

# The Birth of Psychedelic Literature:

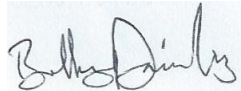
## Drug Writing and the rise of LSD Therapy 1954 – 1964

Submitted by Robert John Dickins, to the University of Exeter as a thesis for the degree of Master of Philosophy in English, September, 2012.

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(Signature)

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Robert Dickins', is placed on a light blue rectangular background. Below the signature is a horizontal dotted line.

## Abstract

This thesis examines hallucinogen drug literature published between 1954-1964 in Britain and North America. By arguing that these texts are medically and culturally contingent to psychiatric research that was being undertaken with various hallucinogens during the period, including Lysergic acid diethylamide and mescaline, via the development of three psychiatric models—the psycholytic, psychotomimetic and psychedelic—it seeks to establish the relationship between psychiatric practice and the form and content of the texts. Furthermore, it examines an inter-textual dialogue concerning the medical, spiritual and philosophical value of these drugs, which has a direct effect on the development of the aforementioned psychiatric research models. In doing so, this thesis also traces the historical popularization of these drugs as they left the clinical setting and entered in to wider society, as propagated by the literature. Broadly speaking, through these analyses, it establishes the primary texts as representing a minor literary movement—Psychedelic literature—through the emergence of a psychospiritual narrative.

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## 1.0 INTRODUCTION

Between 1954 - 1964 a number of books were published that described psychoactive drug experiences with hallucinogens under the auspices of, or directly influenced by, psychiatry: *The Doors of Perception* (1954), *Heaven and Hell* (1956) and *Island* (1962) by Aldous Huxley; *A Drug Taker's Notes* (1957) by Richard Heron Ward; *Exploring Inner Space* (1961) by Jane Dunlap; *Myself and I* (1962) by Constance A. Newland; *The Joyous Cosmology* (1962) by Alan Watts; *The Discovery of Love* (1963) by Malden Grange Bishop; and *The Psychedelic Experience* (1964) by Timothy Leary, Ralph Metzner and Richard Alpert. Collectively, these texts will be referred to as *psychedelic literature* and their psychiatrically-mediated dialogue, this thesis argues, reveals them to be a minor medico-cultural and literary movement.

By contextualising the primary texts according to the development of three psychiatric research/therapy models—the *psycholytic*, *psychotomimetic* and *psychedelic*—this thesis will demonstrate a dynamic, interpenetrative relationship between the books and the theoretical and methodological approaches of these psychiatric and psychoanalytic practices, while also elucidating a dialogue that occurred between the books themselves. Firstly, this will ground the texts within a socio-historical context that is used to identify the texts as a body of work—*psychedelic literature*—and secondly, the thesis will examine how the literature helped transform the practises themselves; thus demonstrating a cultural-contingency between the practice of hallucinogen research and drug literature from the same period. Broadly speaking then, this thesis is a medico-cultural and literary history of hallucinogen research, occurring in both Britain and North America, which aims at grounding the primary texts within the same cultural paradigm, arguing for the existence of a minor literary movement; *psychedelic literature*.

The primary texts will now be briefly introduced in regard to the proliferation of hallucinogen research during the 1950s and early 1960s; this in order to socially and historically contextualise them. It is then necessary, in 1.4, to position the argument of this thesis within the wider critical tradition of drug literature. This will be achieved by recounting the history of drug writing as a critical discipline, along with the various methodological approaches that have been employed, and will also elucidate the context in which the primary texts of this thesis have hitherto been understood.

## 1.1 Valuating Lysergic Acid Diethylamide

In 1938, working for the Pharmaceutical-Chemical Research Laboratories of Sandoz AG in Basel, Switzerland, Albert Hofmann (1906-2008) was working on synthesizing alkaloids from ergot in the hope of finding a new analeptic (Stevens 1993; Davenport-Hines 2001; Feilding 2008). Lysergic acid diethylamide (LSD) was the twenty-fifth compound in the series but was shelved, after animal testing, as unremarkable. Then five years later, on April 16, 1943, while working on “a hunch”, Hofmann resynthesized LSD and accidentally consumed a small amount through his skin (Stevens 1993). Thinking he felt the onset of a cold he took the rest of the day off and returned home. The following is a translation of Hofmann’s account of his subsequent experience:

At home I lay down and sank into a not unpleasant, inebriated-like condition, characterised by extremely heightened fantasy. In low-light conditions with closed eyes (I found the daylight unpleasantly glaring), uninterrupted and fantastic images of extreme plasticity with an intense, kaleidoscope-like play of colours, came upon me (Feilding 2008, 19).

Three days after Hofmann’s first experience he re-tested LSD on himself. He began to feel “dizziness, anxiety, sensory disruption, palsy, nervous laughter” (Feilding 2008, 20) and decided to bicycle home. Unlike his first experience, he found his second harrowing: “All the strength of my will to prevent the disintegration of the outer world and the dissolution of my own ego seemed useless. A demon had entered me and taken possession of my body, my senses and my soul” (Fielding 2008, 21). In consequence of Hofmann’s experience and subsequent testing by Sandoz, LSD was categorized as being in the *hallucinogen* class of psychoactive drugs. Having carried out preliminary research, Sandoz proceeded to market the drug as *Delysid*, with two possible values in human research; as a psychotomimetic and as an aid to psychotherapy (Stevens 1993; Roberts 2008).

A period of widespread research ensued in both Europe and North America, which lasted until the 1960s when public fears over the drug led to its scheduling, and research came to an end. However, before this occurred, psychiatrists and psychoanalysts attempted to firstly verify Sandoz’s conclusions and, secondly, build upon and develop certain theories of the mind in order to explain the efficacy of the drug. These are the psycholytic,

psychotomimetic and psychedelic and will be investigated in chapters 2.0, 3.0 and 4.0 respectively.

## 1.2 Psycholytic Texts

The first possible value that Sandoz ascribed LSD was as an aid to psychotherapy, a discipline that had been developing since the turn of the twentieth century but that had not hitherto been employed with hallucinogens. Psychoanalysis was first developed by Sigmund Freud (1856-1939) and employs ‘the talking cure’ and Freud’s own theory of the unconscious (Cohen 2011). Carl Jung (1875-1961), a pupil of Freud who broke away to develop analytical psychotherapy, developed his own theory of the unconscious. Interestingly, Jung was still alive while early LSD research was conducted but although he commented privately on LSD, he himself did not conduct any research (Sandison 1997, 71). Freud and Jung, and how their methods interacted with LSD research, will be examined more closely in chapter 2.0.

The imagery the hallucinogen caused in patient’s perceptions was thought by Sandoz to be the surfacing of unconscious repressed memory and it was also believed to diminish a patient’s resistance to therapy and therefore act as an aid to the talking cure (Roberts 2008, 16; Melechi 1997, 26). Both Freud and Jung’s theories and methods play an important role in the development of what became known as psycholytic therapy and, to a certain extent, played an increasingly important role in psychedelic therapy toward the end of this research period, as the two methods interpenetrated one another within the territory of psychedelic literature.

In November 1952, psychiatrist Dr. Ronald Sandison (1916-2010) became the first person on record to bring LSD into Britain, which was sourced from Sandoz, and stemmed from a meeting two months before with Albert Hofmann (Roberts 2008). Sandison pioneered the use of LSD in psychotherapy in Britain at Powick Hospital between 1952-1964, treating thousands of patients for various neurosis and depression (Sandison 1997; Roberts 2008). In 1954 he published his first clinical results, and also the first ever British article on LSD, in the *Journal of Mental Science: The Therapeutic Value of Lysergic Acid Diethylamide in Mental Illness* (Sandison 1954). The term psycholytic – meaning *soul dissolving* – was later coined by Sandison to describe the therapy he developed (Sandison 1997; Grof 2010). The distinguishing marker of this therapy was the utilisation of Freudian and Jungian models of analysis alongside a series of small dose LSD sessions (typically 75-200 micrograms) in the treatment of neurosis and for accessing repressed memory (Grof 2010).

*My Self and I* (1962) is written by the American Thelma Moss but was published pseudonymously under the name Constance A. Newland. She will be referred to by her pen

name in this thesis. Having already been in conventional psychotherapy Newland chose to have a course of psycholytic therapy in order to explore her “frigidity” as a neurosis, under the auspices of a practice based on a largely Freudian approach to LSD therapy (Newland 1962; Stevens 1993). Ronald Sandison wrote the book’s introduction: “This is a book about the use of the drug LSD in psychotherapy. It is the first complete case history describing this treatment to be published, and it is significant that the author is not a therapist but a patient” (Newland 1962, 11). The book is a case history that displays all the key signifiers of a psycholytic model in its content, exploring both Freudian and Jungian methods, and equally demonstrates the extent to which the therapy had developed from Sandison’s earlier research, and extended from Britain to the United States.



### 1.3 Psychotomimetic Texts

In deciding on the second, psychotomimetic, approach Sandoz was heavily influenced by *Der Meskalin-Rausch* (1927) by Kurt Beringer (1893-1949) and several other recent mescaline studies, which had noted a similarity between mescaline<sup>1</sup> intoxication and psychosis (Stevens 1993; Hintzen 2010). The idea that a hallucinogen or psychoactive substance might produce effects akin to madness was not new to the twentieth century however.

In the nineteenth century, French physician and psychiatrist Jacques-Joseph Moreau de Tours (1804-1884) began experimenting and researching hashish<sup>2</sup> in regard to mental illness (Rudgley 1993; Jay 2005). He published his findings in the book *Du Hachish et l'Alienation Mentale* (1845), later published in English as *Hashish and Mental Illness* (1973). In fact, during the mid-nineteenth century there was a vogue for drug writing in France, most notably by the authors Charles Baudelaire (1821-1867) and Théophile Gautier (1811-1872). Baudelaire wrote *Les Paradis Artificiels* (1860), part of which translated passages from the English author Thomas De Quincey's (1785-1859) *Confessions of an English Opium Eater* (1821), while Gautier's *Club des Hachichins* (1846) detailed drug exploration by a group of Parisians that included Moreau de Tours (Boon 2002; Jay 2005).

On finding that hashish was not useful as a treatment in his research, Moreau proposed that it was useful as a method by which doctors could have empathy with their patients, by using it on themselves in order to mimic their mental conditions (Jay 2005; Boon 2002). Hence, this reading of the hallucinogen experience describes the drug as a *psychotomimetic* (meaning *to mimic psychosis*) and was one research area Sandoz proposed for LSD. Soon after, psychotomimetic research with mescaline began in Canada and England.

In the early 1950s, doctors Humphry Osmond (1917-2004), John Smythies (b.1922) and Abram Hoffer (1917-2009) were investigating the properties of mescaline, and following the work of Beringer they adopted a psychotomimetic approach by investigating the effects of the drug compared with the state-of-mind produced in a patient with schizophrenia (Dyck 2008). A subsequent correspondence and meeting between Osmond and the English author Aldous Huxley gave rise to the chronologically first text of this thesis, Huxley's *The Doors of*

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<sup>1</sup> Mescaline is a hallucinogenic chemical synthesized from the peyote cactus.

<sup>2</sup> A psychoactive resin produced from the cannabis plant

*Perception* (1954). Osmond facilitated the mescaline experience and although it took place outside the clinical setting, it did occur under Osmond's research programme, and the book reveals an important dialogue with psychotomimetic research.

In *The Doors of Perception*, Huxley postulates that the drug could produce a "beatific vision" and in doing so raised aesthetic, philosophical and spiritual questions about the nature of the mescaline experience. Aside from framing the experience alongside that of a schizophrenic, Huxley begins to develop an aesthetic and spiritual value, and there were a number of disparate influences on him; Louis Lewin (1850-1929), Henri Bergson (1859-1941) and William Blake (1757-1827). Each of these people offered Huxley an interesting insight into his mescaline experience whether it is its pharmacology and spiritual use (Lewin), the drug's action upon the mind/brain (Bergson), or the aesthetic nature of hallucinations (Blake). The extent to which these influences structured the drug discourse within Huxley's text will be examined in chapter 3.0.

As a result of its publication and reception, *The Doors of Perception* prompted a literary response and, in doing so, created a new discursive territory about the value of hallucinogens. A territory, this thesis argues, that is shared and explored by psychedelic literature as a body of work and that produces a *psychospiritual* approach in psychiatric practice and in the narrative form of the texts, which develops over the short history of the literary movement. A number of direct literary responses began the process of delineating this territory and informing the formation of psychospirituality (this will be discussed in more detail in chapter 4.0.)

Oxford professor Robert Charles Zaehner (1913-1974) published his first response to Huxley's *The Doors of Perception*, in an article entitled *The Menace of Mescaline* (1954) and positioned himself against the ability of mescaline to provide a mystical experience. Huxley's *Heaven and Hell* (1956) went more in depth into the author's position in light of these criticisms, and in 1957 Zaehner expanded on his own with the book *Mysticism Sacred and Profane*. The positions and content of Huxley's and Zaehner's argument, developed under psychotomimetic research, begin to augment and assemble the discursive territory of psychedelic literature.

Aside from the theological debate there is also a literary response in the form of another autobiographical case-study. The writer Richard Heron Ward began a course of LSD sessions in the U.K. as a control subject in a psychotomimetic research programme (Ward 1957). In 1957 he published *A Drug-Taker's Notes*. Although the book adds to the

theological debate, siding with Zaehner, it is its relationship with the psychiatric research programme and the manner in which the two spaces are conflated in the text which is of interest to this thesis. The intention is to demonstrate how various influences on Huxley's texts, and Zaehner's and Ward's response, transformed the psychotomimetic understanding, and subsequently led to the development of the psychedelic approach in psychiatry.

## 1.4 Psychedelic Texts

In the end, the value of the psychotomimetic approach was found to be limited. Researchers “failed to demonstrate any significant parallels between the phenomenology of the states induced by these drugs [hallucinogens] and the symptomatology of schizophrenia” (Grof 2010, 16). This was found by research teams in both Europe and the United States (Janiger 2003). And, in fact, in quite the reverse of the aims of therapy, it was found to aggravate existing psychosis when used as a possible treatment (Sandison 1954).

Humphry Osmond was aware of the problem of describing LSD and mescaline with the terms *hallucinogen* and *psychotomimetic* and, instead, coined another term in a letter to Huxley, which he felt was a more accurate description; *psychedelic* (meaning *mind-manifesting*) (Huxley 1999; Dyck 2008). The word retained an element of the psychotomimetic reading so far as both terms presuppose an ability of the drug to produce a differentiated state of consciousness, yet disposed of the negative, pathological connotations that were implicit in the terms psychosis and hallucination. Moreover, as a discourse, the psychedelic approach incorporated the discursive space opened by Huxley concerning the aesthetic and spiritual implications of the drug experience; demonstrating the interpenetrative relationship of literature and therapeutic practise. This relationship, and its development into therapy, partially stemmed from the friendship of a group of scientists and writers in the Los Angeles area, which included Huxley, Oscar Janiger (1918-2001), and Alan Watts (1915-1973) (Lee 1992; Stevens 1993).

Psychedelic therapy was developed as part of this medico-literary discourse. It usually involved the patient/client taking large quantities of LSD (typically 250-500 micrograms), more than was usually involved in psycholytic therapy, and also unlike the psycholytic, it typically took place over only a single session (Bishop 1963; Lee 1992; Grof 2010). According to contemporary LSD researcher, Stanislav Grof (b.1931): “Clinical data suggested that these experiences [psychedelic] had a unique therapeutic value in the treatment of various emotional disorders” and that by employing drug-free discussions after the experience they could “help the individual integrate the LSD experience into [their] everyday life” (Grof 2010, 24). Unlike the psycholytic approach that understood imagery as the surfacing of unconscious material and thus understood the value of LSD to be in destabilising existing conscious states, the psychedelic approach believed they enabled states of

consciousness akin to the mystical experience. The literary result of this change in approach was a qualitative change in the form and content of drug writing during the early 1960s.

The primary texts that derived from the psychedelic research model were published in the first four years of the 1960s and they demonstrate a qualitative difference in their form and content (Bishop 1963; Watts 1962; Dunlap 1961; Huxley 1962; Leary 1964). This difference primarily arose for two reasons: Firstly, socio-politically, as the changing reception of LSD in both the media and in non-medical use began to create friction over the drug's safety, the U.S. and U.K. governments began cracking down on research before finally outlawing the drug in the mid-1960s (Lee 1992; Stevens 1993; Rios 2003; Roberts 2008); and secondly, the literature of the 1960s took the mystical experience to be a distinct truth about LSD if under the correct set and setting. Before contextualising the remaining texts within the psychedelic discourse, it is necessary to briefly mention the changing attitude toward LSD during the 1960s and how this affected both psychiatric therapy and drug writing. Moreover, this begins to delineate the move out of this period of literature.

In the summer of 1962, the U.S. Congress gave the Food Drug Administration (FDA) control over all investigational drugs, including LSD (Stevens 1993; Davenport-Hines 2001). In Autumn of the same year, the psychiatrist Oscar Janiger and a whole host of other researchers had their stock of LSD removed by the FDA (Rios 2003). This was partially the result of LSD leaving the clinical setting and being used publically, which resulted in a number of media scare stories, a public outcry and the rise of an LSD-inspired social movement (Lee 1992; Stevens 1993; Dass 2010). Ronald Sandison would later write: "Once LSD had escaped from the confines of the laboratory and the consulting room it was a substance which knew no cultural or ethical boundaries" (Sandison 1997). The political reasoning behind this move are beyond the scope of this thesis, suffice to say that with the advent of non-medical use, two important effects occurred in respect of psychedelic literature. Firstly, those dealing with LSD found themselves in the position of needing to justify its use, legitimising its value not only to the medical profession but to the public as well; resulting in a change in the tone and quality of texts. The following quote by Humphry Osmond, taken from his introduction to the last case-study text published in this period, exemplifies this:

Our goal must be to learn how best to use these new tools [hallucinogens] and this sort of book is likely to make a puzzling, heavy, and sometimes discouraging task

easier. If we are to succeed, we shall need not only the tolerance and understanding but also the active support and help of our fellow citizens (Bishop 1963, 10).

On the other hand, as LSD left the setting of the clinic, so too did psychedelic literature and along with personal recounts, novels, guides and philosophical musings were also published. However, although the clinical setting disappears from texts, it will be argued here that the three texts that this move refers to (Watts 1962; Huxley 1962; Leary 1964) all retain a grounding in the LSD therapy movement. Indeed, as the move from the clinic ensued, the psychedelic discursive space found itself in the centre of a developing social theory surrounding the use of hallucinogens within the public sphere.

Dr. Humphry Osmond sat on the board of directors at the *Institute of Psychedelic Studies* in San Francisco (Bishop 1963). One of the researches underway was in psychedelic therapy and the writer Malden Grange Bishop underwent a session and subsequently published *The Discovery of Love* (1963). Interestingly, the book, though dealing explicitly with a psychedelic and religious context, incorporated psycholytic elements in its content, dealing with Bishop's memory and his personal relationships for large proportions of the text. It will be argued that this meshing of the psycholytic and psychedelic territories is a response to the mainstream media outcry by describing the experience in terms larger proportions of those reading the book could empathize with; thus providing literary evidence for LSD's safety and therapeutic ability.

Dr. Oscar Janiger undertook a wide ranging study that aimed at recording the effects of LSD without any particular system attached, and a smaller study involving the effects on the creative process in artist and writers—effectively exploring the aesthetic dimension proposed by Huxley (de Rios 2003). The book *Exploring Inner Space* (1961) by Adelle Davis (1904-1974), pseudonymously published under the name Jane Dunlap, was written as a direct result of Janiger's research project. However, more in line with Osmond's work she had hoped "to get chemical Christianity" from a series of sessions. In fact, it was the advent of a different drugs discourse developed by Robert Gordon Wasson in his article *Seeking the Magic Mushroom* (1957) that contributed to this Christian-tempered text, and which demonstrates the extent to which this new drugs territory was emerging in multiple ways through psychiatric practice; Davis was encouraged to participate in the study having read Wasson's article. The manner in which Wasson's reading affected the psychedelic discourse,

within the literature, will be examined in order to demonstrate how various religious approaches were explored within the same psychiatric, drugs territory.

As human research came to an end, so too did the case study texts of psychedelic literature. In response to the growing non-medical, social movement that was forming around LSD, psychedelic literature produced texts that were no longer concerned with either the clinical context or the individual case study. Instead, the rise of the aesthetic, philosophical and theological debate surrounding the hallucinogen experience provided the contextual groundwork for these texts. These include *The Joyous Cosmology* (1962) by philosopher and writer Alan Watts (1915-1973) and *Island* (1962) by Aldous Huxley. Both authors were influenced by/involved with psychedelic therapy and both authors were friends with Janiger and Osmond, having had hallucinogen experiences occasioned by them (Stevens 1993).

Alan Watts' *The Joyous Cosmology* retains the façade, at least, of a single experience narrative like Bishop's *The Discovery of Love*, but is in actuality starkly different so far as Watts develops an idealised narrative, synthesised from all his previous experiences, and thus produces a creative experiential platform for his LSD discourse. The manner in which Watts uses this device to extrapolate a philosophical discourse on the hallucinogen experience will be analysed, alongside the therapeutic goals of psychedelic therapy.

Huxley's *Island* is a fictional novel about the arrival of William Asquith Farnaby on the utopia of Pala. In the utopia they utilise a fictional hallucinogen, *moksha*, and the text aims at demonstrating the place hallucinogens could have within society. The novel is consequentially dealing with a wider, socio-political discourse, which it will be argued is in response to the growing non-medical use of LSD. However, as with Watts's text, it will be analysed alongside the psychedelic approach in order to show the connection between the psychiatric approach, drug literature and the LSD social movement.

Drs. Timothy Leary and Richard Alpert (later known as Ram Dass) worked at Harvard University where they presided over the *Harvard Psilocybin Project* (HPP) (Stevens 1993; Dass 2010). Leary became interested in the hallucinogen psilocybin after trying a mushroom containing it in Cuernavaca, Mexico in the summer of 1960 (Lee 1992; Stevens 1993; Dass 2010). The interest in psilocybin stemmed from the discovery, by the aforementioned Robert Gordon Wasson, of 'magic mushroom' use in Mexico, and the isolation of its psychoactive chemical by Albert Hofmann (Letcher 2006). On returning to Harvard Leary set up the HPP. Aldous Huxley, who was a visiting lecturer at the *Massachusetts Institute of Technology* (MIT) at the time, became a consultant for the project and

in the spring of 1961 Richard Alpert and Ralph Metzner (a graduate student at the time) both had their first psilocybin experiences and joined the team (Dass 2010).

On Huxley's recommendation, Leary began testing the drug with a variety of notable artisans and power-brokers including one that Humphry Osmond recommended should go see him, the beat poet Allen Ginsberg. Under the auspices of the HPP Leary administered Ginsberg with psilocybin and Ginsberg elaborated on his belief that hallucinogens should be open to all, not just the medical profession (Stevens 1993; Connors 2010). Eventually, Leary, Alpert and Metzner left Harvard under acrimonious circumstances. They continued their research outside the establishment setting with a new focus on LSD and published *The Psychedelic Experience* (1964); a guide to taking LSD based on the ancient text *The Tibetan Book of the Dead*. Although not autobiographical like the aforementioned texts, for its purpose is to be used as a guide during LSD sessions, it still sits firmly within the psychedelic therapy model; a high dose in order to produce a mystical experience. Yet, the text also reflects the socio-political response of the psychedelic movement, so far as it is a guide-book made available to all, the implication of which is that the drug should also be available to all.

A number of other readings of these texts have been attempted that try to understand them as either part of a political shift from right to left, or as signifying the impact of an orientalism on Western culture (Braden 1967; Plant 1999; Boon 2002). The psychiatric/psychoanalytic grounding has been largely avoided; indeed the medical monographs have been all but ignored. Before beginning the analysis, therefore, it is necessary to contextualise the approach, position and argument of this thesis in regard to the wider field of critical drug literature, or pharmacography.



## 1.4 Drugs and Writing

Analysing the connection between writing and drugs in English literature has a critical tradition that dates back to at least M. H. Abrams' *The Milk of Paradise* (1934), which reviewed imagery in the works of nineteenth century writers who were known opium users, in the hope of establishing a universal opium effect in their works (Hayter 1968; Milligan 1995). This approach was later challenged by Elisabeth Schneider's *Coleridge, Opium and Kubla Khan* (1953), which posited that, opposed to the imagery in Samuel Taylor Coleridge's work being an effect of opium, it was "a complicated amalgam of influences, both cultural and psychological" (Milligan 1995, 4). There was a slight return to Abrams' position with Alethea Hayter's book *Opium and the Romantic Imagination* (1968) but that also ultimately demonstrated a cultural effect. Hayter asked the question: "Does opium affect the creative processes of writers who use it?" (Hayter 1968, 12). Hayter concluded the connection of drugs and literature could only be understood through the effects of opium on the author's life, rather than directly on any text itself. In other words, to examine opium in De Quincey's *Confessions of an English Opium-Eater* (1822) is to first examine De Quincey the author, not any universal textual effect of the drug. In this respect, Hayter's text was rather moralizing as it decried the negative influence on the authors by opium and, consequentially, their work. The socio-cultural approach to drug literature will be adopted by this thesis, however, and it will attempt to stringently avoid making moral judgment calls on any authors and the content of their texts.

While the tradition for examining the connection of opium and literature was well established it would be a couple of years after Hayter's work that the hallucinogen and literature connection would be broached in R.A. Durr's *Poetic Vision and the Psychedelic Experience* (1970). Durr employs a similar approach to Hayter but examines contemporary reports from hallucinogen experiences, rather than opium in reference to Romantic poetry. Dealing with the same historical period as this thesis, Durr's text is limited by failing to deal with certain primary texts, which detailed personal experiences under psychiatric research programs during the 1950s and 1960s. In doing so, he fails to recognize the extent to which these practices gave rise to the form and content of psychedelic literature and, indeed, the purported experience itself.

Durr proposes that through hallucinogens one is able to experience the world as the great writers do and thus posits a pure literary experience (Durr 1970). The result is a rather

convoluted attempt to understand textual descriptions of drug experiences as being products of the imagination, as if the text and the drug experience itself are derived from the same purity. As one reviewer wrote at the time: “Unfortunately, the 249 pages of the text do little more than offer a great deal of evidence that many people’s accounts of their relationship to the phenomenal world during psychedelic experiences are quite similar to many poetic accounts of the poet’s relation to the phenomenal world” (Krieger 939). In other words, the descriptive intertextuality tells us nothing of any pure experience and only informs the reader as to a qualitative similarity in their use of language.

Hayter and Durr’s attempts to understand the relationship of drugs and writing through the axiom of the author failed to adequately take into account the socio-cultural forces that played a part in any said text; ultimately leaving their critiques very isolated. However, the problem of trying to understand texts as the pure experience of an author’s imagination or genius was being highlighted contemporaneously within continental literary criticism; most notably in Roland Barthes’ essay *Death of the Author* (1967) and Michel Foucault’s *What Is An Author?* (1969). These texts and lectures questioned whether authors were in fact just conduits for socio-cultural forces (Burke 1998; Burke 2000). In terms of drug literature, however, it would be a number years before critiques emerged framing both drug experiences and texts in socio-cultural frameworks (Lenson 1995; Plant 1999; Boon 2002; Boothroyd 2006; Letcher 2006; Banco 2010).

A new language and method of assessment began to emerge within critical drug literature. For instance, in *On Drugs* (1995), David Lenson coined the term *pharmacography* in order to describe all the various texts that deal with writing and drugs, paving the way for a number of later pharmacographies: Sadie Plant’s *Writing on Drugs* (1999), Marcus Boon’s *The Road of Excess: A History of Writers on Drugs* (2002) and Lindsey Michael Banco’s *Travel and Drugs in Twentieth-Century Literature* (2010) for instance. These three books play a varying role in this thesis. Plant’s is a rather undisciplined and directionless cultural assessment that is more a recapitulation of information than a critical analysis. Boon’s book, however, is a more deeply researched and clearly structured pharmacographical history and has been important for providing a critical context for a number of the primary texts discussed here. The most recent of the three, Banco’s *Travel and Drugs in Twentieth-Century Literature*, is a neo-colonial analysis on various authors including Aldous Huxley, William S. Burroughs and Hunter S. Thompson. Banco’s critique, especially the discussions on Huxley’s texts, plays an important contextual role here, so far as the same historical period is

examined. However, while Banco's critique focuses on intoxication in travel, this thesis argues that a psychiatric context better explains the form and content of Huxley's texts.

These works constituted the drug and text connection through social and cultural dynamics, wherein any pharmacography becomes indicative of any said dynamic, as opposed to authorial genius. For this type of pharmacographical analysis Boon proposes:

An open field of interdependent cultural activity, which would include both drugs and literature, one in which science, biography, literary analysis, and ethnography are used as necessary (Boon 5).

Broadly speaking then, drug texts are approached as participating within a social and cultural space and are, therefore, understood as being evidential of a dialogue outside the confines of any single author. This is most obvious in a number of excellent works dealing with the social and cultural histories of hallucinogenic drugs, a number of which have been important in informing and contextualising this thesis: Jay Stevens' *Storming Heaven* (1987) and Martin A. Lee and Bruce Shlain's *Acid Dreams* (1985) detail the history of LSD in the United States; Andy Roberts' *Albion Dreaming* (2008) does similarly for Britain; and Andy Letcher's *Shroom: A Cultural History of the Magic Mushroom* (2006).

This socio-cultural approach is the position of this thesis. Therefore, in understanding the primary texts collectively as *psychedelic literature* this thesis proposes to analyse the connection between their form and content and their socio-cultural production; in this case, psychiatric research with hallucinogenic drugs during the 1950s and 1960s.

Although the primary texts range a number of literary forms and styles, including recounts of personal experiences, novels, essays, and a guide book, there is one clear distinction within. Namely five of the works describe personal experiences under the supervision of trained psychiatrists and psychoanalysts (Huxley 1994; Dunlap 1961; Bishop 1963; Ward 1957; Newland 1962) while the others do not, they take place outside the strictly clinical context but are, it is argued, heavily informed by psychiatric research and therapy. To restate, the argument of this thesis is that all the primary texts are culturally-contingent to the psychiatric and psychoanalytic research methods, rather than any particular authorial imagination, which, for example, Hayter and Durr attempted to identify in their works.

Aside from mentions in the drug histories, very little critical study has been carried out on the primary texts of this thesis and what has been done tends to concentrate on the

psychedelic texts outside the clinical setting, scarcely touching upon their medico-cultural production. Sadie Plant and David Lenson give a brief mention of *The Psychedelic Experience*, *The Doors of Perception* and *Heaven and Hell* in their historical context, but with little or no reference to the psychiatric background of either the authors or the context of their experiences, and totally ignoring the case study texts altogether. While Marcus Boon, on the other hand, briefly mentions *My Self and I* in the main body of his text and references *Exploring Inner Space* and *A Drug-Taker's Notes* in the index, he only goes into limited depth on the other primary texts.

However, another problem of these three popular pharmacographies is that their nets have been cast too wide and they fail to recognise the nuances of difference between individual texts, based as they are in the practise of LSD therapy. They tend to focus on either a political reading of the psychedelic experience or an Orientalisation of the drug discourse in the contemporary culture and, correspondingly, in the books themselves.

According to Marcus Boon: “From the 1930s to the 1960s, it is a little acknowledged fact that one of the principle sources of interest in psychedelics, aside from the interest of researchers working on specific therapeutic uses, was people of conservative or right-wing orientation” (Boon 2002, 258). Boon goes on to persuasively argue that those writers before 1960, like Huxley, were able to get hold of researchers, and thus also the drugs, by using their friendship circles and their notoriety as authors. As the 1960s counterculture subsumed the drugs discourse, these writers began to disappear from drug literature and the implication is that, politically speaking, the space moved from right to left. Looking at the two ends of this period—from Huxley’s *The Doors of Perception* (1954) to *The Psychedelic Experience* (1964)—is very telling in this shift; from a personal, introspective journey to a guidebook intended to be used across a far broader social collective. The drug experience had become a social matter. However, it will argued here that this cultural shift is implicit in the spread of LSD from research tool to a functioning therapeutic tool within psychiatric discourse. Rather than the counterculture simply re-reading the value of LSD in light of a social, left-wing politics, it was the need of therapists to ply their trade within the social that fuelled the shift and made the ‘psychedelic experience’ applicable to a wider socio-cultural audience. This move, it will be demonstrated, was already implicit in Huxley’s earliest text.

Orientalism has long been noted as a major contributing factor to the Western drugs discourse, largely concerning Victorian opium use (Milligan 1995). In terms of psychedelic literature, however, this observation began in 1967 with William Braden’s *The Private Sea*.

Later, in regard to the LSD pharmacographies of the 1960s, Lenson quotes from Robert S. de Ropp's *The Master Game* (1968): "Their insistence on forcing their insights into a framework which is essentially Tibetan [Huxley & Leary] produces a strained, somewhat artificial effect" (Lenson 1995, 143). Lenson goes on to suggest that this perspective was forced on the popular imagination and prohibited a purely Western conception; even going so far as to suggest it perhaps blocked the development of a purely Western mysticism.

However, this argument, this thesis contends, only tells part of the story so far as it rests on the belief that trained psychiatrists, who had been developing models like psycholytic therapy, had no existing framework with which to approach hallucinogens. It would be more accurate to say that Tibetan insights were forced upon the psychiatric/psychoanalytic framework of LSD therapy. This Orientalism, as *otherness* contingent to the experience, has more to do with the popularization of LSD when models of mass consumption were needed to replace those of medical pathologies in the development of the psychedelic discourse. Leary's *The Psychedelic Experience* (1964), based on the ancient text *The Tibetan Book of the Dead*, for example, may have the façade of orientalism, but it is *ego-death*, not death itself that it addresses.

With the two aforementioned readings in mind, this thesis intends to construct a cartography of psychedelic literature based on the proliferation of psychotherapeutic approaches to the drug, while recognising political and Oriental discourse as penetrating influences within the literature.

In conclusion, by contrasting and comparing psychedelic literature to psychiatric practice, this thesis will argue that the publication of the texts is an attempt to socially, and culturally, legitimise the new practices, which arose in response to intensified hallucinogen research and an increase in the public interest surrounding them. The political and Oriental readings were a result of the popularisation of LSD as it entered the popular socio-cultural sphere and are thus contributing factors to the changing form and content of drug literature but not necessarily their driving force. Also, it will be argued that as a body of work psychedelic literature demonstrates a period of territorialization within the methodology of that research field; the result of which was to create a distinct, literary assemblage.

## 2.0: THE PSYCHOLYTIC TERRITORY

In marketing LSD as a key to unlocking repressed unconscious data in patients, Sandoz was inviting a psychoanalytic framework for understanding the efficacy of the drug.

Psychoanalysis was first developed by Sigmund Freud and rests on his identification of a dynamic interrelationship between an individual's conscious and what he called, in his theory, the personal unconscious. Therefore, as a consequence of Sandoz's recommendation, LSD was being ascribed a particular medical value; namely as a therapeutic tool to be used by therapists and researchers on patients with psychopathological problems. And, along with its medical value, the drug also inherited Freud's model of the human psyche as the explanatory framework of its efficacy. LSD research in this particular field led to the development of what became termed as psycholytic therapy and it is the genesis of, and subsequent literary response to, psycholytic theory that is of concern in this chapter. The aim of which is to describe how medical methodology evolved in response to the use of LSD and was then transferred in to a literary form.

Research, in this field, began in earnest on both sides of the Atlantic using both Freudian and Jungian psychodynamic ideas as the framework for understanding the efficacy of the drug. In Britain, Dr. Ronald Sandison (1916-2010) became the first individual to bring LSD in to the country and he and his colleagues at Powick Hospital were the authors of the first British journal article on the hallucinogen: *The Therapeutic Value of Lysergic Acid Diethylamide in Mental Illness* (1954). As well as being trained in psychiatry, Sandison was also versed in Freudian and Jungian analysis and it was Sandison who first developed and coined the term *psycholytic* as the therapeutic method that employed LSD alongside psychotherapy (Sandison 1997; Roberts 2008; Grof 2010).

Researchers believed and reiterated in articles that the drug did indeed evidence the existence of the unconscious and provided the means to facilitate the therapeutic process. This was found on both sides of the Atlantic, as is evidenced in the article *Psychotherapy with Lysergic Acid Diethylamide* (1958) by Betty Eisner and Sidney Cohen: "Lysergic acid diethylamide emerges as a facilitator of recall and as an aid in the abreaction of traumatic events, whether suppressed or repressed. It also serves to enhance patient-therapist relationships. It, along with other hallucinogenic drugs, is unique in that the patient remains lucid throughout the period of activity" (Eisner 1958, 537). The apparent success of this methodology further led to the cohesive development of psycholytic therapy.

Sandison's central role in the development of the psycholytic method is most clearly evidenced by his association with the primary text of this field, Constance A. Newland's *My Self and I* (1962), for which he wrote the introduction. The Freudian and Jungian frameworks had begun to be evolved into a new methodology that took into account different aspects of both theories in its own development:

Freud not only gave us a theory, he also gave us a method of treatment. The theory has proved to be the most adequate, the tools of treatment the least adequate. Free association and the interpretation of dreams are often insufficient to create psychic realities... [but it was] Jung who gave us the method of active fantasy which the author has used with great effect during her treatment sessions (Newland 1962, 15).

In *My Self and I*, Newland discusses her psycholytic therapy in the practice of two Freudian therapists called Arthur Chandler and Mortimer Hartman (Newland 1962; Stevens 1993). This chapter will do a close reading of her text, paying attention to the manner in which the psycholytic method has incorporated different elements of Freudian and Jungian theory and developed a particular approach in respect of the efficacy of LSD. The book's form, narrative and content reveal a particular literary style of integrating Freudian and Jungian theories and expounding the psycholytic method.

The aim of this chapter then is threefold: Firstly, to give a historical context in the development of psycholytic therapy through a brief examination of the psychoanalytical theories of Sigmund Freud and Carl Jung; secondly, to elucidate the theory of psycholytic therapy, as developed by Ronald Sandison, so far as it represented a reformation of psychotherapy in the face of being applied to the hallucinogen experience; thirdly, to extrapolate psycholytic therapy methodologically within *My Self and I* in order to show how and why it manifested as a literary format; namely, in response to the popularisation of LSD and the appropriation of the aforementioned psychoanalytic theories. The question of this chapter revolves not around the question of whether these theories produced a particularly positive result or not, but rather how they evolved in the context of hallucinogen research and medical understandings of LSD. To understand this, this chapter first outlines the development of certain psychodynamic theories, namely those of Freud and Jung, in order to demonstrate, firstly, the reasons why they were applicable and, secondly, how they helped inform the content and form of Newland's text.

## 2.1: Psychodynamic Roots

The Austrian neuropathologist Sigmund Freud (1856-1939) founded the psychoanalytic school of psychiatry just prior to the turn of the nineteenth century and by 1908 Freud's theory had begun to spread, with the first meeting of psychoanalysts occurring in Salzburg, Austria, the same year (Gay 1989). The central tenet of psychoanalysis is the existence of a dynamic within an individual's conscious mind and what Freud named the personal unconscious, which is not available through normal introspection but that supposedly still influences one's everyday lives. Freud wrote: "The division of the psychical into what is conscious and what is unconscious is the fundamental premise of psycho-analysis; and it alone makes it possible for psycho-analysis to understand the pathological processes in mental life" (Freud 2001, 13). Therefore, the unconscious itself was understood in pathological terms. Aside from the theoretical basis of Freud's approach, the method by which the therapy was administered is called the *talking cure*, which functions through a therapist discussing their patient's problems during a one-on-one session (Thom 1981).

Although a number of his pupils, like Carl Jung (1875-1961) and Alfred Adler (1870-1937), broke with some aspects of his theory, they retained the fundamental premise of a dynamic unconscious in the psychical structure of the individual (Gay 1989). The various methods are collectively described as psychodynamics. By the time of Freud's death in September 1939, just after the outbreak of World War 2, he had become an internationally recognised figure, whose theories had rapidly spread throughout Europe and North America (Freud 1991); thus the wide application of psychodynamic methods was already well underway before the hallucinogenic properties of LSD were discovered. Why, however, did Sandoz believe research with LSD might be fruitful in the psychoanalytic field?

Initially, Freud's psychoanalysis aimed at producing a certain knowledge as an explanatory field for conduct and experiences outside other intellectual disciplines (Frosh 1987). In this respect, Sandoz's choice of a possible research field in psychodynamics made a lot of sense. The phenomenology of the LSD experience provided data and information that was not easily interpreted by existing behavioural models in psychology, due to the fact that the phenomenological experience can only be communicated by the patient, rather than observed by a researcher; thus Freud's talking cure represented a pre-existing model for elucidating pathologically-related data. So far as Freudian LSD researchers were concerned this adoption necessitated two important points: Firstly, the initial adoption of a repressed,



thus pathological model of the unconscious and, therefore, that the LSD phenomena was a consequence of said neurotic pathology; secondly, the treatment of LSD phenomena as being akin to a Freudian dream analysis. What, however, was Freud's model of repression? And how did this relate to his method of interpreting dreams?

Freud posited that when a child is born they are preconscious and are driven by the *pleasure principle*. As they grow older their desires are repressed by the *reality principle*, which is encoded into their psychological structure from their parents and wider society; this creates the unconscious. Over time, the reality principle supersedes the pleasure principle as the conscious source of desire. Therefore, Freud wrote: “[W]e obtain our concept of the unconscious from the theory of repression” and he identifies two areas of the unconscious, “one which is latent but capable of becoming conscious, and the one which is repressed and which is not, in itself and without more ado, capable of becoming conscious” (Freud 2001, 15). This is the reason Sandoz marketed the drug as a key to unlocking the unconscious; it would seemingly allow direct access to that which was thought irretrievable. For psychodynamic researchers and practitioners, LSD was a possible key to demonstrating the theoretical foundations of their own tradition, both scientifically and publically, as a working therapy. This, as will be demonstrated in 2.2, is the main point being made in the first British journal article on LSD, which stated: “Our clinical impressions have convinced us that LSD *when used as an adjunct to skilled psychotherapy*, is of the greatest value in the obsessional and anxiety groups accompanied by mental tension” (Sandison 1954).

Having taken the step to correspond LSD phenomena to unconscious material, how did researchers go about approaching the data? The answer to this question lies in the techniques Sigmund Freud developed in his book *The Interpretation of Dreams* (1899): “Dreams are psychical acts of as much significance as any others; their motive force is in every instance a wish seeking fulfilment; the fact of their not being recognizable as wishes and their many peculiarities and absurdities are due to the influence of the psychical censorship” (Freud 1991, 681). Accordingly then, LSD phenomena was equivalent to dream data, so far as imagery was produced within the patient's mind, and its content was meaningful to researchers so far as it might further evidence Freud's conception of the pathologically-based psychological structure of the individual. The great difference is that patients under the influence of LSD were able to talk about their experience as it happened, rather than relying wholly on their memory, consequentially providing more primary data.

For Freud, the technique of psychoanalysis as therapy, the talking cure, functions through a dialogue between the patient and analyst and aims at resolving neurotic and psychosomatic problems, caused by the repression of sexual instincts, according to its theoretical systems: “Words make consciousness of impulses possible; when the correct connections are made, they bring unconscious material through into the half-light of preconscious activity, and thence to the full glare of recognition... the activities of desire, condensed or displaced by the machinations of repression, make sense of the seemingly inexplicable” (Frosh 1987, 25). Primarily in the case study texts, this very process of discussion is played out in the substantive content. For example, in *My Self and I*, which will be discussed in more detail in 2.3, Newland’s analysts play an active role in determining the course of her exploration of the phenomena she perceives: “Dr. M’s suggestion that I fantasy [sic] the act of masturbation had evoked wild terror in me. I did not know the reason why. Very well. I would perform the act here and now, and perhaps find out the reason why” (Newland 1962, 80). The goal of psychoanalysis, and thus of psycholytic therapy, is to identify an unconscious pathology and bring it to the attention of the patient’s consciousness. This is facilitated by LSD in supposedly bringing to light the problems of one’s unconscious, through the imagery produced under its influence, making them visible to the conscious self, in order that they may be communicated to the doctor for analysis. Indeed, as well as the imagery being perceived as unconscious material, LSD was noted as being an aid to the talking cure by also diminishing a patient’s resistance to it (Melechi 1997, 26). Once communicated, according to the theory, problems can be worked through, which according to the descriptive process in the literary texts is a realisation of the problem in itself; the very act of externalising, recognising and integrating is the cure (Newland 1962).

In terms of psychedelic literature another psychotherapist plays an important role in influencing the development of psycholytic theory; Carl Jung. Carl Gustav Jung (1875-1961) was a Swiss psychiatrist who founded analytical psychotherapy. Jung had been a pupil of Sigmund Freud but in 1909 he split from his teacher for a number of reasons (Gay 1989). These included Freud’s refusal to reveal personal details to Jung for analysis (Freud did not want to undermine his own authority) and Jung believed Freud put too much emphasis on the sexual instincts of the individual in creating the unconscious (Gay 1989; Stevens 1993; McLynn 1996). According to the Freud biographer Peter Gay:

[Freud] criticized Jung for being gullible about occult phenomena and infatuated with oriental religions; he viewed with sardonic and unmitigated scepticism Jung's defence of religious feelings as an integral element in mental health. For Freud, religion was an psychological need projected onto culture, the child's feelings of helplessness surviving in adults (Gay 1989, 238).

The unconscious, for Jung, is Janus-faced; half facing the preconscious, and the other facing the future potential. Jung believed that the unconscious was populated by desiring instincts that were wider than purely sexual ones and he also believed it was creative in character, which is to say that the unconscious was not a bi-product in the development of a child but was already existing and contributing to the make-up of one's psyche (Jacobs 1961): "The autonomy of the unconscious therefore begins where emotions are generated. Emotions are instinctive, involuntary reactions which upset the rational order of consciousness by their elemental outbursts" (Jung 2000, 278).

Therefore, instead of a repressed model of the unconscious, Jung posited the existence of a *collective unconscious* filled with what he called *archetypes*, which were patterns of instinctual behaviour coded into the psyche (Jung 2000). These were the occult phenomena that Freud believed Jung to be gullible about. The result of Jung's approach was to extend the dynamics of Freud's system by positing a creative, as opposed to repressive, function in the unconscious; essentially further segmenting the psychical structure: "Whereas for Freud the unconscious is essentially a function of consciousness, the author holds the unconscious to be an independent psychic function prior to consciousness and opposed to it. According to this view the unconscious may be divided into a *personal* and a *collective* unconscious" (Jung 1991, 468). This distinction is important, as will be demonstrated in 2.3, because it seemingly better explained the phenomena perceived by individuals under the influence of LSD.

Similarly to Freud, Jung believed he found evidence of his system in dreams, which correspondingly he saw as being representative of the creative force of the unconscious. He describes dreams as "involuntary, spontaneous products of the unconscious psyche" (Jung 2000, 48) that are populated with mythological archetypes: "All mythical figures correspond to inner psychic experiences and originally sprang from them" (Jung 2000, 256). However, this doesn't mean that these motifs are identical with the archetypes, rather they are communicated through unconscious cultural filters and must be unpicked by Jung's form of analysis.

Interestingly, Jung was aware of LSD during his lifetime and was familiar with Aldous Huxley's *The Doors of Perception* (1954) but while he concurred with the premise that hallucinogens revealed elements of the unconscious, he saw Huxley as an amateur who was unable to balance the revelations at a conscious level and disagreed with their proposed ability to produce a mystical or spiritual experience (McLynn 1996; Stevens 1993). Jung felt that LSD was dangerous as it may reveal latent psychosis and felt that his active imagination was a better method of elucidating data from patients; as far as records show Jung never took the drug himself (McLynn 1996). However, as has already been noted, *active imagination* was an intrinsic part of psycholytic therapy for Ronald Sandison (Newland 1962). In order to examine how the theories of Freud and Jung were incorporated into LSD therapy it is necessary to now look at Sandison's earliest observations on LSD.

## 2.2: Development of Psycholytic Therapy and Literature

Dr. Ronald Sandison (1916-2010) was appointed as a consultant psychiatrist at Powick Hospital, Worcestershire in September 1951 and was put in charge of the clinical aspects of the hospital (Roberts 2008). Sandison had been a wartime physiologist with the RAF and was a trained psychiatrist, versed in both Freudian and Jungian psychotherapy. A year after his appointment he took part in a tour of Swiss mental hospitals and, as part of which, he visited Sandoz laboratories in Basel. It was here that Sandison met Albert Hofmann, learning for the first time about the existence of LSD (Sandison 1997).

In examining the medical literature, provided by Sandoz, Sandison discovered a short paper entitled *LSD-25 as an aid to Psychotherapy* by Anthony Busch and Warren Johnson, which had been published two years previously in 1950 and described the application of LSD to twenty one psychotic patients (Sandison 1997). Sandison later wrote: “Their tiny contribution to the literature on the therapy of psychiatric illness was the stimulus which encouraged me, as I returned to England, to think of starting to use LSD therapeutically in the UK” (Sandison 1997, 60). Two months later, in November 1952, he became the first person on record to bring LSD into Britain (Roberts 2008). At Powick Hospital, Sandison pioneered the use of LSD in psychotherapy in Britain and during 1952-1964 he treated thousands of patients for various neuroses and depression (Roberts 2008; Sandison 1997).

In 1954, Sandison and his colleagues published their first results in the aforementioned paper *The Therapeutic Value of Lysergic Acid Diethylamide in Mental Illness* (Sandison 1954) and thus the beginning of Sandison’s psycholytic method entered the literature. The paper describes the results of applying LSD to thirty-six psychoneurotic patients over a one year period and its results reiterated Sandoz’s understanding that LSD was a useful aid to psychoanalysis. It concluded that LSD did indeed provide “manifestations of the patient’s unconscious” in that it “induces psychic states in which the subject becomes aware of repressed memories and other unconscious material” (Sandison 1954, 491).

There are two consequences relevant to the development of psycholytic theory, and subsequently certain texts like Newland’s *Myself and I*, in Sandison’s initial results. Firstly, and most obviously, LSD was understood to be a useful aid in psychotherapy; secondly, and in connection with the first, LSD also became a proof of the psychoanalytical conception of the psychological structure of the individual. The result of this, for therapists, is that LSD became a useful tool for a particular specialisation, psychotherapy, and, therefore, only those who

were trained in Freudian psychodynamics would be able to interpret the experiences communicated by patients under the influence the drug. Thus Sandison wrote:

*Our clinical impressions have convinced us that LSD when used as an adjunct to skilled psychotherapy, is of the greatest value in the obsessional and anxiety groups accompanied by mental tension. We cannot emphasize too strongly, however, that the drug does not fall into the group of “physical” treatments and that it should be used only by experienced psychotherapists and their assistants (Sandison 1954, 503).*

Sandison is very explicit about the use of LSD being in the hands of “experienced psychotherapists and their assistants”. At this early stage of LSD research, the psychotherapeutic school were staking a claim for sole ownership over the drug. It supposedly aided not only their patients, but the very theory that underpinned their own practice; it had the promise of being something of a working proof. LSD’s value, therefore, was greater than simply therapy; it was a means to validate the very existence of the practice in the first place and, as such, was highlighted in the paper.

However, although Sandison, in his results, confirmed one value judgement that Sandoz applied to LSD, he is at the same time marginalizing the psychotomimetic model as a key to therapy (chapter 3.0 and 4.0 will examine how the psychotomimetic developed its own therapeutic model in the psychedelic.) He reflects on previous research done on “normal subjects” and states that LSD produces depression or schizophrenia in them and that “there has been little correlation of the material with the personality, interests and personal problems of the subjects” (Sandison 1954, 492). Furthermore, Sandison divides the LSD experiences into two types: (1) phenomena that were the result of the toxicity of LSD, and (2) phenomena that pertained to the personal unconscious, and thus was intrinsically tied to memory. The psychotomimetic is aligned to toxicity, and retains little or no value for Sandison while the reproduction of memory is of value in psychotherapy. This underlines the fact that Sandison felt LSD was only applicable to psychoneurotic patients, further sanctifying the importance of this methodology as the sole framework for understanding the drug’s efficacy as a therapeutic agent.

Following the publication of our first paper on LSD in 1954 and my visit to the United States in 1955, at the invitation of the American Psychiatric Association, the hospital suddenly acquired an international reputation (Sandison 1997, 73).

From these early observations by Sandison, coupled with research going on in Europe and the United States, the psycholytic method was developed (Eisner 1958; Sandison 1997; Grof 2010). The psycholytic method involved a series of LSD sessions with psychoneurotic patients, with increasing doses in order to find the optimum level for each said patient, taken alongside standard sessions of psychoanalysis, both while under the influence of the drug and at other times: “The basic idea of this approach was that consecutive sessions might make it possible for patients gradually to confront various levels of their unconscious and resolve deep conflicts underlying their psychopathological symptoms” (Grof 2010, 20). This is the very process that is outlined in the narrative of *My Self and I*.

### 2.3: My Self and I

Originally published in 1962 *My Self and I*, by American Thelma Moss (1918-1997), was released pseudonymously under the name Constance A. Newland. The book details the author's experiences undergoing psycholytic therapy with the Beverly Hills based Freudian psychiatrists Arthur Chandler and Mortimer Hartman, who had provided therapy for a number of famous individuals including the actor Cary Grant (Stevens 1993). According to LSD historian, Jay Stevens, their technique involved using a blindfold on patients in order to elucidate imagery in their mind's eye (Stevens 1993). This method is described in *My Self and I*: "He [Dr. M] asked me to lie down on the couch and gave me an eye-shade to put on" (Newland 1962, 55). Thus the book is contingent to the techniques applied in psycholytic therapy.

Newland was a writer and stage actress before undergoing psycholytic therapy but, afterwards, she retrained and became a psychologist and parapsychologist (Newland 1962; Stevens 1993; Boon 2002). The impact of the treatment she received under the influence of over a dozen LSD therapy sessions is, therefore, undoubtedly remarkable but to what extent was she a relevant patient for psycholytic analysis in the first place?

In his foreword to the book Dr. Harold Greenwald casts Newland as being the "stereotyped American woman" perpetuated by the media "misogynists" of the 1950s and early 1960s (Newland 1962). She is, in his terms and her own, socially "balanced" but also the "model of the frozen, ruthlessly efficient American career woman" (Newland 1962, 7). And Greenwald views her as being typical of the "baffling problem of frigidity in the liberally educated modern woman" (Newland 1962 9). The problem of "frigidity" is described as being a neurosis that, for a psychoanalyst, represents certain blocks in the unconscious but which, nowadays, might well be understood as a misogynistic diagnosis in itself. Regardless, having undergone numerous years of unsuccessful psychoanalysis, this book chronicles her sessions of drug therapy, under which she receives successful analysis while under the influence of LSD. Seemingly, LSD had become the magic substance that allowed psychoanalysis to work more effectively and this book was the determining evidence that was propagated to the public in order to edify the practice.

Dr. Ronald Sandison wrote the book's introduction, which demonstrates the spread of psycholytic therapy to the United States and the importance of his work in underlining the validity of the method. However, to what extent did this new therapy adopt the models with



which it was originally conceived? Sandison is clear about the paths with which it has followed: “Freud not only gave us a theory, he also gave us a method of treatment. The theory has proved to be the most adequate, the tools of treatment the least adequate” (Newland 1962, 15). With this in mind then, it can be said that the Freudian theory of the unconscious provides the context for her visions and, in conjunction with the Freudian’s who facilitated Newland’s sessions, plays a role in the sexual nature of the content of the text:

These were the nuclei of my neurosis: straight jacket and enema nozzle. The straight jacket had taught me that the feeling pleasure “down there” led to punishment and pain. That lesson was drilled home by the enema nozzle: any instrument going in to me down there would prove so painful that I would explode into a long scream through a tunnel (Newland 1962, 149).

However, if Freud is providing the context, what is the method of treatment that structures the manner in which her visionary experience is explained in the text? “Jung gave us the method of active fantasy which the author has used with great effect during her treatment sessions” (Newland 1962, 15). Sandison goes on to write that the role of the therapist is not to suggest or advise but rather to encourage the patient to live out the “fantasies”. This very fact underlines the faith that psycholytic therapists had in LSD’s ability to reveal elements of the unconscious. It is seen as such an intrinsic value in the drug that the therapist need only facilitate the process by using Jung’s method of “active fantasy”.

In terms of form *and* content an interesting occurrence takes place between the Freudian and Jungian influences; the two approaches are segmented, both qualitatively and quantitatively as sections of the book. Part II, *The Case History*, deals largely with childhood memory and trauma related to her sexual neurosis; the shorter Part III, *My Self and I*, from which the title is taken, is concerned with *integration*, not simply rediscovering a memory. Newland wanted to “resolve the battle of her two sexes” (Newland 1962, 208) by going “beyond Freud’s personal unconscious into the collective unconscious of Jung—a realm of which I had only the vaguest knowledge at the time” (Newland 1962, 208) and thus be able to “achieve a fusion between my self, and me” (Newland 162, 209). In order to demonstrate the extent to which the literary territory has evolved along these lines, it is necessary to do a close reading of the text in regard to both Freudian and Jungian theories and Sandison’s initial observations. This will illuminate the literary transformation of the practices.

## 2.4: Freudian and Jungian Literary Motifs

In every human being, I seemed to be told, there is a fire that burns, a creative fire. When that fire is permitted to burn freely, the human being is healthy and creative, whether he be farmer, artist, mother, workman. But when the fire is blocked, as it is by this pain, then the person is crippled, just as I had been crippled for most of my life. As a child, I had felt worthless because I did not have my brother's masculinity or intelligence, nor my sister's grace and beauty. And because I had felt worthless I had withdrawn into non-identity and non-feeling (Newland 1962, 234).

Newland identifies her neurosis, the place where her "fire is blocked" and which her course of psycholytic therapy aimed at alleviating, as "insomnia", "depression" and being "sexually frigid" and, as a case history, the text displays key signifiers of both a Freudian and Jungian approach to understanding the phenomena.

Freud's theory of the unconscious is bound to his theory of sexual repression and includes ideas around what he calls the *Oedipus complex*, *penis envy*, *castration* and the reliving of childhood memories. These ideas are explored by Newland's therapists in *My Self and I* by prompting their patient to use Jung's active imagination technique in order to produce imagery contingent to this theory. Therapeutically speaking, these elements of a Freudian framework are used to work through her childhood memories, which come to her segmentally through the phenomenal imagery Newland perceives under the influence of LSD, and which, therefore, supposedly reveal the roots of her neurosis. Once relived and understood, these unconscious elements are integrated into the light of consciousness, therefore, in theory, relieving the pathology of the patient. Before turning to the text, and elucidating how these are reproduced in literary form, a brief capitulation of Freud's concept of the Oedipus complex is necessary in order to further contextualise the content of the book.

The Oedipus complex is concerned with an individual's earliest sexual feelings, which, Freud argues, are directed toward their parents; any abnormalities in this stage of the development could lead to repressed unconscious material that would come out as neurosis later in life (Freud 1991). He first describes the idea in *The Interpretation of Dreams* (Freud 1991; Bowlby 2007). The name is taken from the Greek myth of Oedipus and specifically from *Oedipus Rex* by the fifth century BC tragic playwright Sophocles, a story which culminates in Oedipus finding out that he has killed his father and slept with and married his

mother (Sophocles 1984). Indeed, Freud radically reinterpreted the play, making it in to a common pattern for the realisation of long-repressed guilt: “The action of this play consists in nothing other than the process of revealing, with cunning delays and ever-mounting excitement—a process that can be likened to the work of a psycho-analysis” (Freud 1991, 363; Bowlby 2007). And, regarding its role as a root of neurosis: “Like Oedipus, we live in ignorance of these wishes, repugnant to morality, which have been forced upon us by Nature, and after their revelation we may all of us well seek to close our eyes to the scenes of our childhood” (Freud 1991, 365). A series of revelations relating to Newland’s neuroses are sequentially unveiled in the unfolding of *My Self and I*, as she comes to an own understanding of the root causes laying in her early sexual development.

From the start of the book there is a setting of the Freudian psychopathological scene from its widest context, discussions around the symptomatic manifestations of Newland’s neuroses and the existence of a personal unconscious based on remembering childhood memories: “When I was fifteen years old, I won a scholarship to study abroad. During the summer fellow students taught me how to use make-up and devised a new coiffure for me and—incredibly—I lost weight... however my parents met me at the dock and were shocked by my appearance. My father forbade me to use make-up” (Newland 1962, 116). As her memories unravel, within the Freudian matrix, so the phenomena become more deeply ingrained in sexual motif, and thus literary motif. Increasingly the text becomes an intensity on sexuality and family as the revelations of the LSD phenomena reveal deeper and more symbolic representations of her complex; eventually leading to the purportedly actual reliving of the key moments that first caused the neuroses to embed in her unconscious.

Yes. Unconsciously I had equated the enema nozzle with the penis: both were instruments of torture which would, if I were to feel anything, explode me into a long scream in a tunnel.

At long last, I had uncovered the classic Freudian “trauma” responsible for my sexual difficulty: one too-strong, too-hot enema, received when I was two and a half years old. It was preposterous. Yet undeniable... (Newland 1962, 149).

As the text delves deeper into Newland’s unconscious, Carl Jung’s theories, apparently now standard fare in psycholytic theory, are employed in order to explain the imagery that appears to lie outside the personal unconscious, and this is explored in the final

section of the book. The imagery of the text focuses on a more mythological, or archetypal, content and Newland begins to be more philosophical and spiritual in her understanding of the LSD experience. This is partly because of the influence Aldous Huxley had over 1960s psychedelic literature, which will be discussed in the following chapter, but the use of Jung's archetypes was very much a part of the psycholytic approach as well.

For Jung, there must be an integration of the unconscious into consciousness for therapy to be successful, for the roots of pathology lie in a dissociation of the two psychical segments. So, unlike Freud, who simply wanted pathological memories to arrive into consciousness, Jung saw the healing aspects of the archetypes as being the tools in themselves, rather than the root cause of the pathology (Jung 2000), which is to say that the creative aspect of the unconscious he perceived was therapeutic. Jung calls this the process of *individuation* and although Newland's Freudian analysis is purportedly a success, it is rather telling that the Jungian element is used in order to complete her healing: "Jung saw clearly that he had no other recourse than to encourage the modern individual to abandon his exclusively extraverted quest for meaning in the outer world of material objects and, instead, to attempt to put him in touch with the symbol-forming capacities latent within his own psychic structure" (Stevens 1982, 33). In terms of Newland's text, this leads inevitably to an archetypal, mythological dimension in the motifs of the text. These phenomena, which lay outside Newland's personal memory, are symbols she integrates in the final section, and that include a "god of wrath", "the gorgon" and, interestingly linked to the Oedipus tale, "the riddle of the Sphinx".

By the end of *Part II* Newland "remembers" (in reality or metaphorically, one is not always sure) certain key moments from her childhood that were the cause of her neuroses. Then, in the third section she embarks on the fusion between her "self" and "I". The term 'self' is employed as an archetypal universal self, based on Jung's idea of a collective unconscious, and 'I' is identified with the personal ego. It is here, more than anywhere else in the text, which is generally stratified and restricted to Freudian imagery, that she edges into a new territory. The effect of this much shorter section, however, is to suddenly throw a new intensity into the text and seemingly elevate its importance above and beyond Freud and, more particularly, the individual memory. As Jung writes: "It is a long way indeed from primitivity [*sic*] to a reliable cohesion of consciousness. Even in our days the unity of consciousness is a doubtful affair, since only a little affect is needed to disrupt its continuity" (Jung 1977, 193). But whereas one might think there exists a tension between Freudian and

Jungian models in *My Self and I*, just as there existed a tension between the two theorists in their lifetimes in that there was no room for such esotericism in Freud's secular model of the psychological structure, this is neatly avoided by the segmenting of the psychological reality within the text. The supposition, therefore, is that LSD is more than a key to the personal unconscious, it is also a key to the collective unconscious. LSD was a tool for guidance through the psyche. This idea had in fact already been developed by Aldous Huxley in his essay *Heaven and Hell*, but this will be discussed in more detail in chapter 3.0. Within this segmentation, Newland begins to use a new language to describe this different psychological space that is at the same time tempered by both scientific and mystical language:

I was dissolving out of the matter which was my body into the energy of those pinpoints of light which grew brighter and brighter, obliterating the blackness and becoming a light which was All Energy.

I dissolved into Nothing which is Everything.

Transcendence. (Newland 171).

As has been already noted, however, Jung did not believe in the ability of LSD to produce a mystical or transcendent experience in the individual and the influence here is likely to have come from Aldous Huxley's understanding of hallucinogens, which Newland was well acquainted with and which will be discussed in the following chapter (Newland 1962; Stevens 1993). Suffice to say, the disagreements between Jung and Freud themselves are circumnavigated in the text and are integrated into a single system; the psycholytic.

## 2.5: Psycholytic Observations

Sandison is explicit about the Freudian unconscious dynamic on which the psycholytic therapy is based: “We consider that the drug primarily disturbs the unconscious and that subsequent phenomena depend on the result of the action of the unconscious on consciousness so that they are bound to vary patient to patient” (Sandison 1954, 500) and this is demonstrated in Newland’s text eight years on. This section will now compare Sandison’s observations to the content of the book in order to further demonstrate the contingency between psychiatric practice and the literature. Sandison *et al.* list three types of unconscious phenomena, caused to manifest by LSD, which enter into ordinary consciousness and each motif is easily identified in *My Self and I* facilitating both the form, content and narrative of the text.

(1) *The hallucinatory experiences resulting from a general non-selective disturbance of the unconscious*: “But the cold was so real. So very real that I heard winds roaring around me. Wild winds. Somehow I was caught up in one of those wild whirlpools of wind... I could see my body swirling off into space... caught up in the very vortex of a whirlwind... growing smaller and smaller... microscopic... as if all the space within the atoms of me had been swept away in the wind...” (Newland 1962, 57). Narratively speaking, the general non-selective disturbance is transformed into a stage of therapeutic access, wherein the atoms of her unconscious are literally swept away in her imagery before the unconscious is further mined.

(2) *The reliving of repressed personal memories*. This is the Freudian element and makes up the majority of Part II in the book: “New image of the cedar chest... several years later... our family had moved into a new house where I shared a bedroom with my sister... bedroom with a large walk in closet... where the cedar chest had been put... and I had been afraid, very afraid to go into that closet because of the cedar chest...” (Newland 1962, 99). Part II is constructed along a dozen psycholytic sessions and childhood memories, remembered, explored and analysed, create the text’s plot, which leads irrevocably toward a memory that she comes to understand as the cause of her frigidity.

And finally, (3) *The appearance of impersonal unconscious images*. These are the images that became understood in Jungian frameworks, the archetypal and mythical figures of the collective unconscious, which Part III is devoted to exploring: “The Amazon seemed to be going on a mission, which I seemed to sense was to cut off the Gorgon’s head. Fearful

mission, for the Gorgon was supposed to transfix into stone whoever looked upon its face. Yet the Amazon was unafraid” (Newland 1962). A sense of going deeper into the unconscious is undertaken narratively, so far as it concludes the arc of her therapy. And also, though only a short section, the title of the book is taken from this final part. The ability to go deeper into the cause of an unconscious pathology through sequential imagery has already been anticipated by the medical literature, and *My Self and I* is not so very far removed in its narrative adoption.

Sandison also wrote: “Patients elaborate their hallucinatory experiences in a number of ways and the mental mechanisms of identification and projection are frequently seen” (Sandison 1954, 495). These are: “Identification phenomena”, “projection phenomena”, “reliving repressed personal memories”, “depersonalization” and “the detachment of the conscious self”. These ideas, once more, can be demonstrated as occurring in the text. Aside from the “reliving of repressed personal memory”, which has already been examined, the rest will be elucidated from the text.

Identification phenomena is noted by Sandison and he also wrote that “several patients have thought themselves to be their own mothers” (Sandison 1954, 495). This idea receives frequent attention throughout Newland’s text and, centred on Freudian ideas, this closely corresponds to Sandison’s observations: “They [her parents] were making love. I did not try to prevent them. Instead, once again, I became both my father and mother... experiencing their double pleasure which grew stronger and stronger” (Newland 1962, 171).

Secondly, projection phenomena is when an individual, under the influence of LSD, identifies either empathetically or literally with another person or object, and this is facilitated in the content by Newland’s first doctor, who is eventually replaced because of her projection with him. Also, note the way in which it is read in a Freudian, sexual light: “I saw Dr. M as a knight on horseback, dressed in medieval panoply, surveying the field for other conquests... and I was the ground beneath the horse’s feet. In some surrealist way, I saw that my arms and legs (which were at the same time the ground beneath the horse’s hooves) were being pulled apart in four directions” (Newland 1962, 102). Her fantastical identification plays a central role in explaining the efficacy of the drug to the reader, and also connects this action to a Freudian understanding through the context of its employment.

Thirdly, according to Sandison, a depersonalization may take place in the mind of the patient. This involves a breakdown in the unity of personal identity, or personality. Interestingly, with the development of the psycholytic method, it had become a method that

represented an avenue for therapy. In other words, the breakdown of identity in order to bring it back together: “Dr. E suggested I continue the fantasy. I did, and became BOTH the Abstract Man and the Abstract Woman: weird and wonderful to be these Rubensesque creatures who grew to godlike proportions as they consummated their love” (Newland 1962, 211). In this case, it is the Jungian model of therapy that is utilised in conjunction with this particular mechanism. Also note the Jungian technique of active fantasy, which is prompted by Dr. E.

Fourthly, “the detachment of the conscious self, a sort of detached ego, occurs frequently and is characteristic of the experience” (Sandison 1954, 498). Newland develops herself, as part of the breakdown of her personality, into a number of characters, one of which, “Conscious Me”, corresponds to this detachment of the ego: “Stupefaction in Conscious Me, as the man I had become in fantasy categorically refused to let the Avenging Angel perform the operation. Why did He-I refuse? The “other voice” answered that He-I were not in the least sorry or guilty to be a man; in fact we were proud of the privilege” (Newland 1962, 202). In fact, as will be seen throughout the primary texts of this thesis, this becomes a useful literary device; Richard Heron Ward, in *A Drug-Taker’s Notes*, for example, develops a character called the “observer”.

Sandison’s observations in the medical literature corresponds so closely to the form and content of *My Self and I* that it reads like an idealised psychodynamic/psycholytic text, almost as if it could have been written by just researching past literature without any experience itself. Of course, Newland did have the therapy, which has been noted by LSD historians like Jay Stevens, as well as in the book itself. The suggestion put forward in this chapter, however, is that there was political reasoning for such a case study to be transformed into literature.



## 2.6 Psycholytic Politics

*My Self and I* demonstrates a number of important points. Firstly, the extent to which the theories of Freud and Jung became part of the psycholytic approach to LSD. Elements of both their methods have been utilised by the psycholytic approach in its own development and, indeed, under the influence of LSD, the therapists found a ready source of data to explore and analyse, which allowed a fusion of various psychodynamic theories. These are explained through the construction of the text, the imagery of its content and the development of its narrative. Secondly, the text demonstrates the spread of psycholytic practice from the research clinic into paid private practice, which is to say that the theoretical and methodological groundwork had entered the functioning of the social as a therapy.

There is also a third important point to be explored; the reason behind its publication. A changing governmental attitude toward LSD made it necessary to defend psycholytic therapy to the public who had, by this time in 1962, the facility to make use of the therapy should they be able to afford it. Before saying something about how this defence manifests in the text, a brief word must be said about the political situation.

A debate was raging within the medical community, between psychiatry and psychology, over whose approach to LSD was more valid (the difference in approaches will be shown in subsequent chapters) (Lee 1992; Stevens 1993). As a result, researcher Sidney Cohen, who was worried about the drug leaving the clinic for the social, drew attention to the rise of the “LSD party” in California, which in turn drew the attention of national newspapers (Stevens 1993). Not only were the public being alerted to the misuse, and possible dangers, of the drug but developing LSD disciplines were being forced to justify their approaches. *My Self and I* can be read as a defence of the psycholytic; just, as will be shown in chapter 4.1, Malden Grange Bishop’s *A Discovery of Love* can be read as a defence of the psychedelic method. There are two ways this is facilitated by the text: The ultimate success of the therapy and the conversion of Newland’s own scepticism within the content.

Newland spends a good proportion of the text describing her own scepticism about both the existence of the unconscious and the therapeutic model itself, a feeling she had harboured for a long time having already undergone several years of failed, non-drug analysis (Newland 1962): “The idea of an unconscious mind is an absurdity. *Mind* implies a state of awareness, and *unconscious* implies a state of unawareness. How can there be an awareness which is not aware?” (Newland 1962, 23). However, by the end, LSD acts as a confirmation

of the reality of the unconscious for Newland; as the reality of her own neurosis is shown to her through imagery and successful therapy. Newland's story appears to reflect the very process that psycholytic therapy was going through in regard to justifying itself as a successful technique and scientific discipline—just as was identified in Sandison's earliest paper—as a method that apparently proves the psychodynamic concept of the unconscious. For any reader, like Newland, who was sceptical of its existence, the book would attempt to lead them to the proof, just as it did the author. Newland was, inadvertently or otherwise, an advert for the treatment; justifying its methodology to both the scientific establishment and the general public.

Freud's theory itself, based as it is on a sexual instinctual dogma, has been repeatedly challenged since its inception, not only by his one-time pupil Carl Jung but by many others as well. French theorists Gilles Deleuze (1925-1995) and Félix Guattari (1930-1992), writing in their book *L'Anti-Oedipe* (1972), for example: "The function of Oedipus as dogma, or as the "nuclear complex," is inseparable from a forcing by which the psychoanalyst as theoretician elevates himself to the conception of a generalized Oedipus" (Deleuze 2009, 58). The object of this thesis is not to test the validity of these theories but to examine how they are utilised and function in literary form. However, it is worth bearing in mind that this Oedipalisation does occur in Newland's text, and the sexual dogma pervades it on many levels; Dr. M becoming a sexual object for Newland for example. Interestingly though: "As Arthur Chandler observed, his partner, Mortimer Hartman, was always eliciting violent sexual fantasy, while he himself never got violent sex fantasies, but rather a high proportion of paranoid delusions, something Betty Eisner<sup>3</sup> said she rarely saw" (Stevens 1993, 133). The implication of which is that the book does more to illuminate the personality and theories of the therapists themselves, than any actual value LSD had itself and, as will be demonstrated in the following chapters, this is concurrent for all the case study texts.

According to Jay Stevens, Newland became interested in taking a hallucinogen having seen Aldous Huxley (discussed in chapter 3.0) talk about them on television (Stevens 1993). As will be shown, Huxley had very different ideas about what the efficacy of these drugs are and, in this sense, it is surprising that the text is so focused on Freudian aspects. However, in light of the justifications, the idealised psycholytic narrative would be tainted by non-

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<sup>3</sup> Betty Eisner (1915-2004) was another LSD researcher utilising psychodynamic techniques

pathological elements, essentially disarming the psycholytic claim to sole-ownership. Yet, Newland could not resist mentioning, or eluding on occasion, to these non-pathological ideas:

I have purposely limited myself to the therapeutic aspects of the LSD experience, treating principally of the personal unconscious mind. LSD offers far wider fields of exploration in that domain which has been variously called the “mystic,” the “integrative,” and the “transcendental.” But this is too amazing a province, too little comprehended as yet, to be included here, in what is essentially the examination and resolution of a neurotic problem (Newland 1962, 48).

Qualitatively speaking then, the result of this idealised textual framework is a very restricted text that is enclosed in some sort of perfect Freudian-Jungian synthetic universe. Only the above quote gives any indication of the other research that was being conducted with LSD over the period and the remainder of the book appears to indicate that LSD was a wonder drug for psychoanalysis alone. However, the psychedelic literature territory had already been opened up into a wider discursive space, which had already begun to explore elements outside the medical-pathological drug paradigm. In order to examine how this occurred, it is necessary to now look at the development of Sandoz’s other LSD reading; the *psychotomimetic*.

### 3.0: THE PSYCHOTOMIMETIC TERRITORY

This chapter is concerned with the second research value that Sandoz ascribed LSD; the psychotomimetic. Unlike the psycholytic, which was developed out of drug-free psychotherapy, the psychotomimetic was intrinsically linked to theories about the action of the drugs themselves—namely cannabis and mescaline—and was thus an established drug theory. In terms of the drug in question, it is mescaline that is of main concern in this chapter and the history of its use will be discussed in 3.2.

The main difference in these approaches lies in the fact that the former is concerned with a drug's interaction with the unconscious, and presumes a certain understanding of phenomena produced under the drug, based on a particular theory of the mind; while the latter is concerned, not with how it interacts with the existing mind-set of the user, but rather how it manifests a certain state-of-consciousness within one's psyche; in this case a psychotomimetic was believed to produce an experimental or model psychosis (Hintzen 2010). While the theoretical approach of psychotherapy was a dogma that researchers had to interpret hallucinogens through the light of, the psychotomimetic was in itself a more open-ended theory and this, more than anything, led to the drug's literary exploration. In other words, various theories of the mind could be employed to explain a drug's effects; most notably by Huxley's reducing-valve theory that will be discussed in chapter 3.4.

The question of whether hallucinogens did indeed produce a model psychosis or, alternatively, other states-of-consciousness, lies at the heart of 1950s drug literature. In fact, the resulting research in the psychotomimetic field of psychiatry opened a discursive literary space that began to take into account mystical experience alongside those of madness. Qualitatively, the result was a more interesting, exploratory body of literature that, unlike the psycholytic, which produced a very formal and stratified text—conversely, mimicking its theory—the psychotomimetic actually opened the potential for discussion over hallucinogens rather than simply parroting the medical theory. Indeed, it will be demonstrated that the medical research was the catalyst, rather than the standard, for this literary exploration.

This is not to say the discursive space is simply a question of those who agree and those who don't agree with the drug's ability to produce a model psychosis in patients, but rather whether the state-of-mind that is modelled is necessarily akin to only schizophrenia. Could the efficacy of a hallucinogen, in fact, be a space manipulated to produce a variety of states-of-consciousness in the patient; one that includes madness, but not exclusively? In

Aldous Huxley's books *The Doors of Perception* (1954) and *Heaven and Hell* (1956) the author proposed that the hallucinogen mescaline could produce a praeternatural or visionary experience (this will be examined in more detail in 3.4) for example. The object of this chapter, therefore, is to examine literature's role in the dissolution of the psychotomimetic territory and an examination of how various textual responses to Huxley, Richard Ward's *A Drug-Taker's Notes* (1957) and Robert Zaehner's *Mysticism Sacred and Profane* (1957), contributed to its extrapolation into a wider discursive framework that effected both psychiatric practice and subsequent texts in psychedelic literature.

Eventually, by the end of the 1950s, the psychotomimetic interpretation in psychiatry and literature had given rise to an understanding that the drug could produce a variety of states-of-consciousness. This reading, as opposed to Sandison's psycholytic, which only saw unconscious material or psychosis in patients, took into account a creative element in the drug; namely that the nature of its effects could be influenced by the immediate exteriority of the user and the intention of the user and psychiatrist alike, and be used to generate particular experiences; what became known as the 'set and setting' (Grof 2010). The psychedelic approach, as this reading became named, will be discussed in the following chapter. This chapter, however, will begin by briefly demonstrating how the psychotomimetic reading of LSD entered the literature and simultaneously explore the avenue of State research that was being undertaken, before briefly saying something of the drug mescaline, by way of introducing the psychotomimetic research of Dr. Humphry Osmond. Following this, Huxley's texts and their responses will be analysed in order to examine the central arguments in this philosophically discursive space.

### 3.1: The Splintered Man

The psychotomimetic understanding of LSD had already begun to influence literature by 1955 and although this chapter is primarily concerned with mescaline, it will be useful to examine an example of LSD in order to demonstrate the typical psychotomimetic reading in textual form. M. E. Chaber<sup>4</sup>, a pseudonym for the author Kendell Foster Crossen (1910-1981), published *The Splintered Man* in 1955 and the fictional crime story included a central role for LSD in the plotline. The book was part of a series centred on the protagonist Milo March.

March, an insurance investigator and reserve army officer, is seconded to West Berlin at the height of the Cold War by the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA). A prominent German agent, Hermann Gruss, has apparently defected to the East, and March's job is his retrieval. The book culminates in a high security hospital in East Berlin where experiments are going on with two drugs: Lysergic acid diethylamide and Chlorpromazine. According to the author: "Everything said about lysergic acid diethylamide is as accurate as I could make it. I have taken certain liberties with chlorpromazine in extrapolating the uses to which it may still be put" (Chaber 1955, *author's note*). It is worth mentioning how LSD's value is cast in this book in order to ascertain the lengths to which the connection of madness is pursued in literature as the primary understanding of its effects, and the extent of influence from actual medical research.

Chaber gives us a clue to his own research on the effects of LSD, for his book, in the body of the text. Having described the drug's discovery by Hofmann, he mentions the research of a psychiatrist called Dr. Max Rinkel and concludes: "The result was that they soon discovered the drug would produce all the major symptoms of schizophrenia in a completely healthy man" (Chaber 1955, 130). Rinkel was in fact a real person. He was the first person to bring LSD to America when he ordered a batch from Sandoz in 1949, and his partner Dr. Robert Hyde became one of the earliest individuals in America to take it (Lee 1992; Stevens 1993).

In the East German hospital, the patients believed they were schizophrenic and are given two sets of medicine, one to take when they felt an "attack" of schizophrenia coming on, and the other to take between attacks. It is here that Milo March finds Hermann Gruss.

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<sup>4</sup> M. E. Chaber is derived from the Hebrew word mechaber, which means 'author'.

The agent is caught in a government-run psychiatric experiment with the aforementioned drugs; wherein they are voluntarily, though unwittingly, taking themselves in and out of psychosis. In the narrative, Crossen writes an early fictional experience with LSD:

Somewhere there had to be a scream. Oderbruch pressed a button and somebody screamed with my voice. I knew him for what he was. I hated him for what I was. I knew there was something he was, but I couldn't say it. A lazy obscenity scrawled on a moving wall. Four letters it had but they wouldn't come together. This was the essence of man. A gibbering, slobbering thing and a four-lettered word on the undulating wall (Chaber 1955, 179).

The mental schism of psychosis is portrayed in the “splintering” of his self; wherein he steps outside a singularity of his consciousness. This moment of *ekstasis*, under the psychotomimetic reading, is understood within a psychiatric framework which has the expectation of a unitary consciousness. As will be described in chapter 4.0, this moment of splinter will be later described as a *psychedelic experience* and becomes a central component in LSD therapy. What is important here, however, is that the medical research on LSD was certainly having an impact on literature.

There is a second interesting observation to make about this book that is pertinent in order to demonstrate the State's understanding of hallucinogens during the 1950s. In *The Splintered Man* the experiment fits nicely into the anti-communist tone of the book, essentially showing the reader what might be happening on the far side of the iron curtain, while also acclimatising them to national stereotyping. However, toward the end it is revealed that the CIA also had the drug and a Western agent, who aides in the rescue, describes it has having the ability to produce insanity in the user (Chaber 1955, 226). The implication is twofold; while Chaber may have been reassuring the reader that America was not lagging in its research, he was also alluding to the possibility the same experiments could be afoot in America. Whether or not the author knew it, the CIA had been testing the drug for some time.

CIA operatives realized that intense mental confusion could be produced by deliberately attacking a person along psychological lines. Acid not only made people extremely anxious, it also broke down the character defences for handling anxiety (Lee 1992, 19).

The CIA had two projects underway that were interested in hallucinogens: MK-ULTRA and ARTICHOKE. The former involved investigating a variety of drugs including LSD and they struck a bargain to be supplied with one hundred grams a week by Sandoz, and also to be informed as to who else was purchasing it (Lee 1992; Stevens 1993). Similarly, in the UK, the Ministry of Defence and MI6 were researching the potentials of the drug as a truth serum, chemical weapon and interrogation tool (Roberts 2008). It is not within the scope of this thesis to say any more on this, suffice to say that the ability to cause a mental disturbance, a form of madness, was, for a time, taken seriously by the State; who believed, as such, it could be a part of their war machine. The eventual failure of the psychotomimetic reading is an important contributing factor to LSD's eventual scheduling, which is to say the government research, along with the medical establishment, failed to find a value in the drug in regard to the psychotomimetic reading.

While the State's understanding of LSD became entwined with a film of madness, literature and the arts used the psychotomimetic territory as a departure point for speculation, rather than as an end in itself. This, in part, is because their interest in the 1950s was largely concerned with a drug that had a longer history of human use than LSD: mescaline. Not only did its early readings have an impact on how the psychotomimetic was approached, but it also had a direct bearing on the framework for understanding hallucinogens in the following decade as well.



### 3.2: Mescaline Research and Literature

The hallucinogenic chemical mescaline is derived from the peyote cactus, found in the deserts of Mexico and Central America, and has been used by Native Americans as part of their religious rituals for thousands of years (Boon 2002; Jay 2005). The history of mescaline use, therefore, can be read in light of a spiritual understanding. Since the isolation of mescaline for science in 1897, however, there had been a number of other, largely psychology, researchers who had approached the drug and, indeed, a number of literary works that directly broached the experience. It is necessary to briefly say something of these researches and texts in order to aid the contextualisation of the 1950s research that will be discussed in 3.3, as they helped develop the *psychospiritual* understanding that was proposed by Aldous Huxley in *The Doors of Perception* and which became an integral format for therapy and the literature alike.

There had been a number of investigations into peyote and mescaline in the years preceding the 1950s. Just prior to the turn of the twentieth century, research was carried out by a number of individuals like Weir Mitchell (1829-1914) and the psychologist Havelock Ellis (1859-1939) and they uniformly noted an intensification of colour and closed-eye visions (Mitchell 1896; Smythies 1953; Jay 1999). Mitchell noted: “My first vivid show of mescal colour effects came quickly. I saw the stars, and then, of a sudden, here and there delicate floating films of colour—usually delightful neutral purples and pinks” (Mitchell 1896, 1626). A number of psychologists were prompted to research mescaline, including the aforementioned Havelock Ellis who subsequently published *Mescal: A new artificial paradise* (1898); the title a nod toward Charles Baudelaire (Baudelaire 1996; Jay 1999; Boon 2002; Jay 2005). Interestingly, Ellis gave the drug to a number of artists, a research avenue proposed by Moreau De Tours, and this methodology was an important research area in later years, especially for Dr. Oscar Janiger, who will be discussed in chapter 4.2. Another psychologist who tried mescaline was William James (1842-1910) who, at the time, was very interested in the effects of Nitrous oxide (James 1985; Jay 2005). Although James did not particularly enjoy the experience itself, his psychological approach to hallucinogens in general is worth noting because of his assessment of the religious experience as being related to a state-of-consciousness, which gave birth to what would later become known as the psychospiritual: “No account of the universe in its totality can be final which leaves these

other forms of consciousness quite disregarded” (James 1985, 388). Thus, for James, these drugs had religious and philosophical considerations.

Later, in Europe, in the 1920s, Kurt Beringer also began investigating mescaline, but in conjunction with schizophrenia. This is how the psychotomimetic approach was developed in the hallucinogen research field, having been initiated by Moreau de Tours with cannabis almost a century earlier (see 1.3) (Smythies 1953; Stevens 1993; Hintzen 2010).

The important points to note from this brief review of early peyote/mescaline research are that, firstly, the drug gave rise to visions in the individual; secondly, they had been connected with psychosis (psychotomimetic); and thirdly, through peyote’s association with the rituals of Native Americans and the speculations of psychologists like William James, mescaline had been ascribed a religious dimension (psychospiritual). Before turning to the 1950s research that gave rise to a number of the primary texts of this thesis, however, it is worth briefly saying something of two works of drug literature that were published in Europe that help contextualise the British and American texts: Antonin Artaud’s *The Peyote Dance* and Henri Michaux’s *Miserable Miracle*.

Originally published in France under the title *Les Tarahumaras* (1947), *The Peyote Dance* by Antonin Artaud (1896-1948) describes the author’s experiences with peyote and the Tarahumara tribe in Mexico, in 1936. Written over the course of twelve years and covering Artaud’s stay at a psychiatric hospital in Rodez, there is a tension within the text between psychosis and spirituality (Artaud 1976). The book, therefore, is an important work of drug literature, so far as it provides an intriguing examination in to a possible essential value in mescaline, seventeen years before Huxley proposed a similar observation, and yet also reveals the psychotomimetic reading in the author’s own described mental state.

Although Artaud writes that one vision “objectively corresponded to a *painted* transcendental representation of the ultimate and highest realities” (Artaud 1976, 37), he also writes in a footnote on the same page that peyote “does not lend itself to these fetid spiritual assimilations.” Rather, the peyote experience is a revelation about oneself “where one comes from and who one is, and one no longer doubts what one is” (Artaud 1976, 38). In play with his romantic language, is the language of psychiatry and psychoanalysis, which, as will be shown in subsequent sections of this chapter, really came into formation within drug writing in Britain and America, during the 1950s and 1960s. Artaud wrote: “And the whole series of lustful fantasies projected by the unconscious can no longer oppress the true breath of man”

(Artaud 1976, 38). For Artaud, the psychiatric methods were avenues into deeper observations about the nature of the self and spirituality.

Henri Michaux (1899-1984) was a writer and artist born in Namur, Belgium. He travelled widely, through the Americas, Africa and Asia before settling in Paris, France. After the freak death of his wife in 1948 he began devoting himself to ink calligraphy drawings and, at regular intervals, he began taking mescaline (Michaux 2002). Originally published in France in 1956 *Miserable Miracle* employs a combination of drawings, notes taken during his experiences and retrospective comments in order to explore the nature of mescaline intoxication. Michaux, in the text, portrays the mescaline experience as a derangement of the senses, akin to schizophrenia and his project, which is ultimately in his eyes a failure, was an examination into whether new meaning could be garnered from this deranged state (Michaux 2002). Similarly, as will be shown in this chapter, the psychotomimetic framework for understanding hallucinogens fell out of favour, as being unable to demonstrate meaningful results; it would be the psychospiritual element that Artaud explored, which would come to dominate the psychedelic literature of Britain and North America.

### 3.3: The Osmond-Huxley Connection

Dr. Humphry Osmond (1917-2004) was born in Surrey, England. After World War Two (WW2), having trained in medicine and served in the Royal Navy, he was appointed senior registrar at the psychiatric unit at St. George's Hospital in London (Dyck 2008). While there, he worked closely with John Smythies (b.1922) and became interested in how human bodies react to certain chemicals. Smythies had been reviewing the literature associated with mescaline intoxication and together they came up with a working hypothesis based on the similar chemical make-up between mescaline and adrenaline: "They postulated that adrenaline might be metabolized in some people in a manner that produces a mescaline-like substance, a substance that, in turn, caused hallucinations" (Dyck 2008, 17). From this they developed a theory that schizophrenia was caused by a chemical imbalance in the body. This was referred to as the *M-substance hypothesis* and, therefore, understands mescaline as a psychotomimetic (Stevens 1993; Dyck 2008).

Initially the pair was unable to secure funding in London for researching the M-substance hypothesis. However, the socio-political climate in Canada after the WW2 was ripe for research. A social democratic government in Saskatchewan was pushing for radical experimentation in public policy, and the extra funding was attracting researchers to the country; one of the areas was psychiatry (Dyck 2008). In October 1951, Osmond moved from London to Weyburn, in Saskatchewan, Canada. Soon after, he began researching mescaline at the Saskatchewan Mental Hospital (Dyck 2008; Stevens 1993). There he met Abram Hoffer (1917-2009), who became his research partner, with Smythies still involved but only from afar in Britain. Also medically trained, Hoffer was interested in biochemistry and this had in turn led him into psychiatry, making him the perfect partner for Osmond, whose main interest lie in the psychological states produced by the chemical mescaline (Dyck 2008).

Osmond, Smythies and Hoffer's approach to understanding the efficacy of hallucinogens is called psychotomimetic. Therefore, this ties their research directly into the second possible application Sandoz gave for LSD when they first marketed the drug in 1947 and although they began the decade dealing with mescaline they would later turn to LSD.

The psychotomimetic approach, this thesis will argue, is ascribing a *creative agency* to hallucinogenic drugs, which is to say they held the belief that a new psychical state is manifested within the psyche of the individual. It is necessary at this juncture to point out how this line of inquiry differs to the psycholytic model described in the previous chapter.

This will be done by examining how the two approaches differed conceptually in regard the interaction between hallucinogens and psychical states.

Conceptually, the original approach of Osmond *et al.* is epiphenomenal (mental states arising from physical causation, in this case schizophrenia being a biochemical pathology, which is experientially similar to the hallucinogen-triggered experience.) Consequentially, they believed it was important for researchers to look at both physical and psychological symptoms of drug intoxication in relation to one another. In contrast, the psycholytic model gave primacy to mind (the unconscious) as the pathological agent and was interested in using hallucinogens to reveal pathological symptoms, not in order to mimic a pathology like the psychotomimetic. For the psychotomimetic approach then, the hallucinogen was the cause itself and was, therefore, psychically creative. It was from this theoretical grounding that Osmond conducted his human research with mescaline.

On securing funding in Canada, “Osmond volunteered to take the first mescaline samples himself, in the familiar surroundings of his home. Osmond’s reaction confirmed his belief that with mescaline-induced experiences doctors could learn to appreciate distortions in perception” (Dyck 2008, 36). There are two important points to note here. Firstly, Osmond was claiming with mescaline what Sandoz had claimed for LSD, that it could be taken by doctors in order to gain some empathy with their patients. When Osmond and Hoffer later turned to using LSD, therefore, it was a logical step. Secondly, the fact that the drug was affecting perception and was not simply a bi-product to the disturbance of the unconscious, which is a clear delineation between his approach and the psycholytic model, provided a further avenue of investigation for Osmond. Alongside the M-substance hypothesis, they began exploring the subjective effects on themselves, friends and graduate students in order to understand exactly what psychical states were being created (Dyck 2008). This began the process of moving away from the psychotomimetic reading into a new territory that was readily adopted by mescaline and LSD texts, and it would be the English author Aldous Huxley who first began this exploration away from the traditional model.

According to Osmond: “We [*Osmond and Hoffer*] planned to introduce some very talented people to psychedelics [hallucinogens] in a leisurely way and to use their reports as a source of information for gauging the best and safest way for employing these tools of mind expansion” (Huxley 1999, *ix*). They believed that it would take “talented people” in order to explain more accurately what the mescaline experience was. After collaborating with Smythies on a paper entitled *Schizophrenia: A New Approach*, which was published in the

*Hibbert Journal* in April 1952, Osmond received a letter from Aldous Huxley, who had recently read the paper. Huxley fitted the “talented people” tag and this, more than anything else, led to the shift from the psychotomimetic reading into what became known as the psychedelic.

Aldous Huxley was born in Godalming, Surrey, England on the 26 July 1894 (Huxley 1994). His first novel was *Chrome Yellow* (1921) and, arguably his most famous work, *Brave New World*, was published a decade later in 1932. The novel includes the fictional drug *soma*, which is used as a method of control in a dystopian world; more will be said on this book shortly. Huxley became interested in the use of drugs after reading Louis Lewin’s *Phantastica* the previous year (Huxley 1994). The extent of Lewin’s influence on the author will also be discussed later in this chapter. In 1937 Huxley moved to California and in the lead up to WW2 he became increasingly interested in the idea of solving the world’s problems by enlightening the individual through the mystical experience (Huxley 1994). The relationship between the role of drugs and the mystical experience came to dominate the latter part of his career and it was after Osmond’s arrival, and facilitation of Huxley’s first mescaline experience, in California, that set the stage for Huxley’s literary exploration of the relationship with the publication of two books *The Doors of Perception* (1954) and *Heaven and Hell* (1956).

Huxley invited Osmond to come and stay with him in his Californian home and indicated that he would like to take part in his mescaline experiments (Lee 1992; Stevens 1993; Huxley 1999). The following year, when Osmond was attending the American Psychiatric Association in Los Angeles, he took him up on the offer, with mescaline in hand. During the visit, Osmond took Huxley to one of the conference’s sessions and during the largely Freudian-tempered talks: “[H]e [Huxley] sat there paying the keenest attention, crossing himself devoutly every time Freud’s name was mentioned” (Huxley 1999, 35). After the conference the topic of mescaline came up and in early May, 1953, Osmond conducted Huxley’s now famous experience. He later wrote in *The Doors of Perception*: “I swallowed four-tenths of a gramme of mescaline dissolved in half a glass of water and sat down to wait for the results” (Huxley 1994, 3). The scene became set for a very non-Freudian literary adventure with the drug that challenged the psycholytic reading of the hallucinogen experience, and helped mark out the psychedelic exploration of the 1960s.

### 3.4: A Bundle of Perceptions

The intention of this section is to demonstrate how Huxley, who was given mescaline under the auspices of a psychotomimetic research programme, reinterpreted the method based on his own experience and introduced a psychospiritual understanding through the subsequent works of literature he wrote on the subject. Furthermore, he thereby elucidated a new value for hallucinogens that, in combination with the intention of the user, posited the drug as a vehicle through which one could investigate various areas of the psyche; eventually leading to a new psychiatric approach. This will be demonstrated by, firstly, examining how this process manifests in the content of his texts and, secondly, by analysing how various influences upon his thinking allowed for the construction of this psychiatrically-inspired literary space.

In later years, Aldous Huxley published the essay *Literature and Science* (1963) and it gives some indication of what the author wished to achieve from his earlier mescaline works, wherein he entreats writers to use science as material for their works, just as science had previously used literature: “The scientist’s aim, as we have seen, is to say one thing, and only one thing, at a time. This, most emphatically, is not the aim of the literary artist. Human life is simultaneously on many levels and has many meanings. Literature is a device for reporting the multifarious facts and expressing their various significances” (Huxley 1991, 13). A question arises from this: How has Huxley appropriated the psychotomimetic approach for literature and what ramifications did it have for both psychiatric research with hallucinogens and later drug writing?

In *The Doors of Perception* Huxley wrote: “The schizophrenic is like a man permanently under the influence of mescaline, and therefore unable to shut off the experience of a reality which he is not holy enough to live with, which he cannot explain away because it is the most stubborn of primary facts” (Huxley 1994, 38). Here Huxley talks directly about the psychotomimetic, a flight from Osmond’s research and theories, in that he is discussing a psychotic state in relation to the experience of mescaline. He is concurring that both put one into an altered perception of the world. However, Huxley extends this argument by developing a manifesting, or creative value, for hallucinogens. And he does this by developing a visionary and psychospiritual thread in his subsequent texts on the topic.

If mescaline was simply mimicking psychosis then the user would be unable to have a non-pathological experience, which Huxley reports to have had in *The Doors of Perception*.

Huxley argues, therefore, that mescaline does not predetermine a pathological state-of-consciousness, but instead affects the functioning of one's psychical dynamics, allowing one to cultivate one's experience of altered perception; or, in other words, mescaline can potentially allow the user to be "holy" enough in order to live the same experience non-pathologically, which is to say for Huxley, as a visionary. This understanding allows a different interpretation of the hallucinogen experience, which is punctuated by the move of the psychotomimetic theory into the form of a drug text that examines the possibility of having a "praeternatural" experience. It should be noted though that pathology is not done away with but rather the pathological and the visionary are segmented alongside one another as "Heaven and Hell". In other words, mescaline is able to manifest opposite states-of-consciousness in the individual, which is to say it has a creative potential that can be determined by the mind-set, or "attention", of the user, as opposed purely the drug itself.

The effect of Huxley's reading was widespread in psychiatric circles. William Braden quotes from a leading LSD researcher, Dr. Sidney Cohen, and parapsychologist Gardner Murphy, as saying: "When the dissolution of the reasoning self occurs in a chaotic manner, the result is called psychosis. When the state is not accompanied by panic or anxiety, it is perceived as mystical, and creative solutions of (or at least an armistice with) life problems could result" (Braden 1967, 44). By the 1960s the heaven and hell perspective was reflected from the literary back into psychiatric discourse, as will be shown in the following chapter, but how had Huxley initially conceptualized it?

Huxley has taken the basic idea that hallucinogens can manifest a change in consciousness in the individual from psychotomimetic theory but removes the pathological determinacy in understanding its effects. It is neither the neurosis of the unconscious nor simply a psychotic state. He does this, for example, by postulating the need to be "holy" or, in other words, under a controlled set and setting; one that could be made possible under psychiatric guidance. Instead of mimicking psychosis, hallucinogens are described as being tools whereby the user is able to cultivate a visionary experience or, indeed, explore the realms of their psyche. Therefore, based on Huxley's own experience of a changed consciousness, his texts extend the psychiatric value of the hallucinogen experience to within a religious and artistic sphere. This approach, discussed in 4.0, will later become embedded in psychiatric practice itself.



A man consists of what I may call an Old World of personal consciousness and, beyond a dividing sea, a series of New Worlds – the not too distant Virginias and Carolinas of the personal sub-conscious and the vegetative soul; the Far West of the collective unconscious, with its flora of symbols, its tribes of aboriginal archetypes; and, across another, vaster ocean, at the antipodes of everyday consciousness, the world of Visionary Experience (Huxley 1994, 62).

The above cartographical metaphor for the mind that Huxley employs is a particularly interesting passage from *Heaven and Hell*. According to Lindsey Banco: “[Huxley] provides one of the vital metaphors through which the altered state of consciousness comes to be understood, disciplined, and sometimes defused” (Banco 2010, 35). Banco’s analysis understands the geographical metaphor to be an indication of a wider conservative, colonial response to the effects of mescaline, yet also writes “nor do I believe that neo-imperial formations are the final arbiters of meaning” (Banco 2010, 35). While recognising the value of Banco’s colonial traveller in the metaphor, this thesis seeks to explore the psychiatric sphere of influence. Huxley’s traveller is more pilgrim than explorer; walking pre-ordained, psychiatric roads. In this sense, Huxley’s metaphor is the articulation of various psychiatric and medical researches that have already been elaborated by 1956; through Freud, Jung and William James.

Huxley has built upon the psychically creative agency of hallucinogens, with the visionary space and thus discarded the pathological necessity of the psycholytic and psychotomimetic readings, which is to say that mescaline purportedly gives one access to the hidden “higher power” in perception, the “antipodes of the mind”. The cartographical metaphor postulates that hallucinogens are vehicles with which a user could explore the various segments of their mind. In this case, therapeutically speaking, the drugs remain relevant for examining pathologies in the personal sub-conscious, and Jung’s collective unconscious, but can also take one beyond. However, the visionary space becomes the primary object of his understanding and is the territory that lies at the centre of subsequent questioning in psychedelic literature.

In the main, Huxley employs the ideas of three people in order to construct his own approach to the visionary space. Each, in their own way, allow Huxley to delineate the space of the hallucinogen experience in textual form. Henri Bergson’s theory of the mind, named by Huxley as the *reducing-valve model*, becomes the explanatory field for the drug’s effect

on consciousness and is mainly explored in *The Doors of Perception*; along with Louis Lewin, whose understanding and approach to psychoactive drugs, specifically mescaline, led to an understanding of inner psychical life that is tempered spiritually. And thirdly, William Blake is used to help describe the non-pathological experience of an altered state of perception, which is to say the mystical or visionary. This section will now examine what role their ideas play in Huxley's two mescaline books, how they helped transform the psychotomimetic reading and, furthermore, how their ideas territorialized the phenomena of the experience within Huxley's cartographical metaphor.

As well as objects, persons of grotesque form may frequently be seen, coloured dwarfs, fabulous creatures, plastic and moving or immobile, as in a picture. At the end of psychosis one man saw with his eyes open white and red birds, and with closed eyes white maidens, angels, the Blessed Virgin, and Christ in a light blue colour (Lewin 1998, 86).

Huxley opens *The Doors of Perception* by citing Ludwig (Louis) Lewin as the individual who did the first systematic study of the peyote cactus from which mescaline is derived (Huxley 1994; Lewin 1998). He first came across Lewin in 1931 when he was writing, arguably his most famous novel, *Brave New World* (1932) and the same year Lewin's text *Phantastica* was first published in the English language. Huxley's earliest text on drugs, *A Treatise on Drugs*, which was published in *The Chicago Herald and Examiner*, October 10, 1931, opens with his discovery of the book (Huxley 1999). Although he felt the text was "strictly, an unreadable book" he found that having finished it he "knew something about the history, the geographical distribution, the mode of preparation and the physiological and psychological effects of all the delicious poisons, by means of which men have constructed, in the midst of an unfriendly world, their brief and precarious paradises" (Huxley 1999, 4). The sort of landscape Huxley came to believe one might enter into by using psychoactive drugs is illustrated in the above quote with its religious iconography; but in the 1930s he was yet to be the convert he would subsequently become, believing "all existing drugs are treacherous and harmful" (Huxley 1999, 4) and that one that guaranteed "heaven" was yet to be invented. This is revealed most obviously in his use of the fictional drug soma in *Brave New World*:

...there is always *soma*, delicious *soma*, half a gramme for a half-holiday, a gramme for a weekend, two grammes for a trip to the gorgeous East, three for a dark eternity on the moon; returning whence they find themselves on the other side of the crevice, safe on the solid ground of daily labour and distraction (Huxley 1985, 54).

Huxley's dystopian novel utilises the fictional drug soma as a tool by which the population are kept under control, wherein different quantities produce various effects, which thereby relinquish the troubles of individuals and pacify them socially and politically. This idea, however, is far from what Lewin describes and it is worth saying something on Lewin and his text *Phantastica* in order to reveal an already culturally-contingent understanding, one that later help lead Huxley to an opinion that differed hugely from that which he explored in *Brave New World*.

Louis Lewin (1850-1929) was born in Tuchel, in Western Prussia. He spent the majority of his life living in Berlin, where he graduated from the University of Berlin in 1875 as a medical doctor, specialising in pharmacology and subsequently became an expert in the field of toxicology. In 1886 he travelled across the United States and came into possession of some mescal buttons, taken from the peyote cactus, and used ritually by the Native Mexican and North American Indians. He then produced an analysis of the hallucinogenic cactus and, in his honour, the Botanical Museum of Berlin named the species *Anhalonium Lewinii*, which is now commonly called peyote. Arthur Heffter (1860-1925) isolated numerous alkaloids from peyote, including mescaline (Jay 2005). Later, in the 1920s, Lewin's friend Kurt Beringer conducted human research with the drug and, as already mentioned, it was he who first coined the term *psychotomimetic*. In 1924, Lewin published *Phantastica: Narcotic and Stimulating Drugs* in Germany. An English edition followed after his death in 1931 (Lewin 1998).

In the text Lewin reviews all the known psychoactive plants and proposes a five-way categorisation. These are: (1) *Euphorica*; which includes opium, codeine and cocaine. (2) *Phantastica*; including peyote, cannabis, amanita muscaria and banisteria caapi. (3) *Inebriantia*; including alcohol, chloroform and nitrous oxide. (4) *Hypnotica*; including chloral, kava-kava and kanna. And (5) *Excitantia*; including coffee, tea, tobacco and betel. Of interest to this thesis is the phantastica class, which would later become known as the hallucinogen class, and more specifically the peyote cactus *Anhalonium Lewinii* from which mescaline was derived (Lewin 1998).

In *Phantastica*, Lewin described the known history of peyote, starting with the era just after the conquest of Mexico by the Spanish conquistador Fernando Cortez, otherwise known as Hernán Cortés (1485-1547), where the church tried to stamp out its use as they saw it as the work of the devil. Then he reviews his own first contact in 1886. Following, he discusses the uses of the cactus among the Native American tribes of Mexico and the southern United States, where it was used ritualistically and considered sacred. By the time of Lewin's writing, the rituals had been Christianised and were used in baptisms and in religious ceremonies as a method of communing with God (Lewin 1998). In conclusion, he writes that peyote "constitutes a large field of research work as to the physiology of the brain, experimental psychology and psychiatry" (Lewin 1998, 89). Therefore it is safe to say that Huxley will have been well aware of the ritualistic use of peyote and the claims that it was able to induce a mystical, or sacred, experience and that, furthermore, that these experiences could be understood in a psychological framework. However, aside from the psychical functioning, it is Lewin's descriptions of the visionary, not the mystical, which appear to have had the most profound effect on his texts. For, as will be shown shortly, Huxley's two mescaline texts, although mentioning the possibility of a mystical experience, only go so far as to ascribe this as a *possible* value to the drug. The concern was almost wholly with the visionary space. According to Lewin, and similar to the other researches already mentioned with mescaline:

Colour-symphonies are perceived. The colours gleam with a delicacy and variety which no human being could possibly produce. The objects bathed in such brilliant colours move and change their tints so rapidly that the consciousness is hardly able to follow. Then after a short time coloured arabesques and figures appear in endless play, dimmed by black shadows or brilliant with radiant light (Lewin 1998, 85).

Huxley wrote: "Visionary experience is not the same as mystical experience. Mystical experience is beyond the realm of opposites. Visionary experience is still within that realm. Heaven entails hell, and 'going to heaven' is no more liberation than is the decent into hell" (Huxley 1994, 102). Having garnered the knowledge that peyote, and mescaline, could be used to experience the visionary, Huxley invoked the artist and writer William Blake in his texts as a way of illustrating an individual who could be "holy" enough in such an experience.

William Blake (1757-1827) was born in Soho, London, as the son of a London hosier and spent his life, in obscurity, as an engraver and writer (Blake 1998; Beer 2005; Clarke 2007). As Michael Mason writes in his introduction to Blake's selected works, "there is no parallel for Blake's artistic duality in the rest of English literature" (Blake 1998). Blake's poetry was never commercially printed during his lifetime and he only made a small number of unconventional engravings. However, after his death he became an increasingly popular figure in Britain and beyond, and became an important symbol in various American countercultures in the twentieth century (Kripal 2007; Clark 2012). Of the most famous works he produced, including *America*, *Songs of Innocence and Experience*, and *Jerusalem*, it is *The Marriage of Heaven and Hell* that primarily concerns this thesis, as it is Huxley's employment of the poem in *The Doors of Perception* and *Heaven and Hell* that takes centre stage (Blake 2008). Who was the Blake, however, that Huxley constructed through his texts and what does he mean for the question of mescaline's value?

According to Jeffrey John Kripal, writing in the journal article *Reality Against Society: William Blake, Antinomianism, and the American Counterculture* (2007), Aldous Huxley's use of Blake was as a figure to be emulated while taking mescaline:

Huxley wanted to know "from the inside" those altered states from which the mystics, artists, and musical masters had been writing, painting and composing their visionary works. He did not want to write about Blake... He wanted to *be* Blake (Kripal 2007, 105)

In the article, Kripal refers to a "psychedelic Blake" as the character created by Huxley after the man himself, who is useful to Huxley as a visionary artist in order to contextualize his experience. However, this psychedelic Blake, when also taking into account the psychiatric research setting, fulfills a number of roles for the author. Firstly, as an artist this helped validated Huxley's emphasis on the changing aesthetics of the perceived world on mescaline and gave him a figure to counterpoint his argument. Secondly, as Osmond had postulated the existence of endogenous hallucinogens in the body in his M-substance theory, Huxley is speculating that Blake himself may have been under the influence of just such a chemical throughout his life, so was supporting Osmond's research. Thirdly, Blake, who purportedly had visions during his life, is also cast as a mystical figure who goes on to

validate Huxley's observations of a spiritually understood Mind-at-large. Understanding Blake as a visionary mystic, however, has been slightly contentious.

What are the common features which this pattern imposes upon our visionary experiences? First and most important is the experience of light. Everything seen by those who visit the mind's antipodes is brilliantly illuminated and seems to shine from within. All colours are intensified to a pitch far beyond anything seen in the normal state, and at the same time the mind's capacity for recognizing fine distinctions of tone and hue is notably heightened<sup>5</sup> (Huxley 1994, 65)

William Blake claimed to have experienced visions during his lifetime and his visionary powers were nurtured by a religious upbringing (Beer 2005). Wayne Glausser, in his essay *What is it like to be Blake? Psychiatry, Drugs and the Doors of Perception* posed the question: "What are we to make of Blake's claims that he had visions?" (Glausser 2007, 163). According to Glausser such a simple question is, when the academic study of Blake has become so complex, not typically asked by professionals. Instead, he looks at, "the work of three amateurs who have attempted to get inside Blake's mental world through diagnostic speculation or pharmaceutical imitation" (Glausser 2007, 163). Answers, he tells us, range from the sceptical, where scholars see Blake as urging a different mode of ordinary perception, more political and ideologically motivated; to the other extreme of them being evidence of a literal visionary or higher sense of perception, wherein he was inspired directly by angels (Glausser 2007).

Of the three "amateurs" Glausser discusses it is only necessary to look at Aldous Huxley here and, more specifically, how Glausser understands Huxley to have employed Blake in the *Doors of Perception* and *Heaven and Hell*. This is in order show that although Huxley's mescaline texts have recast Blake in regard to the mescaline experience and, more specifically, a psychotomimetic discourse in regard to the visionary, Glausser's failure to take into account Huxley's employment of Henri Bergson (who will be discussed in more detail shortly) has left his explanation incomplete as to how Huxley had arrived at perception being so intrinsically important.

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<sup>5</sup> It is worth noting the similarity between this quote, and Lewin's (Lewin 1998, 85) previously quoted one. Colour and light are an important intersection between Lewin, Blake and Huxley, a shared territory.

Broadly speaking, Glausser is right to note that Huxley uses Blake as an example of how someone in an altered state of perception can experience non-pathological visions and who, by virtue of Huxley's reading of Blake's visions, becomes a direct comparison to states induced by mescaline consumption. Huxley connects the two states, this thesis argues, through the visionary, for "Huxley admires it [Blake's experiences] as the perceptual foundation of genius in art" (Glausser 2007, 164). There are two important points to note here.

Firstly, Huxley, in order for Blake to become a visionary example in his texts, must have reached the point wherein one's perception is at the ground for understanding mescaline's action. This will be examined in more detail but, suffice to say for now, according to Huxley, individual consciousness is a concentration of Mind at Large, a universal consciousness: "To make biological survival possible, Mind at Large has to be funnelled through the reducing valve of the brain and nervous system" (Huxley 1994, 12). Hallucinogens, he speculates, biochemically affect this reducing valve of perception, revealing perceptions greater than that required by a Darwinian, biological utility. Having intensified the role of perception, Huxley is then able to open up a qualitative space in his texts that emphasises the quality of his own perception during the mescaline experiment. Hence, like Blake, this disturbance in perception could lead to a visionary experience and, indeed, an aesthetic experience. The psychedelic Blake is ascribed the reducing-valve model as an explanation for his visions and this acts as the premise for Huxley's own use of mescaline.

Secondly, mescaline itself stops being psychically creative, but rather it becomes a key to accessing the "perceptual foundation of genius in art," which in many respects reflects the psycholytic thread that saw LSD as a key to accessing the unconscious. However, the two depart in an important respect because Huxley is "more inclined to idealise than to pathologise the deviation from normal perception" (Glausser 2007, 170). The value of mescaline, therefore, lies in its ability to take one into this state as a vehicle, rather than having an intrinsic artistic value. So although the two threads, pathology and visionary, have entwined in regard to the action of hallucinogens they still differ in regard to what psychical space is being accessed. The creative element is removed from the drug itself and ascribed to the intention of the user, which is to say one must creatively engage with the aesthetic of experience. The result of Huxley's employment of Blake then is to give rise to a content concerned with aesthetics in his two mescaline texts:

This was something I had seen before - seen that very morning, between the flowers and the furniture, when I looked down by chance, and went on passionately staring by choice, at my own crossed legs. Those folds in the trousers - what a labyrinth of endlessly significant complexity! And the texture of the grey flannel - how rich, how deeply, mysteriously sumptuous! And here they were again, in Botticelli's picture<sup>6</sup> (Huxley 1994, 17)

The titles *The Doors of Perception* and *Heaven and Hell* were taken by Huxley from the Blake poem called *The Marriage of Heaven and Hell* (1790). According to Glausser, Huxley departs from Blake in his interpretation and employment of the artist's ideas in his two mescaline texts. Glausser writes that Blake called for a "marriage" of Heaven and Hell, two states that coexist. The former title is taken from the line: "If the doors of perception were cleansed everything would appear to man as it is: infinite. For man has closed himself up, till he sees all things through narrow chinks of his cavern" (Blake 1998, 80). Huxley employs the term to describe the effects of mescaline, and other hallucinogens, on the faculties of consciousness, which is the revelation of a "higher power" in perception. Huxley, however, saw the states more dualistically, as we have already noted, ascribing one to the schizophrenic and the other to the experienced "holy" mescaline user. While for Blake, Glausser argues, the two are inseparable from one another, as he writes in *The Marriage of Heaven and Hell* (1790): "Without contraries is no progression. Attraction and repulsion, reason and energy, love and hate, are necessary to human existence" (Blake 1998, 74). This is not, however, strictly correct because although Huxley has described them dualistically, the two states of perception are still believed to be identical, rather it is one's ability to have control of the same experience that differs; this is the element of intention in the user that allows mescaline to be a vehicle. Coupled with Huxley's proposition that a non-schizophrenic can experience both these states under mescaline also, means that Huxley's use of the term is much less distorted than Glausser makes it out to be. Although there is a marriage that takes place in the psyche of the mescaline user so far as one entails the other, it is visionary and not mystical, which Huxley describes as being firmly in the realm of

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<sup>6</sup> Botticelli's *Judith*



opposites. The psychedelic Blake, for Huxley, illustrates the segmentation of heaven and hell metaphorically.

Huxley's reading of Blake through the hallucinogenic window attempts to ground his visionary reading of the artist within the context of his mescaline texts. On the one hand, as Glausser also notes, this depoliticizes Blake and concentrates on the mystical and visionary aspects of his discourse (Glausser 2007). On the other, however, Huxley is underlining the reality of Blake's reading within the experience of taking a hallucinogen, which is to say he is attempting to philosophically ground Blake within psychical theory. In this manner, the psychedelic Blake *is* Huxley's visionary space, he is the historical exemplifier of its existence but through the process of recasting Blake, Huxley integrated a different theory of the mind in which to place Blake as the exemplifier. He found this theory—the reducing-valve model—in the work of Henri Bergson.

The development of a Bergsonian framework for understanding the efficacy of mescaline was underway well before the publication of *The Doors of Perception*. Huxley, in a letter to Osmond dated April 10, 1953, almost a year after his mescaline experience, outlined his belief that the Bergsonian model was, “the most satisfactory working hypothesis about the human mind” (Huxley 1999, 29). What Bergson's theory was and the extent to which this understanding was then transferred into textual form by the author is the subject at hand here. Not only is it the basis on which Huxley transformed the psychotomimetic theory but it was also the foundation he utilised in order to introduce Blake as his metaphorical character in the texts.

Henri-Louis Bergson (1859-1941) was a French philosopher who rose to prominence at the turn of the twentieth century. He found fame in both Europe and Britain and was championed in America by the psychologist-turned-philosopher William James (1842-1910) (Bergson 1975). However, analytical philosophy, championed by the likes of British philosopher Bertrand Russell, labelled Bergson's work ‘anti-rationalist’ and ‘unscientific’ and Bergson and his theories soon fell into obscurity (Russell 2004). Bergson died on January 4, 1941, aged 81, having renounced all academic posts rather than give in to anti-Semitic laws of the Vichy government in France (Bergson 1975).

Why should Bergson's theory, which had fallen out of favour with the academic establishment, suddenly be utilised over a decade after his death? This is because, for Aldous Huxley, Bergson provided a theoretical approach that included both material and psychological elements and which, therefore, seemed more equipped to deal with the efficacy

of mescaline, in compliment with Osmond's psychotomimetic reading of hallucinogens, which engaged with both the chemistry and psychology of their effect. Obviously, Huxley has not taken Bergson's philosophy wholesale, but what elements has he employed?

The main idea in Bergson's philosophy that Huxley adopted was his theory of psychic functioning, which helped shape the form and content of Huxley's mescaline texts. This section will examine how this theory was firstly employed textually and, secondly, how it was at the same time transformed through the author's mescaline experience. This will be achieved by unpacking how Huxley has cherry picked certain elements in order to explain his mescaline experience in regard to perception and not personal memory, which was more contingent to the psycholytic reading; though both elements played an important role for Bergson.

His perception is not limited to what is biologically or socially useful. A little of the knowledge belonging to Mind at Large oozes past the reducing value of the brain and ego into his consciousness. It is a knowledge of the intrinsic significance of every existent. For the artist as for the mescaline taker, draperies are living hieroglyphs that stand in some peculiarly expressive way for the unfathomable mystery of pure being (Huxley 1994, 20).

Bergson's theory of psychic functioning is most clearly outlined in his book *Matter and Memory*, first published in France under the title *Matière et Mémoire* in 1896. He approaches the metaphysical question of the mind/body duality by initially critiquing the realist and idealist schools of thought and postulating an intuitional third answer. This third way rests on his theory of memory, which acts as an "intersection of mind and matter" (Bergson 1991, 13). However, Huxley dwells very little on the role of memory in Bergson's theory but instead concentrates on the role of perception. The reason for this is because, unlike the psycholytic that saw hallucinogens as a way of accessing memory, Huxley's use of Bergson meant he saw hallucinogens as a way of bypassing the utilitarian functions like memory. It became, as has been stated in his cartographical metaphor, something one could navigate beyond by the use of mescaline.

Bergson describes the role of the brain as a "central telephonic exchange" that adds nothing to what it receives; it only opens and closes motor tracts (Bergson 1991, 30). The brain is not a store house of memory for Bergson, which is the realist position. If injury to the

brain is caused: “[Y]ou do not necessarily destroy the last image, but you deprive it of all the means of acting upon the real, consequentially, as we shall show, of being realized” (Bergson 1991, 79). The memory still exists but it is inaccessible when the brain is damaged. Memory is not, therefore, localised within matter; it is “spirit” that takes the form of “images”. However, personal memories are integrated with our perception according to the utility of our biological functioning.

The body cannot store up images, since it forms a part of the images, and this is why it is a chimerical enterprise to seek to localize past or even present perceptions in the brain: they are not in it, it is the brain that is in them (Bergson 1991, 147).

The exchange that takes place in the brain is between sense perception (derived externally through affection on the nervous system) and memory. Bergson is underlining the necessity of the exchange in order to emphasise a fallacy with the idealist position, which claims we can know nothing of an external reality. He does this by mutually grounding matter and memory in a transactional relationship that hinges on the awareness of affection. There is, he writes, one image that is distinct because one knows it by affections rather than simply by pure perception – one’s own body, or the ‘body image’; hence even the brain itself is an image but is known by affection (Bergson 1991). Thus when Huxley wrote his mescaline texts, he did so by what effect mescaline had on his self, through the change in his faculties of memory and perception. Accordingly then, Huxley describes the brain function as a “reducing valve” and that mescaline circumvents this reducing valve by chemically affecting the brain. There is little, or nothing, about Huxley’s personal memory in his texts, which indicates that he had indeed moved beyond into a realm of pure perception and this grounds his text in a visionary territory.

Bergson’s model, centred around the affection on the ‘body image’, is functional and utilitarian: “For if they [memories] have survived it is with a view to utility; at every moment they complete our present experience, enriching it with experience already acquired and, as the latter is ever increasing, it must end by covering up or submerging the former” (Bergson 1991, 60). Huxley reiterates this, via the Cambridge philosopher Dr. C. D. Broad who discusses Bergson’s theory, in *The Doors of Perception*: “The function of the brain and nervous system is to protect us from being overwhelmed and confused by this mass of largely useless and irrelevant knowledge” (Huxley 1994, 11), which is to say information not

necessary to evolutionary functioning. What mescaline does, Huxley tells us, is to bypass this functioning and to give one access to the full quota of information, a universal consciousness that he calls the “Mind at Large”. The brain acts as an individuating process that creates the phenomenon of individual consciousness as a reduction of the Mind at Large; mescaline reverses this process. Thus memory is not important in the content of Huxley’s text because it is the very function that he believes mescaline was bypassing in his own experience. This does not wholly discount the psycholytic function concerned with memory but devalues it in regard to a deeper metaphysical experience; one centred ontologically on perception.

Presentation in consciousness, is never more than partially fulfilled, for the material object, just because of the multitude of unperceived elements by which it is linked to all other objects, appears to enfold within itself and to hide behind it infinitely more than it allows to be seen (Bergson 1991, 147).

Huxley’s philosophical position in his texts relies on Bergson’s theory so far as it is that which is by-passed; it is in its negation that it becomes important. He explicitly employs the reducing-valve theory and its utilitarian function in *The Doors of Perception*, and then expounds a visionary and philosophical discourse in his texts as a result of its bypassing by mescaline. In other words, by employing Bergson’s theory, Huxley is able to posit a different psychical space in his texts that acts as a ground for his visionary speculation; one in which Blake became the exemplifier. That which is perceived, like the folds in his trousers, become free of their utility and are seen as the thing-in-itself.

In conclusion then, Huxley uses Lewin, Blake and Bergson to create a specific drugs territory within his text that, firstly, reinterprets the psychotomimetic reading by reinvesting the value of the experience non-pathologically and, secondly, to delineate the boundaries of a visionary space. Lewin provided Huxley with the connection between mescaline and visionary experience; Blake provides the example of one who is able to live with such an experience and who, by Huxley’s account, is not schizophrenic but artistically talented; and Bergson, who provides the theoretical/philosophical means for speculating on the nature of the space in regard to his theory of mind. *The Doors of Perception* and *Heaven and Hell* are, when taken on their own, an intriguing synthesis of ideas that Huxley, with a certain literary skill, manages to propound a theory that, while still relying on the grounding of Osmond’s psychotomimetic theory, manages to develop and expand the grounds on which it could be

understood. However, it is through the literary responses to Huxley that the psychospiritual and philosophical dimensions began to take a form that would come to influence the 1960s production of texts. And it is these responses and the manner in which they engaged with Huxley that will be discussed in the following section.

### 3.5: Responses to Huxley

When Aldous Huxley published *The Doors of Perception* and *Heaven and Hell* he was the not the first to raise the question of a philosophical and psychospiritual dimension in the use of certain drugs; to attain, in his words, a “praeternatural experience”. He was, however, the catalyst for the debate during the wave of hallucinogen research in the 1950s and 1960s. Huxley took into account a number of influences when he pencilled the discursive territory of the psychospiritual in his texts, which were outlined in the previous section, but it was in the responses to his work in which the territory took its contemporary form. Robert Charles Zaehner’s *Mysticism Sacred and Profane* (1957) and Richard Heron Ward’s psychiatric text *A Drug-Taker’s Notes* (1957) were the two key challenges to Huxley’s position and they helped to culturally legitimise the debate.

Robert Charles Zaehner (1913-1974) was the Spalding Professor of Eastern Religions and Ethics at the University of Oxford at the time of writing *Mysticism Sacred and Profane* (Zaehner 1957; Rudgley 1993). In it he wrote that as an undergraduate he was a “non-religious” person with a “profound dislike for conventional Christianity” but that he, quite spontaneously and without the use of drugs, had a praeternatural experience. This episode, he believed, was akin to the type of experience Huxley described in *The Doors of Perception* but that, unlike Huxley’s, his was genuine. Zaehner later converted to Roman Catholicism, from which his own theistic position is derived in the text.

After reading *The Doors of Perception* he felt that, “Mr. Huxley had thrown down a challenge which no one with any religious convictions at all could afford to neglect” (Zaehner 1957, *xiv*). He wrote an initial response to Huxley, entitled *The Menace of Mescaline* (1954), but his much elaborated critique, *Mysticism Sacred and Profane*, was published three years later and it is this book, which includes details of his own mescaline experience, with which this section deals. Interestingly, Zaehner’s own experience was conducted, on December 3, 1955, under the supervision of Humphry Osmond’s associate Dr. John Smythies. The similarities in their supervision methods are obvious, and will be discussed further later in this section, but suffice to say that both Huxley and Zaehner were under the guide of psychotomimetic researchers, grounding their texts within the same medical agency.

Principally, Zaehner says that the praeternatural experience, of which Huxley wrote, is not a typical effect of mescaline, which is to say that taking the drug is no guarantee of a

psychospiritual experience. He includes the account of his own mescaline experience, along with two others, in the appendices to demonstrate this. Huxley's mistake lies, the reader is told, in his monist approach to the mystical experience, which takes all the accounts of mystics in the past to be of a single nature, consequentially equating his own experience with theirs. Zaehner challenges Huxley's, "assumption that his experience had religious significance" (Zaehner 1957, *xiv*), by arguing that the author was predisposed to understanding the episode psychospiritually and that, furthermore, the accounts of mystics could not be understood as all being examples of an atypical nature mysticism, or perennial philosophy.

Broadly speaking, there are three ways with which Zaehner constructs his argument and which, thereby, begin to reveal deeper dimensions of the discursive space postulated by Huxley. These focus on Huxley's presumptions, the psychotomimetic reading itself, and the evidence left by other mystics as to the nature of their experience.

Firstly, Zaehner believed that Huxley was predisposed to believing in a universal, psychospiritual mysticism, which could be assessed through mescaline. The was due, in part, to the work of previous writer-researchers, like the psychologist William James who had speculated on the mystical drug experience, Huxley's *philosophia perrenis* and his own intellectual and psychological character (Zaehner 1957; James 1985; Huxley 2004). The influences of the visionary reading have already been noted in section 3.2, but it is necessary to briefly say something of the *philosophia perrenis*, particularly because it is the expounding of this philosophy itself that Zaehner largely takes to account, along with Huxley's own character.

Huxley's book *The Perennial Philosophy* (1945) is an investigation into a number of theological and philosophical texts that illustrate elements of what the German philosopher Gottfried Leibniz (1646-1716) coined the *philosophia perrenis* (Huxley 2004). This monistic position asserts that it is, "the metaphysic that recognizes a divine Reality substantial to the world of things and lives and minds; the psychology that finds in the soul something similar to, or even identical with, divine Reality; the ethic that places man's final end in the knowledge of the immanent and transcendent. Ground of all being—the thing is immemorial and universal" (Huxley 2004, *vii*). Huxley's expounding of this philosophy meant that all mystical experiences are alike in so far as they are all accessing the "ground of all being". For this reason, coupled with prior observations on mystical drug experiences that Huxley was aware of, Zaehner believes he misread the nature of his own mescaline experience because of

a predisposition toward a monistic, psychospiritual understanding. It should be noted, however, that while Zaehner took Huxley to task over a mystical experience, Huxley is explicit about it being a visionary space in the text because it did not go beyond the “realm of opposites”. Therefore, Zaehner is constructing a specific ideal from Huxley’s texts that better corresponds to his own position.

Furthermore, Zaehner also challenges Huxley’s intellectualism and character; calling him, in what is a very Jungian constructed analysis throughout the text, an *introverted introvert*, who sees the world as a place to escape from, to a realm quite possibly offered by mescaline. According to Zaehner, Huxley wanted a “release from the everyday, humdrum existence of subject-object relationship and of what, for lack of a better word, we must continue to call the ‘ego’” (Zaehner 1957, 15). Huxley’s attitude, it must be stated, was particularly presumptuous, if not a little condescending, about the nature of people’s personal experience of the everyday, and indeed reveals more about his own particular understanding of the world than that of others:

Familiarity breeds contempt, and how to survive is a problem in urgency from the chronically tedious to the excruciating. The outer world is what we wake up to every morning of our lives, is the place where, willy-nilly, we must try to make our living. In the inner world there is neither work nor monotony (Huxley 1994, 30)

The second way Zaehner constructed his argument was by approaching the context under which both he and Huxley had been given mescaline; namely under the auspices of doctors working around the psychotomimetic understanding of the drug. Therefore, this involved understanding its efficacy in light of a chemical basis of psychosis. Moreover, it was understood that the chemical effect corresponded to certain states-of-mind. In effect, for Huxley, this meant you could enter heaven or hell (the visionary or psychotic) via the same chemical affect. Therefore, “by a mystical experience Huxley seems to understand not only the experiences of all the recognized mystics, but experiences such as his own under the influence of mescaline; and, since he is honest, he would be forced to add, the experiences of madness” (Zaehner 1957, 27).

Of course, Huxley proposed that this was a difference in control and intention in the user, but nevertheless the connection existed in the theory. For Zaehner, slightly dubiously, this is proof that the experience could not truly be mystical, in the highest theistic sense.



Dubiously, as has been noted in 3.0, because this reading, the psychotomimetic, largely fell out of favour by the 1960s. You could not effectively treat psychotics and, although the drug had the ability to produce an effect possibly akin within the user, it was far from being intrinsic. Rather, the drug appeared to have the ability to produce a multitude of states, typified by the mantra of ‘set and setting’. To call a drug a psychotomimetic was to place a huge weight on one *potential* aspect and was, therefore, almost wholly inaccurate. Indeed, it was the ability of the drug to have its potential so entwined with the exteriority of the user that aided the psychedelic response, which will be explored in more detail in the following chapter.

The third way Zaehner constructs his argument is through various philosophical cross-examinations of previous mystics, confining his analysis to “praeternatural experiences in which sense perception and discursive thought are transcended in an immediate apperception of a unity or union which is apprehended as lying beyond and transcending the multiplicity of the world as we know it” (Zaehner 1957, 199). And these accounts come from traditions as diverse as Christian, Muslim, Buddhist and Hindu.

Often Zaehner approaches their experiences by using Carl Jung’s theory of archetypes and the collective unconscious, which was outlined in chapter two: “[Jung] is not concerned with the God of any theology but with the God-archetype as he finds it in his patients” (Zaehner 1957, 202). His intention, by employing Jungian theory, is to describe a difference in the psychological make-up of the mystics, therefore underlying the non-monistic understanding of the mystical experience. Also, this helps contextualise and validate his own slightly presumptuous assessment of Huxley as an “introverted introvert”.

Furthermore, Zaehner, a Catholic, sought to explain his position through a theistic standpoint; the existence of a personal and active God: “It is an unbridgeable gulf between all those who see God as incomparably greater than oneself, though He is, at the same time, the root and ground of one’s being, and those who maintain that soul and God are one and the same and that all else is pure illusion” (Zaehner 1957, 204). As such, however, he was not wholly dismissing the nature mystic in his assessment, but instead developed a hierarchy of experiences within the mystical tradition, one dependent on individual, religious understandings. For example, his assessment of William James and Jean Nicolas Arthur Rimbaud (1854-1891), wherein he sees the later as correct for recognising the limits of the praeternatural experience, compared with the theistic:

Perhaps alone among ‘nature’ mystics Rimbaud rejected the natural mystical experience as a ‘lie’. Even William James, for all his elaborate objectivity and scepticism, had not been able to do that. That Rimbaud could do what James could not, was due to the fact that he had a standard against which natural mysticism could be judged (Zaehner 1957, 83)

Zaehner’s argument rests heavily on a comparison of textual evidence. It is worth, therefore, saying something of Zaehner’s own mescaline experience, which appears in the appendices, in order to illustrate how his position in the text is informed by it. Ostensibly, the settings and activities of both his and Huxley’s sessions are very similar. Zaehner, like Huxley, was played music and shown art, and questioned about his appreciation of the surroundings and experience; furthermore, having been given the drug in his own room, he too was also taken out, on this occasion to Christ Church Cathedral, Oxford. However, the response Zaehner gives is very different from Huxley’s and very much underline his belief that one is predisposed to certain understandings.

For example, on being shown a reproduction of Raphael’s *Deposition*: “All much too serious.... This is because it’s a really serious picture. This was the first time I had stopped laughing since looking at the Gentile da Fabriano. The reason was that Raphael is to me an essentially religious and ‘numinous’ painter. I was still in the world of nonsensical fantasy, and I realized that Raphael could not fit in there, - not for me at any rate” (Zaehner 1957, 221). To connect this to his own position within the text, he believed the experience to be “nonsensical fantasy” and his theistic beliefs affected his experience by a literal separation of his ‘numinous’ understanding of certain art; in other words, his religious beliefs were outside the territory of mescaline’s efficacy.

Zaehner’s contribution to the discursive space is important because he is proposing an understanding that, firstly, corresponds to the psychotomimetic reading, or in his words the “nonsensical fantasy”. While Huxley had attempted to move the understanding away from this position, Zaehner draws it back in. However, simultaneously, he is also lending credence to the idea that the experience can be manipulated through predispositions of character and, therefore, is unwittingly proposing that it is perhaps possible to ‘mimic’ the mystical or visionary experience—artificially or otherwise. And secondly, through his segmentation of the mystical experience, he is introducing a broadly religious debate over the nature of God. While this, of course, does not act as a proof, it does begin to set the limits of the spiritual

debate surrounding hallucinogens and he is, therefore, contributing to its furthering as a valuable topic of debate.

*Mysticism Sacred and Profane* can be difficult to follow, Zaehner uses a cacophony of different terms for the mystical experience and does so, at times, interchangeably, which is especially difficult to understand when he is trying to delineate a difference in accounts and understandings. While the breadth of learning is certainly extensive, it suffers from a similar complexity to Huxley's *The Perennial Philosophy*, in that, for the reader, the density of knowledge and terminology can be overwhelming. It would be another literary response, a medical supervision text by Richard Heron Ward called *A Drug Taker's Notes*, which would take Huxley to account on the very experience itself and postulate a response more relevant to the unspecialised reader and, indeed, to psychiatry.

Three years after the publication of Ronald Sandison's first scientific paper on LSD, the first non-fiction, psychiatrically-contingent account of the LSD experience—*A Drug-Taker's Notes* (1957) by Richard Heron Ward—was published as a direct result of British LSD research. Ward describes six LSD sessions that he undertook during 1954-55, under the supervision of a female medical psychiatrist only identified as Dr. X. The doctor was studying the effects of LSD on mentally ill patients and had also tested it on herself, which grounds the text psychotomimetically (Ward 1957). Ward's role was as a mentally balanced control subject who was asked to join the research by his friend Dr. X. This is noteworthy as it demonstrates, because of the methodological necessity of a 'control' in science research, the use of LSD outside of the clinical psychopathology setting, in what is supposedly at this point, according to Sandison and the psycholytic method, the valueless realm of healthy subjects. However, the idea of a valueless experience giving rise to the publication of a book seems to be at odds with itself. Granted, this is the only edition of the book published, not surprisingly as it is hardly a bastion of literary quality, but it does demonstrate two important aspects in the contingency of psychedelic literature. Firstly, Huxley's literary espousal about the possible 'value' of a hallucinogen in a healthy subject was deemed worthy for others to similarly investigate and, secondly, that it had become a particularly literary endeavour to do so. The two objects approached here are how Ward engages with the pre-existing debate developed by Osmond, Huxley and Zaehner; and the development of his own consciousness theory that contributes to the discursive territory itself.

Huxley's influence, so far as the drug user, the artist and the mystic all share some experiential space, is evident almost immediately in *A Drug-Taker's Notes*: "The drug-taker

is in much the same unsatisfactory position as the poet or the mystic when it comes to the use of words to describe his experiences” (Ward 1957, 11). The described “ineffability” of the hallucinogen experience is the very characteristic, however, which demands a literary response: “It is only when a scientific mind which is also a mind capable of metaphor writes of such things that something of both objective and subjective value is said” (Ward 1957). Ward cites Havelock Ellis’s paper *Note on the Phenomena of Mescal Intoxication* (1897), published in *The Lancet*, as an example of such a work.

By approaching LSD with the intention of examining whether “consciousness is a constant”, Ward is attempting to provide a reasonable, though questionably scientific, objectivity alongside the subjective descriptions of his own experiences. Simultaneously, through this objectivity being based on a consciousness model, he then attempts to address whether the shared space of ineffability is indeed shared experientially as Huxley proposes it might be. As the back cover so obtusely asks: “Who, then, is right, Mr. Ward or Mr. Huxley?” (Ward 1957). Ward approaches Huxley in two ways; via his own consciousness model that stands in opposition from the one Huxley developed from Henri Bergson, and, similarly to Zaehner, a cross-analysis between his own friend’s purportedly genuine, non-drug, mystical experience and Huxley’s own descriptions. To begin with it is necessary to outline Ward’s consciousness model.

As has been mentioned Ward wished to test the idea that “consciousness is a constant” and he concludes that it is not because it is understood in degrees of consciousness rather than a single, undifferentiated state. Ward develops a scale model of consciousness to explain: “[I]t is possible to think of the totality of consciousness in terms of the major scale in music” (Ward 1957, 21). For example, sleep consciousness represents one octave on a rising scale, and a dream-state exemplifies the move from one state to another, which is to say it moves to an ordinary waking consciousness. Ward opens the space for a drugs discussion by asking: “But need we take it for granted that the progression cannot be continued from wakefulness into a consciousness of yet another quality?” (Ward 1957, 14). Huxley’s reducing-valve model and Ward’s scale model both function to provide the text with an intellectual impetus that allows both the authors to engage textually with their respective experiences. Although Ward’s lacks the eloquence and learning of Huxley’s, its role in the text is equally as vital for, firstly, justifying the discussion and, secondly, forming the groundwork for debate.

Before looking more closely at how Ward challenges Huxley over a hallucinogen's ability to bring one into a visionary space, it is worth briefly saying something on the innate opposition his system has with psychoanalysis. This is because Ward's experience was facilitated by a psychotomimetic-related research programme and, when coupled with Huxley's pre-existing work on the topic, it therefore lent credence to the experience of a healthy subject; psychoanalysis' development into the psycholytic denied any value for a healthy subject, and would, therefore, undermine any premise for Ward's book. This, as was discussed at the end of chapter 2.0, is because the strict theoretical foundations would not have allowed the flexibility for Ward and Huxley's discussions on non-pathological areas of consciousness. Ward is well aware of this departure and refers to the "long-standing fallacies of the Age of Freud" (Ward 1957, 71). However, this is also partly because Freud purported to be a materialist, whereas Ward believed in the existence of a Christian soul (Ward 1957). The question of having a mystical or visionary experience is, as a whole debate, rather debilitating for the psychoanalytical method; its materialist theory doesn't allow for it to be raised as a point of question because it is implicitly answered in the negative. The psychotomimetic's theory on the action of a drug postulates potential theories of mind, including those based on metaphysical and spiritual beliefs. Ward, as will be shown, disagrees with Huxley but he is still able to further his own scale model; something he would have been unable to do had he understood the experience from a psycholytic point-of-view.

Consciousness understands a universe built upon different but interpenetrative levels capable of being transformed into one another; and it understands itself as, so to say, a lift capable of passing from one level to another and of carrying with it, not only the subject as passenger, but many 'material goods' as well (Ward 1957, 33).

The implication of Ward's scale model for the action of LSD is that it allowed him to move up a degree of consciousness. In turn, he was able to comprehend a great deal about his past life more than he would have supposedly been able to had he not: "Perhaps it was the damp, sweaty, wrinkled look of one's own hands that, last time, induced the 'growing back to babyhood'" (Ward 1957, 74). While psychotherapy delved into memories as occasions of the past; Ward believed he saw them as lived experiences and that this made him better understand them. The result of this is that the drug is ascribed a value as a tool of introspection in a healthy subject. Ward's ability to test his philosophical premise and, at the

same time, reveal its truth, is that which connects Ward and Huxley's methods; both of their texts, by dealing with philosophical speculations, ascribe hallucinogens a philosophical value. Yet, although Ward essentially uses the same device as Huxley in order to postulate his own theory, he goes to great lengths to invalidate Huxley's position. Zaehner, in his response, challenged Huxley on the religious grounds only, citing the traditional psychotomimetic model as the illogic of his position. In light of this, one cannot help but see the hypocrisy of Ward's challenge having repeated Huxley's formula for the creation of the discursive space in his text.

Ward argues against Huxley's contention that drugs give one access to the "beatific vision", which he illustrates by quoting from a "real" account of the religious experience, written by his friend 'A', and says they are qualitatively different; while also noting there was some likeness with the "narcotic experience" (Ward 1957, 194). Therefore, Ward is using the evidence for two mutually-beneficial reasons: Firstly, to invalidate Huxley's theory, which consequentially bolsters the credentials of his own; secondly, to show that there is some similarity, which lends credence to his belief that LSD does raise the level of consciousness but not so far as to call it visionary.

What Huxley's critics, like Ward and Zaehner, failed to understand however was that Huxley was not simply thrusting a psychospiritual dimension atop the psychotomimetic, he was outlining a different way of understanding the efficacy of the drug. One in which the effects of mescaline could be understood in terms wider than simply its chemical action; it was highly interrelated with the frame of the user's mind, the context and environment of their experience, and the intention with which it was approached. The effect of the drug could be shaped externally to particular constructs; implying a creative element in its efficacy. His critics had failed to move beyond a simplistic understanding of the psychotomimetic in order to see that the drugs were not the only determining factor in the experience, rather it was the means by which to explore other various states. Zaehner, for his part, identified all these points but failed to draw the correct conclusion, instead falling back on the inadequacy of the traditional psychotomimetic reading. Ward, while denying Huxley a religious state of consciousness, reused Huxley's formula for producing a philosophical drug text; displaying the same skills and techniques in producing that which he sought; the scale model. In combination, however, they did achieve the expansion of the contemporary, discursive territory around the creative potential of hallucinogens and, simultaneously, validate its worthiness for wider cultural and social investigation; specifically in the field of literature.

Yet, of all the books, it would be Huxley's that would become the pre-eminent source of information and inspiration in the literature and the popular culture of the 1960s. The psychotomimetic reading itself, by 1960, had fallen out of favour in research circles and Swiss psychiatrist Manfred Bleuler, in 1959, finally concluded there was no connection between hallucinogens and schizophrenia (Hintzen 2010). In 1960s psychedelic literature, the result was a number of texts that seemingly left the madness of the previous decade and began to explore the dimensions proposed by Huxley in his reinterpretation of the psychotomimetic. They began to explore the cartography of the mind Huxley proposed in *Heaven and Hell* and their ability to do this was based on the development of psychedelic therapy, which is the topic of the following chapter.

## 4.0: THE PSYCHEDELIC TERRITORY

Towards the end of the 1950s a new psychiatric research and therapeutic approach began to be developed called the *psychedelic*. The psychedelic territory was centred on the values and concerns raised by Aldous Huxley in his two mescaline books, which took its leave from the psychotomimetic and raised philosophical questions surrounding spirituality and aesthetics. In fact, the religious debate that had begun with the various responses to Huxley's works would continue in to the 1960s and the various works of literature that were published, almost unanimously, are concerned with reaching a drug-induced mystical, or religious, experience. Unlike the 1950s debate, however, it is not so much a question of whether or not the drug has the ability to cause such an effect, for it is assumed that it does by many writers in the 1960s, but rather the question is concerned with exploring the nature of this religious experience. Also, the other major concern is in developing a therapeutic method that takes these spiritual assumptions into consideration leading to the creation of *psychedelic therapy*. Against a backdrop of increasingly negative popular and political points-of-view about LSD, psychedelic therapy simultaneously began questioning the Western social and its adherents began to see it as a way of overcoming a Western materialist paradigm that was spiritually bereft. This is explored by certain writers using Oriental spiritual frameworks to both highlight existing problems and social pathologies and aid the applicability of LSD to wider society. Ultimately, this led to a new experience-based religious outlook, described as the *psychospiritual*, based on the observations of psychiatric research and an Oriental spiritual framework for communicating them.

The journal literature of the period reflects these mystical and spiritual concerns and demonstrates the extent to which Huxley's literary observations had re-entered research circles and become a part of scientific and academic discourse in the 1960s; thus further demonstrating the contingency between the medical practices and psychedelic literature. This is most notably in the journal articles *Do Drugs have Religious Import?* (1964) by Huston Smith; *LSD and Mystical Experiences* (1963) by G. Ray Gordon Jr.; and, *Implications of LSD and Experimental Mysticism* (1966) by Walter Pahnke and William A. Richards. However, while these articles tend to focus on the question of whether or not there was a relationship between the drug experience and the mystical experience, the books being published as a result of psychedelic research took this to be a fact and it is these books that are the object of investigation in this final chapter.



This chapter is divided into three sections. The first explores the development of psychedelic therapy and how it became a therapeutic practice, largely in California in the early 1960s, and examines its effects on drug literature; namely through *A Discovery of Love* (1963) by Malden Grange Bishop. The second section is concerned with the research of Dr. Oscar Janiger, a friend of Aldous Huxley, whose wide-ranging study on the effects of LSD led to the development of a sub-study on the drug's effect on the creative process of artists. This study led to the publication of *Exploring Inner Space* (1961) by Jane Dunlap, which will be used to demonstrate how the psychedelic territory was being expanded in respect of positive Christian readings and media-influences from recent hallucinogenic mushroom research. Finally, after outlining the end of psychiatric research with the hallucinogen class, how a number of writers and psychiatrists, all heavily influenced by the previous decade of research, began to explore the question of how psychedelics could be incorporated into society. Namely, *The Joyous Cosmology* (1962) by Alan Watts; *Island* (1962) by Aldous Huxley; and *The Psychedelic Experience* (1964) by Timothy Leary, Ralph Metzner and Richard Alpert. These writers developed a psychospiritual approach that utilised Oriental spirituality in order to highlight spiritual pathologies of the Western social and, furthermore, also explored how LSD could be used therapeutically to overcome these pathologies.

#### 4.1: The Discovery of God

This section will recount the development of psychedelic therapy from its coining as a term, into a therapeutic practice based on the ideas Aldous Huxley developed in his two mescaline texts, and how it was then retransformed into a literary form; namely in Malden Grange Bishop's *A Discovery of Love*. Bishop's text will be analysed in two ways. Firstly, it will be read as an idealised form of psychedelic therapy and will elucidate how the methodology has mimicked Huxley's cartographical metaphor and also adopted elements of the psycholytic approach. Secondly, the book will be read as a response to an increasingly negative view of hallucinogens within mainstream politics and the public sphere. Overall, this will demonstrate a dynamic cultural relationship between literature, psychiatric practice and the socio-political position of hallucinogenic drugs in the early 1960s.

Humphry Osmond and Aldous Huxley remained friends after Huxley's mescaline experience and, writing to one another through letters, engaged in a friendly deliberation over the possibility of coining a new name for the hallucinogen class of drugs (Stevens 1993; Huxley 1999). They both felt that the terms *hallucinogen* and *psychotomimetic* were inadequate descriptions of the effects of the drugs and that they carried negative connotations. As was stated in the previous chapter, the psychotomimetic reading fell out of favour because research failed to reveal any meaningful relationship between the state-of-mind produced by mescaline and that of psychotics. Moreover, Huxley, in *The Doors of Perception* and *Heaven and Hell*, had posited a new methodology in understanding the efficacy of the drugs by postulating that they had the ability to, firstly, be a vehicle to explore numerous areas of the psyche and, secondly, to take one beyond a simple pathologically-contingent understanding into a visionary one. The limits of this visionary space, which through the responses of Richard Heron Ward and Robert Zaehner, became a place of religious, mystical and philosophical speculation, demanded a new practice in order to utilise the drugs in the wider social. As Huxley wrote: "What we need is a new drug which will relieve and console our suffering species without doing more harm in the long run than it does good in the short. Such a drug must be potent in minute doses and synthesizable" (Huxley 1994, 44). Therefore a form of therapeutic practice could give the general population access to these experiences under controlled conditions. The word the two came up with was *psychedelic* and its practice was named *psychedelic therapy*. And the potent drug? LSD.

On 30 March, 1956, Huxley wrote a small verse suggesting the word *phanerothyme* to Osmond, which means ‘soul-manifesting’, from *phaneros*, meaning *to manifest* and *thymos*, meaning *soul*:

*To make this mundane world sublime  
Just half a gram of phanerothyme.*

Not to Osmond’s taste, he replied with the following verse, coining the term *psychedelic*, coming from the Greek word ‘*psyche*’ meaning *mind*, and ‘*delos*’ meaning *manifest*, thus *psychedelic* means *mind-manifesting*:

*To fall in hell or soar angelic  
You’ll need a pinch of psychedelic* (Dyck 2008, 2)

The term *psychedelic* was adopted into the clinical field to describe the specific method of therapy that Osmond was developing, *psychedelic therapy*, and which he publically announced in 1957 at the New York Academy of Sciences (Dyck 2008). Huxley, having already outlined a new approach that allowed for an understanding of *psychedelics* that saw them as able to produce more than just a psychotic state-of-mind, recognised the word’s value so far as it did not predicate a specific state. Mescaline and LSD’s ability to be *mind-manifesting* allowed for the intentionality (*set*) and environment (*setting*) to take a role in that which was produced in the mind of the user. In other words, *psychedelic*, as a term, incorporated the position Huxley elaborated on in his texts. The question, however, when understood against the backdrop of the wider social applicability, was how could this understanding translate into a therapeutic method, and to what aims?

Huxley, in combination with the responses to his work, had already partially answered the question; namely, the therapy should aim at producing spiritual and philosophical experiences that users could integrate in to their everyday lives. Broadly speaking, *psychedelic therapy* was developed in the hope that doctors could use “chemicals to trigger new perceptions of the self” in patients (Dyck 2008, 31). Whether the subject’s own approach to the experience was philosophical, spiritual or epistemological, “people regularly believed that the LSD experience fundamentally modified their being” (Dyck 2008, 31). Understood in light of Huxley’s cartographical metaphor, an individual entering into *psychedelic therapy*

would hope to explore the various segments of their psyche and, furthermore, develop an understanding of the self that was unknown prior to the *psychedelic experience*. Zaehner and Ward's contribution to this exploration was to legitimise questions of religious and philosophical understandings in light of Huxley's visionary speculation; questions repeated in the journal literature of the 1960s. Practically speaking, however, what did this mean for the psychiatric practice of psychedelic therapy?

Writing about the methodology of psychedelic therapy in 1975, researcher Stanislav Grof wrote: "During the drug-free preparation period, which usually lasted between fifteen and twenty-five hours, the therapist explored the patient's life history, helped him understand his symptoms, and discussed his philosophical and spiritual orientation" (Grof 2010, 24). From this point, psychedelic therapy would usually employ one large dose of LSD, which differs drastically from the psycholytic approach that employed a series of small dose sessions. Furthermore, the patient would then later have discussions with their psychiatrist/sitter in order to integrate the experience, and thus develop a new understanding of the self (Grof 2010). By employing this method, a session could be geared towards the specific set of the individual with the aim of producing a psychedelic experience. In literary form, the psychedelic approach is exemplified in the following book, and it also demonstrates Osmond's organisation of the psychedelic therapy into a social and institutionalised form.

Originally published in 1963 *The Discovery of Love – A Psychedelic Experience with LSD-25* was written by Malden Grange Bishop. Bishop was a writer who specialised in technical writing; a well-educated, family man, who when asked for his reasoning for wishing to take LSD, wrote: "I want to know more about myself. I want to discover who I am. I want to learn to love more deeply, and more completely. Love, to me, is that state wherein love is its own reward, and where the lover demands nothing whatsoever of the loved one. Love is freedom. I want to be free in love" (Bishop 1963, 28). Thus it was firmly established that psychedelic therapy aimed at promoting one's understanding of the self and, moreover, that it was applicable with a religious and metaphysical understanding: "What I really discovered under LSD was love. Some call it God, and I like this term too. It is God; it is Love" (Bishop 1963, 14).

Aside from the practical aspects of the therapy itself, it is also discernible from Bishop's text the extent to which psychedelic therapy, and hallucinogens in general, had become part of a wider social schema; both in terms of psychiatry outside research and into therapy and, through literature, into the cultural milieu of the early 1960s. For example,

Bishop writes that although he had read Huxley's mescaline texts and his wife an article on "sacred mushrooms" (a text that will be dealt with in section 4.2), it was word of mouth that really led him to the experience (Bishop 1963). Yet, the opportunity to undergo such a therapy was necessitated by social mechanisms, whose existence reified the psychedelic thread within the social. Bishop's session was administered at the Institute of Psychedelic Studies, in San Francisco and on the Institute's board of directors was Dr. Humphry Osmond, whose methods were being practised at the institute (Bishop 1963). Osmond also wrote the foreword to Bishop's text: "The background here is the whole of the author's life and unless we know what manner of man he is, we cannot hope to follow, let alone understand, his account of the mind manifesting experience" (Bishop 1963, 8).

There are two interesting points to note. Firstly, the autobiographical element, missing from Huxley's literary exploration, has very much become an intrinsic part of Bishop's text. Chapter 2, for example, is made up from Bishop's answers to a questionnaire he filled out prior to the experience, which is contingent to the psychedelic methodology. His history and personal relationships then become important elements in his experience. Bishop realised, "I was too busy making a meagre living, too busy trying to make myself into something lovable so that I often starved my children spiritually. I know now that my children, any children, are more happy with something in their hearts than in their stomachs, with excitement in their eyes than clothing on their backs" (Bishop 1963, 142). The content of *The Discovery of Love* is markedly different from either of Huxley's mescaline texts, which were largely concerned with the visionary aspects. However, Huxley himself had not discounted this type of experience and had, indeed, opened it up through his cartographical metaphor. In Huxley's terms, Bishop used LSD to navigate his personal sub-conscious and into the 'antipodes of the mind', wherein he found love/God. In many respects, Huxley had anticipated Bishop's experience almost a decade before he had it. This led to the second interesting point from Bishop's text; the space, to some degree, is shared by the psycholytic approach and this tension is demonstrated in the text.

Although the psycholytic aimed at patients overcoming personal neurosis, to cleanse the self of pathology, and the psychedelic approach was about understanding the self within the context of a wider religious and philosophical framework; the two, through Huxley's segmentation of the psyche, become partially entwined as a literary space in *The Discovery of Love*. The result of which was a merging of approaches. For example, take the following two quotes, which follow one another in Bishop's text. Note the similarity between the unfolding

of content and imagery in Newland's Freudian-tempered text, discussed in 2.3, and Bishop's; the main difference being the outcome, which for Newland was an overcoming of neurosis, but for Bishop was a religious understanding of self.

As I stared at the rose, the living, moving bud changed into the end of my father's penis, and then it changed into my mother's womb. I was there inside the cavity. I saw the ovum high up to the left of me. Then I saw the penis enter the door of the womb. I saw the semen ejaculated from the centre of the penis and then spread out over the walls of the womb... (Bishop 1963, 114).

This was the most significant point of my experience. This was the ultimate and final proof of my eternalness, of my Godness. I saw the beginning of this mortal thing called me, of my physical self. I was there *before* it was (Bishop 1963, 114).

However, while elements of the psycholytic are incorporated, suggesting an amalgamation of approaches within the literary space of explaining the value of the experience, the conjunction simultaneously illuminates incongruity between the approaches. The difference lies in their theoretical grounding so far as the psycholytic is based on the Freudian and Jungian models of the psyche, and the psychedelic on Huxley's cartographical metaphor; the former attached solely to the experience of the corporeal self, the latter applied to the self being understood within a wider metaphysical and religious framework. So, for example, Bishop interprets his LSD visions as a memory, just as Newland did, however he pushes the philosophical boundaries by postulating that they are memories from a non-corporeal self: "I saw the beginning of this mortal thing called me, of my physical self. I was there *before* it was". Then, having taken the understanding that his existence stretched out beyond the limits of his corporeality, he calls it the "most significant point of my experience". This is because it underlines his approach; he entered the session hoping to find God/Love and this realisation underlies its existence for him. The psycholytic is, therefore, neither verified nor dispelled, but is used by Bishop cartographically, through the imagery, to underline his own religious understanding. Having done so, Bishop then proceeds to enter in to a debate about his religious experience and which, therefore, places Bishop's text within the wider debate exemplified by the Huxley-Zaehner discourse of the 1950s.

Bishop opposes the lesson of his LSD experience, the recognition of a self beyond his corporeal existence, to the word *faith* because unlike faith he was imparted with an experiential, sensual knowledge that was a verifiable ‘truth’ while, “faith is the acceptance of something which you cannot otherwise prove” (Bishop 1963, 14). Bishop is drawing a line between the monotheistic, Western religions, in particular Christianity, and that which one might experience on LSD. He is decidedly against organised religion and its moral dogmas, positing instead spirituality based on experience: “The LSD experience is not concerned with morality. Rather it is concerned with immortality, which is what each of us seeks” (Bishop 1963, 15). In comparison to Zaehner’s position, Bishop is manifestly opposed to not only Zaehner’s reading of the hallucinogen experience but also the very grounding of his argument being based, as it was, in a Catholic understanding. Moreover, he is extending Huxley’s position by proposing that LSD could itself be the basis of an experience-based religion, a psychospiritual approach, and not only a grounding for understanding visionary and mystical understandings of the past. However, in section 4.2, it will be shown how an amalgamation between a Christian understanding in combination with the LSD experience, is elucidated in textual form; namely in Jane Dunlap’s *Exploring Inner Space*. Furthermore, in chapter 4.3, the appropriation of Eastern religious frameworks for psychedelic literature will be explored as a counterpoint to the monotheistic positions. Suffice to say, however, Bishop stands alone in all the primary texts of this thesis for developing a specific religious understanding based on, and manifesting from, psychedelic therapy itself.

The meaning of the word psychedelic, as used by Bishop and developed into his brand of experience-based religious understanding, thus begins to transform by 1963. Although Osmond had decided on the word because it had no previous connotations, by 1963, its meaning had begun to develop from ‘mind-manifesting’ into a word loaded with new intrinsic meanings. Bishop describes the word psychedelic in two ways during the book; as meaning *mind-manifesting*, which is concurrent with the meaning of the word attached to it by Osmond but also as *soul-manifesting*. Herein lies the very dichotomy that is at the heart of this territory of drug writing; the Greek term *psyche* is employed to mean both soul and mind and therefore underlines the conjunction between psychological and spiritual understandings; otherwise known as the psychospiritual. Huxley’s early speculations had developed into a psychiatric practice that took both elements seriously and which had begun to filter into the social in new textual forms. In the case of Bishop: “My own experience under LSD was the revelation of my soul to me. There can be no deeper experience, no more

profound revelation” (Bishop 1963, 13). The psychedelic experience was, in Bishop’s words, a “revelation”. Consequentially, the text can be understood as validating LSD, and other hallucinogens, as the basis for a revelatory, and experience-based religious understanding. In chapter 4.3, it will be shown how this idea is taken to its logical conclusion in the socially experimental texts of Timothy Leary and his colleagues.

I was, for the most part, just enjoying my new sense of oneness with God, with all things, and the new world which I had created. I was enjoying a new feeling of love. It was wonderful! Delightful! How I could have made things so complex before when they were so simple, so obvious! (Bishop 1963, 112).

The psychotomimetic flight into the psychedelic territory is still evident in Bishop’s text, however, in light of his psychospiritual understanding, madness takes a new place in relation to the hallucinogen experience: “I would no longer live a schizophrenic sort of life but would bring the two areas of my life—spiritual and physical—together in their proper relationship” (Bishop 1963, 123). In other words, the schizophrenic life is to be found in the social and LSD, when used as part of psychedelic therapy, is valued as being able to heal a spiritually-bereft society. The writer Alan Watts, discussed in 4.3, explores this more explicitly. This, perhaps, appears to be a rather presumptuous understanding by Bishop who had, by his own account, lived a comfortable and happy life; only recognising his own spiritual poverty on account of his LSD experience. However, in light of the increasingly negative socio-political atmosphere in the United States, which was outlined in section 2.6 in regard to Newland’s *My Self and I*, the book was, in many respects, a defence of the psychedelic methodology. Like Newland’s text, Bishop’s justifies the methodology by providing an account of a successful therapy. Moreover, he is outlining a reason why any individual, who perhaps had not considered themselves to be living a “schizophrenic sort of life”, might need to undergo such therapy. Humphry Osmond, in his introduction, is even more explicit in his defence of both hallucinogens and psychedelic therapy:

Those of us who are working with these strange substances trying to find the best way of using them, both in the treatment of illnesses and for the exploration of the human mind, need men like Bishop to come forward and explain that our purposes are



serious and good, to emphasize that this is not a diversion, an amusement or an attempt to relieve people of their spare cash (Bishop 1963, 9).

*A Discovery of Love*, like Newland's *My Self and I*, is a rather over-formulated text that presupposed its culmination. Ultimately, the text has the effect of providing an idealized psychedelic therapy narrative. Although it certainly contributes to the debate within the psychedelic sphere itself, in regard to the nature of the religious and philosophical elements, Bishop does little more than offer a defense in terms of its demonstration to the wider public. Therefore, not only does it act as a defense of the drug itself, it also attempts to legitimize the psychedelic approach within the public and psychiatric circles. More will be said on the socio-political context of the early 1960s in 4.2, however, initially, it is the continuing religious debate that this thesis will proceed to explore.

## 4.2: Neurotheology

This section deals with the hallucinogen research of Dr. Oscar Janiger (1917—2001) and the publication of *Exploring Inner Space* (1961) by Jane Dunlap. Janiger's research project gave over 930 doses of LSD to healthy individuals with the intention of doing a broad survey of LSD's effects. Adjacent to this he also studied the drug's effects on a group of writers and musicians in order to uncover a relationship between LSD and the creative process (Lee 1992; Stevens 1993; De Rios 2003). In 2003, Marlene Dobkin de Rios, a friend of Janiger's since 1969, published *LSD Spirituality and the Creative Process*. Janiger, though named as a co-author, unfortunately passed away two years before it was published. The book describes his experiments and findings, largely exploring them in terms of creativity and spirituality (De Rios 2003).

Jane Dunlap, whose real name was Adelle Davis, was one writer who took part in Janiger's sub-study. According to her, in *Exploring Inner Space*, she purportedly entered the experience with the hope of finding "a chemical Christianity" (Dunlap 1961). Based on results like Dunlap's, Janiger posited the existence of *neurotheological circuits* in the brain, which could be consciously accessed by an individual under the influence of LSD; resulting in a mystical or religious experience (De Rios 2003). In other words, a neurological pattern that corresponded to the religious experiences subjects had reported on LSD, which thus sanctified the psychedelic approach.

There are three central aims in this section. Firstly, placing both Janiger and his research in the context of the other individuals and research already discussed; primarily focusing on the relationship with the psychedelic territory. Secondly, to analyse Dunlap's text in light of her wish to find "chemical Christianity"; this is in order to understand her theological position in relationship to the other arguments that have thus far been identified in psychedelic literature. And thirdly, to examine how influences coming from outside the psychiatric study of hallucinogens had begun to directly affect psychedelic literature by 1961; namely the influence of an article by Robert Gordon Wasson entitled: *Seeking the Magic Mushroom* (1957). It will be argued that Wasson's article, as opposed to Huxley's texts, had the more direct influence over *Exploring Inner Space*, evidenced by the Christian-tempered experiences described by Dunlap. However, this is read as being an amalgamation with the developing psychedelic approach that concerned Janiger and which was itself directly influenced by Huxley.

Dr. Oscar Janiger was born in upstate New York and qualified with a medical degree from the University of California at Irvine. With an interest in psychiatry, consciousness and the botany of hallucinogenic plants, he became a Research Professor at the university and, from 1949, maintained a private psychiatric practice (De Rios 2003; Stevens 1993). During the 1950s and early 1960s he was friends with both Huxley and Alan Watts and his methods and results share a similarly psychedelic concern, which is to say in areas of aesthetic and religious experience (Lee 1992; Stevens 1993). This is notable from his sub-study on creativity and the emphasis laid upon the religious experiences of his subjects. For instance, in a follow-up study, participants were asked to rate their experience and two of the types listed are insanity and religious, which underlies both the psychotomimetic roots of psychedelic research and its concern with the spiritual (De Rios 2003, 189).

After delivering a lecture on Osmond and Smythies' M-substance theory, Janiger was approached by Perry Bivens, a deep-sea diver who had discovered that by changing the mix of gases in his own private decompression chamber he could alter his conscious state (Stevens 1993). He invited Janiger to try it and, "although he could intellectualize for hours about the fragility of what man calls reality, Janiger was unprepared for just how fragile it really was. Bivens would twiddle a few knobs, and the next thing the doctor knew he was gasping with laughter or roaring with energy" (Stevens 1993, 97). Afterwards, the subject of LSD came up and, along with their wives, they both took a trip to Janiger's vacation home in Lake Arrowhead and tried the hallucinogen for the first time (Stevens 1993). Subsequently, Janiger went on to do a large scale study on LSD that went on until 1962.

As well as reading and being influenced by Aldous Huxley's *The Doors of Perception*, the experience led Janiger to conduct human research with LSD, provided by Sandoz, during 1954 - 1962 (De Rios 2003). Janiger's research project gave over 930 doses of the hallucinogen to people aged between eighteen and eighty-one, from a range socio-economic backgrounds that included housewives, professionals, construction workers and the unemployed: "Janiger's general aim was to explore and study the effects of LSD on a large, highly differentiated group of people in a natural setting. Initially, Janiger sought simply to discover what LSD does to an average person" (De Rios 2003, 1). In order to best facilitate his research, Janiger rented a small house in Wilton Place, in Los Angeles, as opposed to a clinical setting, which he believed would have a negative effect on the study's outcome (Stevens 1993; De Rios 2003). A number of Dunlap's experiences take place at Wilton Place

and it further demonstrates how the psychiatric research was contingent to the movement of psychedelic literature (Dunlap 1961).

The more relaxed setting, with healthy volunteers, for LSD research is noteworthy for a number of reasons. Firstly, Janiger was not targeting individuals with an existing pathology, like the psycholytic model, and his research was therefore contributing to what would later become known as psychedelic therapy. Secondly, his approach exemplifies the move of LSD away from the clinical setting, which was important in psycholytic therapy, and in to the wider socio-cultural sphere; not only in the setting but also through the psychiatrist's family and his wide-ranging study on healthy individuals.

For this thesis, two important events happened as a result of Janiger's research: the establishment of a sub-study on creativity that led the publication of *Exploring Inner Space* (1961), and results demonstrating a high amount of people purporting to have a spiritual experience. Both of these events, when read in conjunction with his friendship with Huxley, can be seen as indicative of the psychedelic concern with aesthetics and spirituality. In 1959, Janiger published the article *The Use of Hallucinogenic Agents in Psychiatry*. In this article, Janiger gives early mention to the word psychedelic and writes of his observations on the questionnaires participants had filled out: "Frequently reiterated themes were those of the revitalization of feeling and the intrinsic awareness of the forces of life and creativity and their mutual interpenetration of the world" (Janiger 1959, 258). These observations sit neatly in the concerns raised by Huxley and that developed into key components for the psychedelic territory.

In one of Janiger's sessions, an unidentified artist saw a Hopi kachina doll in Janiger's office and wanted to draw it when under the influence and, as a result, Janiger soon developed a parallel study of the effects of LSD on 60 artists and 40 writers and musicians, in order to reveal how LSD interacts with the "creative process" (Dunlap 1961; Stevens 1993; De Rios 2003). Huxley's concern with Blake was, essentially, being re-enacted in the research field. One of the writers who took part in this sub-study was Jane Dunlap who would subsequently write the aforementioned text. In this text, which will be examined in more detail shortly, she purports to have had a religious experience. This, however, was not unique among Janiger's research project.

Although Janiger tried to create neutral settings that would not adversely influence the experience, in effect trying to develop a secular research model that did not inform participants of what experience they might have beforehand, he found that 24% of subjects

purported a mystical or spiritual encounter (De Rios 2003). *Spiritual* and *mystical* are taken to refer to “any person’s direct, subjective communion with a deity, spirit, or ultimate reality” (De Rios 2003, 115). Moreover, these observations are linked materially to neurotheological circuits in the brain. Just as Humphry Osmond’s early psychotomimetic theory—the ‘M Substance Theory’—relied on an understanding based in both psychiatric and chemical approaches, so too did Janiger’s neurotheological reading. The supposed spiritual experiences, granted under the influence of LSD, were analogous to a physical, neuron-based circuit in the brain that was chemically affected by the hallucinogen.

...the mind has a conscious and a subconscious part, divided by a thin membrane. Neurotheological constructs are beginning to postulate the actual neuroanatomic and neurophysiologic mechanisms responsible for this dichotomy. In this construct the subconscious is kept at bay until something causes the membrane to become more permeable, allowing unconscious content to seep into conscious awareness (De Rios 1993, 150).

While Janiger’s theory lay more in line with the psychotherapeutic tradition than with Huxley’s brain-valve theory, the outcomes he purportedly discovered had some relation to Huxley’s own observations: “In this psychotherapeutic context LSD’s potential to alter consciousness, specifically to provide access to creative and spiritual consciousness... can be seen as a tool for discovering wisdom” (De Rios 2003, 179). There is a correlation here, so far as the value of LSD is understood within a religious, aesthetic and epistemological context. Therefore, if Janiger’s research is indeed being informed largely from the psychedelic approach, to what extent has this been territorialized in literature by Dunlap? On the one hand, her concerns remain the same, yet, as has been noted about other works, there is a discussion over the religious nature of what is being experienced. In Dunlap’s case, a Christian-tempered position is developed and this differentiates the text from the majority of others this thesis has discussed, while retaining the psychiatric-contingency.

*Exploring Inner Space: Personal Experiences under LSD-25*, by Jane Dunlap, was published by Harcourt, Brace & World in 1961 and has not been reprinted (Dunlap 1961). Jane Dunlap is a pen name for the author Adelle Davis (1904-1974) and during the mid-twentieth century Davis was one of the earliest proponents of the field of nutrition (Riedlinger 2002). *Exploring Inner Space* describes five LSD experiences, the first of which

was conducted by a friend of Dunlap's, identified as Dr. Snow, and occurred on the 24 October, 1959 in "Dr. Snow's beautiful home rather than the somewhat dreary rooms of the university infirmary" (Dunlap 1961, 19). Dunlap's following four LSD sessions were similarly conducted to the first, but were under the auspices of Janiger's sub-study on LSD and creativity (Dunlap 1961).

Interestingly, the value that this text places on LSD is an amalgamation of the observations of Huxley and Osmond along with certain approaches in the psycholytic method. As was noted with Bishop's text, the two are beginning to share a territory in the 1960s. According to Dunlap's friend Robert S. Davidson, a clinical psychiatrist who wrote the introduction to the book, and colleague of Dr. Oscar Janiger, *Exploring Inner Space* was written, "partly as a scientific document and partly as an inspiration to people who still believe in the intrinsic spiritual power of the universe" (Dunlap 1961, 10). It was intended, therefore, to promote the spiritual use of LSD within the social. However, there is certainly a recognition by this point that the psycholytic method was also valuable and, as described earlier, Janiger's more psychotherapeutic approach does coincide with it. Davidson, in the opening chapter, discusses two uses for LSD: "For example, these drugs, particularly LSD, when used as aids in the process of psychotherapy, have been found to be sometimes startlingly effective in releasing blocked emotions, recovering repressed childhood memories, revealing defence mechanisms, and developing emotional insights" (Dunlap 1961, 6). The result, therefore, is a text that deals with spiritual dimensions within the LSD experience, but yet simultaneously addresses questions of the self, thereby articulating a lack of spiritual inclination as a kind of neurosis one must overcome. Dunlap, beautifully describes this through the metaphor of a cobra:

An eternity seemed to pass before I realized that the snake was merely shedding her old skin to give me a new one. The instant this awareness came, the dark room was saturated with sunshine, and a marvellous security flooded me from head to toe. Again I was the cobra, this time with a more brilliantly beautiful skin than before. Although I no longer saw the cobra who had given me the skin, I knew she was beside me, her presence reassuring now instead of frightening (Dunlap 1961, 142)

However, the psycholytic aspects, like repressed personal memory, while being alluded to, are marginalised in the text and, instead, there is a focus on the Jungian-inspired

segmentation of archetypes. Unlike Newland's *My Self and I*, which does the reverse in regard to the two approaches, a priority is given to the mythological and religious motifs. Dunlap was not neurotic in the Freudian sense but felt spiritually impoverished and, therefore, her imagery in the book reflects this as the therapeutic quality, which is in line with activating Janiger's "neurotheological" circuits of the brain and the development of psychedelic therapy in order to overcome a spiritual impoverishment.

There are a number of important points to note in order to ascertain the influences that helped lead to the nature of Dunlap's content. Firstly, she was alerted to the sub-study by Davidson, who had also tried the drug and they had discussed their experiences with one another (Dunlap 1961). Therefore, in entering Janiger's sub-study, Dunlap already had a grasp of the LSD experience herself and was thus partly prepared in respect to its effects, regardless of Janiger's approach of neutrality. Secondly, it is safe to assume that with the good deal of psychotherapists and psychiatrists that she knew, she would have been at least aware of both previous research with LSD and the discipline of psychotherapy itself. The upshot of which is that she chose to explore her spirituality under LSD in order to find a chemical Christianity. Thirdly, it is possible to also identify an important textual influence, which she mentions in the text and that, the thesis will argue, provided the groundwork for the Christian culmination of her experiences; namely, Robert Gordon Wasson's *Seeking the Magic Mushroom* (1957).

During this period hundreds of visions passed before my eyes, and dozens of Old Testament characters again lived and breathed. Later I repeated the Lord's Prayer and the Twenty-Third Psalm over and over. With each repetition, the words became more meaningful, more wrought with comfort, forgiveness, and God's love (Dunlap 1961, 192).

The highly Christianized ending to the book, coming after visions of other religious figures like Buddha, describes LSD as having the power to imbue meaning into the words of the bible. Dunlap is recognising a cultural-contingency in the LSD experience, which is to say that it enhances the values and beliefs of the individuals who consume it and this is demonstrated through the text. Indeed, the religious discourse that is occurring in psychedelic literature, on the whole, appears to underline this belief. Before doing a comparative analysis of Wasson and Dunlap's text, it is also necessary to highlight what Dunlap herself describes

as her personal, religious relationship, as pre-existing aside from Wasson's literary influence: "When it came to spiritual attainment, however, my development was so pitifully inadequate that I sometimes felt consumed with an empty yearning" (Dunlap 1961, 13). In other words, she saw herself as having a spiritual impoverishment and this firmly places her experiences within the psychedelic therapy territory. She writes about her personal struggles, from an early age, in pondering the existence of God and the organised dogma that is associated with it. Like Malden Bishop, Dunlap arrived at the LSD sessions with a spiritual expectation of the experience but a distrust of the Church. However, through the work of Wasson, she had read a Christian-tempered text that allowed for an experiential, indeed perhaps even mystical, Christian spirituality.

Of all the excellent articles the magazine [Life] had carried, the one which fascinated me most was by Robert Gordon Wasson on the magic mushrooms of Mexico. The mushrooms, he wrote, caused persons eating them to have visions and mystical experiences and for these reasons had been used in religious ceremonies for hundreds, perhaps thousands of years. He and his wife ate some of the mushrooms, saw beautiful scenes and colors, and felt rich emotions. As I read, I was overcome with an envy which refused to disappear (Dunlap 1961, 11)

Robert Gordon Wasson (1898-1986) was a banker and vice-president of J.P. Morgan & Co. between 1943 and his retirement twenty years later (Letcher 2006). In August 1927 Wasson was on honeymoon when he and his new bride, a Russian named Valentina Pavlovna Guercken (1901-1958), discovered they had opposite feelings about mushrooms. As his wife picked and gathered wild mushrooms to cook for dinner, Wasson looked on in horror, refusing to eat any for supper, telling her he "would wake up a widower" (Wasson 2008, 24). Suffice to say that he did not wake up to find his new bride dead and, after puzzling over why there should be such a cultural gulf in attitude between himself and his wife, they began researching the history of mushrooms. Their research put them in contact with mycological experts all over the world and news of their project spread. On September 19, 1952 Wasson received two letters. One from the British poet Robert Graves (1895 - 1985) that contained a cutting, which cited some sixteenth century Spanish friars who wrote of a Mesoamerican Indian mushroom cult. The other was from his printer in Verona that included a sketch of a



Mesoamerican artefact, held in the Rietberg Museum in Zurich, and which was mushroom shaped. Following this, their research turned to Guatemala and Mexico (Wasson 2008).

Wasson learnt that mushrooms were used in healing and divining ceremonies by the Mazatec Indians in a letter from one Eunice Pike, a missionary resident in Huautla, who had been unable to prevent the locals from the practice (Wasson 2008). On his first trip to Mexico in 1953 he located a curanderos (male healer) who he persuaded to hold a ceremony, and was able to make detailed notes on it. On his third trip, in 1955, along with the photographer Allan Richardson, he met the curandera (female healer) María Sabina (1894-1985) who agreed to hold a ceremony in which the two could eat the mushrooms themselves; thus becoming the first Westerners on record to intentionally consume a hallucinogenic *Psilocybe* mushroom (Letcher 2006). It was a remarkable discovery for an amateur mycologist and was included in Wasson's privately published *Mushrooms, Russia and History* (1957) of which only 512 copies were printed, complete with coloured plates. The book detailed all their research to date; including the discovery of the existing mushroom cult in Mexico. However, it was an article Wasson wrote for Life magazine entitled *Seeking the Magic Mushroom* that had a widespread cultural impact and that Dunlap cites in *Exploring Inner Space* (Dunlap 1961; Letcher 2006; Ceraso 2008). In order to demonstrate how Wasson's religious discourse has penetrated Dunlap's book it is worth now doing an analysis of the article, this will also show how Wasson may have taken influence from Huxley also.

Andy Letcher, in *Shroom: A Cultural History of the Magic Mushroom* (2006), argues that Wasson framed the mushroom cult, in *Seeking the Magic Mushroom*, in Christian "terms" and that this was an inauthentic interpretation of the curandera, Maria Sabina's, ceremony. Although both Letcher and Wasson do agree that the ritual setting included Catholic iconography and that Sabina prayed to various "saints" alongside indigenous influences, Letcher is concerned with the aims and function of the ceremony, and not its aesthetic and linguistic make-up and believes this is ultimately where the misinterpretation lies (Letcher 2006). Aside from citing possible prior influences on Wasson, including a minister father, Letcher's argument centres around the language in which Wasson frames the aims and function of the mushroom experience itself within the article. Wasson wrote: "This was the mushroom speaking through her, God's words, as the Indians believe, answering the problems that had been posed by the participants" (Wasson 1957). On the surface this function would seem to be in line with the mixture of Catholic and indigenous ritual. However, according to Letcher, this was not the function in which Sabina understood it;

rather, her belief was actually animistic as opposed monotheistic. The mushrooms—her “saint children”—were a key to communicating with spirits that showed her visions in order to heal and divine information, and was not a communion with God (Letcher 2006). In other words, Wasson was ascribing his own Christian understanding on to the function of the ceremony, replacing healing with communion with God and thus deterritorializing its meaning in his text.

Wasson, however, was aware of the healing aspect of the ceremony: “The mushrooms are not used as therapeutic agents: they themselves do not affect cures. The Indians “consult” the mushrooms when distraught with grave problems” (Wasson 1957) and goes on to describe Sabina’s belief that mushrooms are for communicating and divining information. Yet, Wasson is dismissive of the abilities to heal and this, more than anything, seems to underlie his Christian-tempered framing, downplaying the value of indigenous belief and over emphasising the ceremonial aspects. This is no more obvious than in his own experience, in which he does not entertain the ability to heal in the descriptions. Instead, Wasson concentrates on the visionary aspects of his experience, at once ignoring any epistemological or medical value.

There is, it appears, some telling intertextuality between Huxley’s *The Doors of Perception* and Wasson’s text, which means it is possible to draw a line of influence from Huxley, through Wasson, and to Dunlap. In *The Doors of Perception*, Huxley “became aware of a slow dance of golden lights” and “at another time the closing of my eyes revealed a complex of grey structures” he, unlike other writers however “saw no landscapes, no enormous spaces, no magical growth and metamorphosis of buildings” (Huxley 1994, 6). However, in *Heaven and Hell* (1956), he writes: “In time, pure geometry becomes concrete, and the visionary perceives, not patterns, but patterned things, such as carpets, carvings, mosaics. This gives space to vast and complicated buildings, in the midst of landscapes, which change continuously, passing from richness to more intensely coloured richness, from grandeur to deepening grandeur. Heroic figures, of the kind Blake called ‘The Seraphim’, may make their appearance, alone or in multitudes” (Huxley 1994, 71). Compare this to Wasson’s description of his visionary experience and one begins to see a qualitatively similar motif: “textiles, or wallpaper of the drawing board of an architect. They evolved into palaces with courts, arcades, gardens—resplendent palaces all laid over with semiprecious stones. Then I saw a mythological beast drawing a regal chariot” (Wasson 1957). In the previous chapter it was demonstrated how Huxley had segmented the hallucinogen experience, and

although he himself concentrated on the visionary and aesthetic, he also pointed out the existence of the archetypal, or Jungian, space. It appears that this is what Wasson concentrated on in his text, only he began to develop the archetypes through mythological creatures: “I felt that I was now seeing plain, whereas ordinary vision gives us an imperfect view; I was seeing the archetypes, the Platonic ideas, that underlie the imperfect images of everyday life” (Wasson 1957).

Therefore in *Seeking the Magic Mushroom* it is possible to pick out two important points, which this chapter argues had an important effect on how Dunlap’s *Exploring Inner Space* was constructed. Firstly, thanks to Wasson’s Christian deterritorialization of Sabina’s ceremony, the hallucinogen experience was deemed to put one in contact with God. This is reiterated in Dunlap’s text, but moreover, it gave her certain expectations before she had undertaken the experiments in Janiger’s research. Secondly, Wasson’s brief but explicit exploration of the Jungian space in his descriptions is very similar to the context and, indeed, the content for Dunlap’s descriptions. The combinations of these discourses are reterritorialized in *Exploring Inner Space*, via Janiger’s LSD research:

I could see that each of the impersonations, such as Pegasus, fairies, snowflakes, and the like, was a symbol of the part of one’s self which longs to take wing, soar into the ether, and commune with the divine. It seemed to me that the feelings of joy, rhythm, appreciation for of beauty and music, and the many other emotions I had experienced were all part of an intrinsic spiritual power which pervades the universe, each of them different aspects of God (Dunlap 1961, 76).

The combination of the mythological archetypes and their ability, according to Dunlap, to lead one to a space of communion “with the divine” clearly illustrates how the conflation of the aforementioned approaches has occurred textually. The archetypal motifs that reoccurred in Wasson’s text, following Huxley, coupled with Wasson’s religious reterritorialization of the mushroom experience and Janiger’s psychiatric approach, reaches an intensity within Dunlap’s text. The psychedelic territory is expanded into a positive Christian framework (as opposed, for instance, to Zaehner’s negative one.) The therapeutic aspect is explored through the visionary motifs of the mythological archetypes; essentially these are the neurotheological circuits being explored into textual form leading to an ultimately Christian confrontation.

*Exploring Inner Space*, the most fantastical work of psychedelic literature in regard to the imaginal landscapes it describes, is important for demonstrating the extent to which the psychedelic territory was expanding. The text incorporated Jungian-style imagery, alongside some of the observations of aesthetic and spiritual values described by Huxley and also, through the work of Wasson, it expanded the spirituality into a Christian-tempered perspective. However, psychiatric research with hallucinogens was coming to an end and the literary exploration, similarly, began to ask new questions, ones directed at the wider society, as opposed the singularity of individual therapy.

Early in 1962 the United States Congress introduced legislation that required new drugs to be demonstrated to work for the reasons they were marketed for (Lee 1992; De Rios 2003). As a result, controls on LSD tightened; the drug was classed as experimental and the restrictions made it difficult for psychiatrists to obtain the drug, while the Food Drug Administration (FDA) was put in charge of granting special permissions (Lee 1992; De Rios 2003). Janiger later remarked:

It was a very intense period... [t]he drug experience brought together many people of diverse interests. We built up a sizable amount of data . . .and then the whole thing just fell in on us. Many who formally were regarded as groundbreakers making an important contribution suddenly found themselves disenfranchised (Qtd. in Lee 1992)

However, although the psychiatric labours with LSD were beginning to come to an end, their association with the writers Alan Watts and Huxley meant that the psychedelic approach was being raised to more popular audiences. Addressing the question of how to integrate the lessons of mescaline, mushrooms and LSD, learnt under the auspices of psychedelic research, in the social became the primary objective of their literature. An Oriental spirituality, already developed by Huxley, became the framework for communicating the lessons of psychiatric research and a new experience-based religious discourse arose as a result; the psychospiritual.

### 4.3 Psychedelic Orientalism:

Establishing a relationship between drug literature and Orientalism has a critical tradition that has largely, thus far, concentrated on opium texts from the nineteenth century. Barry Milligan in *Pleasures and Pains: Opium and the Orient in Nineteenth-Century British Culture* (1995), for example, employs a cultural approach that widely utilises literary criticism, among historical, psychological and sociological methods in examining the works of writers like Samuel Taylor Coleridge and Thomas De Quincey. Milligan argues: “The association of opium with fantastic Oriental visions, for instance, is not easily explicable in terms of a single phenomenon—supposed chemical reactions of opium in the brain that breed the same imagery in all users, for example—but is instead both stimulus and response to a set of interrelated historical, psychological, and cultural factors” (Milligan 1995, 3). While Milligan was concerned with the socio-economic role of opium as an exemplifier in texts of Western and Oriental inter-culturalism, the mid-twentieth century relationship was slightly different. LSD, unlike opium, was not a drug of economic import/export with a history of use and value, but instead a drug whose intrinsic value was in question by those who were investigating it. Orientalism, as opposed to being a “vision” tempered by the cultural exchange of a drug like opium, was instead a lens through which to understand a spiritual value in both society and LSD.

Orientalism, in psychedelic literature, was appropriated in order to highlight the spiritual experience of hallucinogens and, by simultaneously highlighting certain philosophical and spiritual impoverishments in the Western world, as a way to bring LSD to the masses therapeutically. This was initiated in the 1950s by the religious arguments that were constructed by Huxley in *The Doors of Perception* and extended through its responses, but also in conjunction with the need to verify a therapeutic technique for the psychedelic approach. This cultural exchange was primarily textual and took the form of an amalgamation of psychiatric understandings and Oriental spiritual approaches, mainly from Buddhist and Taoist texts, although there are other nods toward Hinduism as well (Watts 1962; Huxley 1962; Leary 1964; Leary 1966). This burgeoning exchange led to a contextual framework for the psychospiritual method as part of the psychedelic territory. Therefore, this section is concerned with tracing the Oriental influence as part of the psychiatric approach leaving the clinic and becoming part of the wider social, so far as the models the literature adopted allowed for a wider participation in using the drugs. For example, not everyone would be in

need of psycholytic therapy as not everyone was neurotic, but for the psychedelic territory, concerned as it was with spiritual and philosophical questions, the juxtaposition of Eastern approaches highlighted, for the writers who utilised them, perceived problems with Western society; problems that everybody lived under the conditions of. This Western social pathology is primarily described as being an alienated self that LSD and Eastern practises aimed at reintegrating. The result was a psychospirituality that could be utilised throughout the Western social and, consequentially, this meant that the drugs in question had a political and cultural value, which went far beyond the medical aspects of the psycholytic and psychotomimetic.

Aside from Huxley's two mescaline texts, the aforementioned primary texts of this thesis have received little or no critical engagement and have uniformly been descriptions based on experiences facilitated by psychiatrists. However, the three primary texts of this section—Alan Watts's *The Joyous Cosmology: Adventures in Chemical Consciousness*, Aldous Huxley's *Island* and *The Psychedelic Experience* by Timothy Leary, Ralph Metzner and Richard Alpert—leave the psychiatric form somewhat. Instead, they are an amalgamation of recreational and psychiatric experiences rolled into a single narrative (Watts), a fictional novel (Huxley) and a guidebook for other people to experience psychedelics (Leary). These texts have generally been understood to be examples of Oriental spiritualism being applied to the hallucinogen experience and not as being connected to the previous psychiatric research first initiated by the psychotomimetic researchers. This thesis, therefore, intends to read the Oriental element as being a tool by which psychiatric methods are communicated to wider society. Before examining the contingency of these texts to the wider literary and cultural milieu of the period, it is necessary to first outline the previous scholarship on them.

One of the earliest commentators to understand the period as being contingent to an introduction of Oriental ideas was William Braden, writing in *The Private Sea: LSD and the Search for God* (1967): “It appears that there is presently occurring, especially in America, a wholesale introduction of Asian theories regarding the nature of man and the cosmos” (Braden 1968, 18). Braden goes on to write that, for the “LSD cultists”, this was necessary because the Western transcendental God was not applicable to the lived spiritual experience that psychedelic drugs purportedly gave individuals and, instead, the immanent God of the East provided a seemingly more ideal framework (Braden 1968). While, on the surface, this appears to be true, as the theistic debate in the responses of Zaehner and Ward failed to cultivate a positive Western theistic assertion, it fails to take into account two points. Firstly,

on the literary front, Jane Dunlap's purportedly successful attempt to "find chemical Christianity" demonstrates the further development of the Western theistic model; in other words, various frameworks had been utilised so it is wrong to say that the LSD experience necessitates an Eastern understanding. Secondly, Braden failed to take into account the extent to which the Oriental systems were not simply imported wholesale, but were filtered through and arranged alongside psychiatric approaches, specifically the psychedelic. In fact, Braden only explores humanistic psychology in his text and gives little or no mention of the history of drug-specific research, like the psycholytic and psychotomimetic.

More recently, David Lenson in *On Drugs* (1995) proposed that the Orientalism was a method by which the users of psychedelics merely superimposed it as a template on the psychedelic experience in order "that it is at once earthly and wholly other" (Lenson 1995, 145). Lenson also asked what might have occurred if this introduction of Eastern scripture had not occurred and answered it thus: "There is a chance that they might have led to that rarest of moments, a purely Western mysticism" (Lenson 1995, 143). While there is, as will be shown later in this section with the works of Timothy Leary, a strong argument for this superimposed model, Lenson fails to recognise that it was not an already unmediated experience that was being interpreted; psychiatry had already created the groundwork into which the Orientalism was introduced. Therefore this section has two objectives; to socially and culturally ground the literature within the psychiatric practices of the period; and, consequentially, to argue that there is an encounter between psychiatry and Eastern scripture that precedes this and is more accurately described as a psychospirituality. The result of this is to demonstrate that there is no pure mysticism of East or West, but a development of a psychospiritual mysticism that takes into account influences from Western psychiatry and Eastern spirituality. Psychedelic literature, especially toward the end of the period concerned, became a territory for exploring this amalgamation of ideas.

The Western cultural interest in Oriental spiritual traditions, in particular forms of Buddhism, was rapidly growing in the 1940s and 1950s, and particularly in the United States (Braden 1968; Suzuki 1974). The publication of translations and original works, like Daisetsu Teitaro Suzuki's *Essays in Zen Buddhism* (3 Vols. 1927, 1933, 1934), *Introduction to Zen* (1934), and Walter Evans-Wentz's *Tibetan Yoga and Secret Doctrines* (1934) and his edition of *The Tibetan Book of the Dead* (1927), were taking the Eastern spiritual ideas to a much wider intellectual audience. And, popular works by the Beat generation, like Jack Kerouac's *The Dharma Bums* (1958), were simultaneously introducing a particular type of Westernised

Orientalism to the youth culture. A major proponent of this Orientalism at the time was Alan Watts who subsequently became a commentator on psychedelics.

Alan Wilson Watts (1915-1973) was born in Kent, England but moved to the United States in 1938 just before the outbreak of World War Two and began formally studying Zen Buddhism in New York (Furlong 1987; Watts 2001). Watts later moved to California in 1950 where he joined the American Academy of Asian Studies and became an Orientalist, specialising in Zen, and spent much of the remainder of his life popularising Eastern religious and spiritual ideas with books, on radio and in person (Furlong 1987; Stevens 1993; Watts 2001). Watts published numerous books on Zen, including *The Spirit of Zen* (1936), *Zen Buddhism* (1948), *The Way of Liberation in Zen Buddhism* (1955) and the very popular *The Way of Zen* (1957). One biographer wrote: “He was good at taking a complex religious idea and putting it into language most people untutored in religion could understand...” (Furlong 1987, 138). His ability to articulate complex ideas clearly, and his proximity to the psychiatric and intellectual circles in California in the 1950s (including friendships with the likes of Aldous Huxley and Oscar Janiger,) made him an ideal experimenter with LSD (Stevens 1993).

In 1958, the Jungian psychiatrist Keith Ditman, in charge of LSD research at the UCLA department of Neuropsychiatry, invited Watts to take part in his research because a number of his subjects had reported accounts that read like mystical experiences, and Watts was deemed a suitably knowledgeable candidate to assist in describing LSD’s effects (Furlong 1987; Watts 2001). Of the experience, written in his autobiography *In My Own Way* (1972), Watts wrote: “All in all my first experience was aesthetic rather than mystical” (Watts 2001, 234). Although he had come to expect a different experience, following on from what Ditman and Huxley had told him of the mystical element, this was not his final experiment with hallucinogens. Recordings were made during his first session and another psychiatrist, Sterling Bunnell, heard them and decided to put Watts through further experiments because of his ability to articulate what he felt (Watts 2001).

His subsequent sessions, which purportedly included mystical experiences, led to the publication of a number of drugs texts that, while also being Watts’ own brand of Orientalism, shared a particular discursive value with the other literature discussed in this thesis; building on and expanding the psychedelic territory. Watts’s friendships with a number of the other researchers and experimenters, which must certainly have had an influence on his opinion, even if just in response, demonstrates the minor literary movement



as having established itself during this period. Watts contributes to this cultural milieu with the following texts: *The Joyous Cosmology* (1962), the chapter *The New Alchemist* in the book *This Is IT* (1958) and, later, the journal article *Psychedelics and Religious Experience* (1968).

In retrospect, Watts wrote of the character of his LSD experiences that “LSD brought me into an undeniably mystical state of consciousness. But oddly, considering my absorption with Zen at the time, the flavor of these experiences was Hindu rather than Chinese” (Watts 2001, 325). This, however, was written in retrospect and in *The Joyous Cosmology* it is Zen that receives the greater attention; especially in comparison to the mystical experience, which Watts saw was the outcome of Zen practise when one reaches a state of *satori* (Watts 1990). In fact, it is the practise of Zen coupled with the therapeutic application of psychedelics that meant the drug was being made applicable to wider society. Watts’ Oriental mysticism was a method of highlighting problems with Western society and the role psychedelics could play in healing these problems.

Watts’ textual and verbal exploration of mysticism has been criticised by later researchers of his works: “Watts’ mysticism is deviant because it seeks perversely to undo mystical experience. This is done by inferring from the fact that mystical experience is not ineffable, that there is no separation between the spiritual and the physical, which eventually transformed into the view that the spiritual and physical are virtually the same thing, which Watts calls his “spiritual materialism”” (Nordstrom 1980, 381). However, this thesis is not concerned with the degree to which Watts has faithfully interpreted Zen Buddhism or Hinduism however, as this is, in itself, a separate project. Instead, it is rather understanding his Oriental view within the trajectory of psychiatric research with hallucinogens and how he relates this to creating a form and content for understanding the psychedelic experience in *The Joyous Cosmology*. In other words, why has Watts chosen to integrate Orientalism and psychedelic psychiatry in *The Joyous Cosmology*? In short, as a method of making both elements applicable to wider, popular, culture. Before exploring this it is necessary to first describe the dialogue that was occurring in psychedelic literature, in this case, between Watts and Huxley in order to demonstrate the contingency of texts.

In Watts’ own preface he places himself firmly within the context of Huxley’s discursive drug territory. He claims that his friend Huxley had had a “deeper” experience with hallucinogens since he wrote *The Doors of Perception* and *Heaven and Hell* (Watts 1962; Davenport-Hines 2001)). Watts is using Huxley’s radical understanding of the

psychotomimetic, which had since developed into the psychedelic, as the grounding for his own philosophical speculation, wherein he attempts to “account [for] some of the deeper, or higher, levels of insight that can be reached through consciousness-changing “drugs”” (Watts 1962, *xvii*). In other words, the new experiences Huxley had achieved had yet to be textualised and Watts saw this as the space he would fill with *The Joyous Cosmology*. The psychedelic territory, a ground for religious and philosophical speculation, is then explored by Watts in recognition of both his Oriental tastes and, more importantly for this thesis, psychiatric methods and therapy.

...the revelation of a unified cosmology, no longer sundered by the ancient irreconcilables of mind and matter, substance and attribute, thing and event, agent and act, stuff and energy. And if this should come to be a universe in which man is neither thought nor felt to be a lonely subject confronted by alien and threatening objects, we shall have a cosmology not only unified but also joyous (Watts 1962, 94)

The prologue of *The Joyous Cosmology* is a broad discussion of the mind-body duality that was most clearly articulated in the modern era by the French philosopher Rene Descartes (1596-1650) in the phrase *cogito ergo sum* (I think, therefore I am) (Russell 2004). In Watts’ opinion this duality is a spiritual and psychiatric problem and the separation of mind and body lies at the heart of individual and social pathologies in the Western world. It is, therefore, the job of therapy and spiritual practice to reintegrate the two as part of a unified system in both a personal and philosophical outlook: “A very small number of Eastern gurus, or masters of wisdom, and Western psychotherapists have found—rather laborious—ways or tricking or coaxing the organism into integrating itself—mostly by a kind of judo, or “gentle way,” which overthrows the process of self-frustration by carrying it to logical and absurd extremes. This is pre-eminently the way of Zen, and occasionally that of psychoanalysis” (Watts 1962, 7). Note how psychoanalysis and Zen have been aligned alongside one another. This demonstrates how Zen, traditionally understood to be about reaching a state of enlightenment, or *satori*, has been recast as a therapeutic method; by doing this Watts is allowing the psychedelic space to be open in regard to psychospiritual practice with hallucinogenic drugs. Moreover, if the problem is duality and if duality lies at the heart of Western society, then these methods attain a greater importance as they become relevant to anyone under the auspices of the Western influence.

Is it possible, then, that Western science could provide a medicine which could at least give the human organism a start in releasing itself from its chronic self-contradiction? The medicine might indeed have to be supported by other procedures—psychotherapy, “spiritual” disciplines, and basic changes in one’s pattern of life, but every diseased person seems to need some kind of initial lift to set him on the way to health (Watts 1962, 12).

There are three important points to note from this paragraph. Firstly, Watts’ perceived Western pathology of the “chronic self-contradiction” that is derived from the philosophical premise of a mind-body duality becomes the problematic for any therapeutic process. In other words, there is a particular Western problem that components of Oriental spirituality can purportedly redress but which, furthermore, could be aided by Western science. Secondly, and in consequence to the first, there is recognition that psychotherapy and spiritual disciplines both aim toward reintegrating the self. By doing this Watts is showing the applicability of introducing a religious tendency into psychiatric practice, which, bearing in mind the development of psychedelic therapy, justifies the aims of such therapies in regard to the observations of Aldous Huxley. And thirdly, that the medicine that Western science has developed in order to aid these therapeutic processes are the hallucinogens like LSD. They become a valuable medical catalyst for a psychospiritual process of personal integration.

Watts has constructed his argument, and his introduction of Oriental ideas, based on a pathology of everyday life. Interestingly this brings to mind Zaehner’s criticism of Huxley that the author looked down upon everyday consciousness but, unlike the earlier Huxley, Watts understands the drugs to be part of a wider process, rather than a spiritual end in themselves. Largely, this thesis argues, because of the development of psychedelic therapy that wished to use LSD as part of disciplined therapeutic process, but also because of Watts’s emphasis on spiritual, Oriental disciplines like Zen. Indeed, it is worth saying something of how Watts may have perceived a similarity between the drug experiences he had read about and received and his understanding of Oriental spirituality.

According to Watts, Zen, like Taoism, Vedanta and Yoga, is not a religion or philosophy, but is known in India and China as a ‘way of liberation’ (Watts 1990). In other words, it is a process, named as ‘moksha’, that one must go through: “*Moksha* is also understood as liberation from *maya* – one of the most important words in Indian philosophy,

both Hindu and Buddhist. For the manifold world of facts and events is said to be *maya*, ordinarily understood as an illusion which veils the one underlying reality of Brahman” (Watts 1990, 58). Bearing in mind Huxley’s observation that one goes through the doors of perception when using a psychedelic drug then the two have an intrinsic correspondence. In fact, as will be shown later in this section, Huxley uses the term *moksha* to name his psychedelic medicine in the novel *Island*. Furthermore, “The important point is that, according to Taoism and Zen, the centre of the mind’s activity is not in the conscious thinking process, not in the ego” (Watts 1990, 45). Mind, in Watts’s interpretation, is the totality of psychic functioning, which must include, therefore, sub, or, unconscious processes. This also acts in accordance to Huxley’s cartographical metaphor and, simultaneously with psycholytic theory, that one is either moving into deeper areas of the psyche or revealing elements of the unconscious. The upshot of these similarities, the process and exploration of the full functions of the psyche, is that Watts is able to introduce his Orientalism into his texts via the psychedelic territory developed by Huxley and the two become inextricably linked.

This literary territory, revolving around spirituality, psychiatry and psychedelics, is most obviously articulated by Watts’ advice for testing the drugs. He writes that the best conditions for taking them are a more home-like setting, as opposed to clinical, and are best “supervised by religiously orientated psychiatrists and psychologists” (Watts 1962, 17). This move from the clinic, however, was having a dual effect when the psychedelics were also leaving the hands of trained psychiatrists, leading to the negative public response that was building in the early 1960s (Stevens 1993). Later, Watts maintained this was an important reason for writing of the book:

I decided more need to be said [on psychedelics], mainly to soothe public alarm and to do what I could to forestall the disasters that would follow from legal repression. For I was seriously alarmed at the psychedelic equivalents of bathtub gin, and of the prospect of these chemicals, uncontrolled in dosage and content, being bootlegged... I maintained that, for lack of any better solution, they should be restricted for psychiatric prescription (Watts 2001, 326)

As has already been discussed, there was an increasingly negative attitude toward the use of psychedelic drugs in 1962 and, just as Bishop and Newland’s texts were defences of the respective methodologies they underwent experiences with, so *The Joyous Cosmology*

was also reckoned by its author to be an attempt to “soothe” the public anxiety. In many respects then, it is the public Watts is primarily addressing with this text; justifying the need for such a practice with his Western problematic of the mind-body dualism, yet also firmly placing the control of such “medicines” within psychiatric hands. He simultaneously wishes to defend the wide use of the drugs but yet still believes in a priestly caste to be in control of them, which is to say the religiously-tempered psychiatrists. In this sense, although the process of culturally controlling the value of the drug is moving away from the clinical setting and in to the social, Watts perceived this to still be mediated by the psychiatric establishment; LSD was religion for the masses.

In fact, the major concern of this later period of psychedelic literature in the early 1960s is in describing how these drugs and psychedelic therapy could be safely and effectively introduced in to society. For Watts, this was in understanding the role of the individual as being alienated from the self by the Western social. Hallucinogens and Oriental spiritual practices (by this point part-and-parcel of the same psychospiritual approach in the literature) were the therapeutic methods of self-realisation/integration and the overcoming of the Western pathology; *The Joyous Cosmology* was a philosophical explanation of this Western state-of-society, which requires healing in respect of these methods. Other works of literature, however, took different approaches in their form and content but with a similar aim. Aldous Huxley, in his final novel before his death in 1963, which similarly explored the social role of psychedelics and self-realisation, chose instead to describe how this might function in fictional form; essentially painting a picture of how society might integrate the psychedelic methodology.

The *moksha*-medicine can take you to heaven; but it can also take you to hell. Or else to both, together or alternately. Or else (if you’re lucky, or if you’ve made yourself ready) beyond either of them. And then beyond the beyond, back to where you started from—back to here, back to New Rothamsted, back to business as usual. Only now, of course, business as usual is completely different (Huxley 1962, 261)

Having written the dystopian novel *Brave New World*, with its population-controlling drug *soma*, Huxley’s final novel *Island* explored the opposite and describes the island utopia of Pala that employs a fictional toadstool called the *moksha-medicine* as part of its efforts to ensure personal and spiritual well-being. According to Lindsey Banco: “[T]he problems

associated with Huxley's island enclave, the restraints it imposes upon its inhabitants and the exceptionality it foments, highlight the imperial dimensions of Huxley's coding of the psychedelic experience as travel" (Banco 2012, 75). As with his reading of Huxley's cartographical metaphor, Banco's critique is concerned with the colonial aspects of the utopia and the manner in which they serve a conservative attitude through various restrictions. However, viewed not simply as a utopian novel, but as part of the psychiatric research and therapy territory, *Island* is revealed to be a distinct part of the psychedelic literature assemblage. The book's concern with the place of the personal, psychospiritual journey in society coincides with the development of psychedelic therapy, along with its aims and parameters.

The concern here then is how Huxley integrated moksha into his utopia; namely through a concern for Oriental ideas and the psychedelic, therapeutic value of hallucinogens. In the above quote, Huxley has envisioned the efficacy of the moksha-medicine in a similar manner to his descriptions of mescaline in *The Doors of Perception* and *Heaven and Hell*. Also, by this time, the remarkable effects of certain mushrooms had already become known thanks to the work of Robert Gordon Wasson, as discussed in section 4.2, but unlike Wasson's predominantly Christian reading, Huxley ascribed his own particular Oriental psychedelic understanding. This is explored most explicitly through the book's protagonist and Pala's syncretic form of Buddhism.

The protagonist is called Will Farnaby; a journalist who is secretly in search of oil reserves on Pala. After a shipwreck, in which he finds himself washed-up on the beach of the island, he discovers a utopian oasis that has crafted itself into an idealistic culture that has based its structure on a synthesis of Western science and Eastern philosophy and which, at the beginning of the novel, he is very cynical about. As Farnaby is slowly shown the structural workings of the society he begins to fall for its idealism, which puts him at odds with his real reasons for visiting Pala. However, the novel is ultimately pessimistic as the surrounding capitalistic, oil-hungry world eventually invades the utopia. In the final chapter, Farnaby experiences the moksha-medicine for himself just at the same time that Pala is invaded. For the reader, two realizations occur concurrently in the text; the revelation of Farnaby's spiritual self, in which his cynicism is cast out, freed from the Western social pathology, and of the unstoppable march of the material world. This mirrors Huxley's attitude in his two mescaline texts, which, as Zaehner pointed out in his rebuke, revolved

around a distrust and dislike of the ordinary world and an escape into the sanctuary of self. Of Farnaby's trip, Huxley wrote:

The inner illumination was swallowed up in another kind of light. The fountain of forms, the coloured orbs in their conscious arrays and purposefully changing lattices gave place to a static composition of uprights and diagonals, of flat plains and curving cylinders, all carved out of some material that looked like living agate, and all emerging from a matrix of living and pulsating mother-of-pearl (Huxley 1962, 262)

Gorman Beauchamp, in his journal article *Aldous Huxley's Psychedelic Utopia* (1990), demonstrates that the novel is more concerned with the reality of personal enlightenment rather than the political enlightenment of the utopia, which is inevitably destroyed by the materialistic and consumer world that surrounds it: "[T]he extensive attention paid to the process of spiritual enlightenment among the Palanese and the demonstration of its effects on the soul of the cynical Farnaby tip the balance of *Island* more toward the personal than the systematic, the eupsychic than the eutopic (Beauchamp 1990, 64). Within this context then, the moksha-medicine and the Palanese religion, which is based on a form of Buddhism, become central to the story, over-and-above the political nature of Pala. However, the Orientalism of the novel bridges the gap between the systematic and the personal, by being a system of belief that nurtures individual, spiritual enlightenment. As Huxley would later write, "The possibility of shifting from objectivity to life's subjective meanings is built into the structure of almost every good novel. What a character does is described, now from the outside, now from within, now as others see the event and now as the protagonist feels it" (Huxley 1991, 18). And this is, indeed, the strength of this otherwise pallid novel; its ability to juxtapose the personal with the systematic in its narrative structure. Huxley's use of Orientalism is to bolster the psychedelic line of thinking so far as it provides a framework, or system, for introducing the psychedelic goal of personal, spiritual realisation via a framework that implies a more generalised social behaviour; in this case Buddhism. In other words, psychedelics are introduced into the social as part of a wholesale revaluation of personal and social ethics.

Pala's religion is a syncretic form of Buddhism that includes aspects of various forms, like Tantric, Mahayana and Zen (Huxley 1962). The character Ranga tells Farnaby that they take a "hard core of sense" from them all, which means "you accept the world, and make use

of it; you make use of everything you do, of everything that happens to you, of all the things you see and hear and taste and touch, as so many means to your liberation from the prison of yourself” (Huxley 1962, 75). This spiritual philosophy of experience is then, like Watts, juxtaposed with the Western approach, of which the character Ranja says only produces “good talkers”. It is within this experiential approach to spirituality and philosophy that the moksha-medicine finds its role as a method toward liberation, when one can “catch a glimpse of the world as it looks to someone who has been liberated from his bondage to the ego” (Huxley 1962, 137). Huxley, for all his pessimism about the materialistic world, does appear to believe that if these spiritual practices, including the moksha-medicine, were more widespread they could affect wider society for the good. The Orientalism gives a social context to the use of hallucinogens, succinctly coupled with the psychedelic territory, which the political was unable to do; it is invoked as a working framework or process that allows for the absorption of psychedelic therapy into the social.

Therefore, what Huxley is demonstrating is, in a political world that will never allow the type of utopia he describes, one is still able to achieve a spiritual enlightenment regardless of the imposition of a cynical, materialistic society. Farnaby, who begins the novel as a cynic from this world, is able, through the moksha-medicine, to perceive the idealistic, enlightened self, even as the island utopia is invaded. Huxley, on the one hand, is showing the reader the necessity of psychedelic therapy in the social through the axiom of Oriental belief and, on the other, the reasons why a materialistic, Western, world is in need of such medicine in the first place.

Watts used *The Joyous Cosmology* to philosophically explore the reasons for the necessity of facilitating the psychedelic experience in the social, which is to say because he believed the West to be spiritually alienated. Huxley, through the medium of fiction, similarly demonstrated how a hallucinogen could, firstly, spiritually enlighten the individual, but also how this might manifest in a better society, which he illustrates through the workings of Pala. In both cases, Oriental spiritualism is employed in order to understand the psychedelic experience as part of a process and, furthermore, this corresponds to the development of the psychedelic territory with its emphasis on philosophical and spiritual growth. Simply put, they are saying a facilitated experience with psychedelics can lead to personal enlightenment when part of a wider personal practice and that, in turn, may lead to a mentally healthier society. However, it would be another individual who took these ideas and applied them to



the existing Western society of the 1960s and brought the psychedelic territory in to the forefront of popular culture; Timothy Leary.

Timothy Leary (1920-1996) was a psychologist who came to prominence while working as Director of Psychology Research at the Kaiser Foundation Hospital, with the publication of *The Interpersonal Diagnosis of Personality* (1957) (Conners 2010; Lattin 2010). On the strength of this work, and thanks to his friendship with a colleague, Frank Barron, Leary was appointed to a professorship at the psychology department, at Harvard University in 1959 (Stevens 1993; Lattin 2010). That same year, after Barron proselytised about some magic mushrooms he had taken in Mexico, Leary had his first hallucinogenic experience on the strength of his friend's recommendation, even though he had initially been sceptical as to the positive nature of their effects (Lattin 2010; Dass 2010).

Robert Gordon Wasson's *Seeking the Magic Mushroom* had a far-reaching effect on intellectual circles. As has been already noted, some writers like Jane Dunlap, had been so influenced that they actively sort out a psychedelic experience, and others, like Huxley, had employed the mushroom as content in their literature. Similarly, it was in Cuernavaca in Mexico, while on holiday in 1960, when Timothy Leary and his scientist friends sought out and procured some magic mushrooms from a curandera named Juana (Conners 2010; Leary 1993). Leary later described the effect of this experience in *The Politics of Ecstasy* (1968):

Once upon a time, many years ago, on a sunny afternoon in the garden of a Cuernavaca villa, I ate seven of the so-called sacred mushrooms which had been given to me by a scientist [Lothar Knauth] from the University of Mexico. During the next five hours, I was whirled through an experience which could be described in many extravagant metaphors but which was, above all and without question, the deepest religious experience of my life (Leary 1990, 13)

On his return to Harvard, Leary quickly went about setting up the Harvard Psilocybin Project (HPP), which ran from the summer of 1960 until its last sponsored study, the Good Friday study, in April 1962 (Lee 1992; Stevens 1993; Dass 2010). The aim of the project was to investigate psilocybin, the hallucinogenic ingredient in magic mushrooms, as a possible therapeutic, religious and creative agent in various studies; succinct with the aims of the psychedelic territory. Aside from the Good Friday study, others included testing the drug on prisoners at the Concorde State Prison and testing the effects on numerous writers and

musicians and recording the results via questionnaires (Stevens 1993; Dass 2010; Lee 1992). Leary and his colleagues would later, in June 1963, also found the journal *The Psychedelic Review*, which included writers like Robert Gordon Wasson, Alan Watts and Aldous's brother Sir Julian Huxley, and which ran until the early 1970s (Leary 1993).

When the day comes—as it surely will—that sacramental biochemicals like LSD will be as routinely and tamely used as organ music and incense to assist in the attainment of religious experience, it may well be that the ego-shattering effect of the drug will be diminished. Such may be one aspect of the paradoxical nature of religious experience (Leary 1993, 180)

Following the end of the HPP, which ended amid some controversy, Leary, his colleague Richard Alpert and graduate student Ralph Metzner began work adapting *The Tibetan Book of the Dead* in to a psychedelic guide book, which would eventually be published under the title *The Psychedelic Experience*. Before looking in more detail at this text, it is first necessary to contextualise the project in regard to its history, those individuals involved and, moreover, how it was embroiled in the psychedelic territory, which, of course, led to the publication of the aforementioned book.

Soon after initiating the HPP, in the fall of 1960, Leary met Aldous Huxley over dinner at a Boston restaurant, along with Humphry Osmond who had instigated the meeting, and the two early psychedelic troubadours felt Leary was the right person “to carry the psychedelic torch” and, furthermore, Huxley agreed to take an advisory role in the HPP (Lattin 2010, 46; Dass 2010). This demonstrates how the psychedelic territory became mediated by other psychologists/psychiatrists through the friendship and support of those who first initiated the approach. Indeed, the influence of the psychedelic circle was there throughout the HPP. In 1962 the Harvard University's Department of Social Relations gave Alan Watts a two year travel and study fellowship. Though having briefly met him before, it was here that Watts began to see a lot of Leary (Furlong 1987; Watts 2001). In fact, this friendship, led to Leary and Alpert writing the introduction to *The Joyous Cosmology*:

We are dealing here with an issue that is not new, an issue that has been considered for centuries by mystics, by philosophers of the religious experience, by those rare

and truly great scientists who have been able to move in and then beyond the limits of the science game (Watts 1962, *x*)

There are two very interesting points to be raised here about Leary and Alpert's introduction, about just how the psychedelic territory was being understood by 1962 and, furthermore, how the introduction of an Oriental lens through which to understand and communicate the psychedelic experience was also being employed to highlight the problematic of previous approaches. Firstly, the question of value raised by hallucinogens is the concern of not only scientists, or psychiatrists, for Leary and Alpert, but also philosophers and mystics. Indeed, in the development of this psychedelic territory, hallucinogens are offering a way for science to engage differently with its own methodologies: "If the pharmacologist can be of help in exploring this unknown world, he may be doing us the extraordinary service of rescuing religious experience from the obscurantists" (Watts 1962, *xvii*). Leary and Alpert wanted to leave behind the materialist ethic of science *and* the non-experiential religious tendency of the West and, in doing so, redevelop a Western approach to both of them through the axiom of the psychedelic experience; the psychospiritual. Watts' book, in this sense, is a bridge to this psychedelic territory, and Watts and others are cast as the thinkers of this new approach, ones who utilise Oriental approaches in order to bring in to focus the problems of Western science and religion: "We have had to return again and again to the nondualistic conceptions of Eastern philosophy, a theory of mind made more explicit and familiar in our Western world by Bergson, Aldous Huxley, and Alan Watts" (Watts 1962, *xiii*). Therefore, on the one hand, the Orientalism is supposedly highlighting a fault in the Western approach and, on the other, it is, through pharmacology, being employed to create a new approach to religion, philosophy and science. Just as Huxley, writing in *Island*, wished to show how psychedelics could inform a revaluation personally and politically, Leary and Alpert are making the same prognosis for the sciences.

Secondly, there is a distinctly political edge to their foreword. As was noted with *The Joyous Cosmology*, Watts felt there was a need to socially justify the use of these drugs within an increasingly hostile environment. Leary and Alpert took this to the next step and saw the psychedelic experience as a politically motivated act in itself: "Thus appears the fifth freedom—freedom from the learned, cultural mind. The freedom to expand one's consciousness beyond artificial cultural knowledge. The freedom to move from constant preoccupation with the verbal games—the social games, the game of self—to the joyous

unity of what exists beyond” (Watts 1962, x). Indeed, Leary expanded on this idea toward the end of the decade with an essay in *The Politics of Ecstasy* (1968). However, there was a very obvious reason why the two professors were eager to expand on the idea that the psychedelic experience was both political and able to remove one from “the learned, cultural mind”; their increasingly precarious position at Harvard University.

In January 1962, when Leary and Alpert wrote the introduction to *The Joyous Cosmology*, their work was being put under intense scrutiny and their methods, in some quarters of Harvard University, were believed to be unethical and scientifically unsound (Lee 1992; Dass 2010; Lattin 2010). Eventually, this led to the dismissal of Richard Alpert and, later, Timothy Leary. Their need to escape the establishment values came directly from their psychedelic research with psilocybin, as Ralph Metzner later said: “[F]rom the point of view of the behaviorist science game, taking a drug that produces an inner experience violates the paradigm” (Dass 2010, 35). The result of this departure was a group of psychedelic researchers attempting to find a base in which to carry on their research with hallucinogens outside of an institution. They left the psychiatric setting and entered into the social as an independent group, going under various names including The International Federation for Internal Freedom, and this gave them the opportunity to develop a new psychedelic paradigm, one in which they too looked to the Orient to highlight the psychedelic experience in their texts (Leary 1964; Leary 1966; Dass 2010; Lattin 2010). Later, in a journal article called *Reactions to Psilocybin Administered in a Supportive Setting* (1963), Leary, Metzner and their colleague George Litwin wrote the following of reported mystical experiences, in an otherwise typical scientific breakdown of methods and results: “Although this is not the place to enter into a detailed discussion of the significance of such experiences, it may be pointed out that some of the psilocybin and LSD descriptions are remarkably similar to classical descriptions of mystical experiences and religious conversions” (Leary 1963, 571). It would be in non-clinical settings and in popular texts that the group began to concentrate on the spiritual aspects of their results.

In the summer of 1962, Leary, Alpert, Metzner and a group of about a dozen graduate students moved to Hotel Catalina, in Zihuatanejo, Guerrero, Mexico for a six week retreat (Dass 2010). Ralph Metzner had been a graduate student when he had been part of the HPP and it was Timothy Leary who first gave him LSD. Metzner and Leary had already begun work on developing a guide from a Tibetan Buddhist model in Hotel Catalina and Metzner’s first LSD experience was undertaken using an early version of the guide (Dass 2010).

According to Metzner, “I thought how absurd it was that I should let fear feelings that were inside of me interfere with the relationship I had with someone outside of me. That was the message of *The Tibetan Book of the Dead* – recognise that it’s all inside of you” (Dass 2010, 54). This was a deeply psychological observation by Metzner but before examining the book itself, in order to demonstrate the realisation of this psychology within the psychedelic territory, it is first necessary to outline the background of *The Tibetan Book of the Dead* in the Western world and, furthermore, how other psychedelic writers had already invoked its use.

Lama Kazi Dawa-Samdup’s translation of *The Tibetan Book of the Dead* (1927) was, although not a complete translation, an attempt to synthesise the main points of what was originally titled the *Bardo Thödol*, or *The Liberation Through Hearing in the Bardo* (Evans-Wentz 1960; Bishop 1993). It was compiled and edited by Dr. W.Y. Evans-Wentz. The book was originally designed to guide people through the experience of death with the intention of having them follow the white light in order to avoid another corporeal life: “The first part, called *Chikhai Bardo*, describes the psychic happenings at the moment of death. The second part, or *Chönyid Bardo*, deals with the dream-state which supervenes immediately after death, and with what are called ‘karmic illusions’. The third part, or *Sidpa Bardo*, concerns the onset of the birth-instinct and of prenatal events” (Evans-Wentz 1960, xxxvi). The Buddhist text was studied during life in preparation for death, and also read over the dying and dead body in order to guide them through the process; a spiritual therapy for avoiding reincarnation.

When it was first published, the text had a wide ranging impact on the Western imagination (Evans-Wentz 1960; Bishop 1993). Aside from the Buddhist and spiritual interest, psychologists and psychiatrists became fascinated by the text; Carl Jung, for example, wrote a Psychological Commentary for the 1938 Swiss edition and subsequent publications in English also included it (Evans-Wentz 1960). Jung’s commentary demonstrates why the text subsequently became very important for psychedelic literature. He wrote that the translation could “make the magnificent world of ideas and problems contained in this treatise a little more intelligible to the Western mind” (Evans-Wentz 1960, xxxvi). Therefore, it is important to understand that this Oriental clash with the Western psychological community had already begun and hence David Lenson’s wish for a purely Western mysticism was perhaps always unattainable. However, what made it so applicable to psychedelic literature? Jung also wrote: “Metaphysical assertions, however, are statements of the psyche, and are therefore psychological” (Evans-Wentz 1960, xxxvii). In chapter three,

this thesis showed how Huxley had employed and evolved the psychotomimetic reading in order to create a spiritually and philosophically discursive space in drug writing; the fact that this book, to Jung's mind at least, fulfilled a similar discursive space in light of a process or therapeutic method meant it was easily corresponded to the psychedelic territory. Before examining how Timothy Leary, Ralph Metzner and Richard Alpert employed the Tibetan model to create a psychedelic guide book, it is necessary to briefly look at how *The Tibetan Book of the Dead* had already become a referenced text in psychedelic literature.

Of the other people identified thus far in the psychedelic territory a number had already engaged with *The Tibetan Book of the Dead*. Although not discussing the book in terms of hallucinogens, Alan Watts had already written a short review for the journals, in which he wrote of its importance, regardless of the success of the translation (Watts 1950). However, it was Aldous Huxley who had first proposed its usefulness in connection with hallucinogen use in *The Doors of Perception* and *Heaven and Hell* and it is worth briefly reiterating what he wrote. In comparing his own experience and comparing the good and bad reactions of the display of colours and white light: "An almost identical doctrine is to be found in *The Tibetan Book of the Dead*, where the departed soul is described as shrinking in agony from the Clear Light of the Void, and even from the lesser, tempered Lights, in order to rush headlong into the comforting darkness of selfhood as a reborn human being" (Huxley 1994, 37). Furthermore: "Like heaven, the visionary hell has its praeternatural light and its praeternatural significance. But the significance is intrinsically appalling and the light is 'the smoky light' of the Tibetan Book of the Dead, the 'darkness visible' of Milton" (Huxley 1994, 98). Interestingly, for Leary *et al.*, the relevance of the book has been slightly shifted and this, no doubt, is because of the development of psychedelic therapy or, in other words, the necessity of building a therapeutic framework around the psychedelic experience; as opposed, in Huxley's case, using the correspondence as an explanatory framework for his own understanding of the colourful imagery he perceived. The later integration of this Tibetan model is understood here then as reflecting the need for researchers to develop a therapeutic model in using psychedelics. Huxley, although having identified the territory within his own discussion, was not himself a psychiatrist; the result of this, however, was other psychiatrists utilising his observations within their own therapeutic context. The question is: How was a book about death, liberation and rebirth adapted into a therapeutic model for the ingestion of hallucinogens?

Metzner said of his first LSD experience, in which an early form of the guide book was employed, that he found himself feeling that afterward “[f]or about two or three hours I had no problem maintaining that state of spherical openness. It was effortless. I knew I was in my body, but I had no identity with it. My identity and awareness seemed to be spread throughout the room and even beyond into the forest outside” (Dass 2010). This is very much in line with Huxley’s mind-at-large and reducing-valve model, so far as identity with the body is reduced as the awareness of mind-at-large increases. However, if a psychiatrist is attempting this spiritual revelation in their patients then they need to demonstrate a workable model and that is where *The Psychedelic Experience* comes in.

Bearing in mind Huxley’s cartographical metaphor, the *General Introduction to The Psychedelic Experience* begins thus: “A psychedelic experience is a journey to new realms of consciousness. The scope and content of the experience is limitless, but its characteristic features are the transcendence of verbal concepts, of space-time dimensions, and of the ego or identity” (Leary 2008, 3). Therefore, following on from the territory that Huxley discussed, *The Psychedelic Experience* is a guide book in order to navigate the realms of consciousness. The book is structured into the three bardos: First Bardo, called The Period of Ego-Loss or Non-Game Ecstasy; Second Bardo, The Period of Hallucinations; and the Third Bardo, The Period of Re-Entry. After these three sections there are some technical notes for people to conduct their own sessions, including instruction on what drugs, in what doses and the way to create an ideal setting for the experience. What is obvious from the outset is the manner in which the adaption of principles has occurred: Rather than preparing an individual to follow the white light in order for the liberation of the soul to occur and, thereby, remove the circularity of rebirth into the body, Leary’s text speaks of the ego. As a therapeutic method the aim is to detach an individual from their socially-generated ego, which in line with Huxley’s thinking is part of the socio-political construct that keeps people spiritually and personally alienated. Then, have them recognise the spiritual element and guide them through ‘re-entry’ while maintaining their liberated ego. Clearly, the Oriental spirituality is being employed in the service of psychedelic, psychiatric models and not vice-versa.

In the realm of the Clear Light, similarly, the mentality of a person in the ego-transcendent state momentarily enjoys a condition of balance, of perfect equilibrium, and of oneness. Unfamiliar with such a state, which is an ecstatic state of non-ego, the consciousness of the average human lacks the power to function in it (Leary 2008, 27)

Although the Oriental element of the psychedelic territory makes sense, so far as it deals with a similar metaphysical outlook and also offers a process of liberation that is easily applied to psychiatric therapy, the book remains more firmly rooted in the public, as opposed medical, sphere. This is for two important reasons. Firstly, although Huxley and Osmond had told Leary that they felt only the elite of society, like politicians and artists, should be ‘turned on’ with hallucinogenic drugs, the beat poet Allen Ginsberg had urged Leary that the experience should be open to all (Lee 1992; Stevens 1993; Connors 2010). While all were seeking a radical change to the social outlook of the U.S., the former felt this information should trickle down from the top, while the latter saw the process as a grass-roots movement. However, it was Ginsberg’s method that eventually came out on top, partly, no doubt, because Leary himself was being cast as the individual to lead this grass-roots revolution (Connors 2010). Secondly, however, the book must also be seen as a turning away from the medical and academic establishment. Although a great deal of the book’s methodology lay in psychiatric theory that had developed in universities and literature in the 1950s and early 1960s, Leary and his colleagues had been expelled from Harvard and, indeed, the work on the guide books had largely taken place outside the confines of Cambridge. The Orientalism was a method whereby the authors could more easily turn the psychiatric context into a social one and bring psychedelics in to a wider forum.

The process of employing an Oriental system in order to explain and guide the psychedelic experience continued for Leary with the publication of *Psychedelic Prayers* (1966). Although it similarly attempted to synthesise an Oriental spiritual text, the ancient Taoist text the *Tao Te Ching*, into a guidebook for psychedelic sessions, it had also become a more explicit political tool in Leary’s attempts to convert the social. According to Ralph Metzner, “He [Leary] was using, at the time, the ethology language of imprinting and de-printing. These ideas and understandings formed the conceptual framework for his work in translating the Chinese Taoist classic, the *Tao Te Ching*, into a session manual for psychedelic experiences.” (Dass 2010, 144). Leary was attempting to ‘deprint’ the Western, materialist paradigm and imprint a psychospirituality on the users of psychedelics. In many respects this was a reaction to the public and government fear of the drugs that, by the mid-1960s, had reached huge proportions, eventually leading to their scheduling.

Hold in reverence



## This Great Symbol of Transformation

And the whole world comes to you (Leary 1966, 1.3)

In 1966, LSD and many other hallucinogens were made illegal throughout the majority of the world (Lee 1992; Stevens 1993; Hintzen 2010). During the brief period between their use being confined to the clinic and psychiatric institutions and the scheduling of the drugs as controlled substances, an attempt was made by Leary, Watts and Huxley to socially legitimise their use within the public sphere. This was done by introducing an Oriental spirituality in order to communicate the systems of psychiatric therapy, which had the effect of making the drugs appear suitable for anyone under the yoke of Western influence. In other words, they became part of a religious outlook, which attempted to cure the Western world of its perceived materialistic and personally alienating paradigm. Returning to the beginning of this section, David Lenson argued that this prevented the development of a purely “Western mysticism”, however, when the texts are examined and are shown to be an amalgamation of psychiatric, therapeutic methodology and Oriental spirituality, one finds that the dialogue between them did give rise to a particular system developed in the West; the psychospiritual. Perhaps not pure, but then what is, they do point toward the early development of a form of mysticism that was particular to the culture of the Western world at the time. In fact, what brought this development to an end was the scheduling of these drugs and the criminalisation of those people involved in their use. By the end of the decade, psychiatric research had all but come to an end worldwide and, along with it, the period and literary movement of psychedelic literature.

## 5.0: Conclusion

At the outset of this essay it was proposed that psychedelic literature was a minor literary movement that was medically and culturally contingent to psychiatric LSD and hallucinogen research in the 1950s and early 1960s. The dialogue that occurred between literature and psychiatry, mediated by religious and aesthetic debate, which occurred in the first decade, led to the development of various new psychiatric readings to these drugs and, indeed, new therapies in the psycholytic and psychedelic methods. The result of this was a psychospiritual narrative that found form in both literature and the aims and functions of psychedelic therapy. In the 1960s, however, the question of whether the drugs did indeed produce a religious or mystical experience was taken as fact by the writers concerned. As LSD began to leave the clinical setting, the texts increasingly became an attempt to socially and culturally legitimize the use of hallucinogens. It is possible to identify three reasons for this: (1) In response to a rise in public interest, which at the time was increasingly being governed by non-clinical use, negative media coverage and political pressure; (2) to legitimize the newly developing psychedelic theory within the scientific context; and (3), in order to add weight to the theoretical and philosophical debates that surrounded the identification of the visionary and mystical territory by Huxley. In other words, through cultural, scientific and philosophical discourse. Although the role of psychedelic literature as a discursive space in the 1950s actively influenced researchers and other literary responses, it would eventually become no more than a mouthpiece for certain agendas; Leary's later social crusade for example in which books like *The Psychedelic Experience* attempted to pre-determine the effects of LSD. Had pressure from the media and governments not been exerted on researchers, it would have been interesting to see whether or not the dialogue would have continued to be influential to psychiatry and drug literature, producing ever-evolving theories and texts.

In the end, as research with LSD slowly ground to a halt, over the course of the 1960s, psychedelic literature similarly came to an end. The drugs themselves, however, became increasingly popular with the counterculture scene on both sides of the Atlantic, where they were used as a badge of nonconformity (Roberts 2008; Stevens 1993). As a result, the trajectory of drug writing changed. On the one hand, New Journalism began to take up the mantle for recording and commenting on the drug elements of the counterculture; on the other, a shamanistic paradigm for understanding hallucinogens began to emerge as an alternative to the psychiatric. It is worth briefly saying something of the texts concerned with

these two trajectories in order to contextualise psychedelic literature within the wider field of pharmacography.

In the mid-1960s, New Journalism was beginning to emerge as a journalistic and literary tradition as a response to a new American counterculture that took LSD as its badge of honour (Wolfe 1973; Stevens 1993): “This whole side of American life that gushed forth when post-war American affluence finally blew the lid off—all these novelists simply turned away from, gave up by default. That left a huge gap in American letters, a gap big enough to drive an ungainly Rio rig like the New Journalism through” (Wolfe 1973, 29). A number of important works in New Journalism were published that examined the countercultural affair with LSD including *The Electric Kool-Aid Acid Test* (1968) by Tom Wolfe and *Fear and Loathing in Las Vegas* (1971) by Hunter S. Thompson. Interestingly, these texts were far more concerned with the exteriority of people’s psychedelic experiences. While the psychedelic writers examined hallucinogens through a psychiatric and spiritual lens, looking into people’s minds, the New Journalists did so through counterculture and politics—a territory that had begun to emerge toward the end of psychedelic literature’s flourishing. In Wolfe’s aforementioned classic, for example, the author Ken Kesey and his Merry Pranksters are tracked across America turning people on to LSD with colourful, multi-media led shows (Wolfe 1989). Leary’s approach is even derided in the text, in the chapter *The Crypt Trip*, when Kesey and his Pranksters visit the Leary group at Millbrook:

‘- and now, for this part of our tour, the Crypt Trip –‘ And the Pranksters started rapping off the Crypt Trip, while Babbs entered into a parody rendition of The Tibetan Book of the Dead. This was one of the Learyites’ most revered texts. ‘This is where we take our followers to hang them up when they’re high,’ says Babbs, ‘the Crypt Trip.’ The clear message was Fuck you, Millbrook, for your freaking frostiness (Wolfe 1989, 99)

It is certainly possible to point toward a similar social outlook between the LSD portrayals of the counterculture and psychedelic writers, so far as the later psychedelic writers were increasingly describing an impoverished social, just as the counterculture cast their own society as a failure. However, what was largely a spiritual impoverishment for psychedelia became increasingly political as LSD was swept up in to the countercultural movement. And,

in the end, the idealistic values of the psychedelic movement were scathingly likened to the problems of American society by New Journalists. As Hunter S. Thompson famously wrote:

But what is sane? Especially here in “our own country”—in this doomstruck era of Nixon. We are all wired into a *survival* trip now. No more of the speed that fuelled the Sixties. Uppers are going out of style. This was the fatal flaw in Timothy Leary’s trip. He crashed around America selling “consciousness expansion” without ever giving a thought to the grim meat-hook realities that were lying in wait for all the people who took him seriously (Thompson 1993, 178)

LSD’s partnership with the late 1960s American counterculture was only part of the story for popular drug writing however. During the 1960s, a number of other books were beginning to be published that examined how hallucinogens were used in cultures and societies outside of the Western mould, and this eventually, during the late 1960s and 1970s, became the dominant paradigm for understanding their use, as psychiatric research faded in to memory. In 1961, *The Yage Letters* by William Burroughs and Allen Ginsberg was published. The book is a semi-fictional epistolary that describes the two beat generation writers visiting South America in order to try the indigenous, hallucinogenic brew ayahuasca (Burroughs 2006; Banco 2010). Later, the writer Carlos Castaneda published a number of books that, purportedly, described his apprenticeship with a Yaqui indian, of which the first two included descriptions of the indigenous use of mushrooms and peyote; namely, *The Teachings of Don Juan: A Yaqui Way of Knowledge* (1968) and *A Separate Reality* (1971). In 1975, *The Invisible Landscape* by Terence and Dennis McKenna was published. While this text, similarly to psychedelic literature, included an element of Orientalism—the ancient Chinese text, the *I Ching*, or *Book of Changes*—it is noteworthy for its concentration of shamanic ideas and, indeed, the *I Ching* is utilised within this paradigm, and not a psychiatric one (Mckenna 1975). These books began to describe the use of hallucinogens within the context of animistic belief that was often in direct conflict with the scientific understanding. However, as such, they more easily distanced themselves from the social drug upheaval in the U.S. and Britain.

The 1970s became a time for reflection in the remnants of psychedelic literature. In 1973, Michael Hollingshead, the individual who first gave Leary LSD, published *The Man Who Turned on the World*. The book details Hollingshead’s psychedelic adventures during

the 1960s and, although not factually perfect by any means, it does provide an interesting overview of LSD's transcendence of the psychiatric approach. He concludes his feelings thus and, in many respects, it reflects the rise and fall of LSD therapy: "And how do I now think of LSD et al? – as certain truths about the nature of my inner self came to be manifest in my conscious mind, my interest in psychedelics began to wane proportionally, so that today I do not believe that LSD can help me towards self-realisation" (Hollingshead 1973, 254).

However, although Hollingshead's disillusionment with LSD came, perhaps, from the drug's trajectory of use in the mid, and late, 1960s, some of the psychedelic researchers still held out hope for its use in therapy; not only the psychedelic but psycholytic also.

In 1975, Stanislav Grof published *Realms of the Human Unconscious: Observations from LSD Research*. The book, based on his own LSD research, describes a theory on the therapeutic value of LSD and that brings together the observations of the various approaches discussed in this thesis, within a single model. The four major levels of the LSD experience, Grof argues, corresponds to areas of the human unconscious: (1) Abstract and aesthetic experiences, which Sandison had described as unimportant back in 1954 (Sandison 1954); (2) psychodynamic experiences and (3) perinatal experiences, which broadly correspond to Freudian and Jungian approaches but which are further developed by Grof in light of information LSD therapy had discovered; and (4) transpersonal experiences that include the spiritual and other-worldly experiences reported by individuals. It is difficult not to think of Huxley's cartographical metaphor of the mind when reading Grof's text; the major difference being Grof's exclusion of the Mind-at-large theory and concentration on psycholytic approaches to the mind—no doubt an attempt to re-legitimize the practice scientifically. In light of the negative views LSD had garnered in the preceding years, this was perhaps wise. However, the text is interesting because it acts as a recapitulation of the 1950s and 1960s research, as if, in its theoretical totality, it was being prepared for a time when research might begin again. Over the past ten years research with LSD has tentatively begun to re-emerge but whether or not a new breed of psychedelic literature will emerge side-by-side with it once more remains to be seen.

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