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

Volume 1 of 2

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Abstract

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

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

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

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‘It is in men that we must place our hope.’ Gandalf.

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