

**Routes of Wholeness:  
Jungian and Post-Jungian Dialogues with the Western Esoteric Tree of Life**

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## Abstract

This thesis compares and contrasts what could be considered two psycho-spiritual traditions: analytical psychology and the Western Esoteric Tradition. A common link between these two traditions is the use of symbols and metaphors of wholeness, specifically the *sefirot* of the Western Esoteric Tree of Life.

Chapter One introduces the *sefirot* of the Tree of Life as found in Judaism, Christianity, the Hermetic tradition, and the Western Esoteric Tradition. Chapter Two analyses how Carl Jung applied and utilised the *sefirot*, generally in relation to alchemy, in his work. Chapter Three defines the Western Esoteric Tradition while the fourth and fifth chapters introduce an analytical psychological interpretation of the Western Esoteric Tree of Life as a way to bring analytical psychology and the Western Esoteric Tradition together in dialogue. Areas of investigation for these latter chapters include: the connection of the ego-complex with the material world, the polytheistic and monotheistic nature of the psyche and synchronicity and the realms of dualistic and non-dualistic transpersonal experience. Finally, Chapter Six presents several theoretical and pragmatic applications for an analytical psychological interpretation of the Western Esoteric Tree of Life. The summation is that both analytical psychology and the Western Esoteric Tradition can offer each other various areas of complementation.

This thesis includes four diagrams, an outline of two common rituals from the Western Esoteric Tradition and a glossary of non-Jungian terms.

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## Table of Contents

<b>Introduction</b>	1
Literature Review	3
Western Esoteric Tradition Literature	4
Analytical Psychological Literature	11
History of Religion Literature	18
Magick and Metaphor: Defining Two Key Terms	22
A Brief Review of Metaphor	23
Metaphor in Analytical and Archetypal Psychology	24
Why Metaphor and the Western Esoteric Tree of Life?	31
<b>Chapter One:</b>	
<b>Paths of Order: The Development of the Kabbalistic Tree of Life</b>	34
A Brief Word on Microcosm and Macrocosm	36
Ten <i>Sefirot</i> of Nothingness: The <i>sefirot</i> in Jewish Kabbalah	37
The <i>Sefer Yetsirah</i>	39
The <i>Sefer Bahir</i>	45
The <i>Shekhinah</i> and the <i>Sefirot</i>	50
The <i>Zohar</i>	52
Rabbi Joseph Gikatilla and the <i>Gates of Light</i>	53
Moses Cordovero and Isaac Luria	55
Summary of Jewish Kabbalah	56
The Tree is He: The <i>sefirot</i> in Christian Kabbalah	57
Summary of Christian Kabbalah	60
The Natural Magician and the Nolan: Hermetic Kabbalah	61
Summary of Hermetic Kabbalah	65
Paths and Portals: The Western Esoteric Kabbalah	66
Lévi, the <i>Sefirot</i> and the Tarot	67
Aleister Crowley and <i>Liber 777</i>	68
Fortune, Regardie and Knight: The Western Esoteric Tradition and Psychology	71
Summary of Western Esoteric Kabbalah	76
Conclusion to Chapter One	77
<b>Chapter Two:</b>	
<b>The Conjunction, The Self and the Thirty-Two Paths: C.G. Jung's Understanding of the <i>Sefirot</i></b>	80
Jung, Alchemy and the <i>Sefirot</i>	92
Adam Kadmon, the Divine Wedding and the Conjunction	94
Summary of the Three Stages of the Conjunction	101
Edward Edinger's Conjunction	105

Pauli and the Thirty-two Paths of the Tree of Life	107
<b>Chapter Three:</b>	
<b>The Arrow and the Serpent: Defining the Western Esoteric Tradition and the Tree of Life</b>	112
(Re)Defining Magic(k) and Magic(k)ians	113
The Tree of Initiation in the Western Esoteric Tradition	127
Robert Moore and the Archetype of Initiation	146
Chronic Liminality and Inflation in the Western Esoteric Tradition	148
<b>Chapter Four:</b>	
<b>From Ego to Abyss: The Personal Perspective on the Western Esoteric Tree of Life</b>	153
The Western Esoteric Tree of Life and the Process of Individuation: Bringing Two Worlds Together	155
Tweaking the Tree: Missing Pieces, Alterations and Modifications	163
Personal Perspective and the Material World: <i>Malkuth</i> as Ego-complex	169
Shadow: The Personal Abyss	174
Operative and Clandestine Shadows of the Tree of Life	182
<i>Yesod</i> : Symbols, Soul and Libido	192
<i>Tiferet</i> : The Sun, Son and Self	204
The Self-Mandala, Mana-Personality and the Process of Individuation	214
The Abyss, <i>Da'at</i> and Choronzon	224
<b>Chapter Five:</b>	
<b>The Supernal Triad and Transpersonal Theories</b>	238
<i>Binah</i> : Dark Mother, Light Mother and the Whore	241
<i>Hokmah</i> : Supernal Father, Chaos and the Beast	249
<i>Kether</i> : The Crown of the Unconscious	255
Synchronicity, the <i>Unus Mundus</i> and Transpersonal Psychology	257
The <i>Unus Mundus</i> as Transpersonal Experience	259
<i>Da'at</i> as “In-between”	267
A Jungian Mysticism?	274
<b>Chapter Six:</b>	
<b>Beginnings and Endings: Roots, Summary and Conclusion</b>	283
<i>Ain Sof Aur</i> , <i>Ain Sof</i> , <i>Ain</i> or the <i>Real</i> Collective Unconscious	284
Routes of Wholeness: A Summary	289
Theory	291

Application	295
Conclusion	305
Bibliography of References	309
<b>Figure One:</b> The Tree of Life	326
<b>Figure Two:</b> The Process of Psychological Development	327
<b>Figure Three:</b> Serpent and the Arrow: Two Paths of the Tree of Life	328
<b>Figure Four:</b> The Grades of the Hermetic Order of the Golden Dawn on the Tree of Life	329
<b>Appendix A:</b> The Lesser Banishing Ritual of the Pentagram	330
<b>Appendix B:</b> The Middle Pillar Ritual	334
<b>Glossary of Non-Jungian Terms</b>	337

## Introduction

The purpose of this thesis is to analyse the *sefirot* of the Western Esoteric Tree of Life, and by extension the Western Esoteric Tradition, from an analytical psychological perspective. Through this perspective, the Western Esoteric Tree of Life can be seen as a metaphor of the process of individuation (initiation). The Western Esoteric Tradition's use of the image of the Kabbalistic Tree of Life reflects both their world-view and the presumed stages of psycho-spiritual transformations thought to occur within that world-view. While Jung did not write specifically on the Western Esoteric (Occult) tradition he did find that related esoteric traditions such as alchemy and various forms of mysticism paralleled what he termed the process of individuation. Ultimately, an analytical psychological interpretation reveals that the Western Esoteric Tree of Life mirrors Jung's notion of the individuation process and that with an analytical psychological appreciation of metaphor, the Western Esoteric Tradition has, consciously or unconsciously, developed an initiatory system of psychological value.

Chapter One of this thesis traces the use of the *sefirot*, the components that comprise the Kabbalistic Tree of Life, through four spiritual traditions: Judaism, Christianity, Hermeticism, and the Western Esoteric Tradition. In each tradition the *sefirot* function as a metaphor or symbol of the *middoth* or qualities of an unknown or even unknowable source. However, while each tradition may have this common trait, each application of the Tree of Life is unique to the world-view of the tradition that employs the Tree.

The second chapter presents an overview of Jung's understanding and application of the *sefirot*. As Jung's use of the Tree of Life and the *sefirot* is intimately related to his understanding of alchemy a review of the key components of Jung's use of this arcane art, specifically his understanding of the conjunction of opposites is also presented. Edward Edinger's interpretation of the conjunction is also presented to amplify Jung's thoughts on the matter. Jung's use of the *sefirot* permeates many of his most important psychological theories and is one more example of his appreciation of a wide variety of spiritual traditions.

Chapter Three outlines the primary components of the Western Esoteric Tradition (also simply known as "Magick") and introduces an analytical psychological understanding of metaphor to the definition of the Tradition. Essentially Magick in this thesis is understood as linking art and science, through the medium of metaphor (and therefore the psyche), in connection with individual volition. When the Western Esoteric Tradition's metaphysical claims of spiritual initiation are taken to be reflections of psychological occurrences, we see that the Tradition mirrors Jung's notion of individuation or becoming a whole individual.

Chapter Four presents an analytical psychological interpretation of the lower seven *sefirot* and the Supernal Abyss of the Western Esoteric Tree of Life. These *sefirot* symbolise what could be described as a dualistic relation with the components of the psyche or a personal theistic experience of the lower transpersonal realms of the Tree. Chapter Five analyses the remaining three *sefirot* (the Supernal Triad) and how they, especially the *sefira Kether*, reflect a non-dual experience of the Esoteric Tree of Life where the "I/Thou" dichotomy found in the lower *sefirot* is absent. This chapter also

introduces Leon Schlammm's claim that analytical psychology can, in fact, be seen as a form of a secular, detraditionalised mysticism. Finally, Chapter Six introduces the wholly abstract source of the Western Esoteric Tree of Life as represented by the Negative Veils of Existence; the chapter concludes with a brief foray into how the analytical psychological interpretation of the Western Esoteric Tree of Life can be applied to the theories and practice of both the Western Esoteric Tradition and analytical psychology. This thesis includes four images, an outline of two Western Esoteric Tradition rituals and a selected glossary of non-Jungian terms.

### **Literature Review**

The sources used throughout this thesis fall into three general categories or themes. The first category is comprised of literature produced from within the Western Esoteric Tradition. The second is literature and sources produced from the various circles of analytical psychology and the third category is comprised of sources, primarily the historical and phenomenological study of religion, which provides the historical background for Kabbalah and related spiritual and philosophical traditions. Before we look more closely at each of these categories we must review a cursory definition of the terms "Esoteric" and "Western Esoteric Tradition" as they are used throughout this thesis. Later, in Chapter Three we will enter into a more complete definition of the Tradition.

The scholar of esoteric traditions Antoine Faivre uses the term "Occultism" when referring to the Western Esoteric Tradition. According to Faivre:

"Occultism" is used in these two meanings: a) any practise dealing with these sciences [i.e., astrology, magic, alchemy, and the

Kabbalah]. . .b) A current appearing in the second half of the nineteenth century with Eliphas Lévi<sup>1</sup> and reaching its apogee at the turn of the century.<sup>2</sup>

Our present concern is with definition “b)” but with one reservation. It would be difficult to concede that the Tradition or “current” reached its apogee at the turn of the century when there would appear to be many more Orders and sources in existence today than at any time in the 19<sup>th</sup> or early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries combined. We should note that the term “Western Esoteric Tradition” is commonly used, along with the term “Western Mystery Tradition”, by those who follow the contemporary revival of the second definition of Faivre's “Occultism” and it will be retained for the remainder of this thesis.

Though not referring specifically (or even generally) to the Western Esoteric Tradition, Henry Corbin's definition of esotericism is equally relevant to our analysis. Corbin states that esotericism refers “to the unavoidable necessity of expressing the reintegration of the human being with symbols.”<sup>3</sup> The Western Esoteric Tradition is historically linked to Faivre's definition of Occultism while the overall spiritual thrust of the Tradition is reflected in Corbin's definition of esotericism.

## Western Esoteric Tradition Literature

The literature produced from within the Western Esoteric Tradition could be considered the least “academic” of the three aforementioned literature categories. This is

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<sup>1</sup> Alphonse Louis Constant (c1810-1875-better known under the pen-name Eliphas Levi) was a French deacon who wrote three major works on the occult: *Transcendental Magic* (1855), *The History of Magic* (1860), and *The Key to the Grand Mysteries* (1861). Each of these works (the latter being translated and published in Aleister Crowley's bi-annual occult periodical: *The Equinox* vol.1, no.x) helped to rekindle interest in the Western Esoteric Tradition.

<sup>2</sup> Antoine Faivre, *Access to Western Esotericism* (New York: State University of New York Press, 1994), 34-35.

<sup>3</sup> Henry Corbin cited in: Steven M Wasserstrom, *Religion after Religion* (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1999), 38.

primarily due to the fact that the audience that the authors are attempting to address are, for the most part, adherents or devotees of the Tradition. Metaphysical, philosophical, and cosmological assumptions are quite common with such sources, as would be the case for sources written by Christians, Buddhists, or any other spiritual practice for members of the same spiritual tradition. While the academic study of the Western Esoteric Tradition is gaining some momentum and validity, the majority of sources that analyse the Tradition come from within the Tradition and as a result tend to be less critical than standard academic sources.<sup>4</sup> Generally speaking, the Western Esoteric literature can be subdivided into three supplementary categories: instructional, philosophical/historical, and reference.

Instructional sources are by far the most common literature available today. A brief inventory of the “New Age/Occult” section of any major bookstore will reveal a plethora of titles that relate to training or edification within the Western Esoteric Tradition. This type of literature has always been a part of the Western Esoteric Tradition and has been reflected throughout its mythology. Despite the fact that the secrets of the Tradition were intended to be concealed from the masses, instructional texts or *grimoires* have been available for centuries.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> A sign of positive things to come in this particular area of research is the recent publication of the *Journal for the Academic Study of Magic* (Oxford: Mandrake Press, 2003) not to mention more established journals such as *Aries: Journal for the Study of Western Esotericism* though the former is concerned more specifically with the form of Western Esotericism being analysed here. Rather than being bound to strict methodological structures (historical methodology for example), the Journal encourages multidisciplinary study of the Western Esoteric Tradition and related practices and traditions.

<sup>5</sup> The *grimoires* (“grammars”) which are usually comprised of instructions on performing acts of practical magic or spirit evocation, are commonly thought of as the personal notebooks of practitioners, and are thus inevitably filled with errors and remain partially incomplete, that eventually became textbooks of instruction for later adepts. Given the cost to buy or make books and the fact that the *grimoires* generally contain both Latin and Hebrew, it is obvious that these books were intended for the rich and educated. Some of the more important *grimoires* include the 13<sup>th</sup> century *The Grimoire of Pope Honorius* (Seattle: Trident Books, 1999); the Medieval *The Key of Solomon*, trans. and ed. S. Liddell MacGregor Mathers, (ME: Samuel Weiser, Inc., 1989) and the related *Goetia: The Lesser Key of Solomon the King*, trans. S.

This type of literature is useful in ascertaining the cosmology of the Western Esoteric Tradition and, as they are created in order that they be understood and utilised, they are usually arranged in a systematic manner. However, anyone who has ever attempted to analyse an instructional text written from within the Tradition knows full well that many presumptions are made of the reader and at times there can be a trying lack of citation. Fortunately modern Esotericists have learned from the chaos of the past, to some degree at least, and have made more rigorous attempts at clearly communicating their teachings.

Aside from the more recognisable and classic authors such as Aleister Crowley, Dion Fortune, and Israel Regardie, there are several contemporary authors who have contributed important instructional works.<sup>6</sup> Following the Golden Dawn<sup>7</sup> tradition of the Western Esoteric Tradition, and mirroring Regardie's attempt to save the tradition by keeping its teachings in publication, Chic and Sandra Cicero have several important works to their credit. Of their works, *Self-Initiation into the Golden Dawn Tradition*<sup>8</sup> is the most systematic and thorough guide to the teachings of the Hermetic Order of the Golden Dawn. From the outset, the practitioner is introduced to esoteric symbolism and meditation practices that are gradually built upon through techniques of increasing complexity and depth. In many ways this work acts as a reference resource as much as it

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Liddell MacGregor Mathers, ed. Aleister Crowley, (ME: Samuel Weiser, Inc., 1995); and the 17<sup>th</sup> century *The Grimoire of Armadel*, trans. and ed. S. Liddell MacGregor Mathers, (Boston, MA: Weiser Books, 2001).

<sup>6</sup> Crowley (1875-1947), Fortune (1891-1946), and Regardie (1907-1985) are classic figures within the Western Esoteric Tradition. The literature produced by these three individuals represents some of the most influential literature within the Western Esoteric Tradition and will be used throughout this thesis.

<sup>7</sup> The Hermetic Order of the Golden Dawn was an Esoteric order that was founded in 1888 and splintered in 1918 with the death of its autocrat, MacGregor Mathers. Chapter Three will go into more detail about the Golden Dawn.

<sup>8</sup> Chic and Sandra Tabatha Cicero, *Self-Initiation into the Golden Dawn Tradition*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. (St. Paul, MINN: Llewellyn Publications, 1998).

does an instructional manual and *Self-Initiation* is a vast improvement over Regardie's *The Golden Dawn*.<sup>9</sup>

Along the same lines as the Ciceros' work, but not following a strict Golden Dawn approach, is *Modern Magick* by Donald Michael Kraig.<sup>10</sup> This popular instructional manual is composed of eleven lessons that systematically reveal the basic symbolism and techniques employed within the Western Esoteric Tradition. To the Ciceros' and Kraig we can add the works of William Gray,<sup>11</sup> Melita Denning and Osborne Phillips,<sup>12</sup> Jason Augustus Newcomb,<sup>13</sup> Gerald J. Schueler,<sup>14</sup> Peter J. Carroll,<sup>15</sup> and Norman Kraft,<sup>16</sup> to name a few key authors. In every case the premise behind the work is instruction, with varying levels of complexity and styles of teachings. It is through these teachings that we can ascertain the assumptions and the cosmology of the Western Esoteric Tradition.

The philosophical/historical sources are as varied in approach as the instructional sources. Some of the most popular works from within this sub-category come from Gareth Knight. Knight's works have rightly gained an impressive level of published

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<sup>9</sup> Israel Regardie, *The Golden Dawn* (St. Paul, MINN: Llewellyn Publications, 1988).

<sup>10</sup> Donald Michael Kraig, *Modern Magick: Eleven Lessons in the High Magickal Arts* (St. Paul, MINN: Llewellyn Publications, 1988).

<sup>11</sup> See especially: William G. Gray, *Attainment Through Magic: Evoking the Higher Self* (St. Paul, MINN: Llewellyn Publications, 1990); *Inner Traditions of Magic* (York Beach, MN: Samuel Weiser, Inc., 1984) and *Temple Magic: Building the Personal Temple: Gateways to Inner Worlds* (St. Paul, MINN: Llewellyn Publications, 1988). For an article by Gray that bridges both psychology and Magic see: "Patterns of Western Magic: A Psychological Appreciation" in Charles Tart, ed., *Transpersonal Psychologies* (New York: Harper & Row, 1975), 433-472.

<sup>12</sup> See the three volumes of: Melita Denning & Osborne Phillips, *The Magical Philosophy* (St. Paul, MINN: Llewellyn Publications, 1988).

<sup>13</sup> Jason Newcomb, *21<sup>st</sup> Century Mage: Bring the Divine Down to Earth* (York Beach, ME: Weiser Books, 2002).

<sup>14</sup> Especially: Gerald J. Schueler, *An Advanced Guide to Enochian Magick* (St. Paul, MINN: Llewellyn Publications, 1988).

<sup>15</sup> Carroll's Chaos approach to Magick is summarised in: Peter J. Carroll, *Liber Kaos* (Boston, MA: Samuel Weiser, Inc., 1992).

<sup>16</sup> Norman R. Kraft's *Ogdoadic Magick: Being a Year of Study with an Aurum Solis Commandery* (Boston, MA: Weiser Books, 2001) gives a structured course of training through the Aurum Solis system of Magick popularised by Denning and Phillips.

longevity. Knight's *A Practical Guide to Qabalistic Symbolism*<sup>17</sup> is an amalgamation of two shorter and complementary works and is equal to Fortune's *The Mystical Qabalah* in both insight and depth.<sup>18</sup> Of interest specifically in our present investigation is the fact that Knight makes multiple references to Jung and archetypal images, though he admittedly has little time for Jung's theories as he finds them too limiting.<sup>19</sup> More historically and loosely psychologically oriented is Knight's *Magic and the Western Mind*.<sup>20</sup> While sweeping in its scope and limited in depth (a mere 197 pages of material covering centuries of esoteric and psychological development) this source does attempt to give both the psychological and cultural precursors of the Western Esoteric Tradition. Similar to *Magic and the Western Mind* in historical scope is Manly P. Hall's *The Secret Teachings of All Ages*.<sup>21</sup> Although Hall's work is concerned with symbols from various religions and organisations (such as the Freemasons) and not specifically with the Western Esoteric Tradition, many Esotericists have been influenced by this staple of esoteric study.

One source that seems to be neglected in assessing the historical foundations of modern Western Esoteric Tradition is *The Hermetic Brotherhood of Luxor*.<sup>22</sup> Partially historical/philosophical and partially instructional, this work has a thorough historical introduction to the teachings of this seminal 19<sup>th</sup> century Order. Aside from the

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<sup>17</sup> Gareth Knight, *A Practical Guide to Qabalistic Symbolism* (York Beach, ME: Samuel Weiser, Inc., 1993).

<sup>18</sup> Dion Fortune, *The Mystical Qabalah* (Boston, MA: Weiser Books, 2000).

<sup>19</sup> Gareth Knight, personal e-mail (March 7, 2001). Interestingly, in 1976, Knight was appointed Consultant in Archetypal Symbolism to the C.G. Jung Institute, Dallas.

<sup>20</sup> Gareth Knight, *Magic and the Western Mind* (St. Paul, MINN: Llewellyn Publications, 1991).

<sup>21</sup> Manly P. Hall, *The Secret Teachings of All Ages* (Los Angeles, CA: The Philosophical Research Society Inc., 1995).

<sup>22</sup> Joscelyn Godwin, et al, *The Hermetic Brotherhood of Luxor: Initiatic and Historical Documents of an Order of Practical Occultism* (York Beach, ME: Weiser, Inc., 1995).

instructional and historical sources there is also the third important subdivision, i.e., reference material.

In most branches of the Western Esoteric Tradition various types of reference materials are used as part of the Tradition's practice. Standard encyclopaedias of mythology, religion, Freemasonry, and psychology are likely to be found referenced within the writings of the Tradition. However, some sources used within the Tradition are created for specific practices such as *gematria*.<sup>23</sup> For example, David Godwin's *Godwin's Cabalistic Encyclopedia*<sup>24</sup> is arranged in alphabetical order (English and Hebrew words are given) and the numeration of the words are listed in ascending numeric order as well. In practice one would find a word, see the definition and calculated sum of that word then simply turn to the *gematria* section to find what other words have the same sum for comparison. Aside from the pragmatic applications of the *Cabalistic Encyclopedia*, Godwin also gives a brief but useful introduction to the Western Esoteric Tradition and its practices. Another example of this type of reference source can be found in Crowley's *777 and Other Qabalistic Writings of Aleister Crowley*.<sup>25</sup>

Several Western Esoteric sources make use of Jung's writings. Terms like archetype, shadow and self, may be used but the applications are usually superficial and often the citations are taken out of context, presented in a cursory manner or are fundamentally incorrect. Few, if any, thorough academic works concerned with Jung

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<sup>23</sup> See the Glossary for this and other esoteric terms.

<sup>24</sup> David Godwin, *Godwin's Cabalistic Encyclopedia: Complete Guidance to Both Practical and Esoteric Applications* (St. Paul, MINN: Llewellyn Publications, 1997).

<sup>25</sup> Aleister Crowley, *777 and Other Qabalistic Writings of Aleister Crowley* Israel Regardie, ed. (York Beach, ME: Samuel Weiser Inc., 1986). One work contained in 777, "Sepher Sephiroth", is given in *Godwin's Cabalistic Encyclopedia*.

have been published from within the Western Esoteric Tradition. We see a similar situation in relation to coverage of the Western Esoteric Tradition from the perspective of the various branches of analytical psychology. Though there may be a lack of sources directly related to the Western Esoteric Tradition we do see that analytical psychology has done a fair bit of work in related areas.

One source that attempted to link analytical psychology and the Western Esoteric Tradition is Alta J. LaDage's *Occult Psychology*.<sup>26</sup> Similar in breadth and scope to Knight's *Magic and the Western Mind*, LaDage attempts to compare her understanding of Western Esoteric Kabbalah and analytical psychology. However, as noble as her attempt is she falls short of an academically viable work.<sup>27</sup> This fact is not lost on the author as she states that her book "is not intended to be 'scientific' or even rational!"<sup>28</sup>

Another serious problem with this work is that it makes incorrect assumptions regarding fundamental Jungian concepts. For example, LaDage indicates that the collective unconscious is, in essence, a type of Akashic Record.<sup>29</sup> LaDage, discussing dead "Uncle Joe" as an example, claims Jung implied that "all that Uncle Joe had thought and desired resides in the Collective Unconscious as a memory bundle, together with all that anyone ever thought about Uncle Joe. Furthermore, this Uncle Joe lump [sic] is autonomous, according to Jung."<sup>30</sup> Reference to Uncle Joe (and lack of references to Jung) aside, this reading of Jung's concept of the collective unconscious as a place where individual personalities eternally dwell is patently incorrect.

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<sup>26</sup> Alta J. LaDage, *Occult Psychology: A Comparison of Jungian Psychology and the Modern Qabalah* (Saint Paul, MINN: Llewellyn Publications, 1978).

<sup>27</sup> One major problem is the fact that the author makes citations without referring to specific texts or pagination.

<sup>28</sup> LaDage, *Occult Psychology*, ix.

<sup>29</sup> Theosophical concept that memories of events, thoughts, and emotions from the beginning of time are stored in an ethereal substance, Akasha.

<sup>30</sup> LaDage, *Occult Psychology*, 87.

However, for its shortfalls *Occult Psychology* is attempting, as is this thesis, to explore the connections between analytical psychology and the Western Esoteric Tradition. LaDage makes a meaningful observation when she compares the processes of the Western Esoteric Tradition and analytical psychology:

There is a significant point of difference in the *technique* between Jung and the Qabalah, for the practical Qabalist actively assaults the unknown. That is his duty, to strip the veils, one by one, from the images that conceal the powers. Jung did develop the technique of “active imagination” for exploring the unconscious, but this is a fairly simple method compared to the highly controlled and ritualized methods of the Practical Qabalah.<sup>31</sup>

Again, LaDage seems to misunderstand or perhaps underestimate the efficiency of the methods of analytical psychology to access and navigate the collective unconscious. However, mutual appreciation of the methods of both Esotericists and psychologists can prove to be a beneficial undertaking, though not without a level of difficulty. This final citation from LaDage equally sums up the perceptions underpinning the writing of this thesis. “Neither group has any particular interest in being associated with the other. The psychologists will criticize me for being mystical and the occultists will criticize me for abandoning the purity of the ancient doctrine and selling out to science. But so be it!”<sup>32</sup>

### **Analytical Psychology Literature**

Analytical psychology has, for the most part, viewed religion and mystical traditions with appreciation and openness. For Jung traditions such as alchemy reflected, at least to his mind, a historical predecessor to his psychological theories. Jungian icon Marie-Louise von Franz made several important forays into elucidating the connection

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<sup>31</sup> LaDage, *Occult Psychology*, 121.

<sup>32</sup> LaDage, *Occult Psychology*, ix.

between esoteric practices and theories and those practices and theories found within analytical psychology.<sup>33</sup> We also find notable contributions in “occult” arts such as alchemy made by an equally influential analyst, Edward Edinger.<sup>34</sup> Several analysts have also analysed the connection between Tarot and Jung’s theories.<sup>35</sup> However, Tarot, as an organised system of spiritual development, has been refined over the past several decades by Western Esoteric practitioners; yet the depths of the tradition remain relatively untouched by analytical psychology.

There has been some important research done on the connection between Jung and Jewish Kabbalah, such as the work done by Sanford L. Drob,<sup>36</sup> Siegmund Hurwitz,<sup>37</sup> and Freema Gottlieb.<sup>38</sup> Yet none of these sources deals with the Kabbalah of the Western Esoteric Tradition as a unique entity. Even when presented with a direct link between analytical psychology and the Western Esoteric Tradition there tends to be a lack of a systematic analysis. One example can be found in Jungian analyst J. Marvin Spiegelman’s *The Tree of Life*, a source endorsed by Esotericist Israel Regardie (who tended to have a limited enthusiasm for analytical psychology). There is little definable

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<sup>33</sup> See for example: Marie-Louise von Franz, *Aurora Consurgens* (Toronto, ON: Inner City Books, 2000); *Alchemy: An Introduction to the Symbolism of Psychology* (Toronto, ON: Inner City Books, 1980) and *On Divination and Synchronicity* (Toronto, ON: Inner City Books, 1980).

<sup>34</sup> Edward F. Edinger, *The Mystery of the Coniunctio* (Toronto, ON: Inner City Books, 1994); *The Mysterium Lectures* (Toronto, ON: Inner City Books, 1995); *Goethe’s Faust* (Toronto, ON: Inner City Books, 1990); and portions of *Ego and Archetype*, (New York: Penguin Books, 1986).

<sup>35</sup> See Sallie Nichols, *Jung and Tarot: An Archetypal Journey* (Boston, MA: Weiser, 1980) and Rose Gwain, *Discovering Yourself Through the Tarot: A Jungian Guide to Archetypes and Personality* (Rochester, VT: Destiny Books, 1994).

<sup>36</sup> See Sanford L. Drob, *Kabbalistic Metaphors: Jewish Mystical Themes in Ancient and Modern Thought* (Northvale, New Jersey: Jason Aronson Inc., 2000) and *Symbols of the Kabbalah: Philosophical and Psychological Perspectives* (Northvale, New Jersey: Jason Aronson Inc., 2000).

<sup>37</sup> Siegmund Hurwitz, “The Dark Face of God in Judaism” in *Jung and the Monotheisms* Joel Ryce-Menuhin, ed. (New York: Routledge, 1999), 45-55.

<sup>38</sup> Freema Gottlieb, “The Kabbalah, Jung, and the Feminine Image” in *Jung and the Monotheisms* Joel Ryce-Menuhin, ed. (New York: Routledge, 1999), 63-73. See also James Di Censo’s Master’s thesis entitled “The Three Stages of the Anthropos and the Differentiation and Individuation of the Psyche” (Ottawa, ON: Carleton University, 1981).

analysis of the Tradition revealed in Spiegelman's work.<sup>39</sup> Instead, we are presented with a collection of narratives which, while representative of an Esoteric approach to Jung's thought, is not cohesive or thorough enough to be a viable source for an academic analysis.

One possible exception to the lack of analytical psychological research on the Western Esoteric Tradition can be found in the writings of analyst and proponent of the "men's movement" Robert L. Moore. The qualifier "possible" is used due to the fact that Moore never fully defines what he means by "occultism." Moore indicates in his work *The Magician and the Analyst: The Archetype of the Magus in Occult Spirituality and Jungian Analysis*<sup>40</sup> that he initially set out to investigate his assumption that ritual involvement in occult practices was to account for various forms of pathologies he observed in his psychotherapeutic clients.

Moore conducted interviews with young occultists where "many varieties of minority religions presented themselves, from theosophy to neo-paganism..."<sup>41</sup> Moore concluded that:

What I discovered in this world of wizards and witches did not conform to my expectations. I found that most of what I had learned about the occult from graduate school and anti-cultist clinicians was at best simplistic and misleading, and at worst incredibly out of touch with human experience in both secular and religious kinds of ritualization.<sup>42</sup>

While Moore's respect for occult traditions is commendable and his subsequent work on sacred space in ritual and analysis is useful, he still fails to define what he means

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<sup>39</sup> J. Marvin Spiegelman, Ph.D. *The Tree of Life* (Phoenix, AZ: New Falcon Publications, 1993).

<sup>40</sup> Robert L. Moore, *The Magician and the Analyst: The Archetype of the Magus in Occult Spirituality and Jungian Analysis* (Philadelphia, PA: Xlibris Corporation, 2002).

<sup>41</sup> Moore, *The Magician and Analyst*, 14.

<sup>42</sup> Moore, *The Magician and Analyst*, 15.

by “occultist”. Moore seems to imply that anything from “theosophy to neo-paganism” is occultism. When Moore mentions “theosophy” is he referring to the Theosophical Society began by Madame Helena Blavatsky in 1875 or is he being more general and using the term to describe loosely *gnostic* traditions that follow Kabbalistic or Neoplatonic world-views? By “Neo-pagan” does Moore mean those who follow various forms of folk traditions and their modern revivals or does he include here modern traditions such as Wicca? Are all nature-based religions that emphasise the immanence of divinity also included in this definition? Moore makes no differentiation between any of these traditions.

Eventually in *The Magician and the Analyst* Moore does finally reveal to the reader, in equally obtuse terms, what he means when he uses the term “occultism.” Moore states that he wishes to “distinguish between occultism properly so-called and the wide spread interest in such topics as Ufology and the Bermuda Triangle.”<sup>43</sup> In order to aid in this differentiation Moore employs the sociologist E.A. Tiryankian’s definition of “the occult.” The definition, as cited by Moore can be summarised as a set of volitional practices, conducted by someone who has specialised knowledge of such practices, that draw on natural hidden or concealed forces, that cannot be measured by modern science which result in the desired empirical results.<sup>44</sup>

Moore then goes on to explore and compare what he calls the archetype of initiation with the sociological and anthropological concepts of sacred and profane space and liminal and liminoid space. While Moore never fully relates what he means when he uses the term “occultist”, nor what criteria he had for his initial research into the occult

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<sup>43</sup> Moore, *The Magician and Analyst*, 46.

<sup>44</sup> Moore, *The Magician and Analyst*, 46.

tradition we may be able to assume that he was, in fact, referring to those within the Western Esoteric Tradition. We will look more closely at this claim in Chapter Four when we see how Moore's model of the male psyche (using the archetypes of the Magician, Warrior, King, and Lover) parallel the Western Esoteric Tree of Life. This parallel structure could indicate that Moore was influenced by the Western Esoteric Tradition, especially its understanding of the Kabbalistic Tree of Life. Another possibility is that his model, like the Tree of Life, reflects archetypal patterns that both the Western Esoteric Tradition and analytical psychology have observed and analysed (Moore acknowledges neither possibility).

In a more general application, Petteri Pietikäinen offers an insightful review of some of the historical influences that helped shape Jung's thought on symbol.<sup>45</sup> Despite Pietikäinen's insights, little has been done to look at how the symbolic focus of the Western Esoteric Tradition and the writings of its primary spokespersons, parallel Jung's concepts. In many ways Jung's understanding of Kabbalah and alchemy are not traditional, "orthodox" interpretations. The interpretations tend to reflect the approach and structure of the Western Esoteric Tradition. That is not to say there is a direct correlation of influence between Jung and the Western Esoteric Tradition but there are most certainly important connections and correspondences that we will review throughout this thesis.

As for Jung's writings, the English translation of the *Collected Works*, especially volumes 12, 13, and 14, contain the central texts concerned with Kabbalah and are used

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<sup>45</sup> Petteri Pietikäinen, *C.G. Jung and the Psychology of Symbolic Forms* (Finland: The Finnish Academy of Science and Letters, 1999).

throughout the thesis.<sup>46</sup> Other areas of investigation include Jung's understanding of the transcendent function, libido, shadow, self, and the nature of symbols.

Two authors, Edward Hoffman and Sanford L. Drob (mentioned above), have made significant contributions to the connections between psychology and Kabbalah. Hoffman, a clinical psychologist, is concerned with demonstrating the correlation between Kabbalah and psychology, while also looking at the larger, overarching picture of the relevance of Kabbalah in modern society. Of particular interest is a chapter by Alice R. Trensfield in *Opening the Inner Gates*, edited by Edward Hoffman. The chapter, entitled "Psychosynthesis and Kabbalah: New Convergence for Inner Work" links Assagioli's Egg Diagram of the psyche with the Tree of Life as understood in Jewish Kabbalah.<sup>47</sup> The similarities between Jung's model of the psyche and that of Assagioli demonstrate a precedent in applying the Tree of Life to a particular branch of depth psychology.<sup>48</sup> However, while Trensfield analysed the connection or interpenetration between psychology and Jewish Kabbalah this thesis will analyse the connection between analytic psychology and the Western Esoteric Tree of Life. Though not directly related, both Hoffman's and Trensfield's work demonstrate the malleability of the Tree of Life and its ability to be applied to the structure of the psyche.

Drob, Director of Psychological Assessment and the Senior Forensic Psychologist at Bellevue Hospital, New York, focuses more on the philosophical and theoretical influences of Kabbalah throughout history. Interestingly, Drob theorises that while

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<sup>46</sup> Citations from Jung's *Collected Works*, H. Read, M. Fordham, G. Adler, W. McGuire, eds. Primary translations by R. Hull. (Routledge & Kegan Paul, London; Princeton University Press) will be given by the paper title, volume number, followed by the paragraph number: e.g., "On the Psychology of the Unconscious", *CW* 7, par. 95.

<sup>47</sup> Edward Hoffman, ed. *Opening the Inner Gates* (Boston, MASS: Shambhala Publications Inc., 1995), 177-198.

<sup>48</sup> See also: Anthony Douglas Duncan, *The Christ, Psychotherapy and Magic: A Christian Appreciation of Occultism* (London: Allen & Unwin, 1969).

Gnosticism was an important influence on Jung, Kabbalah was a greater influence on Jung and his thought. Drob's claim is that the alchemical traditions studied by Jung actually had their roots in Jewish Kabbalah or, at the very least, were heavily influenced by Kabbalistic concepts. We will return to Jung's use of Kabbalah in Chapter Two.<sup>49</sup>

While never specifically referring to the Western Esoteric Tradition or those who operate from within the Tradition, David Tacey offers some interesting insights into the relation between Jung and the New Age movement in his *Jung and the New Age*.<sup>50</sup> Of great interest and importance is Tacey's claim that the New Age movement:

goes wrong to the extent that it advocates a new one-sidedness to heal the old one-sidedness...it lacks a guiding philosophy or an inclusive theology that might enable it to bring spirit and nature, God as Father and God as Mother, Logos and Eros, into a right relationship or an integrative wholeness.<sup>51</sup>

This imbalance is a potential concern in the New Age movement whereas in contradistinction, the Western Esoteric Tradition focuses on the integration of opposing factors; nowhere is this more clearly evident than in their use and application of the Kabbalistic Tree of Life.

Given the perennial nature of much of the material from within the Western Esoteric Tradition and Jung's writing, it is important to mention some of the current postmodern work being done within analytical psychological circles. In this context which is outside the parameters of our current investigation, the works of Andrew Samuels<sup>52</sup> and Christopher Hauke<sup>53</sup> help to balance the overtly perennial and universal

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<sup>49</sup> See p. 34.

<sup>50</sup> David Tacey, *Jung and the New Age* (Hove, East Sussex: Brunner-Routledge, 2001).

<sup>51</sup> Tacey, *Jung and the New Age*, 180.

<sup>52</sup> Andrew Samuels, *Jung and the Post-Jungians*, 6<sup>th</sup> ed. (London: Routledge, 1985).

tendencies of Jungian sources. In a similar vein, Susan Rowland's exceptional work *Jung: A Feminist Revision* is also extremely useful in giving some of Jung's "grand theories" a postmodern interpretation.<sup>54</sup> On the side of the Western Esoteric Tradition, the authors writing from the perspective of Chaos Magick (known as Chaoists) are a good representation of a postmodern approach to the grand theories of the Tradition.<sup>55</sup> While the purpose of the thesis is not to examine the postmodern interpretation of either Jung or the Western Esoteric Tradition, the postmodern perspective can give an alternative interpretation of both Jungian thought and the assumptions of the Western Esoteric Tradition by acknowledging and resituating the grand narratives of each.

### History of Religion Literature

The final category of sources is comprised of works, primarily historical, that are concerned with subjects that contribute to the underlying structures of the Western Esoteric Tradition and analytical psychology. Jung's main sources for Kabbalah included Gersholm Scholem<sup>56</sup>, R.J. Zwi Werblowsky<sup>57</sup>, Eric Bischoff<sup>58</sup>, Adolphe Frank<sup>59</sup> and

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<sup>53</sup> Christopher Hauke, *Jung and the Postmodern* (London: Routledge, 2000).

<sup>54</sup> Susan Rowland, *Jung: A Feminist Revision* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2002).

<sup>55</sup> See especially Peter J Carroll *Liber Kaos* (Boston, MA: Smauel Weiser, Inc. 1992).

<sup>56</sup> In *Mysterium Coniunctionis*, *CW 14* Jung cites Scholem's *Das Buch Bahir (Quellen und Forschungen zur Geschichte der jüdischen Mystik)* Leipzig, 1923 (par. 625); *Major Trends in Jewish Mysticism* (pars. 18, 19, 594, 634); "Zu Abraham Eleazars Buch und dem Esch Mazareph" (*Monatsschrift für Geschichte und Wissenschaft des Judentums*, Dresden, 1926), see bibliography for *CW 14* p. 642; "Kabbala" in the *Encyclopedia Judaica* (par. 592).

<sup>57</sup> Jung exchanged several letters with Werblowsky and acknowledges his contribution to *Aion*, *CW 9ii* in the form of compiling material from Hebrew literature (*Aion*, *CW 9ii*, par. 105). Jung also wrote a forward to Werblowsky's *Lucifer and Prometheus* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1952) which can be found in *CW 11*, pars. 468-473 and he exchanged several letters with Werblowsky (*Letters* v.2, pp. 15-17, 69-71, 116-117 and 122-123). From the letters we can see that there was a mutual exchange between Jung and Werblowsky with Werblowsky helping Jung to understand Kabbalah and its relation to Judaism and Jung commenting on Werblowsky's understanding of analytical psychology.

<sup>58</sup> Bischoff edited and translated *Elemente der Kabbalah* (1913) and is cited in "Individual Dream Symbolism in Relation to Alchemy", *CW 12*, par. 313n and *Mysterium Coniunctionis*, *CW 14*, par. 158n.

<sup>59</sup> Frank wrote *La Kabbale* (1843), the German translation was *Die Kabbala* (1844). See Jung, "Individual Dream Symbolism in Relation to Alchemy", *CW 12*, pars. 313 & 313n.

most prevalent, Christian Knorr von Rosenroth.<sup>60</sup> For the historical background of Jewish Kabbalah used throughout this thesis, which in turn is the basis of both the Western Esoteric Kabbalah, we will focus primarily on the pioneering work of Gersholm Scholem<sup>61</sup>, Moshe Idel,<sup>62</sup> Aryeh Kaplan,<sup>63</sup> and to a much lesser extent, Z'ev ben Shimon Halevi<sup>64</sup>.

Sources for Christian and Hermetic Kabbalah come from the scholars of Jewish Kabbalah mentioned above as well as Philip Beitchman,<sup>65</sup> Frances Yates,<sup>66</sup> and other related material. One source, Karen Silvia de León Jones' *Giordano Bruno and the Kabbalah*,<sup>67</sup> is important since it does not place Bruno within the parameters of the Hermetic tradition, as does Yates, but within the structure of Kabbalah, a Hermetic

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<sup>60</sup> Jung cites Knorr in several places throughout the *Collected Works*. In "Individual Dream Symbolism in Relation to Alchemy", *CW 12*, par. 313; "The Philosophical Tree", *CW 13*, par. 411; *Mysterium Coniunctionis*, *CW 14*, pars. 592-593. Jung cites Knorr's *Kabbala Denudata* (a translation of portions of the *Zohar*) in "A Study in the Process of Individuation", *CW 9i*, pars. 557n, 576n, 596n; "Individual Dream Symbolism in Relation to Alchemy", *CW 12*, par. 313n; "The Philosophical Tree", *CW 13*, par. 411n; *Mysterium Coniunctionis*, *CW 14*, pars. 14n, 18nn, 19n, 557n, 568n, 592nn, 593, 619nn, 634nn, 636, 637n, 640nn, 643n; "The Psychology of the Transference", *CW 16*, p. 163, par. 497n. Jung also used the German translation *Der Sohar und seine Leher*, translated by Ernst Mueller: *Jung Mysterium Coniunctionis*, *CW 14*, pars. 2n & 592n. Jung acknowledges that Knorr's source is Mose Cordovero's *Pardes Rimmonim* (1592), *Jung, Mysterium Coniunctionis*, *CW 14*, par. 18n.

<sup>61</sup> See: Gershom Scholem, *Major Trends in Jewish Mysticism* (New York: Schocken Books, 1973) and *The Origins of the Kabbalah* R.J. Zwi Werblowsky, ed. Allan Arkush, trans. (New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1987).

<sup>62</sup> See: Moshe Idel, *Kabbalah: New Perspectives* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1988); *Hasidism: Between Ecstasy and Magic* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1995) and *Studies in Ecstatic Kabbalah* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1988).

<sup>63</sup> Aryeh Kaplan, *The Sefer Yetzirah: The Book of Creation in Theory and Practice* (York Beach, Maine: Samuel Weiser, Inc., 1993) and *The Bahir: Illumination* (York Beach, Maine: Samuel Weiser, Inc., 1989).

<sup>64</sup> Though rather New Age in perspective, many of Halevi's works have been influential in modern Kabbalistic revivals. See: Z'ev ben Shimon Halevi, *Psychology and Kabbalah* (York Beach, Maine: Samuel Weiser, Inc., 1992); *A Kabbalistic Universe* (York Beach, Maine: Samuel Weiser, Inc., 1988); *Introduction to the Cabala* (York Beach, ME: Samuel Weiser, Inc., 1991); and *Kabbalah: Tradition of Hidden Knowledge* (Great Britain: Thames and Hudson, 1979).

<sup>65</sup> Philip Beitchman, *Alchemy of the Word: Cabala of the Renaissance* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1998).

<sup>66</sup> Especially: Frances Yates, *Giordano Bruno and the Hermetic Tradition* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1991); *The Occult Philosophy* (London: Ark, 1979) and *The Rosicrucian Enlightenment* (London: Ark, 1972).

<sup>67</sup> Karen Silvia de León Jones, *Giordano Bruno and the Kabbalah* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1997).

Kabbalah. Bruno's mnemonic understanding of Kabbalah is similar in some respects to the Western Esoteric Tradition's use of the Tree of Life as a means of mapping universal correspondences. As many of the spiritual traditions that are analysed employ specific terms that may have a unique context to their own world-view, the reader should be reminded that there is a glossary of non-Jungian terms at the back of this thesis.

The sources from within the Western Esoteric Tradition tend to misuse Jungian thought or, as is more generally the case, the theories are taken out of context or presented in an oversimplified manner. The fact that the Esotericists mention Jung in some of their writings indicates that they do find some affinity between analytical psychology and their own world-view. In the case of analytical psychology, there has been little research into the rituals, practices and beliefs of the Western Esoteric Tradition. This omission is unfortunate for several reasons but two of the most important are: first, the primary writers used throughout this thesis were contemporaries of Jung and they therefore share, at the very least, a common link to a tumultuous period of history in which the development in psychology was underway, the world experienced two watershed wars as well as the following period of disenchantment. Second and more specifically, analytical psychology and the Western Esoteric Tradition share an emphasis on images, symbols and metaphor. As products of the collective unconscious, analytical psychology would do well to plumb the depths of the Western Esoteric Tradition—a tradition that is as vibrant and valid as Gnosticism or alchemy.

Authors such as Regardie, the Ciceros, LaDage, Fortune, Knight and Crowley do make limited use of or references to Jung's psychology but they do so from the bias of their own world-view. There seems to be an attitude prevalent within the Western

Esoteric Tradition that Jung came close to understanding the esoteric secrets of the universe but fell short by positing that experiences of angels, demons and entities, for example, derive from the psyche. The Esoteric Tradition posits that these experiences occur on other, ontological planes of existence than our own. The psyche, if mentioned, is generally seen as an intermediate between this world and the others. It almost seems as though Jung threatens their world-view when in fact analytical psychology offers an important alternative interpretation of their cosmology. Similarly, there tends to be a distrust of the Western Esoteric Tradition (especially Aleister Crowley) from some academics, this too is unfortunate.<sup>68</sup>

This thesis differs from the listed Esoteric sources in that it does not operate from the Western Esoteric world-view. However, the emphasis on spiritual development and evolution found within the Tradition is retained as the primary focus in the current study. And while there is an emphasis on the psyche that emphasis does not preclude the possibility of a more literal interpretation of the Tradition. We simply have no way to prove or disprove the metaphysical claims of the Western Esoteric Tradition. However, we are able to interpret such metaphysical claims from an analytical psychological perspective. This thesis is also unique from analytical psychological sources that touch on aspects of the Western Esoteric Tradition (such as Tarot for example) in that there is a sustained analysis of key concepts found within the Tradition as reflected in the *sefirot* of the Western Esoteric Tree of Life. Likewise, unlike the work of Drob and, again to a

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<sup>68</sup> See: Beitchman, *Alchemy and the Word*, 316; B.J. Gibbons, *Spirituality of the Occult* (New York: Routledge, 2001), 18; Scholem, *Major Trends*, 2, 3, 353. Jung was leery about related traditions such as Freemasonry and Rosicrucian revivals: Jung, *The Relations between the Ego and the Unconscious*, CW 7, par. 385. Of course there are many academic sources that do not do this. For example: Wouter J. Hanegraaff. *New Age Religion and Western Culture* (Albany: State University of New York, 1998); James R. Lewis, ed. *Magical Religion and Modern Witchcraft* (Albany: State University of New York, 1996); K. Paul Johnson. *The Masters Revealed* (Albany: State University of New York, 1994).

lesser extent, Halevi, this thesis does not focus on Judaism's use of Kabbalah. While some aspects of Jewish Kabbalah will be analysed, it is the Western Esoteric Tradition that is the subject of interest. Drob has found correlations between Jung's theories and Jewish Kabbalah; this thesis analyses the connections between the Western Esoteric Tree of Life and analytical psychology.

The overall purpose of this thesis is to open an ongoing dialogue between analytical psychology and the Western Esoteric Tradition. The Esotericists' familiarity and practised contact with symbol and metaphor make them a suitable subject for study by analytical psychology. As well, analytical psychology offers the Western Esoteric Tradition an alternative perspective that emphasises a balanced approach towards the depths of the unconscious—a perspective that values a healthy relationship between the ego-complex, the personal and collective unconscious, and the world as a whole. What is not being proposed is neither the substitution of Western Esoteric practice for analysis nor the acceptance of analysts as adepts. Simply, there are enough points of interest between the Western Esoteric Tradition and analytical psychology to warrant further and continued research though ultimately they are two independent and unique psycho-spiritual traditions.

### **Magick and Metaphor: Defining Two Key Terms**

There are two key terms used throughout this thesis that will need to be defined. The first term, Magick, is described fully in Chapter Three.<sup>69</sup> The term "Magick" implies a symbol system that incorporates various methods of art and science and applies them to changing human consciousness; the term is also used synonymously with the Western

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<sup>69</sup> See p.113.

Esoteric Tradition. The remaining term, metaphor, will now be defined in a more thorough manner.

### **A Brief Review of Metaphor**

There has been a long history of debate around the importance and definition of metaphor. On the most basic level metaphor literally means “to transfer”, “to bare” or “to carry”.<sup>70</sup> That which is being transferred is meaning and it is this transference of meaning that makes metaphor an interest, with varying degrees of popularity and support, to many disciplines such as semiotics, literature and linguistics, science, philosophy and psychology. The following is an outline of some of the key interpretations of metaphor from an analytical and archetypal psychological perspective. Given the philosophical depth and complexity of metaphor, we will be unable to engage in any in-depth analysis of the term.

The most common understanding of metaphor is that it is a figure of speech or trope. Metaphor is a trope in which a word or a phrase that literally denotes one thing is used to denote another, thereby implicitly comparing the two things. Metaphor can be seen as descriptive decorations for words or they can be seen as elliptical similes as was popular in the 19<sup>th</sup>C.<sup>71</sup> Another definition is that metaphor is the “transference of a name, quality, action to a subject or object different from, though by implication analogous to, that to which this name, quality, action is implied when taken literally.”<sup>72</sup>

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<sup>70</sup> From the Latin/Greek *metaphora- metaphorō* “transfer”.

<sup>71</sup> *Cambridge Dictionary of Philosophy*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999, p.562

<sup>72</sup> *Encyclopedia of Postmodernism*, Victor E. Taylor and Charles E. Winquist eds. (London: Routledge, 2001), 243.

The following analysis of metaphor will focus on how metaphor is perceived and applied within analytical and archetypal psychology.<sup>73</sup>

### **Metaphor in Analytical and Archetypal Psychology**

In his “The Psychology of the Child Archetype” Jung states that an “archetypal content expresses itself, first and foremost, in metaphors. If such content should speak of the sun and identify with it the lion, the king, the hoard of gold guarded by the dragon, or the power that makes for life and health of man, it is neither the one thing nor the other, but an unknown third thing that finds more or less adequate expression in all these similes, yet—to the perpetual vexation of the intellect—remains unknown and not to be fitted into a formula.”<sup>74</sup> For Jung, and especially in his theory of dream analysis<sup>75</sup>, metaphor is an integral part of the human psyche. Where there are archetypes there are metaphors though, given the vast array of metaphors in our language the reverse is not necessarily true.

Jung also discusses metaphor in *Jung’s Seminar on Nietzsche’s Zarathustra*. In this case, Jung focuses specifically on Nietzsche’s use of metaphors of opposition, not

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<sup>73</sup> Though we will not be dealing specifically with metaphor within the context of analysis Giuseppe Maffei’s “Metaphors and Development of Knowledge” in *Harvest: Journal for Jungian Studies*, vol. 40 (London: C.G. Jung Analytical Psychology Club, 1994), 21-37 does analyse the role of metaphor in the theories of psychoanalysis and analytical psychology. For a selection of non-psychological sources on metaphor see: Aristotle’s *Poetics* (George Whalley, *Aristotle’s Poetics* (Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queens University Press, 1997)); Giambattista Vico’s *La Scienza Nuova* (See, for example: Giambattista Vico, *New Science*, Anthony Grafton, trans. (London: Penguin Books, 1999); Joseph Mali, *The Rehabilitation of Myth: Vico’s New Science* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992); the work of Friedrich Nietzsche (See, for example: Tim Murphy, *Nietzsche, Metaphor, Religion* (New York: State University of New York Press, 2001); Lawrence M Hinman, *Nietzsche, Metaphor, and Truth in Philosophy and Phenomenology Research*, Vol. 43, No. 2 (Dec. 1982); and for metaphor in science see Max Black, *Models and Metaphors: Studies in Language and Philosophy* (Ithica, New York: Cornell University Press, 1962).

<sup>74</sup> Jung, “The Psychology of the Child Archetype”, *CW 9i*, par. 267.

<sup>75</sup> See Jung, “The Psychology of Dementia Praecox”, *CW 3*, pars. 218 & 298, “General Aspects of Dream Psychology”, *CW 8*, par. 506 and “Analytical Psychology and Education”, *CW 17*, par. 144. The latter two are specifically concerned with metaphor and sexuality.

Nietzsche's theory of metaphor. Jung mentions Nietzsche's "love of the metaphor of ice and snow and cold—all that contrasts with the heat. He understands that spirit is chiefly hot...and the contrast would be extremely cold."<sup>76</sup> While Jung does not often refer directly to metaphor, the topic of metaphor is an important one in Jungian and post-Jungian thought.

Jolande Jacobi discusses the "translation of archetypal ideals into symbolic happening"<sup>77</sup>, in her *Complex, Archetype, Symbol in the Psychology of C.G. Jung*. In this work, Jacobi equates metaphor with parable but states that "Jungian psychology prefers to use the word 'symbol' for such sequences as well as for single, self-contained images."<sup>78</sup> Geraldine Godsil's "Winter's Ragged Hand—Creativity in the Face of Death" approaches the subject of metaphor in the context of transformation and rebirth.<sup>79</sup> Godsil states that space and movement are two key features of metaphor thereby emphasising the etymology of the word "to carry over."<sup>80</sup> Godsil continues by linking metaphor and symbol together with reference to Jung:

The mind moves between two images reflecting on the likeness and difference; it traverses boundaries, it explores identity, it carries something new. Jung writes that the 'symbol needs man for its development. But it grows beyond him, therefore it is called 'God' since it expresses a psychic situation or factor stronger than the ego.' The idea of rebirth is intrinsic to metaphor which creates something new out of the already existing and familiar.<sup>81</sup>

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<sup>76</sup> Jung, *Jung's Seminar on Nietzsche's Zarathustra*, edited and abridged by James L. Jarrett (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1998), 282.

<sup>77</sup> Jolande Jacobi, *Complex, Archetype, Symbol in the Psychology of C.G. Jung* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 3<sup>rd</sup> ed., 1974), 77.

<sup>78</sup> Jacobi, *Complex, Archetype, Symbol*, 77.

<sup>79</sup> Geraldine Godsil, "Winter's Ragged Hand—Creativity in the Face of Death" in *Jungian Thought in the Modern World*, Elphis Christopher and Hester McFarland Solomon eds. (London: Free Association Books, 2000), 244-263.

<sup>80</sup> Godsil, "Winter's Ragged Hand", 252.

<sup>81</sup> Godsil, "Winter's Ragged Hand", 252.

Godsil highlights the important link between mind, symbol (and therefore archetype) and metaphor.

Lionel Corbett warns against the premature introduction of myth and amplification within the confines of analysis. However, he also states that “it is also true that the power of story and metaphor (like art, dance or music) can bypass defensive operations and move the soul much more directly than the same idea expressed as an abstract concept or interpretation.”<sup>82</sup> Metaphor, in this context, is a means to move past the boundary of the ego-complex.

In “The Psychological Use of Fairy Tales”, Crowther, Haynes and Newton state that a child’s favourite stories “have to be told over and over again and function as metaphors for the child’s ongoing concerns which are often fraught with anxiety...Children respond to the tales in many different ways: they may experience joy, misery or reassurance that the tale relates, often in disguised form, feelings and emotions they recognise to be true of their own experience.”<sup>83</sup> Metaphor, in this case, functions as the link between the actual fairytale and the subjective emotional and psychological experience of the reader or listener which, in turn, acts as a guide for development. In a similar manner Ian Alister analyses the metaphorical potential of team sports such as football (soccer) to aid in transference within the confines of analysis.<sup>84</sup>

David Tacey reveals that one of the aspects of Jungian “fundamentalism” found within New Age thought is the elimination of the metaphorical “as if”:

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<sup>82</sup> Lionel Corbett, *The Religious Function of the Psyche* 4<sup>th</sup> ed. (East Sussex: Brunner-Routledge, 2001), 92.

<sup>83</sup> Catherine Crowther, Jane Haynes, Kathleen Newton, “The Psychological Use of Fairy Tales” in *Contemporary Jungian Analysis: Post-Jungian Perspectives from the Society of Analytical Psychology*, Ian Alister and Christopher Hauke, ed (London: Routledge, 1998), 220.

<sup>84</sup> Ian Alister, “Popular Culture: Keeping Ourselves Together” in *Contemporary Jungian Analysis: Post-Jungian Perspectives from the Society of Analytical Psychology*, Ian Alister and Christopher Hauke, eds. (London: Routledge, 1998), 231-240.

[W]e find the popular Jungian discourse “fundamentalist” in the sense of obliterating all poetry, metaphor and symbol from Jung’s thinking and constructions. Jung prefaces most of his conjectures and conclusion with a metaphorical “as if”. In his writing he speaks “as if” a God or Goddess were erupting from the psyche and seeking recognition and respect from the human person...the fundamentalists erase the metaphorical “as if” and replace it with definite assertions about the concrete existence of psychic and archetypal contents, which are viewed as “hard wiring” or “genetic codes”.<sup>85</sup>

Christopher Hauke also emphasises the importance of the metaphorical in his work *Jung, Modernity and Postmodern Psychology*.<sup>86</sup> Hauke states that:

In the absence of traditional forms, beliefs and ritual, it is to the inner dialogue of the psyche that the individual has to turn for meaning. In Jungian analysis and psychotherapy, modern consciousness is healed by being nourished at the breast of the symbolic life-source which is contained in the unconscious and rediscovered in dreams, fantasies and symptoms...the emphasis on the child, the infant and feeding metaphors may turn out to be informative about the crisis of the psyche in late modernity, and about the hidden significance of psychotherapy as a cultural theory and a cultural healing.<sup>87</sup>

Hauke sees that “feeding” and “breast” “become symbols of the modern ego needing to replenish itself not from the personal mother but from the self—psyche’s source and the nourishment for consciousness.”<sup>88</sup>

James Hillman speaks more directly to the matter of metaphor than does Jung; Jung being content to equate archetype with metaphor and focusing on the nature of archetypes and symbols over that of metaphor. Hillman’s understanding of metaphor is

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<sup>85</sup> Tacey, *Jung and the New Age*, 138.

<sup>86</sup> Christopher Hauke, “Jung, Modernity and Postmodern Psychology” in *Contemporary Jungian Analysis: Post-Jungian Perspectives from the Society of Analytical Psychology*, Ian Alistair and Christopher Hauke, eds. (London: Routledge, 1998), 287-297.

<sup>87</sup> Hauke, “Jung, Modernity and Postmodern Psychology”, 296.

<sup>88</sup> Hauke, “Jung, Modernity and Postmodern Psychology”, 296.

influenced by Vico and the as-if fictions of Hans Vaihinger (1852-1933).<sup>89</sup> Hillman views metaphor “less semantically as a figure of speech and more ontologically as mode of being, or psychologically as a style of consciousness. Metaphors are more than ways of speaking; they are ways of perceiving, feeling, and existing.”<sup>90</sup> As cited above, Jung analysed metaphors of opposition in Nietzsche’s writings. For Hillman it is not so much metaphors of opposition that are of interest but the paradoxical nature of metaphor and by extension, consciousness. As an example of this endemic paradox Hillman gives the example of “Richard the lion”. Is “Richard the lion” a lion in a cage named Richard or is Richard a courageous king? Hillman states that “this well known example is too simple, for many kinds of metaphors have been distinguished and named; but it serves to illustrate the basic idea: psychological consciousness, because it sees through, because it flourishes in ambiguity, is metaphorical.”<sup>91</sup>

Hillman echoes Jung’s statement that archetypes are metaphorical stating that archetypes “belong to the internal self-contradiction and duplicity of mythic metaphors, so that *every statement regarding the archetypes is to be taken metaphorically*, prefixed with an “as if.”<sup>92</sup> He also indicates that “[m]ythic metaphor is the correct way of speaking about the archetypes because, like Gods, they do not stand still. Like Gods they cannot be defined except through and by their complications in each other.”<sup>93</sup> Also in relation to the archetypes, and in a curiously Kabbalistically toned passage with reference to constellations of light and sparks, Hillman states that “[a]rchetypes are the skeletal

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<sup>89</sup> James Hillman, *Re-Visioning Psychology* (New York: Harper Perennial, 1992), 156.

<sup>90</sup> Hillman, *Re-Visioning*, 156.

<sup>91</sup> Hillman, *Re-Visioning*, 156.

<sup>92</sup> Hillman, *Re-Visioning*, 156. Emphasis in original. Hillman cites Jung: “Every interpretation necessarily remains an ‘as-if’” Jung, “Concerning the Archetypes, with Special Reference to the Anima Concept”, *CW 9i*, par. 143, “The Psychology of the Child Archetype”, *CW 9i*, par. 265 and “Flying Saucers: A Modern Myth”, *CW 10*, par. 681.

<sup>93</sup> Hillman, *Re-Visioning*, 157.

structures of the psyche, yet the bones are changeable constellations of light—sparks, waves, motions. They are principles of uncertainty.”<sup>94</sup>

Ultimately, and unlike Vaihinger and Jung, Hillman views the “as-if” attitude as unnecessary when approaching the archetypes. Hillman states that:

[m]ythic consciousness does not need an “as-if”. So long as the ideas are not fixed into singleness of meaning, we do not need to pry them loose with the tool of “as-if”. Vaihinger after all derives from Kant and in reaction to Kant’s categorical monotheistic mind. “As-if” is a necessary philosophical step for recognizing the metaphorical character of all certainties in what we see, say and believe. But if we begin in mythical consciousness we do not need the prefix. It is implied throughout, always.<sup>95</sup>

Related to the same line of argument, Hillman questions Jung’s assumption that archetypes are unknowable in themselves<sup>96</sup> by suggesting that it is not the archetype that is ultimately unknowable but our method of perception that makes it appear that way: “We have no clear distinct knowledge of them in themselves and by themselves in the Cartesian sense of certainty; but we know them indirectly, metaphorically, mythically.”<sup>97</sup>

Roberts Avens’ *Imagination is Reality* is a useful amplification of some of archetypal psychology’s use of metaphor.<sup>98</sup> In this work, Avens quotes literary philosopher Owen Barfield’s definition of metaphor:

Metaphor, says Barfield, involves a tension between two ostensibly incompatible meanings, reflecting a deeper tension within ourselves—“a tension between that part of ourselves which experiences the incompatibilities as a mysterious unity and that part which remains well able to appreciate their duality and their incompatibility. Without the former metaphor is nonsense

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<sup>94</sup> Hillman, *Re-Visioning*, 157.

<sup>95</sup> Hillman, *Re-Visioning*, 157.

<sup>96</sup> Hillman, *Re-Visioning*, 157.

<sup>97</sup> Hillman, *Re-Visioning*, 157.

<sup>98</sup> Roberts Avens, *Imagination is Reality: Western Nirvana in Jung, Hillman, Barfield & Cassirer* (Dallas, Texas: Spring Publications, 1980).

language, but without the latter it is not even language.” In sum, imagination, in addition to its commonly accepted reproductive function, has the uncanny ability to see into the inner life of things and to assure us that there is more in our experience of the world than meets the eye; that, from quite a sober point of view, there is, as Wordsworth said, salvation from a “universe of death.”<sup>99</sup>

Avens sees Jung and Hillman as being responsible for the development of a Western nirvana through their respective work with images and imagination. He suggests that “a new experience of reality (a Western nirvana) has been made possible through Jung’s rehabilitation of the mythical or archetypal dimension of the psyche, leading to the realization that images, in their liberated mode, are themselves embodiments of meaning; that they mean what they are and are what they mean.”<sup>100</sup> Of Hillman Avens writes:

The importance of archetypal psychology is that it has chosen the path of watchful attention to the imaginal realm, giving, in Hillman’s words, “the psyche a chance to move out of the consulting room”—a chance, that is to say, to be yoked (in the Yogic sense of union) to its archaic, emotional and creative core. In moving beyond the personal and back into the unknown, archetypal ground of all life, psychology only follows the tradition of classical and archaic peoples who solved the problems of the psyche through personal relationships (abreactive encounters, humanizing) but through the reverse” “connecting them to impersonal dominants” and providing for the psyche “*impersonal* satisfaction.”<sup>101</sup>

Jung and Hillman, analytical psychology and archetypal psychology, assign value to images and metaphor. That value is, at its most basic core, of connecting to aspects of ourselves we are not generally cognizant of while dwelling in, as Hillman indicated above, a Cartesian perspective. Metaphor is one door or one means to move outside the confines of accepted, literal, egoic perspectives.

<sup>99</sup> Avens, *Imagination is Reality*, 23.

<sup>100</sup> Avens, *Imagination is Reality*, 40.

<sup>101</sup> Avens, *Imagination is Reality*, 41. Emphasis is in the original.

### **Why Metaphor and the Western Esoteric Tree of Life?**

The Western Esoteric Tradition has a rich history of symbolism and the practice of communication and interaction with entities of various types. There are spirits of the elements and planets, there are the legions of angels and archangels, not to mention demons, devils and dukes, there are the angels of the Enochian system, and then there is the Holy Guardian Angel.<sup>102</sup> These entities are taken to be more or less literal beings or if not literal then they are understood to have literal value or impact in the practitioner's life. Why is it, then, that metaphor should be introduced into this analysis of the Western Esoteric Tradition's interpretation of the Kabbalistic Tree of Life, and therefore the Tradition itself?

First, as Jung has indicated<sup>103</sup>, where there is an archetype there is metaphor. If we are to assume that the experiences of the Western Esotericists are, in fact, expressions of psychological processes then the symbolic nature of their tradition would point to archetypal, symbolic expression. We would then need to look at the nature of metaphor from that perspective. Rather than reducing the symbols, metaphors or archetypes to *just* contents of the psyche, Jung indicates metaphor allows for, what amounts to, a *neither/nor* perspective that acknowledges parallel metaphorical terms retain their individual nature yet do not exhaust the "unknown third thing".<sup>104</sup> Two benefits of this perspective are that we avoid the trap of concretised fundamentalism<sup>105</sup> and, as Godsil

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<sup>102</sup> These terms will be explored in more detail throughout the thesis.

<sup>103</sup> Jung, "The Psychology of the Child Archetype", *CW 9i*, par. 267.

<sup>104</sup> Jung, "The Psychology of the Child Archetype", *CW 9i*, par. 267.

<sup>105</sup> Tacey, *Jung and the New Age*, 138.

has suggested, there is an intrinsic link between metaphor and the idea of rebirth.<sup>106</sup> By moving from the literal perspective of the Western Esoteric Tradition, we are free to, in Godsil's words, "[create] something new out of the already existing and familiar."<sup>107</sup>

If we understand metaphor in this psychological way we are analysing not figures of speech but "ways of perceiving, feeling, and existing."<sup>108</sup> This way of perceiving and existing has an intimate link with imagination which "has the uncanny ability to see the inner life of things and to assure us that there is more in our experience of the world than meets the eye...there is...salvation from a 'universe of death'."<sup>109</sup> The metaphorical and archetypal perspectives have, according to Avens, opened to a new perspective, a "Western nirvana".<sup>110</sup>

Avens, Hillman and Jung approach metaphor from the perspective that it is something more involved than a trope or a tool of language; it is seen as a psychic reality that has the potential to have a profound impact on the psyche and ontological perspective. Metaphors are evocative and transformative in their psychological form; they mould our perceptions and perspectives. For our purposes metaphor will follow the thought of analytical and archetypal psychology outlined above while retaining the literal meaning of "to transfer" "to bare" "to carry". The *sefirot* of the Tree of Life and the symbols and rituals of the Western Esoteric Tradition can be viewed as metaphors that transfer, bare and carry psychological meaning—a meaning that mirrors what Jung labelled the process of individuation or becoming psychologically whole.

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<sup>106</sup> Godsil, "Winter's Ragged Hand", 252.

<sup>107</sup> Godsil, "Winter's Ragged Hand", 252.

<sup>108</sup> Hillman, *Re-visioning*, 156.

<sup>109</sup> Avens, *Imagination is Reality*, 23.

<sup>110</sup> Avens, *Imagination is Reality*, 40.

From a metaphorical perspective, the *sefirot* refer to aspects of our psyche rather than being part of a literal divine being and the entities encountered from the parameters of the Western Esoteric Tradition are taken in a similar vein. By not concretising the images into literal “angels” or literal “demons” (or literal archetypes for that matter) we grant the unconscious a psychological fluidity wherein these entities are encountered such that it is “as if” they were real. The following citation from Jung illustrates metaphor especially well: “Ideas are not just counters used by the calculating mind; they are also golden vessels full of living feeling. ‘Freedom’ is not a mere abstraction, it is an emotion. Reason becomes unreason when separated from the heart, and a psychic life void of universal ideas sickens from undernourishment.”<sup>111</sup> Ideas, the golden vessels of living feeling, are permeated by metaphor and, as in the cases of metaphors such as “Mother”, “Tree”, or “God” there is a sense of direction and teleology that points to or hints at a sense of completion and wholeness. It is in this manner and fashion that metaphor is applied throughout this thesis.

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<sup>111</sup> Jung, “Forward to Jung: ‘Phénomènes Occultes’”, *CW 18*, par. 745.

## **Chapter One**

### **Paths of Order:**

### **The Development of the Kabbalistic Tree of Life**

For approximately sixteen hundred years the term *sefirot*<sup>1</sup> has been present in the Kabbalistic lexicon. This specific application of the Hebrew term<sup>2</sup> originated with and was refined through the Jewish mystical tradition which is now known as *Kabbalah*.<sup>3</sup> However, Judaism is not the only spiritual tradition that utilises the *sefirot*. Several Gentile spiritual traditions have incorporated the *sefirot* along with other Kabbalistic principles. Though the meaning attributed to the term may change from culture to culture and symbol-system to symbol-system there still remains a common principle. The principle common in all uses of the term is order and definition. No matter what view of reality underpins the culture in question, the notion of organising, classifying and defining is implied in the term *sefirot*.

This chapter traces a few of the major developmental transformations the *sefirot* have undergone over the past centuries. By tracing particular concepts we see how each tradition that used the *sefirot* did so in a manner that reflected their particular cosmology and axiology. How the *sefirot* are employed also reflects how that symbol-system perceived order and its relation to disorder or chaos. This chapter follows a chronological format that will review how the major symbol-systems have applied the term *sefirot*. We begin with Judaism and move to early Christian tradition, the Hermetic and the Western Esoteric (Occult) Tradition.

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<sup>1</sup> Also spelled *sefiroth* and *sephirot(h)*. The singular for *sefirot* is *sef(ph)ira(h)*.

<sup>2</sup> Depending on the source, the term has common roots with the following words: *sfar* (boundary), *sappir* (sapphire), *safar* (count), *sefer* (book), *sippur* (communicate), and *safra* (scribe).

<sup>3</sup> The term *Kab(b)al(l)ah* (also spelled “Cabala” or “Qabala”) has a root which implies an oral tradition “from mouth to ear”.

### **A Brief Word on Microcosm and Macrocosm**

The esoteric traditions and some of the theories of analytical psychology covered in the following chapters make use of the terms microcosm and macrocosm in different ways. So as to avoid confusion, it would be germane for us to briefly review these differences.

In Jewish Kabbalah and the Western Esoteric Tradition, the term macrocosm (sometimes Macrocosm) is used to denote the divine or cosmic realms while the microcosm (sometimes Microcosm) is representational of the realm of human existence; the latter being a reflection of the former.<sup>4</sup> The definitions are similar in Jung's writings though he defines the microcosm as both the human realm<sup>5</sup> and the collective unconscious.<sup>6</sup> Jung defines the macrocosm as representative of the "firmament"<sup>7</sup> and "revolving universe."<sup>8</sup> Jung follows the standard esoteric definition of these terms, as would be expected since most of his sources on this subject are esoteric works, with the addition of the microcosm being equal to the collective unconscious. The final way the terms microcosm and macrocosm are utilised can be found in Chapter Four with the introduction of the analytical psychological interpretation of the Western Esoteric Tree of Life.

This new interpretation of the Esoteric Tree of Life changes the roles of the terms microcosm and macrocosm. The microcosm is taken to mean not only the human being;

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<sup>4</sup> See: Israel Regardie, *The Tree of Life: A Study in Magic*, 3<sup>rd</sup> ed. edited and annotated by Chic and Sandra Tabatha Cicero (St. Paul, MINN: Llewellyn Publications, 2002), 96.

<sup>5</sup> Jung, "Synchronicity: An Acausal Connecting Principle", *CW* 8, par. 926 and 928.

<sup>6</sup> Jung, "Synchronicity: An Acausal Connecting Principle", *CW* 8, par. 931.

<sup>7</sup> Jung, "Synchronicity: An Acausal Connecting Principle", *CW* 8, par. 929.

<sup>8</sup> Jung, "Religious Ideas in Alchemy", *CW* 12, par. 472.

it also implies his or her position in the material universe itself. Humanity and its environment (terrestrial and cosmic) are thereby inseparably interconnected, a stance implied by the esotericists by indicating that the macrocosm is but *reflected* in the microcosm. The macrocosm in this case is that which animates and vivifies the microcosm, i.e., the psyche and the collective unconscious as well as the metaphorical and symbolic aggregates which populate them. In this manner the “divine” influence comes not from without, not from the stars or the sky but from within the psyche. While the first two definitions of micro and macrocosms, the esotericist’s and Jung’s, are similar, the latter, a proposition posited for the analytical psychological interpretation of the Western Esoteric Tree of Life, is divergent and unconventional in that the macrocosm is not the exterior universe but the depths of the interior, psychic universe.

### **Ten Sefirot of Nothingness: The *sefirot* in Jewish Kabbalah**

*No creature can take aim at the unknown, hidden God. In the last resort, every cognition of God is based on a form of relation between Him and His creature, i.e. on a manifestation of God in something else, and not on a relation between Him and Himself.*<sup>9</sup>

As stated in the introduction, the term *sefirot* is most commonly applied to Judaism and Jewish Kabbalah. The most direct way to understand and define the *sefirot* within this tradition is to look to early Kabbalistic literature for answers. However, the first written source that uses the term *sefirot* is not, in fact, a Kabbalistic text at all. The *Sefer Yetsirah*<sup>10</sup> is a compact, “proto-Kabbalistic” cosmological text written in a poetic

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<sup>9</sup> Gershom Scholem, *Major Trends in Jewish Mysticism* (New York: Schocken Books, 1973), 11.

<sup>10</sup> Literally, “Book of Creation.” As with any of these Hebrew terms there are variations in spelling. From this point on, differentiation in spelling of terms will only be singled out if the spelling is vital to the application in question.

style. Written between 3<sup>rd</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> century CE, this six chapter, 1500-2500 word (depending on the version) work has had a monumental impact on Jewish Kabbalah. One would not be exaggerating to state that aside from the *Sefer Bahir*<sup>11</sup> no other text has had a more pervasive and fundamental or elemental impact on Jewish Kabbalah than the *Yetsirah*. Even the revered *Sefer ha-Zohar* owes much of its content to the *Yetsirah*.

One of the more important claims of the *Yetsirah* is that the letters/numbers of the Hebrew alphabet are sacred, magical entities. Through words and numbers God created the universe and everything in it. By arranging and rearranging the letters God could change reality.<sup>12</sup> Given the importance of the Hebrew alphabet it would prudent to present it before continuing on:

Table One: The Hebrew Alphabet					
א	Aleph	1	ו	Nun	50
ב	Beth	2	ז	Samekh	60
ג	Gimmel	3	ח	Eyin	70
ד	Daleth	4	ט	Peh	80
ה	Heh	5	א	Tzadi	90
ו	Vau	6	ק	Qof	100
ז	Zayin	7	ר	Resh	200
ח	Chet	8	ש	Shin	300
ט	Tet	9	ת	Tav	400
י	Yod	10			
כ	Kaph	20			
ל	Lamed	30			
מ	Mem	40			

<sup>11</sup> See below.

<sup>12</sup> The Kabbalistic concept of the *golem* is a wonderful example of the power of the Hebrew alphabet. The *golem* is a magical, non-human entity that is ritually created through the use of the letters of the Hebrew alphabet. See Moshe Idel, *Golem: Jewish Magical and Mystical Traditions on the Artificial Anthropoid* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1990).

## The *Sefer Yetsirah*

In the Hebrew bible God accomplishes creation through the manipulation of letters and numbers: quality and quantity.<sup>13</sup> The *Sefer Yetsirah* is also immersed in a cosmology involving the permutation of letters and numbers throughout the universe. This cosmology would come to play a prominent role in Kabbalistic lore.<sup>14</sup> Aside from the mystical permutations of letters and numbers, the *Yetsirah* also contains the first mention (in writing at least) of the term *sefirot*:

Ten Sefirot of Nothingness  
And 22 Foundation Letters:  
Three Mothers,  
Seven Doubles  
And twelve Elementals.<sup>15</sup>

In the above account, the *sefirot* are not tangible or identifiable “objects”. They represent the most basic and subtle constructs of reality. They are the sources of the numbers.<sup>16</sup> Again, the concept of the *sefirot* in the *Sefer Yetsirah* do not have the same definitions as the later Kabbalists would attribute to them.

The *sefirot* are defined as being Nothing (*beli-mah*- בלימה) where *beli* means “without” and *mah* “what” or “anything”. This interpretation of “nothingness” would imply the *sefirot* “are purely ideal concepts, without any substance whatever. Unlike letters which have form and sound, the Sefirot have no intrinsic physical properties. As such, they are purely conceptual.”<sup>17</sup>

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<sup>13</sup> We see this theme in the Hebrew bible in the first chapter of Genesis. The creator brings mater into existence through the act of naming.

<sup>14</sup> This subject of letters / numbers and their place in Kabbalah will be dealt with throughout this thesis.

<sup>15</sup> Aryeh Kaplan, *Sefer Yetzirah: The Book of Creation in theory and Practice* (York Beach, ME: Samuel Weiser, Inc., 1993), 22. Subsequent citations from Kaplan’s translation of the *Sefer Yetsirah* will be abbreviated as “SY” followed by the page.

<sup>16</sup> SY, 23.

<sup>17</sup> SY, 25.

Although the *sefirot* are represented or symbolised by the first ten letters/numbers of the Hebrew alphabet they are not, in fact, identical to those letters/numbers. At this point in the *Sefer Yetsirah* the *sefirot* are not named. The concept is simply revealed in the text. In his translation of the *Sefer Yetsirah*, Kaplan states that while the *sefirot* are not named in the text they are well known from classical Kabbalah.<sup>18</sup> This interpretation is rather questionable. Applying later names and labels to the *sefirot* of an earlier pre-Kabbalistic text is projecting onto the text a structure which would not come into being for several centuries. Rather than apply these names to the *sefirot* at this time we will remain strictly within the text itself without applying later Kabbalistic concepts. What follows are some descriptive passages of the *sefirot* from Kaplan's translation of the *Yetsirah*.

Chapter 1:3 of the *Sefer Yetsirah* introduces the *sefirot* in a more corporeal context:

Ten Sefirot of Nothingness  
 in the number of ten fingers  
 five opposite five  
 with a singular covenant  
 precisely in the middle  
 in the circumcision of the tongue  
 and the circumcision of the membrum.<sup>19</sup>

The fingers in the above citation are referring to God's fingers of creation (Psalms 8:3—this citation is incorrectly given by Kaplan as Psalms 8:4).<sup>20</sup> When God is said to directly influence the physical world, scripture speaks of God's fingers or hands.

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<sup>18</sup> *SY*, 23.

<sup>19</sup> *SY*, 32.

<sup>20</sup> I am thankful to Caradoc Elmet for pointing this out to me.

The circumcision of the tongue is not a reference to physical immolation but rather to the ability to manipulate the Hebrew language, to read the Torah. The central, singular covenant is the tongue that falls between the two hands in actions such as meditation and blessing. As with the hands, the feet also contain ten digits. The circumcision of the foreskin is the membrum that falls between these ten digits. Thus, through both forms of *brit* or covenants, we see a uniquely Jewish definition of the *sefirot*. With ten fingers, tongue, sexual organ, and ten toes the *sefirot* are reflected in the twenty-two letters of the Hebrew alphabet. This links the individual's body with scripture, his/her community, and God.<sup>21</sup>

Chapter 1:5 introduces the notion that the *sefirot* and the “five dimensional [i.e., depths] continuum” are intimately connected:

Ten Sefirot of Nothingness  
 Their measure is ten  
 which have no end  
 A depth of beginning  
 A depth of end  
 A depth of good  
 A depth of evil  
 A depth of above  
 A depth of below  
 A depth of east  
 A depth of west  
 A depth of north  
 A depth of south<sup>22</sup>

The dyads in the above citation reveal the three dimensions or depths of the universe. The dyad of good/evil introduces the moral/spiritual fifth dimension<sup>23</sup> while

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<sup>21</sup> *SY*, 33-37.

<sup>22</sup> *SY*, 44.

<sup>23</sup> This dyad also demonstrates the Kabbalistic notion that this level of existence is imbued with both “good” and “evil”. The application of this dyad is close to the *Tantric* understanding that those things that are “evil” or “dark” can be transformed and applied to serve “good.”

the beginning/end applies to time as past and future.<sup>24</sup> This citation demonstrates the role the *sefirot* play in balancing or synthesising opposing concepts.

Chapter 1:6 develops the dynamic and tangible nature of the *sefirot*.

Ten Sefirot of Nothingness

Their vision is like the “appearance of lightning”

Their limit has no end

And His word in them is “running and returning”

They rush to His saying like a whirlwind

And before His throne they prostrate themselves.<sup>25</sup>

The Hebrew word for vision in this context is *tzafiyah* (צפייתן) which, according to Kaplan, is usually applied to prophetic or mystical vision. What is interesting is that we are lead to believe that the *sefirot* are not identified with God. The *sefirot* are in some way connected to God but they are not identical to God. There seems to be panentheistic undertones in this. Also in this chapter we are introduced to the first pragmatic application of the *sefirot* in the *Sefer Yetsirah*. The *sefirot*, like any object of visualisation meditation/contemplation, are fleeting without proper concentration and training. To imply the *sefirot* can be seen or visualised indicates that they have some tangible quality. Given the aforementioned descriptions of the *sefirot*, we can assume that the objectivity of the *sefirot* is symbolic and not tangible in nature.<sup>26</sup>

Chapter 1:7 infers that the *sefirot* do not exist as independent entities (or any form of entity) and that each *sefira* is connected to the other:

Ten Sefirot of Nothingness

Their end is imbedded in their beginning

and their beginning in their end

like a flame in a burning coal

For the Master is singular

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<sup>24</sup> SY, 44-51.

<sup>25</sup> SY, 51.

<sup>26</sup> SY, 51-56.

He has no second  
And before One, what do you count?<sup>27</sup>

Later Jewish Kabbalists (and Christian Kabbalists) will posit an intimate connection between the “first” or most abstract/divine *sefirot Kether* with the “last” or least ethereal *sefira, Malkut*.<sup>28</sup> Early Christian Kabbalists viewed this relationship similar to the relationship between the Christian understanding of the Alpha and the Omega.

The essential thrust of this citation is that the *sefirot* are dependent on each other as much as they are to divinity. Without fire the coal is not dynamic or “alive”; it is simply a cold lump of matter. Likewise, the fire would not be possible in this analogy were it not for the combustible nature of the coal.<sup>29</sup>

Chapter 1:8 gives another glimpse into the pragmatic application of the *sefirot* and how they affect the microcosmic realm of the individual:

Ten Sefirot of Nothingness  
Bridle your mouth from speaking  
and your heart from thinking  
And if your heart runs  
return to the place.  
It is therefore written,  
“The Chayot running and returning.” [Ezekiel 1:24]  
Regarding this a covenant was made.<sup>30</sup>

The *sefirot* can only be experienced by calming the mind (heart) and the tongue. The call to run and return indicates the intrinsic danger evident with the *sefirot*. By focusing on the abstract there is a risk of losing contact with the exterior, material world. Judaism and Kabbalah focus on the transformation and restoration of the world not

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<sup>27</sup> SY, 57.

<sup>28</sup> More on these *sefirot* in the next section.

<sup>29</sup> SY, 57-66.

<sup>30</sup> SY, 66.

escape from the world. Kabbalism has its extreme ascetic sects but by far the most common approach to the material world is one of ecstasy and joy (assuming, of course, *Torah* and *Halakhah* are adhered to).

By “running and returning” the mystic enters into a covenant with God. This covenant not only binds the mystic with the divine it also brings together and amplifies the physical and spiritual. Just as the mystic’s physical life is enriched by his<sup>31</sup> spiritual life, so too is the mystic’s spiritual life amplified by earthly activities, assuming of course that these actions are lawful.<sup>32</sup>

The final chapter of the *Sefer Yetzirah* that deals specifically with the *sefirot* is Chapter 1:9:

Ten Sefirot of Nothingness  
 One is the Breath of the Living God  
     Blessed and benedicted is the name  
             of the Life of Worlds  
 The voice of breath and speech  
 And this is the Holy Breath.<sup>33</sup>

The concepts of air and breath are at the core of this citation. In Hebrew, *ruach* (רוח) is translated as air. The word also indicates wind, breath and spirit. Through speech God created the Universe.<sup>34</sup> By ushering forth the creative winds of the Hebrew alphabet, God brought all existence into being. All of being is infused with the sacred

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<sup>31</sup> As much as gender inclusiveness is a wonderful modern construct, the early Kabbalists/mystics were on the whole, male (at least those that were historically recorded).

<sup>32</sup> SY, 66-68.

<sup>33</sup> SY, 68.

<sup>34</sup> In a way everyone creates the universe through word and breath. A rock does not become a rock until it is labeled as such. This is one of the mystical notions behind the creation myth involving Adam and Eve. Prior to the ingestion of “the apple” all existence was unitary. No differentiation was made between anything within the universe. By attaining the knowledge of Good and Evil (the first and most important dichotomy for the Hebrew and Christian traditions) all aspects of creation fall into the I/Not I narrative. Once all things are differentiated from the “I” they become “other” and the “other” acquires a name. The name that brings the “other” into being is formulated through letters that form a word which then solidifies the “other” into the universe. Everyday each person recreates the universe anew.

permeation of letter and number. Following this chapter, the *Sefer Yetsirah* focuses on the sacred nature of the letters and numbers of the Hebrew language. The *sefirot* begin to develop into less abstract manifestations through the arrangement and meditation of the essence behind each *sefira*.<sup>35</sup> However, since this chapter is not on the *Sefer Yetsirah per se*, we will leave further analysis for those who are fully dedicated to extracting its wisdom.

To summarise, the *sefirot* are simultaneously devoid of physical properties, yet are symbolised by the most intimate portions of the human being. They are unknowable, yet are present in all of creation. They reflect God, yet they are *not* God. They represent the most profound of human experiences yet they are elusive and potentially destructive. Even with the enthusiastic efforts of Kaplan the meaning of the *sefirot* still remains obscure, hidden...unconscious.

This review of what would prove to be one of the most influential, pre-Kabbalistic texts has attempted to demonstrate how the term *sefirot* was employed prior to the refinement of later Kabbalistic traditions. The next text we will approach is the *Sefer Bahir*. The *Bahir* was the first truly Kabbalistic text to use the term *sefira*.

### **The *Sefer Bahir***

Again we will look to Kaplan for an English translation of the next text, the *Sefer Bahir* and once again we will circumvent Kaplan's interpretation.<sup>36</sup> This exclusion is not due to any lack of validity or importance in his interpretations, but is instead due to the

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<sup>35</sup> SY, 68-71.

<sup>36</sup> Aryeh Kaplan, *The Bahir: Illumination* (York Beach, ME: Samuel Weiser, Inc., 1989). Abbreviated as *SB* followed by the page number.

format of his comments which are, as mentioned above, comprised of later Kabbalistic theories and philosophies.

The primary source for theories on the *Bahir* for this chapter will be the writings of Gershom Scholem. While Scholem demonstrated little deference for Gentile interpretations of Kabbalah he still remains one of the most cited and influential scholars on the history and theories of Jewish Kabbalah.<sup>37</sup>

The *Sefer Bahir* surfaced in Provence during the latter half of the 12<sup>th</sup> century. The book, a pseudopigraphic work, is a combination of several different mystical texts and philosophical influences. Two of the more influential texts are the *Sefer Yetsirah* and the *Raza Rabba*.<sup>38</sup> For our present purposes we need not enter into a description of the *Raza Rabba*. The most important application of the *Raza Rabba* in the *Bahir* is the incorporation of Gnostic terminology and cosmology that will be dealt with, in a cursory fashion, later in this chapter.

The *Sefer Bahir* is devoid of any obvious order or arrangement and seems to be incomplete. According to Kaplan the *Bahir* can be separated into five general themes:

1. The first verses of creation
2. The alphabet
3. The Seven Voices and the Sefirot
4. The Ten Sefirot
5. Mysteries of the soul<sup>39</sup>

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<sup>37</sup> For example Scholem states in *Major Trends*: “all manner of charlatans and dreamers came and treated it [Kabbalah] as their own property. From the brilliant misunderstandings and misinterpretations of Alphonse Louis Constant, who has won fame under the pseudonym of Eliphas Lévi, to the highly coloured humbug of Aleister Crowley and his followers, the most eccentric and fantastic statements have been produced purporting to be legitimate interpretations of Kabbalism.” Scholem, *Major Trends*, 2.

<sup>38</sup> “The Great Mystery.” The text dates from the 2<sup>nd</sup> –5<sup>th</sup> centuries of the Common Era. According to Scholem, this Eastern text demonstrates one source of Gnostic influence on mediaeval Kabbalism. See: Scholem, *Major Trends*, 75 and Scholem, *Origins of the Kaballah*, R.J. Zwi Werblowsky, ed. Allan Arkush, trans. (New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1987), 106-123.

<sup>39</sup> *SB*, xviii.

The first theme deals with biblical passages that are concerned with creation. Job, Genesis, Psalms, among others books are commented upon. The second theme in the *Bahir* reinforces many of the themes and cosmology of the *Sefer Yetsirah*. The sanctity and mystical nature of the Hebrew alphabet is also reiterated. The nature of the *sefirot* is discussed within the third and fourth themes. The fifth theme introduces the notion of transmigration and reincarnation of the soul, and the relation between the human soul and divinity.

In the *Sefer Yetsirah* we saw that the letters/numbers of the Hebrew alphabet are used as symbols for the creation and the perpetuation of the universe. These letters/numbers were/are divine in origin and in nature as well as highly abstract and esoteric. The *Bahir* is the first truly Kabbalistic text that refers to the *sefirot* as attributes (*middoth*) of God. In Judaism, the prevailing theology is monotheistic and Kabbalism attempts to demonstrate how a transcendent, infinite, and paradoxical God can be present in a meaningful way in the world. One way of bridging these dichotomous world-views is to have God known through emanations.

Gershom Scholem's works *Origins of the Kaballah* and *Major Trends in Jewish Mysticism* link the *Bahir* with various streams of Gnostic thought. Scholem indicates that these Gnostic influences may have been incorporated in Kabbalistic thought through direct contact or similar methods of exegesis.<sup>40</sup> The most apparent similarity is found in the Gnostic concepts of the *pleroma* and the *aeons* (and *archons*) and the Kabbalistic

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<sup>40</sup> Scholem, *Origins of the Kaballah*, 81. We should also note, however, that Scholem's Gnostic reading of Kabbalah is not supported by all scholars. The writings of Moshe Idel, specifically *Kabbalah: New Perspectives*, indicates this clearly. For Idel, Scholem's emphasis on a philological-historical (as opposed to a comparative phenomenological approach) to Kabbalah is too limiting. On Scholem and the Gnostic influence Idel states: "We find no more than passing remarks on Gnostic, Catharic, or Christian sources in Scholem's works. Despite his recurrent insistence upon the influence of Gnosticism on Kabbalah, he never presented in his published works a thorough treatment of the relationship of the two." Idel, *Kabbalah: New Perspectives* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1988), 23.

understanding of the qualities, or *middoth* of God.<sup>41</sup> However, the *Bahir* deviates from traditional Gnostic cosmology.

Whereas the Gnostic cosmologies have numerous even infinite *aeons*, (personifications of the *pleroma*) the Kabbalists limited the powers to ten. This particular numeration has its source in the *Sefer Yetsirah* where the number ten was the number of the creation of the universe. According to Scholem, the limiting of the number of *middoth* lead to a number of symbolic names being attached to the *middoth*. At times these titles are contradictory or excessively malleable. Despite this anomaly the *Bahir* does express an attempt to introduce a standardisation of terms.<sup>42</sup>

The most apparent theme in the writings regarding the *sefirot* is the separation between three higher and seven lower *sefirot*.<sup>43</sup> The three higher *sefirot* are derived from Proverbs 3:19, 20.<sup>44</sup> Originally, Wisdom, Knowledge, and Understanding are the three upper *sefirot*. However, more common in later Kabbalah, and specifically in the *Bahir*, the highest *sefira* is the Crown (*Kether*) with Wisdom (*Hokmah*)<sup>45</sup> and Understanding (*Binah*) completing the upper triad. Knowledge (*Da'at*)<sup>46</sup> is only mentioned in relation to the *middoth* of God and even then the reference is only casual.<sup>47</sup>

Jewish Kabbalah may have similarities with various forms of Gnosticism but there are also many differences. The Gnostics viewed creation as the deprived

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<sup>41</sup> Scholem also spends a great deal of *Origins of the Kaballah* developing the connection between the *gnostic* concept of *Sophia* and the Kabbalistic equivalent, *Hokmah* (wisdom). Since this is not a thesis on *gnostic* influence on Jewish Kabbalah we will only analyse the connection between the *aeons* and the *sefirot* to further penetrate the nature of the *sefirot*.

<sup>42</sup> Scholem, *Origins of the Kaballah*, 84-85.

<sup>43</sup> This separation is not unique to Kabbalah and can be found in older material. See Scholem: *Origins of the Kaballah*, 124.

<sup>44</sup> Proverbs 3:19 “The LORD by **wisdom** hath founded the earth; by **understanding** hath he established the heavens.” Proverbs 3:20 “By his **knowledge** the depths are broken up, and the clouds drop down the dew.” Emphasis added.

<sup>45</sup> Synonymous here with the Gnostic *Sophia*.

<sup>46</sup> Synonymous in this context with the Gnostic concept of *gnosis*.

<sup>47</sup> Scholem, *Origins of the Kaballah*, 124.

production of a renegade creator god. Jewish Kabbalah, especially the later *Hasidic* (18<sup>th</sup> C) interpretation<sup>48</sup> and the writings of R. Abraham Abulafia (b.1240 C.E.)<sup>49</sup> emphasises the sanctity of the created world. Later we will see this theme evident in the concept of the *Shekhinah*.

According to Scholem, the “orthodox” Kabbalistic speculation was concerned with overcoming anti-cosmic dualism.<sup>50</sup> While the Gnostics viewed the creator (and thus creation) as removed from the true Hidden God, the Kabbalists looked towards the emanations of the Hidden God in creation.

The seven lower *sefirot* are known by various titles. The number seven plays an important part in Judaism. The seven days of creation, the seven voices with which the Torah was given, the seven voices of Psalm 29, and so forth.<sup>51</sup> Perhaps the most interesting application of the number seven is in relation to the limbs of a man; the two arms, two legs, head, phallus, and wife (as an expression of completion). The same symbolism would be similar for a woman though the symbolism is not as overt. This microcosmic connection with the seven lower *sefirot* is also evident in the macrocosmic symbolism of the *Adam Kadmon* as found in the *Sefer ha-Zohar*.<sup>52</sup> The connection between the individual and the *Adam Kadmon*, which is in turn a connection to the unmanifest divinity, gives the pious individual a direct link to the divine realms.

As we have seen there are some similarities between Gnosticism and Jewish Kabbalah. The Gnostic *aeons* and the Kabbalistic *middoth* (*sefirot*) are powers or

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<sup>48</sup> See: Idel, *Hasidism: Between Ecstasy and Magic*.

<sup>49</sup> See: Idel, *Studies in Ecstatic Kabbalah, Kabbalah: New Perspectives* and Avram Davis. *Fire, Breath, & Silence: The Kabbalistic Meditations of Abraham Abulafia*. *Gnosis Magazine* Winter 1991.

<sup>50</sup> Scholem, *Major Trends*, 13.

<sup>51</sup> Scholem, *Origins of the Kaballah*, 138.

<sup>52</sup> More on the *Sefer ha-Zohar* and the *Adam Kadmon* (primordial man) will be dealt with below.

attributes of an unknown and unseen deity.<sup>53</sup> However, while the Gnostics were attempting to transcend and escape the material world, the Kabbalists were attempting to understand its intrinsic divine nature and their relation to it. One of the ways the Kabbalists viewed the connection between divinity and the material world was through the concept of the *Shekhinah*.

### **The *Shekhinah* and the *Sefirot***

Originally the term *Shekhinah* referred to any point in the Bible where God's presence is manifest among the children of Israel.<sup>54</sup> The term was later applied to the idea of divine inspiration in much the same context as the Christian Holy Spirit is understood. In the context of Kabbalah and the *Bahir*, the *Shekhinah* is the feminine side of God. This feminine aspect of God is also attributed to the final, i.e. the most manifest, *sefira Malkut*.<sup>55</sup> The *Shekhinah* is used interchangeably throughout the *Bahir* with the terms: "the bride", "the daughter" or "the king's daughter", and the ecclesia of Israel.<sup>56</sup> There is also a connection with biblical symbols such as the moon, the earth, the ethrog,<sup>57</sup> "the fruit of beautiful trees" in the festive bouquet (Lev. 23:40), and the date (as a symbol of the vagina).<sup>58</sup> Nowhere prior to the *Bahir* is the *Shekhinah* described as feminine or equated interchangeably with the aforementioned synonyms.

There is a sense of intimacy with the *Shekhinah*. While the *sefirot* are usually approached through meditative intellectual practices, primarily due to their abstract

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<sup>53</sup> The infinite and unknown God of the Kabbalists is known as *En Soph* (limitlessness). More on this matter will be discussed below and in Chapter Six.

<sup>54</sup> See: Exodus 13:21-22 and 40:34-38.

<sup>55</sup> Literally "Kingdom."

<sup>56</sup> For more on gender issues in Kabbalah see: Elliot R Wolfson, *Circle in the Square: Studies in the Use of Gender in Kabbalistic Symbolism* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1995).

<sup>57</sup> Citrus fruit eaten on *Sukkot*.

<sup>58</sup> Scholem, *Origins of the Kaballah*, 163.

nature, the *Shekhinah*, conversely, seems emotional and emotive. Though perhaps an irreverent comparison, there are similarities in the Catholic notion of the Trinity and its relation to Mary. What appears to be a mental exercise in philosophical contemplation (i.e. the Trinity) is made “real” or manifest in the Marian attributes of love, compassion, and sorrow. The many devotees of Mary and the *ex cathedra* statement made by Pius XII seem to indicate that there is a common need for a personal and an emotionally tangible connection to divinity.<sup>59</sup>

To summarise, the *Sefer Bahir* was the first truly Kabbalistic text. The text has no single author and is comprised of various influences from within Judaism and from external sources such as Gnosticism. The *Bahir* is the first attempt to crystallise the highly malleable Kabbalistic philosophy. Also unique to the *Bahir*, is the equation of the *Shekhinah* with “feminine” aspects of divinity. Biblical references to the aforementioned symbols now take on an entirely different meaning—a meaning that indicates a direct connection between humans (especially the Children of Israel), the natural world (as divine creation) and divinity. One last Jewish Kabbalistic concept related to the *sefirot* should be reviewed, namely, the *En-Sof*.

### **Isaac the Blind and the *En-Sof***

We find that the modern understanding of the *sefirot* started to develop with the teachings of Isaac the Blind (circa. 1160-1236). In Isaac’s commentary on the *Sefer Yetsirah* (4:3), 1 Chronicles 29:11 is used for the first time in Kabbalistic literature as a biblical source for the name and order of the lower seven *sefirot*. Though Isaac places

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<sup>59</sup> For a Jungian reading on this issue see: John P. Dourley, *The Illness That We Are* (Toronto: Inner City Books, 1984).

the *sefirot* within an organised framework, the framework was still not entirely consistent.<sup>60</sup> Isaac interpreted early Kabbalistic texts in a new and unique manner. Through Isaac and his contemporaries we see the addition of Neoplatonic concepts to the early Gnostic and Jewish mystical concepts.

Isaac “postulates three stages in the mystery of the deity and its unfolding in creation and revelation. They are called in his works the Infinite (*‘En-Sof*), Thought and Speech.”<sup>61</sup> The term *En-Sof* is the transcendent, ultimate nature of God. The *sefirot* (*middoth*), “Yahweh”, or any biblical account of God does not exhaust the nature of *En-Sof*. Anything that is stated rationally about God is not God. *En-Sof* is divinity beyond rationality. The God of the *Torah* is not *really* God. The God of the *Torah* is a symbol, an imprint, or a reflection of a God that is beyond description and characterisation.

Obviously there is a myriad of other important developments within Jewish Kabbalah and its understanding of the *sefirot*. However, for the purposes of this chapter we will turn to *Sefer ha-Zohar* or Book of Splendour and end with the contributions of Joseph Gikatilla, Moses Cordovero, and Isaac Luria to the development of the *sefirot*.

### **The Zohar**

Read almost any work on the history of Jewish Kabbalah and the *Zohar* will be cited as *the* most important or influential Kabbalistic text.<sup>62</sup> Nearly every Kabbalist who appeared after the dissemination of the *Zohar* used it extensively, if not exclusively. The *Sefer Yetsirah* and *Bahir* are still important but they are usually approached through the

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<sup>60</sup> Scholem, *Origins of the Kaballah*, 263.

<sup>61</sup> Scholem, *Origins of the Kaballah*, 265.

<sup>62</sup> Circa 1286. The *Zohar* was distributed by Moses de Leon (d. 1305) throughout the Spanish Kabbalists.

*Zohar*. Like the other two works, the *Zohar* deals with mystical interpretations of biblical passages. The *Zohar*:

is composed as a commentary on the Five Books of Moses, and this and several other additions contain theosophical discourses on such topics as the hidden and manifest nature of God; the process of creation; the *Sefirot* (which the *Zohar* calls by an abundance of other names); the nature of good and evil; the masculine and feminine aspects of the divine; the nature of death, sleep, and dreams; and the essence of the human soul.<sup>63</sup>

Also like the *Yetsirah* and the *Bahir*, the *Zohar* is not systematised nor is it as seminal in relation to the development of the *sefirot* as it might first appear. The *Zohar* expands on the themes of both the *Bahir* and the *Yetsirah* as the *Bahir* builds on the *Yetsirah*. From the perspective of Jewish mysticism, the *Zohar* is an important document; its influence has also been felt in Christian, Hermetic and Western Esoteric Traditions through various Latin translations.<sup>64</sup>

### **Rabbi Joseph Gikatilla and the *Gates of Light***

A disciple of Abulafia (1240-1290), Gikatilla's (1248-1305) most important contribution to Kabbalah and the development of the *sefirot* was his book *Sha'are Orah* or *Book of Light*.<sup>65</sup> The *Sha'are Orah* "is an encyclopaedia of God's Names as well as a map which reveals the connections between the words in the Torah and the names of God. Like a scriptural cryptographer, Gikatilla strips away the outer layers of meaning in

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<sup>63</sup> Sanford Drob, *Kabbalistic Metaphors: Jewish Mystical Themes in Ancient and Modern Thought* (Northvale, NJ: Jason Aronson Inc., 2000), 10.

<sup>64</sup> The first Latin translation was "the renowned Frenchman Guillaume Postel (1510-1581), one of the outstanding personalities of the Renaissance. Postel Translated the *Zohar* and the *Sefir Yetzirah* into Latin even before they had been printed in the original..." Scholem, *Kabbalah* (Israel: Keter Publishing House Jerusalem Ltd., 1974), 199.

<sup>65</sup> Written in 1290 and first published in Riva de Trento and Mantua in 1561. Rabbi Joseph Gikatilla. *Gates of Light (Sha'are Orah)*. Avi Weinstein, trans. (San Francisco: Harper Collins, 1994).

order to arrive at...the essence of what the Torah means. Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, for example, are more than Patriarchs; they actually represent different attributes of the Holy One Himself.”<sup>66</sup> The *Sha'are Orah* offers “a systematic, clear, detailed work which departs from the opaque and homiletic style of the *Book of Splendour (Zohar)*.... In contrast, Gikatilla wants the Kabbalah of *Gates of Light* to be clearly understood.”<sup>67</sup>

The *Sha'are Orah* differs from other Kabbalistic texts in that its commentaries on the *sefirot* follow an ascending (*Malkut* to *Kether*), as opposed to a descending (*Kether* to *Malkut*), order. Moshe Idel tells us in the introduction to the *Gates of Light* that Gikatilla does not explain this approach but that his teacher, Abulafia used the ascending approach at least once.<sup>68</sup> Idel offers his own interpretation of the ascending path:

Whereas the emanative process of Creation by stages of descent from the Infinite is the central concern of the theosophical Kabbalists, the mystic's return is the focus of the ecstatic Kabbalist. Indeed, the latter states that the mystic, namely the “receiver of the Names of the Sefirot, should make an effort to receive the Divine everflow [sic] from them, in accordance with his attributes. And he should cleave to each Sefirah and Sefirah separately and he should integrate his cleaving with all the Sefirot together, and will not separate the branches”<sup>69</sup>

As Idel has indicated, the *Sha'are Orah* clarified the style and approach to understanding the *sefirot* (through the Divine Names) and adopted an ascending direction to the *sefirot*. Rather than looking at the *sefirot* as part of the creation of existence, Gikatilla analysed their role in the mystical experience.

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<sup>66</sup> Gikatilla, *Gates of Light*, xvii.

<sup>67</sup> Gikatilla, *Gates of Light*, xvii.

<sup>68</sup> Gikatilla, *Gates of Light*, xxvii.

<sup>69</sup> Gikatilla, *Gates of Light*, xxviii.

## Moses Cordovero and Isaac Luria

Moses Cordovero (1522-1570) helped establish a standard order of the *sefirot* and the theory that each *sefirot* contains every other one. In this way the apparent hierarchy present in the ordering of the *sefirot* is not as rigid. Also, everything that exists exists due to a blending of the *sefirot* and since the *sefirot* are *middoth* of God's essence and humans are made in God's image then all humans are encouraged to develop the *sefirotic* traits within themselves.<sup>70</sup>

Finally, we turn to Isaac Luria (1534-1572). Luria contributed very interesting concepts to the development of the *sefirot*. Luria viewed creation as a negative act, an act of contraction (*tzimtzum*). If God is all, everything, limitless (*En-Sof*) then how does the universe exist? This would lead to a non-monotheistic or panentheistic view that this world and every other world would be God. Luria posited that God created existence by leaving a void (space) into which God then emanated an infinite collection of worlds and beings to dwell on them. The first of these beings was the *Adam Kadmon* or Primordial Man. The *sefirot* emanated from the head of *Adam Kadmon* as light. The light returned leaving residual vessels and a second light filled the vessels creating the *sefirot*:

**Table Two: The *Sefirot***

<i>Kether:</i>	Crown <b>or</b> <i>Ratzon</i> (Will)
<i>Hokmah:</i>	Wisdom
<i>Binah:</i>	Understanding
-- <i>Da'at</i> --	Knowledge (not always included)
<i>Hesed:</i>	Loving Kindness
<i>Geburah:</i>	Strength <b>or</b> <i>Din</i> (Judgment)
<i>Tiferet:</i>	Beauty <b>or</b> <i>Rachamim</i> (Compassion)
<i>Netzach:</i>	Glory

<sup>70</sup> Drob, *Kabbalistic Metaphors*, 10.

<i>Hod:</i>	Splendour
<i>Yesod:</i>	Foundation
<i>Malkut:</i>	Kingdom

This combination and arrangement of the *sefirot* is often referred to as the Tree of Life as it has its roots in the Divine World while its branches stretch into the mundane.<sup>71</sup> In Luria's cosmology, the vessels were unable to contain the divine light and as a result the lower seven *sefirot* shattered (*shevirah*) and the upper three *sefirot* were displaced. The goal of any pious Jew, according to this doctrine, is the restoration (*tikkun*) of the divine order of the *sefirot*.<sup>72</sup> This restoration depends on every action, every thought of the individual. Only by repairing the broken vessels within can the universal vessels be mended.

### **Summary of Jewish Kabbalah**

This has been a very cursory review of some of the ways the concept of the *sefirot* has developed in Jewish Kabbalah. Only those applications that are used in other, non-Jewish Kabbalistic traditions were reviewed. Jewish Kabbalah is a complicated tradition but despite this innate complexity, there is a simple concept at its root: order. Jewish Kabbalah attempts to explain how a monotheistic, transcendent deity can have meaning in the mundane world. The tradition also attempts to breathe life into ancient texts and rituals; it attempts to label, to identify and define the unknown. However, Judaism has not been the only religion to embrace Kabbalah and the *sefirot*. Many major Christian

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<sup>71</sup> See Figure One, p.325.

<sup>72</sup> Drob, *Kabbalistic Metaphors*, 10-11, 28-60.

theologians and philosophers embraced Kabbalah and gave their own unique interpretation of the *sefirot*.

### **The Tree is He: The *sefirot* in Christian Kabbalah**

*Nulla est scientia, que nos magis certificet de divinitate Christi, quam Magia & Cabala.*<sup>73</sup>

Christian Kabbalah, like Jewish Kabbalah, acted as a form of religious justification for the tradition's scripture and cosmology. The Jewish Kabbalah demonstrated the power of the Hebrew alphabet, the importance of the *Torah*, and the need for universal restitution. Christian Kabbalah found in Jewish Kabbalah support for the doctrine of the Trinity, an objective verification of the reality of the Christ, and a paradigm for the exploration (one could argue exploitation) of the natural world.

Some historically significant figures in Christian Kabbalah were Flavius Mithridates (15<sup>th</sup> C)<sup>74</sup>, Giovanni Pico della Mirandola (1463-1494), Johannes Reuchlin (1455-1522)<sup>75</sup>, and Christian Knorr von Rosenroth (1636-1689).<sup>76</sup> In many ways Pico was to Christian Kabbalah what the *Sefer Bahir* was to Jewish Kabbalah. Each laid a foundation that would be copied, commented, and elaborated on by later Kabbalists. Though Pico was fluent in traditions of natural magic, Kabbalah, and Gnostic traditions

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<sup>73</sup> *There is no science which makes us more certain of the divinity of Christ than magic and cabala.* Citation by Giovanni Pico della Mirandola as found in Phillip Beitchman, *Alchemy of the Word: Cabala of the Renaissance* (Albany, NY: State University Press of New York Press, 1998), 142.

<sup>74</sup> Mithridates, who translated the *Bahir* into Latin, was one of Pico della Mirandola's teachers of Kabbalah. Scholem refers to Mithridates as Guiglelmus Raimundus Moncada and states that his Latin translation of the *Bahir*, made for Pico, is the oldest in existence (Scholem, *Origins of the Kabbalah*, 49n).

<sup>75</sup> Reuchlin produced the first systematic description of Christian Kabbalah (*De arte cabalistica*) and was well informed with emanational (*sefirot*), number and letter symbolism, and ecstatic currents of Kabbalah. Beitchman, *Alchemy of the Word*, 72.

<sup>76</sup> These are but a few of the Christian Kabbalists who made a contribution to Christian Kabbalah. A good, if cursory listing of Christian Kabbalists and their sources can be found in Beitchman, 115-207 and Francis Yates, *Giordano Bruno and the Hermetic Tradition* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1991).

and philosophies, he always remained a dedicated Catholic and despite his passion for Jewish Kabbalah, Pico could be read as attempting to elevate the Christian “truth” over that of Judaism through the use of Kabbalah.<sup>77</sup>

This point of cultural/dogmatic conflict is interesting because it separates Christian Kabbalah from its Jewish equivalent. The beliefs of Christianity and Judaism, while in agreement on some areas of cosmology, are independent and unique traditions (despite the use of the term “Judeo-Christian”). As with all the forms of Kabbalah mentioned in this chapter, there are similarities between the traditions yet each is unique in its use of Kabbalah and should be respected as an independent tradition.

The *sefirot* in Pico’s thought are employed in much the same way as they were in early Jewish Kabbalah.<sup>78</sup> The *sefirot* are still seen as qualities and they are connected to the natural world and the soul.<sup>79</sup> Yates gives an analysis and summary of Pico’s use of the *sefirot*. She relates that there is a connection between the Ten Spheres of the Cosmos, the seven spheres of the planets, the eighth sphere of the firmament and fixed stars, the empyrean, the *Primum Mobile*, and the ten *sefirot*.<sup>80</sup> The following table gives the celestial equivalent to the *sefirot*:

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<sup>77</sup> In his *Oration*, Pico states that he found in the Jewish Kabbalistic tradition “not so much the Mosaic as the Christian religion. There was to be found the mystery of the Trinity, the Incarnation of the Word, the divinity of the Messiah . . . In a word, there is no point of controversy between the Hebrews and ourselves on which the Hebrews cannot be confuted and convinced out of the cabalistic writings, so that no corner is left for them to hide.” Giovanni Pico della Mirandola, *Oration on the Dignity of Man* A. Robert Caponigri trans. (Washington: Regnery Gateway, 1956), 64-65. And yet again: “No Hebrew Cabalist can deny that the name Iesu, if we interpret it according to Cabalistic principles and methods, signifies God, the Son of God, and the wisdom of the Father through the divinity of the Third Person.” Yates, *Giordano Bruno and the Hermetic Tradition*, 94-95.

<sup>78</sup> Much of Pico’s writing on Kabbalah can be found in his *Conclusiones Cabalistiche numero LXXI*.

<sup>79</sup> Yates, *Giordano Bruno and the Hermetic Tradition*, 101.

<sup>80</sup> Yates, *Giordano Bruno and the Hermetic Tradition*, 100-101.

Kether	Primum Mobile
Hokmah	8 <sup>th</sup> Sphere
Binah	Saturn
Hesed	Jupiter
Geburah	Mars
Tiferet	Sun
Netzach	Venus
Hod	Mercury
Yesod	Moon
Malkut	The Elements

Pico also divided Kabbalah into a “high” form of magic that directed the individual towards God, and a “low” form of demonic magic.<sup>81</sup> Generally, this division can be seen in a practical way by separating the meditative form of Kabbalah from the practical form of magic. In many ways this division is difficult as there are cases where the two are intimately entwined. However, the “practical” Kabbalah would play a major role in the Kabbalistic writings of Hermetic and Western Esoteric Kabbalah.

Another fundamental figure in the development of Christian Kabbalah, and an individual who would act as a major Kabbalistic source for Carl Jung, was Knorr von Rosenroth. According to Waite, Knorr was not overly concerned with finding Christian truths in Jewish Kabbalistic literature. Nor was he attempting to bring Christians to Kabbalah, but he “longed very much for the Kabbalistic Jew to become Lutheran.”<sup>82</sup> Interestingly, while Knorr may have fallen short of his desire to bring Kabbalistic Jews to

<sup>81</sup> This type of “demonic” or “low” magic is usually concerned with material gain or in some way manipulating the material world.

<sup>82</sup> A.E. Waite, *The Holy Kabbalah* (New York: University Books, 1960), 479.

Lutheranism, his writings (translations of portions of the *Zohar*) became an important factor for the Kabbalah of the Western Esoteric Tradition.<sup>83</sup>

Knorr, like other Christian Kabbalists, did not overtly or significantly alter the function or philosophy of the *sefirot*. But the *sefirot* would be interpreted in a manner that was unique to the Christian tradition. The Supernal Triad of *Kether*, *Hokmah*, and *Binah* could be as easily applied to the unmanifest *En-Sof* of Jewish Kabbalah, as it could to the Christian Trinitarian godhead. The contribution of most of the Christian Kabbalists, in relation to the *sefirot*, lies in their translations of Jewish Kabbalistic texts and their interpretations of those translations.

### **Summary of Christian Kabbalah**

In the section on Jewish Kabbalah we saw how the *sefirot* were used as intellectual and qualitative constructs. They represented attributes of an ultimately unknowable deity. They also functioned as a link to the *Torah* and thus to all of Jewish life and the Jewish world-view. In many ways the *sefirot* of Christian Kabbalah function in the same way as their Jewish predecessors. The Christian *sefirot* look to the New Testament as well as to the *Torah* to find meaning and universal order.

Christian Kabbalists like Pico were able to find support for the Christian mysteries such as the Trinitarian nature of God. One noticeable trait of Christian Kabbalah is its ability to adapt a distinctly Jewish mystical tradition to suit its own views. As mentioned above, this attitude is important to understand the nature of Kabbalah. How is it possible that a mystical tradition that is uniquely Jewish (with its connection to

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<sup>83</sup> For example, S.L. MacGregor Mathers, one of the founding members of the Hermetic Order of the Golden Dawn, translated '*Kabbala Denudata*' into English.

the *Torah*, rituals and cosmology) could be adopted, and adopted successfully, by another tradition which is overtly antithetical (at least at the time) to the parent tradition? The most basic answer is that Kabbalah deals with fundamental concerns, concerns about universal order and structure that supersedes doctrinal differences. One interpretation of Kabbalah that existed alongside Christian Kabbalah was Hermetic Kabbalah.

### **The Natural Magician and the Nolan: Hermetic Kabbalah**

*True, without falsehood, certain and most true, that which is above is as that which is below, and that which is below is as that which is above...*<sup>84</sup>

Hermetic Kabbalah<sup>85</sup> was one of three threads of Kabbalah, along with Jewish and Christian Kabbalah, that was present during the Renaissance. Beitchman states that this thread of Kabbalah is one that is:

God-Angel-and-Demon conjuring and connects more-or-less ancient Hermeticism, [and] is spawned in Italy just about the same time as Pico's Christian one. This bold movement ... cuts through millennia of monotheism, refusing its limits, modesty, and restrictions, back to its Pagan provenance. . .<sup>86</sup>

The most obvious difference between this form of Kabbalah and the previous two is the emphasis on practical Kabbalah and magic. Jewish and Christian Kabbalah each had sub-streams of practical Kabbalah but they were marginal. In Hermetic and Western Esoteric Kabbalah this practical perspective takes to the foreground. Two figures that

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<sup>84</sup> From the *Emerald Tablet of Hermes Trismegistus*.

<sup>85</sup> Also called Neopagan Kabbalah (though this should not be confused with the Neo-Pagan revival of the last and present century).

<sup>86</sup> Beitchman, *Alchemy of the Word*, x.

stand out in Hermetic Kabbalah are Heinrich Cornelius Agrippa (1486-1535)<sup>87</sup> and Giordano Bruno (1548-1600).

Agrippa's most well known work is *de occulta philosophia*. *De occulta philosophia* (printed in 1533 and written when he was 23) is divided into three books: Natural Magic, Celestial Magic, and Ceremonial Magic. The work cites heavily the *Corpus Hermeticum* and Hermetic philosophical concepts. As indicated by the titles of the books, *de occulta philosophia* is concerned with "this worldly" concepts. Or rather, it is concerned with a unique view of the world that did not separate the quest to understand the natural world from that of the divine world. During the Renaissance science, religion, and magic had a unique bond. According to de León-Jones the following beliefs prevailed during the Renaissance:

1. Magic is the equivalent of science, because both explore the very structure of the universe.
2. Magic is also the equivalent of religion, because it provides a cosmology and reveals God in the universe and humankind's ability to communicate with deity.
3. Magic is thus the equivalent of both religion and science, because the combination reveals the mysteries of the universe and of the divine.<sup>88</sup>

Agrippa's work demonstrates a drive to rend the veil of mystery surrounding the natural world. By revealing the secrets of the natural world, the divine realms are also revealed, for as the Hermetic Emerald Tablet states: "that which is above is as that which is below."

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<sup>87</sup> Yates displays a remarkable dislike of Agrippa throughout *Giordano Bruno and the Hermetic Tradition*. Whatever one's view of Agrippa, his is still a fundamental name in Hermetic and Western Esoteric Kabbalah.

<sup>88</sup> Karen Silvia de León-Jones, *Giordano Bruno and the Kabbalah* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1997), 9.

Giordano Bruno was a radical thinker in nearly every respect. In fact Bruno was radical enough to be burned at the stake by the Inquisition in 1600.<sup>89</sup> Frances Yates labelled Bruno a Hermetic magus; however, this is not the sole interpretation of Bruno and his relationship with mysticism. In her book *Giordano Bruno and the Kabbalah: Prophets, Magicians, and Rabbis*, Karen Silvia de León-Jones presents the hypothesis that Bruno was actually more a Kabbalist than a Hermeticist. From the perspective of a Bruno biography this assumption may be a minor point but from a perspective of the development of the *sefirot* Bruno's role as a Kabbalist is important.

Like Agrippa before him, Bruno was fascinated with magic. According to de León-Jones Kabbalistic ideas are “most prevalent in Bruno's cosmological ordering because he found them compatible with Neoplatonic and Neopythagorean doctrine.”<sup>90</sup> Bruno found in the Kabbalah of Pico and Agrippa (as well as others) attributes that he incorporated into his theories. Ideas such as negative creation<sup>91</sup>, the idea of moving from the mundane world toward the divine, and the *coincidentia oppositorum*, etc., are all present in Bruno's works. Bruno also saw that there was a deep connection between Kabbalah, theology, and philosophy. De León-Jones gives an English translation (from the Italian) of a passage from Bruno's *Cabala*:

Here then is Cabala, theology and philosophy: I mean a Cabala of theological philosophy, a philosophy of Cabalistic theology, a theology of Cabalistic philosophy, such that I am uncertain whether you have these three as either as an entity, or in parts, or as nothing; however, I am quite certain that you have in part all of

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<sup>89</sup> Bruno's charges included Ariansim [i.e., denying the full divinity of Christ], iconoclasm and possession of heretical books (specifically Erasmus). de Leon-Jones, *Giordano Bruno and the Kabbalah*, 1.

<sup>90</sup> de León-Jones, *Giordano Bruno and the Kabbalah*, 15.

<sup>91</sup> That is to say the Kabbalistic notion of *tzimtzum* where God contracts himself and creates a void in order that he may create existence.

nothing, part of everything in nothing, and not any part of everything.<sup>92</sup>

Kabbalah was a tool of remarkable versatility for Bruno. His primary interest was in the hermeneutic techniques that Kabbalah offered. Bruno's interest in Kabbalah also influenced his mysticism and prophecy. However, we will limit our brief investigation to his use of the *sefirot* as a vehicle of order and structure.

Bruno did not overtly posit an original theory about the *sefirot*. However, he does present the *sefirot* in a direct manner that reflects his philosophy.<sup>93</sup> Bruno followed the standard *sefirot* order and refers to the *sefirot* as *dimensioni*. By referring to the *sefirot* as dimensions we see that Bruno is applying Kabbalah as a form of universal structure, a structure that bridges both science and mysticism. To cite de León-Jones:

Dimensions signify the terms used to define a concept of thing; the inherent qualities that make up its essence...To call the sefirot "dimensioni" underscores that they represent the "dimensions" of God and hence are equivalent to the Names of God.<sup>94</sup>

Like the *Sefer Yetsirah*, Bruno also analyses the dimensions or "measurements" of God. The *sefirot* had another important function for Bruno. The *sefirot* have a history of being used as a means to meditate upon and contemplate abstract concepts. Whether *En-Sof*, the Trinity, or the First Cause, the *sefirot* pointed to, and imbued with quality, that which transcends definition. The *sefirot* also functioned as mnemonic tools. Bruno found the *sefirot*, in their Tree of Life configuration, to be exceptional devices not only to understand the divine and natural worlds but also to understand the microcosmic structure of memory and images. These images, in turn, help to penetrate the depths of the divine world by providing a vehicle, or, perhaps more accurately, a language through which the

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<sup>92</sup> de León-Jones, *Giordano Bruno and the Kabbalah*, 24.

<sup>93</sup> de León-Jones, *Giordano Bruno and the Kabbalah*, 35.

<sup>94</sup> de León-Jones, *Giordano Bruno and the Kabbalah*, 37.

divine world may be experienced. Individually the *sefirot* focused divinity to a specific attribute. As a dynamic structure, such as found with the Tree of Life, the *sefirot* demonstrated the complexity and depth of divinity.

### **Summary of Hermetic Kabbalah**

This section on Hermetic Kabbalah brings to the fore two important influences that would pass onto Western Esoteric Kabbalah. Both the emphasis on magic, that is to say the practical application of theoretical/intellectual cosmological theories and the centrality of symbols and images. Both of these influences play a major role in Western Esoteric Kabbalah.

To rephrase, we moved from the abstract pre-Kabbalistic *Sefer Yetsirah* where the *sefirot* are abstractions of divinity to Jewish Kabbalah, which is rooted in the Jewish cosmology and scripture. In Christian Kabbalah we see a shift to a different cosmology, one that looked towards the Christ concept and the Trinity while embracing Neoplatonic philosophies.<sup>95</sup> Hermetic Kabbalah reflects the intellectual and spiritual movements of the Renaissance. With its emphasis on magic (as both science and religion) and memory, there is a pronounced practicality in Hermetic Kabbalah. The natural world is a link to the divine world and Kabbalah and the *sefirot* provide an interpretive tool or structure through which one can come to understand the secrets of nature. The Western Esoteric Tradition's interpretation of Kabbalah continues to blend, merge, and adapt Kabbalistic concepts including the *sefirot*.

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<sup>95</sup> Neoplatonic thought was not completely absent from Jewish Kabbalah, what is being highlighted are general areas of thought. See Moshe Idel *Kabbalah: New Perspectives*, 2-3 (and elsewhere in the text) for a brief discussion of the impact of Neoplatonism on Jewish Kabbalists.

## Paths and Portals: The Western Esoteric Kabbalah

*Never let your mind wander from the fact that your Qabalah is not my Qabalah; ... you must construct your own system so that it is a living weapon in your own hand.*<sup>96</sup>

The Western Esoteric Tradition also supports its own unique interpretation of Kabbalah and the *sefirot*. Following the influence of Agrippa, the Western Esoteric use of Kabbalah and the *sefirot* is highly pragmatic. There are indeed philosophical abstractions related to the *sefirot* in Western Esoteric Kabbalah. However, the emphasis is, in some cases, on the specific function and effect of the *sefirot* on the individual psyche.

Dion Fortune, one of the most important figures in Western Esoteric Kabbalah, refers to the Western Esoteric Tradition<sup>97</sup> as the Yoga of the West.<sup>98</sup> In this context the Western Esoteric Tradition should be understood as being comprised of mental, physical, and emotional practices. One of the common symbols that bridge many of the branches of the Western Esoteric Tradition, and each of the aforementioned traditions within this chapter, is the Tree of Life and one way the *sefirot* are seen within the Western Esoteric Tradition is as representative of an ongoing initiatory process. This initiatory process is also reflected in one of the tradition's most familiar tools: the Tarot.<sup>99</sup>

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<sup>96</sup> Aleister Crowley, *Magick Without Tears* (Arizona: New Falcon, 1994), 14.

<sup>97</sup> Fortune actually uses the term "Western Mystery Tradition."

<sup>98</sup> See: Dion Fortuna, *The Mystical Qabalah* (York Beach: Weiser, 1991).

<sup>99</sup> In this context, Tarot is far more than a card game or form of cartomancy. The Tarot in the context of the Western Esoteric Tradition refers to a deck of 78 cards that is divided into two parts. The first part is called the "Major Arcana" and is comprised of twenty-two cards from 0 (The Fool) to XXI (The World/Universe). The second part, the "Minor Arcana" is composed of numbered cards (1-10) and court cards (Prince/Page, Knight, Queen, King-or some similar arrangement). The Fool (0) is seen as the aspirant who must pass through many initiations on his/her spiritual journey throughout their life. The actual history of the Tarot (tenuous as it is) is not important in this context. What is important is how the Western Esoteric Tradition tends to use the Tarot (as the Book of Thoth/Hermes) in relation to the *sefirot*.

### Lévi, the *Sefirot* and the Tarot

The most influential person within the Western Esoteric Tradition to popularise the connection between the Tarot and the *sefirot* (through the *sefirot's* connection with the Hebrew alphabet) and the Tree of Life was Eliphas Lévi (1810-1875).<sup>100</sup> Lévi applied the twenty-two cards of the Major Arcana (Trumps 0 to XXI) to the Twenty-Two paths of the Tree of Life that connect the *sefirot*. The remaining ten paths, i.e. the *sefirot* themselves, corresponded to the numbered cards and court cards.<sup>101</sup> For example, *Binah*, the third *sefira*, corresponds to the four Threes, the four Queens, and all Cups. The connecting paths leading to *Binah* from *Hokmah*, *Kether*, and *Tiferet* correspond to The Empress (III), The Magus (I), and The Lovers (VI) respectively.<sup>102</sup> In this way, the esoteric meanings or themes of the specific cards are reflected in the *sefirot* and the connecting paths. Like Bruno's use of the *sefirot* as a complement to his mysticism and a mnemonic tool, the *sefirot* and the Tarot of the Western Esoteric Tradition function as a mnemonic device that supports and amplifies its esoteric symbolism and world-view.

The Tarot can be used as the focus of a practice called "pathworking". One way of describing pathworking is that it is similar to Jung's understanding of active imagination. One would visualise the card as a large landscape or as a door. Then one places oneself into the scene and interacts with the personalities that dwell "within" the card. With a thorough knowledge of Esoteric symbolism this type of practice is assumed

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<sup>100</sup> Lévi was not the first to write on the subject of a connection between Tarot and the Hebrew alphabet. The Comte de Mellet wrote a short article on the tarot in Court de Gébelin's *Le Monde Primitif* (1781). Lévi's *Magical Ritual of the Sanctum Regnum* is an introduction to the connection between Tarot and Kabbalah.

<sup>101</sup> The four suits of the Minor Arcana are: Swords (Air-Intellect), Wands (Fire-Will), Cups (Water-Emotion), and Disks or Pentacles (Earth-Body).

<sup>102</sup> These particular correspondences are taken from Aleister Crowley, *et al.*, *Magick: Liber Aba (Parts I-IV)* (York Beach, ME: Weiser, 1997), 547. Correspondences may change from person to person or from tradition to tradition.

to be an effective way of exploring different aspects of one's personality. While pathworking is similar to active imagination it is not identical with it. In active imagination the unconscious is encouraged to enter into consciousness unhindered by an imposed structure (other than the emotion, dream or complex being dealt with at the time). Pathworking imposes a structure, in our example the structure is the Tree of Life, but the experiences on the Tree would be of an individual and subjective nature. Tarot is not the only way the *sefirot* are used within the Western Esoteric Tradition; the *sefirot* and the Tree of Life are also used as a "cosmic filing cabinet" of universal correspondences.<sup>103</sup>

### **Aleister Crowley and *Liber 777***

While there are Western Esotericists who practice as solitary practitioners, there are also many that are members of various Esoteric Orders.<sup>104</sup> These Orders vary in approach and teachings but the majority use the *sefirot* and the Tree of Life in their training. One important Order that used the *sefirot* in their training was the Hermetic Order of the Golden Dawn.

The Golden Dawn was (or *is* if we are to accept the claims by some modern Orders to be of an unbroken lineage to the original Order) an Order that based Masonically inspired initiations on the *sefirot* and the Tree of Life. In the initiatory schema of the Golden Dawn, the Zealator corresponded to the lowest *sefira*, *Malkut* while the highest grade, Ipsissimus, corresponded to *Kether*. The goal of the initiate was

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<sup>103</sup> For an example of Western Esoteric pathworking see material added to Israel Regardie's *The Garden of Pomegranates* edited and annotated by Chic and Sandra Cicero (St.Paul, MINN: Llewellyn Publications, 2002), 171-480.

<sup>104</sup> More will be said about Esoteric Orders in Chapter Three.

to work their way up the Tree by passing through the grades of the Order. Some lessons and tests were intellectual, some were ritual, and still others were emotional/devotional. At the base of all the lessons were the *sefirot*. One practice employed by the Golden Dawn and other similar Orders was to compile a list of correspondences that applied to each of the *sefirot*. By doing this, the initiate developed a personal and unique relation with the *sefirot*. Aleister Crowley, a one time member of the Golden Dawn, intentionally broke his vows of secrecy and published a great deal of the Golden Dawn's rituals and teachings. His reasons for publishing the material were numerous and by doing so he opened the *sefirot* of the Western Esoteric Tradition to a larger audience.<sup>105</sup>

In 1909, Crowley published a list of correspondences in his book entitled *Liber 777*. This work is arranged in a tabular form based on thirty-two categories that are linked to the ten *sefirot* and twenty-two Hebrew letters of the Tree of Life. In his introduction to *777 Israel Regardie*, states that once the “schema is understood any new set of data of any kind can be referred to it, thus undergoing immediate and spontaneous organization and synthesis within the psyche.”<sup>106</sup> We will return to Regardie's reference to the psyche in due course; for now we will look at an example from *777*.

Since we have used the *sefira Binah* in a previous example we shall use it again in this example. Some correspondences for *Binah* (connected through the *sefira*'s numeration, i.e. 3 as found in Crowley's *777*) are:

1. Sphere of Saturn
2. Wisdom
3. בינה
4. Crimson/Grey flecked with pink/Black
5. The 4 Threes-Queens [of the Tarot]

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<sup>105</sup> One reason Crowley broke his vow of secrecy was that he thought it ridiculous that the Order had sworn him to keep silent on such secret information as the Hebrew alphabet.

<sup>106</sup> Crowley, *777*, v-vi.

6. Path of Sanctifying Intelligence [from the *Sefer Yetsirah*]
7. 2<sup>nd</sup> Plane, Left Pillar [of the Tree of Life]
8. Root of Water [the Element not the liquid]
9. Nephthys, Maut, Isis [Egyptian deities]
10. Cybele, Demeter, Rhea, Heré [Greek deities]
11. Frigga [Norse deity]
12. Compassion [one of the “Forty Buddhist Meditations”]
13. *Prana, śakti, yoni* [as found in Hindu philosophy/theology]
14. Star Sapphire, Pearl [mineral/stones]
15. Cypress, Opium [herbarium]
16. Woman
17. The Virgin Mary
18. Juno, Cybele, Saturn, Hecate [Roman deities]
19. The Vision of Sorrow
20. Silver
21. Belladonna
22. Myrrh
23. The Triangle<sup>107</sup>

This partial list of correspondences for *Binah* indicates the depth and breadth of how the *sefirot* are understood in the Western Esoteric Tradition. However, this is Crowley’s understanding of the *sefirot*. While certain correspondences are very common to each of the *sefirot* and paths of the Tree of Life, the initiate must still develop their own intimate connection to the *sefirot*. Part mnemonic device, part focus of meditation, and part initiatory sign post, the meanings of the *sefirot* in the Western Esoteric Tradition are as diverse and unique in scope as in the previous traditions. One trait that is distinctive to the Western Esoteric Tradition and its practitioners is their connection to psychoanalysis and analytical psychology.<sup>108</sup>

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<sup>107</sup> Crowley, 777, 2-15.

<sup>108</sup> Other interpretations of Kabbalah have demonstrated a concern for the psyche but the Western Esoteric Tradition incorporated psychological terms early in its development.

### **Fortune, Regardie and Knight: The Western Esoteric Tradition and Psychology**

Aleister Crowley, Dion Fortune, and Israel Regardie were writing on and participating in the initiatory path of the Western Esoteric Tradition during the period of growth of psychoanalysis and analytical psychology. While Freud and Jung were debating the structure of the psyche, the Esotericists were undertaking their own foray into the depths of human psychological experience. Given their similar chronological and thematic undertakings we would expect to see some connection or inter-penetration between psychology and the Western Esoteric Tradition. In fact, the connection was very much one-sided. Neither Freud nor Jung had much time for Esoteric traditions or their teachings. However, the same cannot be said for the Western Esoteric Tradition.

Crowley, the least “qualified” psychologist of the four Esotericists discussed in this chapter, stated that the Magical Tradition and the Holy Qabalah were “the Children’s table from which Freud... ate a few crumbs that fell.”<sup>109</sup> Of Jung, Crowley states “...we should all study Jung. His final conclusions are in the main correct, even if his rough working is a bit sketchy; and we’ve got to study him, whether we like it or not, for he will soon be recognized as the undoubted Autocrat of the 1917 dinner-table.”<sup>110</sup> Crowley respected both Freud and Jung, at least to some degree, but it was Regardie and Fortune who actively engaged in the psychology/esoteric connection.

Dion Fortune began to study psychology between the ages of twenty and twenty-four. In 1913 Fortune became a lay psychoanalyst at the Medico-Psychological Clinic,

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<sup>109</sup> Aleister Crowley, *The Confessions of Aleister Crowley* (Great Britain: Arkana, 1989), 45.

<sup>110</sup> Aleister Crowley, “An Improvement on Psychoanalysis” in *The Revival of Magick and Other Essays* (Las Vegas: New Falcon/O.T.O., 1998), 81.

London.<sup>111</sup> However, Fortune eventually turned to the Western Esoteric Tradition as a means for self-expression and self-exploration. Fortune's most important contribution to the Western Esoteric Tradition's understanding of the *sefirot* comes from her work *The Mystical Qabalah*. Fortune does not imply that her work reflects an unbroken lineage from Jewish Kabbalah rather than the Kabbalistic interpretations of the Western Esoteric Tradition are legitimate descendants.<sup>112</sup>

Fortune, like Bruno, saw that Kabbalah and its components brought together various forms of human inquiry. Fortune states that the Tree of Life "is a compendium of science, psychology, philosophy, and theology."<sup>113</sup> *The Mystical Qabalah* goes into great depth in analysing the nature of the *sefirot* as understood from within the Tradition. However, unlike the writings of Luria, Pico, or Bruno names and terms like Freud, transcendental psychology, psychoanalysts, superconsciousness, dream-analysis, analytical psychology, and subconscious mind are used in tandem with the already familiar Kabbalistic terminology. The *sefirot* of the Western Esoteric Tradition now began to be linked with the psyche. Along with Fortune, Israel Regardie also linked the meaning of the *sefirot* in the Western Esoteric Tradition with psychology.

Israel Regardie, like Crowley and Fortune before him, followed in the traditions of the Golden Dawn. Also like Fortune, Regardie found that psychology and the Western Esoteric Tradition had many common points. Psychologists such as Wilhelm Reich, Freud and Jung greatly influenced Regardie.<sup>114</sup> Along with psychology, the practice and

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<sup>111</sup> One of Fortune's public lectures to the London School of Medicine was published under the title "The Machinery of the Mind."

<sup>112</sup> Fortune, *The Mystical Qabalah*, 2, 20.

<sup>113</sup> Fortune, *The Mystical Qabalah*, 13.

<sup>114</sup> Regardie studied psychotherapy under Dr. Nandor Fodor, Dr. E. Clegg, and Dr. J. L. Bendit. For more on this subject see: Gerald Suster, *Crowley's Apprentice: The Life and Ideas of Israel Regardie* (York Beach, ME: Samuel Weiser, 1990).

theories of chiropractic medicine also influenced Regardie. Regardie published several works pertaining to the *sefirot* and the Tree of Life. His most influential Kabbalistic works are *The Tree of Life*,<sup>115</sup> *A Garden of Pomegranates*<sup>116</sup> and *The Middle Pillar*.<sup>117</sup> The latter work deals with a ritual of the same name taught in the Golden Dawn that is used to “charge” the *sefirot* of the Middle Pillar of the Tree of Life<sup>118</sup> as they are found in the human body.<sup>119</sup> As with early Jewish Kabbalah, the *sefirot* of the Western Esoteric Tradition are intimately linked to the human body and mind. One other figure stands out in this attempt to bring together psychology and the Western Esoteric Tradition, Gareth Knight.

Gareth Knight has made several substantial contributions to the development of the *sefirot* in the Western Esoteric Tradition. An author of many seminars, books, and articles concerning Kabbalah and the *sefirot*, Knight has left a living legacy not only through his writings but also through his work with the Society of the Inner Light<sup>120</sup> and his lecturing. By far, Knight’s most important contribution to the development of the *sefirot* is his *A Practical Guide to Qabalistic Symbolism*. Though Knight’s approach to the Western Esoteric Tradition is primarily informed by currents of Rosicrucian thought and mystical Christianity, *A Practical Guide* is a superb example of how the *sefirot* are generally used and interpreted within the Western Esoteric Tradition. The work is

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<sup>115</sup> Israel Regardie, *The Tree of Life: A Study in Magic*, 3<sup>rd</sup> ed. edited and annotated by Chic and Sandra Tabatha Cicero (St. Paul, MINN: Llewellyn Publications, 2002).

<sup>116</sup> Israel Regardie, *A Garden of Pomegranates: Scrying on the Tree of Life*, 3<sup>rd</sup> ed. edited and annotated by Chic and Sandra Tabatha Cicero (St. Paul: Llewellyn, 2002).

<sup>117</sup> Israel Regardie, *The Middle Pillar: The Balance Between Mind and Magic*, 3<sup>rd</sup> ed. edited and annotated by Chic and Sandra Tabatha Cicero (St. Paul: Llewellyn, 1998). Regardie also published a work analysing alchemy from a Jungian perspective entitled *The Philosopher’s Stone* (St. Paul, MN: Llewellyn Publications, 1970).

<sup>118</sup> From the top down, they are: *Kether*, *Binah/Da’at*, *Tiferet*, *Yesod*, and *Malkut*.

<sup>119</sup> Crown, throat, Solar Plexus, genitals, and feet respectively.

<sup>120</sup> London based Esoteric Order founded by Dion Fortune. Knight joined in 1953.

divided into two parts. Part One is entitled “On the Spheres of the Tree of Life” and Part Two is entitled “On the Paths and the Tarot.” Essentially both parts trace the main aspects of the Western Esoteric Traditions and how the *sefirot* and the entire Tree of Life fit within that Tradition.

Knight, as with Fortune and Regardie, uses psychology (primarily “Jungian”) to help clarify the nature of the Tree of Life and the *sefirot* yet also like Fortune and Regardie, Knight sees that the methodologies and models of psychology are too limiting and too narrow. However, the terms and theories of psychology are still to be found within Knight’s *A Practical Guide*:

Students familiar with Jungian psychology can get some conception of their [i.e., the four elements] application by considering the four Jungian psychological functions of intuition, feeling, intellect, and sensation, which corresponds to Air, Water, Fire, and Earth and which on the lower Sephiroth of the Tree can be equated with Tiphareth, Netzach, Hod, and Malkut.<sup>121</sup>

The equation of the *sefirot* with the human body by Jewish Kabbalah brought the *sefirot* into an intimate connection with the individual. Here we see an even more intimate connection between the individual and the *sefirot* via the psyche. In the Western Esoteric Tradition we see that the psyche and the *sefirot* are connected. The *sefirot* and the Tree of Life act as a template through which one can study and experience the psyche. Instead of speaking of the self, the Esoterist speaks of *Tiferet*. Instead of using the term “shadow”, the lunar qualities of *Yesod* or perhaps the discarded dark shells of the *sefirot*, the *qliphoth*, could be used.<sup>122</sup>

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<sup>121</sup> Knight, *Practical Guide*, 72-73.

<sup>122</sup> There is no standardisation in how the *sefirot* can be applied to the psyche (or in this case the model of the psyche employed by analytical psychology). Personal insights and understanding are at the root of the application of the *sefirot* to other constructs of order.

The equalising nature of the self can be objectified and meditated upon through the myriad of symbols that correspond to the Western Esoteric interpretation of *Tiferet*. The paths surrounding the *sefirot* afford the Esotericist various angles of approach. Each of the connecting paths on the Tree of Life is a combination of the two *sefirot* that it, the path, connects. *Tiferet* can be approached through intellect (*Hod*), through emotion (*Netzach*), through the rigid Martian strength of “hard love” (*Geburah*), through loving kindness (*Hesed*) or via a “mystical” experience of unity (*Kether*). The approach toward *Tiferet* would depend on one’s psychological disposition. If one is lacking in self-discipline one could meditate and experience *Tiferet* via *Geburah*. By focusing on the Martian qualities of the *sefira*<sup>123</sup> the Esotericist develops a rapport with those attributes in his or her psyche. In the case of a negative anima/animus (perhaps an imbalance in *Tiferet*) the strength needed to confront the issue could be gained through this type of cultivation.

Not all Esotericists would agree with this approach. A psychologically minded practitioner will evoke (call forward) a “demon”, “angel”, or “entity”, for example, understanding that the image being formulated in the imagination (usually in some form or degree of altered state of consciousness) is a representation or metaphor of their unconscious or portion thereof. There are some practitioners who see such an undertaking as entirely objective. The evoked demons are real and separate from the individual. Still, others posit a middle ground. Even if the demons are “just in the mind”, the mind has a great influence on the body so what is real for the mind, is real for the body. Or as Lon Milo DuQuette states in his *Chicken Qabalah*, “The answer is

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<sup>123</sup> Number 5, colour red, steel, Mars, Fire, Horus, Thor, Sulphur, etc.

simple. The spirits and every other denizen of objective reality are all in your head — only—you have no idea how infinitely huge your head is!”<sup>124</sup>

### **Summary of Western Esoteric Kabbalah**

The Western Esoteric Tradition follows the approach of Hermetic Kabbalah. The *sefirot* function as a means of arranging and of ordering the universe. However, aside from attempting to penetrate the mysteries of the natural world, the individuals within the Western Esoteric Tradition<sup>125</sup> look also to the depths of the psyche for meaning. Yet there is still more to the Western Esoteric world-view than the psyche. According to the Tradition, both the natural world and the “inner realms” of the mind have a greater complexity than is generally accounted for.<sup>126</sup>

While other interpretations of Kabbalah incorporated an understanding of thought and of the mind, the Western Esoteric Tradition, as understood in our current understanding of the Tradition, was in its early stages of development during a period when the psychologies of Freud and Jung were becoming established. This parallel growth meant that the Western Esoteric Tradition found in analytical psychology and psychoanalysis a different vocabulary to describe the very process they adapted from the Judaic, Christian, and Hermetic Kabbalah.

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<sup>124</sup> Lon Milo Duquette, *The Chicken Qabalah of Rabbi Lamed Ben Clifford*, (York Beach, MN: Weiser Books, 2001), 99.

<sup>125</sup> Or at least the individuals listed in this thesis.

<sup>126</sup> The Western Esoteric Tradition also attempts to understand what Jung termed synchronicity. Various practices such as *gematria* (i.e. the substitution of letters for numbers in a word where the resulting number corresponds to any other word with the same numeration) or divination practice help the practitioner find acausal patterns in their environment. Of course, this is an imposed “Jungian” interpretation of esoteric practices. The Esotericists would see these practices as reflecting and underlying universal order or structure.

The focus of the *sefirot* not only included the psyche but also all things in the universe. If the *sefirot* are the building blocks or archetypes of existence then they should be evident throughout the universe. The responsibility is on the individual to cultivate his or her personal connection to the *sefirot* and to understand how the *sefirot* interplay within one's interiority and daily life.

One major difference between the Western Esoteric Tradition's interpretation of Kabbalah and the *sefirot* and the other traditions, is the lack of a central text. Judaism has not only the *Torah*, but also a diverse collection of Kabbalistic works and treaties; Christian Kabbalah has the Hebrew Bible and the New Testament while the Corpus Hermeticum enriches Hermetic Kabbalah. However, the Western Esoteric Tradition, in general, has no central texts, at least in the conventional sense of the word yet thanks to individuals such as Lévi, the Book of Thoth (the Tarot) corresponds to the *sefirot* and the Tree of Life.<sup>127</sup> This book of symbolic images and transformations can be seen as providing an underlying structure that is supplied in the other forms of Kabbalah through their specific scriptures.

### **Conclusion to Chapter One**

We have seen that the *sefirot* are not unique to Jewish Kabbalah. Other traditions have found great wisdom in applying them, and their implicit order, to a pre-existing world-view. However, *sefirot* do not create order or structure out of nothing. In each of the aforementioned interpretations of Kabbalah and the *sefirot*, there was a previously established world-view. The *sefirot* simply rearranged, restructured the world-view to

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<sup>127</sup> Though Christian oriented individuals or Orders will use the Bible and Esotericists such as Thelemites might employ Crowley's "channeled" work, *Liber AL vel Legis*.

allow for a “fresh” or organic view. Hermetic Kabbalah, for example, could not have developed as it had were it not for the spiritual and intellectual currents of the Renaissance informing it and, in the context of philosophy and religion Renaissance thought was enriched by Kabbalistic concepts.

The *sefirot* and the Tree of Life are symbols that become intimately entwined with the world-view that uses them. The result of that intimate connection is that the world-view is afforded a perspective which is open to metaphorical interpretations, patterns of interconnectedness and a more inclusive view of nature and levels of reality. The downside of this inclusiveness is that not all applications of the *sefirot* are useful. At times the inclusiveness simply amplifies “negative” attributes within the world-view, forming connections that constrict rather than expand perception and understanding as can be seen in the Christian Kabbalists, such as Pico, use of the *sefirot* to justify their own world-view over that of Judaism.

One tradition that uses the Tree of Life and the *sefirot* that has not been mentioned is the “New Age” movement. Since this thesis is not concerned with New Age spirituality, no analysis of this use of the *sefirot* will be conducted. Generally speaking the New Age Kabbalah is loosely based on Jewish Kabbalah, without the need to be governed by the edicts of Judaism. Authors and Kabbalists such as Z’ev ben Shimon Halevi [Warren Kenton]<sup>128</sup> and Dr. Phillip S. Berg<sup>129</sup> are two examples of Kabbalists that fit, one could argue, more fully under the aegis of the New Age movement than Judaism. There are, of course, Kabbalistic sources from any of the other

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<sup>128</sup> Z’ev ben Shimon Halevi, *A Kabbalistic Universe* (York Beach, ME: Samuel Weiser Inc., 1988) and *Psychology and Kabbalah* (York Beach, ME: Samuel Weiser Inc., 1992).

<sup>129</sup> Philip S. Berg, *Kabbalah for the Layman Vols. I-III* (Israel: Press of the Research Centre of Kabbalah, 1987).

aforementioned types of Kabbalah that reflect attributes of the New Age movement. However, in the case of New Age or “Pop-Kabbalah” the underlying world-view is clearly the New Age movement.

This chapter has attempted to give a brief outline of how the *sefirot* and the Tree of Life have been incorporated into various cosmologies. Implied in each of the application of the *sefirot* is the notion of order and connectedness. This understanding of the *sefirot* will be applied to another tradition, one that is not noted for its connection to Kabbalah or the *sefirot*. This tradition was founded by C.G. Jung and is known as analytical psychology.

## **Chapter Two**

**The Conjunction, The Self, and the Thirty-Two Paths:**

**C.G. Jung's Understanding of the *Sefirot***

In order to better understand how Jung applied Kabbalah in his writings we will review, in chronological order, various references to Kabbalah within the *Collected Works*. In “Analytical Psychology and ‘Weltanschauung’”<sup>1</sup> Jung discusses the German expression *Weltanschauung*; a term he defines as “an attitude that has been formulated into concepts.”<sup>2</sup> The question Jung wishes to address is do “the findings of analytical psychology add something new to our *Weltanschauung*, or not?”<sup>3</sup> Our *Weltanschauung*, or loosely our view of the world, errs when we take names of things for the things themselves.<sup>4</sup> Jung juxtaposes the scientific method with examples of “unconscious primitivity.”<sup>5</sup> Whereas science deals with working hypotheses that can change (Jung gives the example that the scientist does not argue whether or not the name of the planet Neptune is the “right” name for it) the “primitive” or “old style” emphasises the true name and is therefore solidified. One example of this “old style” given by Jung was the idea that “[f]or the Cabalists the possession of the true name of God meant absolute magic power.”<sup>6</sup>

Rather than look to the past or rely solely on the rational scientific perspective to find a new or vital world-view, i.e. *Weltanschauung*, analytical psychology can offer new possibilities to that end. For Jung analytical psychology is a means to utilise the tools of reason without losing the depth of the unconscious reflected in “primitive” thought: “Analytical psychology tries to resolve the resultant conflict not by going ‘back to Nature’ with Rousseau, but by holding on to the level of reason we have successfully

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<sup>1</sup> Jung, “Analytical Psychology and ‘Weltanschauung’”, *CW 8*, pars. 689-748.

<sup>2</sup> Jung, “Weltanschauung”, *CW 8*, par. 689.

<sup>3</sup> Jung, “Weltanschauung”, *CW 8*, par. 701.

<sup>4</sup> Jung, “Weltanschauung”, *CW 8*, par. 735.

<sup>5</sup> Jung, “Weltanschauung”, *CW 8*, par. 736.

<sup>6</sup> Jung, “Weltanschauung”, *CW 8*, par. 735.

reached, and by enriching consciousness with a knowledge of man's psychic foundations.”<sup>7</sup>

Jung mentions Kabbalah in several places within his notes on *Dream Analysis*.<sup>8</sup> During a seminar on June 26<sup>th</sup> 1929, Jung discusses the book *The Golem (Der Golem)* by Gustav Meyrink.<sup>9</sup> This book is referenced in several places throughout the seminars and it is in this context that Kabbalah is discussed by Jung.<sup>10</sup> One important Kabbalistic notion raised in relation to *The Golem*, God as hermaphrodite, was suggested by Mrs. Alice Lewisohn Crowley<sup>11</sup> and commented on by Jung.<sup>12</sup> Though based on Kabbalistic lore, *The Golem* is not a Kabbalistic work.

In “A Study in the Process of Individuation” Jung refers to the “kliploth” or shards associated with the creation of the *sefirot* as found in Lurianic schools; he also cites Knorr von Rosenroth's *Kabbala Denudata*.<sup>13</sup> Further in the same work, Jung comments on the possible Kabbalistic influences on the works of Jacob Böhme. He acknowledges that while Böhme viewed Kabbalah as a form of magic, and presumably somewhat suspect, there are related themes in Kabbalah and Böhme such as the triplex notion of divinity (for example the *Tetragrammaton* while composed of four letters is actually only three with one repeated).<sup>14</sup> Finally, Jung amplifies a patient's image by

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<sup>7</sup> Jung, “Weltanschauung”, *CW* 8, par. 739.

<sup>8</sup> Jung, *Dream Analysis: Notes of the Seminar Given in 1928-1930 by C.G. Jung*, William McGuire, ed. (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1984).

<sup>9</sup> *The Golem* is first mentioned by Dr. Bauer (p.276) who is not recorded in the “Members of the Seminar” list given on page xviii-xix.

<sup>10</sup> Jung's interpretation and translation of the story can be found in Jung, *Dream Analysis Seminar*, 501-506.

<sup>11</sup> Jung, *Dream Analysis Seminar*, 504.

<sup>12</sup> Jung, *Dream Analysis Seminar*, 504-506.

<sup>13</sup> Jung, “A Study in the Process of Individuation”, *CW* 9i, par. 576.

<sup>14</sup> Jung, “A Study in the Process of Individuation”, *CW* 9i, par. 579.

relating portions of it to the four beasts of *Merkabah* (The Chariot) and Ezekiel's vision.<sup>15</sup>

“Individual Dream Symbolism in Relation to Alchemy”<sup>16</sup> contains a reference to the thirty-two paths of Kabbalah (ten *sefirot* and the twenty-two letters) as found in Kabbalistic sources such as the *Sefer Yetsirah* and the *Sefer Bahir* mentioned in Chapter One. This particular use of Kabbalah is highlighted below when we analyse Wolfgang Pauli's World Clock dream. A second Kabbalistic reference is made in *Psychology and Alchemy* (*CW 12*) in the paper “Religious Ideas in Alchemy”. The reference is a citation made by Jung regarding the Monad as being synonymous with the *prima materia* in alchemy.<sup>17</sup>

The 1942 “Paracelsus as a Spiritual Phenomenon” has references to various Christian Kabbalists who helped to bring Kabbalah into the alchemical tradition; Jung cites figures such as Agrippa<sup>18</sup> and Pico della Mirandola<sup>19</sup> as sources for Paracelsus' knowledge of Kabbalah, such as it was.<sup>20</sup> Specifically, Jung makes reference to commonalities between Kabbalah and alchemy: “Just as the wisdom of Cabala coincided with the Sapientia of alchemy, so the figure of Adam Kadmon was identified with the *filius philosophorum*.”<sup>21</sup> We can see from this citation an example of Jung's interest in the Kabbalah of Agrippa and Pico and its relation to alchemy with the latter tradition being the more imperative influence on Jung's thought.

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<sup>15</sup> Jung, “A Study in the Process of Individuation”, *CW 9i*, par. 588 n.136.

<sup>16</sup> Jung, “Individual Dream Symbolism in Relation to Alchemy”, *CW 12*.

<sup>17</sup> Jung, “Individual Dream Symbolism in Relation to Alchemy”, *CW 12*, par. 427 n.4

<sup>18</sup> Jung, “Paracelsus as a Spiritual Phenomenon”, *CW 13*, par. 152.

<sup>19</sup> Jung, “Paracelsus as a Spiritual Phenomenon”, *CW 13*, par. 167 & 173n.

<sup>20</sup> Jung, “Paracelsus as a Spiritual Phenomenon”, *CW 13*, par. 168.

<sup>21</sup> Jung, “Paracelsus as a Spiritual Phenomenon”, *CW 13*, par. 168.

In “The Philosophical Tree” Jung comments on the image of the inverted tree (*arbour inversa*) being a common form of the Kabbalistic Tree of Life.<sup>22</sup> Jung cites Blaise de Vigenère (Blasius Vigenerus) who he says “had some knowledge of the Cabala and is...comparing the philosophical tree with the tree of the Sefiroth, which is actually a mystical world-tree. But for him this tree also signifies man.”<sup>23</sup> Here we see the linking of a macrocosmic Tree of Life with the microcosm of the human being.

In the same paper Jung cites Knorr von Rosenroth. Jung states:

Knorr von Rosenroth is of the opinion that the “great tree” refers to Tifereth, the bridegroom of Malchuth. The upper Sefirah Binah is named the “root of the tree,” and in Binah is rooted the tree of life. Because this stood in the middle of the garden, it was called the *linea media* (middle line). Through the middle line, which was as it were the trunk of the Sefiroth system, it brought life down to earth from Binah.<sup>24</sup>

*Aion* reveals several Kabbalistic assertions made by Jung. In the chapter titled “Christ, A Symbol of the Self” Jung discusses the dual nature of God—that is to say God contains both good and evil. Jung refers to the *Book of Job*, the Bogomils<sup>25</sup> and Cathars<sup>26</sup>, and finally, “the two sides of the cabalistic Tree of the Sephiroth, which were named *hesed* (love) and *din* (justice).”<sup>27</sup> For Jung, the Kabbalistic Tree of Life reflected the dual nature of the Biblical God: merciful and forgiving and at the same time stern and vengeful. Jung then presents substantiating citations compiled by Rabbinical scholar Zwi Werblowsky.

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<sup>22</sup> Jung, “The Philosophical Tree”, *CW 13*, pars. 410-414.

<sup>23</sup> Jung, “The Philosophical Tree”, *CW 13*, par. 411.

<sup>24</sup> Jung, “The Philosophical Tree”, *CW 13*, par. 411.

<sup>25</sup> The Bogomils were a medieval Balkan sect of Manichaeism origin.

<sup>26</sup> The name Cathars was applied to several sects in patristic times, but is generally applied to dissenters who posed a serious challenge to the Church of the 12<sup>th</sup> and 13<sup>th</sup> centuries. E.A. Livingstone, *Oxford Concise Dictionary of the Christian Church*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), 103.

<sup>27</sup> Jung, *Aion*, *CW 9ii*, par. 105.

Further on, Jung again mentions the Kabbalistic influence on the thought of Jacob Böhme. Of Böhme Jung writes: “In his writings we find a similar ambivalence, namely the love and the ‘wrath-fire’ of God, in which Lucifer burns for ever.”<sup>28</sup> Jung, while presenting these doctrinal and metaphysical assumptions clearly states that he is approaching these subjects from a psychological perspective. To Jung the idea of the *privatio boni*, an attitude he sees the Kabbalistic Tree countering, “is in a sense responsible for a too optimistic conception of the evil in human nature and for a too pessimistic view of the human soul.”<sup>29</sup>

In a footnote corresponding to a citation by Hippolytus on the Monad or Son of Man, Jung refers to the connection between the Greek letter “*Iota*” (ι) and the Hebrew letter “*Yod*” ( י ). In both cases he states that the relationship of *Iota* to the self is the same as that of *Yod* to the *lapis* in Kabbalah<sup>30</sup> and, citing the *Sha’are Kedusha*, the “Original Man, Adam, signifies the little hook at the top of the letter Yod.”<sup>31</sup>

Jung discusses the Kabbalistic influences on alchemy saying that: “Jewish cabalism, made extremely interesting attempts, from the modern point of view, to synthesize a unitary vision of the world in which the physical and the mystical aspects played equal parts.” Jung continues by stating that “[h]ad this attempt succeeded, we would not be witnessing today the curious spectacle of two parallel world-views neither of which knows, or wishes to know, anything about the other.”<sup>32</sup> Finally, Jung considers the unity of the anima and animus as representative of a *coniunctio oppositorum* and

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<sup>28</sup> Jung, *Aion*, *CW 9ii*, par. 111. Jung again mentions the Kabbalistic influence, as well as the alchemical, on Böhme in par. 191.

<sup>29</sup> Jung, *Aion*, *CW 9ii*, par. 113.

<sup>30</sup> Jung, *Aion*, *CW 9ii*, par. 340 n.136.

<sup>31</sup> Jung, *Aion*, *CW 9ii*, par. 340 n.136.

<sup>32</sup> Jung, *Aion*, *CW 9ii*, par. 267.

offers the Kabbalistic example of the union of “Tifereth and Malchuth or God and the Shekhinah.”<sup>33</sup>

As with “A Study in the Process of Individuation”, Jung mentions the *qlippot* in “Answer to Job”. He states that through Job’s moral action “a mortal man is raised...above the stars in heaven, from which position of advantage he can behold the back of Yahweh, the abysmal world of the ‘shards’.”<sup>34</sup> The corresponding footnote offers a brief description of the *qlippot*: “This is an allusion to an ideal found in later cabalistic philosophy”<sup>35</sup>—the editors of the *Collected Works* also added a more thorough description of the *qlippot*. Later in “Answer to Job”, Jung again refers to the joining of “Yahweh” and *Shekinah* (as equivalent to Sophia).<sup>36</sup>

Jung’s *Magnus Opus*, *Mysterium Coniunctionis*, presents an impressive and sustained use of Kabbalistic concepts; again, primarily in relation to alchemy. Jung again acknowledges a connection between Kabbalah and alchemy: “Directly or indirectly the Cabala was assimilated into alchemy. Relationships must have existed between them at a very early date though it is difficult to trace them in the sources.”<sup>37</sup> This connection is evident when Jung discusses or references various Kabbalistic concepts or related parallels: the image of opposition in the alchemical King and Queen<sup>38</sup>, the symbol of the crown in alchemy<sup>39</sup>, the image of the widow<sup>40</sup>, mystic marriage (in this case the bride is

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<sup>33</sup> Jung, *Aion*, *CW 9ii*, par. 425.

<sup>34</sup> Jung, “Answer to Job”, *CW 11*, par. 595.

<sup>35</sup> Jung, “Answer to Job”, *CW 11*, par. 595 n. 8.

<sup>36</sup> Jung, “Answer to Job”, *CW 11*, par. 727.

<sup>37</sup> Jung, *Mysterium Coniunctionis*, *CW 14*, par. 19.

<sup>38</sup> Jung, *Mysterium Coniunctionis*, *CW 14*, par. 2 n.5. Here Jung states that “In the Cabala... red denotes the female, white (the left side) the male.”

<sup>39</sup> Jung, *Mysterium Coniunctionis*, *CW 14*, par. 6 n. 32: “In the Cabala the highest Sefirah (like the lowest) is called Kether, the Crown.” Jung gives no source for this claim.

<sup>40</sup> Jung, *Mysterium Coniunctionis*, *CW 14*, par. 14 n. 69. “‘Widow’ in the Cabala is a designation for Malchuth.”

Israel)<sup>41</sup>, the chariot<sup>42</sup>, and the nature of Adam (here Jung cites the *Zohar*)<sup>43</sup>. Aside from these minor references, Jung also goes into further detail with the interconnection between aspects of Kabbalah and alchemy.

Jung returns, in greater detail, to the “widow” motif in Kabbalistic thought.<sup>44</sup> Here we see Jung, using Knorr—who in turn used the *Pardes Rimmonim*<sup>45</sup>, discussing the connection between *Malkut* and *Tiferet* and the interaction between the *sefirot* of, though he does not use this term, the Middle Pillar of the Tree of Life.<sup>46</sup> Jung also discusses the bridal chamber (*thalamus*) and its connection to *Yesod* and *Malkut* (which Jung equates to the Luna in alchemy).<sup>47</sup> *Adam Kadmon* (and the associated *sefirot*) is another major area of Kabbalistic thought that Jung analyses.<sup>48</sup> We will return to *Adam Kadmon* in more detail below.

In his “Flying Saucers: A Modern Myth” Jung makes mention of the *sefira Tiferet* as being a Kabbalistic equivalent to the self (as is Christ, Khidr, atman, Tao, Buddha, and Mondamin).<sup>49</sup> Interestingly, Jung equates the *sefira Tiferet* with the self and not the more inclusive *Kether*.

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<sup>41</sup> Jung, *Mysterium Coniunctionis*, *CW 14*, par. 25.

<sup>42</sup> Jung, *Mysterium Coniunctionis*, *CW 14*, par. 266. “In the Cabala this chariot (Merkabah) plays an important role as the vehicle on which the believers mount up to God and the human soul unites with the world-soul.”

<sup>43</sup> Jung, *Mysterium Coniunctionis*, *CW 14*, par. 572 n. 106.

<sup>44</sup> Jung, *Mysterium Coniunctionis*, *CW 14*, pars. 18-19.

<sup>45</sup> Jung, *Mysterium Coniunctionis*, *CW 14*, par. 18 n.111.

<sup>46</sup> Jung, *Mysterium Coniunctionis*, *CW 14*, par. 18.

<sup>47</sup> Jung, *Mysterium Coniunctionis*, *CW 14*, par. 19.

<sup>48</sup> Jung, *Mysterium Coniunctionis*, *CW 14*, especially pars. 544-653.

<sup>49</sup> Jung, “Flying Saucers: A Modern Myth”, *CW 10*, par. 779.

Aside from general references to Kabbalah, Jung also made references to the various *sefirot* and *En-sof*. In the *Collected Works*, Jung refers to the following *sefirot*, listed from most cited to least (the spelling varies in the *Collected Works*):

1. *Malkut*<sup>50</sup>
2. *Tiferet*<sup>51</sup>
3. *Kether*<sup>52</sup>
4. *Yesod/Jezoth*<sup>53</sup>
5. *Binah*<sup>54</sup>
6. *Hokmah*<sup>55</sup>
7. *En-sof*<sup>56</sup>
8. *Geburah/Din*<sup>57</sup>
9. *Hesed/Gedulah*<sup>58</sup>

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<sup>50</sup> See Jung, “A Study in the Process of Individuation”, *CW 9i*, par. 576n; *Aion*, *CW 9ii*, par. 425; “The Philosophical Tree”, *CW 12*, par. 411; *Mysterium Coniunctionis*, *CW 14*, pars. 14n, 18-19, 25n, 45n, 327, 568-569, 592, 604n, 607, 635, 643n, 652. See also Jung, *Letters*, v.2, pp. 34&n, 92&n and *MDR*, p. 294&n.

<sup>51</sup> See Jung, *Aion*, *CW 9ii*, par. 425; “Flying Saucers: A Modern Myth”, *CW 10*, par. 779; “The Philosophical Tree”, *CW 13*, par. 411; *Mysterium Coniunctionis*, *CW 14*, pars. 18, 327, 568, 592, 604n, 634n, 635; “The Psychology of the Transference”, *CW 16*, par. 497n; “Jung and Religious Belief”, *CW 18*, par. 1672. See also Jung, *Letters* v.1, p. 356&n and v.2, pp. 34n, 92, 571; *MDR*, p. 294&n.

<sup>52</sup> See Jung, “A Study in the Process of Individuation”, *CW 9i*, par. 576n; “Individual Dream Symbolism in Relation to Alchemy”, *CW 12*, par. 313; *Mysterium Coniunctionis*, *CW 14* pars. 6n, 18, 158n, 592n, 643n, 652; “The Psychology of the Transference”, *CW 16*, pars. 497n, 498n. See also, Jung, *Letters* v.2, pp. 34&n, 92, 122&n.

<sup>53</sup> See Jung, “A Study in the Process of Individuation”, *CW 9i*, par. 557n; *Mysterium Coniunctionis*, *CW 14*, pars. 18, 643-648.

<sup>54</sup> See Jung, “A Study in the Process of Individuation”, *CW 9i*, pars. 576n, 588n; ; “Individual Dream Symbolism in Relation to Alchemy”, *CW 12*, par. 313; “The Philosophical Tree”, *CW 13*, par. 411; *Mysterium Coniunctionis*, *CW 14*, par. 643n. See also, Jung, *Letters*, v.2, p. 92&n.

<sup>55</sup> See Jung, “A Study in the Process of Individuation”, *CW 9i*, par. 588n; “Answer to Job”, *CW 11*, par. 610; “Individual Dream Symbolism in Relation to Alchemy”, *CW 12*, par. 313, *Mysterium Coniunctionis*, *CW 14*, pars. 619n, 643n. See also, Jung, *Letters* v.2, p.92&n.

<sup>56</sup> See Jung, *Mysterium Coniunctionis*, *CW 14*, pars. 592&n, 594, 600.

<sup>57</sup> See Jung, “A Study in the Process of Individuation”, *CW 9i*, par. 588n; *Aion*, *CW 9ii*, par. 105; *Mysterium Coniunctionis*, *CW 14*, par. 633n.

<sup>58</sup> See Jung, “A Study in the Process of Individuation”, *CW 9i*, par. 588n.

Jung makes no mention of *Netzach* or *Hod* in the *Collected Works*.

The above citations are given as a general outline of Jung's use of Kabbalah. We see that he began writing about it, or at least mentioning it, in the late 1920's and he continued to write about it in his later works, culminating principally in *Mysterium Coniunctionis*. Clearly Kabbalah was an important tradition to Jung's psychology. What follows is a more in-depth examination of some areas of Jung's use of Kabbalah, especially in relation to the conjunction of alchemy.

Jung incorporated aspects and theories found in religious and spiritual traditions into his understanding of psychology throughout his forays into the human psyche. Many arcane images and symbols reflected, in Jung's mind, the process of psychological maturation, i.e. *individuation*. Jung found that there was historical evidence for his understanding of the psyche in esoteric traditions such as alchemy.<sup>59</sup> He claimed that the alchemists, lacking an "objective" understanding of the psyche and its processes, utilised symbolic imagery and arcane writings to record psychological transformations. With three entire volumes of the *Collected Works* dedicated to a psychological interpretation of alchemy (and portions of several other volumes that demonstrate a similar influence) there is little doubt that this complex occult art was an important contribution to Jung's model of the psyche.

In *MDR* Jung recounts his understanding of the importance of alchemy in relation to psychology:

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<sup>59</sup> Jung's interest in alchemy is well documented in his *Memories, Dreams, Reflections* (C.G. Jung. *Memories, Dreams, Reflections* Aniela Jaffé ed., Richard and Clara Winston trans. (New York: Vintage Books, 1989); Marie-Louise von Franz's *Alchemy: An Introduction to the Symbolism and the Psychology* (Toronto: Inner City Books, 1980); and Edward F. Edinger's *The Mysterium Lectures* (Toronto: Inner City Books, 1995).

I had very soon seen that analytical psychology coincided in a most curious way with alchemy. The experiences of the alchemists were, in a sense, my experiences, and their world was my world. This was, of course, a momentous discovery: I had stumbled upon the historical counterpart of my psychology of the unconscious. The possibility of a comparison with alchemy, and the uninterrupted intellectual chain back to Gnosticism, gave substance to my psychology.<sup>60</sup>

Jung's *Letters* also reveal his depth of knowledge and interest in Kabbalah in the following piece of correspondence with analyst James Kirsch:

...I can call your attention to the extraordinary development in the Kabbalah. I am rather certain that the *sefiot* tree contains the whole symbolism of Jewish development parallel to the Christian idea. The characteristic difference is that God's incarnation is understood to be a historical fact in the Christian belief, while in Jewish Gnosis it is an entirely pleromatic process symbolized by the concentration of the supreme triad of Kether, Hokhmah, and Binah in the figure of Tifereth. Being the equivalent of the Son and the Holy Ghost, he is the *sponsus* bringing about the great solution through his union with Malkuth.<sup>61</sup>

For Jung alchemy was not at odds with his psychology. Rather, this obscure tradition deepened and enriched his psychology. Related to alchemy, in depth and richness of meaning, is Kabbalah and the *sefirot*.

Sanford Drob suggests, in his *Kabbalistic Metaphors*, that Kabbalah, rather than alchemy, is the more prevalent esoteric tradition in Jung's writings. Drob states that for

every reference to the Kabbalah in Jung's writings there are several to Gnosticism, and perhaps dozens to alchemy: yet the interpretations that Jung places on Gnosticism (itself a close cousin to the Kabbalah), and the very texts to which Jung refers to on alchemy, were profoundly kabbalistic, so much so that one could call the Jung of the *Mysterium Coniunctionis* and other later works, a Kabbalist in contemporary guise.<sup>62</sup>

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<sup>60</sup> Jung, *MDR*, 205.

<sup>61</sup> Jung, *C.G. Jung Letters*, v.2, G. Adler, ed. (Princeton NJ: Princeton University Press, 1975), 92.

<sup>62</sup> Sanford Drob, *Kabbalistic Metaphors: Jewish Mystical Themes in Ancient and Modern Thought* (Northvale, NJ: Jason Aronson Inc., 2000), 290.

The evident Kabbalistic nature of Jung's writings, as revealed by Drob, makes an analysis of Jung's use of Kabbalah a useful and necessary undertaking. However, as Jung did state that alchemy was clearly influenced by Kabbalah<sup>63</sup> the debate as to whether or not Jung was more influenced by alchemy or Kabbalah is somewhat unproductive. Ultimately the Kabbalah found in alchemy was not identical to the Kabbalah found in the Jewish tradition so by regarding Kabbalah and alchemy as separate influences on Jung, each with its own unique contribution, we can attempt to find connections between them. For the purpose of this thesis we will look at how Jung specifically used and understood the Kabbalistic concept of the *sefirot*, as a metaphor of order, and how he applied this understanding to his model of the structure of the psyche. In essence the Kabbalists used the *sefirot* as a way to give order and meaning to the universe. Jung, with his focus on the microcosm of the human mind, applied the *sefirot* in a manner that amplifies the order and structure of the processes of the psyche.

From a general perspective, Jung employed five primary symbols of Kabbalah. Though separate, these five are actually interdependent:

1. The symbol of *Adam Kadmon*
2. The unification of opposites
3. The Divine Wedding
4. The *scintillae* (sparks)<sup>64</sup>
5. Number symbolism<sup>65</sup>

These five symbols or Kabbalistic constructs are actually examples of two more inclusive themes. The two themes are the unification of the *sefirot* (numbers 1 to 3 are examples of unification while number 4 indicates the "sparks" of the individual that participate in the

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<sup>63</sup> Jung, *Mysterium Coniunctionis*, *CW 14*, par. 19.

<sup>64</sup> The sparks are used by Jung to refer to a fragment, either a complex or archetype, within the psyche.

<sup>65</sup> Drob, *Kabbalistic Metaphors*, 310.

unification) and the numeration of the *sefirot*. The following portion of this chapter will analyse and give examples of how Jung used these two approaches to the *sefirot*.

### **Jung, Alchemy and the *Sefirot***

Jung viewed the symbolism of alchemy, especially the alchemy of the seventeenth century and later, as a representation of the processes of the unconscious projected onto external objects.<sup>66</sup> Without knowing it, at least in the majority of the cases, the alchemists were recording the relationship between the unconscious and consciousness via their esoteric imagery. Their imagery was, in essence, reflecting the process of the union of opposites or, in the parlance of analytical psychology, the process of individuation.<sup>67</sup> Jung found that alchemy confirmed his understanding of psychology and he also found that the theories of Kabbalah (or at least those theories he was aware of at the time) echoed the alchemical world-view. Jung also noted that some figures within Jewish Kabbalah mirrored his psychology. For example, in “An Eightieth Birthday Interview” Jung is recorded as stating: “But do you know who anticipated my entire psychology in the eighteenth century? The Hasidic Rabbi Baer from Meseritz, whom they called the Great Maggid. He was a most impressive man.”<sup>68</sup> Here we see that Kabbalah, along with alchemy, is cited by Jung as a historical precursor to his psychological theories.

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<sup>66</sup> Jung, “Religious Ideas in Alchemy”, *CW 12*, par. 394.

<sup>67</sup> Jung, *Mysterium Coniunctionis*, *CW 14*, xvii.

<sup>68</sup> William McGuire and R.F.C. Hull, eds., *C.G. Jung Speaking: Interviews and Encounters* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1993), 271-272.

Jung's knowledge of Kabbalah came from both Christian and Jewish sources. Jung cites standard Jewish Kabbalistic texts such as the *Sefer ha-Zohar*<sup>69</sup> (c.1286) and Moses Cordovero's<sup>70</sup> *Pardes Rimmonim*<sup>71</sup> (c.1550) as well as Christian Kabbalistic sources such as Johannes Reuchlin's<sup>72</sup> *De Arte Cabalistica*<sup>73</sup> and Knorr von Rosenroth's<sup>74</sup> *Kabbalah Denudata*<sup>75</sup> (first volume published in 1677). One obvious

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<sup>69</sup> The *Zohar* is attributed to Moses de Leon, d.1305. Jung makes reference to the *Zohar* in: *CW 9i* par. 576n (this note cites the *Zohar* on the nature of the *qlippot* [Jung uses the spelling *klippoth*]); *Aion*, *CW 9ii* par. 168n (reference to the Messiah as being poor and riding on an ass), 180 (refers to the fish that swallowed Jonah died but revived after three days and spit Jonah out), 335 (reference to the Messiah as being the "central column" of the Tree of Life and the column's relation to Metatron); "Answer to Job", *CW 11* par. 595n (reference to the shards or "kelipot" and the breaking of the vessels as the source of evil); "Paracelsus as a Spiritual Phenomenon", *CW 13* par. 168 (reference to Metatron as an example of the Primordial Man); *Mysterium Coniunctionis*, *CW 14* par. 19&n (here Jung is discussing the relation between Kabbalah [Jung uses the spelling *Cabala*] and alchemy), 25n (reference to Israel as the bride of God), 73n (note pertains to the colours white and red in the *Zohar*), 158n (reference to God as the Tree of Life; Jung also cites Gikatilla discussing the Tetragrammaton), 568 (reference is to the influence of the *Zohar* on Vigenerus—specifically the equation of *Malkut* with a statue), 572&n (the story of Adam receiving the secret arts from the angel Raziel), 589n (reference to Lilith taking flight from Adam as Eve appears), 591 (discussion of the influence of Kabbalah and later the *Zohar* on alchemy), 592n (the relation between the *prima materia* in a *nigredo* state and the Kabbalistic notion of the *nefesh* or the lowest part of the soul corresponding to basic drives is discussed), 619n (a citation pertaining to the letter *yod* as a lovelorn moon searching for her Beloved and quoted by Jung as an alternative to the relation between the *Yod* and *He* final of the Tetragrammaton), 630n (Jung cites the *Zohar* that states that which does not contain male and female elements conjoined is not a heavenly or higher figure), 634&n (reference is to the use of phallic symbolism in the *Zohar*), 635n (reference to the nature of *Yesod* as "faithful friend"), 637n (the *Zohar* is cited describing the letter *Teth* as "the fount of life"), 640n (reference to Adam Kadmon as the "capital stone" from which creation is brought into being), 701n (Jung discusses the symbolic nature of rosemary, or "sea dew" in the alchemical process and cites a passage from the *Zohar* that states that dew wakens the dead and is the food of the holy).

<sup>70</sup> 1522-1570.

<sup>71</sup> This text influenced a fantasy experienced by Jung. See *MDR*, 294 and *Mysterium Coniunctionis*, *CW 14* 18n.

<sup>72</sup> 1455-1522. Reuchlin was a German humanist and lawyer who wrote on Kabbalah and Hebrew studies. See *Mysterium Coniunctionis*, *CW 14* par. 18, 591.

<sup>73</sup> See *Mysterium Coniunctionis*, *CW 14* par. 591n

<sup>74</sup> 1636-1689. Knorr von Rosenroth was a Christian German mystic and Kabbalist. See "Individual Dream Symbolism in Relation to Alchemy", *CW 12* par. 313; "The Philosophical Tree", *CW 13* par. 411 and *Mysterium Coniunctionis*, *CW 14* par. 592-593.

<sup>75</sup> See "A Study in the Process of Individuation", *CW 9i* par. 557n, 576n, 596n; "Individual Dream Symbolism in Relation to Alchemy", *CW 12* par. 313n; "The Philosophical Tree", *CW 13* par. 411n; *Mysterium Coniunctionis*, *CW 14* par. 14n, 18nn, 19n, 557n, 568n, 592nn, 593, 619nn, 634nn, 636, 637n, 640nn, 643n; *CW 16* 497n.

scholarly weakness in Jung's Kabbalistic bibliography is the limited reference to Gershom Scholem's work<sup>76</sup> or similar academic studies of Kabbalism.<sup>77</sup>

One of Jung's interests in Kabbalah was centred on the Tree of Life in the guise of the Primordial Man and the interplay of the *sefirot* that comprise the Tree. As we have seen in the Kabbalistic traditions discussed in Chapter One, the Tree and the *sefirot* represent a dynamic process that includes such cosmic motion as contraction, breaking, creation, expansion, and conjoining. The contraction, expansion, breaking and conjunction found with the Tree and the *sefirot* can also be applied to the processes and growth of the psyche.

### ***Adam Kadmon, the Divine Wedding and the Conjunction***

The Kabbalistic concepts of *Adam Kadmon*, the Divine Wedding, and the unification of opposites in the conjunction, all imply a balance or ordering of existence. Each of these concepts helps to define, deepen, and focus the Kabbalistic cosmology. The Kabbalistic concepts undergo an interesting transformation when Jung uses them to support his psychological world-view. As indicated in Chapter One, the Kabbalistic understanding of *Adam Kadmon* is a primordial archetypal image of order and of the microcosm and macrocosm brought into being from the *En-Sof*.

Perhaps the most interesting role of the *Adam Kadmon* from the perspective of Jewish Kabbalah is that "he" simultaneously incorporates the vastness of the universe

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<sup>76</sup> See "Answer to Job", *CW 11* par. 595n; *Mysterium Coniunctionis*, *CW 14* pars. 18n, 19n, 557n, 592n, 594n, 610n, 625n, 634n; *Letters v.1*, 356n, 513n and *v.2*, 92n, 359n.

<sup>77</sup> Another possibility for this omission is Jung's attempt to play down the Jewish nature of Kabbalah. See Drob, *Kabbalistic Metaphors*, 340-343 for Drob's perspective on the relation between Jung and Judaism. For one analysis of the relation between Jung and Scholem, one that would appear to have been, at least in some ways, cordial, see Steven M. Wasserstrom, *Religion After Religion*, (New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1999), 187-190.

(where one small portion of *Adam Kadmon* is understood to represent vast galaxies) and the intimate confines of the human body.<sup>78</sup> All of creation is thus represented through the symbolism of the *sefirot* that form *Adam Kadmon*.

When Jung compared *Adam Kadmon*<sup>79</sup> to similar alchemical terms he viewed *Adam Kadmon* (and we could extend the comparison to the Kabbalistic Tree of Life as another symbolic representation of *Adam Kadmon*) as a symbol parallel to the alchemist's *solve et coagula* or the process of the separation and union of opposites.<sup>80</sup> *Adam Kadmon* both divides and unifies through his participation in the act of creation via the breaking of the vessels recounted in Kabbalistic cosmology and its eventual reintegration/restoration. As with alchemy, Jung also had a psychological interpretation of *Adam Kadmon* and the Kabbalistic Tree of Life.

Drob points out that Jung understood *Adam Kadmon* to be both the archetype of all psychological being<sup>81</sup> and an expression of the self.<sup>82</sup> Yet *Adam Kadmon* is not limited to being an expression of the self as he is also “the process of transformation.”<sup>83</sup> In alchemical symbolism Jung equates *Adam Kadmon* with Mercurius,<sup>84</sup> and the

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<sup>78</sup> There are obvious parallels between *Adam Kadmon* and the *Vedānta* notion of the *Atman/Brahman*; there are similar parallels found with *Purusha* as presented in book 10 (90) of the *Rgveda* (Jaroslav Pelikan, ed., Ralph T. H. Griffith, trans., *Sacred Writings: Vol.5, Hinduism: The Rig Veda* (New York: Motilal Banarsidass Publishers, 1992), 602).

<sup>79</sup> For Jung's use of *Adam Kadmon* see: Jung, “Psychology of Religion”, *CW 11*, par. 94; “Paracelsus as a Spiritual Phenomenon”, *CW 13*, par. 168; “The Spirit Mercurius”, *CW 13*, par. 268&n; *Mysterium Coniunctionis*, *CW 14*, pars. 44, 548, 591-592&n, 594, 596, 600, 606-607, 609, 611, 618-620, 640, 646-648, 652-653; “The Symbolic Life”, *CW 18*, par. 638. See also, Jung, *Letters* v.2, pp. 304, 325; *Dream Analysis* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1984), 286

<sup>80</sup> Jung, *Mysterium Coniunctionis*, *CW 14*, pars.594, 619. Jung does not use the term *solve et coagula* but he does emphasise the separation of *Adam Kadmon* from unity into multiplicity.

<sup>81</sup> “We can therefore understand why Isaac Luria attributed every psychic quality to Adam: he is the psyche *par excellence*.” Jung, *Mysterium Coniunctionis*, *CW 14*, par. 390.

<sup>82</sup> Drob, *Kabbalistic Metaphors*, 323.

<sup>83</sup> Jung, *Mysterium Coniunctionis*, *CW 14*, par. 429.

<sup>84</sup> Jung, “The Spirit Mercurius”, *CW 13*, par. 268. As with Mercurius and Jung's understanding of the self, *Adam Kadmon* is understood to be androgynous, i.e., *Adam Kadmon* unifies the opposites within himself.

philosopher's stone<sup>85</sup>. *Adam Kadmon* was the underlying order found throughout creation in Jewish Kabbalah and he becomes the same for the psyche and its *coincidentia oppositorum*. To get a clearer and more practical understanding of *Adam Kadmon*, as is the case with the self, it must be approached through more specific symbols or themes. One symbolic theme that reflects the nature of order underlying the *sefirot* is the Divine Wedding. The imagery of the Divine Wedding is not an uncommon one in Kabbalah. The *sefirot* often take on anthropomorphic roles in relation to one another. The imagery of incest is also common. At the root of this imagery is the theme of the union of opposites.<sup>86</sup>

In *MDR*, Jung recounts a series of visions he experienced in his seventies. In one of these visions, he states: "I myself was, so it seemed, in the Pardes Rimmonim, the garden of pomegranates, and the wedding of Tifereth with Malchuth was taking place."<sup>87</sup> This wedding of a "male" *sefira* (*Tiferet*) with a "female" *sefira* (*Malkut*) is similar in context to the Greek understanding of the *hierosgamos*, a sacred union, a fantasy that Jung had following the Kabbalistic vision.<sup>88</sup> This image was to play an important role in Jung's interpretation of both alchemy and Kabbalah.

The premise of the Divine Wedding is that there was an initial separation or a fall during the creation of the Universe. The purpose, in the case of Kabbalah, is to repair the separation, not to restore a Golden Age of past unity but to create a new and unique state of harmony. This process is known in Kabbalah as *tikkun*. In alchemy the union of opposites is found throughout its symbolism and reflects the same theme. It is seen in the

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<sup>85</sup> Jung, *Mysterium Coniunctionis*, *CW 14*, par. 640.

<sup>86</sup> June Singer's classic *Androgyny: Toward A New Theory of Sexuality*, (New York: Anchor Books, 1977), 144-163 covers similar Kabbalistic themes.

<sup>87</sup> Jung, *MDR*, 294.

<sup>88</sup> Jung, *MDR*, 294.

uniting of the sun and moon; gold and silver; spirit and body; and King and Queen. The alchemical examples of the sacred union are not limited to these; the theme of separation and union is an integral component of the alchemical world-view. In Kabbalah, the divine dance of separation and union is portrayed by the interconnectedness of the *sefirot*.

Jung focused on six main *sefirot* when referring to the Divine Wedding or Union.<sup>89</sup> The *sefirot Malkut, Yesod, Tiferet, and Kether* (with the relationship between *Malkut* and *Tiferet* being cited most often) are the most prominently mentioned in Jung's writings on the *hierogamos* in Kabbalah<sup>90</sup>; however, the union of *Hokmah* and *Binah* is also mentioned in a similar manner.<sup>91</sup> Jung derived his knowledge of the *sefirot* from traditional Jewish or Christian Kabbalistic sources. Also, as Scholem has attempted to demonstrate, the early or pre-Kabbalistic [i.e., *Merkabah*] sources have Gnostic roots<sup>92</sup>, so these world-views, i.e., Judaism, Christianity and Gnosticism, exerted some influence on how Jung conceptualised Kabbalah. While he may have been inspired by conventional Kabbalistic sources, his analytical psychological interpretation of the *sefirot* is uniquely unconventional and it is to this innovative interpretation that we now turn.

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<sup>89</sup> There is no mention to *Hod* or *Netzach* in the *Collected Works*. Jung makes one reference to *Hesed* (Jung uses the alternate title *Gedulah*) in *CW 9i, A Study in the Process of Individuation*, par. 588n, as being symbolised by the lion of Ezekiel's vision; he makes two references to *Geburah* in *A Study in the Process of Individuation, CW 9i*, par. 588n where Jung equates *Geburah* with the bull of Ezekiel's vision and in *Mysterium Coniunctionis, CW 14*, par. 633n where Jung cites a passage from Knorr von Rosenroth's *Kabbalah denudata* referring to the heat of the fire of *Geburah* and its connection to *Tiferet*.

<sup>90</sup> Jung, "The Philosophical Tree", *CW 13*, par. 411; *Mysterium Coniunctionis, CW 14*, par. 18-19, 568.

<sup>91</sup> Jung, "A Study in the Process of Individuation", *CW 9i*, par. 576 n.115 has *Binah* (as *Tebhunah*) paired with "Ain-Soph" or *Kether* (as *Senex Israel*); *Mysterium Coniunctionis, CW 14*, par. 643n

<sup>92</sup> Again, Scholem posits that the "historian of religion is entitled to consider the mysticism of the *Merkabah* [an early predecessor of medieval Kabbalah] to be one of the Jewish branches of Gnosticism. However rare the references in the extant texts to Gnostic myths, or abstract speculations on the aeons and their mutual relationships, certain fundamental characteristics of Gnosticism are nevertheless fully congruent with the kind of mysticism we find in the *Merkabah* writings: the possession of a knowledge that cannot be acquired by ordinary intellectual means but only by way of a revelation and mystical illumination; the possession of a secret doctrine concerning the order of the celestial worlds and the liturgical and magical-theurgical means that provide access to it." Scholem, *Origins of the Kabbalah*, 21-22. Essentially, and in a general sense, the roots of Jewish Kabbalah can be seen as having some Gnostic influences. For a contrary perspective to this theory see Moshe Idel's *Kabbalah: New Perspectives* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1988).

There are three types of union or sacred wedding that occur among the *sefirot*:

1. Union of *Hokmah* and *Binah* (through *Kether*)<sup>93</sup>
2. Union of *Tiferet* and *Malkut*
3. Union of *Yesod* and *Malkut*.

In the case of *Hokmah* (Wisdom) and *Binah* (Understanding) the masculine *Hokmah* is referred to as *Abba* (father) and *Binah* is referred to as *Imma* (mother). These two *sefirot* symbolise the first separation into male and female (at least on an archetypal level).<sup>94</sup> On the level of *Tiferet* and *Malkut* we see the incestuous passion between “The Short-Faced One” (*Zeir Anpin*) and the “Daughter” (*Nukual*).<sup>95</sup> The Tetragrammaton (יהוה) symbolically reflects the same incestuous process: the *Yod* (י) symbolises the creative power of the Father who passes it to the first *He* (ה) who is the Mother. The Mother receives the creative power and passes it to the *Vau* (ו) who is the Son. The Son passes the power to the final *He* (ה), the Daughter. The primal creative force emanates from the Father and reaches fruition in the Daughter.<sup>96</sup>

Jung equates this union with the alchemist’s “Chymical Wedding” and the union of the anima and animus<sup>97</sup> and quotes Knorr von Rosenroth who refers to *Tiferet* as the

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<sup>93</sup> Jung refers to this the union of *Hokmah* and *Binah* in two places within the *Collected Works: CW 12* (Jung, *Individual Dream Symbolism in Relation to Alchemy*, par. 313. Jung quotes Adolphe Franck) and *Mysterium Coniunctionis, CW 14*, par. 643n where he states that the Macroprospos corresponds to the *Atzilut* triad of *Kether*, *Hokmah* and *Binah*.

<sup>94</sup> There are obvious parallels to the separation of the *Tao* into the *Yin* and the *Yang* as well as similar sentiments found in Jung, *Mysterium Coniunctionis, CW 14*, par. 607.

<sup>95</sup> Drob, *Kabbalistic Metaphors*, 315. The cited Hebrew terms are used in Drob not in Jung’s writing. On the topic of incest in alchemy see Jung, *Mysterium Coniunctionis, CW 14* pars. 104, 410 (royal incest) and pars.106, 610, 640. For incest as related to the hierosgamos see Jung, “The Psychology of the Transference”, *CW 16*, par. 438.

<sup>96</sup> The connection between the Tetragrammaton and incest is not discussed by Jung though he does cite Knorr von Rosenroth who indicates that the initial *He* is spouse to the *Yod* and the second *He* is the spouse of the *Vau* (Jung, *Mysterium Coniunctionis, CW 14*, par. 619&n). His use of the Tetragrammaton can be found in Jung, *CW 8*, “Synchronicity: An Acausal Connecting Principle”, par. 931 (reference in relation to the *Yod* or first letter of the Tetragrammaton in relation to the hierarchal nature of the psyche); “A Study in the Process of Individuation”, *CW 9i*, par. 579 (discusses the Tetragrammaton as a Trinitarian symbol in the writings of alchemist Gulielmus Mennens [1525-1608]); “The Psychology of Transference”, *CW 16*, par. 597n.

<sup>97</sup> Jung, *Aion, CW 9ii*, par. 424.

bridegroom of “Malchuth.”<sup>98</sup> In *Mysterium Coniunctionis* Jung discusses the relationship between *Tiferet* and *Malkut* specifically indicating that when *Tiferet* is absent from *Malkut* she is known as the widow.<sup>99</sup> Jung states “In this wicked world ruled by evil Tifereth is *not* united with Malchuth. But the coming Messiah will reunite the King and Queen and this mating will restore to God his original unity.”<sup>100</sup> Later, Jung indicates that the union of *Tiferet* and *Malkuth* is an example of the union of the “spiritual, masculine principle with the feminine, psychic principle...”.<sup>101</sup> Jung discusses the alchemist Vigenerus’ knowledge of the *Sefer ha-Zohar* when elaborating on the symbol of a stone pillar or statue. Jung indicates that the pillar mentioned in Genesis 28:22 is *Malkut* when she is united with *Tiferet*. “The stone is evidently a reminder that here the upper (Tifereth) has united with the lower (Malkuth): Tifereth the son has come together with the ‘Matrona’ in the hierosgamos.”<sup>102</sup>

In some representations the Tree of Life, as *Adam Kadmon*, is pictured as a vertical arrangement of the Tetragrammaton. The *Yod* is a stylised head that is attached to the body of the first *He*. The *Vau* sits “inside” the *He* in an obvious phallic reference. The final *He* serves as the lower torso and legs:

י  
ה  
ו  
ה

<sup>98</sup> Jung, “The Philosophical Tree”, *CW 13*, par. 411.

<sup>99</sup> Jung, *Mysterium Coniunctionis*, *CW 14*, pars. 18&19.

<sup>100</sup> Jung, *Mysterium Coniunctionis*, *CW 14*, par. 18, emphasis is Jung’s. See also par. 592.

<sup>101</sup> Jung, *Mysterium Coniunctionis*, *CW 14*, par. 327.

<sup>102</sup> Jung, *Mysterium Coniunctionis*, *CW 14*, par. 568. See also par. 643.

In this particular representation we see the connection between the microcosm of the human body and the macrocosm of the divine realms and the union of the opposites of male and female.<sup>103</sup>

The final union or Wedding mentioned by Jung is one between *Yesod*, as the phallus of *Adam Kadmon* and *Malkut* as created world. Jung cites Knorr von Rosenroth's *Kabbalah denudata* when discussing *Yesod* as the genital region of the "Original Man" "...for Malchuth shall be called a watered garden, Isaiah 58:11, when Yesod is in her, and fills her, and waters her with waters from on high" and "When Malchuth receives the inflowing from the fifty gates through Yesod, then is she called the bride".<sup>104</sup> *Yesod* is also seen as the mediator between *Tiferet* and *Malkut*<sup>105</sup> and the unifying factor between the two sides of the Tree of Life, left (feminine) and right (masculine).<sup>106</sup>

These sexually charged images are a central component of alchemy, Kabbalah, and Jung's understanding of the psyche. Imagery of sexual union, incestuous or otherwise, is a symbol or metaphor of the unifying of the opposites within oneself. In alchemy this unification is known as the Conjunction. The following is a summary of the Conjunction as found in Jung's *Mysterium Coniunctionis*. By understanding both the Kabbalistic and alchemical use of symbols of union we can come to a clearer understanding of how the symbols related to psychological maturation. Later, in Chapter Four (p.153), we will return to Jung's use of the *sefirot* and compare it with those of the Western Esotericists.

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<sup>103</sup> Again, an obviously male dominated representation of the human body.

<sup>104</sup> Jung, *Mysterium Coniunctionis*, *CW 14*, pars. 18 & n. 120.

<sup>105</sup> Jung, *Mysterium Coniunctionis*, *CW 14*, par. 365.

<sup>106</sup> Jung, *Mysterium Coniunctionis*, *CW 14*, par. 635.

## Summary of the Three Stages of the Conjunction

In psychological terms, the process of the Conjunction can be seen as an attempt by the individual, in co-operation with the self, to unify all opposing psychic functions within that individual's psyche. The preliminary stage of the Conjunction is the *nigredo* or blackening which requires the individual to "burn away" or purify the baser parts of the psyche. In psychological terms the *nigredo* corresponds to the confrontation with repressed shadow material.<sup>107</sup>

As the shadow has been brought to consciousness (keeping in mind that this process is never fully completed) the Conjunction proper begins. The first stage of the Conjunction is the *unio mentalis* or mental union.<sup>108</sup> In the *unio mentalis* the "spirit" separates the "soul"<sup>109</sup> from the confines of bodily appetites. According to the alchemical tradition, the soul as Mercurius<sup>110</sup> stands between the body and the higher moral aspirations of the spirit. If left on its own, the soul would side with the body. To guide the soul intense ascetic practises must be undertaken in order to encourage the soul to gravitate towards the spirit and away from an egocentric perspective. Psychologically speaking, this ascetic discipline would take place within the confines of the analysis. Once the "spiritizing" of the soul is complete, or as closely approximated as possible, the

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<sup>107</sup> Jung, *Mysterium Coniunctionis*, *CW 14*, pars. 646, 696.

<sup>108</sup> Jung, *Mysterium Coniunctionis*, *CW 14*, par. 664.

<sup>109</sup> In this context Jung's use of the term "soul" refers to a "function complex" or partial personality, never the whole psyche. Jung, "Introduction to the Religious and Psychological Problems of Alchemy", *CW 12*, par. 9.

<sup>110</sup> Jung gives this summary of the nature of Mercurius Jung, "The Spirit Mercurius", *CW 13*, par. 284:

- (1)Mercurius consists of all conceivable opposites. . .
- (2)He is both material and spiritual.
- (3)He is the process by which the lower material is transformed into the higher and spiritual, and vice versa.
- (4)He is the devil, a redeeming psychopomp, an evasive trickster, and God's reflection in nature.
- (5)He is also a reflection of a mystical experience of the artifex that coincides with the *opus alchymicum*.
- (6)As such, he represents on the one hand the self and on the other the individuation process and, because of the limitless number of his names, also the collective unconscious.

new and improved union of soul and spirit must be reintegrated with the body, in other words, made concrete.<sup>111</sup>

If this reintegration with the body and the everyday world is not accomplished one is simply left “living in the head” which could manifest as either a reclusive attitude toward the physical world or as an asceticism which denies the body, to name but two possibilities. The return to “this worldliness” is accomplished through the *caelum*<sup>112</sup> which is the product of the alchemical process that began with the *nigredo*. The *caelum* is the state where spiritual soul “reincarnates” into the body. Thus the blackness that instigated the process actually holds the resolution to the entire process.

Before the reunion can take place, other symbolic psychological “ingredients” must be added to the *caelum*.<sup>113</sup> The first ingredient is honey or those pleasurable aspects of life<sup>114</sup> that had to be abandoned during the *unio mentalis*.<sup>115</sup> Chelidonia, as the second ingredient, is the essence of the quaternity (the plant has four leaves) and of wholeness.<sup>116</sup> The third ingredient is rosemary flowers which represents conjugal and spiritual love.<sup>117</sup> Mercurialis is added following rosemary. Mercurialis represents sexuality and sexual libido in all its implications,<sup>118</sup> following Mercurialis is the red Lilly which symbolises the adept placing him or herself into the mixture.<sup>119</sup> Finally, the

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<sup>111</sup> Jung, *Mysterium Coniunctionis*, *CW 14*, par. 677.

<sup>112</sup> The *caelum*, also known as the *rubedo* or reddening stage, concretises what was previously an abstract attainment. The *caelum* is the bond that keeps the psychological realisations together. Jung, *Mysterium Coniunctionis*, *CW 14*, par. 691-692.

<sup>113</sup> Jung, *Mysterium Coniunctionis*, *CW 14*, par. 698.

<sup>114</sup> Jung, *Mysterium Coniunctionis*, *CW 14*, pars. 698, 704.

<sup>115</sup> Jung, *Mysterium Coniunctionis*, *CW 14*, par. 698.

<sup>116</sup> Jung, *Mysterium Coniunctionis*, *CW 14*, par. 698.

<sup>117</sup> Jung, *Mysterium Coniunctionis*, *CW 14*, pars. 701, 704.

<sup>118</sup> Jung, *Mysterium Coniunctionis*, *CW 14*, pars. 702, 704.

<sup>119</sup> Jung, *Mysterium Coniunctionis*, *CW 14*, par. 702.

mixture needs blood which is the most obvious necessity for reuniting with the body and its reality.<sup>120</sup>

According to Dorn the *unio mentalis*<sup>121</sup>, the second stage of the *coniunctio* and the lapis is completed at this stage.<sup>122</sup> However, for Dorn, as a “significant exception”<sup>123</sup>, there is a third stage that is overtly mystical and spiritual in nature. Psychologically, the *unus mundus* is marked by the resolution of all opposites within the psyche; in essence, this would be equal to identification with the self.<sup>124</sup> Jung describes the *unus mundus* in various ways. “While the concept of the *unus mundus* is a metaphysical speculation” Jung tells us “the unconscious can be indirectly experienced via its manifestations.”<sup>125</sup> Similarly, we find if “mandala symbolism is the psychological equivalent of the *unus mundus*, then synchronicity is its para-psychological equivalent.”<sup>126</sup>

The *unus mundus* is described as “the potential world outside time”<sup>127</sup>, a unitary aspect of being<sup>128</sup> and the “One and Simple.”<sup>129</sup> It is “the potential world of the first day of creation, when nothing was yet “in actu” i.e., divided into two and many, but was still

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<sup>120</sup> Jung, *Mysterium Coniunctionis*, *CW 14*, par. 704.

<sup>121</sup> Jung, *Mysterium Coniunctionis*, *CW 14*, pars. 757&758.

<sup>122</sup> Jung, *Mysterium Coniunctionis*, *CW 14*, par. 759.

<sup>123</sup> Jung, *Mysterium Coniunctionis*, *CW 14*, par. 759.

<sup>124</sup> Earlier Jung states that “The mandala symbolizes, by its central point, the ultimate unity of all archetypes as well as of the multiplicity of the phenomenal world, and is therefore the empirical equivalent of the metaphysical concept of a *unus mundus*.” Jung, *Mysterium Coniunctionis*, *CW 14*, par. 660. As Jung elsewhere states, the *mandala* is a symbol of the self (Jung, *Symbols of Transformation*, *CW 5*, par. 302 n.69; “Synchronicity: An Acausal Connecting Principle”, *CW 8*, par.870; “A Study in the Process of Individuation”, *CW 9i*, par. 542; “Concerning Mandala Symbolism”, *CW 9i*, par. 634, 717; *Aion*, *CW 9ii*, par. 117, 208, 378; “Flying Saucers: A Modern Myth”, *CW 10*, par. 621, 805; “A Psychological Approach to the Trinity”, *CW 11*, par. 230; “Individual Dream Symbolism in Relation to Alchemy”, *CW 12*, par. 247; “The Philosophical Tree”, *CW 13*, par. 304; *Mysterium Coniunctionis*, *CW 14*, par. 717, 776; “The Psychology of the Transference”, *CW 16*, par. 442) we can presume a connection between Jung’s notion of the self and the *unus mundus*.

<sup>125</sup> Jung, *Mysterium Coniunctionis*, *CW 14*, par. 660.

<sup>126</sup> Jung, *Mysterium Coniunctionis*, *CW 14*, par. 662.

<sup>127</sup> Jung, *Mysterium Coniunctionis*, *CW 14*, par. 718.

<sup>128</sup> Jung, *Mysterium Coniunctionis*, *CW 14*, par. 662.

<sup>129</sup> Jung, *Mysterium Coniunctionis*, *CW 14*, par. 760.

one.”<sup>130</sup> In essence, this third stage of development is the union “of the whole man with the *unus mundus*”<sup>131</sup>, not with “the world of multiplicity as we see it but with a potential world, the eternal Ground of all empirical being, just as the self is the ground and origin of the individual personality past, present and future.”<sup>132</sup> This idea of uniting with a unitary ground before the creation of multiplicity can also be seen on the Kabbalistic Tree of Life where *Kether* or the *En-sof* (or *Ain* of the Western Esotericists) is seen as somehow existing beyond the realm of empirical being.

Jung tells us that “if Dorn...saw the consummation of the *mysterium coniunctionis* in the union of the alchemically produced *caelum* with the *unus mundus*, he expressly meant not a fusion of the individual with his environment, or even his adaptation to it, but a *unio mystica* with the potential world.”<sup>133</sup> In analytical psychological parlance, the process from the shadow work to the integration is a life long process that defies completion. There is no quick fix in the individuation process.<sup>134</sup> The psychological alchemist must carefully and consistently tend his or her inner laboratory while being mindful of the underlying transpersonal ground of the *unus mundus*. Before continuing, it would be prudent to introduce a second psychological interpretation of the alchemical process and to that end we shall review Edward Edinger's interpretation of the psychological process of the Conjunction.

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<sup>130</sup> Jung, *Mysterium Coniunctionis*, *CW 14*, par. 760.

<sup>131</sup> Jung, *Mysterium Coniunctionis*, *CW 14*, par. 760.

<sup>132</sup> Jung, *Mysterium Coniunctionis*, *CW 14*, par. 760.

<sup>133</sup> Jung, *Mysterium Coniunctionis*, *CW 14*, par. 767.

<sup>134</sup> See for example, Jung, “The Transcendent Function”, *CW 8*, pars. 142-143.

### Edward Edinger's Conjunction

Edinger views the process of the Conjunction as two distinct motions, one down and one up.<sup>135</sup> Both the "down" and the "up" motions include four stages and three steps. The first stage represents the state of original wholeness prior to consciousness. The first transitional step, step (a), leads to the first split. This is the step where the self divides into two, corresponding to "the theme of the World Parents." Stage 2 is the beginning of ego development which is characterised by the separation of subject and object. At this point the ego starts to experience itself as separate from the world while still being caught in the polarity between Nature (Mother) and Spirit (Father). Step (b) represents the full separation from the Mother (Nature). Stage 3 is autonomous, independent thinking. Step (c) then brings about separation from the Father (Spirit). Finally, Stage 4 is characterised by independent, autonomous being, a state where the original unity has been differentiated into a fourfold multiplicity. Now the individual is living fully in this world.<sup>136</sup> Likely this stage would be equivalent to the *unio naturalis*.

Eventually this fourth stage begins to lose its lustre. At the fourth stage the individual has full psychic differentiation and is fully part of society but insight into the inadequacy of this state of being begins to surface. This would be the alchemical equivalent of the four elements beginning to fall apart. Once this inadequacy takes root the individuation process begins the motion back "up" towards wholeness.

The first step of the upward motion, step (a), is equal to *unio mentalis* of the Conjunction. Edinger equates this to the reductive analysis of the shadow. This step is marked by the separation of the ego from the unconscious thus allowing the individual to

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<sup>135</sup> See Figure Two, p.326.

<sup>136</sup> Edinger, *The Mystery Lectures* (Toronto: Inner City Books, 1994), 279-280.

take a critical view of his or her desires and projections. This leads the individual to Stage 3 and the next step, step (b). Step (b) is the uniting of the soul/spirit union with the body. Once this is accomplished the individual is led to Stage 2. Here the ego has achieved the acceptance of the opposites and is able to endure the paradox of the psyche's two-sidedness. Following this crucial and mysterious process the individual enters step (c) or the *unus mundus* which leads to Stage 1 where universal wholeness prevails. Step (c) represents a union of the ego with the self and with the world. According to Edinger, at this level "time and eternity are united and synchronicity prevails."<sup>137</sup> Although Jung does not recount identically the process that Edinger does, Edinger's interpretation does give a helpful amplification of Jung's understanding of the alchemical process.

There are obvious similarities between the patterns found in alchemy and those found in Kabbalah. The "Breaking of the Vessels" is equal to the preliminary state of the *nigredo* wherein the four elements begin to fall apart. Once the state of differentiation is underway and the psychological projections are becoming understood the process of reintegration, the psychological equivalent of *tikkun* can begin. The Kabbalistic image of *Adam Kadmon* holds the same meaning as the alchemical *Mercurius*. At the same time they are both the universe of the collective unconscious and the link to consciousness. Within the context of the *sefirot*, the link would be through the *sefira Tiferet*. *Tiferet*, as a symbol of the self,<sup>138</sup> and his Bride *Malkut*, a symbol of the anima, conjoin to re-establish a unity lost in their initial separation.

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<sup>137</sup> Edinger, *The Mysterium Lectures*, 281. We will return to the issues of synchronicity in Chapter Five.

<sup>138</sup> In Jung's "Flying Saucers: A Modern Myth", *CW 10*, par. 779, he states that *Tiferet* is equivalent to the self.

This has been a review of how Jung employed Kabbalistic symbols of union such as *Adam Kadmon*, the Divine Wedding, and similar parallel symbols found in the Conjunction of alchemy. Though the terminology and labels may be different between Kabbalah and analytical psychology the process remains the same; there is a motion towards the integration of opposites, wholeness and order.

Jung was not only interested in the philosophical/spiritual nature of the *sefirot* and their relationship to alchemy. He also found that the numeration of the *sefirot* and the connecting paths of the Tree of Life significant as can be seen in his reference to the number 32 in the World Clock Dream of Wolfgang Pauli.

### **Pauli and the Thirty-two Paths of the Tree of Life**

Numbers play a vital role in Kabbalah. As mentioned in Chapter One, the *Sefer Yetsirah* revealed how the Hebrew alphabet and number system was at the root of the creation of existence. Also, through hermeneutic practices such as *gematria*, the number of a word reveals something about that word's nature and by extension, its relation to other words of the same numeration. In Kabbalah, the number ten is, among other things, representative of the ten *sefirot*<sup>139</sup>; it is also the number of creation and order.<sup>140</sup>

The number thirty-two also plays an important role in the *Sefer Yetsirah*. The number corresponds to the Thirty-two Paths of Wisdom of God. Eventually, and primarily following the influence of Isaac Luria, the Thirty-two paths were equated to the

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<sup>139</sup> There is also a connection to the Pythagorean tetractys that begins with a row of four then three, two, and finally one. In other words, they represent unity in multiplicity. The same reference to order is evident with the *sefirot*.

<sup>140</sup> Leonora Leet's *The Secret Doctrine of the Kabbalah: Recovering the Key to Hebraic Sacred Science* (Vermont: Inner Traditions, 1999) is an interesting work that demonstrates the connection between Jewish Kabbalah and sacred geometry.

paths connecting the *sefirot* on the image of the Tree of Life.<sup>141</sup> Jung mentions the significance of both the number ten and thirty-two within his work involving alchemy and Kabbalah.<sup>142</sup> However, the more interesting number is thirty-two with its role in Jung's amplification of Wolfgang Pauli's "World Clock Dream." In this dream we see the number thirty-two as a symbol of order and structure in a relationship of Kabbalah and analytical psychology. Jung makes mention of Pauli's dream in both *CW 11* ("Psychology and Religion") and *CW 12* ("Individual Dream Symbolism in Relation to Alchemy") but it is only in latter that he connects the dream to the Thirty-two Paths of Kabbalah and so it is to there that we turn our attention.

Wolfgang Pauli's World Clock Dream is a powerful image. The complexity and intricacies of the dream are so remarkable that it is little wonder that Jung would mention this dream in two separate places within the *Collected Works*. Here is one presentation of the dream:

There is a vertical and a horizontal circle, having a common centre. This is the world clock. It is supported by the black bird.

The vertical circle is a blue disc with a white border divided into 4 X 8—32 partitions. A pointer rotates upon it.

The horizontal circle consists of four colours. On it stand four little men with pendulums, and round it is laid the ring that was once dark and is now golden (formerly carried by four children). The world clock has three rhythms or pulses:

- 1) The small pulse: the pointer on the blue vertical disc advances by 1/32.
- 2) The middle pulse: one complete rotation of the pointer. At the same time the horizontal circle advances by 1/32.
- 3) The great pulse: 32 middle pulses are equal to one complete rotation of the golden ring.<sup>143</sup>

<sup>141</sup> The first ten paths are the *sefirot* themselves while the remaining twenty-two paths (the number of letters in the Hebrew alphabet) connect the *sefirot*.

<sup>142</sup> Jung, "Individual Dream Symbolism in Relation to Alchemy", *CW 12*, par. 313.

<sup>143</sup> Jung, "Individual Dream Symbolism in Relation to Alchemy", *CW 12*, par. 307.

This dream came at the culmination of a series of dreams that Pauli had been experiencing over the period of his analysis. The symbolism within the dream is one of completion, wholeness, and order. As can be seen from the above description of Pauli's dream the number thirty-two is evident in the various "pulses" or rhythms of the Clock.

In "Individual Dream Symbolism in Relation to Alchemy", Jung looks to the *Sefer Yetsirah* for its use of the "thirty-two paths of mysterious wisdom."<sup>144</sup> As mentioned in Chapter One, the paths are the basis for creation, for direction, and for differentiation. The thirty-two paths are also related to the "Ancient of Days", another form of *Adam Kadmon*. Interestingly, Jung cites René Allendy's *Les Symbolisme le nombres* regarding the number thirty-two:

32...is the differentiation which appears in the organic world; not creative generation, but rather the plan and arrangement of various forms of created things which the creator has modelled- as the product of 8x4...<sup>145</sup>

Allendy's emphasis is the number thirty-two suggests a plan or arrangement of created things. In other words, the number thirty-two represents order and structure of existence. Similarly, the quaternity and double-quaternity are noted by Jung to represent wholeness and order.<sup>146</sup>

Although Jung only mentions the Kabbalistic reference in passing, Pauli's dream still reveals an interesting connection to Kabbalah and the collective unconscious. It

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<sup>144</sup> Jung, "Individual Dream Symbolism in Relation to Alchemy", *CW 12*, par. 313.

<sup>145</sup> Jung, "Individual Dream Symbolism in Relation to Alchemy", *CW 12*, par. 313.

<sup>146</sup> As an aside, Jung's emphasis on the connection between the quaternity and *mandalas* is well documented. However, many *mandalas*, especially those of the *Vajrayana* form of Buddhism emphasise the number five. Generally there are four deities around the circle with a fifth, the deity being focused on, at the centre of the *mandala*. Even when looking at an equilateral cross, as a symbol of a quaternity there is a fifth point in the centre where the extremities meet. In this context a "quinternity," and thus a figure such as the pentagram, would be a symbol of wholeness. For more on the philosophy behind *mandalas* see Denise Patry Leidy and Robert A.F. Thurman, *Mandala: The Architecture of Enlightenment* (New York and Boston: Asia Society Galleries, Tibet House, Shambhala, 1997).

appears as though Pauli was unaware of the *Sefer Yetsirah* and of the cosmology of Jewish Kabbalah, yet he has a dream that has overtly Kabbalistic themes. Although the imagery is not unique to Kabbalah, there is one other interesting connection between Pauli's dream and Kabbalah.

Each *sefira* has a corresponding spiritual experience. In the case of *Yesod* the corresponding vision, at least in some Esoteric Kabbalistic Traditions, is the Vision of the Machinery of the Universe.<sup>147</sup> Another way of interpreting this vision would be as a vision of the order or structure that underpins the universe. From a psychological perspective, this could be a filtered glimpse of the self, as central organiser of the individual psyche. In this role the self would have obvious symbols of a collective nature, many of which are reflected in Pauli's dream.<sup>148</sup>

Both Kabbalah and Jung have used the *sefirot* in a way that order and definition were placed upon a previously existing chaos. In the case of Kabbalah the chaos is both the external, created universe in all its diversity, and the individual's position within the universe. The Kabbalists worked from the macrocosm of the divine realms and the universe to the microcosm of the individual and his/her personal relation to God and, by extension, existence. In many ways Jung applied Kabbalah and the *sefirot* in the same manner but in reverse order; moving from the psyche of the individual and moving out into the world of form.

Jung's use of Kabbalah and the *sefirot* is rather limited in comparison with the amount of work done with alchemy. However, the alchemy that so fascinated Jung was itself heavily influenced by Kabbalah in many ways. When Jung does mention the *sefirot*

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<sup>147</sup> Dion Fortune, *The Mystical Qabalah* (Boston, MA: Weiser Books, 2000), 235.

<sup>148</sup> Chapter Four will enter into more detail regarding the *sefirot* and their connection to analytical psychology.

they are used to amplify or buttress his alchemical interpretations and claims. Jung's observations regarding the *sefirot* are primarily concerned with the connection or conjunction of opposites (e.g., *Tiferet* and *Malkut*) and the numeration of the *sefirot* (e.g., the Thirty-two Paths). In both cases there is a structure of order placed on the chaos of the collective unconscious. The *sefirot* help to narrow the focus as it were, to specific portions of the objective psyche giving a sense of connection, interpenetration and, to some degree, harmony and wholeness. The Western Esoteric Tradition has also enjoyed a lengthy history with the *sefirot* and their influence so it to this Tradition we now turn.

## **Chapter Three**

### **The Arrow and the Serpent:**

#### **Defining the Western Esoteric Tradition and the Tree of Life**

Various peculiar claims have been made in connection with the Western Esoteric Tradition and not a few of these claims have originated from those within the Tradition itself. The term “Western Esoteric Tradition” is used here instead of the more popular term “Occult Tradition” in an attempt to shed some of the more outlandish associations. Yet even the use of “Western Esoteric Tradition” is not devoid of problems. As we have seen scholars such as Faivre employ the term in a different way. For these authors Western Esotericism refers to a more historically palatable pattern of thought, a pattern of thought where names like Pico, Bruno, Dee, Agrippa and Bacon figure prominently.

Chapter One presented a brief definition of the Western Esoteric Tradition. The following definition is an amalgamation of traditional definitions of Magick, a term synonymous with the Western Esoteric Tradition, coupled with an analytical psychological application of metaphor. By integrating a standard, yet somewhat vague, definition from the Western Esoteric Tradition and a key component or factor within the theories of analytical psychology, we reach a more specific and pragmatic definition.

### **(Re)Defining Magic(k) and Magic(k)ians**

A synonymous term for Western Esoteric Tradition is simply “Magick”.<sup>1</sup> The “k”, popularised by Crowley and commonly applied today, was adopted so as to differentiate the spiritual undertakings of Magick from stage conjuring and slight of hand common in the 19<sup>th</sup> Century.<sup>2</sup> Another reason, and only one of many, for the use of the “k” is that it is the first letter of *kteis* (Greek reference to the vulva) thus revealing an intimate connection between Magick and sexuality. In this application the sexuality can

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<sup>1</sup> However, the term “Magick” is also applied to New Age traditions as well as Wiccan or Neo-Pagan traditions. The use of the term in the context of this thesis is a reference to the Western Esoteric Tradition.

<sup>2</sup> Crowley, *Magick/Liber Aba (Parts I-IV)*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed., (York Beach, ME: Weiser, 1997), 47.

be seen as a reference to the sexual cosmology of traditions such as “left-hand path” *Tantra (Vāmāchāra)* or, in the alchemical and Jungian sense, of the conjoining of opposites. In either case there is the understanding that a union of opposites results in a reordering or transformation of consciousness.<sup>3</sup>

Not all Esotericists agree with the use of this spelling of Magick. In the introduction to his *Inner Traditions of Magic* William Gray states:

What follows is unashamedly and perhaps blatantly about something which up till recently has always been called ‘Magic’. (Without the ‘k’ please Mr. Crowley!) Twist, turn hide, or distort the word into as much gobbledegook as anyone likes, Magic is, and always will be, a fundamental mainspring of human aspirational behaviour.<sup>4</sup>

Despite the differences in spelling we need to establish a set definition; a definition that is at once structured enough to hold merit within an analytical psychological perspective yet inclusive enough to allow the diversity and uniqueness of the Western Esoteric Tradition to be reflected in a meaningful manner. To begin the process of defining Magick we turn to various writers from within the Western Esoteric Tradition, in other words practitioners of Magick. As a spiritual tradition, the Western Esoteric Tradition operates from a specific world-view complete with its own assumptions and assertions about reality and occasionally these assumptions and assertions are revealed in a rather enthusiastic manner. This “enthusiasm” can appear to run contrary to more detached and critical academic sources.

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<sup>3</sup> Another reason the “k” was added can be seen in Aleister Crowley’s use of the number eleven. For Crowley eleven is the number of Magick. Traditional Kabbalistic Magic revered the number of the *sefirot*, ten. Crowley emphasised breaking the old way of viewing Magick by stressing the reality and role of an eleventh *sefirot*, *Da’at*. “K” is also the eleventh number of the English alphabet, thus giving a new credence to the use of English as a sacred language (whereas, prior to this, Greek, Latin, and Hebrew were the primary languages used in Magick). These are only a few of the many applications of the number eleven.

<sup>4</sup> William Gray, *Inner Traditions of Magic* (York Beach, ME: Samuel Weiser, Inc., 1984), 9.

Lévi defined the essence of Magick (though he employed the more traditional spelling “Magic”) as “that which God created before all things when he said: ‘Let there be light’; at once substance and movement, fluid and perpetual vibration.”<sup>5</sup> In her classic work on mysticism, Evelyn Underhill states that magic “in its uncorrupted form, claims to be a practical, intellectual, highly individualistic science; working towards the declared end of enlarging the sphere on which the human will can work, and obtaining experimental knowledge of planes of being usually regarded as transcendental.”<sup>6</sup> Esotericists Denning and Phillips define Magick as “the production of desired effects, whether in the person of the magician or exterior to it, by means of a deliberate and special use of powers and faculties within the psyche.”<sup>7</sup> Aleister Crowley defined Magick as “the Science and Art of causing Change to occur in conformity with Will.”<sup>8</sup> To that definition Crowley added, “Every intentional act is a Magickal Act.”<sup>9</sup> Dion Fortune defined Magick as “The Science and Art of causing change in consciousness at will.”<sup>10</sup> Each of these definitions helps to focus our investigation, yet each is still too vague and has an important component missing.

Lévi’s definition is ethereal and poetic. From within the Tradition it remains an apt definition, but it does little for our current concerns. Crowley’s definition, while less poetic than Lévi’s, is rather too ambiguous and easily misunderstood. Denning and Phillips’ definition and Fortune’s tweaking of Crowley’s definition are helpful in that they indicate that what is occurring to the Esotericist is dependent on and takes place in

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<sup>5</sup> Eliphas Lévi, *Transcendental Magic* A.E. Waite, trans. (York Beach, ME: Samuel Weiser, Inc. 1999), 12, n. 1.

<sup>6</sup> Evelyn Underhill, *Mysticism* (New York: Image Books, 1990), 152.

<sup>7</sup> Denning and Phillips, *The Foundations of High Magick* (St. Paul, MN: Llewellyn Publishers, 1991), xviii.

<sup>8</sup> Crowley, *Magick/Liber Aba*, 126.

<sup>9</sup> Crowley, *Magick/Liber Aba*, 127.

<sup>10</sup> Cited in: W.E. Butler, *Magic, Its Ritual, Power, and Purpose* (New York: Samuel Weiser, 1977), 12.

the psyche, though the type of consciousness in question would depend on the undertaking and disposition of the practitioner. One concept, taken from an analytical psychological perspective, which could be added to the Crowley/Fortune definition to add even more invaluable detail, is the term “metaphor.” Our working definition now becomes “Magick is the Science and Art of changing consciousness, through the medium of metaphor, in conformity with Will.” Let us take a moment to unpack this definition.

The terms Science and Art imply that there are dual operations occurring simultaneously within Magick.<sup>11</sup> Science is employed here in the sense of “objective” observation of one’s experiences, in other words, the application of the scientific method, understood in the broadest sense, to one’s experiences and practices. Those rituals or activities that are deemed successful and repeatable are retained while those that lack success or repetition are abandoned. One way this objectivity is thought to be accomplished within the Tradition is through the use of a journal or Magical Record that records Esoteric practices and experiences. Data such as time, location, weather, emotional state, state of health, astrological/astronomical statistics, and type of practices along with the subjective and objective results of those practices are typically recorded. Similarly, the recording of one’s genealogy and psychological and medical history can also be included in an attempt to disclose possible influences in one’s predispositions and perceptions.<sup>12</sup>

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<sup>11</sup> For more detail on the connection between science, art, religion, and Magick see Lionel Snell’s “Four Glasses of Water: Magic considered as a ‘culture’ distinct from art, science or religion, and how this could help clarify discussion of the broad spectrum of magical, pagan, New Age and ‘alternative’ beliefs and practices” in David Evans (ed.) *The Journal for the Academic Study of Magic*, 2, (Oxford: Mandrake, 2004), 177-205.

<sup>12</sup> For an example of a Magickal diary see: Crowley, *The Magical Record of the Beast 666: The Diaries of Aleister Crowley: 1914-1920*, John Symonds and Kenneth Grant, eds. (London: Duckworth, 1993) and *The Magical Diaries of Aleister Crowley: Tunisia 1923*, Stephen Skinner, ed. (York Beach, ME: Weiser, Inc., 1997). For a common template used by some Esotericists see Kraig, *Modern Magick*, 4.

Though perhaps not scientific in the strictest sense, there is an attempt to record data so that the experiments (meditations, rituals and practices) may be repeated again at a later date by following the recorded data, and that data can then be compared with other similar experiments. Within this context, Magick also includes an observation and recording of one's mental processes.

There is also similar understanding of science found in *MDR*. Jung, discussing his confrontation with the unconscious, states: "From the beginning I had conceived my voluntary confrontation with the unconscious as a scientific experiment which I myself was conducting and in whose outcome I was vitally interested. Today I might equally well say that it was an experiment which was being conducted on *me*."<sup>13</sup> Magick involves a sense of curiosity and a drive for investigation that manifests as an ongoing experiment into the depths of the psyche or soul. Similar to Jung's citation, we could see at least from a certain perspective, that the grand experiment we are calling Magick is equally the experimenter in the sense that the beings encountered within the processes of the Tradition are experienced as autonomous and occasionally seem to reflect their own agenda. The Esotericist peers into the depths of their being but we could say there are beings, experienced as though autonomous, which also stare back with equal interest.

Art in the case of this definition can take one of the more traditional forms, such as painting, drawing,<sup>14</sup> sculpture, music,<sup>15</sup> and film,<sup>16</sup> or it can refer to the art of ritual. The central use and practice of ritual is also reflected in synonymous terms referring to

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<sup>13</sup> Jung, *MDR*, 178.

<sup>14</sup> For examples see the artwork of Austin Osman Spare [1888-1956] which employs sigils, altered states of consciousness, and automatic or trance illustrations.

<sup>15</sup> For an interesting work analysing the transformative properties of music see: David Tame, *The Secret Power of Music* (Rochester, VT: Destiny Books, 1984), 255-288.

<sup>16</sup> For examples of movies inspired by the Western Esoteric Tradition see Kenneth Anger's films.

the Western Esoteric Tradition, such as Ritual or Ceremonial Magick.<sup>17</sup> In this context there is thought to be an interaction between the actions of the body and mind and soul (soul being understood in this case in a Jung/Hillman sense as the domain of the psyche and metaphor). Ritual practice is thought to engage all the senses through the use of various drivers that help nudge consciousness in different and willed directions. The implements or tools commonly used in Magick (robes, candles, and tools such as dagger, pentacle, wand, and cup) relate to the senses of touch and sight. The use of incense and oils relate to the sense of smell. The use of wine or other ingested material relates to taste. The use of chanting, bells, or vibration of God names,<sup>18</sup> stimulate the ears. Finally, the highly symbolic and metaphoric images relate to the imagination and psychological components of the individual.

Both the “science” and “art” portions of this definition imply engagement and action in the material world and not solely research or study. Magick is not only comprised of mental or imaginal exercises; it is, if we accept the claims of the Esotericists, an attempt to integrate the apparent mind/body dichotomy. The use of ritual requires the body and mind to work in tandem and point the mind to “higher” regions of consciousness. Also, the changes or transformations that occur as a result of the practices of the Western Esoteric Tradition must be integrated into one’s place in the world. Simply put the practices of the Esoteric Tradition attempt to help the individual to engage with the world of sense and form, not to escape it. At the same time however, she or he

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<sup>17</sup> Ritual Magick could refer to solitary practice while Ceremonial Magick could refer to work with a group or Lodge. For more information on the group dynamics of Ceremonial Magick see: John Michael Greer, *Inside a Magical Lodge* (St. Paul, MN: Llewellyn Publications, 1998).

<sup>18</sup> The vibration of words or phrases is a technique where the practitioner repeats the word in such a way that the word is elongated and intoned in a manner that vibrates not only the person but also, as the theory goes, the entire Universe. These intonations can also be given in what is commonly referred to as the Voice of Silence. In this case the vibration is mentally resonated.

is warned not to be bound by its glamour, or what would be known in Buddhist and Hindu traditions as *māyā*.<sup>19</sup>

In some ways this stance is similar to the implications of Jung's understanding of individuation in that the ego perspective and our connection to the phenomenal world is not abandoned nor does it hold an autocratic position in the psyche. Those who allow the self to speak and who are aware of their own projections live different lives than those who have yet to do so. Those people who strive for self-understanding still hold jobs, have families or other relations, and participate in varying degrees of social intercourse.

Andrew Samuels summarises this relation between the self and ego succinctly in *Jung and the Post-Jungians*:

The ego-ideal is abandoned in favour of self-acceptance and, more importantly, the super-ego, in its negative form of blind adherence to collective norms, is replaced as a moral arbiter by the self acting as inner guide. What we are describing is a separation from the collective, together with an assumption of responsibility for oneself and a developed attitude towards past and future.<sup>20</sup>

The ego in this citation is not abandoned; it, as part of the process of individuation, adapts to the influences and symbols of the self and the unconscious.

The next portion of the definition is causing or creating a change in consciousness. Each of the aforementioned psychological drivers is thought to help shift,

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<sup>19</sup> Though not originally part of the Western Esoteric Tradition, the term is not unknown to the practitioners. For examples how this term is used by the Esotericists see: Aleister Crowley (*The Magical Record of the Beast 666*, 109, 122, 162; *The Vision and the Voice with Commentary (Equinox Vol. IV no.ii)* (York Beach, ME: Samuel Weiser Inc., 1998), 224; *Commentaries on the Holy Books and Other Papers (Equinox Vol. IV no.i)* (York Beach, ME: Samuel Weiser Inc., 1996), 237, 240, 251, 258, 260-261, 312, 318, 320, 340; *Magick Without Tears* (Tempe, AZ: New Falcon Publications, 1994), 55), Dion Fortune *The Mystical Qabalah* (York Beach, ME: Red Wheel/Weiser, LLC, 2000), 152, 241, Israel Regardie *A Garden of Pomegranates* (St. Paul, MINN: Llewellyn Publications, 2002), 43, 60, 195, 208, 244, 311 (only the first two are actually from Regardie), and Robert Wang *Qabalistic Tarot* (York Beach, ME: Samuel Weiser, Inc., 1983), 111.

<sup>20</sup> Andrew Samuels. *Jung and the Post-Jungians* (New York: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1994), 103.

over time and with repeated application, the centre of perception from the boundaries of strictly regimented ego consciousness to a level of consciousness that is less regimented or structured. Within most branches of the Western Esoteric Tradition the very early stages of training involve techniques of *prāṇāyāma* or techniques of breath control.<sup>21</sup> The controlling of the breath, coupled with relaxation, visualisations and drivers such as incense, help to alter blood and brain chemistry. As with other forms of meditation, with repeated practice the ability to calm the mind becomes more pronounced. However, there still remains a question as to what is to occur with this newly found change in consciousness and how is it to be used. An important contribution to the answer of this question of intent can be found in the landscape of metaphor.

In Robert Romanyshyn's essay, *Alchemy and the Subtle Body of Metaphor*, Jung's relationship with Philemon is analysed in a way that grants Philemon a unique and substantial reality. Philemon's reality was not limited solely to Jung's psyche nor was it entirely independent from it. Romanyshyn brings to the fore several important questions regarding the nature of Philemon:

What shall we call this subtle presence of Philemon who is neither a factual object in this world . . . nor a subjective idea in Jung's mind which he projects onto the world? What is the nature of the subtle body of Philemon who is neither thing nor a thought? Philemon haunts the garden of Jung. He plays on the border of the real and the ideal, hovering like some great being of light, a vibration which at one moment seems substantive like a particle and at another moment without substance like a wave. Philemon is an imaginal being . . . Philemon, I would claim, is the subtle body of metaphor.<sup>22</sup>

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<sup>21</sup> See: Crowley, *Magick/Liber Aba*, 18-21, the Ciceros' *Self-Initiation into the Golden Dawn Tradition* 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. (St. Paul, MINN: Llewellyn Publications, 1998), 298-300, and Frater U.D., *Practical Sigil Magic* (St. Paul, MINN: Llewellyn Publications, 1990) for examples.

<sup>22</sup> Robert D. Romanyshyn. "Alchemy and the Subtle Body of Metaphor" in *Pathways into the Jungian World*. Roger Brooke, ed. (New York: Routledge, 2000), 32.

Romanyshyn suggests we are to view Philemon as a subtle body that is neither real in the sense of possessing a quantifiable tangibility nor wholly subjective. Philemon is a subtle body of metaphor. Jung emphasises the fact that rather than over intellectualise what Philemon and the whole fantasy meant, it was better “...to let the figures be what they were for me at the time—namely events and experiences.”<sup>23</sup> For Jung the fantasy involving Philemon was separate from himself:

Philemon represented a force which was not myself. In my fantasies I held conversations with him, and he said things which I had not consciously thought. For I observed clearly that it was he who spoke, not I.<sup>24</sup>

Jung also states that psychologically Philemon represented superior insight.<sup>25</sup> A superior insight, we can presume, that was perceived as functioning independently from Jung’s everyday ego consciousness. The insights possessed by Philemon were significant enough to put Jung in a position of concern for the possible devaluing of his ego when Philemon would “appear.”<sup>26</sup> Ultimately, Jung acknowledged that Philemon acted as a *guru* and guide of some importance.<sup>27</sup>

Romanyshyn goes on to describe what he means by metaphor:

The *neither/nor* logic of metaphor, the logic of the third between matter and mind, the realm of the soul, requires that one must give up the notion of being able to attribute with final certainty that the epiphany of meaning belongs *either* on the side of consciousness as experience, *or* on the side of the world as an event. The *either/or* logic of the mind is undone in the *neither/nor* logic of soul.<sup>28</sup>

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<sup>23</sup> Jung, *MDR*, 182.

<sup>24</sup> Jung, *MDR*, 183.

<sup>25</sup> Jung, *MDR*, 183.

<sup>26</sup> Jung, *MDR*, 184.

<sup>27</sup> Jung, *MDR*, 183-184.

<sup>28</sup> Romanyshyn, “Alchemy and the Subtle Body of Metaphor”, 35.

Here we see that metaphor acts as a unifying factor for the Cartesian split between mind and matter. Metaphor participates in both worlds and helps relate the reality that the two are not, in fact, as divergent as may be generally understood. However, in order to come to participate in the experience of the metaphorical a certain type of consciousness is required:

An incarnate consciousness is a first, necessary step towards the recovery of the imaginal as real, and the real as imaginal. Starting with a body that is already mindful of the world, with a mind which is already kissed by things, phenomenology allows one to appreciate the metaphorical structure of reality and the metaphorical character of our experience. Soaked within this appreciation, we are able to be responsive to the third between material facts and mental ideas, the third of the imaginal, where metaphorical consciousness dwells. And such a consciousness is indispensable for encountering someone like Philemon who will not yield himself to the literal minded or to a thinking which is too rational.<sup>29</sup>

This understanding of metaphor is one way the “change of consciousness” can be understood in our definition of Magick. In a comparable way, the entities encountered via methods such as pathworking or explorations of the “Astral Plane” can be seen in the same light as Jung’s relationship with Philemon. The angels, demons and related beings found throughout the Western Esoteric Tradition dwell within the world of metaphor. The change in consciousness can be seen as encouraging or being open to the perceptions of the world of metaphor.

Other scholars and writers such as James Hillman and Henry Corbin have also made substantial contributions to the study of metaphor. Hillman’s view of metaphor can be found in his work within Archetypal psychology.<sup>30</sup> Corbin’s study of Islam, in

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<sup>29</sup> Romanyshyn, “Alchemy and the Subtle Body of Metaphor”, 39.

<sup>30</sup> See especially, James Hillman, *The Dream and the Underworld* (NY: Harper and Row, Publishers, 1979) and *Archetypal Psychology: A Brief Account* (Dallas, TX: Spring Publications, 1988).

particular the Sufi tradition, is also relevant to understand the nature of metaphor.<sup>31</sup> However, it is Romanyshyn's refined and elegant appreciation of metaphor that relates most satisfactorily within the context of the definition of Magick.

Some of the most vivid and perhaps complex astral (i.e. metaphorical) recollections from within the Western Esoteric Tradition ("received" through a polished stone that was employed as a visual focal point) are recorded in Aleister Crowley's *The Vision and the Voice*. The following example is from Crowley's experience with the 22<sup>nd</sup> Aethyr or level of the Enochian system of Magick. The opening vision is as follows:

There comes first into the stone the mysterious table of forty-nine squares. It is surrounded by an innumerable company of angels; these angels are of all kinds, —some brilliant and flashing as gods, down to elemental creatures. The light comes and goes on the tablet; and now it is steady, and I perceive that each letter of the tablet is composed of forty-nine other letters, in a language which looks like that of Honorius; but when I would read, the letter that I look at becomes indistinct at once.

And now there comes an Angel, to hide the tablet with his mighty wing. This Angel has all the colours mingled in his dress; his head is proud and beautiful; his headdress is of silver and red and blue and gold and black, like cascades of water, and in his left hand he has a pan-pipe of the seven holy metals, upon which he plays. I cannot tell you how wonderful the music is, but it is so wonderful that one only lives in one's ears; one cannot see anything any more.<sup>32</sup>

What these visions meant to Crowley or what they may reflect psychologically is not at issue. Rather, this example reveals one person's experience with the realm of metaphor from within the cosmology of the Western Esoteric Tradition. The remainder of *The Vision and the Voice* is equally vivid and revealing. For Crowley, and other Esotericists

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<sup>31</sup> See for example Henry Corbin, *Creative Imagination in the Sufism of Ibn 'Arabi*, Ralph Manheim trans. (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1981).

<sup>32</sup> Aleister Crowley, *The Vision and the Voice with Commentary and Other Papers* (York Beach, Maine: Samuel Weiser, 1998), 78.

who have employed this type of Magick, the residents of the Enochian Aethyrs can be seen as representing metaphors of superior insight, though the Esotericist may be more inclined to view the metaphors as objective beings.<sup>33</sup>

As indicated above, to fully appreciate the landscape of metaphor one must be firmly grounded in this world. This fact is important when applied to the Western Esoteric Tradition in that a conversation with a metaphorical being like Philemon or the angels of Crowley's vision when one is lacking a strong, or rather healthy, ego-complex is not likely to be a beneficial one especially when the line between instructive and destructive psychic experiences can be blurry even under the best conditions. We can assume that without a firm grounding in the phenomenal world there are increased risks to ego consciousness and real and lasting implications for the individual who experienced them when dealing with these types of metaphorical entities.

Though perhaps not stated as such, the foray into imaginal or metaphorical worlds is at the root of the philosophy and practices of the Western Esoteric Tradition. The practices within the Tradition rely heavily upon imagination. Some practitioners may regard any experiences as occurring within their psyche while others may posit that the imagination is simply a way for our mind to interpret the existence of alternate realities. Whatever one's perspective, the goal of these philosophies and practices is an ever-widening field of consciousness and perception or, perhaps more relevant to our focus, the goal could be seen as cultivating a Magickal or metaphorical world-view. The objective could be seen as a personal frame of reference that includes and embraces not only the phenomenal and the psychological (mental) factors of life but also the unifying

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<sup>33</sup> For another example of Enochian experiences see: Lon Milo DuQuette, *My Life with the Spirits*, (York Beach, ME: Samuel Weiser, Inc., 1999), 133-155.

third, the realm of soul, in other words, a link to the world of metaphor. Through the medium of the metaphorical world comes the vocabulary of the Tree of Life; a place where the paths and the *sefirot* speak through the language of symbolic correspondences. With this brief review of metaphor complete we are left with the final factor in the definition of Magick to be explored.

The implication of “will” in our definition is twofold. First, will implies volition on the part of the Esotericist. This is one factor that places the Western Esoteric Tradition apart from Spiritualist practices. From the outset the Esotericist remains in control of his or her consciousness. That is to say there is an openness toward the metaphorical world but that openness is contained within the structure and cosmology of the Western Esoteric Tradition. Cultivated passivity or surrender to metaphorical or archetypal realms, such as found in religions like *Vodoun* or practices such as Spiritualism is not generally considered a part of the Western Esoteric Tradition.<sup>34</sup> “Will” within the Tradition also has a second connotation that resonates well with the writings of James Hillman.

In the opening paragraph of his work *The Soul’s Code*, Hillman describes a sense of fate encountered in life:

There is more in a human life than our theories of it allow. Sooner or later something seems to call us onto a particular path. You may remember this “something” as a single moment in childhood when an urge out of nowhere, a fascination, a peculiar turn of events struck like an annunciation: This is what I must do, this is what I’ve got to have. This is who I am.<sup>35</sup>

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<sup>34</sup> At least this is not the case in an overt way. Many times though the esotericist may be “enflamed” in prayer which implies an openness or supplication, as is the case with the Holy Guardian Angel and the Abramelin Operation which is dealt with below. This example is more the exception than the rule. In the philosophy of the Western Esoteric Tradition, some form of conscious control or perception of one’s surroundings is implied.

<sup>35</sup> James Hillman, *The Soul’s Code* (New York: Random House, 1996), 3.

This sense of fate or “This is who I am” is what Esotericists such as Aleister Crowley are referring to when they use the term “True Will.” True Will reflects the direction one’s personality tends toward when free, or as free as possible, from psychological and social constrictions. In other words, when one begins to understand one’s own psychological projections and those psychological fetters imposed by social/political/religious sources one can come to understand one’s “True Will.”

To summarise, Magick, which is synonymous with the Western Esoteric Tradition, is the Science and Art of causing change in consciousness, through the medium of metaphor, in conformity with will. This definition implies that Magick is a set of practices that are both objective (“scientific”) and subjectively expressive (“artistic”).<sup>36</sup> These practices are thought to lead to a widening of consciousness and help to build a bridge between the objective world and the subjective psychological world. This bridge or “third” function is the world of metaphor. Each of these practices and experiences are to be undertaken, according to the Tradition, in a controlled or willed manner and should, for optimum benefit, follow or encourage what James Hillman refers to as a “calling of the Soul” or what Aleister Crowley termed the True Will. One of the most effective ways of analysing how Magick works in practice is to return to the Western Esoteric Tradition’s interpretation of the Tree of Life.

### **The Tree of Initiation in the Western Esoteric Tradition**

As mentioned above, the *sefirot* in the Western Esoteric Tradition are generally applied as a structure of initiation and self-exploration. The term initiation can be taken

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<sup>36</sup> We could also see in this definition the union of Eros and Logos.

in two general ways within the Western Esoteric Tradition. The first meaning is initiation in the sense that one passes from one grade to another within the initiatory scheme of an Order. Phenomena such as degrees, signs, grips, and Knowledge Lectures would fall under this definition.<sup>37</sup> For the sake of simplicity we shall refer to this type of initiation as “ceremonial” initiation.

A second meaning of initiation would refer to the experiences that presumably underpin the ceremonial initiation. This experiential initiation will be termed “transformative” initiation. An example of the idea behind the transformative initiation taken from the perspective of analytical psychology could be when a person comes to understand and experience the nature and function of the shadow and its projections or when transference occurs within therapy. The assumption is that there are elementary, and ultimately predictable and repeatable, changes or transformations that occur in the individual on a microcosmic or psychological level. Until that experience is reached or the transformation occurs one cannot progress to the next stage of development, or at the very least, that progression becomes much more difficult without it.<sup>38</sup>

Generally speaking, there are two Paths of initiation that appear on the Western Esoteric Tradition’s Tree of Life.<sup>39</sup> Though each Path will eventually culminate in the same goal, the approach of each is significantly different. Both Paths can involve transformative and/or ceremonial initiations depending on the individual and his or her particular type of practice within the Tradition. The first path is known as the Path of the

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<sup>37</sup> Orders such as the HOGD and the Ordo Templi Orientis, following obvious Masonic influences, frequently employ various grips, passwords, and Lectures at different levels of progression.

<sup>38</sup> There are many problems with using terms like “ceremonial” and “transformative” in relation to initiation. Obviously “ceremonial initiations” can be linked closely to “transformative initiations” or, then again, not at all. These terms are adopted only for the convenience of analysis.

<sup>39</sup> Please see Figure Three, p.327.

Arrow.<sup>40</sup> This Path corresponds to the *sefirot Malkut, Yesod, Tiferet, Da'at, and Kether*. The Path of the Arrow is a mystical path of development. To elaborate, this Path has the sense that one's ego perceptions (for our purposes this would be *Malkut*, more on this below) either dwells in or is inundated by divinity or unity (*Kether*).<sup>41</sup> This Path is the most direct route to the transpersonal wholeness symbolised by *Kether*.

The Path of the Serpent, in contradistinction, methodically winds its way through the *sefirot*, experiencing each initiation (shift of consciousness), usually in a sequential fashion.<sup>42</sup> This process of ceremonial initiation is most evident within the structure of a Magical Order. Although the ceremonial initiations of Magical Orders commonly follow the Path of the Serpent, the most significant initiations occur along the Middle Pillar (the Path of the Arrow). The initiatory processes of the Hermetic Order of the Golden Dawn will be reviewed as an example of a "traditional" Western Esoteric or Magical Order.

The Hermetic Order of the Golden Dawn was actually comprised of three separate but connected Orders consisting of various grades or levels of development.<sup>43</sup> The Third

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<sup>40</sup> Fortune states that the Path "straight up the Central Pillar, is called the Path of the Arrow, which is shot from Qesheth, the Bow of Promise; it is the route that the mystic rises upon the planes; the initiate, however, adds to his experience the powers of the Side Pillars as well as the realizations of the Middle Pillar." Dion Fortune, *The Mystical Qabalah* (Boston, MA: Weiser Books, 2000), 269. Knight states that the "vertical line up the Tree is the Path of the Arrow, the Way of the Mystic, who seeks not the manipulation of occult powers but Union with God." Gareth Knight, *A Practical Guide to Qabalistic Symbolism* (York Beach, ME: Samuel Weiser, Inc., 1993), v.II, 145.

<sup>41</sup> In actuality the motion is thought to be a passive one, more like there is an "indwelling" of *Kether* in *Malkut*. The mystical experience is of the divine attributes of the Crown being reflected or perceived in the Kingdom.

<sup>42</sup> According to Fortune "...in old pictures a serpent is often depicted as twined about the boughs of the Tree. This is the serpent Nechushtan 'who holdeth his tail in his mouth,' the symbol of wisdom and initiation. The coils of the serpent, when correctly arranged on the Tree, cross each of the Paths in succession and serve to indicate the order which they should be numbered." Fortune, *The Mystical Qabalah*, 24. For a more detailed pictorial representation of this serpent see Plate 2 in: Ciceros', *Self-Initiation into the Golden Dawn Tradition*, and Israel Regardie, *The Golden Dawn* (St. Paul, MINN: Llewellyn Publications, 1988), 62.

<sup>43</sup> For more information on the history of the Hermetic Order of the Golden Dawn see: Ellic Howe, *The Magicians of the Golden Dawn* (York Beach, ME: Samuel Wiser, Inc., 1984); Francis King, ed., *Ritual Magic of the Golden Dawn* (Rochester, VT: Destiny Books, 1997); R.A. Gilbert, *The Golden Dawn Scrapbook* (York Beach, ME: Samuel Wiser, Inc., 1997); Darcy Küntz, ed., *The Historical Structure of the*

Order and the most novice in nature, was the Golden Dawn proper. The Golden Dawn consisted of the first five grades: Zelator (1=10), Theoricus (2=9), Practicus (3=8), and Philosophus (4=7). The pre-grade of Neophyte (0=0) is not technically part of the Golden Dawn.<sup>44</sup> The Second Order, *Roseae Rubae et Aureae Crucis*<sup>45</sup> was comprised of the grades Adeptus Minor (5=6), Adeptus Major (6=5), and Adeptus Exemptus (7=4). The First Order, the A.: A.:<sup>46</sup> was comprised of the grades Magister Templi (8=3), Magus (9=2), and Ipsissimus (10=1).<sup>47</sup>

The grades of the various Orders followed a prescribed path through each of the *sefirot* found on the Tree of Life while the Neophyte (0=0) waited for admission on the outskirts of the Tree.<sup>48</sup> Upon entering the Golden Dawn proper the newly initiated Neophyte (0=0) was introduced to the teachings of the Order.<sup>49</sup> These teachings are reproduced in varying degrees of clarity in Volume One of Crowley's *Equinox*, the Ciceros' *Self-Initiation into the Golden Dawn Tradition*, and Regardie's *The Golden Dawn*. The information and symbols of the grades are given in a slow and methodical manner. For example, the information given in the "First Knowledge Lecture" includes

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*Original Golden Dawn Temples*, Golden Dawn Study Series, 20, (Edmonds, WA: Holmes Publishing Group, 1999) and *The Golden Dawn Legacy of MacGregor Mathers*, Golden Dawn Study Series, 23, (Edmonds, WA: Holmes Publishing Group, 1998). And of course the introduction to Regardie's *The Golden Dawn*.

<sup>44</sup> The numbers separated by an "=" symbolise various things to the initiate. For our purposes the numbers represent a graduated process of initiation and interaction between one's "enlightened" nature (left number) and mundane nature (right number). See Gray, *Inner Traditions of Magic*, 99 for more detailed description of the meaning of this type of grade representation.

<sup>45</sup> Red Rose and Gold Cross.

<sup>46</sup> Crowley founded an Order of the same name with the assumption that he was continuing on the Golden Dawn current after the Order began to schism. For more information on Crowley's Order see "One Star in Sight" in Crowley, *Magick/Liber Aba*, 486-498.

<sup>47</sup> See Figure Four, p.328.

<sup>48</sup> In some theories of the Tree this position "below" *Malkut* is the realm of the *qlippot* or shells that were discarded after the splitting of the *sefirot* during their creation. The Neophyte would be seen as being in a state of disrepair or fractured in some manner.

<sup>49</sup> A grade is never actualised or attained until the next grade is begun. Thus, one does not "become" a Zelator (1=10) until completing that grade.

symbols of the Elements, Zodiac, planets, the Hebrew alphabet and the names of the *sefirot* with their Hebrew spelling.<sup>50</sup> Also at this early stage the initiated Neophyte is given a fundamental ritual called the Lesser Banishing Ritual of the Pentagram (LBRP).<sup>51</sup>

According to *The Golden Dawn*, the LBRP has three primary functions. First, the ritual is a form of prayer to divinity or one's "higher self" usually performed in the morning and evening. Second, the ritual is thought to be a rite of protection against "impure magnetism, the Banishing Ritual can be used to get rid of obsessing or disturbing thoughts."<sup>52</sup> The Western Esoteric method of giving a mental image to the "obsession" can be accomplished through visualisation alone or it could be accompanied by more tangible images such as painting, drawing, or sculpture. Once the "obsession" is objectified it is visualised as being separated from the individual and then it is banished away with the LBRP. This exercise could then be repeated as necessary until the obsession no longer possesses the same disruptive charge.<sup>53</sup> The third function of the LBRP is that it can be used as an exercise in concentration and visualisation. By visualising oneself conducting the ritual in as detailed manner as possible (sight, smell, auditory detail, and touch) one's visualisation skills are honed. These skills are later applied to various practices involving metaphorical and symbolic images.

The order and structure of the *sefirot* are introduced to the Neophyte (0=0) and function on both an intellectual level, through the names of the *sefirot* and the Hebrew alphabet, and on an emotional and spiritual level through the introduction of the LBRP.

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<sup>50</sup> Unless otherwise noted the Knowledge Lectures are taken from Regardie, *The Golden Dawn*, 50-111.

<sup>51</sup> In order to get a feel for the type of ritual conducted in the Western Esoteric Tradition please see Appendix A for the text of the LBRP, p.329.

<sup>52</sup> Regardie, *The Golden Dawn*, 54.

<sup>53</sup> This exercise is also given in Donald Michael Kraig's *Modern Magick*, 124-130 as the I.O.B. technique (Identify, Objectify, Banish).

The first part of the LBRP, the Qabalistic Cross, is said to activate *Kether*, *Malkut*, *Geburah*, *Hesed*, and *Tiferet* in sequence. This act is thought to place the Magician at the centre of his or her Universe. The entire ritual, in essence, places the Magician in the centre of a large *mandala* with the Archangels corresponding to the four quarters, the four Elements and their microcosmic attributes (roughly from East to North: intellect, will, emotion, body). In the centre of the circle stands the Magician facing, as it were, *Tiferet* with *Hod* to the left, *Netzach* to the right, and *Yesod* to the rear. Then, at the culmination of the ritual the Middle Pillar, with its roots in *Kether*, descends into the Magician's circle, that is to say, his or her *mandala*. In a paper entitled "Notes on the Lesser Ritual of the Pentagram" Crowley states "Those who regard this ritual as a mere device to invoke or banish spirits, are unworthy to possess it. Properly understood, it is the Medicine of Metals and the Stone of the Wise."<sup>54</sup> In this context, the LBRP is understood to be much more than a simple introductory ritual. For the Western Esotericist it is thought to have transformative psychological and spiritual properties.

The Second Knowledge Lecture of the Golden Dawn introduces the Zelator (1=10) to alchemical symbolism, meditation exercises, the concept of the Four Worlds of Kabbalah<sup>55</sup>, and the image of the Tree of Life with the numbered paths. At this point the very basics of Tarot are introduced (i.e. number of cards and suits). The Third Knowledge Lecture, for the Theoricus (2=9), begins with the various levels of the "Soul" i.e., *Neschamah*, *Ruach*, and *Nephesch*, and how they correspond to the *sefirot* of the Tree of Life. *Neschamah* corresponds to the Supernal Triad of *Kether*, *Hokmah*, and *Binah*. *Ruach* corresponds to the following six *sefirot* while *Nephesch* corresponds to

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<sup>54</sup> Crowley, *Magick/Liber Aba*, 692.

<sup>55</sup> From lowest to highest: *Assiah*, *Yetsirah*, *Briah*, and *Atziluth*.

*Malkut*. Here again we see that the individual begins to identify with or integrate his or herself into the structure of the Tree of Life. The Theoricus (2=9) is also introduced to a form of *pranāyāma* and other forms of meditation. The most important portion of the Fourth Knowledge Lecture is the exploration of the Major Arcana of the Tarot (numbers 0 to 21). The Practicus (3=8) is shown that each of the twenty-two letters of the Hebrew alphabet are equated to a Major Arcana card which, in turn, is linked to one of the Thirty-Two Paths of the Tree of Life.

The fifth and final Knowledge Lecture of the Golden Dawn (i.e, the Third Order) for the Philosophus (4=7) grade, gives much more complex information loosely based on a “traditional” Jewish Kabbalistic cosmology. More time is spent on the Tree and its many correspondences. The most important portion of the Fifth Knowledge Lecture for our purposes is its outline of the prerequisites for the Adeptus Minor 5=6 grade (i.e., the first grade of the Second Order):

1. A Thesis on the Rituals
2. A meditation on the crosses which have been used as admission badges in the Grades. . .
3. A complete diagram of the Tree of Life
4. The practice of control of the Aura
5. The placing of The Tree of Life in the Aura
6. Tattwas-Astrology-Divination.<sup>56</sup>

The first requirement involves an intellectual interpretation of the Masonically influenced Rituals conducted by the Golden Dawn.<sup>57</sup> Areas to be investigated in the Philosophus (4=7) grade include which Officer is in what position in the Lodge, what the various and different symbols mean, etc. The second requirement is again concerned

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<sup>56</sup> Regardie, *The Golden Dawn*, 87.

<sup>57</sup> For an example of Golden Dawn rituals adapted for solitary work see the “Portal Grade” in: Ciceros’, *Self-Initiation into the Golden Dawn*, 605-647. To understand the general aspects of Lodge or Order workings see: Greer, *Inside a Magical Lodge*, 1-130.

with information specific to the ritual processes of the Golden Dawn. However, the third to sixth requirements reflect a more general focus. Requirement three has the individual construct a large Tree of Life onto which it was essential to list “Deity Names, Names of the Archangels and Angels in Hebrew in the Sephiroth, and to number the Paths and give their attributions. Apart from this, the Tree should be your own personal synthesis of the Order symbolism as it applies to the Tree of Life.”<sup>58</sup> Here we see that the individual is instructed to create a Tree of Life that is unique to his or her personal experience within the Order.

The fourth requirement uses the standard Esoteric term “Aura”. The term aura is used in this context to refer to a part of the body that is not readily understood or measurable by conventional science. It is not understood as paranormal energy; rather it is seen as connected to and is a part of our corporeal bodies. This idea is by no means unique to the Golden Dawn or the Western Esoteric Tradition; the most obvious parallel example would be the Eastern notion of *chi/ki* that is a subtle “energy” that radiates from the physical body. In the fourth requirement the initiate is to learn the basics of anatomy and the systems of the physical body. The initiate is informed that he or she must learn to manipulate the aura but in order to do that the initiate is instructed that they must:

first try to get your emotional reactions under conscious control. Instead of automatically liking this, or disliking that, you must try to understand the mechanism which underlies these feelings. To assist you in this, the study of psychology is recommended.<sup>59</sup>

According to this statement, in order to be able to manipulate the aura one must have an understanding of both the physiological and psychological structures of the human being.

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<sup>58</sup> Regardie, *The Golden Dawn*, 88.

<sup>59</sup> Regardie, *The Golden Dawn*, 88.

These studies are thought to lead the initiate into a closer rapport with, and understanding of, their unique link between soma and psyche and spirit.

One way, according to the Golden Dawn, to link the *sefirot* with the corporeal confines of the human body, was through the ritual of the Middle Pillar (MPR).<sup>60</sup> The LBRP is thought to place the initiate in the centre of his or her personal universe while maintaining a link with the penultimate state of balance and “wholeness” of *Tiferet* which, in turn, is linked to *Kether*. The Middle Pillar, on the other hand, is said to activate the energy centres (similar to but not identical with the *chakras* of various Eastern traditions) found throughout the body with the “energy” emanating from *Kether*. The MPR focuses on the interaction between the individual and the Tree of Life via the *sefirot* of the Middle Pillar. By intoning various deity names the initiate is said to charge or activate the specific energy centre.<sup>61</sup>

We see in the case of these rituals that the body and mind are both engaged as well as the third component that links the two, the aura. The aura is neither wholly physical nor is it entirely psychological yet it participates on both a physical and psychological level. The aura, at least when it is used interchangeably with terms like “subtle body” or “astral body,” can be said to function within the world of metaphor.

Jung makes several references to the “subtle body”, in the *Collect Works*. In those references, the subtle body takes a position of being part mental or spiritual and part physical; being both and neither simultaneously.<sup>62</sup> In *Symbols of Transformation*<sup>63</sup> Jung

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<sup>60</sup> See Appendix B for an outline of this ritual, p.333.

<sup>61</sup> *Kether-AHIH, Daat/Binah-YHVH ALHIM, Tiferet-YHVH ALOAH ve-DAATH, Yesod-SHADDAL CHAI, Malkut- ADNI HARTZ*. This spelling of the God Names is from Regardie’s *The Middle Pillar*, 72.

<sup>62</sup> When subtle body is taken as soul it is understood to be non-material: Jung, “The Spirit Mercurius”, *CW 13*, par. 262.

<sup>63</sup> Jung, *Symbols of Transformation*, *CW 5*, par. 513.

refers to Hiawatha receiving a “pneumatic” or subtle body for a victory. In “Concerning Rebirth”, Jung refers to the subtle body in the Christian understanding of resurrection<sup>64</sup> and in “The Phenomenology of the Spirit in Fairytales” he discusses the subtle body in the context of being an example of a physical aspect of spirit.<sup>65</sup> The same theme of the semi-materiality of spirit as subtle body is also found in “Psychology of Religion”.<sup>66</sup> Jung discusses the “*Bardo*” body, “which is a kind of ‘subtle body’ constituting the visible envelope of the psychic self in the after-death state” in his “Psychological Commentary on ‘The Tibetan Book of the Dead’”.<sup>67</sup> “Religious Ideas in Alchemy”<sup>68</sup> discusses whether or not the alchemical process was more in the physical or spiritual realm. Jung claims that that “either/or” perspective was not present in that age instead there was “an intermediate realm between mind and matter, i.e., a psychic realm of subtle bodies whose characteristic it is to manifest themselves in a mental as well as a material form.”<sup>69</sup>

To return to the Western Esoteric notion of the aura, the aura brings together the body and mind while still existing with its own unique nature. The aura is guided and manipulated through will (volition) and imagination. Taken from the perspective of the Western Esoteric Tradition, a phenomenon such as Jung’s experience with Philemon

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<sup>64</sup> Jung, “Concerning Rebirth”, *CW 9i*, par. 202.

<sup>65</sup> Jung, “The Phenomenology of the Spirit in Fairytales”, *CW 9i*, par. 392.

<sup>66</sup> Jung, “Psychology of Religion”, *CW 11*, par. 160.

<sup>67</sup> Jung, “Psychological Commentary on ‘The Tibetan Book of the Dead’”, *CW 11*, par. 848.

<sup>68</sup> Jung, “Religious Ideas in Alchemy”, *CW 12*, par. 394. See also par. 417. For a comment on the connection of subtle body in alchemy and analysis see Jung, “The Psychology of the Transference”, *CW 16*, par. 486.

<sup>69</sup> See also Jung, “The Visions of Zosimos”, *CW 13*, par. 137n.

might be considered an encounter with an astral entity.<sup>70</sup> Such an encounter is as “real” as any experience with an individual of flesh and blood in that it affects the individual who experiences it yet it cannot be said to be as tangible or conspicuous as contact with a person of flesh and blood. The final ritual we will review, the Abramelin Operation, is traditionally undertaken at the Adeptus Minor (5=6) grade or later.<sup>71</sup> This grade corresponds to the Outer Portal of the Second Order and to *Tiferet* which, from an analytical psychological perspective, is equated to the notion of the self.

The Abramelin Operation is a ritual used by the Golden Dawn that was taken from *The Book of the Sacred Magic of Abra-Melin the Mage*.<sup>72</sup> The Operation is intended to last six months and begins with the initiate setting aside a room within his or her house or a place specifically sanctified for the completion of the ritual, which is to become the "oratory." In this oratory the initiate is to spend a prescribed amount of time in solemn prayer. The type of prayer is left to personal choice but it must "issue from the midst of your heart."<sup>73</sup> The time spent in prayer increases from a few minutes a day to several hours as the Operation progresses. Along with the periods of prayer, the initiate must observe a fast of varying degrees throughout the entire period. During the six months the initiate is obligated to avoid as much as possible, any kind of communication or sensual

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<sup>70</sup> This interpretation of Philemon would not be acceptable by Jung as Philemon was not seen as an objective entity from an alternate plane of existence but rather an aspect of the psyche that had an autonomy that acted *as if* it were objective.

<sup>71</sup> The Abramelin Operation is not unique to the Golden Dawn. Its roots are believed to be in the 15<sup>th</sup> century, the Golden Dawn simply appropriated it into its already eclectic teachings.

<sup>72</sup>*The Book of the Sacred Magic of Abra-Melin the Mage* S.L. MacGregor Mathers, trans., (GB: Aquarian Press, 1976). Apparently Mathers translated this text from the French which was in turn translated from Hebrew. However, Mathers was notorious for “translating” English manuscripts that had poor handwriting or organisation into English. Whatever the case, Mathers’ remains the most used translation of the text. The text will be hereon referred to as *Abramelin*.

<sup>73</sup>*Abramelin*, 65.

stimulation. The culmination of the Operation occurs with the invocation of the Holy Guardian Angel. According to Abramelin, the Angel:

will never abandon you, he will lead you in the Way of the Lord, and he will watch carefully over you to assist you, and consent unto the present Operation of the Sacred Magic, so that you may be able to constrain the Spirits accursed to God, unto the honour of Your Creator, and for your own good and that of your neighbour.<sup>74</sup>

The "Sacred Magic" referred to in the above citation is not only the invocation of one's Holy Guardian Angel, it also includes an evocation of the Archangels who in turn control the Four Infernal Princes and their hierarchical and numerous legions. The premise is that the initiate, with the aid of his or her Holy Guardian Angel, utilises certain *sigils* or geometric seals to bind the demonic beings into servitude. While this is the format of the Operation as found in *The Sacred Magic of Abra-Melin* the individual application and experiences of the Operation as understood within the Golden Dawn would vary from initiate to initiate. For the Golden Dawn the emphasis was not primarily concerned with the literal subjugation of demons. Rather, the emphasis was much more on the connection of the initiate with his or her Holy Guardian Angel or Higher Genius, as a form of *psychopomp* that would aid the initiate and act as a source of inspiration and wisdom throughout his or her life.

There are two interesting sources that involve the Abramelin Operation, neither of which is connected in any direct way to the Golden Dawn's initiatory schemata that will help clarify the nature of the Operation. The first is a published diary of the Operation by

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<sup>74</sup>*Abramelin*, 84.

William Bloom, *The Sacred Magician: A Ceremonial Diary*<sup>75</sup> and the second is a recent publication by Jason Augustus Newcomb entitled *21<sup>st</sup> Century Mage*.<sup>76</sup>

William Bloom's work is a record of his experiences with the Abramelin Operation undertaken in 1972. In Bloom's Abramelin experience the initial two months of oration (prayer) have an overriding air of conflict and difficulty. For example, in his diary entry for May 11 we find Bloom state:

Things happen during oration about which I cannot write. My head torn between complete madness as a veil thrown up to deceive me and a faith in the shock that it really happens. Whichever, it tears me apart and I have seen the Phoenix rising from the weeping ashes.<sup>77</sup>

The conflict evident in the first two months increases significantly in the following two months. However along with the stress and discord there are also moments of relief and insight:

27 June

The bad period is definitely over –temporarily– and now the time of growth again. A vision of living in a new consciousness. In the Oratory, I feel that Unity will reign supreme over the duality and I am no longer so pained by it as I see hope-indeed a glow at the end of the tunnel.<sup>78</sup>

And

16 July

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<sup>75</sup> William Bloom, *The Sacred Magician: A Ceremonial Diary* (Glastonbury: Gothic Images Publications, 1992).

<sup>76</sup> Jason Augustus Newcomb, *21<sup>st</sup> Century Mage* (York Beach, ME: Weiser Books, 2002). While not operating from a Golden Dawn perspective, Newcomb does seem to approach the Operation from a general esoteric and Thelemic perspective.

<sup>77</sup> Bloom, *The Sacred Magician*, 71.

<sup>78</sup> Bloom, *The Sacred Magician*, 88.

The lead-in continues and how torturous it is; the duality<sup>79</sup> is killing; the threats are heavy. For a few days now I have been meaning to mention something for the sake of someone/anyone into whose hands this diary may fall. Concerning this Operation, it is in human terms the most tough and frightening experience possible; apart from courage, it requires spiritual intelligence to prevent inevitable self-destruction. If anyone considers performing it, I most heavily advise them to meditate on it for at least twelve months beforehand before swearing the oath to carry on through it.<sup>80</sup>

The last two months find Bloom in manic shifts in mood. At this point his practice consisted of ninety minutes of prayer, one hour of meditation, and five hours of “holy reading and messing about.”<sup>81</sup> Bloom’s approach is a mixture of mystical Christianity and Theosophy with some general occult theory added to the mix. Bloom increasingly makes use of terms like worm, shame, sin, weakness, and other similar terms of supplication and denigration in reference to himself during this period. He is also noticeably taken with the psychologically problematic concept of the destruction of the personality by which we can assume he is referring to ego perspective.

The final two months are marked by longer and in some ways more manic entries by Bloom. At the end of the Operation the practitioner is to invoke his or her angel and once this is accomplished he or she then commands the demons and devils of the “Infernal” hierarchy to swear allegiance to the practitioner and his/her HGA. In the Epilogue to *The Sacred Magician* Bloom states:

So...I completed the great ceremony. I had achieved the Conversation. I had opened my mystical awareness. But I still had the whole complex of personality characteristics needing

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<sup>79</sup> Bloom is referring here to the standard mystical dualism of the “I” of personality and the “I” of the Soul (HGA).

<sup>80</sup> Bloom, *The Sacred Magician*, 96.

<sup>81</sup> Bloom, *The Sacred Magician*, 114.

transformation, exacerbated now by the intensity of the six month process and by the new awareness and energies.<sup>82</sup>

Here we see Bloom shift from the notion of destroying the personality towards the notion of transformation. Unfortunately, or perhaps inevitably, Bloom was unable to reflect on his recent experiences of the preceding six months. He was riding a wave of prayer and meditation, not to mention psychological stress, and could not ground himself. Following the Operation his partner left for England for three weeks (they had up until that point been living together). During that time he was diagnosed with a severe case of Hepatitis B. Bloom was bedridden for several months and also had restricted oxygen flow to the brain, thus impairing his mental faculties. Added to this collection of malaise Bloom had several near death experiences. Of the illness Bloom recounts:

What a wonderful and extraordinary illness it was. How carefully my own soul or my Teacher<sup>83</sup> must have planned it. Twenty years later I can still think of no more effective or economical way of integrating my energies. How else could I have calmed my psychic explosion and transformed my storming heaven pattern?<sup>84</sup>

Bloom admits that he was not able to fully integrate the experience for nearly twenty years following his illness.

Bloom initially commented that given that the Operation is an “extreme technique, belonging to a culture of wilful sacrifice and humbling devotion, which I associate with patriarchal modes” he did not feel it was suitable for “our emerging non-sexist and holistic spiritual culture.”<sup>85</sup> However, Bloom felt that the Operation might, at the very least, help develop self-discipline which he claims is essential to any spiritual

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<sup>82</sup> Bloom, *The Sacred Magician*, 149.

<sup>83</sup> The Teacher in this case is either the Holy Guardian Angel or a “Spiritual” teacher, or both.

<sup>84</sup> Bloom, *The Sacred Magician*, 150.

<sup>85</sup> Bloom, *The Sacred Magician*, 152.

path and even more so in the then fledgling New Age. Bloom felt that the New Age perspective of developing one's own spiritual path was positive but "we need to be careful that, in disengaging from classical paths of spiritual approach, we do not also lose the skills that are essential for travelling the path."<sup>86</sup>

The preceding was a very brief review of one person's experience with the Abramelin Operation. If we place the Operation within a Jungian context we can see that the Operation calls for six months of increasing degrees of separation from both societal and, in an alchemical/psychological sense of the *unio mentalis*, bodily desires and then integration back into the bodily (*caelum*). Then, after facing what reveals itself to be six months of shadow oriented material, the practitioner objectifies the accomplishment by conversing and communing, even if only symbolically, with the self (i.e. the Holy Guardian Angel) and symbolically placing the ego and shadow in direct rapport with the self. Bloom's practice of the Operation followed a more or less traditional interpretation of the *Book of the Sacred Magic* but his is not the only interpretation available. While the above Jungian interpretation of the Operation was not present in the original text, one source actively adopts Jung's thought and model of the psyche. Newcomb's updated interpretation of the Abramelin Operation begins with a different perspective. He states that the "experience of contacting your Holy Guardian Angel is the marriage of your "human being" with your "divine self" — your conscious self with your unconscious self."<sup>87</sup> With this rather Jungian stance Newcomb begins to introduce his understanding of the Operation.

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<sup>86</sup> Bloom, *The Sacred Magician*, 152-153.

<sup>87</sup> Newcomb, *21<sup>st</sup> Century Mage*, viii.

Newcomb dispenses with most of the dogma of the Operation and focuses on the core essentials. For example he states that it is vitally important to remove oneself from the “every day” world in order to be able to focus on the work, but there are obvious limitations to the duration and degree of this requirement. The important factor, according to Newcomb, is to maintain a conscious awareness of one’s reaction to what interaction does occur during the day between the practitioner and others and to remain focused on the Holy Guardian Angel. He states that avoiding everything in life “can have deleterious effects on your ability to handle the world ...You want to improve your relationship with the world, not destroy it.”<sup>88</sup>

One of the important factors emphasised in Newcomb’s version of the Operation is an understanding that the ego is comprised of multiple conditioning factors and complexes and that the HGA is engaged in an intimate relationship with the ego. The HGA acts as a stabilising factor for the ego while at the same time it also helps keep its potentially narcissistic perspective in check by forcing the ego to acknowledge something outside its boundaries that possesses or symbolises superior insight and knowledge:

The more you pursue your spiritual practices, the more your ego will complain, object, invoke laziness, and generally attempt to swerve you away from your course. Your ego may also fool you into believing it is your Holy Guardian Angel, which can bring on delusion...<sup>89</sup>

Newcomb suggests that once the individual chooses to undertake the Operation in a particular manner he or she should stay with the chosen approach. Some of the suggested approaches made by Newcomb include: yoga (including practices such as *āsana*, *prānāyāma*, *mantra*, *pratyāhāra*, and *dhāranā*), Ceremonial Magick (including

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<sup>88</sup> Newcomb, *21<sup>st</sup> Century Mage*, 36.

<sup>89</sup> Newcomb, *21<sup>st</sup> Century Mage*, 58-59.

rituals such as the LBRP and the use and development of “astral” senses), devotion (in a *bhakti-yoga* sense of surrender to God),<sup>90</sup> sexual techniques, and awareness techniques such as those used in various sects of Buddhism. Once the approach has been selected (and Newcomb suggests trying several until one stands out) it is then applied to the six month Operation.

The definition of the four Infernal Princes is altered slightly in Newcomb’s rendition of the Operation. The four Princes (who correspond to the four elements and therefore operate symbolically on both a macrocosmic and microcosmic level)<sup>91</sup> are not taken to be literal entities but yet they still exist:

I am not saying that evil spirits don’t exist, or that they are mere figments of imagination. They certainly do exist, but they happen to be made of the doubts, fears, and delusions of humanity. You could also say that the doubts, fears, and delusions of humanity are made of demons.<sup>92</sup>

As Philemon was both part of Jung and yet separate at the same time, so too do we see the HGA and the Infernal Princes mentioned above functioning in a similar dual capacity. Their presence is “real” in that it can be felt and they can be interacted with in a manner which grants them some level of autonomous existence. Yet that interaction is intimately bound to and influenced by the individual’s life and all that he or she perceives:

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<sup>90</sup> Newcomb cites Crowley’s *Liber Astarté* as an outline of how this devotion can be defined. To paraphrase Newcomb, citing Crowley, there are seven types of devotion listed in *Liber Astarté*: 1) confession and supplication, as a slave unto his Lord (awe), 2) an Oath as a vassal to his Liege (fealty), 3) a Memorial, as of a child to his Parent (dependence), 4) an Orison, as of a Priest unto his God (adoration), 5) a Colloquy, as of a Brother with his Brother (confidence), 6) a Conjunction, as to a Friend with his Friend (comradeship), 7) a Madrigal, as of a Lover to his Mistress (passion). Newcomb, *21<sup>st</sup> Century Mage*, 107.

<sup>91</sup> Newcomb applies Air (intellect) to Lucifer, Fire (passion) to Leviathan, Water (emotions) to Satan, and Earth (body) to Belial. These demons represent the “negative”, restrictive, or outright destructive aspects of the elements within the individual. Newcomb, *21<sup>st</sup> Century Mage*, 132-139.

<sup>92</sup> Newcomb, *21<sup>st</sup> Century Mage*, 133.

Whether you conquer the demons of fear with a ceremony, by a process of introspection, or by shooting them down, you must conquer these forces in your life. If you do not, you will find yourself slowly falling under their thrall once more, and you will lose sight of your Angel once again in the mire of worldly fears and pains.<sup>93</sup>

Both Bloom's use of the more traditional Operation and Newcomb's more postmodern reworking (i.e., his "belief is a tool" approach) emphasise the fact that there must be a fundamental transformation in one's psyche in order to progress on a spiritual level. Bloom emphasises the rather problematic "destruction of ego" approach while Newcomb takes a more holistic approach by focusing on the exploration and relativisation of the ego's hegemony through its relation with the self (HGA).

Since, according to the Western Esoteric Tradition, the HGA is connected to the *sefira Tiferet* on the Tree of Life and Jung equates the self with *Tiferet*<sup>94</sup> we find an interesting connection between the self and the HGA as representatives of balance, wholeness, and superior insight. If we take the HGA to be another term for the self there are obvious connections between Jungian theory and those of the Western Esoteric Tradition. However there are also many differences as well, which we shall see in the next chapter.

This chapter has outlined several important points. First we looked closely at the definition of Magick as used in this thesis. The definition: "Magick is the Science and Art of changing consciousness, through the medium of metaphor, in conformity with will" reveals an emphasis on "scientific" activities such as observation and recording of subjective and objective experiences. Balancing the scientific approach is an

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<sup>93</sup> Newcomb, *21<sup>st</sup> Century Mage*, 133.

<sup>94</sup> Jung, "Flying Saucers: A Modern Myth", *CW 10*, par. 779.

appreciation for the “art” component of Magick. This could be through traditional forms of art or through the practice of ritual and visualisations. Both the scientific and artistic facets of the definition are employed in order to change consciousness at will. This undertaking would require an increasing command of one’s own projections, an understanding of one’s limits and boundaries, and a desire to push those boundaries. An addition to the more “traditional” definition of Magick was the addition of the term “metaphor”.

Each tradition that has used the Tree of Life has used it to represent a symbol of order and unity. It is a place where all the chaos of existence can be arranged and experienced, to whatever degree and for whatever duration, so as to bring the individual into a state of increased levels of consciousness. Metaphor, whether recognised as such or not, is the binding psychological agent that brings together the individual and the structures of the collective psyche. Similar to Jung’s experiences with Philemon, the magician seeks out the deeper portions of the psyche through openness to and interactions with the landscape of metaphor and through relationships with metaphorical beings encountered therein.

One of the ways to focus or define the foray into the realms of metaphor is through training in a Western Esoteric Order such as the Golden Dawn. Orders usually structure their initiatory process on the pattern of the Kabbalistic Tree of Life. As the initiate progresses he or she is given more complicated and presumably more penetrating symbols and rituals to deepen their connection with the metaphorical/psychological world. The Abramelin Operation is a ritual that attempts to lead the initiate into a dialogue with his or her Holy Guardian Angel or in Jungian terms, the self. This process

can take a very different approach depending on the individual's personality and world-view.

Through the process of initiation, the practitioner becomes intimately connected to the image of the Tree of Life. The Tree takes on an organic and, like any "living" symbol, independent existence in relation to the initiate. The Tree symbolises not only the individual's lofty, and potentially inflationary, spiritual goals it can also represent a symbol of the individual's psyche or Soul and the many facets contained therein. This psychological interpretation of the Western Esoteric Tradition's understanding of the Tree of Life has several important implications which we shall now explore in more detail.

### **Robert Moore and the Archetype of Initiation**

The term "initiation" has been employed liberally throughout this chapter. The Western Esoteric Tradition has a long history of using the term initiation to imply psycho-spiritual progress and development. Prior to moving onto the next chapter we should take a moment to investigate how "initiation" can be understood from the perspective of analytical psychology through a brief review of Robert Moore's work.

Moore is best known for his work with the men's movement and his popular books on the archetypes of the male psyche as personified through the images of the Magician, King, Lover, and Warrior.<sup>95</sup> In the main, Moore's research is not relevant to

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<sup>95</sup> See Robert Moore and Douglas Gillette. *The King Within: Accessing the King in the Male Psyche*, (New York: Avon Books, 1992), *The Warrior Within: Accessing the Knight in the Male Psyche*, (New York: Avon Books, 1993), *The Lover Within: Accessing the Lover in the Male Psyche*, (New York: Avon Books, 1993), *The Magician Within: Accessing the Shaman in the Male Psyche*, (New York: Avon Books, 1993), *King, Warrior, Magician, Lover: Rediscovering the Archetypes of Mature Masculinity*, (San Francisco: Harper, 1990). See also, Robert Moore. *The Archetype of Initiation: Sacred Space, Ritual Process, and Personal Transformation*, Max J. Halvick, Jr. ed., (Philadelphia, PA: Xlibris Corporation, 2001) and *The*

our current analysis. Moore’s interests lay in an anthropological approach to issues such as sacred space and the role of “elders” within the structure of initiation and analytical psychology.

In *The Archetype of Initiation* (and elsewhere) Moore divides the Archetype of Initiation into three phases of consciousness (ordinary consciousness challenged, ordinary consciousness transcended, and ordinary consciousness reconstituted) that are then viewed from ten perspectives (Life Events, Eliade, Campbell, van Gennep, Turner, Freud, Contemporary Occultist, Psychotherapy, Worship, and Social Attitude).<sup>96</sup> In this structuralist approach, Moore attempts to organise disparate forms of information into a cohesive comparative format, as do the Esotericists in their use of the Tree of Life.

As a brief example of what Moore is attempting we will review the “Contemporary Occultist” and the “Psychotherapy” perspectives of the Archetype of Initiation.

<b>Table Four: The Archetype of Initiation<sup>97</sup></b>		
<b>Phase</b>	<b>Contemporary Occult</b>	<b>Psychotherapy</b>
<b>One</b> (Ordinary Consciousness Challenged)	Significant hunger, malignant discouragement	Realization of need of analysis (before therapy session)
<b>Two</b> (Ordinary Consciousness Transcended)	The Quest with its ordeals (with dangers of pseudo-initiation and chronic liminality)	Analytic environment as vessel or container (therapy session)
<b>Three</b> (Ordinary Consciousness Reconstituted)	Adepthood: Initiates now empowered for new creativity and significant service	Post-analysis, adaptation (after therapy session)

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*Magician and the Analyst: The Archetype of the Magus in Occult Spirituality and Jungian Analysis*, (Philadelphia, PA: Xlibris Corporation, 2002).

<sup>96</sup> Moore, *The Archetype of Initiation*, 184-186.

<sup>97</sup> Adapted from Moore, *The Archetype of Initiation*, 184-186.

As indicated in the Literature Review above, Moore does not reveal how he defines or describes “occultist” so Moore’s analysis of the “Contemporary Occultist” perspective is, at best, a general and indefinite interpretation. However, of particular interest in Moore’s thought is the appreciation for the potentially damaging practices of the “Contemporary Occult” tradition.

### **Chronic Liminality and Inflation in the Western Esoteric Tradition**

The concept, definition, and application of initiation within the Western Esoteric Tradition is based on the best possible outcome for an individual. All things being equal, an Adept (Adeptus Minor, 5=6 and above in the Golden Dawn system) should have experienced certain spiritual and psychological episodes, have attained and retained a prescribed amount of knowledge and spiritual wisdom, and still preserve a connection to “the real world.”

Moore emphasises two of the most obvious psycho-spiritual concerns which could apply to the practitioner within the Western Esoteric Tradition, namely, chronic liminality and pseudo-initiation, the latter of which can lead to problems such as inflation. In our working definition of Magick we find that “changing consciousness” implies moving from what Moore calls “normal consciousness” into a liminal state of consciousness. The correlative to the liminal form of consciousness is that there must also be a willed return.

A ritual involving astral (metaphoric) travel, for example, can become a trigger for liminal consciousness. However, living perpetually in the astral or having the astral world imposing on the “real” world could be detrimental to the mundane life of the

practitioner. It would be unlikely that Jung would have been able to accomplish as much as he did if he had spent greater and greater periods of time with Philemon or if he had been carried away by the visitors who preceded the genesis of the *Septem Sermones ad Mortuos*.<sup>98</sup>

Brief sojourns into the liminal realms of metaphor can help to widen one's perspective while disenchanting the ego-complex of its false sense of autonomy and hegemony. Yet if one is lacking in initial and basic work, such as initial shadow confrontation, or one is attached to a rigid or overly materialistic view of "reality" then the onset of a liminal state, especially one brought on by the constellation of an archetype, could be disconcerting or even dangerous. Analysis, especially analytical psychology, is one way to safely engage in the realm of metaphor and probe deeply into the personal and objective psyche. Also, if we accept the claims made by the Esotericists, the rituals and training of the Western Esoteric Tradition can also provide a safe and effective atmosphere, assuming the practitioner has been trained properly.

Proper training is one of Moore's greatest concerns and he emphasises the necessity of ritual elders. Moore, interestingly enough, sees himself fulfilling this role in his own right. Moore states:

Without a ritual elder, the temptation to inflation of the ego is inevitable. Inflation presents a problem to anyone who has ever come in contact with the Sacred, and that includes all of us. The Freudians call it "grandiosity." If you are not a little inflated, you are too far away from the Sun of the Self. Personally, I worry more about you if you are not inflated than if you are. . . I like seeing people who feel alive and important. People who are really

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<sup>98</sup> Jung recounts that while working deeply with fantasies he "needed a point of support in 'this world,' and I may say that my family and my professional work were that to me. It was most essential for me to have a normal life in the real world as a counterpoise to that strange inner world." Jung, *MDR*, 184.

depressed do not have close enough connection with divine powers.<sup>99</sup>

Moore makes the assumption that the ritual elder is essential for the preservation of sacred, liminal space, and, as can be seen from the above citation, the psychological progress of the individual practitioner. While this approach is well documented within anthropological works and within Moore's work, there remains the obvious question of who trained the first elder? While having a ritual elder within the context of the Western Esoteric Tradition is certainly a benefit it is not deemed absolutely necessary. In some traditions, such as Chaos Magick, it may not even be desirable.

A ritual elder can guide the practitioner because the elder is thought to have already experienced much of what the practitioner would be experiencing. However, to make an *a priori* assumption that the elder's experience is essential to the psycho-spiritual progression of an individual or that his or her experiences will be identical to the practitioner's is questionable. From the perspective of Jung's model of the psyche and the process of individuation, the only guide necessary would be the self. The problem would be, of course, how effectively one perceives and interacts with the self on a conscious level. In this case an elder or an analyst could be helpful though ultimately it is the individual who must pass through the various psychological initiations. We shall return to this problem again in Chapter Four when we discuss the ego-self axis. The argument of the necessity of a ritual elder aside, Moore does make an interesting remark regarding the nature of inflation and its role in initiation.

Aleister Crowley's writings are filled with language that could quite easily (and quite justifiably) be construed as having come from an inflated personality.<sup>100</sup> Yet the

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<sup>99</sup> Moore, *Archetype of Initiation*, 80.

more intimate the practitioner becomes with the self and the more fluent he or she becomes with the self's language of symbol and metaphor, the more the ego-complex tends to emulate, consciously or unconsciously, the self.<sup>101</sup> If transient, this inflation can act as a source of *mana* and libido that can be “brought under will” and utilised by the practitioner. The experience can lead to psychological and spiritual insights, inspiration, and attainment. However, there is the very real danger that the swelling of the self's dynamic energy could envelop the ego-complex in such a manner that the ego assumes that it is the self or god.<sup>102</sup> While the goal of the Esotericist is, in essence, to become more than human<sup>103</sup> they would be attempting to reach that goal through a careful spiritual discipline which would require constant vigilance toward the workings of the ego-complex. However, this again implies all things being equal. While the goal may be noble in scope, perhaps the mythic lessons of Icarus should be kept in mind.

The Esotericists are aware, in writing if not consistently in action, of the problem of egotism. However, there is a rather disconcerting attitude regarding the “destruction” or “transcendence” of the ego.<sup>104</sup> If we assume for a moment, as some Esotericists do, that there is an individual “thing” called “ego,” as opposed to a collection or complex of

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<sup>100</sup> Crowley is not alone in this perceived issue of inflation. Few Esoteric writers are innocent of grandiose language and claims. Crowley is simply chosen as he is one of the Esotericists where this is most notable.

<sup>101</sup> According to Jung “the more numerous and the more significant the unconscious contents which are assimilated to the ego, the closer the approximation of the ego to the self, even though this approximation must be a never ending process. This inevitably produces an inflation of the ego...” Jung, *CW 9ii*, par. 44.

<sup>102</sup> Jung refers to this as the “mana-personality” in “The Relations Between the Ego and the Unconscious”, *CW 7*, par. 374-406. We will return to the issue of the mana-personality in Chapter Four.

<sup>103</sup> I am thankful to John Dourley for placing this concept in a Jungian context for me. Rather than saying the Esotericist is attempting to become “more than human” or “god” we can instead see the Esotericist as pushing to become *fully* human. While the latter description may be more psychologically palatable than the previous, they are both ultimately expressing very similar goals.

<sup>104</sup> For examples of how “ego” is defined and dealt with within the Western Esoteric Tradition see: Regardie, *The Tree of Life and The Middle Pillar Ritual*, Crowley, *The Law is for All* (Tempe, AZ: New Falcon Publications, 1996), 93-95, *Magick/Liber Aba, The Book of Lies* 6<sup>th</sup> ed. (York Beach, ME: Samuel Weiser, Inc., 1989) especially chapters 8, 16, 27, 30, and 32, Robert Anton Wilson, *Cosmic Trigger Volume 1*, (Tempe AZ: New Falcon Publications, 1997) and Carroll, *Liber Kaos*, 87-105.

various factors, then the abolishment of ego would be the destruction of any cognition of the sensory world. While it may be that the majority of Esotericists realise that they are not “destroying” the ego but rather displacing its dominion over consciousness, this is not generally reflected in the literature.

With this introduction to the Western Esoteric Tradition complete we shall now open the dialogue between the theories of analytical psychology and the theories of the Western Esoteric Tradition.

## **Chapter Four**

### **From Ego to Abyss:**

### **The Personal Perspective on the Western Esoteric Tree of Life**

In this chapter we will look at how the various Esoteric interpretations of the *sefirot* relate to some of the theories from analytical psychology. We will review, for example, the connection between ego and the external world, the role of the shadow and Shadow Abyss, the nature of the anima and animus and the complex role of the self and its connection to the Esoteric notion of the Holy Guardian Angel. Chapter Four ends with a summary of the Supernal Abyss as a buffer between personal, dualistic transpersonal experience and non-dual transpersonal psychological experiences.

Jung expended a great deal of energy researching alchemy, Spiritualism and Gnosticism, not to mention his forays into the more mainstream forms of religion and spirituality such as Buddhism, Hinduism, Judaism and Christianity. Were he to have made a more thorough study of the theories of the Western Esoteric Tradition he may have found another historically parallel example of his own theories. Similarly, if the Esotericists would take more time and patience to understand the intricacies of Jung's thought, they may be able to see that placing the initiatory processes of psycho-spiritual maturation within the human psyche, as opposed to "higher" and less human divine realms, does not diminish the potential value or numinosity of their Tradition. Traditionally the Tree of Life has helped to bring ideas and concepts together in novel ways and the following analytical psychological interpretation of the Western Esoteric Tree of Life is an attempt to bring into dialogue these two theories of human psycho-spiritual development.

In the previous chapters we have dealt with the rather abstract and malleable nature of the *sefirot* through Jewish, Christian, Hermetic and Western Esoteric Traditions. We have also briefly looked at how Jung employed the *sefirot* within his writings, usually

in support of his alchemical psychological theories, and at the definition and structure of the Western Esoteric Tradition. Now we shall look more closely at how the *sefirot* are defined within the Western Esoteric Tradition and how we may, in turn, interpret them through the theories of analytical psychology.

### **The Western Esoteric Tree of Life and the Process of Individuation: Bringing Two Worlds Together**

The Tree of Life is, first and foremost, a structure and symbol representing order and interconnectedness between seemingly disparate objects and attributes. If the *sefirot* are understood to be metaphorical then we can also see the Tree of Life as an ordering of archetypes. The Tree represents a symbolic manifestation of that which is highly abstract in order that human consciousness may be able to glimpse the underlying complexity of existence. We have seen that the Tree provided the highly intellectual and somewhat rigid traditions of 12<sup>th</sup> century Judaism with a means of intimate and unmediated union with God. The Tree gave seemingly objective verification for the dogma of Christianity while it provided a means to explore the physical and subtle worlds of the Renaissance. The Tree of the Western Esoteric Tradition follows in the path of each of the previous applications by providing a model of a direct link to divinity or ultimate reality, a justification of its own world-view, and a method to explore various modes and levels of psychological, physical and spiritual reality.

While each of the aforementioned functions of the Tree can be found within the traditions mentioned, the Western Esoteric Tradition, as an amalgamation of various spiritual sources avoids, for the most part, a rigid adherence to one particular world-view.

As we have seen, the Tree can be applied in various and often conflicting ways. How then can this symbol of order and structure be applied to the paradigm of the psyche as put forward by analytical psychology? Perhaps more importantly, why should we even bother trying?

The answer to the latter question is apparent to anyone who is interested in both religion, especially the various mystical traditions, and analytical psychology. The symbolic nature and immediacy of experience witnessed within the various mystical traditions fosters a religious attitude and echoes the processes of the unconscious. Jung saw these tendencies in alchemy, mystical Christianity, Gnosticism, as well as in Kabbalah. Lacking the awareness and terminology of the processes of the psyche, these traditions looked to the vocabulary and symbols of their own world-view for explanation.

In 1937 Jung delivered a paper for the Terry Lecture entitled “Psychology and Religion.” In that paper Jung set out to define “religion.” Jung states that religion:

appears to me to be a peculiar attitude of the human mind, which could be formulated in accordance with the original use of the term “religio,” that is, a careful consideration and observation of certain dynamic factors, understood to be “powers,” spirits, demons, gods, laws, ideas, ideals or whatever name man has given to such factors as he has found in his world powerful, dangerous or helpful enough to be taken into careful consideration, or grand, beautiful and meaningful enough to be devoutly adored and loved.... “Religion,” it might be said, is the term that designates the attitude peculiar to a consciousness which has been altered by the experience of the numinosum.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Jung, “Psychology and Religion”, *CW II*, par. 8.

For Jung religion is not solely concerned with dogma or creed, creed being seen by Jung as “codified and dogmatized forms of original religious experiences.”<sup>2</sup> Religion is about the intimate experience of the numinous which, in Jung’s parlance, is another term for the mysterious power of the unconscious: “One must always remember that God is a mystery, and everything we say about it is said and believed by human beings. We make images and concepts, and when I speak of God I always mean the image man has made of him. But no one knows what he is like, or he would be a god himself.”<sup>3</sup>

Jung also defines religion in his paper “Psychology and Religion” as:

a careful and scrupulous observation of what Rudolf Otto aptly termed the *numinosum*, that is, a dynamic agency or effect not caused by an arbitrary act of will. On the contrary, it seizes and controls the human subject, who is always rather its victim than its creator. The *numinosum*—whatever its cause may be—is an experience of the subject independent of his will.... The *numinosum* is either quality belonging to a visible object or the influence of an invisible presence that causes a peculiar alteration of consciousness.<sup>4</sup>

For Jung the religious attitude is one that has the potential to build bridges between opposites. In *Aion*, Jung, discussing the contributions made by Joachim of Flora (c.1135-1202 CE) towards the ushering in of a “new age of spirit” found in monastic thought,<sup>5</sup> states that rather than equating Joachim’s revolutionary insights with the

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<sup>2</sup> Jung, “Psychology and Religion”, *CW11*, par.10. See also Jung, “General Aspects of Psychoanalysis”, *CW 4*, par. 555 and “Psychology and Religion”, *CW 11*, par. 76 (dogma and “mental hygiene”) for the collective benefits of dogma.

<sup>3</sup> Jung, *C.G Jung Letters*, v.2, 384. For a thorough review of Jung and the numinous see: Leon Schlamm, “The Holy: A Meeting-Point between Analytical Psychology and Religion” in *Jung and the Monotheisms*, Joel Ryce-Menuhin, ed. (New York: Routledge, 1994), 20-32.

<sup>4</sup> Jung, “Psychology and Religion”, *CW 11*, par. 6.

<sup>5</sup> Joachim taught that there was a Trinitarian conception to the whole of history which was divided into, predictably enough, three periods. The first period, “Ordo conjugatorum”, related to the Father under which humans lived under the Law of God. This period lasted until the dispensation of the Hebrew Bible. The second period, “Ordo clericorum”, related to the Son in which humankind lived under the Grace of God, this period ended with the dispensation of the New Testament. The third period, “Ordo monachorum” of “contemplatum is the age of Spirit which will be lived in the liberty of “Spiritualis Intellectus” proceeding from the Hebrew Bible and the New Testament. The last age would usher in new religious

“bigoted advocates of that revolutionary and anarchic turbulence” of the Holy Ghost movement “[w]e must suppose, rather, that he himself unwittingly ushered in a new ‘status,’ a religious attitude that was destined to bridge and compensate the frightful gulf that had opened out between Christ and Antichrist in the eleventh century.”<sup>6</sup> Though the nuances of eleventh century Christology are beyond the scope of this thesis, what we can take from this citation is that a “religious attitude” functioned as a bridge between two previously diametrically opposed aspects of Christian doctrine.

In “Commentary on ‘The Secret of the Golden Flower’” Jung recounts a letter written to him by a former patient. In the letter the woman describes a newly found state of mind or attitude. She writes:

By keeping quiet, repressing nothing, remaining attentive, and by accepting reality—taking things as they are, and not as I wanted them to be—by doing all this, unusual knowledge has come to me, and unusual powers as well, such as I could never have imagined before. I always thought that when we accepted things they overpowered us in some way or other. This turns out not to be true at all, and it is only by accepting them that one can assume an attitude towards them. So now I intend to play the game of life, being receptive to whatever comes to me, good or bad, sun and shadow forever alternating, and, in this way, also accepting my own nature with its positive and negative sides. Thus everything becomes more alive to me. What a fool I was! How I tried to force everything to go according to the way I thought it ought to!<sup>7</sup>

The letter offers an example of a religious attitude, one that gives birth to a “superior personality”. Jung equates the birth of the superior personality described by the former patient as the “‘holy fruit,’ the ‘diamond body,’ or any other kind of incorruptible

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orders to convert the whole world and usher in the “Ecclesia Spiritualis.” After his death, Joachim’s theories contributed to revolutionary conclusions, notably by certain Franciscans and Fraticelli. Based on: E.A. Livingstone, *Oxford Concise Dictionary of the Christian Church* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), 306.

<sup>6</sup>Jung, *Aion*, *CW 9ii*, par. 141.

<sup>7</sup> Jung, “Commentary on ‘The Secret of the Golden Flower’”, *CW 13*, par. 70.

body. Psychologically, these expressions symbolize an attitude that is beyond the reach of emotional entanglements and violent shocks—a consciousness detached from the world. I have reasons for believing that this attitude sets in after middle life and is a natural preparation for death.”<sup>8</sup> One could argue that this type of transformation is not solely relegated to mid-life. However, what Jung is stressing is that this religious attitude is therapeutic. He states that “all religions are therapies for the sorrows and disorders of the soul. The development of the Western intellect and will has given us an almost fiendish capacity for aping such an attitude, with apparent success, despite the protests of the unconscious.”<sup>9</sup> Jung warns that continued aping and ignoring of the unconscious will lead to a compensatory movement by the unconscious. This can only be avoided by allowing a genuine religious attitude to surface that can bridge both consciousness and the unconscious.<sup>10</sup>

The religious attitude was also deemed essential in the alchemical traditions. Jung found this fact most aptly reflected in the writings of Dorn. Jung quotes Dorn in a footnote in *Mysterium Coniunctionis*: “I have thought it right to admonish the disciples to implore divine aid, and [to remind them] of the need for the most careful diligence in preparing themselves for the reception of his grace.”<sup>11</sup> However, the religious attitude is not limited to the few or the esoterically minded. All people, Jung would say, have the capacity for a religious attitude.

In “General Problems of Psychotherapy” Jung reveals the importance of the religious attitude within the structure of analysis. He states that his aim in analysis is to

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<sup>8</sup> Jung, “Commentary on ‘The Secret of the Golden Flower’ ”, *CW 13*, par. 68.

<sup>9</sup> Jung, “Commentary on ‘The Secret of the Golden Flower’ ”, *CW 13*, par. 71.

<sup>10</sup> Jung, “Commentary on ‘The Secret of the Golden Flower’ ”, *CW 13*, par. 71.

<sup>11</sup> Jung, *CW 14*, par.677, n68, brackets are in the original text.

bring about a psychic state “in which my patient begins to experiment with his own nature—a state of fluidity, change and growth where nothing is eternally fixed and hopelessly petrified.”<sup>12</sup> Even though this citation seems to indicate a rather loose approach to analysis, Jung is quick to point out that “I would only like to emphasize that you should not think of my procedure as entirely without aim or limit.”<sup>13</sup> Jung provides room for personal freedom of expression for the patient within the framework of the theories and models of analytical psychology in much the same way the Western Esoteric Tree of Life acts as a loose structure for the metaphorical explorations of the Esotericists. However, even though these internal “subjective” forays into analysis and metaphorical exploration are beneficial, there must also be a balance between one’s personal experience and a more historical continuity.

Jung emphasises that there must be both a personal contemporary consciousness and a supra-personal consciousness “with a sense of historical continuity.”<sup>14</sup> Jung states that:

However abstract this may sound, practical experience shows that many neuroses are caused primarily by the fact that people blind themselves to their own religious promptings because of a childish passion for rational enlightenment. It is high time the psychologists of today recognized that we are no longer dealing with dogmas and creeds but with the religious attitude *per se*, whose importance as a psychic function can hardly be overrated.<sup>15</sup>

For Jung, one’s spiritual tradition could offer essential healing transformations. He felt that “a man’s philosophy of life is directly connected with the well-being of the psyche can be seen from the fact that his mental attitude, his way of looking at things, is of

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<sup>12</sup> Jung, “General Problems of Psychotherapy”, *CW 16*, par. 99.

<sup>13</sup> Jung, “General Problems of Psychotherapy”, *CW 16*, par. 99.

<sup>14</sup> Jung, “General Problems of Psychotherapy”, *CW 16*, par. 99.

<sup>15</sup> Jung, “General Problems of Psychotherapy”, *CW 16*, par. 99.

enormous importance to him and his mental health—so much so that we could almost say that things are less what they are than how they seem.”<sup>16</sup>

Though it may seem from these few citations that all that is necessary to be psychologically healthy is to maintain a “religious attitude”, we will review an important, and unavoidably lengthy, citation from Jung’s “The Development of Personality” which reveals something quite to the contrary:

The words “many are called, but few are chosen” are singularly appropriate here, for the development of personality from the germ-state to full consciousness is at once a charisma and a curse, because its first fruit is the conscious and unavoidable segregation of the single individual from the undifferentiated and unconscious herd. This means isolation, and there is no more comforting word for it. Neither family nor society nor position can save him from this fate, nor yet the most successful adaptation to his environment, however smoothly he fits in. The development of personality is a favour that must be paid for dearly. But the people who talk most loudly about developing their personalities are the very ones who are least mindful of the results, which are such as to frighten away all weaker spirits.

Yet the development of personality means more than just the fear of hatching forth monsters, or of isolation. It also means fidelity to the law of one’s own being.

For the word “fidelity” I should prefer, in this context, the Greek word used in the New Testament, “πίστις,” which is erroneously translated “faith.” It really means “trust,” “trustful loyalty.” Fidelity to the law of one’s own being is a trust in this law, a loyal perseverance and confident hope; in short, an attitude such as the religious man should have towards God.<sup>17</sup>

The above citation resonates with some of the views found within the Western Esoteric Tradition. For example, the emphasis on being “chosen”, the development of one’s own law, or “True Will” in Western Esoteric (specifically Crowley’s) phraseology and the separation from societal norms are rather common themes within Western Esoteric

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<sup>16</sup> Jung, “General Problems of Psychotherapy”, *CW 16*, par. 218.

<sup>17</sup> Jung, “The Development of Personality”, *CW 17*, pars. 294-296.

literature. These issues, and others, will be dealt with below when we look at how the shadow is present within the Western Esoteric Tradition and the Western Esoteric Tree of Life. What we have seen is that a religious attitude, one devoid of rigid dogma but with a historical sense of continuity, is an essential part of psycho-spiritual growth. It is not only necessary but a natural part of the human condition, at least according to Jung.<sup>18</sup> With this new found “religious attitude” in mind and in a manner resembling a squirrel scampering to and fro within the branches,<sup>19</sup> we shall begin our journey on the Western Esoteric Tree of Life.

The first part of this chapter is an attempt to place Jung’s understanding of the process of psychological maturation (individuation) into dialogue with the general structure of the Western Esoteric Tree of Life. This dialogue will be accomplished by first reviewing how the Esotericists understand the nature of the various *sefirot*. Then, aspects of Jung’s model of the psyche will be presented to compare with the Esoteric interpretation of the given *sefira*.

This mutual comparison offers interesting insights into three areas. First, it reveals the potential pitfalls of the Western Esoteric Tradition, as seen from an analytical psychological perspective, such as the apparent lack of shadow confrontation and the risk of the ego identifying with the self which, in turn, leads to inflation. Second, from the perspective of Western Esotericism, the application also reveals that analytical psychology, as a form of depth psychology, has the means, or perhaps even the

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<sup>18</sup> For more on Jung’s understanding of the connection between religion and the psyche see: Lionel Corbett, *The Religious Function of the Psyche*, 4<sup>th</sup> ed. (East Sussex: Brunner-Routledge, 2001).

<sup>19</sup> See Crowley, *Konx Om Pax*, facsimile edition with introduction by Martin P. Starr, (Chicago: Teitan Press, 1990), vii. In a diary entry, Crowley recounted that he and George Cecil Jones, an Esoteric colleague, engaged in a Kabbalistic discussion where “Jones took the 10=1 view and we ran up and down the tree like bloody squirrels....”

obligation, to push the definition or focus of individuation to include more of the collective unconscious; that is to say that the ego-complex, while an essential component of consciousness could risk deeper forays into the metaphorical depths of the unconscious beyond the limits generally accepted within analysis. Taken from the perspective of the Western Esoteric Tradition, these risks are essential for sustained self-knowledge. The Western Esoteric Tree of Life not only symbolically reveals the centrality of the ego-self axis as developed by Jung, it also points to a deeper level of experience that could be interpreted as an ego/self-collective unconscious axis as a metaphor implying a further developmental phase of psycho-spiritual development, namely the relativisation of the ego-complex within consciousness. Third, the comparison of the Western Esoteric Tree of Life and analytical psychology reveals that the psyche functions both in a polytheistic manner, as propounded by Hillman's early writings *and* a "self"-regulated manner which reflects a more monotheistic outlook. Before continuing we must review some basic changes and omissions made in the following analysis of the Tree of Life.

### **Tweaking the Tree: Missing Pieces, Alterations and Modifications**

First, we should note that *two* boundaries or buffers called Abysses are being emphasised on the standard model of the Tree. Normally the Western Esoteric Tree of Life is illustrated with only one Abyss, the one separating the Supernal Triad (*Kether, Hokmah, Binah*) from the remaining *sefirot*.<sup>20</sup> One way this "Supernal" Abyss can be

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<sup>20</sup> Occasionally three abysses are indicated on the Tree. The first is the 32<sup>nd</sup> path between *Malkut* and *Yesod*. The second abyss, the Veil of *Paroketh* or the personal abyss falls between *Yesod* and *Tiferet*. The Third abyss or the "Great Abyss" falls between *Tiferet* and *Kether*. Alta LaDage, *Occult Psychology: A Comparison of Jungian Psychology and the Modern Qabalah* (St. Paul, MINN: Llewellyn Publications, 1978), 163. While each of these abysses is implied within the Western Esoteric Tradition, only the "Great Abyss" is generally emphasised in the literature.

understood is as the boundary between rational and trans-rational thought. The other Abyss, rarely emphasised in the literature of the Western Esoteric Tradition, is presented here (falling between *Yesod* and *Malkut*) as a modified version of an Abyss posited by William Gray in his *Attainment Through Magic*.<sup>21</sup> More about these two Abysses will be discussed later in the chapter.

Several concepts that are standard to the Western Esoteric Tree of Life are not analysed in any significant way or they will be altered in this chapter. Most of the omissions are portions of Jewish Kabbalistic philosophy that have been retained by the Western Esoteric Tradition and adapted to the Western Esoteric cosmology. One area that will not be analysed are the three layers or levels of the human soul: *nephesh* (animal instinct), *ruah* (referred to by Esotericists as “higher astral soul”), *neshamah* (one’s higher spiritual self). Generally, the three layers are attributed to *Malkut/Yesod*, the *sefirot* including and below *Hesed* and *Geburah*, and The Supernal Triad respectively. In this application, the baser instincts are located either in *Malkut* (physical world including inanimate objects) or the sexual and progenerative *Yesod*. *Ruah* represents the various attainable structures of consciousness, while *neshamah* is the highest spiritual point of the human soul.<sup>22</sup>

A second area of omission involves what are known as the Four Worlds. The Tree of Life participates simultaneously within or on four levels of existence. This relationship is symbolised either by placing four trees on top of each other (either individually or intertwined in some fashion) or by attributing the *sefirot* of one Tree into four worlds. The fourth world and the most “dense” is *Assiah (Malkut)*. The third world,

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<sup>21</sup> William Gray, *Attainment Through Magic* (St. Paul, MINN: Llewellyn Publications Inc., 1990), 88-96.

<sup>22</sup> For more on the Kabbalistic concept of the soul from an Esoteric perspective see Israel Regardie, *The Tree of Life* 3<sup>rd</sup> ed. (St. Paul, MINN: Llewellyn Publications, 2002), 93-114.

*Yetzirah (Yesod)* corresponds to the astral world and the realm of the angelic beings. The second world is *Briah (Tiferet)* is the world of creation, the realm of the archangels. Finally, the first world is *Atzilut*, the pure, archetypal world (*Kether*).<sup>23</sup> The reason for these omissions is merely a matter of simplicity. The Four Worlds or Four Tree model of the Tree of Life amplifies the complexity of the Tree and the interpenetration of the *sefirot* in that the *Tiferet* of *Assiah* becomes the *Malkut* of *Yetzirah* and so forth. Were this thesis a theological study of Kabbalah, the levels of the soul and the Four Worlds would need to be included in greater depth. However, as we are only dealing with the most rudimentary applications of Kabbalistic philosophy these areas will be left for possible future investigation.

One of the problems with some applications of the Tree of Life is the tendency to use rigid definitions and structures when dealing with correspondences. For example, Halevi, although neither an Esotericist nor a classic Jewish Kabbalist, attempts to place correspondences within a strictly defined Tree of Life built upon “traditional” Jewish Kabbalah. Correspondences are then arranged or manipulated to conform to that format. This approach adds to the depth and detail of the Jewish Tree of Life but it can detract from the depth and detail of the applied correspondences. This can be seen clearly in Halevi’s use of psychology and Jungian archetypes.

In his book *Psychology & Kabbalah*, Halevi offers several chapters on Jung and his theories.<sup>24</sup> Halevi makes many claims about the relationship between Jung’s thought and the Jewish Tree of Life however he never gives reference for his citations. Here is a

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<sup>23</sup> There are many other ways of attributing the Four Worlds on the Tree of Life. This is only one example. See Dion Fortune, *The Mystical Qabalah* (Boston, MA: Weiser Books, 2000), 23-26 for a brief summary of the Four Worlds.

<sup>24</sup> Z’ev ben Shimon Halevi, *Psychology & Kabbalah* (York Beach, ME: Samuel Weiser, Inc., 1992), 165-260.

brief example of how Halevi understands and utilises the archetypes (it should be noted that he rarely seems to differentiate between archetype and archetypal image) on the Tree of Life:

The major Jungian archetypes, when placed on the Tree, correspond almost exactly, though the terms may be different. For example, Jung's Great King would be placed in *Hesed*. His archetype of the Hero is certainly *Gevurah*, the beautiful maid or youth is without a doubt *Nezahian*, while the Trickster clearly fits with *Hod*. These archetypes occur in many guises, but the Great King is always merciful and generous and the warrior courageous and discriminating, which are the qualities of *Hesed* and *Gevurah*, or the reverse if the dark side of the *Sefirot* are being invoked. The same is true of all the other archetypes.<sup>25</sup>

Halevi attempts to define the archetypes, as opposed to the archetypal images, in terms of the *sefirot* which essentially confines the dynamic symbolic pattern of the archetype to a convenient category. The Hero, for example, does not only fit within the confines of *Gevurah* (we have been using the spelling *Geburah*). Halevi's description of the warrior, as an example of the Hero archetype, as being "courageous and discriminating" reflects little of the complexity of that archetype. No mention is made of the Hero's connection to the unconscious self,<sup>26</sup> the role of holding the tension of opposites<sup>27</sup> (*Geburah* resides on the Left Pillar as opposed to the balanced Middle Pillar), the figure of Christ,<sup>28</sup> or the connection to ego consciousness.<sup>29</sup> Halevi's approach may work when used to explore possible thematic connections between archetypal images and Jewish Kabbalah, but it breaks down if we begin to make categorical claims about the

<sup>25</sup> Halevi, *Psychology & Kabbalah*, 189-190.

<sup>26</sup> Jung, *Symbols of Transformation*, *CW* 5, par. 516.

<sup>27</sup> Andrew Samuels *et al.*, *A Critical Dictionary of Jungian Analysis* (London, UK: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1986), 66.

<sup>28</sup> Jung, "Commentary on 'The Secret of the Golden Flower' ", *CW* 13, par.79.

<sup>29</sup> Edward Edinger, *Ego and Archetype* (New York: Penguin Books, 1986), 129.

nature of the archetypes *per se*. The Esotericists tend, for the most part, to do the same thing when the *sefirotic* correspondences are taken to be concrete.

Attempting to reduce the meaning of the archetypes to the confines of Judaic, Esoteric, or any other world-view unnecessarily limits their dynamic potential. However, the Tree becomes more flexible if the *sefirot* are looked at from the perspective that they are loose and metaphorical outlines of psychic and symbolic themes.

When authors such Halevi or Knight, for example, have used Jung's model of the psyche they do so in an attempt to place Jung within the context of the Jewish or Western Esoteric Tradition's understanding of the Tree of Life. Jung's concept of archetypes and clearly defined structure of the psyche seem to fit well on the Tree. Yet there has been no attempt to offer an analytical psychological interpretation of the Western Esoteric Tree of Life.<sup>30</sup> By combining Jung's model of the psyche and the general interpretations of the *sefirot* as understood within the Western Esoteric Tradition, we have a model that gives structure to the chaos of the unconscious. Yet, by its very nature, this model pushes human consciousness toward a perspective of ever widening perception and appreciation of that chaos.

There are two "directions" to the Tree of Life. Creation, or separation into multiplicity, follows the Path of the Lightning Bolt. The Path of the Serpent or the Path of Initiation winds its way back toward an original unity.<sup>31</sup> For Dion Fortune, the Path of the Serpent "represents the dawn of objective consciousness and is a symbol of

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<sup>30</sup> At least this is so to the best of my knowledge.

<sup>31</sup> As mentioned above, there is also the Path of the Arrow, the mystical Path. However, we will not be entering into an in-depth analysis of that Path as the Path of the Serpent includes the *sefirot* that comprise the Path of the Arrow but the reverse is not true.

initiation...”<sup>32</sup> yet she indicates too that what was once only accomplished in the past by initiates is today accomplished by the “average man”.<sup>33</sup> Fortune is here referring to, among other things, modern human understanding of the nature of the psyche and its far-reaching implications in the human condition. She, like the initiates of old and those of present day, sees the apparent split between mind and matter as superfluous. To Fortune, one link between the two realms of mind and matter is psychology:

The esotericist ... points out that matter and mind are two sides of the same coin, but there comes a point in one’s investigation when it is profitable to change over one’s terminology, and talk of forces and forms in terms of psychology, as if they were conscious and purposive.<sup>34</sup>

In keeping with Fortune’s sage advice, we now turn to the language of analytical psychology as a means of understanding the Western Esoteric Tree of Life and its initiations into the realm of metaphor and psyche; a realm where the *sefirot* become representative of the process of psychological maturation.

The Tree of Life has gone through many changes since its earliest application in Judaism. Each transformation stretches or breaks old structures while creating new ones in the process. What follows is an attempt to create a new interpretation of the Western Esoteric Tree of Life. This Tree of Life takes as its primary Kabbalistic influence the method and philosophy of the Western Esoteric Tradition. The primary context of the Tree, the “colouring” or detail, is analytical psychology. While the Esoteric Tree, for example, borrows heavily from Jewish Kabbalah it is still a unique interpretation of the Tree which is actually quite different from the traditional Jewish Tree of Life; the same is true of the following comparison between analytical psychology and the Tree of Life.

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<sup>32</sup> Fortune, *The Mystical Qabalah*, 254.

<sup>33</sup> Fortune, *The Mystical Qabalah*, 254

<sup>34</sup> Fortune, *The Mystical Qabalah*, 251-252.

This comparison approaches the structure of the psyche and its relation to the unconscious in an almost *playful* way.<sup>35</sup> The *sefirot* become hues of a larger picture of dynamic fields connecting and interpenetrating each other to form a vibrant metaphor representing the personal and transpersonal realms of human experience. The emphasis will be on the correspondences and symbolic imagery of the *sefirot* found within the Western Esoteric Tradition with a focus on how those symbols, images and patterns can be viewed from an analytical psychological perspective. This combination results in the traditional nature and definitions of the *sefirot* being stretched and transformed (and occasionally distorted). At the same time, the models and definitions found within analytical psychology will be altered in some minor ways.

### **Personal Perspective and the Material World: *Malkut* as Ego-Complex**

*Malkut* is the last or lowest *sefira* on the Tree of Life.<sup>36</sup> According to the Esotericists, *Malkut's* magical image is of a young woman, crowned and throned. The titles given to *Malkut*, terms or phrases that reflect the nature of the *sefira*, include: The Gate, The Gate of Death, The Gate of the Shadow of Death, The Gate of Tears, The Gate of Justice, The Gate of Prayer, The Gate of the Daughter of the Mighty Ones, The Gate of the Garden of Eden, the Inferior Mother, *Malkah* (The Queen), *Kallah* (The Bride), and The Virgin.<sup>37</sup> In the realm of the human body *Malkut* is said to correspond to the feet or, alternatively, the anus.<sup>38</sup> The Esoteric symbol of *Malkut* corresponds to the double-cubed

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<sup>35</sup> In *Psychological Types* Jung states that “The creation of something new is not accomplished by the intellect, but by the play instinct acting from inner necessity. The creative mind plays with objects it loves.” *Psychological Types*, *CW* 6, par. 197. It is this context that the term “play” is used.

<sup>36</sup> That is to say last in the order of creation and lowest in the process of moving back “up” the Tree.

<sup>37</sup> Fortune, *The Mystical Qabalah*, 247. Any unique spelling is found within the text.

<sup>38</sup> Fortune, *The Mystical Qabalah*, 248.

altar, the equal armed cross, the magic circle and the triangle of art. The spiritual experience of *Malkut* is the Vision of the Holy Guardian Angel.<sup>39</sup> Each of the symbols listed here all represent an aspect of *Malkut*. The image of a young crowned woman is juxtaposed with the Supernal Mother *Binah* whose image is a mature woman, a matron.<sup>40</sup> The daughter, *Malkut*, though removed from its source is still divine, or rather a receptacle of the divine force of the preceding *sefirot*. She is less mature though more virile than Her mother. The various titles of *Malkut* reflect the *sefira*'s connection to the world. Through *Malkut* death and sorrow are present and are experienced. Yet the sorrow experienced here is a transitory, mundane one. *Binah*, the Great Mother, has for its spiritual experience the Vision of Sorrow and since Sorrow has a capital letter we can assume it is of a different nature than the sorrow of *Malkut*.<sup>41</sup>

*Malkut*'s connection to the feet reflects the notion of grounding or "standing on two feet". All journeys must begin from here. The second traditional corresponding symbol, the anus, reflects the idea of natural processes such as elimination of waste, ridding the body, the "Temple of God", of toxins.

*Malkut* represents the multiplicity of the material world. This is reflected in both the double cubed-altar (representing the linking of microcosm and macrocosm) and the equal-armed cross (the balance of the four elements). However, there is more to the material world than simply what can be seen or measured. The Kabbalists also posit a subtle world that gives form to the material world. When combined, these two factors give us the world of our day-to-day existence. Fortune refers to this subtle world as the

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<sup>39</sup> Fortune, *The Mystical Qabalah*, 247-248.

<sup>40</sup> Fortune, *The Mystical Qabalah*, 127.

<sup>41</sup> Or, following Hillman, we can assume that since the word is capitalized we are dealing with an archetype. James Hillman, *Re-Visioning Psychology* (New York: Harper and Row, 1975), 8-13.

“Earth-soul—that is to say the subtle, psychic aspect of matter; the underlying *noumenon* of the physical plane which gives rise to all phenomena.”<sup>42</sup>

We can interpret both the circle and the triangle of art (a tool which is used to contain or hold summoned spirits) as symbols of definition and boundary setting. When the Magician casts the circle, it acts as a boundary between the external mundane world and the realms of the sacred. The triangle, which is traditionally kept outside of the circle, forcibly confines and restricts the independence of ethereal entities, again reflecting the notion of confining, defining and separating.<sup>43</sup>

The base emotions, animal instincts, or simply the physical body and its most basic needs are posited in *Malkut*.<sup>44</sup> The structure of the ego-complex is posited to *Yesod* or the Kabbalistic World corresponding to *Yesod*.<sup>45</sup> However, while this interpretation may sit reasonably well within the loose veneer of Jewish Kabbalah and its hierarchical structure of the soul, it does not take into account the intimate and intricate connection between the ego-complex, the aforementioned baser instincts, and the material world.

The ego-complex, like the structure of *Malkut*, is comprised of various factors, conditions, and functions; it is after all a complex.<sup>46</sup> It is through this complex that we, as individuals, have any conscious perception of the material world at all.<sup>47</sup> Without the ego-complex, and a healthy one at that, the ability to perceive and function in the material world can be compromised. Also, the baser instincts generally located in *Malkut* cannot, at least through the use of Jung’s model of the psyche, be conveniently separated from

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<sup>42</sup> Fortune, *The Mystical Qabalah*, 248.

<sup>43</sup> For more information on the nature of these objects see Aleister Crowley, *Magick/Liber Aba* (York Beach, ME: Samuel Weiser, Inc., 1997) especially parts I-III.

<sup>44</sup> See for example Halevi, *Psychology & Kabbalah*, 170-175.

<sup>45</sup> Halevi, *Psychology & Kabbalah*, 117-121.

<sup>46</sup> Jung, *Psychological Types*, *CW* 6, par. 706 and n37.

<sup>47</sup> Jung, “Spirit and Life”, *CW* 8, par. 611.

the ego-complex as our perceptions of them are experienced through the centre of consciousness or the ego-complex. This multifaceted system of interconnectedness is far more intricate than the deceptively simplistic term “ego” seems to imply. Rather than separate ego from its many components, we will place the entirety of the ego-complex, and its connection to and perception of, the material world within *Malkut*. In this way both the objective world and our psychological appreciation and interaction with it is contained in the same *sefira* and not separated in a dualistic manner.

Like understanding the structure and dynamic of the ego-complex, the understanding of the material world is a fundamental task of the Esotericist. The material world is where all further personal growth and attainment will be built. The same insistence can be found in Jung’s reading of the alchemical tradition when referring to the reintegration of the *unio mentalis* with the physical body.<sup>48</sup> While lengthy, this citation from Dion Fortune sums up this issue succinctly:

If we try to escape from the discipline of matter before we have mastered the lessons of matter, we are not advancing heavenwards, but suffering from arrested development. It is these spiritual detectives who flock from one to another of the innumerable wildcat uplift organisations that come to us from the Far East and the Far West. They find cheap idealism an escape from the rigorous demands of life. But this is not a way of advancement, but a way of retreat. Sooner or later they have to face the fence and clear it. Life brings them up to it again and again, and presently begins to use the whip and spur of psychological sickness; for those who will not face life disassociate; and dissociation is the prime cause of most of the ills that mind is heir to.<sup>49</sup>

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<sup>48</sup> See Chapter Two p.102-103.

<sup>49</sup> Fortune, *The Mystical Qabalah*, 252.

As within the processes of analysis, the “real” world is not something one should avoid. It is something to be understood and engaged in. Only with this firm grounding in place should the deeper structures of the unconscious be volitionally penetrated.

Symbolically, the astrological planet and Element Earth represent *Malkut*, which is solid, firm and grounded. Other symbols traditionally attributed to *Malkut* reflect the same theme of firmness and “groundedness” and at the same time demonstrate *Malkut*’s, as with the various components of the ego-complex, diverse manifestations. Of course the question remains how does this “remodelled” version of *Malkut* relate to Jung’s understanding of the ego-complex?

For Jung the ego is the centre of consciousness and the personality. Part of the ego’s role is to maintain personality, cognitive functions, and function as mediator between conscious and unconscious portions of the psyche. This would seem to indicate that the ego holds an autonomous, or at least a privileged position within Jung’s model of the psyche. However, this is not actually the case. For Jung the ego-complex is the centre of consciousness while the self is the centre of the psyche.<sup>50</sup> It would also appear that the ego-complex is entirely present within consciousness. This assumption is also in error.<sup>51</sup>

*Malkut* has its own unique qualities, as indicated by the various symbols and experiences associated with the *sefira*. It is, at the same time, influenced and shaped by the other *sefirot* and ultimately unable to exist independent from them. The ego-complex also has its own unique “identity” while at the same time it is influenced by other

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<sup>50</sup> Jung, *Psychological Types*, *CW 6*, par.706.

<sup>51</sup> The ego-complex is also comprised of personal or biographical unconscious factors. See Jung’s “Tavistock Lectures”, *CW 18*, pars. 1-415. Complexes have the ability to “possess” the ego acting, as it were, as a “shadow government” of the ego. Jung, “Medicine and Psychotherapy”, *CW 16*, par. 196.

complexes within the personal unconscious and by the archetypal energies of the collective unconscious. According to Jung the “ego, the subject of consciousness, comes into existence as a complex quantity which is constituted partly by the inherited disposition (character constituents) and partly by unconsciously acquired impressions and their attendant phenomena.”<sup>52</sup> Both *Malkut* and the ego-complex participate in the world of the senses and the deeper regions of the psyche.

In order to understand the function of one *sefira* we need to look to the others for contrast. Yet in order to experience the other *sefirot*, or the other portions of the psyche, we would need to be open to the fact that the ego-complex is not the only reality or the sole means of perception. There are, in fact, many facets to the psyche and the first step to accepting and working with that understanding can be a difficult one as it implies that the conscious boundaries of the ego-complex are not certain. Thus, the first Abyss we encounter moving from *Malkut* marks the initial step away from a strictly defined ego-consciousness towards the shadow and the greater dynamic of the psyche.

### **Shadow: The Personal Abyss** <sup>53</sup>

As mentioned previously, the placement of an Abyss between *Malkut* and *Yesod* is not a common one within the Western Esoteric Tradition; at least it is not common within its more popular literature. Before moving on to look at how this first Abyss functions in relation to Jung’s concept of the shadow we must take a moment to clarify

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<sup>52</sup> Jung, “Analytical Psychology and Education”, *CW 17*, par.169.

<sup>53</sup> Although we presented the ego-complex first and are now moving onto the shadow we should not assume that this implies a strict order or sequence in either the case of individuation or the processes of the Western Esoteric Tree of Life. Each of the *sefirot* or archetypes (and archetypal images) can be experienced at any time and in many different ways. We are following this order to simplify our analysis of the Tree of Life via the process of initiation.

what an Abyss is. In keeping with the theme of shadow confrontation, we will also look at how, from an analytical psychological perspective, the Western Esoteric Tradition has used the Tree of Life to confront the shadow. There is also a second shadow related to the Tree, based on its cultural roots and hierarchical organisation, which is not as overt.

Before recounting what the Abyss *is* within the Western Esoteric Tradition we should understand what it *is not*. The term abyss can and has been used in many different contexts in various religions, spiritual traditions, and philosophies. For some an abyss can be likened to the Dante Alighieri inspired Christian Hell or perhaps *Gehinnom* of Jewish cosmology. Alternately, and in a less torturous characterisation, perhaps Jacob Böhme's notion of the divine ground of being, the *Ungrund*,<sup>54</sup> or Hegel's notion of Spirit and the abyss of the unconscious come to mind.<sup>55</sup> Neither a realm of torment nor the abstract source of reality is implied in our use of the term Abyss. The former could be aligned with the Kabbalistic notion of the *qlippot*, while the latter could be understood as the Negative Veils of Existence or the *En Sof*, neither of which need be addressed presently.<sup>56</sup>

The Western Esoteric Tradition views the Abyss between the Supernal Triad and the remainder of the Tree as symbolic of a momentous and potentially destructive spiritual, psychological and physical experience. Some of the more conservative Esotericists will claim, as did many members of the Hermetic Order of the Golden Dawn, that only through death could the Abyss be breached, or at the very least, it represented an extremely high state of enlightenment for those who dwelt on higher (astral) planes of

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<sup>54</sup> See John Joseph Stoult, *Jacob Boehme* (New York: Seabury Press, 1968).

<sup>55</sup> For more on Hegel's contribution to psychoanalysis' understanding of the unconscious see Jon Mill's pioneering, though often verbose, *The Unconscious Abyss* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2002).

<sup>56</sup> More on the *qlippot* below and more on the Negative Veils in Chapter Six (p.282).

existence.<sup>57</sup> However, with Esotericists like Aleister Crowley the Abyss became a psychological and spiritual goal to be pushed for with the utmost of dedication and diligence in this lifetime.<sup>58</sup> With either understanding, the Abyss represents a fundamental shift in perception and enduring psychological disposition.

Another relevant factor regarding the nature of the experience of the Abyss is the sense of permanency and irrevocability. The Abyss is thought to mark a position of no return that should not be entertained lightly. In our current application, the Abyss representing the process of shadow confrontation indicates that the person who looks past the boundaries of ego-consciousness opens a new perspective that includes active engagement in the realms of metaphor and archetypal images. This is not to imply that being aware of this new perspective *creates* the shadow or archetypal images, only that there is a commitment to pursue an alternate form of perception which is actively open to these images.<sup>59</sup> In relation to this new perception is awareness that the factors and experiences that compose the personal and objective psyche cannot be undone once the perspective has been entered—Pandora cannot close the box. Realising one has a shadow or that one's personal relationships have a component of projection embedded in them is a heavy burden since the "real" world is then understood to have an intrinsic psychic component that can be difficult to understand or to control even under optimal conditions.

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<sup>57</sup> See Ellic Howe, *The Magicians of the Golden Dawn* (York Beach, ME: Samuel Weiser, Inc., 1984), 17 and Gareth Knight, *A Practical Guide to Qabalistic Symbolism* (York Beach: ME: Samuel Weiser, Inc., 1993), v. I, 225.

<sup>58</sup> See Crowley, *Magick/Liber Aba*, 647-654.

<sup>59</sup> Obviously the shadow existed before it was consciously known, it was simply unidentified.

William Gray proposes that the second Abyss<sup>60</sup> expels what would be the equivalent of spiritual excrement. According to Gray, all the “exhausted and detrimental thoughts” and the “outworn and useless feelings” we harbour act as psychic poison. He continues: “we realize that thoughts and feelings reduced to such a condition will poison our minds and souls if we do not eliminate them like their physical counterparts....”<sup>61</sup>

Gray then presents some simple exercises which are to purge the “negative” thoughts and feelings. Rather than analysing the psychological merit of Gray’s exercises, what we need to observe is that the Abyss currently in question is that process of elimination and emancipation. When compared to Jung’s model of the psyche, the Abyss can also be seen as parallel to the shadow. Jung states that the shadow (as part of the personal unconscious) “contains lost memories, painful ideas that are repressed (i.e., forgotten on purpose), subliminal perceptions...contents that are not yet ripe for consciousness.”<sup>62</sup>

Similar to Gray’s emphasis on the emotional nature of the Abyss, Jung indicates that shadow content has an emotional nature.<sup>63</sup> Experience of the Abyss also appears to be separate from the individual; that is to say it is experienced as a process that the individual objectively participates in rather than an experience that originates intrapsychically. In the same way, projection and the corresponding emotional nature of the shadow is not experienced as the activity of the individual; rather it is experienced as something that happens *to* them.<sup>64</sup> Should the shadow remain unconscious, the equivalent

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<sup>60</sup> This Abyss is first in the sense that we are working “up” the Tree but second in the sense that the Abyss separating the Supernal Triad from the remainder of the Tree is the “original” or more standard Abyss of the Western Esoteric Tree of Life.

<sup>61</sup> Gray, *Attainment Through Magic*, 91.

<sup>62</sup> Jung, “On the Psychology of the Unconscious”, *CW* 7, par. 103.

<sup>63</sup> Jung, *Aion, CW 9ii*, par. 15.

<sup>64</sup> Jung, *Aion, CW 9ii*, par. 15.

of psychological poison would continue to amass and could, if left unacknowledged, lead to psychological complications.

The movement from *Malkut* into the “Shadow Abyss”, as a metaphor for Jung’s understanding of the shadow, would be the first step into the wider perceptions of the personal unconscious and the first initiatory step toward a greater appreciation of the collective unconscious.<sup>65</sup> While the shadow is the least difficult archetypal image to experience, in the sense that it is not difficult to consciously experience the nature of the shadow,<sup>66</sup> the implications of that recognition and experience have the potential to be highly transformative but not without a great deal of work, conflict, and pain—“The ‘man without a shadow’ is statistically the commonest human type, one who imagines he actually *is* only what he cares to know about himself. Unfortunately neither the so-called religious man nor the man of scientific pretensions forms any exception to this rule.”<sup>67</sup> An understanding of this fact seems to be lacking in much of the literature coming out of the Western Esoteric Tradition.

There are some Western Esoteric authors, such as the Ciceros, who mention the shadow and the importance of shadow integration. However, the information and background presented is more often than not cursory in content and pragmatically limited in application. In their additions to Israel Regardie’s *The Middle Pillar*, the Ciceros place

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<sup>65</sup> In Jung, “Conscious, Unconscious, and Individuation”, *CW 9i*, par. 513, Jung states that the “shadow coincides with the “personal” unconscious (which corresponds to Freud’s conception of the unconscious)...The shadow personifies everything that the subject refuses to acknowledge about himself and yet is always thrusting itself upon him directly or indirectly...” Yet we should be aware that the “personal unconscious” is *not* comprised solely of the shadow. There are many aspects of the personal unconscious which are not related to the shadow. The personal unconscious also includes “everything of which I know but of which I am not at the moment thinking; everything of which I was once conscious but have now forgotten; everything perceived by my senses, but not noted by my conscious mind...” Jung, “On the Nature of the Psyche”, *CW 8*, par. 382. While the term “personal unconscious” is used when referring to the shadow, this does not imply that the shadow=personal unconscious. Jung’s use of the term “personal unconscious” tends to be rather difficult to pin down.

<sup>66</sup> Jung, *Aion*, *CW 9ii*, par. 13.

<sup>67</sup> Jung, “On the Nature of the Psyche”, *CW 8*, par. 409.

a brief review of Jung's, along with Assagioli's, model of the psyche.<sup>68</sup> From *The Middle Pillar* the Ciceros state that:

All of us must face our shadow side. This is especially important for magicians who seek to delve into the inner recesses of the human psyche—the mind of the microcosm. We must discover the distinct characteristics of our shadow (as opposed to other parts of the psyche such as the ego), and recognize it for what it is—a natural part of ourselves and nothing to be ashamed of or feel guilty about.<sup>69</sup>

Following this rather terse definition of the shadow, the Ciceros introduce two meditations or exercises.<sup>70</sup> The first, the “Regression Exercise,” deals with mentally visualising one's past in varying increments. Presumably the point of this exercise is to uncover possible past influences that may be affecting one's current psychological disposition. Following the “Regression Exercise” the Ciceros give the “Trauma Release Exercise.” The “Trauma Release Exercise” is undertaken alone or in conjunction with another person where one person acts as a facilitator for the individual partaking in the exercise. The exercise requires the individual to visualise a traumatic event in the reverse order that it occurred in real life, as though one was watching a videotape in reverse and in slow motion. Then the person is directed to view this mental videotape in the “natural order” until he or she arrives at the initial starting point again. This exercise is then repeated, reverse and forward again, until there is no longer an emotional connection to the event. The Ciceros suggest the individual repeat this exercise over a period of a few weeks.

As the Ciceros have placed these exercises under the heading of “Confronting the Shadow” we must assume that they are of the opinion that these exercises are sufficient to

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<sup>68</sup> Israel Regardie, *The Middle Pillar* (St. Paul, MINN: Llewellyn Publications, 1998), 103-138.

<sup>69</sup> Regardie, *The Middle Pillar*, 114.

<sup>70</sup> Regardie, *The Middle Pillar*, 115-116.

begin one's foray into the personal unconscious of the shadow. Even if these exercises are sufficient to begin to bring the shadow into consciousness, how can one be sure that the "trauma" has been adequately brought into consciousness? While shadow confrontation can and should occur outside the aegis of a clinician's office (as well as within), what happens if the shadow experience is of a deeper or more heavily charged nature? There is no mention at all regarding the possibility that one may not be prepared for such "regression".<sup>71</sup> Given the symbolically charged nature of the Western Esoteric Tradition this passive approach to shadow content is somewhat unsettling. However, at the very least and from an analytical psychological perspective, some mention is made in regards to the importance of shadow integration.

As mentioned above, Israel Regardie emphasised that a person who wished to participate in the processes of the Western Esoteric Tradition should be encouraged to enter into some form of psychoanalysis. However, when this is not possible there is the possibility of working with an Order or group of people. Within the confines of the initiator/initiate relation there is the potential that projections or transference can occur in a safe and productive surrounding. Of course this assumes that the initiator has a reasonable knowledge of their own complexes and that they have the patience to act as the medium for the initiate's transference. Of equal concern is the possibility of a form of counter-transference on behalf of the initiator.<sup>72</sup> Given the degree of variables in this

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<sup>71</sup> See Jung, *Aion*, *CW 9ii*, par. 15 on the autonomy of the shadow.

<sup>72</sup> For more on counter-transference see David Sedgwick, *The Wounded Healer: Countertransference from a Jungian Perspective* (New York: Routledge, 1995).

scenario we can see why Regardie felt it necessary that the initiate contact a professional therapist or analyst.<sup>73</sup>

Jungian analyst Robert Moore claims that it is *only* through working with a ritual elder or ritual leader that one can come to create the liminal space required for effective psychological transformation.<sup>74</sup> While the presence of a ritual elder would most certainly aid in the transition from one psychological state to another, stating that a ritual elder is essential for the creation and maintenance of sacred space seems excessive.

The rituals of the Western Esoteric Tradition, such as the Lesser Banishment Ritual of the Pentagram (LBRP), are generally learned early on and employed regularly, thus allowing for the practitioner to slowly build up a sense of security and the sacred within the created neutral and liminal space. The ritual elder would function best in this case not as the purveyor or preserver of sacred space, as Moore indicates, but as one who can monitor and interpret what occurs to the practitioner on a psychological level while engaged in ritual practice. However, even that function has its limitations as any insight offered from the ritual elder would be inevitably bound by his or her personal world-view and may not be pliable enough to fully appreciate the subjective experiences of the practitioner.<sup>75</sup> Discussion of the Shadow Abyss and ritual elders aside, the Tree of Life itself has a shadow or rather shadows that also need to be addressed.

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<sup>73</sup> For more information on the connection between Regardie and psychotherapy see Cris Monnastre and David Griffin's "Israel Regardie, The Golden Dawn, and Psychotherapy", *Gnosis Magazine*, (Fall 1995), 36-42.

<sup>74</sup> See Robert Moore, *The Magician and the Analyst* (Philadelphia, PA: Xlibris Corporation, 2001), 53-54 and *The Archetype of Initiation* (Philadelphia, PA: Xlibris Corporation, 2001), 49, 81.

<sup>75</sup> See for example the "The Cycle of Meaning" in Charles Laughlin, et al., *Brain, Symbol and Experience* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1992) for a biogenetic structuralist interpretation of the role of a ritual elder.

### **Operative and Clandestine Shadows of the Tree of Life**

The Western Esoteric Tree of Life can be conceptualised as containing two “types” of shadow. One shadow is openly acknowledged, encouraged (at least in some circles), and utilised, while the other shadow remains obscure. In a play on Masonic mythology and terminology we shall refer to these shadows as the Tree’s “operative” shadow, one that is acknowledged and analysed within the Tradition, while the other shadow, the “clandestine” shadow, is one that is far less acknowledged by practitioners and thus has the capacity and potential to be more problematic. Let us first look at the operative shadow of the Tree of Life.

The operative shadow, for our purposes, can be seen as a development or result of the Western Esoteric Tradition’s attempt, consciously or unconsciously motivated, to acknowledge the shadow component of the universe and the individual psyche’s place in that universe. There are three obvious areas within the Western Esoteric Tradition that could be seen as dealing with, to some degree, what Jung termed the shadow. The first area is the practice of Goetic Magick, the second is the Abramelin Operation and the third is found with the Tunnels of Set and the Tree of Death propounded and developed by Kenneth Grant.<sup>76</sup>

The demons of Goetia, as understood by Crowley and others as being part of the mind, represent objectified portions of the personal unconscious.<sup>77</sup> Traditionally these

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<sup>76</sup> We could also include here the various types of Chaos Magick as much of the techniques and concepts from within this “tradition” could be seen as confronting specific shadow issues such as gender constructs, personality constructs...any construct really. The motto of Chaos Magick—“Nothing is True. Everything is Permitted”—reflects the potential for shadow confrontation and integration.

<sup>77</sup> See Mathers (trans.), Crowley (ed.), *The Goetia* (ME: Samuel Weiser, 1995), 17-19 and Crowley, *The Magical Record of the Beast 666* (London: Gerald Duckworth & Co. Ltd., 1993), 104.

demons were called upon to *do* something. The magician, working through the demon(s), could raise armies and find treasure, castles, and horses. At the same time the demon could be called upon to teach the magician the humanities, sciences, languages, and all the secrets of the universe. Perhaps one way these practices can aid in understanding shadow is by asking the question *why* a person would need to or desire to call upon these demons. What is it that the person is incapable of doing without such supernatural agencies and what are the psychological roots of that incapacity? If the demons were called upon in a manner similar to active imagination and allowed to manifest in a type of ritualised fantasy, the demons would become much more useful from a psychological perspective. Rather than being confined by the boundaries of objective and literal existence, the demons become metaphors of psychological processes and conditions. Their original structured hierarchical existence would become part of the flexible and fluid realm of metaphor instead of remaining locked in an antiquated cosmological paradigm.

An interesting juxtaposition in regards to the skills offered through the Goetic demons is the fact that abstract intellectual functions such as knowledge, for example knowledge of the humanities or the secrets of the universe, is placed alongside seemingly unrefined “this worldly” activities such as war, accumulation of wealth (including stores of women—obviously the demons or the magicians were/are gender biased) and the control of the weather. The demons seem to bridge the gap between intellectual (mind) and mundane (body) pursuits. This juxtaposition is also evident in the manner the demons tend to be portrayed. We can see, either from the written descriptions or from illustrations (such as those given in the Mathers and Crowley version of *The Goetia*), that

most of the demons are portrayed as humanoid and theriomorphic or as a humanoid with an animal mount or companion. This combination would seem to reflect an attempt at bringing both the human and animal natures together. The demons of *The Goetia* reflect the same *neither/nor* logic which is evident in the realms of metaphor. *The Goetia* is not the only place where demonic entities are encountered within the Western Esoteric Tradition. We have already reviewed another ritual undertaking where the demonic hierarchy is addressed.

The Abramelin Operation offers the second obvious area of shadow confrontation within the Western Esoteric Tradition. As indicated by Jason Newcomb, the “Four Evil Princes” (Lucifer, Leviathan, Belial and Satan) must be conquered or else there remains the risk that they might, once again, gain autonomous psychological power. However, this confrontation occurs only after one has gained “Knowledge and Conversation of the Holy Guardian Angel.” In Jungian terms this would be like approaching the shadow only after some conscious rapport has been secured with the self or ego-self axis. The likelihood of the individuation process continuing in a meaningful manner without initial shadow work being undertaken is problematic. Yet, if we assume that such preliminary work is already in process, especially if done in the manner suggested by Regardie, i.e. through some form of psychoanalysis, we are left with a different possibility.

Instead of viewing the “Four Evil Princes” as part of the personal shadow, as repressed drives, complexes or experiences, we can see them as metaphors of the collective human shadow. For Jung, shadow work, like the process of individuation, is never complete and it is not only our personal shadow which must be addressed and tended; there is also the collective root of the shadow. According to Jung:

None of us stands outside humanity's black collective shadow. Whether the crime occurred many generations back or happens today, it remains the symptom of a disposition that is always and everywhere present—and one would therefore do well to possess some “imagination for evil,” for only the fool can permanently disregard the conditions of his own nature. In fact, this negligence is the best means of making him an instrument of evil.<sup>78</sup>

In his “On the Psychology of the Trickster-Figure” Jung again refers to the collective nature of the shadow. In discussing folk traditions and carnivals Jung states that:

We are no longer aware that in carnival customs and the like are remnants of a collective shadow figure which prove that the personal shadow is in part descended from the numinous collective figure. This collective figure gradually breaks up under the impact of civilization, leaving traces of folklore which are difficult to recognize. But the main part of him gets personalized and is made an object of personal responsibility.<sup>79</sup>

Our collective shadow is the source of our “civilised” and personal shadow. By knowing one, we may assume, we can learn the nature of the other. The Four Princes, when ritually and metaphorically objectified, can represent a personal contact with the collective shadow of our human psychic legacy.

This legacy raises questions like: “Where does the collective capacity to destroy races of people come from?” or “Why is it that nations are led into conflict after conflict in a seemingly effortless manner?” Answering these questions from an individual, psychological, perspective might include explanations of personal disassociation or psychological development, Oedipal complex, sexual abuse, or whatever aspect of the psyche is too painful to engage in consciously and is consequently repressed or projected onto others. Yet until one can face and appreciate the collective shadow, to whatever

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<sup>78</sup> Jung, “The Undiscovered Self”, *CW 10*, par. 572.

<sup>79</sup> Jung, “On the Psychology of the Trickster-Figure”, *CW 9i*, par. 469.

degree, how can one really understand how the psyche is capable of designing and executing such destructive acts? How can one really expect to “know thyself” without such “imagination for evil” no matter how brief it may be?<sup>80</sup> With these rhetorical questions posited, let us analyse the third operative shadow of the Tree of Life.

Kenneth Grant (b.1924) is perhaps best known for his development and exploration of the “Tunnels of Set.” In *Liber CCXXXI*<sup>81</sup>, Aleister Crowley presented a listing of demonic entities that stand in contradistinction to the more angelic beings of the *sefirot*.<sup>82</sup> This concept was then elaborated on by Kenneth Grant in his work *Nightside of Eden*.<sup>83</sup> The twenty-two paths of the Tree of Life are thought to co-exist with the twenty-two “Tunnels of Set” of the Tree of Death. The Tunnels of Set represent an alternate reality of non-being which can be reached through the pseudo-*sefira Da’at*. Grant, following his own idiosyncratic interpretation of *tantra* also equates the Tunnels of Set with the twenty-two types of etheric vaginal secretions or *kalas* found during rites of “Tantric” intercourse.<sup>84</sup>

Though not widely accepted within the Western Esoteric Tradition, Grant’s theories reveal again the idea of bringing to the fore aspects of psychic life usually left

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<sup>80</sup> For more on the shadow and politics, another form of collective shadow, see Andrew Samuels, *The Political Psyche* (London, UK: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1993), 15-18.

<sup>81</sup> Aleister Crowley, *The Equinox, vol.I, no.vii* (Deluxe facsimile ed. York Beach, ME: Samuel Weiser, Inc., 1993), 69-74.

<sup>82</sup> The concept of a “negative” side to the *sefirot* did not, of course, begin with Crowley. Some of the writings of Isaac Luria deal with the “shards” of the *sefirot* that need to be mended. Crowley simply helped to make this “underside” of the *sefirot* a viable practice within the Western Esoteric Tradition.

<sup>83</sup> Kenneth Grant, *Nightside of Eden*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. (London: Frederick Muller Ltd., 1977).

<sup>84</sup> David Godwin, *Godwin’s Cabalistic Encyclopedia* (St. Paul, MINN: Llewellyn Publications, 1997), 312-313. For a general review of *tantra* and Esoteric traditions see Hugh Urban, *Tantra: Sex, Secrecy, Politics, and Power in the Study of Religion* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2003), 203-263 as well as his *Magia Sexualis: Sex Magic, and Liberation in Modern Western Esotericism* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2006). See also an interesting article on the sexual *liberties* actually expressed in the Victorian period Esoteric traditions found in Hugh B. Urban, “*Magia Sexualis: Sex, Secrecy, and Liberation in Modern Western Esotericism*” in *AAR: The Journal of the American Academy of Religion*, vol.72, no.3, (Atlanta GA: Oxford University Press, September 2004), 695-731.

buried.<sup>85</sup> Grant emphasises seemingly spiritually antithetical concepts such as the importance of death, decay and sexuality within the Western Esoteric Tradition. Orders such as the Hermetic Order of the Golden Dawn regard ritual initiations as being a type of death, perhaps the most overt ritual example being the Golden Dawn initiation for the Adeptus Minor (5=6) grade where the initiate is bound to a “cross of suffering” and then released in a symbolic gesture of spiritual rebirth.<sup>86</sup> Despite this ritual nod toward death and suffering, there still tends to be an overemphasis on the rebirth portion of transformation to the diminution or exclusion of the death portion within Western Esoteric literature and ritual.

However, in the interest of balance, we should note that Grant’s understanding of the Western Esoteric Tradition is a minority view since he emphasises the importance of contacting currents or entities from Sirius, the Star of Set—a theory that dominates Grant’s work.<sup>87</sup> While Grant may be “as fascinating and ultimately mystifying as a giant squid in a cocktail dress”<sup>88</sup>, he does represent one of the few Esotericists who, through engaging in the operative shadow of the Tree of Life, address (perhaps unconsciously) some of the issues reflected in what we are labelling the “clandestine” shadow of the Tree of Life of the Western Esoteric Tradition.

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<sup>85</sup> In his article “Trafficking with an ‘onslaught of compulsive weirdness: Kenneth Grant and the Magickal Revival” Dave Evans indicates that when Grant published the concept of the Tunnels of Set reactions were extreme. Evans cites two summations of Grant and the Tunnels of Set. Gerald Suster (best known as a biographer of Aleister Crowley and Israel Regardie) stated the Grant was “ignorant... perverted... *Tunnels of Set?* Sewers of shit... those who accept Grant’s statements ... are eating his used lavatory paper.” On the other hand, Grant can be seen as a pioneer, especially in the 1970’s when he was “practically alone in offering new contributions to the literature of magick.” See: Dave Evans, “Trafficking with an ‘onslaught of compulsive weirdness: Kenneth Grant and the Magickal Revival” in Dave Evans ed., *The Journal for the Academic Study of Magic*, 2, (Oxford: Mandrake, 2004), 239.

<sup>86</sup> Israel Regardie, *The Golden Dawn* (St. Paul, MINN: Llewellyn Publications, 1988), 221-247.

<sup>87</sup> Kenneth Grant, *Aleister Crowley and the Hidden God* (London: Frederick Muller Ltd., 1973).

<sup>88</sup> Cited in Evans, “Trafficking with an ‘onslaught of compulsive weirdness””, 259.

The Tree of Life is a symbol of spiritual progression, integration, and psychic potency. However, the Tree is not without its own innate shadow and through the acknowledgment of this shadow we can come to better understand some of its more deeply repressed and buried assumptions and bring them to the light of consciousness. While it may be rather contrived to focus on only a few clandestine shadow issues it should suffice to give us a better understanding of two key components of this shadow: the Tree's gender bias and its hierarchical structure that can lead to the possibility (probability?) of inflation.

The Western Esoteric Tree of Life is communicated through gender-biased language.<sup>89</sup> We see that the “feminine pillar” lies in opposition to the “masculine pillar” and we see an emphasis on stereotypical images of both male and female. For example we see a limited view of feminine symbols in *Malkut*, *Netzach*, and *Binah*. *Malkut* is virginal while *Netzach* is seductive and sexual and *Binah*, the Great Mother (or the Whore of Babalon [*sic*] in Crowley's cosmology), is both devouring and liberating. It would appear that the definition and extent of “feminine” is reduced to birth, death, sex, or virginity. The masculine images are equally stereotypical. For example, *Geburah*, the Martian warrior, is, as would be expected, represented by a muscular man. *Tiferet*, a *sefira* of balance and equilibrium is symbolised by a child, a majestic king or a sacrificed god—all of which, given the context, are male.

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<sup>89</sup> Scholem mentions this issue, in rather sexist language of his own, in *Major Trends in Jewish Mysticism*: “One final observation should be made on the general character of Kabbalism as distinct from other, non-Jewish, forms of mysticism. Both historically and metaphysically it is a masculine doctrine, made for men by men. The long history of Jewish mysticism shows no trace of feminine influence. There have been no women Kabbalists...[Kabbalah] therefore lacks the element of feminine emotion which has played so large a part in the development of non-Jewish mysticism, but it also remained comparatively free from the dangers entailed by the tendency towards hysterical extravagance which followed in the wake of this influence.” Scholem, *Major Trends in Jewish Mysticism* (New York: Schocken Books, 1973), 37.

The Esotericists can simply claim that the gender assigned to the Tree is one of symbolic representation of alternating polarity and not to be taken literally. They can also claim, following Jewish Kabbalistic philosophy, that each *sefira* contains every other *sefira* thereby negating the gender exclusive representation. So then what are we to make of the gender specific terminology of the Tree of Life and what can be done about it? One answer is that we should acknowledge this stereotypical imbalance as providing an opportunity to explore the hidden shadow of the Tree.

The Tree of Life exists due to a play between force and form, a dynamic of internal tension that can never be ultimately resolved (unless, following traditional Jewish Kabbalah, the Tree is repaired and we enter into a state of *tikkun* or cosmic repair found in Lurancic Kabbalah and in that case the Tree, i.e. existence, would presumably take on a wholly novel form). Rather than view the Pillars as masculine or feminine, or think of this or that *sefira* as masculine or feminine, we can think in terms of force, form and equilibrium. The symbols traditionally applied to these states help us to realise how embedded these gender issues are within Kabbalah and within the Western Esoteric Tradition. Instead of trying to purge the Tree of these symbols or attempting to ignore the gender issues, we can view the correspondences of the Tree and *sefirot* to be psycho-spiritual symbols or signposts of transformation, as they are used within the Western Esoteric Tradition, while also analysing them more fully to understand and penetrate the gender bias endemic to the Tradition. By acknowledging and consciously working with and analysing the gender biased nature of the Tree, as opposed to repressing or ignoring it, we are able to reach a deeper and more balanced understanding of the Tree.

One issue with the hierarchical structure of the Western esoteric Tree of Life is the potential of inflation. As is probably self-evident, the Golden Dawn initiatory grade structure reviewed in Chapter Three has such a potential. The Neophyte starts off with or as nothing, (0=0).<sup>90</sup> The Zelator gains one part of something but 10 parts missing (1=10) while the Theoricus (2=9) has gained another segment of the missing something over and above the Zelator and two over the Neophyte. The discrepancy in levels is where the problem lies and which happens to be the potential source of inflation. The grades, as symbols of both ceremonial and transformative initiations, are intended to reflect one's experiences and personal attainments. If, however, the grades begin to represent closeness to perfection or act as a measure of spiritual purity, over and above those of a lesser grade, then the abuse of power becomes more likely.

A rather simplified analogy may be taken from the world of martial arts. Various belt colours are used to represent one's martial skill level. This differentiation helps to avoid lopsided sparring matches (for example a 3<sup>rd</sup> degree black belt sparring with a white belt) and to encourage interaction within one's peer group. It is not meant to segregate the higher belts from the lower but to facilitate more effective learning for all involved. However, if taken as a symbol of one's martial prowess or, worse, one's personal worth, the "belt" can become a means to set boundaries between oneself and others who lack the appropriate coloured belt. Not only can there be a lopsided view of those of lower rank there can be a tendency to view those of a superior rank as potential threats rather than valuable resources.

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<sup>90</sup> A person outside of the Order would be of an even less of a standing! We should also be aware that different Orders will apply different initiatory weight to the grades. For example, for Crowley's Order there is a Probationer pre-grade with Neophyte being 1=10. See Liber XIII in *The Equinox*, vol.I no.iii, 3.

The type of inflation suggested above is not what Jung meant when he used the term “inflation.” The aforementioned inflation could be best described as a conscious form of self-aggrandisement or egocentrism. In this type of inflation or arrogance one wholly identifies with the myth of their initiation and spiritual transitions. For Jung inflation:

should not be interpreted as ... conscious self-aggrandizement. Such is far from being the rule. In general we are not directly conscious of this condition at all, but can at best infer its existence indirectly from the symptoms. These include the reactions of our immediate environment. Inflation magnifies the blind spot in the eye.<sup>91</sup>

The unconscious plays a pivotal role in Jung’s definition of inflation and is also relevant to our discourse. If both ceremonial and transformative forms of initiation occur simultaneously then perhaps unconscious psychic energy is released and constellated through the transformative initiation which could then lead to inflation manifesting through the ceremonial, i.e. the actual ritual initiation. If the unconscious is not activated by the initiation then what transformative power can it really have? We will return to inflation and Jung’s use of the term “mana-personality” when we review the nature of the self and *Tiferet* below.

This brief diversion into the shadows of the Tree of Life was intended to draw attention to the fact that certain shadow oriented issues, the operative shadow, are explored within the Western Esoteric Tradition (for example issues of death, decay, and sexuality in relation to spiritual development). As a spiritual symbol or metaphor, the Tree of Life is held to be positive and spiritually affirming. However, even the Tree of Life has an equally vital shadow that should be confronted and brought to consciousness.

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<sup>91</sup> Jung, *Aion*, CW 9ii, par. 44.

In this shadow we see that cultural preconceptions such as gender bias and hierarchical structures are endemic to the Tree of Life. Rather than abandon the Tree we can look at the clandestine shadow as a means to encourage analysis of these issues as they are found in the traditions and philosophies related to the Tree of Life and on a personal or individual level when these traditions and philosophies are put into practice.

The shadow Abyss is a necessary initiation, a step toward wider and more inclusive forms of consciousness. The first Abyss to be encountered on the Western Esoteric Tree of Life demands the difficult and painful task of introspection and self-honesty, not to mention that the shadow Abyss is a test of one's personal resolve. Once the shadow has been brought to consciousness, at least in the sense that the shadow is recognised and it is understood that process will continue for the remainder of one's life, we move to the second *sefira* of the Tree of Life, *Yesod*.

### ***Yesod: Symbols, Soul and Libido.***

The following interpretation of *Yesod* does not readily conform to either the Western Esoteric Tradition's or the traditional Jewish interpretation of the *sefira*. In our analytical psychological interpretation of the *sefirot*, *Yesod* plays an important and complicated role, one that resonates with Jung's notion of symbols, soul and libido. *Yesod* simultaneously represents our psyche's capacity to form the transformative qualities of symbols as well as focused psychic energy or libido. Before engaging in a more detailed analysis we will review how *Yesod* is traditionally understood within the Western Esoteric Tradition.

Dion Fortune relates *Yesod* to the “Unconscious of the psychologists, filled with ancient and forgotten things, repressed since the childhood of the race.”<sup>92</sup> Trained as a lay analyst, Fortune seems to be referring to Jung’s notion of the collective unconscious. Israel Regardie echoes Fortune’s statement in his *A Garden of Pomegranates*.

While expounding on the nature of *Yesod* Regardie states that “[s]ome writers have referred to the astral light which is the sphere of *Yesod* as the *Anima Mundi*, the Soul of the World. The psychoanalyst Jung has a very similar concept which he terms the *collective unconscious* which, as I see it, differs in no wise from the Qabalistic idea.”<sup>93</sup> The Ciceros also posit a similar perspective that is evident in the portion of *Pomegranates* added by them for the 2002 edition of Regardie’s work. In that section we find the Ciceros discussing the benefit of practices such as skrying to penetrate the astral plane. They state: “Through these experiences, the magician is able to reach the deepest levels of what Carl Jung called the *collective unconscious* or what Hermetic philosophers called *Anima Mundi*—the Soul of the World.”<sup>94</sup> However, equating the entire collective unconscious with *Yesod* is rather reductionistic and limited. The potential of both power and meaning of the collective unconscious cannot be relegated to a single *sefira*, no matter how elegant the placement may appear. What we could say is that *Yesod* is the gateway to the unconscious but not the collective unconscious in its entirety. Fortune, coming from a traditional view of the Western Esoteric Tradition would likely have seen the human being, as a physical creature, as relatively low on the hierarchy of the Tree. The higher or divine realms would transcend the human psyche and enter the realms of

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<sup>92</sup> Fortune, *The Mystical Qabalah*, 241.

<sup>93</sup> Israel Regardie, *A Garden of Pomegranates* (St. Paul, MINN: Llewellyn Publications, 2002), 54.

<sup>94</sup> Regardie, *A Garden of Pomegranates*, 194.

spirit. Taken from a psychological perspective though, the unconscious is represented by the entire Tree and beyond, as we shall see.

James Hillman's understanding of "soul" is quite descriptive in connection to the relation between *Yesod* and symbols. In *Re-Visioning Psychology*, Hillman outlines three qualifications used to define 'soul'. All three correlate with *Yesod* in some way but it is the third qualification which resonates best with *Yesod*'s connection with symbol and metaphor:

And third, by 'soul' I mean the imaginative possibility in our natures, the experiencing through reflective speculation, dream, image, and *fantasy* – that mode which recognizes all realities as primarily symbolic or metaphorical.<sup>95</sup>

Rather than "being" soul or "the soul" in a metaphysical sense, *Yesod* represents the perspective of becoming aware of a different way of perceiving the world around oneself. As Hillman states in reference to soul, "By soul I mean, first of all, a perspective rather than a substance, a view point toward things rather than a thing itself."<sup>96</sup> This same attitude of perspective over substance should also be applied to the nature of each *sefira* and the entire Western Esoteric Tree of Life. For Hillman soul is another term for psyche and while *Yesod* may not represent the *entire* psyche it does symbolise a further shift in consciousness towards an appreciation of the metaphorical depths of the psyche.

According to the Esotericists *Yesod* or "Foundation" is Lunar yet it is symbolised by a "beautiful" strong man.<sup>97</sup> *Yesod* simultaneously corresponds to the moon, a traditionally and stereotypically "feminine" planet, and the "masculine" symbol of a

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<sup>95</sup> James Hillman, *Re-Visioning Psychology* (New York: Harper and Row, 1975), x.

<sup>96</sup> James Hillman, *Archetypal Psychology: A Brief Account* (Dallas, TX: Spring Publications, 1988), 16.

<sup>97</sup> This is contrary to the Kabbalistic/alchemical sources used by Jung that claim it is *Malkut* that is lunar: Jung, *CW 14*, par. 19.

strong man. The Esotericists, like Dion Fortune, imply that this seemingly dichotomous schism is due to the fact that *Yesod* is the receptacle of the substance of the other *sefirot* and is “the immediate and only transmitter of these emanations to *Malkuth*, the physical plane.”<sup>98</sup> *Yesod* synthesises both the “masculine” pillar of *Hokmah*, *Hesed*, and *Netzach* (pillar of force) and the “feminine” pillar of *Binah*, *Geburah*, and *Hod* (pillar of form). Obviously this understanding of *Yesod* is infused with gender bias. However, the *sefirot* and their contrary correspondences actually work to collapse gender stereotypes. *Yesod*, as the repository of unconscious symbolism, is the first indication that the polarity of the Tree of Life is, in fact, a representation of “difference” and “otherness” present in the very nature of the unconscious.

Metaphorical symbols reflect an intimate “otherness” that is at once familiar and connected to individual ego consciousness yet exists independently from the conscious motivations of the ego-complex. *Yesod* is emblematic of the metaphorical “stuff” the unconscious moulds into symbolic images which are then perceived on a personal conscious level through the ego-complex and *Malkut*. Traditionally *Yesod* is said to be composed of an actual substance that is thought to participate in both mind and matter. This substance is known as “Astral Light.”<sup>99</sup> The Astral Light is what perpetuates, permeates, and animates matter on the physical plane. This vital energy exchange could be seen as the source behind *Yesod*’s spiritual vision, “The Machinery of the Universe.” *Yesod* is the power and structure behind the perception and perpetuation of reality which, since *Yesod* channels and condenses all the previous *sefirot*, is infused with divine, i.e. unconscious, energy.

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<sup>98</sup> Fortune, *The Mystical Qabalah*, 237.

<sup>99</sup> Fortune, *The Mystical Qabalah*, 237.

For our purposes *Yesod* can also be seen as symbolic of the balanced state of the anima/animus or the “inner” and archetypal “other” within the psyche. In *Yesod* the “other” is experienced in a state of equilibrium. Following a simplified interpretation of the *sefirot* we could view a “negative” anima/animus experience as an unbalanced experience of either *Netzach* or *Hod* respectively.<sup>100</sup> The psychological “other” in *Yesod* complements biological sex, represented through the ego-complex. The anima, *Netzach*, links to *Yesod* via the 28<sup>th</sup> Path while the animus links to *Yesod* via the 30<sup>th</sup> Path. With *Yesod* the ego-complex (*Malkut*) experiences the anima/animus as a contra-sexual source of potential psychic energy; that is to say, it is differentiated yet balanced.

In his lectures on Kundalini Yoga, Jung equates the anima with *kundalini*.<sup>101</sup> This connection implies a definite sexual connotation that is equally present in *Yesod*. As the synthesis of both *Hod* (Mercury) and *Netzach* (Venus), *Yesod* represents a conjoining of opposites (actually a double joining as *Hod* as masculine resides on the “feminine” pillar while the feminine *Netzach* dwells on the “masculine” pillar). Taken to be somewhat parallel to the Hindu understanding of the *mūlādhāra-chakra*<sup>102</sup>, *Yesod* is, on a microcosmic or individual level, the seat of the Esotericist’s power or his or her vital or life energy.<sup>103</sup> This energy is then augmented by the joining of various opposing forces such as *Netzach* and *Hod* and the material world (*Malkut*) with the depths of the psyche (*Tiferet*). Also, in so much as *Yesod* is the gate to the Astral (metaphorical) realm, there is the merging of finite and infinite reality. When discussing the definition of Magick

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<sup>100</sup> We will enter into more detail regarding the anima/animus below.

<sup>101</sup> Sonu Shamdasani, ed., *The Psychology of Kundalini Yoga* (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1999), 22. See also Harold Coward, *Yoga and Psychology* (Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 2002), 51-82. For a criticism of Jung’s work on *kundalini* see Harold C. Coward, *Jung and Eastern Thought* (Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 1985), 123.

<sup>102</sup> Crowley, *Magick/Liber Aba (Parts I-IV)* (York Beach, ME: Samuel Weiser, Inc., 1997), 563.

<sup>103</sup> Regardie, *The Tree of Life* (St. Paul, MINN: Llewellyn Publications, 2002), 105.

above we saw that the peculiar use of a “k” reveals, among others things, a sexual connotation. This sexual connotation is aptly reflected in the idea of the syzygy.

From an analytical psychological perspective, the syzygy is an archetypal (and alchemical) form of the union of the divine couple or sacred marriage. It is the paring of the anima and animus.<sup>104</sup> The anima and animus function “as a bridge or door, leading to the images of the collective unconscious....”<sup>105</sup> Similarly, Jung tells us that “[w]ith the archetype of the anima we enter the realm of the gods...everything that the anima touches becomes numinous—unconditional, dangerous, taboo, magical.”<sup>106</sup> It is with this understanding of the syzygy, where the anima is the archetype of life and the animus is the archetype of meaning<sup>107</sup>, which we apply to *Yesod*. It is the gate to the remainder of the Tree and it brings together the intellectual aspects of *Hod* with the emotional aspects of *Netzach* in a balanced manner.

First we move from the confines of persona and ego identity to the larger view of the psyche, which includes the personal unconscious content of the shadow (movement from *Malkut* to the shadow Abyss). From this shadow Abyss we perceive that we are comprised of a contra-sexual “other” that we not only project onto persons of the opposite biological sex but experience, through symbol and metaphor (*Yesod*), as an unconscious source of libido. *Malkut* (ego-complex) is connected to both the anima (*Netzach*) and the animus (*Hod*). Issues of gender and sexual identity are no longer matters of convenient or static definition. Rather than state that a man experiences the

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<sup>104</sup> Jung, “Concerning the Archetypes with Special Reference to the Anima Concept”, *CW 9i*, par.134. See especially, Jung, *Aion*, pars. 20-42. See also Verna Kast, “Anima/Animus” in *The Handbook of Jungian Psychology* (New York: Routledge, 2006), 94-129.

<sup>105</sup> Jung, *Memories, Dreams, Reflections* (New York: Vintage Books, 1989), 392.

<sup>106</sup> Jung, “Archetypes of the Collective Unconscious”, *CW 9i*, par. 59 cited in Kast, “Anima/Animus”, 117.

<sup>107</sup> Jung, “Archetypes of the Collective Unconscious”, *CW 9i*, par. 66 cited in Kast, “Anima/Animus”, 117.

anima (*Netzach*) and a woman experiences the animus (*Hod*) we can say that either can experience the anima or animus (or both) as a representative of the intricate concept of the “other” in our psychological lives.<sup>108</sup>

While blurring one’s gender orientation may not be necessary for psychological growth<sup>109</sup>, exploration and appreciation of the culturally defined and enforced gender stereotypes most certainly is necessary. Jung tended to interpret and define concepts such as anima/animus and his psychological types in very strict gender specific terms. Susan Rowland gives a useful and alternate definition of “anima” in the glossary to *Jung: A Feminist Revision*:

The anima is the archetype of the feminine in the unconscious of a man. In that this locates a feminine mode in the subjectivity of the masculine gender, denoting a bisexual unconscious, this is a helpful concept. However, at times, Jung uses his own unconscious anima as a model for designating female subjectivity a ‘more unconscious’ than males. Remembering that all archetypes are plural and androgynous mitigates the stress of gender opposition, modelled upon heterosexuality. A male’s unconscious is not purely or necessarily feminine or vice versa.<sup>110</sup>

Rowland’s thesis that Jung’s own anima influenced his theory of “the” anima, while well presented and defended, is not central to our present concerns. Instead what we need to remember is that archetypes are, in fact, plural and androgynous. *Yesod* balances both the emotional Venusian anima (*Netzach*) and the rational Mercurial animus (*Hod*). The experience of *Yesod* is a balanced starting point for the experience of the

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<sup>108</sup> For a feminist discussion of the “other” and Jungian psychology see Susan Rowland, *Jung: A Feminist Revision* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2002). See also Kast, “Anima/Animus”, 116, 121-128.

<sup>109</sup> Though Thelemite Rodney Orpheous does mention the benefits of adopting alternate personality traits (we could say personas) including those of the opposite sex. Rodney Orpheous, *Abrahamadabra: Understanding Aleister Crowley’s Thelemic Magick* (York Beach, ME: Red Wheel/Weiser, LLC, 2005), 82-85.

<sup>110</sup> Rowland, *Jung: A Feminist Revision* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2002), 173.

“other” within the psyche. Where the shadow<sup>111</sup> and persona are personal, in the sense that they have a direct connection to the ego-complex and its experiences, the anima and animus mark a change in focus. They, through the nature of their corresponding *sefira*, represent observable and pragmatic metaphorical components of the unconscious.

*Yesod* can also be seen as representing aspects of what Jung labelled the transcendent function. For Jung the transcendent function “arises from the union of conscious and unconscious content.”<sup>112</sup> *Yesod* functions as the mediator between the consciousness of the ego-complex (*Malkut*) and the unconscious symbolised by the remainder of the Tree. Jung uses the term “transcendent” to emphasise the fact that the function “makes the transition from one attitude to another organically possible, without loss of the unconscious.”<sup>113</sup> According to Jung it is necessary for the compensatory nature of the unconscious to make itself present in consciousness. Jung asks the question, in this case directed to therapists but this question is equally relevant to non-clinicians, what kind of mental or moral attitude is necessary to have towards the disturbing influences of the unconscious and how can it be conveyed?<sup>114</sup> The answer, according to Jung, is to remove the separation between conscious and unconscious and to recognise the significance of the contents of the unconscious in compensating the one-sidedness of consciousness.<sup>115</sup>

Dreams are traditionally the most direct way in which the unconscious and conscious factors that make up the transcendent function can be observed. However,

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<sup>111</sup> Here the reference is to the shadow of the personal unconscious, not the archetypal or collective sense of the shadow.

<sup>112</sup> Jung, “The Transcendent Function”, *CW* 8, par. 131.

<sup>113</sup> Jung, “The Transcendent Function”, *CW* 8, par. 145.

<sup>114</sup> Jung, “The Transcendent Function”, *CW* 8, par. 144.

<sup>115</sup> Jung, “The Transcendent Function”, *CW* 8, par. 145.

more salient to our purposes is how fantasy functions to bring unconscious material into consciousness. Spontaneous fantasies can reveal a great deal of unconscious material in a more coherent and composed way than practices such as slips of the tongue or related unconscious activities.<sup>116</sup> Jung states that some patients, again he is addressing the transcendent function from the perspective of a clinician, are able to create fantasies at any time and that while this talent is not common, it can be developed. The method of development would require what Jung calls “systematic exercise for eliminating critical attention.” These methods, which can be found in most forms of the Western Esoteric Tradition, cause a “vacuum in consciousness.” Once this vacuum has been created any libido-charged fantasy waiting to become conscious can surface. Jung states that this is not always the case and if not special measures, such as the various techniques used within therapy, are required.<sup>117</sup>

The notion of a “vacuum in consciousness” is comparable to Lon Milo DuQuette’s comments regarding the Lesser Banishing Ritual of the Pentagram (LBRP). DuQuette states that by creating the four pentagrams in the ritual and calling the four Archangels, the circle is sealed and a new magical environment is created. This sealing forms a vacuum within the circle: “As Magick and Nature abhor vacuums, this environment is immediately filled by the inrush of the macrocosm.... It is from this superior position the Magician sets to work.”<sup>118</sup> When applied to an analytical psychological interpretation of the Tree of Life, the macrocosm in the above citation

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<sup>116</sup> Jung, “The Transcendent Function”, *CW* 8, par. 154-155.

<sup>117</sup> Jung, “The Transcendent Function”, *CW* 8, par. 155.

<sup>118</sup> Lon Milo DuQuette, *The Magick of Thelema* (York Beach, ME: Samuel Weiser, Inc., 1993), 61, n. 9.

would equate to the collective unconscious.<sup>119</sup> The Magician is attempting to shut down personal consciousness (the microcosm) thereby becoming more open to the wider perspective of the unconscious.

It could be argued that a willed fantasy lacking biographical material, such as the LBRP or other similar Western Esoteric practices is not an effective means of bringing the unconscious into consciousness. The very fact that since the subject of the practice is structured and prearranged to some degree, as opposed to being based on unconscious material such as dreams or waking fantasies, implies that critical attention is brought to bear in the contents of the fantasy and that this will ultimately diminish their usefulness. However, as mentioned above, the combination of conditioning and training along with the various ritual drivers common to the Western Esoteric Tradition, the influence of the critical attention would be, we can assume, reduced enough for the unconscious to surface within the liminal space created within the boundaries of the circle, or in psychological terms, the psyche.

The transcendent function falls under the *neither/nor* logic of the subtle body of metaphor. Once the unconscious is given an outlet for experience and expression, the ego and the unconscious are brought together and the transcendent function is produced.<sup>120</sup> The question now becomes what does one do with this new found connection with the unconscious? As a clinical exercise this question would be answered within the context of the practice of analysis. Whatever the answer is from within analysis, the ego must be placed in a balanced compensatory position to the unconscious.

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<sup>119</sup> As stated in Chapter One “A Brief Word on Microcosm and Macrocosm”, (p. 36) Jung equates the macrocosm with the external world while the microcosm consisted of the psyche including the collective unconscious. The present use of the terms implies the reverse meaning.

<sup>120</sup> Jung, “The Transcendent Function”, *CW* 8, par. 181.

Jung remarked that as the conscious mind of a “civilized man has a restrictive effect on the unconscious, so the rediscovered unconscious often has a really dangerous effect on the ego. In the same way that the ego suppressed the unconscious before, a liberated unconscious can thrust the ego aside and overwhelm it.”<sup>121</sup>

Jung was well aware of the dangers of opening the way to the unconscious. He also knew that while “aestheticization” and intellectualisation could be applied against the affects of the transcendent function, they should only be applied when there was a “vital threat” and not to avoid the necessary task of bringing the unconscious into consciousness.<sup>122</sup> By accepting the unconscious into one’s psychological life one also accepts and grants validity to the psychological “other” in whatever form it may take. By acknowledging the “other” within us we are one step closer to acknowledging the “other” without. Or to reverse it: “Everyone who proposes to come to terms with himself must reckon with this basic problem [i.e., allowing the “other’s” argument or position to count as valid]. For, to the degree that he does not admit the validity of the other person, he denies the “other” within himself the right to exist...”<sup>123</sup>

The anima and animus are also at the root of our creativity and our potential to develop as human beings. Steven F. Walker states in his *Jung and the Jungians on Myth* that:

The realization and integration of at least some aspects of the anima and animus can provide both men and women with greater creative capacity and can enable them to realize more of their full potential as human beings. For the anima and the animus...also may serve, in an individual’s later stages of development, as a bridge to the collective unconscious.<sup>124</sup>

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<sup>121</sup> Jung, “The Transcendent Function”, *CW* 8, par. 183.

<sup>122</sup> Jung, “The Transcendent Function”, *CW* 8, par. 183.

<sup>123</sup> Jung, “The Transcendent Function”, *CW* 8, par. 187.

<sup>124</sup> Steven F. Walker, *Jung and the Jungians on Myth* (New York: Routledge, 2002), 58.

Our need to build a rapport with the anima/animus or the “other” does not end but continues throughout our lives. This, like any facet of psychological maturation, requires personal fortitude and *faith*.

By “faith” we should not think of devotion to a deity or dogma. Nor should we assume that it implies a subservient abandonment of will or identity. We should, instead, think of what James Hillman calls “psychological faith.”<sup>125</sup> The Tree of Life, as a psycho-spiritual metaphor and symbol, requires that a certain amount of trust, a certain proportion of faith be applied to the reality and contents of the psyche. For Hillman the development of the psyche is equivalent to “soul-making.” Hillman states that:

Since psyche is primarily image and image always psyche, this faith manifests itself in the belief in images: it is “idolatrous,” heretical to the imageless monotheisms of metaphysics and theology. Psychological faith begins with the *love of images*, and it flows mainly through the shapes of persons in reveries, fantasies, reflections, and imaginations. Their increasing vivification gives one an increasing conviction of having, and then of being, an interior reality of deep significance transcending one’s personal life....Psychological faith is reflected in an ego that gives credit to images....Its trust is in the imagination as the only incontrovertible reality, directly presented, immediately felt.<sup>126</sup>

While Jung does emphasise taking the unconscious seriously he also emphasises that it “does not mean taking it literally, but it does mean giving the unconscious credit, so that it has a chance to co-operate with consciousness instead of automatically disturbing it.”<sup>127</sup> Yet, as we shall see in the case of the Western Esoteric Tradition, the realm of the unconscious and metaphor needs to be made as real and literal as possible, especially in regards to the crossing of the Supernal Abyss.

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<sup>125</sup> Hillman, *Re-Visioning Psychology*, 50-51.

<sup>126</sup> Hillman, *Re-Visioning Psychology*, 50.

<sup>127</sup> Jung, “The Transcendent Function”, *CW* 8, par. 184.

Now that we have a cursory understanding of the dynamic between *Yesod*, *Netzach*, and *Hod* and we have seen how the transcendent function relates to *Yesod* we shall move to the next important *sefira* on our analytical psychological interpretation of the Western Esoteric Tree of Life, *Tiferet*.

### ***Tiferet: The Sun, Son, and Self***

The term “self” has not been a static one in Jung’s thought and we should take a moment to review how this concept has developed. First we shall review Warren Colman’s “Models of the Self” then we shall turn to Gary V. Hartman’s “History and Development of Jung’s Psychology: The Early Years, 1900-1935.”

Warren Colman brings to the surface several important points regarding the self in Jung’s thought. Colman begins the article by highlighting the problem of the term “self” as parallel to the idea of “I” or “myself”:

Jung’s thinking on the self is full of complexities, paradoxes and uncertainties, many of which are inherent in any attempt to discuss something which, by definition, transcends human comprehension. It is perhaps inevitable that he used ‘the self’ to refer to several different but overlapping conceptions, just as ‘the God-image’, which Jung regarded as indistinguishable from the self, has a potentially infinite range of meanings.<sup>128</sup>

Once it is established that Jung’s understanding of the self is not equated to the idea of “myself” Colman considers three aspects of the Jungian self and posits a fourth: the self as the totality of the psyche, the self as an archetype and the self as personification of the

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<sup>128</sup> Warren Colman, “Models of the Self” in Eliphis Christopher and Hester McFarland Solomon, eds. *Jungian Thought in the Modern World* (London: Free Association Books Ltd., 2000), 4.

unconscious. The fourth aspect, proposed by Colman is the self as the process of the psyche.<sup>129</sup>

When the self is considered as the totality of the psyche there is an implication that the self contains both unconscious contents such as the archetypes and conscious aspects such as the ego-complex. The experience of wholeness and/or the God-image, as direct experience or symbol, comes from the self.<sup>130</sup> However, the experience of this wholeness is not representative of the totality of the wholeness. “These moments offer an *intimation* of wholeness, an incontrovertible inkling of a psychic totality that remains forever out of reach and unknowable.”<sup>131</sup>

The self as archetype presents a few problems. Colman cites Fordham in the discussion of self as archetype.<sup>132</sup> According to Colman, Jung refers to the self as both the totality of the psyche *and* an archetype within the totality. However if the self is the totality of the psyche containing all other archetypes then how can it also be one of them? “Further more, as an archetype, the self cannot be the totality since it excludes the ego which perceives it and is structured by it.”<sup>133</sup> Colman points out that this is an important argument against the notion of the archetypes being *in* the psyche. Instead, “[a]rchetypes are better thought of as modes of experiencing, tendencies to experience the world and ourselves in particular ways. This enables us to recognise the dual nature of archetypes: they generate particular symbolic images but these images also refer to specific psychic functions.”<sup>134</sup> Colman reminds us that in Jung’s later writings he “came to think of the

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<sup>129</sup> Colman, “Models of the Self”, 4.

<sup>130</sup> Colman gives examples of this aspect of the self: Negative Theology, the Unmoved Mover, *En Sof*, the work of Maimonides and Meister Eckhart and Zen *koans*. Colman, “Models of the Self”, 6-7.

<sup>131</sup> Colman, “Models of the Self”, 6-7.

<sup>132</sup> Colman, “Models of the Self”, 7.

<sup>133</sup> Colman, “Models of the Self”, 7.

<sup>134</sup> Colman, “Models of the Self”, 7.

self as the archetype of the ego. He seems to have recognised that the sharp distinction between ego and self could not always be maintained since the more individuated one becomes, the closer the conscious ego approximates to psychic wholeness (although this is an ever-receding goal).”<sup>135</sup>

The self can also be seen as the personification of the unconscious. This understanding is reflected in Jung’s *Answer to Job*<sup>136</sup> where “Job’s conflict with Yahweh [is] a metaphor for the relationship between the ego and the self.”<sup>137</sup> In this case though, Yahweh, as a symbol of the self “is more like a personification of the elemental powerhouse of the unconscious while Job represents the puny but essential forces of consciousness.”<sup>138</sup> This view of the self has influenced the theories of both Erich Neumann<sup>139</sup> and Edward Edinger<sup>140</sup> “in which ego development is seen as a progressive emergence and differentiation from the self (equated as the unconscious).”<sup>141</sup> This theory, Colman points out, is difficult to reconcile with the theory that the ego is both part of the self and, during the process of individuation, becomes more like the self.<sup>142</sup>

Colman presents a fourth interpretation of the self: the self as process. In this theory the self is both an archetype of the psyche and the totality, as well as being both the organising principle and that which is organised. “In this view the self is best understood as the overall *process* of the psyche. That is, it is not simply an organising principle *within* the psyche but is better thought of as the organising principle *of* the

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<sup>135</sup> Colman, “Models of the Self”, 8.

<sup>136</sup> Jung, “Answer to Job”, *CW 11*, pars. 560-758.

<sup>137</sup> Colman, “Models of the Self”, 9.

<sup>138</sup> Colman, “Models of the Self”, 9

<sup>139</sup> See Eric Neuman, *The Origins and History of Consciousness* (London: Karnac, 1989).

<sup>140</sup> Edward Edinger, “The ego-self paradox” in *Journal of Analytical Psychology*, 5(1), 1960, 3-18.

<sup>141</sup> Colman, “Models of the Self”, 9

<sup>142</sup> Colman, “Models of the Self”, 9.

psyche.”<sup>143</sup> Colman’s view proposes that the “self is both the tendency towards organisation (the process of individuation) *and* the structure of that organisation (the self as archetype).”<sup>144</sup>

As we can see the term self is a difficult one to define. If we apply Colman’s view of the self as process to *Tiferet* we have an alternative understanding of how the *sefira* can be interpreted. Perhaps *Tiferet* (and the other *sefirot* as well—especially those that constitute the self mandala mentioned below) should not be thought of as some *thing* on the Tree of Life. It is not a point of manifestation but a point of perspective. The self can be seen as an archetype separate from the psyche when it is experienced or *viewed* that way. Yet despite these experiences and the theories that can be drawn from them we are not in a position to make ontological assumptions about the whole psyche. Colman’s process approach allows for the *sefirot* being both particle and wave, so to speak. That is to say the self can be seen as a specific archetype (a particle) or the entire process of the psyche (a wave) depending on one’s view. A final citation sums up both the self and *Tiferet* well:

Our individuation involves our becoming distinct and discrete individuals to the point at which we can confront the universe from which we have sprung as discriminated but intrinsically connected parts of it. Then, if we can grasp it, we might once again know the experience of wholeness at a different level: at the level of *consciousness*, the highest level of differentiation known to us. At this level, we might become differentiated enough to *perceive* our interconnection and oneness with the universe.<sup>145</sup>

From Colman’s insightful citation we now turn to Hartman’s analysis of the self in Jung’s work.

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<sup>143</sup> Colman, “Models of the Self”, 14.

<sup>144</sup> Colman, “Models of the Self”, 14.

<sup>145</sup> Colman, “Models of the Self”, 18.

According to Gary V. Hartman, Jung defined the term “self” in three ways:

1. Self as an ego-ideal, the potential for the individual’s development<sup>146</sup>;
2. Self as a more encompassing term for personality<sup>147</sup>;
3. Self as the totality of the psyche with universal aspects.<sup>148</sup>

The definition of the “self” given in *CW 6*<sup>149</sup> (the “self” most recognisable by those familiar with Jung today) was added later than the original publication date.<sup>150</sup>

Originally in Jung’s thought, the term self “had figured under the concept of the ego.”<sup>151</sup>

Hartman indicates that, at least in the early stages of his thought, “Jung subsumes Self to ego.”<sup>152</sup> The second meaning of self relates to and overlaps with the first. Hartman

cites Jung’s 1916 paper “The Conception of the Unconscious” which has the self and the persona connected. Under the heading “B. The Composition of the Persona” we find the

following subsections:

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<sup>146</sup> Hartman suggests that Jung’s early use of the self was derived from Jung’s experience with “S.W.” and her somnambulant alter-ego, Ivenes (Gary V. Hartman, “History and Development of Jung’s Psychology: The Early Years, 1900-1935.”, 4. Retrieved September 18, 2002 from the World Wide Web: <http://www.cgjungpage.org/articles/hdself3.html>) Hartman, cites Jung, “On the Psychology of So-Called Occult Phenomena”, *CW 1*, par. 132 where Jung discusses the patient seeking a middle path between two extremes—straining after some ideal condition. Hartman also cites par. 136: “Jung goes on in this paper to suggest that certain somnambulant manifestations may be ‘nothing but character-formations for the future personality, or their attempts to burst forth,’ having ‘a marked teleological meaning.’ This sounds more like an ego-ideal rather than the more numinous and cosmic qualities of the later ‘self’ assumed in Jung’s thinking.” (Hartman, “History and Development of Jung’s Psychology”, 5). The ideal personality also appears in Jung, “On the Relations of the Ego and the Unconscious”, *CW 7*, par. 398. Hartman also cites Jung’s “The Conception of The Unconscious” in Jung and C.E. Long, *Collected Papers in Analytical Psychology* (London: Balliere, Tindall and Cox, 1917), 472 where Jung, under the heading “B. The Composition of the Persona” speaks of the self as an ego. (Hartman, “History and Development of Jung’s Psychology”, 6).

<sup>147</sup> Hartman indicates that the second and first categories overlap (Hartman, “History and Development of Jung’s Psychology”, 5).

<sup>148</sup> Hartman notes that this more inclusive form of “self” coincides with Jung’s work with Richard Wilhelm between the years of 1921 and 1935 and it may be that Jung was influenced by various aspects of Oriental and Eastern philosophy (Hartman, “History and Development of Jung’s Psychology”, 2, 7).

<sup>149</sup> “As an empirical concept, the self designates the whole range of psychic phenomena in man. It expresses the unity of the personality as a whole...[but] can be only in part conscious...” (Jung, *Psychological Types*, *CW 6*, par. 789.

<sup>150</sup> See Jung, *Psychological Types*, *CW 6*, par. 183 n.85.

<sup>151</sup> Jung, “Editorial Note”, *CW 6*, v-vi.

<sup>152</sup> Hartman, “History and Development of Jung’s Psychology”, 4.

1. The conscious personal contents constitute the conscious personality, the *conscious* ego.
2. The unconscious personal contents constitute the *self*, the *unconscious* or *subconscious* ego.
3. The conscious and unconscious contents of a personal nature constitute the *persona*.<sup>153</sup>

At this early stage of Jung's thought he refers to the self as *ego* and both ego and self are relegated under the term *persona* (a term Hartman points out Jung used as a synonym for "personality").<sup>154</sup> According to Hartman, Jung's model, at least at this point, could be summarised as: ego = conscious personality; self = unconscious personality; persona = ego.<sup>155</sup>

The final stage of "self" development is reflected in Jung's later works. Hartman observes that from "the early thirties onward, for Jung to speak of the Self is synonymous with 'totality' or 'wholeness'"<sup>156</sup> and it is at this last stage that we approach Jung's understanding of "self." The purpose of this brief review of the self was to indicate that the concept of the self is not a static or concretised concept in Jung's thought and that the same fluidity be applied to the metaphors depicted below as well.

In the Western Esoteric Tradition *Tiferet* corresponds to the astrological "planet" the sun. However, the Esoteric meaning of the sun does not correspond entirely with Jung's (and other Post-Jungian's) perspective of the symbolic nature of the sun. On one

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<sup>153</sup> Jung cited in Hartman, "History and Development of Jung's Psychology", 6. Emphasis is Jung's. See also Jung, "The Relations Between the Ego and the Unconscious", *CW* 7, par. 512.

<sup>154</sup> In "The Self" Colman states that the 1916 version of "The Relations Between the Ego and the Unconscious" Jung uses "the concept of 'individuality' in the place of what he later termed 'the self'." Colman, "The Self" in *The Handbook of Jungian Psychology*, Renos Papadopoulos, ed. (New York: Routledge, 2006), 153.

<sup>155</sup> Hartman, "History and Development of Jung's Psychology", 6.

<sup>156</sup> Hartman, "History and Development of Jung's Psychology", 10. According to Colman, Jung first mentions the self as "totality" in the 1928 version of "The Relations Between the ego and the Unconscious", *CW* 7, par. 274. Colman, "The Self", 156.

level, and as a symbol, Jung equates the sun with consciousness<sup>157</sup> while the Moon (in our case *Yesod* is lunar and the first step into the unconscious) corresponds to the anima.<sup>158</sup> The sun in the Western Esoteric Tradition and as found on the Tree of Life is more complicated and dynamic than the light of waking ego consciousness.

The sun represents the “Divine Spark” and the individual’s link to divinity, in other words the Holy Guardian Angel or Higher Genius. If the sun is to be taken as a form of consciousness within the Western Esoteric Tradition then it is an amplified form of consciousness that can only be realised through dedication and discipline towards the Great Work (individuation). Though Jung is justified in seeing the symbolic light of the sun (consciousness) in contrast with the moon (unconscious) for the our present purposes the sun, and therefore *Tiferet*, actually represents the focal point of the entire Tree of Life and the centre of what we shall refer to as the “self-mandala.”<sup>159</sup>

Some traditional Esoteric titles and symbols that are applied to *Tiferet* include: a majestic king, a child, a sacrificed god, “The King”, “Adam”, “The Son”, “The Man”, the Mystery of the Crucifixion, visions of the harmony of things, the Rose Cross, the Calvary Cross and the cube.<sup>160</sup> Each of these correspondences symbolises union, balance and conjunction. There is also an overriding air of the sacred and the numinous. Each of these qualities resonates with Jung’s understanding of the self. While Jung does state that the sun is a symbol of consciousness he was also aware of the sun’s more arcane properties.

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<sup>157</sup> See Jung, *Mysterium Coniunctionis*, *CW 14*, pars. 47, 128, 152, 219, 307, and 501.

<sup>158</sup> Jung, *Mysterium Coniunctionis*, *CW 14*, par. 20.

<sup>159</sup> We will return to the “self-mandala” below.

<sup>160</sup> Fortune, *The Mystical Qabalah*, 174-175.

In “Dream Symbolism in Relation to Alchemy” Jung gives an alchemical interpretation to the following dream image: *A globe. The unknown woman is standing on it and worshipping the sun.*<sup>161</sup> Here Jung indicates, based on previously occurring dream images, that the globe of this dream is a symbol of the earth and a previously occurring image of a red ball is the sun. Upon the earth stands the anima worshipping the sun. Jung indicates that anima and sun are thus distinct and therefore represent two separate principles. According to Jung the anima is a “personification of the unconscious, while the sun is a symbol of life and the ultimate wholeness of man...”<sup>162</sup> The sun then is a symbol of the whole person, a person symbolically balanced and complete.

Taken from the perspective as the middle of the Tree, *Tiferet* can be seen as the centre of a *mandala* where *Netzach*, *Hod*, *Geburah*, and *Hesed* form the balancing four points. *Tiferet* is a point that mediates Martian strength and Jovian mercy. It also mediates and balances the emotional Venusian energy of *Netzach* with the Mercurial intellectual energy of *Hod*.<sup>163</sup> *Tiferet* is, in essence, surrounded by four complimentary and contrasting *sefirot*.

The Pillar of Severity (on the “left” of the Middle Pillar) has *Hod* as its base. The intellectual nature of Mercury reflects heightened rationality and mental structure. Above *Hod* we find *Geburah*. The structure or form enforced by *Geburah* is now more dynamic in nature. Represented by the image of a “mighty warrior in his chariot” we see that *Geburah* is the *sefira* of energy and courage but when taken to extremes *Geburah* is a

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<sup>161</sup> Jung, “Dream Symbolism in relation to Alchemy”, *CW 12*, par. 112.

<sup>162</sup> Jung, “Dream Symbolism in relation to Alchemy”, *CW 12*, par. 112.

<sup>163</sup> We know from Jung’s studies in the alchemical traditions that Mercury has a dual nature. It is both the *Lapis* and poison. The same dichotomy would apply to *Hod* as well.

symbol of cruelty and destruction.<sup>164</sup> If repressed or left untended the animus (symbolised on the Western Esoteric Tree of Life by both *Hod* and *Geburah* of the Pillar of Severity) can become aggressive and hostile toward ego consciousness.

On the opposite pillar, the Pillar of Mercy, *Netzach* is at the base. Symbolised as a “beautiful naked woman”, *Netzach* can be encountered as either an open “unselfishness” or as “unchastity” or “lust.”<sup>165</sup> While the vices of unchastity and lust have a rather Christian moral overtone, one that would be fervently challenged by Esotericists such as Aleister Crowley, *Netzach* can be experienced either in a healthy and open way or in a potentially harmful and self-destructive way. Above *Netzach* we see the *sefira Hesed*. *Hesed* is also known as *Gedulah* (love or majesty) and is represented by a “mighty crowned and throned king.” Accompanied by a “Vision of Love” *Hesed* resonates with “Obedience” or, in its “negative” form, with “Bigotry, Gluttony [and] Tyranny.”<sup>166</sup> Here again we see a potential for growth, in the sense of obedience and dedication to God (in other words, psychological faith in the value of the self and the depths of the collective unconscious), or a potential for disproportionate psychological perspective with an inability to discriminate or structure.

To generalise, the Pillar of Mercy, as found on the Western Esoteric Tradition Tree of Life tends toward emotional excess, generally to the detriment of reason, while the Pillar of Severity tends toward cold, dissecting and calculated thought marked by a lack of emotional consideration. The balance is found in recognising and acknowledging the imbalance and looking toward the state of equilibrium in symbolic structure of *Tiferet*.

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<sup>164</sup> Fortune, *The Mystical Qabalah*, 160.

<sup>165</sup> Fortune, *The Mystical Qabalah*, 206.

<sup>166</sup> Fortune, *The Mystical Qabalah*, 149.

As *Netzach* and *Hod* balance and counter one another (emotional and intellectual capacities or archetypes) so too do *Geburah* and *Hesed*. If we use the analogy of a kingdom as an example we would see that *Geburah* would rule with a heavy and well-armed hand. Restrictions, rules and segregation would be implemented and strictly enforced. While there would be a sense of justice there would also be a lack of empathy and compassion. If *Hesed* were in the position of authority there would be a state of enlightened dictatorship but the kingdom would lack the potential to rally force in sufficient quantity and quality should the kingdom require such force. Either extreme has both its strengths and weaknesses. The balance or middle ground is found not in the individual four points but in the centre, *Tiferet*.

Lon Milo DuQuette gives another useful correspondence for *Hesed* that will become more important when we review the function and nature of the Supernal Abyss. DuQuette states that since *Hesed* (he uses the more common Esoteric spelling of *Chesed*) is the first *sefira* below the Supernal Abyss, and thus represents the first step toward manifest creation, the nature of that *sefira* can be found in the mythology of the *Demiourgos* or demiurge. An archetypal and mythical image that summarises the demiurge would be Zeus. Zeus, also known as Jove has a close link to “Jehovah.” DuQuette indicates that because “...the demiurge is not sure of its origin, it’s understandable that it would be a bit insecure. It might even refer to itself as a jealous god and forbid the worship of any other competing deity.”<sup>167</sup> We will return to the relation between the demiurge and the Supernal Abyss below.

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<sup>167</sup> Lon Milo DuQuette, *Understanding Aleister Crowley’s Thoth Tarot* (Boston, MA: Weiser Books, 2003), 47.

### **The Self-Mandala, Mana-Personality and the Process of Individuation**

In his work *Jung and the Post-Jungians*, Andrew Samuels identifies three “classifications” or schools of Jungian thought; the Classical School, the Developmental School, and the Archetypal School.<sup>168</sup> The following examination of what we are labelling the “self-mandala”<sup>169</sup> falls under the aegis of the Classical School with influences from the Archetypal School.

Samuels states that within the Classical School “the integrating and individuating self would be most important, other archetypal imagery and potentials would come close behind and the early experience of the individual would be seen as of somewhat lesser importance.”<sup>170</sup> In a clinical application the Classical School emphasises symbolic experiences of the self followed by an examination of “highly differentiated imagery” and ending with the analysis of transference-countertransference (Samuels indicates that he is not sure whether or not the latter two are reversed in relation to importance following the search for the self).<sup>171</sup>

The theory of the Archetypal School, on the other hand, would “consider archetypal imagery first, the self second, and development would receive less emphasis” while the clinical application would reveal that “particularised imagery would be

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<sup>168</sup> Andrew Samuels, *Jung and the Post-Jungians* (London, UK: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1994), 15.

<sup>169</sup> In *A Garden of Pomegranates* Israel Regardie equates what we are referring to as the “self-mandala” with the Kabbalistic concept of *Ruach* or intellect. Regardie, following standard Kabbalistic doctrine, equates *Hesed* with Memory, *Geburah* with Will, *Tiferet* with Imagination, *Netzach* with Desire, and *Hod* with Reason. Regardie, *A Garden of Pomegranates*, 101. Nevel Drury refers to these *sefirot* as being part of a *mandala* in Nevel Drury, *Echoes from the Void: Writings on Magic, Visionary Art and the New Consciousness* (GB: Prism Press, 1994), 63.

<sup>170</sup> Samuels, *Jung and the Post-Jungians*, 15.

<sup>171</sup> Samuels, *Jung and the Post-Jungians*, 16.

regarded as more useful than symbolic experiences of the self and both would be more central than transference-countertransference.”<sup>172</sup>

The self-mandala, if viewed independently from the remainder of the Tree (i.e., the Supernal Abyss and the Supernal Triad), can be seen as participating in the Classical School of thought. There is an obvious emphasis on the importance of the self and, by extension, the process of individuation. The self-mandala, with *Tiferet* as the focal point, holds a central position on the Tree. This would translate into analytical psychological terms as the self being the central organising archetype in the psyche. However, there is another way to view the Tree and the self-mandala.

Rather than submitting that the self-mandala or even that the self (i.e., *Tiferet*) is the central archetype in the psyche, we can also see that each of the *sefirot* are interconnected. The *sefirot* of the Western Esoteric Tree of Life are simultaneously unique monads of experience (independent and defined) and an interconnected tapestry of psychic convergence wherein no one *sefira* holds a privileged position. Each *sefira* contributes to the overall structure of the Tree and the psyche. This egalitarian or even polytheistic view of the psyche follows the Archetypal School and refrains from placing the centrality of the psyche solely with the self and the teleological focus it brings to psychological development but avoids the limiting tendency of some Archetypal psychologists, such as James Hillman, to denigrate or deny the balancing concept of the self.

David Tacey succinctly summarises Hillman’s view of the self in his paper “Twisting and turning with James Hillman.” Tacey states that Hillman “found all this talk of balance, integration and wholeness intellectually unfashionable. Not just Hillman,

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<sup>172</sup> Samuels, *Jung and the Post-Jungians*, 16.

but our entire age, is now virtually ‘allergic’ to the idea of wholeness and balance, reading any attempt at unity as an undesirable ‘imposition’ of order.”<sup>173</sup> Tacey gives significant counsel with regards to dealing with this allergy to wholeness which equally applies to the notion of the self and *Tiferet*. He suggests that:

it is time that ‘unity’ and ‘balance’ stopped receiving such bad press, and that we get over our phobic response to wholeness .... We still live under the shadow of ‘bad unities’ (Christendom, Facism, Communism), and this continues to block our pathway to the *new unities* that might want to emerge in society and the psyche alike....The continuing value of Jung’s Self, that ‘umbrella’ archetype which brings warring elements into dialogue and relationship, may not be in its bad currency in intellectual society, but in its *efficacy* in psychic and public life. The fact is we do need very large concepts, ideas or deities to deal with the primal opposites such as inner and outer, masculine and feminine, which threaten to tear us apart if we side with one at the expense of the other.<sup>174</sup>

The self, that “umbrella” archetype of balance and unity is represented in our interpretation of the Western Esoteric Tree of Life in a central capacity but one that owes its existence and energy to the remainder of the *sefirot*.

*Tiferet* appears to be far removed from the ego-complex symbolised by *Malkut*. Patterns of archetypal images found on the left and right pillars pull in opposite directions and can sweep the ego-complex along with them. The Middle Pillar mediates and balances the Pillar of Severity and the Pillar of Mercy. It also brings together

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<sup>173</sup> David Tacey, “Twisting and turning with James Hillman” in Ann Casement, ed. *Post-Jungians Today: Key Papers in Contemporary Analytical Psychology* (New York, NY: Routledge, 1998), 231.

<sup>174</sup> Tacey, “Twisting and turning with James Hillman”, 232. Emphasis is in the original text.

consciousness and the unconscious. The Middle Pillar, up to and including *Tiferet*, can be seen as representing what Edinger termed the “ego-self axis.”<sup>175</sup>

Edinger defines the ego-self axis as the “vital connection between ego and Self that must be relatively intact if the ego is going to survive stress and grow. This axis is the gateway or path of communication between the conscious personality and the archetypal psyche.”<sup>176</sup> This communication would translate as the connection between *Malkut* and *Tiferet* (*Tiferet* here includes the surrounding *sefirot* of the self-mandala). The relationship between the ego and self is a difficult though essential one for psychological maturation.

Edinger states, following Jung’s standard placement of the self as the central archetype in the psyche, that since “the Self is the central archetype it subordinates all other archetypal dominants. It surrounds and contains them. All problems of alienation, whether alienation between ego and parent figures, between ego and shadow, or between ego and anima (or animus), are thus alienation between ego and Self.”<sup>177</sup>

The Middle Pillar draws in all other *sefirot* and focuses them at *Tiferet* or the self. Knowing that the Tree is a malleable symbol we need not acquiesce to the claim that the self is *the* central archetype of the psyche. However, we can say that there is a *sefira* or *middoth* or quality of the unconscious that “contains” or resonates with the attributes of what Jung labelled the self. This *sefira* or quality of the unconscious can have a unique and transformative relation with the ego-complex, especially as reflected in the process of psychological and initiatory growth. Due to this intimate connection between the ego-

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<sup>175</sup> Although Edinger popularised and refined the term it was Eric Neumann who initially employed it. Samuels, *Jung and the Post-Jungians*, 116. See Neumann “The Significance of the Genetic Aspect for Analytical Psychology” in *Journal of Analytical Psychology*, 4:2, 1959, 125-138.

<sup>176</sup> Edinger, *Ego and Archetype*, 38.

<sup>177</sup> Edinger, *Ego and Archetype*, 38-39.

complex (*Malkut*) and the self (*Tiferet*), the self can have an overwhelming effect on consciousness. This effect would place the archetypal pattern of the self in a perceived position of centrality. From an Esoteric perspective the numinous quality of the ego-self axis can be easily translated to the relation between the Esotericist and his or her Holy Guardian Angel.

Following the cosmology of the Western Esoteric Tradition we could state that there is a feeling of alienation between the Esotericist and his or her Angel that prompts the Esotericist to begin the Great Work, though he or she may not know this to be the reason at the time. The longing for union with the “other” portion of oneself takes on a fervent form of veneration. The separation, or rather perceived separation, between oneself and one’s Holy Guardian Angel is the cause of existential angst. Separation from one’s Angel is symbolic of the perspective of the separation from all things whatsoever. The root of this alienation is found in the perception of separation between oneself (ego-complex) and the Holy Guardian Angel (represented psychologically by the self). Yet union with the Holy Guardian Angel is not without potential problems, not the least of which is inflation and the appearance of what Jung termed the “mana-personality.”

Jung presents his notion of “mana-personality” in *CW 7*.<sup>178</sup> Mana is a Melanesian word which refers to the numinous or magical power of spirits, gods or sacred artefacts. In Jung’s usage the term mana-personality refers to the effect of assimilating undifferentiated or autonomous unconscious contents such as the anima/animus. Once the anima, for example, is differentiated from the collective unconscious the mana-personality can surface.

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<sup>178</sup> Jung, “The Relations Between the Ego and the Unconscious”, *CW 7*, pars. 374-406.

The mana previously held by the anima becomes absorbed by the ego, or so it first seems to the individual who experiences it. In actuality while the ego becomes a mana-personality the fact remains that “the mana-personality is a dominant of the collective unconscious, the well known archetype of the mighty man in the form of a hero, chief, magician, medicine-man, saint, the ruler of men and spirits, the friend of God.”<sup>179</sup> Given the magnitude of this archetype and its roots in the collective unconscious, it soon becomes clear that the ego is not, in fact, the owner of the newly liberated mana.

The aforementioned figures represent a risk to the conscious ego; they can inflate the conscious mind and “can destroy everything that was gained by coming to terms with the anima.”<sup>180</sup> As long as the ego believes that it possesses the power of the unconscious it falls prey to the effects of inflation. Not the self aggrandising feelings of self importance mentioned above but inflation brought about through the direct influence of the collective unconscious. The ego did not conquer the anima and it pilfered something that did not belong to it. Just as the undifferentiated anima, as the classic contra-sexual archetype in a man’s psyche, could wield autonomous power over the conscious ego related around issues of “femininity”, the newly appearing male figures hold similar and equally disconcerting power:

All that has happened is a new adulteration, this time with a figure of the same sex corresponding to the father-*imago*, and possessed of even greater power... Thus he becomes a superman, superior to all powers, a demigod at the very least. “I and the Father are one”—this mighty avowal in all its awful ambiguity is born of just such a psychological moment.<sup>181</sup>

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<sup>179</sup> Jung, “The Relations Between the Ego and the Unconscious”, *CW* 7, par. 377. According to Jung these images apply to the psyche of a man. A woman would have the corresponding images of the Great Mother, par. 379.

<sup>180</sup> Jung, “The Relations Between the Ego and the Unconscious”, *CW* 7, par. 378.

<sup>181</sup> Jung, “The Relations Between the Ego and the Unconscious”, *CW* 7, par. 380.

This natural occurrence<sup>182</sup> (we should not assume that this occurrence, so long as it is transitory, is in some way negative or harmful—as Moore is cited above, he prefers to deal with inflated people who “feel alive and important”) quickly becomes overwhelming for the ego and “if it has but a spark of self-knowledge, can only draw back and rapidly drop all pretence of power and importance.”<sup>183</sup> Jung gives a brief review of the delusion that occurred between anima and ego:

The conscious mind has not become master of the unconscious, and the anima has forfeited her tyrannical power only to the extent that the ego was able to come to terms with the unconscious. This accommodation, however, was not a victory of the conscious over the unconscious, but the establishment of a balance of power between two worlds.<sup>184</sup>

The sole reason there existed imbalance in the first place was that the ego “dreamed of victory over the anima.”<sup>185</sup> There are exceptions to this delusion though.

If the ego remains strong and able to integrate unconscious material while differentiating itself from it one would have “the steadfastness of a superman of the sublimity of a perfect sage. Both figures are ideal images: Napoleon on the one hand, Lao-tzu on the other.”<sup>186</sup> Few of us can claim such heightened attainment and the best we can strive for is an ego which remains in a balanced state with the unconscious. Once the ego is differentiated from the mana-personality archetype it is then necessary to bring its specific traits to consciousness, one must realise the archetype’s distinct and individual application. Jung indicates that for a man this is the “second and real liberation from the father, and, for the woman, liberation from the mother, and with it

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<sup>182</sup> Jung, “The Relations Between the Ego and the Unconscious”, *CW 7*, par. 389.

<sup>183</sup> Jung, “The Relations Between the Ego and the Unconscious”, *CW 7*, par. 381.

<sup>184</sup> Jung, “The Relations Between the Ego and the Unconscious”, *CW 7*, par. 381.

<sup>185</sup> Jung, “The Relations Between the Ego and the Unconscious”, *CW 7*, par. 381.

<sup>186</sup> Jung, “The Relations Between the Ego and the Unconscious”, *CW 7*, par. 388.

comes the first genuine sense of his or her true individuality”.<sup>187</sup> The liberation from the mana-personality also has implications for various religious traditions, especially the monotheistic traditions.

It is possible, according to Jung, to project the psychic experience of the mana-personality “as an extra mundane ‘Father in Heaven,’ complete with the attribute of absoluteness—something many people seem very prone to do.”<sup>188</sup> This elevation of the unconscious to the *summum bonum* can have the detrimental effect of generating, in psychological terms, an equally devilish figure to compensate. Jung finds neither option desirable. With the projection of the mana-personality comes the projection of individual values and non-values into both God and Devil which in turn influences the human condition. Jung calls for a respectful attitude, not worship, toward the collective unconscious, in the same manner as we follow the laws of our society, that which is naturally more encompassing than our individual perspectives. Now that a truce has been called between ego and anima, the question of the fate of the anima’s mana still remains.

Neither consciousness nor the unconscious can claim the mana yet it must go somewhere. Jung looked to the universal understanding of the self. This summary from *CW 7* presents a wonderful narrative of the course of the psychic mana:

Thus the dissolution of the mana-personality through the conscious assimilation of its contents leads us, by a natural route, back to ourselves as an actual, living something, poised between two world-pictures and their darkly discerned potencies. This “something” is strange to us and yet so near, wholly ourselves and yet unknowable, a virtual centre of so mysterious a constitution that it can claim anything—kinship with beasts and gods, with crystals and with stars—without moving us to wonder, without

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<sup>187</sup> Jung, “The Relations Between the Ego and the Unconscious”, *CW 7*, par.392.

<sup>188</sup> Jung, “The Relations Between the Ego and the Unconscious”, *CW 7*, par.394.

even exciting our disapprobation. This “something” claims all that and more, and having nothing in our hands that could fairly be opposed to these claims, it is surely wiser to listen to this voice....I have called this centre the *self*.<sup>189</sup>

The self, as a unique archetype within the unconscious and separate from the ego:

could be characterized as a kind of compensation of the conflict between inside and outside. This formulation would not be unfitting, since the self has somewhat the character of a result, of a goal attained, something that has come to pass very gradually and is experienced with much travail...our life’s goal, for it is the completest expression of that fateful combination we call individuality, the full flowering not only of the single individual, but of the group, in which each adds his portion to the whole.<sup>190</sup>

The self, the “God within us”<sup>191</sup> is a superb representation of what the Esotericists call the Holy Guardian Angel, the process and result known as “Knowledge and Conversation of the Holy Guardian Angel” and those correspondences that they attribute to the *sefira Tiferet*.

However it is not solely *Tiferet* that participates in the ego-self axis. Each of the *sefirot* below the Supernal Abyss is in some way connected to the self. The three pillars of the Western Esoteric Tree of Life represent possible personal perspectives from within one’s psyche. Each *sefirot* is archetypal and significant, though the central *sefira*, *Tiferet* marks a significant initiatory experience within the Western Esoteric Tradition as well as the Tree of Life.

The Western Esoteric Tradition uses various practices such as ritual, meditation, divination, and visualisation, in tandem or independently, in order to explore various levels of consciousness or parts of the psyche. Symbolic and metaphorical images are

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<sup>189</sup> Jung, “The Relations Between the Ego and the Unconscious”, *CW* 7, par. 398-399.

<sup>190</sup> Jung, “The Relations Between the Ego and the Unconscious”, *CW* 7, par. 404.

<sup>191</sup> Jung, “The Relations Between the Ego and the Unconscious”, *CW* 7, par. 399.

often consciously employed in order to direct or guide the individual's practice. As mentioned in Chapter One, tools like Tarot can be used to engage in the practice of pathworking along the Western Esoteric Tree of Life.

By becoming familiar with the standard or traditional meanings of the *sefirot* and paths of the Tree of Life the individual begins to develop a vocabulary of symbols and images. Over time this metaphorical material, which has been developed over centuries in an attempt to describe the abstract nature of reality, becomes familiar both on a conscious level, through the repeated training and initiation and on an unconscious level through the use of dream and fantasy material. If the unconscious does actually have the drive to become conscious in consciousness, then providing the unconscious with a highly symbolic and loosely structured model through which the psyche can communicate should aid in the process of bringing unconscious material into consciousness.

The work of individuation, as understood by Jung, would occur within the realm of the lower seven *sefirot* of the Western Esoteric Tree of Life. From *Malkut* we must come to understand that there is more to "reality" than simply what is outside of our windows. There is a psychic world that can betray our most adamant volition if we do not enter into rapport with it. If we do not learn to speak the language of metaphor and learn its terrain we have little chance of interacting with the unconscious in a meaningful and healthy way. Once this understanding is reached the first step is an Abyss that marks a psychological point of no return. Once the shadow is experienced and its influence observed that knowledge cannot be undone. The shadow Abyss marks the first step into a wider and deeper perspective of the unconscious.

Once the realm of metaphor has been entered there lies a dynamic and potentially chaotic multitude of archetypal images and symbols. The *sefirot* help to mould this chaos of symbols into images that parallel traditional stages of psychological and spiritual maturation. While the *sefirot* and an analytical psychological interpretation of the Western Esoteric Tree of Life conform to most of Jung's model of the psyche and individuation, there is less emphasis on rigid gender structures and *a priori* centrality of the self. While the self (*Tiferet*) does function to organise and mediate the realms of consciousness and the unconscious it too, including the *sefirot* of the self-mandala, is but one step along the long path of individuation.

### **The Abyss, *Da'at*, and Choronzon.**

From a clinical perspective the theories and models of analytical psychology are applied to help individuals understand their psychological dispositions and to take steps toward becoming psychologically whole, however that wholeness may be defined. Functioning in this world of potential malaise (both physiological and psychological) requires, from a Jungian perspective, a strong ego and an appreciation and respect for the reality of the collective unconscious. However, the Esotericist looks toward the Supernal Abyss with the same sense of necessity and urgency as the analyst views the integration of unconscious psychic material. Several questions arise from an analytical psychological interpretation of the Western Esoteric Tree of Life including what is beyond the self as symbolised by *Tiferet* and what is the role of the second Abyss? What the Esotericist pushes for could be labelled, for our present purposes and in psychological terms, an ego/self-collective unconscious axis.

This term is used to imply a perspective wherein the integration of unconscious aspects of the psyche is taken in a specifically spiritual and non-dual mystical light. The development of the ego-self axis is presented by Jung as a natural part of individuation (more on this below); the ego/self-collective unconscious axis suggests that the individuation process includes an initiatory process of engaging with metaphors of a non-dual transpersonal nature. In other words, the ego/self-collective unconscious axis could be thought of as emphasising the self pole of Jung's ego-self axis but also incorporating states of non-dual transpersonal experience.

Analytical psychology implies the depths of the psyche have some meaning or value and therefore it is in order to realise a richer psychological life that the journey on the Tree is undertaken and ultimately, the journey is to be taken for its own sake.

The initiatory experience of the Supernal Abyss, the eventual dissolving of the subject/object dichotomy, would best reflect the deeper nature of the ego/self-collective unconscious axis. The question is, of course, how much of that axis can the ego-complex actually perceive or retain? Or how can the potentially enveloping tide of the collective unconscious be harnessed for use by the ego-self axis? Obviously in a thesis of this limited scope these questions cannot be assessed in a comprehensive manner. However, the following observations may aid in assessing some of these issues.

While the Western Esoteric Tradition has made use of various degrees or levels of initiation there are, in fact, only two primary goals. The first is the Knowledge and Conversation of the Holy Guardian Angel and the second is the crossing of the Supernal Abyss. We have previously equated the Holy Guardian Angel with Jung's understanding of the self through the *sefira Tiferet*. The *sefirot* below the Abyss represent the process

of individuation, however that process may occur in an individual's life. The Abyss and the pseudo-*sefira* *Da'at* mark a more abstract diversion from Jung's standard model of psychological maturation.

Aleister Crowley is likely the most prolific Esoteric writer on the nature of the Abyss. Unfortunately, most of his writings that are concerned with the nature of the Abyss are couched in his own Thelemic cosmology making him in many respects the least useful *introductory* source to the Abyss. We will turn to Crowley's comprehension of the Abyss shortly but first we shall turn to his colleagues within the Esoteric Tradition.

Israel Regardie states that the *sefirot* of the Supernal Triad above the Abyss are *ideal*<sup>192</sup> while the remainder of the *sefirot* are *actual*. The Abyss is the metaphysical gap between them.<sup>193</sup> The Abyss is conceived of as a "barren desert of sand wherein die the thoughts and empirical egos of men, 'birth-strangled babes' as the expression goes."<sup>194</sup> The analogy of the Abyss being a desert is also amplified in Chapter 42, "Dust-Devils", of Crowley's *The Book of Lies*. This chapter was likely the inspiration of Regardie's reference:

In the Wind of the mind arises the turbulence  
 called I.  
 It breaks; down shower the barren thoughts.  
 All life is choked.  
 This desert is the Abyss wherin is the Universe.  
 The Stars are thistles in that waste.  
 Yet this desert is but one spot accursed in the world of

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<sup>192</sup> That is to say those *sefirot* above the Supernal Abyss are abstractions with the *potential* to manifest. *Kether* is taken to be the fourth Kabbalistic World, *Atzilut* and is also known as the Archetypal World or the Will of Deity (See Lon Milo DuQuette, *The Chicken Qabalah of Rabbi Lamed ben Clifford* (York Beach, ME: Weiser Books, 2001), 139; Dion Fortune, *The Mystical Qabalah* (York Beach, ME: Weiser Books, 2000), 22 for example. Both *Hokmah* and *Binah*, while not part of the Archetypal world (they comprise the third world *Briah*) form the purely abstract nature of *Kether* into the potential for actualisation. In this way the *sefirot* below the Supernal Abyss can be seen as archetypal images that provide form and detail.

<sup>193</sup> Regardie, *A Garden of Pomegranates*, 44.

<sup>194</sup> Regardie, *A Garden of Pomegranates*, 69.

bliss.  
 Now and again Travellers cross the desert; they come  
 from the Great Sea, and to the Great Sea they go.  
 As they go they spill water; one day they will irrigate  
 the desert, till it flower.  
 See! Five footprints of a Camel! V.V.V.V.V.<sup>195</sup>

As with the majority of the short chapters within *The Book of Lies* there are many Kabbalistic concepts and subtleties buried within the text. The Great Sea is the Great Mother *Binah*, the first *sefira* beyond the Abyss. While Crowley, as V.V.V.V.V., claims to have crossed the Abyss what is interesting is that each person who attempts to cross the desert adds to the good of the whole. From an analytical psychological context, each person who delves deeper into the Tree of Life and the unconscious does so not only for their own well-being but the well being of humanity as a whole.

On the surface it would appear that by Regardie's reckoning the Supernal Abyss indicates the destruction of the ego-complex. Coming from a background which involved a fair bit of psychology, it seems rather unlikely that he would be advocating the destruction of the ego-complex. The actual intent is summarised by Regardie as follows:

What is actually being destroyed is simply the unconscious illusion of the separate self and the restrictions which that illusion formerly imposed upon the blazing star or monad within. It is but the shifting of the Point-of-View from that which has no *real* life of its own to a new and nobler centre of reintegration which is vital, real, and eternal.<sup>196</sup>

Rather than destroying the ego-complex the Abyss represents a radical change in perception and perspective. It is a shift in focus from the individual and his or her subjective constructs to a perspective of inclusiveness and interconnectedness.

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<sup>195</sup> Aleister Crowley, *The Book of Lies*, 6<sup>th</sup> ed. (York Beach, Maine: Samuel Weiser, Inc., 1989), 94.

<sup>196</sup> Regardie, *A Garden of Pomegranates*, 162.

William Gray refers to the Abyss as a Chasm of Consciousness. He indicates that to cross the “Great Abyss” is to symbolically die:

We must be prepared to ‘die’, or part from our own existing formulations of ideas which bind us to materialized beliefs, so that we may follow the path of pure power straight to its spiritual source beyond the confines of consciousness from which we would emerge into fresh fields of illumination.<sup>197</sup>

Gray sees that there is a limit to what words or dogmatic beliefs can accomplish and that when that limit is reached one must be prepared to leave it behind. He states that when “an idea is taken so far in words the ‘word-body’ can be sacrificed for ‘sculpture-body’ or ‘music-body’ or ‘mathematical-body’ the ‘Soul’ is along the same idea but the reincarnation takes various forms.”<sup>198</sup> The death of the ‘word-body’, the body of description and mental analysis, makes it possible for the underlying meaning to surface in a myriad of other manifestations.

There is an impression of conversion and transformation in Gray’s conception of the Abyss but that “turn around” while drastic, does not guarantee a lofty spiritual status.<sup>199</sup> Gray informs us that such “a drastic change, however, is not ‘instant evolution.’ We may become *different* beings from an expressional stand point, but we do not become immediately better or more highly evolved souls just because we have crossed into other conditions of consciousness.”<sup>200</sup>

Dion Fortune also adds some important details to the nature of the Abyss. Fortune observes that the Abyss marks the boundary between the *Microprosopos* of the

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<sup>197</sup> William Gray, *Inner Traditions of Magic* (York Beach, ME: Samuel Weiser, Inc., 1984), 110.

<sup>198</sup> William Gray, *Inner Traditions of Magic*, 110.

<sup>199</sup> It would seem from Gray’s writing that he uses the term “conversion” in a similar sense as William James. See William James, *The Varieties of Religious Experience* (New York: Penguin Books, Inc., 1985), 189-258.

<sup>200</sup> Gray, *Inner Traditions of Magic*, 111.

individual and the *Macroprosopos*. She indicates that *Da'at*, the “Invisible Sefirah” situated in the Abyss, can be interpreted as “Perception, Apprehension, Consciousness.”<sup>201</sup> Gareth Knight indicates that the Abyss is the void between force and form. Knight also equates the experience of the Abyss with the Dark Night of the Soul and the experience of existential desolation.<sup>202</sup> Knight states that *Da'at*:

is the highest point of awareness of the human soul regarded as a soul (or in other terminologies Higher Self, Evolutionary Self, etc.) for awareness of the supernal levels can only be possible to the Spirit or Divine Spark itself. It is the gateway to what is called Nirvana in the East, and thus represents the point where a soul has reached the full stature of his evolutionary development. . .<sup>203</sup>

Though Knight’s approach to Kabbalah is influenced by Christian mysticism, as seen in the reference to St. John of the Cross, his use of Buddhist concepts such as *Nirvāna* (*Nibbāna*) is related to how Crowley defines the Abyss.

Crowley was equally interested in employing terms of Eastern philosophy and religion and those of Western culture so it is not surprising that he uses concepts from both traditions in describing his understanding of the Abyss. Knight’s definition of the Abyss as the Dark Night of the Soul could be seen as reflecting the intrinsic Christian dichotomy and separation of matter and spirit, heaven and earth, or humanity and divinity. The perception of the separation of these factors leads to desolation and darkness. However, when approached from the perspective of Buddhist doctrines, doctrines that had an important influence on Crowley, the focus is not so much on metaphysical dichotomies as changing mental processes in order to realise that the perceived separation is illusory.

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<sup>201</sup> Fortune, *The Mystical Qabalah*, 150.

<sup>202</sup> Knight, *Practical Guide to Qabalistic Symbolism*, v. I, 32 and v. II, 146.

<sup>203</sup> Knight, *Practical Guide to Qabalistic Symbolism*, v. I, 102.

In *Magick* Crowley states: “**For to each individual thing Attainment means first and foremost the destruction of individuality.**”<sup>204</sup> By individuality Crowley is here referring to personal, egoic, subjective perspective. In Crowley’s view the Abyss is entirely concerned with personal mental perspective and psychological processes. He states that any idea that is in itself:

positive and negative, active and passive, male and female, is fit to exist above the Abyss; any idea not so equilibrated is below the Abyss, contains in itself an unmitigated duality or falsehood, and is to that extent qliphotic and dangerous.<sup>205</sup>

The Adept must strive to equalise and negate thoughts so as to avoid giving predominance to one thought over another.

According to Crowley there are two factors involved in passing through the Abyss. The first is the attraction of the *sefira Binah*. *Binah* compels the Adept to take the Oath of the Abyss and attempt to cross it. We could interpret this compulsion present in *Binah* as the *ideal* or potential of the drive for the unconscious to become conscious that is first actualised and experienced in *Tiferet* and finally manifesting through *Yesod* into *Malkut*. “Love is the motive power which makes the Adeptus Exemptus take the plunge into the Abyss.”<sup>206</sup> Crowley’s use of the term “Love” usually denotes an impersonal union of opposites or the merging of subject and object, not an emotional state or response. *Binah*, in this scenario, draws the Adept toward the non-dual melding

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<sup>204</sup> Crowley, *Magick/Liber Aba*, 79. Emphasis is in original.

<sup>205</sup> Crowley, *Magick/Liber Aba*, 182. We should note that Crowley’s use of Kabbalistic terms such as “qliphotic” do not correspond to classical Jewish Kabbalah. However, this fact is not lost on Crowley and he did emphasise that while one could learn the “general principles of exegesis, and the main doctrines” of Kabbalah “each man must select for himself the materials for the main structure of his system.” (Crowley, *Magick/Liber Aba*, 252 &n). Again, Western Esoteric Kabbalah is not classical Jewish Kabbalah.

<sup>206</sup> Aleister Crowley, *The Vision and the Voice with Commentaries and Other Papers* (York Beach, ME: Samuel Weiser, Inc., 1998), 68 n.7.

of subject and object. The Adept wilfully heeds that pull and makes what amounts to a leap of faith.

The second factor that needs to be addressed in crossing the Abyss is the *karma* of the Adept. The term *karma* is generally misunderstood or simplified in popular culture. There seems to be a trend to interpret *karma*, which means “deed” or “action,” from a purely physical perspective.<sup>207</sup> In other words, *karma* is relegated solely to physical acts. For example, if someone were to harm another individual the popular understanding of *karma* would have us believe that his or her *action* has *karmic* consequences. His or her actions would then lead to a reciprocation of those actions upon themselves in some form at a later time.

While *karma* does refer to physical actions it also refers to actions of a more subtle nature. *Karma* also, and more importantly, refers to *mental* actions or deeds.<sup>208</sup> More unsettling than harming someone are the mental processes that led to the action. If an individual harms another there is not some ethereal court waiting to exact justice on the perpetrator. Rather, the mental patterns he or she has laid in the past contributed to them inflicting that harm. These patterns and the corresponding actions make it more likely that the habitual violence will continue and will eventually envelope the individual in a similar fashion. Those who assume that *karma* refers only to physical actions are missing a vital key to what Crowley is attempting to communicate.

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<sup>207</sup> The following is an example, taken from a popular book on Witchcraft (Wicca), of this emphasis on the *physical* definition of the term: “The simplest way to look at karma is as a kind of spiritual bank-balance of one’s good and evil *deeds*, and of the results of one’s wisdom and stupidity, over the totality of one’s life.” Janet and Stewart Farrar, *The Witches’ Way: Principles, Rituals and Beliefs of Modern Witchcraft*, 5<sup>th</sup> ed. (London: Robert Hale Ltd., 1990), 121. Emphasis added.

<sup>208</sup> The following, given in Schumann’s text discussing *karma*, is from the Buddhist text *Anguttaranikāya*: “I teach action...as well as non-action...I teach non-performance of bad deeds with body...speech and thought...” Cited in: Hans Wolfgang Schumann, *Buddhism: An Outline of its Teachings and Schools*, 3<sup>rd</sup> ed. (Wheaton, Ill: Theosophical Publishing House, 1989), 53. We see that deed is taken to mean action, speech and thought.

Crowley indicates that the Hindu tradition would equate the crossing of the Abyss with “*Shivadarshana*.” *Śivadarśana* can be taken as a state of consciousness wherein all thoughts and mental differentiation is transcended.<sup>209</sup> According to Crowley this experience is an isolated and transitory experience and is therefore not actually equivalent to the crossing of the Abyss. For Crowley crossing the Abyss “is a permanent and fundamental revolution in the whole of one’s being.”<sup>210</sup> It is on this point that we must deviate from Crowley. The Abyss experience, like that of one’s initial experience of the shadow, is momentous and it may have a lasting impact on one’s psyche. However, as shadow work and the work of individuation is never finished and must be perpetually tended to, so it is, we may postulate, with the experience of the Western Esoteric Tree of Life. We cannot assume, from an analytical psychological perspective that the difficulties and problems symbolised by the Abyss, and we should remember that the Abyss is a symbol and metaphor not an actual “place”, can be forgotten once the initial experience has been encountered. It is not a one-off experience but one that we could and likely would return to time and time again.

From the perspective of an analytical psychological interpretation of the Tree of Life, *Binah*, as part of the Supernal Triad representing the transpersonal collective unconscious, draws the individual into deeper investigations of the collective unconscious. The *karma* or mental tendencies of the individual will dictate the result and nature of the crossing of the Abyss. Should the individual be unprepared to leave behind entrenched views of creed, imposed social, professional or familiar personas, or the

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<sup>209</sup> Crowley, *Magick/Liber Aba*, 713.

<sup>210</sup> Aleister Crowley, *Magick Without Tears* (Tempe, AZ: New Falcon, 1994), 112.

illusory separation of subject and object, then that individual will have a difficult time with the “denizen of the Abyss”, Choronzon.

Crowley personified the chaos of the Abyss with a demon taken from the writings of the Elizabethan astrologer, spy, and diplomat, John Dee (1527-1608). However, Choronzon should not be taken to represent an actual being. Crowley emphasises that:

The name of the Dweller in the Abyss is Choronzon, but he is not really an individual. The Abyss is empty of being; it is filled with all possible forms, each equally inane, each therefore evil in the only true sense of the word—that is, meaningless but malignant, insofar as it craves to become real. These forms swirl senselessly into haphazard heaps like dust devils, and each such chance aggregation asserts itself to be an individual, and shrieks “I am I!” though aware all the time that its elements have no true bond; so that the slightest disturbance dissipates the delusion just as a horseman, meeting a dust devil, brings it in showers of sand to the earth.<sup>211</sup>

The confrontation with Choronzon is nothing less than the metaphorical confrontation with the pure potential of our mind’s need to analyse, label, relate and define. *Da’at* represents the height of human intellect and knowledge at the highest level of human understanding. Yet it is personified, at least by Crowley, as a demon thus reflecting a darker or shadow side. On an individual level Choronzon represents the boundary of our personal perceptions of the “objective” world of form and the “subjective” world of the psyche.

Earlier we noted that Lon Milo DuQuette equated *Hesed* with the demiurge. *Hesed* applies the initial form to the potentiality found with *Da’at*, a process which continues with even greater structure in *Geburah*. The demiurge possesses the ability to create, to differentiate and to give form to mental stimulus that allows us to experience and appreciate such things as art, music, poetry, and various other examples of human

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<sup>211</sup> Crowley, *The Vision and the Voice*, 24.

creativity on a personal level. However, the movement to *Geburah* and down to *Hod*, can also take that ability to differentiate and mould it into rigid structures that can begin to destroy the initial experience by altering it and forcing it to conform to imposed mental tendencies. The demiurge can function in either context depending on the perspective of the individual at that moment. The Abyss is a breaking down of the mental truths, labels and constructs we perpetuate. It could be said that it is in some respects the inspiration of the postmodern perspective.<sup>212</sup> If we can identify and acknowledge the structure we can begin to break it down into to smaller aggregates thereby opening new avenues of investigation and meaning rather than being a passive participant in imposed meaning and structure.

If we look at how the Abyss functions on an individual level we see, as William Gray stated, that it insists on the death of “our own existing formulations of ideas which bind us to materialized beliefs.” Only through the shedding of the need, or perhaps the term *compulsion* is more illustrative, for defining and confining reality to the personal, subjective experience can the source of the experience, the unconscious, hope to express itself. Following the Hermetic axiom what is below (the individual) is like that which is above (the unified collective) we must also reflect on what the Abyss signifies on a larger scale.

We can see the Abyss as the boundary between personal and transpersonal, non-dual experience. Obviously when discussing the concept of transpersonal experience we are placing a value on that particular form of consciousness. Authors such as Jung,<sup>213</sup>

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<sup>212</sup> I am grateful to my advisor, Dr. Roderick Main for initially making this observation.

<sup>213</sup> For Jung transpersonal is equivalent with the collective unconscious (Jung, “On the Psychology of the Unconscious”, *CW* 7, par. 150) but a collective unconscious that reaches back to our animal ancestry (Jung, “On the Psychology of the Unconscious”, *CW* 7, par. 159).

posit that the transpersonal experience is more desirable than a limited ego-centric perspective even though there may be varying definitions of what “transpersonal” implies. By taking the step into the Abyss one metaphorically acknowledges the necessity of leaving behind the boundaries that were developed over years of social, psychological and spiritual conditioning and training.

A view similar to the Abyss is also posited by Jung in relation to the gulf between consciousness and the unconscious. In “Transformation Symbolism in the Mass”, Jung expresses concern with the cost humans have paid for the establishment consciousness and *Logos* at the detriment of instinct and “a loss of reality to the degree the he remains in primitive dependence on mere words.”<sup>214</sup> For Jung an over emphasis on consciousness or rupture of the link with the unconscious, as reflected in our dependency on words as signifiers which we take to *be* the object, can have adverse consequences. Further in “Transformation Symbolism in the Mass” Jung states that:

This rupture of the link with the unconscious and our submission to the tyranny of words have one great disadvantage: the conscious mind becomes more and more the victim of its own discriminating activity, the picture we have of the world gets broken down into countless particulars, and the original feeling of unity, which was integrally connected with the unity of the unconscious psyche, is lost.<sup>215</sup>

The more words and concepts are employed, and even more dangerous *believed* or literalised, the further one is isolated from the collective unconscious. This dichotomous situation is evident throughout both our own psychic world and the world “outside” of it.

Again Jung reflects on the ramifications of an overemphasis on the intellect:

And just as the intellect subjugated the psyche [in relation to the development of Christian doctrine], so also it subjugated Nature

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<sup>214</sup> Jung, “Transformation Symbolism in the Mass”, *CW 11*, par. 442.

<sup>215</sup> Jung, “Transformation Symbolism in the Mass”, *CW 11*, par. 443.

and begat her an age of scientific technology that left less and less room for the natural and irrational man. Thus the foundations were laid for an inner opposition which today threatens the world with chaos.<sup>216</sup>

The concern regarding an overemphasis on rationality is an important part of Jung's thought and can be seen as equally part of Crowley's conceptualisation of the Supernal Abyss as representative of the mind's capability and capacity to analyse and define, though in a hyperactive manner. We could say that it is a hyperactive state of defining through the use of concepts and words where the individual takes literally their *personal* relationship with metaphor.<sup>217</sup> If the collective unconscious is drowned out by the ceaselessly turning conscious mind the result, at least in the thought of Jung and some individuals within the Western Esoteric Tradition, is separation from an important part of the human psyche.

Jung's understanding of individuation requires that the individual delve into the recesses of their unconsciousness and confront and strive to understand what is uncovered. This process will inevitably lead the individual to see that we all share a common link and that link is our connection to the collective unconscious. However, Jung's view still emphasises the *personal* experience of the unconscious; Jung did not, nor should he have been expected to, challenge the necessity of the ego or personal consciousness. He did emphasise limiting the ego's inflated perspective as centre of the psyche but the personal perspective was not seen as a hurdle in individuation. The

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<sup>216</sup> Jung, "Transformation Symbolism in the Mass", *CW 11*, par. 444.

<sup>217</sup> For Nietzsche, metaphors become problematic if they are taken literally or if we lose sight of the metaphorical origins of our concepts thus imbuing them with independence and causal value that they did not originally possess. In other words, Hinman tells us, "[o]ur metaphors thereby acquire an independence and power insofar as they are no longer taken as metaphors but rather as the measure of reality itself; in becoming dead metaphors, they come to rule us. 'A language,' as one recent writer on metaphor has suggested, 'is nothing but a necropolis of dead metaphors.'" Lawrence M Hinman, "Nietzsche, Metaphor, and Truth" in *Philosophy and Phenomenology Research*, Vol. 43, No. 2, Dec., 1982.

Western Esoteric Tree of Life requires that the personal perspective should be challenged for further psychological and spiritual growth. The individual perspective is only evident through the interplay of the *sefirot* below the Abyss. What lies beyond the Abyss emphasises non-dualism and is divergent from the individual perspective. In the Western Esoteric Tradition all things, including one's Holy Guardian Angel—a metaphor of the best an individual can hope to be, must be abandoned upon entering the Abyss. Even an enlightened perspective from *Tiferet* is composed of the perspective of "I" and is deconstructed and left in the Desert on the way to the Great Sea.

## **Chapter Five**

### **The Supernal Triad and Transpersonal Theories**

When we reviewed the nature of the *sefirot* in early Jewish Kabbalah, in Chapter One, we saw that the lower seven *sefirot* received the most attention. The Golden Dawn and Esotericists such as Gareth Knight tell us that the grades beyond the Abyss are reserved for very few (if any) corporeal beings, whereas Crowley's more psychological approach insists that every person shatter the boundaries of their perceptions of personality and individual identity by attempting to attain the experience of the non-dual transpersonal Supernal Triad. Though the Supernal Triad may have different meanings in various traditions, if the Supernal Abyss is experienced by our conscious minds as a tumultuous whirlwind of thought, as with Crowley, then the Supernal Triad would represent a form of psychic primordial chaos in which our conscious minds could become enveloped and overwhelmed. However, to one trained and prepared for such chaos the transformation can be, at least according to some Esotericists, one of the most sublime experiences humanly possible.

This chapter explores the traditional correspondences of the remaining three *sefirot* of the Western Esoteric Tree of Life. Following this review we will turn to how transpersonal experiences fit within Jung's model of the psyche by analysing Jung's use of the *unus mundus* and his theory of synchronicity. We will also review how Jung himself may be viewed as a "detraditionalised mystic" as well as a scientist as indicated in an article by Leon Schlam. Before we begin an analysis of the Supernal Triad it would be advantageous for us to review what Jung had to say about the possibility of coming to know, consciously, the collective unconscious.

While the lower portion of the Tree of Life, at least in our current interpretation, is symbolic of the dialogue between personal consciousness (*Malkut*) and archetypal

images or symbols such as the self (*Tiferet*), the Supernal Abyss and the remainder of the Tree are more abstract in nature. When Jung spoke of the collective unconscious it was understood that there was no way for consciousness to *directly* experience this collective stratum of the psyche. Jung makes this point very clear in the Tavistock lectures:

Consciousness is like a surface or skin upon a vast unconscious area of unknown extent. We do not know how far the unconscious rules because we simply know nothing of it. You cannot say anything about a thing of which you know nothing....We have only indirect proofs that there is a mental space which is subliminal. We have some scientific justification for our conclusions that it exists.<sup>1</sup>

Rather than directly experiencing the collective unconscious we experience the archetypal symbols or metaphors of the collective unconscious. Jung's Kantian approach to knowledge as experience has important implications. Although we may not *directly* experience the unconscious as conceptualised by Jung without mediating symbols and metaphors, Nagy points out when reviewing Jung's use of Kant that "we must not be so full of pride as to limit our concept of reality to what is experienced as outer object."<sup>2</sup> The Western Esoteric Tradition and its use of the Tree of Life can be taken as an example of the "indirect proofs" mentioned by Jung in the above citation. That is to say the Esoteric Tree of Life, when approached from the perspective of analytical psychology, can be seen as a collection of symbols and metaphors of the collective unconscious and the process of individuation. The following interpretation of the *sefirot* of the Western Esoteric Tradition maintains this psychological and metaphorical perspective.

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<sup>1</sup> Jung, "The Tavistock Lectures", *CW 18*, par. 11.

<sup>2</sup> Marilyn Nagy, *Philosophical Issues in the Psychology of C.G. Jung* (Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 1991), 153.

### ***Binah*: Dark Mother, Light Mother and the Whore**

The emphasis on the separation of the final three *sefirot* of the Western Esoteric Tree of Life as presented in this thesis is somewhat contrived. It would be incorrect to assume that *Binah*, *Hokmah*, and *Kether* are somehow more important, vital or sacred than the lower *sefirot*. Each of the *sefirot* are equal in that they are derived from the same, singular source. For the Esotericists this source would be the Divine; for an analytical psychological interpretation of the Esoteric Tree of Life the source is the undifferentiated depths of the collective unconscious. Though not actually separate from the remainder of the *sefirot*, the Supernal Triad does mark a significant change in perspective, one that when compared to the consciousness of the lower *sefirot*, warrants unique treatment. On the one hand, the *sefirot* below the Supernal Abyss are transpersonal but there is a dualistic or theistic “I/thou” relationship between the practitioner and the specific *sefira*. On the other hand, the *sefirot* of the Supernal Triad reflect more of a non-dual transpersonal mode.

*Binah* was presented in Chapter One as an example of the types of correspondences commonly applied to the *sefirot*.<sup>3</sup> We shall now endeavour to unpack more of the nature of *Binah* and this *sefira*'s place within the Supernal Triad. First we shall look to Dion Fortune's and Gareth Knight's more traditional analysis of *Binah*. Following this, we shall briefly look at how Aleister Crowley describes *Binah* as the *Whore of Babalon* [sic]. The clandestine shadow of the Tree of Life again makes itself known through the overtly gender biased imagery of *Binah*, though Fortune is quick to point out that one should not think of the *sefirot* as personalities or places but as states of

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<sup>3</sup> Pages 67-70.

consciousness.<sup>4</sup> We should acknowledge this gender bias while we proceed with our analysis of *Binah*.

The titles of *Binah* reflect the dual nature of this *sefira*. *Binah* is known as: *Ama* (dark sterile mother), *Aima* (bright fertile mother), *Kursiya* (Throne [stability]), and *Marah* (The Great Sea [fluidity]). *Binah's* vision is the Vision of Sorrow and the virtue is Silence with the vice being Avarice. The symbols assigned to *Binah* are the *yonis*, *kteis*, *Vesica Piscis*, cup/chalice, and the Robe of Outer Concealment.<sup>5</sup>

As we can see from the metaphors of *Binah* this *sefira* represents “the female potency of the universe, even as Chokmah represents the male.”<sup>6</sup> The latter symbols listed above each reflect some aspect of this female potency. We see the *yonis* and *kteis*, both references to the vagina as is the *Vesica Piscis*.<sup>7</sup> The elemental weapon or tool, the cup, is receptive in nature (as opposed to the projective knife/sword and wand<sup>8</sup>) as is the robe worn by the practitioner. The robe contains and envelops the practitioner and as Crowley states, the robe “**is that which conceals, and protects the Magician from the elements; it is the silence and secrecy with which he works, the hiding of himself in the occult life of Magick and Meditation.**”<sup>9</sup> There is an overtly womb-like nature to the robe. Each of these symbols reflects an aspect of how the Esotericists view *Binah*; however, perhaps more obviously than any of the *sefirot* “below” the Supernal Abyss, *Binah* is best defined in connection to the surrounding *sefirot*.

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<sup>4</sup> Dion Fortune, *The Mystical Qabalah* (Boston, MA: Weiser Books, 2000), 130-131.

<sup>5</sup> Fortune, *The Mystical Qabalah*, 129-130.

<sup>6</sup> Fortune, *The Mystical Qabalah*, 130.

<sup>7</sup> For more on the *vesica piscis* (fish bladder), also known as the “New Jerusalem” see Lon Milo DuQuette’s *Understanding Aleister Crowley’s Thoth Tarot* (Boston, MA: Weiser Books, 2003), 155-160.

<sup>8</sup> The ritual use of the chalice/cup and the wand/spear, as symbolic of male and female, can be found in Crowley’s Gnostic Mass (Crowley, *Magick/Liber Aba* (York Beach, ME: Samuel Weiser, Inc., 1997), 584-597 as well as the Wiccan ritual of the Great Rite (See: Janet and Stewart Farrar *A Witches Bible Complete* (New York: Magickal Child Publishing, Inc., 1984), 48-54)

<sup>9</sup> Crowley, *Magick/Liber Aba*, 106. Emphasis is Crowley’s.

*Kether* represents pure potential or potency that is transpersonal and non-dual possessing no structure or means of manifestation. *Hokmah* is still highly abstract but represents a stirring or activity of the energies of *Kether*, while *Binah* provides stability and focus to the primordial stirrings. *Binah* is both the “womb of manifestation”, as *Binah* gives rise to the potential for form, and it is consequently the constricting presence of death.<sup>10</sup> On the one hand, *Binah* represents the restriction of the potentiality of *Hokmah* and on the other hand “she” is the womb of manifestation and therefore she is also the gateway to finitude. It is this role of constriction/death that Fortune sees as underlying the equating of the feminine with negativity.

Fortune states that *Kether* is understood to be the ultimate good and the source of all things. The nature of *Kether*, being kinetic, flows to the dynamic *sefira Hokmah*. In this case *Hokmah* appears to support or amplify the essence of *Kether*. On the other hand we have *Binah*. Fortune puts forward this interesting theory which corresponds in many ways to Jung’s understanding of the “missing fourth” of the Trinity<sup>11</sup> in that it ties together the feminine, the natural world and the demonic. This “missing fourth” is the balancing factor necessary for the overly beneficent and intangible Christian Trinity. Here we find Fortune state:

Binah, the opposite of Chokmah, the perpetual opposer of the dynamic impulses, will be regarded as the enemy of God, the evil one. Saturn-Satan is an easy transition; and so is Time-Death-Devil. Implicit in the ascetic religions such as Christianity and Buddhism is the idea that woman is the root of all evil, because she is the influence which holds men to a life of form by their desires. Matter is regarded by them as the antinomy of spirit in an eternal, unresolved duality. Christianity is ready enough to recognise the heretical nature of this belief when it is presented to it in the form of Antinomianism; but it does not realise that its own teaching and

<sup>10</sup> Fortune, *The Mystical Qabalah*, 130.

<sup>11</sup> See Jung, “A Psychological Approach to the Dogma of the Trinity”, *CW 11*, pars. 243-285.

practice are equally antinomian when it regards matter as the enemy of spirit, and as such to be abrogated and overcome. This unhappy belief has caused as much human suffering in Christian countries as war and pestilence.<sup>12</sup>

Fortune brings to light a potential problem for each of the *sefirot*. If the *sefirot* are over simplified, or we could argue if they are strictly defined, there is a possibility of distortion.

By reducing the *sefirot* to definable (conscious) concepts or definitions we lose the autonomous and unique nature of the *sefirot*. *Binah* is an important example of this fact. Fortune indicates that *Binah* and the Supernal Triad are not separate from the remainder of the Tree and that they are all interpenetrated; “[i]t is for this reason that a hard and fast attribution of the gods of other pantheons to the different Sephiroth is impracticable. Aspects of Isis are found in *Binah*, *Netzach*, *Yesod*, and *Malkuth*. Aspects of Osiris are found in *Chokmah*, *Chesed*, and *Tifereth*.”<sup>13</sup> We could also say that aspects of the anima can be found in *Binah*, *Netzach*, *Yesod*, and *Malkut* while aspects of the self can be found in *Hokmah*, *Geburah*, *Hesed*, *Tiferet*—we soon reach a point where dissecting the *sefirot* becomes an ineffectual and self-defeating endeavour. By applying a concept such as the *sefirot* and the Tree of Life to these archetypes we can come to an alternative view of their nature and how it may be possible to further engage with them. To fully engage the *sefirot*, especially the highly abstract nature of the Supernal Triad, requires, according to Fortune, a sense of faith.

Chapter Four began with a brief review of Jung’s understanding of what he termed a “religious attitude” which was also related to Hillman’s notion of a

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<sup>12</sup> Fortune, *The Mystical Qabalah*, 133-134.

<sup>13</sup> Fortune, *The Mystical Qabalah*, 134.

psychological sense of “faith”.<sup>14</sup> From the Esotericists we find that Fortune indicates, following the corresponding *Yetsiratic* text, that *Binah* is the seat of faith:

A cynic defined faith as the power of believing what you know isn't true; and this appears to be a fairly accurate definition for the manifestations of faith as they appear in uninstructed minds, the fruit of the discipline of sects unenlightened by mystical consciousness. But in the light of that consciousness we may define faith as the conscious result of superconscious experience which has not been translated into terms of brain consciousness, and of which, therefore, the normal personality is not directly aware, though it nevertheless feels, possibly with great intensity, the effects, and its emotional reactions are fundamentally and permanently modified thereby.<sup>15</sup>

Fortune's definition of “faith” is one that is concerned not with the doctrine of exoteric traditions but with direct experience of “superconsciousness” which cannot be bound by rational discourse or dogmatic assumptions. Knight's treatment of *Binah* follows closely that of Fortune's save for one important difference, namely, his description of the grade that commonly corresponds to *Binah*.

Knight's description of the Magister Templi (Master of the Temple, 8=3) grade gives a human dimension (i.e. a microcosmic dimension in the Esoteric parlance) to the abstract nature of *Binah*. According to Knight, the term applies to:

one who is absolute master of the arbitration and manipulation of force and form and who has complete understanding of the cosmic power and the creation of requisite forms in which this power may manifest. Also, who has the ability to gauge conditions from day to day and to accept people as they are at any given moment, seeing the stage that they have reached and taking into account the difference between a soul as it is and what it will become as a result of further training; and including in the assessment the effects of karma on the personality or physical vehicle.<sup>16</sup>

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<sup>14</sup> Page 156ff.

<sup>15</sup> Fortune, *The Mystical Qabalah*, 135-136.

<sup>16</sup> Gareth Knight, *A Practical Guide to Qabalistic Symbolism* (York Beach, ME: Samuel Weiser, Inc., 1993), v. I, 92.

From an analytical psychological perspective we cannot comment on the first part of the description of the Magister Templi. These are metaphysical and spiritual assumptions of the Western Esoteric Tradition and are difficult, if not impossible, to prove or disprove. However, the latter portion of the description does make an interesting claim. This grade would seem to correspond to one who is completely aware and in control of his or her being on every level. This awareness is so acute that it can then be applied to the understanding and awareness of all humanity. Clearly the Magister Templi is an extraordinary figure and symbol. While Knight helps to elucidate what *Binah* may represent on a personal level, Crowley leads us even deeper into the human condition.

Crowley attaches the title “Whore of Babalon” to the *sefira Binah*.<sup>17</sup> Rarely one to use a technical term without forethought, Crowley applied the term “whore” with specific intention. Lon Milo DuQuette simplifies the *Binah/Babalon* matter in *The Magick of Thelema*:

The Third Sephirah, Binah represents the original reconciliation and balance of the Divine Self (Kether) and the reflected Not Self (Chokmah). She is viewed as the all-receptive mate of Chokmah and when they are united the primal unity of Kether is realized. As Binah/Babalon resides just above the Abyss, She eventually received unto Herself the totality of the life of the evolving universe. This universal life is symbolized as the “blood of the Saints” which She gathers up into Her great cup (the Holy Graal [sic]). This She shares with the Beast [i.e., *Hokmah*], and they unite in drunken ecstasy. Thus she is called the Great Whore for in her “shamelessness” she receives all and refuses none.<sup>18</sup>

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<sup>17</sup> The peculiar spelling of Babalon has two likely sources or influences. The first influence is the *Book of the Law* where Babalon was held by Crowley to be a secret name of Nuit, the symbol of the infinite universe. See Crowley, *The Law is for All* (Tempe, AZ: New Falcon Publications, 1996), 37. The second likely influence is from the Enochian language popularised by John Dee. The Enochian term *babalond* means harlot. See Donald C. Laycock, *The Complete Enochian Dictionary* (York Beach: Red Wheel/Weiser, LLC, 2001), 83.

<sup>18</sup> Lon Milo DuQuette, *The Magick of Thelema* (York Beach, ME: Samuel Weiser, Inc., 1993), 83.



Reflecting the criteria propounded by Knight, we see that in the entire history of human kind very few have attained the City of the Pyramids, i.e., *Binah*.

The complexity of the Thelemic deity or symbol of Babalon is beyond the scope of this thesis. However, we should note that both *Binah* and Babalon represent a seemingly dichotomous state. It is a state that simultaneously reflects a sublime mystical union and universal Sorrow (the *duhkha/dukkhā* of Buddhism) or the lustful whore who denies no one and the Dark Mother who destroys all in her wake while simultaneously giving birth to difference and differentiation. Knight has given us one definition of what it means to be a Magister Templi, the grade symbolising *Binah*. Crowley gives us another definition that we should consider before continuing on to *Hokmah*. In his “One Star in Sight” Crowley defines what each grade symbolises, at least from his perspective.

The Master of the Temple includes:

The essential Attainment that is the perfect annihilation of that personality which limits and oppresses His true Self. The Magister Templi is pre-eminently the Master of Mysticism, that is, His Understanding is entirely free from internal contradiction or external obscurity; His Word is to comprehend the existing Universe in accordance with His own Mind. He is the Master of the Law of Sorrow (*dukkhā*).<sup>29</sup>

As we can see, Crowley adds a more psychological interpretation of this grade. That is not to say that Knight, Fortune or other Esotericists were oblivious to possible psychological interpretation of the *sefirot*, only that their writings do not emphasise it. Again, we can see with Crowley that rather than the Supernal Triad symbolising the *middoth* or qualities of a transcendent God, they represent particular experiences or qualities that are of a psycho-spiritual nature.

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<sup>29</sup> Aleister Crowley, *Magick/Liber Aba* (York Beach, ME: Samuel Weiser, Inc., 1997), 492.

### ***Hokmah*: Supernal Father, Chaos and the Beast**

*Hokmah* compliments *Binah* while at the same time *Binah* is the compliment of *Hokmah*. The image of *Hokmah* is of a bearded male figure. The titles attributed to this *sefira* are: Power of *Yetzirah* [creation], Av. *Abba*, The Supernal Father, Tetragrammaton [YHVH], Yod [י] of the Tetragrammaton. The spiritual experience is the Vision of God face to face while, the virtue is devotion (there is no corresponding vice). The symbols for *Hokmah* include: the lingam, the phallus, the Inner Robe of Glory, the standing stone, the tower, the uplifted Rod of Power, and the straight line.<sup>30</sup>

The following and final *sefira*, *Kether*, is symbolised as among other things, a point that suggests the absence of dimensionality. *Hokmah* is the first extension of the point and the first movement toward the eventual and final and full manifestation found in *Malkut*. This sense of directionality and expansion is evident in the traditional symbols of *Hokmah*. The overtly projective phallic nature of the symbols compliments the receptive and moulding nature of *Binah*. According to Fortune, *Hokmah* is “not an organising Sefirah, but it is the Great Stimulator of the Universe. It is from *Chokmah* that *Binah*, the Third Sefirah, receives its influx of emanation, and *Binah* is the first of the organising, stabilising Sefiroth. It is not possible to understand either of the paired Sefiroth without considering its mate....”<sup>31</sup> Together, *Hokmah* and *Binah* are symbolic of the primordial source of life. An analytical psychological interpretation of the Tree of Life could view these two *sefirot* as symbolic of the dynamic source of the archetypal and non-dual transpersonal collective unconscious.

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<sup>30</sup> Fortune, *The Mystical Qabalah*, 113-114.

<sup>31</sup> Fortune, *The Mystical Qabalah*, 115.

Each of the *sefirot* in classical Jewish Kabbalah would be considered transpersonal regardless of their position on the Tree of Life. All the *sefirot* are an aspect of divinity. The same interpretation is evident on most Esoteric applications of the Tree of Life. However, when seen as a metaphor of initiation, the *sefirot* take on a slightly different view. The *sefirot* below the Supernal Abyss involve the development and cultivation of one's Holy Guardian Angel or Higher Genius. There is an emphasis on perfecting one's *individuality* in relation to the transpersonal. The Supernal Abyss is the crown of the individual; it is an attainment of Knowledge. Yet from another perspective these transformative *sefirot* still imply that it is an individual defined and delineated perspective active. The Supernal Triad imply, especially in the writings of Crowley, a divesting or shedding of the notion of individuality and duality. In this way the Supernal Triad of the initiatory Western Esoteric Tradition Tree of Life is transpersonal in a non-dual capacity; it requires the dismantling of the whole idea of individuality finally being entirely absorbed in *Kether* in a non-dual union.

The *sefirot* below the Supernal Abyss have personal or subjective experiences and images applied to them. The abstract and transpersonal nature of *Hokmah* and *Binah*, falling on the other side of the Abyss, cannot be directly experienced in any subjective or personal way; they are the primordial *Yin* (*Binah*) and *Yang* (*Hokmah*) of the *Tao* (*Kether* and its source). They inform and influence the lower *sefirot* but they remain highly abstract if viewed independently from the remainder of the Tree.

Fortune reveals that there is an interesting connection between the “Supernal Father” (*Hokmah*) and the “Inferior Mother” (*Malkut*) through *Binah*. The Superior Mother (*Binah*) also known as “The Throne” is a direct link between “the most abstract

form of force” and the “densest form of matter” which hints, “that each of this pair of extreme opposites is the supreme manifestation of its own type, and both are equally holy in their different ways.”<sup>32</sup>

We shall now briefly step out of the Esoteric terminology and into the language of the analytical psychology; however, the following is the author’s interpretation and not Jung’s. The analytical psychological interpenetration of *Binah* and *Hokmah* represents the potential for non-dual transpersonal experience of the collective unconscious (as represented by the pinnacle of the Path of the Serpent/Arrow) that are directly linked with *Malkut* (ego-complex) and fully symbolised in *Kether*. The direct connection between these three *sefirot* (four if *Kether* is included) is represented by what we are labelling the ego/self-collective unconscious axis. By loosening rigid egocentric perspectives, brought about within the Western Esoteric perspective through various rituals and practices, the ego-complex can appreciate and in some cases briefly identify with the archetypes as the patterns and images of the unconscious. Both shadow and self, for example, are experienced as unique to the individual even though either can be experienced as “more” numinous, collective or transpersonal than that individual perspective. Letting go of that personal perspective, symbolised by the crossing of the Supernal Abyss, leads to the direct experience of the source of the self and every other archetypal image, in other words, the undifferentiated potentiality of the collective unconscious in what is generally labelled a mystical or transpersonal experience. This is, of course, a matter of speculation as all experience of the unconscious must be perceived and experienced through the ego-complex.

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<sup>32</sup> Fortune, *The Mystical Qabalah*, 119.

From the above it is obvious that the term self is not used in the sense of being the totality of the psyche. Rather, it represents the totality of an individual's experience of their own psyche. *Tiferet* and the Holy Guardian Angel are understood as being both separate from the individual yet *unique to* the individual. In a way, the archetypal image and the experience of the self, is still connected to the individual who experiences it. We see from the Tree that the direct source of *Tiferet's* energy or nature is *Kether*. We could call *Kether* the unmanifest, abstract or truly collective self, while *Tiferet* is, through its connection with the individual, the manifest experience of the self. Again both the experience of *Tiferet* and *Kether* (or in other words the self as archetypal image and the totality of the psyche) are transpersonal in that they are both greater than the ego-complex and more comprehensive in perspective. To speak of the self in any way that implies personal, dualistic experience would point to *Tiferet*, while discussing the collective processes or implications of the self independent of personal experience refers to the Supernal Triad (and *Kether* specifically as the highest *sefira*). This differentiation would be a matter of degree of impact on the ego-complex. An experience of the self of *Tiferet* would be like a powerful or transformative dream that compensates for an imbalance in the ego-complex. The self is experienced as other than oneself and therefore transpersonal. The self of the Supernal Triad would be more like the experience of *samādhi* or a similar non-dual state where the boundary of the individual ego-complex is lost. By combining Jung's model of the psyche with the Western Esoteric Tree of Life we find interesting parallels such as the multifaceted understanding of archetypes such as the self.

Crowley equated *Binah* with the Whore of Babalon. We also find that he altered the name of *Hokmah* as well. For Crowley *Hokmah* is labelled both Chaos and Therion (The Beast). The Whore riding the Beast is a personification for the conjoining of force and form; the ecstatic joining of universal opposites. *Hokmah*, as the number two, is also the “chaotic despoiler of the perfect unity of the first Sephirah, Kether. Chaos is another title of Chokmah and in certain Thelemic ritual is identified with Therion.”<sup>33</sup> According to DuQuette, Therion and Babalon can be equated to *Shiva* and *Shakti*, further perpetuating the notion of unity and numinous ecstasy.<sup>34</sup>

The grade corresponding to a *sefira* indicates what transformations or developments are to have occurred in the psycho-spiritual life of the initiate. The grade assigned to *Hokmah* (Magus 9=2) is even more “enlightened” and “perfect” than the grade corresponding to *Binah*. No vice is given to *Hokmah* indicating that no potential shadow exists for the Magus. From an analytical psychological perspective this state is a difficult one to accept as our human condition implies that the potential for the shadow to appear always exists.

The obvious underlying assumption of this thesis is that Jung’s theories can be compared with other theories, such as the theories of Western Esoteric Kabbalah, in such a manner as to create new and alternative perspectives that may not be otherwise present. Jung’s concept of shadow is an excellent example of this. Rather than simply accepting the Esoteric interpretation of *Hokmah*’s shadowless nature we can look at it from another perspective. Perhaps *Hokmah*’s shadow, “that which it does not wish to be”, is its

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<sup>33</sup> DuQuette, *The Magick of Thelema*, 82.

<sup>34</sup> DuQuette, *The Magick of Thelema*, 83.

inability to conceive of its own shadow.<sup>35</sup> Standing in the blinding light of *Kether*, *Hokmah* is at risk of identifying with *Kether* and thereby losing its identity and authenticity through a Supernal form of inflation. On a theological level this claim may be of little consequence, however symbolically and from the perspective of analytical psychology, it indicates that even at the highest levels of consciousness or spiritual attainment the shadow still exists in some manner; the brighter the light the darker the shadow that is cast. This approach to *Hokmah* (and by extension the same applies to *Kether*) reveals that no matter how close we may come to know the divine we are still bound to the human condition.

The Esotericists, operating from their own spiritual world-view, are able to make any metaphysical claim they like without necessarily dealing with empirical suppositions or observations as Jung had attempted to do throughout his life. Knight informs us “if anyone claims to be of the esoteric grade of Magus or Ipsissimus, the grades assigned to Chokmah and Kether, he proclaims himself either as a Christ, a liar, or a fool.”<sup>36</sup> It would appear that the grades of the Supernal Triad have little literal personal or pragmatic meaning from an analytical psychological perspective. How can Jung’s model account for a person who lives without a shadow? A person who, as an emissary of the dynamic creative force of the universe, can direct the unfolding of reality? The answer is, of course, it cannot nor should it as it is a method of sustained psychological introspection and therapy and cannot support such an assumption.

From *Hokmah* to *Binah*, through the remainder of the *sefirot*, finally culminating in *Malkut* we have a symbolic representation of the process or dynamic of the ego/self-

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<sup>35</sup> I would like to thank Dr. Roderick Main for suggesting this possible interpretation.

<sup>36</sup> Knight, *A Practical Guide to Qabalistic Symbolism*, vol.I, 79.

collective unconscious axis. The Magus (*Hokmah*) wields the axis as his or her wand like the caduceus of Mercurius. The Throne of *Binah* gives shape to the vital energy of the collective unconscious that eventually, in turn, reaches the ego-consciousness of *Malkut*. This energy is transformed by *Yesod* into an archetypal image or symbol that the ego can engage with. In fact, each of the *sefirot* participates in the psychological dynamic of consciousness and wholeness. We are not bound by a concretised world-view in our present dialogue with the Tree of Life as we are drawing on various and diverse sources for inspiration. With one turn the Western Esoteric world-view surfaces and with another turn the theories of analytical psychology and with still another the influences of Jewish Kabbalah surface.

The polarity of *Binah* and *Hokmah*, the dynamism which gives rise to both psychic reality and physical perception, has its roots in an even more abstract and an even deeper transpersonal source. Ultimately both *Hokmah* and *Binah* are in constant flux with *Kether*. By attempting to interpret the Supernal Triad as separate entities we are artificially imposing a structure onto them. However, without that structure, we could not enter into a meaningful dialogue with the Tree of Life. If *Binah* and *Hokmah* are difficult to apply on a personal psychological level then *Kether* is impossible, for it is, in psychological terms, symbolic of the unity of an undifferentiated collective unconscious.

### ***Kether: The Crown of the Unconscious***

As the pinnacle of the Pillar of Equilibrium (Pillar of Mildness), *Kether* is the ultimate Kabbalistic symbol of balance and unity. The image assigned to *Kether* is an

ancient bearded king seen in profile.<sup>37</sup> Unlike *Hokmah* we are only able to see one side of this *sefira*, there still remains that which is unknown. A selection of titles that have been applied to *Kether* include: Existence of Existences, Concealed of the Concealed, Ancient of Days, The Primordial Point, The Point within the Circle, The Head which is not, Macroprosopos, Amen, Lux Occulta, Lux Interna, and He. The corresponding spiritual experience is the Union with God<sup>38</sup>; with the virtue being the completion of the Great Work (as with *Hokmah* there is no corresponding vice). The symbols of *Kether* are the point, the crown and the swastika.<sup>39</sup>

*Kether*, the “First Manifest, represents the primal crystallisation into manifestation of that which was hitherto unmanifest and therefore unknowable by us.”<sup>40</sup> We will return to the unmanifest roots of *Kether* in Chapter Six but for now we will review, briefly, some of the key concepts that apply to this final (and first in relation to creation) *sefira*. Fortune emphasised that in our stage of development *Kether* and its associated experiences<sup>41</sup> are the Great Unknown but it is not the Great *Unknowable*.<sup>42</sup> While it may be “latency only one degree removed from non-existence”<sup>43</sup>, it still remains as a potential for human psycho-spiritual maturation. *Kether* mirrors the idea of an unmoved mover, though Fortune reminds us that *Kether* is not a person but “a state of

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<sup>37</sup> An analytical psychological interpretation of this Western Esoteric perspective could be that half the face is hidden because the repressed shadow of *Kether* is even greater than that of *Hokmah*. The potential for destruction would be even greater. Jung’s interpretation of Yahweh’s relation with Job in “Answer to Job” (*CW 11*) points to a similar perspective.

<sup>38</sup> Although not specified, the union mentioned here would be of the individual and divinity or, in other words, a mystical union.

<sup>39</sup> Fortune, *The Mystical Qabalah*, 101-102.

<sup>40</sup> Fortune, *The Mystical Qabalah*, 102.

<sup>41</sup> From a classical Jewish Kabbalistic perspective it would be difficult to speak of any form of experience whatsoever with *Kether*. However, the Western Esoteric Tradition is operating on the assumption that a person has the potential to attain the grade of *Ipsissimus* (10=1) that corresponds to *Kether* and these symbols pertain to that grade.

<sup>42</sup> Fortune, *The Mystical Qabalah*, 102.

<sup>43</sup> Fortune, *The Mystical Qabalah*, 102.

existence, and this state of existing substance must have been utterly inert, pure being without activity, until the activity began which emanated Chokmah.”<sup>44</sup>

On a psychological level the consciousness attributed to *Kether* is one without attributes or activities. It is “the intensest form of existence, pure being unlimited by form or reaction; but it is existence of another type than that to which we are accustomed, and therefore it appears to us as non-existence because it conforms to none of the requirements we are accustomed to think of as determining existence.”<sup>45</sup> We can see that there are parallels between this description of *Kether* with the Buddhist notion of “mind-only” in *citta-mātra* and “Buddha Mind”<sup>46</sup> or the *samādhi* (*Nirvikalpa-samādhi*) of *Vedantic* philosophy; a state where there is no discursive mind, duality, or subject-object relations. With such lofty reaches of human consciousness we can clearly see how the theories of transpersonal psychology will be helpful in better understanding what the *Kether* of the Esoteric Tree of Life is and what it means for Jung’s theories.

### **Synchronicity, the *Unus Mundus*, and Transpersonal Psychology**

While Jung did devote an impressive portion of the *Collected Works* to subjects we could label “transpersonal” (for example his work on synchronicity and mysticism), he remained concerned with terms such as “universal consciousness” he encountered in his studies of Eastern spiritual traditions:

One hopes to control the unconscious, but the past masters in the art of self-control, the yogis, attain perfection in *samādhi*, a state of ecstasy, which so far as we know is equivalent to a state of unconsciousness. It makes no difference whether they call our

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<sup>44</sup> Fortune, *The Mystical Qabalah*, 103.

<sup>45</sup> Fortune, *The Mystical Qabalah*, 104.

<sup>46</sup> See Lama Anagarika Govinda, *Foundations of Tibetan Mysticism* (York Beach, ME: Samuel Weiser, Inc., 1969), 279.

unconscious a “universal consciousness”; the fact remains that in their case the unconscious has swallowed up ego-consciousness. They do not realize that a “universal consciousness” is a contradiction in terms, since exclusion, selection, and discrimination are the root and essence of everything that lays claim to the name “consciousness.” “Universal consciousness” is logically identical with the unconscious.<sup>47</sup>

The above citation exposes the primary analytical psychological argument facing our interpretation of the Western Esoteric Tree of Life’s portrayal of psychological maturation and what amounts to the process of psychological initiation. If the Supernal Triad represents the transpersonal collective unconscious (again it is *not* the collective unconscious, it is a metaphor *for* what Jung labelled the collective unconscious), how can we possibly know anything at all about it and what possible use does it hold? From the boundaries of a professional clinical perspective, the importance of the Supernal Triad may not be great. However, outside of the parameters of analytical practice, the experience of the archetypes of the collective unconscious, especially when experienced within the context of a highly symbolic psycho-spiritual system, can hold spiritual meaning.

When we reviewed *Kether* we noticed that Fortune states that the *sefira* is the Great Unknown but not the Great Unknowable.<sup>48</sup> The implication is that at some point in human development we may well come to know (or at least know *more* of) the Unknown, the unconscious, in a more intimate and personal manner. Jung states that “[e]ven today we know of primitive tribes whose levels of consciousness is not so far removed from the darkness of the primordial psyche, and numinous vestiges of this state can still be found among civilized people. It is even probable, in view of its potentialities for further

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<sup>47</sup> Jung, “Conscious, Unconscious, and Individuation”, *CW* 9i, par. 520.

<sup>48</sup> Fortune, *The Mystical Qabalah*, 102.

differentiation, that our modern consciousness is still on a relatively low level.”<sup>49</sup> For Fortune, as cited in Chapter Four<sup>50</sup>, experiences occurring under the aegis of modern psychology were at one time the privilege of the adepts. Today so-called “average people” can delve into the personal and the collective unconscious with a modicum of guidance and a great deal of patience. Also mentioned above was that the experience of *Kether* is one that is not easily transferred to the concrete language of “existence” or what we would label consciousness. Jung echoes a similar position when he discusses the psychic nature of the anima and animus:

The anima and animus live in a world quite different from the world outside—in a world where the pulse of time beats infinitely slowly, where the birth and death of individuals count for little. No wonder their nature is strange, so strange that their irruption into consciousness often amounts to a psychosis. They undoubtedly belong to the material that comes to light in schizophrenia.<sup>51</sup>

Another important area of Jung’s thought that should be reviewed in relation to the transpersonal facets of the psyche is the idea of the *unus mundus* or “One World”.

### **The *Unus Mundus* as Transpersonal Experience**

Even though Jung questioned, at least on philosophical grounds, the idea of trans-egoic universal consciousness in his theories, he was certainly not averse to the idea of an underlying unity to reality that appears to resemble the characteristics of *Kether*. Drawing from the esoteric writings of the alchemists, Jung turned his attention to the *unus mundus* or the “One World”. In Chapter Two we briefly analysed how the *unus*

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<sup>49</sup> Jung, “Transformation Symbolism in the Mass”, *CW* 11, par. 442.

<sup>50</sup> Page 168.

<sup>51</sup> Jung, “Conscious, Unconscious, and Individuation”, *CW* 9i, par. 519.

*mundus* was utilised in alchemy and, in turn, how the concept fit in Jung's theories.<sup>52</sup> To reiterate, Edinger describes the *unus mundus* as representing "the union of the ego with the Self and with the world..."<sup>53</sup> This process would be the equivalent of the union of *Malkut* and *Tiferet* on the Esoteric Tree of Life along the ego-self axis. As an archetype, the self is transpersonal, that is to say it has the potential to be experienced by all people at any time. However, the sense of the *unus mundus* as a specific psychological factor occurs below the Supernal Abyss. A post-Supernal Abyss *unus mundus* would equate to what we are referring to as the ego/self-collective unconscious axis. The former (pre-Supernal Abyss) experience resonates with Edinger's statement that "once you are totally in it you are out of the ego world as we know it."<sup>54</sup> The latter (post-Supernal Abyss) would imply that the "you" that is "totally in it" has been divested of any sense of a separate ego, "ego world" or self.

Jung tells us that the *unus mundus* is "not a fusion of the individual with his environment, or even his adaptation to it, but a *unio mystica* with the potential world."<sup>55</sup> This would imply that rather than *Tiferet* (the self), it is *Kether* which best summarises the nature of the *unus mundus*. The pure potential of *Kether* is manifest in the psyche and proceeds past *Da'at*, through *Tiferet*, then through *Yesod*, finally to be experienced or concretised in *Malkut* (ego-complex). Again, it is a matter of perspective and degree of experience. Hypothetically, the *unus mundus* is the equivalent of *Kether*—a unified field of transpersonal experience. However, when experienced on an individual level (pre-Supernal Abyss) the *unus mundus* relates to the ego-self axis of *Tiferet* and *Malkut*. A

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<sup>52</sup> Page 103ff.

<sup>53</sup> Edward Edinger, *The Mysticism Lectures* (Toronto: Inner City Books, 1995), 282.

<sup>54</sup> Edinger, *The Mysticism Lectures*, 282.

<sup>55</sup> Jung, *Mysterium Coniunctionis*, *CW 14*, par. 766.

fundamental feature of the *unus mundus* is what Jung termed synchronicity. We are unable to diverge too far into synchronicity, as it is a subject worthy of volumes of work in and of itself but we will attempt to cover some of the more relevant points.<sup>56</sup>

Synchronicity is the unifying factor of the *unus mundus* where the boundaries between time, matter and causality collapse. There are similar assumptions behind “Ipsissimus (10=1)”, the grade corresponding to *Kether*. On May 23 1921, Crowley took the initiation of Ipsissimus and recorded in his diary: “As God goes, I go.”<sup>57</sup> Regardless of the validity of Crowley’s claim to Ipsissimus, we see that the grade corresponding to *Kether* and the potentiality of the *unus mundus* implies, through the merging of a human identity with “divinity” or the numinous nature of the collective unconscious, a unity of cause and effect and a state of interpenetration of microcosm and macrocosm where human individuality and divinity become inseparable.

Jung did not produce a systematic or complete definition of synchronicity. The most common definition of synchronicity can be found in Jung’s primary work on the subject “Synchronicity: An Acausal Connecting Principle”. Jung not only defines

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<sup>56</sup> See Jung, “Synchronicity: An Acausal Connecting Principle” *CW* 8, paras. 417-531; Robert Aziz, *C.G. Jung’s Psychology of Religion and Synchronicity* (Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 1990); Roderick Main, *Jung on Synchronicity and the Paranormal* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1997), “Religion, Science, and Synchronicity” *Harvest: Journal for Jungian Studies* 46, no. 2 (2000) and, most recently, *The Rupture of Time* (East Sussex, UK: Brunner-Routledge, 2004); Victor Mansfield’s books *Synchronicity, Science and Soul-Making: Understanding Jungian Synchronicity Through Physics, Buddhism and Philosophy*. Chicago, Ill: Open Court Publishing Company, 1995 and *Head and Heart: A Personal Exploration of Science and the Sacred* (Wheaton, Ill: Quest Books, 2002) and his article “Distinguishing Synchronicity from the Paranormal: An Essay Honoring Marie-Louise von Franz” ([http://www.lightlink.com/vic/mlv\\_paper.html](http://www.lightlink.com/vic/mlv_paper.html), 1996, accessed Nov. 3, 2004); von Franz’s *On Divination and Synchronicity and Number and Time* (Andrea Dykes, trans. London, UK: Rider & Co., 1974); and Ira Progoff *Jung, Synchronicity, and Human Destiny* (New York, NY: Julian Press, 1973).

<sup>57</sup> Richard Kaczynski, *Perdurabo: The Life of Aleister Crowley*, (Tempe, AZ: New Falcon Publications, 2002), 290. We should note however that John Symonds, *The Great Beast: The Life and Magick of Aleister Crowley* (London: Macdonald & Co., 1971), 258 and Lawrence Sutin, *Do What Thou Wilt: A Life of Aleister Crowley* (New York: St. Martin’s Press, 2000), 290 have “As a God goes, I go.”

synchronicity as an “acausal connecting principle” but also as “meaningful coincidence”<sup>58</sup> and “acausal parallelism”.<sup>59</sup> The basic assumption is that there is an acausal link (that is to say no direct causal connection can be found) between intrapsychic experiences and occurrences in the external world.<sup>60</sup> Further, as these experiences occur in relation to activated archetypes the experiences are usually accompanied by a sense of *numinosity*. This whole process occurs within the context of *meaning*. There is a prerequisite of meaning necessary for synchronicity to be differentiated from coincidence. According to Roderick Main, Jung suggests in his theory of synchronicity:

a possible psychological dynamic to explain how an activated archetype might result in synchronicities: the presence of the active archetype is accompanied by numinous effects, and this numinosity or affectivity results in a lowering of the mental level, a relaxing of the focus of consciousness. As the energy of consciousness is lowered, the energy of the unconscious is correspondingly heightened, so that a gradient from the unconscious to the conscious is established and unconscious contents flow into consciousness more readily than usual. Included among these unconscious contents are items of what Jung calls ‘absolute knowledge’, knowledge that transcends the space—time limitations of consciousness...<sup>61</sup>

Aside from the numinous effect of synchronicity and its potential to reveal ‘absolute knowledge’ what is of interest here is the view of synchronicity acting as a point of transcendence where space, time and, as synchronicity is ‘acausal’, causality collapse or implode upon themselves. Synchronicity, we could say, functions as a point of transcendence of seemingly rigid boundaries of consciousness.

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<sup>58</sup> Jung, “Synchronicity: An Acausal Connecting Principle”, *CW* 8, par. 827.

<sup>59</sup> Jung, *MDR*, 374. For a more thorough treatment of Jung’s definition of synchronicity see Main, *The Rupture of Time*, 12-14.

<sup>60</sup> The most often cited example of synchronicity involves a patient of Jung’s and a synchronistic experience of a scarab beetle. See Jung, “On Synchronicity”, *CW*8, par. 982.

<sup>61</sup> Main, *The Rupture of Time*, 37.

Synchronicity can also be seen as breaking down the boundaries that are commonly thought to exist between science and spirituality as can be found in the work of Victor Mansfield. Mansfield has undertaken a difficult task in his writings on synchronicity. As a scientist, a physicist and astronomer, and as one who is deeply committed to exploring various avenues of spirituality, Mansfield attempts to bridge what he labels *head* and *heart*. One way of trying to accomplish this task is through Jung's theory of synchronicity. As a theory, synchronicity participates on both a scientific level and a spiritual level. It participates on a scientific level through its relation to scientific disciplines such as quantum mechanics and its understanding of the intrinsic subjectivity evident in seemingly objective reality. Synchronicity also brings into light the problem of temporality and causality; another focus of the more theoretical reaches of physics.<sup>62</sup> There are also, of course, the experiments into parapsychology and so-called "psi" research.<sup>63</sup>

The "heart" facility of synchronicity can be best defined by paraphrasing the seven attributes of "Synchronicity as an expression of transformative self-knowledge" given in Mansfield's *Head and Heart*.<sup>64</sup> Mansfield indicates that synchronicity represents self-knowledge as can be seen through the following seven characteristics; synchronicity is intuitive, holistic, unique to the individual, transforming, unrepeatable, teleological, and sacred:

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<sup>62</sup> For more detailed studies of the connection between physics and synchronicity see Mansfield, *Head and Heart* and *Synchronicity, Science and Soul-Making* and von Franz *Number and Time*. For another connection between physics and Jungian theory see John R. Van Eenwyk, *Archetypes and Strange Attractors: The Chaotic World of Symbols* (Toronto, ON: Inner City Books, 1997).

<sup>63</sup> However, we should keep in mind the differentiation Mansfield makes between paranormal researches and synchronicity. Due to the erratic and subjective nature of synchronistic experiences statistical or quantifiable research is rendered inadequate. See Mansfield, "Distinguishing Synchronicity from the Paranormal: An Essay Honoring Marie-Louise von Franz", 1996.

<sup>64</sup> Mansfield, *Head and Heart*, 133-135.

1. Synchronicity experiences always involve an interior intuition from our “deepest subjectivity” which is applied to the external event which constitutes the synchronistic experience.
2. Synchronicity is holistic in that it influences our whole being, life and purpose and a synchronicity experience “gives us a personal expression of the unity underlying soul and matter.”
3. Synchronicity experiences are conditioned by collective archetypes; however, the meaning of the archetype is always unique to the individual and their individuation process.
4. The synchronicity experience occurs within the context of an individual’s individuation process and, if the person who experiences synchronicity attempts to understand its meaning, he/she has the potential for personal transformation.
5. One cannot repeat a synchronicity experience since the context which brought forth the compensatory occurrence in the first place will not be repeated; at least not in the same manner.
6. A teleological paradigm is already implied within the process of individuation and the compensatory nature of the unconscious. The synchronicity experience seems to indicate that there is “a timeless ‘vision’ of what the self demands of us.”
7. A true synchronicity experience is always accompanied by a numinous experience and it therefore takes the form of sacred knowledge. There is a sense of providence and superior knowledge not bound by our individual ego perspective.<sup>65</sup>

Of particular interest for our current context is the idea that synchronicity is part of self-knowledge and the idea that it is a point where seemingly divergent concepts and constructs become blurred and, in essence, blend with each other. We shall return to this idea below when we look at how the “pseudo-*sefira*” *Da’at* can be interpreted as a metaphor of synchronicity and the underlying pattern of reality. This symbol links both the macrocosmic realms of the *sefirot* of the Western Esoteric Tree of Life and the microcosmic world of causality.

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<sup>65</sup> For more on synchronicity as spiritual experience see Roderick Main, “Synchronicity as a Form of Spiritual Experience” (Ph.D. diss., Lancaster University, 1995).

The importance and impact of the theory of synchronicity on Jung's thought, especially his later work, is no small issue. Main's book *The Rupture of Time* systematically demonstrates the connection between the theory of synchronicity and many of the other facets of Jung's theories and thought. Of specific importance to our current analysis is Main's synthesis of Jung's theory of synchronicity and the "spiritual revolution."<sup>66</sup> Synchronicity, as an "acausal connecting principle" is an integral aspect of Jung's thought due to the fact that it unifies the objective, external world and the subjective interiority of the psyche. A synchronistic experience is an experience of the underlying unity of existence. This unity can be taken even further where "the sense of unity can be experienced as existing not just between the psychic and the physical but between the psychophysical as a whole and a transcendent, spiritual, or divine aspect of reality."<sup>67</sup> This unity is the *unus mundus* and, we can extrapolate, the experience symbolised by *Kether* as the highest point of the Supernal Triad.

Main recounts Jung's vision of this type of unity,<sup>68</sup> though he emphasises that since it does not involve an external physical event it does not fall under Jung's more common definition of synchronicity. The vision occurred after Jung had broken his foot and suffered a heart attack in 1944. While the content of the vision is not important, at least for our current purposes, the affect the visions had on Jung *is* important. Jung recounts that *he* was not united with a person or object but that "*it* was united, *it* was the

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<sup>66</sup> Main, *The Rupture of Time*, 144-174.

<sup>67</sup> Main, *The Rupture of Time*, 146. To commandeer Dr. Main's statement for a moment; from the perspective of the Esoteric Tree of Life the "psychic" would be self (*Kether/Tiferet*), the physical (*Malkut*) would be ego and the psychophysical would be the ego-self axis, while the joining of this conjunction with the "transcendent, spiritual, or divine aspect of reality" would be represented by the ego/self-collective unconscious axis.

<sup>68</sup> The experiences in question can be found in Jung, *MDR*, 289-298 and *Letters*, v. 1, 357-359.

*hierosgamos*, the mystic Agnus.”<sup>69</sup> Here we have the sense of the transpersonal, even impersonal state of connection. This is not recounted as a person experiencing a union with another state of being but rather the realisation of the individual as being imbedded in a transpersonal unity.

Main further focuses on the connection between Jung’s experience and synchronicity:

In his fuller account of the vision, Jung characterises it in terms of ‘a quality of absolute objectivity’ and of ‘a non-temporal state in which present, past and future are one’. This characterisation clearly reflects the ‘absolute knowledge’ and ‘space-time relativity’ involved in synchronicities. Further, his sense of his visions as representing a kind of mystic marriage between self and world—the *hierosgamos* or *mysterium coniunctionis*—suggests that they may constitute an experiential realisation of the unitary dimension of existence (the *unus mundus*) towards which he considered the more familiar forms of synchronicity to be pointing.<sup>70</sup>

This “unitary dimension” can be further linked to the “realisation of Tao”<sup>71</sup> which parallels the unity implied with *Kether* and the Yin and Yang of *Binah* and *Hokmah* respectively.

A central aspect of synchronicity is that it unites the individual with the world around them. Rather than living entirely “in the head” as a uniquely psychic occurrence, synchronicity reveals that an intricate tapestry of interconnectedness surrounds the individual on an exopsychic and endopsychic level. We find a fitting citation of this

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<sup>69</sup> Jung, *Letters*, v. 1, 358.

<sup>70</sup> Main, *The Rupture of Time*, 147.

<sup>71</sup> Main, *The Rupture of Time*, 147.

aspect of synchronicity in Robert Aziz's *C.G. Jung's Psychology of Religion and Synchronicity*:

For Jung, as evidenced by his own writings on synchronicity and, perhaps more importantly, by the way he lived his own life, the individuation process extends beyond the psychological realm and assumes the character of a drama that takes the whole of nature for its stage. What we normally regard as the discontinuous inner and outer worlds become enclosed within the same circle of wholeness. Inwardly and outwardly nature works, through the compensatory patterning of events, to further the movement of the individual towards wholeness.<sup>72</sup>

Synchronicity not only blurs the boundaries between space and time and causality, potentially theoretical and recondite issues, it also makes a meaningful contribution towards blurring the boundaries between what is considered “I” and “not I”. Given our collective human tendency to discriminate the compensatory lessons present within a synchronicity experience are important ones indeed.

Though the Western Esoteric Tradition does not present the level of academic study on synchronicity as can be found within the literature of analytical psychology, the Tradition is not without some of its own insights as we shall now see.

### ***Da'at* as “In-between”**

Thus far we have defined the *sefirot* as *middoth* or qualities. From traditional theistic perspectives they are qualities of God or gods and from a psychological perspective the *sefirot* can be seen as symbolic of the qualities of the largely unconscious psyche. However, standing in a unique and rather bemusing position is the pseudo-*sefira* *Da'at*. Earlier we encountered *Da'at* in reference to the Supernal Abyss where,

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<sup>72</sup> Aziz, *C.G. Jung's Psychology of Religion and Synchronicity*, 165.



A shadow of an eclipse of the moon is like a shadow of a shadow of a shadow. From one perspective the moon is without its own power as it is only reflects the sun. The moon is therefore shadowy. By eclipsing the moon we have even more shadow and if we take mental discourse or thought to be a shadow of *that* shadow we are left with wispy layers of insubstantiality. Only the Universe or the Universal (i.e. transpersonal) perspective, according to this poem, is the Light or substance.<sup>75</sup>

Again in *The Book of Lies* we see Crowley's view that personal consciousness (personal identity) is a hindrance to the more "real" transpersonal forms of consciousness:

Dreams are imperfections of sleep; even so is consciousness the imperfection of waking.  
 Dreams are impurities in the circulation of the blood; even so is consciousness a disorder of life.  
 Dreams are without proportion, without good sense, without truth; so also is consciousness.  
 Awake from the dream, the truth is known: awake from waking, the Truth is—The Unknown.<sup>76</sup>

This poem, "John-A-Dreams", implies that personal ego consciousness is a flawed form of awareness and only by waking from the view that the sense of personal consciousness is "truth" can we come to experience the "The Unknown" as "Truth". This view of consciousness permeates many of Crowley's spiritual assumptions. This, we can assume, is one of the reasons why the Supernal Abyss, the demon Choronzon and *Da'at* are given such negative connotations in Crowley's cosmology. In other words, *Da'at* and the

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<sup>75</sup> The use of Light in this context has interesting parallels with Robert Grosseteste's (c.1175-1253 CE) *On Light*. See Clare C. Riedl, trans., *Robert Grosseteste: On Light (De Luce)* (Milwaukee, WI: Marquette University Press, 1978) for the use of Light as first corporeal form.

<sup>76</sup> Crowley, *The Book of Lies*, 70.

Abyss represent the final hurdle or fetter on the path to transpersonal experience and enlightenment. However, his is not the only interpretation.

Gareth Knight gives a different interpretation of *Da'at* from that of Crowley. In *A Practical Guide to Qabalistic Symbolism* Knight states that the "...Mysteries of Daath are profound and were little touched on in earlier writings on the Qabalah."<sup>77</sup> Knight also indicates that while *Da'at* is translated as "Knowledge" it is "meant not so much what we understand by the word, but the word in its biblical usage of sexual union, only here the meaning is a kind of Divine Union where the differing planes of being impact and there is a resultant change of state brought to birth—a transformation or transmutation of power."<sup>78</sup> Further in *A Practical Guide*, Knight expounds on the nature of *Da'at* more fully:

Daath is the highest point of awareness of the human soul regarded as a soul for awareness of the supernal levels can only be possible to the Spirit or Divine Spark itself....Before the grade of Daath the experience of a soul is devoted to bringing about a fusion of itself with the Spirit—to 'becoming'. After the powers of Daath are fully operational in a soul there is no further process of 'becoming' for that soul 'is'....Daath, then, is the sphere of Realisation in its supremest meaning, understanding united with knowledge...the human mind at this most abstract level attains to a complete awareness of All and in this complete awareness is absorbed by the Eternal Mind and made one with it, so that Daath, as a Sephirah, represents supreme Wisdom and supreme Power of Realisation.<sup>79</sup>

In the above citation *Da'at* is far from demonic; it is a heightened state of spiritual awareness. For Knight *Da'at* is a symbol of the highest attainable state human

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<sup>77</sup> Knight, *A Practical Guide to Qabalistic Symbolism*, v. I, 32.

<sup>78</sup> Knight, *A Practical Guide to Qabalistic Symbolism*, v. I, 32.

<sup>79</sup> Knight, *A Practical Guide to Qabalistic Symbolism*, v. I, 102-104.

consciousness can perceive. Yet Knight admits there is also a darker side to *Da'at* and the following citation has an overtly though unorthodox, psychoanalytic tone to it:

There is also a dark side of Daath relating to what might be called the subconscious mind of God and this could have strange results on the soul. Contacts with the personal subconscious can be disturbing enough, so one can well imagine how much more explosive would be contacts with the Universal Subconscious, containing the whole past history and inner stresses of the Logos.<sup>80</sup>

On the surface the major difference between Crowley's view of *Da'at* and that of Knight is the use of Christocentric terms such as Soul, Spirit, and Logos. For Crowley no matter how enlightened the individual perspective is, to cling to the notion of individuality is still a limited perspective. Knight, on the other hand, sees that the Supernal experiences are not ones for human souls but they are reserved on the "inner planes" of pure spirit. Like the problem of applying the experiences of the Magus and Ipsissimus grades to "this worldly" consciousness, finding common ground between these two perspectives of the Esoteric Tree of Life is fraught with difficulties.

Dion Fortune gives a description of *Da'at* that is similar to Knight's perspective (or more precisely, Knight's perspective reflects Fortune's). Fortune states that *Da'at*:

is that mind which is clear, simple and certain and which links and understands both sides of the *Abyss*. Daath represents the Unity which links the Principles (i.e. the Supernal Triangle. ed. [sic]) with their manifestation—the mind of God working through Man and Evolution. We are here considering, as with all the Sephiroth, the Sephirah in Malkuth.<sup>81</sup>

In Fortune's description we find a common link between each of the descriptions of *Da'at* presented thus far. *Da'at* is a position or state of "in-between". *Da'at* is the height

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<sup>80</sup> Knight, *A Practical Guide to Qabalistic Symbolism*, v. I, 106.

<sup>81</sup> Fortune, *The Mystical Qabalah*, 341.

of personal consciousness but it is the link to the transpersonal realms. It is the demon Choronzon and it is the “Supreme Power of Realisation.” It is the link between divinity and humanity, yet it is neither. As a pseudo-*sefira* with no number, *Da’at* cannot be included as a *middoth* of God yet it is a central part of psycho-spiritual transformation and initiation. From the perspective of analytical psychology, *Da’at* is the boundary between the process of individuation of the individual and the underlying *unus mundus* of the collective unconscious. *Da’at* is a symbol of the perpetual state of flux which we label psyche. Even though we employ terms such as ego-complex, shadow, anima or animus, or the self, there is, at the root, a state of flux, malleability and interpenetration. *Da’at* is the quality of the psyche that is not a quality, and it is the key to synchronicity, that link between the depths of our collective psyches and the external world.<sup>82</sup> Kenneth Grant’s work *Outside the Circles of Time*<sup>83</sup>, while inundated with his own unique perspectives, reflects this aspect of *Da’at*. Interestingly, Grant opens *Outside the Circles of Time* with a reference to synchronicity.

Grant begins *Outside the Circles of Time* with a discussion of Crowley’s Aeonic model of time. Crowley posited that there were three Aeons.<sup>84</sup> The first Aeon was matriarchic, agrarian and nature oriented and is symbolised by Crowley as the Egyptian goddess Isis. The second Aeon is symbolised by Osiris and was marked by the dominance of the dying and resurrecting god and patriarchy. Christianity would be the ultimate example of an Osirian tradition. The third and current Aeon, at least according to Crowley, is the Aeon of Horus; this is the Aeon of the divine child inaugurated by

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<sup>82</sup> Or perhaps even more disturbing is that *Da’at* might be an insidious Deleuzian rhizome trying to dismantle every Tree of Life from within its own structure with synchronicity as its byproduct.

<sup>83</sup> Kenneth Grant, *Outside the Circles of Time* (Great Britain: Frederick Muller, Ltd., 1980).

<sup>84</sup> See Crowley, *The Law is for All* and *Magick/Liber Aba* for a more thorough treatment of the Aeons.

Crowley with the reception of *Liber AL vel Legis* in 1904. Rather than concerning ourselves with Thelemic cosmology we need only understand that there is a linear motion to the Aeons; each being comprised of roughly two thousand years. It is this assumption of temporal linearity that Grant attempts to usurp from Crowley and which is most relevant for us. For example we find Grant state:

It is now known, however, that the apparently anomalous coincidence of two or more aeons occurring simultaneously is not an impossibility when time is considered to be, not a linear sequence of events or spaces, but a *perichoresis*, an intrusion into the present space of the past and future, which involves an implosion of synchronicity.<sup>85</sup>

Unfortunately Grant does not elaborate on this use of synchronicity. He only continues relating this issue and other Kabbalistic constructs instead to his own particular view of the Tree of Life. Following Grant, *Da'at*, then, can be seen as “the point both of ingress into the noumenon and of egress into phenomena; in other words it is the gateway of the manifestation of non-manifestation.”<sup>86</sup>

Both *Da'at* and synchronicity are examples of states or occurrences that exist outside the standard understanding of linearity, causality and subjectivity. They reflect a position of connectivity between seemingly unconnected realms of experience. Synchronicity points to a reality outside of the subjective psyche and draws the individual into a connection not only with the external “objective” world but, as Jung indicates, with the potential world of the *unus mundus*. The pseudo-*sefira* *Da'at* functions as a point of

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<sup>85</sup> Grant, *Outside the Circles of Time*, 10. One of Grant’s most vehement critics, Gerald Kelly, makes the following statement regarding Grant’s use of the term synchronicity: “Grant employs the typical charlatan’s trick—he uses a lot of ten dollar words that mean to impress as well as lose the reader: “Ultra-dimensional and extra-temporal consciousness”, “perichoresis”, “an implosion of synchronicity”...etc., etc., etc..” Retrieved from <http://geocities.com/Athens/Parthenon/7069/grant3.html>. Last accessed Dec. 8, 2004.

<sup>86</sup> Grant, *Nightside of Eden* (London, Frederick Muller, Ltd., 1980), 145.

“in-betweenness”, a pylon of otherness on an otherwise exceedingly organised and hierarchical Tree of Life. For the Western Esotericists it can either be seen as a refined form of consciousness or the last semblance of individuality before attaining the transpersonal realms of the Supernal Triad.

The concept of *unus mundus* is a difficult one to express without resorting to poetic language. It was a term used in alchemy and related esoteric traditions to communicate a non-dual transpersonal state of consciousness and of being. Edinger states that “the assumption is that the final, total translation to unity is consummated only at death—at best, that is, because death doesn’t automatically bring it about either.”<sup>87</sup> It is clear that the *unus mundus* is a potential psychological state wherein adjectives such as unity, transpersonal and synchronicity prevail. Current researches into physics and synchronistic experience, such as developed by Mansfield, help to broaden the meaning and definition of what we have been referring to as the Supernal Triad.

### **A Jungian Mysticism?**

While it is true that Jung was a psychologist and a scientist, he was also dedicated to exploring fields of interest that lay outside the general boundaries of science and psychology.<sup>88</sup> Jung was not satisfied with maintaining a reductionistic outlook in his

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<sup>87</sup> Edinger, *The Mysterium Lectures*, 283-284.

<sup>88</sup> Jung was interested in subjects such as extra-sensory perception (see “Synchronicity: An Acausal Connecting Principle”, *CW 8*, pars. 838, 840, 848, 855, 863, 907, 913, 947, 954, 966, 994; “Fundamental Questions of Psychotherapy”, *CW 16*, par. 254), parapsychology (“The Future of Parapsychology”, *CW 18*) and spiritualism (see “On Spiritualistic Phenomenon”, *CW 18*, pars. 697-640; “Psychology and Spiritualism”, *CW 18*, pars. 746-756; and, of course, “On the Psychology of So-Called Occult Phenomena”, *CW 1*, pars. 1-150).

model of the psyche.<sup>89</sup> Given Jung's writings on subjects like synchronicity, alchemy and mysticism we could even go so far as, as has Leon Schlamm, to claim that Jung was a scientist as well as a detraditionalised mystic.<sup>90</sup> In his article "C.G. Jung's Visionary Mysticism" Schlamm utilises a taxonomic model of mystical traditions developed by Andrew Rawlinson in his book *The Book of Enlightened Masters: Western Teachers in Eastern Traditions*.<sup>91</sup> This taxonomy is comprised of two sets of polarities: *Hot/Cool* and *Structured/Unstructured*. A mystical tradition can be categorised as *Cool Structured/Cool Unstructured* or *Hot Structured/Hot Unstructured*. Let us take a moment to review Rawlinson's taxonomy.

Rawlinson's taxonomy is summarised as follows<sup>92</sup>:

<i>Hot</i>	That which is other than oneself; that which has its own life. It is not something that one has access to as of right. It is powerful and breath-taking, and is associated with revelation and grace. It is very similar to Otto's numinous.
<i>Cool</i>	The very essence of oneself; one need not go to another to find it. Hence one <i>does</i> have access to it as a right. It is quiet and still, and is associated with self-realisation.
<i>Structured</i>	There is an inherent order in the cosmos and therefore in the human condition. There is something to be discovered and there is a way of discovering it. A map is required to find the destination.
<i>Unstructured</i>	There is no gap between the starting point and the finishing post. Method and goal are identical. We are not separate from reality/truth/God and so no map is required. Everything is available now and always has been.

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<sup>89</sup> This is especially the case with Jung's view of the rigidity of Freud's model. See "The Philosophical Tree", *CW 13*, par. 396.

<sup>90</sup> Leon Schlamm, "C.G. Jung's Visionary Mysticism" in *Harvest: International Journal for Jungian Studies*, vol. 52, n. 1., 2006, p. 7.

<sup>91</sup> Andrew Rawlinson, *The Book of Enlightened Masters: Western teachers in Eastern Traditions*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. (Chicago, Ill.: Open Court, 1998).

<sup>92</sup> Adapted from Rawlinson, *The Book of Enlightened Masters*, 98-99.

The *Hot* and *Cool* poles are placed on opposing ends of a vertical line while the *Structured* and *Unstructured* poles are on opposite ends of an intersecting horizontal line.

Schlamm highlights an important issue in regards to Rawlinson's view of the mystical traditions that fall within these quadrants.<sup>93</sup> He states that these "types of mystical traditions are for Rawlinson all true because they provide equally effective vehicles for spiritual emancipation. This is the reason for Rawlinson's attribution of equal value to competing soteriological traditions and for his refusal to countenance any privileging of any particular spiritual perspective."<sup>94</sup> Related to this egalitarian approach to the various mystical traditions is Rawlinson's insistence that these quadrants are not rigid and that individual teachers and traditions have, in fact, been located in several of the quadrants. According to Schlamm the value of Rawlinson's model "is that it can be used to help differentiate among an amazing variety of spiritual perspectives."<sup>95</sup>

The Upper Left: *Hot Structured* traditions see the cosmos as being comprised of a myriad of powerful beings with spiritual advancement being attained through knowledge of arcane information. The teaching through which one may come to know this information is initiatory and never given or available all at once but is attained only when it is necessary and is presented in a cryptic form. This type of cosmology is typical for forms of esotericism and we can see obvious parallels to the Western Esoteric Tradition. These traditions are hierarchical and require the practitioner to apply volition to break through spiritual barriers. These *Hot Structured* traditions also employ magic or the manipulation of the cosmos in the service of self-transformation. In these traditions

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<sup>93</sup> Schlamm also uses Rawlinson's taxonomy in his article "Ken Wilber's Spectrum Model: Identifying Alternative Soteriological Perspectives", *Religion* 31 (2001): 19-39. Both articles will be cited.

<sup>94</sup> Schlamm, "Ken Wilber's Spectrum Model", 23.

<sup>95</sup> Schlamm, "Ken Wilber's Spectrum Model", 23.

consciousness is seen as divine and hierarchical and while guides of many forms surround the practitioner, transformation is ultimately a solitary and demanding task. The individual spiritual qualities are ecstatic and unpredictable and the social spiritual qualities are described as a whirlwind of projects. *Hot Structured* Traditions include: Hindu *Tantra*, *Vajrayana*, *Siddha* tradition, Vedic ritual tradition, Kabbalah, Hermeticism, Alchemy and Shamanism.<sup>96</sup> Schlamm adds to the modern Western examples of *Hot Structured* traditions: Jung, Steiner, Golden Dawn-[A.E.]Wait, Crowley, and Fortune.<sup>97</sup> The main points are that there is a knowledge that is only accessible through initiation and that only through guidance and training can one learn to use that knowledge.

The complimentary pole is the Lower Left: *Cool Structured* traditions. In these traditions liberation is found not in the objective universe but within oneself and can be accessed through dedicated practice. There is a dispassionate and restrained approach within the traditions with their practice being graduated and gentle while the individual spiritual qualities are unpretentious and simple. The social spiritual quality is responding to the needs of beings. Magic is seen as peripheral and distracting from the spiritual goal. The teachings are open as are the rites of entering into the traditions, liberation comes through the loosening of attachments and consciousness is seen as natural and particularised. The advantage to these traditions is that it is easy for the beginner to start and the process is slow and gentle. However, liberation may take eons to complete. Examples of the *Cool Structured* traditions include *Theravada* Buddhism, Zen, early

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<sup>96</sup> Schlamm, "Ken Wilber's Spectrum Model", 23-24. This summary and the following ones are condensed and slightly amended versions of the ones presented in Schlamm, "Ken Wilber's Spectrum Model", 23-25.

<sup>97</sup> Schlamm, "C.G. Jung's Visionary Mysticism", 18.

Vedanta (Upanishads), Samkhya, Aurobindo, and Plotinus.<sup>98</sup> Rather than a hidden and esoteric approach to liberation, the *Cool Structured* traditions posit that all knowledge is within oneself, only it is necessary to uncover it through a detached and gentle form of practice.

The Upper Right: *Hot Unstructured* traditions include such traditions as *Chaitanya*, Pure Land Buddhism, Sufism, Christian mysticism (St. Teresa, St. John of the Cross). Here we have the notion of an objective divine power that both encloses the practitioner and is the source of liberation and that liberation comes from love and submission to the divine power. Consciousness is seen as divine and universal and humans are nothing before God. Individual spiritual qualities are giving love and responding to the love of others, while the social spiritual qualities are serving the divine. In the *Hot Unstructured* traditions humans are always failing but they need only ask the divine for assistance since love is freely given to all that ask (and in some cases even to those who do not ask).<sup>99</sup>

Finally we come to the Lower Right: *Cool Unstructured* traditions. These traditions include *Advaita Vedanta*, Ramana Maharshi, Dzogchen, *Mahamudra*, Zen, Taoism and *Madhyamika* Buddhism. In this case one's own nature is liberation and all else is illusion including the universe and all things in it. The truth is always present but no one understands, and consciousness is seen as natural and universal. The inner spiritual quality of the *Cool Unstructured* Traditions is unruffled calm while the social spiritual quality is summarised by letting things be. Here the truth is very simple but it is

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<sup>98</sup> Schlamm, "Ken Wilber's Spectrum Model", 24-25.

<sup>99</sup> Schlamm, "Ken Wilber's Spectrum Model", 23-24.

also very illusive. This illusiveness means that one is constantly failing but can begin anew each moment one is on the path by simply being alive.<sup>100</sup>

In essence, Jung has “created a secular form of *Hot Structured* path to spiritual transformation.”<sup>101</sup> The major attributes of this *Hot Structured* Jungian form of secular psycho-spiritual transformation are summarised by Schlamm as follows:

- a) archetypal images are numinous and ‘wholly other’ (having their own life) *to the ego*;
- b) cryptic, initiatory knowledge is granted by these inner images (in Jung’s case by Elijah and Philemon);
- c) The inner cosmos is a labyrinth, and liberation from the powers/beings in it, created by the archetypes, is effected by images which function as esoteric passwords;
- d) expansion away from a point is triggered by the practice of active imagination, producing leaps in understanding;
- e) the danger of the journey towards individuation is psychosis; and
- f) both the withdrawal of psychic projections from the world and the experience of synchronistic links between inner and outer events serve the cosmic purpose.<sup>102</sup>

Schlamm also adds that there are two other significant features to Jung’s teachings. The first feature is “Jung’s archetype of rebirth, the experience of death (before you die) followed by rebirth is a common feature of *Hot Structured* and *Unstructured* traditions.”<sup>103</sup> The second feature is Jung’s experience as a wounded healer; another common feature found in both *Hot* traditions.<sup>104</sup>

Schlamm anticipates the potential argument for placing Jung in a *Cool Structured* tradition. Schlamm indicates two reasons why Jung could be mistakenly identified with

<sup>100</sup> Schlamm, “Ken Wilber’s Spectrum Model”, 24-25.

<sup>101</sup> Schlamm, “Ken Wilber’s Spectrum Model”, 33.

<sup>102</sup> Adapted from Schlamm, “Ken Wilber’s Spectrum Model”, 33. See also Schlamm, “C.G. Jung’s Visionary Mysticism”, 23-24.

<sup>103</sup> Schlamm, “C.G. Jung’s Visionary Mysticism”, 24. See Jung, “Psychology and Alchemy”, *CW 12*, par. 436-441; “The Visions of Zosimos”, *CW 13*, pars. 93, 135, 139; “The Psychology of the Transference”, *CW 16*, pars. 467-471, 478, 493, 511; “Archetypes of the Collective Unconscious”, *CW 9i*, par. 66; “Concerning Rebirth”, *CW 9i*, pars. 199-210, 234, 240-258.

<sup>104</sup> Schlamm, “C.G. Jung’s Visionary Mysticism”, 24.

*Cool Structured* traditions. The first is that “one might assume that because *Hot* is other than oneself, it is not an intrapsychic experience.”<sup>105</sup> Yet, as Schlamm reminds us, the experiences related by Rawlinson in his four quadrants are all intra-psychic with the difference lying in how “oneself” is defined.<sup>106</sup> For the *Hot* traditions “oneself” “means human consciousness, psyche, or soul, whereas in the *Cool* traditions it means the absolute impersonal spirit.”<sup>107</sup> One aspect of Jung’s thought that differentiates him from a *Cool Structured* tradition is his emphasis on “imaginary/visionary experience as a tool for spiritual transformation” that put him at odds with the “finally tuned, spiritual technologies seeking to transcend all images, thoughts, impulses, and desires.”<sup>108</sup> Schlamm stresses that archetypal images are numinous and wholly other to the ego.<sup>109</sup> The confrontation with the collective unconscious,<sup>110</sup> as indicated in Jung’s writings, orients Jung in the *Hot* rather than the *Cool* spiritual traditions.<sup>111</sup> For Schlamm this is illustrated “in the theistic orientation of [Jung’s] writings and his rejection of non-dualism.”<sup>112</sup> The second reason Jung’s thought might be mistaken as *Cool Structured* is because of his scientific claims made in his clinical work.<sup>113</sup> However, Schlamm reminds us that Jung was critical of his contemporary reductionistic science “as illustrated by the influence of Romantic *Naturphilosophie* on his work and his writings

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<sup>105</sup> Schlamm, “C.G. Jung’s Visionary Mysticism”, 25.

<sup>106</sup> Schlamm, “C.G. Jung’s Visionary Mysticism”, 25.

<sup>107</sup> Schlamm, “C.G. Jung’s Visionary Mysticism”, 25.

<sup>108</sup> Schlamm, “C.G. Jung’s Visionary Mysticism”, 25.

<sup>109</sup> Schlamm, “C.G. Jung’s Visionary Mysticism”, 25.

<sup>110</sup> See Jung, “On the Psychology of the Unconscious”, *CW* 7, pars. 103n, 184; “On the Tale of the Otter”, *CW* 18, par. 1720; “The Meaning of Psychology for Modern Man”, *CW* 10, par. 312; “Psychology and Alchemy”, *CW* 12 pars. 48, 51, 323, 327-328; “Religion and Psychology: A Reply to Martin Buber”, *CW* 18, par. 1505; *MDR*, 207-208.

<sup>111</sup> Schlamm, “C.G. Jung’s Visionary Mysticism”, 25.

<sup>112</sup> Schlamm, “C.G. Jung’s Visionary Mysticism”, 25. The issue of Jung’s theistic orientation towards mysticism is analysed in Leon Schlamm’s “C.G. Jung, Mystical Experience and Inflation” in *Harvest: International Journal for Jungian Studies*, vol. 46, n. 2, 2000, 108-128. See especially p. 117.

<sup>113</sup> Schlamm, “C.G. Jung’s Visionary Mysticism”, 25.

on synchronicity (a *Hot Structured* concept illustrating the microcosm/macrocosm homology).”<sup>114</sup>

Jung was also in conflict with both *Hot* and *Cool Unstructured* traditions. In the case of the former, Schlamm states that the martyr/love aspect of the *Hot Unstructured* traditions was at odds with Jung’s “refusal to totally submit to the numinous images of the unconscious.”<sup>115</sup> In the case of the latter tradition, Schlamm states that:

Jung clearly regarded *Cool Unstructured* teachers as people who, in the words of Rawlinson, are a “stick-in-the-mud” and “avoid life and its challenges”. This indifference, if not hostility, to *Cool Unstructured* traditions is evinced in his writings on India,<sup>116</sup> as well as by his refusal, against the advice Heinrich Zimmer and Paul Brunton, to meet Rama Maharshi, the *Cool Unstructured* Advaita Vedanta teacher, when in India in 1938.”<sup>117</sup>

Schlamm has presented us with a constructive interpretation of Jung’s psychological model as an example of a secular or detraditionised *Hot Structured* spiritual tradition. He indicates that while the mind-body dichotomy may not be prevalent in the East, it is still a component of Western culture. Schlamm states that “[i]t is for this reason that I believe the West today is in greater need of *Hot Structured* traditions, which focus attention on mind-body-spirit integration, than of *Cool Structured* soteriological paths.”<sup>118</sup> The *sefirot* of the Western Esoteric Tree of Life participate in a *Hot Structured* manner. The *sefirot* below the Abyss participate in a dualistic or theistic manner and parallel Jung’s model of the psyche very well. Esotericists, like Crowley, who have been influenced by Eastern philosophy and religion, tend to interpret the higher

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<sup>114</sup> Schlamm, “C.G. Jung’s Visionary Mysticism”, 26.

<sup>115</sup> Schlamm, “C.G. Jung’s Visionary Mysticism”, 26. Schlamm also indicates that this attitude of respect for but not surrender to the unconscious is clearly stated in “Answer to Job”, *CW 11*, pars. 553-758.

<sup>116</sup> Jung, “The Holy Men of India”, *CW 11*, pars. 950-963.

<sup>117</sup> Schlamm, “C.G. Jung’s Visionary Mysticism”, 27. See Jung, “The Holy Men of India”, pars. 950-952 and *Letters* v. 1, pp. 236, 477-479.

<sup>118</sup> Schlamm, “Ken Wilber’s Spectrum Model”, 34.

levels of the Tree, the Supernal Triad and especially *Kether*, as non-dual; however, it is primarily the final aspect of the Tree, the Veils of Negative Existence, which fully reflects non-dualism.

## **Chapter Six**

### **Beginnings and Endings: Roots, Summary and Conclusion**

*Kether* is the highest or most spiritually refined *sefira* of the Tree of Life. It is the source of all the *sefirot* and it is also the culmination of the psycho-spiritual processes of the Western Esoteric Tradition. However, even the illustrious *Kether* is not the sum total of divinity for the Esotericists. What follows is a description of the Negative Veils of Existence from various Western Esoteric sources as well as a proposal as to how these Veils relate to the theories of analytical psychology.

Though the lower portions of the Tree of Life may appear to be its foundation, it is actually the upper extremities of the Tree that are its roots of the Tree and even *Kether*, the highest or deepest *sefira* has its roots in a still deeper source. The Western Esotericists, following Jewish Kabbalah, have labelled this three-tiered source *Ain Sof Aur*, *Ain Sof* and finally *Ain*.<sup>1</sup> These three “Negative Veils of Existence” are even more abstract than the *sefirot* or the Supernal Triad. However, in order to present a more complete and rounded view of the Tree of Life we will review some of the more salient points pertaining to the Tree of Life as presented by the Esotericists.

### ***Ain Sof Aur, Ain Sof, Ain* or The Real Collective Unconscious**

Although the Veils have the adjective “Negative” applied to them and despite their abstract nature, we should not assume that they are devoid of function or value. At the same time though, the Esotericists do not expend a great deal of energy in trying to describe the Veils. Their abstract nature is accessible only “in that region of consciousness which transcends thought” and while the mystics of many traditions will attempt to describe or detail these higher realms of consciousness, the Kabbalists, so

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<sup>1</sup> The spelling of these terms, like all the Hebrew words used within the Western Esoteric Tradition varies from source to source.

Fortune assumes, “content themselves with saying the Absolute is unknown to the state of consciousness which is normal to human beings.”<sup>2</sup> Ultimately the Esotericists seem to imply that the *sefirot*, including *Kether*, are somehow within the reach, spiritually or psychologically, of the human being. Somehow we can transform ourselves in order to become closer to God, Unity, or Totality. The Veils, on the other hand, are wholly beyond our capacity to comprehend or experience directly.

Even though the Esotericists do not attempt to cultivate a complex system of metaphors and correspondences for the “Absolute” as they have for the *sefirot*, they do recognise some justification in engaging in at least a cursory form of symbolic discourse. Dion Fortune states that “[w]e must clearly realise that in these highly abstract regions the mind can use nothing but symbols; but these symbols have the power to convey realisations to minds that know how to use them; these symbols are the seeds of thought whence understanding arises, even if we are not able to expand the symbol itself into a concrete realisation.”<sup>3</sup> Even though there may not be a *conscious* comprehension of the Veils, Fortune indicates that there should still be an attempt to engage with the symbols or metaphors which, however abstract, represent the Veils.

In another citation, Fortune discusses the Unknown/Unknowable issue that was discussed in the previous chapter. Fortune believes, following a standard *Hot Structured* and perennial outlook, that given enough time and development, these Veils may become more accessible to human consciousness:

Little by little, like a rising tide, realisation is concreting [sic] the Abstract, assimilating and expressing in terms of its own nature things which belong to another sphere; and we shall make a great mistake if we try to prove with Herbert Spencer that because a

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<sup>2</sup> Dion Fortune, *The Mystical Qabalah* (Boston, MA: Weiser Books, 2000), 27.

<sup>3</sup> Fortune, *The Mystical Qabalah*, 32.

thing is unknown by any capacity of the mind we at present possess, that it must for ever be Unknowable. Time is not only increasing our knowledge, but evolution is increasing our capacity; and initiation, which is forcing the house of evolution, bringing faculties to birth out of due season, brings the consciousness of the adept within reach of vast apprehensions which are as yet below the horizon of the human mind.<sup>4</sup>

For Fortune, the practices, initiations, and symbols of the Western Esoteric Tradition, the Yoga of the West,<sup>5</sup> have the potential to contribute to the development of human consciousness. This may or may not be the case and it is not our place to attempt to prove or disprove this claim. The Negative Veils are metaphors or symbols for concepts of a vast and utterly non-dual nature. Fortune recounts that the Kabbalists state “Kether is the Malkuth of the Unmanifest”<sup>6</sup> indicating, at least on one level, that there is a graduation of transpersonal experience or consciousness which can occur beyond *Kether* though this may point more to a distant evolutionary potential rather than something that can occur presently.

The capacity to appreciate and appropriate the symbol of the Negative Veils would appear to be rather subjective and would likely vary from person to person.

Fortune claims:

[D]ifferent minds go back different distances, and that for some the Veil is drawn in one place, and for others in another. The ignorant [sic] goes no further back than the concept of God as an old man with a long white beard who sat on a golden throne and gave orders for creation. The scientist will go back a little further before he is compelled to draw a veil called the ether; and the philosopher will go back yet further before he draws a veil called the Absolute; but the initiate will go back furthest of all because he has learnt to

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<sup>4</sup> Fortune, *The Mystical Qabalah*, 32.

<sup>5</sup> Jung claims that the West will eventually develop its own yoga and that “it will be on the basis laid down by Christianity.” Jung, “Yoga and the West”, *CW 11*, par. 537.

<sup>6</sup> Fortune, *The Mystical Qabalah*, 29.

do his thinking in symbols, and the symbols are to the mind what tools are to the hand—an extended application of its power.<sup>7</sup>

It is the goal of the initiate to utilise and live in the realm of symbols. The symbols, in turn, convey the best possible expressions of that which is highly abstract to the initiate.

Gareth Knight offers little additional detail to the nature of the Negative Veils other than a general concurrence with Fortune's view. Knight does posit, again through his particular Cosmic Christological reading of the Western Esoteric Tradition that the Veils correspond to a link with the forces outside our "Solar Logoidal" jurisdiction.<sup>8</sup> Knight also reinforces a description of the Negative Veils of Existence given by Fortune. Fortune writes that an adept once told her that "God is pressure"<sup>9</sup> and Knight claims that one useful speculative meditation is to use the idea that the Veils are "a vacuum of pressure."<sup>10</sup> Kabbalistically, this idea resonates with notion of *tzimtzum* in Isaac Luria's thought. Scholem tells us that "*Tsimtsum* does not mean the concentration of God *at* a point, but his retreat *away* from a point. What does this mean? It means briefly that the existence of the universe is made possible by a process of shrinkage in God."<sup>11</sup> There is a sense that the Negative Veils displace or in some way impose themselves onto the *sefirot* of the Tree of Life in much the same way the archetypes of the collective unconscious can impose themselves on consciousness.

Regardie equates *Ain* to: *Parabrahmam*, Crowley's rendition of the Egyptian goddess Nuit, the Absolute or the Unknowable of the Agnosticism of Herbert Spencer,<sup>12</sup>

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<sup>7</sup> Fortune, *The Mystical Qabalah*, 28.

<sup>8</sup> Gareth Knight, *A Practical Guide to Qabalistic Symbolism* (York Beach, ME: Samuel Weiser, Inc., 1993), v. I, 64.

<sup>9</sup> Fortune, *The Mystical Qabalah*, 31.

<sup>10</sup> Knight, *A Practical Guide*, v. I, 64.

<sup>11</sup> Gershom Scholem, *Major Trends in Jewish Mysticism* (New York: Schocken Books, 1973), 260.

<sup>12</sup> It would appear that Fortune and Regardie are at odds with respect to the possible connection between the theories of Herbert Spencer and *Ain*.

the thrice-great Darkness of the Egyptian sacerdotal caste, the *Tao*, also to this “Qabalistic conception or principle of *zero* would be allocated Barruch Spinoza’s definition of God or Substance...”<sup>13</sup> Like Knight, Crowley offers us little help simply equating the Veils with Zero Absolute, Zero as undefinable, and “Zero as basis of possible vibration.”<sup>14</sup>

The analytical psychological interpretation of the Esoteric Tree of Life has attributed personal perception of transpersonal experience to the lower *sefirot* and the source of the experience of the potential non-dual transpersonal psychic energy to the *sefirot* above the Supernal Abyss. The lower *sefirot* participate in the process of developing the whole individual. Similarly, the process of individuation is an interplay between the ego-complex (*Malkut*) and the various archetypal images experienced along the psychological Path of the Serpent (such as the *sefirot* that comprise the self-mandala). At this level the transpersonal experience resembles, at least from the metaphorical descriptions of the Esotericists, as a theistic dialogue or a *Hot Structured* form of mysticism. The Supernal Triad, on the other hand, is representative of those transpersonal realms of consciousness where the boundaries between individual and other are absent. This would be more akin to the *Cool Structured* traditions. This, of course, is not how many of the Esotericists would describe the processes of the Tree; primarily this would be the case with Esotericists like Crowley who were influenced by Eastern traditions that fall under the *Cool Structured* heading.

The Veils remind us that no matter how far one thinks they have progressed or can progress, psychologically or spiritually, there is always something far vaster. The

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<sup>13</sup> Israel Regardie, *A Garden of Pomegranates* (St. Paul, MINN: Llewellyn Publications, 2002), 36-37.

<sup>14</sup> Aleister Crowley, *Magick/Liber Aba* (York Beach, ME: Samuel Weiser, Inc., 1997), 564.

Veils also remind us that no matter how detailed or pragmatic a model or theory is, no matter how “true” or “empirical” it is, there comes a point when it becomes pallid in the light of the *Ain Sof Aur*, dwarfed in the presence of the *Ain Sof* and finally engulfed and absorbed in the negation of *Ain*. Ultimately the Western Esoteric Tradition and analytical psychology are two diverse and independent systems or models of psycho-spiritual development. The former is a spiritual and/or mystical tradition that is concerned with the initiatory progress of the individual through various psycho-spiritual experiences or markers while the latter is a recognised and accredited form of depth psychology with its own history and specific requirements and assumptions. However different these traditions may be, they are both concerned with the systematic exploration of the metaphorical realms of the psyche in all its complexity and numinosity.

### **Routes of Wholeness: A Summary**

The Western Esoteric Tradition claims and upholds certain presuppositions and many of these presuppositions are reflected in the *sefirot* of the Tree of Life. One claim made by the Tradition is that ultimate reality is beyond our “normal” human perception and consciousness. Despite this fact, the Esotericists believe that it is possible to widen and to deepen how human consciousness is defined. They accomplish the feat, so they assert, through training in the use of meditation, visualisation, ritual, and, as had been proposed throughout this thesis, through the vehicle that unites all of these—metaphor. The further reaches of this widening consciousness flow into psycho-spiritual realms that move beyond the boundaries of individuality into transpersonal domains of increasing

non-dual abstraction. The *sefirot* and the Tree of Life are symbols that help define or give quality to that which is otherwise unconscious to the initiate.

Analytical psychology is also concerned with avoiding a rigidly defined consciousness. While the development and differentiation of the ego-complex and the source of individuality are a central component of analytical psychology, there remains another goal and that goal is the cultivation of wholeness where both the conscious self and the personal and collective unconscious participate in a dialogue. The language that is spoken during this dialogue is one of symbol and metaphor. This dialogue requires that the ego-complex must realise that it is not the centre of psyche. While the ego-complex may be the centre of consciousness, its identity and definition is not as central once the symbolic influence of the unconscious, not to mention the underlying unity of the *unus mundus* and the correlated theory of synchronicity, are taken into consideration.

Both the Western Esoteric Tradition and analytical psychology attempt to define and engage with the development of human consciousness without attempting to reduce consciousness to the simple constellation of molecules and cells.<sup>15</sup> Both find merit in the less tangible human realms of symbols and soul. By placing these two similar yet ultimately distinct traditions in relation to one another we can anticipate a meaningful and mutually informative dialogue.

There are two general areas or themes through which the Western Esoteric Tree of Life has attempted to bring together the Western Esoteric Tradition and analytical psychology in comparison. These two areas could be simply labelled theory and

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<sup>15</sup> That is not to say that the materialist approach to consciousness is not important. Obviously a biological or biochemical understanding of the workings of the brain is essential for health and further human evolution. However, whereas analytical psychology can find meaning in both the materialist model and still appreciate the necessity of symbol and psyche, the materialist model is much less open to an equal appreciation.

application. These two areas are offered to present potential areas of departure for further research.

## Theory

If we take the Tree to be a symbol or metaphor for the psyche we see that the *sefirot* are both individual and unique while at the same time each is part of the larger whole. In this way it may be beneficial to see the psyche as polytheistic (allowing each archetypal image to exist on its own terms), as James Hillman prefers, *and* as a monotheistic unity (with a focus on the self as the whole psyche or the organising process within it), as Jung would have it. For the polytheistic approach, the *sefirot* of the Western Esoteric Tradition can be approached and engaged via their traditional correspondences and symbols. Whether it is Mercury/*Hod*, Venus/*Netzach*, Mars/*Geburah* or Saturn/*Binah*, the *sefirot* represent archetypal and mythological patterns (though primarily Occidental in nature) and symbols that have been present in the human psyche for millennia as has been reflected in religion, art and psychology. And as Jung has indicated, contact with the archetypal sources of myth “means an intensification and enhancement of life.”<sup>16</sup> It would be unfortunate if the vitality or value of these *sefirot* were viewed as inferior to an overarching unity within the psyche; however, that unity also brings with it important and necessary assumptions.

We noted in Chapter Four that David Tacey observed that there seems to be a fear of unity, wholeness or balance within our culture.<sup>17</sup> On the one hand, if symbols of wholeness are a necessary and healthy component of our psyche it does us no good to

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<sup>16</sup> Jung, *Letters*, vol. 2, 19.

<sup>17</sup> David Tacey, “Twisting and Turning with James Hillman” in Ann Casement, ed. *Post-Jungians Today: Key Papers in Contemporary Analytical Psychology* (New York, NY: Routledge, 1998), 232

avoid or repress such symbols. On the other hand, the complexity and multiplicity of existence can be eradicated through the zealous drive for unity. Unity and difference, balance and disparity, order and chaos are all essential components of the Tree of Life and of our psyches. Crowley's *Liber AL vel Legis* reflects this when the goddess Nuit, as "Infinite Space, and the Infinite Stars thereof",<sup>18</sup> speaks the words "For I am divided for love's sake for the chance of union."<sup>19</sup> In other words, we cannot have unity, or by extension wholeness, without division. Perhaps it is better to view our psychic cosmology as simultaneously populated with various powers or qualities of equal value with the quality of unity and balance being one of many patterns contained within it but one that is vital for the process of initiation and individuation.

The "polytheistic" approach to the psyche also encourages investigation into the connections between various archetypal images. In Chapter Four we discussed the relation between *Gebura* and *Hesed*.<sup>20</sup> Each *sefira* represents a unique type of power or quality. The symbols of Mars and Jupiter, warrior king and enlightened dictator, play off one another and while it is useful to know the correspondences of each *sefira*, the nuances of each come out in its comparison with the other. For example, this can be applied to the relation between anima and animus. Rather than simply assuming they are separate and gender specific constructs, we can bring them into dialogue with each other. What is it that *Hod* and *Netzach* have to offer each other in comparison and contrast? Is it viable or even reasonable that emotional and intellectual capacities be segregated from one another or emphasised in one biological sex over the other? Other questions might involve how the self or the central *sefira Tiferet* relates to the transpersonal Supernal

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<sup>18</sup> Crowley, *Magick/Liber Aba*, 306.

<sup>19</sup> Crowley, *Magick/Liber Aba*, 306.

<sup>20</sup> Page 213ff.

Triad or the enigmatic *Da'at*? While we will not attempt to engage with these questions presently, we can observe that such obvious questions surface as one begins to interact with the Tree and its patterns of connectivity. Underlying, supporting and informing the processes of the *sefirot* and the Tree of Life is the neither/nor logic of the psyche.

The *sefirot* are abstract *middoth* of an even more abstract source. We would be hard pressed to *prove* the *sefirot* exist in some objective way. However, if we concede that experiences with psychic symbols or figures, such as Jung's experience with Philemon, are meaningful, or at least potentially so, then the symbolic nature of the Tree may prove to be useful. This is especially the case with the various figures encountered on the Paths of the Tree, which we will analyse in greater detail below under the "Application" heading.

The metaphorical and symbolic beings of the Esoteric Tree of Life necessitate the cultivation of neither/nor language in order to engage with them and reflect the complexity and nuances of human consciousness. This is useful in two ways. First, the Tree requires the cultivation of psychological faith. By granting these metaphorical and psychic symbols an autonomous position in our psychic reality, we are also granting ourselves the capacity to invoke the libidinous boon they hold. However, as the initiate and Jung were aware, it is easy for the ego-complex to misappropriate that *mana*. Yet despite the risks, the initiate and analysand dare to hold fast on the path of self-development. The second useful theory that arises from the neither/nor language of the Tree of Life is related to the psychological faith. While analytical psychology is first and foremost a form of clinical depth psychology, it is also, as Schlamm has indicated supports a form of detraditionalised mysticism.

As analytical psychology attempts to uphold the scientific standards necessary to legitimise its place as a valid form of clinical psychology, it naturally runs the risk of losing its emphasis on experience and development of regions of the human psyche beyond that of the ego-complex. In Kabbalistic terms, there is the risk that *Hod* will take precedence over *Netzach*. Of course, there is also the problem of the converse occurring as can be seen in some New Age and Esoteric literature in which Jung is presented and/or misrepresented. While the clinical practitioners of analytical psychology are not required to, and perhaps do not even care to, view Jung's model of the psyche and individuation as a form of mysticism, theirs is not the only interpretation of Jung's writings.

Religion and, more specifically, mysticism was a major interest and concern for Jung and although he claimed to be an empiricist, the foundation of his empirical perspective was one that was affable toward parts of the human psychic experience that other empiricists would have left alone. Perhaps it is useful to see two Jung's. There is the Jung who was concerned with the differentiation, development and maintenance of the ego-complex and the clinical applications and practices that aid in that goal. There is also the Jung who immersed himself deeply into Kabbalah, alchemy, Gnosticism, mystical Christianity, Buddhism, Hinduism, shamanic and tribal practices, and the *I Ching*. This is the same Jung who cultivated two personalities, one of which, the dark one, eventually grew into a "ghostly guru".<sup>21</sup> It is not difficult to place Jung's analytical psychology under the *Hot Structured* heading of Rawlinson's taxonomy. As the number two personality, that is the "second" Jung's, writings fit under the aegis of a secular *Hot Structured* mysticism, the former Jung's writings fall under scientific empiricism and in this way they both, when taken together, are also symbolic representations of Magick as

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<sup>21</sup> Jung, *MDR*, 184.

they reflect both science and art. These two faces of Jung bring together science and art, head and heart, under the will of individuation through the medium of the unconscious, in other words, through symbol and metaphor.

### **Application**

The theories elaborated above are areas that can be explored further and while theories are useful to challenge and change perspectives, it may be helpful also to present a few pragmatic applications of the Esoteric Tree of Life.

Analytical psychology could benefit the most from a thorough study of the metaphors and practices of the Western Esoteric Tradition. The reason for this is that analytical psychology is, by its very nature, open and amiable to the processes and products of the human unconscious. The symbols of Kabbalah, including the Tree of Life, have obvious resonances with Jung's understanding of the psyche. Analytical psychology's lack of spiritual dogma allows for foreign gods, as it were, to surface and to be taken in a critical light.<sup>22</sup> The Western Esoteric Tradition, on the other hand, tends to be less liberal in the sense that the entities encountered within the Tradition are generally assumed to be literal and objective beings.<sup>23</sup> Should the Esotericist take up a middle ground that incorporates the value and necessity of the psyche, as have people like

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<sup>22</sup> This is not to imply that there are no assumptions made within analytical psychology in relation to how the psyche is viewed. There are differences in perspectives that can be seen, as Andrew Samuels has demonstrated in his *Jung and the Post-Jungians*, when comparing Classical, Developmental, and Archetypal schools as well as differences in perspective between analysts trained in the Zurich school of thought and those trained in a more North American medical empirical perspective. Analytical psychology accepts that the unconscious produces images and that those images have meaning or value and can be experienced as autonomous from the ego-complex that experiences them.

<sup>23</sup> The Esotericists who have been cited throughout this thesis represent a rather sophisticated perspective. They tend to incorporate both psychological and spiritual perspectives in their particular outlook regarding the Western Esoteric Tradition. However, as is evident in other spiritual traditions, sometimes the perspective held by the elite in the tradition is not always identical to the average or lay practitioner.

Crowley, Fortune, Regardie, Knight, and DuQuette, then a study of analytical psychology may help to flush out the psychological richness that is endemic to the archetypal symbols of the Tradition.

The most obvious place where analytical psychology can find applications for the Esoteric Tree of Life is in the practice of pathworking. Let us take a moment to place pathworking in an analytical psychological perspective.<sup>24</sup>

Pathworking, within the Western Esoteric Tradition, would generally occur within the context of a complete course of intellectual and ritual training and practice. The intellectual training and study presents the meanings of the symbols employed in the pathworking, while the ritual practice helps to arrange and concretise them. The following summary of a pathworking is from the Ciceros' addition to Regardie's *A Garden of Pomegranates*.<sup>25</sup> The example summarised below spans the whole Middle Pillar though its focus is on the higher Path bridging *Tiferet* and *Kether*.

In practice, a ritual such as the LBRP or a more advanced banishing ritual such as the Supreme Banishing Ritual of the Pentagram (SBRP) and/or the Banishing Ritual of the Hexagram (BRH) would precede the pathworking.<sup>26</sup> This would symbolically purify the surroundings and allow for the individual to feel secure and safe. The breathing techniques employed in these rituals would also facilitate a state of relaxation through the altering of brain and blood chemistry. Once these preliminary rituals are complete the practitioner begins his or her guided visualisation. The actual guiding could take the

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<sup>24</sup> The following example is merely a hypothetical application of pathworking and should not be taken as a suggestion for clinical practice, though it would be interesting if some form of systematic clinical study were undertaken.

<sup>25</sup> Regardie, *A Garden of Pomegranates*, 412-418.

<sup>26</sup> For an example of the BRH see Kraig, *Modern Magick*, 168-177 and for the SBRP or its invoking form (SIRP) see Donald Michael Kraig, *Modern Magick* (St. Paul, MINN: Llewellyn Publications, 1988), 205-213.

form of a previously recorded reading of the pathworking, another person in the room reading it or it could be recounted from memory.

The summary of this Path given by the Ciceros is as follows: “In this pathworking, the student travels from Malkuth to Yesod to Tiphareth, and continues on the Path of Gimel [the Hebrew letter corresponding to the Path], where he experiences another ‘Dark Night of the Soul.’”<sup>27</sup> First the practitioner mentally formulates their temple of *Malkut* (this “temple” would have been developed in earlier training).

Once in the *Malkut* temple the practitioner addresses the Archangel of *Malkut*, Sandalphon. After an exchange of passwords and symbols the Archangel leads them to *Yesod* (the Temple for *Yesod* would also have been previously developed). The practitioner then arrives at the hexagonal Temple of *Tiferet* which is “draped in yellow and surrounded by six large candle sticks, with a large hexagram engraved in both ceiling and floor.”<sup>28</sup> After reciting the corresponding divine names, the Archangel Raphael appears. After again displaying the corresponding password and symbol, Raphael takes the practitioner to the east of the temple:

and draws back a portion of the yellow drapery to reveal a blue archway bearing a white letter Gimel on its keystone. Within the arch is a veil with the tarot image of *The High Priestess* painted on it. The archangel traces the symbol of Luna in the air before the archway and the veil evaporates. In its place is a door carved out of moonstone.<sup>29</sup>

The practitioner then walks through the moonstone door and onto the Thirteenth Path. As the practitioner steps onto the Path the Archangel speaks: “It is written: ‘It is not from man to man that the great gifts are communicated, for that which he can give to another is

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<sup>27</sup> Regardie, *A Garden of Pomegranates*, 413.

<sup>28</sup> Regardie, *A Garden of Pomegranates*, 413.

<sup>29</sup> Regardie, *A Garden of Pomegranates*, 413.

that only which a man can spare from himself. It is for this reason that, after solidarity and brotherhood, each of us stands alone.’ Know that All is One.”<sup>30</sup>

After walking along a landscape of a lush valley the practitioner is confronted with a vast desert. Eventually thirst and exhaustion begin to take hold and the practitioner falls face first into the sand. Then a camel, “equipped with an ornate saddle of blue and silver leather covered in moonstones and pearls”<sup>31</sup> offers itself as a mount to carry the practitioner across the desert. With the sun setting into darkness, the newly acquired mount ushers the practitioner across the desert following a path that eventually ends at a great chasm. The camel lunges into the depth of the dark chasm abyss and as it does time seems to stand still and the only frame of continued reference for the practitioner is the mount below them. Eventually time continues and the camel reaches the other side and continues its pace. Above the rider and mount is a night sky illuminated by a bright full moon. As the camel gallops along the desert it gives way to rolling hills and forests. Ahead is a stream of water from which the rider partakes. The rider returns to the mount and continues to walk up the middle of the stream to its source.<sup>32</sup>

At the end of the stream is a small temple created in the Hellenic style though it is carved entirely from moonstone. The rider dismounts and walks up the stairs of the temple. The temple has no lighting save for the light of the full moon which enters through the open ceiling. There are two large columns, one moonstone and the other obsidian, before which lies the source of the stream—a square pool of pure water. In the east of the temple there is a stylised star engraved in the wall. The practitioner sits down

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<sup>30</sup> Regardie, *A Garden of Pomegranates*, 413.

<sup>31</sup> Regardie, *A Garden of Pomegranates*, 414.

<sup>32</sup> Regardie, *A Garden of Pomegranates*, 414-415.

by the water and stares into it. As the practitioner gazes into the water he or she is gripped by a feeling of despair and doubt:

Is this it you wonder? All this way for a temple, a moonlit pool and a drawing of a star? Shouldn't there be more? Where are the gods and goddesses, the knights and the prophets, the legends and the stories that illustrated the other paths?...The paths that you explored in the middle realms of the Tree never left you with such feelings of spiritual desolation. You are filled with self-doubt about why you are even attempting to scale the Tree of Life. You question all your motives, your accomplishments, and even your most strongly held spiritual beliefs. Never have you felt more empty or more alone. Overcome by sorrow, you bury your face in your hands and tears stream down your face, and your body is wracked with sobs.<sup>33</sup>

The tears fall into the pool and turn to pearls. The practitioner continues to cry until they “have exhausted all feelings of sadness and despair.”<sup>34</sup> As a sense of calm returns, the practitioner looks at the bottom of the pool to see that it is covered with pearls. The eastern wall of the temple is now transparent and opens to the stars on the horizon and where there was once a carving of a star there is now a cluster of real stars; a galaxy slowly spinning. The voice of the moon, Selene, speaks from the night sky, her face hidden by a veil. To complete this pathworking of *Gimel* we will cite the words of Selene to the practitioner:

“Can your tears prevail against the tide of the sea?” she asks. “Your might against the waves of the Storm? Your love against all the sorrows of the world? The Path of Gimel passes through Daath, the higher arc of Yesod. It is written ‘In Daath the Depths are broken up and the clouds drop down dew.’

“This is the initiation which no mortal being can offer. This is the final purification that no earthly water can bestow. It has been called a Dark Night of the Soul. Could the path that leads to the experience of the final union with God be any less? Could any

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<sup>33</sup> Regardie, *A Garden of Pomegranates*, 416.

<sup>34</sup> Regardie, *A Garden of Pomegranates*, 417.

vestment of impurity survive such an ascent? All must be let go.  
All must be released...”<sup>35</sup>

As Selene’s monologue ends her image fades and only the moon remains and the eastern wall of the temple is again solid. And though the practitioner is told they may not understand all that was said and revealed to them there is a sense that a spiritual clarity has been reached on some level. The practitioner climbs back on the camel and returns to the temple of *Tiferet* where he or she leaves the mount and is greeted by the Archangel Raphael. They then descend the Path of *Samek* to *Yesod* to return to *Malkut* and the Archangel Sandalphon. And with a final gesture the ritual and pathworking is complete.

As is obvious from this one example, the practice of pathworking is a detailed form of meditation and visualisation. Of course any claim to spiritual clarity that culminates from this practice is subjective. However, what we can note is that this type of practice gathers and concentrates the teachings of the Western Esoteric Tradition, especially as they correspond to the correspondences of the *sefirot* of the Tree of Life, and organises them in a manner in which they can be engaged with on an imaginal and metaphoric level. The symbols that were originally two-dimensional representations of psycho-spiritual processes become ritually vivified and charged.

From an analytical psychological perspective, exercises such as these could be applied to various archetypal images commonly found within the literature of analytical psychology. For example, a pathworking using details from *The Grail Legend* by Emma Jung and Marie-Louise von Franz<sup>36</sup> could be further supported by an understanding of *Tiferet*. In this way the theories and assumptions of analytical psychology are made

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<sup>35</sup> Regardie, *A Garden of Pomegranates*, 417.

<sup>36</sup> Emma Jung and Marie-Louise von Franz. *The Grail Legend* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1998).

manifest in the psyche. Rather than passively waiting for the unconscious to “send” symbols to consciousness, one can bring together the symbolic language of the unconscious into a “neither/nor” or liminal portion of consciousness created by activities such as the Western Esoteric banishing rituals.

However, on the one hand, by uniting the pre-existing symbol system of the Western Esoteric Tradition with the uniquely psychological interpretation of the Grail myth and arranging this into a pragmatic activity such as pathworking, we have a practice which has more imposed structure than active imagination and is therefore, in a sense, less true to the individual’s psyche and unconscious. On the other hand, the pathworking is systematic, thorough and encourages disciplined and prolonged work with archetypal images and would ultimately relate to the individual. The same exercises could be applied to Jung’s or Edinger’s interpretation of alchemy or even a pathworking based on an analytical psychological interpretation of the *Splendor Solis* as found in Henderson and Sherwood’s *Transformation of the Psyche*.<sup>37</sup> By approaching the Western Esoteric Tradition as Jung approached alchemy and Gnosticism, we can begin to appreciate the depths to which archetypal images have permeated the teachings, rituals, and myths of the Tradition. While it is not necessary for an analyst or someone who is interested in the academic application of analytical psychology to understand the Tree of Life and the *sefirot*, it could prove to be a valuable structure or mould for penetrating, experiencing and analysing the numinosity and *middoth* of archetypal images. The above is but one example of how analytical psychology could benefit from the Western Esoteric Tradition.

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<sup>37</sup> Joseph L. Henderson and Dyane N. Sherwood. *Transformation of the Psyche* (New York, NY: Brunner-Routledge, 2003).

Let us now turn to what the Western Esoteric Tradition can gain from an honest dialogue with analytical psychology.

Israel Regardie suggested that those who might be interested in studying within the Western Esoteric Tradition undergo therapy of some type before beginning the training; there are two predictable and perhaps not mutually exclusive interpretations of this statement. The first interpretation is that Regardie was being facetious by remarking that all Esotericists should have their heads examined. The other interpretation is that as an experienced individual within the Tradition, Regardie was all too aware of the potential pitfalls of its landscape. Regardie may have in fact meant both but it is the latter which is more relevant to us at the moment.

Although a colloquial illustration of Regardie's concern for the potential problem of psychological complications, one need only peruse the various public internet forums dedicated to occult or Esoteric topics to find instances of inflation, deflation, projection, narcissism, and a host of other psychological "issues".<sup>38</sup> As this thesis is not a clinical work we shall not endeavour to offer a form of distance diagnosis for such people. However, for those who are participating within the Western Esoteric Tradition an analytical psychological interpretation of the Esoteric Tree of Life may be of some use. By utilising a recognisable symbol such as the *sefirot* and the Tree of Life and applying an interpretation informed by the theories of analytical psychology, the Tree of Life can offer alternative readings for common Esoteric experiences. For example, claims of possession could be buttressed with an understanding of archetypal constellation. Transformative communications from other worldly entities or *sefirotic* beings who seem

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<sup>38</sup> For example see the Occult Forums at [www.occultforums.com](http://www.occultforums.com), which had at the time of writing, in excess of 6,000 members. This example is offered simply because it is a large and popular forum not because it has an unnaturally large group of psychologically displaced members.

to have chosen the individual in question over and above all others can be reinterpreted as a natural, though no less moving contact with psychological and metaphorical beings of “superior insight”. Also, an analytical psychological interpretation of the Tree of Life emphasises the importance of connection with the world and our means to interact with it, the ego-complex.

The sources from within the Western Esoteric Tradition do not generally emphasise how the psycho-spiritual experiences can be applied in our everyday conscious life. Certainly there are some hints evident in the literature. Crowley, in nearly all his works, emphasises the development of the Law of Thelema wherein every man and every woman is to be respected as a unique, though not necessarily equal, individual. Fortune emphasises the need to reintroduce the feminine and chthonic into the world as well as indicating that there are responsibilities for the Adept but little actual detail is presented as to how this should be accomplished.<sup>39</sup> Regardless of what hints are strewn about, there remains the possible risk that an individual can become lost in their own metaphorical world without moorings to keep them anchored and grounded.

Crowley’s emphasis on the negative nature of ego consciousness or the Esoteric emphasis on spiritual worlds and astral entities could lead one to hide from or avoid the fundamental trials and tribulations of mundane, egoic life—in other words this world could be seen as less important or vital as the astral or metaphorical world. This could mean possible repression or social dissociation instead of an acceptance of and engagement with unconscious metaphorical “beings” and the corresponding transpersonal

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<sup>39</sup> This is, of course, to be expected from a person who is part of an “occult” Tradition. Fortune does reveal much of her approach to the Western Esoteric Tradition throughout her technical works and her novels. See especially Fortune, *The Sea Priestess* (York Beach, ME: Samuel Weiser Inc., 1978) and *Moon Magic* (York Beach, ME: Samuel Weiser, Inc., 1978).

realms. The ego-complex is not necessarily a fetter of psycho-spiritual progress any more than it is the sole authority within the psyche. The development of a middle ground is desirable wherein the demands of the world of the ego-complex and the demands of the unconscious can meet and congress. What cannot be forgotten though is that there are responsibilities that accompany any such dialogue.

In a lengthy letter to Father Victor White, Jung discusses the psychotherapeutic implications of psychedelic drugs. What is interesting is Jung's statement on the result of the archetypal experiences opened by such substances:

I only know there is no point in wishing to *know* more of the collective unconscious than one gets through dreams and intuition. The more you know of it, the greater and heavier becomes your moral burden, because the unconscious contents transform themselves into your individual tasks and duties as soon as they become conscious. Do you want to increase loneliness and misunderstanding? Do you want more and more complications and increasing responsibilities?<sup>40</sup>

Though Jung is discussing the psychological complications that could occur with drugs, the same concerns could be applied to the psychological forays that the Esotericists undertake. The experience of the unconscious has the capacity to complicate and displace our lives. Should the unconscious require it, it may be necessary for us to alter and transform ourselves. This also implies we must have the courage to change the way we view ourselves and how we view others. The Esotericists demonstrate a fearless attitude toward delving into the depths of the unknown but are they prepared or equipped to reintegrate those experiences into the world of the ego-complex in such a fashion that each world retains value?

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<sup>40</sup> Jung, *Letters*, v.2, 172.

The Esotericists understand that there are risks to their spiritual path but they also feel the rewards are worth the risks. Jung demonstrates the same fortitude. While Jung may have warned against unnecessarily opening the floodgates to the unconscious, his actions did not always reflect the safest psychological route. For some there is a drive to make that which is occult conscious. In his seminar on *Dream Analysis* Jung comments: “When we are unconscious of a thing which is constellated, we are identified with it, and it moves us or activates us as if we were marionettes. We can only escape that effect by making it conscious and objectifying it, pulling it outside of ourselves, taking it out of the unconscious.”<sup>41</sup> Neither Jung nor the Esotericists want human beings to live as puppets of the unconscious. Each has presented the world with their version of the blade that will cut through the fetters of the psyche. Each has their own merits but how many more strings could be cut if they were to sit together and dialogue?

## **Conclusion**

This thesis began by defining how the term metaphor is employed in analytical and archetypal psychology. In that context, metaphor is equivalent to Jung’s understanding of archetypes as well as representing a realm where a neither/nor perspective is pervasive. It is within this realm that we find the *sefirot* of the Western Esoteric Tradition. The *sefirot* have been interpreted in different ways through various spiritual traditions. The interpretations analysed in the present work focused on Judaism, Christianity, Hermeticism, and the Western Esoteric (Occult) Tradition. Each interpretation of the *sefirot* and the Tree, while as unique in application as the tradition

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<sup>41</sup> Jung, *Dream Analysis: Notes of the Seminar Given in 1928-1930 by C.G. Jung*, William McGuire, ed. (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1984), 217.

employing the *sefirot*, revolves around the notion of describing the *middoth* or qualities of something that is unknown or unknowable. We could also interpret this in a manner such that we see each tradition as having employed various symbols and metaphors in their endeavour to understand what Jung called the collective unconscious. We also saw that Jung was deeply interested in the alchemical traditions which, as scholars such as Drob have indicated, was itself heavily influenced by Kabbalistic concepts.<sup>42</sup>

Jung's interest in Kabbalah can be found throughout the *Collected Works* though it is most prevalent in his writings on alchemy and, more specifically, the work of Knorr von Rosenroth. Jung focuses on the relationships between the various personifications of the *sefirot* and in the process we find that the *sefirot* reflect Jung's model of the psyche. Jung found that the alchemical notion of the Conjunction, with its conjoining of opposites best reflected his understanding of psychological maturation or individuation.

The Western Esoteric Tradition can be seen as a psycho-spiritual tradition that employs Kabbalistic concepts and, as it developed alongside the discipline of psychology, newly developed psychological theories. As such, the Western Esoteric Tradition presents itself as a viable subject for comparison with analytical psychology. With a restructured definition of Magick, being synonymous with the Western Esoteric Tradition, Chapter Three presented the Tradition as having a psycho-spiritual orientation that is concerned with the exploration of human consciousness through the understanding and applications of symbol and metaphor. Chapter Four initiated a dialogue between the the Western Esoteric Tradition and analytical psychology through the *sefirot* of the Tree of Life where the *sefirot* symbolised the *middoth* of the archetype of initiation or in Jung's terms, individuation.

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<sup>42</sup> Stanford Drob, *Kabbalistic Metaphors* (New Jersey: Jason Aronson Inc., 2000), 289-343.

The lower portions of the Tree of Life symbolise the individuation process or the movement towards a becoming a psychologically whole human being as understood by Jung. However, the standard Tree of Life, especially as utilised by the Western Esoteric Tradition and presented in Chapter Five, posits that there is more than the “individual” in the process of becoming whole. The Supernal Abyss implies that there is a boundary between dualistic transpersonal and non-dual transpersonal realms. Related to this notion of mysticism, Leon Schlammm indicates<sup>43</sup> that we can view analytical psychology as a form of secular or detraditionalised form of mysticism. In this way both analytical psychology and the Western Esoteric Tradition, as *Hot Structured* traditions can be compared on contrasted and while they may be different in many ways, they both have similar goals and means to reach those goals.

Chapter Six expanded on the source or roots of the Tree of Life. These Negative Veils of Existence confirm what Jung indicated, that the ultimate source of the psyche is indefinable and unknowable. However, it is the perspective of the Esotericists that some time in the distant future of human evolution more of the unknowable may reach the light of consciousness. The final portion of Chapter Six presented a cursory interpretation of how the sustained study of the metaphors of the Tree of Life could benefit both analytical psychology and the Western Esoteric Tradition on the levels of both theory and application. For the former the Tree can be a tool for active imagination and symbolic and metaphorical development. For the latter, an understanding of analytical psychology offers alternative, and in some ways more holistic, interpretations of common Esoteric experiences.

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<sup>43</sup> Leon Schlammm, “C.G. Jung’s Visionary Mysticism” in *Harvest: International Journal for Jungian Studies*, vol. 52, n. 1., 2006.

Essentially, the Esoteric Tree of Life brings together opposites to facilitate tension both symbolically and literally. The Tree both presents the psyche as populated by unique and powerful archetypal energies and at the same time presents the centre of the psyche, especially from the perspective of initiation or individuation, as residing in the wholeness of the self. The Tree emphasises the need for unifying both science and spirituality or in the words of Mansfield, head and heart. Yet to do that one cannot lose sight of the necessary and important role the ego plays in the maintenance of a healthy psyche; a point often lost on the Esotericists. Perhaps most importantly, the Esoteric Tree of Life implies that the process of psycho-spiritual maturation is a long and arduous path filled with vibrant, numinous and even terrifying metaphoric and symbolic beings that requires careful and methodical exploration. While not everyone may be suited for or desire to undertake the long and arduous journey along the psycho-spiritual paths symbolised by Tree of Life, there will always be those who are driven by the four powers of the Sphinx: To Know, To Dare, To Will, To be Silent. For those who do feel that drive, an analytical psychological interpretation of the Western Esoteric Tree of Life is one more map that may help clarify the landscape and terrain of metaphor and its relation to the collective unconscious and it may facilitate further reflection and discussion in the same way the Tree of Life has always done in whatever tradition it has taken root.

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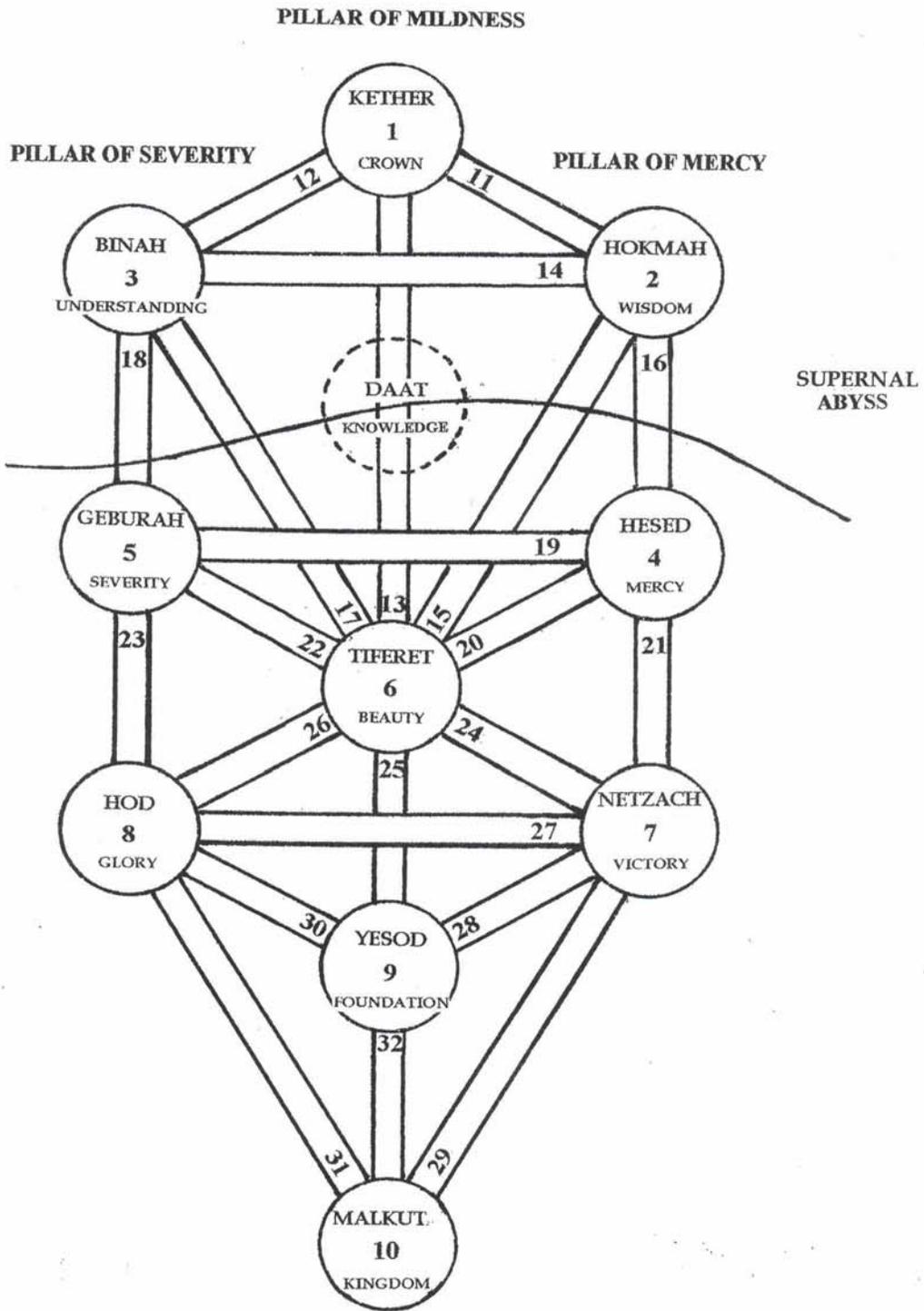
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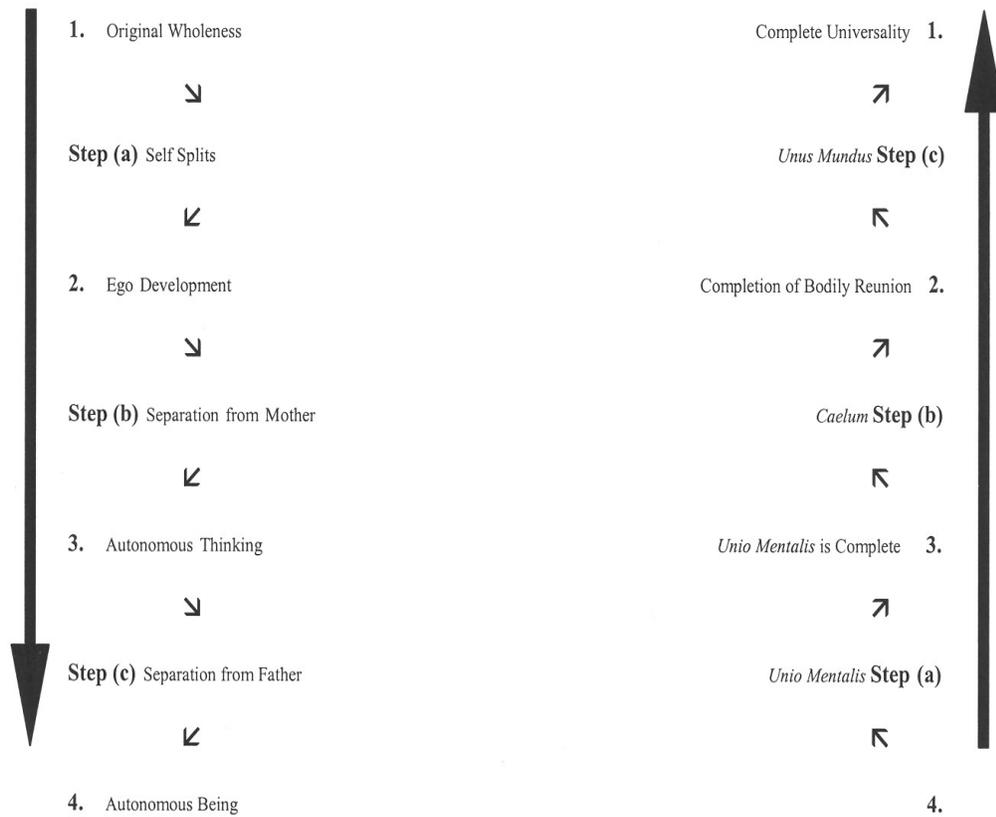
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**Figure One:**  
Tree of Life

**Toward Psychological Development**

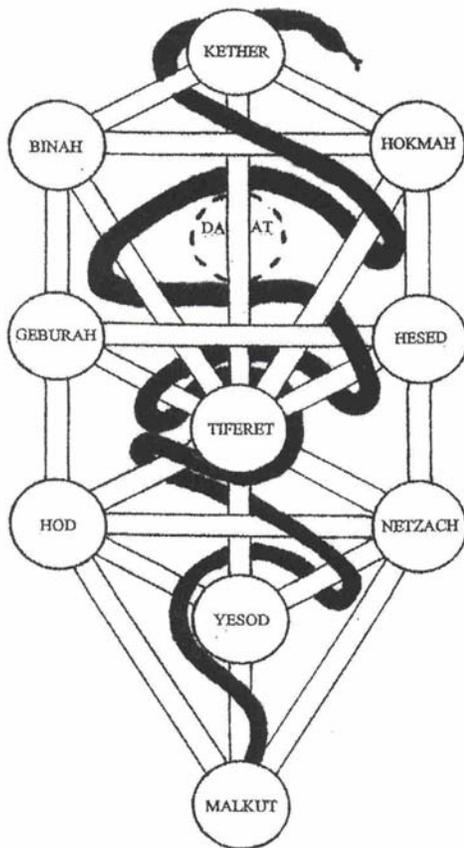


**Toward Individuation**



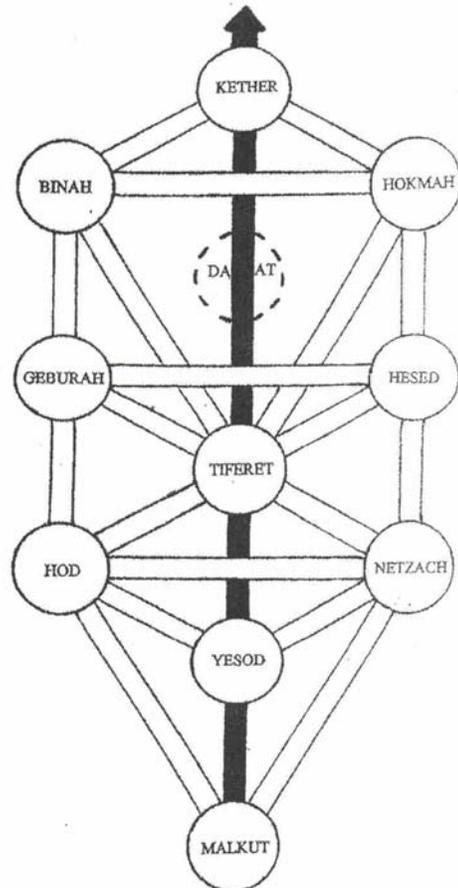
**Dissatisfaction Leading to the Drive Toward Wholeness**

**Figure Two:**  
 The Process of Psychological Development  
 (Adapted from: Edinger, *The Mystery Lectures*, 279)



**Figure Three A:**

“The Path of the Serpent”  
The Path of Initiation which passes through each *sefira* (or rather the path leading to it) as it winds from Malkut to Kether.

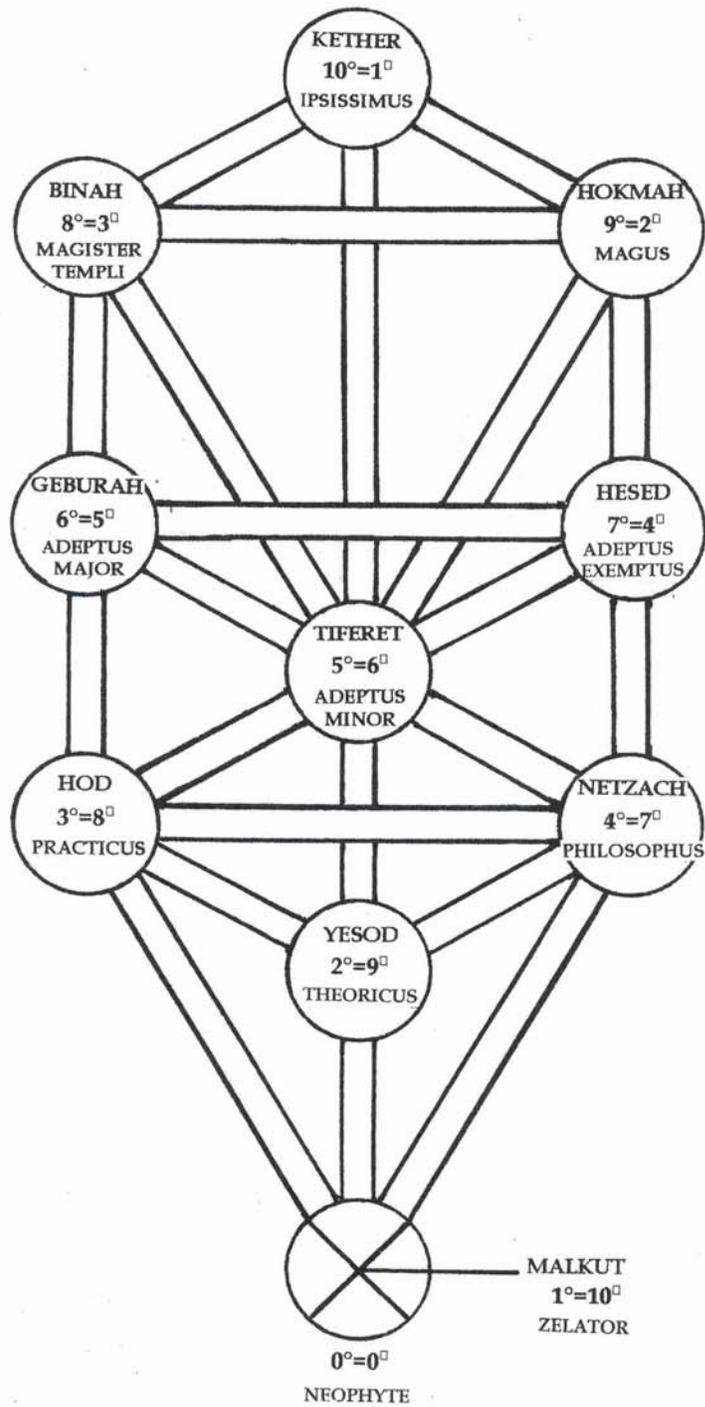


**Figure Three B:**

“The Path of the Arrow” or Mystical Path along the “Middle Pillar”. This path is the direct experience of Kether while in Malkut.

**Figure Three:**

Serpent and the Arrow: Two Paths of the Tree of Life



**Figure Four:**  
The Grades of the Hermetic Order of the  
Golden Dawn on the Tree of Life

## **Appendix A: The Lesser Banishing Ritual of the Pentagram**

The following narrative description of the LBRP is compiled from various sources and reflects a *general* version of the ritual. Individual versions of the ritual may vary from practitioner to practitioner.

### **Purpose**

The LBRP is generally used in the Western Esoteric Tradition as a banishing ritual that is thought to clear the area of unwanted influences as well as setting a boundary for sacred or liminal space. Psychologically, the ritual can be seen as a preliminary preparation for active imagination work or as a symbolic step into the world of symbol and metaphor.

### **Setting**

The practitioner stands in the centre of the Temple (which could be anything from a corner of a room to a full hall or a visualised structure) behind the altar. Upon the altar are the Four Elemental Weapons: Wand, Cup, Dagger, and Pentacle. The altar symbolises the centre of the universe, the *Axis Mundi*, while the Elemental Weapons symbolise a balance of Emotion, Intellect, Body, and Will within the practitioner. The practitioner stands amongst these symbols of balance and wholeness.

## **The Ritual**

The ritual is composed of two distinct sections: the Kabbalistic Cross and the Evocation of the Archangels. The former is also used independently as a form of prayer or meditation. Along with the physical movements there are also various visualisations that accompany them; only the most basic visualisations are recounted here.

### **1. Kabbalistic Cross**

The practitioner visualises a scintillating ball of white light above her head. This is a symbol of her divine spark or higher self. Jung's notion of "the self" would resonate symbolically with this spark. The practitioner reaches above her head and draws the light down to her forehead. This can be accomplished by the use of the index finger of the right hand or by the use of a ritual dagger. Touching her forehead the practitioner intones: ATAH (For Thine/Unto Thee). The practitioner thrusts her hand down her torso, covering the groin region. The light is visualised as rushing down the body to the feet and below. The practitioner then intones: MALKUT (The Kingdom). The practitioner brings the light to the right shoulder, seeing an orb of light forming just to the right of the shoulder. The practitioner intones: ve-GEBURAH (and the Power). The practitioner brings the light across to the left shoulder, visualising a globe of light just to the left of the shoulder. She intones: ve-GEDULAH (and the Glory). Finally, the practitioner claps her hands over her breast and intones: le-OLAHM, AMEN (Unto the Ages, Amen—Amen being an acronym for: God is a faithful king.)

## **2. Formulation of the Pentagrams**

The practitioner moves clockwise from behind the altar to the East of the Temple. The practitioner traces a flaming banishing pentagram of Earth with either her finger or ritual knife (this is also amplified through visualisation). She then visualises the God name YHVH (one pronunciation is simply: Yod He Vau He) in flaming letters in front of her. The practitioner inhales the name into her body and as the name “touches” her feet the practitioner thrusts her hands out in front of her at the same time she loudly intones or vibrates the God name. Following this she places her finger on her lips thus sealing the pentagram. The same process is repeated in the South with the God name, Adonai; in the West with Eheyeh and ending in the North with the God name AGLA (which is short for: “Thou art great forever, oh Lord”). Following this the practitioner returns behind the altar.

## **3. Calling the Archangels.**

Standing behind the altar, facing East with arms out to the side of the body and feet together (forming an upright cross), the practitioner visualises an angelic figure with yellow and purple robes (colours of the element of Air) and says: “Before me, Raphael”. She then visualises an angelic figure in blue and orange robes (colours of Water) and says: “Behind me, Gabriel”. To her right the practitioner visualises an angelic figure with red and green robes (colours of Fire) and says: “On my right hand, Michael”. The practitioner then visualises an angelic figure with earth toned green/brown robes (colours of Earth) and says “On my left hand stands Auriel”. The practitioner moves the left foot

out to the side (forming a pentagram with the body) and says: “About me flames the pentagram and in the Column shines the six-rayed star.”

Following this the Kabbalistic Cross is repeated. The ritual is then complete and any further work (more banishing rituals, prayer, meditation, practical magic, etc.) can begin. Essentially, the practitioner is symbolically standing in the centre of a *mandala* that is sealed with various names of God and reinforced, as it were, with a quaternity of angelic beings. If taken symbolically and metaphorically, this ritual can have obvious parallels with Jungian thought.

## Appendix B: The Middle Pillar Ritual

The following narrative description of the MPR is compiled from various sources and reflects a *general* version of the ritual. Individual versions of the ritual may vary from practitioner to practitioner. The most thorough source regarding this ritual is Regardie's *The Middle Pillar*.

### Purpose

The Middle Pillar ritual is thought to charge various energy centres of the body (similar to the notion of *chakras*) that correspond to the *sefirot* of the Tree of Life. The ritual also moves and directs energy. The MPR also has meditative applications that can be found in Regardie's *The Middle Pillar*.

### Setting

The practitioner stands in the centre of the Temple (which could be anything from a corner of a room to a full hall or a visualised structure) behind the altar. Upon the altar are the Four Elemental Weapons: Wand, Cup, Dagger, and Pentacle. The altar symbolises the centre of the universe, the *Axis Mundi*, while the Elemental Weapons symbolise a balance of Emotion, Intellect, Body, and Will within the practitioner. The practitioner stands amongst these symbols of balance and wholeness.

## The Ritual

The ritual is composed of two distinct sections: the intonation of the Divine names and the Circulation of the Body of Light. The former is the MPR proper and is used independently as a form of prayer or meditation. Along with the physical movements there are also various visualisations that accompany them; only the most basic visualisations are recounted here.

### 1. Vibration of the Divine Names

The practitioner stands or lies with hands to her side and visualises a scintillating ball of white light above her head. This is a symbol of her divine spark or higher self. Jung's notion of "the self" would resonate well with this spark. While focusing on this light the practitioner intones or vibrates the God name *Eheieh* three or four times. She then visualises the light descending to the neck region and intones *YHVH Elohim*. The visualisation then focuses on the solar plexus where the practitioner vibrates *YHVH Eloah va-Daath*. Once this is complete the focus turns to the genital region and the God name *Shaddai El Chai*. Finally, the visualisation moves to the feet where the final God name, *Adonai ha-Aretz* is intoned. A more advanced version of the ritual also includes the corresponding colours: white, lavender, yellow/gold, violet and black respectively. In essence the practitioner is drawing down divine energy into various areas or *sefirot* of a microcosmic Tree of Life.

## 2. Circulation of the Body of Light

The circulation of the Body of Light is not technically part of the Middle Pillar Ritual but it is common to find the two exercises linked together. Once the MPR is complete the practitioner refocuses on the first ball of light. She then exhales and “pushes” the light in an arch to the left and down to her feet. She then inhales and “pulls” the energy up her right side in an arch to the head. This is repeated several times. The same is repeated again but this time moving from the front of the body (exhale) to the feet then from the feet up the back of the body (inhale) to return to the head. Finally, focus is moved to the feet. Energy is visualised as spiralling or wrapping itself up the body (inhale) and is exploded, visualised like a fireworks explosion, out the top of the head (exhale) and allowed to settle at the feet again. In this way the energy centres that were activated or charged in the MPR are mobilised or utilised in the Circulation of the Body of Light. In essence, the practitioner has symbolically linked herself with the balanced state of the Middle Pillar of the Tree of Life at the same time they charge the corresponding *sefirot* on a microcosmic level.

## Glossary of Non-Jungian Terms

The following definitions were compiled primarily from the following sources (some definitions were altered for brevity or relevance):

Alan Axelrod, *The International Encyclopedia of Secret Societies & Fraternal Orders*, (New York, NY: Facts On File, Inc., 1997).

Dan Cohn-Sherbok, *The Blackwell Dictionary of Judaica*, (Oxford, UK: Blackwell Publishers, 1992).

Nevill Drury, *The Dictionary of Mysticism and the Occult*, (New York, NY: Harper & Row, 1985).

Rosemary Ellen Guiley, *Harper's Encyclopedia of Mystical & Paranormal Experience*, (New York, NY: Harper Collins Publishers, 1991).

Stephan Schuhmacher and Gert Woerner, eds. *The Encyclopedia of Eastern Philosophy and Religion*, (Boston, MASS: Shambhala Publications, Inc., 1994).

Abramelin Operation- Ritual which, in its classic form, requires six months of increasing prayer and meditation. The culmination of the ritual has the practitioner contact their holy Guardian Angel and cause the fallen angels (which can be understood to symbolise one's shadow or a transpersonal shadow) to become subservient to the practitioner.

Abyss (Supernal Abyss, Great Abyss)- Boundary between the ideal world (symbolised by the first three *sefirot*) and the actual world (symbolised by the remaining *sefirot*). The Abyss can also be seen as the boundary between rational and trans-rational thought and the separation of personal and transpersonal psychological experience.

Adam Kadmon- Anthropomorphic representation of the Tree of Life. The *Adam Kadmon* is understood to be the Primordial Man as well as a mediator between the microcosm and macrocosm. "His" body is made up of the *sefirot* of the Tree of Life.

Aethyr- A term used to denote one of thirty diverse levels or planes of existence. This term is generally used in *Enochian Magick*.

Alchemy- An ancient forerunner of chemistry that is commonly thought to have had three main goals: 1. transforming base metals into gold 2. search for the elixir that prolonged life indefinitely 3. the acquisition of the ability to create life artificially. With alchemists like Gerhard Dorn, alchemy was a means to attend to spiritual enlightenment.

Analytical Psychological Tree of Life- Proposed adaptation of the Western Esoteric Tree of Life that posits that analytical psychology and the Western Esoteric Tradition have a

common view in the psycho-spiritual potency of symbol and metaphor in psychological maturation. This Tree also indicates that the psyche is both polytheistic and monotheistic simultaneously. From an Esoteric perspective, this Tree reveals the necessity for shadow work and the potential pit falls of inflation.

Āsana- A form of bodily posture assumed in meditation in order to, among other things, overcome the presence of the body and its desires.

Astral Plane- Esoteric concept of a plane of existence and perception paralleling the physical dimension, but one phase removed from it. This thesis implies that the Astral Plane can be seen as the neither/nor realm of metaphor.

Bhakti-yoga- The path of love and surrender, one of the four primary yogic paths to union with God.

Chakras- “wheel, circle.” Term for the centres of subtle or refined energy in the human “energy” body.

Chaoist- A practitioner of Chaos Magick.

Chaos Magick- A practice which could be termed “results based” Magick. Chaos Magick breaks away from the notion of tradition and structure and focuses on observable and repeatable practices often using the axiom “belief is a technique.”

Choronzon- Demonic figure adapted by Crowley from the writings of John Dee. For Crowley, and for the Analytical Psychological Tree of Life, Choronzon is a symbol or metaphor for the tumultuous process of self-consciousness.

Demiurge- From the Greek *demiurgos*, a “fashioner” or “architect,” the creator of the world. For the *Gnostics* he was not the supreme reality, but a middle-ranking deity who proposed laws for the world that the initiated could transcend.

Dhāranā- “concentration.” A mental state that constitutes an important prerequisite for deep meditation.

Duhkha- “suffering.” *Duhkha* is one of the three Buddhist marks of existence. All things, pleasant or unpleasant, mental or physical, are conditioned and impermanent and are, if left unattended, the cause of suffering.

Ego/self-collective unconscious axis- Proposed link that bridges the personal ego-self axis, as developed by Edward Edinger, and the transpersonal experience of the collective or objective unconscious (symbolised by the Supernal Triad found on the Tree of Life).

En-Sof- “Infinite.” The term applied to divinity as perfection with no distinction or plurality. It does not reveal itself and is beyond all thought.

Enochian Magick- A form of Magick developed by John Dee and Edward Kelly. This form of Magick was received from skrying sessions where Dee would conduct ceremonial rituals while Kelly, in a trance state, stared into a crystal stone to receive images of angelic beings. The angels would point to letters, in reverse, on a tablet in order to communicate. The language used by the angels, known as Enochian, is thought to hold great power. The Hermetic Order of the Golden Dawn incorporated Enochian Magick in their higher Grades.

Evocation- In Magick, the calling forth of a spirit using spells or words of power. Unlike invocation the entity is kept outside the circle and as such these entities are generally thought to be more chaotic and dangerous than those encountered through invocation.

Four Worlds- Kabbalistic theory that existence participates in four Worlds. The fourth (or first depending on if one is moving from concept to creation or creation to conception) and most dense World is *Assiah*, the manifest world. The third World is *Yetsirah* (the Angelic World), the World of Formation. The second World is *Briah*, the Creative World (the World of the Arch-Angels). The first, and most divine World is *Atziluth*, the archetypal (in a Platonic sense) World. The Tetragrammaton (YHVH) is taken as a symbol of the Four Worlds interpenetrated.

Gehinnom- The Jewish version of hell, literally Valley of Hinnom [a valley to the southwest of Jerusalem]. During the period of the monarchy it was the site of a cult that involved the burning of children (II Kings 23.10; Jeremiah 7.13; 32-35). In rabbinic Judaism the name is used to refer to the place of torment for the wicked after death.

Gnosticism- Dualistic, mystical Christian religion, which flourished in the Mediterranean region during the second century of the Common Era. “Gnostic” comes from the Greek *gnosis*, meaning “knowledge.” Gnostics believed that the redemption or liberation of the soul was possible only through knowledge (gnosis)— a spiritual knowledge, not faith.

Goetia- A book or *grimoire* (and system of Magick) that employs various fallen spirits or “demons” for practical, mundane results. From a psychological perspective, the demons could be equated to components of the shadow.

Grimoire- Medieval collections of magical spells, rituals, and incantations. Perhaps the most well known grimoire is the *Goetia*.

Hermetic Order of the Golden Dawn, The- Short-lived but influential Western Occult order the accepted both men and women. The Order arose in England in 1887/1888 (closing in circa. 1923) and during its height the Order possessed perhaps the greatest repository of Western magical and occult knowledge. Rituals developed by the Golden Dawn continue to be used by some practitioners within the Western Esoteric Tradition, though some consider them outdated.

Hermetica (Hermetic)- Collection of mystical tracts and dialogues-primarily Greek in origin including references to various healing gods. The principle figure of the Hermetica is Hermes Trismegistis.

HGA- See: “Holy Guardian Angel.”

Holy Guardian Angel (HGA)- Also known as the “Higher Genius”, the HGA refers to the divine or enlightened aspect of oneself. The HGA can be loosely equated with Jung’s notion of the self.

Invocation- This term can be found with two meanings within Magick: 1.) the act of summoning an angel or god for a positive or beneficial purpose using sacred god-names or words of power. The invocation occurs within the consecrated Magick Circle, distinct from the profane, unsanctified territory which lies outside it. 2.) Allowing an entity to inhabit one’s body. The emphasis is on an intimate connection to something as compared to evocation.

Kabbalah- Generally understood to be an esoteric branch of classical Judaism. Kabbalah (found with various spellings) presents a symbolic representation of the creation of the universe as well as hermeneutic techniques for scriptural intercourse. In the context of this thesis, the term “Kabbalah” can be equally applied to Christian, Hermetic, and Western Esoteric traditions.

Karma- Karma is understood as 1. a mental or physical action; 2. the consequence of a mental or physical act; 3.the sum of all consequences of the actions of an individual in this or some previous life; 4. the chain of cause and effect in the world of morality.

Kteis- Greek word for vagina used extensively in Crowley’s writings.

Kundalini- Term commonly applied in *Tantric* philosophy. *Kundalini* (Skt. “snake”, “coil”) refers to the psycho-spiritual energy residing at the base of the spine. Symbolised as a coiled serpent, *Kundalini* is thought to be able to be released through systematic applications of various yogic practices. The energy is moved from the lowest *chakra* (*mūlādhārā*) to the highest (*sahasāra*) thereby releasing various psycho-spiritual blockages that may be present.

Lesser Banishing Ritual of the Pentagram (LBRP)- Common Western Esoteric Tradition ritual that is conducted in order to rid an area (or the mind) of unwanted influences. This is one ritual used to create and maintain sacred space and can be found in Appendix A.

Lingam- Hindu symbol for the phallus, representing the life-giving powers of the universe.

Magick- The “k” was present in older spellings of the word “magic.” Aleister Crowley revived the use of the older spelling in order to, among other things; differentiate Magick as a spiritual system and the practice of slight of hand. Dion Fortune defined Magick as

“The Science and Art of causing change in consciousness at will.” The definition constructed for this thesis is “The Science and Art of causing change in consciousness, through the medium of metaphor, in conformity with will.”

Major Arcana- In the Tarot, the twenty-two “mythological” cards, or trumps, which are assigned by some Esotericists to the Paths of the Tree of Life (numbers 0-XXI).

Mandala- “circle, arch, section.” A symbolic representation of cosmic forces in two, or three, dimensional form, and is of considerable significance in the Tantric Buddhism of Tibet. The *mandalas* are primarily used for supports for meditation and visualisation.

Mantra- A word or string of words thought to contain power which can be utilised through constant repetition. On a practical level, a *mantra* helps to focus the mind by occupying the mental discourse and lessens external disturbances.

Māyā- Sanskrit for “deception, illusion, appearance.” The continually changing, impermanent world of perception.

Metaphor- Used in this context to indicate a symbol that participates both as part of the subject while being experienced as independent from the subject. Metaphor bridges the “either/or” gap of the mind (with a clever shift to a neither/nor perspective of the soul) by unifying the subject/object dichotomy and remaining a unique construct in and of itself. Carl Jung’s experience with Philemon would be such a metaphorical symbol.

Middle Pillar (Pillar of Equilibrium, Pillar of Mildness)- Pillar that is composed of the *sefirot Malkut, Yesod, Tiferet, and Kether*. This Pillar and the *sefirot* on it are balanced and harmonious.

Middle Pillar Ritual (MPR)- Ritual of the Western Esoteric Tradition that charges centres similar to *charkas* by intoning various Hebrew God-names. The ritual is used for meditation and for balancing oneself and can be found in Appendix A.

Middoth- Term concerned with the potencies or attributes of Divinity. Eventually this term was applied in reference to the *sefirot* as qualities of an unknown deity and it is in this context that this term is employed in this thesis.

Minor Arcana- In the Tarot, the fifty-six minor cards. These fall into four suits: swords, wands, cups, and pentacles. Where the Major Arcana correspond to the Paths of the Tree of Life the Minor Arcana correspond to the *sefirot* themselves.

Mūlādhāra-chakra- In *Kundalini yoga*, the *charka* or energy centre at the base of the spine where the serpent energy lies “coiled” ready to be awakened.

Nephesch- The “lowest” level of the soul, home to the animal instincts. Usually corresponds to *Malkuth*.

Neschamah- One's "higher" spiritual self corresponding to the Supernal *sefirot*: *Kether*, *Hokmah*, and *Binah*.

Nirvāna- "extinction." In Buddhism, it is an unconditioned state that transcends arising, subsiding, changing, and passing away. In essence, it is "oneness with the absolute." The term does not mean annihilation but rather entry into another mode of perception.

Nirvikalpa-samādhi- "changelless *samādhi*" A term used in *Vedānta* to refer to the highest transcendent state of consciousness as the realisation that "I am *brahman*" thus eliminating mind, duality and subject-object relationship.

Path of the Arrow- The mystical path that moves from Malkut directly to Kether along the Middle Pillar.

Path of the Serpent- The path of Initiation that systematically winds through the *sefirot* of the Tree of Life from *Malkut* to *Kether*. Many Esoteric Orders follow the Path of the Serpent in their initiations.

Pathworking- A form of visualisation usually following the Paths and *sefirot* of the tree of Life. Pathworking is similar to Jung's understanding of active imagination.

Pillar of Mercy- Pillar usually seen on the "right-hand" side of the Tree of Life composed of *Netzach*, *Hesed*, and *Hokmah*. This Pillar is considered masculine and is dynamic force.

Pillar of Severity- Pillar usually seen on the "left-hand" side of the Tree of Life composed of *Hod*, *Geburah*, and *Binah*. This Pillar is considered feminine and is responsible for structure and containment.

Prānāyāma- Breathing exercises that may be used in conjunction with *mantras*.

Pratyāhāra- The withdrawal of the senses from sense objects so that the mind can be directed undisturbed toward the object of meditation.

Qlippot- In the creation of the Universe God's power could not be contained and the vessels made to contain the energy (sometimes attributed to the *sefirot*) shattered. The shards are impure and are known as the *qlippot*. In some branches of the Western Esoteric Tradition a "Tree of Death" is posited to be the shadow side of the Tree of Life.

Ruach- In Kabbalah, the part of the soul that lies between the *Neschamah* and the *Nephesh*. Referred to in the Western Esoteric Tradition as the "higher astral soul," *Ruach* corresponds to the spheres of consciousness ranging between and including, *Hesed* and *Hod*.

Sefer Bahir- "The Book of Illumination." Modern scholarship places the *Bahir* in 12<sup>th</sup> century Provence, though there are older texts incorporated within it. Like the *Sefer*

*Yetsirah*, the *Bahir* deals with the power of the Hebrew alphabet and numbers. It also lays the foundation of what would become the doctrine of the *sefirot*. Much of the terminology from this book became standard in the vocabulary of latter Kabbalists. The *Bahir* also makes reference to the Transmigration of Souls.

*Sefer ha-Zohar*- “Book of Splendour.” Mystical commentary on the Pentateuch and parts of the Hagiographa. It was first published in Spain by Moses de Leon in the 13<sup>th</sup> century. The work was written partly in Hebrew and partly in Aramaic. The *Zohar* is one of the principle Kabbalistic works, and most subsequent mystical writing of Judaism is based on it.

*Sefer Yetsirah*- “The Book of Creation.” The *Sefer Yetsirah*, of early Babylonian or Palestinian origin, is the earliest metaphysical text in the Hebrew language (3<sup>rd</sup>-6<sup>th</sup> centuries, CE), and describes God’s revelations to Abraham. The text discusses the creation of all things through the application of the Hebrew alphabet. The concepts found in the *Sefer Yetsirah* would become the foundation for the development of the *sefirot* as well as magical theories such as the creation of a Golem, and artificially created being.

*Sefirot* (sing. *sefira*)- The ten emanations on the Kabbalistic Tree of Life. The *sefirot* represent levels of spiritual reality on both a microcosmic and macrocosmic level. The *sefirot* are qualities or middoth of the unmanifest ultimate reality known as the En Sof.

The following a brief summary of each *sefira*, primarily from a Western Esoteric perspective, moving from pure abstract potential to physical manifestation (various spelling can be found for each name):

*Kether*- “Crown.” First *sefira* of the Middle Pillar of the Tree of Life. *Kether* is beyond the Supernal Abyss and symbolises the ultimate unification of opposites.

*Hokmah*- “Wisdom.” Second *sefirot* and first *sefira* on the Pillar of Mercy. *Hokmah* is understood to be the seminal spark of creation. Sometimes equated with the universe or with Neptune.

*Binah*- “Understanding.” Third *sefira* in order of creation, first *sefira* on the Pillar of Severity. *Binah* is the Supernal Mother through which the seeds of manifestation are deposited. *Binah* corresponds to Saturn and is both the Dark Sterile Mother and Bright Fertile Mother.

*Da’at*- “Knowledge.” *Da’at* is a “pseudo-*sefira*” that straddles the Supernal Abyss or, sometimes symbolises the Abyss. *Da’at* is the seat of conceptual rather than absolute knowledge.

Supernal Abyss- Boundary between the idea world (symbolised by the first three *sefirot*) and the actual world (symbolised by the remaining *sefirot*). The Abyss can also be seen

as the boundary between rational and trans-rational thought and the separation of personal and transpersonal experience.

*Hesed*- “Mercy.” First *sefira* “below” the Supernal Abyss and second *sefira* on the Pillar of Mercy. Corresponds to the planet Jupiter.

*Geburah*- “Strength.” Second *sefira* on the Pillar of severity corresponding to the planet Mars.

*Tiferet*- “Beauty.” Central *sefira* on the Tree of Life. Corresponding to the Sun and falling on the Pillar of Mildness or Equilibrium, *Tiferet* symbolises balance and wholeness. Jung equates *Tiferet* with the self.

*Netzach*- “Victory.” Seventh *sefira* falling on the bottom of the Pillar of Mercy corresponding to the planet Venus.

*Hod*- “Glory.” *Hod*, as the last *sefira* on the Pillar of Severity, corresponds to the planet Mercury.

*Yesod*- “Foundation.” Just below *Tiferet* on the Middle Pillar, *Yesod* corresponds to the Moon.

*Malkut*- “Kingdom.” *Malkut* is the Little Sister that represents both our physical material world and the subtle attributes accompanying it. *Malkut* is the tenth *sefira* on the Tree (when moving from abstract to manifestation) and corresponds to Earth.

Shadow Abyss- A proposed Abyss that symbolises the process of shadow confrontation. The Shadow Abyss falls between *Malkut* (ego-complex) and *Yesod* (source of metaphorical and symbolic imagery and libidinal energy) on the Analytical Psychological Tree of Life.

Shekhina- Loosely understood as God’s immanent feminine principle thought to dwell in exile in the physical world. Associated with *Malkut*.

Skrying- Form of divination or visualisation technique in which the practitioner gazes at a shiny or polished surface to induce a trance-state in which scenes, people, words, or images appear.

Supernal Triad- A term used to refer to *Kether*, *Hokmah*, and *Binah*, the three “highest” and most abstract *sefirot* on the Tree of Life.

Olippot (also kelipot)- The “negative” or “impure” shells of existence which formed during Creation. Though part of Jewish Kabbalah, the *qlippot* have a role in the Western Esoteric Tradition representing the alternate or opposite side of the *sefirot* and the Tree of Life. See: Tree of Death.

Tarot- A pack of 78 cards commonly used in divination. The pack is divided into the Major Arcana (major Mystery consisting of cards 0-21) and the Minor Arcana (consisting of the numbered cards and the Court cards-all of which are divided into four suits). In the Western Esoteric Tradition, the cards are also applied to the Paths and *sefirot* of the Tree of Life.

Thelema- Greek word for will. Aleister Crowley used the term to refer to the religion which he founded in 1904 with the “reception” of the Book of the Law, the primary holy book of Thelema. The Theology of Thelema postulates all manifest existence arising from the interaction two cosmic principles: the infinitely extended, all-pervading Space-Time Continuum (symbolised by the Egyptian goddess Nuit) and the atomic [Quantum] individually expressed Principle of Life and Wisdom (symbolised by the Egyptian winged globe Hadit). The interplay of these Principles gives rise to the Principle of Consciousness that governs existence (symbolised by the Egyptian war god Ra-Hoor-Khuit).

Theosophy- The teachings and doctrines of Theosophical Society which was founded in 1875 by Madame Helena Blavatsky, H.S. Olcott, and William Q. Judge. The organisation blended Hindu and Buddhist teachings with those of general Western mystery teachings.

Tikkun- In this context *Tikkun* refers to a “cosmic repair” to restore the previously perfect *sefirot* to their original state.

Tree of Death- An “anti-Tree of Life” developed by Kenneth Grant. Each path and *sefira* of the Tree of Life has a demonic side. The Paths are known as “Tunnels of Set” and the corresponding *sefirot* are the *qlippot*.

Tree of Life- Symbolic representation of both divine and mundane realities. Traditionally comprised of ten spheres (*sefirot*) that symbolise attributes or qualities of divinity, the Tree of Life has been applied in Jewish, Christian, Hermetic, and Western Esoteric traditions.

Tzimtzum- “Divine Contraction.” Doctrine that God contracted to make space for creation.

Vāmāchāra- Sanskrit term referring to *Tantra*.

Vodoun- Primarily a Haitian religion involving practices such as singing, chanting, trance, ecstatic dance, which can lead to disassociation as the deity possesses the practitioner.

Yoni- Hindu name for the vulva. In *Tantra*, the lingam and yoni symbolise the divine creative generative powers in the universe.