

CLASS NOTES, WEEK 4

FREUD, THE HASIDIM, AND THE LURIANIC KABBALAH

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In 1913, Ernest Jones, one of Freud's most energetic disciples, established the London Psycho-Analytical Society in an effort to make his master's theories more palatable to the British medical establishment.¹ In the same year, another group was founded toward which Jones expressed unrelenting hostility,² but which offered the first psychoanalytic training in Britain: the Medico-Psychological Clinic, also known as the Brunswick Square Clinic, which, during and after the Great War, treated shell-shocked soldiers as well as a wide range of other psychological disorders.³ The official literature of the Clinic attempted to reassure the public, the medical profession, and psychoanalysts such as Jones that the Clinic did not dabble in occult pursuits.⁴ However, despite this public claim to scientific respectability, somewhat unorthodox practices were quietly pursued by Clinic members, including mesmerism, spiritual healing, and scrying.⁵

The apparently more orthodox London Psycho-Analytic Society was not immune to such practices. W. H. B. Stoddart, a later member of the Society, published a work on psychoanalytic techniques which was 'perhaps the most widely read text book of psychiatry at the present day'.⁶ Stoddart's psychoanalytic techniques include scrying as well as hypnotic experiments and the interpretation of dreams, reflecting the continuity of that eclectic mixture of medicine with occult practices which had characterised William Wynn Westcott's approach in the last decades of the nineteenth century.⁷ Much to the annoyance of Jones and his more orthodox colleagues, the Medico-Psychological Clinic boasted many female doctors and was run on feminist lines.⁸ Despite the increasing influence of psychology on the British public as well as on progressive education and the criminal justice system in the decades during and after the Great War, the Medico-Psychological Clinic survived for only nine years, closing in 1922.⁹ But its impact has continued to reverberate in circles other than those originally intended. The British occultist Dion Fortune (1890-1946) trained at the Clinic as a lay analyst in the years just after the war,¹⁰ and the experience she acquired there permeates both her theories about the relationship between psychoanalysis and occultism and her 'occult' novels, which reveal a direct knowledge of conditions such as shell-shock and the various stages of obsessional disorders.

The need to supplement psychology with occult theory was evident to Fortune from the outset of her training:

¹ For the early history of psychoanalysis in Britain, see Ernest Jones, *Free Associations: Memories of a Psycho-Analyst* (London: Hogarth Press, 1959), 229-240; Ernest Jones, 'Reminiscent Notes on the Early History of Psycho-Analysis in English-Speaking Countries', *IJP*, 26 (1945), 8-10; Suzanne Raitt, 'Early British Psychoanalysis and the Medico-Psychological Clinic', *HWJ*, 58 (2004), 63-85; Dean Rapp, 'The Early Discovery of Freud by the British General Educated Public, 1912-1919', *SSHM*, 3 (August 1990), 217-243; R. D. Hinshelwood, 'Psychoanalysis in Britain: Points of Cultural Access, 1893-1918', *IJP*, 76 (February 1995), 135-151.

² For Jones' antagonism toward the Medico-Psychological Clinic, see Philippa Martindale, "'Against All Hushing Up and Stamping Down': The Medico-Psychological Clinic of London and the Novelist May Sinclair', *PH*, 6:2 (2004), 177-200.

³ See Raitt, 'Psychoanalysis', 63.

⁴ See, for example, the letter from Charles Spearman in *The Lancet* (20 December 1913), 1803, cited in Raitt, 'Psychoanalysis', 67. For the Clinic's reputation for occult practices, see Martindale, "'Hushing Up'", 193.

⁵ See Raitt, 'Psychoanalysis', 78.

⁶ W. H. B. Stoddart, *Mind and Its Disorders* (London: H. K. Lewis, 1908); 'E. J.', 'Review of W. H. B. Stoddart, *Mind and Its Disorders*', *IJP*, 3 (1922), 84.

⁷ For this mixture of scientific and occult medicine, see Hayward, 'Demonology, Neurology, and Medicine'.

⁸ For the feminist stance of the Clinic, see Martindale, "'Hushing Up'", 188.

⁹ For the permeation of psychological theories into British culture, see Thomson, 'Psychology and the "Consciousness of Modernity"'; Bingham, *Gender*, 102-105; Claire Valiér, 'Psychoanalysis and Crime in Britain During the Inter-war Years', in Jon Vagg and Tim Newburn (eds.), *The British Society of Criminology Conferences: Selected Proceedings, Vol. 1: Emerging Themes in Criminology* (London: British Society of Criminology, 1998), 1-12.

¹⁰ For Fortune's involvement with the Clinic, see Raitt, 'Early British Psychoanalysis', 67; Suzanne Raitt, *May Sinclair: A Modern Victorian* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), 140, n. 106; Richardson, *Magical Life*, 52; Knight, *Dion Fortune*, 31-32.

As soon as I touched the deeper aspects of practical psychology...I realized that there was very much more in the mind than was accounted for by the accepted psychological theories...It was in order to understand the hidden aspects of the mind that I originally took up the study of occultism.¹¹

It seems she also felt occult theory needed a psychological framework. In 1922, the year in which she created her Fraternity of the Inner Light, she published under the name Violet M. Firth a little book called *The Machinery of the Mind*, which claims to offer 'certain fundamental concepts' of psychology to 'serve as a basis for future studies'.¹² Although the work is predominantly a mixture of Freudian and Jungian approaches and does not reveal the occult predilections of its author, it was not well received by the psychoanalytic community.¹³ But Fortune probably never intended it for this readership. As so much popular literature on the subject was already available at the time, the *raison d'être* for *Machinery of the Mind* may have been an attempt to educate occultists in the language of the psyche, as Fortune recommends it to aspiring students in two of her occult treatises.¹⁴

Fortune had great respect for Freud and recommends his seminal work, *The Interpretation of Dreams*,¹⁵ as 'occultism on a sound scientific basis'.¹⁶ But she felt Freud had missed the occult understanding of the individual as a 'spiritual being' whose 'mind and body are the garments of his manifestation'.¹⁷ As she became more involved with Jung's analytical psychology, her views of Freud increasingly reflected the attitudes of the Swiss psychiatrist toward his former mentor. In Fortune's *Goat-Foot God*, Hugh Paston disparages Freud's materialistic view of the human psyche: 'It was a great pity that the learned doctor had not also had a classical education, and learnt that Priapus and Silenus are gods, and not dirty little boys playing with filth'.¹⁸ By the late 1930s Fortune had become a firm Jungian, and in 1942 she stipulated as required reading for her disciples not only her own *Mystical Qabalah* but also *The Psychology of C. G. Jung*, a newly published work summarising the main principles of analytical psychology by one of Jung's most important disciples.¹⁹ Fortune's concept of the unconscious is not only personal, but also encompasses the domain of the 'Unseen', extending beyond humanity to 'the World soul deep hidden in the most primitive depths of subconsciousness'.²⁰

We live in the midst of invisible forces whose effects alone we perceive. We move among invisible forms whose actions we very often do not perceive at all, though we may be profoundly affected by them.²¹

This is the realm of Kabbalistic theosophy, teeming with angels, demons, and sefirotic powers, and animated by the primal light streaming through creation as the organising principle of the universe. Fortune's ideas about the unconscious may certainly be seen as what Olav Hammer calls 'psycho-religion'.²² But this 'active syncretistic tendency' that merges esoteric and psychological dimensions, and which Hammer considers unique to modern post-Enlightenment Western esotericism,²³ is already present in the medieval Kabbalah and is particularly emphasised in the Kabbalah of the Hasidim, to whom Freud's

¹¹ Fortune, *Psychic Self-Defence*, 18-19.

¹² Violet M. Firth [Dion Fortune], *The Machinery of the Mind* (London: George Allen & Unwin, 1922), 11.

¹³ See Barbara Low, 'Review of Violet M. Firth, *The Machinery of the Mind*', *IJP*, 5 (1924), 388-389.

¹⁴ See Dion Fortune, *Sane Occultism* (London: Rider & Co., 1929), 141; Fortune, *Psychic Self-Defence*, 211.

¹⁵ Sigmund Freud, *The Interpretation of Dreams*, trans. A. A. Brill (London: George Allen & Unwin, 1913; repr. Freud, SE4 and SE5).

¹⁶ See the bibliography in Fortune, *Psychic Self-Defence*, 211, and the recommended reading list in Dion Fortune, 'The Literature of Illuminism', *ILM* (July 1929 to September 1930), repr. in Dion Fortune and Gareth Knight, *Practical Occultism* (Loughborough: Thoth Publications, 2002), 140-174.

¹⁷ Fortune, *Psychic Self-Defence*, 30.

¹⁸ Fortune, *Goat-Foot God*, 51.

¹⁹ Jolande Jacobi, *The Psychology of C. G. Jung*, trans. K. W. Bash (London: Kegan Paul, Trench, Trubner & Co., 1942). See also Knight, *Dion Fortune*, 290-291.

²⁰ Fortune, *Mystical Qabalah*, 17.

²¹ Fortune, *Psychic Self-Defence*, 25.

²² See Hammer, *Claiming Knowledge*, 67-73.

²³ Hammer, *Claiming Knowledge*, 6.

own family belonged.²⁴

Freud is not usually thought of as an occultist. In a conversation with Jung, he calls on his disciple to help him form an 'unshakeable bulwark' against 'the black tide...of occultism'.²⁵ Jung, who believed Freud's insistence on the centrality of sexuality in all the manifestations of the unconscious was 'just as occult' as anything the occultists could offer, understood his teacher's passionate dogmatism as an eruption of 'unconscious religious factors':

Freud, who had always made much of his irreligiosity, had now constructed a dogma; or rather, in the place of a jealous God whom he had lost, he had substituted another compelling image, that of sexuality.²⁶

But as Stanley Schneider and Joseph Berke suggest, there seems to have been a 'concealed Freud' far more familiar with esoteric ideas, including those of the Kabbalah, than he cared to make public.²⁷ While 'unconscious eruptions' may have played their part, so too did Freud's need to maintain scientific respectability and protect psychoanalysis from 'the danger of becoming a Jewish national affair'.²⁸

David Bakan, in the preface to the paperback edition of a controversial work first published in 1958, *Sigmund Freud and the Jewish Mystical Tradition*, describes the personal account of Rabbi Hayyim Bloch, a historian and Kabbalistic scholar who discovered in Freud's library a number of German scholarly works on the Kabbalah as well as Jean de Pauly's French translation of the *Zohar*.²⁹ In adopting Freud's theories of the unconscious, Fortune was appropriating a psychological system which was itself impregnated by Freud's Hasidic background and the Lurianic and 'ecstatic' Kabbalistic currents that fuelled the Hasidic movement.³⁰ Bakan asserts that Freud, 'consciously or unconsciously, secularized

²⁴ For the Hasidic psychologisation of the Lurianic Kabbalah, see Arthur Green, *Menahem Nahum of Chernobyl: Upright Practices, The Light of the Eyes* (New York: Paulist Press, 1982); Idel, *Hasidism*, 227-238.

²⁵ C. G. Jung, *Memories, Dreams, Reflections*, trans. Richard and Clara Winston (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1963; repr. London: HarperCollins/Fontana, 1995), 173.

²⁶ Jung, *Memories*, 174.

²⁷ Stanley Schneider and Joseph H. Berke, 'Sigmund Freud and the Lubavitcher Rebbe', *PR* 87 (2000), 39-59, on p. 55. Freud's efforts to present psychoanalysis as a science did not preclude his becoming a Fellow of the Society for Psychical Research, nor did it stop him from producing papers dealing with esoteric themes, such as 'Dreams and Telepathy', published in English in *Imago* 8 (1922), 1-22, trans. C. J. M. Hubback, repr. in Sigmund Freud, *Collected Papers*, 4 volumes, trans. C. J. M. Hubback and Joan Riviere (London: Hogarth Press, 1924-1925), 4:408-35. In this paper Freud reveals his willingness to consider the possibility of telepathy but insists that, even if some dreams do display telepathic elements, this is not mutually exclusive of his own method of dream interpretation. See also 'Psychoanalysis and Telepathy' (1921), published posthumously in English in Freud, SE18, 177-194. In this paper Freud initially presents occultism as a 'new danger' that threatens the psychoanalytic edifice, but then declares (178-79): 'It is probable that the study of occult phenomena will result in the admission that some of these phenomena are real'. Other papers by Freud on the occult include 'The Occult Significance of Dreams' (1925), published in English for the first time in George Devereux (ed.), *Psychoanalysis and the Occult* (New York: International Universities Press, 1953), 87-90; and 'Dreams and the Occult' (1933), in Sigmund Freud, *New Introductory Lectures in Psychoanalysis* (New York: Norton, 1933), 257-75, repr. in Devereux (ed.), *Psychoanalysis and the Occult*, 91-109. The fact that these papers were not included in the *Standard Edition* of Freud's works reveals a good deal about the attitudes of the psychoanalytic community toward Freud's esoteric inclinations. When Ernest Jones pressed Freud about his occult interests, Freud retaliated: 'My acceptance of telepathy is my own affair, like my Judaism and my passion for smoking' (Sigmund Freud to Ernest Jones (7 March 1926), Letter 478, in R. Andrew Paskauskas (ed.), *The Complete Correspondence of Sigmund Freud and Ernest Jones, 1908-1939* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1993), 596-97. For Freud's involvement with Wilhelm Fliess and the 'borderland' between medicine and occultism which Fliess represented, see Webb, *Occult Establishment*, 356-361.

²⁸ Hilda C. Abraham and Ernst L. Freud (eds. and trans.), *The Letters of Sigmund Freud and Karl Abraham, 1907-1926* (New York, NY: Basic Books, 1965), 34.

²⁹ David Bakan, *Sigmund Freud and the Jewish Mystical Tradition* (Princeton, NJ: D. Van Nostrand, 1958; repr. Boston: Beacon Press, 1975), xviii.

³⁰ For the relevance of Freud's Hasidic family background to his psychoanalytic theories, see Willy Aron, 'Notes on Sigmund Freud's Ancestry and Jewish Contacts', *YIVO Annual of Jewish Social Science*, 11 (1956-1957), 286-95; Paul Roazen, *Meeting Freud's Family* (Amherst, MA: University of Massachusetts Press, 1993); Emanuel Rice,

Jewish mysticism; and psychoanalysis can intelligently be viewed as such a secularization'.³¹ In Fortune's work, a curious uroboric circle may be observed: an early-twentieth-century occultist 'psychologises' esoteric ideas through the use of a psychological system which is itself a 'secularised' expression of those same ideas, and likewise 'sacralises' that psychological system through the framework of the same esoteric ideas that infused it to begin with.

Crowley, who referred to psychoanalysis as 'hashed-up paganism with Semitic sauce',³² nevertheless recognised the importance of the Kabbalah for Freud's theories, observing tartly that the magical tradition and the Kabbalah were 'the Children's table from which Freud...ate a few crumbs that fell'.³³ But until the 1980s, little scholarly exploration was made into the conceptual structures of psychoanalysis in relation to the Kabbalah, with the exception of Bakan's often-disputed work.³⁴ This decades-long neglect may be partly due to the antisemitic sentiments evident in many early academic discussions on Freud's Jewishness. Despite Freud's efforts, psychoanalysis was marked from its inception as a 'Jewish' science.³⁵ Jung, after he had broken with Freud, attempted to bolster the validity of his own psychological theories by joining, for a time, the swelling tide of anti-Jewish feeling during the 1930s and, inadvisedly in the light of subsequent world events, referred to psychoanalysis as 'Jewish psychology':

It has been a grave error in medical psychology up till now to apply Jewish categories...indiscriminately to Germanic and Slavic Christendom. Because of this the most precious secret of the Germanic peoples – their creative and intuitive depth of soul – has been explained as a morass of banal infantilism.³⁶

More recent scholarly work has tended to focus on Freud's Jewish roots in a general sense, rather than on the relevance of the Kabbalah to fundamental Freudian concepts such as the centrality of sexuality, the linguistic playfulness of the unconscious, and the hidden meanings underlying the 'manifest content' of dream imagery.³⁷ Some researchers have actively opposed Bakan's placement of Freud within the Jewish esoteric tradition.³⁸ However, in the last two decades a number of psychologists and psychoanalysts have begun examining the relationship between Freud's ideas and the Kabbalah,³⁹ and this growing body of work affirms the centrality of Kabbalistic concepts, particularly those of the Lurianic Kabbalah, in virtually every aspect of the psychoanalytic edifice. Lurianic themes also seem

Freud and Moses: The Long Journey Home (Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 1990); Yosef Hayim Yerushalmi, *Freud's Moses: Judaism Terminable and Interminable* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1991); Schneider and Berke, 'Sigmund Freud'.

³¹ Bakan, *Freud*, 25.

³² Crowley, *Confessions*, 45.

³³ Crowley, *Confessions*, 19.

³⁴ An exception is Harry Trosman, 'Freud's Cultural Background', *AP* 1 (1973), 318-335.

³⁵ For this theme see Janet Liebman Jacobs, 'Freud as Other: Antisemitism and the Development of Psychoanalysis', in Janet Liebman Jacobs and Donald Capps (eds.), *Religion, Society, and Psychoanalysis: Readings in Contemporary Theory* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1997), 11-22.

³⁶ Jung, CW10, ¶354. For Jung's pre-war foray into antisemitism, see Aryeh Maidenbaum and Stephen A. Martin (eds.), *Lingering Shadows: Jungians, Freudians, and Anti-Semitism* (Boston: Shambhala, 1991), and Aryeh Maidenbaum (ed.), *Jung and the Shadow of Anti-Semitism: Collected Essays* (Berwick, ME: Nicolas-Hays, 2002); Poliakov, *Aryan Myth*, 286-90.

³⁷ See Miriam Huttler, 'Jewish Origins of Freud's Interpretation of Dreams', *JPJ* 23:1 (1999), 5-48; D. B. Klein, *Jewish Origins of the Psychoanalytic Movement* (New York, NY: Praeger, 1981); J. Miller, 'Interpretation of Freud's Jewishness', *JHBS* 17 (1981), 357-74. For Freud's work on the linguistic playfulness of the unconscious, see Sigmund Freud, *Jokes in Relation to the Unconscious*, in Freud, SE8.

³⁸ See Susan Handelman, 'Interpretation as Devotion: Freud's Relation to Rabbinic Hermeneutics', *PR* 68 (1981), 201-18. For possible reasons for such opposition, see Dan Merkur, 'Freud and Hasidism', in Jacobs and Katz (eds.), *Religion, Society, and Psychoanalysis*, 11-22.

³⁹ For references more recent and comprehensive than Bakan's which discuss Freud's knowledge of Kabbalah, see Ana-Maria Rizzuto, *Why Did Freud Reject God?* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1998); Joseph H. Berke and Stanley Schneider, *Centers of Power: The Convergence of Psychoanalysis and Kabbalah* (New York, NY: Jason Aronson, 2008). See also Stanley Schneider and Joseph H. Berke, 'Freud's Meeting with Rabbi Alexandre Safran', *PH* 12:1 (2010), 15-28; Sanford L. Drob, 'This is Gold': Freud, Psychotherapy and the Lurianic Kabbalah' (1998-2006), at <<http://www.newkabbalah.com>>. For other recent papers, see Joseph H. Berke, 'Psychoanalysis and Kabbalah', *PR* 83 (1996), 849-863; Stanley Schneider and Joseph H. Berke, 'The Oceanic Feeling, Mysticism and Kabbalah: Freud's Historical Roots', *PR* 95:1 (2008), 131-56.

to have permeated the theories of Melanie Klein (1882-1960), one of Freud's most important followers and, like him, from an Eastern European Hasidic background.⁴⁰ It remains unclear whether the Kabbalah was consciously utilised by Freud or had been absorbed unconsciously from his family background. Karen Starr suggests the latter, stating: 'It is unlikely that Freud consciously incorporated Jewish mystical ideas into his theories. However, it is almost certain that he was exposed to these ideas and influenced by them'.⁴¹ Whether Freud was a conscious or an unconscious Kabbalist, it is not surprising that Dion Fortune, whose maiden voyage into occult waters coincided with her work at the Medico-Psychological Clinic, was quickly attracted to Freud's ideas and felt there was a close relationship between occultism and these new researches into the unknown regions of the human soul.

Freud avoided mentioning the Kabbalah, but he never concealed his interest in numerological and linguistic word-plays as expressions of the unconscious – although he only referred to the source of this preoccupation with *gematria* in a private letter to Jung, calling it 'the specifically Jewish nature of my mysticism'.⁴² Such hermeneutics, although utilised in most Kabbalistic texts, are found in older rabbinic sources, and Susan Handelman argues that Freud's method of dream interpretation is therefore based on rabbinic, not Kabbalistic, methods of extracting the hidden meanings from scripture.⁴³ But it is not only Freud's psychological *gematria* that suggests Kabbalistic influences; the major themes of his work echo the major themes of the Kabbalah. Freud believed that the dream, like the Torah, is a text that must be decoded in order to reveal the secret workings of the psyche:

There is a psychological technique which makes it possible to interpret dreams, and...if that procedure is employed, every dream reveals itself as a psychical structure which has a meaning...I shall further endeavor to elucidate the process to which the strangeness and obscurity of dreams are due and to deduce from those processes the nature of the psychical forces by whose concurrent or mutually opposing action dreams are generated.⁴⁴

If the phrase 'psychical forces' is replaced by 'ten *sefirot*', Freud might be describing the nature of traditional Kabbalistic hermeneutics. Freud's concept of 'free association' as a means of accessing the depths of the unconscious – 'noting and reporting whatever comes into his [the patient's] head' with a 'completely impartial attitude'⁴⁵ – strongly resembles the Kabbalistic 'jumping and skipping' technique advocated in the thirteenth century by Abraham Abulafia to achieve altered states of consciousness.⁴⁶ While *gematria* may be rabbinic in origin, it reaches its apotheosis in Kabbalistic speculations about the infrastructure of the godhead. The angelic and Divine Names are the linguistic manifestations of objective powers, as Fortune herself was aware:

⁴⁰ See, for example, Harriet Lutzky, 'Reparation and Tikkun: A Comparison of the Kleinian and Kabbalistic Concepts', *IRP* 16 (1989), 449-58; Joseph H. Berke and Stanley Schneider, 'Repairing Worlds: An Exploration of the Psychoanalytical and Kabbalistic Concepts of Reparation and Tikkun', *PR* 90 (2003), 723-49. For more on Klein, an Austrian Jewish psychoanalyst who studied with Sandor Ferenczi in Budapest during the Great War and emigrated to London in 1926, see Hanna Segal, *Introduction to the Works of Melanie Klein* (London: Hogarth Press, 1975); Robert Caper, *Immaterial Facts: Freud's Discovery of Psychic Reality and Klein's Development of His Work* (London: Routledge, 1999). For Klein's most important work on the subject of reparation, see Melanie Klein, *Love, Guilt, and Reparation and Other Works 1921-1945* (London: Hogarth Press/Institute of Psycho-Analysis, 1981). There is no mention of Klein in Fortune's work, although Philippa Martindale ('"Against All Hushing Up"', 179-80) points out that Klein had 'a powerful impact on the development of British psychoanalysis in the late 1920s and 1930s' and her ideas were already circulating at the Medico-Psychological Clinic during the period of Fortune's training.

⁴¹ Karen E. Starr, *Repair of the Soul: Metaphors of Transformation in Jewish Mysticism and Psychoanalysis* (London: Routledge 2008), 18.

⁴² Sigmund Freud, letter to C. G. Jung (April 1909), in William McGuire (ed.), *The Freud-Jung Letters*, trans. Ralph Manheim and R. F. C. Hull (London: Hogarth Press/Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1977), 219-20.

⁴³ Handelman, 'Interpretation', 201-18.

⁴⁴ Freud, SE4, 57.

⁴⁵ Freud, SE4, 175. For more on Freud's 'free association', see Sigmund Freud, *The Psychopathology of Everyday Life*, trans. A. A. Brill (London: T. Fisher Unwin, 1914); repr. Freud, SE6.

⁴⁶ For Abulafia's 'jumping and skipping' (*dillug* and *kefitsah*), see Bakan, *Freud*, 77-81; Scholem, *Major Trends*, 135-136; Idel, *Mystical Experience*, 13-41.

Those profound students of the subtler aspects of existence, the Qabbalists, were in the habit of reducing to numerical value all potencies with which they worked...If, therefore, we are dealing with the names which the Hebrew Qabbalists gave to the potencies...we may be sure that...when deciphered and reduced in turn to their factors, will tell us a very great deal about the potency concerned.⁴⁷

For Freud, as for Lurianic Kabbalists, the most pervasive 'potency' animating human life is *eros*, the sexual urge, which in the psychoanalytic framework is presented as an unconscious power permeating, and even dominating, the whole of human existence. Freud's insistence on 'the importance of sexuality in all human achievements' echoes Shaul Magid's suggestion that the entire Lurianic myth is based on sexual desire, and that in Lurianic Kabbalah 'a healthy cosmos is a cosmos in the state of erotic desire leading to sexual union'.⁴⁸ In the introduction to the first English translation of Jung's *Psychology of the Unconscious*⁴⁹ – the edition with which Fortune herself was familiar – Beatrice Hinkle explained that Freud's concept of sexuality is 'entirely different' from the popular understanding. According to Hinkle, Freud conceived sexuality as 'practically synonymous with the word *love*...It must also be borne in mind that Freud strictly emphasises the psychic idea of sexuality...as well as the somatic expression'.⁵⁰ As a scientist and a true son of the Enlightenment,⁵¹ Freud could not assign to sexuality the religious significance it enjoys in Kabbalistic texts. He used the term 'libido' to describe sexuality as an all-encompassing, compelling life-force, similar to Henri Bergson's *élan vital*, which itself echoes the same Hasidic roots.⁵² Fortune, on the other hand, exhibited no such shyness in assigning divinity to the libido:

The esotericist does not use the term 'sex' as we do, he speaks of 'life-force' which he conceives to be...a radiating and magnetising vibratory activity...This force he conceives to radiate from the Great First Cause, and therefore to be divine in its nature.⁵³

Following Mathers and Crowley, who followed Lévi, who in turn followed the Kabbalistic theosophy of Joseph Gikatilia and the Lurianic texts of the *Kabbala denudata*, Fortune proposed that this divine life-force is dual in nature, a polarity of cosmic male and female potencies that comprise the twin pillars of the sefirotic Tree. The Tree is 'a scheme of relationships, stresses, and reflections',⁵⁴ and its dualism is fundamental to creation: 'There can be no manifestation without differentiation into the Pairs of Opposites'.⁵⁵ By 1920, Freud too had moved beyond his original idea of a one-tune psyche, and presented two opposing unconscious forces: the life-drive or *eros*, and the death-drive, referred to by post-Freudians as *thanatos* after the Greek god of death.⁵⁶ Where the life-drive seeks to perpetuate life through pleasure and relationship, the death-drive seeks to achieve a return to the primal state of inanimate matter, on both biological and psychological levels. Echoing Zoharic descriptions of the 'evil impulse',⁵⁷ Freud associated this urge toward repetition, stasis, and disintegration with a 'daemonic' quality:

The manifestations of a compulsion to repeat...exhibit to a high degree an instinctual character and, when they act in opposition to the pleasure principle, give the appearance

⁴⁷ Fortune, *Sane Occultism*, 76.

⁴⁸ Freud, SE7, 43; Shaul Magid, *From Metaphysics to Midrash: Myth, History, and the Interpretation of Scripture in Lurianic Kabbalah* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 2008), 31.

⁴⁹ C. G. Jung, *The Psychology of the Unconscious*, trans. Beatrice M. Hinkle (London: Kegan Paul, 1917).

⁵⁰ Beatrice M. Hinkle, 'Introduction', in Jung, *Psychology of the Unconscious*, vii-xxviii, on p. xii.

⁵¹ For Freud as a rationalistic atheist, see Peter Gay, *A Godless Jew: Freud, Atheism, and the Making of Psychoanalysis* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1987).

⁵² Freud, SE7, 45. For the influence of Bergson's Hasidic background on his idea of *élan vital*, see Mary Whiton Calkins, 'Henri Bergson: Personalist', *Philosophical Review* 21:6 (1912), 666-675.

⁵³ Dion Fortune, *The Esoteric Philosophy of Love and Marriage* (London: Rider, 1923), 28. For the term 'life-force', preferred by some practitioners at the Medico-Psychological Clinic, see Martindale, "'Hushing Up'", 181.

⁵⁴ Fortune, *Mystical Qabalah*, 43.

⁵⁵ Fortune, *Mystical Qabalah*, 45.

⁵⁶ See Freud, SE18.

⁵⁷ See, for example, *Zohar* 1:165b and *Zohar* 1:179a.

of some 'daemonic' force at work.⁵⁸

Fortune, perceiving the Kabbalistic polarity of *Hesed* and *Geburah* in Freud's idea of a dialectic within the unconscious, describes this second, female potency as 'locked up in form'; it embodies the 'disintegrating forces that constantly seek to reduce all specialised substance to its common root'.⁵⁹ The interaction of the two powers stands behind all manifestation: 'This fundamental duality extends into all combinations of which the atom is the base'.⁶⁰ It is difficult to know whether Fortune derived her ideas from Freud or from the Kabbalah since, for her, the two sources seem to have represented two different languages describing the same creative process on both cosmic and human levels.

Harold Bloom, although he does not claim that Freud consciously borrowed themes from the Kabbalah, points out another aspect of Kabbalistic thought which he believes 'prefigures' Freud's ideas: the *tselem* or 'divine image' in the human psyche, first mentioned in the *Zohar* and later developed by Luria and his disciples, who refer to it as the 'ethereal body'.⁶¹ The *tselem* bears a close family resemblance to the *ochêma pneuma* or 'spirit vehicle' of the Neoplatonists, a quasi-material entity which links body and soul and mediates vital psycho-spiritual energies to the physical form of the individual.⁶² The astral vehicle can also be found in Gnostic texts, where each of the seven layers of the vehicle, now described as the carrier of astral fate, is impregnated with the vices of each of the seven planetary archons as the individual soul descends into worldly incarnation.⁶³ In the Lurianic Kabbalah, as in Neoplatonic thought, this 'divine image' carries the seeds of the individual personality, and Bloom suggests that Freud's ideas of personality and the emotional responses of the individual reflect this 'enigmatic' intermediary between soul and body.⁶⁴ The idea of a multi-layered astral body was enthusiastically taken up by the Theosophists,⁶⁵ and the various tiers of this complex vehicle were incorporated into Fortune's system as different levels of 'etheric, astro-mental, and spiritual consciousness'. Fortune explained that the tiers of sefirotic emanations described in Kabbalistic theosophy are reflected in these various levels of individual human consciousness;⁶⁶ the *sefirot*, including their planetary correlations, are within the human soul. As Abraham Abulafia explained in the thirteenth century, the human being is

...the ultimate composite, which is man, who comprises all the *sefirot*, and whose intellect is the active intellect; and when you will untie its knots, you will be united with it [the active intellect] in a unique union.⁶⁷

⁵⁸ Freud, SE18, 29. For Fortune's understanding of the 'evil influence' and the *qlippot* which represent it, see Fortune, *Mystical Qabalah*, 297-304. For the relationship of Freud's dialectic between *eros* and *thanatos* and various passages in the *Zohar*, see Schneider and Berke, 'Freud's Meeting', 20.

⁵⁹ Fortune, *Esoteric Philosophy*, 29.

⁶⁰ Fortune, *Cosmic Doctrine*, 36.

⁶¹ Bloom, *Kabbalah and Criticism*, 20-21. For the *tselem*, see Fine, *Physician*, 95-96, 384-385, n. 45; Scholem, *Mystical Shape*, 251-73.

⁶² For the Neoplatonic 'spirit vehicle' or astral body, see John F. Finamore, *Iamblichus and the Theory of the Vehicle of the Soul* (Chico, CA: Scholars Press, 1985); D. P. Walker, 'The Astral Body in Renaissance Medicine', *JWCI* 21:1/2 (1958), 119-33; E. R. Dodds, 'The Astral Body in Neoplatonism', in Dodds (trans.), *Proclus: Elements of Theology*, 313-22; Robert Christian Kissling, 'The *Ochêma-Pneuma* of the Neo-Platonists and the *De Insomniis* of Synesius of Cyrene', *AJP* 43:4 (1922), 318-30.

⁶³ See Jonas, *Gnostic Religion*, 160; Couliano, *Tree of Gnosis*, 102-105. For Gnostic texts describing the astral vehicle as *antimimon pneuma* or 'counterfeit spirit', see, *inter alia*, *The Apocryphon of John* II.1.15, in *Nag Hammadi Library*, 107; *Pistis Sophia*, trans. G. R. S. Mead (London: J. M. Watkins, 1921), 111.283.

⁶⁴ Bloom, *Kabbalah and Criticism*, 20.

⁶⁵ For the Theosophical astral body, see H. P. Blavatsky, 'Astral Bodies, or Doppelgänger', *Lucifer* 3:16 (1888), 328-33, repr. in Blavatsky, CW10, 217-26; Annie Besant, *Man and His Bodies* (Los Angeles, CA: Theosophical Publishing House, 1914); C. W. Leadbeater, *Man Visible and Invisible* (Wheaton, IL: Theosophical Publishing House, 1902). Blavatsky's sources probably included Thomas Taylor's translations of Neoplatonic texts such as Proclus' *Elements of Theology*, published in 1816, in which Proclus discusses the *ochêma* in Proposition 209, as well as Lévi's *La science des esprits*.

⁶⁶ Dion Fortune, *Aspects of Occultism* (Wellingborough: Aquarian Press, 1962), 47-53.

⁶⁷ Abraham Abulafia, *Ve Zot Li-Yehudah*, cited in Wolfson, *Abraham Abulafia*, 145-46.