

Mesmerism and Hypnotism differ

[Brief fragment ascribed to H.P.B. and published in Annie Besant's pamphlet on *Hypnotism and Mesmerism*, Centenary Edition, 1847-1947. Adyar: Theos. Publ. House, 1948, 65 pp.
— Dara Eklund]

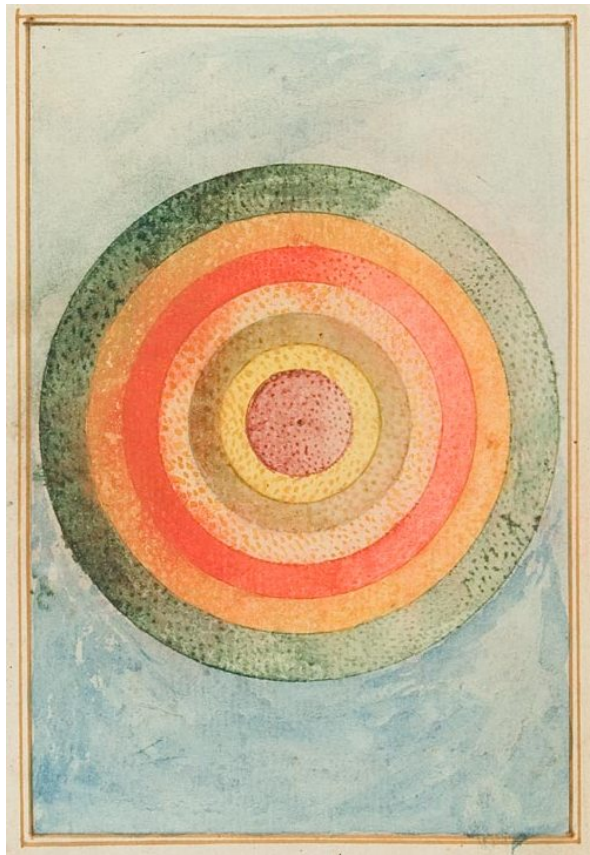
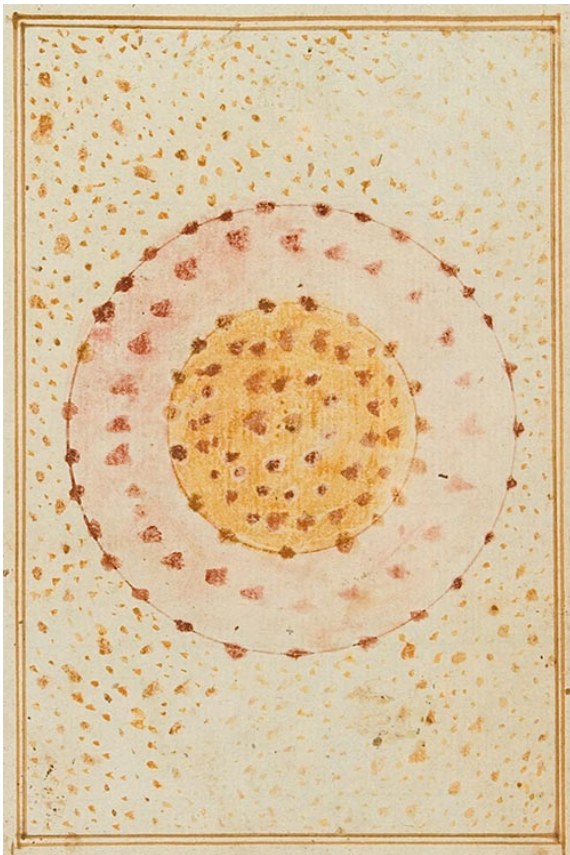
MESMERISM and hypnotism differ completely in their method. In hypnotism the nerve-ends of the sense-organs are first fatigued and then by continuance of the fatigue are temporarily paralyzed; and the paralysis spreads inwards to the sense-center in the brain, and a state of trance results. The fatigue is brought about by the use of some mechanical means, such as a revolving mirror, a disc, an electric light, etc. A frequent repetition of this fatigue predisposes the patient to fall readily into a state of trance, and permanently weakens the sense-organs and the brain. When the Ego has left his dwelling, and the brain is thus rendered passive, it is easy for another person to impress ideas of action upon it, and the ideas will then be carried out by the patient, after coming out of trance, as though they were his own. In all such cases he is the mere passive agent of the hypnotizer.

The method of true mesmerism is entirely different. The mesmerizer throws out his own Auric Fluid . . . through the etheric double, on his patient; he may thus, in the case of sickness, regularize the irregular vibrations of the sufferer, or share with him his own life-force, thereby increasing his vitality. For nerve-atrophy there is no agent so curative as this, and the shrivelling cell may clairvoyantly be seen to swell up under the flow of the life-current. The [363] pranic current flows most readily from the tips of the fingers, and through the eyes; passes should be made along the nerves from center to circumference, with a sharp shake of the fingers away from the patient and the operator, at the end of the pass. The hands should be washed before and after the operation, and it should never be undertaken unless the mind is quiet and the health strong. The loss of vitality should be made good by standing in the sun, with as little clothing on as possible, breathing deeply and slowly, and retaining the breath between each inspiration and exhalation as long as is convenient, *i.e.*, not long enough to cause any struggle or gasping. Five minutes of this should restore the pranic balance.¹

¹ *Blavatsky Collected Writings*, (ON MESMERISM AND HYPNOTISM) XIII pp. 362-63



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Mesmer's Principes du Magnétisme (1786) watercolours 2 & 3

