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This present issue will be the last Hermetic Journal. The first issue appeared in 1978 which makes fifteen years of continuous production. I feel that the Journal has served its purpose and made a contribution to furthering interest in Hermeticism. During the first ten years of the Journal I also published the Magnum Opus series of twenty three hermetic sourceworks, and both of these projects (as many of my friends and colleagues knew only too well) entirely swallowed up all the time and creative energies I had available.

About seven or so years ago I became increasingly frustrated at having to devote all my time to publishing and consequently to neglect undertaking research. I became only too aware of the gaps in my knowledge and that I was living off of my fund of research which I had built up in my twenties before publishing the Journal.

The ill fated Hermetic Research Trust which I established at the end of 1986, was an attempt by me to secure more time for such research, but it could never obtain the resources necessary to free me from undertaking publishing to raise funds. A number of misjudgments on my part led to the failure of the Trust as a means of sustaining my work.

In 1989, Joseph Ritman, the founder of the Bibliotheca Philosophica Hermetica, recognising my difficulties, gave me a

grant to free me to undertake research, and for the first time for many years I was able to study and research hermetic books and manuscripts in the British Library, the Bodleian in Oxford, the Ferguson Collection in Glasgow, the Wellcome Institute, and many other collections.

In 1991 Joseph Ritman offered me a position in his library as a researcher — which gave me access to the resources of the Bibliotheca Philosophica Hermetica, and the opportunity to coordinate my work with other members of the staff and fellow researchers attached to the library. The Bibliotheca Philosophica Hermetica is undoubtedly the major force in our age for reviving and focussing interest on hermetic studies, so I am greatly pleased to become part of the current of revitalising energy that flows through the library, and hope to be able to assist its work in whatever ways I can.

The practical results of this change in my circumstances is that I can devote much of my time to research and transcribing works for future publication. It became obvious to me during my initial research that there were very few bibliographical listings of hermetic material, particularly manuscript sources. Fellow researchers had to muddle through hoping to serendipidously locate interesting manuscripts. So one of the first tasks I set myself over the past years was to construct databases that will enable fellow

researchers to locate items of interest to them. I have also been working on a graphic database of hermetic emblems, which will allow users to search for key alchemical symbols in a large database of woodcuts, engravings and manuscript drawings and paintings on computer file.

During this phase of my studies, I find I have little free time to devote to producing the Journal, so I have decided that it will be best for me to bring its production to a close. There will no doubt in future be other vehicles that will allow myself and regular contributors to the Journal to publish articles and results of researches.

But although I will now bring the Journal to a close, I do not wish to entirely withdraw from public work in this area, and especially I would wish to keep in touch with all my colleagues who have supported the Journal over the years. In order to some extent to sustain the momentum for hermetic research that was created through the publication of the Journal, I propose to continue to act as a focus for people who want to investigate hermetic ideas in depth. I will make what knowledge and expertise I have in hermetic studies, more directly available to former readers and others deeply interested in our subject. I can, for example, probably always help in locating books, manuscripts and symbolism, as I have many bibliographical tools

and databases close at hand. I may also be able to assist by suggesting ways of approaching a particular aspect of the subject.

So in future I will try to make myself and my researches available directly to those who are interested in working further with these ideas. Of course, such correspondence will greatly aid my own research, as this will spark off investigations which occasionally will lead to uncovering a previously obscure manuscript or drawing attention to an important section of text.

Since 1991 I have moved back to Edinburgh and hopefully this will be a more permanent situation. The P.O. box in Oxford is now defunct, and people should in future write to me at Royal Terrace. Due to the upheavals of the past seven years I have actually moved address seven times, which has had no little impact on my work. I hope now for at least a few years of stability.

I would like to thank all those who wrote articles for the Journal over the years, and also to express my gratitude to the subscribers whose helped pay for its production. Those who purchased the early editions of the Magnum Opus sourceworks, actually helped to subsidise the Journal which always made a financial loss.

However it is not negative financial considerations which have caused me to bring the Journal to a close, but a more

positive growth in my work.  
Over the next few years I should be able to develop new research tools for those who wish to investigate the obscure though spiritually en-riching realm of alchemy. There is a wealth of material still to be discovered,

identified, commented upon and published. I do hope to be able to keep in touch and work with many of my colleagues and former subscribers in bringing this material to light.

*Adam McLean*

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## The Song of Nature (The Secret Recipe)

I am the Dweller in the ancient rocks,  
The One who takes the iridescent rain  
To glow like crystals in my timeless eyes;  
My priests, the winds, travel the deep woods  
And skies of Earth, my body that lies  
Eternally within the tides,  
And from the dreams of men I draw my sustenance.

Thus over you I watch, my lonely children,  
You who are I in other shape and form:  
The sleeping lion, white meadows full of spring  
And dusty scholars studying into night.  
All these and more, and many, many more  
Who move unknowingly within my sphere,  
Have in my seasons a remote delight  
And my protection when they fail to hear my warnings;

Nonetheless, do not deny me, you who are living  
In the change and flux of Time:  
For I am ageless, and cannot despair,  
And in me burns the darkness and the dawn.

Josephine Gowans

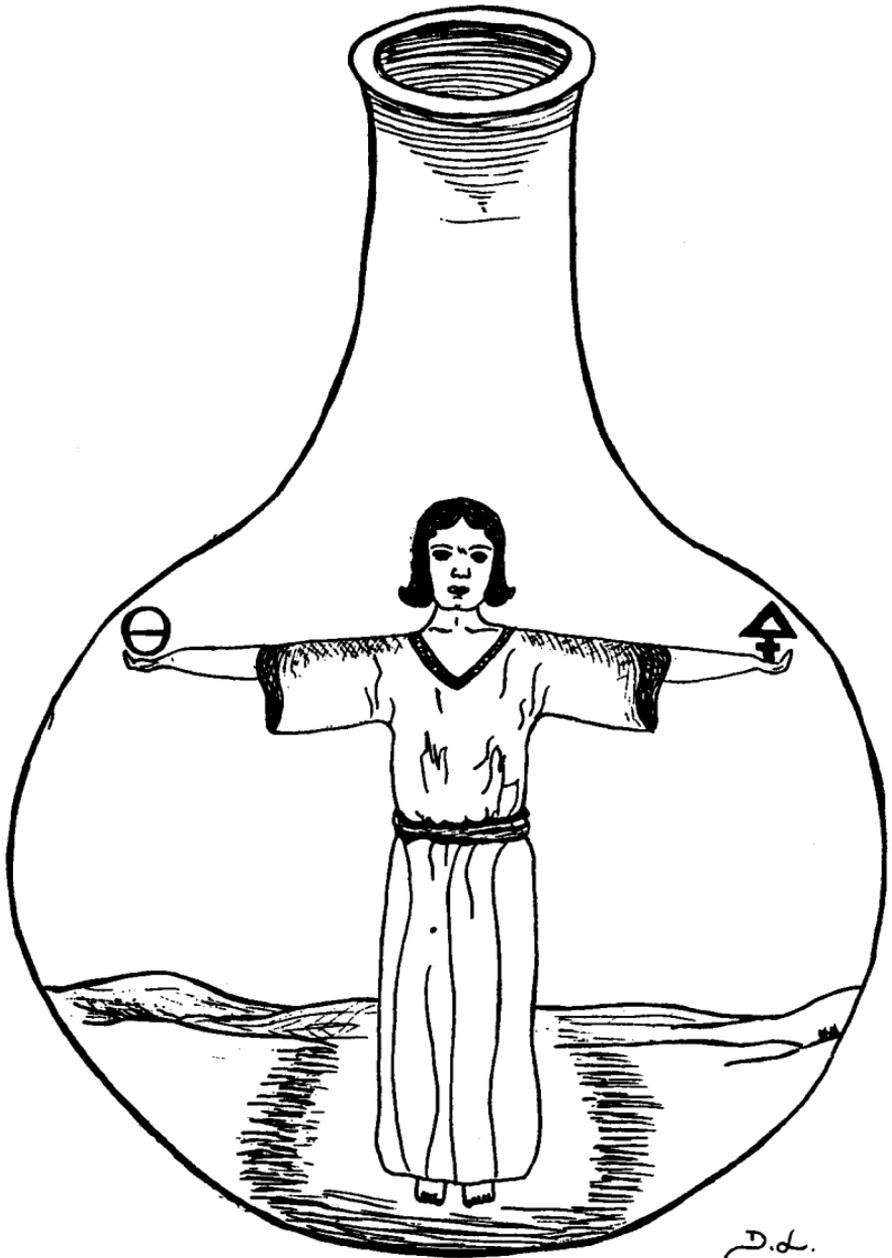


Figure is an artist's conception, by Doris Lorca, FRC

Figure : "and there wilt see a Red Man, holding in his right hand a triangle with a cross, but in his left hand the Eye of the World, with a small line through it."

# **The Epistle of Dr. Hadrianus a Mynsicht To His Friend Dr. Hartman**

## **A Rosicrucian Alchemical Allegory**

**by Alberto I. LaCava, Ph.D., FRC**

**(Alchemical figure by Doris Lorca, FRC)**

Alchemical allegories are symbolic stories that were created and written by their authors with several goals in mind. The first goal was to discourage the casual, ignorant reader. The casual reader in most cases would allow himself to become so discouraged by the obscure language of the allegory that would immediately give up any and all attempts to understand it, claiming that it did not make any sense, that it was too difficult to explain and to interpret.

On the other hand, the allegory was created to exert a charming and seductive power on the mind of the alchemical student who is willing to invest the time and effort required to uncover and understand its meaning. We know through our readings that the alchemist of the past have spent hours researching, following leads, thinking and meditating on the meanings behind these literary veiled presentations. Hermetic Alchemy is sometimes called "the magnetic stone", because of this charming power of attraction or fascination exerted on the seekers of the alchemical knowledge.

### **The Epistle of Hadrianus a Mynsicht**

I came across a fascinating allegory sometime ago, while studying an original notebook of the British Rosicrucian and Alchemist of the

latter part of the eighteenth century, Dr. Sigismund Bacstrom. The story of Dr. Bacstrom is well known by the historians of alchemical and Rosicrucian movements, such authors as E. A. Waite and A. McLean have reported on him.<sup>1</sup>

The notebook that was in my hands contained the study notes from Dr. Bacstrom from March to April, 1805.<sup>2</sup> This was a study notebook, not unlike the notebooks used by modern esoteric students to keep notes and personal comments on their studies. This particular notebook had a long story of "travelling" through private collections of alchemical and mystical enthusiasts of Europe, the last of them, Mr. Denis Duveen.

The whole collection of Mr. Duveen was purchased by the Mellon family and taken to the United States sometime this century. The Mellons were fascinated by the ideas of Carl Jung on the symbolic and psychological interpretation of alchemical images and texts, and spent considerable effort forming a collection of ancient alchemical and mystical texts and manuscripts. Such collection is known today as the "Mellon Collection", and is deposited in custody of Yale University's Library, whereupon the author of this article was able to take it in hand, review it and share the following with the readers.

Page 15 of the Bacstrom notebook contained the following fascinating alchemical allegory, attributed to the alchemist Dr. Hadrianus a Mynsicht :

*"Epistle of Hadriani a Mynsicht to his friend Dr. Hartman.  
(Translated from the original Latin by S. Bacstrom)*

*Dear Doctor:*

*In the evening, sometime ago, a certain philosophical saying of Sendivogius occurred to my mind ... "The Wind has carried it in its Belly"...*

*Hear therefore my honored friend and learn wherein*

*Take that universal Center, which for certain the Ocean gives thee by a Northern Messenger and thou wilt have the Mercurial Key.*

*Now open the Door of the Sun, walk in, and there wilt see a Red Man, holding in his right hand a triangle with a cross, but in his left hand the Eye of the World, with a small line through it.*

*Stand still and believe me, that these are the Signs of my Secret Golden Fleece, that when placed in the Sphere of the Secrets, they cause the Sun to eclipse, and by passing through various colors and degrees, they generate the Celestial Eternal Morning.*

*But it is not permitted to every man to go to Corinth, although I do not doubt of thy good success and felicity.*

*Hadrianus a Mynsicht, M.D."*

## Dr. Hadrianus a Mynsicht

Hadrianus a Mynsicht was a Paracelsian physician who lived in the period 1590 to 1638. He was a devout student of Alchemy and considered himself as a Rosicrucian. He used pseudonyms to "hide" his name in his most important writings. His style, however, is quite original and the images suggested have many elements in common in most of his writings.

One of his pseudonyms was, "Hinricus Madathanus Theosophus", the author of one or more of the treatises that appear in "Secret Symbols of the Rosicrucians of the 16th and 17th Centuries". One of the treatises in question, "Aureum Seculum Redivivum" (The Rebirth of the Golden Age), is highly allegorical. In the text appears a poem from a "famous poet" Harmannus Daticus, another anagram of Mynsicht's own name. Madathanus calls himself "Dei Gratia Aurea Crucis Frater" or "by the Grace of God Frater of the Golden Cross". This identifies Mynsicht as a Rosicrucian Frater.

Mynsicht gives his seal or personal symbol in "Aureum Seculum". This seal, mysteriously appears on a 17th Century Gate in Rome. The Alchemical Gate and the symbol were discussed in a previous publication.<sup>3</sup> The alchemical gate is in the Piazza Vittorio Emmanuele, a public square where now functions a street market.

Mynsicht is considered by some (e.g. Rudolph Steiner) as the author of the anonymous "Golden Treatise Concerning the Philosopher's Stone", which contains the celebrated "Parabola", a masterpiece of the art of alchemical allegory. A comparison between the different allegories written by Mynsicht and the Parabola suggest a common author.

## The Mystical Meditation on the Allegory

Convinced that "the true mysteries of the Universe can only be obtained by divine Illumination", the Alchemists knew that study, intellect and reason alone were not suffice keys to unlock the deepest meaning behind the extended metaphor. For the Alchemical mystic knew and understood the value of meditation — it opened the mind to Cosmic inspiration, illumination and guidance.

Mystics have known and practised the method of "reflection" meditating on symbolic allegories for many centuries. The notebook of Dr. Bacstrom gives an interesting example of the technique he used in achieving such inspiration and illumination in understanding the allegory. After translating the allegory into English, Bacstrom still had to unlock its deepest mystery:

*"My thoughts on this weighty Subject, which occurred to me in the beginning of February 1805, one evening, being alone in the house, after having fervently prayed to God, which thoughts I immediately get down on paper, because I did and do conceive them to be of great Moment."*

After a period of prayer and meditation, Dr. Bacstrom received illumination on the meaning of the allegory, which he would then commit immediately into writing.

### Understanding the Allegory

There are, of course, several interpretations of this allegory, which include a laboratory alchemical process, as well as a process of *inner self-transformation*, produced by the mystical exercises performed by the alchemist. The discussion of the allegory as given in Bacstrom's notebook is quite lengthy and involved. In the following discussion of the symbols used in the allegory, Bacstrom's discussion has been simplified, the goal being to provide the reader with an introduction and with a basic understanding of the richness of the imagery used by Hadrianus a Mynsicht.

*"The Wind has carried it in its Belly..."* For Bacstrom this statement represent the need to "liquefy" the First Matter, i.e., to make the invisible more material and therefore more tangible. In "The Emerald Tablet", it is said that the First Matter is carried by the Wind in its belly. This First Matter is part of the energy of Nous present in air which, "causes the air to be vital air" and that "without this you can do nothing". Thus, what this represents is the Alchemical Marriage of the Superior and the Inferior.

*Take that universal Center, which for certain the Ocean gives thee by a Northern Messenger and thou wilt have the Mercurial Key...* Bacstrom interprets the "Universal Center" as the alchemical Salt, the matrix of the crystalline or material universe, which carries in its essence order and structure. The reference to the ocean is a veiled reference to the salt, which is found in abundance in the sea. Another symbol that is brought to mind by the reference to the Ocean is the mystical Journey through the inner world of the alchemist (the journey of Jason and the Argonauts<sup>4</sup>), the meeting and the battle with the monsters of the depths of our own mind. But alive in the dissolving water is the salt, symbolic of the clay of the creation of solid matter, the physical body of the alchemist, and the solidification of the unconscious into higher levels of awareness.

The "Northern Messenger" however, puzzled Bacstrom. He speculated that it may concern the magnetic flow of the Earth from North to South. Another explanation he gives is that the alchemical

process should reach maturity when the Sun transits the Northern constellations of Aries, Taurus and Gemini during the Spring, or around the Spring Equinox. The alchemist Sendivogius places this in allegorical terminology by stating that "*when you see the Rams and the Bulls playing in the fields, and Two Little Boys, thou wilt have the Mercurial Key*". (That is, when the Sun goes through Aries, Taurus and Gemini during Spring). It is during Spring, that Nature undergoes regeneration and rebirth. This parallels the consciousness of the alchemist, as he, himself, goes through this process.

The "mercurial key" is another expression for sea salt, which may contain "the sulphur of nature" ( $\blacklozenge$ ), whose symbol looks like a key.

*...Now open the Door of the Sun...* The Door of the Sun is a symbol having several levels of meaning. For example, for Bacstrom, fine gold (Sol) leaves were used by the alchemists as a "ferment" in the alchemical process. "Door of the Sun" may refer to the use of some gold to commence such a process. Another explanation is that the "Door of the Sun" may simply refer to sulphur ( $\blacklozenge$ ), since alchemists referred to sulphur as "the Road of the Sun", — a fundamental ingredient involved in the creation and production of philosophical gold.

From a more mystical viewpoint, the Door is representative of the entrance, gateway or admittance into the world of the Light and illumination. Such illumination is necessary in order that we may each identify, "inside" of ourselves, these alchemical components of the Great Work. These components are revealed symbolically through the vision of the Red Man, as explained below.

*...walk in, and there wilt see a Red Man...* "The red man" is interpreted by Bacstrom as "a red hepar sulphur", or a dark red sulphur compound. Sulphur, one of the alchemical essences, is typically represented being red in color. As from the mystical point of view, the sulphur represents our emotional being containing all of its fiery power and energy. It is necessary that the energies of our emotions be harnessed through the alchemical process. This is evidenced by the Red Man... *holding in his right hand a triangle with a cross...* which in itself is a reference to the symbol used for sulphur ( $\blacklozenge$ ), while simultaneously alluding to man's emotional fiery nature.

*...but in his left hand the Eye of the World...* a circle ( $\bigcirc$ ), with a small line through it ( $\ominus$ ), the symbol of salt. This salt typifies the more material elements of our selves, our inertia, our resistance to change, in other words, our crystallized concepts.

Consequently, the Red Man holds the two polarities of alchemy in each of his hands. His right hand carries the active and positive

polarity of sulphur, while his left carries the crystallized negative polarity of salt. The Red Man himself is the mediator. He, together with the sulphur and the salt formulate the principal ingredients of the philosopher's stone.

*Stand still and believe me, that these are the Signs of my Secret Golden Fleece...* This sentence refers to the legend of Jason and the Argonauts and his quest for the Golden Fleece, which for the alchemists was a symbol for the preparation of the Philosopher's Stone.

Note that the myth of the Argonauts is a mystical journey which displays a rich imagery, including Jason battling with a sleepless dragon and other symbols which resemble the images that the alchemists used to describe the operations of their art.

The sleepless dragon in Bacstrom also represents a state in which "the dragon still fulminates". The "dragon" in question resulted from the reaction between sulphur and nitre salt (i.e., sodium nitrate). If the reaction took place successfully, the "dragon went to sleep". If the reaction was not done properly, "the dragon fulminated", which I am to understand that it meant there was an explosion in the alchemist's laboratory !

*...that when placed in the Sphere of the Secrets...* The Sphere of Secrets is the alchemical retort or alembic where the ingredients (the Red Man, Sulphur and Salt) are to be treated by the fire of the furnace. From the point of view of transcendental Alchemy, this is representative of the body and mind of the alchemist, where the true transmutation will take place.

*...they cause the Sun to eclipse...* This makes reference to the transformations taking place in the alembique. According to the alchemists, the ingredients would become black, after heating. This blackening of the substances represents the stage of "Nigredo" or dark stage, better known by transcendental Alchemists as the "Dark Night of the Soul", in which the consciousness of the alchemist goes through a symbolic night of pain and desperation.

*...and by passing through various colors and degrees...* This stage is the "Cauda Pavonis" or the Peacock Tail, where the substance displays many amazing colors in laboratory alchemy. These color changes represent the inner and outer transformations, the experiences and changes in the life of the transcendental Alchemist, coupled with further growth and spiritual evolution.

*...they generate the Celestial Eternal Morning...* In this stage, there is the reddening of the substance in the retort (*the rubedo stage and achievement of the Lapis Philosophorum*). The transcendental Alchemist receives Light, achieves the Cosmic Illumination, he has experienced a revival or the glorified body. At this point he has achieved the Philosopher's Stone.

*But it is not permitted to every man to go to Corinth...* Again refers to the myth of the Argonauts, and is allegorical of the completion of the Great Work. The journey of the Argo, after obtaining the Golden Fleece, and going through several other adventures, finally ends in Corinth, where Jason becomes the King. It is to be noted that Corinth in antiquity was considered as a very wealthy city, and may have become to some alchemists a symbol of the final transmutation of the lower metals into gold. The allegory states that not every alchemist that starts the alchemical process (the journey of the Argonauts) can achieve the final goal of the Great Work (become King of Corinth). Mystically suggests that not every alchemical student on the path may be able to achieve the highest level of Illumination.

*...although I do not doubt of thy good success and felicity...* This represents the confidence that the alchemist displays in his disciple. Even if the Great Work is not achieved, the disciple would be allowed to enjoy a life of success and happiness — a Cosmic Gift for having attempted the Quest in honesty and good faith.

## Conclusions

The "Red Man of the Door of the Sun" has revealed itself both as an allegory of the quest of the alchemist in search of the secret of transmutation, and as an allegory of the mystic in search of Cosmic Consciousness and Illumination. At the end of the allegory, both reach the real Philosopher's Gold and the Philosopher's Stone. The goal of the author has been to introduce a discussion of the symbolism from an alchemical and mystical viewpoints. There is more to learn from the allegory, which, following the alchemical tradition, *can only be learned by meditation.*

## Notes

1. A.E. Waite, *The Brotherhood of the Rosy Cross*, Chapter 20, University Books, New Hyde Park, New York, undated. Adam McLean, "Bacstrom's Rosicrucian Society", *The Hermetic Journal*, 6-25, (1980).
2. Mellon Manuscript No. 141, "Bacstrom's Alchemical Miscellany", in the Beinecke Library of Yale University.
3. McLean, Adam and F. Marulli, "An Alchemical Gate in Rome", *The Hermetic Journal*, Vol. 21, pp. 31-34.
4. Mynsicht uses the imagery of the journey of the Argo in his Epistle and in the "Parabola". References to the imagery of the Jason myth also appears in the Alchemical Gate in Rome.

# John Dee and the Secret Societies

Ron Heisler

Man of science and magus extraordinary, and for two decades England's leading mathematician, it is only in recent years that John Dee's reputation has begun to properly recover from the obloquy attached by an age of militant rationalism to those notorious angel raising episodes in which he engaged in the 1580s. Meric Casaubon's poisonous 1659 edition of Dee's angelic diaries, which did not include all extant volumes, leaves us with little more than an impression of a rather pathetic Dee seeking to communicate with angelic spirits with frustratingly meagre results. What I am seeking to identify is the political and religious significance of these episodes and the clues they give to the secret society culture of the late Elizabethans.

Dee's religious views have always been irritatingly opaque. That he was a Protestant of some sort is beyond dispute. In the time of Edward VI he associated with reformers. The curious affair in the reign of Catholic Queen Mary, when, during investigation by the Court of Requests (a committee of the Star Chamber) in 1555, he was accused of casting horoscopes of the Queen and her Spanish husband with evil intent, is ambiguous, for some of his companions in this possibly criminal venture subsequently proved lackeys of the Catholic monarchy of the most loyal kind. In any case, Dee was released, the official suspicions presumably dispelled.<sup>1</sup>

Did Dee go through a Familist stage? We know of his strong links with the bookseller Arnold Birckmann, for a letter of 1604 written by Johann Radermacher refers to their meeting in Birckmann's shop more than forty years before. In 1577 Dee advised the cartographer Abraham Ortelius (a Familist) that correspondence could reach him via Birckmann's servants in Antwerp.<sup>2</sup> Birckmann has long been suspected of being a member of the Family of Love — a secret society with several grades of membership, which seems to have taken a spiritualist turn and which recruited indiscriminately from both Catholic and Protestant ranks in England, the Low Countries,

Germany and France. In 1585 Birckmann's London shop passed into the hands of the Familist Arnold Mylius, who had married his daughter.<sup>3</sup> Dee was an avid explorer of all frontier territories of knowledge and a flirtation with Familism would have been characteristic of him. One of Dee's pupil-friends, Sir Philip Sidney, was fascinated by the sect: there is a letter to Sidney from his intimate friend, the French *savant* Hubert Languet, written from Antwerp, where Languet was a guest of the printer, Christopher Plantin, today the best remembered of all Familists.<sup>4</sup> Dee's greatest patron was Queen Elizabeth, and it has been surprisingly unmentioned upon that after her death she was accused of being a favourer of the sect.<sup>5</sup>

Was Dee ever initiated into freemasonry? There is nothing to indicate that he was, yet he seems to have been keenly interested in matters architectural, an area in which England was singularly deficient even by the mid-16th century, going by the paucity of published works available in the vernacular. Dee owned five editions of Vitruvius; his 1567 copy is laced with notes on architecture.<sup>6</sup> We have no direct evidence of any interest in the mysteries associated with King Solomon's Temple. On the other hand, he wrote the "History of King Solomon, every three years, his Ophirian voyage, with divers other rarities—" in 1576, of which fragments were published by Purchas years later.<sup>7</sup> These voyages had been undertaken by the sailors of Solomon, who had been taught seamanship by the mariners of Hiram of Tyre, without whose assistance, of course, the Great Temple at Jerusalem could never have been built, as all freemasons would have known. In the 1590s, having returned, quite prudently, from the uncertainties of Bohemia, where Kelley languished in gaol, accused of fraudulent transmutation, Dee's financial situation was precarious. He ceaselessly sought an office that would bring financial security. In his diary there is an entry for December 7 1594 stating "and on the 8th day, by the chief motion of the Lord Admirall, and som[e]what of the Lord Buckhurst, the Quene's wish was to the Lord Archbishop presently that I shuld have Dr. Day his place in Powles [St. Paul's]."<sup>8</sup> Charles Howard, the Lord Admiral, and Thomas Sackville, Lord Buckhurst, have a prominent role in James Anderson's *The New Book of Constitutions* (1738): both had been Grand Masters of the freemasons.

To unlock the function of the notorious 1580s seances, I think we should first look to Dee's associates. Long overlooked is some correspondence between Dee and Roger Edwardes, whose credentials remain a trifle hazy. Edwardes was, nevertheless, exceedingly well connected: his patrons included the Earl of Hereford, Lord Burleigh and the Queen herself, it would seem. There is a letter to Burleigh of

April 13 1574 in which Edwardes described the situation in the Low Countries.<sup>9</sup> His sole published work, *A Booke of very Godly Psalmes* (1570), was dedicated to Lettice Devereux, Viscountess of Hereford. The daughter of Sir Francis Knollys, she was the mother of the ill-fated Robert, future Earl of Essex. Edwardes mentions in his dedication that he was the "vassal" of the Earl of Hereford. On March 29 of the previous year Edwardes had written to Burleigh forwarding a treatise to be presented to the Queen. Two months later, on May 28, he was bragging to a Mr "Marche" that the book "had been well accepted" by her.<sup>10</sup>

Edwardes's mind perpetually travelled the grooves of the apocalypse. In 1580 he wrote "A Phantastical Book", as a later owner of the manuscript entitled it, on the "Conversion of the Jews", the coming of the millenium being dependent on this particular event. Edwardes's manuscript found its way into Lord Burleigh's papers.<sup>11</sup> His surviving correspondence with Dee dates from between July 13 1579 and July 16 1580. In one letter, Dee addressed him as "my lovinge friende R. Edwardes". This was one of several letters apparently belonging to a circle whose members included "Thomas Lincoln" (presumably the bishop of Lincoln) and a "W. Cestren" In a damaged letter with essential words missing, Edwardes alludes to "William Herbert", which leaves us in a quandary as to which William Herbert was meant: the Earl of Pembroke or the apocalyptic poet.<sup>12</sup> It probably was the latter, William Harbert of St. Gillim, whom Dee records in his diary, in an entry for May 1 1577, as having passed him some notes on the *Monas Hieroglyphica*.<sup>13</sup> Harbert, who chided Shakespeare and Samuel Daniel<sup>14</sup> together in a poem, was a friend of Joshua Sylvester, the best translator of Du Bartas's *Devine Weekes*; Harbert himself produced a now lost translation of Du Bartas *Uranus*, which he presented to Lord Lumley. I argue elsewhere that the late Elizabethan popularity of Du Bartas was based on the Huguenot's masonic resonances: his *Devine Weekes* was a quasi-masonic text.<sup>15</sup> In *A Prophetie of Cadwaller, last King of the Britaines* (1604) the Welsh poet depicted James I as a second Brute, who had returned to reunite the kingdom of Britain, which had so famously been divided into three parts by King Lear. As Harbert put it, "Disioynted... by her first monarches fall", Britain will be restored by a king who "shall three in one, and one in three unite", thus inaugurating a new golden age in which war will be bound in chains.<sup>16</sup>

Similar millennial sentiments are never far from the mind of Roger Edwardes, as can be seen in *Godly Psalmes*, where he depicts the "holy citie newe Jerusalem" and projects "a newe heaven, and a newe earthe". Edwardes's influence on Dee is unmistakable, to whom a

spirit discoursed freely on the 24th March 1583 on the course of nature and reason, telling how "New Worlds shall spring of these. New Maners; Strange Men...."<sup>17</sup> The utopianism of Shakespeare's *Tempest* was perhaps forged to a degree in the spiritual workshop of the Dee circle.

The apocalyptic ethos of the 1580s was exceptionally intense at the time — or virulent, for the overcoming of Antichrist, the Pope in Rome, was the cardinal priority in the scheme of things, coupled with the defeat of Spain. John Aylmer, who had become bishop of London, had years before assigned to Queen Elizabeth the messianic task of destroying Antichrist in Britain, and latterly James Sandford, in his 1576 translation of Guiccardini's *House of Recreation*, had developed the theme, seeing in Elizabeth "some diviner things" than "in the Kings and Queens of other countries".<sup>18</sup> Her role was to inaugurate a new golden age. Sandford, who profoundly believed in a millennial age or "status", was probably the "Mr Sandford" who features in Dee's angelic diaries.<sup>19</sup> He had translated Giacopo Brocardo's *The Revelation of S. John* (1582). Brocardo is rightly considered an important forerunner of the Rosicrucians: the 120 years that elapsed between the legendary Christian Rosenkreutz's death and the finding of his tomb is anticipated by Brocardo with his theory of three stages leading to the overthrow of Antichrist. The stages — each of forty years — represent Savonarola, Luther, and the struggle with the Pope/Antichrist.<sup>20</sup> The goal was to be reached in the year 1600, but the Rosicrucian manifestos shifted goalposts to 1604, when the Rosicrucian vault was discovered. Fleeing from Venice to escape the Inquisition, Brocardo travelled in northern Europe, entering England in 1577, where he almost certainly made contact with the Dee-Sidney circle.

We must now glance briefly at the occult setting that Dee was heir to, Societies with esoteric and secretive propensities were all the fashion in sophisticated Europe. The Italian Platonic academies had long flourished and continued to multiply. In France, poets and intellectuals had flocked to the Pléiade, a hub of Platonism (a home to Daniel Rogers, *ami* of Dee and Sir Philip Sidney), whilst Henry III, the epicene Valois king, first of all set up his Palace Academy, of which Walsingham had word in February 1576, and then established in 1583 at Vincennes the mysterious "Confrérie d'Hieronymites". Beginning with twelve members, it was said to be a hive of drug experimentation. It was a development of an earlier Order of the Holy Spirit, founded in 1578, to which belonged the French ambassador to England, the cultivated Michel de Castelnau de Mauvissière, who took into his London household Giordano Bruno for two years.<sup>21</sup> The Family of Love, which had become alarming to authority partly

because it recruited its secret membership largely outside courtly circles, possibly had as many as a thousand members in England in 1580.

Regarding Dee, there is one important posthumous allegation. It was reported to Elias Ashmole some decades after Dee's death that he was "acknowledged for one of ye Brotherhood of ye R.Cr. by one of that Fraternity,...Philip Zeiglerus..."<sup>22</sup> Philip Ziegler, the revolutionary Rosicrucian prophet, had arrived in England in 1626 and created turmoil. Dee had died in 1608. I have not encountered any evidence to confirm Ziegler's assertion. But that Dee knew Francis Thynne, the alchemically minded poet of the London "Rose" society, is probable. In his diary, Dee noted down for March 1 1598 that "I receyved Mr. Thynne his letter".<sup>23</sup> Of Dee's close friend and admirer over many years, Sir Edward Dyer, John Aubrey wrote that he "labour'd much in chymistry, was esteemed by some a Rosicrucian..."<sup>24</sup> Dyer completed his mortal coil in 1607. Veracity was not the strong point of either Ziegler or Aubrey and their claims must be accorded some caution.

However, important links with Rosicrucianism can be made through two of Dee's servants. Roger Cook worked for the magus from 1567 till 1581. They quarrelled and split, but made up again, with Cook returning into Dee's employ in 1600. Now it happens that a "Roger Cock" is recorded as having been an assistant to the alchemist-inventor, Cornelius Drebbel, whilst working for the Emperor Rudolph II at Prague up to 1612. Almost certainly "Cock" was Dee's "Cook". Drebbel was among the most important of all Rosicrucians.<sup>25</sup> From about 1603 till his death, Dee had a young pupil called Patrick Sanders, who acquired several of his manuscripts after his death. Eventually becoming a member of the London College of Physicians, Sanders edited Roger Bacon's *Epistola ... De Secretis Operibus Artis et Naturae*, which was published at Hamburg in 1618. Sanders dedicated the work to the Rosicrucian Brotherhood.<sup>26</sup>

To most effectively probe into the enigma of Dee we must look to the evidence provided by his contemporaries. We can make no better beginning than with Sir Philip Sidney's curious comment to Hubert Languet on February 11 1574. After disparaging Humphrey Lhuyd's *Commentarioli Britannicae*, Sidney wrote: "But of course the important thing, ...is for you to remember that our 'unknown God' [Dee] is of the same land and substance, and will take amiss your arousing so much laughter at the expense of his blood brother; otherwise in his anger he may perhaps brandish his hieroglyphic monad at you like Jove's lightning bolt — for such is the wrath of heavenly spirits."<sup>27</sup> Sidney, who studied chemistry "led by God with Dee as teacher and Dyer as companion", was making a witty sally, at

the heart of which stands a phrase — “our ‘unknown God’” — which warrants being taken more seriously.<sup>28</sup> The hint of the cultivation of the *prisca theologia* — of the *original* religion within conventional religion — is clearly given by Sidney, and we have to pose the issue of whether a Dee sect was already formalized by 1574? We can't be sure about this, but one thing is clear: a cult of John Dee was a fact of life. His insatiable egotism was leavened by an intelligence and learning which commanded the admiration of other minds of stature.

It is a severe comment on the insularity of Spenserian scholarship that hitherto no Spenserian has recognized the portrait of Dee — and, by implication, the status accorded to him — to be found within the Castle of Temperance episode in *The Faerie Queene's* Second Book. Spenser describes three “honourable sages”, the second of whom “could of things present best advise”. Dee was certainly a practical man who organized programmes of exploration. This figure sits in the second room, its walls enlivened with “famous Wisards”, as well as with “All artes, all science, all Philosophy”. Spenser paints Dee as “a man of ripe and perfect age”, who did “meditate all his life long, /That through continuall practice and usage, /He now was growne right wise, and wondrous sage.” Dyer and Sidney's co-worker in the Areopagite poetry society was Edmund Spenser, who was at work on *The Faerie Queene* by 1580.

What went on between Dee and the Sidney circle is unrecorded in detail. But with regard to others posterity has been blessed. The awkward tango that Dee danced with the alchemist and explorer, Adrian Gilbert, the half-brother of Sir Walter Raleigh, is well written down in the spiritual diaries. On March 26 1583 Dee enquired of a spirit “Must Adrian Gilbert be made privy of these Mysteries?” In his marginal note, Dee comments that Gilbert “may be made prive, but he is not to be a Practicer.”<sup>29</sup> The extent to which Gilbert was to be made “privy to our practice” was a perpetual worry for Dee. By the 1590s Dee had acquired a new set of intimates. We have notes by him on a book's flyleaf, dated May 31 1594, in which he bestowed on a “Mr Barker” (the physician Thomas Barker?) and a “Mr Alped” (undoubtedly Richard Alred) the title of “Discipulos” — disciples! Of Alred, Dee noted in the diary on March 23 the same year, “Magus disclosed by frendship of Mr Richard Alred”. Alas, Dee gives no further explanation.<sup>30</sup>

The greatest competing ego with Dee's within his own circle was that of the Florentine patrician, Francesco Pucci (1543-97), a utopianist of fluctuating and wayward opinions.<sup>31</sup> Veering towards Protestantism, he entered England for the first time in 1572, taking an Oxford M.A. in 1574. The following year he was expelled from the University. Passing from the Italian church in London to the French

church, he was soon embroiled in controversy again. His unruly personality and brand of anti-Calvinist Protestantism must have made this inevitable. Leaving England, he made his way to Fausto Socinus in Basle by 1577, but the town soon expelled him. Returning to London in 1579-80, he encountered further persecution and departed for Holland and the company of the great scholar Justus Lipsius, whose political thought was to influence Shakespeare and who was to be exposed for Familist tendencies a few years later. Pucci returned to London, and it is presumed that it was in the capital that he completed — or wrote out — *Forma d'una repubblica cattolica* in 1581. It was some centuries before his hand was recognized in this unpublished utopian text.

Pucci proposed the organization of a *secret* "republic" of good people in all lands, who would prepare the world for a great council that would reunify Christianity. Borrowing from the notorious Anabaptists, whose implication in social and political revolution decades earlier had rendered their name anathema in all respectable circles, Pucci's scheme envisaged "Colleges" being established, whose principal officers would include a Provost, a Chancellor and a Censor, elected for terms of four years by males over the age of 25. There were to be central delegate meetings from time to time in friendly territories, which would take place *incognito* if necessary, using the guise of merchants. Outwardly the organization was to observe conformity to the laws of a land and to obey the civil magistrates, stipulations which indicate a Familist influence on Pucci's thinking. His objective was the unification of all peoples in a comity that reached even the mosque and the synagogue. His immediate target — the eradication of the Christian schism — would be effected by the calling of a general council of "spiritual persons" and "lovers of truth". At times he contemplated this council being called by the Pope.<sup>32</sup>

The rediscovery of Pucci in twentieth century Italy created a *frisson* of excitement in academic circles. Some have been surprised by the absence of obvious utopian precursors to Pucci within the Italian tradition without considering that his utopia may reflect English conditions and thinking. We know that Sidney and Daniel Rogers were strongly influenced by eirenist impulses in the 1570s, which were not completely erased by the St. Bartholomew massacre of Huguenots in Paris in 1572. They first sought to heal schism within Protestant ranks between Lutherans and Calvinists. The religious views of these thinkers, although having a Protestant foundation, could not be reduced to any orthodox straight jacket. Although no firm evidence has surfaced to establish that Pucci knew Dee by 1581, the serious possibility remains that his utopia may actually represent a compendium of the commonplaces being

exchanged within the confidentiality of the magus's circle.

What is beyond dispute is that by 1585 Pucci met up with Dee and the brilliant alchemical charlatan, Edward Kelley, at Cracow in Poland. Pucci accompanied the two on their journey to Bohemia. He was at Prague with them by August 20.<sup>33</sup> In July 1586 Dee noted in his diary that he and Kelley had left Pucci behind in their lodgings at Prague. Dee's spiritual diaries are enlivened by periodic bouts of obvious paranoia, but on this occasion his apprehensions appear well founded. At Erfurt he wrote, "I was sore vexed in mind to think of Pucci his return to our company, as well for his unquiet nature in disputations, as for his blabbing of our secrets without our leave or well liking or any good doing thereby".<sup>34</sup> Dee had become hypersensitive with good reason: the Papal Nuncio was baying for his blood at Rudolph II's imperial court. Of Pucci, the Welsh magus wrote, "he has laid such a bait for us with our mortal enemy, to entrap us by fair fawning words".<sup>35</sup> Pucci was trying to convince Dee and Kelley that they should make their way to Rome to conduct their angel raising sessions in the presence of the Pope. They wisely rejected such a seductive offer. By 1587 the unstable Pucci had reconverted to Catholicism. One is baffled as to why Dee did not break off such a dangerous acquaintanceship immediately, assuming that Pucci's move was sincerely meant and not a mere ploy to deceive the Catholic authorities. But he did not and the uneasy relationship continued for some time. That Dee saw his own circle as being essentially a formal sect is implied by a later comment he made on Pucci, whom he dismissed as "being but a probationer, not yet allowed of, and to us known to be cut off."<sup>36</sup> Clearly there was a grade of membership of a higher status than probationer. Dee himself had ambitions to enter a yet higher body. At a seance in Prague on August 20 1584 the Spirit Uriel had communicated with him, and Dee poured his heart out: he was "most desirous to be entered speedily into the School of Wisdom..."<sup>37</sup> Pucci decidedly belonged to the school of unwisdom: he fell into the hands of the Inquisition, who at Rome had him decapitated and burned in 1597.

And what can be said of Dee's religious standpoint when in Bohemia? The Lutheran Budovec described his reception by Rudolph II at the time: he "was at first well received by him; he predicted that a miraculous reformation would presently come about in the Christian world and would prove the ruin not only of the city of Constantinople but of Rome also. These predictions he did not cease to spread among the populace." The Venetian ambassador wrote of Dee in June 1586 that "He does not profess a Christian life but declares he has revelations from angels...When the Pope was informed he rightly feared the appearance of a new sect." Pucci, who

assumed he was witnessing divine revelation at Dee's seances, at the *Actio Pucciana*, in which an angelic spirit was activated, "received great confirmation of my hopes for an imminent renovation of all things which God will accomplish..." Dee recorded an angel's instructions in 1586, which underlined his non-doctrinal Christianity: "Whosoever wishes to be wise may look neither to the right nor to the left; neither towards this man who is called a catholic, nor towards that one who is called a heretic (for thus you are called); but he may look up to the God of heaven and earth and to his Son, Jesus Christ".<sup>38</sup>

R.J.W. Evans's summing up of Dee as a believer in a kind of mystical universal revelation strikes me as utterly inadequate, perhaps tending to indicate the magus was a quietist, a follower of a passive Christian route.<sup>39</sup> To the contrary, we should regard him — particularly in view of his strong filiations with Roger Edwardes, a friendship which lasted till the late 1590s — as a full blown apocalyptic and millennialist, with a driving activist nature. His pursuit of angelic guidance was consciously functional, intended to steer his various enterprises — the explorations in the Americas, for example, or the rejigging of the political map of Central Europe, with Rudolph II seen as the great prize.

Dr Adam Clarke, Hebraist, alchemist, astrologer and kabbalist, was arguably the leading Methodist intellectual of the early 19th century. Tragically, his manuscript "Mysterium Liber" seems to have utterly vanished from the face of the earth. But at least we have Clarke's note describing this fascinating effort: "N.B. As it is assembed that the six books of Mysteries transcribed from the papers of Dr. John Dee by Elias Ashmole, Esq., preserved in the Sloan Library,.... are a collection of papers relating to State Transactions between Elizabeth, her Ministers and different Foreign Powers, in which Dr. Dee was employed sometimes as an official agent openly, and at other times as a spy, I purpose to make an extract from the whole work, and endeavour, if possible, to get a key to open the Mysteries. A.C."<sup>40</sup>

In tracing the origins of Rosicrucianism, commentators have often turned to the mysterious journeyings of Nicholas Barnaud, a Huguenot alchemist around whom an enormous mystique has gathered over the centuries.<sup>41</sup> Barnaud's fame partly rests on his authorship of one of the most controversial of all Huguenot political polemics, *Le Réveille-Matin des Francais et de leurs voisins (prétendus)*, whose first edition dates from 1573 and for which he used the pseudonym of Eusèbe Philadelphie. This ultra-radical work, which was greatly expanded in subsequent editions, betrays a line of thought more consistent with the revolutionaries of 1789 than with the Huguenot aristocrats and their pet theologians of the 1570s.

Virulently anti-church in sentiment, the author insists on the marriage of priests and the abolition of tithes, pursues the theme of a grand Huguenot alliance with the house of Guise to overthrow the Valois dynasty, justifies tyrannicide and the right of resistance to oppression, and outlines a novel form of political control for society with clear republican implications.<sup>42</sup> Horrified, the great Calvinist writer Beza rushed to condemn the book at Geneva. Both John Dee and Gabriel Harvey owned copies of the work.

Many pseudonymous works have been linked to Barnaud's name and no satisfactory biographical sketch has ever been produced. We know for certain that he was born at Crest in Dauphiné, visited Spain in 1559, was at Paris in 1572 and fled to Geneva, where he worked as a diplomatic emissary for the besieged Protestants.<sup>43</sup> There his name was misspelt quite regularly as "Barnaud" or "Bernard". This raises an intriguing possibility, hitherto unnoticed by historians, for in the Return of Aliens for November 1571 in London we encounter "Jacques Taffyn, who was recejver to the kinge of Fraunce, borne at Tournay in Flanders.... Anne his wife, borne at Tournay. Guy Barnarde and Nicholas Barnarde, brothers to the aforesaid Anna,..., and cam for religion about ij yeres past, and are yet of no church, but go to the French church by occasion."<sup>44</sup> Regrettably, we have no other information to clarify whether this was the same as our Barnaud or not. Settling in France in his autumnal years, he was excommunicated by his local church described as "that pest". His religious sentiments leaned towards those of Socinus — who rejected the Holy Trinity.<sup>45</sup>

We must now proceed from Barnaud the politician to Barnaud the alchemist. Two of his alchemical tracts were published in Holland by Christopher Raphelengius, grand-son of the Familist Christopher Plantin; the others were brought out at Leyden by Thomas Basson, an Englishman of the Familist persuasion. It was his son, Govaert Basson — also a Familist — who published Robert Fludd's very first Rosicrucian pamphlets. The Basson edition of *Quadriga Auriferae Secunda Rota* was dedicated to Sir Edward Dyer, although it is clear from Barnaud's preface of July 1599 that he did not know the English knight personally. But it is quite on the cards that Barnaud had known John Dee as early as 1583. Contrary to A.E. Waite's claim, Barnaud nowhere says that he witnessed Edward Kelley's feat of transmuting mercury into gold at the home of Thaddeus von Hajek in Prague.<sup>46</sup> He does state, however, that he saw "projection" achieved by Hajek with the aid of his son at Prague in 1583.<sup>47</sup> Now it happens that in that year Dee and Kelley were made most welcome by Hajek, who put them up at his Prague house. Hajek appears to have known Sir Philip Sidney a few years before: his son, who was sent to England

to study, was put in Sidney's charge.<sup>48</sup> We can infer that Barnaud probably met Dee in 1583, but we cannot prove it.

Barnaud's significance revolves around an alchemical tradition that he was a key precursor of the Rosicrucian Brotherhood, although the evidence for this contention is remarkably elusive. The tradition seems to have crystallized with J.S. Semler's *Unparteiische Samlungen zur historie der Rosenkreuzer* of 1788, which alleged that in 1591 Barnaud, who is known to have travelled in France and Holland that year, founded an alchemical society. Semler goes as far as to claim that a great college of the fraternity of the Rosicrucians met in 1591 and 1597, the implication being that Barnaud was possibly associated with at least the former.<sup>49</sup>

Semler did not oblige posterity with documentation for these contentions. If they contain a particle of truth, however, Dee — who shared with Barnaud patron-friends in Bohemia and Poland — almost surely heard about such developments. But that Barnaud may have organized some alchemical sect is not quite beyond the realm of possibility, for in 1597 he produced his *Commentariolum in Aenigmaticum quoddam Epitaphium*, which contained the "alchemical Mass" originally written by the Hungarian, Nicholas Melchior. The more we know about the Renaissance alchemists, the more we have to respect them for their practical bent: what they wrote down, they attempted to carry out in their laboratories usually. Why did Barnaud edit this "Mass", as did Michael Maier two decades later, if it was not intended for collective use?<sup>50</sup>

## Notes

1. Public Record Office. Proceedings in Court of Requests Cat. I lxxvii 48.
2. J.E. Van Dorsten *The Radical Arts* p. 23. *Ecclesiae Londino-Batavae Archivum* vol. I (1887) ed. J.H. Hessels; letter of 7/17 January 1604, pp. 157-60.
3. Stephen Batman *The Golden Booke of the Leaden Goddes* (1577) describes three degrees of the converted: the cominalty of the holy ones; the upright understanding ones; the illuminate Elders. In England, they had bishops, elders and deacons. On Mylius, see article by A. Hamilton in *Quaerendo* vol. xi (1981) pp. 278-9.
4. J.A. Van Dorsten *op. cit.* p. 29.
5. *A Supplication of the Family of Love...* (1606) p. 46: "It appeareth that she [Elizabeth] had alwayes about her some Familistes, or favourers of that Sect, who alwaies related, or bare tidings what was donne, or intended against them."
6. J. Roberts & A.G. Watson eds. *John Dee's Library Catalogue* p.13.

7. Samuel Purchas *Hakluytus Posthumus or Purchas His Pilgrimes* vol. I (1905 ed.) 105-6. Dee's treatise ran to 70 sheets.
8. *Private Diarv of Dr. John Dee* (1842) ed. J.O. Halliwell.
9. British Library MS Cotton Galba C.V.
10. *Calendar of State Papers (Dom.)* 1547-1580 p. 332.
11. British Library MS. Lansdowne 353.
12. British Library MS. Cotton Vitellius C.V. II fs. 312-14, 325-28. On William Herbert: f. 312.
13. *Private Diary of John Dee op. cit.* p.3.
14. William Harbert *Epicedium* (1594) first stanza.
15. A.L. Prescott *French Poets and the English Renaissance* p.179. I analyse Du Bartas in a forthcoming history of early English freemasonry.
16. C.A. Patrides & J. Wittreich eds. *The Apocalypse* p. 181.
17. British Library MS. Sloane 3677 f. 99v.
18. C.A.Patrides & J.Wittreich *op. cit.* p. 96.
19. Brit. Lib. MS. Sloane 3677 fs. 137v, 144v.
20. *Johann Valentin Andreae 1586-1986*. Catalogue by Bibliotheca Philosophica Hermetica, Amsterdam (1986) p. 27. Andreae's friend, Tobias Hess, who possibly part-wrote the Rosicrucian manifestoes, avidly studied Brocardo.
21. F.A. Yates *The French Academies of the Sixteenth Century* (1947) pp. 156, 157, 171, 226.
22. Peter French *John Dee* p. 14.
23. *Private Diary of Dr. John Dee op. cit.* p.61.
24. *Dictionary of National Biography*.
25. J. Roberts & A.G. Watson *op. cit.* p. 4. On Drebbel, see R. Heisler "Rosicrucianism: the First Blooming in Britain" *The Hermetic Journal* 1989 pp. 38-40.
26. *Ibid.* p. 38. J. Roberts & A.G. Watson *op. cit.* pp. 58. 60-2.
27. J.M. Osborn Young *Philip Sidney 1572-1577* p.146.
28. Roger Howell *Sir Philip Sidney* p. 137 quoting Dr. Thomas Moffett's *Nobilis*. Moffett knew Sidney.
29. Brit. Lib. MS. Sloane 3677 fs. 104, 164(?).
30. *Private Diary of Dr. John Dee op. cit.* pp. 48, 52. J. Roberts & A.G. Watson *op. cit.* pp. 101, 28.
31. Useful comments on Pucci are to be found in E.Cochrane ed. *The Late Italian Renaissance*; also see *Dict. of Nat. Biog.* Biography in Francesco Pucci *Lettere, documenti e testimonianze* vol. II ed. L. Firpo & R. Piattoli.
32. M. Eliar-Felden "Secret societies, utopias, and peace plans: the case of Francesco Pucci" *Journal of Medieval and Renaissance Studies* vol.14 (1984).
33. On Rogers see J.E.Phillips *Neo-Latin Poetry of the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries* (1965) p. 11 re. C. Plantin the Familist

- publishing his Latin poems in 1565. Rogers was related to, and knew, several Familists. A Familist himself? Who knows? Also pp. 13, 16, 18, 19.
34. *True Relation of Dr. John Dee* (1659) ed. M. Casaubon p.430.
35. F. Pucci *Lettere, documenti e testimonianze op. cit.* p. 182.
36. *Ibid.* p. 187.
37. *True Relation of Dr. John Dee op. cit.* p. 206.
38. R.J.W. Evans *Rudolph II and his World* (2nd ed.) p. 224. *State Papers (Venetian)* vol. VIII (1581-1591) p. 169. R.J.W. Evans *op. cit.* p. 103. P. French *John Dee* p. 120.
39. R.J.W. Evans *op. cit.* p. 224.
40. *List of MS formerly in possession of the late Dr. Adam Clarke.* Baynes & Son Sale Catalogue (1837), copy in British Library.
41. *Nouvelle Biographie Universelle* (1853). H. Hauser *Les Sources de l'Histoire de France XVI Siècle (1494-1610)* vol. III. A.E. Waite *The Brotherhood of the Rosy Cross* pp. 75-79. Useful fresh material in R.J.W. Evans *op. cit.* pp. 200, 208, 212-13, 283. But the most important survey still remains Prosper Marchand *Dictionaire historique* vol. I (1758) pp.82-87.
42. J.W. Allen *History of Political Thought in the Sixteenth Century* pp. 308-9.
43. R.M. Kingdon *Geneva and the Constitution of the French Protestant Movement 1564-1572* pp. 185-6.
44. *Returns of Aliens dwelling in.... London from Henry VIII to James I Part II (1571-1597)* ed. R.E.G. Kirk & E.F. Kirk p. 38.
45. *Dictionaire de Biographie Francaise* (1951). Barnaud died in 1607.
46. *Theatrum Chemicum* vol III(1659) pp. 796-7. C. Nicholl *The Chemical Theatre* p. 21 quoting from Waite's edition of F. Barrett's *Lives of the Alchemists*.
47. *Theatrum Chemicum* vol III p. 749.
48. *True Relation.... op. cit.* p. 212. J.M. Osborn *op. cit.* pp. 242, 299, 313, 318, 435. Sidney was in Prague in 1575 and 1577. Hubert Languet appears to have made the introduction.
49. J.S. Semler *Unparteiische.... der Rosenkreuzer* Book I pp.89, 83, 90, 91
50. R.J.W. Evans *op. cit.* p. 200.

# **An infallible Touchstone**

## **for discovering and distinguishing**

### **a true master of chemy**

[This letter was sent to the Gentleman's Magazine and published in their issue for May 1768.]

The delightful and blessed fruits of true Chemy, and of the Philosopher's Stone are so sweet and charming, that every one hearing something of them, doth directly wish and long for them. This exposes a great many to the danger of being deceived by cunning secret-mongers and caco-chemists, who are great many at present times, and do promise every thing, that is asked, but with no other view or intent than of contriving opportunities, schemes, and tricks for picking the pockets of the credulous; and the knavery, used herein, is so fine and subtle, that it cannot be easily found out sooner, than by the unhappy experience of being deceived and ruined. The examples are numberless, and increase daily. Therefore I was moved by due zeal for that royal truth, and the true love of my fellow creatures, to form the following touchstone, which you will please to make known by the channel of your Magazine, for the good and benefit of the public, and you will oblige a great many of your readers, as well as your humble servant.

S. V. H. or,

per Anagramma, Lefyruschi.

**An infallible Touchstone for discovering and distinguishing a true master of chemy from deceitful secret-mongers, and an honest son of Hermes from bastards and caco-chemists, and also containing something more for wise searchers of Nature.**

If any one pretends to be a Philosopher, and proposes the communicating either of that whole art, or of one or another particular, by any conditions whatsoever, no body should be hasty in believing, but always strictly observe the following points, and ask.

1. What is the visible first matter, to be taken in hand to begin the work? If he doth deny a plain answer under any excuse whatever, leave him directly, and ask nothing more. For the visible first matter is openly named and proved in all books of true philosophers, and yet has discovered hitherto nothing of that secret. But if there be named any visible matter whatever, it must be universal, or some particular; so examine it directly according to this certain test.

The visible matter which God took first in the great creation, and produced thereof the whole terrestrial Globe, and every thing therein, that, and no other must be the visible first matter of them, and contain the primordial seeds of them all; and also consequently it must be the true visible first matter in the little creation, or work of the philosophers, producing the quintessence of all things in the world, and the great medicine of animals, vegetables, and minerals, either in general or particular.

This or that visible matter is of such sort or not.

Therefore, etc.

Because, there is the greatest harmony and correspondents between that great and little creation, and the latter is always ruled by the first; and no Philosopher can choose any better matter, than God made at first, and which also he himself took, and produced thereof the whole earth, and every thing therein. But would any one be wiser, and choose any other matter, he will deceive himself and others, and his work shall prove him a fool. The only true visible first matter is clearly enough showed and proved by the holy scriptures, by all the writings of true Philosophers, and also by daily experience, that it cannot be unknown to any, but to such, who are willfully ignorant of his truth, that by the word of God the heavens are of old, and the earth standing out of the water and in the water. I Peter. iii. 5.

2. Whether that visible first matter alone, and in itself be sufficient

for the whole work, or requireth some other materials?

If it be answered in the first, the Master speaks the truth, but if in the latter, he is a mountebank and process-monger. Because that visible matter, which God made first in the great creation, and which he himself also took, and produced thereof our whole earth and every thing therein, shall it not be sufficient in the little creation, and the work of Philosophers? And what can be found in all the world, which is not produced thereof? and consequently must lie hid therein.

3. Whether he does know, hath seen, and can show the secret cave of the true virgin earth, most properly called the Earth from the heaven; the entire new earth; the Earth, which has never been under our feet, but always above our heads; the Earth upon which have never fallen any rays of the Sun and Moon, though the Sun be its father, and the Moon its mother, and the wind carried it in its belly; the Earth, which not yet having brought forth any animals, vegetables and minerals, containeth in his centre the Primordial seeds of them all, and whether he can also give the proper reasons of those knotty descriptions according to the letter, without metaphors and allegories; and also dig without spades, pick-axe, and the like instruments, and get that virgin earth, and bring it to the day, to the sight and touch, and show and prove undoubtedly all the said qualities. For that farmer must be a mad man, who will plough and sow without having one single inch of earth or field; and so likewise that architect, who will build a castle in the air, and not upon the earth and ground; and far more than that philosopher, who knows not that virgin earth, or to build his work upon its ground. For it is the only foundation of the whole, and the true horn of plenty, whereof also comes the happy success.

4. Whether he out of that visible first matter alone can produce mercury and sulphur, without the addition of any other thing, and thereof further can produce a snow-white bright amalgama, when on the contrary, common mercury and sulphur become a black powder, called *Æthiopa Mineralis*? If he answers not accordingly, show him the door. For this is one of the most essential and principal points in the whole secret, without which, every thing is vain, and to no purpose. And Sendivog says, out of one are made two, and of two one, and you have done.

5. Whether he can give a clear and plain explanation of Hermes Smaragdine table, and show and prove its true sense and meaning in every respect by one single and simple experiment, so, that every one must become directly convinced, that it was according to the whole table, and to keys hid therein, and could not be otherwise, but that all other interpretations, made and published hitherto, are entirely impertinent and wrong, making it rather obscurer than clearer.

6. Whether he did use the first year any fire of coals, turf, wood, oil, spirits and the like fuel, or only the secret fire of the philosophers and nature! If the first, send him to the brick and lime kilns or glass-houses.

7. Whether he can remove by one single and simple experiment all obscurities and doubts, and show at once the truth of all the six points mentioned before, and this so clear and plain to the eye, that every one feeling, or already knowing that common experiment, must become directly convinced of them all: Because the royal truths of Hermes are allied to one another, and of one country, nation, family and blood, and therefore always in mutual friendship and harmony. And for these identical reasons all particulars and receipts, not being of kindred with the universal, and flowing out of that first fountain, shall be always accounted spurious and cheating; and they shall also ve always found such by proper trials made without the presence of the secret-monger, and the hocus pocus of his deceitful hands.

8. Whether he does absolutely want more than two vessels, contrary to the verses,

If only is the matter true,  
He shall want vessels very few;  
In common two are to be spent,  
And sometimes one will serve the end.

9. Whether he does want more than one drachm of gold and silver, and sooner than one year? If he answers to both affirmatively, take care, there surely lies a snake in the grass.

10. Lastly, ask him also, what shall be the price? If he will sell his art and secret for any sum of money whatsoever, then account him for a secret-monger and deceiver, being himself afraid of happy success; because all sale is a real prostitution of that royal art, and it is entirely unlawful to every true son of Hermes to think of any sale; and not one such example can be found in all the world, but all sale and experience has been ever proved a villainous cheat and fraud. On the contrary, if he only desires the small expenses for the work, and the necessaries of life for the time required to its finishing, or any other thing equal to them, then there can be no suspicion upon just grounds and reasons.

Therefore, if his answers be according to the forementioned nine points, account him for a true master in that art, who shall not deceive you. For all the said points do concern the most secret principles, being most essential in that art, and from which also depends the success; and you may agree with him according to your

circumstances, and to equity and honesty, which latter will cause a quick agreement. And then let him explain, show, and satisfy you perfectly about the said nine points, that you become sure of their ground and truth; after which you shall likewise stand to your words, and perform and fullfil your promises, and proceed fairly and honestly. For there are more knots, and whosoever deceives a sincere son of art, deceives always himself, and turns God's blessing to a curse, and poison to himself. On the contrary, if he cannot answer accordingly, and satisfy you about the said nine points, Ah! think not on the tenth, but account him for a true scholar of that alchemist, talking with the most honourable dame of nature in the dialogue annexed to Sendivog's treatise on Mercury, pages 74 and 75, where that alchemist says;

Alch: Now I see, that I know nothing; but I dare not say so; for there I should lose my reputation, and my neighbours will bestow no money upon me, if they should be sensible, that I know nothing. Yet I will say, that I do certainly know, or else no body will give me so much as bread; for many of them hope for much good from me.

Nat: Although you should put them off a great while, yet what will become of thee at the last; and especially, if thy neighbours should demand their charges of thee again.

Alch: I will feed all of them with the best hopes I can!

Nat: And then what will you do at the last?

Alch: I will try many ways privately, if either of them succeed, I will pay them; if not, I will go in some distant country, and practice the like there!

Nat: And what will become of thee afterwards!

Alch: Ah! ah! ah! there be many countries, and also many covetous men, to whom I will promise great stores of gold, and that in a short time, and so the years shall pass away, till at the last, either I or they must die kings or asses.

Nat: Such philosophers deserve the halter! Fie upon thee, make haste and despatch theyself, and put an end to thyself and thy philosophy.

*This is inserted for its peculiarity. It is evidently written by a foreigner, and the purpose for which it is written is no less manifest.*

# Zosimos and the Inner Temple

Graham Knight

Concentration upon the major European texts of Alchemy that were produced in the 16th and 17th centuries can sometimes lead to a neglect of the earlier Masters upon whose work later authorities had built.

I have had reason before to emphasize the extraordinary richness and diversity of the work surviving by Zosimos - and the hope that there will soon be a published collection of his remaining texts.

The manuscript of St. Mark dates from the tenth or eleventh century and contains the earliest recension of Democritus' *Physica et Mystica*, the first masterpiece of defined Alchemy. Democritus is often cited by Zosimos, who appears to have lived and worked in Alexandria some time around 300 AD, and whose work is also contained in the same manuscript.<sup>1</sup> Both Democritus and Zosimos discuss the revelations of Alchemy in a way that suggests adherence to a mystery cult, and indeed it has been suggested of the latter that he was associated with the Gnostics.<sup>2</sup>

Democritus describes an Evocation of his 'master', by means of which he is directed to a secret compartment in one of the pillars of the inner temple. Here he discovers the formula - "Nature rejoices in nature, nature triumphs over nature, nature dominates nature". It is not indicated whether this temple is public, or whether it is specific to the alchemic followers of this 'master'.

However, it seems likely that Alchemy of this period was closely bound up with the kind of pan-Egyptian practices detailed in the magical papyri, where magic, medicine and science all mingle. A cursory glance through the Greek Magical Papyri<sup>3</sup> will show initiatory verses, medicinal herbs and stone, and scrying techniques thrown together.

Whereas Democritus seems to be discussing events that occur

within the material world, the initiatory experiences of Zosimos seem closer to those of Thomas Vaughan or Andrae Valentinus, occurring like them in a vision following upon study and meditation<sup>4</sup> - "While saying these things, I fell asleep and I saw standing before me at an altar shaped like a dome (or receiver of distillate), a priest sacrificing". There appear to be several visions written up as one, for at each stage Zosimos 'awakens' to test his understanding of the preceding symbols before re-entering the psycho-drama; "Filled with fear, I awoke and reflected... persuaded that I had rightly understood... I fell asleep again".

The descriptions of the Temple exist on several levels and are strongly reminiscent of the period of Rosicrucianism, when the Emblemata functioned to explore mystico/chemical visions, of which the *Chymical Wedding* is the most famous. It is extraordinary to see how, as so often in Alchemy, an aspect of its learning is present early in its history, already formed and then it is carried forward fifteen centuries, re-appearing in cultures infinitely distant in geography and experience.

"There were 15 steps to mount to this altar... shaped like a dome...<sup>5</sup> I have accomplished the act of descending the 15 steps walking toward the darkness and the act of mounting the steps going toward the light."

"In the dome-shaped altar all things are blended, all are dissociated, all things unite, all things combine, all things are mixed and all are separated, all things are moistened and all are dried, all things flourish and all things wither."

In a 15th century Syrian MS. held at Cambridge<sup>6</sup> (Ms. M.M.6.29), Zosimos further elaborates this mythical approach to the Praxis; "In a place in the far west, where tin is found, there is a spring which rises from the earth and gives rise to it like water. When the inhabitants of this region see that it is about to spread beyond its source, they select a young girl remarkable for her beauty and place her entirely nude below it, in a hollow of the ground, in order that it shall be enamoured by the beauty of the young girl. It springs at her with a bound seeking to seize her; but she escapes by running rapidly while the young people keep near her holding axes in their hands. As soon as they see it approach the young girl, they strike and cut it, and it comes of itself into the hollow and of itself solidifies and hardens. They cut it into bars and use it." The text then returns to more traditional alchemical styles of symbolism; "This is why they call 'water of the river' the mercury drawn from tin; they call it thus, because it runs like water which throws itself into lakes and which has the appearance of a dragon furious and venomous."<sup>7</sup>

It is interesting to compare this symbolism with the medieval

versions of the Unicorn mythos: "The very fierce animal with only one horn is called unicorn. In order to catch it, a virgin is put in a field, the animal then comes to her and is caught, because it lies down in her lap."

Honorius of Autun, *Speculum de mysteriis ecclesiae*,

Arlunnus says these animals:-  
 Lust greatly after pretty girls.  
 This way to catch him is the best  
 A youth in women's clothes is dressed  
 And then with mincing steps he flaunts  
 About the Unicorn's bright haunts.  
 For when this creature spies a maid  
 Straight in her lap, he lays his head.  
 The huntsman/ doffing his disguise/  
 Saws off the horn and wins the prize.

Amman, Ein neuw Thierbuch, 1569.

Interestingly, Ripley talks of the "green lion lying in the queen's lap with blood flowing from his side", the unripe Materia obviously here being interchangeable with the Mercurial unicorn.

Zosimos follows Democritus in naming the four metallic bodies as copper, iron, tin and lead<sup>8</sup> - and concerning the fable outlined above, he defines the Mercury obtained from tin as 'water of the river, bile of the dragon'. It is significant that Zosimos more than any other contemporary Greek source, discusses the practicalities of his Art, describing the vessels, their construction and function. The St. Mark MS. contains in addition, sketches of the vessels and lists of alchemical symbols<sup>9</sup> - so that the mystical visions and allegories come to fruition in the alchemic laboratory, tested within the material athanor - "...the master of the house said to me, 'Thou hast contemplated, thou hast stretched thy neck upward and seen what has been done.'"

## Notes

1. *Col. des Alchimistes Grecs I and II*. Democritus p. 41, Trans. p. 43; Zosimos in II p. 107, trans. p. 117.
2. Stillman, *The story of Alchemy and early Chemistry*, pub. Dover, 1960.
3. Ed. Hans Dieter Betz, pub. Chicago, 1986.
4. See my previous article discussing Vaughan's *Lumen de Lumine* in the *Hermetic Journal* No 38. pp. 30-32.

5. The altar/dome is the Athanor, the steps the act of sublimation. Berthelot gives the Greek  $\phi\iota\alpha\lambda\eta$  as the glass distiller that condenses vapours.
6. This may seem a late recension of a work ostensibly originating in the 2nd or 3rd century, but it must be remembered that much from the Alexandrian schools was saved by Syrian scholars working in Persia or later under Muslim rulers, and translating into Arabic. Carried to Spain by Mohammedan conquest, the texts were eventually translated into Latin in the 12th and 13th centuries, to enter the mainstream of European thought. See also my article, 'Hidden Sources of the Florentine Renaissance' in the *Hermetic Journal* for 1990, pp. 69-71.
7. Berthelot, *La chimie au Moyen Age II*, pp. 244-5.
8. "The shell of the egg is an element like earth, cold and dry; it has been called copper, iron, tin, lead. The white of the egg is the water divine..." Greek text circa 3rd C., copied in 1578. Berthelot, vol I.
9. Berthelot, *Introduction a l'etude de la chimiè*.

## The Fountain of the Lovers of the Science, composed by John Fountain of Valencienn in the County of Hainault.

Lyons 1590.  
The third edition.

[This English translation of this important early alchemical allegory (thought to have been composed in the 15th century) is found in MS. Sloane 3637 in the British Library (a 17th century manuscript).

This work was published in French in various editions, the earliest of which I have seen being issued at Paris in 1561, though the Sloane manuscript refers to the edition published at Lyon in 1590. — A. McLean.]

It was in the time of the month of May, when one should bury sorrow and care, that I entered into an orchard, whereof Zephyrus was the gardener.

When I passed before the Garden, I was not clothed in silk, but arrayed in sorry garments, that I might not in public appear naked; and diverting myself with a desire to chase away unpleasant thoughts, I heard an harmonious song of many grateful birds. Then I beheld the entrance of the garden which was shut, but as I judged by my sight, Zephyrus soon opened it. He afterwards retired, seeming thereby as if he had not done it. And when I saw the manner of it, I retired a little back, and afterwards I entered in. My teeth not having eaten for a day I was very dry and hungry. But I carried bread with me, which I had saved for a week. Then I perceived a fountain of very clear, pure and fine water, which was under a hawthorn tree. I joyfully sat down by it, and made me pottage of my bread. Then after eating I fell asleep within this pleasant orchard. And according to my

apprehension, I slept long enough for the pleasure which I took, being in the dream which I dreamed. You now may know it from my dream, and I after found it a fiction. It is true that methought two comely Ladies with beautiful looks, seeming like the daughters of a King, in respect of their noble atire, came softly towards me, and I humbly saluted them, saying to them, Glorious Ladies, God save you both bodies and souls, May it please you to tell me your names, do not ye deny me this.

One answered very courteously. Friend my name is Knowledge. Behold here Reason which accompanied me, whether it be in the mountains, or in the valleys, or in the fields, she can make you very wise. Then understanding this language and believing myself to be awake, I much wondered at what happened. For I saw issue from the fountain, which is so agreeable and wholesome, seven streams which I had never seen before. Having lain me down in this way, which wetteth me so much, that I was all be-dirtied, the water there gushed out abundantly. Then I desired the Lady Reason who was with Knowledge, to tell me the signification of the fountain, and the streams which are so plentiful and comely, and whose the enclosure was, on all sides well beset with trees and with sweet flowers, moistened with running waters, so that I thought I never saw its equal. But she most gently said to me. You, my friend, shall know how this affair does stand, which you so much desire to know; hearken attentively to me.

In it the fountain has a thing, which is most nobly contained. He who shall know it well, will love it above all other things. He who would seek and search it out, and being found put it afterwards into the earth and dry it to a most subtile powder, then again dissolve it in its water, but which has before been separated, then gather the parts together, which the earth shall set to rot in the water which should nourish it. Thence there will a maiden breed, bearing fruit at both her breasts. But that we should remove the rottenness, which neither she nor her fruit does care for, the maid I speak of in many things bestirs herself, and fervently desires it. For she mounts into the air flying on high; afterwards descending down gliding in the valley, and in descending down she fawns the fawn which Nature gives to her.

It is a Dragon which has three throats, hungry and never satiated: all around him everyone assaults or kicks at him, surrounding him just as it were in a street and chasing him with a violent pursuit, so that a sweat do cover his face, (alias But beforehand by heat one drives away the sweat which covers the face) which blackens and beglews it, as with bird lime then impregnates it and [le mengue - an unknown word]. In the same manner she brings forth again (This amorously done) much more powerful than before, then drinks it as

the juice of the apple. So the infant according to its manner often drinks, and afterward brings forth again, so that it clearer is than crystal, in truth the work is just so [Ytall - another obscure word]. And when it is so shining in a most strong and powerful water, it thinketh to devour its mother, who has eaten up its brother and father. So as it gives suck and broods, the dragon strikes it with his tail. Into two parts divide its Mother, which does assist it after this division: deliver it then to the three throats, which they have sooner taken it than a gargle.

Tis then the strongest in the World, there's nothing ever does confound it. Tis marvellous and powerful, one ounce is worth a hundred weight of Gold. it is a fire of such a nature, that it overcomes corruption, and transmutes into another substance, since it brings it to its own likeness and cureth every distemper, The impostume leprosy and gout; and gives youth to ancient bodies, and to the young ones wit and mirth. Tis as a miracle from God. Without this the Treacle cannot be made, nor any thing which is found underneath the heavens, which is experienced by the ancient prophets and doctors who teach us Nature.

But one dare not make more enquiry, for fear of the Governors of the Earth; may such a mischief never happen, for without Sin one may do this. Many Wise loved it much, accursed be he who has defamed it. One ought never to reveal it, but to those who will love God, and those who will have the Victory, to serve God, love or believe. For he to whom God giveth time to live so long that he is some place have wrought this work, has from God obtained for himself grace or favour, know this for certain. Wherefore he should devoutly pray for those holy men who have put it into writing according to their way of discourse. Philosophers and Saints discreet men whose numbers I cannot reckon up. But may God shower all mercy on them who thus far have opened it. And for those who love the Science may God give them estate and patience.

You ought to know that this same serpent, which I at first did mention to you, is governed by the seven streams, which are so amiable and fair. So I was minded to describe it, but I will name otherwise. It is a noble worthy Stone made by a Science divine, in which more virtue does abound, than in any thing which is in the World. Tis found out by Astronomy, and by the true Philosophy. It is produced in the Mountains, where there grows no other strange or foreign thing (alias, they find it grow aloft with all it ought to have). Know it for an approved truth, that many wise men have found it there, and it may there be still found out, with taking pains to labour well. It is the cabinet (or the quarry) of the precious stones of the philosophers which is so amiable and dear. One may have it easily and so tis better that all that can be had. But you will have undergone

a deal of toil, before you have found it out. Having it you shall fail of nothing, which we can find upon this earthen world. Now let us return unto the fountain, there to know a certain thing.

This valuable fountain does belong to a Lady of honour who is called Nature. Who ought to be much honoured; for each thing is made by her, and if she fails there all is undone. This Lady I assure you has been a long time established. For as soon as God had made the Elements which are perfect, Water, Air, Earth and Fire, Nature was perfect in them all. Without nature there could not grow a little oyster in the Sea. Natures the Mother of all things in the World. The noblest thing which is in Nature, does very well appear in the figure of a Man which Nature has made, wherein she has erred in nothing. So it does in many things which are produced by Nature. Birds, trees, beasts little flowers, they are all made by Nature. And so likewise it is of metals, which are not alike nor equal. For by herself they are made, very deep within the earth. Of which you will have a fuller account, when Nature shall show it you: whom I desire that you would see, to the end that you may the better follow her way and her path in your work, for she must make the discovery to you.

As she was making this discourse, I saw Nature approaching, and presently without delay I went straight on to meet her, and humbly to salute her. But truly she first bowed to me, giving me the salutation. Then Reason said, see Nature here, let it be all your care to love her, for it is she will make you the prudent Master of her Work.

I hearkened diligently, and she undertook to ask me whence I was and what I sought for in that place, because it was very wild and full of darkness for those who were not clerks. Lady, said I, by the God of the Heavens I came hither as those who know not whether to go to find out some good adventure. But I will tell you without delay and propound my adventure in short.

I have heretofore seen a very great prelate, skillful, a clerk, prudent and cunning, who discoursed in common speech so that he made many a man wise, to know the medicine which he made, very high and very precious: demonstrating its excellence by very great experiment, he spoke with very great reverence of the Philosophers and their Science. He had been at a very good school; then I was put to a school, which was desirous to learn and know a better things than all possessions. And it happened to me to ask him whence this science came at first. If one met with it in writing, and who it was who showed it. He answered me without delay, in this discourse which I will tell you.

The Science is the gift of God, which comes by inspiration, so is knowledge given by God, and is inspired into Man. But with this that one do well improve at school, by his understanding. But before a

letter was seen, this surely was a Science known, by people not learned but inspired, who ought highly to be honoured, for many have found out this Science by the divine Wisdom.

And further God is omnipotent, to give to his true servant such a knowledge as he pleases. Wherefore is displeases many clerks, saying that no one is sufficient, if he have not been a student. He who is not a Master of Arts or Doctor, gets no honour among the clerks. And can you blame them for this when they no nought but praising one another. But he who well would punish them must take the books away from them. Then their knowledge will be failing in many clerks, doubt it not. And it will not be in their lays, who make up round rhymes and songs, and who know not how to versify. And many things which many men do freely make a trade of, which they find not in their books. The carpenter and the mason study but very little. No. And they also surely make as good use, as those who study Physick, or Law, or Divinity; for the employment of their Life.

From henceforth I was much incited wholly to apply my mind, so as by true experience to be able to obtain the knowledge of which many men desire, by the favour of the sovereign Lord.

Reason and Nature I assure you hearkened well unto my story. Then said I to Nature, Madame, Alas I am Body and Soul always in care desiring to learn the science, where I cannot fail of having honour in my life, without any envying me. For all my riches I will get as the labourers of the ground, to dig and hough the land, and afterwards to sow their seed, as the true workman do, who make their riches and their praise. And for that reason I would pray you, that you would be pleased to tell me, how they do call this Fountain, which is so amiable and wholesome. She answered; Friends behold, since you desire to know it; It most properly is called, the Fountain of the Lovers. How it must be known to you, that ever since our Mother Eve, that I have governed all the world, as great as tis in all the Circle, nothing without me can rule, unless God would inspire it. I who am called Nature O environed the Earth, without, within and in the middle. In everything I have taken my place, by the command of God the Father, I of all things am the Mother. To all things I give virtue. Therefore nothing is or ever was without me, a thing which might beneath the Heavens be found, which is not governed by me. But since you reason understand, I will give you a goodly gift, by which if you will use it well, you may purchase Paradise, and great riches in this World. From whence nobility might rise, honour and great Lordships, and all pleasure in thy Life. For you shall use it with delight, and many noble feats behold by this fountain and the Cave, which governs all the seven metals. They rose from thence, that is certain. But I the Fountains Mother am, which is a sweet as honey. And to the seven planets of heaven it is compared, that is to Saturn,

Jupiter, Mars and the Moon, the Sun, Mercury and Venus. Observe it well; you are obliged to this. The seven planets which I mentioned, are without all doubt compared to the seven metals coming out of the Earth, which are made of one matter. Now by the Sun we mean Gold, a metal without compare; and by the Moon we mean silver, a noble handsome metal; by Venus, Copper we do mean, this also is a very fitting name. By Mars we mean Iron; and Tin by wholesome Jupiter. And by Saturn good Lead, which we call leprous Gold. Mercury is argent vive, which has all the government of the seven metals, for it is the mother (just so as here they appear) which can make the imperfect perfect. After it I would withdraw [draw] you.

Now understand well what I shall say, and how I shall manifest the Fountain of Dame Nature, which you see here hard by in the Figure. If you know well how to seek Mercury to work as the letter shows, you will make the Medicine of it, whereby you may purchase Paradise, with the honour of this world, where great plenty of riches does abound.

You ought to know by Astronomy and by Philosophy, that Mercury is the matter of the seven metals, and the principal. For by its lead-like heaviness, it keeps in a mass beneath the Earth, notwithstanding it is volatile, and very convertible into the others. And it is found underground, just so as is the dew, and after mounts into the Air of heaven. I Nature tell you so; and thus it may afterwards conceive. He who would have the Mercurial Medicine, must put it into its vessel in a furnace to make Sublimation, which is a noble gift of God, which I will show and represent to you, according to my Power; for if you make not pure Body and Soul, you never will make a good amalgam, nor also a good conclusion. Therefore apply your mind to it.

Now understand, if you would know; (tis better than anything to have good Judgment) take your Body and make a trial of it, as others have done, know it well. You must make your spirits very clean, so that it may incorporate. There will be a handsome battle. Twenty against seven are requisite without doubt. And if twenty cannot destroy they body in this case it must [muire - an unintelligible word]. So the battle is of Mercury most strong and fierce. it is afterwards requisite to make him restore, so that one can draw out nothing [more]. When your undertaking succeeds according to your desire, then he being taken, if you would have justice from him, you shall shut him up in the prison, from whence he cannot stir. But you must comfort him with one gift, or else for you he will do nothing, so that he will do the contrary. And if you would do him a kindness, it behoves you to set him at large, and set him again in his first estate, and for this you shall be his master. Otherwise you cannot well know that which you seek and which you would have. But by this means

you shall know it, and all shall go according to your desire. But what you make of the Body, remember to make it here.

First then you must without contradiction, of thy Body make a Spirit, and the Spirit reincorporate into its Body without any separation. And if you know not how to do all this, be sure do not begin the work. After this conjunction there begins Operation, out of which if you proceed, you'll have the glory of the heavens. But by this book you ought to know, which I Nature deliver to you, that the Mercury of the Sun is not like to that of the Moon, for it should always remain white to make a thing to its own likeness. But that which serveth for the Sun, must openly resemble it, for one must rubify it, and this is the first Work. And then one may conjoin them as in my argument I have said, which you herein have heard before, and which you ought to hearken to. And if you cannot understand it, in your work you may mistake, and perhaps shall lose a deal of time and waste it in vain. And if you know how to work what I have said, you may assuredly proceed therein.

Now you have one point of this Work, which I Nature discover to you. You surely must with a good Judgment make afterwards a congelation of Body and Spirit together, so that one be like the other. And then you must with a right understanding separate the four elements, which you shall make all new, and then shall set them to work. First you must extract the Fire and also the Air for this affair; and afterwards reconcile them. I tell you this here in express words. Earth and water on the other part do serve very well in this Art. As also does the quintessence, for that is the Knowledge of our work. When you shall have found out the four and separated the one from the other, so as I have said before, thy work shall be half done.

Now you may proceed by this means to make what I before have told you in this chapter. You shall put it into a little furnace: this is called a Marriage, when it is made by a wise man: and this is also very properly its name. Now understand the reason well: for the male may well be tied or coupled with the amiable female. And when they are found pure and clean and the one joined with the other, they produce a certain generation. So that this is a glorious work, and which is of great substance. Just so it is in another similitude of many a man and many a woman, who have good reputation and fame, by their children which they breed, which thing each one ought to esteem. From birds, from beasts and from fruits I could prove it otherwise. Put the seed of a tree skillfully into the earth; after the Putrefaction from thence will come a generation. You may know it by the cork [core]: which is more worth than all things else. By sowing one grain, you'll thence have a thousand. You need not there be very cunning. Nor ever was there any creature who could say to me Nature, I obtained a Birth without seeking after you. You in nothing

can reproach me. And so it is of metals, whereof Mercury is the most subtle. Tis put into the furnace where his body is, which I have told you in my relations. And it is very necessary to do this, according as you shall see herein afterward. There tis requisite for him to be in love with his like, and then to work. But first that they may come together they must be parted asunder. But after this separation I assure you they reunite. The first time is the betrothing, the second the marriage, and the third time skillfully united into one nature. This is the perfect marriage in which our total work consists. Now understand well what I've said, for I indeed have falsified in nothing. When you shall have separated them, and by little and little well mended them, you shall afterward reunite them, and join the one to the other. But remember in your lesson, the proverb which Cato spoke: The man who reads and noting understands, is like a hunter who catches nought. Learn then well to understand, that you may not calumniate the books, nor the good workmen, who are perfect understanders. For all those who blame our work, neither know nor understand it. He who well shall understand us, shall very soon come to our Work. It has been opened oftentimes, and by Philosophers approved; But many men esteemed for wise blame it, for which they are fools. And all should lay the blame thereof on them, who have in themselves understanding without gall. But one may well and truly praise all those who such a jewel have, and those who think to find it out by the means of working well. And one should say it is well done: their good work deserveth praise. Now we have told a thing which briefly ought to be disclosed: which is that, if you would well proceed, you make a union of two, so that they may be betrothed in the vessel, which well knows the being or existence, and then separate it for your work. It behoves you to order it well. And to let you know the Way, tis nothing else but dissolution, of which you will have great need. If you would pursue the Work, you out to destroy the Composition, so as you have occasion for it, so that each one be by itself apart. And then having the Earth thirsty, with the water of Heaven in due manner (for they are of one nature all) tis reason it should be moistened, and it shall be governed by me.

Now I have told without any error, how the body shall get a soul, and how you must separate them, and divide them from one another: but the division without doubt, is the key of all our work. It is performed by the fire: without it art would be imperfect. Some say that Fire produces nothing of or by its nature, except ashes. But saving their respect Nature's engrafted in the Fire, for if Nature were not there, the fire neer have any heat. And I will prove it thus. I will take Salt (alias Sol or the Sun) to bear me witness. But now we will leave this discourse and we will speak of other noble subjects. And when I heard this conference, I writ the word down in my heart: and

said thou Lady in a bright array, will you hearken to me a while, and let us return to ye (alias the seven) metals, of which Mercury is the principal, and let you and reason make me some interpretation, or I am mistaken in your work, because of what you have said above. For you would have me to destroy that which I made at first: and that you do expressly say. I know not whether these are repetitions, or whether you speak by Parables, for I understand not your schools.

Friend (Nature answered thus) how understand you the Mercury which I have heretofore named to you? I tell you that it is shut up, although it happen oftentimes that it goes and comes through many hands. The Mercury which I commend to you, surnamed De Mercurio, that it of, from or out of Mercury. It is the Mercury of Mercuries; and many folks make it their care to find it out for their affair. For tis not vulgar Mercury, you cannot find it without me. But when you would work therein, you must be very authentical, (versed in good Authors), to arrive at the practise, whereby you may have a very great knowledge of our works. You must know the metals. or your work will not be worth an oyster. Now, the better to know the way, I'll tell you where the work is placed, likewise where it does begin, if you are a Son of the Science. And he who thither would arrive must know how to obtain this point, or his affair will be worth naught, for all the labour he there employs. Therefore I do call ye Fountain, which is so amiable and wholesome Mercury, the true source or fountain head who is the cause of perfection.

Now understand well what I shall say, for indeed I will speak nothing wrong. This Mercury without its equal you may find in the Sun, when he is in his great heat, and that he makes many blossoms appear, for the fruits come after blossoms. I can prove it in this manner, and still a hundred other ways, which to this art are very slight. But this hear is the chief, and I therefore mention it to you. I have not abused you indeed, for it is visibly there to be found. And if you would work in Luna, you may as well there find it out; in Saturn and in Jupiter, and in Mars which I call Iron: in Venus and in Mercury one may find it most securely. But as to me I found it in the Sun and after wrought it. And therefore I made this Book for you, that you may freely understand me. In Luna seek to see or find it: from thence I took my first matter.

Moreover I say to ye understanders, that both the works are but one, except the rubifying, which serveth rarely for the Sun. And I know not how to tell you more thereof, unless I should show you the practice. And this could not draw you back from error, if you did not see it done. But keep in your memory well, what I have told for you to hear.

Being at dissolution you ought to make imbibition. But do not you begin to act what I have said in this affair, if you have not a

perfect proof of the Work, in having well dissolved the imperfect. And if you can get over this step, reincorporate it by the circle, returning to the former work: the other was only a messenger. You may seek it evidently, how it is slightly made: you cannot come to a nearer way, to the highest of your aim. And if you truly understand it, you will not labour in vain. And after this work so performed, you must restore what is undone. Putrefaction is to be seen from whence a noble being should be born: and in this point the masterpiece consists, whereby all our work is put together. And as I have said to you before, all which is fitting does consist in this. The preparation is put into the furnace. You must have like to like: for the sprout must putrefy before it can issue out of the earth. Likewise the seed of man, which I name you for a proof, putrefies in the body of the woman, and becomes blood and after takes a soul, but in the form of a creature. This same secret Nature gives you.

From thence there ought a thing to be born which shall know more than its Master, to suckle the four children who already are all grown great, which are called Elements and separated from one another.

Now you have five things together, and they do much resemble one another, also it is but one substance, all of the same appearance. The Child should there eat up its Mother and afterwards destroy its Father. Flower and milk and fruit with blood, it behoves you to find in one pool.

Now mind from whence the milk does come, and it is needful there to make Blood. If this you cannot well consider, you lose your labour as your work. And if you know how to understand me well, be sure to work without more delay, for you have passed the Pass, where many fools and wise men do stop. There you may pause a while, and afterward begin to work, and so pursue till you make issue forth the perfect fruit which we do call Elixir. For by a mighty skillful work the precious stone is made of the Philosophers of renown, who very well do know the reason.

And there's no jewel nor possession, which can be the value of this stone. If you would have me tell you its force; it can cure all diseases, likewise by its most noble acts, it perfects all imperfect metals. And there is nothing in the world but this, where mighty virtue does abound. It is disposed to wonderful things, yet we do call it the Medicine. And of all the other Stones, which many Princes hold for dear, none can so much rejoice a man, as that which I do name to you. And therefore I put you in mind, that you may take it for certain. For above all the Stones in the world, virtue does in ours abound. And therefore you must do your endeavour to gain such noble wealth. If you will well follow me, you may arrive at this end.

Learn well, so it will make you wise, for I have told you all the

Practice. In the Furnace you may see it very well, in which all you have ought to be: making by a certain management the circle of Putrefaction. Moreover I have taught you by these divisions your work remains in two parts: I will tell you no more of this, until I shall have seen in you some service for which I may tell it you; otherwise it would be folly. But when you shall have deserved it, I'll tell it you in short words; therefore ask me no more, I have only told over and above too much.

And when I heard Nature, that she cared not to say any more to explain her works, I began to weep most tenderly and said, O dame in bright attire, will you have pity on me, or I shall never despatch that which I have found in a book. Tell me O noble and good Lady beforehand, you will do a charity.

Then she answered, you shall know no more until you have deserved it. Alas, said I, then O dear Lady, will you tell me the way how I may deserve it. For I will always serve you loyally without any other thought. I cannot make you recompense, nor increase your riches. I will serve you incessantly, if you will give me so noble a gift, as to receive me for one of yours.

The Nature answered. Son, you know what I have said. But is you do believe me, you may beforehand be much more knowing. Lady, said I, by the God of Heaven, I would willingly be one of those, who should serve for such a work his whole lifetime without doing any wrong. Will you then tell me your commands, for I will contradict nothing.

Then, said Nature, without mistake, my son in law, you needs must learn to know the seven planets, of which Mercury is the principal, their powers, their infirmities, their changeable qualities. 'Tis needful afterward to learn whence Sulphur, Salt and Oil do come. Wherefore we put you in mind of what you will still have occasion for. Sulphur is mighty necessary: so will it give you profit or much ado to make it. Without Salt you'll bring to pass nothing useful for your work. From Oil you have a great mystery. (alias you have great occasion for Oil). You'll make without it nothing sweet-scented. This you ought to remember well, if you would arrive at our Work.

I'll tell you one word, now understand it, with which you will be well contented. One metal in one only vessel, you need to put into one furnace. 'Tis Mercury which I explain to you, and there is no need of ought else there. But the abridgements of your work, I disclose it to you word for word.

Now I will speak to you Gold, which is the treasure of the metals. It is perfect, nothing is more perfect than it, of those which I have named before. Luna is and it is not perfect. This I certify to you for a Truth. There's but one metal in the world in which our Mercury does abound, and so tis found in all the seven. This I have tried very well.

Gold by right is hot and dry, Luna in her nature cold. Saturn is heavy and soft; in this it may be likened to Gold. Many clerks fierce in speech, will nominate it leprous Gold. Venus well resembles Luna in weight and also in the forging. Mercury is cold and moist, witness Jupiter which thence is bred. Mars is hard and heavy and cold. This is the dressing [preparation] of all the rest, be their nature hard or tender, you must understand all seven, as I have named them above, and know their virtues well; and by this means afterward you will make what you will of Mercury.

Indeed, Lady, it shall be done, tell me the work beforehand, and how I may manage what I have seen within your bounds. For never yet since I was born, have I been so much enamoured of any thing in the world. I think a virtue there abound. I esteem it as the secret of God, which is revealed in this place.

Then, said nature, you say true, and this is all the wealth of the World, from from my Fountain there proceed great riches, from which honour comes to many men is diverse ways. I'm like a mine to many people. And because you are come hither without any return or revenue, and that you have the good will to labour as a person desiring to meet good fortune, I will show it you beforehand.

I have told you in a remarkable chapter, I know not whether you remember it, that thy work consists of two parts. I Nature, discover it to you. Make thy penetrative Sulphur by fire become attractive. make it then eat up its mother. So our affair will be accomplished. Put the Mother into the belly of the child, which she has brought forth before: then so it will be both father and son quite made perfect by or of two spirits. Indeed it is no other thing, that what I here expose to you. And if you thereunto would add a foreign thing, or apply any other thing than Sulphur, Salt and Oil, in truth your work will be worth nothing. For the Earth will not bring forth other fruit than what you saw therein. A creature makes a creature, and a beast a beast of its own nature. So of all seeds it likewise is. Take this for the design of my Sciences.

Say not, my son in law that this is gall. All must arise and fall in a most acceptable way, most pleasant, and most amiable. I have preordained the way, just so as is the dew, it must mount up into the air of heaven, and sweetly afterwards descend by a most amicable path (Alias, Our water pure prepared goeth just as does the dew), which one ought to manage well.

In the descension which it makes, it bringeth forth the perfect Sulphur, and if you can obtain this point, you well may say without a lie, that you can have a great quantity of Gold above ground without doing evil; for if all the sea were a metal, such as one would have it, Copper, argent vive, lead or tin, and you should cast one only grain on it when it were heated, there would come out of it a smoke, which

would appear in a wonderful dress, and all would afterwards be quiet, and when the smoke should be appeased and all becalmed, the sea would be much finer Gold, than any King has in his Treasure.

Now to our purpose we'll return, as before to govern well. When they sulphur shall be eaten up, your Mercury mortified, keep him in prison forty days, and then you'll see that which you love. And God send you to do so well, as to obtain Paradise. Here you see well ordered, the prison which I have named to you; faith I have given it you there in the figure. Now do you remember Nature, who was willing to afford you so noble a gift, as to reveal the most admirable Science, and venerable in this world. There could not otherwise be made the stone of which I treat with you. Do thou then view the writings well of our books: or else by figures this science is demonstrated. A real thing without any fable; most certain and most true, what is beneath is all just like to what is mutable above, for producing in the end, the miracle of one thing alone. As from one thing were all, and by the thought of one all things which have been produced did grow; so are our works made out of one. The glorious Sun its father is, and the Moon the real mother, the wind does close it in its belly: its nurse indeed is the Earth. It is the father of the treasure of the world, and the great secret has its foundation here, Its power then is quite entire, when it returns back into Earth again. Make separation of the earth from Fire, by skill and in the proper place, and sweetly separate the gross from the subtle, which you shall keep apart. then will it mount up from the earth to heaven, and before your eyes descend, receiving sovereign virtue with its terrestrial power. Thus at great glory you'll arrive, obtaining victory over all the world. This is the power of Powers, where many take great pains and struggle. It will conquer things subtle and the hard it will transpierce. They are very agreeable wonders, whereof we have most excellent reasons.

My name is John of the Fountain. I have not lost my labour in working, for through the world I multiply [or there multiplies and increases] the work of Gold, which I have finished in my lifetime, by my truth (thanks to the holy Trinity) which is the medicine of all evils, true and effectually the finest, which one can search for any where, be it in the seas, or be it in all the earth. And from a metal foul it drives the filth away, so that it renders it a matter pure, that is a metal very delicate, of the species of Gold or Silver. By this means the work is made, and there's no need of any other craft, according to my little sentiment, I do really find it so. Therefore I'll call my book which tells the matter, and declares so precious an artifice, the Fountain of the Lovers of the most useful science, described in my humble style. It was made by a friendly [Seuvage - an unknown word]. When I was in my youthful days, in the year one thousand four

hundred and thirteen, when I was twice sixteen years of age. Twas finished in the month of January in the city of Montpelier.

Some add.

Here does end John of the Fountain,  
Who possessed this mighty work,  
As the most secret gift of God,  
Which ought to make all men discreet.

This Art which is so precious may  
Be comprehended in these two verses.

Si fixum solvas faciasque volare solutum,  
Et volucremigas faciet te vivere tutum.

If you dissolve the fixed  
And make what is dissolved fly  
And fix the volatile  
It will make you live happily.

# A Behemist Circle in Victorian England

Joscelyn Godwin

This is the story of a group of six or seven people who carried the torch of theosophy—using the word in its traditional sense, to denote the teachings of Jacob Boehme and his followers—through the barren years of the Victorian Era. That Boehme had disciples in England and Germany during the hundred years around 1700 is well known: there were his translators Sparrow, Ellistone, and Blunden; his commentator Freher and his illustrator Gichtel; his mystic followers John Pordage, Jane Lead, and William Law. The publication of the four-volume English edition of Boehme in 1764-1781, with its famous folding plates, is the last legacy of that period<sup>1</sup>. Students of the German Romantics, of the French Illuminists, and of the English poets (especially Blake) for fifty years around 1800 will be aware of a second wave of Behmenist influence. But what happened next, especially in the England that was once the promised land of Behmenism? During more than a century, between "Law's Boehme" and the Glasgow edition of the *Epistles* in 1886<sup>2</sup>, only one small book of his was published in England<sup>3</sup>. It might therefore seem futile to study an empty period in Behmenist history. But I hope to show that this is not the case.

The "circle" of our title was a loosely-knit group of friends and relatives, not a single study-group in which they all met together. Their histories are fragmentary, since no one has undertaken the search of family archives (if such even exist) that proper biographies would require. Moreover, these people's lives overlap and intertwine in a way that makes a strictly chronological approach impossible. The reader will find it helpful to know in advance that the circle consists of a founder, James Pierrepont Greaves; a man and his daughter, Thomas South and Mary Ann South (who later became Mrs. Atwood); a central figure, Christopher Walton; and another man and his wife,

Mr. and Mrs. Penny (née Anne Judith Brown). Minor roles are played by Mr. Atwood, the Theosophist painter Isabelle de Steiger, and another Theosophist, C. C. Massey; and there is a guest appearance from the French occultist Eliphas Levi.

If it is difficult to pinpoint the revival of theosophy in nineteenth century England, the name of James Pierrepont Greaves (1777-1842) must stand somewhere at the head of it. Greaves was a London merchant with inherited capital and a property in King's Arms Yard, Coleman Street, whose business was ruined in 1806 when the Napoleonic War cut off foreign trade. Accepting bankruptcy, he turned over his property to his creditors, and thereafter lived on the income allowed by them. But the premature end of Greaves's worldly career was only the beginning of his life in the real world of philanthropy and spiritual endeavour. The turning point came when he read about the life and struggles of Johann Heinrich Pestalozzi (1745-1827), the Swiss pioneer of humane education for the very young. Greaves was so excited that he packed up then and there and moved to Switzerland. He arrived at Pestalozzi's establishment in Yverdon in 1817 and stayed for eight years, until family matters necessitated his return to England.

Pestalozzi had expressed the hope, as early as 1818, that Greaves would act as his voice to the mothers of Britain<sup>4</sup>: a challenge which the former merchant took up in 1825, using as his forum the London Infant School Society. In many ways, Greaves's ideals resembled those of the pioneer Socialists Robert Owen, whom he had met at Pestalozzi's<sup>5</sup>, and Charles Fourier, of whom he had certainly heard there<sup>6</sup>. They were against the aloof paternalism of the established Church, the selfishness of the rich and the dog-eat-dog mentality of the poor, and all that made people strive against each other rather than live in fellowship. But Greaves's field of view was not limited to the bettering of life on earth, nor to the reorganization of the outside world. For this disciple of Law and Boehme, all must come from within, and all must lead to the bettering of man's spiritual, not just his material environment. Pestalozzi, in a letter to Greaves, had described the end of education as: "to render man conscientiously active in the service of his Maker; to render him useful, by rendering him independent, with relation to society; and, as an individual, to render him happy within himself."<sup>7</sup> The Swiss educator believed in the essential goodness of the human creature, and that "the ultimate destination of Christianity is to accomplish the education of mankind."<sup>8</sup> This would not do for Greaves, whose values were entirely the other way round. Man was not perfect, neither was his destiny to become happy and educated on earth.

For four months in 1827, Greaves advertized his own form of radicalism in a journal with a striking title and format: *The Contrasting Magazine of errors and truths: intended to direct the*

*attention of thinkers to the errors of the leading opinions of the day: and to the only means of real improvement.* Printed in double columns, the articles consisted of someone else's text, marked "Is this True?" accompanied by the Editor's amended version, marked "Or, is this True?" Some of the authors were famous, like Robert Owen or Thomas Paine; others were forgotten divines, or correspondents rash enough to write to the magazine, whose letters were contrasted with what they should have said. Here is a telling passage from a review of Pestalozzi's *Letters on Early Education* in which one can see the gulf between the humanistic attitude and Greaves's theosophic one. The reviewer writes of Pestalozzi:

His simplicity of mind and *gentleness* of heart made him among children only a child of *larger growth and greater wisdom.*

In conveying instruction, he *assumed no airs of authority, appealed to no rules, enforced no doctrines, and used no books.*

He simply led his pupils on from thought to thought, and *contrived* to make the pupil *teach itself.*

Another novelty of his *plan*, is the *extreme early age at which he would have instruction commenced.*

In contrast, Greaves suggests the following version:

His simplicity of mind and *the devotedness* of *his* heart made him among children only a child *conscious of the power of God within man.*

In conveying instruction, he *founded upon that living authority within the child, appealed to this innate law, enforced upon the submission to this interior evidence, and used no reasoning.*

He simply led his pupils on from *feeling to feeling*, and from thought to thought, and *endeavoured* to make the pupil *discover a teacher within himself.*

Another novelty of his *views*, is *his acknowledgement that this interior instruction commences at the moment of birth.*<sup>9</sup>

Everything in Greaves's writing directs attention to the inner voice, the divine nature within man, which is our common birthright but which we need to rediscover and submit to. Owen and Fourier had had much to say about Love, but to Greaves they lacked the essential "Love-nature." In other words, theirs was a social and sexual love, profane rather than sacred. Far from the free and joyful indulgence of the passions that was the *raison d'être* of Fourier's utopia, Greaves believed that "every abstinence is good."<sup>10</sup>

This "Sacred Socialist" was as good as his word. Freed, for all his business failure, from the necessity to earn a living, Greaves lived a life of philanthropy, asceticism, and voluntary poverty. He organized a large-scale scheme of public works in 1832, in Randwick,

Gloucestershire, paying his workers not with money but with credits redeemable for basic foodstuffs, clothes, and household goods, thus preventing them from spending their wages on drink.<sup>11</sup> Not only was Greaves a vegetarian and teetotaler, but he considered that there was no need in the human diet for tea, coffee, sugar, butter, cheese, salt, mustard, pepper, or vinegar.<sup>12</sup> Uncooked food from the fruit garden was his ideal, eaten so slowly that a five-minute snack would take as many hours. For variety, he urged adoption of what he called the "Boil'd Bread Diet."<sup>13</sup>

Diet was only one level of Greaves's triple programme for the rescue of mankind from its predicament, which he describes as follows:

Man is a being in a three-fold confusion; he is made of substances which are in confusion, in his stomach, in his head, in his heart. His cookery is as erroneous as his philosophy and his religion. He is as much without a rule in his head as he is without a rule in his religion, and in his food, and he will remain so while the natures are so confused within him. No animal can be so sadly disorganized as man.<sup>14</sup>

To remedy the situation, Greaves proposed nothing less than a movement of "pennyless, moneyless missionaries, who being filled with love can go forth, and deliver the Love message, and demand what they need of those who have the same."<sup>15</sup> Though there were few in England willing to take on the life of a Buddhist monk, Franciscan friar, or Hindu sannyasin, Greaves's personal qualities did attract a few kindred souls. One, Alexander Campbell, was working for Robert Owen's movement in Cheltenham, as a missionary of the "Association of all Classes of all Nations," when he met Greaves and was converted to his principles of theosophy.<sup>16</sup> Campbell's contribution was to edit and publish his master's letters after Greaves's death

Greaves did not see the infant as a pure spirit whom "civilized" education warps and depraves: the trouble began earlier. "I affirm that Education can never repair the defects of Birth," was the quotation chosen by Campbell for the title-page of the *Letters*. And what causes these birth defects? The abuse of sexuality on the part of the parents. Greaves urges repeatedly the deferral of marriage until both partners have reached a degree of spiritual maturity; and then, he says, consummation should occur when the woman, not the man, demands it. "The woman, with the love in her feelings, must win the man's affection, and the man, with his wisdom, must exercise and direct the woman's understanding."<sup>17</sup>

Just as he was out of sympathy with the free-love movement and with materialistic, "physical" socialism, so Greaves also rejected the

popular and sectarian Christianity that seemed to him on the same low level of aspiration. The complacency, the blind trust in Church and Bible, and above all the exclusivity of such Christians was as far as possible from the inward path of his theosophy. A pair of contrasts from his magazine will show how Greaves dealt with an exoteric Christian of this type who boasted of his own tolerance of unbelievers. The latter, "C.A.W.," writes:

*Nay, I could live upon good terms even with a Deist, provided he keeps within the bounds of decency, and does not carry with him through life, that juvenile vanity, which will not suffer him to be quiet, till he has told all the world that he laughs at those things which they consider as the most sacred and inviolable.*

Greaves offers as a contrasting statement:

*Nay, we shall live upon good terms with every human being, and not oppose their professions, unless, instead of keeping them for themselves, they be animated by that selfish spirit of bigotry, which will not suffer them to be quiet till they have told all the world that all that is sacred and inviolable is contained in their articles of belief, and all the remainder is doomed to eternal damnation.*<sup>18</sup>

Greaves's religion did not need Thirty-Nine Articles, nor a Church, nor even Jesus Christ as the vicarious sacrifice for mankind's salvation. Jesus was for him simply the highest possible exemplar of the union with God, to which every human being can and should aspire. The desire of the soul for Union, he writes, is the strongest possible prayer, and must not be lost sight of at any moment.<sup>19</sup>

Greaves was a Behmenist in the sense of his devotion to the inner church and the inner way; in his acceptance of Boehme's explanation of the roots of sin and suffering; and in his refusal to countenance a mystic path that was not suffused through and through with love. But unlike most of Boehme's disciples, and certainly unlike the master himself, Greaves seems to have had little interest in the intermediate domains of spirits, spheres, and cosmogonic systems that make Boehme's works so compelling to a certain mentality. In comparison to the Behmenists, Greaves's letters and diaries make monotonous reading. He was uninterested in occultism and cosmology, indifferent to the current craze for animal magnetism and mesmerism, and seemingly ignorant of the historical context of his quest. His was the short path to regeneration and union, and his influence was less as a writer or persuader than through the power of his own presence—which, as the twinkling eyes of his portrait show, was anything but solemn and sanctimonious.

Isabelle de Steiger (1836-1927) writes that in the 1840's Greaves

led a theosophical circle that met in a country house in Kent. Steiger was very old when she compiled her memoirs, which are fascinating but full of slips and repetitions. For instance, she says that this group went on until 1860 or 1870, yet adds that it died peacefully with Greaves.<sup>20</sup> Nevertheless, she got her information from a former member, Mrs. Atwood, and it does seem likely that the circle existed in Greaves's last years, when he was living in London. His influence thus passed to two remarkable women, Mary Ann South and Anne Judith Brown. As we now turn to them, they will lead us to the difficult personality of Christopher Walton, the collector and biographer of William Law; and to their own close relatives, Thomas South (Mary Ann's father) and Anne's husband Edward Burton Penny.

Mary Ann South (1817-1910) was one of the daughters of Thomas South (c.1785-c.1855), a gentleman, of Bury House, Gosport, Hampshire. In conformity with her era and class, Mary Ann had only the education deemed suitable for a lady; she later deplored her lack of a proper grounding in classics and philosophy, to say nothing of chemistry, astrology and geology. However, to Isabelle de Steiger, who was under the same disadvantage, the old adept's self-earned knowledge of classics was extraordinary.<sup>21</sup> Some scientific gaps must have been filled, too, by Mary Ann's study of what she called her chief guide: the *Elements of Physiophilosophy* of Lorenz Oken. This book of 1810, of which an English translation appeared in 1847,<sup>22</sup> was a universal manual of knowledge, covering nature, science, and the arts. Oken's central idea was the correspondence of every domain of nature with the human body and its senses. In a way, this was a version of the Renaissance doctrine of correspondence between the macrocosm and the microcosm, adapted to the new discoveries of science and the categorizing zeal of German scholarship. It was a "Philosophy of Nature" in the spirit of Novalis or of Goethe's *Pflanzenlehre*, and thus inspired at second remove by Paracelsus, Boehme, and the seventeenth-century alchemists.

The 1840s were the era of the *Zoist* magazine, in which mesmerism and magnetism, trance states and clairvoyance, were investigated by physicians, clerics, and natural philosophers, while also being the talk of London's drawing-rooms and fodder for popular novelists. Thomas South's daughters plunged into this world and into practical experimentation of a type that Greaves would never have condoned. By this time, the discoveries and cures that had brought fame to Anton Mesmer in the 1780s had been expanded in three principal directions. First, there were the experiments of the Comte de Puységur, who had found that people under mesmeric, or, as we might say now, hypnotic, influence sometimes acquired extra-sensory perceptions: clairvoyance, clairaudience, knowledge of past and future, etc. The state in which this occurred was called "lucid somnambulism," for the subject was not asleep, but able to describe

all that he or she perceived. Second, there was the combination of Mesmeric theory with the recent researches of Gall and Spurzheim, inventors of the science of Phrenology. Carl Jung himself, in his *Psychological Types*, showed respect for the insights of phrenology as one of the first modern attempts to systematize the workings of the psyche, though its relation to bumps on the head, while true to the doctrine of correspondences, rested on shaky ground. Thirdly, though this falls outside our scope, the advantages of Mesmerism for inducing anaesthesia were demonstrated to tremendous effect and the discomfiture of the medical profession, which cruelly refused to countenance the use of something it could not understand. The Souths were involved in a branch called "Phrenomagnetism," in which trance-states were induced with the help of touching certain points on the skull.

In 1846, Thomas published a pseudonymous book: *Early Magnetism in its higher relations to humanity as veiled in the poets and the prophets*, by "ΘΥΟΣ ΜΑΘΟΣ."<sup>23</sup> In view of future developments, it seems likely that Mary Ann collaborated on the work, and that the following description of the trance-state as a short cut to mystical experience may be hers:<sup>24</sup>

Now it is believed, and on no light evidence, that the magnetic trance affords, nay, is itself, when justly and perseveringly ordered for that end, THE METAPHYSICAL CONDITION, pre-eminently perfect. It removes the sensible obscuration, and presents a clearer glass before the mind than it can ever regard in the natural state. The patient is no sooner lightly entranced, than he begins to feel an internality never before known to him, and which may be increased with more or less effect according as the intention is fixed, and the calibre of the minds and circumstantial conditions are favourable or otherwise; though under the single ordinary operation of one agent and patient, the work will hardly become universal.<sup>25</sup>

Mary Ann gives further information in a letter she wrote to Christopher Walton in about 1849:

It is as an example or forecast of a superior condition of life, and of the power of artificial means for inducing a state of self contemplation, by entrancing the senses, that the phenomenon of mesmerism appears to me now principally interesting. If you have *already* witnessed this and the ordinary manifestations of *Phrenomagnetism* I am unable to procure you a sight of any thing novel or peculiarly striking in these departments; but if you have *not* seen these things, and will be moderate in your anticipations, I shall have much pleasure in accompanying you to see an exhibition promised me at Camden Town on Friday evening

(tomorrow I mean) at *six* o'clock.

Thomas South believed that this trance-experience and the "magnetic" means of inducing it were the great secret of Antiquity. The statues of Egypt and India seemed to demonstrate "magnetic postures" such as Mesmer and his pupils had rediscovered; from Egypt, these mysteries must have spread to the Hebrews and later to the Greeks.<sup>26</sup> "Religious creeds and modes of worship," he wrote, "may indeed change, or be borrowed by one people from another; but their base in reality is immutable, and always originates where it is rightly understood." And again: "We have little faith in mere individual revealments... truth does not belong to persons or periods."<sup>27</sup>

The Mesmerists of the 1840s were a strange mixture, ranging in their persuasions from rank atheists (for whom animal magnetism was simply a natural force), through open-minded Deists hoping to discover more about the intelligent forces directing the universe and mankind, to Christians of various shades, most of them dissenting from the Anglican and Roman Catholic churches, which looked on the magnetic phenomena—dangerously close to those of certain saints and of Jesus himself—with terror disguised as contempt. Evidently Thomas South was not of the latter persuasion. While he quotes the Scriptures whenever he sees in them a hint of ancient knowledge and practice of this secret art, his heart was more with the Neoplatonists, whom he cites in Thomas Taylor's translations. Here is a Proclus-inspired definition of what is going on objectively during the trance-experience described above:

The Mind rightly disciplined and related to the Universal, becomes universalized and one with the great magnetic Will of nature; and revolving with the Infinite Medium through all its spheres, developes in order its various correspondencies, with the regular coadaptation and harmony of its parts; thence by participation it perceives all things in all, and in itself microcosmically, until at length, becoming perfectly converted to its Principle, the divinized Epitome moves with demiurgic power and grace.<sup>28</sup>

Or, as Thomas South puts it with epigrammatic brevity: the Absolute can only be known by becoming it.<sup>29</sup>

By 1849, Mary Ann and her father (one never hears of her mother) were collaborating on a larger project: an exposition of how this kind of mysticism had been concealed in the writings of the alchemists and Hermetic philosophers. Thomas was going to treat the subject in verse, Mary Ann in prose. His poem is lost, but her treatise was duly completed and published in 1850 as *A Suggestive Inquiry into the Hermetic Mystery*.<sup>30</sup> Some readers will know the story of this first

modern attempt to give alchemy a spiritual, rather than a material explanation. No sooner was the book printed than the Souths got cold feet: was it for nothing that these mysteries had been concealed so long, and was it for them to violate the discretion of the ages? They collected and bought back all the copies they could lay their hands on and burnt them on the lawn of Bury House. However, for all their scruples Mary Ann was not unwilling to lend a few survivors of the original hundred copies to friends and confidants. Since several reprints have since appeared, there is no need here to dwell on the *Suggestive Inquiry*, beyond giving it a context.

For Thomas South, the new science was a godsend, supplying what a moribund Christianity could no longer provide. He writes to Walton circa 1853 that:

...now when the light of Christian Truth is so intirely eclipsed amongst us, the natural magic ought to be again developed and must be, before we can hope for a restitution of the Divine.

It was chiefly with this view that the Hermetic Inquiry was written, to promote the investigation and open all initiatory means to the great End, but I had no inclination to systematize prematurely or accommodate reviewers with propositions which can only be appreciated by following the progressive evidence throughout.

The whole Edition of the Book is now withdrawn into *my own hands* for private circulation only, having had reasons to fear the consequence of indiscriminate publication.<sup>31</sup>

Thomas South himself may have gone further into forbidden zones than is implied in Mary Ann's *Suggestive Inquiry*. The evidence for this is also in his letters to Walton, in which he repeatedly urges his friend to abandon his slow path of studying Boehme, Freher and Law. South wrote early on in their relationship: "We are evidently in different spheres of mind, I cannot help viewing it as though you travel by rail, and that our school passes you in the electric telegraph—what this means can only in any way be explained personally."<sup>32</sup> Now the Souths were, as we have seen, willing to share the *Suggestive Inquiry*, with its dangerous revelations, with selected friends—Walton among them. So it cannot be simply of these that Thomas South is speaking in the following letters. I can only interpret what follows as a hint at the practice of sexual alchemy:

I had hoped to find in you an ardent enthusiastic enquirer in the road I put you on, but dared not venture farther unless, at your own instinctive suggestion. Business I fear has intervined and drawn you away from the pursuit, be assured it is the only clue to thread the labyrinth of this life's mystery, the only saving

passage for Regeneration. The little you have seen of Magnetism, the unprepared subjects, both agents and patients have probably afforded you but little light. Mrs. Walton is likely to be far the best vessel you have ever seen or heard of for enlightening you, and I was in hopes ere this to have heard of some result in that quarter, I have never seen any one more apparently fitted for the experience. Pray remember me and all of us most kindly to her—remember this, the secret is most awful and to those who have by any means intellectually or spiritually ever attained a knowledge of it, conscience has at once hermetically sealed and discretionary revealment [sic], the recipient of such sacred science must first be deeply moved with a desire (this longing after Immortality) for the Attainment when his spirit is quickened and duly craving for the flame the light assuredly will from without kindle the fire within, and he will at once see and believe and know the way of regeneration, and that there are indeed no other...<sup>33</sup>

...of this be assured, Freher as well as others had knowledge of a practice in common with Behmen, which and *which only* raised them when they were not regenerate but on the road to be so. In one generation there is but one, one only way, no one ever dared to reveal it openly, never in print never in writing and never personally but after long experience of character, particularly as to one point, reticence—tis true it was never discovered to me in this way, I am under no oath but those which conscience sealed my lips with as the light burst on me as it has rarely burst on others. I tell you as my honest friend this holy light, has surely beamed on my unworthy self, after a long course of intense worldly suffering mental and bodily, that beam that kindled Behmen [and] Freher also fell on the humble head that now directs this pen.<sup>34</sup>

I may be wrong in my surmise, but I can think of nothing else that would have evoked from a liberal-minded early Victorian such awed discretion. The mesmeric trance was one thing, and perhaps from Thomas's point of view a spectator's phenomenon only. But here he is speaking of a personal experience. Possibly he attained by this means, well known in the Tantric traditions of the East and in certain Cabalist schools, the certainty of other modes of being that had been denied him, not being a good mesmeric subject. But even if I am right about this, I have no reason to believe that Mary Ann South was a party to it.

We will return later to Mary Ann South's history, after she became Mary Ann Atwood in 1859. But the reader may already have wondered who this Walton was, who in Thomas South's words never got sufficiently out of his "Behmenist straitjacket" to learn these awful secrets.

Christopher Walton (1809-1877) was the scion of a prominent Northern Methodist family on his father's side, and of a Bristol one on that of his mother, Anna Maria Pickford. Walton came to London as a silk mercer in 1830, and subsequently set up as a "Goldsmith, Dealer in Diamonds, Pearls, etc." at 24 Ludgate Street (later at 8 Ludgate Hill). His route to Jacob Boehme is easier to trace than his road to riches. As a Methodist, he happened upon John Wesley's "Some Extracts from Mr. Law's Writings." This led him to read all of William Law's works in order of publication, thus moving from the devotional tracts to the great illustrated edition of Boehme, and to collect a magnificent theosophic library.

It is just possible that Walton had also been in contact with John Pierrepont Greaves before the latter's death in 1842. The British Library identifies them as joint authors of a short anonymous work entitled *On the Present, Past, and Future, with regard to the Creation*,<sup>35</sup> on which Walton's hand has added, as title: *Behmen, Law, and other Mystics... written from a Knowledge of the Philosophy of Jacob Behmen*. Although not published until 1847, this book has a strong flavor of Greaves. Its exposition of Boehme stresses the dualism of all creation, established by some "sin far older than man's."<sup>36</sup> Much imagery is taken from the world of fruits and vegetables; a sliced apple or orange is a "microcosm of the great world of Nature." It is surely Greaves, not Walton, who writes the charming meditation on a table spread with all manner of grains, seeds, roots, and fruits,<sup>37</sup> and it is his emphatic voice that rings through the declarations at the end, for example: "The present Creation seems to be only a parenthesis," and "I believe Christ Jesus, the Lord, to be the full, living *image, house, form, and glory* of GOD."<sup>38</sup>

On the other hand, there is no doubt that Walton was behind the publication, because after the essay comes a prospectus for an *Outline of the Biography of William Law* in three volumes. The reader learns here that the Law manuscripts and papers have been purchased from his descendants, while anyone knowing of other materials is invited to contact "X.Y.Z., c/o Mr. Walton, 24 Ludgate St."<sup>39</sup>

Walton had decided by 1845 to devote all his energies outside his business to the Behmenist cause, and in particular to gathering and presenting to the world the materials for a proper appreciation of William Law. During 1845-46 he was paying the Rev. Robert Payne Smith of Pembroke College, Oxford (a future Dean of Canterbury) for editing and perhaps translating. Samuel Jackson, a busy translator of German religious books, called Walton's attention to the Freher manuscripts in the British Museum and offered to translate for him. But the bulk of the work was done by Walton himself, who worked diligently to understand Boehme's ideas and make them comprehensible to others through extracts and quotations.

The result of his labors was an edition of 500 copies, not sold but distributed to libraries and individuals, of a stout octavo entitled *Notes and Materials for an adequate biography of the celebrated divine and theosopher William Law. Comprising an elucidation of the scope and contents of the writings of Jacob Böhme, and of his great commentator, Dionysius Andreas Freher; with a notice of the mystical divinity and most curious and solid science of all ages of the world. Also an indication of the true means for the induction of the intellectual "heathen", Jewish, and Mahomedan nations into the Christian faith.*

The title-page of this anonymous work is dated London, AD 1854, but the Preface is signed Midsummer 1856. Evidently Walton had trouble bringing his work to a conclusion, and no wonder: it is the most chaotic presentation imaginable. Certainly there are riches in abundance: an ample exposition of Boehme's system; a biography of William Law; extracts from Freher's manuscripts, both those in the British Museum and in Walton's own possession; an introduction to Boehme's French translator, the "Unknown Philosopher" Louis-Claude de Saint-Martin... But it is all piled higgeldy-piggledy, stuffed into immense footnotes, and, worst of all, printed in microscopic type. When Thomas South thanked Walton for the book, he complained that the "small type debarred me from deep perusal," and he was not the only one. Twenty years later, with a certain impatience, Walton was telling Mrs. Penny that his magnum opus was perfectly legible if one would just obtain a pair of "common spectacles," and gave her the address of where to get them.<sup>40</sup>

If Walton had not penetrated to the Souths' deepest alchemical arcanum, he had at least learned from the father and daughter of the fashionable context within which to present his magnum opus. He calls Boehme "a perfect clairvoyant," though (he adds) not, as the current scientists define this, nor as the seers and "lucides" explore inferior astral or "phantasaic nature." No: Boehme penetrated to the centre of the divine majesty itself, "for being a highly regenerated gospel christian," (there speaks the Methodist!) "therefore the divine eye found in him a proper medium of understanding."<sup>41</sup> While putting Boehme on a higher level entirely than the Magnetists, Walton does allow that the student, besides reading, will do well "to witness some really good cases of magical sleep or trance, with lucid clairvoyance."<sup>42</sup> At the very opening of his Preface, Walton confesses that his understanding was "much enlarged and perfectionated" recently when he "obtained a true and philosophic insight into the *arcanum* of 'Animal' or 'Vital Magnetism'."<sup>43</sup>

For all his enthusiasm for the theosophers, Walton was a typical example of the would-be esotericist trapped within his exoteric tradition. Far from giving him a broad, detached, and serene view of the universe, his following of Boehme's footsteps left him a

literalistic worshipper at the letter of both Old and New Testament, and a missionary intent (expressed on his title-page) to convert the heathen to "pure gospel christianity." I will not go into the squalid details of how he quarreled with all of his family, entering into lawsuits against his own son. It is better to remember him with gratitude for having collected the priceless manuscript remains of Law and Freher, and for having bequeathed them to Dr. Williams's Library in London, whence they are gradually being brought to light by Adam McLean.<sup>44</sup>

The letters received by Walton show that he had a persistent interest in mediums and Spiritualism, having business correspondence with the French clairvoyant Alphonse Didier in 1852, the famous American mediums Mrs. Hayden and D. D. Home, and, as late as 1876, Mr. Williams, a "physical medium." At Mrs. Marshall's, in 1861 or 1862, he got a written message that purported to be from the spirit of Freher himself; and in 1865, he had a long psychic reading of his character by J. Murray Spear, positively dripping with praise—thus tending to confirm the theory that psychics, and even "spirits," tend to reflect what is in the querent's own head!

Although Christopher Walton's presence will continue to brood in the background, I turn now to the other members of this Behmenist circle: Anne Judith Brown (1825-1893) and her husband Edward Burton Penny (1804/5-1872). Anne was one of the thirteen children of the Rev. Walter Brown, Rector of Stansfield, Oxfordshire, and Prebend of Canterbury, and Eliza Cokayne Frith. Orphaned at six, she was raised by an older sister; then a spinal disease left her crippled for life, and often in pain.<sup>45</sup> Young Anne Brown must have had little to look forward to, but as it turned out she would later have a happy marriage and a career of vigorous intellectual activity and writing, first as a moralist, then as one of the deepest thinkers of the Spiritualist movement.

According to Isabelle de Steiger, Anne Brown was a friend of Mary Ann South and a member of Greaves's study-group in Kent, though she could only have been in her teens at the time.<sup>46</sup> Massey, on the other hand, says that she was introduced to Boehme by the Rev. Enoch Warriner, Rector of Foots Cray, Kent, in 1854, and thereafter to Saint-Martin. Whichever is the case, she remained a firmly committed Behmenist to the end of her days.

Anne's first literary incarnation covers the years from 1857, when she published *Morning Clouds*, to 1865, the year of her marriage. *Morning Clouds*, which ran to a second edition, is a book of gentle moralistic advice to those on the threshold of adult life. The next work—anonymous, like all these—was *The Afternoon of Unmarried Life* (1858), whose dedication tells all: "To the Unmarried Gentlewomen of England whom time has made familiar with sorrow and not averse to thought... with unfeigned respect." It is on how

they can occupy themselves for the world's benefit and their own fulfilment. *A neglected line of study strongly recommended to the rich* (1860) is a plea for help on behalf of poor clergymen and their families.

Anne Brown now turned her skills to the novel. *The Romance of a dull life* (1861) is dedicated "To those who know the weight and worth of dullness." The heroine, inhabiting a Jane Austen world, fails to get married yet perhaps lives happily ever after because she reads Boehme and Swedenborg, and does not even shun the Unitarians! *Problems in human nature* (1863) is a collection of essays in a broad Christian vein, avoiding the excesses both of Rome and of "extreme liberalism." The last of this period, *Wanted—A home* (1864) and *Spring and Autumn* (1865), are also novels in the customary three volumes, peppered with quotations in German, French, and Italian, but suffused with a gentle piety, as a reviewer of the time might have said.

To the modern reader, Anne is a very dull writer. She wrote for people like herself, with time on their hands to ramble and muse through "three-decker" novels and moralities. Even her later work on philosophy is extremely wordy and often unclear. But she accepts her dullness, her spinsterhood, her aches and pains and boredom as she watches men busily running the world for her and other women running after the men. It does not worry her because she has found an inner sense of worth, an inner light metaphorically and perhaps actually. It is this that she is trying to convey to her readers.

When Anne Judith Brown married the Rev. Edward Burton Penny, Rector of Topham, Devon, on 3 October 1865, her life must have become a lot less dull. They met because of a mutual interest in Saint-Martin, says her biographer Massey. Mr. Penny's correspondence suggests a three-cornered connection, for he speaks of two friends called Mr. and Mrs. Greaves who admired Walton, stayed with Penny for four days in the summer of 1863, and lent him the books of Saint-Martin. Mr. Greaves had been to Paris and made a pilgrimage to Saint-Martin's tomb, and also to the Unknown Philosopher's publisher, who disappointed him sorely with his ignorance of theosophy.<sup>47</sup> It would be a strange coincidence indeed if this Mr. Greaves were not related to James Pierrepont Greaves, possibly as his son. If so, it would be fitting for him to have introduced his friend Edward Burton Penny to his father's sometime pupil Anne Judith Brown.

Mr. Penny had long been familiar with the theosophic and mystical tradition. Many years before, he had followed William Law's advice of taking a month's retreat for prayer; he said he was far from attaining the degree of concentration that Law recommended, but that it had had a permanent influence on him.<sup>48</sup> By 1863 Penny was corresponding with Christopher Walton, having responded to the

latter's recent entries in *Notes and Queries*, and inviting him to visit him and his (first) wife in Devon. Penny was thrilled by the discovery of Saint-Martin's letters to Kirchberger, and said that he felt like translating them—which he duly did.<sup>49</sup> But he was not self-restricted, as Walton was, to the Behmenist school. Penny read the French esotericists Fabre d'Olivet and Eliphas Levi, and even Paschal Beverly Randolph's *Dealings with the Dead*, in which he was struck by the parallel with an experience of Gichtel's: the discovery of his friend's soul in the form of a globe. Feeling that he had to excuse himself for this slumming in disreputable literature, he asked Walton:

Is it not lawful to look for jewels, even under the swines' feet? If the smell of the sty does not offend you too much, I should like to know whether you can not find something worth picking up in Randolph's *Dealings with the Dead*, 1862... This Randolph is a colored man, and was a medium and trance-speaker in England, a few years ago;—but he repudiates such practice now.<sup>50</sup>

Penny was the sort of clergymen who could say that "to me all days are Sabbaths," and that "even the Devil is a useful idiot in a way."<sup>51</sup> But Walton was having none of this. Although his replies have not survived, it is easy to tell from Penny's reactions that the pious goldsmith considered Fabre d'Olivet "almost as bad as Swedenborg,"<sup>52</sup> and declined all comment on Randolph. Instead, he tried to get the Rector to come round to his own Methodism, preaching to his friend to the extent that the other burst out: "What *do* you mean by wanting me to come round to the simple practical views of Bromwell and Tersteegen? Preaching and praying in rooms or highways without outward authority? I seem called to another direction."<sup>53</sup>

The second Mrs. Penny made an excellent team with her husband. To his French she added her knowledge of German and Italian, and introduced him to the works of Franz von Baader, Boehme's German editor and commentator.<sup>54</sup> The two of them were close friends of the Atwoods, visiting each other's houses and, as Steiger says, "all four being much connected with Church dignitaries."<sup>55</sup>

This cosy life of teas in vicarage gardens did not prevent Edward Penny from going to Paris in Spring 1867 and paying a visit to the most un-vicarly Eliphas Levi. A few years earlier, on 3 and 4 December 1861, Levi had been visited by the young Kenneth R. H. Mackenzie, Rosicrucian and Freemason, who wrote a celebrated account of his conversations.<sup>56</sup> Penny was less anecdotal in his impressions, as he related them in a letter to Walton; he was also as much inclined to instruct Levi as to learn from him. Because Levi is a

figure of such importance in English, no less than in French esoteric history, I give Penny's narrative in full.

I called upon him in Paris, and told him I believed Boehme got his wisdom from the original source of the Kabbala itself. I questioned him about his ideas of miracles—the increase of loaves and fishes—the evil spirits sent into swine &c, he considers purely figurative. I told him Boehme would explain it more satisfactorily to him.—He professes to be ready to learn—but he does not read either German or English.—The point where his science seems to me to be truncated, or shortened abruptly, is his dogma that—"A thing is not just because God wills it, but God wills it because it is just"—His conception of God being restricted to what He is in His *Works*—he seems unable to ask the question what He is in *Himself*—Which, though we cannot comprehend it, we may *apprehend*.—and if a thing is not *just* because God wills it, but God wills it because it is *just*—it follows that justice is greater or prior to God and that there must be another God besides God.—I had not read this passage when I saw him, so I had not an opportunity to get him to explain;—I mean however to write to him.

With these exceptions you will find what a wonderful analogy there is between what he claims for the *Kabbala* and we claim for Theosophy!

The "Grand Oeuvre"—the Magical Science—Magnetic Power—all having for object to control, cut off, overcome the Astral Light, which is the same as the "Old Serpent," the "Spirit of the World," "Satan"—he approaches very nearly to Boehme's teaching,—though Boehme distinguishes between three forms or powers. It provides the *fulcrum* for Archimedes' lever whereby to move the world.

Levi's great aim is to bring his science into *practical*, *positive* form.—he is eminently *synthetical*—while Boehme is more eminently *analytical*.—There appears to me in Levi a great *waste* of words about *Magical Rites*, and the *superstitions* of antient astrologers and professors of Magic and in the description of disgusting works of witchcraft and sorcery—and I should have thought his book would have been much better without it.—I should like to ask him why he has reproduced all this forgotten trash;—possibly it may be merely to gibbet the arms of the enemy—and hold them up to public contempt?

I hope you will see this remarkable man when you go to Paris. His real name is *Constant*—Levi being a *nom de plume*, as I found out by his books,—since I saw him (for he allowed me to call him Levi)—He is about sixty. A man in his position, Cabbalistic I mean, who finds himself so much higher than all others of the school—or any other school he knows of—must

necessarily feel strongly fortified in his own conclusions and dogmas;—but he professes not to be above being taught;—and I am sure you will say that there are many things he may learn from Boehme—if he will but examine them *patiently*, and with an unfettered mind—and certainly nobody is more able to open Boehme to him than you are—provided you also are willing to exercise much patience, and lose your time with him;—(and supposing also you can converse in French which is his only language)—I should like very much to be the means of bringing you together—for I believe you may do each other good—his studies and experiments in Magic I conceive to have gone much farther than those of any man I know of—and, on the other hand, he knows nothing of the “zero” or the “little door within”—nor of the beauties of your Theosophic Problems. I have still to read his *Histoire de la Magie* and his *Clef des Grands Mystères*—perhaps they may tell me more about the man and his attainments.<sup>57</sup>

Despite this promising visit, Levi did not respond to Penny's subsequent letters. Penny told Walton that if the latter should succeed in seeing Levi, “you must expect to find him very much coiled up like the hedge hog in his armour of defence—his hierarchical prejudices may have something to do with this in dealing with English—and Protestants.”<sup>58</sup> We must also be content, until other sources surface, with this glimpse of the Rev. Penny, surely one of the most delightful clerics of his day, and as much wasted on the parishioners of Topham as the erudite Mrs. Penny must have been on their wives.

It is sad to learn that Mr. Penny died after only seven years of marriage to Anne. Walton continued to correspond with the widow, whom he found equal to his deepest thoughts and feelings in a way that her husband had never been. In his last years, Walton's devotion was more and more to the feminine aspect of Divinity: Boehme's Sophia. In 1875 he writes to Mrs. Penny that the “Grand Secret of all secrets is to regard Virgin Sophia as your mother, and run to her knees as your rightful home.”<sup>59</sup> In 1876 his jewelry business was robbed and he told his confidante that he felt his end approaching. Thereupon he presented his collection to Dr. Williams's Library, a Congregational foundation, where he said that it would be given a special room and known as “The Walton Theosophian Library.” If given the opportunity, he went on, he would do his great work, “the climax of all grand works of all ages of Man, the one desideratum to the intellect of all mankind.” He urges Mrs. Penny:

Aim Madam at this one thing and that by all diligence of labour and faith—until you can say I now know the light of the abyssal Godhead to be the fire of all fires—divine fire—the only

fire, and possessing my whole Soulish life and being. When this takes place (beyond Mrs. Pratt's theory of the glorified resurrection state), you are arrived again at the beginning whence you were made a creature, the circle completed in its first starting point, your life (literally true) hid with Christ in God. May this be your and my glorious experience and that speedily.

And he adds the note: "This the sum of all my theosophic studies hitherto, and now I am ready to tell the world *all*."<sup>60</sup> Walton remained silent and died a year later.

Returning now to Mary Ann South, we find her marrying in 1859 the Rev. Alban Thomas Atwood (1813/14-1883), whom Mr. Penny calls a friend of Miss Brown's and a man of "remarkable attainments."<sup>61</sup> A persistent search might unearth evidence of these; I have only come across a tract of 1837, written against the Oxford Movement.<sup>62</sup> Mrs. Atwood, as we will now call her, left Hampshire and London to live in Yorkshire, where Mr. Atwood was Vicar of Knayton-in-Leake with Nether Stilton, near Thirsk, and Rural Dean of the neighbourhood.<sup>63</sup> In this remote village the Vicar built a house, Knayton Lodge, out of his own money, leaving the funds for a vicarage to accumulate for the benefit of the future incumbent. Mrs. Atwood became a great gardener, but was more respected than beloved by the locals. Like the Pennys, the Atwoods had no children.

Mr. Atwood "appreciated but did not share his wife's mystical views; and respected but did not understand her great book," says Steiger.<sup>64</sup> Still, in 1865 he wrote a friendly review of Penny's Saint-Martin book for *The Recipient*. This was a Swedenborgian magazine, and Mr. Penny felt obliged to apologize on his friend's behalf to that arbiter of Behmenist orthodoxy, Christopher Walton.<sup>65</sup>

By the mid-1880's Mr. South, Rev. Penny, Mr. Walton, and Rev. Atwood were all dead. But many years remained to Mrs. Penny and Mrs. Atwood, living in their tiny villages of Cullompton, Devon, and Knayton, Yorkshire. Mrs. Penny began a second career as a writer for the Spiritualist journals. Her contributions to *Light*, the journal founded by W. Stainton Moses (who wrote as "M.A., Oxon.") show her horizons in a continual state of expansion. Thirty-five of her contributions were gathered in her posthumous *Studies in Jacob Boehme*, and another 88 listed there, ranging from brief letters to substantial articles on a great variety of subjects, of topical as well as eternal interest. In 1881 she praised Swedenborg, not ready to class him with Boehme but no longer dismissing him, as she said Saint-Martin and Walton had done.<sup>66</sup> She recommended the revival of respect for the science of astrology, as an element in the doctrine of the World-Souls of this and other planets.<sup>67</sup> On another front, she outgrew her scepticism of thirty years earlier concerning the Bible as an authority,<sup>68</sup> and was no longer willing entirely to dismiss the

Church's doctrines of prayer for the dead<sup>69</sup> and vicarious suffering.<sup>70</sup> Although she saw no hope for the near future that the esoteric and exoteric might unite within Christendom, she could now forgive the Church for teaching at the "child level," as many spirits were also doing—and being blamed for it.<sup>71</sup>

Spiritualism was a fact that had to be faced, especially if one was writing for Spiritualist magazines, and Mrs. Penny took part in the endless debate about what entities were actually communicating through the mediums: were they the souls of the dead, as most Spiritualists believed, or were they mindless discarnate "shells" and elementaries, as Madame Blavatsky was now proclaiming? Mrs. Penny was inclined to believe that human personality does survive bodily death, as Swedenborg taught, and that consequently the dead can on occasion communicate with us, and benefit from our prayers. Her study of Boehme led her to agree that the average souls, which retain an attachment to earth, are eager to embody and speak, and that the medium may serve to awaken their memories. But she was very doubtful that apparitions are who they say they are; the more so since the most blessed souls, in Boehme's system, go at death to the purely spiritual state.<sup>72</sup>

After contributing little during 1884-1886, Mrs. Penny returned to the pages of *Light* in 1887. Now one of the chief themes of debate was over reincarnation, which the French Spiritualists generally believed in, the American and British not (though there were counter-schools on both sides). "I am almost a convert...and a very reluctant one," was Mrs. Penny's position: reluctant because the doctrine was not in Boehme, and because the idea of a return to the earthly arena was repulsive to her. She could not believe that "enfleshed life" was the only possible vehicle for spiritual progress, but preferred to reserve judgment on the question.<sup>73</sup> Entering another popular debate, on the question of whether animals (especially pets) have souls, she was sure that they do. Dogs are potentially the younger brothers of humans, and conversely (says Boehme), depraved humans appear in the next world as dogs.<sup>74</sup> She cites Pierrepont Greaves in support of the idea of universal spiral evolution, with its consequent phases of spiritual life and the inevitable death of old religious systems.<sup>75</sup> Thus she could allow that the new "revelation" of Spiritualism was God-sent: a view diametrically opposed to that of the Archbishop of Canterbury and of most churchmen, Anglican, Roman Catholic, or Dissenting. "I disbelieved twenty-five years ago," she confesses, but "God offers new truth in every age that lights up, but can never contradict, the old."<sup>76</sup>

In 1889 Mrs. Penny published a series of articles about Blood Sacrifice: one of the stumbling-blocks for those who wanted to accept ancient and pagan religions as valid and sacred, not to mention those

Spiritualists who felt uneasy with one of the central dogmas of Christian theology. She calls on Thomas Lake Harris, Baader, Saint-Martin, Joseph de Maistre, Eliphas Levi, and Greaves in these erudite articles, whose burden is (1) that the animal sacrifices of ancient times were necessary to demonstrate the efficacy of blood in attracting good invisible agents, and repelling bad ones (this from Baader); (2) that in sudden and violent death, a multitude of subordinate soul-entities are released from control, and thus made available for use by higher, spiritual influences (this based on Greaves); and (3) that the Pentecostal outpouring was conditional on the shedding of Christ's blood.<sup>77</sup> Mrs. Penny kept up her writing throughout the three-year illness that ended with her death on 18 December 1893.<sup>78</sup>

Mrs. Penny's Behmenist legacy was published in three phases. A long essay from *Light and Life*, "An Introduction to the Study of Jacob Boehme's Writings," appeared separately during her lifetime, in 1886,<sup>79</sup> and was combined with other articles of hers for a re-edition in 1901.<sup>80</sup> Lastly, the Boehme enthusiast C. J. Barker gathered all her Behmenist writings into a grand memorial volume, *Studies in Jacob Boehme*,<sup>81</sup> which forms a companion to Barker's and Watkins' edition of Boehme's own works.

The Behmenist revival had few contributors outside this circle, but one of them should be mentioned, if only to illustrate the synchronicity of ideas. In 1856, the same year as Walton completed his book on William Law, Robert Alfred Vaughan (1823-1857) published his two-volume *Hours with the Mystics*, in which fifty pages are devoted to Boehme and a few more to Pordage and Jane Lead. Vaughan had studied in Germany, been ordained, then retired to devote himself to writing, but did not live long enough to pursue any further his researches on this untrodden ground. In the same work, he introduced Meister Eckhart, but warned that this greatest of mystics was "not acquittable of pantheistic errors"<sup>82</sup> In the following year, 1857, appeared Catherine Winkworth's translation of another German mystic, Johannes Tauler. Both of these books were praised by Charles Kingsley and did much to kindle an interest in mysticism among such of the clergy as were not mired in the High vs. Low Church or the evolution debates. But Boehme, with his titanic imagery, his earthiness of diction and his frightening revelations about God's inner conflicts, was too strong stuff for them.

The last survivor of our circle was Mrs. Atwood. Isabelle de Steiger was led to friendship with her through Mrs. Penny, whom Isabelle had contacted during the 1880's in response to the articles in *Light*. She visited Mrs. Atwood in Yorkshire each year until the latter's death in 1910, at the age of 92. Hearing that the younger woman was involved with a new "Theosophical Society" in London, Mrs. Atwood was delighted: "theosophy" to her meant Jacob Boehme

and his followers. Whether or not she retained this impression after Isabelle had given her the works of A. P. Sinnett and Anna Kingsford to read, the old lady still felt a kinship with them, especially through the anti-vivisectionist cause that she and Mrs. Penny (and no doubt Mr. Greaves) had also espoused. So after visiting London for the last time in 1886, she wrote to Sinnett offering the gift of her father Thomas South's rich library of alchemy and esotericism. Although it was accepted, few of the London Theosophists were interested in its arcane lore; they could find it all in Blavatsky, no doubt. Only G. R. S. Mead profited by Mrs. Atwood's gift, thereby becoming the best scholar that the Theosophical Society ever produced. Bits and pieces of the library were given away or sold, and after Mrs. Sinnett's death, the residue passed to the Scott-Elliots in Ayrshire.<sup>83</sup>

Mrs. Atwood had an indirect, but more decisive effect on the Theosophical Society through her friendship with Charles Carleton Massey (1838-1905).<sup>84</sup> Their correspondence began while Massey was quite young, and continued faithfully until his death. He was a lawyer by profession, a prosperous bachelor who gave up his practice around 1870 for a life of writing, traveling, translating, lecturing, and bridge-building in the service of the new spiritual impulse. Massey became early on a convinced "theosophist" in the Behmenist sense, and, since he read German, an admirer of Baader as Boehme's best modern exponent.<sup>85</sup> He admired Lorenz Oken's book (which had been Mrs. Atwood's vade mecum), and studied her own *Suggestive Inquiry*. He came to believe in reincarnation as inevitable for most of us, but that Christianity pointed to a way of escape from it. All of this esoteric study left him perplexed at the insistence of Law and Saint-Martin on the necessity for an exoteric Christianity.<sup>86</sup>

Massey had taken Spiritualism and Madame Blavatsky's Theosophical Society seriously enough to go to America in 1876 for first-hand knowledge of them. He subsequently headed the London branch of the Society, and was one of the most stalwart contributors to *Light*. But the 1880's were a period of disillusion, for him as for many members of the Society, as successive waves of scandal broke over the heads of Blavatsky and her "Masters." In particular, Massey could not countenance her aversion to Christianity. It was the loss of his support, and of other cultured and influential Christian Spiritualists such as Stainton Moses, that left the Society to be fought over by the likes of A. P. Sinnett, Annie Besant, and William Q. Judge.

In 1888, Massey wrote to Mrs. Atwood that he had long been averse to historical Christianity, but that lately:

I have felt so deep a need of Christ, and have been so vehemently drawn to personify Him as the object of devotion, that I welcome any conception of natural processes which

facilitated belief in the historical descent of a Divine Humanity on earth, as manifested in an individual germ of our regeneration, an external Personality as a fulcrum so to speak, from which spiritual thought and love can spring upwards. I don't think one need be a worse philosopher for being also a devotee, and after all, we cannot dwell in the purely occult and impersonal, or pass at once behind all manifestation into the subjective adytum of the Atma.<sup>87</sup>

Mrs. Atwood's answers to Massey are lost; it is not clear, in any case, how far hers was a Christian, devotional mysticism of this kind. Steiger says that "age and other circumstances had closed all mystic doors to her."<sup>88</sup> By 1903 Mrs. Atwood had come to mistrust the whole revival of occultism, in fact to regard it as a large-scale operation of evil magic.<sup>89</sup> She could look back over more than half a century since she had burned her book and voluntarily entered the silence: whatever had happened, it was not her fault.

Far from closing, the Behmenist circle was by now opening wider. Steiger was urged by Massey to write, and dedicated her own treatise on mysticism, *On a Gold Basis*, "to the author of *A Suggestive Inquiry*, my best teacher."<sup>90</sup> Massey's own letters, published as *Thoughts of a Modern Mystic* in 1909, showed that a Christian mystic could exist behind the facades of the Inns of Court and the Athenaeum Club. I have already mentioned C. J. Barker's labours to reissue the major works of Boehme in English, with the cooperation of the Theosophical publisher Watkins. Using updated versions of the seventeenth-century translations, the series culminated in 1924, just after Barker's death, with *Mysterium Magnum*. Mrs. Penny's *Studies in Jacob Boehme* appeared, thanks to Barker, in 1912, with a precious biographical note by her friend Massey. Finally, exactly a century after Pierrepont Greaves's first public statement in his *Contrasting Magazine* (1827), there came Isabelle de Steiger's posthumous *Memorabilia*, with a Preface by A. E. Waite, without which we would know very little about Mary Ann and her friends.

## NOTES

1. This is generally called "Law's Boehme," though the translations were adapted from the 17th-century editions by the editors, G. Ward and T. Langcake. The illustrations were Law's legacy.
2. This was a reissue of Ellistone's translation, called "vol. I" of Boehme's *Works*, but never continued.
3. Hermann Neander [=Samuel Borton Brown], *True Resignation. How Man must die daily, in his own will, in Self. By Old Jacob Boehme*. London: Whiting & Co., n.d. [c.1860]; not in British Library

or NUC catalogues.

4. see J. H. Pestalozzi, *Letters on Early Education, addressed to J. P. Greaves, Esq.* (London: Longmans, 1851; 1st ed. 1827), p.3.
5. *Letters and Extracts from the Manuscript Writings of James Pierrepont Greaves* [2 vols., Ham Common: the Concordium, 1843; London: John Chapman, 1845], vol. II, p.11.
6. *Ibid.*, vol. II, p.47.
7. *Letters on Early Education*, p.165.
8. *Ibid.*, p.176.
9. *Contrasting Magazine*, no.xv (8 Sept 1827), p.114.
10. *Letters and Extracts*, vol. II, p.9 (22 Sept 1840).
11. *Ibid.*, vol. I, p.xiv.
12. *Ibid.*, vol. II, p.231 (19 Oct 1841).
13. *The New Nature in the Soul*. From the Journal of John Pierrepont Greaves (London: John Chapman, 1847), p.56.
14. *Letters and Extracts*, vol. II, p.216 (14 Aug 1841).
15. *Ibid.*, vol. II, p.144 (2 Apr 1841).
16. *Ibid.*, vol. I, pp.iv-v.
17. *Ibid.*, vol. I, pp.32f. (23 Feb 1840).
18. *Contrasting Magazine*, no. xvii (22 Sept 1827), p.133.
19. *New Nature*, pp. 88-89.
20. I. de Steiger, *Memorabilia. Reminiscences of a Woman Artist and Writer* (London: Rider, n.d. [after 1927]), p.234. I hope in due course to read Mrs. Atwood's correspondence with Steiger in Brown University Library, Providence, Rhode Island, USA.
21. *Memorabilia*, pp.120, 190
22. Trans. Alfred Tulk, London: Ray Society, 1847.
23. London: Baillière, 1846; "Thuos Mathos" is an anagram.
24. W. L. Wilmshurst attributes the whole book to her in his Introduction to the 1918 edition of her *Suggestive Inquiry*.
25. *Early Magnetism*, p.42.
26. *Ibid.*, pp.27, 3.
27. *Ibid.*, pp.25, 26.
28. *Ibid.*, p.16.
29. *Ibid.*, p.49.
30. London: Trelawney Saunders, 1850; reprinted Belfast: Wm. Tait, 1918, 1920, etc.
31. Letter of 25th May ?1853.
32. Letter of 27 Nov ?1848.
33. Letter of 4 Jan ?1853.
34. Letter of 19 Sept ?1853.
35. London: T. Ward, 1847.
36. *On the Present*, p.13.
37. *Ibid.*, p.17.
38. *Ibid.*, pp.20, 21.
39. *Ibid.*, pp.22f.
40. Letter of 3 Nov 1874.
41. *Notes and Materials*, p.vi.
42. *Ibid.*, p.xx.
43. *Ibid.*, p.i.
44. See "Seven Illustrations to the Works of Jacob Boehme," in *Hermetic Journal*, 1991, pp.145-159.
45. Biographical note by C. C. Massey in A. J. Penny, *Studies in Jacob Boehme* (London: Watkins, 1912).
46. *Memorabilia*, p.234.

47. Letters of 7 and 12 Aug 1863.
48. Letter to Walton, 27 Oct 1865.
49. Louis-Claude de Saint-Martin and Kirchberger, Baron de Liebistorf, *Mystical Philosophy and Spiritual Manifestations. Selections from their correspondence* (Exeter, 1863). Penny also translated Saint-Martin's *Man: his true nature and ministry* (London, 1864).
50. Letter of 19 May 1863.
51. Letter of 24 May 1863.
52. Letter of 21 Sept 1865.
53. Letter of 28 Aug 1864.
54. Letter of 2 Sept 1866.
55. *Memorabilia*, p.188.
56. *The Rosicrucian and Red Cross*, vol.II ([1873], pp.27-32).
57. Letter of 9 June 1867.
58. Letter of 18 July 1867.
59. Letter of ? Apr 1875.
60. Letter of 25 Oct 1876.
61. Letter of 15 Aug 1865.
62. *Hints for the Times, by a Clergyman* (Oxford: Author, 1837).
63. *Memorabilia*, pp.191-3.
64. *Ibid.*, p.195.
65. Letter of 17 Sept 1865.
66. *Light*, vol. I (18 June 1881), pp.186f.
67. *Ibid.* (10 Dec 1881), p.399.
68. *Light*, vol. II (21 Jan 1882), p.27.
69. *Ibid.* (18 Feb 1882), p.75.
70. *Ibid.* (17 June 1882), p.286.
71. *Ibid.* (29 July 1882), p.355.
72. *Ibid.* (21 Jan 1882), pp.27-9.
73. *Light*, vol.VII (15 Jan 1887), p.32.
74. *Ibid.* (19 Mar 1887), pp.128f.
75. *Ibid.* (11 June 1887), p.261.
76. *Ibid.* (29 Oct 1887), pp.519f.
77. *Light*, vol.IX (23 Mar 1889), p.140; 15 June, p.290; 6 July, p.324.
78. C. C. Massey's obituary of her appeared in *Light*, vol. XIII (30 Dec 1893), p.618, and was reprinted in *Studies in Jacob Boehme*, pp.xxi-xxvi.
79. Glasgow: Dunn & Wright, 31 pages.
80. Edited by Grace Shaw Duff; New York, 193 pages.
81. London: Watkins, 475 pages.
82. *Hours with the Mystics*, 3rd ed. (London: John Stark, 1888), vol. I, p.xix.
83. *Memorabilia*, pp.252-254.
84. Not to be confused with his contemporary, the mythographer Gerald Massey, who was unrelated.
85. C. C. Massey, *Thoughts of a Modern Mystic* (London: Kegan Paul, 1909), p.114.
86. *Ibid.*, p.17.
87. *Ibid.*, pp.62f.
88. *Memorabilia*, p.253.
89. *Thoughts of a Modern Mystic*, p.66.
90. I. de Steiger, *On a Gold Basis. A Treatise on Mysticism* (London: Philip Wellby, 1907).

# Michael Sendivogius and the *Statuts des Philosophes Inconnus*

Zbigniew Sydło

In his recent paper entitled "Michael Sendivogius and Christian Rosenkreutz. The Unexpected Possibilities"<sup>1</sup>, Rafał Prinke has put forward evidence for his hypothesis that Sendivogius played an important role in the early history of the Rosicrucians.

He chooses a somewhat unusual approach to the issue, basing his introduction on the fact that Dame Frances Yates, in her book *The Rosicrucian Enlightenment*, had possibly omitted an important character in her otherwise extensive coverage of the topic. Prinke sketches the background for such a character and then deduces that Michael Sendivogius fits the situation ideally. Having introduced his new "player" on the scene, Prinke then develops his arguments that Sendivogius must have played an important role in the early stages of the Rosicrucians. The evidence is certainly interesting and consists largely of details of hitherto unknown relationships which existed among the philosophers and politicians of the time, and several clear references to Sendivogius in the hermetic literature of the period.

One of the topics which Prinke touches on, but fails to develop, is a work which has appeared in print once only: the *Statuts des Philosophes Inconnus* [Statutes of the Unknown Philosophers].<sup>2</sup> Of them he writes: "As I have not been able to read these statutes, I cannot comment on their content and how they compare with the rules of the Rosicrucians as outlined in the Manifestos, but their very existence is quite meaningful."<sup>3</sup>

During the course of my own independent research on Sendivogius I have recently become acquainted with the *Statutes*. I have translated them from French into English and have analysed them. I shall now present my findings in order to lend further evidence to Prinke's arguments that Sendivogius may have played an important role in the early history of the Rosicrucians.

As I have mentioned already, the *Statutes* only appeared in print once. This was in the French edition of 1691 which was entitled *Les Oeuvres du Cosmopolite*. They were printed together with Cosmopolite's 55 letters, exemplifying the kind of relationship, through letters, which could exist between "senior" and "junior" members of the Cabalistic Society of Unknown Philosophers, and they were followed, as Prinke has shown, by the *SOMMAIRE ABREGÉ De tout ce qui est contenu dans ces Lettres, renfermé dans un Sceau ou Hieroglyphe de le Societé des Philosophes Inconnus*. [An abbreviated summary of all that is contained in these letters, locked up in the seal or hieroglyph of the Society of Unknown Philosophers.] The title page of the *Statutes* also contains the words "Nouvellement decouverts" [newly discovered], suggesting that this was their first printing. The 55 letters were subsequently republished six times, but without the accompanying *Statutes*.<sup>4</sup>

It is significant that the name of Sendivogius appears nowhere as the author of any of the French editions.<sup>5</sup> Instead, the author is given as "Le Cosmopolite". It is well-established that, since the appearance in print of the *Novum Lumen Chymicum* in Prague in 1604, Sendivogius always used various methods of concealing his true identity, by means of anagrams or pseudonyms.<sup>6</sup> The pseudonym "Cosmopolite" was first used by Sendivogius in 1604 and seems to have been adopted by himself and the editors of his subsequent editions as his hallmark.<sup>7</sup>

Sendivogius must have had a good reason for using a pseudonym, and especially this particular one. The use of a pseudonym was obviously to conceal his identity. The fact that he used the word "Cosmopolite" suggests that he considered himself to be a "citizen of the world" - a man whose outlook and disposition were not limited by race, creed or nationality.

In spite of the fact that the *Statutes* were printed in 1691 alongside Sendivogius' other well-known works, and that they appeared under his accepted pseudonym "Le Cosmopolite", scholars have taken scarcely any notice of them.<sup>8</sup> This can be attributed to two main causes:

- (a) the fact that the *Statutes* only appeared once in at least twelve different printings of works attributed to "Le Cosmopolite".
- (b) there was some doubt as to their authorship.

Even as recently as in 1976, Bernard Roger wrote<sup>9</sup> :

"La Nouvelle Lumière Chymique, ou Traité de la Nature en general, ou Douze Traités, le Traité du Soufre, le Traité du Sel, la lettre philosophique dite de Sendivogius, l'Idée d'une nouvelle Societé des Philosophes et les cinquante-cinq lettres de Sendivogius ou de J.J.D.I., tels sont les textes, d'auteurs

évidemment différents, que la renommée et les éditeurs ont attribués au mystérieux "citoyen du Cosmos", le Cosmopolite, dont le nom, fait assez étrange, ne semble avoir été imprimé que dans les éditions françaises..." [The New Chemical Light, otherwise known as the Treatise on Nature in general or Twelve Treatises, the treatise on Sulphur, the treatise on Salt, the philosophical letter *supposedly* by Sendivogius, the idea of a new Society of Philosophers and the 55 letters of Sendivogius or J.J.D.I., such are these texts, by clearly different authors, that they have been generally attributed to the mysterious "citizen of the Universe", the Cosmopolite, whose unusual name seems to be only used in the French editions...]

The comments of certain other writers however, suggest that they were aware of facts which were not generally recognised. In the *Bibliotheca Esoterica Catalogue* for example, (no author given, Paris 1941, facsimile reprint in 1988), the following entry exists on page 162 under the name of Faber, to whom Sendivogius referred in his second letter<sup>10</sup>:

"Michael Sendivogius, dit le Cosmopolite, Grand Maître de la Rose-Croix et fondateur de la branche des Rose-Croix particulièrement adonnée à l'alchimie sous la dénomination de "Société des Philosophes Inconnus", faisait le plus grand cas de ce médecin de Castelnaudary". [Michael Sendivogius, otherwise known as the Cosmopolite, Great Master of the Rosey-Cross and founder of the alchemical branch of the Rosey-Cross which was called the "Society of Unknown Philosophers", held in very high esteem this doctor from Castelnaudary.]

The author of this statement implies that Sendivogius not only wrote the *Statutes*, but that he also founded the alchemical branch of the Rosicrucians. In 1702 Sendivogius' letters were published in J. Manget's *Bibliotheca Chemica Curiosa*. The title to the letters reads as follows:

"*Apographum Epistolarum hactenus ineditarum M. SENDIVOGII, seu I.I.D.I. Cosmopolitae vulgo dicti. Clarissimo ac novo Cabalae Philosophorum incognitorum dignissimo Sodali T.S.P. M.S.*" [A collection of hitherto unedited letters by M. Sendivogius, or I.I.D.I. Cosmopolita as he is commonly known. For the most excellent and most worthy new member of the Cabale of the Unknown Philosophers T.S.P. M.S.]

As Prinke has already noted<sup>11</sup>, Manget did not doubt that Sendivogius had a very important position in the Cabale of the Philosophers. This leads to the interesting issue of Sendivogius' secrecy and anonymity, which were clearly known and understood by certain authors such as Manget, Stolcius and Maier but not recognised by others such as Borel and Dufresnoy.<sup>12</sup>

I have compared the contents of these *Statutes* with other better-known works of Sendivogius, and have established that he was indeed their author.<sup>13</sup> Viewed in this light, they support Rafal Prinke's hypothesis of the "unexpected possibility" that Michael Sendivogius may have played a role in the early history of the Rosicrucians.

### Notes

1. R. Prinke, op.cit., *The Hermetic Journal* (Oxford, 1990), 72-98.
2. This was bound with four other works which bore the general title: *Les Oeuvres du Cosmopolite* which was published in Paris in 1691 by Laurent d'Houry. I have also seen manuscript editions: MS 92 (French) in the Ferguson collection at Glasgow University and Sloane MS 1724 (Latin) at the British Library, London.
3. R. Prinke, op. cit., 85.
4. The dates of publication of the letters were: 1702 (Geneva), 1718 (Nuremberg), 1749 and 1750 (Vienna), 1766 (Leipzig) and 1770 (Frankfurt and Leipzig). For further details see: R. Bugaj, *Michał Sedziwoj (1566-1636) Życie i Pisma* [Michael Sendivogius (1566-1636) His Life and Works] (Ossolineum Publishers, Wrocław-Warszawa-Kraków, 1968) 283 et seq.
5. Altogether at least 13 editions of works ascribed to "Le Cosmopolite" were published in French between 1609 and 1723: 1609 (Iérémie Perier, Paris), 1618 (Sebastain Chapelet, Paris), 1618 (Abraham Pacard, Paris), 1620 (Perier, Paris), 1621 (Perier & Buizard, Paris), 1628 (Pierre Billaine, Paris), 1629 (Pierre Billaine, Paris), 1629 (Charles Hulpeau, Paris), 1639 (Theodore Mairie, The Hague), 1659 (A. Vlacq, The Hague), 1669 (Jean D'Houry), 1691 (Laurent D'Houry), 1723 (Laurent D'Houry).
6. See, for example, R. Prinke, op.cit., 88.
7. It was subsequently used by others such as George Starkey alias Eyreaneus Philaetha Cosmopolita. See also: J. Read, *Humour and Humanism in Chemistry* (London, 1947) Chapter 3 "The Tragedy of the Cosmopolite" (pp. 37-51), and Chapter 4 "The Mantle of the Cosmopolite" (pp.52-65).
8. Caillet and Duveen have mentioned them in passing in: Caillet, *Manuel Bibliographique des Sciences Psychiques ou Occultes* (Paris, 1912), 3, 516 ref. 10131., Duveen, *Bibliotheca Alchemica et Chemica* (London, 1949), 545.
9. B. Roger (ed), *Le Cosmopolite, Nouvelle Lumière Chymique, Biblioteca Hermetica* (Paris, 1976), 24.
10. M. Sendivogius, *Les Oeuvres du Cosmopolite "Traitez du Cosmopolite Nouvellements decouverts."* (Paris, 1691), 44.
11. R. Prinke, op.cit., 89.
12. See the discussion in: Z. Szydło, *The Life and Work of Michael Sendivogius (1566-1636)* (Ph.D. thesis, London University, 1991), 154-156.
13. Z. Szydło, op.cit., 145-147.

# Statutes for a Society of Unknown Philosophers

Treatises of Cosmopolite, Newly discovered  
 Having suggested the idea of a Philosophical Society, the author explains in several letters, the theory and practice of the Hermetic truths.

## Idea for a new Philosophical Society

### Preface

Having sailed around the unknown seas of the Ancient Philosophy for a very long time, we have finally arrived, through the mercy of our Lord, at a port. But since it is not just through destiny that we have avoided the dangers of such a sailing, we feel that we can best show the Lord our gratitude by dedicating to Him the infinite treasure which he has bestowed upon our hands, and to use it to His glory and for the service of others. Because if one is bestowed with the best things possible on Earth, where else should one's goal be directed, other than to heaven? For these are the sentiments which reason and our desire for salvation inspire in us. Knowledge on its own will inspire us just as much as these sentiments, but when we have neither of these motives, charity on its own will suffice. We are currently living in extremely bad times, when the whole Christian world is lamenting. It would therefore be a crime to hide in secret such a gift received from heaven; such a gift which could do so much to help the poor and miserable of whom there are so many in the world.

Inspired by these noble desires, and rather than restricting ourselves to just one part of the earth, we should immediately resolve to travel around the whole world. This is because all people, but especially Christians, can make use of this divine bounty which we have been given. This gift can be used by everyone of us to repair damaged churches and re-establish holy places by building sound foundations.

Such initially, were our ideals, but alas it soon became clear that we would be unable to carry them out, without finding thousands of contradictions [sans y trouver mille contradictions], the malice of men, even though it is so far away, has caused my life to be in danger on more than one occasion; this is not to mention the dangers which threaten our Republic, if I extend my thoughts further.

I have therefore been compelled to follow other ideas and to search for another means of achieving our goal. After some deliberation I have come to a clear solution: we should establish among ourselves a certain Philosophical Society in which the true identity of members will be concealed, and which will become generally well-known and will thus spread to all kingdoms in a short space of time. All Associate members will thus be wise and sensible propagators of the precious treasures of the Hermetic Science, regardless of their nationality.

It is with this view in mind that I prayed for enlightenment from the Holy Spirit, in order that I may write the Statutes and Rules of this new Cabale. These rules will govern the manner of conduct of the members of this society. Next, I have chosen people of whom I approve, to be founder members. And finally, for those who would hope to be able to join our ranks one day, I have written several treatises on this science. I have included in these works those ideas which my experience has taught me to be useful, so that even those people who are in the most distant lands will be able to gain some benefits from them. The result will be, that if they think a little, I hope that they will easily recognise the essential points and basis of our Philosophical secret. For this is the subject that demands some attention. It is this material which, I hope, the Patrons of the society will pass on to those whom they meet. As for the rest of the theory and practice, members will have to acquire this through studying, reading and even through experiments - they will then arrive easily at their goals.

These goals will be reached easily, unless God allows the veil of obscurity to spread over them. For God alone understands the depths of our hearts, knows our intentions, our malice, and to where our thoughts aspire. Only He can remove a certain obscurity in the spirit of these people. This obscurity acts as a veil and hinders them from observing those things which are clearer than broad daylight. Thus it hides from them the explanations of natural phenomena [*leur cachant par la ce gue peuvent les causes naturelles*], or at any rate, it prevents them from knowing for a while, until such a time when they have become enlightened.

Now on these treatises which I have written - I have allowed several of them to be printed. As for the others, which explain the same basic principles in some detail, I have recommended that these should not be made available to the public, or if some have appeared, I have immediately stopped them, in the belief that it would be more convenient and more useful to have them published at another time.

However, in order that such a delay should not cause the slightest prejudice against our Society which is being formed, I have considered it appropriate to communicate by letters to our Elders, the

best parts of these works. These are written in a simple and clear style. I have also requested that they should be made immediately available to our members, in accordance with the statutes and regulations which follow.

# Statutes of the Unknown Philosophers

## Chapter One

### The organisation of the Society

#### **Article I — The Nationality of Members**

This society must not be limited by any Country, Nation, Kingdom or Province i.e. any particular place. It should spread to all inhabited lands and especially those where Jesus Christ is worshipped, or where His Law presides, or where virtue is known or where reason is adhered to. For a universal good cannot be enclosed into a small reserved space, it must be carried by all to where it can help others.

#### **Article II — How the Society should be subdivided**

For fear however, that there will be confusion from such a vast array of countries, we have found it a good idea to divide the whole Society into companies, the companies into sections, and the sections into assemblies. These bodies should be distributed in such a way that each one is based at a fixed place and country. For example, each company should be enclosed in an imperium ~Empire] which there should only be one president; each section should only be bounded by a Province, and the assembly should only stretch as far as a county of any particular country. Thus if someone from an unstable country [qui ne soit pas d'un pais stable] wishes to join the society, he will be obliged to choose such a place to live in, that he will not be a member of two companies, sections or assemblies at any particular time.

#### **Article III — The number of Members**

As regards the number of members in each company, section or assembly, it is neither easy nor useful to suggest any particular number. The reason for this will shortly become apparent. Providence will see to this because the glory and service of God is the ultimate and only name of this Institution. All that one can say in general is that members must exercise prudence with those whom they admit. This will be done according to the time, place and requirements of their Body, and thus they will admit fewer or more people. They

should remember however, that the veritable philosophy cannot be practised by a multitude of people - and thus we can be sure that the number of members will remain small. The most senior member or the president of each company will keep a register of all members. This will contain their names and countries. Their membership numbers will also be kept, for reasons which we shall discuss next.

## Chapter 2

### Conditions for membership

#### **Article I — The social status and religion of members**

It is not at all necessary that those who are accepted into this society should be members of any one particular religion or profession, or that they should all be of equal social status. What is required of them however, is that they should all worship Jesus Christ, that they should all love virtue and have the proper frame of mind for the Philosophy. Those members of mediocre background will thus be able to succeed in achieving the sole aim, which is to help all poor Christians and to offer comfort to all those afflicted with poverty, regardless of their status or whereabouts. Thus they will be able to do this, as well as those people from a higher social background. It would be a very sad state in Christendom, if people of a modest background, who are of high moral calibre, were banished from our society, in favour of those from the upper classes.

There is no reason to believe that those who are not members of the Roman Church abuse the treasures given to them by the philosophy, to make war with Catholics or to overthrow the Holy Apostolic See. For it is not possible that God will allow them to successfully complete the Great Work, of which our Philosophy discovers the principles, unless they purge their hearts of bad intentions even before they begin. They will never have their eyes opened to the mysteries of the Philosopher's Stone, if they do not cease to be blind to the mysteries of faith. If however, someone joins under the false pretences of being both keen and religious, and is subsequently discovered to be against Christianity, and especially against Roman Catholicism, he will be removed from the Society, even though he may already be a member.

#### **Article II — Exclusion of People who have taken Holy Orders**

Maybe it does not make any difference, as I am about to say, from what background members originate; but believe however, that clerics should never be accepted, nor anyone who has taken monastic vows, and especially members of orders of Mendicant friars, if this does not conflict strongly with the wishes of other members of the Society. For the same laws apply to both slaves and all people who

consecrate their lives to the service of God. The Philosophy demands people with free minds who are free to do as they wish; people who can work when they wish, and who can use their time freely on the Philosophy and on their new discoveries, without interfering in anyone's affairs.

### **Article III — Sovereigns only exceptionally to be admitted**

Now among free people, the least suitable for this kind of occupation are kings, princes and other sovereigns. One can include in this group people who are of a higher social status than the average person but who have ended up by loss of fortune, as ordinary commoners. For none of these groups of people are really suited to our Society, unless certain distinct virtues, which shine throughout their entire conduct, exclude them from this group. The reason for this is that ambition would not be the driving force of these kind of people; for wherever this unfortunate situation is found, people no longer act by the motivations of piety and Christian charity.

One also has to add to this list of exclusions the poor and the destitute of all sorts; on the grounds that they would not be in a position to prepare the most sought after secret of Nature, even if they possessed the work which would instruct them in its preparation.

### **Article IV — Behaviour befitting members**

Anybody from any social or other background must satisfy the following conditions to show that he has genuine good intentions for entry into the Society. He has to:

- a) be a practising Christian with strong convictions
- b) have strong faith
- c) have strong hope
- d) be generous
- e) have a good business sense [un homme de bon commerce]
- f) be honest in conversations
- g) persevere with determination regardless of results
- h) not to have any bad intentions
- i) ensure that any people who assist him in helping others do not come to any harm themselves

Above all, one should guard against any unhealthy connections with wine and women. Did not Harpocrates guard his freedom among goblets? And Hermes - was he wise, when surrounded by women? But what a mess! To achieve the reward of the highest virtues one must be prepared to sacrifice the pleasures of life.

**Article V — Why these people should have a natural curiosity**

It is not sufficient for our proselytes to have irreproachable manners: they must also have a genuine desire to penetrate the secrets of chemistry and a curiosity which stems from the bottom of the soul, and not to accept the false recipes of the charlatans, but the wonderful operations of the Hermetic Science. They must exercise care that they do not unintentionally start to scorn the Art, whose excellence cannot be appreciated all at once. This, after all, must not be understood in such a manner, that as soon as a man is curious, in the same way that the majority of alchemists are, he is immediately deemed to have that which is necessary to be admitted among us. For curiosity will never be more alive in those who, having been forewarned of false principles, devote themselves to the operations of a sophisticated chemistry. [*car jamais la curiosite ne fut plus vive gue dans ceux qui ayant ete prevenus de faux principes, donnent dans les Operations d'une Chymie Sophistique;*] Besides, we should never allow the incapable and the indignant to enter the sanctuary of our truths.

**Article VI — Secrecy - also an essential condition**

To conclude this list of desirable qualities, one must include a perfect secrecy - which Harpocrates was able to keep so effectively. For if a man does not know how to keep his mouth shut and remain silent when the situation demands it, he will never have the characteristics of a true and perfect philosopher.

### Chapter 3

#### Procedure for admitting new members to the Society

**Article I — How to become a patron**

Whoever becomes admitted to our Society can in turn accept new members, of whom he becomes the Patron. It is up to him to make known the rules of the Society to the new member, and that this member does nothing without informing his Patron and obtaining his consent.

**Article II — How to gain members**

Thus if someone, who is drawn by the reputation of the Society, wishes to become a member of it, he should befriend a person who he believes to be already a member. The member will begin to observe closely the prospective candidate's behaviour and his general attitude, and will keep him "in suspense" for some time without making any promises, until he is sure that the prospective candidate has shown sufficient proof of his ability and intentions. The prospective candidate must be watched closely unless his reputation

is so well established, that there is no reason to doubt his virtue and other qualities.

In this case, the member will propose membership to the person to whom he would become the Patron. He will explain to the new member frankly and without any disguises and favours, his good and bad points. At the same time, he will naturally keep his own person, family and proper name secret in case the proposed member does not accept the invitation to join. Even if he does not give an immediate reply, he must be told not to mention under any circumstances the fact that he was offered membership of the Society.

For it is one of the most important features of this Society, that not only are all of its members anonymous to strangers, but they are anonymous even among themselves; hence the name: "*Society of Unknown Philosophers*". The result will be that true Philosophers will thus be more easily protected from false accusations, misunderstandings etc., which have been customarily used against them. This would apply particularly to those who had made the Stone, and might then be misled from their true friends by demonic influences. The Society would thus be in danger of collapsing within a short period of time. If, on the other hand, a certain member is discovered to be dishonest or a traitor to the Society, then as a result of the anonymity of members, his exposure will not endanger or damage their reputation and they will not be involved in his misfortunes and be able to continue their work and experiments without fear. If, after this warning, anyone is stupid enough to make known his affiliations, he himself will suffer the unpleasant consequences.

### **Article III — The obligations of Patrons**

The matter of the acceptance of a new member into the Society is not to be treated lightly. The new Patron must first interview the proposed member and discuss with him in detail the implications of his proposed membership. If there is any reason whatsoever to doubt the intentions of the new applicant, then the Patron is obliged to make no promises to him. He must then submit and discuss his proposal at a meeting of the committee, and to act on their instructions.

### **Article IV — The prerogatives of the General Secretaries**

The General Secretary, or the most senior member of a given company, section or assembly is exempt from the aforementioned rules, in addition to many others of a similar nature. If however, the number of members drops, then it will be necessary to amalgamate the various assemblies into one section. The General Secretary of an assembly will then naturally lose his privilege; this will be left as a

matter for his own conscience. After the closing of such an assembly, no-one may succeed a General Secretary until such a time when growing numbers of members deem it necessary to reform more assemblies.

### Article V — The Reception

When a new member has been accepted into the Society according to the principles already given, he must be received into the Society in the manner which I shall describe. If the newly accepted person is religious, then a Mass should be celebrated, with the intention of seeking guidance for him, from the Holy Spirit. If the circumstances are not favourable for such a mode of reception, then the person who is receiving the new member should organise a suitable ceremony.

Next, the person who is received must promise to keep secret at all costs the aforementioned statutes and above all any work which he undertakes. This must be done regardless of what may happen to him, whether it be good or bad.

Furthermore, he will promise to be loyal to the Society, and to treat as his own brothers any members of the Society whom he may meet. If he should ever come into possession of the "Stone", he will even promise by oath if his Patron requires him, to (as in all the other laws of the Reception, of which he must be aware, both the quality and the merit of those that are received) use the Stone only for those purposes which are recommended by the Company.

After that, the person who has acted as Patron in receiving the promises, himself repeats the promises in the name of the Society and all the members; he reassures the new member of their friendship, fidelity and protection, and vows that all the members will respect the statutes of the Society in the same favourable manner, if he does so. After these promises have been made, he whispers to him in the language of the wise men, the name of the *Magnesia*, or the true and unique material, of which the Philosopher's Stone is composed.

It would however be considered wise to have given him previously some sort of vague description of this substance, so that he may subsequently try to skilfully decipher it himself. If he has difficulties in solving the mystery ultimately, this information should at least be sufficient to give him some help in solving the problem himself.

### Article VI — The Name which the new member must adopt

The new member will accept a cabalistic name. If at all possible, the name will be an anagrammatic form of his surname or the name of an Ancient Philosopher. He should make this name known to his

Patron, so that it may be inscribed without delay into the Register, or the Journal of the Society. This will be done by one of the Elders who will ensure that each President and each member of every section and assembly are aware of it.

#### **Article VII — What the new member must give in written form to his Patron**

In addition to that, if the Patron considers it necessary, he will demand, in order to bind the new member more closely, a handwritten acknowledgement of indebtedness which will be signed by him with his cabalistic name. He will have complete faith in the manner in which his affairs are handled, and in the oath which he has taken. The new member may likewise ask his Patron to give him a copy of the statutes, signed with his cabalistic name. This will serve as a proof for all members of the Society, that he is a member.

#### **Article VIII — The Agreements which the Patron must receive from the new member**

When he has the time, the new member will be permitted to copy out the statutes and the Table of signs and Cabalistic characters which are used in the Art, with his own interpretation. In case by chance he should meet someone from the Society, he and the other person will be able to mutually recognise one another, by use of the signs. Finally, he may also receive a list of Cabalistic names of members from his Patron. These names would naturally not be the real ones - for it would be assumed that the member knows the real ones.

As far as our other writings which the Patron might possess are concerned, the Patron is obliged to show these also to the new member either all at once, or a few at a time, as he sees fit. He must be careful to check however, that there are no false documents among those that he shows, or any other which are contrary to our doctrine. For a philosopher can disguise certain matters for a while, but he is never permitted to deceive him. The Patron will not be forced to make these sorts of communications, either faster or in larger numbers than he would wish. Furthermore, he does not have to send anything until he has tested the person who is to join and also shown that he obeys the statutes carefully.

#### **Article IX — The obligations of a new member**

There is nothing else left for the time being, except to encourage this new member to study with care our books or the works of other approved philosophers. He should do this either by himself or in the company of other members. He should be particularly keen to learn practical techniques, which will give weight to the theory.

He must take care not to be overcome by weariness during long hours of work, and he must not lose his patience and give up, when working on a particular experiment. He must understand that all other members are working for him and with him, just the same as he is working with them and for them. Without this work, he cannot hope to participate in their progress. For perfect science and peace are the fruits of hard work, in the same manner that glory is the prize of soldiers and Heaven is the goal of all good people. The vices of laziness and weakness are only the result of ignorance and errors.

## Chapter 4

### Statutes and rules for all members

#### **Article I — Anniversary of the Reception**

On every anniversary of his reception, every member who is a Roman Catholic should attend a thanksgiving Mass in order to receive further guidance from the Holy Spirit, which gives enlightenment in Science. All Christians should celebrate their anniversaries in a similar manner, in accordance with their religion. If however, someone should forget their anniversary celebration, they should not feel too guilty since this is only a recommendation, and not a precept.

#### **Article II — Members must avoid discreditable conduct**

Members must not get involved in dubious activities with metals, regardless of their nature. They must have nothing to do with charlatans or false recipe-mongers. For there can be no greater indignity than a Christian philosopher who is searching for truth and who wants to help others, and who gets involved in a deceitful act.

#### **Article III — Working in Groups**

Those members who as yet have no experience of dealing in operations involving fire, and who are thus ignorant of the art of distillation, are allowed to attempt these operations with mineral, vegetable and animal substances, since these processes are frequently necessary. Metals must never be alloyed however, and even more, alloys must never be used. This is because they are bad and must therefore be kept away from our members.

#### **Article IV — It is possible to enlighten those who are on the wrong track**

Occasionally it is possible to visit crude chemical laboratories, provided that the workers there are not of a bad reputation. Since it is people like these that eventually become members of the Society, they should be approached. If they are then seen to be in error, they

should be made aware of the fact, and subsequently instructed correctly according to our writings. All of this advice should be given with modesty, and in a charitable spirit, in order that the person does not waste any more time.

It is important however, not to say too much on such occasions: for it is enough to simply prevent the blind man from falling over the precipice and to put him on the correct track. One is under no obligation to guide him after that; indeed, this would positively be bad, especially if one then realises that the blind man lacks an enlightened spirit, and that he ignores virtue.

#### **Article V — How to encourage people to join the Society**

Consider someone, among those who are interested in chemistry, who is an honest person with a reputation, who respects wisdom and honesty and who is interested in the Hermetic science for curiosity's sake, and not for money. There will be no harm or danger in talking to him about the affairs of members of our Society, in order that if someone was called by heaven and destined for this work, this would be an opportunity for him to hit on the thought of joining us and fulfilling his destiny. In these discussions however, the fact that one is a member must not be mentioned, until the correct qualities have been recognised in this person, and the consent of the Patron has first been obtained. Otherwise there would be a risk of losing the title "Unknown Philosopher", which is against our statutes.

### **Chapter 5**

#### **On the types of activities which members should conduct among themselves**

##### **Article I — They should meet from time to time**

Those members who know each other should meet occasionally when the opportunity presents itself, at fixed time and place. They should do this regardless of the company, section or assembly of which they are members. At these meetings members can discuss matters concerning the Society, books which they have read, and experiments and ideas which they have had. This is in order that they can learn from one another, as in any branch of science. These meetings must be conducted in a civilised and dignified manner. Wherever they take place e.g. in inns, the participants must conduct themselves to the highest standards, and leave an impeccable impression. Whilst these meetings will undoubtedly be very useful, they are nevertheless not obligatory.

### **Article II — Communication by means of letters**

It is also possible to conduct business by means of letters between members. It must be borne in mind however, that members must never use their own names and must keep secret the most important points of the letter. Members should only sign these letters with their Cabalistic names, which should also be used at the beginning of the letters. The letter should be sent in an envelope which will bear the proper name of the addressee. If there is reason to suspect that the letters may be intercepted, one should use either numbers, a code, or allegorical words.

Communications by means of letters in this manner can thus be extended to the most distant members of the Society. The letters can serve as a means whereby Patrons can explain certain problems to their members, which arise as a result of their Philosophical research.

### **Article III — The way in which members should help and correct one another**

If it is observed that a member does not obey strictly all the rules of the Society, and his conduct is not of the highest order as we would wish, he should be cautioned by the member who saw him, or, more importantly, by his Patron, in a delicate and friendly manner. The cautioned man must accept the criticism with grace and good spirit, and act upon it. If the cautioned man does not accept the good advice, he must not be immediately cut off from all business with other members, but he should be denounced in front of all the members of his own company, section or assembly, so that they are aware, and can discuss matters with him more cautiously, and not speak to him too openly. It is nevertheless prudent to act with some caution, since if the person in question suspects that he will be banned from the Society, he may do no harm to others, but he may also never have a chance of obtaining the Stone.

## **Chapter 6**

### **How to use the Stone**

#### **Article I — How the person who has already made the Stone, should give advice on it**

If one of our members is fortunate enough to bring the Great Work to a successful end, he should immediately give others advice on how to achieve the same result. This should not be done by writing in the sort of manner which is used here, but by an anonymous undated letter which is addressed to all General Secretaries of the companies. This is in order that those who are not able to *meet* the fortunate member, can be given some hope that they too may experience similar good fortune, and that they shall not get

disheartened by their efforts.

It will be up to the person who possesses the great treasure to choose among members, both known and unknown, those to whom he would disclose his technique. Otherwise, he would have to give the method to everyone, even those towards whom the Society has no longer any obligation whatsoever. If he were to do this, he would expose the Society to great dangers.

### **Article II — He must divulge his technique to those who ask for it**

The fortunate member who discovers the technique for making the Stone is obliged without fail to reveal his findings to his Patron, provided that he is worthy of it. After that he should reveal them to all members, both known and unknown, who ask for it, provided that they will obey carefully the rules for keeping the secret. They will also be obliged to work hard and in secret, and never to misuse the grace which has been accorded to them. Failure to disclose one's findings in the manner described would be a criminal act which would be equivalent to disclosing the secret to traitors, cowards and others who want to make quick gains with a minimum of effort.

### **Article III — How to make the Stone**

Now the means of communicating this secret is left entirely at the disposal of its possessor. He may wish to pass on a small quantity of the Powder which he has made, or explain clearly the procedure for making it, or he may simply choose to help those friends of his whom he believes may be able to make it. The last mentioned method would probably be the best, since each person would then be able to acknowledge the effort and results of the man who achieved the ultimate goal.

Those who are enlightened by similar means will not be able to use the Stone for the benefit of the other members, and not even their own Patron, unless they had earlier asked for permission from their instructor. For the secret itself is the least gratification which we owe him. And even the person who discovered it will not give it away easily but only to those who are very worthy of it.

### **Article IV the final one — The use to which the Stone must be put**

Finally, we shall discuss the uses to which such a treasure may be put, in the manner which follows.

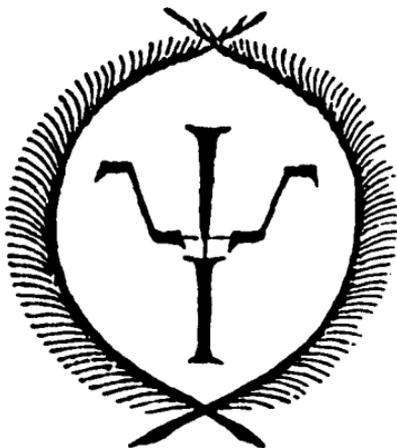
One third must be given to God. That is to say for the building of new churches, the repair of old churches, the building of church foundations and similar pious causes such as propagation of the faith, as long as this is done without spilling human blood. For the truth of the Christian faith is spread not by arms but by good deeds: Jesus Christ did not order his apostles to teach the Gospel with sword in

hand, but He only wanted them to act through the Holy Spirit, and that they should use the gift of languages to communicate with all people.

A second third should be distributed among the poor, oppressed people, and to the afflicted, regardless of how they may be afflicted.

The final third may remain at the disposal of the person who earned the money, in order that he may help his parents and friends - but only as much as they need, and no more. Thus, they should praise God, serve their country, and strive peacefully towards their own salvation. He must remember that it is very difficult to maintain moderation when there is a sudden change of fortune. Even when one gives money to the poor, this must be done sincerely and not just to impress others, otherwise one may lose oneself.

### End of the Statutes and Rules of the Cabalistic Society of Unknown Philosophers



### An Abbreviated Summary of all that is contained in these Letters, locked up in the Seal or Hieroglyph of the Society of Unknown Philosophers.

This symbol was not invented and chosen by chance: for the Trident is the Neptune of our parable, which contains in abbreviated form the entire theory and practice of the Hermetic Science.

Now in order that these particular mysteries can be understood, we shall explain them by means of two

Geometric models, i.e. by analysis or decomposition, and by synthesis or composition.

The unity of the whole figure is considered by analysis first. In the second place comes the binary, or dual nature, of the Cones, or right pyramid. Thirdly

is considered the triplicity of the voids or angles, and fourthly the quaternary nature of the Lines. Finally we discuss the extreme points, or the entire dimension of the whole figure, and the latitudes of the lines. For each of these features has its own Cabalistic significance.

By Synthesis, one considers firstly the change of the quaternary of the Lines into the triplicity of the voids or curves. Secondly, from the triplicity to the binary nature of the Cones. Thirdly, from binary to unity.

Let us now apply this dual approach. It is first necessary to know that both the one and the other represent, in enigmatic form, (i) the first generation or creation of corporeal beings, (ii) the production and multiplication of these same things by Nature, (iii) the products of the Art, which imitate both the one and the other.

Consider in the first instance, the unity of character of the whole misshapen figure, which is formless because its empty space remains unenclosed; it does not tend to a triangle, nor a quadrilateral nor a circle, nor towards any other perfect figure: this then I call the Catholic Water, or the first Being of Bodies, disguised in an inconspicuous way, so that it is indifferent from all perfect forms.

The duality or binary nature of the right Pyramids, or the concurrence of the cones or the vertices of the Pyramids, shows that they both have an elongated power, which is the active or passive form of the aforementioned first Being. Consider next the triplicity of the voids or curves, which are curved in three places and which face three opposite directions, i.e. the bottom of the interior of the trident faces upwards, its outside faces downwards, and the extreme points of the signs face the diagonal. This triple curve then, which is arranged in such a manner that the three areas of space are all adjacent to one another, signifies the Hyle, Archee, and Azoth [chaos, fire and the Philosopher's Mercury]. These three have the same ratio among themselves. The quaternary of these right lines of varying sizes, latitudes and positions, joined however at a single point, signifies the distinction between the four elements, and the distribution of the four primary qualities, both symbolic and dissymbolic. Now when considering the symbol conversely by synthesis, the triple conjunction of the Lines which are counterposed or next to one another, shows the composition of the three primary Principles: Salt, Sulphur and Mercury. This is achieved by the mixing and combination of the Elements, and by communicating the dissymbolic qualities.

From the symbolic point of view, we can see that the binary of the Cones and Pyramids which are joined at the base from different sides, represent the principal Principles of the second order i.e. Mercury and Sulphur, male and female, radical humidity and primitive heat. Finally the unity of all the character which results from the joined Cones, shows the Mercury of the Philosophers, the second Catholic Water, or our Universal Spirit. The extreme points of the Cones signify the masculine and feminine seeds of the same species. Where the lines touch at an angle, they represent the three families of inferior Mixtures, with the different forms which are made from the

mentioned. That is how this Hieroglyph mysteriously explains what was made in the first Creation. It does not explain any less well what was next made by Nature. For the unity of the character signifies primary matter, (not make-believe and imagined as the false doctrines of Schools pretend), but corporeal and sensible, and already redressed in a certain primitive form, i.e. that of the simple Elements or principle Principles. The binary of the Cones represents the real and actual movements of the action and passion of all corporeal Beings, which cause perpetual corruption and generation.

The triplicity of the three kinds of curves or voids shows us the influence of the superior Beings, i.e. Stars and Heavenly Bodies, and the reflection of the inferior ones, with the joining and cooperation of what is in between. This occurs without any discontinuity from the centre of the Earth to the circumference of the entire corporeal Machine. The quaternary of the lines represents the flux of the Elements and the emission of their quintessence.

By synthesis once again, the triplicity of the voids and curves demonstrates the multiplication of the Principals of the first order: Salt, Sulphur and Mercury. The binary of the Cones represents the multiplication of the Principles of the second order, through the mixing of the preceding ones, in male and female.

Finally the curved unity of the Hieroglyph is the image of the multiplication of the Universal Spirit. The disjointed Lines, as well as the angles, signify multiplication - both from simple seeds, as well as species from one and the other Family of inferior Mixtures, by the triple digestion and coction of the Magistracy, and by the specification of the Universal Spirit.

This same symbol also represents the way in which the Art imitates Nature and the Creation; it explains these processes very well. For by analysis and synthesis, the unity of the character is the model of the second Catholic Water, which must be derived from the confused array of various things, through the gain of the Art. The binary of the Cones signifies substances of two different consistencies, which were taken from the clean body of the Universal Spirit; by solution and coagulation, and not by division of the mixture. The triplicity of the curves is the figure of contemperation, or equal mixing of mercurial, sulphureous and saline properties, which must give rise to the Universal Spirit. Finally, the quaternary of the lines denotes the harmony of the four Elements.

Thus, by reverse order or by synthesis, the triplicity of the curves describes the three principal parts of the Magistracy i.e. solution of the body, coagulation of the spirit, union of the body, the soul and the spirit, through digestion, ablation and fixation.

The binary of the joined Pyramids depicts the purifications of the Magistracy, by solution and coagulation, both in red and white.

Finally, this unity shows the virtue of the Elixir. The situation and the position of the extreme points signifies the projection of the Elixir onto a greater quantity of whatever Body it may be, and an actual transmutation of the imperfect forms into a very perfect one of a more noble species, or finally into a seminal substance.

## The copy of an oath, found amongst the papers of a known adept,

after his death, which is administered upon the adopting of a Brother  
into the Cabalistical Society.

*[Contained in Mercury's Caducean Rod: or, The great and wonderful Office of the Universal Mercury, or God's Viceregent, Displayed. Wherein is Shewn His Nativity, Life, Death, Renovation and Exhaultation to an Immutable State; To which is added A General Epistle, discovering the Mysterious Fire of Pontanus. By Cleidophorus Mystagogus. The Second Edition. London. Printed by William Pearson, for Thomas Ballard, at the Rising Sun in Little Britain. 1704.]*

For as much as the great God of Heaven and Earth, from whom we all proceed, in whom we live, and to whom we must return at our appointed time, hath adopted and chosen out from amongst mankind a certain number of Christians, for that eminent work of creating perfect things from imperfection, unto whom it is made manifest by the Spirit of Creation the universal first or fifth creating Quintessence, by which it is by many held to this day, the World was reduced from its rude and undigested Chaos, to a beautiful and pregnant matrix, fit for the receiving of seminal virtue, for producing all circular appearances, as daily doth appear by our most glorious production or manufacture; and for as much as it has been from all times thought fit to keep secret and undivulged, from the common knowledge of Mankind, the easy and facile way of our Great Work, both for the glory of God and common good and conveniency of government; and for as much as there are no obligations found like those which are freely entred into by a true sense of his great necessity, therefore I, R.S. do freely, for the reasons before mentioned, promise and swear by the great Jehovah, and by all things visible and invisible, and by the fifth produced Essence to me known, as I have evidently made appear to thee and the rest of my Brethren, I will not

reveal, acknowledge or declare till death me thereunto cause or move; or any way direct, or indirect, absolutely informing any person to the attaining of this secret and divine knowledge, unless I, the said R.S. do evidently know, that the said person hath found out things supernatural, which is daily experienced; wonderful and manifest effects me thereunto moving, or that the said party be so qualified by Nature, that three or four of the said brethren of the Society finding him fit for the said work, and give me their consent and permission, so as to do it. I also do promise that if God should, out of special mercy, reveal to me greater knowledge of the supernatural and hidden Mysteries that to some common Adepts, not to discover thereof to them by way of discourse, without I am directed by my Brethren so to do, or that I am assured he doth enjoy the same ever glorious Mercy and bright knowledge. I also promise by virtue of the foresaid oath, not to have to do with Kings or great men, and never to commune with any out of a covetous mind or design, but remain satisfied with that knowledge God hath showed me out of his wonderful providence to me; likewise I promise to make it my endeavour to find out one to enjoy this knowledge after my decease, unto whom I will, while I live, impart what I safely may, and at my death reveal the whole secret; also I promise in the presence of God, that I will never join with any upon a covetous pretence of advancing the Secret, unless it be with an Adeptist, known and approved of by my other brethren; neither deliver any true knowledge of our true Universal Magnet and Chalybs, and principally the Mercury and Gold, whether it be in an enigma or otherwise, as is designed or best thought fit for the preservation of this science; and if it should so happen that I should be racked and tortured to discover the same, and there is no hopes of avoiding the danger, by giving or delivering some other compound way, which hath been beforehand consulted of, and agreed upon, by the brethren; and if that will not do, then I promise to swallow my common pill without which I promise never to be, but constantly to have it about me, in the form of beads, or what shape shall be thought most fit, to which promise and covenant I bind my body and soul and my life, in the testimony of which I have set my hand with my own blood, and my seal with the true universal mixture, desiring to hold that Man excused, which observing my willful failing in any thing above mentioned, privately cuts me off from amongst men; and I desire of God, and of all my brethren to forgive him, and to esteem him with the highest veneration imaginable, knowing that his zeal for the glory of the Lord of Hosts hath been thereunto moved. Thus calling God, Heaven, Earth and all that is therein to bear testimony of this my free and voluntary condescension. Amen, Amen, Amen, and praise be to thee, O God, Holy, Holy, Holy, for ever, Amen, Amen, Amen.

# Foam of the Moon

## The Sponge and the Pumice Stone

Graham Knight

"The zioug vivus (quicksilver) which is formed by cinnabar they have called tinctorial mercury. That formed by copper they have called water of copper and water of Aphroud; so also they have called the mercury drawn from silver, water of silver, foam of aphroseline and dew. That which is obtained from tin some have called water of the river, others bile of the dragon." Zosimos - 15th Century Syrian MS., Cambridge University.

Even if the hypothesis of a single thematic collector as the originator of the Theban Magical Papyri should prove false, nevertheless internal evidence shows that these documents form a coherent body of work, and I have indicated elsewhere how the purely magical is mingled with herbal lore, medicine and other symbolism clearly proto-alchemic in intention. It is a common-place of magical and mystical literature that images and indeed whole texts can be passed intact across centuries and cultures, re-appearing to guide and inspire generations who know nothing of their true origins. The Magical papyri date from between the 2nd and 5th century AD., but many passages are a good deal older than their final recension. I wish in these brief notes to take one excerpt, and to illustrate parallels from widely disparate texts, that cumulatively open a perspective upon a most important alchemical substance.

PDM. xiv. 920-29.<sup>1</sup>

"Lees of wine: It is a white stone like galbanum. There is another one which is made into Lune. (This is) the way to know about it, whether it is genuine. If you grind a little with water and apply it to the skin of a man for a short time, it cuts the skin. Its name is Greek (is) 'foam of the Moon'.<sup>1</sup> It is a white stone."

The Leyden Papyrus<sup>2</sup> enlarges slightly upon essentially the same

text: "Lees of wine. It is a white stone like galbanum. There is another sort which is made into lime. The way to know that it is genuine is this. You grind a little with water; you rub it on the skin of a man for a short time; then it removes the skin. Its name in Greek<sup>2</sup> 'foam of the Moon'. It is a white stone. 'Foam of the Moon'; this is a white stone like glass when it is rubbed into fragments like orpiment." Verso col. IV 4-13, 17-18.

Here at a very early stage in the history of Alchemy, we see the emergence of the whiteness, which will feature so prominently in later texts. The *Turba Philosophorum* entered Europe from Arabic sources in the 10th Century, but undoubtedly is an accurate redaction of a much earlier source, retained by Syriac and Arabic archivists. It talks of a 'round white stone' which 'has within itself the 3 colours and the 4 natures and is born of a living thing'. In these 3 colours can be seen the simplest division of the Work - into black, white and red, or nigredo, albedo and rubedo. By terming this substance 'foam of the moon', the Papyri link the white stone with the silver feminine of the Sea, and with the sea-born Aphrodite.<sup>3</sup>

Just as the above passages balance between an obscure yet real ingredient, and a mystico-mythic aspect, so later texts offer similar recipes and definitions. That tireless accumulator of manuscripts and lore, Agrippa in Ch. VII of Volume I of his *Occult Philosophy*, describes Sophus - probably meershaum (sea froth) or sepiolate, one of the bisilicates, giving it as Air of earth stone, as were also sponge and pumice.<sup>4</sup> Meershaum (or Alcyonium) was also called Milesium (from Miletus in Asia Minor) - "Born upon the waves like a sort of porous earth spawned by the sea, it was then sun dried".

Salmordine (which was almost certainly the primitive form of asbestos- chysolite) came from the Ligurian Sea and medicinally was sub-divided into 5 types:

- 1) White - in powder form, for removing facial spots, or drunk to dissolve kidney stones.
- 2) Ireu milesium - burnt in wine to grow hair.
- 3) Black - taken with salt for toothache.
- 4) Blood salmordine - "It is said that the Anatolians will never wear this stone, because a good and evil are mingled in it."

As I have often had reason to emphasize, the Papyri and those later sources that ultimately derive from them make no distinction between the chemical, medicinal, magical and mystical - often combining several or all such layers of meaning projected upon a single source or subject. Thus Calid says to "take this stone that is no stone nor of the nature of stone... The stone is found in the head of a snake or dragon." Zosimos more exactly describes the stone as the head element itself. Nicholas Culpeper enters deeply into this same

strata of proto-alchemic thought when he offers the following remedy for dropsy (itself a profoundly lunar illness): "A water snake, a string being thrust through her tail, and she hung up, a vessel full of water being set underneath, into which she may thrust her head, after certain hours or days she will vomit up a stone, which being received in the vessel full of water, will drink it all up; which stone being tied about the middle of the one that hath the dropsie will dry up all the water." Such a snake-stone is also described by Pliny (an Anguinum - from anguis, a snake), worn as a talisman by the Druids. Formed from the poisonous spittle of serpents coiled together in the heat of summer, and gathered by moonlight. This same myth occurs in England concerning spindle-whorls - perforated glass or stone beads. These were said to be produced by a number of serpents hissing into a central space until their foam condensed into the serpent stone. A wide variety of these myths are detailed by M. Oldfield Howey in *The Encircled Serpent*.

What all of these disparate sources indicate is how so many approaches to the same matrix of images - deriving from sympathetic magic, medicinal herbalism as well as religious impulses - came to be employed by Alchemy to describe the essentially numinous quality of its work - whether mystical or chemical, as well as how early some of these images attain to their definitive state. My goal would be to encourage students of Alchemy to look beyond the European texts, and to search out the early near-eastern masters, who so often can offer clues to the evolution and eventual meaning to the texts that are our equivalent to the material athanor of the Alchemical Work.

"In the lunar sea there is a sponge planted having blood and sentience, in the manner of a tree that is rooted in the sea and moveth not from its place. If thou wouldst handle the plant, take a sickle to cut it with, but have good care that the blood floweth not out, for it is the poison of the Philosophers."<sup>5</sup>

#### Notes

1. The Greek magical Papyri in translation, Chicago 1986. 'foam of the Moon' is written both Greek and Egyptian.
2. The Leyden Papyrus pub. Dover 1974, etc.
3. Thus Ruland's *Lexicon* differentiates between male and female sponges, whose ashes were used as a styptic. He stresses that the sponge has soul and understanding, being "a zoophyte, neither animal nor vegetable, but having a third nature.
4. Jung, in a note on p. 134 of *Mysterium Coniunctionis*, says, "Spongia means not only sponge but also pumice stone, which has the same porous structure".
5. *Artis Auriferae*, Basel 1593. Vol I, ii, 'Allegoriae super librum Turbae.'

## The Forgotten English Roots of Rosicrucianism

Ron Heisler

Michael Maier, according to his own statement, first heard of the Rosicrucian brotherhood when in England. Leaving Prague in the spring of 1611, he spent some time in Amsterdam before, we can reckon, arriving in London in the winter of that year. Presumably it was in December 1611 that he wrote the Rosicrucian "greetings card", featuring a rose, which was sent to James I. The wording carries a very strong echo of a powerful speech in the play, *The Two Noble Kinsmen*, which bears the unmistakable imprint of William Shakespeare's unique poetic talent. This familiarity with the Bard's play is unlikely to have been purely accidental, particularly, as I have shown elsewhere, Maier had a significant connection with Shakespeare's circle of friends.<sup>1</sup> The question inevitably arises, therefore, of what clear evidence exists to indicate that the traditional Germanocentric reading of the history of early Rosicrucianism - which depicts the movement as mainly gestating in the strivings of J.V. Andreae's personal circle - oversimplifies the movement's origins to the point of gross distortion?

Francis Thynne, whose cousin was Sir John Thynne of Longleat House, Wiltshire, was born c. 1545 and died in 1608. Not a literary figure of either the first or second rank, he is remarkably interesting, however, for the ethos his erratic life and interests evoke. Entering Lincoln's Inn in 1561, he made there a life-long friend in Thomas Egerton, who later rose to positions of the highest importance in both law and state. Improvidence and mental illness seem to have afflicted Thynne in his early years. At the end of 1573 he was imprisoned in the White Lion at Southwark for a debt of £100, his precious books being sold off. His pleas for help to Lord Burleigh survive among the Salisbury letters. After two years he was released from confinement, coming under the hospitality of cousin Sir John at Longleat. Sir John's first marriage, incidentally, was to the sister of Sir Thomas Gresham,

a masonic Grand Master in the south, says James Anderson. In 1602 Francis was to offer a long discourse on the admirals of England to Charles Howard, the Lord Admiral, another Grand Master.<sup>2</sup>

Thynne's manuscripts are numerous, and they reveal a man who not only was a heraldic enthusiast, becoming Lancaster herald, but was an ardent delver into alchemical texts, which exist to this day in the British Library, in Longleat House and in the Ashmole collection in the Bodleian.<sup>3</sup> At Longleat are to be found Ripley's *Compendium of Alchemy*, Thomas Norton's *Ordinal of Alchemy*, the obscure *Stella Alchymiae*, dated 1384, of "Joanne Bübelem de Anglia" and a disputation between the father and son, Merline and Marian, concerning the marriage between Sylos and Anul (Sol and Luna).<sup>4</sup> A member of the Society of Antiquaries, Thynne was a hack historian, who worked with John Stow and Abraham Fleming for the editor John Hooker in expanding and revising Holinshed's famous *Chronicle*. Thynne's "A Treatise of the Lord Cobhams" was left out by order of the Privy Council.

Thynne's occultic preoccupations become very evident in the "Homo Animal Sociale", a manuscript treatise, dated 20th October 1578, which he presented to Lord Burleigh.<sup>5</sup> He discusses Egyptian hieroglyphics and the Druids, the "notes, signes, tokens, caracters or signes of the voyce whereby there are made generall differences of soundes", and, with evident relish, kabbalah, the "most profounde knowledge" being lost to us, as "the learned Cabaliste Mr Dee" observed in his book "entituled monas heroglyphica". He tells how Hebrew letters were unwritten before the "sonnes of Adam", who before "the generall floode were the Junitors of the same, for the sonnes of Sethe as speketh Josephus did write on the pillers all the knowledge of the celestiaall things". He also refers to "the confused Kingdome of trayters[?] at the Towere of Babilone" - the masons who built badly and were deprived of the original pure tongue.

Thynne's poetry is far from great; but its content is fascinating and revealing. His *Emblemes and Epigrammes* were written out c. 1600. "White heares" is a description of some sort of society meeting at the Rose tavern :

"At the Rose within newgate, ther friendlie did meete,  
fower of my ould frends, ech other for to greete:"<sup>6</sup>

Thynne's poem "Societie" is suspiciously ambiguous: we are never quite sure whether he is lauding mutuality and social bonds in society in general, or whether he is talking of a very specific, very exclusive fraternity - a club. Dated December 20 1600, the poem is dedicated to Sir Thomas Egerton, Lord Keeper of the Great Seal. The

poet tells of,

"The purple Rose which first Damasco bredd,  
adorn'd with cullor gratefull to the sight"

He links the image of a society to the image of the rose:

"Soe two faire dowries which mann doth enioye -  
true perfect love, and suer fidelitie -  
firmelie preserve humane societie,  
their friends assisting in ech hard annoye,  
when want of ech brings noe securitie;  
both which, this damask rose doth well unfoulde,  
as honest hart, which fayth and love doth houlde."

Thynne concludes:

"soe our societie, without love and fayth  
is never perfect, as true reason sayth,  
ffor where is perfect love, there trustie fayth is found,  
and where assured trust doth dwell, there must needs  
abound."<sup>7</sup>

So from all this we have learned that there was a group of friends meeting at the Rose Tavern in Newgate, which almost surely included Egerton. The damask rose was their emblem. From Thynne's papers, we can guess that one of the topics their conversations regularly ran to was alchemy. But that London had at least one tavern called the Rose is unsurprising, the rose being perhaps the most popular symbol of Tudor England.

A little more need be said on Sir Thomas Egerton, who eventually became Lord Chancellor. A man of considerable intellect, he ceaselessly encouraged young men of the highest calibre. In the 1590s he was a vigorous promoter of the career of Sir Francis Bacon. John Donne the poet became his secretary. Another of his secretaries, George Carew, was presented with a copy of *Arcana arcanissima* by Michael Maier and probably provided hospitality to Maier whilst serving as ambassador in France. In 1610, when Egerton's son James was killed in a duel, Robert Fludd and his servant were interrogated by a law officer for the light they could throw on the affair. Presumably Fludd had been in attendance on the dying man. Egerton's third wife, the shrewish Alice, was the widow of Ferdinando, 5th Earl of Derby, whom Professor Honigmann argues with some trenchancy had been an early patron of the Bard. A fierce Protestant, if not quite a Puritan, Egerton — originally a good friend

to the Earl of Essex before his fall from grace — was to bind himself strongly in alliance with William Herbert, 3rd Earl of Pembroke, and the Earl of Southampton, both famous patrons of Shakespeare.<sup>8</sup>

The Bard's poem *The Phoenix and the Turtle* was published in *Love's Martyr* (1601). Dedicated to Sir John Salusbury of Lleweni, many of the poems relate to Salusbury's marriage. Honigmann skilfully argues that Sir John had been an early patron of Shakespeare and that the Bard's poem had been occasioned before 1590. Now it happens that Sir Robert Salusbury of Rug, Sir John's cousin, on contemplating his imminent departure from this world, asked Sir Thomas Egerton to become guardian to his son. Honigmann concludes that during his last illness, Sir Robert "could probably be considered to be in the hands" of the faction in the county of Denbighshire led by Sir John of Lleweni.<sup>9</sup> The Egerton of the Newgate "Rose" society, we can surmise, was on the most intimate terms with Shakespeare's best known patrons.

We must now seek for the antecedents of the crucial Rosicrucian scene in *The Two Noble Kinsmen*, which depicts a ceremony in the temple of Diana at which a rose falls from its tree as a sign to the vestal virgin Emilia that she may marry.<sup>10</sup> The origin of this scene is to be found in the story of Palamon and Arcite as related in "the knight's tale" in Chaucer's *Canterbury Tales*. Chaucer tells how,

"The fires flamed up upon the altar fair  
 And clear while Emily was thus in prayer,  
 But all at once she saw a curious sight,  
 For suddenly one fire quenched its light  
 And then rekindled, as she gazed in doubt  
 The other fire as suddenly went right out;  
 As it was quenched it made a whistling sound  
 As of wet branches burning on the ground.  
 Then, from the faggot's tip, there ran a flood  
 Of many drops that had the look of blood."

(Coghill translation)

Diana the huntress appears and explains to the bewildered Emily that,

" ... the fires of sacrifice that glow  
 Upon my altar shall, before thou go,  
 Make plain thy destiny in this for ever."

The seeds of the idea of associating Emilia with the imagery of the rose are also planted by Chaucer:

“... one morning in the month of May  
 Young Emily, that fairer was of mien  
 Than is the lily on its stalk of green,  
 And fresher in her colouring that strove  
 With early roses in a May-time grove  
 - I know not which was fairer of the two -”

Shakespeare's ritual scene has also somewhat more immediate precursors in the tilt yard entertainments that constituted such a prominent feature of the annual round of the Elizabethan court. Numerous descriptions of these have survived in print and in manuscript; many more have been irretrievably lost.

Fortunately, we have a good account of the 1575 events at Woodstock. We are told that Hemetes the hermit went to the temple of Venus at Paphos and was stricken blind there as a punishment for maintaining divided allegiances: he had been a delighter in learning as well as a servant of love. Edward Dyer, alchemist and possible freemason, whom years after his death was reputed to have been a Rosicrucian of sorts (he seems to have had a connection with the Rosicrucian Cornelis Drebbel), composed the “Song in the Oak” for the entertainment, for it is ascribed to “Mr Dier” in a manuscript now lingering in the Bodleian Library. It has been speculated that Hemetes' tale may in fact be an allegorical projection of Dyer himself. What is certain is that according to a letter from the autumn of 1575, Dyer stayed on at Woodstock after the court had left.<sup>11</sup>

Our next relevant description turns up in Sir William Segar's *Honor, Military and Civill* (1602). Segar's brother, Francis, it is worth noting, was to serve the great patron of the Rosicrucians, Moritz, Landgrave of Hessen-Kassel, in the capacities of captain, counsellor and English agent. William Segar paints the picture on Accession Day (17th November) 1590 at Westminster. Her Majesty “did suddenly heare a musicke so sweete and secret, as euery one theareat greatly maruelled .... the earth as it were opening, there appeared a Pauilion made of white Taffata, .... being in proportion like vnto the sacred Temple of the Virgins Vestall. This Temple seemed to consist vpon pillars of Pourferry, arched like vnto a Church, ... Also, on the one side there stood an Altar .... Before the doors of this Temple there stood a crowned Pillar, embraced by an Eglantine tree, whereon hangd a Table” An eglantine is a variety of rose with five petals (the sweet-brier). Sir Henry Lee, says Segar in describing more of the ceremony, “himselfe disarmed” and “offered vp his armour at the foot of her maiesties Crowned Pillar ....”<sup>12</sup> The equation had been made between Elizabeth I and a goddess.

Glynne Wickham has noted the strong connection between *A Midsummer Night's Dream* and *The Two Noble Kinsmen* - how

characters in one text turn up again in the other. He remarks, "How singular .... that when Shakespeare was again called upon to write a play in celebration of a marriage, he should have chosen another aspect of the same story of Theseus and Hyppolita, and begun it at the very point where the earlier play had ended". Wickham then acutely observes that Hymen's song at the opening of the *Kinsmen* play echoes the sentiments of Oberon's song at the end of the *Dream*.<sup>13</sup>

But when was the Rosicrucian play written? To answer this we must first date the *Dream*. Professor Honigmann comprehensively explores the question of for what marriage the latter was run up and comes down in favour of the Derby marriage - William Stanley, 6th Earl, to Elizabeth Vere - which took place on January 26 1595.<sup>14</sup> The *Dream* may have already played on stage a little while and been polished up somewhat for the Derby wedding, with some topical allusions fed into the text to enliven the occasion. If the writing of the *Kinsmen* text followed that of the *Dream*, we are probably talking about the second half of 1594 as the moment of composition. We have a major clue at hand, however, in Henslowe's diary. Philip Henslowe was the most successful theatrical impresario of his day, and his diary contains a section for 1594 when entries cover the performances of both the Lord Admiral's Men and the Lord Chamberlain's, the Bard's company. Whether the companies acted together in effect, or performed separately, we cannot tell from these entries. For the 17th September 1594 Henslowe wrote "ne - Rd at palamon & arsett ljs".<sup>15</sup> "Ne" has attracted much comment over the years in Henslowe's usage. Most commonly, it is taken to be an abbreviation for "new" - to represent a premiere performance. Could this premiere of September 1594 have been of the Bard's original text for *The Two Noble Kinsmen*? An older play of *Palamon and Arcite* certainly existed. As far back as 1566 the now lost play by Richard Edwardes, Master of the Children of the Chapel, had been performed at Christ Church Hall, Oxford.<sup>16</sup>

There is a second clue, whose import is equally difficult to determine. The *Kinsmen* text includes a ballad, "The George Aloe". On March 19 1611 there was entered on the Stationers' Register, in the name of the publisher Richard Jones, "the seconde parte of the George Aloe and the Swiftestake, beinge both ballades". We can search in vain through the Register for anything called the "first part of the George Aloe" - or the "George Aloe", for that matter. However, on January 14 1595 an entry was made in the Register for the publisher Thomas Creede (who published the first Quarto of King Lear): "the Saylers ioye, to the tune of 'heigh ho hollidaie'". In the manuscript of the Percy Papers several decades later a ballad was

entered "from an ancient black-letter [printed] copy in Ballard's collection", with the following description: "The Seamans only Delight: Shewing the brave fight between the George Aloe, the Sweepstakes, and certain French Men at sea. Tune, The Sailors Joy, etc."<sup>17</sup> Our 1595 Register entry, it would seem, is none other than the first part of the "George Aloe". The closeness of this January 1595 date to Henslowe's "ne" entry of September 1594 adds weight to the claims of Henslowe's *Palamon and Arcite* to be the torso from which *The Two Noble Kinsmen* was quarried.

There is a further riddle tied up with the ballad of "The George Aloe". The music was composed by the great lutenist, John Dowland. Diana Poulton identified this music in three surviving manuscripts: in William Trumbull's Lute Book, now in the British Library, where it probably was written in after 1613 at Brussels, where Trumbull was the English envoy; in the Euing Lute Book of c. 1600, now at Glasgow University; and in a Cambridge University manuscript containing three copies of the piece, convincingly dated at c. 1595-1600.<sup>18</sup> Those who claim *The Two Noble Kinsmen* as a definite late work of the Bard have scrupulously refrained from tackling the question of the early date of Dowland's song in relation to dating the play. Dowland seems to have associated with the Bard in the 1590s, if we are to believe some manuscript notes by Sir William Oldys written in the mid-18th century. Oldys comments that "Shakespeare was deeply delighted with the singing of Dowland the Lutenist, but Spencer's deep conceits he thought surpassed others. See in his Sonnets *The Friendly Concord*. That John Dowland and Thos. Morley are said to have set several of these Sonnets to musicke ..."<sup>19</sup> That the Bard and Dowland, the brightest stars in their respective firmaments, knew each other well would not be surprising. Both shared an illustrious patron in Ferdinando, Lord Strange. Dowland's "Ferdinando Earle of Darby, his Galliard" and "Lord Strangs March" survive to this day.<sup>20</sup>

Dowland's personality is almost as puzzling as Shakespeare's, although at least with Dowland we have some personal letters to refer to. Despite the massive biographical and musical profile given in Diana Poulton's well known study, and subsequent analyses published in *Early Music* and elsewhere, I believe there is a hitherto unrecognized pattern running through his life, whose unravelling can throw substantial light on the *mentalité* in which thrived one of the leading exponents of Renaissance melancholy. Dowland's esotericism has already attracted some critical attention; but one facet of his esoteric life has up to now been completely overlooked: the recurrent interaction of his career with the lives of personalities conspicuously associated with Rosicrucianism.

We must first consider Dowland's illustrious patron, Moritz,

Landgrave of Hessen-Kassel. Brought up a Lutheran, Moritz converted to Calvinism in 1604. Marburg, which he established as Germany's first Calvinist university, with its brilliant chemistry and medical faculties became the powerhouse of academic Rosicrucianism in Europe. It had a particularly close association with Exeter College, the only Calvinist college at Oxford. Bruce T. Moran's researches have uncovered the systematic way in which Moritz organized and controlled an extensive hermetic alchemical circle focussed on what were probably Europe's best laboratories at Kassel, some of whom were leading Rosicrucians. The Danish scientist Wormius discussed in a letter of the 18th August 1616 the rumour that Moritz was a Rosicrucian. On the 17th April 1604 Moritz wrote a letter mentioning the livery "made in the form of a rose" worn by many young gentlemen at Kassel and remarking that it was "plutost signe d'une bonne amitié entre eux, que de quelques autre conséquence[s]." <sup>21</sup> Karl Widemann, a physician, was to send Moritz cosmological Rosicrucian writings some years later. <sup>22</sup> Finally, it is hard to believe that the first editions of the Rosicrucian manifestoes could have been printed in so small a town as Kassel without Moritz's explicit knowledge and consent.

An Anglophile, who assiduously pursued connections with England and maintained a company of English "comedians" at his court for years, Moritz was in a strong position to steer the marriage of Prince Frederick of the Rhine with James I's daughter, Elizabeth, an event which finally took place at the start of 1613. This marriage was intended to cement the alliance of German Protestant princes with England against Hapsburg supremacy in Europe. A skilful public relations campaign was mounted to promote the claims of Prince Frederick for Elizabeth's hand, and I would suggest that we look at the book, the *Varietie of Lute-Lessons* of 1610, in this context. Edited allegedly by Dowland's son, Robert, it features a pavan attributed to Moritz himself — although Anthony Rooley believes it is good enough to have been the product of John Dowland's genius. I am sure that its aim was to spread Moritz's "fame" at the English court. We learn in the book that the first "Pavin" was "made by the most magnificent and famous Prince Mauritius, Landgrave of Hessen, and from him sent to my father, with this inscription following, and written with his GRACES owne hand." This was surely a "pièce d'occasion", a minor political act in itself.

Dowland's relationship with Moritz went back to the 1590s. On March 21 1595 Moritz wrote to the Prince of Brunswick comparing Dowland's ability as a lutenist with those of Gregorio Howet. Dowland was still working for Moritz when Henry Noel wrote to him on December 1 1596. On February 9 1598 the Landgrave wrote to Dowland offering the post at his court the musician had relinquished

a year before.<sup>23</sup> After that nothing further is known of their relationship until the music book of 1610.

Of Michael Maier, I have said much elsewhere. To my earlier comments should be added the thought that he most probably served as an intermediary with Dowland, for it was about the time of his first English visit that he became personal physician to the Landgrave. One thing is pretty certain. In the autumn of 1613 there must have been some interaction between Maier and the dedicatee of the *Varietie of Lute-Lessons*, Sir Thomas Monson. Sir Thomas Overbury, whose murder was to rock society at its highest levels, had been gaoled in the Tower at the behest of James I, whose governor (Master of the Armoury) was Sir Thomas Monson. Traditionally, the historians of the Overbury affair have assumed that Overbury was attended in the Tower by the physician Sir Turquet de Mayerne, who signed himself "Mayernus". A careful scrutiny of letters in the British Library shows Overbury referring to the physician "Mayerus" on several occasions, which is the way Maier signed himself. Independent evidence exists to confirm that Maier was in England in May 1613.<sup>24</sup> James had insisted that no doctor see Overbury without his personal approval, and it is inconceivable that Maier could have got to Overbury without going through Monson. We can envisage, perhaps, a friendship circle consisting of Monson — a fanatical music lover — Maier and Dowland.

If we cast our minds back to the probable premiering of the *Ur-Two Noble Kinsmen* in September 1594 and the first mention of Dowland's appearance at the Kassel court in late March 1595, we have good grounds to conjecture that it was Dowland himself who first brought news of *Palamon and Arcite*, to which he had contributed, to the ears of Moritz the Landgrave. No-one better, apart from the Bard himself, could have explained the play's esoteric rose symbolism, one would have thought. Other than Shakespeare, no creative mind of the period invoked the imagery of the rose so frequently as Dowland.

But what of *The Two Noble Kinsmen* as we know it, in which Shakespeare's evident contribution runs to no more than perhaps forty percent of the playing time - one hour of the 150 minutes it ran to in the recent Royal Shakespeare Company production? The surviving script is a hodge-podge that must have been assembled in a hurry. The joins certainly show. It even borrows its morris dance scene from *The Masque of Grays Inn and Inner Temple*, written by Fletcher's usual partner, Francis Beaumont, and presented earlier in 1613 in celebration of the Palatinate marriage. Beaumont and Fletcher had made three admiring references to Dowland in *The Knight of the Burning Pestle* (1607?). Fletcher alone made a reference to him in *The Bloody Brothers* (1617) and a further one — in collaboration, it is

usually thought, with Philip Massinger - in *The Fair Maid of the Inns* (1626).<sup>25</sup> This all tends to suggest an ongoing friendship between Fletcher and Dowland at a time when Dowland's contemporary reputation in England was on a definite slide. Could Dowland have actually been the organizing genius responsible for getting the King's Men to take *Palamon and Arcite* out of the prompt copy chest where it lay gathering dust and to commission a rewrite at the nimble hands of John Fletcher? We should not rule out the possibility.

Why did the play's "George Aloe" music get into the Trumbull Lute Book? I doubt it was for purely musical reasons, for William Trumbull seems to have had Rosicrucian associations. A friend of his, acting as secretary to the English ambassador at Paris in the years 1611-13, was Thomas Floyde. On December 15 1609 Floyde wrote to Trumbull that "Dr. Lloyd, my brother Jeffreys and my cousin Yonge have often remembered you." On February 23 1610 Floyde concluded a letter with "My good friend and yours, my brother Jeffreys, Doctor Floud, my cousin Floud, my cousin Yonge and myself .... kiss your hands." One presumes that "Dr. Lloyd" was "Doctor Floud"; and I suspect strongly that "Doctor Floud" was none other than Dr Robert Fludd, the most famous of English Rosicrucians.<sup>26</sup>

By January 17 1610 a relationship between Trumbull and Moritz of Hessen-Kassel was well established, for on that day Moritz commended Dr Mosanus "unto you and your favour." And on October 17 1611 Moritz wrote to thank Trumbull for the kindness he had shown to his son Otto at Brussels.<sup>27</sup>

Trumbull's daughter Elizabeth married George Rudolph Weckherlin (1584-1653), a distinguished German poet, who was appointed an under-secretary of state at Whitehall in 1624 and was a keen Palatinist. Weckherlin's diary reveals that Weckherlin knew Robert Fludd and bought a house from him. It also gives the chronology of some mysterious transactions between the poet and Lewis Ziegler, agent to Lord Craven, the main financial backer of Elizabeth, Queen of Bohemia, which appear to partly relate to Weckherlin's initiation into Rosicrucianism.<sup>28</sup>

The poet's grand-son, Sir William Trumbull (1639-1716), was a devoted friend of Alexander Pope's about the year 1706, and quite uninformed of an earlier Rosicrucian affinity in the family, it has been suggested that Pope's knowledge of Rosicrucianism was garnered through this particular friendship. Sir William was said to have received his early instruction in Latin and French from Weckherlin.<sup>29</sup>

Another manuscript collection of lute pieces with Rosicrucian implications is that belonging to Philip Hainhofer, which is held today in the library at Wolfenbuettel. Hainhofer (1578-1647), who

came from Augsburg, was well known both as a diplomat and as an art connoisseur. His manuscript compilation appears to have been begun in 1603 or 1604. That it contains three unique items attributed to Dowland suggests a personal link between Hainhofer — or his transcriber — and Dowland at some point in time.<sup>30</sup> Daniel Stolcius produced two of the classic Rosicrucian emblematic texts in *The Pleasure Garden of Chemistry* (1624) and *The Hermetic Garden* (1627), the first largely derived from engraved plates originally printed in works by the Rosicrucians Michael Maier and J.D. Mylius. Stolcius, who studied at Oxford after fleeing from Bohemia in 1620, dedicated *The Hermetic Garden* to Hainhofer, who was described as counsellor to the Duke of Pomerania. Coincidentally, the younger Dowland, Robert, spent time working at the court of the Duke of Wolgast in Pomerania, where he asked permission to return to England on August 30 1623.<sup>31</sup> Stolcius was indebted to Hainhofer, who "inspired me with your gentle conversation, even to the extent of thoroughly showing me your storehouse of philosophy [science and alchemy], the like of which I have never seen in my travels ..." <sup>32</sup> Hainhofer signed the album amicorum of the Rosicrucian Joachim Morsius and — years later — was mentioned in a letter from the Herzog August von Braunschweig to the greatest Rosicrucian (or ex-Rosicrucian) of all, Johann Valentin Andreae. Hainhofer even owned a manuscript copy of one of the manifestoes, the *Fama*, taken from an early draft that must have been in existence before 1613.<sup>33</sup>

Henry Peacham (1578-1644) was a prolific literary jack of all trades, who even published the occasional musical composition of his own.<sup>34</sup> His drawing of a scene from Shakespeare's *Titus Andronicus* is the earliest illustration of a Shakespeare play known. Done in 1595, it found its way to the library of Longleat House, the temporary home of Francis Thynne. Peacham's friendship with John Dowland was clearly a strong one. He dedicated an emblem to Dowland in *Minerva Britanna* (1612) and mentions their friendship in *The Compleat Gentlemen* of 1622. Peacham also dedicated an emblem to the Landgrave Moritz in *Minerva Britanna*, to which he appended a marginal note: "This most noble Prince beside his admirable knowledge in all learning, & the languages, hath excellent skil in musick. Mr Dowland hath many times shewed me 10 or 12 several sets of Songes for his Chappel of his owne composing."<sup>35</sup>

Could Peacham have known Michael Maier, introduced through the agency of John Dowland? His *Minerva Britanna*, presumed to have been published at the beginning of 1612, having been entered on the Stationers' Register on August 9 1611, contains a surprising nugget, which evokes recollection of Michael Maier's Christmas "greetings card" of 1611 to James I as well as the Bard's great rose

speech in the *Kinsmen* play. In a poem dedicated to John Dowland, Peacham writes:

"Heere, Philomel, in silence sits alone,  
In depth of winter, on the bared brier,  
Whereas the Rose, had once her beautie shoven;  
Which Lordes, and Ladies, did so much desire:  
But fruitles now, in winters frost and snow,  
It doth despis'd and unregarded grow."

It is poor verse and worse syntax, but all the same the poem seems to draw nourishment from Shakespeare's explication of why "a rose is best":

"It is the very emblem of a maid:  
For when the west wind courts her gently  
How modestly she blows and paints the sun  
With her chaste blushes! When the north comes near her,  
Rude and impatient, then, like chastity,  
She locks her beauties in her bud again  
And leaves him to base briars." (T.N.K. II.ii.)

Was Peacham an actual Rosicrucian or a member of a rose society? The question is unanswerable, but prompted by a provocative passage in his posthumously published *The Truth of our Times* (1638). He describes a tavern tradition: "in many places, as well in England, as the Low Countries, they have over their Tables a rose painted, and what is spoken under the Rose, must not be revealed; the reason is this; The Rose being sacred to Venus, whose amours and stolen sports that they might never bee revealed, her sonne Cupid would needes dedicate to Harpocrates, the god of Silence".<sup>36</sup>

Moritz of Hessen-Kassel, *The Two Noble Kinsmen*, the evidence of Henry Peacham, William Trumbull and Philip Hainhofer, the hermeticist tendency of many of Dowland's greatest melancholic compositions: — all these pointers combined tell us of a man in close, knowing proximity to that typical Baroque expression of Protestant mysticism: the Rosicrucian movement. And that movement claimed its own. Alongside J.V. Andreae, Fludd and Maier, Johann Daniel Mylius ranked as one of the most eminent Rosicrucian writers. Son-in-law of Johannes Hartmann, the great professor of chemistry at Marburg University, Mylius eventually became Moritz's personal physician. Robert Fludd prescribed pills according to his prescriptions in England. In 1620 Mylius published his *Thesaurus* at Frankfurt. No printed copies appear to have survived. But there is a manuscript copy

in Germany, in which Mylius pays tribute to Dowland by featuring his "Farewell" on page one under the heading "Grammatica illustris Douland." "A Fancy" by Dowland turns up on page eighteen. Undoubtedly Dowland was the favourite composer of the Rosicrucians.<sup>37</sup>

Our story is almost complete and it would be timely for me to set it in a broader framework. The symbolism of the rose had evolved into a rich tradition in the culture of Tudor England, and began to develop new ideological forms in late Elizabethan times in response to court politics (tilt day entertainments) and the fashionable hermetic and alchemical ideas that the quickening English Renaissance was disseminating. The literary culture ran in tandem with the scientific-esoteric revolution. Thus Shakespeare's *Palamon and Arcite* paralleled the formation in London of Francis Thynne's "Rose" society — almost certainly an alchemical talking-shop. Alchemical societies named "the Rose" are known to have been founded on the Continent a few years later, as in France, probably in imitation of the London society, whilst Moritz of Hessen-Kassel bragged of a society at Kassel wearing "the livery" of a rose as early as 1604 and a brotherhood of the "Rose" apparently existed at Tuebingen in 1607.<sup>38</sup>

The central role of England in the Protestant struggle with Catholicism and the Hapsburgs of Spain and Austria had long been appreciated. England and Wales constituted one state, and a wealthy one at that; German Protestantism was divided over many states, most of them relatively impoverished. It was therefore almost inevitable, because of the dynamic of Elizabethan England, that fresh winds generated in Britain would sweep abroad, changing the climate for the torpid German states and their mainly timid princes. The sudden brilliant outpouring of the English drama that began in the 1580s was to have unexpected political consequences overseas. By the mid-1590s, English actors — usually called "comedians" — were touring widely on the Continent. This unprecedented cultural offensive spread English influence and ideas in Germany to enthusiastically receptive audiences. Moritz of Hessen-Kassel's Anglophilism led him at this time to set up a permanent company of English actors at his court; although drawn mainly from the Lord Admiral's Men, some of the principals had previously acted in Shakespeare's productions.<sup>39</sup> With the musicians who so often accompanied them, including the young Dowland, they were the couriers of English ideas as much off-stage, we can assume, as on-stage. At least two plays with strong masonic content were acted abroad by the English companies; one for certain was performed at Kassel in the winter of 1606/7.<sup>40</sup> Whether the choice of these dramas

reflected a widening interest, expressed even abroad, in matters masonic, I cannot say. But, as I show in a work currently in course of completion, speculative freemasonry was a far more vigorous plant in late Elizabethan England than had previously been suspected. And this very fact, combined with the thriving "underground" culture of the Family of Love, implies that a fully institutionalized "secret society" tradition had already broken ground that the Rosicrucian brotherhood, in process of establishment well before the publication of the manifestoes in 1614, would seek to occupy also.

There has been a tendency to view the early history of Rosicrucianism through a religious prism to the exclusion of a variety of seemingly autonomous cultural influences — such as the literary and musical — which moulded the imaginative arena in which the movement took flight. What I hope to have demonstrated is that these influences have their place — and their importance; and that to understand the preliminaries to Rosicrucianism proper we should think in terms of a dialectic between the capitals of London and Kassel that spanned all of two decades.

## Notes

1. See R. Heisler "Michael Maier and England" *Hermetic Journal* 1989.
2. *Dictionary of National Biography. Calendar of State Papers (Dom.) 1601-1603* p. 165.
3. Brit. Lib. Add. MS. 11, 388. Bodleian Library Ashmole MS. 766 fs. 2-88 ("Discourse uppon the Philosophers Armes").
4. *Historic MSS Commission 3rd Report Appendix* p. 186.
5. Brit. Lib. MS Lansdowne 27 fs. 70-5.
6. F. Thynne *Emblemes and Epigrammes* ed. F.J. Furnivall (1876). Early English Texts Series Old Series 64 p. 75.
7. *Ibid.* p. 25.
8. *Dic. of Nat. Biog.* Public Record Office S.P. 46/75 fs. 18, 20-1, 78d.
9. E.A.J. Honigmann *Shakespeare: the 'lost years'* p. 96.
10. See R. Heisler "Shakespeare and the Rosicrucians" *Hermetic Journal* 33 (Autumn 1986).
11. *The Queenes Maiesties Entertainment at Woodstock* ed. A.W. Pollard (1910) p. 87.
12. Sir W. Segar *Honor, Military and Civill ...*(1602) pp.197-8.
13. G. Wickham "The Two Noble Kinsmen or A Midsummer Night's Dream, Part II?" p. 179 in *The Elizabethan Theatre VII* ed. G.R. Hibbard.
14. E.A.J. Honigmann *op. cit.* pp. 150-53.

15. R.A. Foakes & R.T. Rickert *Henalowe's Diary* (1961) pp.24-5.
16. R. Dutton *Mastering the Revels* (1991) pp. 38-9, 58.
17. *Transcription of the Registers of the Stationers' Company 1554-1640 AD.* ed. E. Arber vol. II p. 317. *The English and Scottish Popular Ballads* ed. F.J. Child (1898) pp. 133-5, 285.
18. D. Poulton *John Dowland* p. 172.
19. Oldys' notes are found inscribed in the British Library copy of Gerard Langbaine *Account of the English Dramatic Poets* (1691) (Pressmark C.45d.15) vol. II f. 455. The poem in question, although originally attributed to the Bard, was shortly afterwards published in a book of Richard Barnfield's poetry. It is so good, it is better than anything else that Barnfield wrote, and is good enough to be by Shakespeare. Barnfield so regularly betrays Shakespeare's influence in his writings that he almost certainly was a personal friend. Perhaps the poem was the Bard's gift to him, which he was permitted to sign as his own.
20. D. Poulton *op. cit.* pp. 157, 168-9.
21. B.T. Moran "Privilege, communication, and chemistry: the hermetic alchemical circle of Moritz of Hessen-Kassel" *Ambix* 32 (Nov. 1985). R. Heisler "Rosicrucianism: The First Blooming in Britain" *Hermetic Journal* 1989 p. 30.
22. B.T. Moran *op. cit.* p. 117.
23. Personal communication from Anthony Rooley. D. Poulton *op. cit.* pp. 34, 47, 50.
24. See R. Heisler "Michael Maier and England" *Hermetic Journal* 1989.
25. For most of these references see D. Poulton *op. cit.* p. 132.
26. *His. MSS Com. Marquess of Devonshire MSS* vol II pp. 201, 249.
27. *Ibid.* vol. II p. 218; III 1). 154.
28. On Weckherlin see *Dic. of Nat. Biog.* and L.W. Forster *Rudolf Weckherlin* (1944). The diaries (now in British Library) have entries for Ziegler in 1636 and 1637. Relevant entries are given in R. Heisler "Robert Fludd: A Picture in Need of Expansion" *Hermetic Journal* 1989 p.143.
29. On Pope's friendship see Maynard Mack *Alexander Pope* p.104, etc.
30. Herzog-August-Bibliothek, Wolfenbuettel. Guelf. 18.7 Aug.2. D. Poulton *op. cit.* p. 452.
31. *Ibid.* p. 86.
32. Useful references to Hainhofer are in H. Schneider *Joachim Morsius und sein Kreis* (1929). Regrettably, the British Library lacks a copy of this work. W.E. Peuckert *Die Rosenkretzer* p.173.
33. *Johann Valentin Andrae*, Bibliotheca Philosophica Hermetica, Amsterdam (1986) p. 41.
34. R.R. Cawley *Henry Peacham* (1971). *Dic. of Nat. Biog.*

35. E.K. Chambers "The First Illustration to 'Shakespeare'" *The Library* IV (1924-5) pp. 326-30. Dover Wilson "'Titus Andronicus' on the Stage in 1595" *Shakespeare Quarterly* I (1948) pp. 17-27. H. Peacham *Minerva Britannia* (1612) pp. 74, 101.
36. H. Peacham *The Truth of our Times* (1638) pp. 173-4. Peacham's Rosicrucian affiliations are underlined by the epigrams in Thalia's (1620): there are epigrams to Dowland, Ben Jonson and John Selden.
37. D. Poulton *op. cit.* pp. 485, 494.
38. The Tuebingen society is mentioned by L. Keller "Akademian, Logen u. Kammern des 17. und 18. Jahrhundert" *Comenius-Gesellschaft* vol. xx (1912) p. 17. At Amsterdam, a chamber of rhetoric had been active since the 15th century called De Eglantier — the Eglantine.
39. The indispensable work on English actors abroad is Jerzy Limon's *Gentlemen of a Company. English Players in Central and Eastern Europe, 1590-1660* (1985).
40. "Fortunatus" — obviously *Old Fortunatus*, which featured King Athelstan of masonic legend — was performed at Kassel in 1606/7. Earlier, in the 1590s, *The Four Sons of Aymon* was being performed abroad, as at Amsterdam.

Michael Maier's  
*Intellectual cantilenae on the  
resurrection  
of the Phoenix*

Mike Dickman

Like<sup>1</sup> his English contemporary, Robert Fludd, a man with whom he had much in common and on whom he probably had a fair amount of influence<sup>2</sup> Michael Maier (1568- 1622) was a genuine "Renaissance Man".

Son of a civil servant in the duchy of Holstein, he was born in Rendsburg in 1568, and from earliest youth on showed a highly uncommon degree of intelligence. In 1592, while at the University of Frankfurt, he obtained from Rudolph II the title of Poeta Laureatus Caesareus for a poem on an anagram of his own name, and was "magister" at the University of Bologna in 1596, but left the same year to receive his doctorate in medicine from the University of Basle for a brilliant thesis presented on the subject of epilepsy.

Rejoining the Emperor in Prague in the capacities of personal physician and private secretary, he soon became part of the intimate imperial circle and was covered in honours by Rudolph, who elevated him to the position of Count Palatine. Member of the Imperial Consistory and occasional envoy to foreign courts, he was sent to England in 1611 on a mission to King James I (at which time he also presented the King and Prince Henry with elaborate Christmas greetings of his own invention<sup>3</sup>). He was present, too, as one of the Elector Palatine's "gentlemen" at Prince Henry's funeral in London. The fact of his wide travels has led to a belief that he might have been one of the Emperor's secret agents.

After Rudolph's forced abdication in favour of his brother in 1611, Maier travelled to Saxe, Leipzig and Mulhouse, where he met with Landgrave Mauritz von Hesse and the Prince Christian von Anhalt, both of whom shared his passion for alchemy and music as well as

supporting, as did he, the mystical and political goals of the Fraternity of the Rose-Cross.

Together they would support the adventure of Frederic V, brother-in-law to James I of England and Elector Palatine, who, as chosen king of Bohemia, was to reign for hardly a year.

After Rudolph's death in 1612, Maier took refuge in England where he remained for four years, mastering English, translating Norton's *Ordinall of Alchemy* and composing his *Arcana Arcanissima* and possibly several other of the texts published by de Bry and Jennis in Oppenheim and Frankfurt between 1616 and 1618.

Maier was one of the Rosicrucian movement's staunchest supporters and he wrote several defenses of it of a distinctly alchemical stamp, as well as rallying more than a few of its better-known supporters to its cause. He was also involved in much of the underground political movement in 17th Century Europe, but the part he played in both of these has yet to be fully elucidated.<sup>4</sup>

He was a man of great erudition and wit, though not without his darker side<sup>5</sup>, and must have fairly burst upon the 17th Century reading-public (such as it was) in the few brief years between 1614 and 1622 in which most of his work appeared. His other interests were, however, simple "planets circling around the central sun of Alchemy"<sup>6</sup>, and that the final text published by Maier during his lifetime<sup>7</sup> should have been the *Cantilenae Intellectuales de Phoenixe redivivo* is, indeed, of some significance.

Here, in plain and more or less unambiguous terms, he sets forth the "internal" nature and processes of the final stages of Alchemy.<sup>8</sup> Though four years and many other texts seem, at first glance<sup>9</sup>, to intervene, the work is, in effect the complement to and completion of the *Atalanta Fugiens* series published in Oppenheim in 1618. Where that was a series of "... chemical emblems of the secrets of nature, adapted partly for the eyes and intellect in figures engraved on copper with legends, epigrams and notes attached, partly for the ears' and the soul's recreation with about 50 musical fugues in three voices... to be looked at, read, meditated, understood, weighed, sung and listened to, not without a certain pleasure"<sup>10</sup>, this is a somewhat more interiorised series of nine chords or, if you would resonances, to be heard by the inner ear as the images unfold upon the reader's inward turned eye.<sup>11</sup> Where the *Atalanta* could be construed as breviary for finding, fixing and purifying the prima materia and an exposition of its complex double or tripartite composition and the two-fold Mercury, the *Cantilenae* treats of unification, harmony, the genesis of the Stone of the Wise, "deathlessness" and "the tincturing of gross metals".

It is interesting, upon this score, to note that Fulcanelli, among

others, utterly, denies the existence of salt as a third alchemical principle<sup>12</sup>.

This is borne out to a certain extent by the interesting configuration of the so called "Mother Letters" in the English Rosicrucian (specifically "Golden Dawn") Tarot systems, whereby ♀ Aleph, the Fool - Air, ♁ Mem, the Hanged Man, Water and ♃ Shin, Judgement/The Aeon, Fire. Earth, embodiment, solidity, final-state although conceivably represented by ♄ Thav, the Universe = Saturn, has in fact, no representation, or - if you prefer - is all the other letters taken together, all the other cards in all their various and endless transmutatory possibilities.

Finality as a "state" - a "final goal" - then, is an impossibility, and it would thus seem that, like the ancient Chinese, our Sages clearly perceived that the only thing that really seems to exist is progress, mutation and change, these terms themselves being mere names for the fact that everything we know of is in a constant state of flux, and so, since entirely dependent upon the nature of every other thing in that process at any given moment, without these other "things", devoid of meaning. "Change" is nothing but a term, and thus no more "real", "fixed", or "solid" than anything else, and thus cannot even be said to exist itself in any but the most conventional sense of that term.<sup>13</sup>

The triads are triple voiced harmonies - resonances for want of a better word - and, to quote Rebotier "variations" on the number three in all its multiplicity. They are consonant and "foursquare", as I understand it<sup>14</sup>, in that, if one accords with them - tunes, or attunes oneself to them - their undeniable presence must necessarily work upon and influence one's inner transformation, or firing-process - for complete they are in all their parts, and "solid" - holographic almost - in their infinity of mutual inter-mirrorings.

According to Maier's ORDERING, the three voices "invariably"<sup>15</sup> refer to Venus, the Crab and the Lion. These are

- "quality" - the nature and virtue of the prima materia,
- "profundity", the "barely visible" and "shifts", and
- "presencing" - the enactment - embodiment - of the purified "Stone", perhaps?...

Venus, the ALTUS, is the feminine-principle, lover and mother, related according to both Dee and the Golden Dawn (though with different reasonings), to the entire process of creation-emanation. Appreciation of quality is her characteristic, for it is she who "feels" what becoming is, who forms it and births it forth - she who is the

quality of the universe as experienced.

The Crab, MEDIA, Cancer, Luna - Sideways moving in both sudden shifts and expression of extension-expansion; armoured; shy; profundities behind façades of shallowness and endless shifting mirrors.

The Lion, GRAVIS, Leo, Sol, the VIIIth. and XIXth. ATUS of the Tarot. Clarity, light of day, presencing... and, perhaps, over-presence...

It is interesting to note here parallels with glyphs from two other sources:

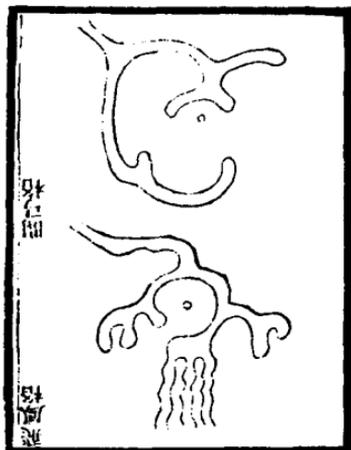
The three above-mentioned Mother Letters of the Sepher Yetzirah, **𐤃** SHIN, **𐤀** ALEPH and **𐤌** MEM - Fire, Air and Water, respectively - may be read as follows (cf., for example, Ponce, Kabbalah, pp. 42 and 111) -

**𐤃** Shin: the head; fire, summer season

**𐤀** Aleph: the chest; air; spring autumn seasons

**𐤌** Mem: the stomach; water; winter season.

thereby - amongst other things - touching each of the sephiroth on the so-called "Tree of Life": Shin to the Supernals, Aleph to the interplay between Briah and Yetzirah, and Mem to that between the outermost aspects of Yetzirah and the so-called "worlds" of Assiah. It spells (for want of a better word) a yogin and, as such, is echoed in the following Taoist "diagram of the internal disposition" of, for example, someone in profound meditation or performing one of the "internal arts", such as T'ai Chi Ch'uan. To read it, the reader should orient him- or herself to feel the upper "dot" in the back of the mouth/medulla-region, the hand-like appendages as the ears and the upward floating "flames" rising from the region of the pituitary gland and behind the eyes, in and through the mind (here, synonymous with brain).



The lower dot is situated in the lower section of the centre of the belly, four finger-breadths below the navel, with the arc representing the diaphragm and the lower support, the base of the belly or root of the genital area or womb.

Geomancy patterns known as 'The Flying Male Phoenix' (above) and 'Drawing the Bow' (below). (Prom Chiang P'ing-chien, *Shui-lung ching* 3:10a.. 1744 ed.)

Those who know Crowley's Tarot card of the Ace of Cups (Tiphareth of Atziluth, Kether of Briah) will note similar parallels: Energy (the basic "generative fluid" of the universe) rays upward from the cup in the all-embracing patterns of the Net of Indra<sup>16</sup>. That which flows downward is in the form of pulsating waves, electrical and rhythmic in nature...

...This, at any rate, is the case when the system is running at optimum "velocity", which is to say, when the subject, object and act that unifies them are not obscuring the infinitely open energy-flow that is reality, when the practitioner is not getting, or allowing visions of the universe to get in his or her own way.

Where this is not the case, the net becomes Arachne's ensnaring web, and the pulsings of physical creativity not more than banal spurts of re-production of "more of the same".

Interesting, too, to note that on his Trump, Atu XIV, Art, the vessel has engraved upon it a raven roosting on a skull and that this image is picked up in the Ace of Cups card in the form of the three interlinking circles reflected from the depths to the surface of the crystalline cup and forming what is in effect an interwoven threefold vesica piscis and thus, of course, once again the Trinity, "Divine Genetrix" and the trine.

Such "attributions" are nonetheless, only indices. The music - like Pythagorean or Keplerian "Music of the Spheres" - expresses facets of the work, be these stages or processes or the simultaneous unfoldings of divine harmony beyond all idea of - so to speak - "sound", both struck and unstruck.

\* \* \*

I am not sure that a presentation of the triads will be of much use to the reader, but perhaps a brief introduction to their outermost and most obvious symbolism may provide a basis for some, from which they might subsequently undertake the plunge into the deeper and subtler levels for themselves and, hopefully, recover from the depths of a very limpid pool, if not the Stone of the Wise itself, at least some very clear indications as to its location and nature. Understanding - which often occurs as a complex simultaneity - slowly expands out of study, reflection and experimentation.

There is a tendency, particularly (although certainly not only) amongst occidentals, to look down on the more "material" paths as one imagines oneself slowly progressing towards subtler and more "elevated" levels of understanding. In Buddhist terminology this is said to be "losing the relative in the absolute", "relative (and hence unreal) nirvana" - "the top of a hundred foot pole" - What do you do when you reach the top of a hundred-foot pole?

The point with Alchemy and all transformative practices is that the transformation be thorough-going - "from the ground up", so to

speak. For all that understanding the final goal of such practices is often more or less "easy" (and a relative clarity as to the goal is certainly what orients and inspires the rest of the path), actually putting into practice the endless, slogging, purificatory exercises seems very often not, at first. It can be boring, difficult, and often anything but grand as one continually bumps into one's own seemingly interminable ineptitude - Indeed, its very purpose is to dissolve the Alchemical Subject such that the varying intensities of fire will finally be able to work upon it without its carefully distorting their every kindly attempt to point out the way.<sup>17</sup> The less one rushes, the less one despises the menial (and often very difficult to perform!) operations, the greater the maturity in one's practice.

Finally one just has to get on with it and get out of one's own way.

Clarity as to the goal helps one put the goal into practice as the path. Clarity as to the stages of the path allows one to practice a path which is, in fact, a progressive enactment and revelation of the goal. Clarity as to the ground points out what to work with, where, how and why, since it is at all times the twofold materia - the unobscured clarity of primordial creativity (viz., the goal) and one's own rather crabbed and often totally imaginary version of same.

One of the major shortcomings of our so called "materialist"<sup>18</sup> education is goal-orientedness.

Nothing is ever for now; everything is always for some non-specified "later", and thus we learn to lose the enjoyment we take in the process of learning, to lose the respect we have for our teachers, and to turn them into a mere means to our own - so much more glorious! - ends.

Where we don't wind up good for little else than trying to bring in enough to pay the monthly rent and food-budgets before falling over in front of our television sets, there is the danger, (since both are based on the dualism of subject vs. object), of taking the path of "spiritualism" and "occultism" which often has us mistaking plausible little cosmologies for complete and perfect enlightenment (and are not the rosy paths of Occultism, Religion and Science strewn with the burnt-out carcasses of just such precipitate "magistries"?).

Transmutation is a slow and painstaking Art. Change is not to be - fundamentally cannot be - precipitated, and where it is, often has dire effects as we rush off on wild goose chases or trump up fool's gold as the real thing. The results of Alchemy are solid and real and can be tried against the touchstone of reality. But you have to wait for them, and while waiting - gently, and in your own time - work.

Strange as it may seem, this "work" is almost invariably upon the "lower and more material" paths, and any difficulties in coming at the goal are almost inevitably found to be based in some missing,

misplaced or misunderstood element of what one had, at the time, assumed to be no more than a passing phase of some very minor facet of what has subsequently transpired to be one's path.

Let it be understood, then, that what I am about to offer here by way of interpretation is little more than the insights (if one dare even call them that!) I had on initial readings of the text. They do not, in any wise, pretend to be correct, final or true. Tibetan Buddhism recognises at least five, and as many as seven, levels of meaning in any text of value, to wit: outer, inner, secret, extremely secret and absolute, where the last may again be subdivided into completely secret, ultimate meaning and absolute, the last taking on the meaning of an inexpressible and direct mind-to-mind transmission where nothing is transmitted and there are no "minds" to effect either transmission or reception and yet nothing, in the final analysis, is left unaccomplished.

Those of my readers who have been kind enough to follow this Introduction up to this point will, of course, clearly perceive that any meanings I may touch upon would - if of any value at all! - of necessity be entirely restricted to the first, or - very occasionally - and this more by sheer luck than anything else - the outer surface of the second of these layers of possible understanding. I am no expert on, or adept of Alchemy, but I hope that they are of some use to those of you who, like myself, are more or less beginners, and it is for this reason - and as much for my own instruction as for the benefit of others - that I have presumed to include them.

### Triad 1

In his Schema, Maier points out that the first two triads are more or less introductory, one "treating of the names given to divers things", while the other "contains Allegories".

Assuming, then, that all elements of the Perfect Stone of the Wise are already complete within us, wanting only direction and perfection<sup>19</sup>, one might take the first part of Triad No. 1 as speaking of the gathering of the *prima materia*, seen, in this instance, as fire or light. It is what is consumed and what arises from its own ashes. Equally, it is what can never be consumed or arise from its ashes - beyond coming and going, beyond process and object - the ground, the path and the goal.

Part two lays emphasis more on the process, the tempering of fire with fire until fire is rendered "immortal". Immortality, here, refers to the youthfulness of those who have learned to remain forever fresh to the continuous round of arisings, refusing to permit themselves to drift off into the commonplace and "material". As goal it is not

sought but unfolds of itself, the process, or task, being to render the phoenix as "fire-like" as possible, dissolving and bathing him in fire after fire until his materiality melts away in total oneness with the primordial Light.

With the mention of Nilus, the Nile, one is led to thoughts of Sothis, the Dog-Star (and hence all stars, and by extension, subtle light, mantic arts and rapt meditation), to Taurus and to the Moon. The Moon is exalted in Taurus because it is in the material that the spiritual best finds its expression or incarnation.

The final section speaks of the bringing of fire to fire, the sealing of the flask, the secrets of the firing process and the dissolution of the Alchemical Subject. Such then are the "names".

### Triad 2

The second Triad speaks of "Allegories", part one "naming" the prima materia and, in some part, the firing process.

Part two reveals the accessibility of the Phoenix, the tale of whose origin and end is said to be known to one and all, and points out that the Phoenix embodies all Alchemical Birds - the process or path in its entirety, the subtle opening between life and death, form and void, similars and dispartes.

Part three speaks again of the vase, or flask, showing how it is linked through "circulation" to the alchemical materia, and is both real and not real - an indissoluble coupling of the tangible and intangible enlivening all things. In this alone are the "ashes" - the dissolving substance - of the Phoenix able to lie.

### Triad 3

From Triad three onward, Maier enters into a detailed description of the firing processes, inward routes, putrefactions, conjunctions and separations.

He first describes the invaluable part played by the fires of different intensities required by the Art. An example may be useful here, relating also to part three of the previous Triad: If, for instance, one were to consider the alchemist, himself, in all his "void presence", as the flask, his disciplined and resolute turning inwards of the vision and emotions as the sealing, his dissolution of the sense of ego as the dissolution of the subject or materia, and his essential and vital energies, whatever their state of purity/workability, as the prima materia itself, all that was happening to him at any given instant might then be considered to be the various intensities of the "fire".

Through constant tempering and purification in these fires of the real and unreal, through all his false starts, misplaced hopes and

modified successes, he finally reaches the point of "projection" where the flask - self-imagined and now no longer necessary, cracks and he is unified throughout being and non-being with the entire nature of the Universe.

Maier praises this process (part two) "in the words of others", calling it Moonwort (red, black and yellow), Glaux and Moly. The process is itself both the ground and the goal of the Art.

In part three he goes on to praise intelligence and sharp wits and to point out the dire results of a lack thereof.

#### Triad 4

We come now to the mating of what is generally considered to be pure and impure. Void marries form for she sees, at last, that it is her mirror-image - her activity. No "base dust", but her actual incarnation as the Prajñā-pāramitā-hṛdaya-sūtra points out.<sup>20</sup> To be taken in by the void is to be incurably ill. It is thus she - "emptiness" - who seeks this "marriage", searching far and wide until she penetrates to the lowest (but what are these spinning feathers?) possible stratum. From it, the conception of the immortal foetus will undoubtedly arise.

Hercules' taming of the Nemean Lion (part two) has many interpretations. It relates to the VIIIth Atu of the Tarot, "Force" - (or "Lust", according to Crowley) - the taming of the wilder emotions of hatred and desire... In the Vajrayana Tantras, transmutation of these two emotions brings the "Mirror-like" and "All-discerning" Primordial Wisdoms... "A gentle flower and hearty food".

In part three Maier points out that he who has married inner and outer, and dissolved anger and greed may bring his inner richness to bear on both the inner and outer "worlds". Such a one is rich indeed!. Who can compare with him?

#### Triad 5

For all that it ardently longs to be conjoined with the passions, intuition does not like fixed forms, and indeed, even goes so far as to shun and fear them. A medium, says Maier, must be found.

In part two, two immense (and thus well-nigh invisible) opposites marry and are merged. Basic ideas such as form and void, good and evil, real and unreal, are cooked up into "a dish fit for a king".

Part three speaks of the use of clear insight in rectifying the external and internal energies such that they may fitly "house the king". Although, on one level, a natural result of the circulation linking materia and flask, none the less, mastery of these energies and flexibility in understanding and using them must necessarily be sought out and gained.

## Triad 6

We no come to the dangers of draconian ego-inflation. "At the top of the hundred-foot pole" dwells a demonic serpent whose very breath is enough to lay waste all space and time. Here the mirror-like Primordial Wisdom reflects back on itself and turns poison into the vast openness of space.<sup>21</sup>

In part two, desire and attraction engulf what is still a very fragile bark. (And do I catch glimpses of a certain "red powder" here?)

Part three urges one to perfect one's task without distraction, and with an energy that will carry one through "good" times and "bad".

## Triad 7

Maier next points out the entry into the all-penetrating understanding of awakenedness and the unification - once more - of the so-called spiritual and substantial. Here, too, he clarifies the fact that this purification is multifold and that even the most apparently negative occurrences are to be turned to the work of conjunction.

Part two urges the understanding of the mythos of the Redeemer and particularly that of the Christ. This is a vast subject and urgently in need of a spring-cleaning, but the aspect stressed here may perhaps best be summarised as follows: As above mentioned, there is a tendency, once a glimmering of spiritual understanding has been born, to take this half-light for total illumination, to mistake one's cosmologies for laws of the universe, and overevaluate the "subtle" while underestimating the "gross". Realising and accepting the fact that the "Son of God" is also - and equally - "Son of Man", as did Christ, for example, when finally hammered onto the cross of materiality, brings this very necessary and subtle coniunctio and one may then "commend one's spirit" knowing that negativity does not exist in any way at all except as the part it plays in transformation, that it is a mere "name" - an interpretation - and knows not what it does. Thence comes real birth beyond all compulsive coming-and-going, and "the tinging of gross and impure metals".

To this end, the medium - openness and unpremeditatedness - must be found. This is subtle. Unfabricated.

## Triad 8

Maier now discusses the continuing reappearance of habit-pattern and the utter necessity for genuine rebirth of the cleansed spirit from the waters and fires of purification. A cursory glance at almost any alchemical text assures us that the purification and union are not the most easily attained of objects: separatio follows coniunctio, followed by yet more nigredo - putrefactio, over and over again in almost bewildering array. It might almost be said that, far from being "the

transmutation of lead into gold", the alchemist's main task seems to be to go down into the "mine" and laboriously draw out every last trace of lead-ore that he finds there.<sup>22</sup> "Gold", after all, can only be spent, once made; "lead" - our stock of which seems utterly inexhaustible! - can continually be purified and transmuted.

Bathing in the void - the openness or open-endedness of one's origin - carefully and to adequate degree, until all trace of defilement has dissolved back into its fundamental voidness is absolutely essential.

Veils are of two kinds: defilement, that is to say unconscious attachment to emotional responses, and "knowledge", or one's familiar old library of half-baked assumptions and dogmatic assertions.

Reference is then made to the binding of selfless love and the work of the Pelican. The vinegar of suffering and tempering of sacrifice work to render "all metals" impervious to the greatest heat. It is of one's own blood that the "white" becomes the "red".

With part three we arrive at the projectio. The foetus, well formed and adamant, takes his birth "beyond the stars", beyond space or time, or as is often said, in, but not of, the world.

Here, too, the opening of the pathway of enlightened - that is to say - compassionate activity, the path of the Pelican as above-mentioned.

### Triad 9

In part one, veiled in the allegory of Judaeo-Christianity, Maier presents us with his final summation of the Art.

It might be important here to recognise the a-theistical nature of profound understanding.

Looked at from a Qabalistic point of view, for example, the "god-names" of the Hebrew language turn out to have a totally different realm of application than that generally understood by the terms "god", "divine" and what have you. Indeed, if one examines the Qabalistic Tree, upwards from the Assiatic Malkuth (and even below), to its resolution into unknowableness beyond the Kether of Atziluth, Ain Soph Aur and Ain Soph, one finds oneself following and ever increasingly subtle trail of resonances - sound-light energies ranging from the apparently real and turgid to the furthest quintessential manifestations of knowing/knowableness.<sup>23</sup>

Working down the Tree by a Qabalistically based system such as the final working of the Abramelin Technique, one finds one has evoked not only the various "divine", "angelic" and "demonic" hierarchies, but also oneself, the magician, as Adam Kadmon, in direct line of transmission between the inner and the outer realms.

The Magician disappears, the internal "divine and angelic" and their "fallen" counterpart interact without interference, and the "will" that is done is no longer localisable - the single resonance of a finely tuned monochord strung between infinite profundity and infinite vastness. Sound/light; light/sound. Indivisible.

An atheist - particularly one who is a devout non-believer in gods — has generally thrown out the baby and kept the bath water. Convinced of the non-existence of a god or gods, he nevertheless more often than not continues to accept — generally uncritically - the political structures of the particular theism he now fervently disavows.

Whereas before he believed in a god, he now believes in something else: in the non-existence of god, in scientific fact, the Party, logical positivism, nothing at all, whatever... Tossing out the animating spirit, he now espouses one or other aspect of his original (or new) "Ism's" cosmological structure or law. And, as Lama Angarika Govinda points out, after death a logical positivist will experience exactly what he expects - absolutely nothing at all!

A-theism, on the other hand, can be seen as the refusal to allow any idea, no matter how convincing, to take over from the miraculous fluxus of becoming which seems to be "Reality's" only more or less abiding characteristic — the refusal to replace the living with (more or less intelligent) ideas. A-theism is not necessarily irreligious, or, for that matter, anything at all. Its realm of activity is not that of belief and non-belief and it concerns itself only with what can be known, and with the multifold and subtle levels of enactment thereof.

In the first part of this Triad, Maier discusses ultimate realisation under the guise of its three traditional western forms or facets, Father, Son and Spirit — Being, embodied being, and the quickening spirit informing one and the other, an ever "ascending", "descending" communication of vitality and ideas.<sup>24</sup>

Like Christ's cloak, this endless becoming of no-thing into something, is a seamless field of energy.

Militant ideas try to cut it up and share it out into manageable less-than-realities, but it is not susceptible to their shears. No matter where you put a name on it, it disappears, or so transforms itself as to seem to have disappeared, and then... reappears when no one is looking.

In part two, he outlines this becoming: An energy-field arising out of absolutely nothing for absolutely no reason, having a seeming tendency to assume what seem like patterns and forms for more or less longer periods of apparent duration — Space, dragon-dancing space into space...

The last section points to the fact that the Phoenix is not, in fact,

the culmination of the work. There remains a further step to be taken: the conjoined sulphur and mercury must be added to molten gold and merged therewith, so as to be multiplied indefinitely. Perfect medicine, flawless elixir, wealth immeasurable. The Phoenix is birth and death in each and every molten instant, fire purifying fire into fire until the very concept of fire itself is purified and light merges into light, space into space, being and unbeing into more than being. he concludes by pointing out the difference between material gold — at best not even second best — and real gold... which seems so little a thing.

It should be noted that the path as described here has much in common with the so-called "Great Seal" (phyag.rgya chen.po) and "Great Perfection" (rdzogs.pa chen.po) texts of Tibetan Buddhism, and thus presupposes a somewhat more than passing knowledge of the stages of practice leading up to the experiences it describes. References to the prima materia and the initial stages of working with it are hardly more than sketched in, but — as with the texts of Dzogchen — it is obviously assumed that the reader has at least some experience in the foundation practices of the Art and a clear idea as to its field of application and final destination. Anyone who set off without these is asking for trouble: though possibly finally "goal-less" in themselves, these three — ground, path and goal — constitute the entire practice. They are completely mutually interrelated and over-emphasis of any one to the exclusion of another, the fond illusion, for example, that understanding the goal is actual realisation, or that realisation itself is the final liberation, serves only to involve the practitioner in endless frustration and disappointment, witness the ignominious demise of so many of the extra-orthodox schools of eastern and western spirituality — not to mention the unfortunate fraudulent continuation of so many others!

Understanding comes from actually plunging in, entering the Nigredo with its endless series of separatio and purgatio and working with it until the first glimmerings of what might really be gold actually do start to appear. And for this sort of thing reference might usefully be made to such texts as the Rosarium Philosophorum and Crowning of Nature as well as, of course, the Atalanta.

It is true that actual practical alchemy may seem a bit beyond most of us. Where and how to start is not at all clear, teachers are few and far between, and materials apparently expensive or cumbersome (although, on this score, cf. the early volumes of the Hermetic Journal and the work of Frater Albertus and Jean Dubuis). There is also the feeling of helplessness, lack of time or adequate space. Arguments against practice are legion. However, of one can only lay hold of what the prima materia, flask and fires actually are, any practice one does

may be worked within the alchemical paradigm. The results — even to a total beginner — are truly exquisite.

Of all techniques of the "Western Tradition",<sup>25</sup> and due probably to its reconditess, Alchemy is pretty much the only one to have escaped relatively unscathed from religio-political "normalisation". Its images, as is well known, are either dense and abstruse or rarefied and suggestive — (or both, or neither)... And yet, for all the confusion as to whether it is actually a practical "Art" or an interiorised "psychological" one (and it is both... and neither), uninformed and over-enthusiastic chemistry or diseased and delirious psycho-babble (both of which it is only extraordinarily rarely — generally in the hands of its would-be detractors or those who have tried to use it to turn a quick buck), sexual magic, longevity and/or transmutatory magic, or whatever may be, it has, in fact, come down to us pretty much intact and as it was intended to be.

No ravening egoists have managed to pervert it into being one thing or another. Those who have tried to appropriate its ends have gone the way of all flesh, scorned or worse by the very world in which they hoped to take their ease, or, at very least, impress.

The impression one has on studying the works and lives of the alchemists is not one at all one of confused and struggling outcasts and misfits. No self-aggrandising doctors, strutting realists or safe and self-indulgent men of religion here. They, and the "Brothers of the Rosy Cross" (whatever that was, and who they very often were), seem often, in an "Age of Reason", the sanest and most "reasonable" of men, genuinely perceptive and truly pious. If we can let them speak to us directly, or as nearly directly as the reconditess of their imagery will allow, we suddenly find ourselves in communion with some very pleasant and singularly awesome gentlemen, very keen to pass on to us the techniques and secrets that lead eventually to the direct experience of the creativity of being and the happiness and peace to be shared with all others that they know so well.

My translation of *The Intellectual Cantilenae*, which I hope will be published shortly, is based on the edition published by Gutenberg Reprints, J.-C. Bailly Editeur, Paris, October 1984<sup>26</sup> — a beautifully presented reprint of a text in Mr. Bailly's personal library with an introduction by Sylvain Matton on the Phoenix in the writings of Michael Maier and Alchemy in general and a note on the music of the Cantilenae by Jacques Rebotier.

I append here my translation of the second of the Cantilenae.

## The Second Triad of the Intellectual Cantilenae.

## Altus

Teach us now, O Muse,  
In fitting verse, and worthy of the subject,  
The many different names that Fire has  
And beneath what divers figures and allegories the real lies hidden.

It is called Celestial Dew,  
Falling on the flowers of the field,  
Well known to the Wise, who make of it their pleasure,  
And possession of which is so precious.

It is the sea's salt water  
With which to cook our fish  
And tint him to a lovely ruddy hue.

It is an acrid Liquor  
Of disagreeable smell;  
The Vinegar eating at all existing things;  
It is a fire like unto the humid warmth of a horse's steaming breath,  
Wherein our Matter putrefies  
and dissolves into chaos.

When sperm is nourished by the womb,  
The Menstruum giving growth to the foetus  
Is called the Perennial Waters of Life.  
For when the male ejaculates his seed  
Which then is watered by the dampness of the female and nourished by her  
Nature forms and produces a child blood,  
Who, in terms of its perfections,  
Marvellously resembles those to whom it owes its life.

This is the veritable Sacred Fire,  
Taken from the living flesh of the Sun and  
Brought to earth by Prometheus,  
Taught to the Greeks by Orpheus  
Who established among them the Bacchanal.  
This is the Fire  
The Bacchantes carried in their races,  
Symbolised by the blazing torches in their hands.  
This is the Fire that burned day and night  
Upon the Altars consecrate to Vesta and Minerva.

## Media

There is no-one does not know the origin of the PHOENIX:  
Its tale is told throughout the Universe,  
And there is no place on Earth, highest mountain or deepest valley,

that does not rejoice in it or where it is unknown:

It is the Stone best known of stones,  
Of which sufficient glimpse is revealed by the Wise to the true Children of the  
But which they hide from those who would seek to demean it. Art,

It is the Vulture  
That builds its nest in a tree upon the highest mountain peak,  
Whence emerges the feathered chick,  
A crow who day and night cries out:  
"Give me my due  
And I'll return you what is yours by rights!"

It is a King drowned in a deep sea,  
Struggling to reach the surface  
And return to his Realms.

It is the White Swan;  
The golden-feathered Peacock;  
The Pelican, redeeming  
With its own blood,  
The lives of its young;  
The twin-bodied Lion,  
Who at first supported by its own strength  
Soon after falls to the ground.

It is the Serpent twined about the Caduceus of Mercury  
Used by that messenger of the gods to do his miracles,  
Bringing sleep to, or taking it from whomsoever he pleases,  
Giving life back to the dead  
Or carrying death into the world of the living.

#### Gravis

Not all places are conducive to the generation of each and every thing.  
Similarly, no common urn will serve for the Ashes of a King

In like wise, there is but one sole and unique Coupling of the Earth and Iris,  
A small portion of which will serve to hold the ashes of our Bird until his  
but, hid within the bosom of that earth, resurrection;  
Is a secret virtue or essential power  
That restores to him his life.

For just as through cooking, leaven forms all divers types of bread,  
Fitting them to bring nourishment to the various parts of the body,  
So, too, the all-powerful virtue of this earth is precisely to revive what is dead  
And hidden 'neath the waves.

Again it can be compared to a Mother's milk,  
Which is produced of the blood that, coursing the veins of a young woman,  
Once returned to the breast, becomes fit nourishment for a newborn child.

Never shall I reveal this secret.

And yet, I will add that it is of this earth that the Hermetic Vase should be  
For it is fireproof made,

And will never split or crack.

Hence the fact that it is ever sought out with such care.

This then is the Royal wax

With which to seal our secret.

In a word, it is the one and unique thing that gives to all others their form, their  
strength, their beauty.

## Notes.

1. I should like to acknowledge my indebtedness to Joscelyn Godwin's introductory essay in the Magnum Opus edition of *Atalanta Fugiens*, Ron Heisler's articles "Rosicrucianism in Britain," "Michael Maier in Britain" and "Robert Fludd: a Picture in Need of Expansion" in *The Hermetic Journal*, 1989, Christopher McIntosh's *The Rosy Cross Unveiled* and Stanislas Klossowski de Rola's *Le Jeu d'Or* (a French translation of his *Golden Game*) for most of the historical data found in this section.

2. Albeit that there are those who contend (based, no doubt, on Craven's statement that the two were friends) that Maier initiated Fludd into Rosicrucianism, it would seem from evidence unearthed or cited by Heisler that relations between them were strained to say the least. Cf. Christopher McIntosh *op. cit.*, p.57; Paul M. Allen *A Christian Rosenkreutz Anthology*, p.207; J. Godwin *Robert Fludd - Hermetic philosopher and surveyor of two worlds*, p.6 and *passim*; C.H. Josten, "Truth's Golden Harrow" in *Ambix III*, Nos 3 & 4; and Klossowski de Rola, *op. cit.*

3. Cf. Adam McLean "A Rosicrucian Manuscript of Michael Maier" *Hermetic Journal* No.5, 1979, pp. 4-7 and also the appendix to Godwin's translation of the *Atalanta Fugiens* (cf. bibliography).

4. Cf., e.g., Frances Yates, *The Rosicrucian Enlightenment* (London, 1972), but also Heisler, Klossowski de Rola, *op. cit.*

5. Cf., e.g., Heisler, *loc. cit.*

6. Godwin, *op. cit.*, p.2.

7. Klossowski de Rola, *op. cit.*, p. 106, expresses rather intriguing doubts as to whether Maier actually did die in 1622, or, for reasons philosophical and political, simply withdrew from public view, living on to publish his *Tractatus Posthumus* in 1624.

8. "One is not going to find recipes for physical alchemy here, or in any of Maier's works: like all engaged on that level, as he undoubtedly was, he gives suggestions and hints only..." (Godwin, *op. cit.*, p.3). Although the goals of Alchemy were certainly not those of what is today called Science it should never be forgotten that the actual practice of Alchemy was quite as "physical" as it was "spiritual". Cf., for example, *infra*.

9. Brief examination of the catalogue of Maier's output shows that the greater part of it appeared in the years 1617 and -18. One may, I think, fairly safely assume that the bulk of these had been in preparation - physical or cogitative - for several years and were the summary of his

thoughts on various matters up to that time. The next important work to be published was this very *Cantilenae* (Rome and Rostock - 1622 and 1623, respectively.) and it seems to stand to reason that Maier was using it as a sort of final "testament or covenant" - a final making sure that he had not been misunderstood.

10. *Atalanta Fugiens* - Joscelyn Godwin's translation:- Magnum Opus Sourceworks, cf. *ibid.*, note 2 above.

11. Maier himself describes them as "a triple-voiced Harmony".

Reference may profitably be made, here, to J. Godwin, *Robert Fludd, op. cit.*, particularly p.6 and section III, "Pyramids and Monochords", as well as to the selections on Pythagorean Music in Manley P. Hall *The Secret Teachings of All Ages*.

12. This assertion - and from so unimpeachable a source - merits quotation in full: "...Thus, the obscure life-force, latent and potential in the two primitive mineral substances, develops by contact and struggle, the union of their contrary natures, one fiery and the other watery. These alone are our elements, and there exists no other. When the Philosophers speak of three principles, intentionally describing and distinguishing them, they are using a subtle artifice with the intention of throwing the neophyte into a cruel perplexity. We thus certify, along with the most excellent authors, that two bodies alone suffice to accomplish the Magistracy from beginning to end". "It is not possible," says *L'Ancienne Guerre des Chevaliers*, "to acquire possession of our Mercury other than by the means of two bodies, neither one of which may come to its requisite perfection without the other." If a third must be admitted, it will be found in that which results from their coupling and is born of their mutual destruction. For though one search again and again, never will one find other parents of the stone than the two bodies - referred to as principles - above mentioned, and from which the third arises, heir to the mixed qualities of their begetting. This important point merited stressing... etc..., *Les Demeures Philosophales*, I, pp. 368 et seqq. 3rd. edition, Paris, Jean-Jacques Pauvert, 1983. Going on to quote Flamel's extraordinary *Livre des Figures Hiéroglyphiques*, he assures us that these two "vray principes" are, indeed, "souffre" and "argent vif".

13. This is, none the less, only a very small part of the story, and readers interested in this point are referred to the extant works of Fulcanelli, Eugène Canseliet and Bernard Biebel, particularly the latter's extraordinary presentations of Pontanus's *Epistle on the Philosophic Fire* and the anonymous *Treatise on the Material of the Philosopher's Stone in General*, hopefully both soon to be published in English.

14. I must confess that this word, *quadratus* in the Latin, *quarrée* in French was problematical, although, of course, it is only the English adjective *quadrate*, "conforming or consonant". I finally used "foursquare" as well, on the assumption that what Maier means has something to do with the virtual "tangibility" of these - so to speak - "chords" - the fact that the reader can almost literally hear them if he is reading in the right register. In "Philadelphian Gold", (*The Hermetic Journal*, 1991, p. 94), the word is used as a verb meaning "to be in perfect consonance with, perfectly understand". I might also bring to the reader's attention Epigramma XXI in the *Atalanta*, the squaring of the circle (the presencing of potential), and Hildemarie Streich's cogent comments thereon (*op. cit.*, pp. 12-14, and, indeed, her entire article). Cf.

also Jacques Rebotier's article. Appendix III. The *Aurore* of Henri de Linthaut, (cf. *Oeuvre Chymique du docte Henri de Linthaut, l'Aurore suivi de l'Ami de l'Aurore*, commented and introduced by Bernard Biebel, Paris, 1978, p. 67), has this rather intriguing note on the Hand of the Philosophers:

... For this I tell you in truth that if you know not well how to practice by heart this hand, and familiarise yourself in all things to the rise and fall of the seven notes contained within it, you will sing never in B-flat nor yet B square, much less in nature. Should you understand well this hand, not only do all notes that be sing four parts, but you yourself shall compose, discover errors and false notes...

A final reference might be Thomas Norton's *Ordinal of Alchemy, Credo mihi*, ch. I, (cf., e.g., *The Book of Lambspring and The Golden Tripod*, Lampeter, Wales, 1987) where he says:

... (King Hermes') "Quadripartite" deals with four great branches of natural science: astrology, medicine, alchemy and natural magic; and therein he expresses himself as follows: "Blessed is he who knows things truly as they are, and blessed is the man who duly proves that which appertains to knowledge. . . etc. (Cap. I, p. 101).31.

15. On a more banal level, reference is also made here to the continuous personality shifts in the "voices" of the *Atalanta* triads, where each of the "fleeting" elements is to be found now in the soprano, now in the bass, now in the tenor, in ever evolving/mutating harmonic and resonatory transformation.

16. Skt. *Indramâyajâla*, a magical net covering all of space, the interstices of which are multifaceted jewels, mutually reflecting and augmenting the glory of the multiplicity of the universe. See especially, Thomas Cleary, trans., *The Flower Ornament Sutra*, Vols I-III, Boston, 198....

17. It is true that there are teachings that do cut directly through to the absolute and fundamental nature of the universe. However, such instructions are generally directed at what Tibetan texts, for example, call "the student of the highest faculties". It is also true that we do all have such a "superior man" within us but, unfortunately, the opposite is equally true. For the benefit of the student of highest capacity, we study and understand, for his "fellow students" of lesser and lowest capacity, we practice and purify. It is also worthy of note that many of those who have written texts directed to tis "highest of students" have themselves actually been the greatest of practitioners, carefully preparing and practicing subtlety of purification until "even if they pushed enlightenment, it just would not go away". Padmasambhava, the father of Tibetan Buddhism, said:

"Though my View is as vast as the vastnesses of Space,  
My attention to detail is as fine as the finest ground flour."

This is surely the correct attitude to have!

18. But actually "transcendental" — when were we ever taught to enjoy working with our materials — to take pleasure in them in and for themselves and not to despair at the endless hours things always seem to take to do?

19. Cf., for example *Atalanta Fugiens*, Epigram XXXVI. Also Thomas Cleary, trans., *The Inner Teachings of Taoism*, Boston and London 1986.

20. "Here, Shariputra, form is emptiness and emptiness is form;

emptiness does not differ from form, nor form from emptiness, whatever is form, that is emptiness, whatever is emptiness, that is form and the same is true of feelings, perceptions, habitual response and consciousness."

21. Cf. Hakuin Ekaku, *Go-i Koan*, quoted in Isshu Miura and Ruth Fuller Sasaki, *The Zen Koan*, New York 1965. "...Strange to say, the light of the Great Perfect Mirror Wisdom is black like lacquer. This is called the rank of "The Apparent Within the Real." This text on transmutation of a very high order is essential for all those interested in the alchemical path. Cf. also, *AZOTH ou le moyen de faire l'or caché des Philosophes*, Paris 1659, ch. Opération du mystère philosophic, where we have the following interesting quote: "I am old, frail, and ill, and I am called the Dragon. For that reason I am shut up in a pit, that I be recompensed with Royal Crown, and enrich my family, being most particularly their runagate servant. But after these things shall we possess all treasures of the realm; fire torments me greatly, and death tears at my flesh and bone until six weeks be past; God wills that I may surmount all enemies. My soul and spirit forsaking me cruel poison I am compared to the black crow, as reward for malicousness, I lie in the powder and earth, as it pleases God thus that of three one thing be made, to which end forsake me not O my soul and spirit, and that I shall see again the light of day and there spring from me that herald of peace, looked to by all the world, in my body are found the Sulphur, Salt and Mercury, these things fittingly sublimed, distilled, separated, putrefied, coagulated, fixed, cooked and washed, such that the faeces and filth be cleansed."

22. Cf., for example, the articles by Charles Poncé - "Notes from an Alchemical Journal" - in *Maitreya* Vols. 3, 4 and 5.

23. Cf., for example, Zev ben Shimon Halevi, *Adam and the Kabbalistic Tree*, Rider, London. Also Ajit Mookerji, *Tantra Art*, Ravi Kumar, Paris, London, New Delhi, 1971/72, section 2, pp. 38-54.

24. Reference may profitably be made here to Tulku Thondup's *Buddha Mind: An Anthology of Longchen Rabjam's Writings on Dzogpachenpo*, Snow Lion, New York, 1989, especially Part II, and Tarthang Tulku's *Time, Space and Knowledge*, Dharma Publications, Emeryville, California. Also Halevi, *op. cit.*, and H.V. Guenther, *Matrix of Mystery*, Shambhala, Boston and London, 1984.

25. Alchemy is, of course, no more "western" than it is "oriental". Though much of the trappings as we now know them were imported into Europe by the Moors and Crusaders and have venerable antecedents in India, China and even Tibet, being well nigh unpoliticisable, it has absorbed all of these, adapting them to its unique, western style, and western alchemists have made of it a thing as entirely their own.

26. *Chansons Intellectuelles sur la Résurrection du Phénix par Michel Maier, etc. Traduites en François sur l'Original Latin par M.L.L.M. à Paris chez Debure l'ainé, Quai des Augustins, à l'Image S. Paul M.DCCC.LVIII. Avec Approbation et Privilège du Roi, précédé de Le Phénix dans l'oeuvre de Michel Maier et la littérature alchimique par Sylvain Matton, et de La Musique des Cantilenae Intellectuales par Jacques Rebotier - J.-C. Bailly, Editeur, Octobre 1984.*

# Wood and Metal Kabbalistic Orientation and Elementary Alchemical Returning.

Gavin Bennett

“Orient und Occident sind nicht mehr zu trennen.”<sup>1</sup>

From descent into Exile to the post-natal state of mortality a leaden condition of consciousness grows heavy in the bowels of earth. Looking up Western cartographers put the cold North at the head



and the South's heat becomes a bodily, culturally tainted fire of egoic Foundation.

But Fire's  $\Delta$  base duality gives directional ascent to inner unity when lead<sup>2</sup> is raised from a sexed self-centred Yesod to turn slowly eastwards thus beginning to reverse clock-time<sup>3</sup>.

Fire beneath and distant Water  $\nabla$  above when the two make no real connection at the centre represent a scorching outer materialism divorced from a cold distant dualistic heaven. This is God the unrevealed Name  $\text{𐤀}^1$  above, totally transcendent, unattainable.

But the outer and inner in conflict may be harmonised by “working models of the cosmic order as manifested in time”<sup>4</sup>. The passion of the corporeal soul, the base Metal of the West through cultivation in a centrally elevated Earth must yield its essence to give growth to the Wood of the Tree of the incorporeal soul, the nature of

the East.

"If a thing does not contain Yin and Yang it repudiates its origin."<sup>5</sup>



Fire contains the seed point of mercurial return. The vessel of Water releases the spitting sulphurous spark to ignite the flame. "The Yin and the Yang reflected on each other, covered each other and reacted with each other."<sup>6</sup>

*In The struggle of the Two Primordial Powers*<sup>7</sup>



"the male power has the sun as his head and rides on the lion of sulphur; the female has the moon as head and rides on the griffin of quicksilver. The shield decorations, however, are inverted: on the shield of the solar power the moon is portrayed, and on that of the lunar power the sun."<sup>8</sup> From each, and within each, "likings and dislikings, avoidings of this and movements towards that then arose in all their distinctness, hence came the separation and union of male and female. Then... in mutual change... slow processes and quick jostled each other and the motions of collection and dispersion were established."<sup>9</sup> The 'working models' of metallic transmutation, nurturing the Tree of Gold in the solid symbolic soil substance of the soul are no mere mental constructs. Theoretical understanding is comparable to 'rigid' Sulphur.<sup>10</sup> Binah's creation of corrupted lead in

exiled earth is to encourage the stealer of fallen fire to descend beneath the rock ["At the quarries near Gilgal he himself turned back and said, I have a secret message for you, O King"<sup>11</sup>], rather than be chained to it, in order to expose its contents and raise them changing their state by heated agitation. Sulphur "must be liberated from its conceptual limitations, and become wholly 'active'. It must be dissolved in Quicksilver before it can become a living 'ferment' which can transmute other metals."<sup>12</sup>

Cinnabar "the basic substance of Taoist alchemy"<sup>13</sup> is the ideal working model to examine in manifested time to give some physical pointer or positive psychological projection of the potential Philosopher's Stone whereby exiled lead may be raised to our Foundation (the ☉ of Yesod, and passing through its silver) to become (Tipharethic) gold, bestowing the immortality of Knowledge when the Ketheric White Stone redescends into the active idea of Redness.

Tan<sup>14</sup> means not only cinnabar or Elixir<sup>15</sup> but is indicative of Redness itself<sup>16</sup>. The Redness of earth, אדמה, Adamah, is the going forth into the created feminine א of the spiritual Air א the oxygen in the blood, אד, that produces this very redness. The primal man אדם<sup>17</sup> is in a state of oxygenated yangness.

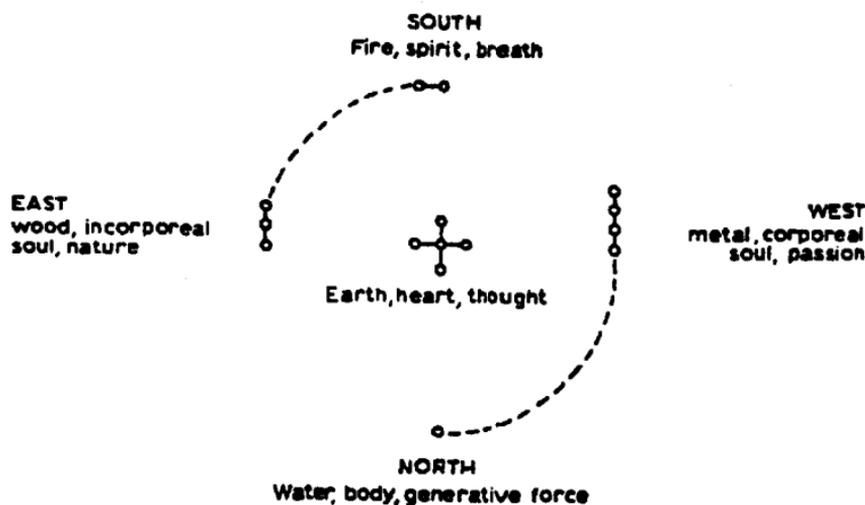
As in heat the volatile whiteness of mercury is released from cinnabar to recreate it with Sulphur<sup>18</sup>, the man returns the white Yin watery seed into "vapour, steam" אד<sup>19</sup> driven up the governor channel<sup>20</sup> to its higher source by the heat which accumulates in the cinnabar field<sup>21</sup>.

The flames of Promethean Yang in the Stove<sup>22</sup> beneath the Yin of the dark lead as it flows back as whitened mercury



return and mingle steaming through the gates to again become the heavenly Fire in the Crown. The Celestial dew condenses beneath it, the Gold of elevated Taste drips from the roof<sup>24</sup> of the mouth, the returned tongue guides the Waters of Life into descent, the

immanence of the Name  $\begin{matrix} \text{☯} \\ \square \end{matrix} \downarrow$ , turns the wheel of the assured immortality of man, the cold North finds warmth in its rightful place,



25

"the east and the west merge together"<sup>26</sup>, and the cauldron<sup>27</sup> rises and falls ever purifying the essence until turn upon turn around the risen earth gives birth to the everlasting foetus continually self creating from the seeds of its former opposites. "The wind has carried it in his belly. The foetus... shall... rise up, living, to the light."<sup>28</sup>

## Notes.

1. "East and West can no longer be kept apart." (Goethe). Cited in Richard Wilhelm, *The Secret of the Golden Flower - A Chinese Book of Life, Arcana*, London, 1987, rpt., p.10. We must attempt to pass beyond the view expressed by C.G. Jung (ibid. p.128) in his commentary on Wilhelm's translation of the *T'ai I Chin Hua Tsung Chih*. "Growing acquaintance with the spiritual East should be no more to us than the symbolical expression of the fact that we are entering into connection with the elements in ourselves which are still strange to us."
2. "Lead: A Taoist technical term which means Vitality or the Vital Principle." [Lu K'uan Yu (Charles Luk) *Taoist Yoga - Alchemy and Immortality*, a translation with introduction and notes, of the Secrets of Cultivating Essential Nature and Eternal Life (*Hsin Ming Fa*

- Chueh Ming Chih*) by the Taoist Master Chao Pi Che'n, born 1860, Rider, London, 1988 ed., p. 189] "When you use lead, do not use ordinary lead; and when you have finished using the true lead, that too is thrown away. This is the real secret of using lead. Using lead and not using it", [Chang Po-tuan, (11th century) from *Understanding Reality* the condensed version of which became known as *Four Hundred Words on the Gold Elixir*, here translated by Thomas Cleary from *The Inner Teachings of Taoism*, by Chang Po-Tuan, Commentary by Liu I-ming (1808), Shambhala, Boston, 1986, p.30]. "Another name for sense is true lead" (Liu I-ming, *ibid.* p.41).
3. True lead develops from the physical lead (h, 𠄎, on Path 32) from Understanding (☉ the Feminine root of h) of the esoteric purpose of the Seed of the generative force (*ching*) in Yesod to become ascending vitality. "Vitality: The vital principle derived from the purification of the generative force; it stands for eternal life." (Lu K'uan Yu, *op. cit.*, p.198).
4. Nathan Sivin, "Chinese Alchemy and the Manipulation of Time", *Isis* (An International Review devoted to the History of Science and its Cultural Influence - Official Journal of the History of Science Society) 67 (239), Dec. 1976, Smithsonian Institute, Washington, p.517.
5. Wei Po-yang, *Ts'an T'ung Ch'i* [The Kinship of the Three; or The Accordance (of the *Book of Changes* with the Phenomena of Composite Things] written about 142 A.D. cited trans. from Roy Spooner and C.H. Wang, 'The Divine Nine Turn Tan Sha Method, a Chinese Alchemical Recipe', *Isis* 38 (3-4), Feb. 1948, pp. 240-1.
6. *Chang Tzu*, Chapter 25, the translation of James Legge *The Texts of Taoism*, Vol. 2, p.128, (Dover, New York, 1962, orig. Oxford 1891) is here slightly modified as in Joseph Needham, *Science and Civilisation in China. Vol 2. History of Scientific Thought*, Cambridge University Press, 1956, pp.39, 40.
7. From the alchemical manuscript Ph. 172 of the graphic collection of the Central Library Zurich.
8. Titus Burckhardt, *Alchemy - Science of the Cosmos, Science of the Soul*, trans. from the German by William Stoddart, Stuart and Watkins, London, 1967, p. 145.
9. *Chuang Tzu*, Ch. 25, Needham's modification of Legge's trans., *op. cit.*, p.40.
10. Burckhardt, *op. cit.*, p.144.
11. Judges, 3: 19. This free trans. based on K.I.V. and N.I.V. highlights "turning again" (K.I.V.) or the "cycle" or "wheel", גלגל, Gilgal, of returning in Supernal Wealth, 𐤁, by repeated Work, 𐤁. (ref. *Sepher Yetzirah* letters' "reign").
12. Burckhardt, *op. cit.*, p.145.

13. Wolfram Eberhard, *A Dictionary of Chinese Symbols - Hidden Symbols in Chinese Life and Thought*, trans. from the German by G.L. Campbell, Routledge, London, 1989, rpt., p.66.

14. The Chinese character 丹 emphasised by superimposition on the Kabbalistic Tree of Life is a pointer to Knowledge achieved by combining opposites.

The Speech 言 of the Serpent 巳 or Dragon of primeval direction 巳 is Heard 聞 on a different scale in the Waters 水 of Life 水.



(The T of *Tan* is pronounced more like a D.)

Theory and practice, the general and the more specific are here united.

15. In 'The Divine Nine Turn Tan Sha Mehtod', "it is not certain whether the term... refers to the cinnabar used in the first turn or is the name of... possibly the final product." (Spooner and Wang, op. cit. p. 237). The relative 'Yin Yang Nine Turn Secret for the Preparation of Purple Gold and then Returned *Medicine*' uses the same term in describing its alchemical cyclical transformations with delightfully Yesodic colour.

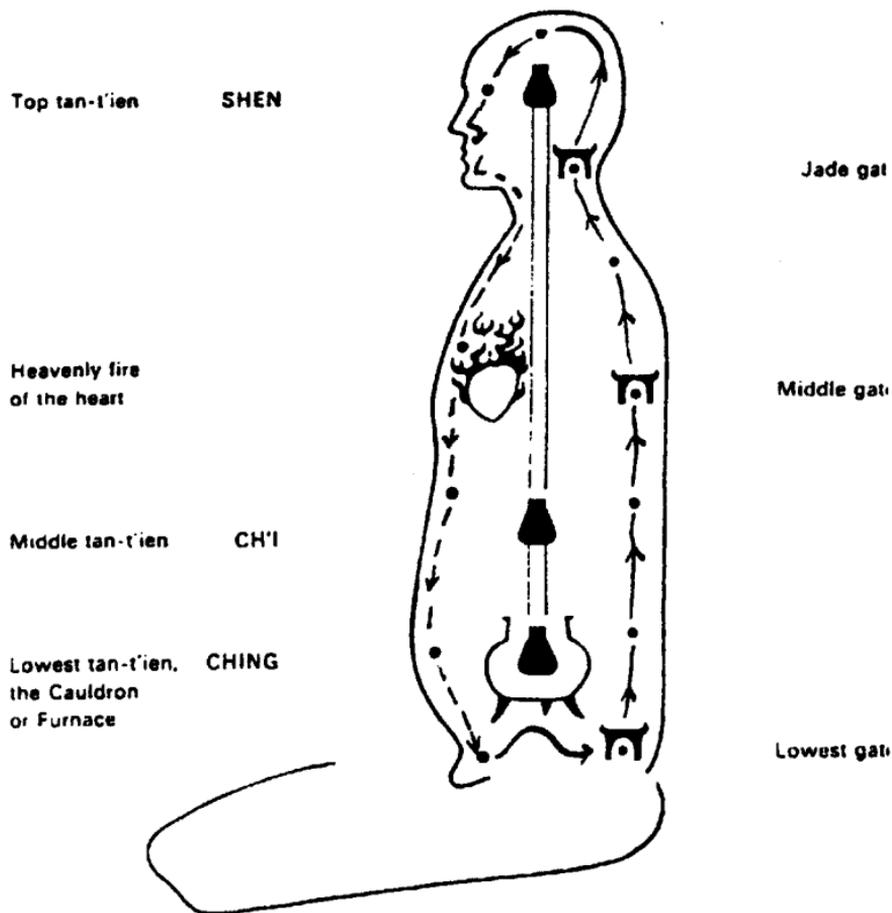
16. Red mercuric sulphide "is the mother body of gold", (Spooner, Wang, p. 239).

17. The Hebrew Adam also means "to be red".

18. "... the contrary principles may each be isolated in a state of purity and then combined with one another in the proper proportion to produce the perfect metal", or substance. (Tenney L. Davis, "The Dualistic Cosmogony of Huai-nan-tzu and its Relations to the Background of Chinese and of European Alchemy", *Isis* 25 (2), Sep. 1936, p.337.

19. The Chi 氣 ("ethereal essence, energy") is defined as "vapour, steam, subtle matter" in Joseph Needham, op. cit., Vol. 2, p. 228,

where the pictogram 气 in its ancient form may be seen not only as "rising vapour", but as symbolic of the three levels of the physiological triple burner, heater or warmer, whose corresponding levels of knowledge can be equated with those of the soul. [See note 21.]

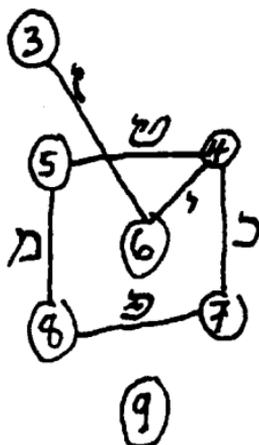


(Diagram adapted from Philip Rawson and Laszlo Legeza, *Tao - The Chinese Philosophy of Time and Change*, Thames and Hudson, London, 1973, p.29.)

20. The Governor Channel is represented in the above diagram by the unbroken arrowed line, the Channel of Function being shown as dotted. The penile root and the palate, the tongue and the penile root are where they respectively begin and end.

The 'switches' of the Dragon and the Tiger [for indications of their symbolic interchangeability with the Lion  $\Omega$  and the Serpent  $\text{☉}$  see Chapter 14 of my *Paths of the Stars - Kabbalistic Astrology* (in progress)] Kabbalistically interpreted reveal that reversal is the only way forward. The exiled mouth  $\text{☉}$  by returning its seed  $\text{☿}$  puts, as tongue to palate ["The nobles held their peace and their tongue cleaved to the roof of their mouth." (Job 29: 10)], it into the cycle of

Life  $\beth$  that One may reconnect with the Centre. The Serpentine root



of sexuality  $\beth$ , the cyclically extended membrum  $\uparrow$  of Self Understanding returns mercurial water to the root of exiled Fire. Thus a leaden lunar Foundation  $\uparrow\downarrow$  becomes the gold of cyclical transformation. The  $\circ$  reflects the  $\circ$  as rising and falling Yin/Yang harmonised essence. The whole may be pictured as the cyclical "support" letter  $\downarrow$  that joins Tiphareth and Yesod, Sol and Luna, King and Queen, as exemplified in an all-embracing Foundation.



["cultivation should begin with the laying of the foundation" (Hsueh Hsin - Hsiang 'Ching Chi Shen Chang', Essay on Life-Essence, Life-Force and Life-Spirit, cited trans., Sing Chow Wu, *A Study of the Taoist Internal Elixir - Its Theory and Development*, St. John's

University Ph.D. dissertation, 1974, p.98)] where  $\uparrow$  is the infinitely recyclable mercurial Unifier moving back and up from the perineum. The tip of the tongue touching the palate in curling connection is represented by the overlaid tips of  $\uparrow$  (initially Knowledge) and  $\downarrow$  (taking it into the round of experience). As the letter samekh represents the Taoist microcosmic orbit, the upright of  $\uparrow$  is the spine

and the "gates" (daleth's own definition) through which the the energy within that orbit ascends. The 1 mediator is in this schema symbolic of the central column of alchemical connection between base root and brain, fiery furnace and ascending cauldron of the circulation and control of consciousness.

21. The Taoist "cinnabar field just below the navel" [(Eberhard, loc. cit.) "The whole region from the navel down through the abdomen... is known as the 'Elixir Field'... the Vital Centre, the field of Cinnabar, the Centre of Life where the source of the function of the Three Main Pulses... are to be found." (R.B. Jefferson, *The Doctrine of the Elixir, The Doctrine of the Golden Mercuric Sulphur (Cinnabar), The Fire of the Unitive Path*, Coombe Springs Press, Ellingstring, N. Yorks., 1982, p.13) may be equated with the Fire of the Lower Tan T'ien ("field of the drug'... or alchemical agent" [Jefferson, p.6]), the stove, furnace or ching cauldron whose tripod feet are synonymous with the symbolic flames of the triple heater ☵ representing the distribution and regulation of energy, the life breath, Chi, the pneuma, or Ruach, through Ching, generative force, Nephesh, to Shen, Spirit, Neschamah.

The developing Chi steam or vapour ☵ moves into the distinction of self awareness from the body of the lower Fire ☲. This ancient Chinese "pictogram of flames". (Needham, loc. cit.) may, as also the ☵ Fire, be seen to represent the three thrusting channels (see Mantak and Maneewan Chia, *Chi Nei Tsang - Internal Organs Chi Massage*, Healing Tao Books, New York, 1990, p.38) within the microcosmic orbit whereby the alchemical vessels the middle and upper Tan T'ien are creatively energised.

22. ... "a cavity where the inner fire is kindled by regulated breathing to put the Generative force into the microcosmic orbit and transmute it into Vitality." (Jefferson, loc. cit.)

23. "Releasing the *spiritus* from the heated *prima materia*" [a detail of fol. 60a Codex Vossianus 29 (16th century) Leiden Univ. Lib., Thomas Aquinas (pseud.) *De Alchimia*], Maria-Louise von Franz, *Alchemy - An Introduction to the Symbolism and the Psychology*, Inner City, Toronto, 1980, p.37.

24. The 9 Serpent of *Sepher Yetziratic* "Taste" ☱ is given by Fabre d'Olivet (*The Hebraic Tongue Restored*, Weiser, York Beach, 1981 rpt., p.356) to represent "the shelter of man; the roof that he raises to protect him".

25. "The perfect union", Charles Luk, op. cit., p.30.

26. Chapter XXIV, 'An Ancient Chinese Treatise on Alchemy entitled Ts'an Tung Ch'i, written by Wei Po-Yang about 142 A.D., trans. Lu-

Ch'iang Wu', *Isis* 18 (2), Oct. 1932, p.239.

27. ... "a cavity in which the process of alchemy transmutes the Generative force into Vitality and Vitality into Spirit through each of the Tan t'ien" (Jefferson, p.6).

28. Michael Maier, *Atalanta Fugiens - An Edition of the Fugues, Emblems and Epigrams*, translated from the Latin by Josclelyn Godwin, *Magnum Opus Hermetic Sourceworks* No. 22, Phanes Press, 1989 edition, Grand Rapids, p.107 (Emblem/Epigram 1).

A Short Book of Dialogues,  
or,  
(Certain Colloquies) of some Studious Searchers  
After the Hermetick Medicine and Universal  
Tincture.

[This extract is taken from the English translation by Christopher Packe of *The Works...* of Johann Rudolph Glauber printed in London in 1689. Although historians often portray Glauber as a proto-scientific chemist (he is credited with the identification of Glauber's Salt now known as Sodium Sulphate), Glauber worked extensively with alchemical ideas as well as developing laboratory techniques for distillation and control of furnaces. This extract illustrates very well Glauber's reworking of the classic sequence of colour changes in the process of transmutation. - A. McLean]

The First Dialogue, or Conference, betwixt two Lovers of Hermetick Medicine, deciphered by the Letters, A. and B. the last of which hath had a prosperous Success on his Labours, the other not, and therefore craves of this last (viz. B.) a Manuduction to the Work, whereby he is rendred Master of his desire.

**A:** ...I have searched into Vegetables, Animals, and Minerals, because the Philosophers write, that their Stone is Vegetable, Animal, and Mineral; but I see, that I have not had under my hands the true Matter. For if there does appear in any [of these Matters] the Crow's head, yet the other Colours which the Philosophers make a description of (as the Dragon's Blood, the Peacock's Tail, Virgin's Milk, Coagulum, or curdling, and principally that Red and Fire-abiding Salamander) did never appear [to my view]. Or, if these [Signs] of Sanguis Draconis, or Lac Virginis appear to sight, in some other Matter, yet notwithstanding the other colours, and other signs, which the Philosophers make mention of, did never discover themselves [to

my view].... Hereupon I did at last even most thoroughly persuade myself, that it was an impossible thing, that, out of one Matter, and by one and the same Labour, one Colour should orderly succeed another, and become visible to the sight, by the bare help of an external Fire, as for example, first of all, in the putrefaction, the Crow's head, then the Peacock's Tail, then the Dragon's Blood, Lac Virginis, Coagulum or cheese-like curdling, and at last the fixed Salamander...

**B:** Come then, on God's Name, a little nearer me, and heed well the things which shall be shewn unto you. We will here take half an ounce of common Gold, and put it into this Aqua Fortis, made of Vitriol and Saltpeter, whereto we will add the same weight as the Gold is of, or a little more, of our Salarmoniack, without which, the Aqua Fortis alone, and by itself, is not able to dissolve the Gold.

**A:** Pray, Sir, why do you say, Our Salarmoniack? Are their several and different kinds of it? For my part, when I dissolve Gold, I put it into the Aqua Fortis, that [common] Salarmoniack, which is everywhere to be had in the Merchants Warehouses, and is very fit to dissolve Gold into a Yellow water.

**B:** You speak very well after your own way; And I confess, that every Salarmoniack mixt with Aqua Fortis is very good to dissolve Gold; nor is this any new way, for 'tis in very much use amongst all the Chymists, who are wont on this wise to dissolve their Gold, but yet that which is thus dissolved, still remains Gold, and doth easily admit of being again precipitated out of the Aqua Fortis, and of being reduced by Fusion into the former Body, it had before its Solution. But if so be, that the Solution shall be made by the help of our Salt Armoniack, then is the case vastly altered, and your attempting its Reduction again will be in vain. For if Gold be but dissolved barely once with out Salarmoniack, it admits not any more of melting, nor doth it of itself return again into a malleable Metallick Body, but gets a Reddish Scarlet kind of Colour in the Tryal [or Crucible] and remains an unfulfil Powder. And if you add some Borax thereunto, and set it in the Fire then to melt, it will pass into a Red Glass, which is a sign of its being plainly destroyed, and of its being transmuted into another Body. And therefore I dare aver, that there is seated in our Salt Armoniack a power of inverting, and transmuting Gold, and of making it fit for the Philosophical putrefaction, which thing is impossible to be done by any other salts whatever they be, and what Name soever called by.

**A:** Certainly, this is a Divine miraculous thing, to subject Gold, so mightily constant in the Fire, unto Putrefaction, and to reduce it by Putrefaction, into a nothing: For I have read too and again, amongst the Philosophers Writings, that it is an easier thing to make Gold by Art, than to destroy Gold made by Nature. And therefore this salt

must needs be a wonderful one, which is able to effect these and other, the like almost incredible things.

**B:** Well may you term it a wonderful Salt, for so it is, the like of which, no Man will find in the whole World; though to such as know it, it is so vile and mean a thing; insomuch that scarce any one would think it likely, that such things could be done thereby, as are wont to be, should it be but named by its own proper Title. Does not, I pray, that Philosopher, Cosmopolita [or Sandivow] confess, that he hath oftentimes declared the Art, and Secret of the whole Philosophick work, word for word, sometimes to one, sometimes to another, and yet they would not at all believe him, by reason of the meanness, or vileness of the Work? And does not he make frequent mention of his own, and not the common Sal Armoniack? But that you may give more belief and credit to our salt, I would have you read the Turba of the Philosophers, wherein you will find all those things which they have published concerning their Salt: And amongst others, hearken to those few words, which the Rosary mentions: Our Salt dissolves Gold into a red Colour, and Silver into a white Colour, and transmutes them out of their Corporeity into a Spirituality, and with our Salt, are their Bodies calcined. And for this reason, Lumen Luminum, also says, that if the Omnipotent God had not created this Salt, the Elixir could not have been perfected, and the Study of Chymistry would have been in vain. Avicen saith, If thou hast a desire of getting Riches, prepare Salts, that they may be changed into a clear water, for by the Fire are Salts changed into Spirits: Salts are the Roots of thy work. Hermes saith: All Salts are Enemies to our Work, and to our Art, save the Salts of our Lune: Arnoldus saith: Every Salt that is well and rightly prepared, is of the Nature of Salt Armoniack, and the whole Mystery of our Art consists in the Preparation of common Salt: He therefore that knows Salt, and its Solution, to him is the Mystery of the ancient wise Men known. And therefore bend the utmost Meditations of thy Wit upon the Nature of that Salt only, in which the Wisdom of the ancient wise Men, and every Mystery, is found hidden and concealed. The Writings of the Philosophers are full of those and such like Sayings, and they so every where mightily insist upon Salt. And now, what think you of these Testimonies; what! do the things I have spoken, yet find any belief in your Breast?

**A:** Yes Verily, and now I am on your side; but yet do as yet desire, and heartily wish for this one thing, that you would for once let me see your Labour, whereby I may convince other incredulous Persons, and make them believe too.

**B:** Well, I am content; and come let us go to work, and let us put the Gold in its requisite Menstruum, and place it in warm Sand, thereby to hasten forward the Solution of the same; though there is strength sufficient in our Menstruum, to dissolve the Gold in the Cold

without Fire. We shall in a short time see it of a yellow colour: And behold that very Colour, and the Gold itself is so changed, as it is never more reducible into its former golden Body. Thus you have now the entrance and beginning, which as yet is vastly distant from the wisht for end: And when you now see the beginning, know, that is the first day of our Philosophick Labour. Next, let us proceed to the Putrefaction of the dissolved Gold, without which no Colours present themselves to our view. Behold in this very moment, Sol begins to wax black, and in a little while after it will conceive such a thorough blackness, that it will be like to Ink, and may serve to write withal on Paper. This lackness, the Philosophers cal the Head of the Crow, by that name pointing out unto us their Putrefaction; by which, the second day of our Philosophical Labour is finished.

Our Ground [or Earth] therefore, being sufficiently enough moistned, we must beseech God to bestow upon us the hot shine of the Sun; for without the Sun's heat which stirs up the Life in all things, there cannot possibly be any increase and growth. Lend me therefore your best attention. As soon as the putrefied Body of our Sol shall feel the warming heat of the Sun, its blackness, which was the true Sign of its Putrefaction, will vanish away by little and little, and give way to the access and approach of many most delicate Colours, the which, the Philosophers have named the Peacock's Tail, and this finisheth the third day of our Philosophical Labour. And now, when the Fruit-producing Sun shall have thus illustrated our Field, or Ground with its warmer Rays, but for one day as yet, we may easily see, what is further likely to come to pass hereafter.

**A:** Huy da! what a wonderful thing is this, that I see here? in so short a time, and how speedily hath the Peacock's Tail changed itself into a thick Blood? Who could ever believe it, unless he had seen and beheld it with his own eyes?

**B:** I confess it is such a thing as may well cause in any one most exceeding admiration, seeing that there proceed from Art and Nature, Operations of such great moments: God hath made all things very well, and should he not permit such an admirable changing of Colours, to appear in the Operation, verily the Philosopher would be in doubt, whether or no he might hope for an happy success of all his Labour: An now upon the occasion of this Blood-like Colour, is arisen the Name of Dragon's Blood amongst the Philosophers, who say, that when this Colour appears in view, the fourth day of the Philosophical work or Labour is finished.

... For this Golden Blood may [probably] be the potable Gold of the Ancients, which never more suffers itself to be reduced into its former malleable Body. I have sundry ways attempted to reduce it, but never could effect the same. But this one Case I except, viz., a little of this dry Blood, being put upon molten Gold, hath ingressed

into the same, and the residue swims at the top thereof like an Earth: but yet that little which adjoynd itself to the Gold, is of so great a Power as to make all that whole Body of Gold which it entred into, brittle, yea so brittle, as that it suffers itself to be beaten in a Morter into most fine Powder.

**A:** I Marry, Sir! these are Miracles indeed, which I see and hear; who will make any further doubt, but that the Universal Tincture which heals the Sicknesses, or distempers both of Men and Metals, may be prepared, out of this Golden Blood? For all the Philosophers do with one consent confess, that their Tincture, when quite perfected and cast in upon molten Gold, doth render the same brittle. And now seeing this Golden Blood of ours, being as yet immature, and not prepared, doth effect the same, would it not, I pray, perform the same much better, if it had but Ingress given unto it, by inceration, whereby it might flow the easier, and enter the more readily. I do not now at all doubt, but that this aureous Blood both can and in time will become an universal Tincture of Medicinal Virtues.

**B:** Although I am not minded publickly to disclose an Arcanum of such great moment, and so great a Mystery, and to throw such a precious Pearl afore swine; yet I am of the mind to prepare some quantity thereof, and to part with so much unto the sick that need it, and that shall desire the same from me, as is requisite for their use. And not only to the sick, but to others too, that are willing to apply it to other uses and experiments; but especially unto those who would fain try, whether or no, even this very Blood will turn itself (according to my description) into a white Milk, and then into a Red Stone, and, by a new reiteration of the work, pass through all colours. This desireousness, or inquiry after the Truth cannot at all prove any ways disadvantageous to me, or mine. For the Art itself will always remain an Art, unless it chance to hapopen that some one or other Searcher, which is of a more subtle Ingenuity, should, by his diligent and serious inquiry, search out the very foundation of the Art itself. Which if it should come to pass, he must then think, that God hath vouchsafed this gift unto him, and that he now considers, and well knows, what esteem he ought to set upon it, and by what means he ought to hide it... All these things which thou hast hitherto seen, are indeed very good; but we are as yet far off from the end. Have you not likewise read in the Philosopher's writings, that the White Swan doth also show itself in the Work? Now, if by but as yet One days shining, the Sun shall have illuminated by its brightness the Dragon's Blood, you shall see it turned into a white Milk, which milk the Philosophers have written off, and which at length goes into a Coagulum, or cheeselike curdling. Look therefore now upon that Milk, which you see to admit of Coagulation and Condensation, by little and little: And thus with this golden Cheese do we finish the

Philosophical Labour of the Fifth day.

**A:** God be thanked, that this days Labour hath also succeeded, as we could wish, But forasmuch as those things which you mentioned, but now come in my mind, viz., that we are far off from the end of the work as yet, and yet tomorrow is the Sixth and last day of this our Philosophical week; and further, seeing you said presently after the beginning of this our Conference, that the whole Work would be finished in six days space, and that on the seventh Day we may cease from all our Work and Labours, and sanctify it, or keep it holy, and give God due thanks for all his benefits bestowed on us: Seeing (I say) that all these things come now in my mind, 'tis no wonder, if they likewise create in me a great deal of care and puzzling, to think, how this can be, that all those things that remain yet behind may be perfected, and brought to a full end in one day.

**B:** Cease your care, my friend, nor do you ought else this Sixth day, but hourly increase the Fire by degrees, and stir it up more and more, that so you may see, by what means our white Coagulated Milk will by little and little pass into a yellow Colour, and will at length be thoroughly Red, and abide most constant in the Fire. This fixed Redness, the Philosophers call their Salamander: The Poets tells us a tale, of a certain Worm that lives in the Fire, which cannot be burnt or consumed thereby. Therefore, after the Philosophers have brought their work through all the colours, and have at length attained so far, as that there appears no other, but a mere fixed Redness, they named it their Salamander, with which (if you except only Inceration and Multiplication) they ended their work, and so do we also finish these our present Labours.

**A:** Ah, my dearest friend... there are divers scruples and doubts.. that perplex my mind.. For I am yet as plainly ignorant, what use to put that Salamander to. As concerning those things which you have faithfully disclosed unto me hitherto, I trust, I shall not err in their operation, but as touching Inceration and Multiplication, in which the two Cardinal main points, the very pillar or hinge of the whole operation lies, as you said, I must needs confess myself more blind than Tiresias was...

**B:** Have you not read in the Philosophers, when they speak of Inceration, that the out-driven Soul is to be restored to the dead King, that the dead Body may be recalled back to Life, and that it, arising with a more glorious Body, and a more excellent Crown, may prove an helper to its meaner Brethren. The Philosophers words are as follows. Here the Soul lets itself down, and refresheth the dead body. For it is not sufficient, that the King be deprived of Life and so left dead: No, no, for necessity requires, that its Soul be restored unto it, which may restore its motion, and lost life, to the dead body. Now, by how much the oftener, the Soul and Life is taken away from the King,

and that which is taken away be again restored thereunto, which so much the stronger and more active Body, and so much the magnificenter a Crown will he arise withal. By these few words have I laid open unto you, Inceration and Multiplication. But yet there are other ways of increasing our fixed Salamander, and rendring it fusible, viz. by the addition of Mercurial things, which by their speedy Flux and penetrating Property, do pierce into this our destroyed Gold, dissolve it, and so bring to pass, that there is made of them both (viz. of the destroyed Gold, and which admits not of any reduction, and of the Volatile Mercury) a certain fusile middling Body, which said Body, thus conjoin'd of the two, is to be matured by the bare Regiment of the Fire. And by this maturation, is this universal Medicament rendred so fusible, as to have ingress into all the Metals, and to penetrate them.

**A:** But pray Sir, is not this way of giving a more easy ingress and flux to our destroyed, and irreducible Gold, by the Mercury of Metals, more facile, and a nearer one than that abovesaid way, which requires a great many operations, by the reiterating of Inceration and Multiplication?

**B:** Yes verily, it is a shorter and easier way, as being void of many tedious Labours, for it needs nothing else, but that the Mercury of some Metals be put into some good strong glass with the inverted Gold, and so be brought unto Fixation. But yet this medicament, that is on this wise wrought up with the Mercury to a constancy in the fire, cannot extend its colour so largely, as that, which is rendered fusible by so many reiterated Operations, because, in every reiteration, the Tincture is exalted and multiplied...

**A:** .. Only this one thing more would I gladly know, viz., where I ought to seek for the Soul of the King.

**B:** You must look, whither you have driven it, and there must you seek it, and having found it, you must restore it to the dead King, and so you will again begin your Work, and you shall again bring it through all, the variety of colours, like as you did at the first time. For when the Soul is restored to the Body, there is made a new Solution, which is to be again putrefied, that it may turn back [sic]; and then proceeding on according to the same way, as was done in the first operation, there will appear all the Colours, and they too far more delicate than in the foregoing Labour. The Crows head will be blacker, the Dragons Blood redder, the Lac virginis whiter, and the Salamander more subtle, than it was in the first operation. For by so much the oftener you shall repeat this Mortification and Vivification of the king, so much the more Magnificent, more precious, and more efficacious a Tincture, will you obtain. Believe it, and give God the thanks, and be mindful of the Poor, as soon as ever you are Master of your Desires...

**Place in Space**  
**the residence of Motion,**  
 or the Secret Mystery of Nature's progress,  
 being an Elucidation of the Blessed Trinity.  
 Father - Son - and Holy Ghost.  
 Space - Place - and Motion.

[From MS. Sloane 3797, folios 3-5.]

Space, Place, Father & Son  
are inseparable fixed & immoveable.

Motion ye Holy Ghost  
Is that which brings all things to the Blessed determination of  
the Dei, as in the Gloria Patri, Filii & Spiriti Sancti, etc.

Space is the Circle of Created World  
 Space is the Place wherein this Engine's rolled  
 As Place a Center circled in by Space  
 So Space ye Circle is of place's place  
 Place is a Center yet Exchange of Place  
 The Lineal motion is to Space's Space  
 Place in it Self is ever fixed and still  
 Which doth ye Vacant Space of Spaces fill  
 Space can not Move because it all Contains  
 Yet Space is Motion, place where Power reigns  
 Nor Space nor Place do ever Stir nor Move  
 Yet place in Space is restless Motions Grove  
 Great is the Magic of this motion's race  
 Motion in Space doth pass from place to place  
 Thus Motion caught in all including Space  
 Standing in centers moved to Circle's place

Motion is that which runs the world about  
Yet it a place is never found without  
Place it is Still from Motion never free  
Move and not move how can it ever be.  
This riddle placed in Space of mental motion  
Is plane to sense without erratic notion  
Motion's confined to various centriq place  
Never to pass ye boundless bounds of Space  
Thus each beginning doth its end contain  
And End once made it must begin again  
For what was done by one Creating Word  
Must by this Three in one be understood  
If any ask how this could ever be done  
Tell them the word is Father, Ghost and Son  
Before that time was made Creatural  
God in himself was the great all in all  
But to extend the virtue of his power  
Of nothing all things made for his one bower  
Thus was the great abyssive might  
Formed into Creature, whence produced was Light  
This light to Nature joined both firmly stood  
As primo genitors and to beings food  
The product of this all including one  
In Triple Creature most divinely shown  
Prangeth it self by measure of formation  
To be the being's being of Creation  
Thus were the heavens and the Earth begot  
Both out of darkness unto Light was brought  
From whence was made twixt one and t'other  
Father, & Mother, Sister, & Brother  
Four in number as the Elements are  
Conjointly work to procreate their par  
Fire is the Father, and the Mother is air  
Brother and Sister, Earth and Water, are  
These in their number weight and Measure  
Make of this world the hidden treasure  
Joined them thro light let them unite together  
That they may live in love and be for Ever  
So is the Quatrant four in one  
The Matter Form and Essence of our Stone.

## An Alchemical Allegory

[Extracted from "A Dialogue, or Questions put by an Adept Master to a certain Scholar, with his answers", found in MS. Sloane 3637, folios 37-56. A similar work is included in the *Ginaeceum Chemicum*, Ludguni, 1679, though this does not contain this allegory.]

Before either the Theban Ogyges or Deucalion of Thessaly, under whose unequal governments the Earth was wasted with deluges, there reigned in Epirus the most pious King of all the Age. And yet he also being grown in years at length submitted to approaching fate. The widow Queen in seven days destroyed with grief and sorrow, departed also to fill her husband's grave. But one small hour before her death, for she had long been big, she was brought to bed of twins. But among her dying groans, the nurses lamentations, and the outcries of the noble ladies that stood around, they all forgot which had the good fortune to be born the first. Although there was a difference in sex, a sundry colour both of hair and skin, and a vast variance in the shape of all their members, yet such a fatal oblivion seized them all, that there was none that dared to vote, either for the one or for the other. What should a people do that had a firm established law, that the first born of whatsoever sex should be exalted to the succession of the Kingdom.

The nobles met, the prudent Senate soon congratulated with themselves for the difference in the sexes of the double birth. Because the Kingdom had another law, that the brother should have the sister for his wife, which being done they hoped that there would be no quarrel about inheritance. So having chosen the most deserving among themselves to govern during the minority of the Princes, and others to take care of their education, they all departed home. They applauded themselves that they had so easily diverted a danger so threatening to the Kingdom.

But, alack, by what evil fate shall I say it came to pass, that discord should divide the Royal Family. That differences and strife should there be every day increasing? The prince had red bushy hair, threatening eyes, a stern look, almost a bullock's neck, rough skin

and a rapacious hand. To his playfellows always cruel, but to his sister he bore a mortal hatred. But the Princess had a face even to be envied by the Nymphs, her hair was white, but surpassed by her fairer neck, her eyes were sparkling and her countenance cheerful towards all, unless when she, as she was almost always, was struck with horror at her brother's name. The Governors of the Kingdom knew that unless this antipathy were remedied, no marriage could be made.

Therefore convoking the States again, they often and oftentimes consulted, but found out no redress for such great evils. They went into Dodona's Grove, but the vocal oaks were silent. They sought the sacred Pigeons there, but they were flown away, the one to Delphos, and the other into the furthest regions of the sandy Libya. Ambassadors sent hither return, and nothing's done. In the mean time the rabble made a tumult, the greater part disdaining a female Empire over them demanded the Prince to place him on the Throne. But the better part, although in number less, pitying the fortune of the Princess, and not enduring the injury betake themselves to her.

And now the Kingdom's peace had plainly been despaired of, had not the chiefest of the Senators, Cleobulus, but not without danger of his head, repressed the raging people. For he promised he could effect the so much desired marriage. He told aloud that from the furthest Aethiopia and the Fountains of the Nile, he had bought, and dearly too, a Love-charm, and a potion and a preservative. Prodigies and wonders and things unheard of before are swallowed soonest by the greedy vulgar. So this Hydra being for a time repressed, Cleobulus told the Senators returning to the Counsel house how matters were. That he despaired of making the marriage he had promised, that he thought it best to blunt their first fury, but not being able to sustain a second shock, he would fly his country, and they should consider what was further to be done. They needed haste. The Palace gates were diligently guarded, that nothing should again be spread abroad from thence.

In the meanwhile there are some sent into Egypt to consult, nay even to hire the Magi. The recompense was two parts of the Kingdom divided into seven. A reward so great soon drew great multitudes, that promised golden mountains, while they themselves gaped after sordid gain. To be brief it would surfeit you to relate their frauds, their cheats, their villanies, their tricks, and juggles. While these were doing some busybody courtiers throwing papers out by night betrayed the whole imposture. The raving people besieged the palace, they ask for Cleobulus to be surrendered, but being informed that he had left Epirus, they demanded the King, that they might crown him according to the custom of his ancestors. But those who did desire a Queen, sending her forth by a back door, carried her to another part of the Kingdom to be crowned.

Meanwhile what do the Magi? Truly they rejoiced that the work

they knew not how to perform was taken from them. But raising a great clamour they go to the Governor, and, as it is the way of mountebanks, complain that the work being now almost perfected, they were deceived of their wages. They take counsel together among these tumults to break open the treasury by night and take the Crowns and royal jewels. The attempt succeeds well, they get aboard a ship which they had stolen also, and passing down the river, they made a stop at the mouth thereof. Judging it now convenient time and place, each one requires to have his share of the booty in his own possession. It is the manner of robbers to quarrel in dividing the spoil, so they come to handy-blows.

Among these knaves, as in such works all hired men most certainly are, there were, like doves among the crows, two honest men; the first was born at Babylon in Chaldea, the other nine miles from the down-falls of Nilus. The spreading fame of the Epirotical affairs, and not the smell of gain had brought them thither. What should they do? Their counsel about the reconciling of the Princess was always rejected even with laughter, nor yet was there leave given to depart. They consented not to the theft. But when those fled, if they had stayed at Court, they might have lost their heads for the villanies of others. But now being in the extremest danger, they call all their Magia to their assistance, and while the rest were squabbling, they lift the Crown entire together with the Jewels into the Air, and twice as much as was the whole height of the mast, they by their Art keep it suspended there. The fight now ceases and they tremble, astonishment and wonder does invade them.

The two Sophi cast themselves out of the ship. Many others follow, but not knowing the Nature of the River (it is called Cocytus) they are drowned. The other less malicious thieves setting sail, arrive in Egypt but with empty purses. But those two who were truly Sophi, when they by skillful swimming had attained the banks, they go to the Senate, accuse their fugitive Companions of the crime, but that they accompanied them only with intent to save the regalia out of the hands of robbers. Which they also affirm that they have done, and that they had placed them in the Air aloft, at the mouth of the Cocytus. And that moreover now all fear of civil war was vanished, because to whomsoever the realm was destined by the laws of fate, into his hand the Crown should willingly and easily descend.

The prudent Senate mindful of the frauds of late, and having too weak a faith for such great miracles, committing the Magi to faithful keepers, they sent one to the King, the other to the Queen, and also hasty messengers to survey the Mouth of Cocytus. They returning relate that all are true, a Crown of most unheard of beauty pendant in the Air. The astonished senators in haste begin their Journey. Coming to the river they salute the King on the right bank and the Queen sitting on the Left, not knowing to which of them this admirable Crown was destined, for as yet it did incline to neither part. The Magi

are called, since they had hung it there, let them command it to descend without delay. This they denying they had power to do unless according to a Law given by the Sophi and the appointed order of the Fates, by the hasty rabble they are put to death and their bodies enclosed in lead are cast into the River. Time was not long before the ebbing and the flowing tides carried them into the neighbouring shallows, out of their flesh grew up the herbmarine, a succedaneum for a turf to cover the remaining bones.

[I must here insert a verse.

Discoloured weeds and green Mosse intomb you].

But the candidates for the Crown, seeing it yet unmoved begin the lament the Magi. Of all the divers sent down into the water to seek their carcasses. there none returns. The wisdom of the Senate therefore thinks it fit, that there be erected one empty tomb upon the river's bank, and a second on the other, to which the ordinary Priests officiating the holy Rites of the kingdom should strive to call the Magi's wandering Ghosts. In a short time the primroses arising show that the prayers of the just are heard.

After this it was perceived, either the river was little shrunk, or that the tombs receded further from it. But this doubt is soon cleared, because even vulgar eyes do judge that waters are sensibly diminished every day. As they decrease the competitors removing ever anon their tents press forward on the bank and follow them retiring. The less the river, is the nearer they approach, the nearer that they are, the more they seem alike. For as much as the black exhalations of Cocytus do tan the lovely fairness of the Queen, so much the Northern Winds add beauty to the King; so that they who were before so much unlike, have now so much resemblance, that they are scarce distinguished from one another.

Behold another wonder. As they approach, in the same proportioned space the Crown descends from above. Now the King is just about to touch it, and now the Queen is nigh and now they touch it. But neither can the sister without her brother, nor can the brother without his sister, move it. With their joined forces therefore they carry it between them, with the Senate rejoicing, Cleobulus returning, the people applauding, and the realm triumphing. Dodona's vocal forest now resounds again, and instead of doves, the ghosts of the Magi utter prophecies. The willing sister marries to her brother, the brother takes his sister for his wife. From these nuptials there arises a numerous posterity, which to this very day endures and shall endure as long as this whole orb of Earth.

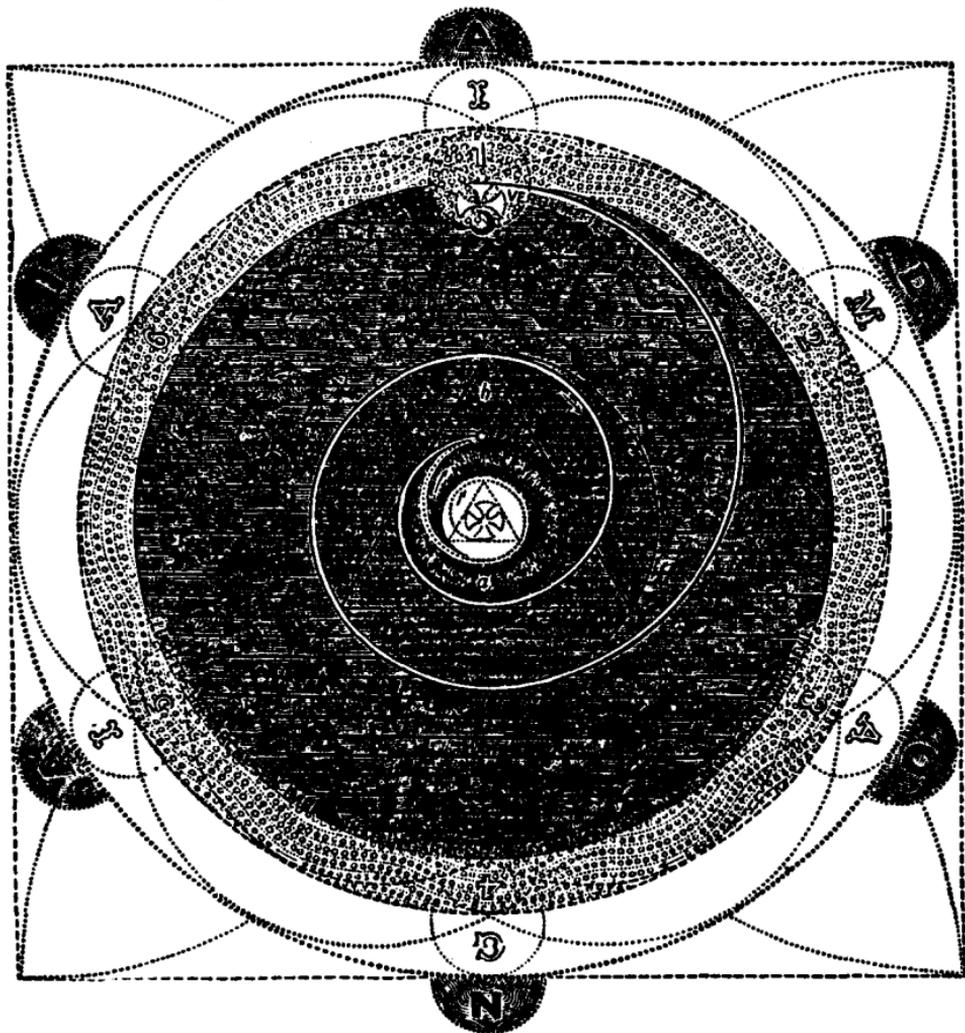
## Christopher Walton's Series of Theosophic Symbols

Adam McLean

During the mid-nineteenth century Christopher Walton, a goldsmith living at Ludgate Hill in London, became fascinated by the philosophy of Jacob Boehme and began to collect all the books and manuscripts he could find on Boehme and the Behemists in England (see Joscelyn Godwin's article in this issue page 58). His library became one of the most important collections of Protestant mysticism. He was particularly fortunate in acquiring almost all the manuscripts (together with copies) of D. A. Freher, and was greatly interested in the complex symbolic diagrams that Freher devised to illuminate and explain Jacob Boehme's theosophy.

Walton conceived an enormously ambitious publishing project, *The Introduction to Theosophy*, a series of volumes, in which he intended to put into print the writings of Boehme, William Law, and D. A. Freher. Regrettably only one volume was issued, and this was devoted to writings of William Law. Within this publishing scheme, Walton had himself devised an elaborate sequence of emblematic figures (which follow in the tradition of D. A. Freher), together with his own commentary on these symbols. These series of theosophic symbols are a quite extraordinary exploration of Behemist ideas, filtered through Walton's own imagination. His commentaries to some of his emblems are in places illuminating and remind us of Freher's later pieces. Other sections are extremely confusing, though seem to reveal only the surface of an elaborate philosophical system, derived from Boehme but which incorporated elements of nineteenth century science. One wishes that Walton had been able to develop these ideas further, and express them in a clearer form. For example, in some places his commentary on his symbols focuses upon the forces of electricity and magnetism and also upon chemical ideas of the importance of Carbon, Hydrogen, Oxygen, and Nitrogen in organic chemical substances.

I include here a part of the seventh series of his theosophic symbols, which illustrates the seven days of creation.

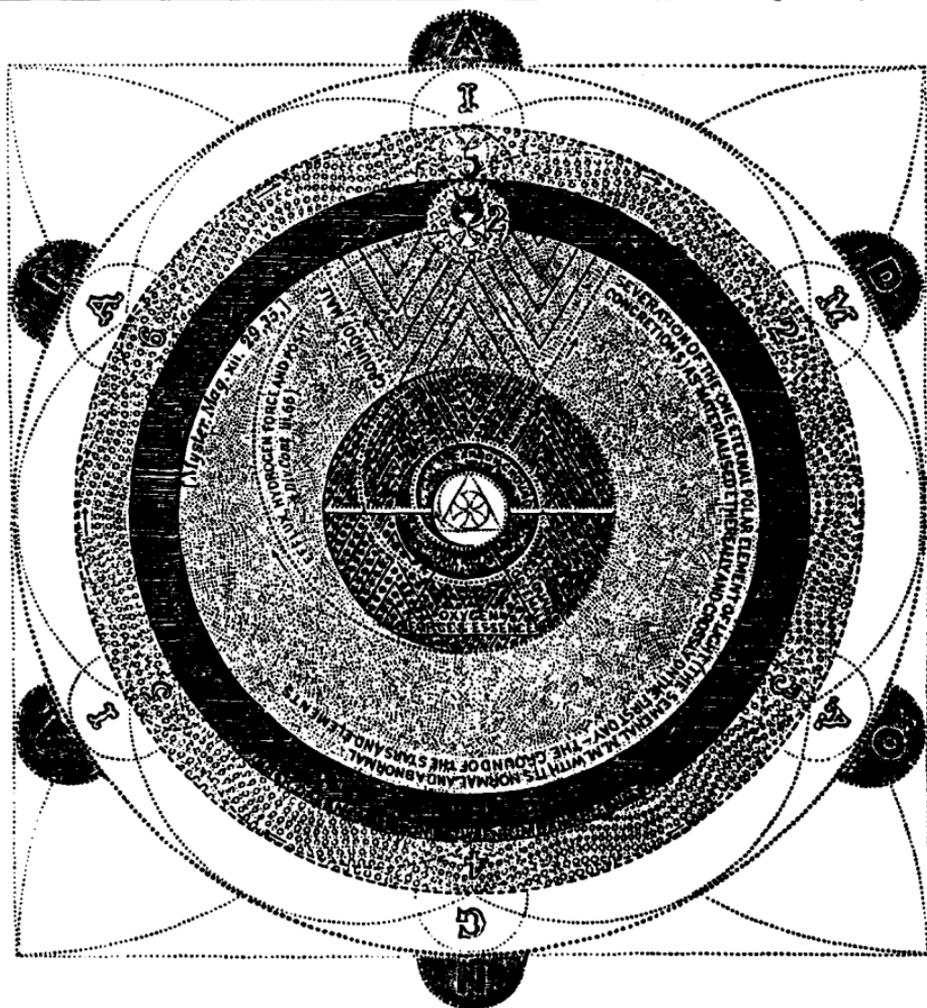


**A SYMBOL OF THE SO-CALLED 'FIRST DAY'  
OR GROUND CREATION OF TEMPORAL NATURE.**

VIZ. BY THE NOW UNRESTRAINED ACTION OF THE UNBALANCED MAGNETIC POLE FIAT OF ETERNAL NATURE, IN THE PURE AND FOECIAL MATERIA OF LUCIFERS KINGDOM AND THE FIAT LUX BAPTISM OF THE SEMINAL LIFE ESSENTIALTY, SO COMPRISED AND CONDENSED.

BY WHICH ARREST (OF OFFENDED NATURE), LUCIFER WITH HIS HIERARCHY BECAME SHUT UP IN THE SPIRITUAL GROUND OF HIS PRINCIPALTY, INTO THE DARK ABYSS THEREOF, BEYOND TIME AND PLACE THE VACUUM SOURCE OF (THE PURE OMNIPOTENCE OF) HARSH HARD STERN ATTRACTION, OR FIERCE SHARP BITTER STINGING WRATHFUL COLD QUALITATION, OR FROST-FIRE, A SULPHUROUS ACID POISON LIFE AN ETERNAL GASPING DYING DEATH. — (See description hereof *Great Six Points*, chap. ix, 75.)

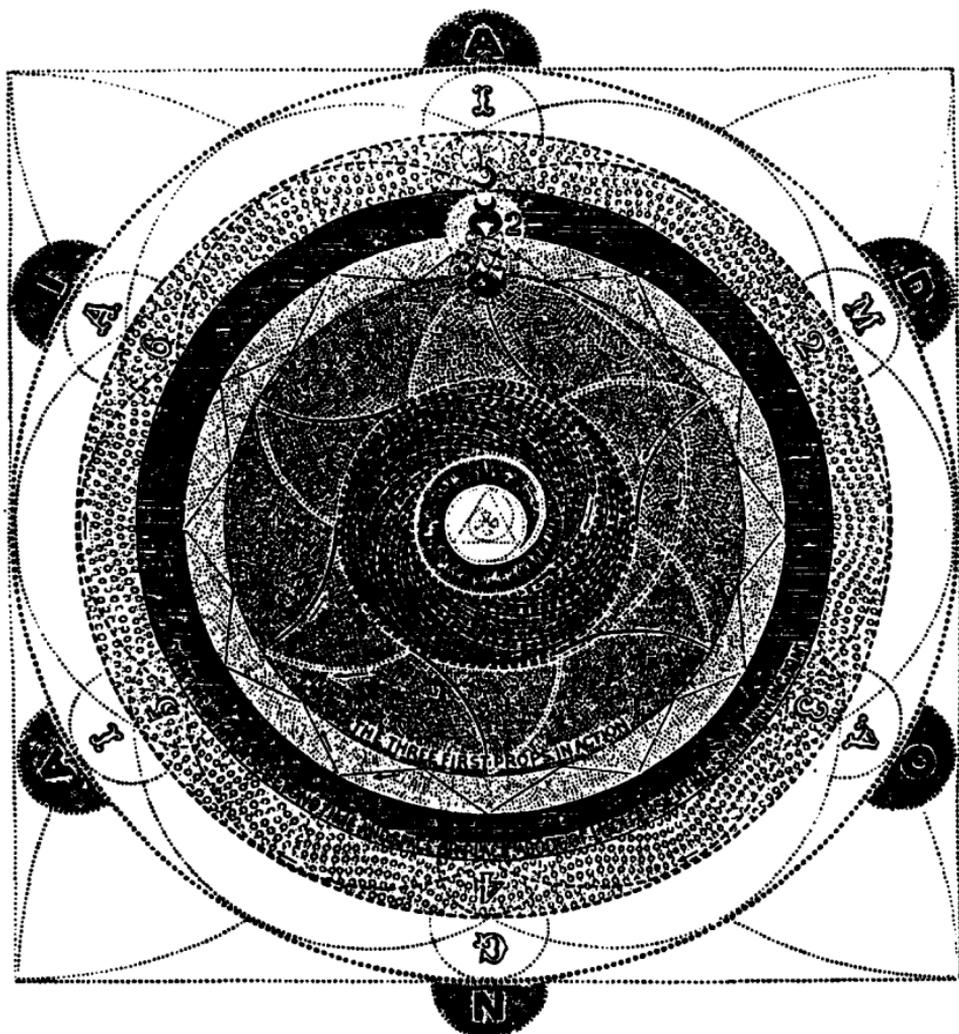
**NOTE.**— (a) DENSED SPOILED OR FOECIAL MATTER OF LUCIFERS SPIRITUAL KINGDOM, GROUND OF GEO-EARTHNESS. (b) DENSED UNSPOILED SPIRITUAL MATERIA THEREOF, GROUND OF ETHER-VAPOR-EARTHNESS — BOTH THE ONE AND THE OTHER BEING REBAPTISED WITH THE SPIRIT OF LIGHT, IN ORDER TO REGENERATION OR FULL RESTORATION, BY THE PROCESS OF CHRIST.



## A SYMBOL OF THE SO-CALLED SECOND DAY'S CREATION, WHEREIN THE COMPRISED AND REBAPTISED

ONE ELEMENT, (THE HEAVENLY WATER) WAS DIVIDED OR SEVERED INTO ITS POLARITY OF ESSENCE AND SPIRIT IN ALL THINGS, THE PUNCTUM OF SEPARATION (THE ELECTRIC FIRE) CALLED 'FIRMAMENT' STANDING BETWEEN THE TWO AS A MEDIUM OF UNION AGAIN — WHICH TWO POLES OF SEPARATION (OF THE OUTSPOKEN WORD OF THE MYSTERIUM MAGNUM) TERMED THE FIERY MERCURY AND THE WATERY MERCURY CONSTITUTE THE GROUND OF THE HYDROGEN AND OXYGEN CASES WHOSE MATERIALITY WAS CARBON; AND POINT OF RE-CONJUNCTION NITROGEN, AND CHEMIC UNITY IN EQUILIBRIUM DRY WATER, (THE WET VAPOUR HAVING FIRST EXISTED AT THE DELUGE, EVEN BY THE EXACT REPETITION OF THE FIRST DAY'S CREATION, BEING A REMEDIAL ACTION OR REPELIVE) — THIS SEVERATION OR FLOWING OUT AND POSIT OF THE HYDROGEN GROUND, (INCLUDING POTENTIALLY ALL THE OTHER ELEMENTS AS LIKEWISE DID THE CONTRA OR OXYGEN GROUND POLE) WAS THE ABSOLUTE SHUTTING-OUT OF THE DARK HABITATION AND INFLUENCE OF THE DEVILS FROM THIS NEW CREATED NATURE, AND SO THIS FORMATION OF POLARITY IN MATTER MAY BE TERMED THE BEGINNING OF TIME.

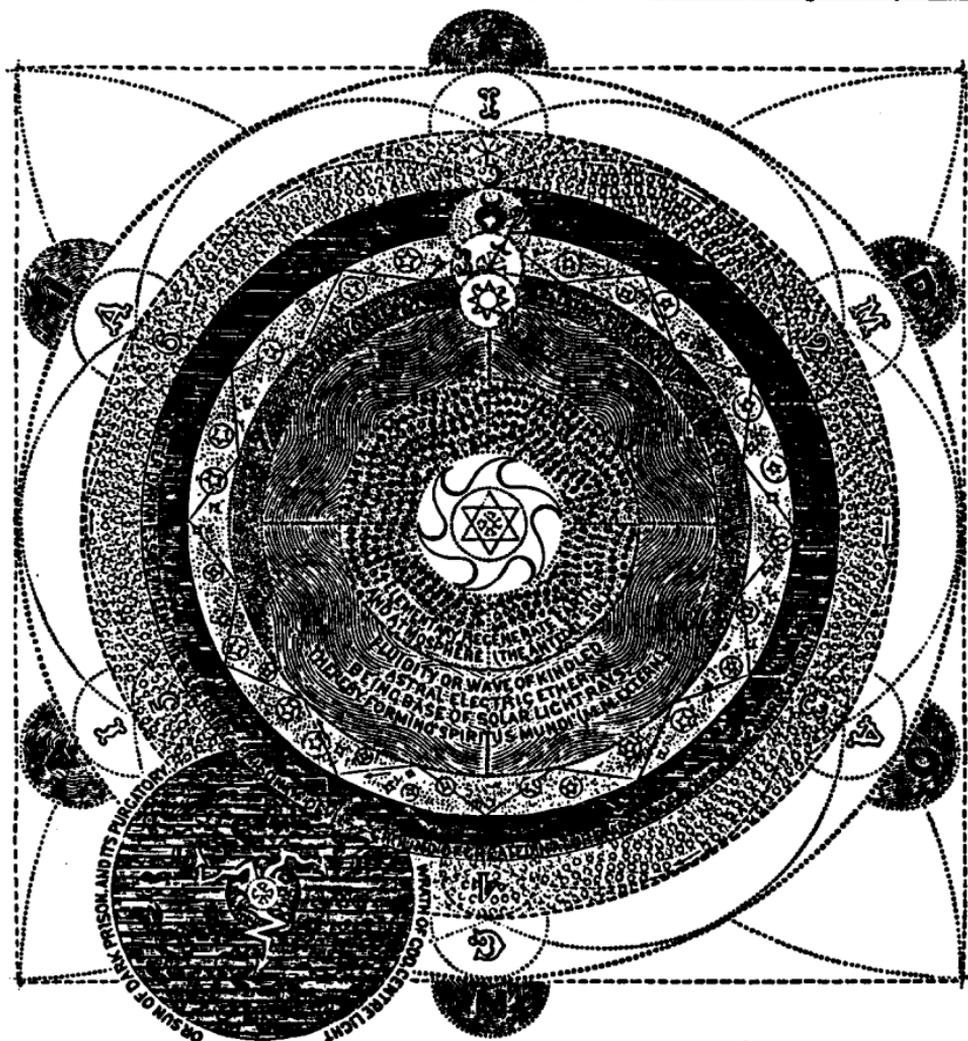
THUS, BY THE FIRST DAY'S CREATOR 'FIAT OF MAGNETISM, (THE FIRST OR CENTRIPETAL PROPERTY OF ELECTRICITY,) AND NOW THE SECOND DAY'S ACTION OF THE SEVERATION BY THE 'VERBUM OF MOTION (THE SECOND OR CENTRIFUGAL PROPERTY OF ELECTRICITY,) THE GROUND WAS LAID FOR THE GENERATION OF THE SULPHUR SPIRIT OF HEAT OR VEGETABLE LIFE WITH ITS CARBON SALOR ACID, (THE THIRD OR GRAVITATION PROPERTY OF ELECTRICITY,) WHENCE THE SAL-NITRAL REACTION ELECTRIC FLASH OR KINDLING OF THE NATURE LIFE IN ALL, ON THE FOURTH DAY, AND ITS OUTFLOWINGS FROM THE CENTRAL HEART (OR BODY OF DRY WATER OR METAL) IN TRIUNE RAYS OF HYDROGEN OXYGEN NITROGEN, THE THREE COLORS OF THE ONE QUINTESSENTIAL ELEMENT OF LIGHT, THE CARBON BODY THEREOF BEING MANIFESTED AS DUSKY GREEN.



## A SYMBOL OF THE SO-CALLED THIRD DAY'S CREATION, SHOWING THE REACTION OF THE RULING FIAT

OR FIRST CONDENSING PROPERTY, IN THE SECOND OR EXPANSIVE PROPERTY, IN ALL THE POSITED ELEMENTARY MATERIA (AND N.B. THE EXTENT OR UTMOST LIMIT THEREOF — BY WHICH GRAVITATION AND CONCENTRED ACTION OF THE TWO CONTENDING POLES OF THE FIERY AND WATERY NATURE OF LIGHT I.E. IN THE EARTHLY CENTRE, IN THE SAL-ITR OR PURE MATERIA THEREOF THE SULPHUR SPIRIT OF HEAT OR VEGETABLE LIFE WAS GENERATED, (BEING THE FIRST CONJUNCTION BETWEEN MALE AND FEMALE FORCES IN MATTER) WHENCE THE FORMS OR SEEDS OF LIFE SHUT UP IN ITS WOMB OR GROUND IN THE SAL-ITR THEREOF PULLULATED ACCORDING TO THEIR KIND, LIKE AS DID THE MOTHER, THE TOTAL EARTHLY CENTRE, WITH ITS CARBON HYDROGEN AND OXYGEN PRINCIPLES, THESE BEING THE GROUND OF THE FURTHER OR NEXT BIRTH THEREIN OF THE SOLAR CENTRE I.E. OF THE COMPRISED 'FIAT LUX' OF THE FIRST DAY, THE SAME OPERATION ALSO TAKING PLACE IN THE ASTRAL EXTRA-PAROCIAL SPHERE, WITH ITS ISOLATED MATERIA, ALSO FORMING ITS CENTRES, YET ALL TOGETHER MAGICALLY PRESSING ON AND INTO THE IR ENCLOSED VORTEX OR BODY, WITH ITS CENTRE, THEY BEING AS TO THEIR CORPUS FIXED OR LOCALLY SEVERED FROM IT.

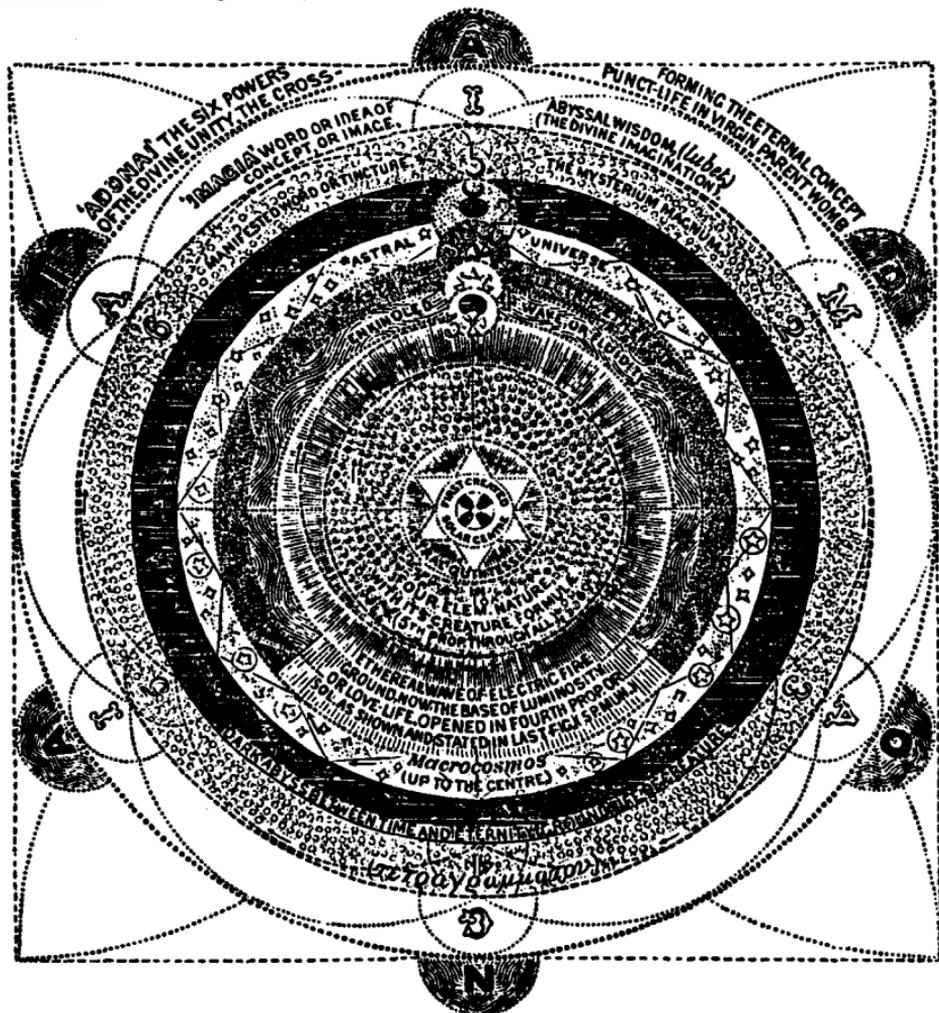
N.B. — HERE TO REFER TO THE P.S. NOTE OF FIG 36 OF EIGHTY SEVEN MARY TABLES, SHOWING HOW THE FIAT OF THE DELUGE BEGAN WITH AND ACTED IN THE ASTRAL UNIVERSE, AND THENCE THROUGH ITS I.E. THE REAL ELEMENTARY VORTEX, DOWN TO THE CENTRAL EARTH, SEVERING (BY ITS SAL-ITR FLASH) THIS LATTER WITH ITS INTERNAL FIERY FLUIDITY, INTO GEOLOGIC AND ORGANIC PLANETARY OUT BRANCHINGS AND SELF POSITS, ITSELF THUS BECOMING A NEW HEART OR CENTRE OF HEAT AND LIGHT, AND A SPIRIT OF CIRCULATION TO ITS BODY OF THE SURROUNDING UNIVERSE.



## ASymbol of the so-called fourth day's creation, THE COMPLETION OF NATURE.

BEING THE KINDLING OF THE SULPHUR-SPIRIT, OR NOW PREPARED VEGETATIVE GROUND OF LIFE. AS A SOL OR ELECTRIC LIGHT, IN ALL CONCRETIONS OF MATERIAL NATURE. TOTAL AND SEVERAL. CIRCUMFERENTIAL AND CENTRAL OR ASTRAL AND 4-ELEMENTARY, I.E. EARTHLY. AND THEREUPON ITS REACTIONARY OUTGOING AND CIRCULATION. - WHENCE SOUL SPIRIT AND BODY IN THEIR KIND IN ALL THINGS, AND ALL TOGETHER FORMING ONE MATERIAL NATURE, OR MECHANICAL ORGANISM OF MENTAL AND ENTAL ESSENCE, AS A TREE GERMED OUT OF THE FIAT-CONCRETED SEED OF ALL THINGS, THAT IS OUT OF THE 'MYSTERIUM MAGNUM' OF LIGHT-ENTZ. LATENT THEREIN - SUCH SEED BEING THE SPIRITUAL ETERNAL NATURE OR DIVINE MIND, AND THAT BEING THE ESSENTIALISED TINCTURE - LIFE OF ALL THE POWERS, COLORS AND VIRTUES OF LIGHT-ENTZ. IN PARTICULARITY. LIKE AS THIS WAS A DEVELOPMENT OUT OF THE CONCENTRED TRIUNE PUNCTUM OF THE ABYSSAL UNITY, AS THIS WAS OUT OF THE CROSS CENTRE OF THE WOMB OF THE SUPREME LIGHT-HUMANITY. - ALL WHICH DEGREES THEREFORE HAVE AN OPEN MEDIUMSHIP IN AND THROUGH THE PUNCTUM OF SOL INTO THE ASTRAL ELEMENTARY ORGANISM UNIVERSAL AND PARTICULAR, MORAL AS WELL AS INSTINCTIVE AND MAGNETIC. (M.M. XL34. *Tria Vira* ix. 62. x. 28.

☉ ☽ ☿ — THE FOUR ELEMENTAL CASES, THE ROOT OR THE ESSENCE OF ALL MATERIAL FORMATIONS, (VIZ. THE HYDROGEN AND OXYGEN POLES, WITH THEIR CENTRE OF UNION AND SEPARATION, THE NITROGEN, OR ABYSSAL CROSS-PUNCT ESSENCE, THE CARBON BEING THE BODY THEREOF), - THESE EXIST FROM THE EVER ENKINDLING OF THE SOLAR CENTRE OF THE UNIVERSE, (ITS ELECTRIC LIGHT), THEY BEING THE CROSS-ARMS EX-SEVERATION OF THE THEREIN CONCENTRED ELECTRIC ETHER OR CONCRETED ONE ELEMENT AND THEIR VEHICL OF DISTRIBUTION AND EXPOSIT BEING EACH SOLAR RAY, AS A SEVENFOLD POWER AND VIRTUE THUS, BEARING IN MIND THE INNER OR SPIRITUAL CONSTITUTION OF THE PUNCTUM OF SOL, IS CONTINUALLY RE-ANIMATED THE WHOLE SOLAR ORGANIC SYSTEM (AS ALSO ITS ASTRAL BRAIN,) WITH - SUMMABLY - THE TINCTURE.

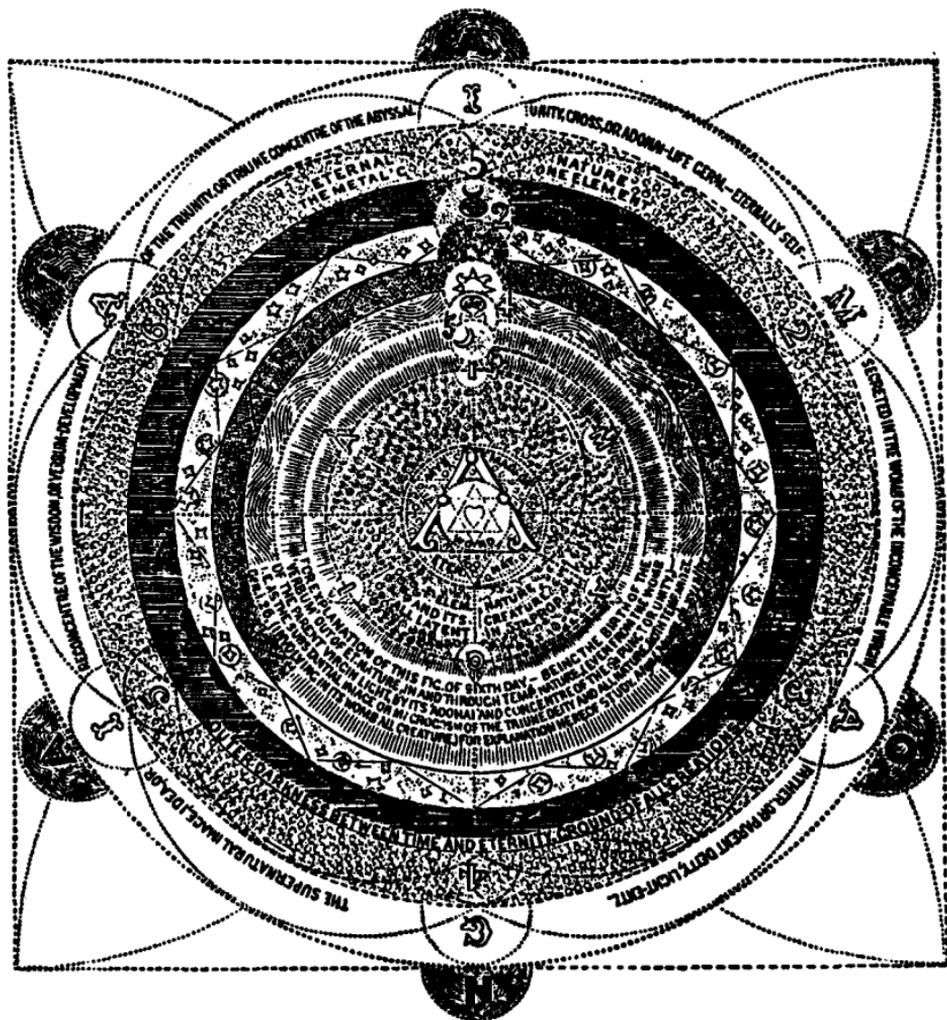


## A SYMBOL OF THE SO-CALLED FIFTH DAY'S CREATION, BEING THE JOY-LIFE OPENING OF THE NEW WORLD

VIZ. THE ELEMENTAL LOVE-LIFE SENSEHOOD AND ASTRAL LIGHT-QUINTESSENCE INTELLECT OF THE CHEMICALLY UNITED POLES IN THE SPIRITUS MUNDI. WHEREUPON FOLLOWED THE JOYOUS EXSEVERATION OR **ORGANIC BIRTH OF THE MALE AND FEMALE CREATORIAL SEMINATIONS, ACCORDING TO THEIR KIND,** (BOTH VEGETABLE AND ANIMAL) LATENT IN THE FOUR-ELEMENTARY ASTRUMS OR DIVISIONAL SECRETIONS OF THE ONE ELEMENT OF ETERNITY, CONSTITUTING THE ESSENCE OF MATERIAL NATURE, VIZ. FIRE, AIR, WATER, EARTH.— (AS REFERRED TO IN LAST SYMBOL.)

P.S.— TO READ FOR FULL ELUCIDATION OF THESE DESCRIPTIONS OF THE FIRST CREATION, J.B.'s *M.M. chaps x to xvii.*

**Note**— UNDERSTAND THE ASTRAL UNIVERSE TO BE THE CONCRETION OF ALL THE SEVERED POWERS AND QUALITIES OF THE ETERNAL (MENTAL) NATURE. ALL BEING LATENT IN EACH STAR. BUT ONE ONLY MANIFESTED FOR OPERATION—IT IS TERMED '*Mysterium Magnum Externum*' I.E. THE RE OUTSPOKEN OR EX-VEGETATED WORD OF GOD HAVING ITS OWN FLUENT SPIRIT AND WORKING OF PREDESTINATIVE INSTINCT AND MAGNETISM ACTION IN ITS VORTICAL ENCLOSURE OF THE ELEMENTARY SYSTEM. THUS IT IS A MECHANISM OR CLOCKWORK, A MATERIAL OUTBIRTH OR SECRETION OF THE ETERNITY, CALLED **TIME.**



## ASymbol of the so-called Sixth Day's Creation, wherein, all the previous births of life

(or developments of the divine word,) in temporal nature, now in the fifth property (the joyous sensibility of light and love,) reactionally sought their primal centre or unity which actual reconcentre or sound was met by the eternal concentre or image of the divine wisdom—the complement of all the stages of its births of the hyper-abysal deity in its development. As the great mystery of eternal nature—thus all-sounding life met both *a posteriori* and *a priori*, in a sensual intellectual material virgin unity, termed *Adam*—a corporate image or essential idea, (as we have just said) (1) of the whole of God abyssal developed and concentred, (2) of eternal nature, the fully developed and reconcentred mystery of the polar spiritual essence of light—the virgin mind of understanding (3) of the developed and reconcentred temporal mystery or seminal material concretion of the two poles of spiritual nature in chemic unity, with its creature.

**SUCH A MICROCOSM OF UNIVERSAL BEING, OR ESSENTIAL IMAGE, WAS THE VIRGIN ADAM, AS THE SIXTH DAY'S CREATION,**

nothing being before him as his lordship-ground but the outbreathing word and outbreathed wisdom, of the triune centre of the abyssal deity—he therefore was *de facto* and *de jure* lord and sustainer of all created nature, the medium and habitation of God standing externally as well as internally in the centre of all the universe of nature, inwardly in heaven, outwardly on the created solar central earth, its locomotive sol or luminous virtue, and such will he (and his redeemed posterity,) be in the resurrection. (See Note of fig 36 of EIGHT SUMMARY TABLES.)



# Reviews

**The Mystery of the Seven Vowels in Theory and Practice** by Joscelyn Godwin 107 pp, hb £15.00 paperback £7.50. Distributed in the UK by Element Books, Longmead, Shaftesbury, Dorset SP7 8PL.

Joscelyn Godwin, who has already given us *Harmonies of Heaven and Earth* and *Music Mysticism and Magic*, has produced a third volume on the mystical dimensions of music, this time focussing on the vowels.

The first couple of chapters cover the essential linguistic and acoustical basics and take care to point out that the western concept of seven vowels is a fundamentally arbitrary structuring of a far more complex vocal situation. The three next chapters: *Vowels and Planets*, *Vowels and Tones* and *Vowels and Colors*, chart the various correspondences which have been made between these symbols. There then follows a chapter detailing the work done on interpreting the vowel sequences in ancient papyri, and one on the 'vowel-songs' of modern composers. The rest of the book takes us through the vowel lore of divine names and culminates with some glimpses at the hieratic use of harmonics in mystical practice and a selection of practical exercises.

This is a wonderful little book that really illuminates its subject—which has not, I think, been dealt with in any comprehensive way before. It manages that rare feat of successfully combining historical and mystical approaches, and it reflects that profound combination of scholarly and spiritual understanding which one has come to expect of Joscelyn Godwin's work.

Stephen Ronan

**The Philosophia Mystica of Paracelsus**, translated into English and edited by Gerhard Hanswille and Deborah Brumlich. 158 page pb. Published by Merkur Publishing Co. Ltd., Scarborough, Ontario, Canada M1V 3P1.

This mystical work ascribed to Paracelsus was first published in German by Lucas Jennis in 1618. It consists of a number of short pieces of a theological nature, the most interesting part of which is an extended commentary upon the prophetic Book of Daniel. Although it is not certain whether all these pieces were written by Paracelsus, they emerge out of a Paracelsist background, and it is interesting that they were published by Lucas Jennis, who was central to the explosion of

Rosicrucian and spiritual alchemical publications, during the second decade of the 17th century. Merkur has done a great service in drawing our attention to this work and translating it into English.

**Alchemy Unveiled - for the first time, the Secret of the Philosopher's Stone is being openly explained** by Johannes Helmond, translated into English and edited by Gerhard Hanswille and Deborah Brumlich. 182 page hb. Published by Merkur Publishing Co. Ltd., Scarborough, Ontario, Canada M1V 3P1.

This is a translation of a work written in 1957 and published in German in 1963. Although this is a modern work, its style and content echoes 17th and 18th century alchemical writings. The author Johannes Helmond certainly had immersed himself in the stream of spiritual alchemy (the title recognises particularly the influence of the Order of the Golden and Rosy Cross) and his writing leads us into a deep exploration of many well known aspects and symbols of alchemy. The work is refreshingly unique being based on his own insights. This book has so many interesting perceptions, original and new ways of presenting the symbols and stages of the alchemical process, that it will be of great value to students of alchemy.

**Working the Soul - Reflections on Jungian Psychology** by Charles Poncé. 189 page pb. North Atlantic Books, 2320 Blake Street, Berkeley CA 94704, USA. \$12.95, £9.95.

This is a compilation of eight papers and articles given over a period of ten years by Charles Poncé. These are entitled *In Praise of Bombast [Paracelsus] — Paracelsus and the Wound — Saturn and the Art of Seeing — An Alchemical Allegory: Notes Towards and Understanding of Genesis — Woman, the Feminine, and Alchemy — On the Androgyne — The Alchemical Light — On the Possession of Consciousness*. As with Poncé's other writings, this book is an in-depth exploration of the inner resonances of alchemical symbolism, and the ways in which the archetypal symbolism of the alchemical tradition can still be used to explore the inner workings of the human soul.

**Robert Fludd - Essential Readings Selected and Edited** by William H. Huffman. 270 page pb. Aquarian Press. £9.99, \$18.00.

This is a very useful selection of most of the Robert Fludd material that exists in English. It includes extracts from *A Brief Apology, washing*

away the stain of suspicion and infamy applied to the Fraternity of the Rosy Cross, the opening sections of the *History of the Macrocosm*, the 'Declaratio Brevis' to James I, *A Philosophical Key*, *Truth's Golden Harrow*, the *Squeezing of Parson Foster's Sponge*, and a short extract from the *Mosaical Philosophy*. William Huffman provides an introduction together with useful and thorough bibliographical and chronological notes.

**Science, Meaning, & Evolution - The Cosmology of Jacob Boehme**, by Basabar Nicolescu. Translated from the French by Rob Baker, with a foreword by Joscelyn Godwin and an afterword by Antoine Faivre. 235 page hb. Parabola Books, 656 Broadway, NY 10012, USA, \$17.95.

In this thought provoking study of the links or correspondences between modern research in quantum physics and the ideas of the great religious traditions of the past, French physicist Basabar Nicolescu calls for a new dialogue between the knowledge of science, and a deeper, older way of understanding, so that a real evolution of the human spirit can take place. As the author writes: "Reality could be compared to a crystal with different facets. If one facet of the crystal is removed, the crystal ceases to exist. But if there is a crystal, this signifies that there has been crystallization, that is, laws globally engendering the different facets of the crystal. It is exactly in this sense that I employ the term 'correspondences'. The discovery of the laws of correspondence can develop only by a new scientific and cultural approach—one which is transdisciplinary—in which all branches of knowledge, both the so-called 'exact' sciences and the so-called 'human' science, as well as art and tradition, must cooperate.

"The transdisciplinary approach, intimately linked with levels of reality, is the preferred means for exploring what circulates between these different levels. On this path, it is inevitable that the great texts the past, such as those of Jacob Boehme, will be rediscovered, for culture forms an indissociable, inseparable whole, over all times. Boehme shows us how the multiple splendor of Being is reflected in the mirror of Nature; in its turn, modern science has brought about our discovery of increasingly dazzling signs while looking into the mirror.

"What we call the 'real' is the result of the interaction between two facets of one and the same Reality: the physical universe and humanity. The time for a truly new alliance—that of man with himself—has come. In our quest, Jacob Boehme is present among us, bodily present, a friend, a divine cobbler, a living witness to this new alliance."

-from Publisher's cover notes

**The Rose Cross and the Age of Reason. Eighteenth-Century Rosicrucianism in Central Europe and its Relationship to the Enlightenment** by Christopher McIntosh. 200 page HB. 8 illustrations. E. J. Brill, Leiden, New York, Köln, 1992. \$63.

The Rose Cross and the Age of Reason deals with the interaction between two movements of thought in eighteenth-century Germany: The philosophy of the Enlightenment, and the complex of ideas known as Rosicrucianism. Dating from the early seventeenth century and drawing on Pietism, Freemasonry, Kabbalah and alchemy, the Rosicrucian movement enjoyed a revival in Germany during the eighteenth century. Historians have often depicted the neo-Rosicrucianism as a Counter-Enlightenment force. Dr. McIntosh argues rather that it was part of a "third force", which allied itself sometimes with the Enlightenment, sometimes with the Counter-Enlightenment.

This book is the first in-depth, comprehensive study of the German Rosicrucian revival and in particular of the order known as the Golden and Rosy Cross (Gold- und Rosenkreuz). Drawing on hitherto unpublished material, Dr. McIntosh shows how the order exerted a significant influence on the cultural, political and religious life of its age.

—from Publisher's cover notes