

# **Rosaleen Norton's Contribution to the Western Esoteric Tradition**

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## **Abstract**

This thesis explores the contribution of the Australian witch and trance artist Rosaleen Norton (1917-1979) to the 20<sup>th</sup> century Western esoteric tradition. Norton's artistic career began in the 1940s, with publication of some of her earliest occult drawings, and reached a significant milestone in 1952 when the controversial volume *The Art of Rosaleen Norton* – co-authored with her lover, the poet Gavin Greenlees – was released in Sydney, immediately attracting a charge of obscenity. Norton rapidly acquired a reputation as the wicked 'Witch of Kings Cross', was vilified by journalists during the 1950s and 1960s, and was branded by many as evil and demonic. Norton's witchcraft coven was dedicated to the practice of heathen worship and ceremonial sex magic and attracted a small number of dedicated inner-circle followers, most notably the renowned musical conductor Sir Eugene Goossens (1893-1962), whose personal and professional career would be irrevocably damaged as a result of his contact with Norton's magical group.

Within the social context of post-World War Two Australia Norton was unquestionably an unconventional figure at a time when the local population was approximately 80 per cent Christian. Norton claimed to be an initiated follower of the Great God Pan and also revered other ancient figures, most notably Hecate, Lilith and Lucifer. Norton claimed to encounter these mythic beings as experientially real on the 'inner planes' which she accessed while in a state of self-induced trance. Many of her most significant artworks were based on these magical encounters.

Norton is presented in this thesis as a magical practitioner and artist whose creative work and thought has made a substantial contribution to the 20<sup>th</sup> century Western esoteric tradition – and, in particular, to the magic of the so-called 'left-hand path', which is a significant part of this modern occult tradition. Norton's artworks are also compared to those of the notable British trance artist and occultist Austin Osman Spare (1886-1956), who is now widely regarded as a major figure in the 20<sup>th</sup> century magical revival.

## **Introduction**

The purpose of this thesis is to present a detailed overview of Rosaleen Norton's magical practices and to evaluate her contribution to the Western esoteric tradition. The selection of this topic immediately raises two specific issues: is the controversial and bohemian 'Witch of Kings Cross', Rosaleen Norton, an appropriate subject for academic study and can she be positioned within a social, intellectual or historic context which makes such a study worthwhile?

I will argue in this thesis that Rosaleen Norton (1917-1979) is a significant figure within the 20<sup>th</sup> century Western esoteric tradition considered as a whole, and that within the context of 20<sup>th</sup> century Australian esoteric practice she is one of its most notable, albeit controversial, figures. After providing an overview of key aspects of the Western esoteric tradition, as it is generally understood, I will also present evidence that the practice of Western magic became fragmented and highly polarised in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, substantially as a result of the widespread influence of the well known British ceremonial magician Aleister Crowley (1875-1947), and that Norton can be considered a practitioner of the so-called 'Left-Hand Path', a branch of Western magic associated mainly with Crowley and his followers. The influence of Crowley on the Left-Hand Path in modern Western magic is described in detail in Chapter Three.

With regard to the academic study of modern magical practices (as distinct from the anthropological study of magic in pre-literate societies, which is well established as a discipline), it is significant that an increasing number of highly regarded scholars are now turning their attention to the study of modern magical beliefs as expressions of 'contemporary alternative spirituality' (or, in some cases, New Age spirituality) as well as exploring the historical nature of esotericism in general. Recent academic studies of modern magical practices include Luhrmann (1989), Hutton (1999), Owen (2004), Greenwood (2005), Bado-Fralick (2005) and Urban (2006).<sup>1</sup> Wouter J. Hanegraaff, Chair in Western Esotericism at the University of Amsterdam, believes that the study of Western esotericism has been gaining ground in academic circles and that 'it has become more and more apparent...that the traditional neglect of Western esotericism as a domain of historical inquiry has led to serious gaps in our knowledge, with predictably negative effects upon the understanding of our own cultural heritage.'<sup>2</sup> Michael D. Bailey similarly observes in his recently published journal article, 'The Meanings of Magic' (2006) that scholars in many fields now recognize magic as an important topic since its 'rites, rituals, taboos, and attendant beliefs...might be said to comprise, or at least describe, a system for comprehending the entire world.'<sup>3</sup> The European Society for the Study of Western Esotericism was established in 2005 'to advance the academic study of the various manifestations of Western Esotericism from late antiquity to the present and to secure the future development of the field'<sup>4</sup> and several scholarly journals have been established to cater to the increasing academic interest in this subject area, including *Magic, Ritual and Witchcraft* (University of Pennsylvania Press), *Esoterica: Journal of Esoteric Studies* (Michigan State University), *Nova Religio* (University of California Press), *Journal for the Academic Study of Magic* (University of Bristol, UK), *Aries* (European Society for the Study of Western Esotericism) and *The Pomegranate* (Equinox Publishing, UK). Clearly the diverse range of modern magical practices, including such controversial topics as sex magic and Tantra, are no longer considered taboo subjects unworthy of academic study. As Hugh Urban has noted in the preface of his recently published *Magia Sexualis* (2006) such study 'opens some critical insights into the shifting attitudes towards sexuality, gender, religious authority, and social liberation over the last two hundred years'.<sup>5</sup> Norton herself

receives significant coverage in Lynne Hume's academic study *Witchcraft and Paganism in Australia* (1997).<sup>6</sup>

Meanwhile the nature of esotericism itself has been discussed in a recent scholarly article by Arthur Versluis, editor of *Esoterica* at Michigan State University. Versluis acknowledges the pioneering work on Western esotericism undertaken by Antoine Faivre at the Sorbonne, noting that Faivre identifies Correspondences and Interdependence, Living Nature, Imagination, Transmutation, Praxis of Concordance, and Transmission as the six defining characteristics of Western esoteric systems.<sup>7</sup> However Versluis notes that in his definitive book *Accès de l'ésotérisme occidental* (1996) Faivre has omitted *gnosis*, or spiritual knowledge, as a key element in the Western esoteric tradition. Versluis defines *gnosis* as 'direct spiritual insight either into hidden aspects of the cosmos, or into transcendence' and maintains that without *gnosis* the concept of Western esotericism is impoverished because it is central to various currents of thought found in the Western esoteric tradition.<sup>8</sup> I agree with Versluis on this crucial point and in Chapters Two and Three of this thesis will seek to demonstrate not only that the quest for *gnosis* is a central feature of modern Western magic but that both the left-hand and right-hand paths in modern magic have specific Gnostic precursors.

### ***Who was Rosaleen Norton?***

During the 1950s Norton was well known in Sydney as 'the Witch of Kings Cross' and was portrayed in the popular media as a colourful and 'wicked' bohemian figure from Sydney's red-light district. Her provocative 'pagan' art, exhibited first at the University of Melbourne Library in 1949 and later in the Apollyon and Kashmir coffee-shops in Sydney's Kings Cross, plunged her into legal controversy, and her 1952 publication *The Art of Rosaleen Norton* was, for a time, banned in Australia on the basis that it contained allegedly obscene material. Norton was involved in a number of court hearings and was widely criticised in the media for engaging in bizarre sexual practices with her lover, the poet Gavin Greenlees. She was later associated with the scandal that eventually engulfed the professional career of renowned musical conductor and composer, Sir Eugene Goossens (1893-1962), who had arrived in Australia in 1947 and later became a member of Norton's magical coven in Kings Cross (see Chapter One).

Norton was invariably depicted in the popular media as a pagan rebel and portrayed in such ungracious terms as 'the notorious, Pan-worshipping Witch of Kings Cross... a person known to the police through two prosecutions for obscenity'.<sup>9</sup> Most of her mainstream print media coverage was generated by popular gossip-driven magazines like *The Australasian Post*, *People*, *Truth* and *Squire* that inclined towards sensationalist articles, and tabloid newspapers like *The Daily Telegraph*, *The Daily Mirror* and *Sun*.<sup>10</sup> But all of this salacious media interest in Norton has to be seen in an historical context. During the immediate post-World War Two period Australia was both socially and politically conservative, ruled by the highly traditional Sir

Robert Menzies, an ‘ultraconservative prime minister, who reigned supreme in the 1950s with his anti-communist manifesto and harsh stance on censorship’.<sup>11</sup> Norton was portrayed in the media as a Devil-worshipping harpy, ever eager to flaunt accepted social conventions at a time when the appropriate place for a woman was perceived to be within the home, focusing on domestic concerns and attending to the needs of husband and children. As Marguerite Johnson has observed, ‘Rosaleen was presented as society’s scapegoat, the witch on the outskirts of the community, a demon required to reinforce family values and Christian morality.’<sup>12</sup> During the 1960s, with its increasing intake of migrants from many European and Asian countries, Australia began a process of becoming a multi-cultural, multi-faith society associated in turn with a range of new religions.<sup>13</sup> However, from the 1860s up until the period immediately after World War Two, Australia’s religious profile remained relatively stable. In 1947 Anglicans, Presbyterians and Methodists collectively comprised over 60 per cent of the population and Roman Catholics made up an additional 20.7 per cent,<sup>14</sup> which meant that in the immediate post-war environment Australia was more than 80 per cent Christian.

Because witchcraft has long remained linked to medieval and early modern Western Christian demonology<sup>15</sup> it is hardly surprising that in most media depictions of Norton during the 1950s and 1960s she was portrayed as a renegade from mainstream society, as an anti-Christian Devil worshipper, and as a practitioner of ‘black magic’. It seems to me that this perception of her was substantially distorted and uninformed. Nevertheless, the distinctions I make in this thesis could be considered finely delineated, since I believe that there are undoubtedly shades of grey between the familiar polar opposites of ‘black’ and ‘white’ magic (see Chapters Three and Seven). Norton’s chthonic magical orientation is clearly evident, both in her writings and in her artistic imagery, and, as I seek to demonstrate in subsequent chapters, Norton was both a pantheist and a practising witch who paid homage to a range of ancient pagan deities associated with the primal forces of Nature and the Underworld. The latter included Pan and Hecate, to whom she dedicated her ritual altars. Norton was also involved in sex magic, pursuing forms of ritual practice derived principally from the occult teachings of the British ceremonial magician Aleister Crowley, referred to earlier. For reasons that I describe in detail, I do not believe that Norton was a practising Satanist in the literal sense of the word. However it is clear that her inclination was toward the ‘night’ side of magic and much of her occult imagery as a visionary artist is associated with the so-called *Qliphoth*, or dark, negative energies of the Kabbalistic Tree of Life – a central motif in the study and practice of modern magic. A substantial section of this thesis is spent in describing Norton’s magical beliefs, cosmology and ritual practices because this is vital to any understanding of Norton herself. The connections between Norton’s visionary art and her magical perspectives are also described in detail.

What was less well-known to readers of the popular tabloids published in Sydney during the 1950s was that Norton was a natural trance artist. She began experimenting with self-hypnosis in 1940, at the age of 23, and as a result of her

visionary explorations of trance states began to portray a wide range of supernatural beings in her paintings and drawings. Norton believed that the Great God Pan, the principal deity in her personal magical pantheon, was not simply a figure from ancient Greek mythology but a vibrant and living archetypal ‘presence’ in the world. By paying ritual homage to Pan, Norton believed that she was responding to the Earth as a sacred, living organism. To this extent she can be considered a significant precursor of those members of the environmental and Goddess spirituality movements who, since the late 1970s, have affirmed the need to ‘resacralize’ the planet. Any evaluation of Norton must necessarily consider these aspects of her magical philosophy as well.

My thesis begins with a concise overview of Norton’s life. Chapter One is essentially a condensed historical biography; her magical ideas and visionary art practices are described more specifically in later chapters.

In Chapter Two, I describe the principal strands of the Western esoteric tradition which, by common consensus, include the Jewish Kabbalah, the Hermetica, Alchemy, the Tarot, Rosicrucianism and Freemasonry.<sup>16</sup> All of these esoteric strands in turn became central elements in the magical philosophy and ritual practices of the Hermetic Order of the Golden Dawn which more than any other comparable organisation led to the resurgence of interest in Western magic in the 20<sup>th</sup> century. The Order of the Golden Dawn was established in England in 1888 and began to fragment into splinter magical groups soon after 1900. The Order’s ritual symbolism and grade structure, which derived from Freemasonry and Rosicrucianism, employed the symbol of the Kabbalistic Tree of Life as a central motif and operative framework. The principal activities of the Golden Dawn focused on the practice of ceremonial and visionary magic. Its membership included such figures as the renowned poet W.B. Yeats (1865-1939), occult historian Arthur Edward Waite (1857-1942), the controversial magician Aleister Crowley, novelist Dion Fortune (1890-1946), London coroner Wynne Westcott (1848-1925), actress Florence Farr (1860-1917), and S.L. MacGregor Mathers (1854-1918), a translator of Kabbalistic texts and medieval magical grimoires. In this thesis I present the Golden Dawn as a magical organisation drawing on the Gnostic and Hermetic traditions and also as a group aligned with the Right-Hand Path in magic, as distinct from the Left-Hand Path described in Chapter Three.

Norton established her witchcraft coven in Sydney’s Kings Cross district in the early 1950s and during this period made brief contact with Gerald Gardner (1884-1964), one of the principal figures involved in the rise of modern pagan witchcraft in Britain. To place these events in context I have described the rise of modern witchcraft, or ‘Wicca’ as it is generally known, since there is evidence that Norton sought to emulate Gardner’s leadership role in Australia. Wicca is now regarded as an ‘invented tradition’ – that is to say, a ‘tradition’ presented as belonging to an ancient lineage but whose actual origins are much more recent. The birth of modern witchcraft can be dated specifically to September 1939 and the New Forest region of

Hampshire, but Wicca nevertheless drew on many archaic elements which helped establish an impression of an ancient Celtic lineage (see Chapter Two). British witchcraft was exported to the United States in the mid-1960s and, following the advent of the American counterculture and the influence of feminism, subsequently gave rise in the late 1970s to a form of feminist witchcraft known as Goddess spirituality, which has since attracted an international following. This development is also described in Chapter Two.

Chapter Three focuses on the esoteric doctrines and practices of the so-called 'Left-Hand Path' which includes the ritual sex 'magick' [Aleister Crowley's unique spelling]<sup>17</sup> practised by members of the Ordo Templi Orientis (O.T.O.), an international organisation that Crowley joined in 1910 and headed from 1922 until his death in 1947,<sup>18</sup> as well as the magical philosophy and practices associated with the rise of modern Satanism (with specific reference to the American Church of Satan and the Temple of Set). The term 'Left-Hand Path' can be used (and is so used, by many of the practitioners themselves) to refer collectively to occult practitioners who focus on individualism, antinomianism and the chthonic or 'dark' side of magic. This 'nightside' tradition<sup>19</sup> in modern Western magic is distinguished from the 'Right-Hand Path' which is aligned with the more mystically oriented Hermetic tradition that found expression in the Golden Dawn and also in those derivative magical groups influenced principally by Dion Fortune (such as the Fraternity of the Inner Light and the still extant Servants of the Light), that emphasize spiritual rebirth, transcendence, and ultimately mystical union with the Godhead.

The relevance of the Left-Hand Path magical material presented in Chapter Three is that Norton was strongly influenced by Crowley and practised a comparable form of sex magick both with the poet Gavin Greenlees and also with the well known musical conductor and composer Eugene Goossens (later Sir Eugene).<sup>20</sup> Goossens was already interested in Crowley's approach to magick prior to coming to Australia, having apparently learned of this type of occult ritual practice from his friend and fellow musical composer Philip Heseltine (1894-1930). Heseltine was a member of Crowley's Ordo Templi Orientis<sup>21</sup> and had dabbled with various forms of demonic magic found in medieval grimoires. I also describe the principal characteristics of modern Satanism in Chapter Three since Norton was frequently accused of being a Devil-worshipper and it is important to consider whether such charges could possibly have any substance.

One of the principal findings presented in this thesis is that Norton is best understood as a magician aligned with the Left-Hand Path, rather than with witchcraft alone (modern witchcraft has distinctly chthonic elements but also some characteristics more specifically associated with the Right-Hand Path in magic – see Chapter Seven). Norton's worship of Pan and Hecate, her sex magic practices (associated with Crowley), and her trance-art and visionary magic (which parallel the chthonic visionary art and trance techniques of Austin Osman Spare – see below) provide evidence of this esoteric alignment.

Norton's magical cosmology, ritual practices, and visionary art are the subjects of Chapters Four, Five and Six and collectively present the core material that is central to this thesis. Also included in Chapter Six is an overview of the visionary art and trance-magic of Austin Osman Spare (1886-1956), whose artistic and magical approach closely parallels Norton's in several key areas and therefore provides the basis for some useful and intriguing comparisons. Spare is now regarded as one of the major figures in the 20<sup>th</sup> century magical revival, alongside Crowley and Dion Fortune, and I believe that it is within the context of this post-Golden Dawn magical revival that Norton's contribution to the Western esoteric tradition should be considered. Such a summation necessarily includes a discussion of both the similarities and also a number of crucial differences between her magical approach and that of Austin Spare. In my view both Spare and Norton should be considered as significant 'visionary' magicians aligned with the magic of the Left-Hand Path.

Chapter Seven begins by describing various academic approaches to the practice of magic. I initially intended this chapter to be part of the Introduction but because it explores perspectives both from academia and also modern occultists themselves, it seemed more appropriate to locate this material towards the end of my thesis, following on from the presentation of the major data on Norton's art and magic, and an exploration of her position within the Western esoteric tradition itself. Chapter Seven draws attention to the fact that because most anthropological perspectives on this subject are based on the study of pre-literate societies around the world, most of these academic models have only very limited application in describing contemporary Western magic as practised in modern, largely urban contexts. Fortunately, many modern occult practitioners are themselves highly literate, and they have described their various philosophies and practices in detail, both in books and more recently on the Internet. Norton was one of these highly literate practitioners. In addition to presenting her magical philosophy in the introduction to *The Art of Rosaleen Norton*, Norton also described her magical approach in a series of informative autobiographical magazine articles published in the 1950s and I have drawn extensively on this important primary material. Such data makes possible a systematic study of Norton's beliefs and ritual practices from what is known in the field of academic anthropology as an *emic* perspective – that is to say, a perspective that draws substantially on the 'insider' point of view (in this context, the beliefs and viewpoints of Norton and her magical associates) rather than focusing primarily on imposed 'external' or 'outsider' models of analysis (*etic* explanations of magic). In Chapter Seven I extend this *emic* analysis by proposing a 'spectrum' approach to the study of 20<sup>th</sup> century Western magic which, in my view, allows us to consider not only the familiar polarities of 'black' and 'white' magic but also the various shades of grey found somewhere in-between. Throughout this thesis I have made numerous references to the beliefs, practices and stated viewpoints of a number of influential modern occultists since their perspectives have been extremely valuable in locating Rosaleen Norton within the Western esoteric tradition as a whole. Many of these themes carry through to my concluding remarks in Chapter Eight, which considers

the contribution Norton has made to this tradition and positions her both as a modern witch and also as a practitioner aligned with the magic of the Left-Hand Path.

### *A note on sources*

Shortly after Norton held her exhibition at the University of Melbourne Library in 1949, she was interviewed at length by L.J. Murphy, a psychologist from that University. A lengthy transcript of this interview has survived, and because Norton discusses her magical philosophy, trance magic methods and attitudes to sexuality, it is of considerable interest as a primary source document. In 1951 Norton also compiled a range of extensive notes on the symbolism of the occult artworks reproduced in *The Art of Rosaleen Norton* (published in Sydney in 1952). I have drawn on this unpublished manuscript material, which was passed to me in the 1980s by Norton's publisher, the late Wally Glover, and which remains in my possession.

Glover had first contacted me in 1981 following publication of a book I co-authored with Gregory Tillett on occultism in Australia (*Other Temples, Other Gods*, 1980) and I subsequently became involved in the re-publication of a facsimile edition of *The Art of Rosaleen Norton* (published in Sydney in 1982, three years after Norton's death). This publication was financed by Glover and I contributed an introduction to the new edition. At the time, Glover assembled numerous documents and wrote personal notes about his reminiscences, all of which have been extremely useful as background for this thesis. The publication of the facsimile-reprint edition of *The Art of Rosaleen Norton* also led to an approach from Mrs Cecily Boothman, Norton's elder sister, who suggested that I write a biography of Rosaleen Norton. This eventually resulted in the publication of *Pan's Daughter: the Strange World of Rosaleen Norton* (Sydney 1988). Mrs Boothman provided me with pertinent family details and other relevant material which, like Glover's reminiscences, provided key insights into Norton's background. *Pan's Daughter* was aimed at a general rather than academic audience, was written in a journalistic style, and was around 35,000 words in length, approximately 80,000 words shorter than the present thesis.

Since the publication of *Pan's Daughter*, which remains the only biography of the artist, a substantial body of new information has emerged which has effectively demanded that Norton's approach to magic and visionary art should be researched and evaluated in much greater depth. This has been the underlying aim of this thesis, which contains a substantial amount of previously unpublished material. The new data includes transcripts from the 1949 University of Melbourne transcripts not previously available [see Appendix A], records of interviews provided by key members of the NSW Police Department following the arrest of Sir Eugene Goossens, and copies of letters sent by Goossens to Norton which contain specific magical content [see Appendix B]. None of these sources of information was available to me at the time I wrote *Pan's Daughter*. I have also been able to draw extensively on an archive of 1950s newspaper clippings compiled by Wally Glover's friend, Jock McKenna. Unfortunately, Glover, McKenna and Boothman are now all

deceased. I should also mention here that in *Pan's Daughter* I did not seek to position Norton as a magical practitioner of the Left-Hand Path as I do here, and I did not describe in depth Norton's magical relationship with Sir Eugene Goossens, the nature of which has become much clearer to me since I began work on the detailed research required for this thesis. The nature of Crowley's influence on Norton's magical practice, a factor greatly enhanced by her relationship with Goossens – who in turn shared Norton's interest in Crowley and the *Goetia* – has also become apparent to me only in more recent times.

It is pertinent to mention that I interviewed Rosaleen Norton at her home in Roslyn Gardens, Kings Cross, in 1977, two years before her death. Some of my notes from that interview have been useful in the preparation of this thesis. Also, I was fortunate in December 1984 to take part in the filming of a 90-minute international television documentary, *The Occult Experience* (Cinetel Productions, Sydney, screened on Channel 10 in 1985 and later distributed in the USA through Sony Home Video). My role as the co-producer, researcher and interviewer for that documentary gave me direct personal access to several key figures in the Wicca and Goddess spirituality movements (some of whom have since died) and information acquired at that time has proved invaluable by way of historical background as I researched Norton's involvement with witchcraft and trance-magic.

On a personal note I would like to mention that if the University of Newcastle had not been bold enough to offer a course on Neopagan studies, which remains something of a rarity on Australian university campuses, I may never have contemplated undertaking this thesis in the first place. I am very grateful for the support of the University and for the gracious and generous assistance of my supervisor, Dr Marguerite Johnson. I would also like to acknowledge the assistance of Robert Ansell, Publishing Manager of Fulgur Publishers, London, who provided valuable feedback on the section of text in Chapter Six which deals with the visionary art and trance-magic of Austin Osman Spare.

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## Notes

<sup>1</sup> Four of these publications focus on modern and contemporary magic in Britain. Tania Luhrmann's *Persuasions of the Witch's Craft* (Harvard University Press, Cambridge, Massachusetts 1989) explores contemporary Wicca and white magic in England, Ronald Hutton's *The Triumph of the Moon* (Oxford University Press, Oxford 1999) is considered the definitive historical study of modern pagan witchcraft and explores the birth of Wicca in England and events leading up to it, Susan Greenwood's *The Nature of Magic: An Anthropology of Consciousness* (Berg, Oxford 2005) describes nature magic, witchcraft and neo-shamanism in contemporary Britain, and Alex Owen's *The Place of Enchantment* (University of Chicago Press, Chicago 2004) is a highly regarded scholarly overview of occult practices in Victorian and Edwardian England. Nikki Bado-Fralick's *Coming to the Edge of the Circle: A Wiccan Initiation Ritual* (Oxford University Press, New York 2005) is of special interest because the American-based author is both an academic and a high priestess within a Wiccan coven, and Hugh Urban's *Magia Sexualis* (University of California Press, Berkeley, California 2006) looks likely to become the most authoritative academic source-work on sexual magic in the West for many years to come.

<sup>2</sup> W.J. Hanegraaff, 'Some Remarks on the Study of Western Esotericism', *Theosophical History*. Wheaton, Illinois, Spring 1999.

<sup>3</sup> M.D. Bailey, 'The Meanings of Magic', *Magic, Ritual and Witchcraft*, University of Pennsylvania Press, Summer 2006: 1.

<sup>4</sup> See European Society for the Study of Western Esotericism website: [www.esswe.org](http://www.esswe.org).

<sup>5</sup> H. Urban, *Magia Sexualis: Sex, Magic and Liberation in Modern Western Esotericism*, University of California Press, Berkeley, California 2006: x.

<sup>6</sup> See L. Hume, *Witchcraft and Paganism in Australia*, Melbourne University Press, Melbourne 1997: 32-34; 189-191.

<sup>7</sup> A. Versluis, 'What is Esoteric? Methods in the Study of Western Esotericism', *Esoterica: Journal of Esoteric Studies*, IV (2002) 2. According to Faivre, the first four elements are especially crucial to the study of esoteric thought. 'Correspondences' includes the symbolic relationships between the visible and invisible cosmos; the concept of 'Living Nature' arises in all forms of *magia* which regard Nature as being essentially alive – traversed by light or 'hidden fire'; 'Imagination and Mediations' includes such intermediaries as rituals, symbolic images and spirit entities; and 'Experience of Transmutation' refers to the transformation or 'metamorphosis' experienced by the esoteric practitioner. 'Praxis of the Concordance' refers to the attempt 'to try to establish common denominators between two different traditions', and 'Transmission' refers to the transmission of esoteric teachings from master to disciple. See also J. Santucci, 'Esotericism, the Occult and Theosophy', paper presented at CLE lecture series 'Cults, Sects and New Religions', Department of Comparative Religion, California State University, 2000.

<sup>8</sup> A. Versluis, loc cit: 3.

<sup>9</sup> D. Salter, 'The Strange Case of Sir Eugene and the Witch', *Good Weekend/Sydney Morning Herald*, Sydney, 3 July 1999: 17

<sup>10</sup> As I demonstrate in Chapter One and Chapter Seven, Norton also received more serious critiques of her visionary art and pagan symbolism in small literary magazines like *Pertinent* and *Arna* but these were specialist publications with low print runs and did not reach the mainstream Australian public.

## Notes

<sup>11</sup> M. Johnson, 'The Witch of Kings Cross: Rosaleen Norton and the Australian Media', conference presentation, Symbiosis: Institute for Comparative Studies in Science, Myth, Magic and Folklore, University of Newcastle, 2002.

<sup>12</sup> Ibid: 1.

<sup>13</sup> C.M. Cusack, 'Tradition and Change: Australian Churches and the Future', *Australian Review of Public Affairs*, University of Sydney 2003:1

<sup>14</sup> D. Cahill, G. Bouma, H. Dellal and M. Leahy, *Religion, Cultural Diversity and Safeguarding Australia*, Australian Multicultural Foundation, Melbourne 2004:41.

<sup>15</sup> M.D. Bailey, 'The Meanings of Magic', loc cit: 22.

<sup>16</sup> The Cambridge Centre for Western Esotericism, an academic organisation, lists relevant areas of investigation within the field of esotericism as 'alchemy, astrology, Gnosticism, Hermeticism, Kabbalah, magic, mysticism, Neoplatonism, new religious movements connected with these currents, nineteenth, twentieth, and twenty-first century occult movements, Rosicrucianism, secret societies, and theosophy'. See [www.ccwe.wordpress.com](http://www.ccwe.wordpress.com).

<sup>17</sup> Crowley allegedly added the additional 'k' to the word 'magic', taking it from the Greek word *kteis*, meaning 'genitals' – a clear allusion to the sexually oriented doctrines of Thelema. See S. Greenwood, *Magic, Witchcraft and the Otherworld*, Berg, Oxford and New York 2000: 20, fn 1.

<sup>18</sup> Sabazius X° and AMT IX°, *History of Ordo Templi Orientis*, U.S. Grand Lodge, 2006 : 5, 17 available on-line at [www.oto-usa.org/history.html](http://www.oto-usa.org/history.html).

<sup>19</sup> This term is used by members of the Dragon Rouge, a contemporary Scandinavian Thelemite organisation aligned with the teachings and occult philosophy of Aleister Crowley and Kenneth Grant. See [www.dragonrouge.net/english/general.htm](http://www.dragonrouge.net/english/general.htm).

<sup>20</sup> Goossens was knighted in June 1955. See Chapter One.

<sup>21</sup> See listing of O.T.O. members provided by O.T.O.practitioner Ithell Colquhoun in *Sword of Wisdom: MacGregor Mathers and the Golden Dawn*, Spearman, London 1975: 207-208.