

Israel Regardie and the Psychologization of Esoteric Discourse

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Abstract

This is an article in the history of Western esoteric currents that re-examines and clarifies the relationship between esoteric and psychological discourses within the works of Israel Regardie. One of the most common ways in which these two discourses have been found to be related to one another by scholars of the esoteric is through the process of “psychologization”—with Regardie often being put forth as a paragon of the process. This paper argues that a unitary conception of psychologization fails to adequately describe the specific discursive strategies utilized by Regardie. In order to accurately analyze his ideas, a manifold typology of complementary, terminological, reductive, and idealist modes of psychologization is proposed instead. Through this system of classification, Regardie’s ideas regarding the relationship between psychological and esoteric discourses are understood as a network of independent but non-exclusive processes, rather than as a single trend. It is found that all four modes of psychologization are present, both in relative isolation and in combination with one another, throughout his works. These results demonstrate that while it is accurate to speak of Regardie as having psychologized esoteric discourse, this can only be the case given an understanding of “psychologization” that is differentially nuanced in a way that, at least, accounts for the distinct discursive strategies this paper identifies.

Keywords

psychologization; method and theory; psychology and esotericism; science and religion; Israel Regardie; Golden Dawn

1. Introduction

Of all the exponents of the esoteric current initiated by the Hermetic Order of the Golden Dawn (HOGD),¹ Francis Israel Regardie (1907–1985) contends with the titans of modern Western esoteric currents, such as Samuel Liddell MacGregor Mathers (1854–1918), Arthur Edward Waite (1857–1942), Aleister Crowley (1875–1947), and Dion Fortune (1890–1946), as perhaps the most prolific and widely influential author on the practice of magic. Tremendous portions of Regardie’s esoteric writings concern themselves with a single, unified question: what is the nature of the relationship between esoteric and psychological discourses?² Although Regardie explored this family of

¹ For treatments of the order’s history, see: Ellic Howe, *The Magicians of the Golden Dawn: A Documentary History of a Magical Order 1887–1923* (York Beach: Samuel Weiser, 1972); Ithel Colquhoun, *Sword of Wisdom: MacGregor Mathers and the Golden Dawn* (New York: G.P. Putnam’s Sons, 1975); R.A. Gilbert, *Golden Dawn: Twilight of the Magicians* (Wellingborough: The Aquarian Press, 1983); Mary K. Greer, *Women of the Golden Dawn: Rebels and Priestesses* (Rochester: Park Street Press, 1995); R.A. Gilbert, *The Golden Dawn Scrapbook: The Rise and Fall of a Magical Order* (York Beach: Samuel Weiser, 1997); Daniël van Egmond, “Western Esoteric Schools in the Late Nineteenth and Early Twentieth Centuries,” in *Gnosis and Hermeticism from Antiquity to Modern Times*, eds. Roelof van den Broek and Wouter J. Hanegraaff (Albany: State University New York Press, 1998), 311–46; Mary Greer and Darcy Küntz, *The Chronology of the Golden Dawn: Being a Chronological History of a Magical Order, 1378–1994* (Edmonds: Holmes Publishing Group, 1999); Henrik Bogdan, *Western Esotericism and Rituals of Initiation* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2007), 121–44; Christopher McIntosh, “‘Fräulein Sprengel’ and the Origins of the Golden Dawn: A Surprising Discovery,” *Aries* 11, no. 2 (2011): 249–57.

² Within the nascent field of Western esotericism, uses of the term “esotericism” (and “esoteric”) have ranged from strongly essentialist frameworks describing “esotericism” as a *Ding an sich* (e.g., Antoine Faivre, Nicholas Goodrick-Clarke), to empirical treatments that view “esotericism” as an historiographical construct (e.g., Wouter J. Hanegraaff, Kocku von Stuckrad), to intermediary positions between these two poles (e.g., Marco Pasi). It is far beyond this paper’s scope to examine the individual merits of such arguments, or to venture into defining related terms, such as “occultism” or “magic.” It will suffice to say that within this paper, I use the term “esoteric discourse” in preference to “esotericism.” The theoretical underpinnings of this shift conceptualize ‘the esoteric,’ as a discourse in European and American religion in which claims of higher knowledge are characterized by a dialectic of revelation and concealment. For more on “esoteric discourse” as a theoretical alternative to “Western esotericism,” see: Kocku von Stuckrad, *Locations of Knowledge in Medieval and Early Modern Europe: Esoteric Discourse and Western Identities* (Leiden: Brill, 2010), 43–66; Kocku von Stuckrad, *The Scientification of Religion: An Historical Study of Discursive Change, 1800–2000* (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 2014), 152–58; Kennet Granholm, *Dark Enlightenment: The Historical, Sociological, and Discursive Contexts of Contemporary Esoteric Magic* (Leiden: Brill, 2014), 28–29; Egil Asprem, *The Problem of Disenchantment: Scientific Naturalism and Esoteric Discourse, 1900–1939* (Leiden: Brill, 2014), 546–51. Additionally, I follow Kennet Granholm’s lead in

concerns in a variety of ways throughout his six decades of involvement in Western esoteric currents, his overriding focus—to elucidate the ways in which esoteric theory and praxis overlapped with the psychological modelling and psychotherapeutic practice of his day—remained relatively constant. Given this focus, the question naturally emerges as to what degree Regardie’s ideas fall within the scope of what many scholars of esoteric discourse now term “psychologization.” In his pioneering works on the New Age movements, Wouter Hanegraaff noted that one of the characteristic attitudes of such intellectual currents is the “double phenomenon of a *psychologizing of religion combined with a sacralization of psychology*.”³ Far from being a peculiarity of the New Age, Hanegraaff identifies psychologization as the “dominant tendency among 20th-century magicians” as well.⁴ This psychologizing trend has been

that “esoteric currents can be analyzed as ‘discursive complexes,’ i.e. collections of distinct discourses in specific combinations” (Granholm, *Dark Enlightenment*, 36). For more on this, see: Kennet Granholm, “Esoteric Currents as Discursive Complexes,” *Religion* 43, no. 1 (2013): 46–69. For useful overviews of this definitional debate (apart from the specific advocates for discursive approaches listed above), see: Antoine Faivre, *Access to Western Esotericism* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1994), 3–48; Wouter J. Hanegraaff, “Empirical Method in the Study of Esotericism,” *Method & Theory in the Study of Religion* 7, no. 2 (1995): 99–129; Wouter J. Hanegraaff, “On the Construction of ‘Esoteric Traditions,’” in *Western Esotericism and the Science of Religion*, eds. Antoine Faivre and Wouter J. Hanegraaff (Leuven: Peeters, 1998), 11–61; Kocku von Stuckrad, “Western Esotericism: Towards an Integrative Model of Interpretation,” *Religion* 35 (2005): 78–97; Nicholas Goodrick-Clarke, *The Western Esoteric Traditions: A Historical Introduction* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), 3–14; Wouter J. Hanegraaff, *Esotericism and the Academy: Rejected Knowledge in Western Culture* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012); Wouter J. Hanegraaff, “The Power of Ideas: Esotericism, Historicism, and the Limits of Discourse,” *Religion* 43, no. 2 (2013): 252–73; Marco Pasi, “The Problems of Rejected Knowledge: Thoughts on Wouter Hanegraaff’s *Esotericism and the Academy*,” *Religion* 43, no. 2 (2013): 201–12; Egil Asprem and Kennet Granholm, “Constructing Esotericisms: Sociological, Historical and Critical Approaches to the Invention of Tradition,” in *Contemporary Esotericism*, eds. Egil Asprem and Kennet Granholm (Sheffield: Equinox, 2013), 25–48.

³ Wouter J. Hanegraaff, “The New Age Movement and the Esoteric Tradition,” in *Gnosis and Hermeticism: From Antiquity to Modern Times*, eds. Roelof van den Broek and Wouter J. Hanegraaff (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1998), 378 (emphasis in original). For nearly identical wording, see: Wouter J. Hanegraaff, *New Age Religion and Western Culture: Esotericism in the Mirror of Secular Thought* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1998), 196–7; Wouter J. Hanegraaff, *Western Esotericism: A Guide for the Perplexed* (London: Bloomsbury, 2013), 137 (emphasis in original).

⁴ Wouter J. Hanegraaff, “How Magic Survived the Disenchantment of the World,” *Religion* 33 (2003): 366. In later works, Hanegraaff caveats this assertion somewhat: “The psychologizing trend is very common in modern and contemporary esotericism, but is certainly not universal.” Hanegraaff, *Western Esotericism*, 137.

further identified as the hallmark of modern emic discourses on magic by a wide range of contemporary scholars.⁵ Amid this flurry of recent research touching on the psychologization of esoteric discourse, Regardie has come into view as one of the phenomenon's chief representatives—with Hanegraaff,⁶ Marco Pasi,⁷ John Selby,⁸ Egil Asprem,⁹ and Kocku von Stuckrad¹⁰ putting him forth as a primary example of modern esoteric discourse's trend towards psychologization. However, in none of these cases is the assertion that Regardie's esoteric discourse is psychologized supported by a full critical review of his writing on the subjects. As such, the degree to which this characterization is a true reflection of Regardie's work remains an open question, one which is addressed by this present work.

In examining the relationship between psychological and esoteric discourses in Regardie's writings, I argue that the notion of "psychologization" as a singular process is imprecise and ill-suited for describing the particular discursive

⁵ T.M. Luhrmann, *Persuasions of the Witch's Craft: Ritual Magic in Contemporary England* (Berkeley: North Atlantic Books, 2010), 280–2; Alex Owen, *The Place of Enchantment: British Occultism and the Culture of the Modern* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2004), 231; Kocku von Stuckrad, *Western Esotericism: A Brief History of Secret Knowledge* (London: Equinox, 2005), 144; Jennifer Walters, "Magical Revival: Occultism and the Culture of Regeneration in Britain, c. 1880–1929" (PhD diss., University of Sterling, 2007), 111; Egil Asprem, "Magic Naturalized? Negotiating Science and Occult Experience in Aleister Crowley's Scientific Illuminism," *Aries* 8 (2008): 140; John Warne Monroe, *Laboratories of Faith: Mesmerism, Spiritism, and Occultism in Modern France* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2008), 202; Jesper Aagaard Petersen, "'We Demand Bedrock Knowledge': Modern Satanism Between Secularized Esotericism and 'Esotericized' Secularism," in *Handbook of Religion and the Authority of Science*, eds. James R. Lewis and Olav Hammer (Leiden: Brill, 2010), 89; Alison Butler, *Victorian Occultism and the Making of Modern Magic: Invoking Tradition* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011), 180–81; Marco Pasi, "Varieties of Magical Experience: Aleister Crowley's Views on Occult Practice," in *Aleister Crowley and Western Esotericism*, eds. Henrik Bogdan and Martin P. Starr (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), 55; Colin Duggan, "Perennialism and Iconoclasm: Chaos Magick and the Legitimacy of Innovation," in *Contemporary Esotericism* (Sheffield: Equinox, 2013), 94.

⁶ Hanegraaff, "How Magic Survived," 368; Hanegraaff, *Western Esotericism*, 137.

⁷ Marco Pasi, "La notion de magie dans le courant occultiste en Angleterre (1875–1947)" (PhD diss., École Pratique des Hautes Études, 2004), 395–98; Pasi, "Varieties of Magical Experience," 76.

⁸ John Selby, "Dion Fortune and Her Inner Plane Contacts: Intermediaries in the Western Esoteric Tradition" (PhD diss., University of Exeter, 2008), 199.

⁹ Egil Asprem, *Arguing With Angels: Enochian Magic and Modern Occulture* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2012), 7. It should, however, be noted that Asprem suggests that Hanegraaff's overreliance on Regardie as an example is partially responsible for his model of the psychologization process being somewhat one-dimensional ("Magic Naturalized," 142).

¹⁰ Von Stuckrad, *The Scientification of Religion*, 72.

entanglements at play. Thus, after providing a brief biographical sketch of Regardie, which examines his careers as both a magician and psychotherapist, I propose a model of “psychologization” as a manifold network of discursive strategies that are mutually independent, but non-exclusive and capable of overlap. The specific component processes of this typology that bear discussion in Regardie’s case are, respectively, the complementary, terminological, reductive, and idealist modes of psychologization. Following this, I briefly look into the origins of the psychologizing trends in modern Western esoteric currents, finding that the bidirectionally formative nature of the relationship between esoteric and psychological discourses makes the blanket characterization of modern esoteric discourse as being psychologized troublesome. Descriptions of Regardie as a paragon of psychologized esoteric discourse by Hanegraaff, Aspren, and Pasi then follow, with a picture emerging of each author describing Regardie’s “psychologization” in somewhat different terms—each accurately reflecting aspects of Regardie’s work in parts, but painting with an overly broad brush in others. Through a careful documentary analysis of Regardie’s esoteric corpus, the conclusion proposed is that the issue of “psychologization” within his esoteric discourse is far from a simple matter with a “yes-or-no” solution.

2. The Life and Times of Israel Regardie

2.1 The Initiate

In order to understand Regardie’s relationship with the two disciplines in question, a biographical sketch that charts the course of his life in relation to these fields of study will prove useful in contextualizing his writings within the broader framework of his life, education, vocations, and avocations. Regardie, whose surname was originally Regudy, was born on 17 November 1907 in London to a small immigrant family of Orthodox Jews from Russia.¹¹ When the family left London for Washington, DC, in 1921, Regardie ostensibly took up the study of art. However, at the age of fifteen or sixteen—sparked by a reference to Helena Petrovna Blavatsky (1831–1891) in a book belonging to

¹¹ Nicolas Tereshchenko, “Israel Regardie (1907–1985) and the ‘Golden Dawn,’” *ARIES: Association pour la Recherche et l’Information sur l’Esotérisme* 4 (1986): 71; Gerald Suster, *Crowley’s Apprentice: The Life and Ideas of Israel Regardie* (York Beach: Samuel Weiser, 1990), 1; Pasi, “La notion,” 391; Richard Kaczynski, *Perdurabo: The Life of Aleister Crowley* (Berkeley: North Atlantic Books, 2010), 432. The family name, Regudy, was changed to Regardie in 1921 after an army recruiter misspelled the name of Israel’s older brother on his enlistment papers.

his sister—Regardie’s interests began to tend towards the esoteric.¹² This soon blossomed into the exploration of Theosophy, yoga, and the Qabalah, with the works of Blavatsky,¹³ Paul Foster Case (1884–1954), and Charles Stansfeld Jones (1886–1950)¹⁴ making particular impressions upon him. Spurred in part by his Jewish heritage, his early delving into the Qabalah was supplemented by a year’s study of Hebrew language under the tutelage of a student of George Washington University, as was recommended to Regardie by the head of the Library of Congress’s Semitic Language Division after the young man expressed his interest in translating heretofore untranslated Qabalistic texts.¹⁵ Between 1926 and 1927, Regardie’s descent into the world of the esoteric was doubly affected by his discovery of Crowley’s writings and by his initiation into the Societas Rosicruciana in America (SRIA).¹⁶ In 1928, Regardie’s fascination with Crowley’s work reached its apogee, and he made contact with Crowley. The result this time was that Regardie was invited to leave the US and join Crowley in Paris as his (unpaid) secretary, travelling companion, and student.¹⁷ Three years later—once Crowley could no longer afford to keep Regardie

¹² Israel Regardie and Christopher S. Hyatt, “Regardie Pontificates: An Interview,” in *An Interview With Israel Regardie: His Final Thoughts and Views*, ed. Christopher S. Hyatt (Phoenix: Falcon Press, 1985), 19; Suster, *Crowley’s Apprentice*, 1; Pasi, “La notion,” 391; Kaczynski, *Perdurabo*, 432.

¹³ Regardie and Hyatt, “Regardie Pontificates,” 9, 52–53.

¹⁴ Israel Regardie, “Introduction to the Second Edition,” in *A Garden of Pomegranates: Skrying on the Tree of Life*, eds. and ann. Chic Cicero and Sandra Tabitha Cicero (Woodbury: Llewellyn Publications, 1999), xxii: “I began the study of Qabalah at an early age. Two books I read have played unconsciously a prominent part in the writing of my own book. One of these was *Q.B.L. or the Bride’s Reception* by Frater Achad (Charles Stansfeld Jones), which I must have first read around 1926. The other was *An Introduction to the [Study of the] Tarot* by Paul Foster Case, published in the early 1920s.”

¹⁵ Israel Regardie, “The Qabalah of Number and Meaning,” in *Foundations of Practical Magic: An Introduction to Qabalistic, Magical and Meditative Techniques* (Wellingborough: The Aquarian Press, 1979), 113; Israel Regardie, vol. 1 of *The Complete Golden Dawn System of Magic*, 10 vols (Tempe: New Falcon Publications, 1984), 30; Suster, *Crowley’s Apprentice*, 4; Nicholas Popadiuk et al., “From the Occult to Chiropractic Psychiatry: Francis Israel Regardie, D.C.,” *Chiropractic History* 27, no. 2 (2007): 35.

¹⁶ Popadiuk et al., “From the Occult,” 35; Kaczynski, *Perdurabo*, 432. Regardie received special permission, due to his age, to join the the Washington, DC, chapter of the SRIA in early 1926. He was initiated into the Neophyte in March of that year, and advanced to the subsequent grade of Zelator in June of the following year. His introduction to Crowley came through a friend who lent him a copy of *Book Four*, and was soon followed by Regardie’s acquisition of a full set of *The Equinox*, obtained directly from Karl Germer (1885–1962) after Regardie had made his initial contact with Crowley via correspondence.

¹⁷ Tereshchenko, “Israel Regardie,” 71; Suster, *Crowley’s Apprentice*, 31–51; Pasi, “La notion,” 391; Kaczynski, *Perdurabo*, 423–43.

on—the pair parted on friendly terms, and, although they did enter into a rather vicious quarrel in 1937,¹⁸ Regardie greatly valued his relationship with Crowley, remarking later in life: “Everything I am today, I owe to him.”¹⁹

Following his separation from Crowley, Regardie’s life became devoted to the pursuit of two subjects: psychology and the esoteric. In 1932, Regardie published a pair of books, *The Tree of Life* and *A Garden of Pomegranates*, both of which drew deeply from the wealth of HOGD material that Regardie had studied in *The Equinox* and with Crowley. These books at once proved polarizing within the wreckage of the now-defunct order.²⁰ In the following years, Dion Fortune took on the mantle of Regardie’s champion. Not only did she defend his work in print against detractors, but she petitioned for his acceptance into the Stella Matutina (SM), an offshoot of the HOGD to which she belonged.²¹ With Fortune’s sponsorship, Regardie was initiated into the SM’s Bristol chapter in 1934, taking the magical motto: *Ad Majorem Adonai Gloriam*.²² Although Regardie progressed rapidly through the order’s grades and greatly valued its teachings, he quickly became disillusioned with the generalized opposition to the practice of practical magic within the order.²³ The order was, he determined, “in a state of irreversible decay”²⁴ and had become “an ossified system” in need of vivification.²⁵ The only solution that would ensure the revitalization of the HOGD current, Regardie surmised, was to break his oaths of secrecy and make public the teachings and rituals of the order.²⁶ This he did between 1937 and 1940, with the publication of the four-volume compendium *The Golden Dawn* through Aries Press.

2.2 The Student of the Psyche

Although Regardie “had first begun to read about psychoanalysis in the writings of Freud and Jung as early as 1926,”²⁷ it was his tenure with the SM that allowed

¹⁸ Suster, *Crowley’s Apprentice*, 48–51; Kaczynski, *Perdurabo*, 494–95.

¹⁹ Quoted in Suster, *Crowley’s Apprentice*, 51.

²⁰ Suster, *Crowley’s Apprentice*, 61.

²¹ Kaczynski, *Perdurabo*, 494.

²² Popadiuk et al., “From the Occult,” 36; Suster, *Crowley’s Apprentice*, 61.

²³ Suster, *Crowley’s Apprentice*, 73.

²⁴ Tereshchenko, “Israel Regardie,” 74.

²⁵ Gilbert, *Golden Dawn*, 79.

²⁶ Suster, *Crowley’s Apprentice*, 74.

²⁷ Israel Regardie, “Introduction to the Second Edition,” in *The Middle Pillar: The Balance Between Mind and Magic*, eds. and ann. Chic Cicero and Sandra Tabitha Cicero (Woodbury: Llewellyn Publications, 2010), xxx.

this interest to blossom into what would become a career. Although she had no formal qualifications, Fortune had long been practicing as a lay analyst when she and Regardie first met in 1932, and had in 1922 already published—as Violet Firth—*The Machinery of the Mind*, a collection of essays on Freudian psychology.²⁸ When Regardie joined the SM, it was Fortune who acted as the initial catalyst Regardie needed to begin taking the study of Sigmund Freud (1856–1939) and Carl Gustav Jung (1875–1916) seriously.²⁹ Concurrently, Regardie became acquainted with another SM initiate, Eric Graham Howe (1897–1975),³⁰ a medical doctor and psychologist who was a noted mediator of Jungian psychology.³¹ Regardie’s friendship with Howe further stoked the fires of his “interest in and involvement with the world of psychology.”³² In early 1937, Regardie himself entered into a course of psychoanalytical therapy and study under “Dr. E.A. Clegg of Harley Street, and with Dr. J.L. Bendit, a Jungian of Wimpole Street in London.”³³ He also received private instruction in “relaxation techniques” from Oskar Köllerström (c. 1897–1977),³⁴ himself a student of the eminent psychoanalyst Georg Groddeck (1866–1934).³⁵ During this period, Regardie underwent analysis and received training in both Freudian and Jungian psychology, and went on to become a lay analyst himself.³⁶

Later in 1937, Regardie returned to America from England to commence his formal higher education. Although he never graduated from high school, Regardie applied and was admitted to the Columbia Institute of Chiropractic (CIC) in New York City for the fall term in 1937.³⁷ At the time, Regardie

²⁸ Alan Richardson, *The Magical Life of Dion Fortune: Priestess of the 20th Century* (London: The Aquarian Press, 1991), 51–56; Selby, “Dion Fortune,” 132ff.

²⁹ Popadiuk et al., “From the Occult,” 36.

³⁰ Suster, *Crowley’s Apprentice*, 67.

³¹ James Webb, *The Occult Establishment* (La Salle: Open Court, 1976), 476.

³² Suster, *Crowley’s Apprentice*, 60. It is worth noting that Howe was the uncle of Ellic Howe, the author of *The Magicians of the Golden Dawn*.

³³ Regardie, “Introduction to the Second Edition,” *The Middle Pillar*, xxx. Outside of this and other brief notes made by Regardie mentioning the names of these two therapists, little is now known about their identities or practices.

³⁴ Israel Regardie, *Be Yourself: A Guide Book to the Art of Relaxation* (Cheltenham: Helios, 1965), 8.

³⁵ Kristine Stiles, ed., *Correspondence Course: An Epistolary History of Carolee Schneemann and Her Circle* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2010), 164. Apart from his tutelage in psychoanalysis under Groddeck, Köllerström was deeply involved in both the Theosophical Society and the Liberal Catholic Church.

³⁶ Suster, *Crowley’s Apprentice*, 79.

³⁷ Popadiuk et al., “From the Occult,” 37. CIC was a private institution, established in 1919 by Frank E. Dean—who headed the school still in 1937, when Regardie was enrolled. CIC eventually merged with the Columbia College of Chiropractic in 1954, and again with the

identified himself as a writer and masseur, expressing an interest in studying chiropractic due to massage's lack of efficacy in treating patients.³⁸ He graduated from the CIC with a Doctor of Chiropractic degree in 1941 and stayed on at the college, teaching anatomy.³⁹ On 18 April 1942, in what he would later refer to as a “ghastly error,”⁴⁰ Regardie enlisted to serve in the United States Army. His enlistment records indicate that he entered the service as a Branch Immaterial Warrant Officer, with the rank of Private, and that his term was to last “for the duration of the War or other emergency, plus six months.”⁴¹ During this time, Regardie was assigned to a medical department, where he provided training to new recruits on a variety of military subjects, including basic medical training (e.g., first aid).⁴²

2.3 The Chiropractic Psychiatrist

Towards the war's end, Regardie was discharged, whereupon he returned to the United States and sought employment as a chiropractor. In 1944, he was initially hired by the Los Angeles College of Chiropractic (LACC) in Hollywood, California, where he taught chiropractic and “chiropractic psychiatry.”⁴³ As doctors of chiropractic are not medical doctors and do not have the ability to prescribe medicine, the use of the term “psychiatry” to describe Regardie's subject is “a misnomer, and might better have been referred to as the practice of psychology.”⁴⁴ However, the subject was regularly offered both at LACC and the Hollywood College of Chiropractic, where Regardie taught after leaving LACC in 1952.⁴⁵ Not content to simply teach, he continued to study

Atlantic States Chiropractic Institute of Brooklyn in 1964. It was, in the end, renamed as the New York Chiropractic College, which still exists today.

³⁸ Popadiuk et al., “From the Occult,” 37–8.

³⁹ *Ibid.*, 39.

⁴⁰ Quoted in Suster, *Crowley's Apprentice*, 110.

⁴¹ Record for Francis Israel Regardie; Electronic Army Serial Number Merged File, ca. 1938–1946 (Enlistment Records) [Electronic Record]; World War II Army Enlistment Records, created 6/1/2002–9/30/2002, documenting the period ca. 1938–1946; Record Group 64; National Archives at College Park, College Park, MD [retrieved from the Access to Archival Databases at www.archives.gov, September 26, 2006]. As a note, while Popadiuk et al., in “From the Occult” (40), quote Regardie as giving his enlistment date as 28 April 1942, the enlistment record shows the date as 18 April.

⁴² Popadiuk et al., “From the Occult,” 40.

⁴³ *Ibid.*, 42–43. Originally founded in 1911, LACC is known today as the Southern California University of Health Sciences.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, 43–44.

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, 44.

psychotherapy as well. Through his own Reichian analysis under Nandor Fodor (1895–1964),⁴⁶ as well as his correspondence with both Wilhelm Reich (1897–1957) himself⁴⁷ and his daughter Eva Reich (1924–2008),⁴⁸ Regardie came to have a great appreciation for Reich’s idiosyncratic approach to somatic psychotherapy, which augmented Freudian theories of psychoanalysis with the practice of massage. Regardie said of this that “it was inevitable then that the vital biological approach of Wilhelm Reich should appeal to me.”⁴⁹ In Reich’s form of practice, Regardie believed that he had discovered “a bridge between conventional psychotherapy and occultism.”⁵⁰ However, as Marco Pasi notes, following his return to the United States, Regardie had largely disengaged from “les milieux occultistes” and published hardly anything on the subject of the esoteric until the 1960s.⁵¹

In 1947, while still employed with LACC, Regardie became a state licensed chiropractor and set up a private practice in Los Angeles,⁵² specializing in Reichian techniques,⁵³ and practicing a form of Reichian analysis which combined Reich’s somatic psychotherapy with more conventional chiropractic as well as yoga.⁵⁴ Regardie maintained this practice until his retirement in 1981, when he moved from California to a resort community in Sedona, Arizona.⁵⁵ That same year, perhaps as a result of his pending retirement, Regardie became directly involved in the revival of the Golden Dawn. Though he had been publishing on the subject of the HOGD and its esoteric curriculum for decades at this point, his involvement in order work had been at a standstill since leaving the Bristol SM. However, Regardie slowly re-entered the Golden Dawn

⁴⁶ Suster, *Crowley’s Apprentice*, 110.

⁴⁷ Regardie and Hyatt, “Regardie Pontificates,” 53–4. Regardie notes of Reich: “I discovered him around 1947. Again we don’t need to go into the how and why. I became enamoured of him almost immediately. Within a very short period of time I got myself involved in Reichian therapy, in which I stayed for four years. Reich and I had a number of personal communications, which must remain private. I explain why in my book on Reich to be published in 1984.” The book Regardie references here was never published.

⁴⁸ Popadiuk et al., “From the Occult,” 37.

⁴⁹ Regardie, *Be Yourself*, 7–8.

⁵⁰ Regardie, “Introduction to the Second Edition,” *The Middle Pillar*, xxx.

⁵¹ Pasi, “La notion,” 394. Regardie’s publishing output on strictly chiropractic topics was pronounced during the period between 1944 and 1965. For a bibliography of his chiropractic publications, see: Popadiuk et al., 45.

⁵² Suster, *Crowley’s Apprentice*, 110.

⁵³ Pasi, “La notion,” 393.

⁵⁴ Popadiuk et al., “From the Occult,” 48.

⁵⁵ *Ibid.* 51.

circles and began individually tutoring select students during the late 1970s and early 1980s.⁵⁶ In 1980, Regardie began corresponding with Chic Cicero (b. 1936), who had established an autonomous Golden Dawn organization with his wife called the Isis-Urania Temple No. 18 in Columbus, Georgia, in 1978.⁵⁷ Then, after Cicero completed the construction of his temple's Vault of the Adepti in 1982, Regardie performed the ceremony to consecrate the vault, marking "the re-establishment of a valid initiating Second Order in the United States."⁵⁸ Regardie died on 10 March 1985 in Sedona of a heart attack,⁵⁹ leaving behind a tremendous literary legacy—which spanned both esoteric and chiropractic domains—and, thanks to his work during the last decade of his life, a revived incarnation of the HOGD.

3. The Psychologization of Esoteric Discourse

3.1 Defining "Psychologization"

The question of the degree to which Regardie's esoteric discourse is psychologized necessitates a brief examination of just what is meant by the term "psychologization." At its core, any treatment of the psychologization of discourse on the esoteric is discussing a relationship between two categories of discourse: psychological and esoteric. There is a wide range of ways in which these two categories can become entangled; however, it is not within the scope of this paper to develop a typology that claims to exhaust all relational possibilities. Rather, the typology presented here should be seen as exhaustive only insofar as it identifies all of the relational strategies present in Regardie's work, as well as those found in secondary analyses of his work. The members of the typological schema are to be viewed as *modes* of interaction, dynamic discursive processes by which Regardie attempts to reconcile what are often seen—outside esoteric currents, at any rate—as mutually exclusive categories. Within this context, I have identified four different processes which constitute instances of psychologization as found or identified within Regardie's works:

⁵⁶ Suster, *Crowley's Apprentice*, 150–51; Joseph Lisiewski, "Subtle is the Way: A Personal Portrait of Dr. Francis Israel Regardie," in *What You Should Know About the Golden Dawn* (Tempe: New Falcon, 2006), 199–203.

⁵⁷ Greer and Küntz, *The Chronology*, 50–51.

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, 51. At that time, the only operating orders with charters reaching back to the original HOGD were in New Zealand.

⁵⁹ Tereshchenko, "Israel Regardie," 75; Suster, *Crowley's Apprentice*, 178; Popadiuk et al., "From the Occult," 51; Greer and Küntz, *The Chronology*, 51.

Mode-One: Complementary Psychologization
 Mode-Two: Terminological Psychologization
 Mode-Three: Reductive Psychologization
 Mode-Four: Idealistic Psychologization

Mode-one psychologization is the process by which psychological and esoteric discourses are viewed as separate but complementary domains. While this relational modality *does* begin with the position that psychological and esoteric discourses are distinct categories, it does not rise to the level of exclusivity we see in Stephen Jay Gould’s non-overlapping magisteria model of the relationship between religion and science, wherein the two are treated as wholly separate domains whose natures permit no intrusion of one into the other’s sphere of authority.⁶⁰ What we see with mode-one psychologization is something more akin to Ian Barbour’s dialogue model, which portrays science and religion’s relationship as being one of a constructive dialogue between two non-identical, but non-oppositional domains.⁶¹ Alister E. McGrath interprets Barbour’s dialogue model of this relationship in terms of complementarity, and draws on examples of modern Catholic theologians who position science and religion as participating in a complementary relationship.⁶² This notion of relational complementarity—where both domains are separate but one completes the other in some way—is the essence of mode-one psychologization. This mode of complementary psychologization, then, describes a situation where psychological and esoteric discourses are seen as separate categories, but as relating to one another in a way that is complementary—with one picking up where the other leaves off. As we shall see presently, this mode of psychologization is strongly exemplified in Regardie’s near-constant assertion

⁶⁰ Stephen Jay Gould, “Nonoverlapping Magisteria,” *Natural History* 106 (March 1997): 16–22.

⁶¹ Ian G. Barbour, *When Science Meets Religion* (New York: Harper Collins, 2000), 23.

⁶² Alister E. McGrath, *Science and Religion: A New Introduction* (Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell, 2010), 48: “How might they complement each other? For John Paul II, the answer was clear: ‘Science can purify religion from error and superstition; religion can purify science from idolatry and false absolutes. Each can draw the other into a wider world, a world in which both can flourish.’” For similar treatments of science and religion’s complementarity, see: Erwin N. Hiebert, “Modern Physics and Christian Faith,” in *God and Nature: Historical Essays on the Encounter Between Christianity and Science*, eds. David C. Lindberg and Ronald L. Numbers (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1986), 441–43; Mikael Stenmark, *How to Relate Religion and Science: A Multidimensional Model* (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 2004), 38; Victor G. Cicirelli, “Can Science and Christian Religion Coexist: Compatibility or Conflict,” in *Religion and Psychology: New Research*, ed. Sylvan D. Ambrose (Hauppauge: Nova Science Publishers, 2006), 259–60.

that psychotherapy serves as a necessary precursor to any esoteric practice.⁶³ Through mode-one's relational discourse, Regardie positions psychotherapeutic and esoteric techniques as complementary in nature, insofar as they both work towards achieving the same goal, but distinct in that they respectively represent different stages of the work's continuum.

Mode-two psychologization is the process whereby the metaphysical terminology of an esoteric discourse is replaced with psychological terminology, all while maintaining the meaning of the original esoteric concepts. Strikingly similar to Olav Hammer's identification of "terminological scientism" as a typical discursive strategy within Theosophy and the New Age,⁶⁴ this mode of psychologization has been identified by Aspren as "an increasing tendency to incorporate terminology and theories borrowed from the new psychological discourses so prevalent from the beginning of the 20th century, and to use these in the interpretation of occult theories and practices."⁶⁵ This is then a discursive strategy through which esotericists attempt to legitimize their beliefs and practices by adapting the terminologies of psychology. The intended effects of this process are nearly identical to those of terminological scientism, and can thus be considered a specific sub-modality of that broader discursive strategy. Terminological psychologization at once seeks to position esoteric discourse as being relevant to modernity by "demonstrating" the esoteric's agreement with science, and to subordinate science to the esoteric through the "revelation" that scientists are just now discovering truths known to esotericists for centuries.⁶⁶ What is important to keep in mind here is that within mode-two psychologization, unlike in mode-one, esoteric and psychological discourses are not seen as separate categories. Rather, their identity is maintained in a very particular way, which reinforces the inward metaphysical primacy of the esoteric alongside the outward terminological primacy of psychology.

⁶³ For a characteristic example, see: Regardie, *The Middle Pillar*, 20–21.

⁶⁴ Olav Hammer, *Claiming Knowledge: Strategies of Epistemology from Theosophy to the New Age* (Leiden, Netherlands: Brill, 2004), 206. Hammer defines terminological scientism as "the active positioning of one's own claims in relation to the manifestations of any academic scientific discipline, including, but not limited to, the use of technical devices, scientific terminology, mathematical calculations, theories, references and stylistic features — without, however, the use of the methods generally approved within the scientific community, and without subsequent social acceptance of the mainstream of the scientific community."

⁶⁵ Aspren, "Magic Naturalized," 141. See also: Butler, *Victorian Occultism*, 180–81; Hanegraaff, *New Age Religion*, 216.

⁶⁶ Hammer, *Claiming Knowledge*, 328; Petersen, "We Demand Bedrock Knowledge," 89; Owen, *The Place of Enchantment*, 13.

The paramount example of this process in action is esotericists' utilization of Jung's terms "archetype" and "collective unconscious."⁶⁷ Through this process of terminological psychologization, we see "the 'gods' of traditional pantheons ... interpreted as archetypes, and reversely the archetypes of the collective unconscious are seen as powerful, numinous realities."⁶⁸ In this way, there is a dual process, whereby esoteric concepts are on the one hand couched in a psychological terminology, and on the other, psychological terms are imbued with an esoteric metaphysics.

Mode-three psychologization is very nearly the converse of mode-two. Whereas the latter essentially masks an esoteric metaphysical system with psychological terminology, the former reverses this vector—masking a psychological system with esoteric terminology. Reductive psychologization can be defined as the active utilization and reinterpretation of the results of the psychological reduction of esoteric discourse. The general idea driving reductionism is that the ability of one system to be reduced to something else, which is itself irreducible, casts that which is being reduced as "not fully real," with reality being characteristically irreducible.⁶⁹ In terms of esoteric doctrines, three distinct reductive processes can be identified: (1) epistemological reductionism, which posits that complex behavioral systems like religion follow naturally and can be deduced from, and thus reduced to, biological and physical laws; (2) definitional reductionism, which posits that the terminology of natural science is necessarily universal, and that the terminological apparatuses of religious and esoteric discourses can, by definition, be *translated* into scientific terms; and (3) ontological reductionism, which posits that religious phenomena have no existence of their own, and can be explained away as being "nothing but" combinations of "other types of things that are real."⁷⁰ Reductive theories of religion originated with the nineteenth-century anthropologists and sociologists of religion, such as Ludwig Feuerbach (1804–1872), Edward Burnett Tylor (1832–1917), and Émile Durkheim (1858–1917), and the particular process of psychological reduction is generally thought to owe its origin to Freud's interpretation of religious doctrines as social projections of internal psychological processes.⁷¹

⁶⁷ Luhrmann, *Persuasions*, 172.

⁶⁸ Hanegraaff, *New Age Religion*, 216.

⁶⁹ Richard H. Jones, *Reductionism: Analysis and the Fullness of Reality* (Cranbury: Associated University Presses, 2000), 16; Ralph W. Hood Jr. et al., *The Psychology of Religion: An Empirical Approach* (New York: The Guilford Press, 2009), 22.

⁷⁰ James M. Nelson, *Psychology, Religion, and Spirituality* (New York: Springer, 2009), 45–47.

⁷¹ Hanegraaff, *New Age Religion*, 224–25; Hood et al., *The Psychology of Religion*, 23; Jones,

Where the psychological reduction of religious or esoteric doctrines shifts direction and becomes the reductive psychologization of the same doctrines is in the reinterpretation of psychological reductive theories of esoteric discourse by esotericists. The paramount example of this reinterpretative process is Crowley's essay "The Initiated Interpretation of Ceremonial Magic" (1903), wherein he poses the question as to "the cause of my illusion of seeing a spirit in the triangle of Art," and answers himself: "That cause lies in your brain."⁷² In this way, we see Crowley begin with a psychologically reduced interpretation of the magical practice of evocation, and then reinterpret this as something to be applied to magical practice—acting as a *practicing magician* rather than as a psychologist. For, although the magical practice is reduced to psychological terms, Crowley still advocates for the performance of the ritual itself, rather than utilizing the psychological reduction as a means to advocate for conventional psychotherapy in ritual's stead.

Mode-four psychologization differs greatly from modes-two and -three in that, while it does maintain an identity between psychological and esoteric discourses, its *modus operandi* is neither reductive nor strictly terminological in nature. It is the most complex of the modes examined here. This psychologizing mode, like its terminological and reductive cousins, maintains an identity between psychological and esoteric discourses. However, this identity is not positioned in a way that subordinates one category to the other. Rather, idealistic psychologization comes closest to Hanegraaff's definition of the process as being bidirectional, whereby the esoteric is psychologized at the same time as psychology is esotericized. He notes that since "the subject is conceived as an objective reality and an object as a subjective experience," this mode of psychologization "is not correctly described in terms of objective realities versus subjective realities."⁷³ Although idealistic psychologization *does* indeed represent a fundamentally subjectivized reinterpretation of esoteric discourse, it does not do so in a reductive manner, as does mode-three. Mode-four's subjectivization does not proceed by reducing formerly objective esoteric phenomena to a wholly private psyche. On the contrary, the psychologized vista *is* seen as public in the sense that it is not ontologically contained within

Reductionism, 232.

⁷² Aleister Crowley, "The Initiated Interpretation of Ceremonial Magic," in *The Goetia: The Lesser Key of Solomon the King, Clavicula Salomonis Regis*, trans. Samuel Liddell Mathers and ed. Aleister Crowley (York Beach: Samuel Weiser, 1997), 16. For more on Crowley's psychologization of magic, see: Aspren, "Magic Naturalized," 142, 152, 156–59, 163; Pasi, "Varieties of Magical Experience," 53–55, 69–70.

⁷³ Hanegraaff, *New Age Religion*, 196–97.

a *single* esotericist's psyche, but is rather seen as a "separate but connected" locus accessible to all by means of the application of esoteric praxis. In this way, although esoteric discourse is radically reinterpreted in psychological terms, idealistic psychologization is not a simple reduction of the esoteric to psychology, but is rather grounded in a valuation of the psyche itself as the root of sacrality.⁷⁴

Through mode-four psychologization, the esotericist reinterprets the idea of sacrality in such a way that its locus is not conceived of as a god who is separate from the individual, but rather the individual psyche itself.⁷⁵ For this reason, it appears that psychologized strains of esoteric discourse "tend to dislike references to a personal creator-God,"⁷⁶ favoring instead the notion of divinity as something more akin to a "state of consciousness."⁷⁷ This mode of psychologization allows esotericists to at once "talk about God while really meaning their own psyche, and about their own psyche while really meaning the divine."⁷⁸ What is important to remember, however, about esoteric practice within this idealistic psychologization is that such experiences are not seen by practitioners as a retreat into a private interior world where the truths gleaned are *only* subjective.⁷⁹ On the contrary, the psychologized divine is treated as something objectively real, but whose reality can only be accessed and understood through esoteric practices of "elevating" or "exalting" individual consciousness such that it comes to reach the divine locus that is the psyche.

The relocation of esoteric phenomena to a "separate but connected" psychic vista that characterizes mode-four's psychologization has been identified by Asprem—drawing at once on Tanya Luhrmann and Hanegraaff—as arising out of the cognitive dissonance felt by esotericists as their beliefs and practices come into disjunctive contact with modern rationalism and scientific naturalism.⁸⁰ This is to say that the esotericist who, for example, believes in the existence of angels and demons on the one hand, yet in the descriptive efficacy of science on the other, finds himself divided. This mode of psychologization allows for the alleviation of this cognitive dissonance by means of suspending their "disbelief by confining magic to a place outside the empirical realm of

⁷⁴ Hanegraaff, "The New Age Movement," 378.

⁷⁵ Hanegraaff, *New Age Religion*, 216, 245–46; von Stuckrad, *Western Esotericism*, 144.

⁷⁶ Hanegraaff, "How Magic Survived," 366.

⁷⁷ Owen, *The Place of Enchantment*, 13.

⁷⁸ Hanegraaff, *New Age Religion*, 513.

⁷⁹ Owen, *The Place of Enchantment*, 148.

⁸⁰ Asprem, "Magic Naturalized," 141–42.

verification, evidence and rational criticism.”⁸¹ The specific tool used to effect this doxic suspension is the “magical plane,” which is described as separate from but connected to the mundane world.⁸² According to Hanegraaff, the magical plane functions to rationalize magic by positing that it operates “on a different level of reality,” in which “processes of secularisation and disenchantment in the everyday world simply *have no bearing* ... and hence do not have to affect the reality of magic.”⁸³ Luhrmann describes this idea of the separate-but-connected magical plane as having been given “particular force” by “the advent of psychoanalysis.”⁸⁴ The connections drawn between the magical plane of the esotericists and the unconscious mental realms of the psychoanalysts served to legitimize the construct in the eyes of esotericists—to imbue it with the scientific credibility desperately craved by so many late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century practitioners. In Luhrmann’s analysis, apart from its separateness, the defining feature of the magical plane is the fact that it is either presented as being composed of a different substance or as operating under different rules than the mundane plane of the everyday world.⁸⁵ The overall effect and function of this differentiation is “to *insulate* magical practice from rational critique, thereby legitimising it.”⁸⁶ However, this insulation from “rational” criticism should not be misconstrued as implying that esoteric truths were conceived as being non-demonstrable. What we see instead is a particular type of empiricism whereby esoteric phenomena are viewed as being non-testable on the “material plane,” but as fully testable on the “magical plane.” A prime example of this mode of psychologization can be seen in Regardie’s statement that magical techniques of visualization and skrying on the magical planes “are seen to be technical methods of exalting the individual consciousness until it comes to a complete realisation of its own divine root.”⁸⁷

The four psychologizing modalities now having been described, the question of the modes’ relations to one another arises. As I have intimated,

⁸¹ Ibid., 142.

⁸² Luhrmann, *Persuasions*, 277; Hanegraaff, “How Magic Survived,” 370; Asprem, “Magic Naturalized,” 141–42.

⁸³ Hanegraaff, “How Magic Survived,” 370 (emphasis in original).

⁸⁴ Luhrmann, *Persuasions*, 277.

⁸⁵ Ibid., 274, 280.

⁸⁶ Asprem, “Magic Naturalized,” 141–42 (emphasis in original).

⁸⁷ Israel Regardie, “Introduction,” in *The Golden Dawn: An Account of the Teachings, Rites and Ceremonies of the Golden Dawn*, ed. Israel Regardie, 4 vols. (Chicago: The Aries Press, 1937–1940), 29.

and as will be demonstrated presently, Regardie's psychologization of esoteric discourse is not limited to *one* of these modalities—or even to utilizing one *at a time*. Rather, what we see throughout his work is a tendency to make use of two or more modes of psychologization within the same book or essay. How, then, do these modalities relate to one another? It would appear at the outset that certain modes would exclude one another, rendering any attempt to engage in all four *at once* to be logically inconsistent. Mode-one would seem to be excluded by the other three modes, as it is the only one considered here that insists on treating psychological and esoteric discourses as separate categories, while the others maintain some type of identification. Similarly, there appears to be a great logical disjunction between modes-two and -three, as each category is nearly the exact converse of the other. Finally, mode-four's particular method of identifying psychology and the esoteric would put it at odds with all three of the other modalities. These disjunctions being the case, what does it mean for a single individual to simultaneously engage in more than one mode of psychologization? Logically, this would be permissible by redefining our categories *P* (psychological discourse) and *E* (esoteric discourse) from being singular entities to constellations of related entities (i.e., *P* becomes P_1, P_2, \dots ; and *E* becomes E_1, E_2, \dots). In this way, in order to maintain consistency, any combination of mode-one alongside other modes would need to distinguish why *some* aspects of these categories remain separate, while others are identified (i.e., rather than broadly identifying or distinguishing *P* and *E*, P_1 could be identified with E_1 while P_2 is distinguished from E_2). Now, if the individual were to, within a single work, identify E_1 with P_1 via mode-two (or mode-three or -four) and at the same time distinguish E_1 from P_1 via mode-one, then we would arrive at a clear logical impasse. As such, any challenges regarding the internal logic of Regardie's multimodal psychologization of esoteric discourse must be careful to account for the specific esoteric phenomena being psychologized at the time.

3.2 Origins of the Psychologizing Trend

The cultural context within which the psychologization processes emerged is denoted by Hanegraaff as “secularization,” which in turn leads to the related cultural process of “disenchantment.”⁸⁸ As he defines it, secularization is “the totality of historical developments in modern western society” that has resulted in Christianity's demotion from being the foundational centre of discursive hegemony in the West, reducing it “to merely one among a

⁸⁸ Hanegraaff, “How Magic Survived,” 358–60.

plurality of institutions within the context of a culture which is itself no longer grounded in a religious system of symbols.”⁸⁹ Disenchantment, then, is the resulting set of circumstances that arise from secularization, and is defined by Hanegraaff as “the social pressure exerted upon human beings to deny the spontaneous tendency of participation, by accepting the claims of a culturally established ideology according to which instrumental causality amounts to a worldview capable in principle of rationally explaining all aspects of reality.”⁹⁰ Within the specific discussion of the psychologization of modern magic, Hanegraaff contends that, owing to the fact of secularization, “although the Golden Dawn-magic of the 20th century is rooted in the hermetic and kabbalistic currents which flourished in the Renaissance ... there yawns a gulf between Renaissance *magia naturalis* and the occultist magic of today,” such that modern magical practitioners “actually appear to have serious trouble understanding the original meaning of the worldview” from which their own practices emerged.⁹¹ The consequence of this process of psychologization is that, although this “is a survival of magic in a disenchanted world ... *this will no longer be the same magic* that could be found in periods prior to the process of disenchantment. It will be a disenchanted magic.”⁹² Within the broader context of the study of religion, particularly sociological approaches, both the secularization and disenchantment theses have been interpreted and applied in widely diverging ways.⁹³ Furthermore, since Hanegraaff’s original formulation of the psychologization thesis, there has been a good deal of debate among scholars of Western esoteric currents regarding both the broader idea of secularization and the particular applicability of the disenchantment thesis to modern esoteric currents.⁹⁴ In both cases, the debates in question are outside

⁸⁹ Ibid., 358–59.

⁹⁰ Ibid., 377.

⁹¹ Ibid., 366 (emphasis in original).

⁹² Ibid., 359–60 (emphasis in original).

⁹³ For overviews of the origin and reception of both the secularization and disenchantment theses, see: William H. Swatos Jr. and Kevin J. Christiano, “Secularization Theory: The Course of a Concept,” *Sociology of Religion* 60, no. 3 (1999): 209–28; Michael Saler, “Modernity and Enchantment: A Historiographic Review,” *American Historical Review* 111, no. 3 (2006): 692–716.

⁹⁴ For major discussions after Hanegraaff, see: Owen, *The Place of Enchantment*, 10–11; Corinna Treitel, *A Science for the Soul: Occultism and the Genesis of the German Modern* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 2004), 29–55; Christopher Partridge, vol. 1 of *The Re-Enchantment of the West: Alternative Spiritualities, Sacralization, Popular Culture, and Occulture*, 2 vols. (London: T&T Clark International, 2004–5), 8–15, 40–44, 67–70; von Stuckrad, *Locations of Knowledge*, 11; Kocku von Stuckrad, “Discursive Transfers and Reconfigurations: Tracing the Religious and the Esoteric in Secular Culture,” in *Contemporary Esotericism*, 228, 233; Kennet Granholm, “The

the scope of this paper to address, as it is Hanegraaff's original position that particularly informs the notion of psychologization.

Before moving on to Regardie, the nature of the complex relationship that exists between psychological and esoteric discourses must be addressed. Although a full examination of this relationship's nature is well beyond this paper's scope, a brief explanation will prove useful in understanding Regardie's work. According to the eminent historian of psychology Henri Ellenberger, the safest general characterization of modern psychology is that there exists "an uninterrupted continuity . . . between exorcism and magnetism, magnetism and hypnotism, and hypnotism and modern dynamic schools."⁹⁵ Ellenberger sees the emergence of early modern psychology as being birthed through "the antagonism and the interplay between the Enlightenment and Romanticism."⁹⁶ The major figures involved in this dynamic interrelationship between pre-Enlightenment esoteric currents and the burgeoning schools of psychology include Franz Anton Mesmer (1734–1815),⁹⁷ Armand-Marie-Jacques de Chastenet Marquis de Puységur (1751–1825),⁹⁸ Friedrich Wilhelm Joseph Schelling (1775–1854),⁹⁹ Freud,¹⁰⁰ Jung,¹⁰¹ and Wilhelm Reich (1897–1957).¹⁰²

Secular, the Post-Secular and the Esoteric in the Public-Sphere," in *Contemporary Esotericism*, 309–29; Egil Asprem, "The Problem of Disenchantment: Scientific Naturalism and Esoteric Discourse, 1900–1939," (PhD diss., Universiteit van Amsterdam, 2013).

⁹⁵ Henri E. Ellenberger, *The Discovery of the Unconscious: The History and Evolution of Dynamic Psychiatry* (New York: Basic Books, 1970), 48.

⁹⁶ *Ibid.*, 198–99.

⁹⁷ *Ibid.*, 58–66; Monroe, *Laboratories of Faith*, 67–71; Robert Darnton, *Mesmerism and the End of the Enlightenment in France* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2009), 14.

⁹⁸ Ellenberger, *The Discovery of the Unconscious*, 112.

⁹⁹ *Ibid.*, 77–78, 159, 202–3; Treitel, *A Science for the Soul*, 34–35; Hanegraaff, "Magnetic Gnosis," 127; S.J. McGrath, *The Dark Ground of Spirit: Schelling and the Unconscious* (London: Routledge, 2012), 1–2, 21–23, 44–45, 107; Matt Ffytche, *The Foundations of the Unconscious: Schelling, Freud and the Birth of the Modern Psyche* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012), 106, 112.

¹⁰⁰ Ffytche, *The Foundations of the Unconscious*, 17, 71–72, 219; Webb, *The Occult Establishment*, 359, 364–65, 371–78; Ellenberger, *The Discovery of the Unconscious*, 218, 542, 887–88; Owen, *The Place of Enchantment*, 143; Odo Marquard, *Transzendentaler Idealismus, romantische Naturphilosophie, Psychoanalyse* (Köln, Germany: Verlag für Philosophie J. Dinter, 1987), 163.

¹⁰¹ Hanegraaff, *New Age Religion*, 487, 500–501; Ellenberger, *The Discovery of the Unconscious*, 208, 223, 728–30; Richard Noll, *The Jung Cult: Origins of a Charismatic Movement* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1994), 41–42, 48, 69, 169, 171; Richard Noll, *The Aryan Christ: The Secret Life of Carl Jung* (New York: Random House, 1997), 30–32, 126–27, 131; Ffytche, *The Foundations of the Unconscious*, 223.

¹⁰² Webb, *The Occult Establishment*, 472; Myron Sharaf, *Fury on Earth: A Biography of Wilhelm Reich* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1983), 55, 235; William Edward Mann, *Orgone, Reich, and Eros: Wilhelm Reich's Theory of Life Energy* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1973), 91–93;

In general, it appears that the connections between post-Enlightenment depth psychology and pre-Enlightenment esoteric currents are such that the former “basically continues the esoteric project by other means.”¹⁰³ This being the case, we must keep in mind that characterizations of modern esoteric currents as being psychologized depend on a psychology that is itself greatly dependent prior esoteric currents—the relationship between the two being bidirectionally formative. To speak of modern esoteric discourse being “psychologized” in some sense refers to post-Enlightenment esoteric currents being interpreted in light of a system of thought (i.e., psychology) that is itself the product of pre-Enlightenment esoteric currents, and is thus something of an *esoteric current*—albeit one of a different sort than the openly esoteric currents with which it is being related.

3.3 Regardie as a Paragon of the Psychologization Process

In his discussion of the psychologization of modern magic, Hanegraaff singles out Regardie as a paragon of the psychologization process. He sees Regardie’s Middle Pillar ritual as epitomizing “the basic approach to ‘magic’ in modern occultism, which rests essentially on training the imagination by means of visualisation techniques.”¹⁰⁴ In Regardie’s work, Hanegraaff views magical practice as having been transformed “essentially into a series of psychological techniques for ‘exalting the individual consciousness,’ involving meditational practices and, most importantly, visualisation.”¹⁰⁵ He characterizes Regardie’s psychologized interpretations of the HOGD’s and SM’s rituals as occurring within “a perspective grounded in Freudian psychoanalysis.”¹⁰⁶ For Hanegraaff, this focus on constructive visualization—as opposed to the strictly passive reception of images—is the characteristic attitude of modern psychologization.¹⁰⁷ In his analysis, Regardie’s “magical techniques are

T.E. Weckowicz and H.P. Liebel-Weckowicz, *A History of Great Ideas in Abnormal Psychology* (Amsterdam: Elsevier, 1990), 265.

¹⁰³ Von Stuckrad, *Western Esotericism*, 146.

¹⁰⁴ Hanegraaff, “How Magic Survived,” 369. The Middle Pillar ritual can be found in: Regardie, vol. 1 of *The Golden Dawn*, 179–82.

¹⁰⁵ Hanegraaff, “How Magic Survived,” 368. Hanegraaff is here quoting, Regardie, “Introduction,” in *The Golden Dawn*, 29. Regardie states in this passage that magic “is a poetic or dramatic convention,” and that “from a purely psychological point of view” it can be seen as “technical methods of exalting the individual consciousness until it comes to a complete realisation of its own divine root.”

¹⁰⁶ Hanegraaff, *Western Esotericism*, 137.

¹⁰⁷ For a counter-argument, demonstrating the historical continuity between the visualization practices of contemporary esoteric currents with their antique, medieval, and Renaissance

psychological techniques intended to develop a mystical consciousness,” which is to say that they represent a psychologically subjectivized reformulation of the pre-modern esoteric worldview, which “was based upon the belief in a personal God,” further demonstrating Hanegraaff’s characterization of Regardie’s work as participating in the idealist mode of psychologization.¹⁰⁸ Hanegraaff is here following in Luhrmann’s footsteps. In her treatment of the magical plane, she puts Regardie forth as one who “at times . . . seems to regard magic as no more than a system of psychology,” noting that Regardie’s presentation of magic often centers on the conscious manipulation of “powerful symbols to gain direct access to his unconscious feelings.”¹⁰⁹ This analysis also seems to characterize Regardie’s magic as exemplifying mode-four psychologization.

Although hesitant to extrapolate Regardie’s positions as being representative of the whole of modern esoteric discourse, Asprem does “believe that there is much merit in describing Regardie’s own take on ritual magic as ‘psychologized.’”¹¹⁰ Indeed, Asprem is somewhat critical of Hanegraaff’s general characteristic of modern esoteric discourse as psychologized, insofar as his sample set (i.e., Regardie’s writings, Luhrmann’s anthropological study of a single group) is insufficiently broad to warrant such a sweeping generalization.¹¹¹ As Asprem does not expand on what he precisely means in describing Regardie’s magic as psychologized, we are somewhat less than certain as to whether he is concurring with Hanegraaff’s characterization, and to which mode of psychologization he refers. However, the fact that he is referencing Regardie’s psychologizing of magic within the context of Hanegraaff’s argument leads one towards that assumption. Selby’s statement that Regardie “was one of the first authors seriously attempting to integrate psychology and magic” is similarly vague.¹¹² We are left in the dark as to what exactly Selby means by the “integration” of psychology and magic, although it is clear that—whatever this process is—Regardie is seen as a paragon of the psychologization process.

A far more in-depth discussion of Regardie’s psychologization is given by Pasi. He begins his treatment of Regardie’s psychologization by discussing the continuum leading from Blavatsky’s notion of the Ascended Masters

precursors, see: Christopher A. Plaisance, “Magic Made Modern? Re-evaluating the Novelty of the Golden Dawn’s Magic,” *Correspondences: Online Journal for the Academic Study of Western Esotericism* 2, no. 2 (2014): 159–87.

¹⁰⁸ Hanegraaff, “How Magic Survived,” 366.

¹⁰⁹ Luhrmann, *Persuasions of the Witch’s Craft*, 276.

¹¹⁰ Asprem, *Arguing With Angels*, 77.

¹¹¹ *Ibid.*, 76–77.

¹¹² Selby, “Dion Fortune,” 199.

as “des êtres incarnés” (incarnated beings) to the more fluid and gradually psychologized positions of Fortune and Crowley, seeing Regardie as having crossed “le dernier seuil” (the final threshold) to arrive at “une interprétation complètement psychologique de la magie” (a completely psychological interpretation of magic).¹¹³ Pasi notes that, despite Fortune’s training as a lay analyst, Regardie tends to “‘subjectiviser’ et ‘psychologiser’ la pratique magique” (“subjectivize” and “psychologize” the practice of magic) in a far more radical way than does Fortune, in whose system “la communication avec des entités extérieures et objectives reste fondamentale” (the communication with external and objective entities remains fundamental).¹¹⁴ For Pasi, then, Regardie’s psychologization is principally mode-four, and is fundamentally tied to the shift from objectivity to subjectivity in the focus of modern esoteric practice. In general, Pasi notes that for Regardie, “there seems to be an almost perfect equation between psychology and magic,”¹¹⁵ which results in “une conception totalement individualiste et sécularisée de la magie” (a totally individualistic and secular conception of magic) whose ultimate aim is “le développement ‘intégral’ de sa propre personnalité” (the “integral” development of his own personality).¹¹⁶

As a case in point of this wholly subjectivized psychologization, Pasi examines Regardie’s treatment of the Holy Guardian Angel (HGA). He notes that within Crowley’s system, even though he had begun to introduce “des interprétations d’ordre psychologique, voire physiologique, au sujet des entités” (psychological or physiological interpretations of [supernatural] entities), he stuck fast to the position that certain beings—such as the HGA—“ne pouvaient pas être ramenées à la psyché du magicien” (could not be reduced to the psyche of the magician).¹¹⁷ For Regardie, the primary goal of magic is to enter into a relationship with one’s HGA, an objective that Pasi sees Regardie as identifying with the psychological process of “l’ouverture de la conscience vers le ‘Soi Supérieur’” (the opening of consciousness to the “Higher Self”).¹¹⁸ The centralization of this process, which is essentially psychological self-knowledge draped in a facade of religious terminology, at once participates in mode-two and mode-four psychologization. This reformulation of magical

¹¹³ Pasi, “La notion,” 387–88.

¹¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 397.

¹¹⁵ Pasi, “Varieties of Magical Experience,” 76.

¹¹⁶ Pasi, “La notion,” 397.

¹¹⁷ *Ibid.*

¹¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 395.

practice is, for Pasi, a radical innovation, whereby magical practice has ceased to function as a means through which the magician either communicates with “des entités désincarnées” (disincarnate entities) or attempts to “manipuler la réalité extérieure et objective par le biais de forces ou qualités impersonnelles” (manipulate external and objective reality through impersonal forces or qualities), but has rather become “une technique pour interagir avec une partie (‘supérieure’ ou ‘inconsciente,’ peu importe) de soi-même” (a technique for interacting with a portion [“higher” or “unconscious,” it does not matter] of oneself).¹¹⁹ This shift from a strictly external and objective conception of magic to a more internal and subjective view is, Pasi tells us, “un signe, certainement, de l’impact de la culture moderne (ou, si l’on préfère, de la sécularisation) sur les théories de la magie” (a sign, surely, of the impact of modern culture [or, if you prefer, secularization] on theories of magic).¹²⁰ This final characterization of Pasi’s seems to strongly tend towards mode-four psychologization.

4. Psychology in Regardie’s Esoteric Corpus

4.1 Psychological and Esoteric Discourses

The requisite theoretical background now having been developed, we may proceed with a documentary analysis of Regardie’s esoteric corpus, with the overriding goals being to illuminate the ways in which he relates psychological to esoteric discourses and to determine what modes of psychologization appear in his works. In working towards this understanding, the natural starting point is the collection of explicit statements made by Regardie as to the nature of this relationship. Although his earliest works, *A Garden of Pomegranates* and *The Tree of Life*, certainly contain a mixture of psychological and esoteric elements, it is in *My Rosicrucian Adventure* (1936) that we see the first explicit statement.¹²¹ Here, Regardie directly quotes Jung’s commentary on Richard Wilhelm’s (1873–1930) edition of the Chinese alchemical text *The Secret of the Golden Flower*, noting that “magical practices are ... the projections of psychic events which, in cases like these, exert a counter influence on the soul, and act like a kind of enchantment of one’s own personality.”¹²² This is a

¹¹⁹ Ibid., 397.

¹²⁰ Ibid.

¹²¹ Israel Regardie, *What You Should Know About the Golden Dawn* (Tempe: New Falcon Publications, 2006), 67. The book was originally titled *My Rosicrucian Adventure*; subsequent reprintings were retitled as *What You Should Know About the Golden Dawn*.

¹²² Carl Gustav Jung, “Commentary,” in *The Secret of the Golden Flower: A Chinese Book of Life*,

clear statement of the mode-three reduction of magical processes to psychic processes, which is characteristic of Regardie's reliance on Crowley's essay "The Initiated Interpretation of Ceremonial Magic."¹²³

Two years later, with the publication of *The Middle Pillar* (1938), we see Regardie moving away from this reductive identification to see "analytical psychology as the spouse of the ancient system of magic,"¹²⁴ with "broad divisions of certain principles common to both."¹²⁵ This, then, is a statement of a collaborative relationship, where both magic and psychology address the same fundamental issues from different angles. This sense is maintained in Regardie's other 1938 publication, *The Philosopher's Stone*, where he makes use of the same quotation from Jung's commentary above, but this time frames it with a comment noting that "the psychological approach borders very closely on the magical one," and that magic's objective is "to bring the student into an awareness of his own divine nature," which is essentially "to effect psychological integration."¹²⁶ Thus, although we see Regardie making something of a differentiation between psychological and esoteric discourses here, they are both positioned as working towards the same goal, which is itself bound up with the fourth mode of psychologization, wherein divine illumination and psychological holism are one and the same.

After Regardie's break from publishing on esoteric topics following his enlistment in the army, we see him return to the topic with his 1968 book *Roll Away the Stone*. Here, Regardie returns to his previous reliance on Crowley's early reductive psychologization, plainly stating that "magic is the name for a primitive psychological system" whose goal is "the transcendental experience" of illumination, which he identifies with Jung's notion of individuation.¹²⁷ Two years later, in his 1970 introduction to *The Middle Pillar's* second edition, Regardie speaks of a "correlation of the practice of magic to modern psychotherapy," noting that the difference is terminological rather than conceptual, which

trans. Richard Wilhelm (London: Kegan Paul, Trench, Trubner & Co., 1931), 100.

¹²³ Crowley, "The Initiated Interpretation of Ceremonial Magic," 15–19.

¹²⁴ Israel Regardie, *The Middle Pillar: The Balance Between Mind and Magic*, eds. and ann. Chic Cicero and Sandra Tabitha Cicero (Woodbury: Llewellyn Publications, 2010), 20.

¹²⁵ Regardie, *The Middle Pillar*, 25.

¹²⁶ Israel Regardie, *The Philosopher's Stone: A Modern Comparative Approach to Alchemy from the Psychological and Magical Points of View* (Saint Paul: Llewellyn Publications, 1970), 150–51.

¹²⁷ Israel Regardie, "Roll Away the Stone," in *Roll Away the Stone: An Introduction to Aleister Crowley's Essays on the Psychology of Hashish, With the Complete Text of the Herb Dangerous*, ed. Israel Regardie (Saint Paul: Llewellyn Publications, 1968), 9.

seems to be a clear statement of mode-two psychologization.¹²⁸ The same year, in his psychological interpretation of Crowley, *The Eye in the Triangle*, Regardie emphasizes the same identity between the two. In one passage, he claims that both Reich's and Crowley's techniques were essentially the same, with Reich's "vegeto- and orgone therapy which levelled its attacks on the neurotic armoring" and Crowley's "yoga and magical processes" both working towards the unified goal of "gaining access to a different level of psychic functioning."¹²⁹ Similarly, he makes a clear terminological identification between "the Jungian concept of creative fantasy" and the HOGD practice of "skrying in the spirit vision," seeing "little difference" between the two and stating that they are "practically identical" practices—which seems to indicate a terminological psychologization of magic.¹³⁰

In one of his last works, *The Art and Meaning of Magic* (1971), Regardie maintains his previously held position that "magic is a series of psychological techniques" that allow us to "understand ourselves more completely" and to "more fully express that inner self in every-day activities."¹³¹ This would, at first, appear to be a return to his Crowley-influenced reductive phase, wherein magical techniques were seen as something akin to methods of hypnotic autosuggestion. However, he is quick to note his "emphatic disagreement" with this idea that the efficacy of a magical talisman is "due entirely to suggestion," which seems to indicate an instance of mode-four psychologization.¹³² In the last year of his life, Regardie came out rather strongly against the efficacy of Jungian practice, calling active imagination "plain mental masturbation"—a characterization that plainly calls into question his previous statements as to active imagination's identity with certain magical practices.¹³³ During this final interview, however, Regardie still speaks highly of Jung's ideas, noting the degree to which it shaped his personal philosophy and terminology, saying that Jungian psychology "still has a place in my life, but as a therapy I think it's utterly useless."¹³⁴ Thus, we see a continuation in his late period: the mode-four dual process of the psychologization of magic going hand in hand with the enchanting of psychology. He would have us see the two categories as either

¹²⁸ Regardie, "Introduction to the Second Edition," in *The Middle Pillar*, xxix.

¹²⁹ Israel Regardie, *The Eye in the Triangle: An Interpretation of Aleister Crowley* (Tempe: New Falcon Publications, 1982), 314.

¹³⁰ *Ibid.*, 204.

¹³¹ Israel Regardie, *The Art and Meaning of Magic* (Toddington: Helios Book Service, 1971), 44.

¹³² *Ibid.*, 23–24.

¹³³ Regardie and Hyatt, "Regardie Pontificates," 24.

¹³⁴ *Ibid.*

identical or deeply related, but seeks to strike such a balance so as to neither reduce magical processes to psychological processes like simple suggestion (mode-three), nor reduce psychological techniques to mere terminological bluffs for interactions between an ontologically separate magician and legions of angels and demons (mode-two). However, as we have seen already, Regardie *did* clearly espouse both mode-two and mode-three psychologization, vacillating between the latter three modes in his explicit statements on the entangled relationship between esoteric and psychological discourses.

4.2 Mode-One: Complementary Psychologization

We have now examined two categories of statements found within Regardie's esoteric corpus that deal with his opinions on the nature of the relationship between psychological and esoteric discourses. This briefest of overviews of his explicit statements of this entanglement has demonstrated occurrences of modes-two, -three, and -four psychologization. There are still, however, hundreds of other disparate attestations of psychologization to be found in Regardie's writings. The proceeding sections 4.2–4.5 will identify and discuss specific examples of each of the four modes of psychologization culled from the corpus.

One of the most unique and consistent ways in which Regardie expressed his views on the relationship between esoteric and psychological discourses was in his continued insistence that some form of psychotherapy functioned as an essential precursor to the practice of magic—mode-one psychologization. Of all the modes under discussion here, mode-one is singular in that none of the secondary analyses of Regardie identify this process at work. As opposed to the patterns of change we saw in the previous section, Regardie's opinion on this matter remained fixed throughout his entire magical career. It is in 1938, in *The Middle Pillar*, that Regardie first proposes this idea, and the fact that this came about less than a year after he began undergoing analysis with Bendit and Clegg leads us to think that there is a relationship between the two.¹³⁵ However, we cannot strictly deduce whether Regardie's decision to enter analysis formed or was formed by this position. Initially, Regardie positions therapy as “the logical precursor” that should “comprise definitely the first stage” of the practice of or attainment in magic, going so far as to say that for esoteric schools to remain viable, they need to create departments of—specifically analytical—psychology.¹³⁶ He viewed the psyche of the student

¹³⁵ Popadiuk et al., “From the Occult,” 37.

¹³⁶ Regardie, *The Middle Pillar*, 20–21. See also: Regardie, *The Middle Pillar*, 40, 98.

as being “hopelessly clogged with infantile and adolescent predilections,”¹³⁷ and believed that any failure to recognize and deal with these foundational psychological issues would open the student up to much deeper neuroses and nervous breakdowns.¹³⁸ In this way, Regardie saw psychoanalysis as a requisite first step which any would-be magician need take before entering into a proper course of esoteric studies.

Moving forward to Regardie’s 1968 re-emergence into esoteric publishing, we see that he has adjusted somewhat his opinion as to the place of psychotherapy within a magical curriculum, but that his position has not fundamentally changed. In *Roll Away the Stone*, we see him reassert his belief that analysis should “precede practical experiments” with magic.¹³⁹ Here, however, we do see two subtle shifts in Regardie’s position. First, rather than specifically endorsing Jungian analysis, as he appears to have done in 1938, he explicitly notes that it “makes little difference” whether the student undergoes Freudian, Jungian, or Reichian analysis.¹⁴⁰ Second, although he does note the use of analysis as a protective measure in removing psychotics and neurotics from esoteric schools, he here notes its importance in bringing the student in touch with hitherto unknown aspects of himself.¹⁴¹ The same year, we see Regardie elsewhere espouse an almost identical position in his introduction to *The Golden Dawn*, noting that the choice of therapeutic styles “is of small consequence” compared to the preparation and aid it provides to the student of magic.¹⁴² The essential point of the preparative nature of psychotherapy in relation to magical practice is again reinforced two years later, in *The Eye in the Triangle*, where Regardie clearly notes that “there must be no confusion between the two,” emphasizing that while therapy makes an excellent *precursor* to esoteric practice, the two are not identical.¹⁴³ This emphatic point serves to strongly reinforce the nature of mode-one psychologization as differentiating psychological and esoteric discourses in a non-oppositional, collaborative manner.

The last decade of his life saw Regardie categorically emphasizing the

¹³⁷ Regardie, *The Middle Pillar*, 21.

¹³⁸ *Ibid.*, 86.

¹³⁹ Regardie, “Roll Away the Stone,” 61.

¹⁴⁰ *Ibid.*

¹⁴¹ *Ibid.*

¹⁴² Israel Regardie, “Introduction to the Second Edition: Volume I,” in *The Golden Dawn: A Complete Course in Practical Ceremonial Magic*, ed. Israel Regardie (Saint Paul: Llewellyn Publications, 1998), 5.

¹⁴³ Regardie, *The Eye in the Triangle*, 432.

preparative nature of psychology within an esoteric curriculum in a largely similar way to his work in earlier decades, but, again, with a few small adjustments and developments that differentiate it from his earlier opinions. During the course of his 1980 essay on the HGA, Regardie makes the analogy that a student attempting to invoke his HGA without having first undergone analysis is like “pouring fine wine into an unwashed bottle,” in that any good result will tend to be tainted and distorted by unresolved neuroses and psychoses.¹⁴⁴ In his final interview with his colleague Christopher S. Hyatt (1943–2008), he is quite firm in reinforcing his tenet that “anyone getting into the Golden Dawn ... MUST precede any practical work with some psychotherapy,”¹⁴⁵ as it is “the only valid requirement for a sane occultism.”¹⁴⁶ He again makes it perfectly clear that we are not to identify psychotherapy *with* magical practice, but that it is a prerequisite.¹⁴⁷ Similar to what we see from his middle period as well, late period Regardie strongly emphasizes the self-knowledge and freedom from delusion and phantasy that comes from honest analysis.¹⁴⁸ Thus, we see that over the course of nearly fifty years, Regardie maintained the general position that while psychoanalysis is a distinct operation from magical experimentation, it forms a necessary precursor to the latter. And although we see small shifts in those aspects of therapy and particular therapies Regardie values, there is a remarkable consistency in this position throughout the whole of his esoteric corpus. It is curious that while we have seen previously that Regardie concurrently argued for some form of identity between psychological and esoteric discourses—varying between modes-two, -three, and -four—in this specific doctrine, he assiduously denied an identity between analysis and magical practice. This latter position is, for our purposes, quite interesting in that it appears that Regardie was engaged in parallel modes of psychologization, and that he did not appear to view his continued utilization of mode-one as disjunctive with his varied uses of the further three modes.

4.3 Mode-Two: Terminological Psychologization

Continuing with mode-two psychologization, we find it to be a continual trend present in a great deal of Regardie’s esoteric writings. He more or less

¹⁴⁴ Israel Regardie, *Ceremonial Magic: A Guide to the Mechanisms of Ritual* (Wellinborough: The Aquarian Press, 1980), 73.

¹⁴⁵ Regardie and Hyatt, “Regardie Pontificates,” 41.

¹⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, 23.

¹⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, 34.

¹⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, 24, 111.

continually propounded the position that the relationship between esoteric and psychological discourses was such that nearly all (if not all) of the former's concepts could be expressed using the latter's terminological apparatus. In his 1946 book on Christian Science, *The Romance of Metaphysics* (later retitled *The Teachers of Fulfillment*), Regardie notes his belief that "the average person is not at all interested in religious terminology, which is a medieval barbarity."¹⁴⁹ Rather, he proposes that religions must adapt their language, not their ideas, to better comport with that of modern science if they wish to remain relevant. Similarly, in one of his final books, *Healing Energy, Prayer and Relaxation* (1982), Regardie tells us that the utilization of "psychological rather than metaphysical" terminology may allow for the conference "of scientific and popular recognition on metaphysics."¹⁵⁰ This is the very definition of terminological psychologization in its most consciously directed form.

Apart from these explicit statements of Regardie's on his reasons for propounding mode-two psychologization, there are dozens of examples of his doing so. Throughout the 1930s and 1940s, and then again in the 1970s and 1980s, we see Regardie espouse the identity of esoteric and psychological terminologies in a shifting and often contradictory manner. We begin with his identifications of the five Qabalistic components of the soul (in ascending order) and various Freudian and Jungian terms. Regardie describes the *nepheesh*, which he defines as "the animal soul" and "the life of the body," as the focus of the investigations of Freud, Jung, and Alfred Adler (1870–1937).¹⁵¹ In *The Tree of Life*, he vaguely equates the *nepheesh* with "what the analysts call the Unconscious,"¹⁵² and then in *The Middle Pillar* more specifically identifies it with both "the Freudian unconscious" and "the Jungian concept of the unconscious."¹⁵³ Apparently treating these terms as identical as well, Regardie additionally uses the term "subconscious" as another synonym for the *nepheesh* in instances where he previously identified it with "the unconscious."¹⁵⁴ He defines the next component of the soul, the *ruach*, as individual consciousness

¹⁴⁹ Israel Regardie, *The Teachers of Fulfillment* (Phoenix: Falcon Press, 1983), 128.

¹⁵⁰ Israel Regardie, *Healing Energy, Prayer and Relaxation* (Las Vegas: Golden Dawn Publications, 1989), 13.

¹⁵¹ Israel Regardie, *A Garden of Pomegranates: Skrying on the Tree of Life*, eds. and ann. Chic Cicero and Sandra Tabitha Cicero, (Woodbury: Llewellyn Publications, 1999), 94.

¹⁵² Regardie, *The Tree of Life*, 84.

¹⁵³ Regardie, *The Middle Pillar*, 36.

¹⁵⁴ Regardie, *The Tree of Life*, 105; Regardie, *A Garden of Pomegranates*, 95–97; Israel Regardie, "Mysticism and Oedipus," in *Mysticism, Psychology and Oedipus*, ed. Christopher S. Hyatt (Phoenix: Falcon Press, 1985), 23.

singularly identified with the psychological term “ego.”¹⁵⁵ Following this, Regardie takes the *neschamah* and the *chiah* as a gendered pair comprising both the “divine soul” and “higher Self,”¹⁵⁶ and respectively identifies them as Jung’s primary archetypes of the collective unconscious: the *anima* and *animus*.¹⁵⁷ The highest component of the soul, the *yechidah*, he at once identifies with the Freudian *id*, Groddeck’s *es*, and the supernal triad of Sephiroth on the Tree of Life.¹⁵⁸

Moving from the microcosm to the macrocosm, we immediately encounter the superior classes: gods, archangels, angels, demons, and so on. Regardie is quite consistent in a Jungian interpretation of these classes of beings. He consistently identifies the higher types as Jungian archetypes or dominants, specifically equating them with “gods and archangels and angels” in two instances;¹⁵⁹ in another, “great gods and spiritual forces, *Cosmocratores*, who become the intelligent architects and builders of the manifold parts of the universe”;¹⁶⁰ and in yet another, specifically the god Bacchus as an archetype.¹⁶¹ At this point, I would like to call attention to the fact that Regardie’s characterization of the gods in *The Art and Meaning of Magic* (1971) is decidedly non-reductive. As we have just seen, he proposes a terminological identity between the gods and Jung’s archetypes, but maintains that the gods *are gods* insofar as they are the demiurges who shape and govern the manifold universe. This maintaining of the esoteric meaning of “god” juxtaposed with the Jungian term “archetype” is decidedly characteristic of mode-two psychologization. This is important to note because, as we shall see in the following section (4.4), his treatment of Jungian complexes in that same volume, as well as elsewhere, does not appear to be non-reductive, and instead comports to mode-three psychologization. The final point to examine within this section’s discussion on Regardie’s terminological psychologization is that of his widely varying esoteric

¹⁵⁵ Regardie, *A Garden of Pomegranates*, 94; Regardie, *The Middle Pillar*, 33; Regardie, “Mysticism and Oedipus,” 23.

¹⁵⁶ Regardie, “Mysticism and Oedipus,” 23.

¹⁵⁷ Regardie, *The Middle Pillar*, 30–31.

¹⁵⁸ Regardie, *The Middle Pillar*, 27, 32; Regardie, *The Philosopher’s Stone*, 20.

¹⁵⁹ Identical wording is found in the following: Regardie, *The Middle Pillar*, 60; Regardie, *The Art and Meaning of Magic*, 95.

¹⁶⁰ Regardie, *The Art and Meaning of Magic*, 13–14. It is of interest that Regardie here uses the term ‘cosmocrator’ to denote one of the superior classes. For more on this designation, see: Christopher A. Plaisance, “Of Cosmocrators and Cosmic Gods: The Place of the Archons in *De mysteriis*,” in *Daimonic Imagination: Uncanny Intelligence*, 64–85, ed. Angela Voss and William Rowlandson (Cambridge: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2013).

¹⁶¹ Regardie, *Ceremonial Magic*, 87.

Tree of Life	Astrological Spheres	Qabalistic Microcosm
Kether	Primum Mobile	Yechidah
Chokmah	Zodiac	Chiah
Binah	Saturn	Neschamah
Chesed	Jupiter	
Geburah	Mars	
Tiphareth	Sun	Ruach
Netzach	Venus	
Hod	Mercury	
Yesod	Moon	Nephesh
Malkuth	Earth	Guph

Table 1: The Qabalistic Universe and Man

correspondences to Jung’s collective unconscious in particular, and the idea of the unconscious in general. The first of these identifications is with the esoteric locus, variously referred to as the astral plane, world, light, and so on. Throughout his writings, Regardie variously defines this as being composed of some “subtle electro-magnetic substance,”¹⁶² or as “a four-dimensional plane composed of a luminous etheric substance.”¹⁶³ In esoteric terms, Regardie at once syncretically identified the astral plane with both the ninth Qabalistic sphere of Yesod, the Platonic world soul,¹⁶⁴ and the alchemical Sea of the Wise.¹⁶⁵ In his very first book, Regardie already speaks of a “clear correspondence” between the esoteric “Astral Light and the concept of the

¹⁶² Regardie, *The Tree of Life*, 55. For further instances of the electromagnetic nature of the astral, see: Regardie, “Introduction,” in *The Golden Dawn*, 27; Israel Regardie, “A Qabalistic Primer,” in *Foundations of Practical Magic: An Introduction to Qabalistic, Magical and Meditative Techniques* (Wellingborough: The Aquarian Press, 1979), 78–79; Regardie, *A Garden of Pomegranates*, 104; Regardie, *The Middle Pillar*, 42; Regardie, *Be Yourself*, 29–30; Israel Regardie, *The One Year Manual: Twelve Steps to Spiritual Enlightenment* (York Beach: Samuel Weiser, 1981), 42–43; Regardie, *The Art and Meaning of Magic*, 86; Israel Regardie, *How to Make and Use Talismans* (New York: Sterling, 1983), 48.

¹⁶³ Regardie, *The Tree of Life*, 71. For further instances of extra-planar and etheric identifications, see: Regardie, *The Tree of Life*, 72, 74; Regardie, “Introduction,” in *The Golden Dawn*, 27. For further information on planar and dimensional terminologies within modern esoteric discourse, see: Christopher A. Plaisance, “Occult Spheres, Planes, and Dimensions: Geometric Terminology and Analogy in Modern Esoteric Discourse,” *Journal of Religious History* (forthcoming).

¹⁶⁴ Regardie, *The Tree of Life*, 55; Regardie, *A Garden of Pomegranates*, 54; Regardie, “Introduction,” in *The Golden Dawn*, 27.

¹⁶⁵ Regardie, *The Philosopher’s Stone*, 119, 137.

Collective Unconscious.”¹⁶⁶ We see this terminological correlation between Jung’s collective unconscious and the constellation of esoteric identifications bound up with the astral plane carry forward throughout many of Regardie’s subsequent writings as well.¹⁶⁷

However, as strong as this identity between the collective unconscious and the astral plane is in Regardie’s writings, it does appear that he wavered in his consistency—at times proposing other identities for the unconscious that were quite at odds with the astral. In one notable instance, he specifically identifies Yesod “with the Freudian idea of the Unconscious.”¹⁶⁸ This is not *too* far a stretch from Jung’s collective unconscious, but is different enough to give us pause. Elsewhere, we see Regardie identify “the Unconscious” with the five classical elements, and, although he is not here *specifically* referencing the *collective* unconscious, the hylic elements are themselves a far cry from the astral forms of the sublunary sphere.¹⁶⁹ Far more disjunctive is the direct identification Regardie makes in two places between the collective unconscious and the three supernal Sephiroth.¹⁷⁰ This is particularly troublesome because of the previous identification Regardie made between the supernals and Freud’s *id*, but more importantly because of the vast gap that exists between the first three supernal Sephiroth and Yesod, the ninth. As Regardie is clearly *not* supposing an identity between Yesod and the supernal Sephiroth, the disjunction between these two identifications of Jung’s collective unconscious is rather stark. Just as troubling is the clear identity Regardie proposes between God and the collective unconscious,¹⁷¹ and between God and the (undifferentiated) unconscious.¹⁷² Again, since Regardie does not appear to be proposing that God and Yesod are identical, we have a clear disjunction between his systems of identities between the psychological and esoteric terminologies. However, for all these disjunctions, we can glean one important point from this section and the previous section (4.2) taken together: in terms of mode-two psychologization, it appears that Regardie tended to limit himself to proposing identities between descriptive models rather than normative techniques. In other words, while his

¹⁶⁶ Regardie, *The Tree of Life*, 84.

¹⁶⁷ Regardie, *A Garden of Pomegranates*, 54; Regardie, *The Philosopher’s Stone*, 25, 52, 45, 119, 203, 137; Regardie, *The Art and Meaning of Magic*, 55; Regardie, *Ceremonial Magic*, 88, 92, 97.

¹⁶⁸ Regardie, “Mysticism and Oedipus,” 6.

¹⁶⁹ Regardie, *The Art and Meaning of Magic*, 60.

¹⁷⁰ Regardie, “Introduction,” in *The Golden Dawn*, 28; Regardie, *The Philosopher’s Stone*, 77.

¹⁷¹ Regardie, *The Middle Pillar*, 60; Israel Regardie, *The Art of True Healing*, ed. Marc Allen (San Rafael: New World Library, 1991), 52.

¹⁷² Regardie, *The Teachers of Fulfillment*, 167–68; Regardie, *Healing Energy*, 56–57.

instances of mode-two psychologization commonly substitute psychological terms for essentially esoteric metaphysical concepts, we do not see the same mode of psychologization at play in regards to esoteric practice.

4.4 Mode-Three: Reductive Psychologization

As mode-three psychologization is nearly the precise converse of mode-two, and given that Regardie clearly made extensive use of mode-two terminological psychologization, we would not expect to see mode-three reductive psychologization present throughout his works. However, as mentioned previously in discussing his mode-two interpretation of Jung's archetypes, it does appear that his interpretations of complexes tended towards mode-three. It is quite telling as to Regardie's continued reliance on Crowley's essay "The Initiated Interpretation of Ceremonial Magic"—which itself proposed a mode-three interpretation of the evocation of lesser spirits—that the most glaring instance of reductive psychologization in Regardie's esoteric corpus is his interpretation of evocation. As early as 1932, we see Regardie proposing a comparison between the object of a magical evocation and psychological neuroses or complexes, specifically noting that "the same subjective rationale" by which a neurotic patient delves into his personal unconscious to confront harmful complexes "may be extended to the Goetic aspect of Magic, the evocation of spirits."¹⁷³ In the same book, he clearly states that it can be argued that such spirits are "but previously unknown facets of our own consciousness" and that "their evocation ... is certainly not incomparable to a stimulation of some part of the mind or imagination" by a patient undergoing psychoanalysis.¹⁷⁴ Regardie's language here is important to make note of in order for us to distinguish the identity he proposes between spirits and complexes *as reductive* from the previously identified *non-reductive* identity between gods and archetypes. In this case, Regardie specifically relegates these "spirits" to the *personal* unconscious rather than the collective unconscious, and clearly indicates their ultimately *subjective* rather than objective nature. In this way, Regardie's interpretation represents a fundamental shift from the medieval demonological ontology, which considered the Goetic demons as objectively existing entities, separate from the magician. Regardie restructures this dynamic, positing a wholly subjective mode of existence for the demons, ontologically relocating them to a position within the magician's being. This is the very essence of reductive psychologization.

Regardie maintained this reductive identity between demonic spirits and

¹⁷³ Regardie, *The Tree of Life*, 296.

¹⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, 153.

complexes of the personal unconscious throughout the rest of his esoteric career. In the mid-period essay “Mysticism and Oedipus,” we see Regardie “remind the reader that ‘angels,’ ‘spirits,’ and ‘powers’ of the practical Qabalah and Magic are ... ‘ideas’ of varying degrees of power and significance which exist and function unperceived in the different regions of our subliminal consciousness.”¹⁷⁵ This interpretation, which Regardie specifically identifies as Freudian, maintains his early-period mode-three treatment of lesser spirits as wholly subjective denizens of the magician’s individual unconscious. This reductive interpretation, however, reaches its apogee in 1971 during the course of Regardie’s discussion of evocation in *The Art and Meaning of Magic*. Therein, he clearly states that “what modern psychology calls a complex” is identical with what “the ancient psychology of Magic ... named a Spirit.”¹⁷⁶ He is clear in his assertion that while there is “a purely objective occult theory” of evocation, his position “is the subjective point of view.”¹⁷⁷ In this sense, he describes the practice of evocation as a technique by which these unconscious complexes are personalized and given “tangible shape and form” by the magician’s imagination, and are then called forth and “brought within the dominion of the stimulated will and consciousness of the theurgist” where they can be “assimilated into consciousness.”¹⁷⁸ In other words, the evocation technique is, for Regardie, something akin to a dramatic facade superimposed over a process that is, at its core, psychotherapeutic. The “demons” with which the evocator deals are not, for Regardie, objective beings from the nether worlds, but rather mere aspects of his own unconscious psyche. The magic of evocation has thus been effectively *reduced* to the psychoanalytic confrontation of complexes of the personal unconscious by the conscious mind.

The second category of examples of mode-three psychologization in Regardie’s writings is his consistently reductive interpretation of the HOGD and SM’s initiation rituals. In his early work, *My Rosicrucian Adventure*, referencing Jung’s reductive description of magic from *The Secret of the Golden Flower* quoted above in section 4.1, Regardie identifies the officers of the orders’ initiation rituals as representing “psychic projections ... just as figures in dreams do,” being “personifications of abstract psychological principles inhering within the human spirit.”¹⁷⁹ Using the Neophyte ritual as an example, he describes

¹⁷⁵ Regardie, “Mysticism and Oedipus,” 9–10.

¹⁷⁶ Regardie, *The Art and Meaning of Magic*, 51.

¹⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, 52.

¹⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, 54–55.

¹⁷⁹ Regardie, *What You Should Know About the Golden Dawn*, 67.

the various facets of the individual psyche symbolized and personified by the ritual officers.¹⁸⁰ Additionally, the overall characteristic of the Vault of the Adepti—within which rituals of the higher grades of the HOGD and SM took place—and its connection to the mythology of Isis and the tomb of Osiris was interpreted in a Freudian manner as “a highly interesting and complex symbol of the Mother.”¹⁸¹ Nearly identical descriptions of the order officers as psychic projections of the initiate’s personal unconscious appear throughout Regardie’s later works as well, demonstrating a continuing strain of mode-three psychologization throughout. In his introduction to the first edition of *The Golden Dawn*, he makes use of the same Jung quotation and nearly identical language in interpreting the officers as “psychic projections” and “personifications of abstract psychological principles inhering within the human spirit.”¹⁸² In each of these instances, not only do we see the same principles being relayed, but also nearly *identical verbiage*. There is, in all of these examples, a consistent characterization of the projections as being *personal* in nature, and as existing *within* the initiate’s psyche. Similar to Jung’s reductive interpretation of evocation, the projections Regardie here describes are eminently subjective in nature and are ontological dependents of the initiate’s own mind. Such an interpretation of ritual is paradigmatic of reductive psychologization, insofar as the initiating officers are seen as mere vessels onto which the initiate may project aspects of his personal unconscious.

4.5 Mode-Four: Idealistic Psychologization

Moving forward to mode-four psychologization, we do not see instances where Regardie describes psychological and esoteric discourses as equivalents, either in

¹⁸⁰ Ibid.: “Thus, in the preliminary Neophyte or 0°=0□ grade, the Kerux personifies the reasoning faculties. He is the intelligent part of the mind, functioning in obedience to the Will; the Qabalistic *Ruach* in a word. The highest part of that mind, the aspiring, sensitive, and the intuitive consciousness, the *Neschamah*, is represented by the Hegemon who ever seeks the rising of the Light, while the active will of man is signified by the Hieres, the guardian against evil. The Hierophant, in this initial ceremony of Neophyte, acts on behalf of the higher spiritual soul of man himself, that divine self of which but to rarely, if ever at all, we become aware.”

¹⁸¹ Ibid., 85.

¹⁸² Regardie, “Introduction,” in *The Golden Dawn*, 43–44. Just a year later, in *The Philosopher’s Stone*, we see Regardie again using nearly identical language to describe the initiating officers as “just such psychic projections as Jung refers to,” and “personifications of psychological principles active within the psyche (151). This mode of psychologization carries forward to 1970, in *The Eye in the Triangle*, where he again utilizes the same Jung quotation, and similarly describes the officers as “psychic projections” and “personifications of abstract psychological principles inhering within the human organism” (136–37).

a terminologically or reductive mode of psychologization, but rather narratives that express a bidirectional non-reductive relationship where psychology is esotericized alongside a psychologization of esoteric discourse. As we have seen, Regardie seems to have had no trouble in making use of what would appear to be mutually exclusive modes of psychologization within a single work. As such, it should come as no surprise that we see evidence of mode-four psychologization among the same early works wherein he first made use of modes-one, -two, and -three as well. In *A Garden of Pomegranates*, we see this trend emerge in an already developed form, with Regardie questioning “whether the Qabalah resolves itself into an objective or subjective scheme,” and arriving at the position he terms “objective idealism,” wherein “the universe is subjective without denying in the least its objectivity.”¹⁸³ This idea is unpacked with greater detail in *The Tree of Life*, where Regardie examines the question of the interiority of the astral plane and the objectivity of its denizens. While he does concede that “the Gods and the Universal Essences come to be apprehended within the interior constitution of man,” which seems to imply a subjective ontology that “has no primary reference to any external subject,”¹⁸⁴ they are neither “the products of his imagination” nor “subjective creations.”¹⁸⁵ This discursive strategy, then, allows Regardie to combine an esoteric ontology of the superior classes as objective beings with a psychologized understanding of religious experience as an interior phenomenon that is ontologically *within* the experiencing subject—a confluence of objectivism and subjectivism.

Regardie tends to justify this idealistic psychologization by means of combining a macrocosmic theology with the Hermetic axiom of the microcosm’s reflective relationship to the macrocosm.¹⁸⁶ In *The Tree of Life*, he makes this doctrine plain, noting that “one of the fundamental postulates of Magic is that Man is an exact image in miniature of the universe, both considered objectively, and that what man perceives to be existent without is also in some way represented within.”¹⁸⁷ In this way, Regardie proposes what is essentially an orthodox Hermetic doctrine of man’s external and internal structure being a mirror of the greater structure of the cosmos. This reflective axiom is found in Regardie’s earliest works, and is a strain that continued

¹⁸³ Regardie, *A Garden of Pomegranates*, 128–29.

¹⁸⁴ Regardie, *The Tree of Life*, 95.

¹⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, 234–36.

¹⁸⁶ For the origins of this doctrine within the Hermetic corpus, see: *Corpus Hermeticum*, 4 vols., ed. A.D. Nock and trans. A.J. Festugière (Paris: Les Belles Lettres, 1946–54), XI.15; *Asclepius*, in vol. 2 of *Corpus Hermeticum*, I.10.

¹⁸⁷ Regardie, *The Tree of Life*, 95.

well into his final works as well, appearing in early works such as *A Garden of Pomegranates* and *The Middle Pillar* as well as late-period works such as *The Art and Meaning of Magic* and *Ceremonial Magic*.¹⁸⁸ One of the more interesting ways in which this Hermetic doctrine of the microcosm was filtered through Regardie's mode-four psychologization is found in his essay "Mysticism and Oedipus," where he draws a connection between this esoteric anthropology and Freudian psychology by means of Ernst Haeckel's (1834–1919) theory that, among all organisms, ontogeny recapitulates phylogeny.¹⁸⁹ Here, following in the footsteps of a long succession of *Naturphilosophen* from Goethe onwards, Regardie posits that just as man's external physical ontogeny recapitulates his species's physical phylogeny—which is to say that man's physical development from embryo to adult recapitulates mankind's development from single-celled organism to *Homo sapiens*—so does his internal psychological ontogeny recapitulate man's phylogenetic ascent, from that of brute animal to civilized man.¹⁹⁰ From this, Regardie develops a soteriological interpretation of Freud's Oedipus complex, rooted in the idea that all complex organisms desire a return to the unitary state of their genesis. For, just as "the whole universe in all its manifold branches would be permeated with the inherent desire to return to the material source of life,"¹⁹¹ so does man desire to return to the womb, so as to "approach Nirvana" by recapturing the fetus's "feelings of peace, placidity and omnipotence."¹⁹² Thus, in Regardie's Hermetic recapitulation theory, we see a model of magical soteriology that is at once subjective *and* objective, with domains of psychological internality and physical externality being bridged by the doctrine of the microcosm.

A second way in which we see mode-four psychologization present itself in Regardie's works is in his theology. Making full use of the Hermetic reflective axiom, Regardie's theology is dipolar, with macrocosmic and microcosmic genera of divinities comprising at once the respective poles. This being the case, any references that Regardie makes to divinities—particularly to "God"—must be contextualized so as to clearly understand whether he is referring to the God of the macrocosm, or the God of the microcosm. Regarding the greater macrocosmic God, we see a pronounced panentheistic current throughout

¹⁸⁸ Regardie, *A Garden of Pomegranates*, 93; Regardie, *The Middle Pillar*, 77–78; Regardie, *The Art and Meaning of Magic*, 85; Regardie, *Ceremonial Magic*, 13–14.

¹⁸⁹ For the historical context of Haeckel's theory, see: Stephen Jay Gould, *Ontogeny and Phylogeny* (Cambridge: Belknap Press, 1977).

¹⁹⁰ Regardie, "Mysticism and Oedipus," 13–17.

¹⁹¹ *Ibid.*, 19–20.

¹⁹² *Ibid.*, 10.

the whole of Regardie's theology. Panentheism is a family of theologies that affirm that "although God and the world are ontologically distinct and God transcends the world, the world is 'in' God ontologically."¹⁹³ This relationship between God and the world is most often portrayed by the panentheist as the world being God's visible body, but that this body is ontologically within God. We see this doctrine laid out plainly in *The Tree of Life*, where Regardie paraphrases Acts 17:28,¹⁹⁴ telling us that in God "do we live and move and have our being,"¹⁹⁵ describing "the totality of all life in the universe" as God's "cosmic body," of which we "are the minute cells and molecules."¹⁹⁶ This doctrine is continued forward and is manifestly present in later works as well, such as Regardie's 1979 essay "A Qabalistic Primer," where he impresses upon his reader "the realization of the universe as a being divine, the entire body of God which includes every man and every form of life within its vastness."¹⁹⁷ At times, Regardie moves from an explicit panentheism to pantheism, but on the whole, the former more strongly characterizes his thought.¹⁹⁸ Additionally, Regardie's conception of the macrocosmic divine is strongly characterized by polycentricity,¹⁹⁹ as is evidenced both by early statements that the world's divinity "is represented by hosts of mighty Gods, divine beings, cosmic spirits or intelligences,"²⁰⁰ and by later works that similarly characterize the demiurgic divinities as plural in nature.²⁰¹ However, whether panentheistic

¹⁹³ John W. Cooper, *Panentheism: The Other God of the Philosophers* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2007), 18. According to Cooper, within the Western theological tradition, this doctrine begins with Plato's *Timaeus*, and was largely diffused into later currents through successive generations of Platonic commentators, most notably the late antique Neoplatonists.

¹⁹⁴ This phrase from Acts 17:28 (NRSV), "in him we live and move and have our being," is so strongly identified with panentheism that a modified version of it appears as the title of a collection of essays by contemporary panentheists: Philip Clayton and Arthur Peacocke, eds., *In Whom We Live and Move and Have Our Being: Panentheistic Reflections on God's Presence in a Scientific World* (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2004).

¹⁹⁵ Regardie, *The Tree of Life*, 101.

¹⁹⁶ *Ibid.*, 22.

¹⁹⁷ Regardie, "A Qabalistic Primer," 61.

¹⁹⁸ For a notable exception, see Regardie, *The One Year Manual*, 57: "There is no God *and* the World—there is not God and himself. There is *only* God. All is God." This direct *equation* of God and the world, as opposed to the panentheistic supervening of God *over* the world, is the very definition of pantheism.

¹⁹⁹ For polycentrism within antique Platonic theologies, see: Edward P. Butler, "Polycentric Polytheism and the Philosophy of Religion," *The Pomegranate: The International Journal of Pagan Studies* 10, no. 2 (2008): 207–29.

²⁰⁰ Regardie, *The Tree of Life*, 61–63.

²⁰¹ Regardie, *The Art and Meaning of Magic*, 13–14.

or pantheistic—or whether monocentric or polycentric—what all of these macrocosmic theologies have in common is an insistence that God is a reality external to the individual and objectively real.

The opposite pole of Regardie's theology, the individual God, is the psychologized microcosmic reflection of the macrocosmic God. Where the macrocosmic God is wholly external to the individual, the microcosmic God's nature is fundamentally one of internality. Various identified by Regardie as the "higher genius,"²⁰² "Divine Genius,"²⁰³ or "Holy Guardian Angel,"²⁰⁴ this being is seen as the internal and eminently personal reflection of the external and impersonal macrocosmic God, and is correlated to various psychological concepts throughout Regardie's career, such as the "higher self,"²⁰⁵ "the *id*,"²⁰⁶ "the core of the unconscious,"²⁰⁷ "the Unconscious,"²⁰⁸ "the central core of individuality, [and] the root of the Unconscious."²⁰⁹ Regardie sums up the relationship between this internal, psychologized God and the external God whose body is the cosmos:

By the magical hypothesis, the higher genius corresponds within man to the possible relationship of God to the universe. That is to say, man being the microcosm of the macrocosm, a reflection of the cosmos, is a universe within himself, a universe ruled and governed by his own divinity.²¹⁰

Regardie's soteriology tended to revolve around this God, with his understanding of magic's central process being at once represented as the magician's invocation of his HGA, and the ego's confrontation and union with the higher self.²¹¹ In this way, when Regardie speaks of "the belief in a personal God" as "a poetic or dramatic convention," and describes the goal of magic as "purely psychological" with the goal of "exalting the individual consciousness

²⁰² Regardie, *The Middle Pillar*, 77–78.

²⁰³ Regardie, *Ceremonial Magic*, 13–14.

²⁰⁴ Regardie, *The Tree of Life*, 104.

²⁰⁵ Regardie, *The Art of True Healing*, 5–6.

²⁰⁶ Regardie, *The Middle Pillar*, 42.

²⁰⁷ *Ibid.*, 52.

²⁰⁸ Regardie, *The Art and Meaning of Magic*, 48, 69.

²⁰⁹ *Ibid.*, 69.

²¹⁰ Regardie, *The Middle Pillar*, 77–78.

²¹¹ Regardie, *The Tree of Life*, 104; Regardie, *What You Should Know About the Golden Dawn*, 60; Regardie, *The Middle Pillar*, 35; Regardie, *The Art and Meaning of Magic*, 48–49; Regardie, *Healing Energy*, 56–57.

until it comes to a realisation of its own divine root,”²¹² we are to understand that he is strictly speaking of the microcosmic, not the macrocosmic, God. This reflective relationship that exists between the microcosm and macrocosm in Regardie’s ontology makes for a theology that allows for both an objective deity external to the subject, and a personal deity internal to the subject. This particular species of dipolar theism is the very essence of mode-four psychologization. It psychologizes the idea of God by viewing an aspect of the self as divine, but it sacralizes this psychological outlook by treating this personal divinity as a reflection of an objective, universal God.

The third aspect of mode-four psychologization within Regardie’s work concerns his presentation of the mind-body relationship. Far from compartmentalizing esoteric practice as something strictly psychological and disconnected from the body and materiality, we see a strong somatic component that clearly allows for the events that transpire on the “magical plane” to directly affect the world of matter. As early as 1932, we see Regardie proposing a method whereby “health is restored by the persistent concentration of divine power” by means of a “flow of energy” under the stimulus of which “diseased tissue and diseased cells ... become gradually broken down and ejected from the personal sphere.”²¹³ Six years later, in *The Philosopher’s Stone*, Regardie similarly presents us with an extensive list of esoteric theorists in whose doctrines imagination was believed to directly affect matter,²¹⁴ and follows this with the bold assertion that he can see “no valid reason why the interior psychical or magical power should not be able to effect a physical transmutation” or to “move a physical object without physical contact” by virtue of the soul’s ability to “exude its own subjective astral substance into objective materialization.”²¹⁵ This belief of Regardie’s in the ability of mind to causally exert influence over matter does not disappear in his later works, but continues to reassert itself. In 1946, we see him claiming that the “great spiritual powers” of the mind to affect matter have “concretely been proven by magnetic experiments.”²¹⁶ And again, in 1965, although he claims to “loathe the glib phrase” of “mind over matter,” he finds himself “disposed to accept the truth implicit in it,” insofar as he finds “that mental processes have a

²¹² Regardie, “Introduction,” *The Golden Dawn*, 28–29.

²¹³ Regardie, *The Art of True Healing*, 42–43.

²¹⁴ Regardie, *The Philosopher’s Stone*, 90–91.

²¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 149.

²¹⁶ Regardie, *The Teachers of Fulfillment*, 35.

remarkable influence on physiological activity” and healing.²¹⁷ Although it does appear that Regardie’s later views are a bit more subdued than in earlier years, there is a continual train of thought present in which the “magical plane” exerts causative influence over the material body.

The mechanism by which Regardie saw mind being able to exert this influence over matter appears to be his conception of man’s astral or etheric body. While we have previously identified the way in which Regardie conceived the astral plane as being an electromagnetic mean between soul and body, it is here important to note that his doctrines continually make reference to a specialized body possessed by all that is composed of this substance. We see this evidenced as early as 1932, when Regardie speaks of “centers in our mental and spiritual nature” that are the correlates of physical organs.²¹⁸ He later described this “interior subtle or astral body” as “the medium or intermediate state between mind and body.”²¹⁹ As Regardie gradually became acquainted with Reich’s somatic psychology, he came to integrate Reich’s notions of “orgone energy” and “vegetotherapy” into his practice. As early as 1938, we see Regardie—who, it should be remembered, worked as a masseur early in life—utilizing massage as a means by which a therapist’s astral body could directly affect a patient. He notes that this spiritual energy “may be communicated like an electric current through the arm and hands to finger tips,” and enter “the patient’s body as the palms of the masseur’s hands glide over the surface being treated.”²²⁰ This technique of esoteric massage was eventually assimilated into Regardie’s understanding of Reichian vegetotherapy. Later in life, Regardie came to adopt Reich’s belief that, owing to the fact that “mind and body are phases of a unitary living organism,” psychological tension was intimately connected with the particular “neuromuscular tension” that Reich termed “muscular armor.”²²¹ Like Reich, Regardie identified this muscular armor with certain “neurotic character structure[s]” found in patients.²²²

²¹⁷ Regardie, *Be Yourself*, 41–42.

²¹⁸ Regardie, *The Art of True Healing*, 15. For a view of the astral body as composed of psychic organs, see also: Regardie, *The Middle Pillar*, 52.

²¹⁹ Regardie, *The Philosopher’s Stone*, 28–29. For more on the development of terminologies relating to the so-called ‘astral body,’ see: Christopher A. Plaisance, “The Transvaluation of ‘Soul’ and ‘Spirit’: Platonism and Paulism in H.P. Blavatsky’s *Isis Unveiled*,” *Pomegranate: The International Journal of Pagan Studies* 15, no. 1 (2013): 250–72.

²²⁰ Regardie, *The Middle Pillar*, 79.

²²¹ Israel Regardie, “What is Psychotherapy?” in *An Interview With Israel Regardie: His Final Thoughts and Views*, ed. Christopher S. Hyatt (Phoenix: Falcon Press, 1985), 118.

²²² Israel Regardie, “On Reich,” in *An Interview With Israel Regardie: His Final Thoughts and Views*,

As discussed in section 3.1, one of the driving forces behind idealistic psychologization is the desire of the magician to insulate himself from rational critique of scientific naturalism by relegating magic to a separate-but-connected psychic plane. In phrasing his view of this plane's relationship with materiality—and thus the sacral psyche's relationship with the body—Regardie notes that the “ideal is not to escape from the body but to become involved more and more in life . . . to bring down godhead so that one's manhood being enriched may thereby be assumed into godhead.”²²³ Rather than proposing that the magical plane serves as an escape from material reality, Regardie implores the magician to become *more* involved in materiality *through* magic, but in a way that circumvents materialism by sacralizing the world of body and flesh. Furthermore, like Crowley, Regardie explicitly did *not* seek to insulate his practice from experimental falsifiability, but sought to apply a method of empirical verification that operated on and was native to the magical plane.²²⁴ With Crowley, we see a dedicated and sincere commitment (which was somewhat less than successful) both to discovering “scientific methods for reaching . . . the magical realm” and to devising ways by which such magical experiences could be empirically evaluated and tested.²²⁵ In both his early and late works on the subject,²²⁶ we see Regardie appeal to Crowley's methods of “testing” astral visions by means of checking the vision's contents against the exhaustive symbolic frameworks that comprise the HOGD's interpretation of the Qabalah.²²⁷ Flawed as it is in its substitution of confirmation bias in the aim of *verifying* the Qabalah's truth for the spirit of open-ended inquiry that characterizes the epistemological framework of true experimentation, Regardie's attempts at incorporating experimental methods into his practice demonstrate a committed opposition to escapist psychologization throughout his works.

ed. Christopher S. Hyatt (Phoenix: Falcon Press, 1985), 133.

²²³ Regardie, *The Middle Pillar*, 77.

²²⁴ For Crowley's relationship with the experimental method, see: Asprem, “Magic Naturalized,” 138–65; Pasi, “Varieties of Magical Experience,” 53–87.

²²⁵ Asprem, “Magic Naturalized,” 163.

²²⁶ Regardie, *The Tree of Life*, 227; Regardie, *The Art and Meaning of Magic*, 91–96.

²²⁷ For an outline of Crowley's method, see: Aleister Crowley, “Liber O vel Manus Sagittæ sub figura VI,” *The Equinox: The Official Organ of the A.A., The Review of Scientific Illuminism* 1, no. 2 (1909): 11–30.

5. Conclusion

In concluding this documentary analysis of Regardie's esoteric corpus, it has become apparent that his doctrines and practices can be strongly characterized as being psychologized. However, it does not appear that speaking of "psychologization" as a unitary phenomenon greatly elucidates the particular ways in which Regardie saw esoteric and psychological discourses interfacing. Rather, I fear that such a treatment of the issue may indeed serve to more greatly obfuscate the issue. In this way, I also believe that descriptions of Regardie's interpretation of esoteric discourse as "psychologized" made with this overly general definition do him and his works a disservice, by simplifying and generalizing what is in actuality quite a complicated network of proposed relationships. The fourfold typology of complementary, terminological, reductive, and idealistic modes of psychologization most accurately describes the various ways in which psychological and esoteric discourse are entangled within Regardie's work. In uncovering these modes within his corpus, and applying the resultant typological schema to the question of his psychologization of esoteric discourse, I believe we may come to a better understanding of what processes are actually at work—both in terms of evaluating prior statements made by other scholars regarding the issue, and in performing this present analysis.

In summation, I have argued that while it is indeed accurate to speak of Regardie as having psychologized esoteric discourse, this can only be the case given an understanding of "psychologization" that is differentially nuanced so as to distinguish between diametrically opposed psychologizing currents. This differential typology enables us to specifically identify Regardie as participating in four distinct psychologizing discursive strategies, both in isolation and in combination with one another in ways that are on occasion logically problematic, but tend towards an internal consistency. This clarification is, I believe, important not only insofar as it sets the record straight on Regardie in particular, but also in terms of ironing out the idea of psychologization itself as a discursive strategy within modern esoteric discourse. For, if it is the case that such an analysis of Regardie's works necessarily leads to a nuanced and differentiated idea of "psychologization," it seems also to follow that any such statements regarding modern esoteric discourse being psychologized be re-evaluated in light of this typology.

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