

THE UNIVERSITY OF CALGARY

Kabalarian Philosophy

by

Angela Lewis

A THESIS

SUBMITTED TO THE FACULTY OF GRADUATE STUDIES
IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE
DEGREE OF MASTER OF ARTS

DEPARTMENT OF RELIGIOUS STUDIES

CALGARY, ALBERTA

AUGUST, 1994

© Angela Lewis 1994



National Library
of Canada

Acquisitions and
Bibliographic Services Branch

395 Wellington Street
Ottawa, Ontario
K1A 0N4

Bibliothèque nationale
du Canada

Direction des acquisitions et
des services bibliographiques

395, rue Wellington
Ottawa (Ontario)
K1A 0N4

Your file Votre référence

Our file Notre référence

THE AUTHOR HAS GRANTED AN
IRREVOCABLE NON-EXCLUSIVE
LICENCE ALLOWING THE NATIONAL
LIBRARY OF CANADA TO
REPRODUCE, LOAN, DISTRIBUTE OR
SELL COPIES OF HIS/HER THESIS BY
ANY MEANS AND IN ANY FORM OR
FORMAT, MAKING THIS THESIS
AVAILABLE TO INTERESTED
PERSONS.

L'AUTEUR A ACCORDE UNE LICENCE
IRREVOCABLE ET NON EXCLUSIVE
PERMETTANT A LA BIBLIOTHEQUE
NATIONALE DU CANADA DE
REPRODUIRE, PRETER, DISTRIBUER
OU VENDRE DES COPIES DE SA
THESE DE QUELQUE MANIERE ET
SOUS QUELQUE FORME QUE CE SOIT
POUR METTRE DES EXEMPLAIRES DE
CETTE THESE A LA DISPOSITION DES
PERSONNE INTERESSEES.


THE AUTHOR RETAINS OWNERSHIP
OF THE COPYRIGHT IN HIS/HER
THESIS. NEITHER THE THESIS NOR
SUBSTANTIAL EXTRACTS FROM IT
MAY BE PRINTED OR OTHERWISE
REPRODUCED WITHOUT HIS/HER
PERMISSION.

L'AUTEUR CONSERVE LA PROPRIETE
DU DROIT D'AUTEUR QUI PROTEGE
SA THESE. NI LA THESE NI DES
EXTRAITS SUBSTANTIELS DE CELLE-
CI NE DOIVENT ETRE IMPRIMES OU
AUTREMENT REPRODUITS SANS SON
AUTORISATION.

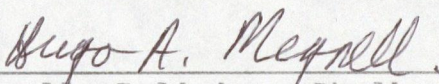
ISBN 0-315-99405-3

THE UNIVERSITY OF CALGARY
FACULTY OF GRADUATE STUDIES

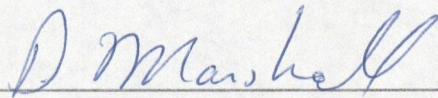
The undersigned certify that they have read, and recommend to the Faculty of Graduate Studies for acceptance, a thesis entitled "Kabalarian Philosophy" submitted by Angela Lewis in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts.



Supervisor, Irving Hexham, Religious Studies



Hugo Meynell, Religious Studies



David Marshall, History

23 August 1994
Date

Abstract

This thesis is a description of Kabalarian Philosophy, an organisation which was founded in Vancouver in 1936. This paper will introduce Alfred Parker, the founder of the group, and examine the ideas which may have influenced the development of his thought. It also lays out the beliefs of the organisation, and looks at the people who have accepted those beliefs. Finally, the thesis examines the impact of the movement and its possibilities for success in the future.

The Kabalarian Philosophy falls broadly into the occult milieu, with numerology, Spiritualism, and Qabbalah as its major influences. This organisation is a rare example of a new religious movement which has originated in Canada.

Acknowledgements

I am indebted to the Student Executive Council of the Kabalarian Philosophy for permitting me to study their organisation, and to the students at the Calgary Centre for cooperating in every aspect of my research. I am especially grateful to Clarice Hailley who spared no effort in finding the information I needed, and to Hilton Ramsey for reading and discussing early versions of many chapters.

I am thankful for the many academics who have encouraged my interest in religion; most especially Tom Robinson and Jim Penton, both of whom I encountered while an undergraduate, and who remain my mentors.

I will remember with fondness Wednesday nights at Nick's, and I thank my friends, Kurt, Rob, Trevor, Linda and Mark, who made these years both enjoyable and productive.

I thank my family, who know that this work really began decades ago. It was my grandmother's straightforward expression of faith, and my father's attempt at a sociological analysis of the same which began my religious quest.

Finally, I owe the deepest gratitude to my husband, Len, without whose unfaltering faith and support this work would not have been completed. Your greatest gift has been your belief in me, and your retelling of the "hero myth" when I didn't deserve it and couldn't believe it. The achievement is as much yours as mine.

Dedication

For my family,
who learned to accept my fascination with religion
and
for Len, who celebrates it.

Table of Contents

Approval Page.....	ii
Abstract.....	iii
Acknowledgements.....	iv
Dedication.....	v
Table of Contents.....	vi
 CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION.....	 1
 CHAPTER TWO: HISTORY.....	 6
 CHAPTER THREE: BELIEFS.....	 18
The Kabalarian Creed.....	18
Involution and Evolution.....	19
Mind and Name.....	20
The Mathematical Principle.....	21
Birthpath.....	23
The Cyclic Law.....	28
Reincarnation.....	29
After Death.....	31
Schizophrenia.....	31
Sexuality.....	32
Ethics.....	35
Idiosyncrasies.....	36
Conspiracy.....	36
Children.....	40
Personal Relationships.....	41
 CHAPTER FOUR: PRACTICES.....	 45
Finances.....	48
 CHAPTER FIVE: THE PARTICIPANTS.....	 52
What is the Appeal of the Kabalarian Philosophy?.....	57
What Can be Learned from Defectors?.....	61
 CHAPTER SIX: INFLUENCES.....	 67
The Metaphysical Movement.....	68
Spiritualism.....	76
Yoga.....	78
Qabbalah.....	79
Numerology.....	82
 CHAPTER SEVEN: IMPACT AND POSSIBILITIES.....	 89
Applying a Model of Success.....	95
 Bibliography.....	 104

Chapter One: Introduction

The late nineteenth and early twentieth century witnessed a proliferation of occult activity in North America. Spiritualism flourished, seances were popular, Mesmerism was widely practised, and yoga and Eastern philosophy had begun to make inroads into society. Into this milieu came a young British emigrant, Alfred Parker, who arrived in Winnipeg with his family in 1910¹. The thirteen year-old had a keen interest in religion. Over the next few years, he participated in many occult activities, studied and then taught yoga, and ultimately became secretary to a travelling swami. Eventually, according to the movement he founded, the swami indicated that he had taught the young man all he could, and that although he could provide no more specific direction, he sensed that the answers Parker sought were to be found in mathematics. Alfred Parker felt that it was up to him to find the truths which would combine the scientific practicality of the west with the idealism of the east. For many years, Parker worked to develop a philosophical system. For a while, he hosted a radio program, "The Practical Philosopher", and wrote a column for the Vancouver Sun. Over time, he gathered a following and began giving public lectures.

¹ Winnipeg was a significant choice for the family, in light of later events. The city had a strong occult and metaphysical subculture, evidence of which is preserved in a special archive at the University of Manitoba.

In 1936, Parker's movement was formally established in Vancouver as the Order of Kabalarians.² The group's ideology is built upon the theory that the fundamental basis of life is to be found in a mathematical principle. The philosophy teaches that each digit from one to nine has its own unique "speed of vibration" which creates various conditions and characteristics.³ This philosophy reduces language to numbers and seeks to explain such phenomena as human behaviour, business success, and transportation disasters on the basis of the characteristics of the numbers. Kabalarian Philosophy also posits a cyclical nature of existence⁴ and provides moral and lifestyle guidelines.⁵

² All biographical data is taken from the following biography of Alfred Parker written and published by his daughter. Carollyne Tylor, Against the Tides, (1983).

³ This is the fundamental principle of Alfred Parker's teachings and is to be found throughout his written work. The system is laid out in Alfred J. Parker, "What's in Your Name? You Are Your Name," in Alfred J. Parker A Selection of Writings on the Kabalarian Philosophy (Vancouver, 1975).

⁴ See, for example, Alfred J. Parker, "The Cyclic Law," in Alfred J. Parker, A Selection of Writings on the Kabalarian Philosophy (Vancouver, 1975).

⁵ These recommendations are scattered throughout the writings of Alfred Parker. See, for example, Alfred J. Parker, "Mental Tension the Basis of All Disease," and "The Right Way to Health," both in Alfred J. Parker, A Selection of Writings on the Kabalarian Philosophy (Vancouver, 1975).

With the exception of a few poorly researched newspaper articles⁶, this movement has so far avoided analysis by outsiders. This thesis is, therefore, necessarily largely descriptive, as it is important to define and understand a group before one can offer a helpful critique. This work will examine the origins and history of the movement, its beliefs and practices, its participants, other movements and ideas which may have influenced its development, and its future prospects.

This thesis is the product of more than a year of participant observation research at the Kabalarian Centre in Calgary, in addition to participation in two twelve-week courses offered by the organisation, and reading of all of Alfred Parker's books. Additional information was obtained by interviewing current and former members of the organisation. The research was undertaken with the permission of the Student Executive Council of the Kabalarian Philosophy, and with cooperation by the students at the Calgary Centre. At the insistence of the Student

⁶ A search of the archives of both the Vancouver Sun and Vancouver Province turned up only fourteen articles about the Kabalarian Philosophy. Fully half of the articles dealt with a failed "heart balm" suit brought against Alfred Parker in 1956, five more dealt with the dispute between the organisation and residents of the neighbourhood where they eventually built their Vancouver Centre, and only two addressed the beliefs of the group. One of those discussed vegetarianism almost exclusively, the other, although dealing with name, a major interest of the organisation, failed to convey the beliefs of the Kabalarian Philosophy on this topic.

Executive Council, this researcher was permitted to access only those books which were considered to be in the public domain', and was also encouraged to attend mostly public meetings. Although Kabalarian leaders were asked to comment on the chapter regarding beliefs, the presentation remains my own.

The organisation studied here has existed in near anonymity for almost sixty years. Consequently, most of the clues as to its history, development, and character must be sought within the group itself. There are many pitfalls to this type of research, the negotiation of which have hampered this work considerably. Primarily, the organisation attempted to control what material I was permitted access to. While I was encouraged to enrol in their classes, I was forbidden to write about what I learned, except to the extent that it was discussed in public works. When I learned, through interviewing early defectors, about some rituals performed by the group's founder, but no longer practised, I was asked not to write about them. When my questions became uncomfortable, I was told to contact the headquarters for answers. The telephone calls and letters outlining those questions went unanswered. Still, on the whole, the organisation welcomed my inquiry and cooperated fairly well, and I have confidence that the work which

' Alfred Parker's books, although considered to be public, are published and distributed only internally.

emerges, although exploratory in nature, will give the reader a glimpse into this unique Canadian group.

Chapter Two: History

Alfred James Parker was born in Great Britain in 1897. He was raised within the Church of England. In 1910, he arrived in Winnipeg with his family, and in 1912 moved to Cranbrook. As a youngster, Parker enjoyed nature, and in a biography written by his daughter we are told that he sensed a real pattern in nature, but observed chaos in the lives of men.⁹ It was this observation which led Parker to read books relating to religion, philosophy, and the occult sciences.⁹ In addition, Parker claimed that his mother was both very devout and very ill. He was disturbed that God would allow her to be so sick and so often close to death.¹⁰ He claims to have questioned clerics about this but to have received no satisfactory answers.

As a young man, Parker was said to have quite a temper, and his daughter claims that at age eighteen or nineteen, he became literally blind with rage upon seeing his sweetheart flirt with another man. He determined that emotion must be

⁹ All of the historical information which is available on Alfred Parker and the Kabalarian Philosophy is found in Carollyne Tylor, Against the Tides (1983). This book is published by its author, and is available from the organisation. Unfortunately, a lack of public and scholarly interest in this movement means that no outside information is available. Since this book contains the only historical information available about the Kabalarian Philosophy, I have had to use it, though its view of the organisation's history is likely mythologised.

⁹ Ibid., p.87.

¹⁰ Alfred Parker, Life is Short - Why Waste It? (Vancouver, 1960) p.1.

controlled.¹¹ Still in his late teens, Parker began reading about and experimenting with hypnosis, and his daughter claims he became quite skilled at it. He quit practising hypnosis after a frightening incident when a girl he had hypnotised was momentarily blinded by the experience.¹²

When his family moved to Vancouver, Alfred had access to large libraries, and began attending various churches and philosophical discussions. His daughter tells us that he pressed the speakers for logical answers but seldom found any. During this period, he also started experimenting with extrasensory perception.¹³

In 1920, the Parkers moved to Tacoma, Washington to open a car washing business. After the move, Parker's daughter reports that Alfred's health became bad due to heavy smoking and poor eating habits. While in Tacoma, Alfred Parker met an East Indian yoga instructor named Wasson. Alfred began using yoga exercises and breathing and recovered his health.¹⁴ The biographer reports that Parker and Wasson became friends and spent many hours discussing yoga and Eastern Philosophy, and that although Parker saw some merit

¹¹ Ibid., p.105.

¹² Ibid., p.109.

¹³ Ibid., p.117.

¹⁴ Ibid., p.135.

in it, he did not believe that it provided the logical answers he was seeking.¹⁵

During this same time, Spiritualism and its attendant seances were becoming very popular. Parker and Wasson attended many seances and learned that they could block "the guide's expression" through yoga breathing and deep concentration. After they ceased the breathing, however, they were greeted by "a deep masculine voice loudly mouthing vile obscenities and curses."¹⁶ The men especially enjoyed exposing fraudulent mediums.

After studying yoga for a time, Alfred began to teach it with Wasson.¹⁷ Parker also became interested in palmistry for a short time.¹⁸ He became convinced that much could be learned about the human mind through the occult.¹⁹

Parker's daughter claims that the home the family lived in Tacoma was haunted by at least three personalities from the spirit world.²⁰ Parker also had experiences of disembodied minds through his sister-in-law, Edith who was "a very sensitive and intuitive girl and too easily

¹⁵ Ibid., p.136.

¹⁶ Ibid., p.137.

¹⁷ Ibid., p.144.

¹⁸ Ibid., p.154.

¹⁹ Ibid., p.155.

²⁰ Ibid., p.140.

influenced by the disembodied world."²¹ The biographer reports that Edith was taken over by one of these minds on more than one occasion, and also saw a ghost.²² Alfred Parker was aware of the ghosts and the possession, and seems to have derived some of his belief system from these experiences. On another occasion, the biographer reports that Parker became very ill due to a poor diet and lack of exercise, and that while he lay in hospital, he was aware of disembodied minds around him urging him to join them, but that he resisted because he knew he still had work to do.²³

Parker's daughter reports that in 1925, in Aberdeen Washington, Alfred met a man "who would guide his footsteps toward the path for which he had spent his whole life, until that time, searching."²⁴ The man was Swami Rai Mohan Dutta²⁵, and he was on a teaching tour in North America. Parker and the Swami spent a great deal of time together discussing yoga and philosophy. During one of these discussions, the Swami is reported to have said:

The Hindu mind cannot truly understand the Western mind, but you seem to be equally gifted with both the Western and the Eastern way of thinking, and

²¹ Ibid., p.155.

²² Ibid., p.158.

²³ Ibid., p.221.

²⁴ Ibid., p.163.

²⁵ I was unable to find biographical data for either Swami Rai Mohan Dutta or Wasson, two important influences on Alfred Parker, either within or without the organisation.

because of this it is surely your duty to find the link and merge those minds. I can only tell you this, that you will find the key in mathematics, but I don't know how or where to direct you.²⁶

Parker became secretary to the Swami and accompanied him on his teaching tour. While on this tour, Parker turned his attention to the mind. He came to believe that mind is only the expression of thought, that the expression of thought is language, and that, therefore, language and mind are one.²⁷ He was still trying to figure out how mathematics fit into this formula when the Swami taught a class on numerology.²⁸ Parker began applying numerology to people's names, and was convinced that he had found the answers he had been seeking his whole life.²⁹

In 1930, Parker returned to Vancouver with his second wife and child. There he began teaching philosophy classes. He convinced his mother to drop her nickname, and the poor health that had plagued her all her life was gone. He also made the first of several changes to his daughter's name. Over many years, he experimented on his daughter, observing what characteristics were brought on by various mathematical combinations.³⁰

²⁶ Ibid., p.165.

²⁷ Ibid., p.167.

²⁸ Ibid., p.166.

²⁹ Ibid., p.167.

³⁰ Ibid., p.177.

From a few students initially, the group grew in five years to "overflowing a large classroom in the basement."³¹ During that period, Parker wrote a number of articles for the Vancouver Sun, and made some radio appearances. In addition, Parker was kept busy by requests for written name analyses and interviews.³² The biographer reports that during his early thirties, Parker began studying the wheat market, and discerned its cyclical nature.³³

Parker's daughter reports that for about ten years, the family lived next door to a Jewish family who introduced Alfred to the Kabbalah and other aspects of the tradition. In addition, Parker was introduced to "a well-known Rabbi in Vancouver from whom he received some very valuable information and thoughts that opened up his mind to new ideas and discoveries of his own."³⁴

In 1936, Kabalarian Philosophy was formally organised. Parker appointed a secretary, chairman and treasurer, with himself as head of the board of directors.³⁵ During this period, Parker discovered that he had given his followers a

³¹ Ibid., p.187.

³² Ibid., p.187.

³³ Ibid., p.188.

³⁴ Ibid., p.208. Although it would be helpful to know exactly what Alfred Parker was taught about the Jewish tradition, his biographer provides no further information, and his own works give no specific clues.

³⁵ Ibid., p.209.

name combination which made them very sociable but lazy."⁶ He then began creating names with different numerical totals.

The biographer reports that around 1938, the movement experienced its first schism. It seems that the chairman of the board, a certain Mr. Leach, wanted the board [rather than Alfred Parker] to control all the money which came into the organisation. The issue came to a head at a meeting, and Parker demanded the resignation of the board. Mr. Leach left the group, taking a "little following of five or six people" and set up a group of his own. Leach, who then changed his name to "Isun Lea" is reported to have died of a stroke within a year, and nothing more is known of his group."⁷ When the board was reorganised, the movement was renamed "Society of Kabalarians." The biographer reports that the name was changed several times over the years, primarily due to "changes in methods of administration at that particular period."⁸ Parker's daughter reports that during the early years, many people came looking for answers to immediate problems, some stayed, some left, and a few real "trouble makers" were asked to leave."⁹

⁶ Ibid., p.209.

⁷ Ibid., pp. 210-211.

⁸ Ibid., p.212.

⁹ Ibid., p.213.

Parker's daughter seems to hint at other schisms when she describes people who engaged in gossip against her father. She writes:

Those who perpetrated these upheavals were basically the losers, though some caused a great many problems and heartaches for my father, but to relay these occasions to you would be pointless and only give life to situations best forgotten. At such times, the Teacher was deeply disappointed and hurt to think that these misunderstandings sometimes meant a loss in friendship and, what was even worse in his eyes, a loss in studentship.⁴⁰

During the thirties and forties, activities of the organisation included drama, public speaking, choral groups and social events. In addition, a newsletter was published, which eventually came to be called the "Kabalarian Courier". In the late forties, Kabalarian Philosophy purchased a hall, The Manhattan, but later sold it because it was too much work.⁴¹

Parker dreamed of his philosophy becoming known worldwide, but the opening of his first branch happened almost by accident. A Kabalarian student who had moved from Vancouver to Calgary began to miss the lectures, and invited Parker on a speaking tour in Calgary and Edmonton in September of 1947. The tour was well promoted and many people came to hear the lectures. A group began meeting, hosted by the promoter, but serious problems soon developed. The branch had been started unexpectedly, so there were no

⁴⁰ Ibid., p.246.

⁴¹ Ibid., p.248.

resources in place to guide it. The man in charge reportedly invited a Hindu speaker, and then began including studies of Yoga Philosophy in the meetings.⁴² The biographer reports that he had little knowledge of the Philosophy and was a very poor reader, and he drove many people away by his terrible reading of the lessons. Ultimately, Parker was informed of the situation, and put another student in charge.⁴³

A Centre was also established in Edmonton, and is said to have grown rapidly from the beginning.⁴⁴ In 1959, a Centre was added in Victoria. In 1957, Parker and a young couple went to California to try to start a Centre. Parker remained in Los Angeles for about a year, but the Centre never really took root, and after four years, the young couple also returned to Canada. The biographer reports that "it was from those seeds that ultimately blossomed the now-active center of San Luis Obispo."⁴⁵ Parker periodically went on tour to lecture at the new centers, and over the years, groups were also established in Saskatchewan and Dawson Creek, as well

⁴² This information came from a personal interview with someone who had been a student in Calgary at that time and remembers the classes. Another early student suggested that there was a sexual scandal, and also pointed out that this man had not balanced his name, and may not have even formally joined the Kabalarian Philosophy. Personal interviews, July, 1993, Calgary, and October, 1993, Calgary.

⁴³ Ibid., p.252.

⁴⁴ Ibid., pp.251-253.

⁴⁵ Ibid., p.257.

as in Holland."⁶ Alfred Parker died in 1964, and Ivon Shearing became head of the organisation.

In 1994, Ivon Shearing⁷ continues to lead the Kabalarian Philosophy. Although he lacks the charisma of Alfred Parker, he has earned the respect of many Kabalarian students. The transitional period between the two leaders was not entirely smooth. At the time that he took over the leadership of the organisation, Shearing was in his early thirties. I am told that there were older men in the group who had been loyal to Parker, and who were discontent at being passed over in favour of this young man. Hilton Ramsey has suggested that some of those older men probably left active membership sooner than they would have, had Mr. Parker remained at the helm.⁸ In addition, some of the older students outside of Vancouver have expressed discontentment with the increasing bureaucratization of the Kabalarian Philosophy since the death of Alfred Parker.⁹

⁶ Ibid., p.259.

⁷ Ivon Shearing, born 1932.

⁸ Personal interview with Hilton Ramsey, June, 1993, Vancouver. Dr. Ramsey, a retired academic and longtime Kabalarian student, was an important contact with the group. He received early versions of several chapters of this thesis, and offered his commentary. He also filled in some recent history, where no written sources were available.

⁹ This opinion came up in informal discussion with older students. Although the shift was explained mathematically, it was clear that the problem was increasing bureaucracy, and the end of personal contact with a charismatic leader.

In 1993, the total membership of the organisation is estimated at one thousand, with the active students [those remaining on the mailing list] perhaps five hundred.⁵⁰ Part of the reason for the discrepancy in the numbers is that Kabalarian Philosophy is an aging organisation. Many of its members have simply become too old to participate in activities. Kabalarian Philosophy discourages procreation, so there is little natural growth, and there has been only limited success at recruiting families. Hilton Ramsey has suggested that at the time of Parker's death, there were about five hundred active members, the same number he identifies today. He points out, however, that there has been a great deal of recruitment, but only enough to replace those who have died or left the movement.⁵¹ In practical terms, the group has not grown in thirty years.

In Calgary, the numbers are even worse. Students remember a time when there were one hundred members.⁵² Today, there are less than a third that many, the majority of whom are inactive, with many of the committed being past middle age. Edmonton, too, is in decline, although the numbers are higher. The leader of the Edmonton group explains that while he continues to recruit new students, many of his most

⁵⁰ The first number was given by an employee of the organisation, the second by Dr. Ramsey in an interview at the Vancouver headquarters in June of 1993.

⁵¹ Personal interview, June, 1993, Vancouver.

⁵² Personal interviews, April to November, 1993, Calgary.

committed have moved to Vancouver in order to participate more fully in the Philosophy."⁵³

Only the Vancouver, Calgary and Edmonton Centres remain active, the rest having become "correspondence centres," meaning that they have no building, no leader, and no real organisation, although students may occasionally participate in social functions. Hilton Ramsey explains that with scarce resources, the organisation has decided to concentrate on the city of Vancouver, because its population is large and growing, and the prospects for recruiting seem better."⁵⁴ This bodes poorly for the Calgary Centre, which seems unlikely to survive without intervention from Vancouver. The Calgary group is headed by woman in her seventies. None of the younger students are prepared to forfeit their careers to lead the group, and most have confided their hope that Vancouver will send a strong couple to Calgary when new leadership is needed."⁵⁵ With the Vancouver Kabalarians turning inward, Calgary's days as an active Centre would seem to be numbered.

⁵³ Many students made this claim, and it was affirmed by Floyd Farrell, leader of the Edmonton Centre, in a personal discussion on February 7, 1993 at the Calgary Centre.

⁵⁴ Personal interview, June, 1993, Vancouver.

⁵⁵ This information was disclosed in personal interviews conducted between April and November of 1993.

Chapter Three: Beliefs

The Kabalarian Creed

The following creed, summarizing the teachings of Alfred Parker, appeared in each of the early magazines published by the Kabalarian Philosophy. It reads:

I BELIEVE in GOD, THE PRINCIPLE, which always was, is and always will be, from whence all things came.

I BELIEVE in the positive and negative forms of THE PRINCIPLE. "Male and female created HE them, without which there would be no manifestation of THE PRINCIPLE."

I BELIEVE the positive (Male) manifestation of the PRINCIPLE (Spirit) becomes involved with the negative (female) manifestation of THE PRINCIPLE (body) forming man on this earth.

I BELIEVE that the positive manifestation (SPIRIT) must control the negative manifestation (body) through perfect balance between Mind and Consciousness, thus making Mind a perfect channel of expression through the Word.

I BELIEVE all things created express through their own individual rate of vibration, and our minds also vibrate to their own overall or basic vibration.

I BELIEVE that our names provide that basic vibration.

I BELIEVE that the spoken word is the only channel of conscious expression.

I BELIEVE in the oneness of all things.

I BELIEVE in the involution of spirit into form, and its evolution back again to Divine Consciousness through the power of the Word.

I BELIEVE THAT "IN THE BEGINNING WAS THE WORD, AND THE WORD WAS WITH GOD AND THE WORD WAS GOD."⁵⁶

⁵⁶ This creed can be found in almost any early edition of the Kabalarian Courier, see, for example Kabalarian Courier, volume 4, number 11, August, 1947.

Involution and Evolution

The worldview of Kabalarian Philosophy is based upon the notion of a dualistic nature of reality. The Philosophy posits a set of opposites which compose reality; the abstract and the finite, cause and effect, male and female, positive and negative, spirit and matter. God is seen as abstract, as universal consciousness. Through the process of involution, God [consciousness] enters the finite world. This process is seen as the union of "Father the Spirit with Mother Earth," a union which creates life.⁹⁷ While consciousness enters the world through this union, it is all but lost on the lower life forms but may be expressed through the mind of man. It is hoped that through the balance and growth of mind, man's consciousness can evolve to rejoin universal consciousness. Individuality is seen as the opposite of universal consciousness, so the goal is to arrive at an understanding of oneness with God the Spiritual Principle.

⁹⁷ Fragments of this concept are to be found throughout Alfred Parker's writings, although it is best developed in a book which I have been asked not to quote. The ideas appear briefly in Alfred Parker, "The Cyclic Law," p.11, which is part of the larger collection by the same author, A Selection of Writings on the Kabalarian Philosophy (Vancouver, 1975). The idea is also expressed in the Kabalarian Creed, "I BELIEVE the positive (Male) manifestation of the PRINCIPLE (SPIRIT) becomes involved within the negative (female) manifestation of THE PRINCIPLE (body) forming man on this earth."

Mind and Name

To understand how this evolution occurs it is important to examine how Kabalarian Philosophy conceives of mind. Alfred Parker was convinced that mind is neither a manifestation of the brain's activity nor the product of socialisation, but something which can be created. He believed that mind is created when a child is named, and that the quality of one's mind is determined by his name.⁵⁸ Essentially, a child is born physically when it takes its first breath, and the seed of universal consciousness [spiritual potential] within the child is awakened when it is given a name. In order to evolve and rejoin universal consciousness, Kabalarian Students seek to balance their minds by balancing their names, free their minds, clarify their thoughts, live a principled life and fulfil their life's purpose. Parker writes:

When man has learned to merge his human mind with its divine source of Consciousness (wisdom), he has fulfilled his spiritual destiny; the spirit has become involved in or seeded into, flesh- thus changing its state of universality to that of human individuality. This starts the cycle of involution at the lowest point of human existence; and then evolution, growth, and unfoldment take place until human, or mortal mind progresses from a material and limited concept to a universal, or Godlike, state of mind. Thus does Universal Consciousness become clothed in mortality and then, through mental growth and concept, evolve

⁵⁸ Alfred Parker, "What's in Your Name? You Are Your Name," p.30, in A Selection of Writings on the Kabalarian Philosophy (Vancouver, 1975).

back again to its original state of Spiritual Consciousness..."

The Mathematical Principle

Central to an understanding of Kabalarian Philosophy are three concepts; mind, language, and mathematics. Mind, as discussed above, is created by one's name.⁶⁰ Mind is the tool for conscious thought, and the instrument by which one may have an awareness of life. Alfred Parker taught that conscious thought is possible only through language, that one can not think without using language. Since mind is the vehicle for conscious thought, and conscious thought is possible only through the use of language, mind and language must be the same thing.⁶¹ Parker felt that mind is created through the name and may be measured through the use of mathematics.⁶²

⁵⁹ Alfred Parker, Man's Greatest Gift - Time. (Vancouver, 1960) pp.38-39.

⁶⁰ Although the Philosophy teaches that one's name creates his mind, it is important to note, as Hilton Ramsey pointed out in personal correspondence in June of 1993, "It is consciousness that empowers both name and language in the creation of mind and thought."

⁶¹ Although he acknowledges that this is what Alfred Parker taught, Dr. Ramsey feels that this explanation is too elementary, and that, "language provides the mechanics of mind, but not the logic and intelligence of mind." Personal correspondence and personal interview, June 1993, Vancouver.

⁶² Alfred Parker, "What's in Your Name? You Are Your Name" p.30, in A Selection of Writings on the Kabalarian Philosophy (Vancouver, 1975).

Kabalarian Philosophy teaches that mathematics and language are the two basic laws of being, through which man conceives and understands life." The core of the Philosophy is the "mathematical principle," the digits from one to nine. These digits are perceived as symbols for the essence of life, Universal Consciousness. When a Kabalarian student speaks of God, what is meant is God as a Principle or Universal Law. It is believed that the universal creative power behind life expresses itself through mathematics to come into reality.

The nine digits are at the center of reality. Each digit possesses a unique "speed of vibration." This speed of vibration is a vehicle for certain characteristics which are eternally and universally connected to and measured by that digit. Mathematics can be applied to language because, in any alphabet, letters have a fixed and unchangeable position. Kabalarian Philosophy teaches that mathematics is the basic principle of measurement, and that each letter of the alphabet, being in a specific position, is a symbol or vehicle for the power of intelligence expressing through that particular position. The numerical values of letters within words can be added to reveal the fundamental characteristics of people or objects described by those words. When applied to objects, this principle permits one to predict the success or failure of a business enterprise,

" Ibid., p.10.

or the likelihood of a given ship facing disaster. When applied to people, it allows one to predict an individual's basic characteristics, style of communication, and health weaknesses. Moreover, Kabalarian Philosophy teaches that by changing one's name, one can change his character and his life."

Birthpath

A belief fundamental to Kabalarian Philosophy is that a person's spiritual or true purpose in life is established by his date of birth. All birthdates are reduced to a single digit, from one to nine, and based upon the quality of intelligence determined by that digit, one can understand what sort of person one was born to be." It is claimed that this "birthpath" is responsible for one's persistent feelings that he could and should be doing something more than he is. The birthpath implies potential personal characteristics, health weaknesses, and ideal careers.

" These ideas are found throughout Alfred Parker's writings. Again, they are most clearly expressed in a book which I have been asked not to quote. As applied to name, these ideas are laid out in Alfred Parker, "What's in Your Name? You Are Your Name," which is found in his larger collection, A Selection of Writings on the Kabalarian Philosophy (Vancouver, 1975).

" This idea is frequently expressed in Parker's work. See, for example, Alfred Parker, "Life's Purpose Revealed Through Balanced Mind," p.30, in A Selection of Writings on the Kabalarian Philosophy (Vancouver, 1975).

While the sum of one's birthdate [month, day, and year] provides Kabalarians with an overall picture of what one was born to be, each element suggests what he is supposed to be learning during a specific period of his life. For example, the month of one's birth indicates his life's "minor lesson" from birth to age twenty-seven, the day of his birth gives direction from age twenty-seven to fifty-four, and the year of his birth addresses the period from age fifty-four to the close of life. These minor lessons enable one to understand what types of experiences he will be attracting during each period of his life, and what he is to be learning from them. When these minor lessons are understood, one is able to create the experiences and associations necessary for the fulfilment of the birthpath.

The day of one's birth not only tells a Kabalarian his second minor lesson, but also which "group" he falls into. All people belong to one of three groups, water, fire or air. All people within a group are thought to share certain characteristics, primarily the way they interact with others, their perspective on life and purpose in life. The groups are further subdivided by digits and certain nuances emerge. Kabalarians believe that all three groups have an important role to play in society, the water group in leadership and initiating action, the fire group in merging or expressing diplomacy, and the air group in providing

inspiration and ideas. Human compatibility is explained and predicted on the basis of the three groups.

While an individual's birthpath and minor lessons indicate the type of person he was born to be, they do not compel him so to be. One's birthpath inclines him towards certain characteristics, but it is his name which actually makes him what he is." By adding the mathematical value of specific letters in one's name, Kabalarian Philosophy teaches that one can understand his own nature. The numbers are interpreted in very specific terms. A Kabalarian life analysis will include personal characteristics, health weaknesses, character flaws, love styles, thinking pattern, communication style, and the sort of work toward which one is inclined. In explaining one's life and character, appeals are made to birthpath, name, group and minor lessons rather than to genetics or environment. It is felt that by giving a person a particular name to harmonize with his birthpath, it is possible to allow the expression of artistic or technical qualities, orient him towards physical work or towards business, and allow success in both financial and interpersonal affairs. Care is taken, however, when selecting a name for an individual, to ensure that it will not create characteristics which will conflict with those ordained by his birthpath.

" Alfred Parker, "What's in Your Name? You Are Your Name" pp.19-20, in A Selection of Writings on the Kabalarian Philosophy (Vancouver, 1975).

Unfortunately, according to Kabalarian Philosophy, most people's names are not in harmony with their birthpaths. Too large a difference will prevent a person from doing what he was born to do. In addition, the influence of certain numbers brings not only positive but also negative characteristics to bear upon one's personality. Not only will the presence of a particular digit lead to an unpleasant disposition, it may also cause ill health, and personal and financial losses. This is particularly true when one's name is not "balanced". For this reason, Kabalarian Philosophy recommends that individuals change their names to a balanced name which will permit their birthpath to be expressed." While many of the early changes seem to have been merely an alteration of the spelling of the name given at birth to create a better mathematical total, it is today recommended that one undergo a complete change to eliminate the possible usage of the old

" While in theory, each different birthpath is given a compatible name, in reality, there are only two mathematical name formulas generally given. Women are given a name whose total implies being "cheerful, modest, home-loving, conscientious, patient, accumulative, intellectual, and responsible." Men, on the other hand, are given names thought to make them "stable, accumulative, ambitious, appreciate material values, mathematical, even-tempered, expressive, executive, and organizing." If women must participate in the business world, they will use a middle initial which will give them a final destiny better suited for that task, the same destiny that men are always given. All Kabalarian surnames have the same mathematical totals. People in leadership positions within the organisation sometimes have slightly different numerical totals.

unbalanced spelling." This change is made legal, sometimes after a trial period during which one becomes accustomed to the new name. The new name is thought to create a new life in which one will no longer be subject to the limitations of the past name but will enjoy greater success and happiness in life. Negative characteristics of the numbers will even be sublimated by balancing the name."

While the primary influences of the numbers are found by adding certain digits within the name, the value of each of the letters independently influences one's life for certain periods throughout life. For example, a letter having the mathematical value of one will imbue one with "oneish" qualities for a one year period. Kabalarian Philosophy teaches that throughout one's life, one is continually experiencing the mathematical influence of his legal first and surnames.⁷⁰ Using this principle, a Kabalarian student is able to predict, by examining someone's name, during what years that individual experienced major changes, asserted their independence and so on.

" An announcement run in the Kabalarian Courier, volume 4, number 5, February, 1947, illustrates both types of change. "Effective as of January 2, 1947, Isobel, Laila and Barrie Welliver, residing at 3557 West 39th Ave. Vancouver B.C., have legally changed their respective names to Isabell, Carell, and Barrie Whalen."(p.3)

" Alfred Parker, "What's in Your Name? You Are Your Name" p.43, in A Selection of Writings on the Kabalarian Philosophy (Vancouver, 1975).

⁷⁰ Ibid., p.115.

The Cyclic Law

In addition to defining his birthpath, one's date of birth also establishes him within the cyclical nature of the universe. It is believed that time can be divided into nine year cycles, consisting of three year periods of planting, testing and growth, and harvest. These periods repeat themselves from life's opening to its close, daily, monthly and yearly, and on a universal scale eternally.⁷¹ When an individual understands where he is within his own cycle, he is able to understand what he is to be accomplishing. If he is in a period of planting, he knows it is time to work hard toward future goals. If he is in a period of testing and growth, he recognises the importance of standing firm and building upon the foundation of the undertakings he has commenced. When a person enters the harvest period, he must work to bring about the fruition of the projects he started in his early cycle years. Through a knowledge of the cycles, Kabalarian Philosophy teaches that one can make decisions with minimal risk. One can choose the appropriate time to buy or sell commodities, enter into a marriage, or even take a family vacation. Alfred Parker claimed that economic conditions, business and weather all run in predictable

⁷¹ This fundamental concept is expressed in many places, and is laid out in detail in two small books. Alfred Parker, Man's Greatest Gift - Time (Vancouver, 1960) and Alfred Parker "The Cyclic Law" in A Selection of Writings on the Kabalarian Philosophy (Vancouver, 1975).

cycles, and that man can benefit by being aware of the cycles."⁷²

Every person is born into the universe at a specific point in the universal cycle. By establishing that point, one can learn where he is in his own cycle. Once one's personal cycle is known, he can access Kabalarian Mathematical Calendar Forecasts. These charts read rather like a daily horoscope, advising one of positive or adverse conditions, and urging one to do what will be most fruitful at each particular point in the cycle.

Reincarnation

Although cyclical in his worldview, the founder of Kabalarian Philosophy rejected the notion of reincarnation. In addition to feeling that the theory absolved man of personal responsibility in this life, Parker had a philosophical objection. Believing that the purpose of reincarnation is to allow a mind to continue its spiritual progress, and confident in his belief that mind is created by one's name, Mr. Parker's objection is an obvious one. A disembodied mind which returned to life in another body could not continue to progress because the name given the

⁷² Hilton Ramsey has pointed out that although it is theoretically possible to discern economic, business, and weather cycles, Kabalarian students are not yet able to do so. Personal correspondence and personal interview, June, 1993, Vancouver.

new body would create a new mind and a new pattern of thinking. He writes:

What would be the use of the former mind reincarnating to continue progress, when the extent of his former progress was due to his mind through the previous name? How is he going to continue the same mental paths under a different name, under a different degree of intelligence, association, and environment? Mind does not need to be carried over; it is always created through the Power of the Word by the parents through the name given at birth."

Parker's rejection of the notion of reincarnation should not be interpreted as a denial of the idea that each generation should benefit from the wisdom gained and progress made by the preceding generation. In fact, Kabalarian Philosophy teaches that each generation ought to advance a step beyond the previous one. This can only happen, however, through knowledge of the Mathematical Principle which would permit the qualities of Divine Consciousness to be incorporated into human existence." When man lives in ignorance, he passes on only his degeneration, but his descendants can individually or collectively rise above it."

" Alfred Parker, Reincarnation Revealed (Vancouver, 1960) p. 30.

" Ibid., p.27.

" Ibid., p.29.

After Death

The goal of the Kabalarian student is to balance his name to allow his mind to rise to the level of Universal Consciousness. Kabalarian Philosophy teaches that the balanced mind may in fact become a part of Universal Consciousness even while the body is still alive.⁷⁶ When the body dies, the balanced mind will rejoin Universal Consciousness. A mind that is not balanced and has not progressed will not join Universal Consciousness at death, for no progress is possible once the body has died.⁷⁷ The unbalanced mind will instead become disembodied. If there is a weaker mind around, the disembodied mind may interfere with it, causing a condition known as schizophrenia.⁷⁸ If the other minds have advanced beyond the level of the disembodied mind, the mind cannot enter another person, and will remain disembodied and ultimately dissipate due to lack of stimulation.

Schizophrenia

Alfred Parker believed that schizophrenia, a condition whereby two minds control one person, was widespread. He felt that the way to protect one's self against it was to

⁷⁶ Alfred Parker, Man's Greatest Gift - Time (Vancouver, 1960) pp.38-39.

⁷⁷ Ibid., p.33.

⁷⁸ Alfred Parker, Schizophrenia (Vancouver, 1963) p.33.

have a balanced name and a disciplined mind. Parker believed that disembodied minds were responsible for the phenomena of child prodigies; an older mind would take over a child, and prevent the development of the child's own mind."

Related to schizophrenia is the concept of mass mindedness. Parker felt that individuals were sometimes influenced by other minds, as when an audience reacts to a movie or a sports competition.¹⁰ Parker felt that mass mindedness was responsible for epidemics; peoples' minds became influenced by the idea that they were in danger of contracting a dangerous disease, and they actually attracted the illness.¹¹

Sexuality

Alfred Parker was convinced, as have been so many religious innovators, that lust is the root of much evil¹². Essentially, Parker felt that sex must be used only as a means of procreation, and even then very carefully. Because of the influence he believed human thoughts to have on life, he wanted to separate sex from lustful thoughts. To this

¹⁰ Alfred Parker, "Mental Tension The Basis of All Disease," p.10, in A Selection of Writings on the Kabalarian Philosophy (Vancouver, 1975).

¹⁰ Alfred Parker, "Thoughts are Things," p.43 in A Selection of Writings on the Kabalarian Philosophy (Vancouver, 1976).

¹¹ Ibid., p.34.

¹² cf Oneida Community and Shakers

end, he advised that when sex was necessary for reproduction it should be engaged in in the morning rather than before sleeping. This would allow an individual to lift his thoughts to a higher plane to protect his mind from evil or emotional thoughts during sleep."

Parker often expressed a concern about overpopulation, and many Kabalarian students have chosen to marry and remain childless. In discussion with Kabalarian students, it has been intimated that although chastity is the ideal, the frequency of sex within a marriage is only gradually decreased over the life of the relationship. While they acknowledge that sex naturally seems to wane over time, rather than interpreting the decline as the demise of romance, they view it as a sign of the evolution of mind and the growth of spirituality. Recent teachings by the group's current leader, Ivon Shearing, suggest that Kabalarian students would be wiser to dedicate themselves to spreading knowledge of the Philosophy rather than to raising children."

Parker's concern with the sex act went beyond its tendency to lower the mind to basic instincts, he felt that sex was actually damaging to the mind. He writes that when

" Alfred Parker, " Thoughts are Things," p.43 in A Selection of Writings on the Kabalarian Philosophy (Vancouver, 1975).

" This is taken from a book based on notes compiled from Ivon Shearing's lectures. Ivon Shearing, Human Relationships volume 1 (Vancouver, 1990).

man finds his satisfaction in sex, "It could be described as cancer of the mind (not the brain); it destroy's one's thinking along spiritual lines."¹⁵ Parker was influenced by the Eastern [yoga] beliefs that the sexual force was somehow connected to the brain and nervous system and must be harnessed to preserve vitality.

Man must be taught that his vital sex forces represent the vitality and strength of his bodily and mental functions, and that they are too valuable to his well-being to squander for a thrill, that sex force is the food of the mind and the strength of the bloodstream. It must be conserved for mental and spiritual progress and growth."¹⁶

At times, Parker's discussion of sex tends towards the language of physiology, while expressing [but not citing] the yogic concept of kundalini.

To bring the subject down to a basic understanding: due to man's ignorance he is creating complete chaos in thinking that by depleting his vital sex forces he is finding relaxation. Instead, he is starving his brain cells of the grey matter that comes up the spine to feed the brain, and each indulgence is a step further down the ladder of degeneration."¹⁷

This is not to say that simply by abstaining from sexual activity, one can improve his mind, for discipline and knowledge are required to redirect vital forces from the

¹⁵ Alfred Parker, "Mental Tension The Basis of all Disease," p.18, in A Selection of Writings on the Kabalarian Philosophy (Vancouver, 1975).

¹⁶ Ibid., p.17.

¹⁷ Ibid., p.21.

loins to the mind. Kabalarian students truly believe that an individual's vitality is diminished by over indulgence in sex, and many have indicated to me that they can see this lack of vitality even in children in large families. Evidently the parents' overindulgence [to create many children] produces weaker offspring.

Ethics

Like so many religious leaders, Alfred Parker observed things in society which he felt were not helpful for mental and spiritual progress. His writings contain disparaging references to "sex magazines" which he seemed to feel had a particularly bad influence on young girls, and "crooners of the rock-and-roll type."⁸ In addition, references are made to the mind poisoning effects of television, alcohol and the consumption of meat.⁹ While Parker addressed these everyday moral issues, his primary concern was with ethical thinking and ethical speech.

In recent publications, the Kabalarian Creed has been deemphasized, and in its place has been offered the "Kabalarian Ethics of Right Thinking."¹⁰ This document

⁸ Alfred Parker, "Thoughts are Things" p.30 in A Selection of Writings on the Kabalarian Philosophy (Vancouver, 1975).

⁹ Ibid., p.30.

¹⁰ This statement can be found in the any recent edition of the Kabalarian Courier, eg Kabalarian Courier, volume 10, number 2, March/April 1980.

provides guidelines on appropriate ways to think and speak. Practices such as lying, boasting and swearing are discouraged, while governing moods, keeping an open mind, and striving to eliminate negative thoughts are advised. Kabalarian students are encouraged to "kill out ego", be systematic, create a refined personality and dress conservatively. Students are reminded that thoughts are important and that "your mind is the greatest instrument in the universe." In doing participant observation in this group, I have noticed that some Kabalarian Students are so concerned about respecting "the Power of the Word" that they are offended by humour, seeing it as treating the Power of the Word lightly.

Idiosyncrasies

Kabalarian Philosophy, in addition to a rather eclectic belief system, contains some unexpected nuances. Many of these ideas are peripheral to the Philosophy, and cannot be found in Alfred Parker's work. Most of these idiosyncrasies have been gleaned from lectures I have heard, lecture transcriptions I have read, or conversations I have had with group members.

Conspiracy

There is a fundamental mistrust, within Kabalarian Philosophy, of traditional religion, and particularly of

Christianity. This mistrust is sometimes expressed through mocking of the Christian tradition, and sometimes through harsh criticism. In one public lecture, the Jesus story was characterised as a "Mickey Mouse story" which we must grow beyond. In the same lecture, it was stated that religion capitalises on the control of people, and will not allow individuals to explore spirituality, and also that there is a lot of religion that is not passed on to the masses, because passing it on would take power away from institutional religion.¹¹ There is a feeling that Christianity was imposed on people so they would give up their power.

In discussion with senior students, I have found a real ignorance about the origins of Christianity. I have been told by different students that the start of the Christian era was an important period. Astronomers recognised that the world was at the beginning of a new age, religion presented the idea to the masses so it would be accepted. More cynically, I have been told that the religious leaders decided that this would be a good time to introduce a new religion, and so imposed Christianity. Most shockingly, I have been referred to the much maligned Protocol for the Elders of Zion, and told that Christianity was cleverly imposed by Jewish leaders. Students have confided that these

¹¹ These statements were presented in a public lecture at the Calgary Centre given by Floyd Farrell, leader of the Edmonton Centre, on February 7, 1993.

ideas are expressed even more strongly in closed gatherings of Kabalarians. A book which I have been asked not to quote also express these ideas in very strong terms.

Some students have expressed disagreement, and a certain level of embarrassment at these teachings. Other students, who hold to some Christian beliefs, are quite offended by the anti-Christian sentiment. I have discussed the conspiracy issue with Dr. Hilton Ramsey, a Kabalarian long active in Vancouver, and the man appointed by the organisation to review and discuss my thesis, and he has acknowledged that while this belief is widely held among Kabalarian students, the quest for political correctness has halted its discussion in Vancouver. Ramsey expressed some surprise at the language used by the Edmonton leader, and pointed out that this kind of talk ceased in Vancouver thirty years ago."² It should be noted also that Alfred Parker wrote a great many positive things about Christianity, often seeming to want to present Kabalarian Philosophy as the fulfilment of the older tradition."

The Jewish or Christian conspiracy is not the only one posited by Kabalarian Philosophy. Transcriptions of lectures given by Ivon Shearing, the current leader of the movement, seem to hint at forces working behind the scenes to keep

² Personal interview with Hilton Ramsey, June, 1993, Vancouver.

³ See, for example, Alfred Parker, Life and Religions (Vancouver, 1968) p.27.

people from progressing in their lives. The following is given in response to a question regarding contraception.

Easy and readily available forms of birth control have resulted in more sexual promiscuity, allowing for greater degeneration of mind, stultifying the mental processes. Birth control is thus encouraged because it makes the masses more controllable."⁴⁴

This is a typical conspiracy statement. The listener has the feeling that a sinister plot is afoot, but the power behind the plot is seldom made explicit. Even more subtle references are found in Shearing's musings on whether Kabalarians should have children.

Parenthood is a wonderful responsibility bringing with it the attendant joys as well as trials and tribulations, and should be respected and admired as a role. However, one must recognize the subtleties of entrapment where one has become committed and must dedicate one's life to the upbringing of that child."⁴⁵

He further states:

There has been a thought planted among students that once certain things have been accomplished-- a house, and so on-- the next step is to have children. This is a trap. If children are to be the next step, one should already have achieved the higher responsibility of self-development."⁴⁶

When ideas of conspiracy are put in writing, they are very subtle, but the notion does seem to be broadly held. The course description for the fifth seminar, "Principles in

⁴⁴ Ivon Shearing, Human Relationships, volume 1 (Vancouver, 1990) p.42.

⁴⁵ Ibid., p.46.

⁴⁶ Ibid., p.47.

Action," lists as a benefit "you will learn to better understand the beliefs, religions, and philosophies of others." This course would seem a likely forum for the discussion of the conspiracy idea, but the seminar and its class materials are beyond the realm of public literature to which the organisation would allow this researcher access. In discussion with senior students, I have found a knowledge of both religion and philosophy sorely lacking.

Children

The issue of whether Kabalarians should have children has been discussed above. Essentially, Ivon Shearing has taught that Kabalarian students should aspire to be "universal parents," to commit themselves to bringing new people into the movement rather than to bearing and raising children. He has argued that Kabalarian Philosophy is a very small movement, and has had little success in retaining the children of members, so students must concentrate on bringing new converts into the movement."

Nonetheless, Shearing does spend some time discussing children, and how they are to be raised. Shearing argues that children are essentially "sponges" or "radio receivers" from birth to age nine, with no "basic individuality."⁸⁶ He discusses separately how children with each numeric influence are to be raised, but concludes that physical

" Ibid., p.47.

punishment is the best form of discipline for any child. He explains how temper tantrums are to be understood, "Temper tantrums are obsessions. They represent schizophrenic interferences working at that particular time."⁷ When a child has a temper tantrum, then, it is due to the influence of an interfering disembodied mind. Shearing states that the only way to free the child from the interfering mind is to:

stimulate the body physically to the point where the painful sensations of the physical body register more strongly than the impulses of desire that are coming from the mental plane."⁸

He wisely advises against beating the child to insensibility and leaving scars, cuts, or bruises.

Personal Relationships

Shearing writes, "Friendship must be a philosophical, impersonal relationship." Also:

It is a challenge to build and maintain an invisible wall; so that you can smile and be natural, but do not let the other person touch you mentally or emotionally."⁹

He writes about being friendly without being familiar or personal. This attitude has been picked up by students of the Philosophy. After more than a year of being among the students at the Calgary Centre, I know nothing about their lives except what they have told me in response to direct

⁷ Ibid., p.57.

⁸ Ibid., p.58.

⁹ Ibid., p.16.

questioning during interviews. Discussion over brunch often centers on the characteristics of the numbers, and little personal information is exchanged. The aloofness extended not only to me as an outsider, but appeared to obtain between students themselves. There seemed to be no sense of community as is often found in small group settings. A high level of formality was maintained; at meetings in which there were five people present, three of them women, a representative of the women's auxiliary would walk primly to the front of the building, stand behind the podium, and read announcements for the women's auxiliary. At classes in which there were two people in attendance, the class would begin with a formal, "Good evening, ladies." Occasionally, this formality was relaxed, but never to the degree I would have expected in such a small group. I have questioned students about this seeming lack of community, and most have acknowledged the same feeling, although they attribute it to the small size of the group. Many feel that there are simply not enough students in Calgary to find someone with whom they have much in common. Other students have pointed out that they do feel closer to particular students at other Centres, or to those with whom they spend time at the organisation's resort. The lack of personal discussion they

attribute to the group's distaste for both gossip and emotion."¹⁰

Apparently, this formality is maintained even within families. Shearing states, "As long as we are tied closely to family, our individual objective is seriously limited because it is restricted to the family objective."¹¹ Also, "The family plane of mind can become a curse to individuality inasmuch as the family takes advantage through familiarity, possessiveness, and a sense of obligation."¹² Shearing suggests that it is important for Kabalarians students to separate themselves from family members who may hinder their spiritual progress. This hindrance may come in the form of simply talking and thinking only of petty family affairs, or it may come through a rejection of the family member's decision to become a Kabalarians. Shearing writes:

Most new students find that their families object to the name change and ridicule their diet and standards regarding smoking, drinking, and so on. Families often think of the Philosophy as a fanatical cult. The decision by students to separate from such a family is not too difficult because there is such a strong, negative objection, resistance, and interference."

¹⁰ It may be true that part of the problem is the small size of the group. In a service I attended in Vancouver on June 6, 1993, I did observe some hugging and warm greetings between students at the meeting.

¹¹ Ibid., p.11.

¹² Ibid., p.8.

¹³ Ibid., p.10.

In interviews with Kabalarian students, it is clear that Shearing is correct; many converts perceive that their families have belittled, rejected, or even "disowned" them. Some students, of course, have found acceptance of their decision within their families, and some have other family members within the group."⁴

⁴ Personal interviews, April to November, 1993, Calgary.

Chapter Four: Practices

Members of the Kabalarian Philosophy refer to themselves as "students." The normal route for exploring Kabalarian Philosophy is to enrol in one or more of the five courses offered by the movement. There are two introductory courses, one of which teaches students the mechanics of analyzing names, and one which teaches the principle of cycles. Two intermediate courses deal with healthy living and mental growth. The fifth course teaches individuals how to live a Kabalarian lifestyle. In order to take this course, one must apply to become a member of the Society of Kabalarians.⁹⁵ Once one has full membership in the organisation, he can participate in Senior Philosophy classes, as well as enjoy added benefits including access to the resort property owned by the organisation, access to tape and video library, and participation in various activities and conventions.

In Vancouver, classes consist of a combination of brief videotaped lectures by the group's current leader, and lectures and demonstrations by a local speaker. In Calgary, although the courses are billed as seminars, they consist almost entirely of watching videotapes of the classes in Vancouver. These lectures are accompanied by professionally produced notes and workbooks. Sessions run for two hours, once a week, for twelve weeks. The cost of these courses is

⁹⁵ Hilton Ramsey reported that this practice was being reviewed, as of June 1993. Personal interview, June, 1993, Vancouver.

quite prohibitive; the first course costs \$325, the next three cost \$225 each. In addition, before registering for the "Life Analysis Training" class, one is required to order a "personal name report" from Vancouver, at a cost of \$38. Only the first two courses are available in Calgary, although members are encouraged to read and discuss the books used for the senior classes. Once one reaches at least "level 1 membership," course fees decrease, but one is obliged to pay \$25 monthly membership dues.

Kabalarian Philosophy has very few rituals. Parker taught specific guidelines concerning food. Members are vegetarians [although they will eat seafood], use dairy products only sparingly, and avoid acidic fruits. Kabalarian Philosophy emphasises the "breath of life" and members are encouraged to engage in physical activity, and to practice deep breathing. Weekly meetings are opened with three deep breaths, and I am told that certain yoga exercises are used by senior students.

At the Calgary Centre, weekly meetings are held on Sunday mornings. One Sunday a month, visitors are welcome to attend. On these Sundays, a lengthy videotaped lecture by the group's current leader is shown, a few songs [typically old, popular, secular tunes] are sung to prerecorded music, a fund-raising raffle is held, and announcements are read. The lecture typically deals with name analysis. The meeting is often followed by a brunch which is prepared by one of

the students. During more than a year of participant observation, I observed only three non-Kabalarian visitors at these services.

One Sunday a month, a Name Analysis Study Class is held. People who have completed the Life Analysis Training course are permitted to attend this meeting to practice name analyses. At one meeting that I attended, we did name analyses on the recently deceased Jeanne Sauve, and a prominent local businessman. This meeting also opened with deep breathing, and closed with a song, announcements, raffle and a brunch.

Other Sunday mornings are occupied by Senior Philosophy Classes. Attendance is restricted to members of Kabalarian Philosophy. I was only once permitted to attend a Senior Philosophy Class. This class consisted of a sort of game concerning characteristics of the nine digits, and a discussion and role play of how to talk to outsiders about the Philosophy.

In addition to regular Sunday morning meetings, many special services were also held. I was permitted to attend both Easter and Christmas services. The primary emphasis at the Christmas service was on the secular elements of the holiday; Santa appeared and gifts were exchanged. One Easter service featured a skit demonstrating the qualities of the nine numbers, while another included a visit by the Easter Bunny. Special services also featured entertainment by

various students, including word games or riddles, the reading of poetry, and "magic" tricks. At both services, secular seasonal songs were sung; Peter Cottontail at Easter and Silver Bells and Winter Wonderland at Christmas. Some time was taken on both occasions to universalize the Christian understanding of the occasion. At the Easter service, it was done verbally in homiletic form, seemingly for my benefit, and at Christmas, handouts concerning the Christmas message were available.

The Calgary Centre is located in an older house in a neighbourhood that is otherwise residential. The house also contains two residential suites, one of which is occupied by the local leader, and the other used as revenue property. The local group of Kabalarian students is quite small. There are five students who are regular attenders at weekly services, and less than two dozen others who occasionally take classes or attend special events.

Finances

A constant concern for the Calgary group is keeping money flowing in. Mention has been made above of the frequent raffles held at Sunday services. Tickets are sold for \$1, and most of the students buy several. Because there are frequently no more than six people at the services, individuals have a very good chance of winning at least one of the three or more prizes offered. It is my impression

that most of the students are embarrassed to have their name drawn, either because the group is so small, or because they are winning a prize which they have donated. As a result of this embarrassment, a winner will often urge that a different name be drawn, or the caller will read a different name if he sees his own on the entry. Another consequence of either this embarrassment or excessive kindness is that the name of this researcher has frequently been called, although I have never entered the draw. In addition to these regular monthly raffles, one major raffle is held each year.

Another method of fundraising is through public lectures. Once or twice a year, the leader of the Edmonton Centre will give a lecture in Calgary. These lectures are open to the public, and an admission fee is charged. The fee for the fall, 1993 lecture was \$8. There were roughly twenty people in attendance, all of whom had some previous connection to the Kabalarian Philosophy.

Occasionally, an admission fee is charged to a Sunday morning meeting. In February, a service is held to mark the birthday of the founder. In Vancouver, an elaborate evening is planned, including a banquet, entertainment, a long talk by the current leader, and reminiscing about the founder by some of the older members of the group. In 1993, students travelled to Vancouver, and paid \$15 to attend this event. In Calgary, students paid \$5 to watch a videotape of the speeches. In addition, souvenirs were available, starting

from an \$8 keychain with the founder's picture, and including taped lectures and copies of photographs of the founder. It was explained at this service that \$3 of the admission charge, and roughly half the price of the souvenirs would be sent to Vancouver. Also sent to Vancouver are membership dues and fees paid for courses. The Calgary Centre then receives a commission from Vancouver.

Another frequent fundraiser is the monthly brunch. One student prepares the meal, the others contribute \$5. Once a year, a yard sale is held at the Centre. At Christmas, students contribute handicrafts which are taken to Vancouver to be sold. In the fall, apples grown on the organisation's resort property are sold. Most of the money needed to support the Centre comes from the students themselves. In addition to paying membership dues, tuition for classes, admission to special events, raffle tickets, and brunch, students also make direct contributions to the Centre. This used to be done by means of actually passing a collection plate at the weekly meetings [a practice which continues in Vancouver], but has now become slightly more subtle. One couple acknowledged that the tax deductible portion of their yearly contribution totalled more than \$3000. There is some feeling in the Calgary Centre that other means of raising money must be found," particularly since the group has

" This sentiment was expressed in informal conversations over brunch at the Calgary Centre.

recently established a building fund, hoping to one day build a structure which will attract new members by making the organisation appear more successful. While the parent organisation in Vancouver does own a large building in a nice area, informants acknowledge that the nation's current recession has taken a toll both on revenues and on the group's ability to attract new members."

" Hilton Ramsey, personal interview, June, 1993; Vancouver.

Chapter Five: The Participants

Interviews were conducted with many of the frequent and occasional attenders at the Calgary Centre, as well as with a few defectors. While the numbers are too small to draw statistically reliable data, some interesting characteristics may be observed. The people associated with this group ranged in age from late thirties to late seventies. Active members were split in terms of education, a few had one or more degrees while others had less than one year of post secondary training, and most held nonprofessional jobs. All considered themselves to be in or near the middle class.

In terms of prior religious training, this sample is unremarkable. Most had been raised in families which were nominally affiliated with mainline churches, but had become inactive by their teens if they were ever active at all. Four people in the sample practised a religion at the time that they first encountered the Kabalarian Philosophy; one was becoming discontented with the United Church, one was a practising Roman Catholic, and one couple was active within the Lutheran Church. The Roman Catholic participated in both movements for four years before she discarded Kabalarian Philosophy, the others all left their churches to pursue the Philosophy. The United Church member has since moved on to explore other groups.

Nearly everyone in my sample reported a prior curiosity about religion, philosophy, or psychic phenomena, but had done little exploration. A few had visited several churches, attended a few lectures or read one or more books. The most common interest cited was with Transcendental Meditation, though it is not clear whether this interest followed or preceded their exploration of Kabalarian Philosophy."¹ With the exception of the Roman Catholic in my sample, all the defectors I contacted had moved on from the Philosophy to study TM, although they had subsequently left this organisation as well. Each defector was able to name several others who had taken the same route, though they also reported knowing individuals who had returned to Christian churches after leaving the Philosophy. Most of my sample had done little work to develop a belief system, and were attracted to the Kabalarian Philosophy not on the basis of the ideas which it held, but in order to solve difficulties they were experiencing when they encountered the group.

Nearly all of the past and present Kabalarian students interviewed joined the group at a time when they were facing what they perceived to be serious problems in their lives. The most commonly cited reasons for exploring the Philosophy were the search for mental or physical health, relief of

¹ The leader of the Calgary Centre suggested that the interest in T.M. may come as a result of learning about mind through the Kabalarian Philosophy. It is an interest which she tries to discourage. Personal interview, October, 1993, Calgary.

general family or job stress, the desire for a whole new way of life, and a curiosity about religious or philosophical ideas. One member reported joining in order to improve his finances by applying the Cyclic Principle, one joined because she had a friend in the movement, and one recent apostate could not recall any particular reason for joining. Some of the men in the sample joined because they were romantically involved with members. With the exception of the member seeking material gain, all of the current members have reported that the need which led them to join the group has been met. Even apostates report health benefits which they attribute to the diet and breathing exercises taught by the group.

Although Kabalarian students happily report resolution of the problem which initially led them to the group, their interpretations are highly subjective. For example, it should be noted that for both former and current members, health is a relative term. Most of those who reported exploring Kabalarian Philosophy for reasons of their own or a family member's health had serious diseases at the time of joining. All of them still have these diseases [or have already lost a spouse to them] but believe that they have lived longer, healthier, and more productive lives with the disease than they would have had they not discovered these teachings. Of interest is the fact that all of these members

believed in and used alternative medicine prior to joining the Philosophy, and continue to today.

Other reported outcomes of experiences in the Philosophy include finding fulfilling work, good relationships, self confidence, and mental clarity. It is difficult to assess whether someone else's life is in fact balanced, successful, or fulfilling, but defectors from the organisation have suggested that students do not actually have the level of success they claim. More than one apostate suggested that members' problems are not solved, and that their [mental and emotional] growth may actually be hindered by their involvement⁹⁹. My impression was that although most of the students reported happy resolution to their problems, some may have settled for less than their full potential. For example, most of the women in the group worked in jobs where they supported others, though their talents may have permitted them to do something more demanding. One of the women explained that her job was in fulfilment of her numbers¹⁰⁰.

With only one exception, everyone in my sample first encountered the Kabalarian Philosophy through a social contact. All of them had a name analysis done, took a course, and stayed. The participants in my study had been in

⁹⁹ Personal interviews, September 1993 to November, 1993.

¹⁰⁰ Personal interview, April, 1993, Calgary.

the movement from three to more than fifty years, with most having participated for fifteen years or more.

As discussed above, there are very few active members at the Calgary Centre. Most of the inactive members I was able to speak to had become inactive as a result of advancing age. A few younger ones had changed their names and learned to calculate names and cycles, but were not interested in participating in the organisation. The leader of the Calgary Centre reports that this is a very frequent phenomenon; people will have a name analysis done, and change their own or their child's name, but never join the Kabalarian Philosophy. Since I have become familiar with the Philosophy, I have become sensitive to unusual names. In two chance encounters when I have had the opportunity to question individuals about their names, I have found that, indeed, the Kabalarian Philosophy did have an influence. In both cases, the woman's parents had contacted the organisation when she was young and requested a name analysis. Both families changed the child's name, but had no further contact with the Philosophy.

Those who did join reported varying degrees of commitment. When asked what impact their participation in the Kabalarian Philosophy has had on their lives, answers ranged from the benefits listed above to, "everything," and "it is my life." On the other hand, one twenty-year member

reported no impact.¹⁰¹ Most who are involved are quite committed, giving considerable time, effort, and money to the organisation. Many make trips to Vancouver to attend special functions, and also make use of the group's resort property.

What is the Appeal of the Kabalarian Philosophy?

I have never visited a fortune teller; I have never had my palm read; consulted a psychic; or permitted my aura to be photographed. Perhaps it was a childhood spent in a conservative Protestant church, but it just never seemed appropriate. When my thesis research began, I made an exception. The first time I visited the Calgary Centre for brunch, the students performed an informal name analysis. They asked the correct spelling of my first and last names, as well as my birthdate, performed a few calculations, and began to speak.

My reluctance to hear their words began to change as I was told that I was idealistic, deeply spiritual, drawn to the occult, capable of intense concentration and a born teacher. Moreover, I was described as intelligent, analytical, refined, and a deep thinker. Given my values,

¹⁰¹ It should be noted that this member also seemed to have very little knowledge of the teachings of the Philosophy, in spite of having taken classes. In addition, this member's spouse and child were not involved, and she reported no close friends in the organisation. Personal interview, October, 1993, Calgary.

goals, and self-perception, these words were sure to please. I am certain that I was told about some negative traits and characteristics, though the only ones I remember specifically are that I was prone to bronchitis, heart disease, and head tension. Hardly enough to slow down an idealist such as myself! When I received my written name analysis, the overall impression was far less optimistic. Most of the positive traits were gone, replaced by the warning that the things I desire the most will be taken away from me.

I have heard many oral name analyses given by Kabalarians, and they all include mention of negative traits. I have no doubt that mine did as well, but I failed to hear them. My itchy ears only picked up that part of the analysis which reinforced [and raised] my previously held self image. It seems to me that this is the appeal of the Kabalarian Philosophy.

It is flattering to have another person make an effort to understand what one is all about. Karla Poewe, in her work on conversion experiences, lists as one step in the conversion process the experience of smiting words; an individual feels that the words which are being spoken are directed at him¹⁰². This experience is guaranteed in

¹⁰² Karla Poewe, "On the Metonymic Structure of Religious Experiences: The Example of Charismatic Christianity," in Cultural Dynamics: an International Journal for the study of Process and Temporality of Culture, Volume ii, (April, 1989) p.372.

Kabalarian Philosophy because the words truly are directed at the individual. He may feel that his whole life is being laid out and explained, and a solution to all his problems is being offered.

During the course of my studies, I had the opportunity to observe this phenomenon on several occasions. In one instance, I had taken a colleague to a public presentation at the Calgary Centre. After the formalities, a Kabalarian student did a thorough name analyses of my colleague and her spouse [who was not in attendance.] By the end of the evening, my colleague felt that she had found understanding and an explanation for an unhappy life and marriage.

Another instance involves someone I met while taking courses at the Calgary Centre. This individual had completed an advanced degree, and started a challenging career. She worked only a short time, then left her job and moved in order to marry. At the time that she started exploring the Philosophy, she had been out of the paid workforce for several years, raising small children. The Kabalarian Philosophy suggests that upon marriage, if a woman takes her husband's surname, it changes her character. This woman had married at about the same time she changed "minor lessons," so not only was her personality changing, but so too was her role, and the experiences she would be attracting. The woman knew that she was growing discontent with her role in life, and the Kabalarian Philosophy provided an explanation. It

could be that this understanding of her feelings is easier to deal with than a more mundane one. It is possible that a woman may feel guilt at her frustration with the child rearing role. It is also quite possible that an individual with an advanced degree may feel some guilt and frustration at not contributing to the field in which she had trained. Accepting an alternate explanation of these feelings may help alleviate guilt and frustration.

I inadvertently created a situation in which I could observe the appeal of the personal name analysis. I had the opportunity to speak to an undergraduate religious studies class about my research. I had spoken about the system of name analysis, and shown a brief example. A student asked whether the Kabalarians would work out his name. I casually remarked that he could call the Centre and ask. I was greeted as a hero on my next visit to the Kabalarian Centre, as close to fifteen undergraduates had in fact called for information.

The appeal of personal understanding cannot be overrated. I have seen many cynics begin to relax as their own characteristics are described. Even when the description does not appear overly accurate, people seem willing to listen.¹⁰³ However, because two or more names, and a complete birthdate provide a lot of numbers from which

¹⁰³ Even my amateur and inaccurate analyses were in demand after my colleagues learned that I had taken a course at the Calgary Centre.

interpretation can be drawn, it is almost certain that every individual will find in his name analysis at least a few points which appear insightful and true. If these characteristics are positive, the individual's own ego may fill in the details. If they are negative, but offer some explanation for failure and disappointment, one may at least have experienced understanding, and have the hope that the situation may be changed.

What Can Be Learned from Defectors?

Those who have left the Kabalarian Philosophy reveal some potential pitfalls in the belief system. A recent defector has been mentioned above. This individual reported a lifelong dislike of her name. Through a business contact, she heard about a "name consultant." Calling the number she was given led her to the Calgary Centre. She had a name analysis done, changed her name, and took a course. She was considering a career change at the time, and thought that the Mathematical Principle may make her options clearer. Although this woman never formally joined the organisation, or paid dues, she took two classes, and attended meetings and social events with some regularity for close to four years. At the same time, she continued to attend the Roman Catholic Church, in which she had been brought up. Although her comments may be tempered by the current acrimony she feels towards the group, she now reports that she never took

the Philosophy very seriously. She was offended by the way Kabalarians quote the Bible but criticize religion. Her primary difficulty with Kabalarian Philosophy was that it made her feel like she had little control over her own life. She found herself afraid to make a decision without first doing a mathematical calculation, and making all her decisions based upon numbers instead of reason. It was a health crisis which finally prompted this woman to leave the group. She was seriously injured, and as she lay in hospital, she realised that the Kabalarian Philosophy "provided no answers and no comfort." Although she feels that she will probably explore other ideas superficially, this woman intends to continue practising her Roman Catholic faith.¹⁰⁴

An earlier defector had many of the same concerns as the woman just described. This apostate and her husband participated in the Kabalarian Philosophy for ten years during the fifties. She describes their level of involvement as "total." Although she credits the dietary guidelines of the Philosophy with improving her health and prolonging her husband's life, she also felt she was made powerless by the teachings of the organisation. She resented the criticism of religion, and the attempts at social control. "They didn't want you to read anything else or know anyone else." She felt that the group was critical, negative, and self-

¹⁰⁴ Personal interview, September, 1993, Calgary.

righteous. Ultimately, this woman rebelled against the control. When the Ladies' Auxiliary refused to meet at her home because she fraternised with defectors, she decided it was time to leave. A friend told her about Transcendental Meditation, she experimented, joined, stayed and taught for many years. Today, although quite elderly, this woman is an active New Ager.¹⁰⁵

A third defector, also active during the fifties, rebelled against the rules as well as the powerlessness she and her husband felt in light of the teachings about cycles. This couple ultimately left the movement when their son became very ill with hepatitis. Doctors ordered a high protein diet, which apparently violated Kabalarian norms. Social pressure was exerted on the couple, and they chose to leave rather than risk their child's life, or face the judgement of their peers. This couple also joined Transcendental Meditation, later leaving to become New Agers. Although they are also quite elderly, and have failing health, they are still associated with two local spiritual centers as well as holding second degree qualifications in Reiki, and being followers of Lazaris, a channelled entity.¹⁰⁶

These defectors, as well as others who declined to be formally interviewed, point out some weaknesses in the ideas

¹⁰⁵ Personal interview, October, 1993, Calgary.

¹⁰⁶ Personal interview, November, 1993, Calgary.

taught by the movement. Every apostate I found had reacted strongly against the Cyclic Law, feeling that it prevented him from making good decisions. As discussed above, the belief is that each individual, as well as the whole universe, is continually experiencing a nine year cycle. There are also cycle months, days, and hours. According to the theory, it is extremely important that one engages in activities at the appropriate time. For instance, one should ideally begin a new job in a one cycle year. The difficulty arises when one is offered a new job in what should be a building or reaping year. Reason may reveal that the new opportunity is desirable, but to begin something new in a test year is to court failure. Although Kabalarian students are quick to point out that a knowledge of the cycles helps one to take actions at the appropriate time, it is equally true that a firm belief may prevent one from making rational decisions at what the numbers reveal to be bad times. Of course, if the Cyclic Principle is correct, it may prove that the decision was not as good as it appeared to be.

Trying to live in harmony with the Cyclic Law appears to be awkward. In attempting to schedule an interview with one Kabalarian couple, calculations were made in order to find a cycle hour which would be fruitful and congenial for all three of us. Both members of this couple had careers, and the logistics of ensuring that all activities were undertaken at appropriate times had prompted this woman to

carry a monthly chart of cycle days and hours for both herself and her husband.

It has often been postulated that the role of religion is to bring people assurance in the midst of an unpredictable world, while the task of magic is to allow one to gain control over the world. The Kabalarian Philosophy does neither. It attempts to explain the world in terms of basic laws which can be understood and utilised. In the end, however, one can neither control nor escape these laws. In one sense, believing the world to be chaotic would at least allow one the confidence and freedom to act within it, while knowledge of the laws makes many people feel fearful and enslaved.

Another difficulty which all the defectors in my sample had with the Kabalarian Philosophy was its negativity towards religion generally, and Christianity in particular. The organisation should be more mindful of the culture in which it exists. Presumably, some of the people who would be willing to explore this Philosophy are spiritual seekers. In Canada, anyone interested in spirituality is likely to participate in or have come out of Christianity. Hearing this movement characterised so negatively will likely offend more seekers than it attracts. Indeed, in my interview sample, the only people I would class as active seekers are those who have left Kabalarian Philosophy. Although they went on to join alternative spiritual groups, their

explorations prior to encountering the Philosophy were in Christian circles. During my participant observation in this organisation, I found other students and enquirers who recoiled at the [often unfair and poorly informed] criticism of the Christian tradition. The rhetoric appears to do more harm than good, and the organisation would seem wise to reconsider its use.

Chapter Six: Influences

Throughout his writings, Alfred Parker neglects to acknowledge sources for his ideas. Although Kabalarian students claim that he independently discovered all of the principles contained within his work, elements of the Kabalarian Philosophy closely resemble the teachings of other movements. Through the biography of Alfred Parker, written by his daughter, we are able to have real insight into the ideas which influenced his thought.¹⁰⁷

It is clear that Kabalarian Philosophy was not created in a vacuum. Alfred Parker arrived in North America in 1910. His biographer reports that he read many philosophical and religious books, attended meetings and services of all types, and dabbled in various occult arts.¹⁰⁸ His teachings reflect the influence of these activities.

During the period that Parker was investigating the spiritual realm, there was no dearth of interesting ideas and practices in which he may have participated. We are told, in particular, that he attended Spiritualist seances¹⁰⁹, studied yoga¹¹⁰, attended a class on

¹⁰⁷ Parker's spiritual quest is laid out in Carollyne Tylor, Against the Tides (1983). This book was published privately.

¹⁰⁸ Ibid., p.107.

¹⁰⁹ Ibid., p.136.

¹¹⁰ Ibid., p.135.

numerology¹¹¹, and sampled occult practises such as Mesmerism¹¹² and Palmistry¹¹³. It would seem that during his exploration of these various movements, Alfred Parker came to accept many of the ideas they hold.

The Metaphysical Movement

In his book, The History and Philosophy of Metaphysical Movements in America, J. Stillson Judah describes a family of sects which have been influenced by transcendentalism, Emanuel Swedenborg, Ralph Waldo Emerson, Indian monistic thought, Hermetic and Kabbalistic philosophy, and Anton Mesmer's hypnosis. Judah writes:

We may reasonably seek a common ground for all of these, since the seeds of the basic philosophies were sown swiftly between 1840 and 1875, in an area stretching no farther than from Maine to New York.¹¹⁴

Based upon his description of these groups, it would appear that the Kabalarian Philosophy has picked up many of their philosophical underpinnings. Alfred Parker came to North America in 1910, to the west coast rather than the east, but encountered groups which had been influenced by the ideas Judah describes. Judah posits fifteen characteristics of

¹¹¹ Ibid., p.166.

¹¹² Ibid., p.109.

¹¹³ Ibid., p.154.

¹¹⁴ J. Stillson Judah, The History and Philosophy of the Metaphysical Movements in America (Philadelphia, 1967) p.12.

metaphysical movements, Kabalarian Philosophy embodies all of them. These characteristics are discussed below.

Metaphysical sects reject creedal authority, although many have their own statements of principles.¹¹⁵ Although the Kabalarian Philosophy has a creed, it has today been largely supplanted by the "Kabalarian Ethics of Right Thinking." In one public lecture I attended, a Kabalarian leader criticised Christianity for its creeds and for not having changed its doctrines in two thousand years.¹¹⁶

Most metaphysical groups believe that inner man is divine.¹¹⁷ Kabalarian Philosophy teaches that divinity or universal consciousness, Christ consciousness is seeded into man.¹¹⁸

Metaphysical sects prefer to see God as a Principle, a God of Science.¹¹⁹ These groups consider themselves to be scientific as well as religious. Kabalarian Philosophy refers to God as Principle or Universal Consciousness, and

¹¹⁵ Ibid., p.12.

¹¹⁶ Floyd Farrell, February 7, 1993, at the Calgary Centre.

¹¹⁷ Ibid., p.13.

¹¹⁸ This idea can be found throughout Parker's writings. See, for example, Alfred Parker, Revelation (Vancouver, 1977) p.32.

¹¹⁹ Op. Cit. p.13.

considers its Mathematical Principle and Cyclic Law to be scientific.¹²⁰

Most metaphysical sects believe that God is related to man in a "quasi-gnostic or dualistic manner." However, given the belief commonly held by these groups, that physical matter exists only in one's mind or is mind, the idea emerges that God is completely immanent. If one knows the laws of this immanent God, he can shape his own fate.¹²¹ As discussed above, Kabalarian Philosophy does teach the gnostic notion of divinity being seeded into man. It also teaches, however, that Universal Consciousness is really in everything, rocks and trees, animals and man. There is a divine law at work in all these things which allows them to be fully rocks and trees. If man knows and uses the universal principle, he too may be fully what he was born to be.¹²²

Most metaphysical sects accept the moral teachings of Jesus, which they separate from the Christ Principle, which is man's inner nature.¹²³ Kabalarian Philosophy teaches

¹²⁰ This idea, too, is common in Parker's books. See, for example, Alfred Parker, "What's in Your Name? You Are Your Name," p.114 in A Selection of Writings on the Kabalarian Philosophy (Vancouver, 1975).

¹²¹ Op. Cit. pp.13-14.

¹²² Alfred Parker, "What's in Your Name? You Are Your Name," pp.18-19, in A Selection of Writings on the Kabalarian Philosophy (Vancouver, 1975).

¹²³ Op. Cit., p.14.

that one should aspire to Christhood, becoming one with the Principle within.¹²⁴

Metaphysical groups do not regard man as a sinner, but merely as ignorant of his true nature.¹²⁵ Salvation is seen as discovering and using higher laws.¹²⁶ Kabalarian Philosophy teaches both of these ideas, encouraging individuals to become what they were born to be and to rejoin Universal Consciousness by balancing their minds through the Mathematical Principle.¹²⁷

Metaphysical philosophies are pragmatic, encouraging the enquirer to test the principles rather than to believe them.¹²⁸ Kabalarian Philosophy offers a name analysis, which is intended to demonstrate the truth of the Mathematical Principle. Since these analyses do frequently contain some elements which seem accurate, they tend to engender belief in the Philosophy.

Metaphysical groups claim validity for their teachings through religious experience.¹²⁹ Judah describes, in particular, the development of secret powers or healing and

¹²⁴ Alfred Parker, Sermon on the Mount (Vancouver, 1970) p.20.

¹²⁵ Op. Cit., p.14.

¹²⁶ Op. Cit., p.15.

¹²⁷ Alfred Parker, Revelation (Vancouver, 1977) p.38.

¹²⁸ Op. Cit., p.14.

¹²⁹ Op. Cit., p.14.

material gain. Kabalarian students do believe it is possible to develop great mental powers, though I have met none who claim to have done so. Many claim physical healing and material accumulation.¹³⁰

Many metaphysical sects "offer a psychological approach to reality," providing a path to health and self-fulfilment.¹³¹ Kabalarian Philosophy offers the ultimate in self-fulfilment; one can know precisely what kind of person he was born to be, what sort of careers he is best suited for, and what kind of people will provide good companionship. One needs merely to align himself with universal laws, and he will fulfil his own destiny.¹³²

Metaphysical belief systems are optimistic with regards to the nature of both God and man.¹³³ They also posit material rewards in this life, as well as immortality or progression in the next. Kabalarian Philosophy holds out the possibility for a life of health and fulfilment, as well as

¹³⁰ Personal interviews, April to November, 1993, Calgary.

¹³¹ Op. Cit., p.16.

¹³² Alfred Parker, "What's In Your Name? You Are Your Name," p.116 in A Selection of Writings on the Kabalarian Philosophy (Vancouver, 1975).

¹³³ Op. cit., p.16.

the opportunity to rejoin Universal Consciousness before or at the point of death."¹³⁴

Some metaphysical sects emphasise the desirability of acquiring "pleasant things under the guise of prosperity." These groups often believe that God rewards those who "realise their unity with him by using his laws."¹³⁵ Because these sects frequently teach that evil is not real, they can become quite hedonistic. Kabalarian Philosophy emphasises the possibility of material gain, and of avoiding bad health and bitter experiences through using the Mathematical Principle. Posters advertising lectures at the Calgary Center promise material gain through using the cycles and a balanced name.

Judah writes:

Most metaphysical groups have a belief in an inner meaning of words beyond their dictionary definition - a meaning that cannot be discovered empirically from the standpoint of usage or etymology, but that is revealed intuitively.¹³⁶

That Kabalarian Philosophy perceives words to have meaning beyond their definition is gross understatement. The Mathematical Principle gives words a significance far beyond etymology and usage. In addition, Judah suggests that metaphysical biblical exegesis may reveal unique

¹³⁴ Alfred Parker, "What's In Your Name? You Are Your Name," p.116 in A Selection of Writings on the Kabalarian Philosophy (Vancouver, 1975).

¹³⁵ Op. cit., p.17.

¹³⁶ Op. cit., p.17.

interpretations of texts which appears to outsiders as allegorical, but which offer insiders a key to understanding the Bible which aligns it with their teachings.¹³⁷ Kabalarian Philosophy makes use of this technique; indeed, its founder wrote several books of biblical interpretation demonstrating that the principles he taught were found in scripture¹³⁸. These books make astonishing reading for one versed in literary criticism and classical theology!

Finally, Judah explains that the metaphysical sects encourage healing through the mind or spirit.¹³⁹ Alfred Parker thought that all disease had its origins in the mental realm. By changing the way one thinks, one can change his physical health. By allowing oneself to worry about the possibility of contracting a disease, one can actually attract it. Having a "constructive mental attitude" towards life will go a long way towards maintaining good health.¹⁴⁰

Kabalarian Philosophy embodies all of the characteristics which Judah uses to delineate metaphysical movements. In his

¹³⁷ Op. Cit., p.18.

¹³⁸ See, for example, Alfred J. Parker, Sermon on the Mount A Logical and Basic Interpretation of the Scripture. (Vancouver, 1970). In addition, the "Kabalarian Courier" ran regular articles on biblical interpretation during the 1940's.

¹³⁹ Op. cit., p.18.

¹⁴⁰ This idea is found throughout Parker's work. See, for example, Alfred Parker, "Mental Tension, the Basis of all Disease," in A Selection of Writings on the Kabalarian Philosophy (Vancouver, 1975).

discussion of the ideas that influenced the development of these groups, we find many other similarities. For example, Judah posits that the notion of God as a mathematical principle resulted from a synthesis of Newtonian science and Puritanism by Jonathan Edwards and others.¹⁴¹ Metaphysical sects feel that their beliefs are scientific, and emphasise divine laws.¹⁴² Metaphysical groups feel that one's life conditions are attracted by his thoughts.¹⁴³ Metaphysical groups feel that matter is composed of atoms in vibration, that spirit and matter are only differentiated by their speeds of vibration, and that an individual can raise the speed of vibration of his consciousness through thought.¹⁴⁴ Kabalarian Philosophy teaches all of these concepts.¹⁴⁵ Metaphysical movements, influenced by Swedenborg, teach that creation is an emanation from God¹⁴⁶, Kabalarian Philosophy teaches the same. Metaphysical movements, particularly those influenced by Hinduism, teach that sin is only

¹⁴¹ Op. cit., p.26.

¹⁴² Op. cit., p.39.

¹⁴³ Op. cit., p.40.

¹⁴⁴ Op. cit., p.41.

¹⁴⁵ These ideas can be found throughout Parker's work. See, for example, Alfred Parker, "Thoughts are Things" in A Selection of Writings on the Kabalarian Philosophy (Vancouver, 1975).

¹⁴⁶ Op. cit., p.41.

ignorance,¹⁴⁷ Kabalarian Philosophy teaches the same idea.¹⁴⁸ It seems clear that Alfred Parker was influenced by the beliefs which underlay many of the alternative spiritual traditions of his day.

Spiritualism

Another movement which seems to have influenced the founder of Kabalarian Philosophy is Spiritualism. Alfred Parker's daughter reports that as a young man, Alfred would frequently attend and disrupt seances. He liked to reveal fraudulent mediums when he found them, as well as to try to block the medium's communication through the use of yoga breathing.¹⁴⁹ Although Parker did identify some charlatans practising Spiritualism, he also came to believe that the dead sometimes remain in close proximity to the living.

Spiritualism is based on two primary beliefs; that the human personality survives death, and that it is possible for the living to communicate with the dead. These beliefs are ancient, and are thought by some to be at the base of all religions.¹⁵⁰ Spiritualism as a movement, had its

¹⁴⁷ Op. cit., p.41.

¹⁴⁸ Alfred Parker, Revelation (Vancouver, 1977) p.37.

¹⁴⁹ Carollyne Tylor, Against the Tides (1983) p.136.

¹⁵⁰ Durkheim, for instance, felt that animism and spiritism, which make up most modern religions, were actually two very basic and separate religions. Emile Durkheim, The Elementary Forms of the Religious Life (New York, 1965) p.88.

origins with two young girls, Margaretta and Katie Fox, in 1848 in New York State. The two girls claimed to communicate with a man who had died in the home they inhabited. The communication was said to take the form of "rappings." Although it was later suggested that the noises were actually the result of flexing of the knee or toe joints, the movement was born.¹⁸¹ Spiritualism has taken the form of seances where the departed are thought to communicate through Ouija boards, or by speaking to or through a medium, as well as through table rappings. In addition, in some circles, musical instruments are believed to be sounded, or flowers moved by spirits.

Alfred Parker did not believe in the soul or in spirits. He did, however, hold some credence in ghosts and the survival of disembodied minds beyond death, ideas which he may have accepted as a result of his experiences with Spiritualism. Older Kabalarian students and early defectors have described participating in two rituals which would seem to have been based upon this belief. One practice involved Alfred Parker discerning that a student was being possessed by a disembodied mind, and then drawing it out of him. In the second ceremony, Parker would lead a group of students in humming. When the noise reached a certain pitch [or speed of vibration] students would begin speaking in tongues. This

¹⁸¹ Winthrop S. Hudson, Religion in America, (New York, 1987) p.186.

experience was known as "manifesting," and was thought to mean that a disembodied mind was being materialised.¹⁵² This practice would seem to be very similar to a seance, where a spirit would make itself known.¹⁵³

In addition to influencing his beliefs about the activities of the dead, Spiritualism may also have helped to inform Alfred Parker's soteriology. Like Spiritualism, the Kabalarian Philosophy teaches that man may become part of a universal spirit or godhead both during and after life.

Yoga

Parker's daughter reports that he studied and then taught yoga with a man named Wasson.¹⁵⁴ Kabalarian Philosophy emphasises the importance of the "Breath of Life." Students are encouraged to practice deep breathing, and meetings are opened with three deep breaths. Senior students, I am told, practice other yoga exercises. Parker's teachings on sex may also have been influenced by yoga, particularly his

¹⁵² Although these practices were described by both early defectors, and people who have been continuously involved since the 1950's, the current leadership would not comment on them, except to say that they are not part of the practices of the Kabalarian Philosophy. It seems clear, however, that they once were, under the leadership of Alfred Parker, the founder of the organisation.

¹⁵³ It is my understanding, however, that in Spiritualism, manifested entities do not speak in tongues, but in a language comprehensible to those present.

¹⁵⁴ Carolynne Tylor, Against the Tides (n.p., 1983) p.135.

teachings which resemble so closely the concept of kundalini. This influence, however, may not have been necessary, since the ideas Parker had about sex were commonly held in his era.

Qabbalah

Parker's daughter reports that the family had Jewish neighbours who taught her father about Qabbalah, and introduced him to a prominent rabbi.¹⁵⁵ Kabalarian Philosophy does, in places, bear some resemblance to Qabbalah, but it may be Qabbalah filtered through the metaphysical movement.

The term Qabbalah is derived from the Hebrew root "qbl," which means "to receive." This word is used to denote Jewish mystical traditions from the twelfth century onward. Moshe Idel, in an article in The Encyclopedia of Religion¹⁵⁶, identifies two major emphases of Qabbalah:

(1) a theosophical understanding of God combined with a symbolic view of reality and the theurgical conception of religious life, and (2) the way to attain a mystical experience of God through the invocation of divine names.¹⁵⁷

¹⁵⁵ Carollyne Tylor, Against the Tides (1983) p.208.

¹⁵⁶ Moshe Idel "Qabbalism," in Mircea Eliade, editor in chief, The Encyclopedia of Religion (New York, 1987) volume 12, p. 117 - 124.

¹⁵⁷ Ibid., p. 117.

Alfred Parker seemed to feel that he was following in the tradition of Qabbalah. After providing a brief history of the Jewish mystical tradition, he writes:

The Kabalah might be more accurately termed a religion of revelation; its philosophy traces the meaning of symbols through the Mathematical Principle.¹⁵⁸

Qabbalism teaches that God is in one sense unknowable. This aspect of God is referred to as "En Sof." It is believed, however, that God can be known through ten qualities which emanate from him. These qualities are known as "sefiroth," and are thought to compose reality. Alfred Parker, too, taught that the unknowable could be known through nine qualities which emanate from God. Parker writes:

The Kabalarian Philosophy is the knowledge of the Mathematical Principle through which the unknowable takes form and through which the unknowable may be measured, analyzed, and understood by the human mind.¹⁵⁹

It is also taught that "Adam kadmon," the primordial man, is composed of these qualities. Kabalarian Philosophy teaches that all of reality is composed of the qualities symbolised by the nine digits, and that humans are composites of these qualities. While Parker wanted to use

¹⁵⁸ Alfred Parker, Life is Short - Why Waste it? (Vancouver, 1960) p.10.

¹⁵⁹ Ibid., p.9.

this belief to understand the divine, Jewish Qabbalists felt that they may actually affect God.¹⁶⁰

One of the most distinctive feature of Qabbalistic Judaism is its belief that the world is in one sense filled and enlivened by God's divine light.¹⁶¹ This is a belief which the Kabalarian Philosophy has accepted. Another belief central to both systems of thought is the conviction that humans are "imbued with divine life," that there is some element in man which comes directly from God, and shares his substance.¹⁶² In Qabbalah, it is thought that this part is the "Neshamah," the highest part of the soul. In Kabalarian Philosophy, it is the divine spark which is seeded into a person when he receives a name.

Other elements of Qabbalah which find parallels in Kabalarian Philosophy are the belief in cycles, and a mathematical form of interpreting words. Both of these, however, bear only vague resemblance between the movements. For instance, one Qabbalistic source teaches that the cosmic processes operate on seven thousand and forty-nine thousand year cycles. Kabalarian Philosophy teaches a nine year cycle. Qabbalism uses three forms of "gimatriyyah" or numerical forms of interpretation of language. The first is

¹⁶⁰ Lawrence Fine, "Kabbalistic Texts," in Barry Holtz, (ed.), Back to the Sources Reading the Classic Jewish Texts (New York, 1984) p.328.

¹⁶¹ Ibid., p.322.

¹⁶² Ibid., p.327.

the numerical calculation of letters, the second is using letters as abbreviations for words, and the third is the interchanging of letters. Kabalarian Philosophy uses only the first technique.

Current leaders of Kabalarian Philosophy stress that their philosophy is unrelated to the Jewish faith, and that the term Qabbalah is used because of the etymology of its root, "to discover that which is hidden." Members have some sense that Qabbalah deals with numbers, but, on the whole, know nothing more about it. Although the movements have some similarities, it is quite possible that Alfred Parker picked those ideas up from other metaphysical groups rather than directly from Qabbalah, since much occultism of his period had been influenced by Qabbalistic thought.¹⁶³

Numerology

The elements of Kabalarian Philosophy which are today the most emphasised, are those concerning the "Mathematical Principle." Although Kabalarian Philosophy teaches that Parker independently discovered and proved the characteristics of the numbers, the resemblance of his teachings to numerology cannot be ignored. Numerology discusses the "lifepath", equivalent to the Kabalarian "birthpath," and calculated and interpreted in the same way. Numerology teaches the importance of name, and assigns the

¹⁶³ Ibid., pp. 46-48.

same values to letters, adds the same letters, and interprets totals in the same way. Numerology acknowledges the potential conflict between "lifepath" and name, and some writers posit the idea of a "balanced name." Numerology teaches about "minor lessons," and about cycles, as does the Kabalarian Philosophy. Numerology teaches that a digit carries certain characteristics because of its unique speed of vibration, just as Kabalarian Philosophy does.

There are some minor differences in calculation between numerology and Kabalarian Philosophy. Kabalarian Philosophy reduces every number to a single digit, while numerology allows 11 and 22 [and in some systems 33 and 44] to remain as two digits, and posits them as "master numbers" with their own unique characteristics.¹⁶⁴ There is always a one year difference in personal cycle between numerology and Kabalarian Philosophy; the initial calculation is done identically, then the Philosophy adds one year. Numerologists express the total of the name in one digit, while Kabalarians tend to use a three digit form, but the numbers taken into account and the outcome are the same.

Although the calculations and interpretations are nearly identical in numerology and Kabalarian Philosophy, the underlying philosophy can be quite different. Some

¹⁶⁴ The system of numerology is explained in dozens of popular books. See, for example, Kathleen Roquemore, It's All in Your Numbers: The Secrets of Numerology (New York, 1975).

numerologists, for instance, feel that the lifepath is the path a soul has chosen for this particular life, while Kabalarian Philosophy rejects the notion of reincarnation and past lives. In addition, some numerologists counsel against selecting a child's name based upon his birthdate, preferring to let the child develop naturally into what it will be, or believing that the parents will be guided to intuitively select the name a child needs.

Kabalarian students do not like to be reminded of the similarity of their belief system to the occult art of numerology, but the similarity exists. Alfred Parker's biography reveals that Parker observed a class on numerology taught by Swami Rai Mohan Dutta, while Parker was serving as his secretary.¹⁶⁵ In addition, in a videotape used for public presentations, Ivon Shearing states that when Alfred Parker wrote a column for the Vancouver Sun, he was identified as a numerologist. Kabalarian Philosophy maintains that Parker discovered and proved the Mathematical Principle, but the evidence would seem to suggest that he discovered it in the preexistent system of numerology. In a 1991 article entitled "Numerology - What Relationship With Kabalarian Philosophy, If Any?," an article which claims to have been "reviewed and approved by Student Executive Council," Croft Stanfield acknowledges the influence.

¹⁶⁵ Carollyne Tylor, Against the Tides (n.p., 1983) p.166.

While Mr. Alfred J. Parker originally studied numerology, he gleaned such truths as the individual qualities of the numbers from 1 to 9 and their relationship to the sequence of letters in the alphabet. At the same time, he discarded the many variations and illogical concepts that became associated with the basic Mathematical Principle over the centuries. Through a great deal of study, observation, and introspection, he refined name analysis as we know it today.¹⁶⁶

That much may be true, given the slight variations discussed above. It remains the case, however, that Kabalarian Philosophy owes a great deal to the older art.

The practise of assigning numerical values to letters dates back to at least the sixth century before the common era. Although his school may have been influenced by earlier number mysticism from Egypt, it is usually Pythagoras who is credited with bringing numerology to the western world. The Pythagorean school was established at Croton in southern Italy around 531 BCE. Pythagoras is thought to have taught that numbers underlie the phenomenal universe. In addition, he frequently represented numbers with letters. Pythagoras himself is credited with the discovery that the musical scale could be represented by arithmetic ratios. Pythagoras influenced Plato, and Plato's writings about mind-body

¹⁶⁶ Croft Stanfield, "Numerology - What Relationship to Kabalarian Philosophy, If Any?" (1991) p.1. I was given a photocopy of this and two other small articles on the same subject. Their page numbering would suggest that the three were printed together, but are not part of a larger work, and have no title encompassing all three. No publisher is listed, and it seems likely that this document is only circulated internally.

dualism and reincarnation helped to prepare a way for the acceptance of letter and number mysticism in the west. With later political conquests, this form met Eastern philosophies and religions which also contained elements of letter mysticism. Many forms of letter mysticism developed during the Hellenistic and Roman periods.¹⁶⁷

Letter and number mysticism remained popular in the Western world until the seventeenth century. In this century, attitudes developed which led to a decline in many magical practices. In his book, Religion and the Decline of Magic, Keith Thomas describes three factors which led to the change.

The first of these was the development of intellectual ideas which made up the scientific and philosophical revolution of the seventeenth century. For a short time, magical practices had stimulated a growth in the sciences. Numerology had prompted the revival of mathematics, while astrology had turned scientific enquiry to the stars. The scientific revolution entailed the acceptance of a mechanical worldview, in which the universe itself was

¹⁶⁷ There is very little scholarly work on letter and number mysticism available in English. Some information about Pythagoras' role can be found in E.T. Bell, The Development of Mathematics (New York, 1945) p.51-55. A more thorough discussion is available in encyclopedic works eg, Jon-Christian Billigmeier, "Alphabets," in Mircea Eliade, editor in chief, The Encyclopedia of Religion (New York, 1987) volume 1, p. 216 - 222.

subject to unchangeable laws, and in which magical beliefs had no place.¹⁶⁸

The second reason that Thomas identifies for the decline of magic in the seventeenth century was the growth of technology. Food became less scarce, and epidemics less common. With the rise of literacy and growth of newspapers in Europe, new ways were found to address some of the problems which had hitherto required magical solutions. The growth of insurance, building standards, and fire fighting skills took many of the risks out of life. In addition, sociological and economic theories were beginning to make the world seem more predictable and orderly.¹⁶⁹

Thomas identifies new aspirations as a third reason for the decline of magic. Although science had begun to see the world differently, it actually did very little to improve life in the seventeenth century. However, the belief that the world was orderly, and that cause preceded effect gave men the optimism that things could be changed. When one abandons the belief that disease is the punishment of God or the result of a witch's spell for the conviction that it has natural and knowable causes, one can aspire to find and address those causes. This confidence, in turn, weakens any claims which magic may make. It is not clear where this

¹⁶⁸ Keith Thomas, Religion and the Decline of Magic (London, 1973) pp.767-774.

¹⁶⁹ Ibid., pp.774-785.

attitude of self-reliance originated, although Thomas suggests that it may have been a result of the rise of technical occupations in this period. Where agrarian people had to rely on the weather, carpenters, blacksmiths, cobblers and textile workers could rely upon themselves. This attitude of self-help was carried over into the religious life.¹⁷⁰

Although magical practices declined in the seventeenth century, they were not extinguished. Many, including numerology, regained some prominence in the nineteenth century. Thomas writes:

If magic is to be defined as the employment of ineffective techniques to allay anxiety when effective ones are not available, then we must recognise that no society will ever be free from it.¹⁷¹

Sociology, psychology and biology have all addressed the question of what makes a person who he is. The answers are far from simple, and substantial disagreement remains. Psychology, philosophy, and theology all discuss how an individual may become what he desires to be, but again the answers are varied and the road is difficult. In the face of this, it is perhaps not surprising that some people, desiring more straightforward answers, may turn to numerology for explanations of what they are and how they might become otherwise.

¹⁷⁰ Ibid., pp.785-794.

¹⁷¹ Ibid., p.800.

Chapter Seven: Impact and Possibilities

In nearly sixty years of existence, Kabalarian Philosophy has failed to attract a large number of followers. Most of the Centres which have been started are gone, and many of the most committed students are aged or already dead. Evaluating the impact of such a small movement with a relatively short history is difficult, but it is possible to discuss the role of Kabalarian Philosophy within the context of alternative spirituality generally.

In his article, "The Revival of Astrology in the United States," J. Gordon Melton argues that the existence of a large occult community paved the way for the acceptance of new religious movements.¹⁷² The resemblance of Kabalarian Philosophy to numerology has been discussed above, and it would seem that had North Americans not been familiar with the concepts of numerology, it would have been more difficult to convince them to hear the message of the Philosophy. While most of the students at the Calgary Centre report previous knowledge of numerology, only one had really explored it. The others acknowledged no prior interest in any occult arts.

Kabalarian Philosophy has helped to fuel interest in and knowledge of numerology to an audience which may not have explored it otherwise. There is anecdotal evidence about

¹⁷² J. Gordon Melton, "The Revival of Astrology in the United States," in Rod Stark, ed, Religious Movements: Genesis, Exodus and Numbers. (New York, 1985) pp.279-299.

students who have left the Philosophy to pursue numerology. From conversations with numerologists residing in Vancouver, but visiting a psychic fair in Calgary, it would appear that some people move between the two groups rather freely. As one worker at a psychic fair expressed it, "Nearly everyone I know is either a Kabalarian or an ex-Kabalarian." He explained that many numerologists have joined the Kabalarian Philosophy and changed their names, but later left because they did not enjoy the sexual and dietary proscriptions. Kabalarian students naturally explain that these people never really understood the principle or they would not have left.

While it is difficult to evaluate the impact of this movement based upon anecdotal evidence, it would seem at very least, that Kabalarian Philosophy has introduced numerology to people who may otherwise never have explored it seriously. It may also have given numerology an air of respectability. When one enters a Kabalarian Centre on a Sunday morning, it looks just like church. Men are adorned in suit and tie, women are dressed modestly, and the atmosphere is reverent. For those who would explore numerology but are offended by the countercultural trappings of the occult, Kabalarian Philosophy provides an answer. By exposing people to numerology, Kabalarian Philosophy may be helping to lay the groundwork for the acceptance of newer religious movements still to come.

Another area in which Kabalarian Philosophy and groups sharing similar beliefs have influenced the culture is through the introduction of occult ideas into mainstream society. Today, the idea that a person's thought influences his life is almost an axiom. Even the medical profession is now willing to acknowledge that optimistic thinking has health benefits, and that negative thinking can make our health worse. When Parker first started teaching about a vegetarian diet, it was unusual for westerners to even consider such a change. Today, we recognise the health risks associated with a diet rich in meat, and even the latest version of "Canada's Food Guide to Healthy Eating" is very nearly vegetarian. When Kabalarian Philosophy and other groups first suggested meditation and deep breathing, they were likely treated with suspicion. Today, many people recognise the benefits of such practices. Sixty years ago, when Kabalarian Philosophy began speaking of God as an impersonal force, this notion was not widely held. Today, belief in an impersonal god-force seems to be widespread.

Kabalarian Philosophy has touched relatively few lives, but the ideas which it shares with other metaphysical movements have gained a considerable audience. In addition, by familiarising North Americans with numerology, Kabalarian Philosophy may be helping to lay the groundwork for the acceptance of other new religious movements.

Based upon my interviews with early defectors from the Kabalarian Philosophy, this would appear to be the case, at least on an individual level. In discussion with people who left the movement during the 1950's, I have discovered that many moved on to explore Transcendental Meditation, and other new religious movements, and then moved into the New Age Movement. Prior to their involvement with Kabalarian Philosophy, these people had confined their active exploration of religion to Christian churches.¹⁷³ It would seem that their experiences in the Kabalarian Philosophy provided the catalyst to begin a thorough spiritual search. In this way, Kabalarian Philosophy may have contributed to the growth of other alternative religions as well as the new Age Movement.

As discussed above, the active membership of the Kabalarian Philosophy has not grown in the last thirty years, although recruitment has kept up with defection and death. The organisation is currently undertaking "market research" which it hopes will permit it to more successfully recruit new members. Certain changes have already been made, including revamping the courses from a lecture format to a style which more closely resembles a seminar. In addition, plans are being made to concentrate the movement's scarce resources on recruiting within the city of Vancouver where

¹⁷³ Personal interviews, September to November, 1993, Calgary.

the movement is headquartered, rather than spreading money and effort to several smaller centers.¹⁷⁴

It would appear that Kabalarian Philosophy might have some potential for survival and growth, at least in the short term, if it can overcome some important obstacles. The beliefs which the organisation holds concerning positive thinking, healthy diet, and impersonal god-force are quite widely held in North America, and the Philosophy may find a receptive audience if it were able to make its message known.

Hilton Ramsey has suggested that one market which is currently unexplored, but in which the Kabalarian Philosophy may find some acceptance is Vancouver's large Chinese community.¹⁷⁵ Traditionally, the Chinese have held beliefs very similar to those of the Philosophy regarding numbers having qualitative characteristics, and the power of a bad name to ruin one's life. These shared beliefs may make recruiting within this community relatively easy.

There are some problems with the organisation's attempts at recruitment which may hamper its success. A potential recruit is encouraged to explore the Kabalarian Philosophy by attending some of the courses offered by the movement. As discussed above, these courses run for twelve weeks at a

¹⁷⁴ Hilton Ramsey, personal interview, June, 1993, Vancouver.

¹⁷⁵ Hilton Ramsey, personal interview, June, 1993, Vancouver.

cost of \$325. The courses are paced very slowly, and, at least the first two, discuss very little philosophy. Instead, students are taught the characteristics of the digits, and how these apply to name. While this is a major component of the Kabalarian Philosophy, it is not very inspiring. Anyone attracted by the more commonly held beliefs about positive thinking, healthy lifestyle, or impersonal god would likely be disappointed to spend twenty-four weeks and more than five hundred dollars discussing numbers. We live in an information age, where individuals can access a great deal of information very quickly and, often, at little cost. Many potential recruits are likely lost by the very slow unfolding of the organisation's message. The cost of the courses would also pose a very serious deterrent to many people who may otherwise explore the Philosophy. Unless they have been involved in another "client cult," North Americans are not accustomed to paying so directly for religion.

A third hindrance to recruitment, at least in the Calgary Centre, is that the group seems relatively cold. James Richardson and others have identified the development of affective ties between a potential convert and group members as one of the most important situational factors in conversion.¹⁷⁶ Because the Kabalarian Philosophy

¹⁷⁶ James Richardson and Mary Stewart, "Conversion Process Models and the Jesus Movement," in James T. Richardson, ed. Conversion Careers In and Out of the New

discourages becoming too familiar in relationships, and anything which may be construed as using the power of the word lightly, it is relatively difficult to become emotionally close to Kabalarian students. In terms of persuading potential converts to stay, this is a real disadvantage.

Applying a Model of Success

Rodney Stark, in his paper "How New Religions Succeed: A Theoretical Model,"¹⁷⁷ presents eight conditions which may predict how a movement will fare. He suggests that movements will be successful to the extent that they:

1. Retain cultural continuity with the conventional faiths of the societies in which they appear or originate.
2. Maintain a medium level of tension with their surrounding environment; are deviant, but not too deviant.
3. Achieve effective mobilization: strong governance and a high level of individual commitment.
4. Can attract and maintain a normal age and sex structure.
5. Occur within a favourable ecology, which exists when:
 - a. the religious economy is relatively unregulated;
 - b. conventional faiths are weakened by secularization or social disruption;
 - c. it is possible to achieve at least local success within a generation.

Religious Movements (Beverly Hills and London, 1978) p.37.

¹⁷⁷ Rodney Stark, "How New Religions Succeed: A Theoretical Model," in David Bromley and Philip Hammond, eds, The Future of New Religious Movements (Macon, Georgia, 1987) p.11-29.

6. Maintain dense internal network relations without becoming isolated,
7. Resist secularization.
8. Adequately socialize the young so as to:
 - a. limit pressures towards secularization;
 - b. limit defection.¹⁷⁸

Stark predicts that "the more fully a movement fulfils each of these conditions, the greater its success," and that "failure minimally to fulfil any single condition will doom a movement."¹⁷⁹ Applying these criteria to the Kabalarian Philosophy may allow us to predict its future prospects.

Alfred Parker seemed to understand that maintaining cultural continuity with the dominant religions was important, for many of his books were attempts to demonstrate that what he was teaching could also be found in the Bible, rightly interpreted.¹⁸⁰ Since Parker's death, the teachings have shifted somewhat, and the Bible is no longer discussed. When Christianity is addressed, it is often in the most negative of terms, and claims of cultural continuity are not to be found in contemporary Kabalarian Philosophy.

¹⁷⁸ Ibid., p. 13.

¹⁷⁹ Ibid., p.13.

¹⁸⁰ See, for example, Alfred Parker, Genesis (Vancouver, 1956) p.4. The prologue for this book reveals Parker's belief. "We find spiritual leaders deserting their own source of wisdom, the Holy Bible, and turning to modern psychology for the solution to human delinquency; they have failed to find the answers only because they have failed to follow the admonition, 'Seek and ye shall find.' The key and answer to the age old mystery, life, is to be found in the esoteric understanding of the Scripture..."

Cultural continuity may exist with occultism, which, while not Canada's dominant religion, is certainly widespread. However, this connection, too, is denied. Whatever continuity exists is enveloped in beliefs about positive thinking and an abstract god. The average Canadian, however, is likely to apprehend Kabalarian Philosophy as almost totally foreign.

Kabalarian Philosophy probably does maintain a medium level of tension with its surrounding environment. Kabalarian students are committed to many of the ideas with which many Canadians are familiar, but relatively few embrace. Society is not especially threatened when members change their names and become vegetarians. The Kabalarian student is an oddity, but does not appear dangerous. A search of Vancouver newspapers has revealed that the only apparent community opposition the Kabalarian Philosophy has faced is over the construction of its building. Residents rightly observed that Oak Street was acquiring a very high density of churches.¹⁰¹ While Ivon Shearing observes that many families of converts perceive Kabalarian Philosophy as a "fanatical cult,"¹⁰² this belief is not likely shared by the public.

¹⁰¹ Vancouver's two largest newspapers ran four articles in April and May of 1967, outlining the neighborhood's objection to the planned construction of the organisation's current headquarters.

¹⁰² Ibid., p.10.

It would appear that Kabalarian Philosophy has achieved moderately effective mobilization, and quite a high level of individual commitment. Members remain a part of the secular world, but actively support the organisation and its leaders. The group has suffered no major schisms, has survived the death of its founder, and has built a strong infrastructure. On the other hand, mobilizing members to make new converts seems to be a perennial problem for Kabalarian Philosophy, as it is for so many religious groups.

Kabalarian Philosophy does not have a normal sex and age structure. It is an aging organisation, and has little success at attracting young people and families. Because procreation is discouraged, it is unlikely that the organisation will ever enjoy a normal age structure.

While Stark does not address the question of ethnicity, it would seem consistent with his theory that if a group is dominated by an ethnic group which is not the largest in the society within which the group is situated, the organisation's ability to attract converts from other ethnic groups may be jeopardised. For example, if the Kabalarian Philosophy were to become very successful at recruiting within the Chinese population, it could soon come to be identified as a Chinese religion. This may well hamper its success at recruiting among other ethnic groups. Vancouver's Asian population, however, is very large, so the many

converts could be made before the organisation would look much different than the city.

Legally speaking, Canada has a relatively unregulated religious market. There are no churches which are formally established and supported by the state. The only real control on which groups may legitimately operate as religions is Revenue Canada. Currently, that agency accepts Kabalarian Philosophy as a religion, but Kabalarian spokesmen say the battle has been hard fought and may not be over.¹⁸³ While the government may view Kabalarian Philosophy as a legitimate religious option, there is reason to believe that average Canadians do not. In his book, Fragmented Gods, sociologist Reginald Bibby argues that the Canadian religious economy may not be as unregulated as it appears. While there are no state churches, a majority of Canadians continue to identify with traditional mainline churches and are not open to conversion by other groups.¹⁸⁴

Vancouver is probably the most favourable ecology in Canada in which to start a new religious movement. Reginald Bibby demonstrates that the percentage of people holding to religious beliefs and practices, and affirming commitment to

¹⁸³ This point was made in a lecture I observed at the Vancouver Centre on June 6, 1993. The lecture was given by Ivon Shearing in a Sunday morning meeting. Hilton Ramsey confirmed the struggle the group has had in gaining religious status in a personal interview the following day.

¹⁸⁴ Reginald Bibby, Fragmented Gods: The Poverty and Potential of Religion in Canada (Toronto, 1987) p.51.

a faith and participation in its rites are lower in British Columbia than anywhere else in Canada. This is explained in terms of the migration to the west coast by people who want "to maximize life's enjoyment in a beautiful coastal setting," and "are less concerned about keeping the status quo."¹⁸⁵ Parker's biographer writes that the founder initially intended to establish his movement in California,¹⁸⁶ which has the same secular character as British Columbia.

If Vancouver had the right religious climate for establishing a new movement, it may have been too large a market to tackle. As Parker's early converts are nearing the close of their lives, it must seem that the decades have passed without the Philosophy experiencing large scale success. After sixty years of existence, the organisation has perhaps five hundred active members. Although the majority of these people reside in Vancouver, they are all but invisible in a city whose population exceeds two million. In a smaller market, the group may have appeared more successful.

It has been my observation that the Kabalarian Philosophy, at least as it exists in Calgary, does not maintain dense internal network relations. Members of the organisation are acquaintances rather than friends. Most do

¹⁸⁵ Ibid., pp.87-90.

¹⁸⁶ Carollyne Tylor, Against the Tides (np, 1983) p.173.

not socialise with other members, neither do they report close relationships with others in the group. This may not be the case in Vancouver, and, indeed, some students in Calgary report that they do have close friends within the broader organisation. The aversion to emotion, small talk and gossip, noted above, no doubt makes it difficult for emotionally rewarding relationships to develop.

Stark notes that one easy way to avoid secularisation is to have mostly converts rather than second or third generation members in a group. Kabalarian Philosophy has done this, largely as a result of its inability to retain its youth. However, some of the doctrines which make the movement unique seem to have been deemphasized, to the degree that I was able to interview one student who had been a member of the organisation for a number of years, and completed the introductory courses, yet was unfamiliar with Alfred Parker's teachings on diet and sex.¹⁸⁷ It would appear that some degree of tacit secularisation has taken place to make the Philosophy more palatable. In addition, many of the converts have been members for forty years or more, and may by now have settled into a relatively secularised form of the Philosophy.

Adequate socialisation of the young is necessary so that those born into the faith remain within it. The Kabalarian organisation has made efforts to train its children by means

¹⁸⁷ Personal interview, April, 1993, Calgary.

of a "Philosophy School" for six to twelve year olds and a "Young Philosophers" class for those from twelve to eighteen. Both groups meet Sunday mornings to teach young people the creeds and principles of the organisation. Care is taken, particularly with the older children, to ensure that they are taught by the leaders of the Philosophy. In addition social activities are provided, including camping, fishing, craft programs, an annual picnic, and the opportunity to participate in dramatic and choral presentations. Young people are also encouraged to take responsibility in such areas as decorating or serving at banquets, and learning to cook at the Calaway Bay Resort. In spite of these efforts, however, Kabalarian Philosophy suffers a high defection rate, for those raised in the movement.¹⁸⁸

If Stark's model is correct, it would appear that Kabalarian Philosophy will not succeed. The most serious weaknesses the organisation has are in the areas of attracting and retaining a normal sex and age structure, and adequately socialising the young to resist both secularisation and defection. Failure to procreate has been the demise of religious groups in the past, and could claim

¹⁸⁸ These programs for youth may exist in Vancouver, but there are no such activities in Calgary, where there appears to be only one affiliate with a child under twenty years of age. I am told that the organisation once operated a grade school for the children of members in Vancouver. I was not able to find out when that was or for how long a period of time.

another victim if some changes are not made. If the Kabalarian Philosophy is to succeed, its leaders must take a serious look at the weaknesses which exist in its structure. If members are to commit their lives to mental and spiritual advancement rather than to conceiving and raising future Kabalarians, the organisation must learn how to attract and to welcome families. In addition, it must develop more effective means of socialising the children of converts as well as any children born into the movement, so that they will remain within the movement. It would seem wise for leaders to look at the example of those who have gone before. The theology of the Shakers discouraged procreation, though members were encouraged to adopt children. At eighteen years of age, the children were permitted to choose whether to remain in the movement or to leave, most chose to leave.¹⁸⁸ As sociologist, Reginald Bibby is fond of saying, the way religious groups gain new members is to "grow their own." A group which fails to do so faces real challenges to survival.

¹⁸⁸ William Sims Bainbridge, "Shaker Demographics 1900 - 1940," Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion. 21:352-365. 1982.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Agar, Michael H., The Professional Stranger An Informal Introduction to Ethnography. New York: Academic Press, 1980.

Bainbridge, William Sims, "Shaker Demographics 1900 - 1940." Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion. 21: 352-365. (1982).

Barker, Eileen, The Making of a Moonie. Oxford: Blackwell, 1984.

Beattie, John, Understanding an African Kingdom. New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1965.

Bell, E.T., The Development of Mathematics. New York: McGraw-Hill, 1945.

Bibby, Reginald, Fragmented Gods: The Poverty and Potential of Religion in Canada. Toronto: Irwin, 1987.

Bibby, Reginald, Unknown Gods: The Ongoing story of Religion in Canada. Toronto: Stoddart Publishing, 1993.

Bromley, David and Shupe, Anson, Moonies in America Cult, Church and Crusade. Beverley Hills, California: Sage Publications, 1979.

Bromley, David and Hammond, Philip, (eds.), The Future of New Religious Movements. Macon, Georgia: Mercer, 1987.

Burgess, Robert G. (ed.), Field Research: A Sourcebook and Field Manual. London: George Allen & Unwin, 1982.

Campbell, Bruce, Ancient Wisdom Revived. Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1980.

Chidester, David, Salvation and Suicide. Bloomington, Indiana: Indiana University Press, 1988.

Davis, Winston, Dojo: Magic and Exorcism in Modern Japan. Stanford, California: Stanford University Press, 1980.

Durkheim, Emile, The Elementary Forms of the Religious Life. New York: Free Press, 1965.

Eliade, Mircea (editor in chief), The Encyclopedia of Religion. New York: Macmillan, 1987.

Elwood, Robert S., Religious and Spiritual Groups in Modern America. Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice Hall, 1973.

Elwood, Robert S. Jr., Alternative Altars Unconventional and Eastern Spirituality in America. Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 1979.

Holtz, Barry (ed.), Back to the Sources Reading the Classic Jewish Texts. New York: Summit Books, 1984.

Hudson, Winthrop S., Religion in America. New York: Macmillan, 1987.

Judah, J. Stillson, The History and Philosophy of Metaphysical Movements in America. Philadelphia, Pennsylvania: The Westminster Press, 1967.

Kabalarian Courier, 4:5 (1947) ; 10:2, (1980).

Kozminsky, Isidore, Numbers Their Meaning and Magic. New York: Samuel Weiser Inc., 1912.

Lofland, John, Doomsday Cult. A Study of Conversion, Proselytization, and Maintenance of Faith. New York: Irvington Publishers Inc., 1977.

Parker, Alfred J., Genesis. Vancouver: Kabalarian Philosophy, 1956, 1982.

Parker, Alfred J., Answered Through Wisdom. Vancouver: Kabalarian Philosophy, 1960, 1976.

Parker, Alfred J., Attitudes and Habits. Vancouver: Kabalarian Philosophy, 1960, 1976.

Parker, Alfred J., Life is Short - Why Waste It? Vancouver: Kabalarian Philosophy, 1960, 1976, 1980.

Parker, Alfred J., Man's Greatest Gift - Time. Vancouver: Kabalarian Philosophy, 1960, 1976.

Parker, Alfred J., Reincarnation Revealed. Vancouver: Kabalarian Philosophy, 1960, 1976.

Parker, Alfred J., Schizophrenia. Vancouver: Kabalarian Philosophy, 1963, 1981.

Parker, Alfred J., Life and Religions. Vancouver: Kabalarian Philosophy, 1968.

Parker, Alfred J., Sermon on the Mount A Logical and Basic Interpretation of the Scripture. Vancouver: Kabalarian Philosophy, 1970.

Parker, Alfred J., A Selection of Writings on the Kabalarian Philosophy. Vancouver: Kabalarian Philosophy, 1975.

Parker, Alfred J., Revelation The True Story of Life. Vancouver: Kabalarian Philosophy, 1977.

Parker, Alfred J., A Universal Perspective. Vancouver: Kabalarian Philosophy, 1981.

Podmore, F., Modern Spiritualism. London: Methuen, 1902.

Poewe, Karla, "On the Metonymic Structure of Religious Experiences: The Example of Charismatic Christianity." Cultural Dynamics, ii,4:361-380. (1989).

Ponce, Charles, Kabbalah, An Introduction and Illumination for the World Today. Wheaton, Illinois: The Theosophical Publishing House, 1973.

Richardson, James, (ed.), Conversion Careers In and Out of the New Religions. Beverley Hills and London: Sage Publications, 1978.

Richardson, James; Stewart, Mary White and Simmonds, Robert, Organised Miracles A Study of a Contemporary, Youth, Communal, Fundamentalist Organization. New Brunswick, New Jersey: Transaction Inc., 1979.

Roquemore, Kathleen, It's All in Your Numbers; The Secrets of Numerology. New York: Harper and Row, 1975.

Scholem, Gershom, Major Trends in Jewish Mysticism. New York: Schocken Books, 1941.

Shearing, Ivon, Human Relationships. Transcription of classes by Mr. Ivon Shearing, Volume 1. Kabalarian Philosophy, 1990.

Shearing, Ivon, What is the Difference Between Kabalarian Philosophy and Numerology? np,nd.

Shearing, Ivon, The Mathematical Principle. np,nd.

Shupe, Anson, Six Perspectives on New Religions: A Case Study Approach. New York and Toronto: The Edwin Mellen Press, 1981.

Spradley, James P., The Ethnographic Interview. Fort Worth, Texas: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1979.

Spradley, James P., Participant Observation. New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1980.

Stanfield, Croft, Numerology - What Relationship With Kabalarian Philosophy, If Any? np,nd.

Stark, Rodney and Bainbridge, William, The Future of Religion. Berkeley, California: University of California Press, 1985.

Stark, Rodney, (ed.), Religious Movements: Genesis, Exodus, and Numbers. New York: Paragon House, 1985.

Thomas, Keith, Religion and the Decline of Magic. London: Penguin Books, 1973.

Tylor, Carollyne, Against the Tides. By the author, 1983.