

# *Thou shalt crouch at my feet*



## Overcoming the drawing power of the Astral Light

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Now, what is a medium? The term medium, when not applied simply to things and objects, is supposed to be a person through whom the action of another person or being is either manifested or transmitted. Spiritualists believing in communications with disembodied spirits, and that these can manifest through, or impress sensitives to transmit “messages” from them, regard mediumship as a blessing and a great privilege. We Theosophists, on the other hand, who do not believe in the “communion of spirits” as Spiritualists do, regard the gift as one of the most dangerous of abnormal nervous diseases. A medium is simply one in whose personal Ego, or terrestrial mind (*psychē*), the percentage of “astral” light so preponderates as to impregnate with it their whole physical constitution. Every organ and cell thereby is attuned, so to speak, and subjected to an enormous and abnormal tension. The mind is ever on the plane of, and quite immersed in, that deceptive light whose *soul* is divine, but whose body — the light waves on the lower planes, infernal; for they are but the black and disfigured reflections of the earth’s memories. The untrained eye of the poor sensitive cannot pierce the dark mist, the dense fog of the terrestrial emanations, to see beyond in the radiant field of the eternal truths. His vision is out of focus. His senses, accustomed from his birth, like those of a native of the London slums, to stench and filth, to the unnatural distortions of sights and images tossed on the kaleidoscopic waves of the astral plane — are unable to discern the true from the false. And thus, the pale soulless corpses moving in the trackless fields of “Kāmaloka,” appear to him the living images of the “dear departed” ones; the broken echoes of once human voices, passing through his mind, suggest to him well co-ordinated phrases, which he repeats, in ignorance that their final form and polish were received in the innermost depths of his own brain-factory. And hence the sight and the hearing of that which if seen in its true nature would have struck the medium’s heart cold with horror, now fills him with a sense of beatitude and confidence. He really believes that the immeasurable vistas displayed before him are the real spiritual world, the abode of the blessed disembodied angels.

We describe the broad main features and facts of mediumship, there being no room in such an article for exceptional cases. We maintain — having unfortunately passed at one period of life *personally* through such experiences — that on the whole, mediumship is most dangerous; and *psychic* experiences when accepted indiscriminately lead only to honestly deceiving others, because the medium is the first self-deceived victim. Moreover, a too close association with the “Old Terrestrial Serpent” is infectious. The odic and magnetic currents of the Astral Light often incite to murder, drunkenness, immorality, and, as Éliphas Lévi expresses it, the not altogether pure natures “can be driven headlong by the blind forces set in motion in the *Light*” — by the errors and sins imposed on its waves.

And this is how the great Mage of the XIX<sup>th</sup> century corroborates the foregoing when speaking of the Astral Light:

We have said that to acquire magical power, two things are necessary: to disengage the will from all servitude, and to exercise it in control.

The sovereign will [of the adept] is represented in our symbols by the woman who crushes the serpent's head, and by the resplendent angel who represses the dragon, and holds him under his foot and spear; the great magical agent, the dual current of light, the living and astral *fire* of the earth, has been represented in the ancient theogonies by the serpent with the head of a bull, a ram, or a dog. It is the double serpent of the *caduceus*, it is the Old Serpent of *Genesis*, but it is also the *brazen serpent of Moses* entwined around the *tau*, that is to say, the generative *lingam*. It is also the goat of the witch-sabbath, and the Baphomet of the Templars; it is the *Hylē* of the Gnostics; it is the double-tailed serpent which forms the legs of the solar cock of the Abraxas: finally, it is the Devil of M. Eudes de Mirville. But in very fact it is the blind force which souls [*i.e.*, the lower *Manas* or *Nephesh*] have to conquer to liberate themselves from the bonds of the earth; for if their will does not free them from this *fatal attraction*, they will be absorbed in the current by the force which has produced them, and *will return to the central and eternal fire*.<sup>1</sup>

The “central and eternal fire” is that disintegrating Force, that gradually consumes and burns out the *Kāma-rūpa*, or “personality,” in the *Kāma-loka*, whither it goes after death. And verily, the Mediums are attracted by the astral light, it is the direct cause of their personal “souls” being absorbed “by the force which has produced” their terrestrial elements. And, therefore, as the same Occultist<sup>2</sup> tells us:

All the magical operations consist in *freeing* one's self from the coils of the Ancient Serpent; then to place the foot on its head, and lead it according to the operator's will. “I will give unto thee,” says the Serpent, in the Gospel myth, “all the kingdoms of the earth, if thou wilt fall down and worship me.” The initiated should reply to him, “I will not fall down, but thou shalt crouch at my feet; thou wilt give me nothing, but I will make use of thee and take whatever I wish. For *I am thy Lord and Master!*”

And as such, the *Personal Ego*, becoming at one with its divine parent, shares in the immortality of the latter. Otherwise . . .

Enough, however. Blessed is he who has acquainted himself with the dual powers at work in the ASTRAL Light; thrice blessed he who has learned to discern the *Noëtic* from the *Psychic* action of the “Double-Faced” God in him, and who knows the potency of his own Spirit — or “Soul Dynamics.”



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<sup>1</sup> *Dogme et Rituel de la Haute Magie*, Vol. II, ch. vi

<sup>2</sup> [Éliphas Lévi]