; III, 246-67; III, 182-83, 119-20. One might also be wary of that excess of desire that manifests as spiritual ambition. Clara Codd, *Way of the Disciple*, p. 148.

¹⁸⁵ See definitions of magic in Appendix IV (pp. 431-37).

context Crowley's Theorem 1: 'Every intentional act is a Magical Act',¹⁸⁶ which at once brings magic into the arena of everyday life and accessible to all, enabling instant contact with the Masters or any other intermediaries at any hour of the day.¹⁸⁷ Perhaps he is taking the advice of Éliphas Lévi, who declared that the magician must 'will well, [. . .] will long, [. . .] will always, [. . .] such is the secret of power.'¹⁸⁸ Directly pertinent to this is the cultivation in the practitioner of faith, in the absence of which, no results can be obtained.¹⁸⁹ Once again, faith is well recognised as an indispensable mechanism in religious endeavour, and is none less so in the Western mysteries which, certainly in their higher practices, e.g. in work appertaining to the Supernals on the Tree of Life, is a religious activity.¹⁹⁰ It is exemplified in the advice to the aspiring alchemist given by John Dastin to develop a mind 'pure and dedicated to God, and humbly beseech him for help.'¹⁹¹

In 1924 Fortune was still reticent concerning methods of contacting the Masters, save to state guardedly that the chief requirement is a strong and lasting desire, which she describes as an outpouring of 'a subtle but nevertheless potent form of force' which is the factor that vitalises any clear mental image that accompanies it.¹⁹² Her approach was nevertheless consistent with that of Leadbeater, Bailey and Scott, who

¹⁸⁶ Crowley, *Magick*, p. 132. Repeated by Fortune as 'Any act performed with intention becomes a rite.' Dion Fortune, *Psychic Self-defence* (Wellingborough: Aquarian Press, 1974), p. 173.

¹⁸⁷ 'Whenever you think of the Masters, you touch them, you lay the hand of your soul upon them.' Fortune in Knight, *Dion Fortune/Inner Light*, p. 89.

¹⁸⁸ Cited from Martin Stoddard, *Orthodox Heresy: the Rise of 'Magic' as Religion and its Relation to Literature* (London, 1989), p. 64 in B. J. Gibbons, *Spirituality and the Occult* (London: Routledge, 2001), p. 39.

¹⁸⁹ As so clearly stated by Fortune's 'Socrates', p. 373, above, and p. 374, n. 172. Faith was clearly an indispensable factor for members of the Theosophical Society such as Col Olcott. See Chapter 5, pp. 279, 283.

¹⁹⁰ Faith might be characterised as spiritual aspiration that at a 'lower' level might be expressed as spiritual fervour, but that has a resonance at a more refined level characterised by a feeling of certainty (for the person concerned). Jung felt he had surpassed his 'belief' in God and arrived at that stage of certainty. 'I don't believe – I know!' BBC Interview 1959. It is a lower octave of *gnosis* in its fullest sense.

¹⁹¹ Wilfred R. Thiessen, ed., 'John Dastin's Letter on the Philosophers' Stone', *Ambix*, 32, 2/3 (November 1986), 82, cited in B. J. Gibbons, *Spirituality and the Occult: From the Renaissance to the Modern Age* (London: Routledge, 2001), p. 112.

¹⁹² Dion Fortune, *The Esoteric Philosophy of Love and Marriage* (London: Aquarian Press, 1970 [1924]), p. 29.

state that fervent aspiration and a ‘right attitude’¹⁹³ are two key ingredients leading to contact.¹⁹⁴ Aspiration is another affective characteristic which is a strong feature of Christian and other religious observance as a basic means of contacting higher beneficent forces or individuals (e.g. God, Jesus, Mary, or the Saints), and no doubt Fortune, recognising its power, felt comfortable at the time about recommending this not overtly occult procedure.

The question of why certain matters were communicated and not others is one that is answered by Fortune’s advice concerning the steps that an aspirant can take while preparing to meet the Master, namely, to cultivate a sound general knowledge upon which inner teachings can be based.¹⁹⁵ It naturally follows that whatever is of most interest to the aspirant, medium, or sitters will attract teaching about that area. It is not surprising that she received materials concerning the setting up of a therapeutic centre when we note that her parents were experienced in running a hydrotherapeutic centre; that she had worked as a psychotherapist; that she was in contact with a nurse and the psychotherapist husband of her friend Maiya Tranchell-Hayes; and that whenever her medical doctor husband attended her trance sessions, the process of receiving the teachings on healing was greatly eased. It was hinted by Carstairs that two of the communicators with regard to medical matters were Paracelsus (1493-1541) and Ignaz Semmelweiss (1818-65), a pioneer bacteriologist. A later communicator appeared to be another who, though not a doctor, by his own admission picked up data from the minds of those present, and reinterpreted it from his own viewpoint, suggesting that the presence of Fortune’s husband, Dr Penry Evans, was not only useful but indispensable to some communications. This again suggests that it is the amount and quality of stored data in the minds of the sitters that is a critical factor in the quality of the transmissions

¹⁹³ incorporating unselfishness, curiosity, and the moral courage to step outside of accepted norms, all balanced by an attitude of discrimination – testing the spirits to determine their real worth. Scott, *Outline*, pp. 193-200. It recalls Fortune’s ‘likemindedness’ (pp. 363, 357, above).

¹⁹⁴ Scott, *Outline*, pp. 193, 199.

¹⁹⁵ Dion Fortune, *The Training and Work of an Initiate* (Wellingborough: Aquarian Press, 1972), pp. 17-24.

received.¹⁹⁶ One presumes that an occultist engineer or financier would have matters relating to engineering or finance clarified.

One may cite here the scholar Jennifer Porter, who endorses studies which show that appropriate predispositions or prior beliefs appear to determine those most likely to receive contact from alien beings (extra-terrestrials). She reports that some spiritualists are able to determine whether the origin of a communication is of a discarnate human or of extra-terrestrial origin by means of a distinctive feeling of ‘strangeness’, and she suggests that the application of this feeling can be generalised to cover students of the Mysteries with their own traditional (and perhaps limiting) cultural predispositions.¹⁹⁷ In a sense, the Masters are indeed extraterrestrials. Their history as members of the human race can in no way be proved; we have to use our own experience and limited powers of discrimination to be satisfied with the nature and content of their communications. This is a theme also taken up by Sally Palmer, who investigates the degree to which alien contacts resemble those of traditional religious encounters (including areas we would term magical or shamanistic). In particular, she gives the instance of George King (1919-97), founder of the Aetherius Society in 1955, who experienced contact with the ‘Cosmic Masters’, most of whom were spirits from other planets in the solar system.¹⁹⁸ Jacques Vallee has compiled an index of over nine hundred UFO sightings witnessed during the period 1868-1968, and draws comparisons between those incidents and previous examples in the Middle Ages and the ancient world, arguing that the forms that these energies or beings take on are carefully geared to fit the preconceptions of the culture in which they appear. He thus compares and correlates recent extra-terrestrial appearances with Celtic fairy lore, with the appearance of saints and other religious figures such as at Knock in 1879, with Plutarch’s *daemons*, and with the Elementals of Paracelsus, which suggests that they might all be placed

¹⁹⁶ Knight, *Three-fold Way*, pp. 41-64.

¹⁹⁷ Jennifer E. Porter, ‘Spiritualists, Aliens and UFOs: Extraterrestrials as Spirit Guides’ *Journal of Contemporary Religion*, 11: 3 (1996), 337-353 (pp. 344, 5).

¹⁹⁸ Sally Palmer, *Close Encounters of the Religious Kind? Identifying the Religious Components in the Literature of the Alien Close Encounter Phenomenon* (unpublished doctoral thesis, University of Kent, Canterbury, 2000), p. 15. A comprehensive account of George King’s work with extra-terrestrials is given in George King with Richard Lawrence, *Contacts With The Gods from Space: Pathway to the New Millennium* (Hollywood: Aetherius Society, 1996).

firmly within the tradition of intermediary beings. The apparent absurdity of most incidents, he proposes, is purely the result of our own ignorance of the underlying physics involved.¹⁹⁹ This is an area that deserves wider investigation, particularly against the background of flexibility in the stances of both New Age beliefs and what is popularly termed the ‘new physics’.²⁰⁰

Time and Place

We have seen that the phenomenon of time had much to do with the mechanism that lay behind the synchronous appearance of a bought postcard.²⁰¹ Some of Fortune’s passing remarks – such as that time on the inner planes ‘doesn’t count’²⁰² – show her as aware of the flexibility of time, but she did not seem to realise the dichotomy between

¹⁹⁹ Jacques Vallee, *Passport to Magonia: On UFOs, Folklore and Parallel Worlds* (Chicago: Contemporary Books, 1993 [1969], pp. 11, 13, 57, 132-35, 151. He seeks to strengthen his case for the matching of appearances to the culture of the time by citing fictional occurrences as precursors to actual later incidents, e.g. that Arthur Koestler had already written of black-outs as a result of alien activity in 1933, and the effect of visitations on car ignition had already been described in Bernard Newman’s novel *The Flying Saucer* (1950). Vallee, *Passport*, p. 162. This is in a similar vein to Helena Blavatsky’s work on the Masters appearing subsequent to Bulwer-Lytton’s work *Zanoni*. Alan Watts’s survey further introduces the possibility of an alien ‘opposition’ similar to the Kabbalistic *dibbukim*. (See Chapter 4, p. 247, above.) Watts also highlights the importance of the Council of Nine as intermediaries who communicate through their spokesman ‘Tom’ using the deep trance medium Phyllis Schlemmer as their vehicle. Alan Watts, *UFO Visitation: Preparing for the Twenty-first Century* (London: Cassell, 1996), pp. 6, 83, 86, 93. He observes tellingly, ‘People report what they have seen but that does not mean that it is necessarily what was there.’ Watts, *UFO Visitation*, p. 10. For a considered overview of Vallee’s work, see Colin Wilson, *Alien Dawn: An Investigation into the Contact Experience* (London: Virgin Publishing, 1998), pp. 83-117. Two further particularly scholarly works concerning the complexity of UFO phenomenon have since appeared, viz.: Dennis Stillings, ed., *Cyber-biological Studies in the Imaginal Component in the UFO Contact Experience* (St Paul, MN: Archaeus Project, 1989), with nine papers expressing a predominantly sceptical view; and James R. Lewis, ed., *The Gods Have Landed: New Religions from Other Worlds* (Albany, NY: State University of New York, 1995), which examines the religious dynamic in UFO phenomena and abductions. John A. Saliba, for example, notes that Christian fundamentalists align UFO phenomena with the Devil himself, who causes a ‘temporary manipulation of matter and energy’ in order to mislead people. John A. Saliba ‘The Religious Dimension of UFO Phenomena’ in Lewis, *Gods Have Landed*, pp. 15-65 (p. 39). The contents of this book reflect a predominant concern with psycho-social explanations.

²⁰⁰ For the New Age, see, for example, Shirley MacLaine, *You Can Get There From Here* (London: Bantam Books, 1987 [1975]); Paul Heelas, *The New Age Movement* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1996). For the New Physics, see John Gribbin, *In Search of Schrödinger’s Cat* (London: Corgi Books, 1985); Bart Kosko, *Fuzzy Thinking* (London: HarperCollins, 1994), and Gary Zukav, *The Dancing Wu Li Masters* (London: Rider, 1979).

²⁰¹ See above, p. 344.

²⁰² Fortune, *Moon Magic*, p. 103.

that position and her other frequent approach based on the mythological-historical paradigm of ‘tradition’; each consideration of it, even in ‘inner’ terms, allowed herself and her students to, as it were, confirm and ‘solidify’ the idea of linear time. Her stress on her foundational doctrine of reincarnation, too, served in her day to emphasise the concept of linear time, as indeed does evolution, that paradoxical yet proven alternative to congruent time.²⁰³ Recent approaches by Jane Roberts or Neale Donald Walsch, neither magicians nor occultists, are among many who have opened up to popular

²⁰³ Both time and reincarnation are greater subjects than can be discussed here, requiring extensive investigation in their own right. See, for example, Jane Roberts, *The Nature of Personal Reality*, (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, 1974); Jane Roberts, *Adventures in Consciousness*, etc. See also A. T. Barker, compil., *The Mahatma Letters to A. P. Sinnett* compiled by A. T. Barker (Adyar: Theosophical Publishing House, 3rd edn, 1979 [1923]), p. 191: ‘Time is something created entirely by ourselves;’ How, then does this fit with the theory of evolution? There is a view that although it is not possible to change the past, it is possible in personal terms to change our attitude to it and so redeem our own past mistakes. David Hawkins, *The Discovery* (Paignton: Nightingale Conant, 2007), Part 2, 5. Plato (Timaeus, 37d) spoke of time as a ‘moving image of eternity’; Aristotle as ‘the numerical measure of change’; Plotinus as an aspect of ‘activity’; with Augustine adding that what we measure are purely ‘changes in mental impressions’. Whereas Boehme saw process as a quality of Deity, Newton saw time as a fixed background to all phenomena. Husserl saw the ‘process’ of time as a characteristic depending on how impressions of the ‘experiential flow’ were retained. Thomas McFarlane, ‘A Brief History of Time’ in *The Nature of Time*, <http://www.integral science.org> Spring 1998 rev 2004. [accessed 06/12/07]. The introduction of the idea of natural selection, and hence evolution, by Alfred Russell Wallace and Charles Darwin for ever changed the way we interpret the past, and so Helena Blavatsky, reflecting, perhaps, Wallace’s incorporation of a belief in invisible intelligences into a scientific paradigm, correspondingly incorporated evolution into her own beliefs concerning invisible intelligences. But she greatly enhanced the time-periods of a repeatedly-incarnating, and extended geological history way beyond that of conventional science. Yet at the same time, she was able to say “‘Time’ is only an illusion produced by the succession of our states of consciousness as we travel through Eternal Duration, and it does not exist where no consciousness exists [. . .]” H. P. Blavatsky, *The Secret Doctrine* (London: Theosophical Publishing House, 1888 [1950]) I, 110. See also Blavatsky’s letter of March 30th, 1879 where she praises ‘the great modern Scientist’ A. R. Wallace. H. P. Blavatsky, *A Modern Panarion: A Fugitive Collection of Fragments, Volume I* (London: Theosophical Publishing Society, 1895), pp. 199-206 (pp. 204-05). Since then, Bertrand Russell proposed his general theory of relativity (1915), and later, J. W. Dunne’s unconventional work *Experiment with Time* (London: A. & C. Black, 1927) expressed his well-supported theory that all time is eternally present, only experienced linearly as ‘serial time’ – a concept very close to that of mystery traditions, and was a text that inspired J. B. Priestley towards his own *Man and Time* (London: Aldous, 1964). *The Book of Time* (Newton Abbot: Westbridge Books, 1980), edited by Colin Wilson has scholarly chapters by seven distinguished authors, which together encompass much of the above. Since then, Stephen Hawking has published his enormously influential *A Brief History of Time* (London: Bantam, 1988), and his even more succinct *Black Holes and Baby Universes and Other Essays* (London: Bantam Books, 1993) explaining a variety of topics such as the Big Bang, black holes, and superstring theory, much of which is apposite to aspects of esoteric conjecture. Cf the Fludd diagrams in Joscelyn Godwin, *Robert Fludd: Hermetic Philosopher and Surveyor of Two Worlds* (London: Thames & Hudson, 1979), pp. 24-30.

recognition new ways of apprehending time. According to Roberts, since time's sequence of moments is only the result of the way we feel comfortable perceiving it, our disposition is not the result of our past, or even of the future; the series of choices of events is all in the present.²⁰⁴ Her contact Seth insists upon the simultaneity of events, and upon the concept of reincarnation as a temporary conceptual structure to enable access to insights otherwise hidden.²⁰⁵ This is confirmed by Walsch who expresses time as the Eternal Moment, containing 'all "possible possibilities."' Once again, everything is happening now. This applies not only to events, but to alternative selves as well, as determined by the individual's capacity to choose which events and which alternate selves to perceive, thus enabling any of an infinite number of possible events past or future, to be selected, and to 'occur'.²⁰⁶ Leilah Wendell, insisting that her conclusions stem from her own experience, states: 'Past, present and future are all at *equal distances* from where I am right now!'²⁰⁷ If that were so, one might ask if it were not better to work on one's ability to change one's perception of time rather than, as it might seem, perpetuate the concept of its linear nature by accepting conventional magical traditions. It would at least give some credence to the creative nature of magic, which can be considered as much akin to a mechanism for altering outcomes only seemingly dependent on time.²⁰⁸ These alternative ways to recognise time – for example, as a phenomenon of multi-dimensionality which the concrete mind is only able to understand in linear terms – nowadays gives us the task of attempting to reconcile, and use creatively, the apparently anomalous relationship between the

²⁰⁴ Roberts, *Adventures*, p. 148; also 'There is no time. All things exist simultaneously. All events occur at once.' Neale Donald Walsch, *Conversations with God: an Uncommon Dialogue* (London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1997) book 2, p. 58.

²⁰⁵ Jane Roberts, *The Nature of Personal Reality* (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, 1974), pp. 447-49. Also quoted in Hanegraaff, *New Age Religion*, p. 271.

²⁰⁶ Walsch, *Conversations*, pp. 117, 118. In similar vein, Stewart speaks of 'the delusion of rigid linear history', R. J. Stewart, *Power within the Land* (Shaftesbury: Element, 1992), p. xv. As one of Fortune's communicators said, 'Time is measured by us by what happens, not by the number of times the earth turns on its axis.' Fortune in Fortune and Knight, *Spiritualism and Occultism*, p. 114.

²⁰⁷ Leilah Wendell, *The Book of Azrael* (New York: Westgate Press, 1988), p. xii.

²⁰⁸ The same may be said, of course, about the activity of church service where God is petitioned to alter what might seem an otherwise inevitable and unwelcome future.

conventional time paradigm and the new, as exemplified popularly in science fiction, and to resolve the problem of how intermediaries relate to them.²⁰⁹

Is it the more flexible attitude to time that has encouraged an unconscious increased expectancy of events such as precognition or synchronistic phenomena,²¹⁰ and of being able not only to re-interpret, but also in some way ‘alter’ the past, or at least change outcomes relating to one’s past actions, to one’s own satisfaction? The examination of time might clarify, for example, some of the rationale behind meditation, behind the phenomenon of the existence of intermediaries, or behind ceremonial magic, the prime activity of Fortune’s Society of the Inner Light. One can only influence future ‘presents’ from this ‘present’, hence its importance in magic and religion, as in life. Using the mechanisms of suggestion and intention, a magician can assert, generally in concert with emotion and visualisation, that a certain condition, microcosmic or macrocosmic (e.g. universal harmony) has *already* manifested, and feel satisfied that as a consequence, future conditions have already subtly changed for the better.²¹¹

The element of time could also provide a rationale for the existence of the Masters; are they aspects of ourselves come to meet us from ‘the past’ or even from ‘the future’? That there are only a few of them compared to the number of occultists could be explained by a pooling of wisdom as the higher levels of consciousness are reached.

It is not easy to differentiate time and place in the occult tradition, for so much of the tradition harks back to past times and past places. Fortune was especially aware of the geographical element in occult work, maintaining that the environment of Egypt in particular tended to stimulate some kind of inner experience for sensitive visitors.

²⁰⁹ Are they all merely ghosts of the past, for example? Gary Zukav has shown that Einstein’s experiments in the variability of clock time suggest that what ‘time’ we are in depends very much upon the experiencer – there is no ‘universal time’. Gary Zukav, *The Dancing Wu-Li Masters* (London: Rider, 1979), pp. 166ff. See also Bonewits, *Real Magic*, p. 45.

²¹⁰ Cf. the term ‘synchronicity’. Jung speaks of ‘psychic parallelisms which cannot be related to each other causally, but which must be connected through another principle, namely the contingency of events.’ Carl Gustav Jung, *Memories, Dreams, Reflections*, p. 356. See also Carl Gustav Jung, *Synchronicity, an Acausal Connecting Principle* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1972).

²¹¹ Knight in Fortune and Knight, *Introduction*, pp. 36-47.

She speaks of many such ‘sacred centres’ in every country interlinked with those of other countries. Most churches in the south-west of England, for example, are associated with the name of a local ‘saint’. As part of my magical training, I was advised, as well as making myself aware of sacred sites about the country generally, to select one cathedral or abbey and one prehistoric site for particular attention. Fortune, taking her prompt from Lewis Spence’s *Mysteries of Britain* (1928) suggests that ancient monuments provide a link between Druids and ‘the great subconscious of the world, where Past, Present, and Future lie ready to be unfolded’.²¹² Students in her tradition are still advised to make at least one site visit to a location which has some connection to the figure one wishes to contact, or about which a ritual has to be composed. It was possible until very recently, for example, to stand and meditate in the same cell as that in which the historical Socrates spent his last day, which Knight was able to do.²¹³ Similarly, other visits have been made to the sacred sites about Glastonbury (where Fortune saw fit to purchase land), especially the Tor and Wearyall Hill, both frequented by Fortune, and also further afield; Tower Hill, scene of Thomas More’s beheading; Tewkesbury Abbey, which became the model for a complete inner meditational construct;²¹⁴ the battlefields of the Somme and Ypres where Carstairs supposedly met his death, and so on. The theme of the sacredness of the land of Britain in particular was ably presented in Eleanor Merry’s *The Flaming Door* (1962 [1936]), and later continued by Fortune’s pupil, Christine Hartley in her *The Western Mystery Tradition* (1968). More recently, Stewart’s major emphasis, whether dealing with the World of Faery, the Tarot, or figures such as Merlin, is on the necessity, before true

²¹² Fortune, *Aspects*, pp. 13-17. Richardson cites recent examples of sensitives (including many from Fortune’s training or lineage) ‘tuning in’ to sacred sites. [The sites] ‘are symbolic gateways to levels of consciousness and universal energies within our minds that we can all reach, simply by travelling *within*.’ Alan Richardson, *Spirits of the Stones* (London: Virgin Publishing, 2001), p. 3. This is one way in which an apparently ‘pre-personal’ activity can lead into ‘transpersonal’ states. What seems to matter to the practitioner is whether or not s/he is aware of the difference.

²¹³ The ruins of the jail lie behind the ancient Law Court situated in the Athenian Agora.

²¹⁴ Knight, *Abbey Papers*, *passim*.

harmony among peoples can come about, for humanity to be first reconciled with the land, for ‘Your true self and the land are one.’²¹⁵

Richard Noll points out that concern for the land, for the landscape, and for the soil of one’s birth was a determining influence on the psychologist C. G. Jung. His early familiarity with the literature of the German *Naturphilosophie* of the Romantic era, the coincidence of an early twentieth-century rise in many German neo-pagan groups following an earlier revival of *völkisch* movements, and his own itineraries about the regions of Germany provided him with the basis for a concept of the psyche as to a large extent geographically determined.²¹⁶

²¹⁵ R. J. Stewart, *The Way of Merlin* (Wellingborough: Aquarian Press, 1991), p. 14. This is amply illustrated in his *Underworld Initiation* (1985); *Earth Light* (1992); *Power within the Land* (1992), etc. The contact he established with a buried king at the tomb of Les Monts, Grantez, Jersey was introduced earlier (Chapter 4, p. 252), and is also given in Gareth Knight, *Secret Tradition in Arthurian Legend* (Wellingborough: Aquarian Press, 1983). The King who was destined to merge into the land to act as a guardian, responsible for disseminating ‘earth-peace’ to peoples under his jurisdiction. It did not follow that the King was ‘confined’ there – he appeared apart from the tomb, and was also, in a way, ‘part of the solar system’, which was also in the very substance of the stones. Knight, *Secret Tradition*, pp. 158-62. There is much more to this, and can perhaps explain the nature and continuing power of sacred sites that occultists (including Fortune) are sensitive to. Again, the learning was felt to be a two-way process as in Knight’s partner’s experience of the H. G. Wells contact (p. 342, above). It appears to be as much to do with time as with place.

²¹⁶ Giving rise to ‘an intuitive grasp of the very pulse of life itself’ Richard Noll, *The Jung Cult*, pp. 21, 41, 75-77, 272, 305 n. 34. Outside of esotericism, concern in this country with *genius loci*, kinship in husbandry, and the geographic exchange between land and psyche are well represented in these examples: Harold J. Massingham *Impressions of Life in a Buckinghamshire Village* (London: Cobden-Sanderson, 1934); S. P. B. Mais, *Glorious Devon* (London: The Great Western Railway Co., 1928) and George Ewart Evans, *The Pattern Under the Plough: Aspects of Folk-life in East Anglia* (London: Faber & Faber, 1971). Massingham is especially significant as expressing a profoundly spiritual (Bible-based) approach to the English countryside, and calling for a rebirth in our attitude to the countryside which is much in line with the ecological thinking of today. One may comment that a ‘rebirth of England’ brought about by a new and beneficent relationship between humanity and the land (‘love of the land for its own sake’), could well presage a world-wide rebirth, and effect the age-old aim of the magi – transformation of the Anima Mundi. See H. J. Massingham *The Tree of Life* (Charlbury, Oxfordshire: Jon Carpenter Publishing, 2003 [1943]), p. 7. Over the course of many volumes, these authors celebrate a wide variety of the country’s regions, highlighting the close interaction between land and people. Mais’s biographer Maisie Robson recounts the success, of his book and radio series *This Unknown Island*, and describes his preference for rugged countryside, remote villages, and touring on foot. Maisie Robson, *An Unrepentant Englishman: The Life of S. P. B. Mais, Ambassador of the Countryside* (Rotherham: King’s England Press, 2005), pp. 87-109. One could also draw parallels in music and art, e.g. the folk traditions painstakingly gathered by Cecil Sharpe (1859-1924); George Butterworth’s evocative music of the English landscape, and the works of John Constable (1776-1837).

Perhaps this concern for the land is for Fortune one example of following in the footsteps of the Masters, who are sometimes said to address themselves to particular localities – countries, and continents.²¹⁷ Thus, a special group of Masters direct the British Isles 'with the exception of Southern Ireland' (who have their own), and they are able to boost the evolution of the particular race or country of which they have oversight by virtue of their ability to pass on some of their own beneficial *karma*.²¹⁸ On a smaller scale, I have been closely associated with recent and very poignant ritual work based, for example, upon Bateman's, Rudyard Kipling's home at Burwash, East Sussex; various churches of the City of London; sites associated with the Battle of Hastings; major cities of the globe; and an extension of the major visualisation of Glastonbury Tor outlined by Fortune in her War Letters – each of these instigated by inner promptings from what I take to be Masters. Sometimes the promptings were obvious; at other times synchronicities occurred several times before I took notice. A chance word in a book, noticing a house name 'Bateman's' that I had previously overlooked, a fleeting reference to Kipling on the radio – all contributed to the certainty of what ritual I was expected to create or take part in next. After ritual is concluded, an endorsement from the inner planes is sometimes brought to attention, the most remarkable in my case being the announcement within a few days of the 'Hastings' ritual that Prince Edward was to be endowed with King Harold's own title 'Earl of Wessex', that I had emphasised during the rite.²¹⁹

Nicholas Whitehead notes that saints appeared to certain individuals as guides in early Christian centuries, and quoting Peter Brown, he gives the example of the guidance supplied by St Felix to the Christian poet Paulinus of Nola. The saints were held to have strong links with the sites upon which they were martyred, providing for

²¹⁷ Knight in Fortune and Knight, *Spiritualism and Occultism*, pp. 136-41. This was also a feature of the Masters' remit as described by C. W. Leadbeater in *The Masters and the Path* 2nd edn (Adyar, Theosophical Publishing House, 1946 [1925]), *passim*.

²¹⁸ Fortune, *Magical Battle*, p. 130; Fortune, *Cosmic Doctrine*, p. 140. See also Leadbeater, *Masters*, pp. 200, 202.

²¹⁹ Such 'endorsements', or synchronicities, are often looked for, and are termed 'signs following'. Yet they nearly always come as a surprise, or in a way that is surprising. Knight has recorded many similar. Cf. Also Crowley's 'By doing certain things, certain things happen.' Gerald Suster, *Crowley's Apprentice: The Life and Ideas of Israel Regardie* (London: Rider, 1989), p. 28.

pilgrims and worshippers at their shrines a more open channel between heaven and earth in a way very reminiscent of the prehistoric kings' own willing sacrifice for the sake of the land and ultimate wellbeing of the people.²²⁰ Here we have suggestive parallels stretching from pagan sacrifice, through early and medieval Christianity to the inner plane guides or Masters of the modern magical Lodge. Fortune's *Avalon of the Heart* emphasises both Christian and pagan influences focusing on Glastonbury, and ultimately stemming from Atlantis, because the Manu Merlin was said to have reached the shores of England during the third emigration from Atlantis, immediately before its submergence.²²¹ Besides her broad-brush approach to occult geography,²²² she was also sensitive to local influences, as she reveals in her novels. Fortune speaks of different rock types evoking quite different inner sensitivities, some of them 'alive with presences'.²²³ She designates London in particular as having its full range of atmospheres,²²⁴ and on a millenarian note identifies the English capital city, and presumably the great figures (Masters?) associated with it, as 'the centre for the new age'.²²⁵

The impact of the Masters in my own occult life has largely been subliminal through prompts and urges to write, the two most notable peak experiences having occurred during ritual – the first after an evocation of Arthur and Guinevere, who processed around the Lodge dispensing blessings, and the second towards the end of a Palm Sunday ritual and visualisation of Jesus whom I vividly sensed to be present and re-enacting the scene of his triumphal ride into Jerusalem as on the original occasion, seeming to shoot a glance directly into my eyes as he passed. Both incidents provoked a

²²⁰ Nicholas Whitehead, *Patterns in Magical Christianity* (Albuquerque: Sun Chalice Books, 1996), pp. 168-69. See Peter Brown, *The Cult of the Saints* (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 1981).

²²¹ Fortune, *Sea Priestess*, pp. 196-98. The myth of this lost continent (like Lemuria before it) has an enormous range of literature to its credit, and many explanations as to its location in the world or on the Astral. A recent title is Andrew Collins, *Gateway to Atlantis* (London: Headline, 2000), which has an extensive bibliography.

²²² Even speaking of the earth as the 'body of the Goddess' – nowadays a commonplace idea among New Age groups concerned with ecological issues.

²²³ Fortune, *Moon Magic*, pp. 2-3.

²²⁴ E.g. Pelham Street, Oxford Street, Billings Street. Fortune, *Goat-foot*, pp. 7, 8, 24; Chelsea; the 'murky district behind Euston', etc. Fortune, *Winged Bull*, pp. 45, 159;

deep and intense emotional impact involving tears, and great difficulty in returning to normal consciousness for some time afterwards. In both cases, the build-up had seemed quite uneventful, working away at visualising the scenes being described, and the peak occurrence came quite unexpectedly. It is very difficult to gauge the long-term implications of these contacts, though I remember them both very clearly, and they seem to have given some kind of long-lasting spiritual boost to my life. For a Christian, visualising oneself taking part in a Biblical scene involving Jesus must be a most acceptable way to exercise the *via positiva* which Ignatius and the Society of Jesus found so empowering – one which is unknown to most everyday Christians, but which Christian occultists can and do use seemingly to great advantage according to their belief.

Finally, a recent well-balanced article on the Masters by Suzanne Rough, of the ‘D.K. Foundation’,²²⁶ lays out in simple terms the way that inner plane communication might take place:

1. that while the concept of the Masters, like many a concept, is a ‘contrivance’, a product of the human mind, they nevertheless represent and are channels for units of consciousness, or ‘informing Lives’ using the constructed personalities;

2. that these ‘informing Lives’ operate over vast periods of time, generally namelessly, being without personalities; and

3. she speaks of Blavatsky and Olcott as having ‘created’ the Masters, as ‘channels of access’ whereby humanity could more easily contact the consciousnesses behind them, and through which those consciousnesses could work in the world.

Rough describes how such Masters - or daemons in the ancient sense of the word – can be created by a three-fold process of:

1. seeing them in your mind (as in the minds of the early Theosophists);

2. naming them (as, for example, Master St. Germain, Master Jesus, etc.); and

²²⁵ Dion Fortune in Cammell, ‘Unusual Communications’, *Light* (Jan 1942), quoted in Fortune and Knight, *Spiritualism and Occultism*, p. 38.

²²⁶ So called after the Master Djwahl Khul, the inspiration for the works of Alice Bailey.

3. feeding them with collective energy, or emotion (as in a Mystery School).

Eventually this energy, and these entities, will manifest on the etheric plane, but not on the physical. Early Theosophists like Blavatsky, Besant and Leadbeater had etheric vision, and were perhaps themselves confused as to whether the manifestations of their Masters related to the etheric or the physical planes. Rough emphasises that her Master D.K. stresses the importance of *mental* rather than lower contacts, partly because it requires much less energy on behalf of the ‘informing Lives’, and partly because it helps raise humanity’s consciousness to higher levels of contact. Leadbeater’s popularisation of the Masters was a departure from Blavatsky’s comparatively restrained foundations, being achieved through the creative process of building a world for the Masters as he imagined it to be. Suzanne Rough reminds us that dwelling on the machinations of the imagined daily lives of the Masters, and their varied occupations, and relationships between them, are barriers to our understanding of the ‘informing Lives’ themselves as channels which were ‘created to help us focus on our own lives and live them better, not to distract ourselves with what they are up to in theirs’. The preparations that students can make towards contact with their own Masters include:

1. organizing themselves physically;
2. essential emotional balancing;
3. learning ‘a certain meditation technique’.

Rough concludes her article most appositely with the ‘memorable and, to my mind unsurpassed’ explanation of the Masters written by Dion Fortune herself (quoted in Chapter 5 above).²²⁷

This Chapter has discussed a range of techniques, varying over time, that English occultists have used for contacting higher beings according to the sensed needs

²²⁷ Suzanne Rough, <http://www.dkfoundation.co.uk/dkfQWhoAreTheMastersd.htm> [accessed 26 September 2005]. I quote Rough’s considerably truncated rendering for comparison with the full and correct paragraph as given on page 293 in Chapter 5: ‘The Masters as you picture them are all imagination. Note well that I did not say the Masters were imagination . . . (they are contacted) through your imagination, and although your mental picture is not real or actual, the results are real and actual.’

of the time. As we have seen, even Fortune herself during the course of her life developed simpler meditation and visualisation techniques apart from ritual, some of which she publicised for use by the untrained, making way for those with experience in the Western Mysteries to investigate and in their turn make available novel methods and techniques with which to experiment. Perhaps because an increasing number of those experimenting with any of the variant methods of communication with intermediaries have not felt constrained by loyalty to any one particular method, or because there is now a greater awareness throughout society – and increased sensitivity among some – of these formerly specialist and recondite techniques, the tendency in the busy life-styles of people today is towards simplicity, by-passing most of the intricacies and complications outlined above, and well summarised by Gary Zukav: ‘This is how non-physical guidance works. You ask. Then you listen. Then you decide. [. . .] It’s that simple.’²²⁸

²²⁸ Gary Zukav, *Soul Stories* (London: Simon & Schuster, 2000), p. 37.

Chapter 7: Conclusion

Consideration has been given here to the life and work of Dion Fortune in the light of her experience of spiritual intermediaries, together with an account of how those intermediaries and the hierarchies to which they belong form part of a historical tradition cultivated and documented by a long line of common people, highly educated scholars, philosophers, and esoteric practitioners. The critical influence on culture, creativity and the arts of these irrational but powerful constructs has led an increasing number of scholars to grant some recognition to these components of Western esotericism as a valid subject of research. I have therefore drawn attention to the work of historians, anthropologists and others who have investigated the various forms of spiritual intermediary, and also to accumulated comment on, and appreciation of, the work of Dion Fortune as both novelist and magical practitioner. I have attempted to clarify the relationship between Fortune's writings and practices and her understanding of intermediaries in general and the Masters in particular. I have also tried to demonstrate that the intermediary belief and experience was a stimulus for setting in motion a broader interest in the occult thanks to the writings of Madame Blavatsky and her immediate followers at the end of the nineteenth-century right up to the more recent New Age movement. Dion Fortune's work was firmly rooted within the stream of Western esotericism, and it was particularly her faith in her Masters that informed and empowered her own magical usage. After more than a century of research and esoteric practice, the question of the nature and purpose of intermediaries is surely now ready to be addressed as more empirical data following that given in our historical survey comes to light, and as both insiders and outsiders continue to contribute to the debate. I have shown that the broad spectrum of intermediaries encompasses many forms of 'other-worldly' beings, or energy sources, with which human mediators maintain they are able to interact, irrespective of whether those forms are subjective or objective, human or non-human, in such a way that those mediators are prompted to engage in creative projects whether of an occult or mundane nature. These energy sources, or complementary life-forms, may be perceived under many differing forms of imagery, ranked in hierarchies, and recognised under many names and guises according to the

perceiver's culture and presuppositions, e.g. faeries, extra-terrestrials, higher selves, the voice of a god, or God. These constructs are by no means mutually exclusive, since they may indicate the presence of identical energies or beings at perhaps different levels of subtlety, and all are open to further investigation by anthropologists, historians, and students of religious experience. The essential point emphasised in the present context is that, given the esoteric tradition of hierarchies of intermediary beings, Fortune used a combination of her understanding of esotericism, the work of her immediate Theosophical forebears, personal revelation, and her inner sensitivity, in order to explain and categorise them in her own way, identifying those that were of most use in her occult work. For example, she considered interaction with Elementals and elemental power as essential to the success of magical ritual, and paid specific allegiance to what she believed to be her Masters as prime sources of inspiration and higher energies, both of which contributed to the success of her work as a whole.

The resources available for this research were discussed in my first chapter. Dion Fortune's published texts, supported by those of her fore-runners, contemporaries, and successors, were the primary materials, alongside the secondary works of recent scholars specialising in Western esotericism. Thus both 'insider' and 'outsider' points of view were represented, and I included a few of my own insights and experiences as a life-long 'insider' where appropriate.

Among the definitions of 'esotericism' and cognate terms, those of Antoine Faivre, Jacob Needleman, Wouter Hanegraaff, Kocku von Stuckrad and Arthur Versluis were set alongside those of Fortune's own understanding of a kind of a 'perennial esoteric tradition' or 'perennial philosophy' in existence since Atlantean times. Whereas Faivre's six categories are apparently straightforward, I suggested that the 'vertical' and experiential dimensions described by both Needleman and Versluis hold the key to a more inclusive interpretation, more satisfying to 'insiders'. I nevertheless contend at the beginning of my historical survey that Faivre's categories do indeed contain a more 'vertical' component than is apparent at first sight, and, more importantly, refer tacitly to intermediaries in a way hitherto unrecognised, and validating further investigation into them by scholars in the future.

Fortune's use of the incongruous term 'occult science' was noted, and compared with Waite's 'occult arts'. We saw that both contain similar components, save that Fortune supported her term 'science' by referring to the central position of psychology within occultism, which nevertheless also encompasses inhabited invisible planes, including those of the highest and most mystical. These planes may usefully be compared with psychological models of levels of consciousness, some of which were referred to in my text. I noted that Fortune also included as a cornerstone of occultism the further key concept of reincarnation. However, neither reincarnation nor the existence of higher beings or objective planes of existence can be admitted as part of the repertoire of psychology save as subjective interpretations of different aspects or levels of consciousness. We saw, for example, that the academic stance with regard to messages mediated in séance was that there is no evidence to justify any role for spirits or objective intermediaries as any part of the explanation for their occurrence. Several of the leading occultists, such as Blavatsky, Leadbeater and Fortune herself, practised as spiritualist mediums, and Fortune welcomed spiritualism for its 'unencumbered' nature, and its ability to bring comfort to many. We noted that she was concerned that occultists should be well-educated in traditional magical lore and trained in its practices in order to be able to operate positively at higher levels of consciousness rather than acting as lower level channels as in spiritualism.

I drew attention to observations by prominent neo-pagans, such as Israel Regardie, R. J. Stewart, Aleister Crowley and Starhawk, and by independent observers such as Wouter Hanegraaff, Tanya Luhrmann, Ronald Hutton and Colin Wilson, who combine to give a predominantly positive view of Dion Fortune's standing as an eminent practising occultist, and therefore a figure whose work would repay closer study than has been granted to her until now.

I have shown in detail in this historical survey how a range of recent studies have added to our understanding of the pervasive nature throughout recorded history of a belief in the existence of intermediaries, though it should not be assumed that this in any way proves their objective existence. I have nevertheless argued that this is a phenomenon, albeit apparently subjective, that has persisted for so long, and which has been acted upon so fervently by so many – presumably with results that were felt to be

beneficial by the practitioners concerned – that its cultural impact has been sufficiently great as to render it imperative to study phenomenologically, perhaps even more so in today's climate of disenchantment.

I have shown how complex inner hierarchies, already highly categorised in Zoroastrianism, carried through into Egypt and Greece, where in both, celestial and chthonic cults existed side by side. I noted a possible fore-runner of Christian practice in the mystery religions of Greece, and that the early prevalent concept of the Cosmic Tree provides an analogous model to that of the Tree of Life of mystical Judaism and the Calvary Cross of Christianity. I referred to Henry Corbin's survey of the Iranian Sufi mystic Ibn Arabi (1165-1240), who re-introduced the pivotal concept of a mesocosm, namely a world of images replete with angelic intermediaries, capable of being perceived through the organ of the imagination. I emphasised the crucial role of early Judaism in the proliferation of angels, demons and specialised aspects of God, which were explored in depth by Renaissance magi, and of which the most prominent remain in use by esotericists today. I discussed and illustrated similar parallel developments in, firstly, the Chaldaean Oracles and the Hermetica, and the later complex cosmological systems of Gnosticism and Neo-Platonism. The hierarchy as listed by Iamblichus, and his recommendation of theurgic rites to reach higher, more mystical levels of consciousness are a particularly important foreshadowing of latter-day occult tradition, possibly under the process succinctly identified by Versluis as 'a-historical continuity'. I have emphasised that Jewish and Christian Kabbalah were both familiar with the concepts of the personal inner teacher, or *maggid*, the Four Worlds of Neo-Platonism, and a hierarchy of Planetary Angels and Demons. I showed how the name lists of Christian angelology and demonology existed in proliferation alongside the veneration of saints, or local dead 'heroes', a demonstration of the high regard in which the ancestors were still held, and I pointed to the ambivalence in the attitude of the faithful towards demons, on the one hand feared and hated, on the other, used, much as in the Ancient World, to acquire personal gain. I highlighted the importance of Pseudo-Dionysius who, under Neo-Platonic influence, tabulated the familiar nine orders of angels, which can be correlated with the Kabbalistic Tree of Life.

I have shown how ancient and medieval concepts about intermediaries persisted through the Renaissance, being taken up by Christian Magi such as Marsilio Ficino, Johannes Trithemius, Cornelius Agrippa, Robert Fludd and John Dee, who were particularly aware of the essential foundation of Empedocles's Four Elements, and of the World Soul (in Dee's case as universal wisdom) which as an aspect of Sophia or the Mother Goddess or Fortune's 'Planetary Being' as well as cognate in some respects to Éliphas Lévi's 'astral light', could be considered as further key elements in Fortune's philosophy. I discussed the denizens of the inner worlds as both personal and intelligent, enabling magi to co-operate with those entities directly, or through energies inherent in, or passing through, artefacts. The emphasis by Dee, for example, on communication with angels, arranged in hierarchies of seven, was important to him as a mechanism for mystical ascent. I pointed to the example of Dee's innovative Hieroglyphic Monad, which, like Fludd's diagrams and the Tree of Life itself, also acted as an intermediary symbol like the universal Cosmic Tree. Alongside saints and angels, less prominent inner entities such as ghosts, important to the common people from ancient times, incubi, succubi, and various nature spirits remained accessible to all who cared to invoke them.

I also showed how the a-historical stream continued through the Christian theosophy of Jacob Boehme, John Pordage and Johann Georg Gichtel, each of whom developed strong inner contacts, and how the stream continued through the Enlightenment under the influence of key figures such as Emanuel Swedenborg, Martinès de Pasqually, Francis Barrett, and nineteenth-century channellers such as Paschal Beverly Randolph and Frederick Hockley.

I highlighted the gradual rise of the phenomenon of so-called "Superior Beings", not necessarily human, but generally considered to be in charge of magical groups or secret societies, and also the new and significant input to Western esotericism given by spiritualism and by Helena Blavatsky, whose occult career was founded on her experience as a medium. Under her influence, a new kind of intermediary, human and evolving, made its appearance, inspiring her complex texts, and resulting in an upsurge of interest in esotericism at almost popular level. I showed how MacGregor Mathers also maintained a belief in Unknown Superiors, who may or may not have been human,

a link between the eighteenth-century Illuminati and Blavatsky's own Mahatmas, with whom he communicated through talismans. I identified the role of the Neo-Theosophists Annie Besant, Charles Leadbeater and Alice Bailey as instrumental in popularising, and possibly distorting, the idea of the Masters. I discussed the defection of figures such as Anna Kingsford, Rudolf Steiner and G. R. S. Mead from the Theosophical Society, and the transfer of their allegiance to specifically Western, rather than Eastern Masters, as did Fortune herself some years later. Given the world-wide dissemination of Theosophy, those within its ranks who preferred an overtly Western mystery school would have been attracted to Fortune's Society of the Inner Light. In my re-evaluation of the phenomenon of the existence of intermediaries and of recent studies about them, I again emphasised their implicit presence in Faivre's six categories. However, there are several significant changes in the nature and function of those later termed Masters, such as Fortune's insistence that though once human like saints and heroes they were now no longer; also the importance of the many-tiered, or multi-layered system of the inner worlds within which the hierarchies of beings were said to exist. I also followed recent scholarship in emphasising the profound effect of evolutionary theory on the interpretation and explanation of the nature of intermediary beings as part of an evolving universe.

In presenting an intellectual biography of Fortune, Chapter 3 sought to determine reasons for her sensitivity to inner, or altered states of consciousness by outlining the development of her psychic life preparatory to full involvement in occultism. In the light of research into similar cases, I suggested that a withdrawn childhood, followed by an amount of mental abuse and subsequent mental breakdown were significant contributory factors. Like Blavatsky, she was psychic and creative from an early age, and later developed a more mature psychism, perhaps as a result of repetitive mundane work as well as some later training, that enabled her to mediate higher level contacts. Alongside her concurrent psychical and magical interests, it is evident that her experience of psycho-analytical work, in her opinion less effective than cures achieved by occult means, led her to intensify her study of occultism, particularly in its Theosophical and Masonic forms.

I surveyed the chief figures in occult, particularly Theosophical, literature with which Fortune would have been familiar and which contributed significantly to her predispositions and expectations towards occultism. I demonstrated that her Glastonbury experiences in channelling, her Masonic training under Theodore Moriarty and in the Alpha et Omega Lodge, and especially the impetus of her initial overwhelming contact with at least two Master figures were significant factors that impelled her into forming her own Lodge. Although she produced a range of texts during her life, she was always conscious of her potential audience for each one, and would not stray too far outside her predetermined boundaries, which in all but a few of her books resulted in a certain lack of clarity in her exposition of the relationship between intermediaries on the one hand and the Tree of Life on the other, even though this relationship held the key to her own understanding. *The Esoteric Orders and their Work*, the *The Mystical Qabalah*, and her War Letters were significant exceptions, though it emerged that probably the majority of her works were channelled by one or several of her Masters. Alongside her guides and texts, the novels are important sources for this critical examination. By her own admission, they contain the keys to magical practice through their graphic descriptions of how the inner forces might flow in practical work, particularly highlighting the crucial role of the third incarnate male or female entity or energy, intermediate between the male and female actually involved in the magical operations on earth. In this respect I indicated that Fortune was at the same time attempting to re-balance the traditional male-dominated Mysteries and it is for this reason that she is held in high esteem by feminist wiccans and magicians today.

In Chapter 4 I set out which characteristics of Kabbalah appealed to twentieth-century Western occultists. Like many of them, Fortune relied exclusively on non-Hebrew sources, particularly MacGregor Mathers's *The Kabbalah Unveiled* (1887), and the derivative works of Crowley and Regardie. I showed that the immediate source for this activity directly stemmed from Éliphas Lévi, for all his acknowledged shortcomings. Even though Fortune did not emphasise the Kabbalistic background when discussing intermediaries, this background was the essential ground-plan against which she was able to set out the hierarchies and levels of consciousness as she saw them and which she was able to use in a practical way as a ladder of ascent. I suggested

that there were several possible reasons for Fortune's lack of reference to the Tree as the obvious background to her exposition of the hierarchy of intermediaries, among which were secrecy concerning practical use of the Tree, the requirement of her own working practice to concentrate on one major facet of the work at a time, and to a need for her novels and texts to be taken up by a wider range of readers generally unfamiliar with the technicalities of the vocabulary of Western esotericism. Supported by Jon Klimo, I attempted to show the apparently separate stream of spiritualism was part and parcel of the history of consciousness expansion or ascent from ancient times onwards, and that Blavatsky's insistence that her Mahatmas or Masters were incarnate, was anomalous within this stream, neither preceded nor followed by any important occultist, including Fortune.

I followed Fortune's own categorisation of inner beings, and showed that whereas Z'ev ben Shimon Halevi (Warren Kenton) constantly refers to the Tree of Life throughout his work, Fortune does not. I showed how Dion Fortune, like Madame Blavatsky, but unlike Halevi, gave specific names to her Masters as well as describing their functions rather than their dwellings, habits, or appearance. She was thus able to explain her understanding of them in a clear and comprehensive way that had not been done before. Alongside the Glyph of the Tree of Life, her Masters provided her with a ladder of ascent to reach beyond intellect to the heights of the spirit. Whilst giving few tables and charts like those of Leadbeater and Bailey, Fortune followed Blavatsky in her explanation of the Masters' task as predominantly one of transmitting energies down the planes by electing to forego their own evolutionary journey in favour of offering this kind of special assistance to those still in incarnation. To be effective, they required mediators specially trained in Mystery School techniques rather than ordinary spiritualist mediums who were rarely able to contact advanced, high-level beings. In contrast to the reverential tone of much Theosophical writing, I introduced the modifying views of Jane Roberts's Seth that communications with the Masters, whilst remaining sincere, should not exclude the playful approaches and exchanges such as obtained between Fortune and David Carstairs, and I expressed the concern of John and Caitlin Matthews that the Masters, though beyond psychology, were nevertheless not

always reliable. I also introduced and compared some alternative views of the nature and function of angels.

I also showed in Chapter 4 how the concept of the ‘Otherworld’, stemming from late twelfth-century Sufism, provided a matrix for Paracelsian Elementals and Lévi’s ‘astral’ world.¹ Fortune’s account of her hierarchy of beings from the Jewish Briatic ‘Lords of Flame’ down to the world of Faeries is an amalgam of Theosophy and her own revelations. I showed how she balanced theory with practice, emphasising, for example, the necessity of practitioners to familiarise themselves with and employ the services of the elemental kingdoms. I illustrated the further development of this theme as developed by R. J. Stewart, John and Caitlín Matthews, and Gareth Knight in the stress they laid on the importance of Underworld, Ancestor, and Faery themes to balance heady ascents, which without them lacks considerable substance.

I compared several differing interpretations of the nature of demons and the negative kliphoth in the Qabalah, and showed that Fortune tended to avoid aligning them with the Sphere of Geburah, and described them as imbalances in character, and in accordance with Kabbalistic lore, as similar unavoidable imbalances resulting from transitions between the levels of creation rather than as adverse outside forces. She regarded even negative thought-forms as not necessarily evil, since they would disperse if not fed by emotion. However, this did not exclude the possibility of gleeful demonic entities determined to disturb otherwise benign conditions of magical rituals or creative projects in daily life. Her accounts in *Psychic Self-Defence* of a variety of negative psychic experiences are very untypical of her later work, or the work undertaken by her Society today. To take them or her novels as examples of the real nature of Mystery School work would be similar to building a psychotherapy on a model of pathology rather than on one of dynamic practice.

I noted that ancestors and guardians (often associated with places) were sometimes confused with gods, particularly in ancient times, and highlighted Fortune’s concern with the ‘National Spirit’, which she aligned with Glastonbury. I also indicated

¹ In Chapter 5, I also recorded Kenneth Rayner Johnson’s account of significant dialogue between various medieval western philosopher-theologians and the Sufi tradition, such as Michael Scot, Roger Bacon, and Raymond Lull, and that Isma’ili gnosis was a significant influence on the work of Helena Blavatsky.

how work with animals and shamanism developed after Fortune in my brief outline of the work of Stewart (The Triune Alliance), Matthews (shamanism and totem animals), and Nevill Drury (shamanism).

Fortune considered the use of the Tree of Life itself most significant as an intermediary glyph, illustrated by her vivid inner experiences encountered as a result of meditation on the Spheres, and which provided the impetus for her occult novels.

Chapter 5's thorough examination of the identity, nature and apparent tasks of those Masters with whom Fortune was most closely associated was less concerned with any details or comparisons of their teachings, but rather with the broader question of the views of practising occultists concerning the attributes and impact of the Master phenomenon. I showed some similarity between Masters and earlier saints, martyrs and, particularly, heroes, the tradition of whose adulation stretches back into earliest times, save that whereas these were specially marked by their popularity, the Masters were not. In their most mature form the Masters were also of recent origin, a vivid illustration of how the revelations of Madame Blavatsky had inspired a vigorous Theosophical movement, thereafter falling into continuing controversy. While S. L. MacGregor Mathers denied any great knowledge of them, Anna Kingsford and Israel Regardie even denied their very existence, save as psychological archetypes. In contrast, the Neo-Theosophists created an unstable edifice of devotion and belief around the Masters that Blavatsky had already disowned toward the end of her life. The immense impact of the Masters' reality energised Fortune into creative writing and building a workable system of ascent and invocatory power through the use of simplified, reformed Masonic ritual.

My account of superficially similar inner entities, such as the Unknown Superiors of eighteenth-century secret societies, and the possibility of Edward Bulwer-Lytton's fictional Zanoni as the inspiration for Blavatsky's later elaborations showed that without the upsurge of spiritualism in the 1870s, particularly with skilled mediums such as Paschal Beverly Randolph, there would probably have been no opportunity – too few of Fortune's 'tracks in space' – for superior inner figures to have manifested to consciousness as fellow human beings, and, apart from the saints, there would have

remained available only figures of myth such as Circe or Christian Rosenkreutz. The position of Rosenkreutz remains obscure, and even though he still stands as a leading intermediary of Western esotericism, can only be included as one of Fortune's Masters by way of exception; a fictional figure now elevated to myth, he is often accepted as a real being and a Master (possibly Jesus, or even that aspect of God known in the West as the Christ) by Rudolf Steiner, Fortune, and by some Rosicrucians, although this is rarely committed to writing, and cannot be considered as other than speculation.²

Although the popular view even today, is that Masters come from the East, Blavatsky's first spiritualistic contacts were of Western origin, and Eastern figures were only introduced after Blavatsky's translation to India, since when, her references to prior contacts were retrospective and probably inaccurate or invented. I also observed that the genealogies of the Masters as set out by C. W. Leadbeater were predominantly Western.

We noted the crucial impact on Theosophy of Darwinian evolutionary theory. The attempt to reconcile esoteric views with science saw the hierarchies less as permanent occupiers of static Neo-Platonic spheres than as part of a grand scheme of the progressive evolution of the world through many cycles of manifestations, incorporating ubiquitous intermediaries such as are represented by the grand Hierarchy of Compassion, the dynamic Dhyani-Chohans, 'Intelligent Powers of Nature', Buddhas at various levels of development akin to Masters, and, *pace* Leadbeater, still in the process of continuous evolution.

I gave an account of Bailey's intricate exposition of the Hierarchy of Masters as received from her inner contact 'The Tibetan' and based on the Seven Rays. This structure recalled the Renaissance emphasis on the seven-fold nature of the universe and its intermediary correspondences. I pointed to the subsequent Lords of the Seven Rays of Elizabeth Clare and Mark L. Prophet especially with regard to the Western emphasis in their roles, to the introduction of a named female Master, and to the

² For example, neither Christopher McIntosh nor Roland Edighofer comment on this. Christopher McIntosh, *The Rosicrucians: The History, Mythology, and Rituals of an Esoteric Order* (San Francisco, CA: Weiser Books, 1998); Roland Edighofer, 'Rosicrucianism I: First half of the 17th Century' and 'Rosicrucianism II: 18th Century' in Wouter J. Hanegraaff, ed., *Dictionary of Gnosis and Western Esotericism*, (Leiden: Brill, 2005), II, 1009-1017

incorporation of changes in some of the Masters' responsibilities as they variously evolved. I compared Fortune to Anna Kingsford and Rudolf Steiner in respect of their similar desire to develop overtly Western contacts for Western students, having dissented from the novel Orientalism of Theosophy.

I pointed out that whereas the Theosophical exposition of the Seven Rays depended on their numbering, Fortune's Rays depended on their seven colours, though she was not consistent in their use and preferred overall to name them according to function, this changing over time according to changed emphases in her understanding.

I investigated the extent to which the physicality of the Masters was important, given the Theosophical insistence that they were advanced incarnate beings, a consideration pursued by K. Paul Johnson's and others' suggested identification of prominent figures in India at the time as possible candidates. Whereas there was a concerted attempt through detailed description and character-sketch by Theosophists such as David Anrias to emphasise the physicality of the Masters, Fortune's opinion was that though useful as 'call signs', these were not to be taken literally but used as convenient images through which genuine teaching or energies mediated by formerly incarnate beings from a high spiritual plane, could be contacted. An abstract 'likemindedness' with these personalised energies was the hallmark of the authenticity for what might eventually represent functions or offices rather than individuals. I highlighted the role of faith, fervour, and expectancy as factors in giving voice to the Master concept, and the deep psychic sensitivity of early Theosophists which hindered their ability to distinguish clearly between the physical and subtle (particularly etheric) planes. Although Col. Henry Olcott was forthrightly assured that the Master speaking to him at the time was a 'living man', this did not exclude the possibility of misinterpretation by Olcott. It is also a matter of nomenclature, and it could be maintained that communications even from beings of high attainment could indeed have sometimes been transmitted telepathically by advanced souls living abroad or perhaps travelling in the astral body, or by the deceased. The initial enthusiasms and exaggerations, even the subterfuges, of those who initiated late nineteenth-century and early twentieth-century occultism appeared to be essential to generate sufficient impact for the successful dissemination, acceptance and success of Theosophical and other

esoteric concepts. I compared this scenario with today's specialist culture of UFO phenomena, E.T.s, beings from the future, and many other alternative models now available, which are meaningful to some practitioners and investigators alike.

Where Christian Rosenkretz provides a foundational link between the Masters and Christianity, the Rev. Anthony Duncan accepts Masters as comparable to saints, without, however, noting significant differences, such as that Masters tend to work with specialist esoteric groups as well as overseeing the good progress of creation as a whole.³ Congruence with the ancient hero-concept may be ruled out on account of the very popularity of heroes, who like, for example, Lord Nelson, Winston Churchill, H. R. H. Diana, Princess of Wales, and Elvis Presley boasted huge followings in their day, and constituted a significant presence in the group-mind of their devotees. I raised the question whether such a phenomenon was or is a kind of 'incarnation', or less immediately, as Jon Klimo suggests, a manifestation or projection of the 'god within' or the 'wise old man' archetype, and I specially drew attention to the more relaxed, laterally-based mind-set of present-day practitioners as more accepting of paradox and the recognition of ideas that although at variance with each other are not seen as mutually exclusive.

A hallmark of Fortune's work was her emphasis on the crucial role of the feminine as the dynamic force of the inner worlds. I traced the mention of female Masters back to 1883, when it was remarked that several were already in existence. In the *Golden Dawn*, a contact was made with a female Egyptian Master, and in the *Inner Light*, Col. Seymour emphasised the Great Mother – if not a Master, certainly a figure of inspiration and power for Seymour. The Prophet couple and Fortune include mention of female Masters, and indicate that their numbers will grow, and I suggested some reasons why there were at first so few female Masters. I pointed to the alternative view of the Matthews, who, seeing the whole concept of Masters and the idea of a smooth progression of increasing and evolving consciousness as one ascends the Tree through time as one to be doubted, looked instead to the chthonic tradition of sybils and prophets working in tandem.

³ A. D. Duncan, *The Priesthood of Man* (London: Geoffrey Bles, 1973), p. 177.

My researches into the more precise work of the Masters indicated that they were, as in Theosophical tradition, both objects of devotion and part of a putative Inner World Government, cf. the Seven Planetary Intelligences of Trithemius and Dee. Yet they also set tasks for individual pupils with whom they wished to cooperate, and this is the aspect of their work emphasised by both Fortune and Knight, who see the Masters' ashrams purely as a reflection on the inner planes of Mystery Schools on earth. We saw that the emphasis on received teachings is nowadays much reduced, with even Fortune, and certainly her followers, emphasising the equal importance of invoked energies, forces or vibrations inspiring pupils into specific tasks such as writing and performing rituals, writing novels, visiting sacred sites, etc. It is noteworthy that the mediation of much high-level material appears to have passed into the remit of those, such as Helen Shucman and Neale Donald Walsch, who are not necessarily aware of Western esotericism, and who are often initially most reluctant to participate.

We saw that Bailey's categorisation of the Masters' work included the development in humanity of superior morals and self-consciousness, work with the animal and vegetable kingdoms, and generally assisting in what may be summed up in the phrase 'divinizing creation', spiritual work which we may observe is almost identical with the highest overall aims of religion, particularly mystical religion.

I also discussed the standing of intermediate figures who have been contacted by occultists, such as Sir Francis Drake, H. G. Wells, King Arthur, and even Dion Fortune herself, all much akin to heroes, though few died a heroic death or led exemplary lives. Yet at the same time their figures have contributed intermittently and positively to the mental energy reservoir, the egregore, of some of Fortune's successors. I conjecture that they might be guides, archetypes, or specialised aspects of the surely multidimensional personalities of the Masters who felt the need for a more specific image to work through on particular occasions, but who at this stage might best be referred to as part of the ever-extending pool of 'metabeings' that are now beginning to be recognised in the spiritual intermediary tradition.

For the sake of clarification, Chapter 6 attempted to separate out the methods best suited to inner plane communication, but this has not been entirely satisfactory. Such techniques were closely guarded from outsiders at the end of the nineteenth

century and it did not appear to be a promising field of investigation save perhaps in the field of spiritualism. However, hints were increasingly given as the century progressed, even by Blavatsky herself, and outsiders began recording the effectiveness or otherwise of their own experiments. Fortune was more explicit towards the end of her life, as were her followers, and now also the many independent practitioners inside and outside of the New Age movement. I noted that Klimo and Hanegraaff record the more objectively visible manifestations of mediums at work, including relaxation, sensory restriction, rhythm, boredom, and breathing techniques as necessary concomitants preparatory to reaching those inner realms, which, real though they were deemed to be, remained open to interaction, and where one may discover an Inner Teacher. Stanislav Grof and Michael Harner postulate just two broad categories of consciousness (mundane and other), whereas Ken Wilber suggests a contrasting extended categorisation of innumerable subjective (yet 'real') states of consciousness, but none of these discuss detailed methods of approach into those states. These speculations postulated by research are useful to place alongside the traditional lists of the seven planes as set out, for example, by Fortune's 'Greek', which included the earthbound on the second plane, Guides on the third, Masters on the fourth, and supremely moral beings on the sixth plane.

I found that both scholarly and occult consensus pointed to a mixture of several or all of the following components of communication in actual use: trance, intuition, visualisation, autosuggestion, and telepathy, perhaps changing in emphasis with any one medium over time. For several of these, there are few specific pre-nineteenth-century references, although all must have been in common use among shamans, magi and cunning folk since ancient times.

Despite F. W. H. Myers's list of four possible sources of inner creative inspiration (the recipient's own mind, telepathic material from other incarnate beings, unknown disembodied intelligences, or the deceased) there is no evidence to merit the inclusion of either of the last two categories. Blavatsky herself stated that she would have no difficulty in reproducing spiritualistic phenomena from within her own resources. Most of Fortune's channellings were the result of intentional full trance, which she categorises as three-fold: 1. becoming objective on the higher plane

(presumably as in a lucid dream); 2. Moving to the appropriate level of consciousness and standing aside for an inner entity to take over, generally appearing as s/he was in his/her last incarnation, or imagining self as though incarnate; and 3. moving to the appropriate level of consciousness and allowing one's higher self to take over. Any messages were transmitted telepathically within the trance state, all the more effective if the medium was trained and on the verge of Masterhood herself. Since the late 1950s it has been realised that mediumship of this kind and quality was rare, and for either power or inspiration to manifest it was deemed sufficient to employ visualisation and retain full consciousness, the results being checked by the meditator's feeling of an initial 'onset of power', and a subsequent sense of 'rightness' or otherwise at the conclusion – in other words, following Fortune's dictum of applying the full force of intellectual judgement after the event was concluded. Recent experience by practitioners (e.g. Rosaleen Norton) appears to confirm the vivid reality for the operator not only of the inner planes, but of those intermediaries that inhabit them.

We consistently observed that one of the main requirements for valid high-level communication was said to be fervent aspiration, perhaps replaced nowadays by a confident assurance that what one intends will surely, even if only eventually, occur. A balanced personality and some experience of meditation were also deemed necessary before one was allotted an inner guide. Both Gareth Knight and R. J. Stewart remark on the two-way nature of learning that takes place with such a guide, although on the other hand David Carstairs likened the relationship between an inner and an outer couple to that of a trusting child and a parent. One of the mechanisms that Carstairs mentions as useful is that of synchronicity, which acts to concentrate the mind and foster telepathy.

It was a surprise that Fortune's mediation of the *The Cosmic Doctrine* (1924) was more akin to telepathy than trance, so it appears that while trance is not necessary for communication to take place, telepathy is. We are told that telepathy is the prime means whereby the Masters relay ideas from Divinity to receptive mediators in incarnation, a method used since ancient times by the Manus as the prime civilising mechanism, and to this day by fully-conscious channellers such as Schucman, Knight and Walsch. Bailey suggests that the etheric, the 'prima materia', is the vehicle of telepathic contact, and that telepathy is therefore universal, though severely limited by

the inevitable distortion of the mediator's own mind, although it was observed that inner communicators could well make use of any specialised knowledge in the mind of any particular sitter.

Fortune points to the Astral plane as subject to a great deal of illusion, but which is the raw material that is manipulated by visualisation, a universal tool not only used in magical ritual where intermediaries are visualised as clearly as possible but also by novelists, present-day sports people and self-improvers alike. We noted the use of visualisation among Tibetan monks, and its effectiveness, especially when invested with emotion and, Geoff Hughes reminds us, with intention. We also noted that Fortune stressed that a visualised figure, being of the astral, might not be able to transmit material of high quality unless connection was also made at the higher, Chesedic level. Some scholars such as J. B. Hollenback recognise the merit and power of the controlled imagination, although the insider Halevi warns of the need to exercise sound judgement before determining to what extent the content of visions or channelled messages are valid or worthwhile. We found that some of the detailed techniques described today were remarkably similar to each other, e.g. those of Halevi and Edwin Steinbrecher, each incorporating many steps, in contrast to Fortune who even in 1939 was recommending the simple method of visualising a Master and holding an imaginary conversation with him. Indeed, it is often sufficient nowadays to sit before the computer keyboard, and 'tune in', with intention, for meaningful material to emerge, either from one of Fortune's traditional contacts or from contacts of one's own.

I was not surprised to learn of the great value Fortune placed on the heightened atmosphere arising as a result of ritual to stimulate changes in consciousness and communication with selected intermediaries. Fortune was well aware that part and parcel of ritual lay in the power of suggestion, the mainstay of magic. Fortune's Green Ray element in her Society placed emphasis on the opportunities for tuning in to the inner worlds at sacred sites such as cathedrals and prehistoric tombs, interfaces by means of which kings, guides or guardians are able to interact with like-minded humans. Yet it is interesting that considerations of neither place nor time weakened the apparent strength of contact, and the theme of the congruence of all times has been taken up by communicators such as Seth and more recent followers in Fortune's

tradition. Suzanne Rough, for example, is of the opinion that the concept of the Masters was purely a contrivance created by Blavatsky, making available to us otherwise nameless channels operating over vast periods of time, and responsive to techniques such as visualisation, naming and imbuing them with energy or emotion as described above. We noted the continuing diversity of methods of communication, but with some move towards simplicity.

In conclusion, in view of her well-received texts and novels on occultism and the still well-regarded work of the Society which she founded, I feel it is safe to say that Dion Fortune emerges as a significant figure of twentieth-century English occultism, so established in her lifetime by virtue of her unwavering reliance on the transmissions of her Masters and a belief in millennia of esoteric activity. Despite her success, it has not been customary for later commentators to emphasise the importance of these high-calibre intermediaries. She saw them as the fountainhead of her inspiration and power who gave her the commitment, structure and direction upon which her work was based regardless of whether her concept of these intermediaries was valid or illusory. There is no doubt that she conceived of the Masters as the very foundation of her impressive work in Western esotericism.

Appendix I
Dion Fortune: a Chronology
(some dates approximate)

		Age	
December	1890	0	Born Violet Mary Firth, Llandudno, North Wales
	1894	4	Atlantean memories
	1900	9	[Golden Dawn: major schism]
	1903	12	[Golden Dawn collapsed - reorganised as the 'Alpah et Omega', 'Stella Matutina' and other Temples]
	1904-6	13-15	Poems and short stories published. Conjectured attendance at Sexey's School, Blackford, Weston-super-Mare
	1905	14	['Grail Cup' discovered by Allen sisters and Wellesley and Kitty Tudor-Pole]
	1906	15	Moves to London area
	1907	16	[Alice Buckton to Glastonbury]
	1911	20	At Studley Horticultural College for Women, Studley Castle, Warwickshire
	1912	21	[Alice Buckton buys Chalice Well]
January	1913	22	Taken on as staff member at Studley
April	1913		Leaves Studley. Mental and physical breakdown
June	1914	23	Enrols at Medico-Psychological Clinic, Brunswick Square. Interested in Freud [Chalice Well now a hostel]
	1916	25	Joins the Land Army - Bishops Stortford, Herts. Theosophical centre meeting - first realisation of the power of telepathy
	1917	26	Initial meeting with Theodore Moriarty
	1918	27	Working at biological laboratory. Momentous inner experience at Theosophical Society Library, London: Contact with two 'Inner Plane' figures, leading to memories of Atlantis. [Nov.: MacGregor Mathers dies]
	1919	28	Formal links with Moriarty (co-masonic rituals at The Grange, Bishops Stortford) Initiated into Alpha et Omega Temple of the GD, London under Brodie-Innes for short time, then Moina Mathers Contacts with Maiya Curtis-Webb
	1920	29	Trance work with Frederick Bligh Bond at Glastonbury [Mother a Christian Science practitioner]

Jan-Mar	1921	30	Trance experiments with Maiya Curtis-Webb
Autumn	1921		Trance work: Fortune, her mother and Bond Makes contact with 'The Watchers of Avalon'
Feb-Jul	1922	31	<i>'Doctor Taverner'</i> short stories serialised in the <i>Royal Magazine</i>
August	1922		Meets Charles Loveday at Glastonbury Trance work: contacts 'Company of Avalon' - Founding date of the Fraternity of the Inner Light <i>Machinery of the Mind</i> (based on her work at the Medico-Psychological Clinic seven years previously)
August	1923	32	[Moriarty dies at King's Lynn, Norfolk]
July 1923 (to Feb 1925)			<i>The Cosmic Doctrine</i> channelled (working with Alice Buckton at Glastonbury) Trance work with parents at Letchworth
August	1924	33	Purchases 3 Queensborough Terrace, Bayswater. Fraternity of the Inner Light now a formally run group. Purchases Chalice Orchard, Glastonbury <i>Esoteric Philosophy of Love and Marriage</i>
	1925	34	Joins the Christian Mystic Lodge of the Theosophical Society <i>Psychology of the Servant Problem</i> (from 1918 work) <i>The Soya Bean</i> (also from 1918 work)
Whitsun	1926	35	Chant of the Elements experience on Glastonbury Tor <i>The Secrets of Dr Taverner</i>
November	1926	35	Opens the Fraternity's Second Degree
Vernal Eq.	1927	36	Expelled from Alpha et Omega Temple
April	1927		Dr Thomas Penry Evans initiated into Society of the Inner Light Marries Penry Evans
August	1927		Trance work - intermittent communications until 1932
October	1927		Resigns from Christian Mystic Lodge of the TS First Issue of the <i>Inner Light</i> magazine <i>The Problem of Purity</i> (from 1916 work)
February	1928	37	The Community/Fraternity of the Inner Light formally named <i>The Esoteric Orders and their Work</i>
December	1928		The Lesser Mysteries re-established as a ritual group. [Regardie becomes Aleister Crowley's secretary until 1931.] [Krishnamurti repudiates role as Maitreya.]

			[Moina Mathers dies, aged 63.]
January	1929	38	Begins publishing articles in <i>Inner Light</i> on ‘Spiritualism in the Light of Occult Science’
April	1929		Re-opens the 2nd Degree of the Lesser Mysteries
January	1930	39	Opens the 3rd Degree of the Lesser Mysteries . <i>Sane Occultism</i> published (from the <i>Occult Review</i>) <i>The Training and Work of an Initiate</i> <i>Mystical Meditations on the Collects</i> (from serialised articles in the <i>Inner Light</i>) <i>Psychic Self-defence</i> Visionary experiences concerning the Tree of Life Reinstated into the GD: with Hope Hughes in the ‘Stella Matutina’ Temple
May	1931	40	Begins serialisation of <i>The Mystical Qabalah</i> (until 1935) <i>Spiritualism in the Light of Occult Science</i>
July	1932	41	<i>Through the Gates of Death</i>
November	1932		Letters to Israel Regardie
	1933	42	Col. Charles Seymour initiated; writes his monographs.
	1934	43	<i>Avalon of the Heart</i> Possible date for her taking up the lease on The Belfry, West Halkyn Street, London, from Lady Caillard.
	1935	44	<i>The Winged Bull</i> <i>The Mystical Qabalah</i> <i>Practical Occultism in Daily Life</i>
	1936	45	<i>The Goat-foot God</i>
Vernal Eq.	1936		New Regime: Formal inauguration of the '3 Ray' system Meets Bernard Bromage.
	1937	46	[Regardie published <i>The Golden Dawn</i>]
	1938	47	Penry-Evans leaves the Society <i>The Sea Priestess</i>
	1939	48	Col. Seymour leaves
	1939-40		<i>Circuit of Force</i> articles in <i>Inner Light</i> magazine
October	1939		<i>War Letters</i> begin (till October 1942)
	1940	49	Hope-Hughes dismisses Fortune from the ‘Stella Matutina’ Temple, but she is reinstated by Maiya Tranchell-Hayes.
August	1940		<i>Inner Light</i> magazine suspended – wartime austerity Bromage at Fortune's 'Rite of Isis'
	1941-42	50	'Master of Medicine' resumes channelling

April 1941-Feb 42			15 trance sessions on the 'Arthurian Formula'
Autumnal Eq. 1941			1st Degree re-instated
1942	51		Margaret Lumley-Brown joins the S. I. L. Bromage comment; DF sensibly dressed Visits Aleister Crowley at Hastings
Nov 43-Feb 43	52		<i>Esoteric Philosophy of Astrology</i> serialised
Apr 1943-Mar 1944			<i>Principles of Hermetic Philosophy</i> serialised
May 1944	53		Suggests reading Jung
July 1945	54		Divorces Penry-Evans Correspondence with Aleister Crowley
January 1946	55		Fortune dies

Appendix II

Works of Dion Fortune: a) in order of publication

1. *Psychological texts (authored in the name of Violet M. Firth)*

Machinery of the Mind	1922	from work done in 1916
Psychology of the Servant Problem	1925	
The Problem of Purity	1927	from 1916 lectures

2. *Miscellaneous early work (authored in the name of Violet M. Firth)*

The Soya Bean	1925	from 1918
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3. *Works concerning the Occult*

The Esoteric Philosophy of Love and Marriage	1924	
The Esoteric Orders and their Work	1928	
The Training and Work of an Initiate	1930	
Psychic Self-Defence	1930	
Sane Occultism	1930	articles from the <i>Occult Review</i>
Spiritualism in the Light of Occult Science	1931	serialised in the <i>Inner Light</i> 1929/30
Through the Gates of Death	1932	serialised in the <i>Inner Light</i> 1930/31
Avalon of the Heart	1934	
Practical Occultism in Daily Life	1935	
The Mystical Qabalah	1935	
The Cosmic Doctrine	1949	
Aspects of Occultism)	1962	selected articles from the <i>Inner Light</i>
Applied Magic)	1962	selected articles from the <i>Inner Light</i>
The Magical Battle of Britain	1993	from <i>Weekly Letters</i> 1939 - 1944 Later publ. with commentaries by G. Knight
Introduction to Ritual Magic	1997	articles from the <i>Inner Light</i> 1930/40.
The Circuit of Force	1998	articles from the <i>Inner Light</i> 1939/40 Later publ. with commentaries by G. Knight
The Esoteric Philosophy of Astrology	Monthly Letters to members 1942-1943	
The Principles of Hermetic Philosophy	Monthly Letters to members 1943-1944	
(published together as <i>Principles of Hermetic Philosophy</i> , 1999		with commentaries by G. Knight)

The Arthurian Formula 2006. Channelled sessions held between April 1941 and February 1942, being pages 34-91 of *The Arthurian Formula* by Dion Fortune, Margaret Lumley Brown and Gareth Knight.

4. *Theological works*

Mystical Meditations on the Collects 1930

5. *Occult fiction*

The Secrets of Dr Taverner	1922	publ. 1926
The Demon Lover	1927	publ. Noel Douglas
The Winged Bull	1935	publ. Williams and Norgate
The Goat-Foot God	1936	"
The Sea Priestess	1938	publ. Inner Light Publishing Co.
Moon Magic	1957	publ. Aquarian Press

6. *Non-occult fiction (under the pen name of V. M. Steele)*

The Scarred Wrists	1935	Stanley Paul
Hunters and Humans	1935	Stanley Paul
Beloved of Ishmael	1936	Stanley Paul

Works of Dion Fortune: b) in order of their inception

(excluding detective novels)

1. *Based on work undertaken 1916-19 and published under the name of Violet M. Firth:*

Machinery of the Mind	publ. 1922
The Soya Bean	publ. 1925
Psychology of the Servant Problem	publ. 1925
The Problem of Purity	publ. 1927

2. *Published under the name Dion Fortune:*

The Secrets of Dr Taverner	1922	serialised in <i>Royal Magazine</i> , 1926)
The Esoteric Philosophy of Love and Marriage	1924	
The Cosmic Doctrine		channelled 1923-25

The Demon Lover	1927	
Master of Medicine (1)	1927	
The Esoteric Orders and their Work	1928	
The Training and Work of an Initiate	1930	
Spiritualism in the Light of Occult Science	1929/30	articles from the <i>Inner Light</i>
Through the Gates of Death	1930	articles from the <i>Inner Light</i>
Psychic Self-Defence	1930	
Mystical Meditations on the Collects	1930	
Sane Occultism	1930	articles from the <i>Occult Review</i>
Avalon of the Heart	1934	
The Mystical Qabalah	1931-35	publ. 1935
Practical Occultism in Daily Life	1933-35	publ. 1935
Introduction to Ritual Magic	1930-40	publ. 1997
The Winged Bull	1935	
The Goat-Foot God	1936	
Aspects of Occultism)		selections of articles from
Applied Magic)		the <i>InnerLight</i>
Commentary on The Winged Bull	Aug-Oct 1937	from the <i>Inner Light</i>
The Sea Priestess	1936	publ. 1938
Moon Magic	c. 1938	publ. posthumously 1957
The Circuit of Force	Feb 1939-Aug 1940	<i>Inner Light</i> articles
The Magical Battle of Britain (1)	Oct 1939-Oct 1942	weekly letters
The Arthurian Formula	Apr 1941-Feb 1942	publ. 2006
Master of Medicine (2)	1941-1942	
The Esoteric Philosophy of Astrology	Nov 1942-Feb 1943	monthly letters
The Magical Battle of Britain (2)	Oct 1942-May 1944	monthly letters
The Principles of Hermetic Philosophy	Apr 1943-March 1944	monthly Letters

Appendix III

Works Cited by Fortune

a) authors and works

Author:	Work:	Cited in:
No author given:	<i>Egyptian Book of the Dead</i>	Avalon: 59
	<i>Holy Bible</i>	MQ: 105
	<i>Lives of Alcyone</i>	Applied: 71
	<i>Loeb Clasical Library</i>	MQ: 105
	<i>Sacred Books of the East Series</i>	MQ: 105
		Sane: 161
	<i>Song of Songs</i>	MQ: 130
	<i>Zohar</i>	MQ: 105
	<i>Truth Magazine</i>	Sane: 129
		Self-defence: 114
	<i>OE Library Critic</i>	Sane: 129
	<i>Occult Review</i>	Sane: 159
'a modern poet' (Swinburne?)	3 verses	Winged Bull: 82, 83
'a poet' (Swinburne?)	1 verse	MQ: 218
a verse 'read as a schoolboy'		Goat-foot: 92
A. E.	<i>Song and its Fountains</i>	MQ: 100
Arthur Avalon (Sir John Woodroffe)	<i>Serpent Power</i>	Ritual Mgc: 163
Attwood, Mary Ann	<i>A Suggestive Enquiry into the Hermetic Mystery</i>	Circuit: 57; MQ: 92
Barham, Richard H.	<i>Ingoldsby Legends</i>	Winged Bull: 7
Baudouin, Charles	<i>Suggestion and Autosuggestion</i>	Circuit: 67
		Machinery: 73
Bell, Blair	<i>The Sex Complex</i>	Machinery: 72
Bergson, Henri	<i>Creative Evolution</i>	Taverner: 61
Berman	<i>The Glands Controlling Personality</i>	Machinery: 71
Besant, Annie	<i>The Ancient Wisdom</i>	MQ: 40
		Sane: 19
Besant and Leadbeater	<i>Thought Forms</i>	Ritual Mgc: 169
Blackwood, Algernon	<i>Jules le Vallon</i>	Training: 119
	<i>The Bright Messenger</i>	Training: 119
	<i>Incredible Adventures</i>	Battle of Britain: 71

Blake, William	<i>Jerusalem</i>	Avalon: 49
Blavatsky, H. P.	<i>The Voice of the Silence</i>	Aspects: 27; Sane: 39
Blavatsky, H. P.	<i>The Mahatma Letters</i>	Sane: 105
Blavatsky, H. P.	<i>The Secret Doctrine</i>	Applied: 71 Training: 86 Love & Marr: 2 Hermetic: 129 Circuit: 69 MQ: 27, 41, 97, 259
Blavatsky, H. P.	<i>Isis Unveiled</i>	Taverner: 61 MQ: 41, 97,
Bond, Frederick Bligh	<i>The Gate of Remembrance</i> <i>The Hill of Vision</i>	Avalon: 83 Avalon: 83
Bond, Mary	<i>Avernus</i>	Avalon: 87
British Medical Journal		Self-defence: 30
Brodie-Innes, John	<i>The Devil's Mistress</i>	Goat-foot: 10
Brown, William	<i>Psychology and Psychotherapy</i>	Machinery: 73
Browning, Robert	verse	Sea Priestess: 14 Moon M: 152
Buckley, Reginald	<i>Queen of Cornwall</i>	Avalon: 79
Buckton, Alice	<i>Eagerheart</i>	Avalon: 72, 77
Campbell, Armine le S	<i>The Glories of Glastonbury</i>	Avalon: 110
Canterbury, Archbp. of	<i>Christianity and Social Order</i>	Battle of Britain: 78
Caroll, Lewis	<i>Alice in Wonderland</i>	Sane: 123
Chesterton, G. K.	<i>The Ballad of the White Horse</i>	Avalon: 110
Coué	<i>Suggestion and Autosuggestion</i>	Aspects: 59 Practical: 14
Crowley, Aleister	<i>Magick</i> 777	Applied: 61 MQ: 73, 81, 82, 104, 127, 148
David-Neel, Alexandra	'her books on Tibet' 'on Tibetan mysticism'	Applied: 11 Circuit: 67; MQ: 87
Dickens, Charles	<i>Pickwick Papers</i>	Taverner: 5
Dunne, J. W.	<i>Experiment with Time</i>	Hermetic: 79
Ellis, Havelock	<i>The Psychology of Sex</i>	Circuit: 21
Euripides	<i>The Bacchae</i>	Goat-foot: 20
Frazer, James	<i>The Golden Bough</i>	MQ: 97, 105

		Inr Lt Jnl: 1937, 214
Freud, Sigmund	<i>The Interpretation of Dreams</i>	Machinery: 57
Garver, Will	<i>Brother of the Third Degree</i>	Sane: 103
Goldsmith, Oliver	<i>The Vicar of Wakefield</i>	Sane: 177
Gould, Cmdr.	'Oddities' in <i>Jnl. of the Asiatic Society</i> , Vol LXV 1896	Self-defence: 29
Graham, Stephen	<i>The Priest of the Ideal</i>	Avalon: 110
Gurney, Edmund and Frank Podmore	<i>Phantasms of the Living</i>	Moon M: 44, 217
Haggard, Rider	<i>She</i>	Moon M: 116; Sea Pr: 47
Harrison, Jane	<i>Prolegomena to the Study of Greek Religion</i>	Applied: 24 Circuit: 12
Hart, Bernard	<i>The Psychology of Insanity</i>	Sane: 141 Self-defence: 209 Machinery: 72
Hitler, Adolf	<i>Mein Kampf</i>	Batt of Britain: 23
Heindel, Max	<i>The Rosicrucian Cosmo-Conception</i>	MQ: 87, 259
Housman, Lawrence	<i>Little Plays of St. Francis</i>	Avalon: 79
Huysmans, Joris Karl	<i>Là Bas</i> <i>A Rebours</i>	Goat-foot: 41, 45 Goat-foot: 27, 41, 44, 45, 140
Iamblichos	<i>On the Egyptian Mysteries</i>	Goat-foot: 26 Self-defence: 74
Jacobi, Jolande	<i>The Psychology of C. G. Jung</i>	Battle of Britain: 133
James, Henry	<i>The Wings of a Dove</i>	Goat-foot: 21
James, William	<i>Principles of Psychology</i>	Machinery: 71
Jerome, Jerome K.	<i>Three Men in a Boat</i> <i>The Passing of the Third Floor Back</i>	Self-defence: 21 Practical: 10
Joyce, James	<i>Ulysses</i>	Rit Mgc: 58
Jowett, Benjamin	'translations from the Greek'	MQ: 105
Jung, C. G.	<i>Psychology of the Unconscious</i>	Winged Bull:
Kidd, Benjamin	<i>The Science of Power</i>	MQ: 133
Kipling, Rudyard	<i>The End of the Passage</i> <i>The Elephant's Child</i> <i>Kim</i>	Self-defence: 28, 58 Sea Pr: 106 Rit Mgc: 46

Knight, Richard Payne	<i>The Symbolic Language</i>	
	<i>of Ancient Art and Mythology</i>	MQ: 90; Rit Mgc: 108
Leadbeater, Charles	'on auras'	Aspects: 49
Lévi, Eliphas	<i>History of Magic</i>	Taverner: 61
Loyola, Ignatius	<i>Exercises</i>	Goat-foot: 34
Marsden, Rev. C. L,	<i>Glastonbury: The English Jerusalem</i>	Avalon: 110
Mason, A. E. W.	<i>The Prisoner in the Opal</i>	Self-defence: 149
		Goat-foot: 8
Mathers, S. L. Macgregor	<i>Golden Dawn</i>	Applied: 72
	<i>Kabbalah Unveiled</i>	Circuit: 17
		MQ: v, 22, 52
	<i>(The Greater Holy Assembly)</i>	MQ: 47
	<i>(Book of Concealed Mystery)</i>	MQ: 46, 53
Mayo, Catherine	<i>Mother India</i>	Aspects: 26
McCleod, Fiona/Boughton	<i>The Immortal Hour</i>	Avalon: 77
	<i>The Queen of Cornwall</i>	Avalon 78
McDougal, William	<i>The Group Mind</i>	Applied: 16
	<i>Physiological Psychology</i>	Machinery: 71
	<i>An Introduction to Social Psychol.</i>	Machinery: 73
Milton, John	<i>Paradise Lost</i>	Self-defence: 89
Mitchell, Dr T. W.	<i>Medical Psychology and</i>	
	<i>Psychical Research</i>	Self-defence: 209
Mitchison, Naomi	<i>The Corn King and the Spring Queen</i>	Goat-foot: 151
Moll	'on hypnosis'	Self-defence: 208
		Machinery: 72
Morgan, Charles	<i>The Flashing Stream</i>	Circuit: 41
Morgan, Charles	essay ' <i>On Singleness of Mind</i> '	Circuit: 159
Muldoon, Sylvan and Hereward Carrington	<i>The Projection of the Astral Body</i>	Sea Priestess: 28
		Self-defence: 208
Myers, F. W. H.	<i>Human Personality</i>	Self-defence: 209
Nichol, Maurice	<i>Dream Psychology</i>	Sane: 141
		Self-defence: 209
		Machinery: 72
	<i>Occult Review</i> (magazine)	Self-defence: 92, 99
Ollivier, C. S.	<i>Analysis of Magic and Witchcraft</i>	Self-defence: 134
Pitt, George D.	<i>Sweeny Todd, the Demon Barber of Fleet Street</i>	

		Sane: 18
Plotinus (tr. MacKenna)	<i>Plotinus</i>	MQ: 105
Powell, A. E.	<i>The Astral Body</i>	Aspects: 49
Powis, John Cooper	<i>A Glastonbury Romance</i>	Avalon: 107
	<i>Punch</i> (magazine)	Self-defence: 163
Regardie, Israel	<i>The Tree of Life</i>	Applied: 61, 64
	<i>A Garden of Pomegranates</i>	Applied: 64
	<i>The Golden Dawn</i>	Battle of Britain: 67
Rostand, Edmond	<i>L'Aiglon</i>	Sea Priestess: 43
Rudhyar, Dane	<i>New Mansions for New Men</i>	Hermetic; 186, 188
Schuré, Edouard	<i>The Great Initiates</i>	Aspects: 23
Seabrook, W. B.	'on heathen rites' - actually: <i>Adventures in Arabia: among the Bedouins, Druses,</i>	
Shakespeare, William	<i>Midsummer Night's Dream</i>	Taverner: 135
	a short verse	MQ: 144
	<i>Hamlet</i>	Sane: 18
Shaw, G. B.	<i>Pygmalion</i>	Self-defence: 172
Shelley, Mary	<i>Dracula</i>	Self-defence: 56
Smiles, Samuel	<i>Self-Help</i>	Training: 197; Sea Pr 6 Taverner: 31
Smith, Elliott	'On mummies' - actually: <i>Tutankhamen and the discovery of his tomb, etc.</i>	Moon M: 119
Spence, Lewis	<i>Mysteries of Britain</i>	Aspects: 16 Avalon: 110
Spencer, Herbert	<i>First Principles</i>	Training: 22
Tansley, A. G.	<i>The New Psychology and its Relation to Life</i>	Machinery: 74
Tennyson, A.	<i>Idylls of the King</i>	Avalon: 110
Theresa of Avila	<i>Interior Castle</i>	MQ: 130
Trotter, Wilfrid	' <i>The Psychology of the Herd in Peace and War</i> '	Applied: 16
	actually: <i>The Instincts of the Herd in Peace and War</i>	Circuit: 21

		Machinery: 73
Wagner, Richard	<i>Flying Dutchman</i>	Sea Priestess: 135
Waite, A. E.	<i>The Holy Kabbalah</i>	MQ: 56
Waite, A. E.	<i>Key to the Tarot</i>	MQ: 73
Westcott, Wynn	<i>Sepher Yetzirah</i>	MQ: 23, 72, 83, 91, 112, 117, 128, 182, 204, 223, 223
		Ritual Mgc: 74
Wheatley, Dennis	<i>Strange Conflict</i>	Battle of Britain: 60
Whitman, Walt	<i>Children of Adam</i> (poems)	MQ: 263
Wickland, Dr	<i>Thirty Years among the Dead</i>	Self-defence: 208
Wilmshurst, W. L.	<i>On Masonic Initiation</i>	Training: 78
Woodroffe, Sir John	<i>Principles of Tantra II</i> for extract on p. 24 by Panchkori Bandyapadha	Applied: 25 Circuit: 13: 67
Woodroffe, Sir John	<i>World as Power, Power as Reality</i>	Applied: 2

b) works specifically recommended by Fortune for close study

These items appear in ‘The Literature of Illuminism’ serialised from July 1929 to September 1930 in the *Inner Light* and recently reproduced in Dion Fortune and Gareth Knight, *Practical Occultism* (Loughborough: Thoos Publications, 2002), pp. 140-174. Each title appears with a remark as to its contents and suitability. She intends the titles to be read in the order mentioned within each section. She also states that she does not necessarily agree with all the concepts or outlooks expressed. There is some overlap of titles when they appertain to different categories. The comments noted here briefly encapsulate Fortune’s own view at the time of their contents and their worth. Many of these titles have not stood the test of time, e.g. the psychological works; Margaret Murray’s research has been found seriously wanting; the *Maleus Maleficarum* is now known to be a concoction by two medieval clerics, etc.

Wherever possible, I have added the date of the first edition of each, and suggested by their dates which editions Fortune might well have consulted. In a few cases, I have corrected Fortune’s rendering of the titles.

I. Books for the Beginner

Fortune’s comment *(abbreviated)*

Annie Besant, <i>Popular Lectures on Theosophy</i> [1910] 1912	For the enquirer
A. P. Sinnett, <i>Esoteric Buddhism</i> [1883] 1918	Eminently readable
Dion Fortune, <i>Esoteric Orders and their Work</i> [1928]	
Annie Besant, <i>The Ancient Wisdom</i> [1897] 1917	General framework
Max Heindel, <i>The Rosicrucian Cosmo-Conception</i> [1909] 1929	“
Papus, <i>What is Occultism?</i> [1913] 1913	Practical application
A. E. Waite, <i>The Occult Sciences</i> [1891] 1891	“
Franz Hartmann, <i>Magic, White and Black</i> [1888] 1893	“
Dion Fortune, <i>Sane Occultism</i> [1930]	“
Anon, <i>The Initiate</i> [1920] 1920	The Occult outlook
Anon, <i>The Initiate in the New World</i> [1927] 1927	“
Algernon Blackwood, <i>Julius le Vallon</i> [1916] 1929	Real occult Knowledge
Algernon Blackwood, <i>John Silence</i> [1908] 1912	Also worth reading
Algernon Blackwood, <i>Incredible Adventures</i> [1914] 1914	“

II. The Classics of Occultism

Mme Blavatsky, <i>Secret Doctrine</i> [1888] 1928	Fundamental text
Mme Blavatsky, <i>Isis Unveiled</i> [1877] 1919	Of the greatest interest
Eliphas Levi, <i>Transcendental Magic</i> [1886] 1923	Informative,
entertaining	
Eliphas Levi, <i>History of Magic</i> [1860] 1922	“
Mrs Attwood, <i>A Suggestive Enquiry into the Hermetic Mystery</i> [1850] 1920	Stodgy, but extremely valuable

III. Books on Initiation

Mrs Besant, <i>Initiation, the Perfecting of Man</i> [1912] 1912	Best introduction
“ <i>In the Outer Court</i> [1895] 1914	“
“ <i>The Path of Discipleship</i> [1896] 1918	“
J. Krishnamurti, <i>At the Feet of the Master</i> [1910] 1928	Heartily recommended
Mabel Collins, <i>Light on the Path</i> [1885] 1910	More comprehensive
Rudolf Steiner, <i>The Way of Initiation</i> [1908] 1923	Sound and valuable
“ <i>Initiation and its Results</i> [1909] 1910	“
Dion Fortune, <i>Esoteric Orders and their Work</i> [1928]	General principles
W. L. Wilmshurst, <i>The Meaning of Masonry</i> [1922] 1927	Comprehensive
“ <i>The Masonic Initiation</i> [1924] 1924	“
Alice Bailey, <i>Initiation, Human and Solar</i> [1922] 1922	Very interesting

- The Dominion of Dreams* [1899] 1919 and
The Winged Destiny [1904] 1910 for deep spiritual experience
- J. Caldwell Johnston, *The Book of the Beloved* [1923] 1923 beautiful mystical poetry
- A. E. Waite, *Collected Poems*, 2 vols. [1914] 1914 Mystical
 psychology
- The Oxford Book of English Mystical Verse* [1917] 1917 beautiful anthology
- A. E. *The Candle of Vision* [1918] 1920
- Maurice Hewlett, *Lore of Proserpine* [1913] 1913 factual visionary experiences
- Henry Jackson Van Dyke, *The Other Wise Man* [1927] 1927 a little gem, as are:
 Edmond Holmes, *Sonnets to the Universe* [1918] 1918 and
 Olive Schreiner, *Dreams* [1891] 1908
- Stephen Graham, *Priest of the Ideal* [1917] 1917 pilgrimage around Gt Britain

VIII. Ceremonial Magic

- Eliphas Lévi, *Transcendental Magic* [1856] 1923 magnum opus
- “ *The History of Magic* [1860] 1922
- A.E. Waite, *The Mysteries of Magic: Digest of the Works of Eliphas Lévi* [1886] 1886
 good but coloured by his dislike of anything non-
 Christian
- The above three are the best introduction to this subject. Also read:
- W. L. Wilmshurst, *The Meaning of Masonry* [1922] 1927
- “ *The Masonic Initiation* [1924] 1924
- Dion Fortune, *Esoteric Orders and their Work* [1928]
- MacGregor Mathers, *Egyptian Magic* [?]
- C. W. Leadbeater, *The Science of the Sacraments* [1920] 1920
- “ *The Hidden Side of Christian Festivals* [1920] 1920
- “ *The Masters and the Path* [1925] not wholly recommended
- Algernon Blackwood, *The Regeneration of Lord Ernie* and *A Descent into Egypt*
 Both these in *Incredible Adventures* [1914] 1914
 (as well as those already noted above.) Valuable accounts of ritual magic.
- Talbot Mundy, *Om* [1924] 1924 and *Ramsden* [1926] 1926 his two best
- Sax Rohmer, *The Brood of the Witch Queen* [1918] 1918
- Dion Fortune, *Dr. Taverner* and *The Demon Lover* [1927]
- Aleister Crowley, *Moonchild* [1929] 1929 Unpleasant, but should be read
- Seabrook, *The Magic Island* [1929] 1929 extraordinary – stranger than fiction

IX. The Old Gods in England

- Lewis Spence, *The Problem of Atlantis* [1924] 1925 and
The History of Atlantis [1926] 1926 fascinating subject
- R. Hippisley Cox, *The Green Roads of England* [1914] 1923 Atlantean colony here?
- Lewis Spence, *The Mysteries of Britain* [1928] 1928
- Arthur J. Hubbard, *Neolithic Dewponds and Cattleways* [1905] 1916 life of primitives
- E. Herbert Stone, *The Stones of Stonehenge* [1924] 1924 “
- Harold J. Massingham, *Downland Man* [1926] 1927 “
- Margaret Murray, *The Witch-cult in Western Europe* [1921] 1921 exceedingly valuable
- Charles Olliver, *The Analysis of Witchcraft* [1928] 1928 a psychological point of view
- Jessie Weston, *From Ritual to Romance* [1920] 1920 connects ancient and medieval
- John Brodie Innes, *The Devil's Mistress* [1915] 1915 his best book
- John Buchan, *Witchwood* [1927] 1927 survival of the cult of Pan
- Lord Dunsany, *The Blessing of Pan* [1927] 1927 similar

X. An Outline of Psychology

- Dion Fortune, *Machinery of the Mind* [1922] good starting point
- Maurice Nicoll, *Dream Psychology* [1917] 1920
- Wilfred Trotter, *Instincts of the Herd in Peace and War* [1910] 1924
functioning of the group mind
- Benjamin Kidd, *The Science of Power* [1918] 1920 “
- Bernard Hart, *Psychology of Insanity* [1912] 1925 readable introduction
- Dr William Stoddart, *The New Psychiatry* [1915] 1915 “
- W. McDougall, *Physiological Psychology* [1905] 1911 mind/body relationship
- Louis Berman, *The Glands regulating the Personality* [1921] 1928 “
- Charles Baudouin, *Suggestion and Autosuggestion* [1920] 1926 of primary importance for occultists
- William James, *Varieties of Religious Experience* [1902] 1928 “
- Richard Bucke, *Cosmic Consciousness* [1894] 1905 supernormal consciousness
- A.G. Tansley, *The New Psychology* [1920] 1929 standard survey
- W. McDougall, *Social Psychology* [1908] 1908 “
- Carl G. Jung, *Psychology of the Unconscious* [1915] 1916 occultism on a sound scientific basis
- Sigmund Freud, *Interpretation of Dreams* [1913] 1920 same but too one-sided
- Albert Moll, *Hypnotism* [1890] 1924

XIII. An Introduction to Meditation

a) the possibilities

Arnold Bennett, *The Human Machine* [1908] 1926; *Mental efficiency* [1912] 1912; and
How to live on Twenty-four Hours a Day [1908] 1929

b) training

Annie Besant, *Thought Power* [1903] 1916 excellent but hard going. Theosophical

James Ingall Wedgwood, *Meditation for Beginners* [1918] 1919 better; Theosophical

Dorothy Greenside, *Character-building and Thought Control* [?] graduated exercises

Rudolf Steiner, *Practical Training in Thought-control* [?] metaphysical

Ignatius Loyola, *Spiritual Exercises* [1522]

Swami Vivekananda, *Raja Yoga* [1912] 1923 rationale of super-consciousness

c) use of suggestibility

Charles Baudouin, *Suggestion and Autosuggestion* [1920] 1026 Coué standard work

T. Henry Hamblin for books on New Thought and American Uplift

d) practical

Evelyn Underhill, *Practical Mysticism: a Little Book for Normal People* [1912] 1914

Brother Lawrence, *The Practice of the Presence of God* [c. 1694] 1914

Miguel Molinos, *The Spiritual Guide* [1675] 1921

Thomas à Kempis, *Imitation of Christ* [1418] 1919

XIV. Books on Witchcraft

Margaret Murray, *Witchcult in Western Europe* [1921] 1921

Charles Olliver, *Analysis of Witchcraft* [1928] 1928

Signe Toksvig, *The Last Devil* [1927] 1927 a novel

Lord Dunsany, *The Blessings of Pan* [1927] 1927 “

Sylvia Townsend Warner, *Lolly Willowses* [1923] 1923 “

Montague Summers, *History of Witchcraft* [1926] 1926 and

Geography of Witchcraft [1927] 1927

He also edited *Malleus Maleficarum* [1928] 1928 and *Compendium*

Maleficarum [1929] 1929

A. E. Waite, *Ceremonial Magic* [1911] 1911 gives portions of grimoires

Montague Summers, *The Vampire in Europe* [1929] 1929 and *The Vampire, his Kith
and Kin* [1928] 1928

Frank Hamel, *Human Animals* [1915] 1915

Dudley Wright, *Vampires and Vampirism* [1914] 1924

S. Baring Gould, *Book of Werewolves* [1865] scholarly

Elliott O'Donnell's book on werewolves [1912] 1912

Browning, Robert	Sea Pr: 14
Byron, Lord	Applied
Collins, Mabel	MQ: 105
Dee, Dr John	MQ: 194
Dickens, Charles	Sane: 177
Doyle, Conan	Self-defence: 29
Ellis, Havelock	Inner Light Mag 1937
Freud, Sigmund	MQ: 105
Johnson, Dr	Inr Lt Mag Nov 1936
Kelly, Sir Edward	MQ: 104
Kipling, Rudyard	Applied: 23; Hermetic: 128; Sea Pr: 281
Lawrence, D. H.	by implication in Winged Bull
Lully, Raymond	MQ: 104
Luther, Martin	Sea Pr: 7
Massey, Gerald	MQ: 105
Mathers, S. L. M.	Applied: 66
Mead, G. R. S.	MQ: 92, 105
Papus	MQ: 23, 105
Regardie, Israel	Applied: 66
Rosenroth, Knorr von	MQ: 104
Steiner, Rudolf	Sane: 115, 147
Saint-Martin, Louis Claude de	MQ: 105
Vivekananda	Sane: 147, 163

These are instructive lists, although it probably could be supplemented by additional titles from the *Inner Light* magazine, where books are also occasionally reviewed and recommended.

It is clear that Fortune was widely read, and that this list must constitute but a tiny fraction (a cross-section, if we are lucky) of her reading. For Kabbalah, she obviously relies heavily upon Wynn Westcott's translation of the *Sepher Yetzirah*, and Mathers' *Kabbalah Unveiled* (which includes the other titles mentioned). Knowing full well that Crowley's system was firmly based on the teachings he received from the Golden Dawn, she had no hesitation in using his tabulation in 777, though sometimes

with some reservation. And, strangely, despite her misgivings over the use of Eastern practices in the West, there are appreciative references to Blavatsky's *Secret Doctrine*.

As we would expect, most of Fortune's references are to magical texts - some 38 in all, two-thirds of those referring to Kabbalah. Second in importance are her references to works of fiction - almost 30, if we include poetry. The category including psychology, sex, suggestion, and psychical research contains some 18 references, and there are 14 references to works concerning cosmology - mainly from the *Secret Doctrine*, but including other sources as well. These references include multiple references to single works.

Using the criteria of book titles only, the most significant topics concern psychology, of equal significance as magic (including Qabalah, Tarot, etc.); secondly, occult fiction.

No account is taken of references that she made to her own works, of which there are few, mainly to her text-books, *The Cosmic Doctrine*, and *The Mystical Qabalah*.

Appendix IV

Some Apposite Definitions and explanations of Magic

Chapter 1 of Bengt Ankarloo and Stuart Clark's *Witchcraft and Magic in Europe: The Middle Ages* is a necessary discussion of various definitions of magic.¹ Since Dion Fortune was above all a practising magician, a selection of the views of just a few, mostly modern, commentators and practitioners would surely not come amiss here. Ankarloo and Clark stress the amorphous nature of popular culture (of which magic is a part), but they argue that this should not prevent us from including it as an equally powerful statement as against formal condemnations of magic by the church. They argue against the now doubtful view that religion grew out of magic (the early twentieth-century evolutionary model), seeing the interaction of Christian and pagan customs as, rather, creative and transformative. Neither do they see any clear distinction between supposed 'manipulative' magical demands on the one hand and 'supplicative' prayer on the other. They praise Lynn Thorndike's method of allowing texts concerning magic to speak for themselves rather than impose either the 'rise-and-fall' model of, for example, Keith Thomas, or the evolutionary paradigm mentioned above, or the supposition that magic and religion can clearly be distinguished from each other (e.g. an irrational magic vs rational religion). Medieval (and, I would argue, modern) magic were and are complex matters, closely intertwining with religion, manifesting in at most a 'shared boundary' between them.

Fortune considered regular use of magical ritual to be the most effective means by which Westerners who are not naturally psychic may sensitise and raise consciousness to the highest levels of which they are capable, fostering a more controlled and deeper contact with the Saints and Inner Hierarchies, impressing the universal consciousness (or collective unconscious) with patterns of balance that the inner beings can use in their own ways to cultivate harmony among all creation, thus raising the consciousness of all.

These are, then, a very small selection of the very many opinions that are available. It is interesting to note the number of modern occultists who base their definition on that of Fortune's.

a) by occultists of the Western Tradition

Ancient

The Goetia of the Lemegeton of King Solomon:

Magic is the Highest, most Absolute, and most Divine Knowledge of Natural Philosophy, advanced in its works and wonderful operations by a right understanding of the inward and occult virtue of things; so that true Agents being applied to proper Patients, strange and admirable effects will thereby be produced. Whence magicians are profound and diligent searchers into Nature; they, because of their skill, know how to anticipate an effect, the which to the vulgar shall seem to be a miracle.

¹ Bengt Ankarloo and Stuart Clark, eds, *Witchcraft and Magic in Europe: The Middle Ages* (London: The Athlone Press, 2002), pp. 6-12.

Cornelius Agrippa:

Magic is a faculty of wonderful power, full of most high mysteries. It contains the most profound contemplation of things which are most secret, together with their nature, power, quality, substance and virtues, and the knowledge of the whole of nature. It instructs us in the way things differ and agree with each other and thus it produces wonderful effects by applying the virtues of one thing to another and thus uniting them. It also joins and knits firmly together compatible inferior objects by means of the powers and virtues of superior bodies. This is the most perfect and principal branch of knowledge, a sacred and more lofty kind of philosophy, and the most absolute perfection of every most excellent philosophy. Maxwell-Stuart, *The Occult in Early Modern Europe* (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1999) p. 116 in Bengt Ankarloo, Stuart Clark, eds, *Witchcraft and Magic in Europe: The Period of the Witch Trials* (London: Athlone, 2002), p. 148.

Psellus:

Magic explores the essence and power of everything. (Ashcroft-Nowicki, 1999: 23)
Modern

Adler:

‘A set of techniques enabling the human mind to achieve desired effects.’ (1986: 8).

Bonewits:

‘The science and art of magic deals with a body of knowledge that, for one reason or another, has not yet been fully investigated or confirmed by the other arts and sciences.’ (1971: 33)

‘A science and an art comprising a system of concepts and methods for the build-up of human emotion, altering the electro-chemical balance of the metabolism, using associational techniques and devices to concentrate and focus this emotional energy, thus modulating the energy broadcast by the human body, usually to affect other energy patterns whether animate or inanimate, but occasionally to affect the personal energy pattern. A way to control *psi* phenomena.’ (1971: 216)

Butler, W. E.:

‘the art of effecting changes in consciousness at will.’ (1965: 9,10)

‘the art of causing changes in consciousness at will.’ (1974: 10)

Carpenter, Dennis D.:

‘The active cultivation of psi abilities’ (1996 in Lewis, ed, 1959)

Crowley, Aleister:

‘the Science and Art of causing Change to occur in conformity with Will.’ (Symonds and Grant, eds, 1973. See also his verbal illustration, p. 131)

‘the Science and Art of causing change to occur in consciousness in conformity with Will.’ (As wrongly quoted by Crowley, Vivianne, 1989: 11, but correct on her p. 112)

Dennis and Phillips:

‘the production of desired effects . . . by means of a deliberate and special use of powers and faculties within the psyche . . . entirely under the command, and according to the will, of the magician.’ (1974: xviii)

Duncan, Anthony D.:

‘the science and art of causing changes in consciousness to occur in conformity with will.’ (1966: 48)

‘the art of making changes in accordance with the will.’ (1975: 37)

Edwards, David:

‘A means of causing changes in consciousness in conformity with will.’ (1971: 9)

Farr Florence:

‘Magic is ‘unlimiting experience’ - removing the limitations of illusory restrictions.’ (Howe, 1972: 64)

Fortune, Dion:

‘It is the aim of that branch of esoteric science which is popularly called Magic, to obtain control of conditions upon one plane by acting upon the forces of the plane immediately above it, which acts as causal plane to the lower one.’ (1967a: 12)

‘Magic may be defined as the use of some form of ceremonial, ranging from the simple mantram or spell to elaborate rituals of which the Mass of the Church and the ceremonies of the Freemason are examples . . . The whole idea of ritual magic is about the contacting of a being on the Inner Planes who will assist in the operation by concentrating a cosmic force of a particular type.’ (1972 [1928]: 78)

‘a highly developed, highly stylized, form of mystical religion, with an elaborate philosophical basis.’ (From ‘The Broken Tryst’ in *Occult Review* 56 (1932) 23)

‘Magic is the art of causing changes to take place in consciousness in accordance with will.’ (*London Forum*, September 1934: 174. Seymour in Ashcroft-Nowicki, 1999: 24)

‘the practical application of a knowledge of the little-understood powers of the human mind.’ (1976b: 56)

‘Magic . . . is a technique for the utilisation and direction of the astral forces, which are the immediate causes behind the world of appearances.’ (1938 in Fortune and Knight, 1999b: 133)

Gray, W. G.:

‘Man's most determined effort to establish an actual working relationship through himself between his Inner and Outer states of being . . . Magic seeks to translate energies from one state of existence to another in accordance with an intention of the operative intelligence.’ (1969: 7, 8)

Green, M.:

‘the art of causing changes in consciousness in conformity with the will.’ (1983: 20)

Hughes, G.:

‘Magic is the endeavour to move to other levels to create a cause which will produce an effect on this physical level.’ (Richardson & Hughes, 1989: 242)

Knight, G.:

‘to effect changes in consciousness in conformity with will.’ (1978: 8)

Lévi, Eliphas:

‘the traditional science of the secrets of Nature which has come down to us from the Magi’ (Waite, 1891: 12, 275)

Mackenzie, Kenneth:

‘a psychological branch of science, dealing with the sympathetic effects of stones, drugs, herbs and living substances upon the imaginative and reflective faculties.’ (King, *Rit Mgc & Alchemy*) in Howe, 1972: 64)

Mathers, MacGregor:

‘The Science of the Control of the Secret Forces of Nature.’ (Greenwood, 2000: 190)

Matthews, Caitlín and John:

‘Magic and ritual are microcosmic expressions of the macrocosm: man's tiny torch of desire uplifted to the fire of the stars.’ (1986: 101)

Regardie, Israel:

‘Magic has been defined by Aleister Crowley as "the science and art of causing changes to occur in conformity with the will." Dion Fortune qualifies this nicely with an added clause, "changes in consciousness."(1970 [1932]: iii)

‘Magic . . . is essentially a divine process - Theurgy, a mode of spiritual culture or development.’ (1971: 11)

Starhawk:

‘The art of liberation, the act that releases the mysteries, that ruptures the fabric of our beliefs and lets us look into the heart of deep space where dwell the immeasurable, life-generating powers.’ (1987: 6)

‘the art of changing consciousness at will.’ (1989: 7, 28, 32)

‘the art of sensing and shaping the subtle, unseen forces that flow throughout the world, awakening the deeper levels of consciousness beyond the rational’ (1989: 27)

Stewart, R. J.:

‘the tuning of consciousness to other worlds or dimensions by the skilled application of magical patterns and key symbols in a process of personal transformation which can lead to profound and far-reaching practical results.’ (1987: ix)

‘[. . .] magic is a set of methods arranging awareness according to patterns [. . .] The serious application of magical methods leads to transformation; it is the transformation that is of value, and not the methods themselves.’ (1987: 1)

‘Magic is basically an artistic science in which we control and develop our imagination to cause changes in the outer world.’ (1987: 12)

‘Magic may only be understood through active participation.’

Waite, A. E.:

‘esoteric wisdom, occult knowledge, the transcendental philosophy and practice are all inter-convertible terms which all signify Magic . . .’ (1891 :13)

b) by Recent Chroniclers of the Occult

Butler, E.M.:

'one of the most powerful elements in human thought which the history of ideas has to show.' (1993: 268)

Carpenter, Dennis D.:

'the active cultivation of psi abilities.' (1996 n Lewis (ed): 59)

Cavendish, R.:

'an attempt to exert power through actions which are believed to have a direct and automatic influence on man, nature and the divine (1990:1)

Gibbons, B. J.:

'Magic is essentially a means of concentrating the will and of engaging the imagination.' (1991: 13).

Greenwood, S.:

'Magical practice is essentially concerned with a sustained and regular interaction with otherworldly reality.' (2000: 49)

King, Frances:

'the science and art of creating changes in consciousness and entering into contact with non-human intelligences.' (1970: 43)

King, Francis:

'methods of entering into relationships with non-human forces and obtaining wealth, power, and pleasure' (1970: 9)

King & Skinner:

'the art and science of using little known natural forces in order to achieve changes in consciousness and the physical environment.' (1976: 9)

Kraig, Donald Michael:

'Magic is the science and art of causing change (in consciousness) to occur in conformity with will, using means not currently understood by traditional Western science.' (quoted in Cicero & Cicero, 2003: 70)

Luck, Georg:

'a technique grounded in a belief in powers located in the human soul and in the universe outside ourselves, a technique that aims at imposing the human will on nature or on human beings by using supersensual powers. Ultimately it may be a belief in the unlimited powers of the soul.' (1985: 3)

Raglan, Lord:

'the most powerful influence on human conduct the world has ever seen.' (1940: 73).

Richardson, Alan:

'Deliberately or not the magician provokes a change within the consciousness of the group, the nation and ultimately the world.' (1984: 77)

Spare, Austin:

'to steal the fire of heaven.'

Suster, Gerald:

'The science and art of realising the Divine Self by changing the human self.' (1989: 18)

Wilson, Colin:

'Magic' springs from man's recognition that he possesses powers that are inaccessible to everyday awareness . . . an instinctive recognition that he was once a god. Magic is an obscure striving towards the realisation of Faculty X.'

Woodroffe, Sir John:

'the development of supernormal power, either by extension of natural faculty or by control over other beings and forces of nature.' (1968: 469)

Appendix V

Recent Examples of Contact with Intermediaries

The following unpublished transcripts are drawn predominantly from the archives of the Gareth Knight Group, the organisation instituted by Gareth Knight (Basil Wilby) to continue and extend the work of Dion Fortune after his resignation from the Society of the Inner Light in 1960, and the formal institution of his own group in 1974. The records pertain to contacts with an assortment of intermediaries, save where obvious, and were mostly generated as a result of participation in theurgic ritual.

These materials clearly illustrate, firstly, how the impetus of Fortune's work has continued and been developed in an intensive and practical, and not purely theoretical, way and, secondly, of how her work appears to be capable of producing positive and beneficial personal results by virtue of the experiences and realisations for those taking part. The emotive, even mystical, content of some of them enhances the sense of reality that the contacts had for the participants quoted.

This representative selection of instances ranges from 1986 to 2005. It will be noted that there are no examples from quite a number of years. This reflects the sparseness of archival material for those years rather than any lack of experiential occurrences. The examples represent the sentiments of several different people, and constitute a valuable record of the kinds of experiences resulting from contact with intermediaries within the Dion Fortune tradition, and are of particular interest to students of theurgic experience. It should be noted that none of these experiences was specifically looked for; neither does their occurrence indicate the degree to which participants in the rituals benefited from, or contributed effectively to, the work in hand, which is succinctly summed up in the Avalon Group brochure as one of 'raising consciousness, and engaging in fellowship with the inner forces, archetypes, and Inner Plane Adepts. The overall aim is to seed or impress the collective unconscious with patterns of balance so that the inner beings, such as the Archangels, can use them in their own ways to foster harmony and balance amongst all creation.'

Further and more extended examples, may be found in Dion Fortune and Gareth Knight, *An Introduction to Ritual Magic* (Loughborough: Thoth Publications, 1997).

1. 22/23 March 1986

I recall the masters clearly, including the new Northern contact (looking like someone between Asclepius and St Christopher and bearing a staff – and who continued to appear through all the weekend), and Morya at the centre exuding heat, fire and power. I remember a vision of Apollo, and vaguely the charioteer.

2. 22/23 March 1986

Whilst the Delphi charioteer may be Greek, he is also the Great Being behind Merlin. He is very important right now. Considering his lofty position he communicates with great ease, although when he is in close contact he is very overwhelming and my mind doesn't want to think, it just wants to be. In the working he said, 'You shall ride with me one day, and in that day you shall know more love, than in a million years on Earth.' [. . .] the Charioteer is linked in a direct line to one of the stars of the Great Bear.'

3. 22 June 1986

Contacts a combination of Carstairs and the Tibetan. The first related to the love/wisdom aspect of the Divine Feminine and BVM images. The latter an international concern. Also various stellar entities around.

4. 22 June 1986

Renewed contact with Thomas More and unexpected and unsought contact with Carstairs, of extraordinary strength and power – like a black crystalline pillar, joining deepest Earth and heavens. Not at all the Flanders poppy romantic.

5. 30/31 August 1986 (after a Tolkien ritual)

The elves bring light and song and the joy of the true art of living. They are a gracious and noble race, yet there is an underlying sadness about them as though they remember

when all was joy and the gods were all around even in Middle Earth, and this knowledge of things as they were, of knowing Paradise, is a deep pain of loss. As I write I feel their joy under the stars. When I awoke this morning Manwe was there on his great throne, overseeing all. I am aware of the magical weapons of the elves around me. As men we have elven blood within us and we understand their yearning. Here is the key for, like us, they work for the restoration of Paradise in Middle Earth. Then all shall be gathered to Illuvatar and the song shall be greater than before.

6. 18/19 October 1986

Mary Queen of Scots [. . .] who, it appears, was a personality who bore an archetype the working through of which was little comprehended by her contemporaries. Her last letters on the night before she died show a deep conviction of fulfilling a sacrificial destiny that, on the face of it, seems unsupported by the historical record, and therefore invite the stigma of hypocrisy or self-deception. However this demonstrates the sometimes differing values of the world of personalities and those of the inner/archetypal worlds.

7. 18/19 October 1986

The thing I took away was the strength of contact with Sir Thos. More. This has built up since the Tower trip. The contact washed over me like a tidal wave. He appeared as clear as day before me and I lost track for a few minutes.

8. 18/19 October 1986

DF was there all right. She manifested as soon as we got started, accompanying and interpreting. She really must have had an intelligence like a razor underneath that rather homely exterior [. . .] the powerful dark presence of Carstairs (he always seems to be bathed in a kind of black light), Sir Thos. More in his austere but infinitely compassionate way. [. . .] A new contact, for me, was Dee, who I have always admired but never before met – a kind of grave Prospero, who was also the Tarot Hermit and Melchizedek.

9. 18/19 October 1986

I had a dream about Carstairs the previous night and I began to move very deeply in my inner world as a result [. . .] It opened up the Atlantean strata in a controlled way, making a contact for our whole company, inner and outer. The depth was so great that it took some time to come out of it. Whatever the outcome this was a seminal contact for me and one which I shall return to as a source of strength and inspiration for the future.

10. 18/19 October 1986

The welcome of the Masters was warm; the openness of Sir Thos. More speaks of the essence of love.

11. 18/19 October 1986

I was very aware of the company of dwarves behind me and I felt almost guilty to have brought them to witness the crucifixion. This was foolish of course - they were tougher than me! [. . .] At the end of the ritual I still saw the body there. The Mother figure had by then been joined by a simple row of silent – though not sad – dwarves, who watched with her. My impression was that they were slightly non-plussed and surprised at finding someone who loved the earth as much as they did themselves! Human too! And for this reason were glad to play their part.

12. 7/8 February 1987

The key point of this contact was however the naming of Mary Stuart, as Queen and Catholic martyr, at the memorial to those who had sacrificed their lives for the good of the many. At this point she was seen to circumambulate the lodge, a figure in black so palpable as to be almost visible to physical sight. And to one present in particular, who was much moved by her presence, she seemed almost to dance round, proclaiming joyously that she was free. She stood beside this brother and said she was so affected because he had Stuart blood in his veins.

13. 18/19 October 1987

This ritual was an important and complete affirmation of the Goddess. When the Goddess was summoned I saw her as a vast figure of all that is of the feminine side of creation, and in her aura, as it were, I saw the two Queens, Elizabeth I, Queen of England, and her racial shadow, Mary Queen of Scots, together, equal, and both raised to a high status of spiritual racial being [. . .] I sat for some time in the temple at the end of the ritual. The image that dominated the temple then was of a red rose floating in space, and a feeling of deep peace. Mary, Queen of Scots, stood behind me and I felt that she was indeed a sacrifice, one who was showing the way to the new age when the goddess would be freed. She was calmer than the day before, pleased that we recognised the importance of the coming age.

14. 6/7 June 1987

(A Merlin figure) [. . .] The infolding of Space to form a mighty Star Being with long, amply materialled cloak and broad brimmed, pointed hat, slightly battered, a being of age and wisdom beyond imagining, the archetype of the Star Magician.

15. 15/16 August 1987

I must admit I was wary about representing Sir Thomas More, as how could someone who had led quite an imperfect life relate to someone who for me represented something of an ideal? But I had a nice contact prior to the ritual with him upon the relationship between master and pupil, which made this feeling disappear. The actual act during the ritual seemed to create somewhat of an overshadowing experience with two consciousnesses inhabiting one body in a strange sort of way. Quite an experience, which left me feeling full of life and really charged afterwards. As an after result of this ritual I have had some very good contacts with Sir Thomas More.

16. 15/16 August 1987

[. . .] the contact turned out to be far more ancient than I had conceived possible. It seemed in fact Titanic. One of the great spiritual beings who at some remote time had overseen the forces of the formation of the earth and presumably still holds them in conscious control. Almost what in the *Cosmic Doctrine* is called a Lord of Flame or

Form. Nonetheless it seemed in no wise an unhuman or unfriendly contact. Just very 'other'. Certainly, it would seem, pre-human, or superhuman, but this does not mean inhuman. As a spiritual being, he must have all the qualities that we have, in actuality or potential.

17. 30 October/1 November 1987

I found it an interesting experience mediating the 7th Lord of Form, particularly as I have never had to take on a female archetype before (and boy, was she a female archetype!). She certainly came as an enchantress. Her voice was musical and 'spell binding'. I felt both besotted by her and in a state of wonder as I 'took a back seat' and watched her talking through me.

18. 13/14 February 1988

When we were in the Chamber of Venus I was thunderstruck as the bedhangings were pulled aside, for there lying on the silken sheets was not a Venus but the body of M. Q. S. (Mary Queen of Scots), her head lying just above. I couldn't believe it! I had not had a thought of M. Q. S. for some time and was, in any case, quite certain that Fr. -----'s Rose Garden Ritual had, as a side effect, settled things comfortably as regards this lady. I was very taken aback; even more so when she rose in due course and proceeding as asked to do in the ritual, but with her head held before her in both hands! I couldn't understand what I had seen, so thought the best course was to simply fade her image and build the image of the Venus as strongly as I could [. . .].'

19. 17 November 1990

I was aware of DF standing in the North West before we started the Saturday afternoon ritual but it was then as if she had not only moved to the East as we began but that in my mind's eye I was seeing her figure superimposed on that of the magus. His voice sounded very different and on opening my eyes it seemed to me that his face had altered. I could see and hear what she must have been like in physicality. From what I know of her methods of working perhaps something like this was to have been expected. I was also very aware of her in the West as I moved to the altar with the cup and her presence, together with the extraordinary qualities of the cup itself made this a potent moment and

I found myself looking over the brim of the cup into a vast still sea lit by moonlight in which ages appeared to pass in a few seconds of actual time.

20. 17/18 November 1990

There was an honouring of our Sister (Dion Fortune) for her work in the mysteries by the Inner and the many initiates whom she had brought to the Work. Towards the end as Merl's (Dr Thomas Penry Evans, Fortune's husband) name was called, I was aware of his coming forth robed as a Priest of the Sun – very secure of his place in the mysteries having integrated the initiations bestowed upon him by the S(ociety of the) I(nner) L(ight) by his work in the world and that now upon the Inner he was functioning as a true priest of the Sun. He seemed to carry the mark of the priesthood of Melchizedek.

21. 12 July 1995

Anybody any ideas on a small Chinese sage who keeps popping up in my meditations? He doesn't talk – just stands and smiles – and I know nothing about Chinese philosophy or occultism! He is very ancient, quite bald, and wears a sort of ivory coloured robe. A bit like one of those carved Netsuki figures. He is quite extraneous to what I am doing, but I don't like to be rude and tell him to go away, as he's totally benign! All the books say Cabala started in Egypt or the Fertile Crescent, but could it have had distant Chinese affiliations?

22. 16/17 December 1995

I now find that any time I want to attempt to communicate with the chancellor I only have to visualise the pathway leading to [. . .] Abbey and out he pops from between the yew trees. It's like a call-sign.

23. 16/17 December 1995

I could clearly see the Chancellor and Socrates gazing out with their usual serene wisdom, but David Carstairs grinned at me and gave me a cheery wave. This was so spontaneous that I very nearly burst out laughing.

24. 5 January 1996

An odd thing happened on the Monday night [. . .] Somebody was trying to dictate a ritual to me in my sleep. I've no idea where it was coming from, and I couldn't pick up any of the details, but it was something to do with the Rosicrucians. It felt as though I was receiving all this data fairly clearly, in words and pictures, but that it wasn't quite filtering through into consciousness – I could sense it just on the edge of my consciousness, a bit like trying to see something out of the corner of your eye. Two or three times I actually woke up, aware that in my sleep I had just told the sender of the material, rather crossly, that it was a complete waste of time their trying to send stuff through because I wasn't able to pick it up properly. But every time I went back to sleep it started up again with the same intensity. I'm afraid nothing tangible had come through by the morning except the awareness of the Rosicrucian link, so I frantically started reading up on the Christian Rosenkreutz literature in the hope of stuffing my conscious and subconscious minds with a bit more raw material on the subject. But the inner contact, whoever it was, has not been back since. Typical!

25. 3/4 February 1996

During this time I was aware of a circumambulating procession round the lodge, between our seated circle and the altar, which seemed to draw within to its vortex many poetic and imaginative traditions of the country and those associated with them. I particularly noticed George Russell, or 'AE', but there were many others, and many mythological and legendary figures, and non-human beings, the mighty Sidhe and all the lesser elemental creatures. Eventually they all followed a spiral way into the centre and entered the central tower and hill.

26. 3/4 February 1996

The central Tower became a vertical vortex drawing in the four aspects of the quarters and the powers of below and above, and the whole thing was like a huge pillar of energy. And then we sat down. Sitting down did not stop the process from continuing, far from it, things began to build even more. Edmund Spenser came in thick and strong. It is a while since I have had such a strong overshadowing as this. I could feel the huge Elizabethan ruff around my neck and felt as though my face changed shape. He was there mediating power from the south to the centre. I asked a few questions but was

ignored. People left the lodge and I tried to get up but he wouldn't let me. His only instructions to me were 'Sit, and allow me to do what I need to do.'

This went on for a while until there was only [one other member] and I left in the room and I had to force myself to stand up against the will of my contact (I don't mind helping out matey but this is *my* body!).

27. 3/4 February 1996

I found the imagery very vivid and very animated during this working. In particular, I was aware of the presence of David Carstairs right from the start of the visualisation. He was just standing around in the South quarter of the temple. This seemed to arise quite spontaneously before I even realised that he was 'placed' in the South as part of the ritual. I rarely get any actual communication from DC, but I'm often aware of him being around and sometimes see him quite clearly. While his list of personal qualities was being read out he seemed to be larking about in a display of mock modesty. I think he was also quite chuffed with those field glasses! I saw all the Masters very vividly during this working, but DC particularly so. I also had the most powerful image of Christ that I've ever had – usually I find I can only see him either as a blinding power too great to comprehend or just as some ordinary bloke, but this time I got a really strong, clear, emotionally-charged image.

28. 4 April 1996

Went to church over Easter and was struck by the power and presence of Our Lord and Our Lady. On Maundy Thursday evening the presence of the Sorrowing Mother was incredibly strong. She stood and witnessed our ceremony in which Christ was crucified. Then on the Saturday with the lighting of the Paschal candle, I was quite amazed how our vicar was overshadowed by the Christ whilst blessing the sacred host. I've never considered our rector to be a particularly 'spiritual' chap but I guess the act of ordination goes a long way.

29. 20/21 April 1996

[. . .] the reredos in the West, which appeared to be an attractive focus for inner plane beings of one kind or another, almost a kind of inner auditorium or congregation. I was aware of an aspect of W.G. Gray here, which seemed to be in beneficent and approving

mode – which I must say is a welcome contrast to the attitude one might have expected from his late personality – and also an aspect of Dion Fortune [. . .] this also seemed to be in a balanced and beneficent mode.

30. 20/21 April 1996

I was strongly aware of the presence of David Carstairs, especially when I was standing up doing the Wilfred Owen stuff with the bayonet and what-not – he seemed to be standing directly behind me, feeding the power through from the East; it was such a strong presence that I felt sure that if I reached behind me a little way I would be able to touch his hands.

31. 20/21 April 1996

Throughout this ritual I was aware of a short man dressed in a brown robe standing behind me. The gentleman in question had the annoying habit of gripping my shoulder with his hand. As he had the grip of a vice this was physically uncomfortable and I was glad when he finally let go. Who it was I do not know.

32. 20/21 April 1996

When I got home, C said she had been reading about Wilfred Owen (the subject of our ritual work that day) in the Sunday paper.

33. 20/21 April 1996

Master DC has always been a special favourite for me, very human and accessible, and was a contact I first made through work on Dion Fortune's writings [. . .] I respect and revere Master TM (Thomas More) but he always comes over to me as a bit cold – a man with tunnel vision, to admire but not love. Master S(ocrates) I can only visualise as a mythical character, and even walking the Agora at Athens I could not convince myself of his ever having been incarnate! I suppose that is irrelevant really because a lot of mythical characters are more contactable on the inner than 'real' people.

34. 1 June 1996

I did consider how to express my investigations in a ritual form and thought I had sussed it, when a Merlin type figure came up and told me that I had set up the directions/officers incorrectly. At first I thought he was speaking crap until a sudden realisation proved him right.

35. 1 June 1996

The other thing I have been aware of (in between playing the guitar very badly) is the power of music and its potential for magical use. It struck me (like a gong – BANG ... and then the vibration throughout one's being as realisation surfaces and manifests) that one could have a particular tune which would evoke the presence of a particular Master. I know there is nothing new in this in essence e.g. Carstairs and his war songs, but it seemed that the actual act of *playing* the particular tune (as this involves emotional involvement) whilst visualising the Master, would yield some powerful results.

36. 29/30 June 1996

I didn't actually write the pathworking until Thursday. I asked David Carstairs to help me with it but he declined on the grounds that it would be better for me to do it on my own, to make a creative contribution instead of just being used as a 'psychic drainpipe'. He likened it to learning to ride a bicycle, saying that I had already managed (unwittingly) to do without the stabilisers and hadn't been afraid because I'd thought he was still holding on to the back of the saddle.

37. 29/30 June 1996

[. . .] the reality of a band of inner plane adepts specifically drawn from the ranks of those who died in WWI (& II) reasserted itself. This lot wish to be known. They wish us to know that such a brotherhood exists, and that they exist to work for peace in a dynamic, strong, incisive way as an inner plane force who can be contacted and used to provide inspiration, initiative and push for peace and the environment. There was the suggestion that they are 'behind' the green warriors of Greenpeace, etc. The name 'Light of the Somme' came to mind. I don't know how reliable all this is, but pass it on to the group to make of it what they will.

38. 20/22 September 1996

As Blaise in the East in the Earth Healing rite I was beset by tremendous heat, particularly at the commencement, as the power from behind me in the East came through – a ‘magus type’ contact, for which the name Blaise is close enough – but exactly who I do not know.

39. 20/22 September 1996

In the evening ritual, mediating ‘Faery’ was 100% tingling otherness – but at the same time felt very familiar. Through the eyes of the male being I was mediating, the humans looked transient, like leaves, but dangerous, and the animals were vivid and each had their own song. The stars were spread above the earth with great clarity. The faery consciousness held a sadness and deep detachment, a feeling that they were far fewer than once, and that most have withdrawn from the earth-plane . . .

40. 16/17 November 1996

The actual contacts one makes in rituals, in my experience, stem directly from one’s spiritual intention rather than from any particular names, which are usually fairly shallow intellectualisations anyway [. . .]

41. 23 January 1997

[. . .] Socrates has been very much in evidence. I find that from recent personal experience he can effortlessly draw me across the mind’s dark cloud of Daath into abstract thought, with tangible sensations about the brow and crown, while I experience Sir TM more in the realm of the Yetziratic spheres about Tiphareth. Now before anybody jumps my case for trying to pigeon-hole the Masters, I said from my personal experience. Though it does sort of jive with the communications received by H. where he states he’s closer to our daily consciousness than the others. It may be that the group’s Masters form a complementary whole in that they each see to the needs of different levels of awareness. None greater than the other, but each needed to fulfil the full range of contacts.

42. 1/2 March 1997

The most surprising thing of all about the weekend, for me, was the appearance of the Chancellor in the East in quite definite, detailed and physical form – I could almost count the buttons on his gown. This is unusual for me, because my normal contact with our I(nner) G(reater) M(ysteries) Masters is primarily as misty outlines embodying minds and personalities rather than bodies, on an inner and not an outer plane (apart from D(avid).C(arstairs), who I first ‘met’ through Violet Mary before I joined the G(areth) K(night) group, so it is a different kind of relationship). It was a shock to see T.M. solidly standing there, not doing anything, but apparently quite solemnly watching the proceedings. He stayed the whole time, on and off. Perhaps he was looking for one of his usual contacts who happened not to be there this time.

43. 19/20 April 1997

At one point I had David Carstairs sitting on my lap (don’t think there’s anything strange in this – he often does it, it’s just his way – I gather he sometimes used to do it to Dion Fortune too) and then suddenly it wasn’t David Carstairs any more, it was Alun Lewis. With him came a strong sense of despair and inescapable emotional pain that induced an intelligent man to calmly and purposefully shoot off his own head; but also a great pride in being part of that ancient tradition, carrying the poetic flame from generation to generation and knowing that his own death would not break the line but that the flame would be continually passed on.

Alison Southcombe gives two accounts of contacts with fairy-like elementals, the first while staying at a guest house in Devon, formerly a watermill:

After turning off the light at night, the bedroom door mysteriously opened, and on someone dashing to close it, a silent voice seemed to say, “Too late, we are already in the room and only used the door as a device to let you know of our arrival!” For what seemed like many hours we were plucked and tweaked mischievously [. . .] Finally what seemed to be an overshadowing greater presence entered the room – Fairy Queen type images came to mind – and rounded up or calmed the individual sparks that had been causing our discomfort and then all of a sudden they were gone.

The second instance was at an abandoned watermill in Gloucestershire. The spot was overgrown, and understandably quiet and lonely, and though picturesque, exuded an atmosphere of great sadness and longing:

When I looked into the calm face of the pool I understood why, there was a water spirit still there and having worked for many years in harmony with the mill and the flow of the mill-race I could feel it urging us to draw closer to the water. Well that was it - it was as if a shadow had touched us, we turned and ran all the way up the meadow and kept looking back to see if we were pursued.²

Knight points to the many and varied ideas concerning the activities and ‘physical’ appearance of fairies. Indeed, the newcomer is likely to be surprised at their size, much like the Elves of Tolkien. He describes the faery realm as the ‘Primal Land’, a kind of Garden of Eden or Land of Perfection, where humans and faeries freely intermingled. Knight maintains that this land, or condition, still exists, and can be contacted through the dedicated, unselfish use of the imagination. He emphasises that any selfish motivation will throw up challenges and tasks that the magician may not be up to handling. The aim of all such contact should therefore be that of transformation of ourselves and the world by virtue of the powers we bring back.

In order to experience the faery realm, it is necessary to believe in them as a real and independent life-form greatly attuned to, and concerned with the custodianship of the land.³

The following account concerns an early attempt by another at contacting a Master:

Back in the 1960s, when first attempting to contact “the Masters”, weeks of fervent meditation led to the vision of a rocky island shore. In the background reared the broken peak of a smouldering volcano. This was really exciting. I was really getting somewhere! Then a bespectacled man in a gabardine coat appeared, holding out his hand in greeting. He said ‘Hello, my name is Fiona.’ I was devastated. This was not the member of the Great White Brotherhood I had expected, but an elderly transvestite with a Scots accent. I made my excuses and left.

² Alison Southcombe, ‘A Sense of Place – Experiences in Contacting the Elemental Kingdom’, *Inner Light*, Autumn Equinox 2002, vol 22, No 4, pp. 22-23.

³ Gareth Knight, ‘Do You Believe in Fairies?’ *Inner Light*, Vernal Equinox 2005, vol 25 No 2, pp. 1-7.

Later I understood that I had been short with the writer William Sharp, who wrote on Celtic and Gaelic themes under the pseudonym 'Fiona MacLeod' his alter-ego, a figure who became more and more 'real' as time went on. We did have some interesting conversations subsequently, and I later discovered his work, and thought I was one of the few people who still read it. Wrong again, there is a huge revival of interest in his writing, and many people who work esoterically claim to have been 'getting Mr.Sharp on the Inner' over the last few years.

[. . .] a crucial point missed by many fairy botherers is that *they don't like us*. Terry Pratchett spells it out in *Lords and Ladies* , Alan Garner knows, and hints at it in his fiction. R. J. Stewart has told us, but still the nature of 'otherworld contacts' is wilfully misunderstood. Often by young men who have not got girlfriends.⁴

Paul Dunne sets out a persuasive argument for David Carstairs being, not a Master but, like the Unknown Soldier:

a British Collective Astral Projection of all the young British Soldiers who died fighting for their country in World War I [. . .] a Magical Body that, [. . .] born out of the Willing Sacrifice of so many, [. . .] acts as their voice and representative, the sum of all their lost lives, and like any Magical Body he has come to take on an independent identity and existence in his own right.'

Pointing out that the DC contact came about within two years of the institution of the Grave of the Unknown Soldier, he says:

'[. . .] David Carstairs acted as a Spiritualist Medium's Control and was able to put Dion Fortune in touch with two of her Primary Inner Planes Masters who assisted in the Channelling of her book *The Cosmic Doctrine*, and these Masters have remained the Primary Contacts of the Inner Light Group ever since. [. . .] without World War I there would have been no Dion Fortune as we know her and also no Society of the Inner Light [. . .] almost the Magical grandmother of them all. [. . .]

⁴ VB, 'Concerning Dalua', *Inner Light*, Summer Solstice 2005, Vol 25 No 3, pp. 7, 8.

The Lost Magical Tradition of the Western Mysteries was Reborn out of the Evils of War that demanded the greatest of Sacrifices upon the behalf of the British Collective.’⁵

⁵ Paul Dunne, ‘The Manifestation of David Carstairs’, *Inner Light*, Summer Solstice 2005, 25 No 3, pp. 15-20.

Appendix VI

The following presentation was given at the Exeter Centre for the Study of Esotericism MA in Western Esotericism (EXESES0) Conference, 13th-14th October 2007. It encapsulates many of the characteristics of intermediary activity from ancient times, as well as discussing background theory.

The Role and Function of Intermediaries in the Western Esoteric Tradition

John Selby

A. Introduction

In ancient times, intermediaries were considered to be any kind of god or divine power or superhuman energy or being that causes or is thought to cause all the good or evil that occurs in the events of human life. This presentation and the accompanying illustrations give an overview of the variety of intermediaries that have been recognised in the past, and emphasise how important they were in the lives of Western people, whether those people were learned or not.

But first, I'd like us to remind ourselves of how recent scholars have defined esotericism : what criteria they have placed by which to judge whether, or how far, a movement is esoteric

B. Theory

Faivre's six fundamental characteristics of esotericism have become something of a standard, and probably need more detailed examination than was given in yesterday's lecture. They are set out very briefly here. The first four, Faivre says, **must** be present to qualify a movement as esoteric. We should bear in mind that these categories are etic considerations, suggested by an academic, and not ones that a practitioner, or 'insider' would necessarily be aware of (emic).

1. There are correspondences between all parts of the universe, visible and invisible, where everything conceals and shows forth a mystery (the universe a theatre of mirrors). Vertically – as above, so below, macrocosm/ microcosm; correspondences between the human body, the planets, etc....; Horizontal correspondences – e.g. between nature (the book of nature), history, scriptures, etc.; and Holographic correspondences where the whole is reflected in each part.
2. The Cosmos expressed in Nature, living, multilayered, hierarchical; Nature as a dynamic set of interrelationships allowing of intervention through magical practices, medicine, and alchemy. Here, Hanegraaff stresses the pantheistic dimension – the cosmos permeated by divine energy.
3. Imagination, and Mediations through ritual, imagination, symbols, talismans, and intermediary spirits. Imagination has been regarded as an 'organ of the soul' – see Henry Corbin's *mundus imaginalis* - imagination as the chief instrument for attaining gnosis, knowledge of self, world, myth, and all the realities underlying the phenomenal world. [Evelyn Underhill gave a simplistic comparison between mysticism and magic (maybe as a reaction from her experiences in the Golden Dawn): 'the mystic seeks to give; the occultist seeks to get'. I think this falls way short of the reality. Yes, most mystics eschew images and intermediaries as a hinderance to union with God (e.g. see Patanjali), whereas esotericists, as Faivre put it, prefer 'sojourning on Jacob's ladder' among the angels. But the picture is not so clear-cut when we look at the life of figures such as Hildegard of Bingen, Louis Claude de Saint-Martin, and nearer our own day, Dion Fortune, who specifically taught that the end of magic is in mysticism (one only has to look at the glyph of the Tree of Life and the Supernals as ample witness). Also,

many a mystic is inspired by an intermediary of some kind, Jesus, St Francis, the Cross, etc.,

4. The experience of transmutation/metamorphosis/the search for gnosis. This is the path of regeneration, either through ascent or descent. Cf Robert Kirk/Underworld).

Hanegraaff tended to think that Faivre's characteristics were based more on a sixteenth-century worldview, and suggests that there might be new elements that arise in importance that could come to be included as essential elements in the future. What could these be? Would there be room for them in Faivre's scheme?

Faivre also includes his two further factors:

5. The practice of concordance – seeing comparable features within different esoteric traditions, e.g. as in the concept of the *prisca theologia* or *philosophia perennis*, a secret tradition supposedly inherent in many exoteric religions.
6. Transmission of teachings from master to pupil through initiations. 1. As exemplified in a general sense of a historical lineage of truth, and 2. as the passing on of portions of such from master to pupil in particular cases. Faivre appears to restrict his master or teacher to those in incarnation, running the risk of excluding ongoing revelations received from discarnate teachers, and the tradition that any real initiator is an intermediary on the inner planes, the earthly initiator merely acting as a channel. Energies and powers are also transmitted as well as teaching.

Hanegraaff suggests that much of this model is congruent with New Age religion, save, perhaps for the New Age emphasis on **individual** effort and inner experience rather than reliance on a guru of any kind. This is questionable – gurus nowadays come in the guise of 'course leaders' or esteemed authors. Further characteristics of the New Age are the return of Christ (probably as a spiritual event), sacred texts interpreted intuitively, and congruence of self-knowledge and God-knowledge (e.g. Shirley McLaine's 'I am God'). But there are differences between New Age and Western esotericism that come to light in their developmental history, which could well be the subject for further discussion in the future.

Needleman argues for inputs from both academics and from practitioners. Examples I am aware of include Tanya Luhrmann and Susan Greenwood – both putting themselves through a deliberately participatory approach by joining and undertaking serious training with Wiccan and magical groups – and Russel T. McCutcheon who has brought together the comparative views approaches of some 27 insiders and outsiders in *The Insider/Outsider Problem in the Study of Religion* (1999). As well as this more phenomenologically oriented understanding of esotericism, Needleman emphasises esotericist's interest in nature, and the multilevel character of the universe, and he sees the relevance of psychological interpretations.

Versluis looks particularly to the vertical component of esotericism, and is critical of Faivre's lack of emphasis on the pivotal gnostic, experiential dimension (although to be fair, Faivre does mention it under 3., 4., and 5.).

Recent practitioners might also emphasise the mythological and fictional elements more e.g. Atlantis, the Muses, characters in Star Trek (e.g. Mr Spock), prominent Tolkien characters (Gandalf, Galadriel, etc), each adding to the store of intermediaries that practitioners are able to work with. Magicians, I read, do actually use figures such as these.

Returning to Faivre, is the role of intermediaries more evident than at first appears? Let us look at this again.

1. mentions correspondences between all parts of the universe (Nature); everything is in, or a reflection of everything else. Since nothing is excluded, this must include all beings, visible and invisible, all the characters which feature, and to whom appeal is made in an intermediary role – e.g. Scriptural figures – Rachel, Jacob, Moses, Mohammed, Archangel Gabriel, New Testament figures, and so on... Non-scriptural – Medea, Circe, etc ...
2. follows from the above - Cosmos as a multilayered hierarchy in living Nature – must include Nature itself, i.e. Ghea, the Anima Mundi, the Great Mother (see at end) and the energies, or spirits, or living creatures (totem animals, gnomes, fairies) that inhabit it, and that inhabit the Underworld. Faivre talks about those magical practices such as alchemy and medicine, that act on the bodies and psyches of living people, as well as activities, like the use of crystals, that seem to act more abstractly on non-personal conditions such as the forces of Nature, which itself must be redeemed, because it has been tainted by man.
3. Cosmos seen as a scenario within which contacts can be made by use of the imagination and which specifically includes all kinds of intermediaries including spirits, angels, initiators, and also the inanimate ones such as talismans and other symbols.
4. Rather than using the word ‘transformation’, which he feels sounds less than adequate, Faivre prefers to speak of the experience of a transmutation/ of metamorphosis/second birth, of humanity and of Nature (does he mean this to exclude the deceased, and inner hierarchies, who, since Darwin, have been thought of in esoteric circles of as subject to evolutionary processes in consciousness, too?)
5. Emphasises similarities between traditions – folk, oriental, etc... the primordial tradition that contains revelations concerning of course, mythological characters, histories, heroes, and very strong intermediary connections.
6. Transmission of teachings and initiations from teacher to pupil. As previously mentioned, the emphasis is slight on the idea that many teachings, revelations, and initiations ultimately derive from inner teachers/initiators, with the living gurus (or initiators) being just channels, sometimes highly sensitive, sometimes highly trained.

Are inner beings therefore more in evidence here than Faivre himself suspected?

C. Examples of Intermediaries

Having already mentioned talismans and symbols as intermediary objects, I would like to give briefly some other examples of supposedly **inanimate objects** as intermediaries, seen as living symbols – Versluis and Eliade both mention the **Cosmic Tree** as it appears in many traditions (e.g. Cross of Calvary, Ygdrassil, Celtic spinning wheel, the World Axis, etc..). Then there were the Merkabah mystics of early Judaism, who ascended by meditation on the **chariot** (from Ezekiel). Later speculation on the design and components of the chariot even led to its various parts (e.g. the wheels, the canopy, etc.) being considered as intermediary symbols as well. Later the spheres of the **Tree of Life** of Kabbalistic literature were termed ‘living creatures’ by means of which mystics not only made ascent, but were able to draw down beneficent influences from above (even, for example, the Angel of the Countenance), much as pagan magi were able to draw down gods into statues in ancient times. Religious ikons, artefacts and relics such as the bones of the saints, (whether genuine or not did not seem to matter) were also deemed effective towards higher states of consciousness.

Then there are John Dee’s innovative **Heiroglyphic Monad** a further intermediary glyph. (see diagram, p. 469) and Fludd’s geometrical diagrams, discussed later.

In the Intermediary section proper, notice how organised the inner worlds were taken to be – planes, levels, together with hierarchies which inhabit them, even from early times (Zoroastrian religion already had very well-developed hierarchies), but these were continually being re-expressed, reinterpreted in succeeding cultures. Compare the 6th box on p. 460 - a classic 3-fold cosmos – with the complex work of Robert Fludd, where several systems are inter-related into one diagram. His diagram, p. 470, is actually a spiral – 4-fold (1. The Deity, 2. 9 Orders of Angels (10); 3. The Fixed stars and the Planets (8); 4. The 4 Elements; all integrating as a whole with the 22 letters of the Hebrew alphabet, very fruitful intermediary symbols). This is an example of an elaboration of Platonic cosmology long after it had supposedly been superseded by the newer cosmic model of concentric spheres. A further example here is the Tree of Life of the Kabbalah, which is at one and the same time a 4-fold, a 7-fold, a 10-fold, 11-fold, and so on . . . and there is a Tree in every Sphere . . . [see diagram, p. 468].

And the immensely complex and varied Gnostic cosmologies discussed by GRS Mead. (Simonian Aeonology, p. 467) is just one example as is the Valentinian cosmology beside it. Mead's account says of this:

In the beginning, the Father, together with Sige (Silence) emanated Mind and Truth, who emanated Logos and Life, who emanated Man and Church. In gratitude, Mind and Truth gave 10 Aeons to the Father, and Logos and Life gave 12 Aeons to Mind and Truth. The youngest of these was Sophia, who, daring to emulate the creativity of the Father, brought forth the Abortion/Demiurge. In response, Mind and Truth emanated Christos and the Holy Spirit to comfort Sophia and evict the Abortion from the Pleroma. The Father created Stauros (The Cross) as the boundary of the Pleroma. Finally, all the Aeons created the 'Common Fruit' (Jesus), who with Sophia emanated 70 Logoi. In turn, the Demiurge created 360 angels including the 12 signs of the Zodiac and the 7 Planets.

Notice the presence of syzgies at every level. It's very refreshing, very unusual, to see partners depicted as working together. The inner levels or spheres created by the emanations are the background against which various hierarchies are laid out.

There was a great deal of incoherence/discontinuity between systems, but held nevertheless within what Versluis calls the 'a-historical continuity' of esotericism as a whole. Some examples: A Zoroastrian hierarchy (p. 459); Iamblichus's hierarchy (p. 460); the 9 orders of angels of Dionysius (p. 460), which can be linked with the planets through the Tree of Life (p. 468). In the sixteenth century Girolamo Menghi postulated a scheme of 6 orders of demons (p. 461); and Giordano Bruno gives us his 7-fold hierarchy (p. 462), and his Table of Gods (p. 469). These can be compared with a surprising 9-fold Hierarchy of Theosophy, expressed in Eastern terminology (p. 464). The Theosophical hierarchies were generally 7-fold and multiples of 7, seen at their best in Alice Bailey. Finally we can look at the 10-fold hierarchy of Knorr von Rosenroth (p. 465), which became the basis of the Golden Dawn system of hierarchy.

Demons

It is important to note that in the Greek world, the *daimon* was neither good nor bad, or was either as occasion determined. Socrates, for example, declared that his *daimon* always gave him good advice, but in contrast, see in late 18th-century Germany J. G. Herder's 'Sturm und Drang' literature, which strove to evoke the dark side of the psyche. Some of James Hillman's work on Jung pertains to this. For a comprehensive view, see Roelof van den Broek, who speaks of immortal divine powers, good and evil, existing in both humanity and in nature, able to assist in magical operations, and empower oracles. Plato considered them essential as part of the ladder of

ascent: ‘every *daimon* is something between a god and a mortal’, and Plutarch considered them spirits of the air, telepathic, helpful, judgmental/punishing after death. Faivre considered that the idea of mediatory spirits in Neo-Platonism were not incompatible with Christianity if one looks at the writings of Origen, Clement and Cyprian.

But in Judaism and Christianity, foreign gods were always designated as evil.

Angels and Archangels

Angels began to be more clearly differentiated from evil entities by fourth century Neo-Platonism, and certainly in Judaism and Christianity, and as the middle ages progressed, increased hugely in numbers. More and more angel lists were published, together with their attributes, mostly under freshly-coined names. We might consider as a subject for research the prevalence of angels/winged beings, and avian symbolism and metaphor in general – perhaps the Judaeo-Christian-Islamic tradition as compared to, say, Hindu tradition.

The Archangels were contained broadly within the Pseudo-Dionysian nine Orders as relatively standard practice, but Angels were much more ubiquitous and considered infinite in number – as guardian angels, planetary angels (e.g. Trithemius’s *Septem Secundaeis*, *Seven Secondary Intelligences*), terrestrial angels, time angels, etc.

Renaissance

I have briefly indicated (pp. 462), contacts that Renaissance Magi, and also Christian theosophists, had with angels and other intermediaries (e.g. Bruno’s invocations of angels for power, (although Bruno also must have seen a use for his Twelve Principles, which includes figures from the Greek pantheon, and elsewhere, the Muses (See table on p. 469). We may note Dee’s search for wisdom through conversation with angels; Pordage’s initial terror at being confronted by angels; Gichtel’s wrestle with Satan before meeting the Lord; and Swedenborg, who, according to his own understanding, was the only human being who was permitted to walk and talk with angels, who were once human beings who had now passed on.

Demons in the usual sense as evil entities, were as ubiquitous (examples on pp. 461-62). And many other entities appeared. They are listed, e.g. by Rosenroth (p. 465) in his tabulation – Archdemons and Orders of demons. The most notorious working incorporating them is described in the fifteenth-century *Book of the Sacred Magic of AbraMelin the Mage*, where during a 6-month retreat, demons were specifically invoked in order to exorcise them from the operator’s psyche. The work was translated by MacGregor Mathers, and Aleister Crowley attempted to carry out the exercise, but with limited success. In 1972, William Bloom carried it through, apparently to good effect as a psychological cleansing.

But during the 18th century the focus of attention had diversified. Alongside a continuing interest in angels (Pasqually), some Secret, or esoteric, Societies took up the mythos of Rosicrucianism, and began to take the existence of other kinds of inner beings more seriously – Unknown Superiors, who may have incarnated or may not, and whose specific task was to guide those societies.

In the 19th century, Madame Blavatsky (1831-1891) began her practical career as a spiritualist medium, channelling popular inner figures like John King, and then other, generally Near Eastern communicators such as Tuitit Bey and Serapis, beings of a much higher calibre (i.e. conveying messages far surpassing the triviality typical of most séance readings at the time) and which led her to believe in the possibility of the earthly existence of beings of superior intelligence, whom she would do better to contact instead. Among the acknowledged influences that stimulated this new approach were figures of the Rosicrucian and high-grade Masonic

traditions, but with significantly different attributes. (See list of attributes p. 464). Blavatsky understood the universe to have been populated by an almost endless series of evolving Hierarchies over millions of years, so accounting for the existence of humans of such advanced wisdom.

Supposedly having met her master M when she was 20 in England in 1851, it was not until after 1880 that she turned to her well-known Eastern contacts – the Mahatmas, or Masters, who, unlike angels or the Unknown Superiors, didn't appear as higher level beings from above, but were humans who as the result of evolution, had succeeded to higher levels of consciousness, and who could share their wisdom with those sufficiently trained or sufficiently gifted to be able to receive it. They were said to live in Tibet, but could travel astrally, or instantaneously in the flesh, or convey messages by telepathy, and allegedly by other means.

It is difficult to know where to draw the line between historical and non-historical figures – Christian Rosenkreutz was a mythological/fictional figure, but has been elevated to the status of a Master, for example by Rudolf Steiner. Similarly, Bulwer-Lytton's novel *Zanoni* (1842) has also been credited with inspiring the idea of the Masters in the first place. A further fictional intermediary now taken up by the occult fraternity is that of the Dweller on the Threshold, which Alice Bailey (or the Tibetan) defines as the sumtotal of all unintegrated personality traits and defects met with at death. This is analagous to the Shadow. It also seems to have strongly influenced science fiction and fantasy literature in the 20th century, e.g. H.P.Lovecraft's 'weird stories' of psychological horror, and from C.S.Lewis onwards.

Similarly, in the Order of the Golden Dawn MacGregor Mathers (1854-1918) maintained that the impetus for his work stemmed largely from his Secret Chiefs, whom he claimed to have met physically once or twice, but whom he discouraged other members from attempting to contact. Nevertheless, some members did claim contact with various inner figures, as I've noted on p. 464.

We have no way of knowing whether any of these intermediaries were objective beings of higher planes of existence, or subjective aspects of personality. Insiders act as though they are real, and they seem satisfied of benefits in their mundane and spiritual lives. It is paradoxical that inner figures can be any one of a range of gods, saints, heroes, mythological or fictional characters, animals, or inanimate objects, including the hugely significant construct of large entities such as the World Soul, the *Anima Mundi*. But it was Pico della Mirandola who said that man, with all his inner capacities, was the supreme intermediary, and it is the human being that remains the most paradoxical of all. □

Note on an intermediary concept woven throughout – that of the World-Soul. It appears in Hermetic literature as the book of Nature; in Neo-Platonism as the Soul of the World; and is taken up by Agrippa – Soul of the World, akin to Mother Nature, Ghea, the Shakti of Eastern tradition – and by Ficino, who speaks of the World Soul, radiating energy from the Sun, and who was the first to delineate the triplicity World-Soul – World-Spirit – World Body. It was important to Fludd, who included it in some of his diagrams, and also to Steiner, taking a lead from Goethe. Faivre makes a point of explaining the significance of the God-Human-Nature Triangle in relation to Christian theosophy. (Cf. Dion Fortune's 'mind side of nature', which is cognate). □

For clarity, reference should be made to the following outline and illustrations (pages 459-70).

The Role and Function of Intermediaries in the Western Esoteric Tradition

A. Introduction

B. Theory

Faivre's six fundamental characteristics of esotericism, the first four of which **must** be present to qualify a movement as esoteric:

1. There are correspondences between all parts of the universe, visible and invisible.
2. Cosmos is expressed in Nature, living, multilayered, hierarchical. Nature as a dynamic set of interrelationships allowing intervention through magical practices, of medicine, alchemy.
3. Imagination and Mediations through ritual, imagination, symbols, talismans, intermediate spirits.
4. The experience of transmutation/metamorphosis/the search for gnosis. The path of regeneration.

Two elements **not necessarily** present:

5. The practice of concordance – seeing comparable features within different esoteric traditions, e.g. as in the concept of the *prisca theologia* or *philosophia perennis*.
6. Transmission of teachings from master to pupil through initiations.

Is the role of intermediaries more evident here than appears?

[**Needleman** stresses the need for inputs from both practitioners and from academics. **Versluis** – vertical component – criticises Faivre's lack of emphasis on a pivotal gnostic, or experiential dimension.]

Supposedly **inanimate objects** as intermediaries (living symbols) – **Cosmic Tree** in many traditions (e.g. **Cross of Calvary**, **Ygdrassil**). Also Merkabah mystics of early Judaism – ascended by means of the **chariot** (from Ezekiel) – later speculations on the design and components of the chariot, also intermediary symbols. **Spheres of the Tree of Life** and **letters of the Hebrew alphabet**, termed 'living creatures', whereby one could both ascend, and also draw down the influence of the Angel of the Countenance. John Dee's innovative **Heiroglyphic Monad**; Fludd's **geometrical** diagrams. Versluis: intermediaries as 'prisms'.

C. Examples of Intermediaries.

1. **Daimons of the Ancient World**

A god or other divine power; an undetermined superhuman power, or energy, that causes, or is thought to cause, the good or evil that occurs in the events of human life. Neither good nor bad, or either as occasion determined.

Zoroastrianism: An example hierarchy:

1. 7 personifications of the deity
2. A multitude of Yazatas (guides, protectors, forces of nature, specific entities, e.g. Victory, friend of soldiers)
3. Fravashis, guardian angels of nations and individuals
4. Unknown demons who punish the wicked after death

Egypt – many gods with heads of animals. Locally-developed hierarchies. Underworld/shamanistic activities.

Greece - Great range of intermediaries; huge confusion/overlap angels, ghosts, heroes, gods. Guardian spirits given or chosen at birth, also identified with the *nous*, i.e. the 'divine spark' of both Plato and modern esoteric practitioners.

Plato: demons essential as a ladder of ascent.

Plutarch (first century): Demons were spirits of the air, telepathic to sensitive humans and a great help in daily life, the driving force behind oracles. Judged and punished souls after death.

Mystery religions – Demeter and Kore, death and resurrection.

Chaldaean Oracles (second century) clearly distinguished between good demons (angels) and bad (demons), following Judaism and Christianity. Varied hierarchies, e.g.

1. the archangels surrounding the Father
2. the cherubs and seraphs who praise God/ bear his throne
3. ubiquitous ministering and communicating angels.

1. The Supreme Father (primordial Fire)
2. The Feminine Principle, First Intellect
3. The Intellect (*nous*)
4. The Creator
5. The Artisan

Compare with:

Porphyry (third century)

1. The Father above the sphere of the Stars
2. The Intellect, the Mother
3. Generator of Ideas (the Power of the Father)
4. Life, or World Soul, governed by Hecate/Psyché

Corpus Hermeticum: humans are composed of:

1. body; 2. pneuma (astral body); 3. psyche (soul); 4. logos (reason) and 5. *nous* (the supreme intermediary, mind/consciousness, attained only at death).

Gnosticism:

Mead: the prime intermediary beings: Archangels, or Aions, qualities of the Divine. Enormous and complex systems.

Neoplatonism: Mediatory spirits of Neo-Platonism not incompatible with Christianity (Origen, Clement, 4th c).

Iamblichus's more developed hierarchy:

Proclus (fifth century) 3 classes of demons:

1. The more spiritual
2. The more rational
3. The more unreasoning

Gods
Archangels
Angels
Good Demons
Avenging Demons
Evil Demons
Cosmic Demons
Archons of the Realm of Matter
The Souls of the World (undivided formless fire)
Purified Souls
Impure Souls
Lower Orders skilled in the arts of deception

A 3-fold cosmos:

1. The Empyrean
2. The Ethereal World (fixed stars and planets)
3. The Hylic (sub-lunar world)

Aion
The Sun
The Moon/Hecate

St Paul:

Love
Truth
Faith

2. Angels as benign messengers of God, or aspects of God.

OT and Apocrypha: Seven Angels mentioned. After the Exile, entities were deemed either good or bad. Philo of Alexandria (1st century) foreshadowed the Neo-Platonic idea that God *required* intermediaries for the work of ascent.

Angels in the Middle Ages: Angels named, and groups systematised. Differing systems, merging with names of God.

Veneration of Christian saints.

Pseudo-Dionysius (fifth century) increasingly influential. The **9 Orders of Angels** (*Celestial Hierarchy*) based on Neo-Platonic ‘three triads of intelligible gods’, matching the 9 celestial spheres and correlate with the Spheres of the Tree of Life:

- | | | |
|--|--|--|
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Cherubim, Seraphim, Thrones 2. Dominions, Powers, Authorities/Virtues 3. Principalities, Archangels, Angels | <p>Cf. Human hierarchies (again in 3 triads):</p> <table border="1"> <tr> <td> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. <u>sacraments</u>: baptism, eucharist, unction; 2. <u>clergy</u>: bishops, priests, deacons; 3. <u>laity</u>: monks, catachumens, penitents </td> </tr> </table> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. <u>sacraments</u>: baptism, eucharist, unction; 2. <u>clergy</u>: bishops, priests, deacons; 3. <u>laity</u>: monks, catachumens, penitents |
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The Dionysian system incorporates the concept of divine grace. Dionysius and Dante emphasise infinite numbers.

Cf. Ibn Arabi’s (c.1200) classification of angels:

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|---|
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. those superior to men 2. those much like humans (e.g. djinn, terrestrial angels) 3. those corresponding to the seven planets, mediating human-like characteristics, fostering stages of ascent |
|---|

Planetary angels:

Raphael, Gabriel, Michael, Anael, Satquiel, Samael and Casziel, each with many assistants, who can be coerced, or trapped in matter like a genie. Individuals, not forces. The 9 Orders of Angels – their only master was God; angels of the planetary spheres were open to influence from men.

Universality of certain angelic themes:

- | |
|---|
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. power and awesomeness; 2. intuitive understanding and love, 3. their praise, 4. their work alongside humans, 5. their property to make us happy. |
|---|

Angels in the Renaissance [Translation of *Corpus Hermeticum* by **Ficino** in 1464.]

Innumerable orders of spirits within the supercelestial, celestial and mundane spheres, also correlated with the planets and the Tree of Life spheres. E.g.:

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|--|--|
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Dominations – Jupiter 2. Powers – Mars 3. Virtues – Sun | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 4. Principalities - Venus 5. Archangels - Mercury 6. Angels - Moon |
|--|--|

Planets thought of as ‘gods’. Fairy folk, heroes, saints, demi-gods apostles, kings, princes and pontiffs.

Agrippa: guardian angels; **Milton**, territorial angels. **Agrippa** and **Ficino**: *Anima Mundi* (World Soul, energy from the sun).

3. Demons

Scapegoats for evil, but Satan slow to emerge. All foreign gods were considered demons. Proliferation of exorcisms.

Middle Ages: demonologies complex. Evil counterpart of the Tree of Life *ahra sitra*, kingdom of the *klippot*, demonic powers. Female Lilith, (Sumerian origin) central female demon. Eventually rose to be God’s consort.

A Zoharic classification:

- | |
|---|
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Those similar to angels 2. Those who resemble humans and submit to the Torah 3. Those who behave like animals, and have no fear of God |
|---|

6 orders of demons from Girolamo Menghi (sixteenth century Christian):

1. Leliurion (fiery ones)
2. Aerea (present in the air)
3. Terreo (earthly)
4. Acquatile (causing danger in water)
5. Sotteranei (Those causing earthquakes, toppling buildings, etc.)
6. Lucifogo (flee from the light)

Heroes like Arthur were demonised by the Church, considered to imprint false images in dreams.

Demons lived in the dark air above the earth, and could sometimes take bodily form, deceptive and powerful. Necromancy: Spirits between heaven and hell. Invocations included specifically named superior controlling powers.

Demons in the Renaissance

Demons were personal and intelligent, but paradoxical. Acted legitimately under natural law. Giordano Bruno's list of fallen angels (following Agrippa):

1. supracoelestes (similar to the Greek *daimon*)
2. mundanos (of the planets and zodiac)
3. subterranei (of the elements)

Agrippa and Ficino had no superstitious fear of demons – contrast with Heinrich Kramer – fear of ‘demonic invasion’.

Other entities: fairies, larvae, wraiths, incubi, succubi, heroes, phantoms, spirits of the four elements, and monsters. Agrippa: sixteen hundred different kinds of nature spirit, and ghosts. Fairy kingdom seen as malevolent, but were used by cunning folk as a source of healing power. Elizabethan ghosts.

4. Renaissance Magi and Intermediaries

Christian Cabala The majority of Renaissance Magi were Cabalists, e.g. Pico, Reuchlin.

Marsilio Ficino (1433-1499) The first to accept the hierarchy: World Soul – World Spirit- World Body. Indecisive concerning whether to invoke demons directly, or just work with the spiritual planetary influences/essences.

Pico della Mirandola (1463-1494) summoned angels directly by name for their specific powers, but avoided the ancient practice of invoking demons into idols. Introduced Cabala into Christianity. The human being the supreme intermediary.

Johannes Trithemius (1462-1516) Invoked intermediaries directly. Importance of the Seven Secondary Intelligences (planets), and rule over cycles of the world's history. *Steganographia*. His Kabbalistic correlation:

- | | |
|------------------------|----------------------|
| 1. Orifiel (Saturn) | 4. Raphael (Mercury) |
| 2. Anael (Venus) | 5. Samael (Mars) |
| 3. Zachariel (Jupiter) | 6. Gabriel (Moon) |
| | 7. Michael (Sun) |

Heinrich Cornelius Agrippa (1486-1535) *Three Books of Occult Philosophy* (Donald Tyson's edition) the major Renaissance source for intermediaries and magical practice. Importance of Plato's Soul of the World (Mother Nature, Ghea, Shakti) and of the Elements. Importance of the power of sound, hence of the correct naming of the intelligences (correct names are known only to God). Agrippa's system incoherent – many sources.

Giordano Bruno (1548-1600): Invoked demons for power. Angels and Orders of Angels correlated with Sephiroth, the tenth being 'Issim' (separated souls and heroes). Very complex system combining Egyptian systems and Cabala. He also added the Muses as intermediaries leading the blind in ascent to regeneration.

1. God	2. Gods	3. Stars
4. demons	5. Elements	6. sense

John Dee (1527-1609) sought direct access to spirits for wisdom. Territorial angels, time angels, hierarchies of angels in sevens. Many sources, especially Trithemius's *Steganographia*. Recovery of the Angelic language.

Robert Fludd (1574-1693) followed **Johannes Reuchlin (1455-1522)**: all bodies, 'celestial and terrestrial' have spirits. Fascinated with cosmology and the place of hierarchies of angels within it. Importance of Nature, the World Soul. Illness an imbalance of good and evil spirits in the body. Cured by horoscope, application of herbs, etc.

5. Christian theosophy

Faivre emphasises the 3-fold 'God/Human/Nature Triangle' as a defining characteristic of Christian theosophy, together with creative imagination and its ability to enable contact with inner worlds.

Jacob Boehme (1575-1624) a pivotal figure. Much mathematical imagery, especially trinities and sevens. Boehme's *Four Tables of Divine Revelation* - cosmologies indicating the place of intermediaries. All very complex.

John Pordage (1607-1681) Versluis: the most important theosopher of the 17th century. Terror at first contact with inner beings, allayed by presence of angels also witnessed by those present. Passed through flames of hell to ascend to delights of heaven. Eternal Nature, 'the fruitful mother of all things'. Demons will eventually be redeemed.

Johann Georg Gichtel (1638-1710) – Versluis – exaltation and release at appearance of the Lord after wrestling with Satan. Prime contacts divine Wisdom (fem.) and Sophia, restorative of the soul. Unlike Boehme, little symbolism.

Emanuel Swedenborg (1688-1772) 'one of the great theosophers'. Spiritualism very common practice from ancient times, but Swedenborg's channelling was of quality. Angels were deceased humans, contactable by him alone. Long periods of received dictation from angels. Prayer, no invocations. Communications the result of grace.

Louis Claude de Saint-Martin (1743-1803) more speculative.

Andrew Jackson Davis (1826-1910) leading American spiritualist channelled Galen and Swedenborg.

6. Rosicrucian intermediaries

Fludd heavily influenced by Rosicrucianism – angelic support for the ideal society and unity of all religions. **Christian Rosenkreutz** allegorical, but raised to status of a Master. **Comte de Saint-Germain (d. 1784)** clouded in mystery and myth. Lineages by Besant, Leadbeater and Bailey. Heindel (1865-1919) inspired by Elder Brother met in C. Europe.

High-Grade Masonry. The higher degrees (e.g. Rose-Croix) speculated on invocation of divine names. Martines de Pasqually (?-1774) **Order of Elect Cohens** c. 1760, with a register of 2,400 names of angels and other beneficent spirits, invoked during ritual. Successor Jean-Baptiste Willermoz (1730-1824) considered they exist in four circles:

- | |
|--|
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Superior denary spirits 2. Eight major octonary spirits 3. Seven inferior septenary spirits 4. Three minor ternary spirits |
|--|

Alessandro di Cagliostro (1743?-1795) was considered by some to be a superior being, supposedly able to resurrect as an ‘elect master’ with healing and initiatory skills.

James Webb: Martinist Orders deriving from Order of Elect Cohens probably inaugurated the concept of ‘invisible superiors’ in secret societies. Ellic Howe: third degree of ‘Strikte Observantz’ Masons also deferred to ‘Superiores Incogniti’. Hannegraaff traces Theosophical Masters back to these.

7. The Nineteenth Century

Francis Barrett’s *The Magus* (1801) based on Agrippa. **Bulwer-Lytton’s** *Zanoni* (1842) assumes superior beings like the Masters. Innovatory concept: the Dweller of the Threshold which must be faced by all at death. Accepted by subsequent practical occultists, e.g. Blavatsky, Fortune.

Paschal Beverly Randolph (1825-1875) – vast, complex hierarchies, e.g.: Arsaphs, Eons, Arch-Eons, Antarphim, etc.

Frederick Hockley (1808-1885) – The 500 angels (guardian spirits) at time of Christ increased with world population. By Hockley’s time there were half the number of angels as mortals, family members sharing. Many kinds of spirit, e.g. Angels, Planetary Spirits, etc.

Increasing numbers of channellers, e.g. Blavatsky, Lady Caithness (MQS), Anna Kingsford (intimate with her ‘angel-genius’ but eschewed the very idea of Masters).

8. Late Nineteenth- and Early Twentieth-century

The Theosophical Society

Madame Blavatsky’s contacts inspired by the same sources as 18th c. Rosicrucianism and high-grade masonry, but significantly different. They were:

- | |
|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Living/incarnate More down-to-earth, less ideal than the former Possessed supernormal wisdom and powers Were subject to the evolutionary process Displayed the whole breadth of human emotion |
|---|

Her contacts prior to 1875 were Western. Hanegraaff and others argue for Paracelsus and Agrppa as the source for her sevenfold system. After 1880 and HPB's conversion to Buddhism, she turned to Eastern intermediaries, e.g. *Mahatma letters to A. P. Sinnett* 1880-1884. Master Morya introduced 1881.

The universe is animated by an infinite number of Hierarchies of sentient beings, incarnating over millions of years as part of the evolutionary process, this theory introduced as a result of Darwin's *Origin of Species* (1857).

Barborka: Theosophical 'Hierarchy of Compassion', who plan each new system or universe: seven primordial rays emanating succeeding levels. Resonances with Zoroastrianism. He outlines a nine-fold Hierarchy:

- | | |
|----------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| 1. Adi-Buddhi | 6. Dhyani-Bodhisattvas |
| 2. Universal Buddhi | 7. Super-terrestrial Bodhisattvas |
| 3. Universal Light or Life | 8. Terrestrial Buddhas |
| 4. Seven Sons of Light | 9. Men |
| 5. Dhyani-Buddhas | |

Annie Besant *The Ancient Wisdom* is a digest of Blavatsky's cosmology. Leadbeater's *The Masters and the Path* is an account of the daily behaviour of the Theosophical Masters; also Alice Bailey, a precursor to Leadbeater?

Rudolf Steiner (1861-1925) initiated by the Master 'M' and Christian Rosenkretz about 1880. Direct experience of Christ (1900), but continued to communicate with Eastern figures, including Krishna, Buddha, alongside Christ, Lucifer and Michael. Stressed evolution. Later emphasised Christ, Rosenkretz and Zarathustra, then abandoned Eastern Masters altogether. The hierarchy:

- | |
|---|
| 1. Angels (Spirits of Twilight) |
| 2. Archangels (Fire-Spirits) |
| 3. Archai (Original Forces or Spirits of Personality) |
| 4. Spirits of Form |

His clairvoyance identified the seven original *rishis* (spiritual masters) who passed on their wisdom to later civilisations. He also stressed the importance of Nature as an intermediary.

Hermetic Order of the Golden Dawn

MacGregor Mathers kept his 'Secret Chiefs' a closely guarded secret, but possibly modelled on Francis Irwin's (1823-1898) Brotherhood of Light's Unknown Superiors. Passed on, or 'living humans' with 'terrible superhuman powers' whom he met astrally? Other members claimed contacts, e.g. Florence Farr (female Egyptian adept at the British Museum). Annie Horniman ('Purple Adept' in 1902), and ran a 'Sphere Group' supervised by an Egyptian astral entity. Felkin (Ara Ben Shemesh, a 'Sun Master'). Mathers's hierarchies derived from **Knorr von Rosenroth (1636-1689)** :

Sphere	Planet	God Name	Archangel	Order of Angels	Order of Demons	Archdemon
Kether	Primum Mobile	Eheieh	Metatron	Chaioth ha Qadesh	Thamiel	Satan/Moloch
Chokmah	Zodiac	Jehovah	Ratziel	Auphanim	Chiagidel	Beelzebub
Binah	Saturn	Jehovah Elohim	Tzaphkiel	Aralim	Satariel	Lucifuge
Chesed	Jupiter		El Tzadkiel	Chasmalim	Gamchicoth	Ashtaroth
Geburah	Mars	Elohim Gibor	Khamael	Seraphim	Galab	Asmodeus
Tiphareth	Sun	Eloah va Daath	Mikael	Malachim	Tagaririm	Belphegor
Netzach	Venus	Jehovah Tzabaoth	Haniel	Elohim	Harab-Serapel	Baal
Hod	Mercury	Elohim Tzabaoth	Raphael	Beni Elohim	Samael	Adrammelech
Yesod	Moon	Shaddai el Chai	Gabriel	Kerubim	Gamaliel	Lilith
Malchut	Earth	Adonai Melech	Metatron	Chaioth ha Qadesh	Thamiel	Satan/Moloch

In 1915, Westcott reported that there had been no supra-normal beings or Masters in the GD since 1905 at least. [Regardie – Masters an irrelevance anyway.] Crowley contacts Pan and Aiwass, his Holy In 1915, Westcott reported that there had been no supra-normal beings or Masters in the GD since 1905 at least. [Regardie – Masters an irrelevance anyway.] Crowley contacts Pan and Aiwass, his Guardian Angel. He also takes part in the Abra-Melin retreat, deliberately invoking many inner demons specifically to banish them.

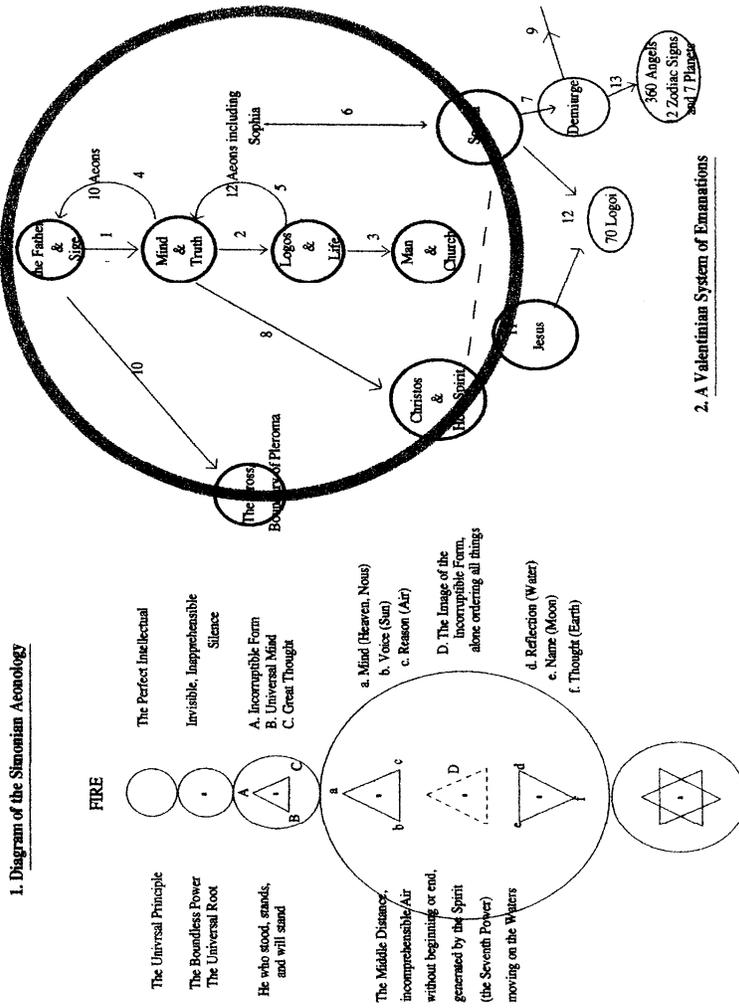
Hanegraaff concludes his account of intermediaries by reference to extraterrestrials in the works of Swedenborg and Jacob Lorber (1800-1864), to the Theosophical adepts from Venus, and the highly spiritualised ET's of the post-war UFO traditions, strongly influenced by Alice A. Bailey, and the later Summit Lighthouse of Elizabeth Claire Prophet.

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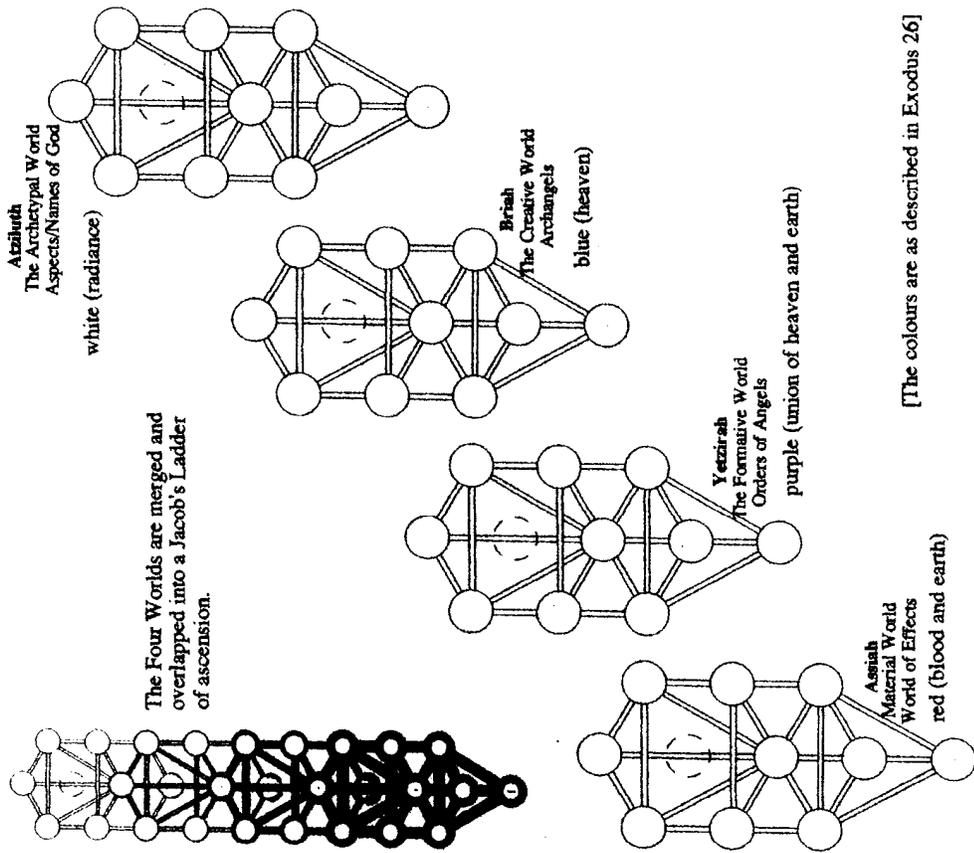
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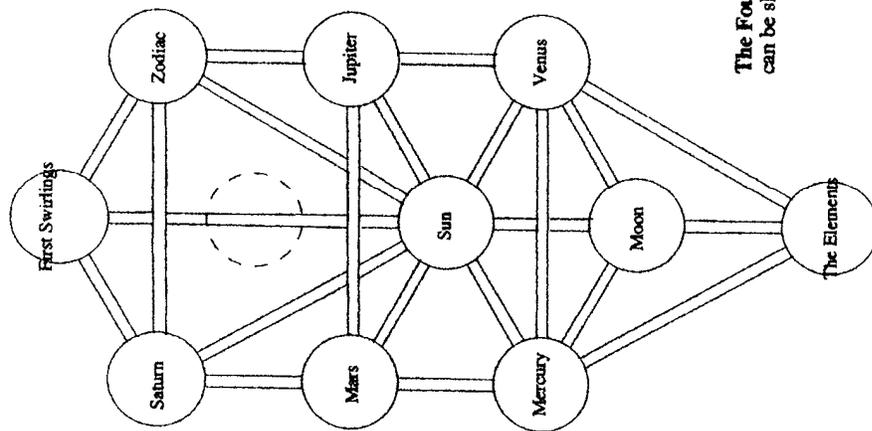
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For Figs. 1 & 2, see G. R. S. Mead and the Gnostic Quest, edited by Clare Goodrick-Clarke and Nicholas Goodrick-Clarke (Berkeley, CA, North Atlantic Books, 2003), pp. 69-75, 106, 226.



[The colours are as described in Exodus 26]



The Four Worlds can be shown thus:

The Tree of Life has four levels centred on the four spheres above the sphere of the Elements (Earth). The levels constitute the 'Four Worlds' of the Kabbalah

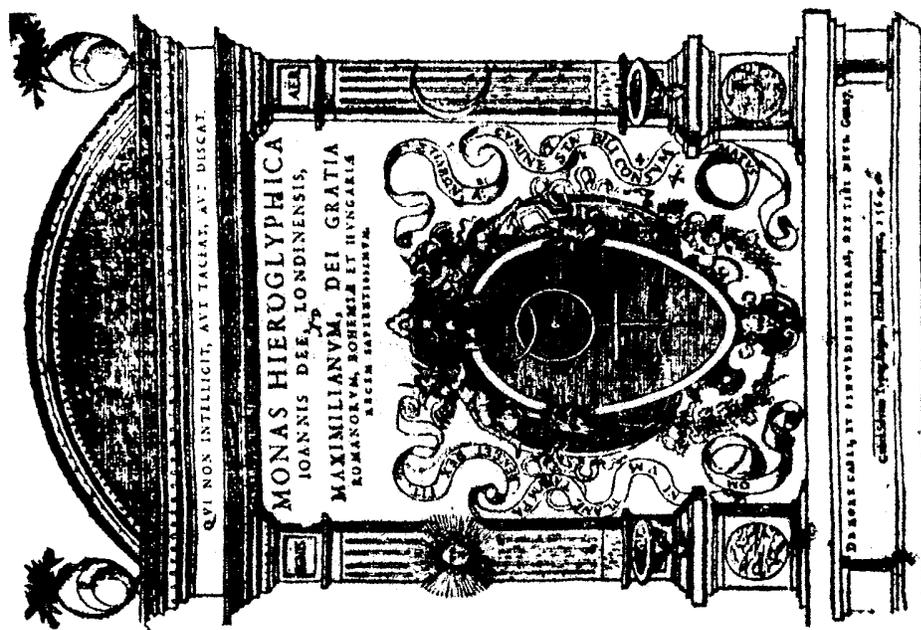
THE GODS of
G. Bruno's *Spaccio
della bestia trion-
fante*, 1585

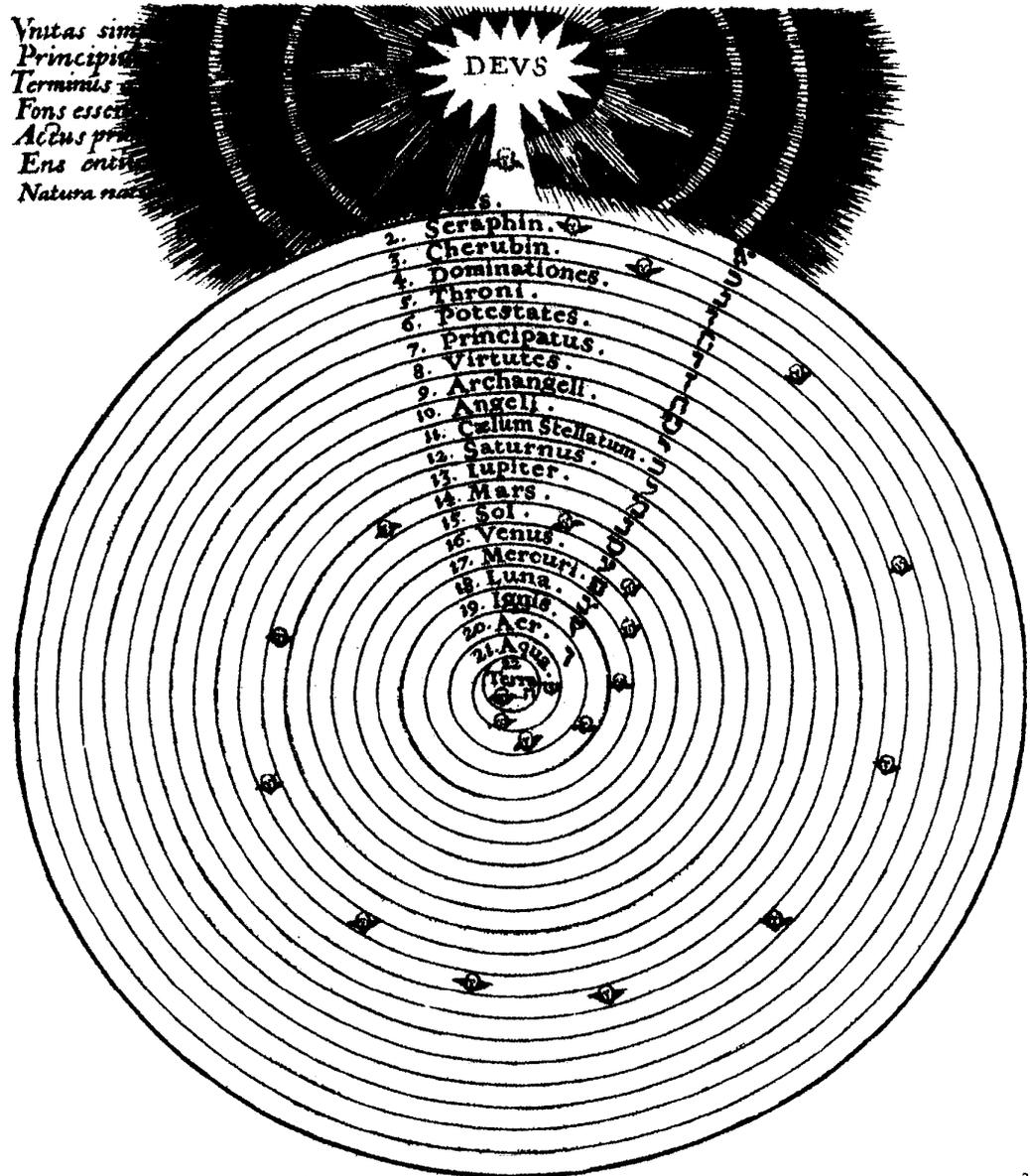
THE TWELVE PRINCIPLES
of G. Bruno's *De imaginum, signorum
et idearum compositione*, 1591

I	JUPITER	(18 images)
	JUNO	
II	SATURN	(4 images)
III	MARS	(4 images)
IV	MERCURY	(7 images)
V	MINERVA	(3 images)
VI	APOLLO	(8 images)
VII	AESCLAPIUS	(6 images)
	CIRCE	(1 image)
	ARION	(1 image)
	ORPHEUS	(3 images)
VIII	SOL	(1 image)
IX	LUNA	(6 images)
X	VENUS	(10 images)
XI	CUPID	(2 images)
XII	TELLUS	(3 images)
	OCEAN	(1 image)
	NEPTUNE	(1 image)
	PLUTO	(1 image)
	DIANA	
	VENUS and CUPID	
	CERES	
	NEPTUNE	
	THETIS	
	MONUS	
	ISIS	

As can easily be seen by comparing the two lists, there is a marked similarity between the gods of the *Spaccio* and the "principles" of *De imaginum compositione*. Many, indeed most of them, are the same. There is a general similarity, too, in the fact that both lists contain the seven planetary gods and also other non-planetary principles. Even these non-planetary principles are somewhat similar in both lists; Minerva is in both; if we include with Apollo in the *Spaccio* list, Circe, Medea, Aesculapius who support Apollo in the council, we have something corresponding to the curious Aesculapius group in the *De imaginum compositione*; if we remember that Isis can mean the earth or nature, we have something corresponding to the Isis of the *Spaccio* in the Tellus group of the other work.

One naturally thinks, in connection with these "principles", of





first of the Hebrew letters, *Aleph*, marks this beginning of beginnings, from which the other 21 hypostases emanate in a threefold scheme.

The turns of the spiral marked 2-10 are the nine orders of angels: Seraphim, Cherubim, Dominations, Thrones, Powers, Principalities, Virtues, Archangels and Angels. These inhabit incorporeal, metaphysical realms. With

11, the heaven of the fixed stars, we reach the sphere of the zodiac which encloses the seven Chaldean planets (12-18): Saturn, Jupiter, Mars, Sun, Venus, Mercury and Moon. The third division is the sublunary region where all is compounded of the four elements (19-22): fire, air, water and earth. The archetypes or intelligences that preside over each of the twenty-two spheres are

signified both by the Hebrew letters and by the winged heads.
UCH II, e, p. 219

2

21

Appendix VII

The following monograph, first published in the *Inner Light*, 24: 2 (Vernal Equinox 2004), 14-19, throws additional light on Violet Firth (Dion Fortune) as a person.

Dion Fortune: a Character Sketch

John Selby

What kind of person, then, was Dion Fortune? To imagine her as she saw herself, or as others saw her at the time. Was she a person of integrity? How much weight can we place on her sincerity? These are not questions we would naturally ask of a scholar, mathematician, philosopher, inventor, or even an artist, although we might well do so in the case of a psychologist, who is supposed to be of much more direct and, hopefully, beneficial influence upon our own behaviour and character. Even more so in the case of one whose influence might be considered covert, yet more powerful – that of a magician! Personality and character traits are especially significant in the case of one following the path of a discipline whose key concept is self-mastery; indeed it was Fortune's own advice that prospective students should judge the worth of an organisation not by its glossy brochures and brave words, but by virtue of its human output in everyday life. Sound advice indeed!

She was not an orphan, as some say. She was brought up as a child in a Christian Science household. Was it this, perhaps, that led to her parents' tendency to stress her superiority over her classmates, leaving her with few friends, and causing her to develop something of a propensity towards snobbishness, a characteristic that led her to take better comfort in the company of horses and ponies? This, coupled with a withdrawn life of reading and no doubt a large measure of daydreaming, may well have led to the development of latent mediumistic powers, which in the end became sufficiently visible as to alarm both her parents and also her neighbours! In reflective mood, she composed poetry. Her poem 'Violets', composed when she was just 13 is lightweight but unlike most (even adult) attempted poetry today, keeps metre and rhyme almost perfectly. One feels that she could well have developed into an accomplished poet had she so minded. Extended contact with adults rather than with children of her own age could well have made her a difficult child, but also of course, sharpened the edge of her self-confidence.

That she was strong-minded while still a young woman is amply borne out by incidents at college – her strong sense of fair play led her to boldly advise a fellow student to defect rather than continue awkwardly under the circumstances of a suspected swindle. And paradoxically, it was her later confrontation with the Warden, and undergoing a harrowing psychological barrage from her strong enough to precipitate a lengthy and incapacitating breakdown, that might well have been the

essential transformational crisis which firmly oriented her in the direction of her subsequent psychotherapeutic, then magical, career.

Physically slim and attractive in her teens, she filled out later in life, but retained her strength of mind, having the demeanour of one who perhaps nowadays might be associated with the feminist cause, which in a sense, she was anyway.

Evelyn Hadfield, a fellow student of Fortune's at Studley Agricultural College, remarked many years afterwards that she actually displayed a great sense of fun, even to the extent of playing practical jokes on the staff. But strangely in view of her later Land Army stint, she was said to dislike gardening, although she certainly always appreciated the results.

One of the students under Fortune's much appreciated tutelage in of the Fraternity of the Inner Light during the years 1930 to 1946 was Helah Fox who knew Fortune well. She had vivid memories of her lecturing unhesitatingly and without notes, standing completely still with a remarkable, sometimes military, presence, all in stark contrast to her much more relaxed behaviour when staying at her other centre in Glastonbury. Bernard Bromage attests to her superb and unflagging self-confidence, and unflappability. But in Glastonbury, she would delegate all her duties, let her hair down, and behave in very buoyant mood, seeming to precipitate all sorts of weird and unaccountable incidents about herself when others were about. Yet there were other times too, when she let her depth of feeling show. She almost wept when someone read out for them a moving letter from a serving Officer on the front.

Fortune's marriage was not particularly happy – like most marriages, going through phases. Mr Penry-Evans did not appear easy to get on with, and Fortune shed no tears at their parting, although some say that her magical work was at its peak during the time of their marriage.

Of those who knew her personally, the journalist Bernard Bromage was one of the closest. He had met Dion Fortune in 1936 when she was 45 years old and at the height of her magical career and incidentally attending Bromage's London University Extension Course lectures on Literature and the Occult. He considered her essay work to be of excellent quality –indeed, she was his 'star pupil', and he was keen to read all her published material as soon as it became available. He especially remarked upon her unique insights and innovative approach – signs of genius, or perhaps 'lateral thinking' in today's terms – and yet despite her early professional experience in depth psychology, perhaps only dimly remembered by then, he noted a certain tendency to recklessness in her use of psychological terms.

Her dress in those years reminded Bromage of the figure advertising Sandeman's Port –flowing crimson cloak and large wide-brimmed black hat, reminding him of the Sea Priestess of her then current novel, although elsewhere he says that Maiya Trenchell-Hayes was the model for this. Perhaps it was not too strange that she seemed to feel that this attire somehow made Fortune invisible.

Yet her personality was more forgiving than her demeanour suggested; Bromage delighted in her still active humour – she termed his University Extension Class a 'coven' - and their discussions eventually led to him setting up a lecture programme at 3, Queensborough Terrace, which regularly attracted intelligent audiences, including the Director of the Science Museum, and where he engaged some well-known literary and artistic personalities to take the chair. One special occasion for Bromage was when Fortune invited him as a guest into one of her Lodge rooms to see her perform in a so-called Rite of Isis (she agreed with Bromage afterwards that it was more Greek than Egyptian!). Although untrained in occultism, Bromage was deeply moved by the ritual, or 'pantomime' as he called it, recognising in it, perhaps for the first time, something of the power of mythical drama to stir the unconscious.

Indeed, Bromage felt at this and on most occasions, that her self-taught ability to handle her body and emotions with such great economy, and her calm self-assurance and authority were such as to fit her well for a ministry of healing; he was well aware of the healings of some most difficult cases that she and her husband Dr Penry-Evans had effected together. Healing does not seem to be a major part of the Society's activities nowadays. Perhaps it needs people of charisma.

Others report that in her dealings with human nature, she may have been a little naive – not being able to foresee, for example, the possibility that there might be friction between the conflicting interests of the three sub-sections of her Fraternity – almost an inevitability in any organisation. Then there was the matter of her fear during the war of racial contamination, which Ronald Hutton designates as a 'personality quirk'. Hutton is further critical of her inflexible stand on sex, race, and hierarchy, all of which matters have certainly taken on a different complexion half a century on.

It rests with Bromage to sum her up more favourably as 'one of the most interesting personalities of the century' in view of her 'dynamic curiosity in occult matters'.

W.E. Butler, a student of Dion Fortune's from 1925-1946, and a member of the Society of the Inner Light until 1978, broadly confirms Bromage's recollections of her. He recalls how meticulously she supervised the production of each and every page of her *Inner Light* Magazine; indeed, she earned the nickname 'Fluff' on account of the rigour she displayed on inspecting the surfaces round the room after they had been cleaned! But Butler also emphasises that her outward character was well capable of adaptation according to circumstance, whilst at the same time retaining an underlying stability which was never afraid to acknowledge mistakes. As for personal relations, and despite her obvious authority, she never interfered in the personal life of her students, always teaching from principle, and allowing life experience to be the real teacher.

It is interesting to speculate on her relationship with Aleister Crowley, her magical contemporary. Whether they worked magic together is doubtful; they were certainly an influence on each other, and over time they are said to have exchanged a

fair number letters. The one or two that survive seem to suggest that their relationship was not uncongenial. In one dated 8th January 1942, she addresses him 'playfully' as '666', gives due credit to his superior intellect, discrediting her own in the process, and wishes him all due success in his Tarot work. In June 1944 she sent him a copy of her *Sea Priestess*. In a letter to him dated 14th March 1945 she complains about the negative comments she had received from readers of her *Mystical Qabalah* concerning the number of appreciative references she makes to Crowley's scholarship in that book. It is unfortunate that Crowley's Bohemian antics attracted to him the name 'Antichrist' and 'wickedest man in the world', both epithets far from deserved. But as far as detractors were concerned, she used her fine sense of judgement, and always avoided confrontation where possible.

There was an exchange of letters with Israel Regardie during the 1930's; the correspondence which survives roughly charts their relationship. She speaks of reviewing his books (which she says she valued above anything written by Crowley or Lévi), and later praises his exposure of most of the secrets of the Golden Dawn system, something she had done in a small way herself in *The Esoteric Philosophy of Love and Marriage* with regard to the Alpha & Omega Lodge. But rather than go into the minutiae of the technicalities discussed in the letters, let us focus on their general tone, for any telling phrases that let slip any traits of her character.

Nov 14th 1932: '.... I suppose you know you have given away the old "Golden Dawn" system, lock, stock, and barrel? It is guarded by oaths with the most appalling penalties. I trust you have not been slain by invisible forces!" She appears to take the matter somewhat flippantly.

And Nov 16th 1932, after their meeting, with great warmth: 'I am so glad you liked us, because we liked you! [. . .] it is a great pleasure to meet someone to whom I can talk "on the level".' The 'us' in this case were Fortune and her husband, whom Regardie considered henpecked!

Later correspondence and articles by Regardie reveal some disagreement over matters of fundamental importance, specifically, the existence of the Masters, which, as a psychologist, Regardie would on no account accept. He became disenchanted with the Bristol Lodge of the Golden Dawn of which he was a member for two years for much the same reasons that Fortune had been unhappy with the Alpha & Omega Lodge – i.e. that the officers did not understand what they were about; and he hoped that Fortune would publicise his somewhat caustic views in the *Inner Light*. Despite, or perhaps because of their firm friendship, Fortune was courageous enough to stand her ground and refuse his article, offering the sound advice 'I should be wary if I were you.'

Fortune in 1934 was described by Ithell Colquhoun as a big woman, simply and conventionally dressed, with faded blond hair, and reminding one of a schoolmistress or matron of a nursing home. She was vigorous and well-spoken, and projected a sturdy, common-sense approach to her subject. Her eyes were deep blue and glistening, somewhat hypnotic, which faculty Colquhoun (perhaps mischievously)

comments, 'could be used to extract donations from her disciples – for the benefit of the fraternity, of course.'

Kenneth Grant's memories of Fortune are few, he having met her only fleetingly towards the end of her life in 1945. She was in her final illness, yet still strikingly and unconventionally dressed, and keen to discuss with Aleister Crowley, in whose house they met, new plans for reviving more pagan attitudes. Yet in the same year, Colin Wilson recounts that Mrs Bendit, the wife of Dr Lawrence Bendit, whose sessions of Jungian analysis Fortune was (anonymously) attending, commented on her as a 'burnt-out shell'. Perhaps she was nearing her end.

Later, when Bromage met her for one last time to discuss her ambitious plans for some sort of federation of occultists, he felt that she had matured. He reported, contrary to Grant, that she was dressed more conventionally in black satin, and appeared less secluded, and in touch with a greater circle of people of like mind.

These, then, are the sometimes conflicting opinions of those who knew her when she was alive. Secondary sources are based mostly upon hearsay, and what researchers believe they can detect in her novels and other publications; interestingly, most are positive.

Colin Wilson was one of the first to write of Dion Fortune at second hand. He contrasts her with Aleister Crowley, mistakenly described as 'her master' – he was never that, although he had pretensions of being so – the one, Fortune, self-possessed, sober; the other, Crowley, a Bohemian exhibitionist. In his surprisingly informative and balanced review of the occult *The Giant Book of the Supernatural*, Wilson grants Dion Fortune several pages, presenting her as a magician whose qualities have been greatly underestimated, 'the last great magician of the 20th century', and a writer of brilliance, although he does mention in passing that while she was under her first teacher Moriarty, some of her fellow students did tend to be rather wary of her because of her outspokenness.

Ithell Colquhoun's account speaks of Charles Loveday as Fortune's 'boyfriend', a term much open to varied interpretation these days. There is no doubt that he worked well beyond the call of duty for the Fraternity – it was he who purchased and personally refurbished the ex-army huts erected at Glastonbury – and who is today buried beside her on the outskirts of that very same town. Yet he had his own quarters at Chalice Orchard, and there is no eye-witness evidence to indicate other than that their liaison was purely fraternal. Colquhoun also suggests the possibility of Charles being the Raoul Loveday of Crowley's Thelemic Temple, a matter promptly dismissed by Butler and others, for he was certainly not.

Colquhoun deals fairly with the matter of Fortune's ultimate departure from the Alpha & Omega Lodge of the Golden Dawn headed by Moina Mathers, and takes Francis King to task for exaggerating the consequences of Fortune's disappointment and uncharacteristic attempts at retaliation, something most unlikely to have happened. Fortune was apparently a model student in the Golden Dawn until she began to

question certain practices and lose confidence in the leadership. Fellow member Edward Garstin was surprised that she intended to set up her own organization after spending such a short time with the A.O., perhaps because he was unaware of the extent of her previous experience and training elsewhere. The move certainly indicated her enthusiasm.

In an attempt to gain some feeling for the environment in which Fortune worked, Colquhoun visited Chalice Orchard during the 1950's, some four years after Fortune's death, and found it a pleasant enough site, but the buildings seemed too small for comfortable ritual work, cluttered with lumber, and contaminated by pets. She similarly describes 3 Queensborough Terrace as having a dank, chilly, and stuffy atmosphere. Does one detect a hint of bitterness in these descriptions?

It has been said that Fortune maintained several deep and lasting friendships, set an example of 'super-achievement, self-sacrifice, and personal integrity', displayed excellent organizational ability, and exerted a rare talent for inspiring and motivating others.

How, then, after all, do we sum up Dion Fortune as a person? In a way similar, perhaps, to her pupil W.E. Butler, a 'friendly unassuming individual who knew more about the art of magic than the rest of us might hope to learn in half a dozen lifetimes'. Certainly she was a figure of fundamental importance in the Western magical tradition, who did not merely rely on previous sources or suspect traditional texts, but going back to first principles, was bold enough to strike out on her own to create an eminently workable system. And what happened to Violet – how far did she identify with her role as a magician to the detriment of her role as a woman? The adoption of a magical name (albeit based on her family motto *Deo, non Fortuna* – By God, not by chance, or, more poetically, by God's good grace, not by dint of luck), for everyday purposes as well as use in her magical role, might be seen as a somewhat questionable course of action nowadays as indicating in some sense an abrogation of her earthly day-to-day personality. Nevertheless, 'Dion Fortune' was how she signed her letters, and how she is known to us to this day.

More than all this, her character shines through in her own writing – the tenacity of purpose in her War Letters, the obvious sincerity and straightforwardness in advising her readers of all the opportunities and all the pitfalls of magical training. Indeed, what shows through her own writing is more than can be dealt with here, and is its own vindication of her strength of character. Perhaps another time.

Did she then perhaps see herself as the magical *shakti* of the New Aeon? Or, as the renowned occultist and surrealist Austin Osman Spare acknowledged, as 'one of us!' She certainly lived up to Bromage's assessment of a person who was a 'symbol of something new in the way of integration, struggling to break out of the clutches of an unimaginative materialism into a realm in which spirit can interpenetrate matter to a fresh issue.' As we would say today, a pioneer heading the contemporary paradigm shift that is slowly but inevitably beginning to re-include esoteric elements in society that

have been deliberately excluded for three hundred years, displacing the one-sided materialist outlook of the so-called Enlightenment, and setting the scene for a new Renaissance.

9th October 2003

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