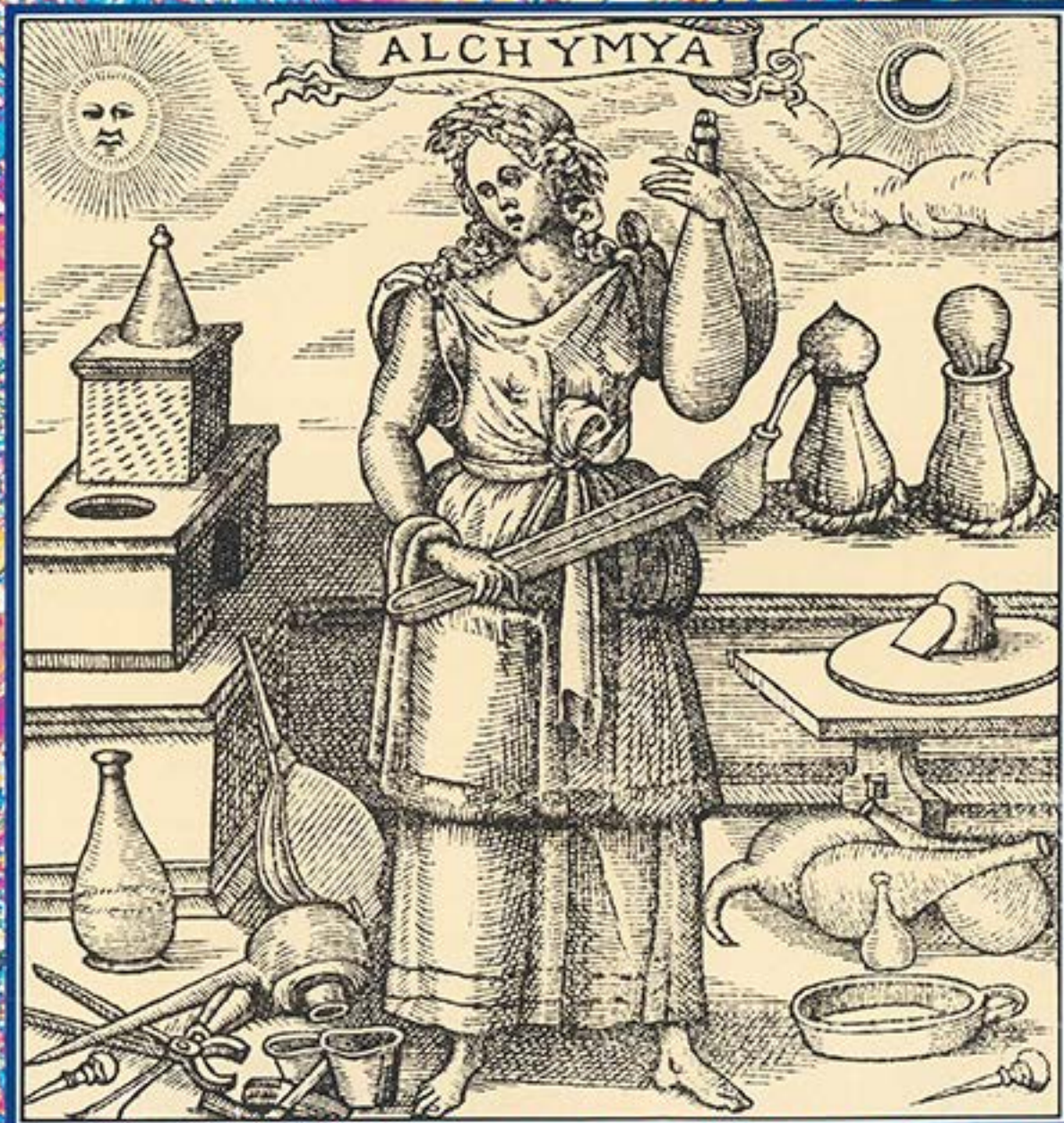
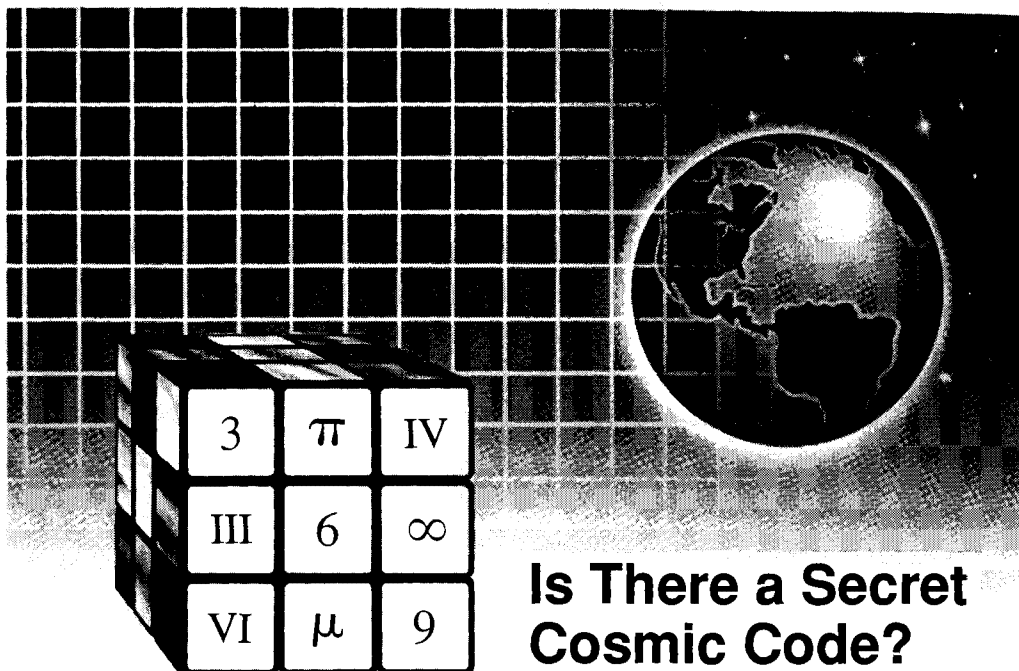


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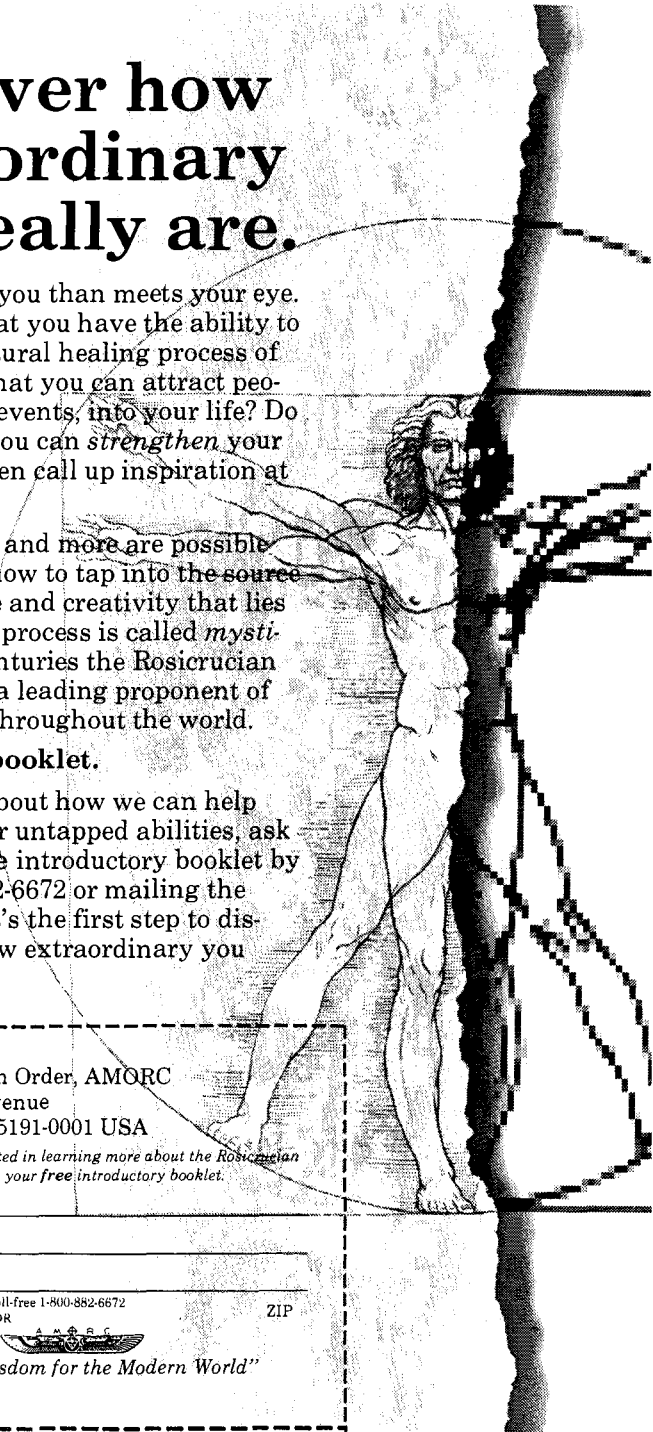
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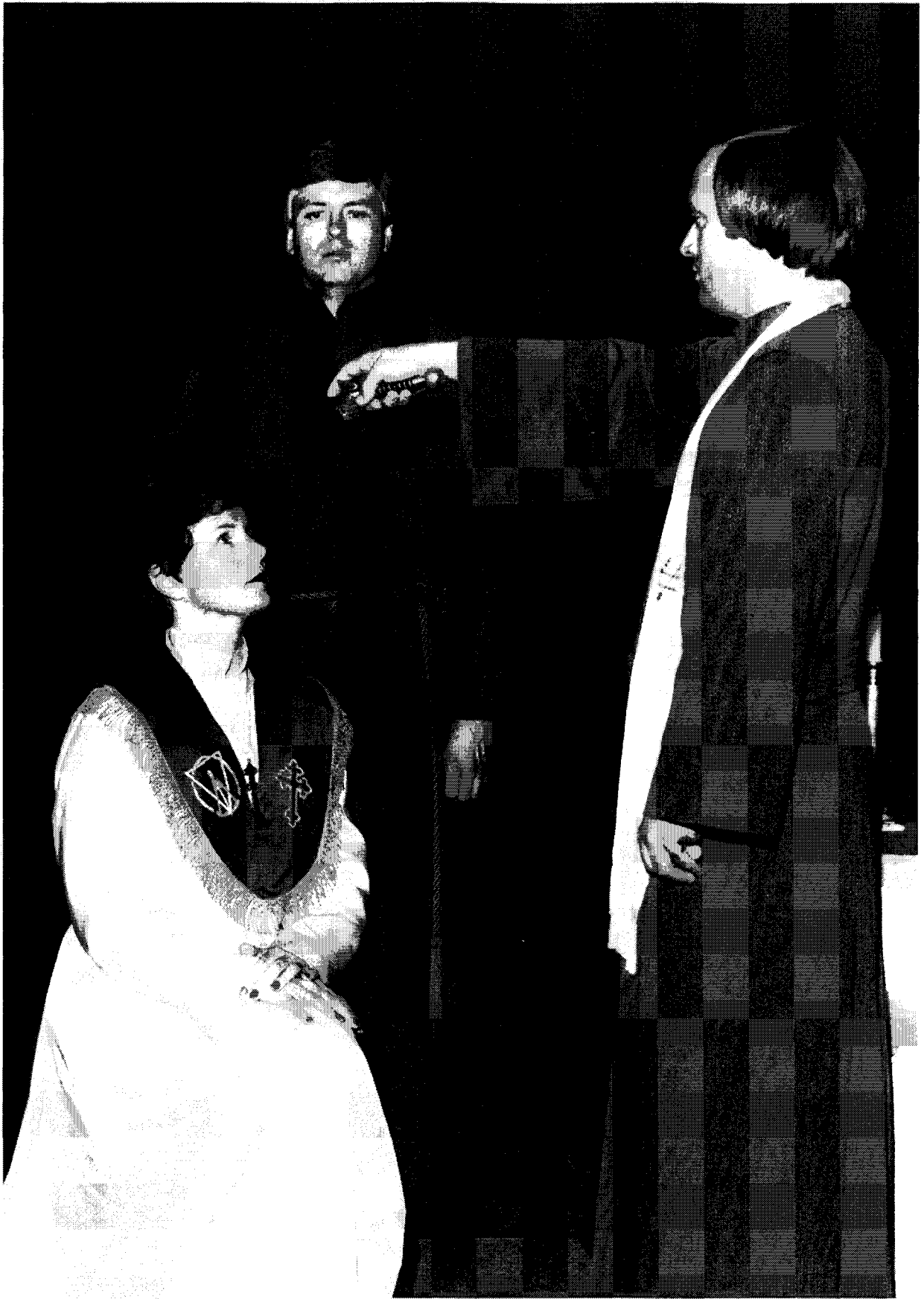


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## PHOTO

Imperator Christian Bernard installs Kristie E. Knutson as Grand Master of the English-speaking Grand Lodge, AMORC, as Ritualistic Conductor Dennis Kwiatkowski looks on. This Installation took place on July 25, 1991, at the inspiring AMORC English International Convention in Houston, Texas.



# Message from the Imperator

## A Journey Through Images

I WOULD like to lead you upon a journey through images familiar to us all.

Let us go back in time and recall the Deluge, a familiar theme that appears as a story in almost all ancient cultures and religions. While in meditation one day, Noah heard the inner whisper, the voice of God telling him to begin building an ark of refuge that would allow his relatives and all species of animals to be saved from the catastrophe to end all time.

This image immediately evokes some questions: Did God speak only to Noah, or was Noah the only man on Earth able to listen to, understand, and accept the word of God? I firmly believe the latter notion is true, because nowadays we realize the importance of preparing ourselves and keeping the door open through which God speaks to us, and consequently being tuned in to messages coming from our subconscious mind.

Another question arises: Noah summoned together some people and gathered couples from each animal species, and all serenely accepted his instructions to enter the ark of salvation. Why did all of these individuals accept the commands of Noah?

Now let us visualize the force of Islam in the nation of Iran which, after having been de-emphasized by the government of the Shah Reza Pahlavi, has returned to the cultural ascendancy of a thousand years ago. Under the leadership of the Ayatollah Khomeini, the government has restored the ancient habits, costumes, and traditions of their ancestors. These include punishment by having the fingers, ears, and tongues of common criminals cut off; the death penalty imposed for any

crimes of moderate seriousness; the enforced use of the veil and of black robes by women. It seems that the masses' yearning for maintaining their ancient culture has persisted, even after the modernizing experience of Westernization practiced under the Shah. I would ask how a man or woman feels in a country that has gone through such experiences in so short a time. Do you think he or she has evolved or regressed?

Let us also examine the incident that took place in Guyana over ten years ago, where the Reverend Jim Jones, of the Church of God, led hundreds of followers into collective suicide. All of them, without hesitation, accepted the words of their minister, who claimed to have spoken with God. Reverend Jones then decreed that since the majority of the group were great sinners, they were to commit suicide, so that not even one of them would be left to tell the story of that sect. I consider it very strange that none of them—not even a single one—raised questions and challenged the purposes of the minister before he led them into that collective act of self-annihilation. Were all these people so deeply indoctrinated or deceived by the words of their spiritual leader?

### *An Example of Courage*

Now let's examine another image, one which has been highly inspiring to me ever since it was made public on television a couple

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*Frater Charles V Parucker, Brazilian Grand Master and Vice President of AMORC, authored this article. The Imperator and AMORC Grand Masters worldwide will be regular contributors to this department of the magazine.*

of years ago. This image comes from out of the protest movement by Chinese students at Tienanmen Square in Beijing, China, in 1989. As you remember, the students were fighting for further democratization of their country. The live image of that little Chinese man, with a bag hanging from each hand, directly facing the armored tanks of the all-powerful Chinese army, emerges as an indomitable force of the human being in its full magnitude. At the moment he was involved in this confrontation, that man demonstrated a power coming from his inner being that allowed him to face the kind of unusual contingency which he undoubtedly had never consciously foreseen could happen. At that very instant, all of his inner fortitude was revealed in a most extraordinary way. As the armored tank turned right, our hero stepped sideways in the same direction. Then the tank turned left, and again he stood directly before it, determined to face the tank openly.

This is the real way we face the most unusual situations we are confronted with by the circumstances of life. In our quest for knowledge, we constantly prepare for such difficult moments, which may occur suddenly.

At such times we must manifest all that we know and follow that cosmic inspiration we then happen to receive.

What thoughts passed through the mind of our Chinese hero in Tienanmen Square? Moreover, what thoughts passed through the mind of the tank driver, charged with the duty of running over a fellow citizen who was so awkwardly standing in his way?

Reflecting upon the images we have explored, do we know how, as did Noah, to listen to and accept those impressions from our inner self which stem from the Divine Essence? Do we want, as do the people of Iran, to maintain a conservative culture, rejecting any proposals for change?

If we come to find ourselves in a situation that is exceptionally difficult, how will we act? Will we be submissive, like the unfortunate disciples of the Reverend Jim Jones, or will we act firmly as did the man in Tienanmen Square? Can we consider that brave Chinese man as our powerful symbol for facing all circumstances with unique courage?

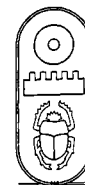
Let us reflect upon the mystical aspects of the powerful images considered here. Δ

## This Issue's Cover

We welcome readers to the special Alchemy Issue of the *Rosicrucian Digest*. Our cover artwork features an alchemical theme, reflecting the importance of alchemy in the Great Work of the Rosicrucian Order. Lady Alchymya, Mistress of the Mystic Art, graces the front cover, surrounded by equipment found in a 16th century alchemical laboratory (from *The Newe Jewell of Health*, London, 1576). Photos on our back cover highlight present-day alchemy classes at RCUI—featuring instructors, students, and some of the special equipment used in class. Instructors Jack Glass and Russell House are shown (middle row of photos, left and center, respectively) at work in the laboratory classroom. For more information on the RCUI Alchemy Classes, please see “Alchemy—the Living Tradition” on page 6.

Class Photos: Mary Berglund, F.R.C.  
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# Alchemy

## the Living Tradition

by Russell B. House, F.R.C., I.R.C.

In the past few years there has been a growing interest in the art and science of alchemy as evidenced by the number of books on the market and by the increasing number of seekers who look to the portals of the living tradition of alchemy. Many books are available on the history of alchemy, such as *Prelude to Chemistry* by John Read,<sup>1</sup> or *A History of Alchemy* by Serge Hutin,<sup>2</sup> and I will refer those who wish to pursue the historical aspect in greater detail to these and similar sources.

Let it suffice to say that alchemy, like the Rosicrucian Order, AMORC, has its traditional beginnings in ancient Egypt. The traditional history of the Order<sup>3</sup> relates that the learned philosophers of Egypt took it upon themselves to preserve for all time the accumulated wisdom of their age, which had reached its epitome at the beginning of the 18th Dynasty. They distilled wisdom from the various mystery schools, among them being those dedicated to the mysteries of Osiris, and conveyed these private teachings verbally to selected initiates. The classes were generally led by the Pharaoh himself. Over a period of

**A**ny would consider alchemy to be anything but a living tradition. It calls to mind images of misled experimenters in medieval garrets, or worse yet, the crafty charlatans who played on the greed and credulity of the masses in centuries past. It is a fact that there have been countless would-be alchemists who only managed to reduce their modest fortunes into vapors while pursuing the *fata morgana* of endless riches. Certainly, there were always traveling "pseudo-adepts" ready to sell them a manuscript that was alleged to outline the Great Work of the Philosopher's Stone and which revealed the "great secret" that had thus far eluded them.

As we prepare for the 21st century, why are we once again confronted with alchemy? Is it an inevitable outgrowth of the materialistic inclinations of our culture with its emphasis on money and power and the desire to extend the life of the body? Or might it be a response to an indwelling desire to understand the laws of Nature so that we might live in harmony with the constructive and evolutionary forces which give rise to all things?

*Russell House is an alchemy instructor for Rose-Croix University International and a member of the Order's International Research Council. An AMORC member since 1978, Frater House has served as Master of Nefertiti Lodge, AMORC, in Chicago, Illinois, and is presently Regional Monitor for the Chicago area. He has had a life-long attraction to alchemy, and has maintained a laboratory for nearly a decade. He first presented practical workshops on alchemy for Nefertiti Lodge in 1983, and has studied alchemy with a number of teachers, including the late Frater Albertus.*

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years, the classes became increasingly private, and a clearer vision was developed regarding how the "Brotherhood," as it was called, was to assure the transmission of this knowledge to future generations.

Seekers from Greece sought admission to the Brotherhood, based on the high wisdom evidenced by the philosophers in Egypt, but they were denied admission, due to lack of preparedness. In later years, those who were properly prepared, such as Pythagoras, approached the portals of wisdom and were initiated and permitted to promulgate the teachings in their own lands. From Egypt, the light spread to Italy, Greece, Persia, and the Holy Land. Pilgrims from southern France brought back from the Holy Land word of the great achievements in the sciences demonstrated by a "brotherhood" there. By the beginning of the 9th century, A.D., the fraternity—now known as the Rosicrucians—and these Hermetic teachings were established in France.<sup>4</sup>

#### Hermetic Philosophy

The term *Hermeticism* has come to be associated with alchemy to the extent that they are nearly synonymous. Hermes Trismegistus—who was born in Thebes in 1399 B.C. and died at El Amarna in 1257 B.C.—was a Master of the Brotherhood. Certain of his writings on ontology and alchemy were rediscovered in A.D. 400, notably the *Poemandres* and the enigmatic *Emerald Tablet*.<sup>5</sup> The latter contains the axiom, "that which is above is like to that which is below, and that which is below is like to that which is above . . ."

Where, then, are we to find the modern-day adherents of Hermetic philosophy? The Rosicrucian Order has been the medium for transmission of timeless wisdom to its initiates for more than 3000 years. By necessity, these unchanging truths have been presented in various forms, depending on the needs of the culture of the time. This follows the Rosicrucian Law which dictates that "none of

the Brethren shall be enjoined one habit, but may suit themselves to the Custome and mode of those Countries in which they are."<sup>6</sup> We see, at one time, the teachings of the Order garbed in Qabalistic terms, and at another time, presented in psychological terms. One has only to look to Europe during the 16th and 17th centuries to find that the alchemical model was the operative method of instructing initiates regarding Hermetic laws and principles. This is clearly evidenced by literally thousands of manuscripts, among which are *The Compass of the Wise*,<sup>7</sup> *The Secret Symbols of the Rosicrucians of the 16th and 17th Centuries*,<sup>8</sup> *Die Theoretische Grad*,<sup>9</sup> and *The Golden Chain of Homer*,<sup>10</sup> all of which are authentic Rosicrucian documents, specifically using alchemical symbolism, and detailing, in

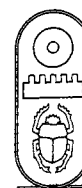
carefully veiled terms, actual laboratory manipulations which demonstrate little-known laws of Nature.

It is a frustrating task that the would-be alchemist encounters today. Gone are the days when one could travel to the Notre Dame of Paris, when "the alchemists of the fourteenth century used to meet there once a week on the day of Saturn, ei-

ther at the main porch, at the Portal of St. Marcel or else at the little Porte-Rouge, all decorated with salamanders."<sup>11</sup> "There . . . each philosopher would show the result of his labours and work out the next sequence of his researches."<sup>12</sup>

#### Alchemy Classes at R.C.U.

In the early 1940s, due to the encouragement of Orval Graves, an AMORC librarian and later Dean of Rose-Croix University, a series of alchemy classes which included practical laboratory applications was initiated for the members. The author had the good fortune to meet with Frater Graves in June, 1989, and saw some of the artificial stones produced during the experiments in the classrooms, as well as a fine artificial diamond produced by the late French Rosicrucian alchemist, F.



Jollivet Castelot. A topaz, produced in those early classes at Rose-Croix University, was declared by a gemologist to be among the finest he had ever examined.

In October, 1990, the author conducted a telephone interview with Frater Graves, who talked about the early R.C.U. alchemy classes and explained that he encouraged students to follow Paracelsus for general techniques and background. There was a wonderful spirit of harmony in those early classes, Frater Graves explained. Students would take turns staying up at night, regulating the heat of the furnace and condensers for days at a time, as specific temperatures were required, especially in the herbal work.

Dr. A. Whaley, on the R.C.U. faculty at that time, assisted in duplicating some of the government research regarding the manufacture of synthetic precious stones. Diamonds, essentially hard carbon crystals, were produced. A chemist known to Frater Graves, still living in San Francisco, was growing emeralds by crystallization, using a method which yields the finest synthetic stones. Another firm, B & J Star Company, was then making synthetic stones, including beautiful sapphires. DuPont was very helpful, as it sent samples and revealed some of the "tricks of the trade." The R.C.U. classes were unable to duplicate all of the processes, as they were using alchemist's furnaces, while B & J Star used high-powered electrical furnaces.

Among those studying alchemy at R.C.U. was Dr. Albert Richard Riedel, who was remembered by Frater Graves as "a little too complicated for the rest of us." When the classes were disbanded in the 1940s, many of the students continued to work on their own seeking to master the procedures they had learned.

In 1960, Dr. Riedel, under the pseudonym "Albertus Spagyricus, F.R.C.," published *The Alchemist's Handbook*, which included an "Alchemical Manifesto 1960," declaring the opening of the Paracelsus Research Society.<sup>13</sup> Reprinted numerous times,<sup>14</sup> this book is considered by the author of this article to be an essential text for the would-be alchemist. Under the name "Frater Albertus," Dr. Riedel operated the Paracelsus Research Society, which later became Paracelsus College, in Salt Lake City, Utah, where he taught laboratory alchemy in the herbal, animal, mineral, and metallic kingdoms. The curriculum also included other Hermetic sciences—notably Qabalah and certain applications of astrology.

Over a period of nearly 25 years, Frater Albertus initiated many hundreds of students into the Hermetic wisdom and revealed important points that would permit the persistent student to discover the secrets of this ancient wisdom. He did much to legitimize the work of the alchemists, for among his students were many skilled in the so-called "legitimate" sciences—researchers, chemists, physicians—who were shown that the writings of alchemists, notably those of Paracelsus and Basil Valentine, indicated medicines of tremendous health value that could be reproduced in the modern laboratory. *The Triumphal Chariot of Antimony*, by Basil Valentine,<sup>15</sup> was given much attention by the students of the Paracelsus Research Society. Basil Valentine reveals in the book the wonders of the toxic semi-metal antimony when it is cleaned of its venom and properly prepared for medicinal use.

With the death of Frater Albertus in 1984, and the subsequent closing of the Paracelsus College, the author, along with many other students of alchemy, continued to explore the mysteries of alchemy seeking greater understanding. It is truly said that "when the

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*"The Rosicrucian Order has been the medium for transmission of timeless wisdom to its initiates for more than 3000 years. By necessity, these unchanging truths have been presented in various forms, depending on the needs of the culture of the time."*

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Student is ready, the Master will appear," for where there is truly a need for guidance, it will not be withheld.

### *Today's RCUI Alchemy Classes*

In 1988 RCUI administrators approached Frater George Fenzke and Jack Glass about conducting alchemy classes. Frater Fenzke, student of the original R.C.U. alchemy classes in the 1940s, had maintained a lifelong interest in alchemy, continuing to study with Frater Albertus. Frater Glass had studied alchemy for more than 30 years, with 14 years of instruction from Frater Albertus.

A curriculum in practical alchemy was put together, and the first alchemy class, in June, 1989, enrolled nearly 40 students. After almost 50 years of silence regarding practical alchemy, the laboratory at RCUI was in use again!

In April, 1990, Frater Fenzke passed through transition, and the author was approached by Frater Glass to co-instruct the alchemy classes. In June, 1990, the second-year class was held, and plans for expansion of this successful program were discussed.

Each class of the three-year program is five days in duration, and is offered to AMORC members who have completed the work of the Third Temple Degree. While first-year classes have been conducted at Nefertiti Lodge in Chicago, Illinois, and at Atlantis Lodge in Washington, D.C., the RCUI facility in San Jose, California, remains the primary campus due to the requirement for a workable laboratory.

"Alchemy I" covers the basics—the history and theory of alchemy—with practical laboratory instruction emphasizing work in the plant kingdom, such as preparation of herbal extracts and elixirs, including a method of producing a plant stone. The "spagyric" techniques of separating the principles of a plant into the three essentials of salt, sulphur, and mercury, with their subsequent purification and recombination are demonstrated.

The wonders of the mineral kingdom are the focus of "Alchemy II," wherein students work with the tinctures from antimony, the oil of sulphur, and tartar preparations. "Alchemy III" will be an initiation into the realm of metals, and will disclose the preparation of the oils, or sulphurs, of the seven planetary

metals, as well as the long sought-after Philosophical Mercury.

As an outgrowth of this program, the curriculum has been expanded to include a two-day intensive class, suitable for presentation at RCUI extension sites. This class—offered to members who had completed the Third Temple Degree and recently presented at Nefertiti Lodge in Chicago and at San Diego Lodge—concentrates on the theory and practical laboratory work related to the plant kingdom. Would-be alchemists will gain enough information from the class to produce plant preparations in their home laboratories with a modest amount of equipment.

Alchemy is, historically, an oral tradition. The numerous books on the market can assist the student in learning the theory and the basics of the practice, but there is no substitute for practical demonstration and for that which is conveyed orally.

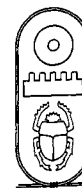
The author has visited numerous alchemical laboratories in this country and is always thrilled to see the amount of dedication, patience, and enthusiasm that has led to success in the making of various herbal, mineral, and metallic preparations. It has been consistently observed that those who have affiliated with the Rosicrucian Order, AMORC, have generally been well prepared for the higher understanding that is required in such an endeavor.

### *Rosicrucian Alchemy*

Alchemy is a life-long pursuit, and it does not readily reveal its secrets to the seeker. The firm grounding in the laws of Nature that are afforded by the Rosicrucian teachings and the subsequent experiments to demonstrate their efficacy to the student are of inestimable value in the understanding of alchemy. Truly, it is Nature that is the alchemist; the operations of the so-called alchemist are to assist Nature in the evolution of all things.

Despite the emphasis placed on practical alchemy in the present article, one should not conclude, however, that the alchemist is a materialist. Indeed, we have heard of spiritual alchemy, or of mental alchemy, and we have the very learned and insightful writings of C.J. Jung on the psychological applications of alchemical symbolism.

Should mystics focus on the spiritual rather than the material aspects of alchemy?



Rosicrucians know that overemphasis of any aspect to the detriment of its contrary polarity will bring imbalance. So much attention has been devoted to the so-called spiritual aspects of alchemy in recent years that the laboratory aspects must be revitalized so as to restore the balance. We know that man is a spiritual being in a physical body, and that it is incorrect to deny the wholeness of being.

Alchemy has within its doctrines the answer to our question, informing us that all things are made up of salt, sulphur, and mercury, and that all three aspects (represented exoterically as body, soul, and spirit) must be present for a perfect manifestation.

The most wonderful aspect of alchemy is that it is truly all-encompassing in its scope. As such it is perhaps the purest expression of Art itself. Many have, in fact, referred to alchemy as the Great Art.

The Laws of Nature are universal, working and unfolding simultaneously in all planes of creation as mandated by the Divine Will. Through the alchemical path, the aspirant strives to align himself with the Divine, and thereby to participate consciously in the Great Work, the evolutionary work of the One. Should the aspirant persist on the Path, the methods revealed will cause him or her to have increasingly direct and clear encounters with the expressions of the One in the crucible of earthly existence and experience. This unfolds according to the preparedness and sincerity of the student.

Clearly, alchemy cannot be an ideology separate from its practice. And while in times past the trend has been to focus attention on the material, psychological, or spiritual aspects of alchemy to the detriment of its other facets, in her own words, Alchemy gently reminds us that all three aspects must be harmonically balanced. The salt, sulphur, and mercury must be present in their fullness for anything to manifest perfectly. The would-be alchemist attempting to take part of the whole will embrace a corpse as devoid of life as a Pharaoh's mummy—that which was once regal will lie as dust in his hands. But by being gentle and patient, she will live in the alchemist's breast.

We are indebted, today, to those who have gone before us—the Rosicrucians who were part of the living tradition of alchemy—among whom we must count Hermes Trismegistus,

Albertus Magnus, Roger Bacon, Raymond Lully, Nicholas and Pernelle Flamel, Michael Maier, John Heydon, Benedictus Figulus, Basil Valentine, Theophrastus Paracelsus, Comte de St. Germain, Cagliostro, Albert Riedel, and George Fenzke. Each of them contributed, in his or her own way, to the vitality of the alchemical tradition—not to seek gold or the favor of men, but to aid the sufferings of humanity, as do all Rosicrucian students.

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The author would like to express his indebtedness to the tireless efforts of Jack Glass, for the encouragement and friendship of George Fenzke, to Grand Master Kristie Knutson, and RCUI President Ken Thompson, for their valuable support of the alchemy program, and to the many students of alchemy who keep the lamp "trimmed and burning."

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Footnotes:

- <sup>1</sup> John Read, *Prelude to Chemistry* (New York: The MacMillan Company, 1937)
- <sup>2</sup> Serge Hutin, *A History of Alchemy* (New York: Walker and Company, 1962)
- <sup>3</sup> Consult *Rosicrucian Questions and Answers with Complete History of the Rosicrucian Order*, by Dr. H. Spencer Lewis, F.R.C., for a fascinating recounting of the traditional and the historical origins of the Rosicrucian Order. Available from AMORC Books and Supplies
- <sup>4</sup> Michael Maier, *Laws of the Fraternity of the Rosie Crosse (Themis Aurea)*, 1656, p. 92. Reprinted by The Philosophical Research Society, Inc., Los Angeles, 1976
- <sup>5</sup> H. Spencer Lewis, *Rosicrucian Questions and Answers with Complete History of the Rosicrucian Order* (San Jose, CA: Supreme Grand Lodge of AMORC, 1954), pp. 94-96.
- <sup>6</sup> *Ibid*, pp. 64-65.
- <sup>7</sup> Ketmia Vere, *The Compass of the Wise* (Berlin and Leipzig: 1779). Translated by Leone Muller, limited edition by AMORC, 1990.
- <sup>8</sup> *Secret Symbols of the Rosicrucians of the 16th and 17th Centuries* (San Jose, CA: Supreme Grand Lodge of AMORC, second edition, 1987)
- <sup>9</sup> Graf Von Lohrbach, editor, *Die Theoretische Grad* (Athens: 1785) Translated by Leone Muller, R.A.M.S., 1985
- <sup>10</sup> Anton Kirchweger, editor, *The Golden Chain of Homer* Translated by Leone Muller, R.A.M.S., 1984
- <sup>11</sup> Fulcanelli, *Le Mystère des Cathedrales* (Albuquerque, NM: Brotherhood of Life, 1984), page 40
- <sup>12</sup> *Ibid*, pp. 40-41
- <sup>13</sup> Albertus Spagyricus, *The Alchemist's Handbook* (Salt Lake City, UT: Paracelsus Research Society, 1960)
- <sup>14</sup> Frater Albertus, *The Alchemist's Handbook* (New York: Samuel Weiser, 1974)
- <sup>15</sup> Basilus Valentinus, *The Triumphal Chariot of Antimony* (Amsterdam: 1685) Translated by A.E. Waite, published in London by James Eliott and Company, 1893



## Interview With A Modern Alchemist

*Jack Glass, F.R.C., I.R.C.; Interviewed by Russell House, F.R.C., I.R.C.*

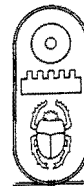
*Modern alchemist Jack L. Glass is a long-time member of the Rosicrucian Order, AMORC, and a member of the Order's International Research Council. Frater Glass is a valued member of the RCUI Faculty, having been instrumental in the rebirth of alchemy at our university. He has studied alchemy and related subjects for more than 30 years, and his RCUI alchemy classes have attracted a fascinated student body. This interview was conducted on July 9, 1991.*

**RH:** People have many questions regarding alchemy and the classes now taking place. First of all, how would you define "Alchemy"?

**JG:** It is the process by which we raise the rate of vibrations.

**RH:** What is the purpose of alchemy, of raising vibrations?

**JG:** We must purify our body, spirit, and soul so that they again reach attunement with the All. We must first purify the body by eliminating things that impede our well-being. Once we clean the "mansion of our soul," it will be a better receptacle for the spirit to function in.



**RH:** Has alchemy always existed in the Rosicrucian Order? Is it part of our tradition?

**JG:** Yes. The Alchemy of Mind has always been given to Rosicrucian students through the monographs. Laboratory alchemy was available at R.C.U. in the 1940s. It was suspended about 1960. However, laboratory alchemy has always existed—whether here or elsewhere. It was resurrected here at RCUI in 1989.

**RH:** Why was there no laboratory alchemy until recently?

**JG:** Although I cannot speak for the Order, I feel that all things must come to a rest before being revived. This method seems to enhance the final results.

**RH:** That answer is rather satisfying, I think. What curriculum is presently available?

**JG:** We currently are presenting an introductory class—"Introduction to Practical Alchemy"—at some AMORC affiliated bodies. It is a two-day class to familiarize the student with the subject. It requires that students be AMORC members in the Fourth Temple Degree. Once acquainted with the subject, it will help [the student] to get more out of Alchemy I. In fact, all alchemy classes require having completed three Temple Degrees and being in the Fourth or above. The first year is plant alchemy, the second is mineral alchemy, and the third is the work on metals. One year is required between each of these three classes because there is so much material to absorb that we feel a period of one year between classes is necessary.

**RH:** What basically do you accomplish in these classes?

**JG:** We work with the theory of mental and physical alchemy. Through meditation and contemplation, we raise the mental, as well as the physical being, to a higher rate of vibration. When we work in the laboratory doing physical work, we automatically evolve the spiritual. Through these processes, we actually take a plant (or a mineral or metal), separate it into its three essentials—body, spirit and soul, raise their rate of vibration, and put them back together. This has transmuted the subject to a higher rate of vibration. The student will also learn some standard laboratory procedures.

**RH:** The idea of working with laboratory equipment is probably as frightening or foreboding to some as it is exciting to others. It also sounds expensive. Can alchemy be done without special laboratory equipment?

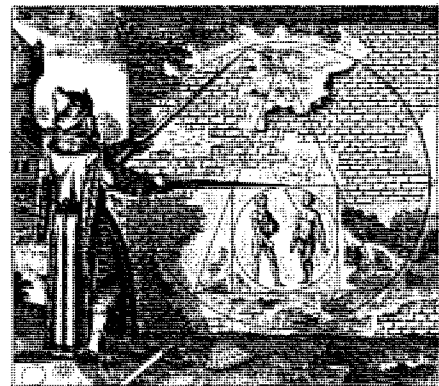
**JG:** Absolutely. Normal household equipment is all that is necessary. Alchemy can be practiced in an apartment, in the cellar, out of doors, and so on.

**RH:** What kind of results have you seen in the classes?

**JG:** Fantastic! Almost all of the third-year students wish to have classes beyond the present curriculum. Many helpful medicines have been brought forth.

**RH:** You make medicines through alchemy?

**JG:** Yes, we do make very potent medicines. Although we show the processes, we do not prescribe medicines. We can only report to you the results we hear from others.



**RH:** What background must a student have to attend these classes?

**JG:** Really, there are no requirements other than being "on the Path." One only needs a desire to know the Laws of Nature and how to apply them. We have had people from all walks of life, such as doctors, a surgeon, blue collar workers, psychologists, housewives, chemists, nurses, retirees—anyone with a true desire to learn the ways of the universe.

**RH:** Jack, what does the future hold?

**JG:** Since there is such a demand, I visualize students in laboratories all over the world delving into and researching the laws of the universe. Δ



## Prosperity

by Kristie E. Knutson, F.R.C.

SEVERAL years ago, as I began working with the principle of prosperity, I was strongly attracted to the idea of spiritual abundance. Yet, I must say, at the same time I found myself in conflict over the idea of asking for material and financial wealth.

Dr. H. Spencer Lewis on many occasions remarked that there is nothing wrong with material prosperity—that indeed attempting to meditate and develop a deep attunement with the Cosmic is difficult when one is hungry, cold, and insecure about the future. According to Dr. Lewis, beautiful, peaceful surroundings become increasingly more useful as we pursue our mystical endeavors.

Yet how much is enough wealth? After all, I am certainly not hungry or living out in the cold. My basic needs are met. Frankly, asking for anything above that would seem to be just plain greedy.

During the time when I was turning these ideas over, I heard a curious story about a near-death experience that surprisingly gave me some insights about this prosperity dilemma.

A while back, there was a young man who was badly hurt in a car accident. According to his story, something unusual happened while the emergency team was working on him.

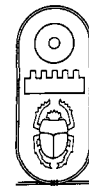
He said he suddenly found himself floating above his body, watching the actions of the medical team. He said he felt very detached and peaceful. A little later, he started moving down a long, dark tunnel toward what he said

was the most magnificent light. When he got to the end, he was overjoyed to find his grandmother and father, both of whom had died when he was young.

While he was in this state, what he later described as a “Being of Light” came to him. This remarkable being helped him review his life, and watched many events with him that had taken place from the young man’s childhood up to the time of the accident. With the counsel and support of this wonderful being, the young man reached the conclusion after a bit that it was too soon to die and that too many things remained for him to accomplish. So, in the end, he returned to his body and eventually recovered from his accident.

What touched me most deeply about this story was how the young man explained that because of what happened, he now understands why we are alive. He discovered we are here for two simple reasons: to *acquire knowledge* and to *serve*. When asked what he meant by “acquiring knowledge,” he said we are here to learn about and understand the principles behind things.

This triggered the insight for me that, if what the young man says is true, then clearly we chose to incarnate into this *material* existence specifically because it is by wrestling with the illusions and challenges of *physical* life that we come to really understand how things work. It is by actively dealing with things material as well as spiritual that we fulfill the purpose of life.



And indeed at some point being alive will mean our having to face the terror of being without a job, or of being in serious financial trouble. It might mean having to deal with the pain of being alone, of feeling unloved. It can mean struggling to survive a health problem. Or it can mean striving to overcome anger and resentment about certain people in our lives.

Whatever our particular challenges might be, in seeking to overcome them we are by definition seeking prosperity—we are seeking to be rich with success, happiness, and fulfillment. And in the process of trying to create that prosperity, we discover through trial and error how things really work. We learn to understand and use the natural laws and principles of the universe—those same wonderful principles we study in our Rosicrucian monographs.

Therefore, actively seeking material prosperity is perfectly appropriate when we understand that our overriding purpose is not to acquire wealth—but is rather to learn the metaphysical skills and develop the mystical consciousness that leads to true mastery of life.

Keeping this in mind, then, I would like to briefly discuss how we go about creating a foundation of spiritual and material abundance in our lives. We do this by using the four steps of the prosperity process.

The first step begins with knowing that the Cosmic or Divine Mind is the infinite and unending source of all abundance. We establish a warm and flowing connection between ourselves and this Infinite Source by opening ourselves to the guidance and inspiration of the Master Within. We must understand that there are no limitations to this relationship or to the abundance available to us.

The second and most potent step—which many of us often fail to take—is to ask the Divine Mind simply and directly for exactly what we want or need. The act of asking opens our hearts and our hands to receive. Indeed, as students of the Mystical Path we have all heard the axiom, “No sincere petition goes unanswered.” Clearly, this infers that something must be requested before the answer can be received. And while visualizing what we want is, of course, an important part of the entire process, it becomes much more effective after we have made our initial, direct, and heartfelt petition of Divine Mind.

The third step in the prosperity process is to know that our request is being answered, and to open our arms and willingly accept the Cosmic’s abundance. In this step, it is important to thank the Divine Mind for responding to our needs, and allow ourselves to *feel* how wonderful it is to have our needs fulfilled in this fashion.

Last, it is important to realize that any request of this nature establishes a kind of covenant or agreement between us and the Divine Mind. In this covenant it is agreed that the Divine Mind supplies us with an abundance of all things necessary to live a successful and happy life. In return, we dedicate ourselves to be of maximum service to the Cosmic and those around us: to live our lives in a way which sets the highest example for others to follow; and to remain open and responsive to cosmic guidance.

As part of this last step, many people find themselves led to tithing a percentage of their income to charity, to make a voluntary commitment in service to society, or in some other way return to the greater good a portion of the gifts they receive.

All of this is a surprisingly simple and surprisingly powerful process. And each time we use it—no matter what our request might be—we are never serving just ourselves. We are also acting in service to humanity.

After all, in order to create prosperity of any nature we are being required to transmute the “lead” of our fears, negative emotions, mistaken judgments, and limited thoughts into the “gold” of material and spiritual wealth. Each time we succeed in overcoming our inner limitations to create prosperity, we show by example the profound rewards of the mystical path—and we become powerful symbols of hope for others.

#### **The Celestial Sanctum**

*is a cosmic meeting place. It is the focal point of cosmic radiations of health, peace, happiness, and inner awakening. During every day, periods for special attainments are designated when cosmic benefits of a specific nature may be received. Nonmembers as well as Rosicrucian students may participate in the Celestial Sanctum contacts. Liber 777, a booklet describing the Celestial Sanctum and its several periods, will be sent to nonmembers requesting it. Address Scribe S P C, Rosicrucian Order, AMORC, 1342 Naglee Ave., San Jose, California 95191-0001, stating that you are not a member of the Order and enclosing twenty-nine cents to cover mailing.*



# Fiery Philosophy

by Orval Graves, F.R.C.



There is no question that physical fire is mighty or that it can be used either constructively or destructively. Symbolically physical fire often is used to refer to a greater and a more wonderful fire. However, the scientist does not truly understand the secret of physical fire. Similarly, humanity is not aware of the higher and more subtle fire which is burning in and affecting mankind in general.

## Colombes—Guardians of the Fire

Undoubtedly the ancient mystery schools understood both the physical and spiritual import of fire. In ancient Rome young girls, known as Colombes, were held responsible for keeping the sacred fire burning in the east of the temple day and night. Those ancient mystic predecessors of the Rosicrucian Order, the Mystery Schools, probably passed on to the Rosicrucians their fire philosophy. One authority on the history of Rosicrucians maintained that at one time "Fire-Philosopher" was a synonym for the word Rosicrucian. An examination of the early history of the Rosicrucians does prove that they were familiar with the physiological, mental, and spiritual fire which burns more or less in every individual being.

The Fire-Philosophers maintained that the expression of the Absolute which was back of all material phenomena partook of the characteristics of physical fire. They thought that divine and spiritual occurrences were always connected with fire; whether it was physical or of some supernatural nature, fire always reflected light. Naturally then, in the explanation of the secrets of nature, you could expect these Fire-Philosophers, or alchemists as they were known when they worked in the laboratory, to make great use of physical fire.

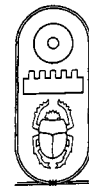
## Mysterious Power of Physical Fire

Everyone is familiar with the fact that iron becomes red hot when placed in an intense

**D**EVER before in the history of our planet has fire burned more widely or fiercely than it does today. In the dawn of the earth's history the so-called primitive races believed that when there was a great conflagration in their country, such a serious fire betokened the coming of a great divine teacher and a new age of human betterment.

Just exactly when or how fire was discovered by man is not known. No doubt it existed in Nature through volcanoes, lightning, etc. The Smithsonian Institute says that man first started making use of fire "in the Acheulian epoch during the third interglacial stage."

*This article by Frater Graves—former Dean of Rose-Croix University, AMORC librarian, and early Alchemy Instructor at the university—is reprinted from a 1944 edition of the Rosicrucian Digest. Frater Graves, retired and residing in the San Francisco Bay Area, maintains an avid interest in alchemy and Rosicrucian philosophy.*

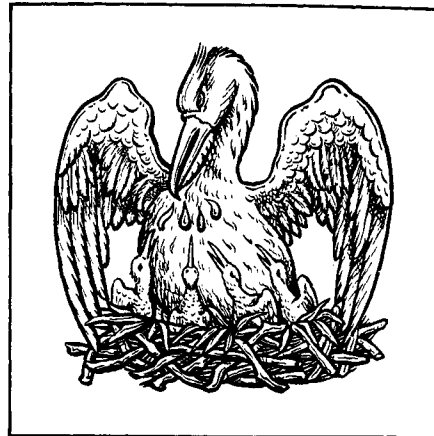


fire. Only those who have studied physics realize that the molecules of iron have their vibratory rate increased as a result of this heat treatment. As the vibratory rate of this material iron is increased by heat, the piece of metal will change color, glow, and emit a white light. The interior of the iron has been so changed by fire that the molecules have reached a rate of vibration where they now affect vibrations on a higher range in the cosmic scale of vibrations. Physicists and scientists will tell us that light is not a vibration of metallic iron. Similarly, increasing temperatures would bring about stimulation of higher octaves in the cosmic keyboard until the molecules and atoms of original iron would be completely transmuted or "broken down into some new arrangement," as physical scientists would say.

In a rare old work called *Collectanea Chemica*, which is absolutely unobtainable today because of its scarcity and prohibitive price, Fire-Philosophers have given their explanation of a similar effect of fire upon herbs. The elixir of herbs is obtained in ways not recognized by modern pharmacists. There is a certain type of equipment used in this method of process known as an *alembic* (see illustration).



An alembic or condenser was usually connected to the body or cucurbit. When the spout was turned back into the body, the equipment was then known as a "pelican." This term was used because a pelican in life nurses its young by regurgitating its food and then feeding it to its young. The pelican has



become the symbol of revivification among alchemists, while the alembic has become symbolic of regeneration.

In the final stage of this method, there is a certain powder of the salt called "caput mortuum" which in some instances is changed from white through yellow to a red color. The virtues of this powder in the elixir are greatly increased by the process of purification and calcination through the intense vibrations of fire which are applied to the herb over a long period of time.

#### *The Inner Fire*

Some of the most unique experiments in our Rosicrucian teachings deal with the effect of certain kinds of physical fire on the human body. Suffice to say here that everyone knows that a wood fire has a soothing and calming effect on the human body and is different from the ordinary natural gas fire. Men who work around blast furnaces will tell you that physical fires definitely affect the physical body. Some Rosicrucian students have stated that a regular and controlled nearness to the alchemical reverberatory furnace has had a beneficial effect upon the physical body.

But there is also an inner fire which seems to have physical influence on the life of man. The word "metabolism" is used commonly today. Dr. W.A.N. Dorland's *Medical Dictionary* defines basal metabolism "as the main heat produced by an individual as measured from 14 to 18 hours after eating when the individual is at rest." There must be fire in the human body to produce this heat, yet it is not physical fire. Chemists sometimes call it oxidation. It

makes no difference what you call it; this force produces heat the same as does physical fire. Mystics of old knew of this heat and knew that it brought about definite physiological changes. They stated that to increase this heat it was necessary to revivify the psychic organs of the human body.

Some writers today speak of the marvelous powers of the Hindus as a result of their age-old use of the Kundalini fire. As a matter of fact, the old continental Rosicrucian named Gichtel brought this subject to the attention of Europe. He obtained it directly from ancient Egypt. The Rosicrucians of medieval Europe also maintained that the physiological heat was most effective in bringing about physical regeneration. Old Egyptian Hermetic philosophies contained the word *palingenesis*, which meant rebirth or regeneration.

There is a great body of Hermetic works called *The Corpus Hermeticum*. This body of Hermetic teachings is definitely pre-Christian and is so recognized by scholars of today. The spiritual teachings of this body of works is exemplified by the famous Rosicrucian treatise *Divine Poemander*. This work is familiar to philosophers and religious scholars as giving striking literary parallelism to the great Antinicaean work called *The Shepherd of Hermas*. In addition to the many spiritual teachings and divine wisdom, *The Divine Poemander* or the *Sermon of Hermes Trismegistus* brings to a focus the spiritual teachings of regeneration.

#### How To Raise Your Vibrations

If there is a definite method of physical regeneration by the use of physiological heat, how are we to increase this heat within our own body? If we follow our analogy through, we must increase physiological heat of the human body by raising the vibrations of the human body. The beginning Rosicrucian student is usually greatly puzzled by the phrase, "raising your vibrations." Naturally, specific details of the higher degrees cannot be given in this public article. However, many years ago there appeared in the *Rosicrucian Digest* an article called "Raising Your Vibrations" by Frater Gamui, Oriental Master, which is very helpful in this regard.

Briefly this is what the Venerable Gamui suggested that our students do to raise their vibrations. He said that we should first watch our diet in relation to our health and the

metabolic needs of our physical body. He stressed the word moderation. Proper physical exercise of all parts of our body was second in importance; proper breathing was the third essential; proper thinking was the fourth essential. The fifth and last essential point was communication and attunement with the Cosmic. Practice and adherence to the above points will bring about a gradual increase of physiological heat in the human body which will express itself in life by a magnetic personality, a sensitive courteousness, as well as a keen and brilliant mentality.

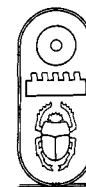
#### The Fire Atoms of the Mind

Thomas Stanley, one of the greatest writers on esoteric philosophy, explained that Democritus conceived man to be made up of parts of earth, air, water, and fire. Man's mind was composed of fire. It differed from other parts of his body because mental atoms were the finest, the smoothest, and the most mobile. Thought, then, was a direct sensation produced upon the fire atoms of the mind. Thought does have somewhat similar characteristics of fire in that it quickly comes and goes and it causes us to suffer and yet brings us good as well. Disraeli said that when he did a great deal of thinking he was inspired with internal heat and as a result felt stimulated and revived. Many great men spoke of the fire of inspiration born within them. They felt a compulsion to carry their message to mankind or be consumed by the fire within.

#### Emotions Called Living Fire

Living fire or energy within man is frequently wasted upon the multifarious distractions which confront him. Man's attempt to control his emotions will further increase the intensity of living fire. Mystic students are warned not to give way to extreme anger or uncontrolled living fire. In excess anger, the heat within the body becomes so intense that the Soul or Real Self is almost forced out of control.

We have all heard the exclamation: "he was so angry he was out of his head." Hysteria and other emotions besides anger need to be controlled. As a matter of fact, Raymond Andrea, former Rosicrucian Grand Master of Great Britain, said that some students "are of so powerful an emotional caliber that anything in the nature of stimulation, even of physical exercise, revivifies the whole personality."



Those emotions which are more or less instinctively animalistic in quality when given free reign tend to bring out a baseness in human character which is ordinarily termed selfishness. By controlling and sublimating this fierce energy of living fire a musician is able, for example, to perform most exquisitely, rendering the finer shades of emotions in the cosmic plane susceptible to great audiences. A control of the emotions gives one a likeable and lovely character, radiating warmth toward humanity.

#### ***Strenuous Living Stimulates Fire Within***

Mystical students on the Path who desire to develop this mysterious fire within are admonished to lead as strenuous a life as possible in the physical, mental, and spiritual realms. Some schools maintain that mystics should never be strenuous. They tell their followers to be calm and passive; thus they will live longer. Even if this were so, the mere state of existence does not justify passivity. As a matter of fact, the physiological fire within is augmented by strenuous physical activity, mental agility, and spiritual virility. This fire will purify or burn out the dross parts of the personality. Such purification will help an individual live longer than slothful persons and he will, in the meantime, be more productive. We are told that man does not live by physical bread alone.

Some schools speak of this physiological fire within as a serpent power dangerous to reveal to the great mass of mankind. This power is not a new discovery nor is the word "serpent" new as used in connection with it. Our own Rosicrucian, Thomas Vaughn, continually spoke of a serpent in his alchemical writings. G.R.S. Mead also wrote of serpent power in his extensive translations. Many other mystics dating back to the Egyptians spoke of the serpent and its mysterious symbolic power. Actually much has been written, and still exists, about the symbolism and mythology of the serpent. Even in the Holy Bible the Seraph, a fiery being, is so called because it resembles a huge flying serpent.

The Master Serapis, who was connected with Egyptian Rosicrucian work, is named after an old Egyptian god, Serapis, the great solar god who replaced Osiris. Serapis was the greatest god of Egypt, the serpent of Wisdom, during the early days of Christianity.

Just as the Egyptians revered the great solar force, so today should we do everything in our power to raise our own inner fire that it may be in attunement with at least the lower octave of the great solar forces. Nor is this force any more dangerous than the force of the great life-giving sun. Sincerity, earnestness, enthusiasm, and genuine service to mankind will act as a shining armor more protective than the thickest of metal armor of knights of old.

#### ***Trial by Fire***

Initiation in the ancient Mystery Schools depicted the cleansing power of fire by physical demonstration. All of us who are on the Path are more or less going through a "trial by fire." Sometimes the spiritual flames cause a terrific pressure within our personality. At other times the fire burns with a glow of benevolence. The mystics of old inflamed themselves by prayer. The hero unconsciously inflames himself by sacrifice. The mystic inflames himself by constancy to the teachings of Fiery Philosophers. Perhaps in some future life, those who have passed the test of fire will no longer have to strive strenuously. Their every act, thought, and aspiration will be so perfect and all-inclusive that there will be no need for a fiery existence. Such a goal corresponds to the state of being consumed by the fire of the Holy Ghost, the God Flame of the Magi, and the condition of nihilism called Nirvana.

#### ***The Human Aura Compared to A Diamond***

In looking back over this article one can understand that it is possible to have an analogy between the outward physical fire and the inward spiritual fire. The Comte de Saint-Germain, we are told, took a king's diamond which had a flaw in it. He subjected this diamond to an intense physical fire together with another process and was able to bring the king a perfect blue-white diamond.

In the same way Rosicrucians or occultists and mystics, by raising their vibrations and using certain mystical practices, may perfect the flaws in their personality. As a result those who are gifted with clairvoyance will see the auras of such persons change from a colorless greyish-blue to one which will have even more than all the spectrum colors of the rainbow, scintillating back and forth like the reflections of sunlight that radiate from a blue-white Kimberley diamond. Δ



## Ancient Egyptians' Discovery May Help Purify Blood Supplies

*Plant chemicals kill bacteria, viruses*

by David Perlman  
S.F. Chronicle Science Editor

**R**ESearchers exploiting a discovery that Egyptian physicians first made nearly 5000 years ago have developed a new way to kill viruses and bacteria that can infect human blood collected for transfusions.

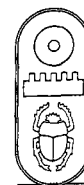
Ultimately, they say, the nation's blood supply could be made even safer than it is now—and thoroughly protected even against HIV, the AIDS virus.

The doctors of ancient Egypt saw that people who ate a common weed growing on the banks of the Nile quickly developed severe sunburns marked by intensely darkened skin when they were exposed to bright sunlight.

Those physicians did not realize that they had discovered a class of natural chemicals that remain inert until the sun's ultraviolet radiation brings them into activity.

The Egyptians used the plants to treat patients for the disfiguring disorder called vitiligo, in which dark-skinned people develop blotchy pale patches because some skin cells lose their pigmentation.

Activated by sunlight, the plant compounds darkened the white patches, and that reaction is still used to treat vitiligo.



The chemicals in the Egyptian weeds are called *psoralens*, and they are also found in a wide range of other plants, including buttercups, figs, limes, and parsnips. Modern researchers have developed a process known as *photoactivation* using ultraviolet lamps to turn the chemical activity of psoralen compounds into a weapon for treating a fatal form of skin cancer, cutaneous t-cell lymphoma, and psoriasis, a more common and distressing skin disorder.

### **Safer Transfusions**

Now a team of scientists at the University of California in San Francisco and the California Department of Health Services has learned to turn on the activity of synthetic psoralens to decontaminate whole blood. Scientists believe this development can assure the safety of the nation's blood supply for transfusions.

Batteries of screening tests now used by every blood bank in the nation can detect with near-certainty the presence of seven disease-causing viruses, including HIV. But safe though the blood is, there is always a remote chance that a virus might escape detection, and the ability to purify all donated blood with certainty would be a major contribution to transfusion safety.

Dr. Laurence Corash, UCSF professor of laboratory medicine, and Dr. Carl V. Hanson, chief of the state's virus laboratory in Berkeley, led groups that have tested simple systems for killing both viruses and bacteria in blood plasma and platelets by using psoralens activated under ultraviolet light.

The federal Food and Drug Administration has just authorized the first human trials in which blood treated with a psoralen compound and then irradiated with ultraviolet light will actually be transfused into volunteer patients.

It will take at least five more years, however, before the complex series of trials in humans proves that the system is both completely safe and effective, Corash said.

### **Chimp Experiments**

In experiments with chimpanzees, the UCSF team contaminated human blood plasma with infectious doses of hepatitis virus and treated the plasma with a psoralen compound that was activated by ultraviolet light before it was transfused into the chimps. The

chemical swiftly killed all the viruses, and six months after the transfusions none of the animals showed any evidence of virus infection, Corash and his colleagues have reported.

As a result of other experiments by other research groups, Corash said in a recent interview, "There's lots of data that shows we haven't encountered a single virus the system can't kill—whether the virus infection is in cells or outside the cells. And the system is so simple you could build it in your garage."

In another series of experiments, the UCSF group focused on protecting blood platelets from infection by bacteria, a problem that can arise when platelets are stored for a long time. Platelets are the cells that cause blood to clot, and platelet transfusions are essential for treating patients undergoing cancer chemotherapy or who have had transplants of bone marrow or organs.

In recent laboratory experiments, transparent plastic bags of platelet concentrates from the Alameda-Contra Costa Blood Bank were inoculated with two common strains of bacteria and three viruses, then dosed with 8-MOP, a psoralen compound, and irradiated with long-wavelength ultraviolet light. The researchers reported recently in the scientific journal *Blood* that the system quickly inactivated all the microorganisms with no damage to the platelets and their ability to perform their clotting function.

### **Inactivating AIDS Virus**

In Hanson's Berkeley laboratory, the team has developed similar techniques for inactivating the AIDS virus by destroying its genetic core while leaving the proteins on the outer surface of the virus intact. In this way, the virus is rendered noninfectious and can be used without danger for diagnostic tests and other experiments, Hanson said in an interview.

Working with Red Cross researchers, Hanson and his colleagues are also exploring different psoralen compounds and different wavelengths of ultraviolet light to make the system even more specific and more effective.

"The prospect of learning to inactivate known and even unknown viruses that may contaminate blood is an exciting one," he said.

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# Geber

## the Prince of Adepts

by Gladys Lewis, F.R.C.

*AGAINST a splendid and magnificent backdrop of the Thousand and one Nights and the court of Harun al Raschid, moves the figure of an Arabian alchemist—Geber. The very sound of his name was to become as magic to students for centuries to come.*

Up to modern times, fantastic tales have clouded the true identity and background of Geber, but time has sifted the true from the false, and it has been established recently through much research that Geber actually lived and practiced through the greater part of the eighth century, and that he rode in on the crest of the wave of culture that Harun al Raschid encouraged. At this period, perhaps the last half of the eighth century, wise men, students, philosophers, poets, and musicians all were welcome at the seat of the caliphate at Baghdad.

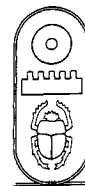
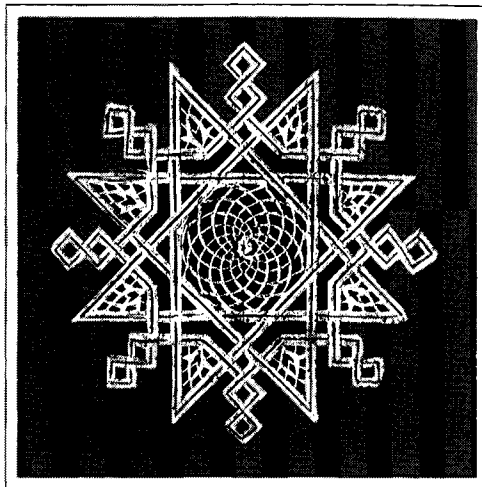
Geber, known as Jabir in the Arabian, was the son of the druggist Hayyan, and though Hayyan did not live long enough to guide his brilliant young son, he left the boy in very capable hands. The young Geber was educated in the finest style of the period: that is, he studied all branches of learning. Alchemy he learned from Jafar al-Sadiq, a great religious leader of the Shiites. With Jafar he studied mysticism and other occult subjects relating to alchemy so that when he came to the court at Baghdad he was a master of the art he was to follow during his entire lifetime.

Under the patronage of the Caliph's powerful ministers, the Barmicides, Geber was

given the *carte blanche* for his experiments. Laboratories, equipment, helpers, and anything else he needed was his for the asking and Geber made the most of this opulent period in his life. It is well that he did because the Barmicides and others fell into disfavor with Harun in later years and only a few escaped with their lives, among whom was Geber. He found protection in the town of Kufa from whence his father came, and he lived there in seclusion continuing his alchemical experiments until his death.

Geber was worshiped by his successors. They called him "the greatest chemist of Islam," "the Prince of Adepts." "He is the oracle of mediaeval chemists" says Hoefer. "Geber for the history of chemistry is what Hippocrates is for the history of medicine." But to the student of alchemy he is more than that; he is a symbol of the passage of Hermetic knowledge to the Western World. The path of this knowledge took a long and circuitous route by way of the great cities of Baghdad, Damascus, Toledo, Cordoba, and finally northern Europe, but the true beginning took place with Geber at Baghdad.

There was a lively exchange of knowledge and ideas, as well as material gifts, between the



East and the West at that time because of Charlemagne's great conquests and his wary and diplomatic dealings with the Islamic leaders. Hermetic knowledge and the art of alchemy had started its journey to the West.

Now why was Geber called "the Prince of Adepts" and the "first chemist of Islam"? He became the first chemist of Islam because in his pursuit of the art of alchemy he insisted upon experiment and more experiment. In his works he gave detailed instructions on how to build equipment and the amount of chemicals to be used. Also the method was clearly set forth, together with the results to be expected. Geber, in his writings, reveals himself to be a man of an open mind and a generous heart. "This is a figure of the Athanor" writes Geber in his instructions on how to build an athanor. "Yet if anyone can more ingeniously invent the like let not our invention retard him from so doing." This is a true mark of a master, to encourage his pupils to excel the teacher.

#### **Geber's Writings**

The student finds many controversial remarks concerning the authenticity of Geber's writings. His opinion is swayed from one side to another until clear thought often is hopeless when it comes to fine points of distinction. However, an encouraging ray of light comes from E.J. Holmyard of the new Science School, Clifton College, Bristol, England, and we quote directly his simple and telling words: "The authenticity of the books under consideration [the writer is referring mainly to the books comprising *The Sum of Perfection*] is therefore still uncertain. It is possible that they are genuine translations from Arabic books of Jabir; or that they are genuine translations from Arabic books of other chemists; or that they are summaries made in Mediaeval Europe of Jabir's Arabic books; or that they are Mediaeval European forgeries made by an unknown author and merely fathered upon Jabir in order to ensure favourable reception. Whatever the future may disclose concerning them, we may safely say that they are not unworthy of Jabir and that he is worthy of them; and that we know of no other chemist, Muslim or Christian, who could for one moment be imagined to have written them."

First it will be necessary to review what is generally known as Aristotle's theory of the

four elements or simple bodies. The idea goes back to antiquity—to India and Egypt, but it is evident that Aristotle gave more life and meaning to the theory. Simply, the Aristotelian theory is this: There exists four qualities, and they are hot and moist with their opposites cold and dry. These four qualities combine in a very logical manner to form earth, air, fire, and water.

The various forms of all matter were composed of certain proportions of these four elements, and one form could be changed into another by altering the proportions of the elements. Furthermore, Aristotle extended his theory and stated that fire and earth combined to make an earthy smoke which condensed and gave form to refractory stones and minerals; and air and water combined to make a watery vapor which condensed and gave form to fusible metals.

At this point, Geber comes forth with his addition to the theories of Aristotle. Through his practical experience, he knew that Aristotle's theory was a little too indefinite to be of use to the chemist or alchemist, so he made additions and alterations, and this modified theory was accepted up to the time of modern chemistry—that is, the 18th century.

#### **The Perfect Metal**

The theory is this: The watery vapor (a combination of air and water) was converted into mercury, and the smoky vapor (a combination of fire and earth) was converted into sulphur. These two elements, sulphur and mercury, then combined in varying proportions to form the metals and minerals. Geber said that if the mercury and sulphur were of absolute purity and if they combined in perfect proportion, the result would be the perfect metal—gold. If the mercury and sulphur were not pure and the proportions varying from the perfect, the combination would result in silver, lead, or any other metal.

Logically thinking, Geber states that if the impurities and defects were removed from these other metals, gold would result because, basically, all metals are composed alike. However, through his experiments Geber discovered that the ordinary mercury and sulphur as we know them were not the same as the basic or alchemical mercury and sulphur present in all metals and minerals; but that these two



minerals resembled the basic elements more closely than any other minerals.

With Geber's theory clearly fixed in our minds, we must examine his wonderful instruction on chemical processes and equipment, and lastly and most importantly we shall examine Geber, the alchemist and the keeper of the secrets of Hermes.

Geber places great importance upon the cleansing and preparation of metals and minerals, and gives explicit instruction for these processes. This must be completely understood and accomplished perfectly before any further work is done. Then before going on with the description of the various metallic bodies and their properties, he lists in great detail the impediments that hinder the artist and the reasons why he meets with failure instead of the longed-for success. "The impediments incident to this work are generally two, viz: Natural Impotency and defect of necessary expence, or occupations and labours."

Natural impotency embraces both the physical and spiritual qualities of man. Physical defects hinder very seriously and also included are defects in our character, our mental make-up, educational training, and general personality. To quote: "There are also, besides these, others who have a soul moveable, from opinion to opinions, and from will to wills; as those, who suddenly believe a thing, and will the same, without any ground at all of reason; but a little after that, another thing; and do likewise believe another, and will another. And these are so changeable that they can scarcely accomplish the least of that they intend; but rather leave it defective."

The second impediment embraces "a defect of necessary expence, or occupation and labours." Many brilliant and ingenious men have failed because of poverty or the material cares of this world. These are the unfortunate creatures "from whom this our precious science withdraws herself" to quote the beautiful lines from the *Sum of Perfection*. Geber's discourse and warnings concerning impediments refer to transcendental alchemy. In other words, the artist in some measure must try to reflect the perfection he hopes to find.

#### The Alchemical Artist

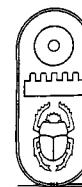
The artist now is ready to go on with his study and experiments concerning metals. He

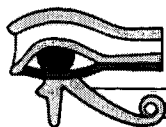
is taught calcination, sublimation, descension, distillation, etc., and the reasons for so doing are given. He is taught how to make his own furnaces, and the instructions and illustrations are so complete and clear that anyone of average intelligence could follow them with success. The following instructions have been copied from Geber's Book of Furnaces, *Of the Calcinary Furnace*.

"Let the calcinary furnace be made square, in length four foot, and three foot in breadth, and let the thickness of the walls be half a foot; after this manner: Luna, Venus, Mars, or other things to be calcined, must be put into dishes or pans of most strong clay, such as of which crucibles are made, that they may persist in the asperity of fire, even to the total combustion of the thing to be calcined. Calcination is the treasure of a thing; be not you weary of calcination; but study what we have said in our volumes. For imperfect bodies are cleansed by calcination, and by reduction of the calcinate into a solid body, or mass. Then is our medicine projected upon them, and cause given to you of joy."

We now advance to the truly alchemical aspects. As always, the treasure is hidden and the seeker is not always successful, but in reading and meditating upon the following lines from the *Sum of Perfection*, one of the profound secrets of the Art is revealed to us. "Likewise also, we alter not metals, but Nature; for whom according to Art, we prepare that matter; for she by herself acts—not we; yet we are her administrators." Geber knew and understood that the alchemist was merely the channel for nature and her divine laws. On the preparation of the solar medicine of the third order, which seems to be almost the same as the philosopher's stone or the great Elixir, Geber writes: ". . . and in this order is compleated the most precious arcanum, which is above every secret of the sciences of this world, and is a treasure inestimable . . . . Now let the High GOD of Nature, blessed and glorious be praised, who hath revealed to us the series of all medicines . . . ."

And thus is transformed before us the first chemist of Islam into the Adept—the Prince of Adepts and the master of the inner secrets of nature. With loving care he prepared the way for Nature, and she in gratitude smiled upon her servant and embraced him with her shining wisdom. Δ





# BOOK REVIEWS

## Alchemy's "Mute Book"

A Commentary on the *Mutus Liber*, by Adam McLean.

Magnus Opus Hermetic Sourceworks No. 11.

(To order book, see ad in back of magazine.)

AT FIRST I hesitated to relax and enjoy this book, fearing that the very act of putting words into the mouth of the "Silent Book" would destroy forever the pristine landscape and act to profane the sublimity of the mystery. Instead, I found Adam McLean to be a welcome and generous guide through a terrain that he holds in reverent awe. McLean shares with his fellow traveler the choicest vantage points that he has discovered along the way, and does not intrude upon the whisperings of the "Silent Book."

Adam McLean has, once again, applied the keenly "sharpened Mercury" of his intellect, penetrating to the heart of the matter at hand, and extracting tremendous vitality from one of the greatest enigmas of alchemical literature. It is, as such must be, a highly personal interpretation, and while some will prefer their own interpretation, McLean has not presumed his views to be the final word on the subject. Rather, he has outlined, by his own example, a method through which we may open the doors to the Hermetic kingdom and likewise obtain personal initiation.

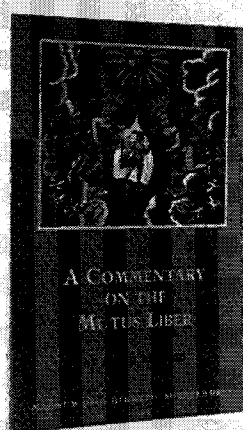
The introduction provides a brief history of this manuscript, which was authored by the pseudonymous "Altus," and first printed in 1677. McLean offers his observations on the rich symbolism of the fifteen plates of the Manget edition of the *Mutus Liber*. These observations are printed opposite the plates themselves, which are familiar, at least in part, to any who have delved into the writings of the alchemists. This section is followed by the commentary proper.

It is in this commentary that McLean displays his characteristic approach to Hermetic symbolic systems, offering a multilayered in-

terpretation of the process. Alchemy concerns transformation and evolution, a divine process wherein both the matter and the alchemist are elevated. To focus on "spiritual" alchemy to the detriment of the laboratory approach, or vice versa, is an error, and McLean has not only eluded this snare, but has presented the matter in a way that will aid the reader to experience the magnificence of this "Silent Book."

To this end, the classical spagyric approach—involving the separation, purification, and recombination of the primary qualities of salt, sulphur, and mercury—is presented as the foundation of the laboratory work. It is these ethereal essences—salt, sulphur, and mercury—which enliven and ensoul the material vehicles which are manipulated by the alchemist, who in turn must become increasingly sensitive to the subtle play of energies and work in conjunction with them, not attempting to bend Nature to his will, but rather seeking to become a vehicle for divine expression, just as matter is a vehicle rather than the essence itself.

The *Mutus Liber* seems to indicate that dew is suitable as a starting matter for the Work, particularly by the often-printed fourth plate, wherein we see sheets on short wooden poles being used to catch dew and the celestial qualities with which it is imbued. Numerous experimenters have been prompted to gather the morning dew for use in the laboratory. While dew or rainwater can be used in the Work, as indicated in any number of texts, such as *The Golden Chain of Homer*, McLean has taken a broader view, and states that "One possible interpretation of the *Mutus Liber* is that 'dew' is not necessarily restricted to one physi-



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*Alchemy's "Mute Book" (cont.)*

cal substance, but anything that is seen to have been formed in a similar way may be taken as the prima materia." Indeed, he goes on to point out the possible use of deliquescent minerals which run to liquid in the atmosphere as possible "magnets" for subtle energies. Paracelsus and many others have used such as vessels for the celestial energies.

This text is highly recommended, not only as a reference for the student of Hermeticism and alchemy, but also as an example of an exemplary technique for deepening the appreciation of Hermetic literature and art.

—Russell House, F.R.C., I.R.C.

## Mysteries of the Seven Vowels

The Mystery of the Seven Vowels in Theory and Practice,  
by Joscelyn Godwin.  
(To order book, see ad and order form in back of magazine.)

From antiquity, humankind has utilized vowel sounds for a variety of purposes from the mundane to the esoteric. Although the exoteric world most closely relates these particular sounds to everyday speech, a series of ancient traditions associates the use of vowels with music, color, planets, and a host of religious rites.

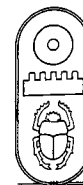
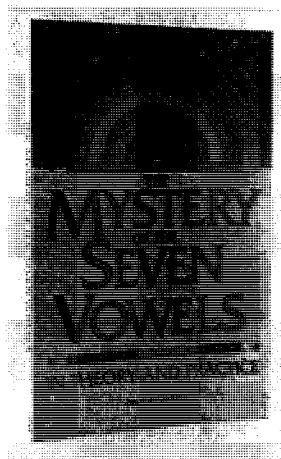
Now, in the first English-language book on the subject, author and translator Joscelyn Godwin has brought together a variety of source materials dealing with vowels and their higher traditional meanings. In *The Mystery of the Seven Vowels in Theory and Practice*, he examines these varied practices in a brief but significant manner. Although not nearly so involved as his better-known and earlier works (including *Mystery Religions*; *Music, Mysticism, and Magic*; and *Harmonies of Heaven and Earth*), *The Mystery of the Seven Vowels* leads the reader on a journey through arcane customs regarding the acoustical and mythological uses of vowels, in a manner described as "scholarly, but . . . practical."

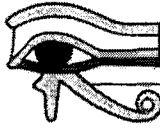
The opening chapters, through an introduction to vowels and acoustics, seek to lay a foundation for deeper and more advanced material developed in the remainder of the

volume. Having introduced extreme mouth positions represented by AH, OO, and EE, intermediate vowel colors are then added and affixed to a pyramid representing fourteen standard English vowels. To these are added the distinctive sounds of French and German vowels, along with a mention of Scandinavian throat-resonance and Chinese tonality—all serving as a preface to break down the idea of artificial limits implied within particular alphabets. Godwin's discussion of acoustics centers around the harmonic (overtone) series existing in nature, coupled with the concept of resonance, especially as it relates to the human voice.

Three chapters are then devoted to the relationship between vowels and planets, vowels and tones, and vowels and colors. The seven vowels of the Greek alphabet are introduced, and a series of correspondences is established—the first of these relating to the seven Chaldean planets of Graeco-Roman antiquity and to the Egyptian influence of the associated Hermetic writings of the period. A subsequent corre-

spondence aligns the planetary-vowel combinations to individual notes of a diatonic musical scale. After a comparison of various note arrangements, Godwin proposes that practi-





### *Mysteries of the Seven Vowels (cont.)*

cal correspondences may be found in the acoustical order of vowels (as discussed above), rather than in their alphabetical order. In examining a third correspondence—that of color—the author utilizes his historical and metaphysical expertise to cast a critical eye upon a variety of personal and, in some cases, highly imaginative speculations. This analysis, it is noted, is not meant “to dismiss a fundamental Hermetic principle; it is only to warn against putting too much faith in those who have limited it by imposing the boundaries of their own imagination.”

Toward the middle of the book two chapters consider ancient and modern vowel-songs. Through a novel method of transcription, the theory is advanced that ancient Greek writings encoded secret songs. Again, Godwin finds little purpose to this theory, except for the spiritual experience afforded through the study and contemplation of the writings themselves. More promising is the discussion of the late nineteenth and twentieth century composers exploiting textless vowel sounds in their works, particularly Wagner, Debussy, Scriabin, Ravel, Holst, and bookseller and minor composer Edmond Bailly, whose monograph on vowel songs and composition *Chant des Voyelles* sought to define the entire subject.

In the concluding chapters, the author relates the vowels to the various names given to deities throughout history, particularly that of the Tetragrammaton, the four Hebrew let-

ters comprising the name of the Mosaic God as described in the book of Exodus. By then introducing another common vowel-name, *laô*, he establishes a parallel between the Abrahamic religions and paganism, while reaffirming the importance of the vowel extremes: *laô* contains the three sounds EE, AH, and OO. As Godwin proceeds into his final topic—a discussion of the Egyptian mysteries—he bids the reader to suspend the critical faculty, “becoming instead a vehicle for ideas that seem to have a ring of authenticity about them.” Through his moving and impressive reenactment of an Egyptian musical ritual, he seeks to assure the reader that, despite the limitations that appear to be placed on spiritual development in a highly material age, each individual is a microcosm in potential, subject only to the “awakening of our own microcosmic nature.” The volume concludes with a series of vowel exercises drawn from varying influences.

*The Mystery of the Seven Vowels* is a fascinating and rewarding book. In his writing, Godwin does not seek to impose any dogmatic principles upon the reader; rather, by introducing a variety of sources, he allows his audience to contemplate, examine, test, and ultimately to acquire the knowledge sought after by readers of this most illuminating work.

—Michael Braz, Ph.D., F.R.C., I.R.C.

*Frater Braz is an Associate Professor of Music at Georgia Southern University, Statesboro, GA.*

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## An Alchemical Riddle\*

My name contains 6 and 50, yet has only 8 letters. The third is a third part of the fifth, which added to the sixth, will produce a number whose sum will exceed the third itself by just the first, and which is half of the fourth. The fifth and the seventh are equal, so are the last and the first. The first and second together equal the sixth which contains four more than the third tripled. Now, my lord, how am I called?

—from *The Chymical Wedding of Christian Rosenkreutz*

\* The answer is printed on our front cover.

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# The Transmission of Alchemical Knowledge

## An Alternate View

by Timothy O'Neill, F.R.C., I. R. C.

The translation into Latin of the Arabic text, *The Revelations of Morienus to Khalid Ibn Yazid*, in 1144 has usually been cited as the primary reason for the great revival of interest in alchemy among 13th-century Europeans. This work has long been held as the document which reintroduced alchemical interest to the West and eventually sparked a great revival of the art in the mid-1200s. According to traditional histories of alchemy, the art was "lost" to the West during the Dark Ages and was then revived in the context of 13th-century Aristotelianism as taught in the universities of Europe. However, as we shall see, more recent research upon this text and upon the survival of indigenous European alchemical texts suggests that the transmission of alchemical knowledge and the revival of interest in the art was by no means so simple or straightforward as the older view implies.

The ancient and widespread set of ideas we call "alchemy" appears to have suddenly emerged both in the East and West about the second century A.D.<sup>1</sup> At roughly the same time that the Chinese Taoist philosopher Wei Po Yang wrote his treatise on the elixir of immortality, the Greek philosophers of Alexandria, Egypt, began to compile the Hermetic corpus, that large body of documents attributed to the mythical sage Hermes Trimegistus. Even though its focus was purely philosophical, the Hermetic corpus formed the theoretical backbone of all later practical alchemical work on the transmutation of metals and the creation of the elixir of life.

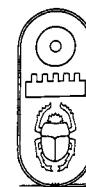
Jack Scott, in *The Origins of Alchemy in Graeco-Roman Egypt*, traces original Aristotelian and Stoic ideas that gave birth to the pre-Hermetic literary references to alchemy found in Greek plays and poems. The conclusion that alchemy was practiced centuries before it surfaced as a literary entity in the late

2nd and early 3rd centuries is not too surprising, since even the Greeks held for the great antiquity of the art. When alchemy, per se, surfaced in such documents as the famous *Leyden Papyrus X*,<sup>2</sup> it was in the form of collections of very practical recipes for dyeing, metallurgy, and other crafts.

During the golden age of Alexandrian alchemy, the philosophical conclusions of the Hermeticists and the practical work of the recipe-makers gradually coalesced into such early alchemical texts as the *Vision of Zosimos*. As the Roman Empire was gradually Christianized following the rule of Constantine, interest in alchemy gradually waned; however both the Byzantine and Arabic schools collected and improved upon many of its techniques, texts, and ideas. Although the direct influence of the Alexandrian school upon later Western science was minimal,<sup>3</sup> its indirect effect, particularly through Islamic sources, was quite marked.

### Eastern Influences on Western Alchemy

In any evaluation of Eastern influences upon Western alchemy, it is important to realize at the outset that the orientation, aims, and methods of the East vary quite strongly from those found in the Alexandrian school. The Indian school of alchemy was rooted in the medicinal uses of plants within the medical context. The Ayurvedic system of medicine popularized the use of metals such as gold and mercury in its treatments.<sup>4</sup> Unlike Chinese alchemy, the goal was longevity, rather than physical immortality. Indian physics held an advanced atomic theory long before Democritus, yet it remained purely theoretical, adding nothing to alchemical practice. Practical work with metallurgy and pharmacopia began quite early in India, yet there was little interest in the transmutation of metals, unlike the Islamic and European



schools for whom it formed the major fascination.

In medieval India there arose a school of alchemists whose main attention was the medicinal use of mercury.<sup>5</sup> It is possible that these alchemists influenced the Arabic schools, who in turn passed on to the West their preoccupation with mercury—an interest which later appears among alchemists such as Paracelsus.

Chinese alchemy focused almost exclusively upon the problem of physical immortality rather than medicinal or transmutative works. Theories have been put forward as to the direct transmission of Chinese alchemical concepts to the West via Central Asian trade routes and the famous "Silk Road." However, it appears much more likely that it was the Chinese fascination with mercury which traveled into India, thence to Arabia and the West, receiving modifications and additions at each stage of the journey.

#### Islamic Alchemical Tradition

We reach the real key to the 13th-century Western revival of alchemy when we consider the Islamic alchemical tradition. As in both India and China, Islamic alchemy tended to value the medicinal properties of metals and plants much more highly than in the West; however, it is in Islam that we first discover a pure fascination with the transmutation of metals, in and of itself, much as in the West.

Islam obtained the seed essence of its alchemy from the Alexandrian school, and to some extent, from the much later school of Byzantium. As was the case with so much learning, Islam not only preserved alchemical knowledge, but also materially improved upon it. Geber, the most famous Islamic alchemist, substantially improved the laboratory technique and theoretical structures of Alexandrian alchemy, and was quoted as a final source by European alchemists for hundreds of years after the 13th-century revival. The prevalence of Arabic words in European alchemy, and even in modern chemistry, many of them coined by Geber, demonstrates the great impact of the Islamic school. Thus it appears that when the first translation of a text—namely, *The Revelations of Morienus*—first appeared in Europe from this influential Islamic school of alchemy, the West began to reclaim its own Aristotelian heritage. How-

ever, although the influence of Islamic alchemy was great, the influence of the Byzantine school and even of indigenous European alchemical texts must also be re-evaluated.

#### The Mythical Morienus

Scholar Lee Stavenhagen's translation of the *Revelations* in the 1970s raises serious questions about this text, both as to the date of its transmission, its influence, and its importance. The English scholar, Robert of Ketton, translated the Koran into Latin in 1143. It was long held that in the following year, 1144, he turned his attention to the *Revelations*.

Stavenhagen's analysis of the five earliest texts of the *Revelations* prior to its first printed appearance in 1559, demonstrates that the version of 1559 was the result of many centuries of "patchwork-quilt" editing involving several differing manuscripts.<sup>6</sup> The myth of a single translation by Robert of Ketton quickly disappears on several grounds, and the only reference to an Arabic original appears in some 13th-century Islamic texts. The actual original does not survive. Even a cursory reading of the text demonstrates that this is no encyclopaedic compilation of Alexandrian alchemy, but rather a purely Arabic text given an Alexandrian varnish through the introduction of the mythical Christian sage Morienus. Clearly, the *Revelations* were not the single, all-encompassing source of the 13th-century revival of European alchemy they were once thought to be.

Obviously, the Islamic world's influence on European alchemy was great. However, if Islam was the source of the European familiarity with the Alexandrian tradition, then why were the Italian Humanists of the 15th century so anxious to translate the Hermetic corpus for themselves when it became available in Greek rather than Arabic?

#### Other Sources of the Revival

The *Revelations*, despite their general inadequacy as either an important alchemical text or a source based on the Alexandrian school, were popular enough to have survived in many manuscript copies before the first printed edition—demonstrating that Islam was certainly a direct influence on the 13th-century revival. However, research into other early European alchemical texts has shown that Byzantine texts such as Marcus Graecus' *The Book of Fires*,

the early Latin *Turba Philosophorum*, and many purely technical manuals, such as the *Mappae Clavicula*, the *Compositiones ad Tingenda*,<sup>7</sup> as well as the work of Magister Salernus, Theophilus the Monk, and Heraclius' *De Artibus Romanorum*—all 12th century or earlier—also exercised an important influence upon the 13th-century revival.

Thirteenth-century alchemists such as Roger Bacon, Albertus Magnus, Avicenna, Vincent of Beauvais, Bartholomeus Anglicus, and their followers, were essentially encyclopaedists of earlier sources. Except for Bacon, they are theoreticians rather than laboratory technicians. Their work is really part of the much larger revival of Aristotle that took place throughout the new European universities formed during the 12th and 13th centuries. The key sources for these alchemists were precisely these Latin and Arabic recipe books, rather than the genuine Hermetic corpus. The few fragments of Alexandrian doctrine that seeped into Europe via Islam and Byzantium were far less important to the 13th-century revival than Theophilus and Heraclius and the indigenous European recipe-book tradition.

Thus, when we come to the first translation of the surviving Greek texts of the Hermetic corpus into Latin by Marsilio Ficino in the 15th century, we can understand why the European intellectual community was so eager to have direct access to the whole Hermetic corpus in its original language. All that had previously existed were fragments and pseudo-fragments such as the *Revelations*. The Humanist search for a universal religion is visible in both Pico de Mirandola and Ficino.<sup>8</sup> They tend to quote Moses, Jesus, Pythagoras, Plato, Hermes, and Zoroaster all in the same breath, on the basis that they all referred to a single, secret, ancient wisdom. The Hermetic corpus was seen as the purest expression of this tradition, and in it the Humanist philosophers hoped to find the true origin of Christianity.

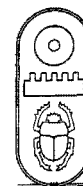
The Renaissance revival of Hermetic alchemy, as opposed to the recipe-book alchemy of the 13th and 14th centuries, was certainly due in large part to the availability of Ficino's translation of the corpus, yet the survival of the recipe-book tradition into later alchemy and chemistry was largely due to the efforts of the extraordinary Swiss doctor and alchemist,

Paracelsus.<sup>9</sup> Much in the manner of the Oriental alchemists, he shifted his attention away from the transmutation of metals toward the use of pharmacopia in medicine. He also favored a much more open transmission of alchemical ideas. Both for practical and philosophical reasons, many previous alchemical texts were coded and burdened with extraordinary obscurity—a device meant to warn away the uninitiated from the dark and powerful secrets of matter. Paracelsus wanted all knowledge to be available, yet his innate verbosity tended to obscure his own alchemical works, despite all his efforts at clarity! Paracelsus forms the true link between the medieval alchemical tradition and the iatrochemists of the 17th and 18th centuries, such as Von Helmont . . . the true forefathers of modern chemistry.

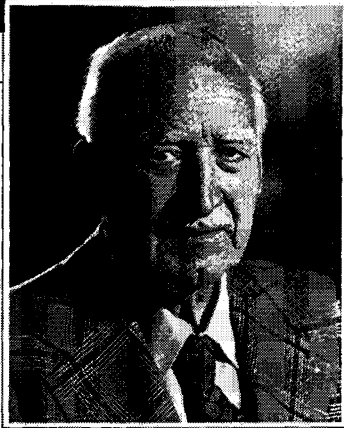
We have seen that the transmission of alchemical knowledge from the East to the West and from era to era within the European context is far more complex than the old model of a simple "revival from the East." The role of the *Revelations* of Morienus is not so pivotal as once thought, and the influence of Byzantine and early Latin texts on the 13th century revival are probably more important than once thought. The continuity of Western alchemy from Alexandria through the early chemists of the 17th and 18th centuries is far stronger than once thought, and the genesis of modern chemistry is in greater debt to the tradition of medieval recipe books than once supposed. Δ

Footnotes:

- <sup>1</sup> Ralph E. Lapp, *Matter* (New York: Time Incorporated, 1965), p. 15
- <sup>2</sup> John Maxon Stillman, *The Story of Alchemy and Early Chemistry* (New York: Dover Publications, 1960 [original edition, 1924]), p. 79.
- <sup>3</sup> *Ibid*, p. 174
- <sup>4</sup> A.L. Basham, *The Wonder That Was India* (New York: Grove Press, Inc., 1959), p. 499.
- <sup>5</sup> *Ibid*, p. 498
- <sup>6</sup> Lee Stavenhagen (translator & editor), *A Testament of Alchemy: Being the Revelations of Morienus to Khalid Ibn Yazid* (Hanover, N.H.: Brandeis University Press, 1974), p. 60.
- <sup>7</sup> Stillman, *op. cit.*, Chapter 5.
- <sup>8</sup> Sem Dresden, *Humanism in the Renaissance* (New York: World University Library, 1968), p. 36
- <sup>9</sup> Hugh Kearney, *Science and Change* (New York: World University Library, 1971), p. 114, *passim*.



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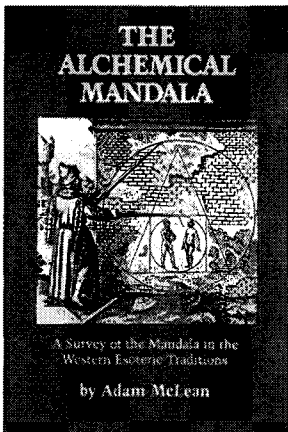
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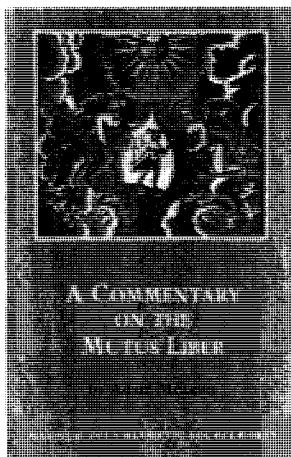
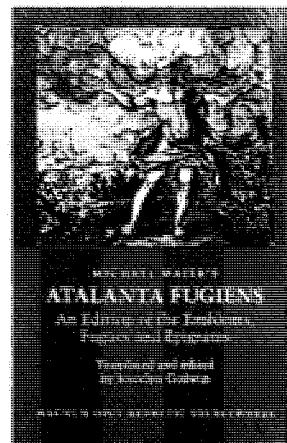
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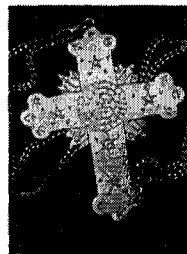
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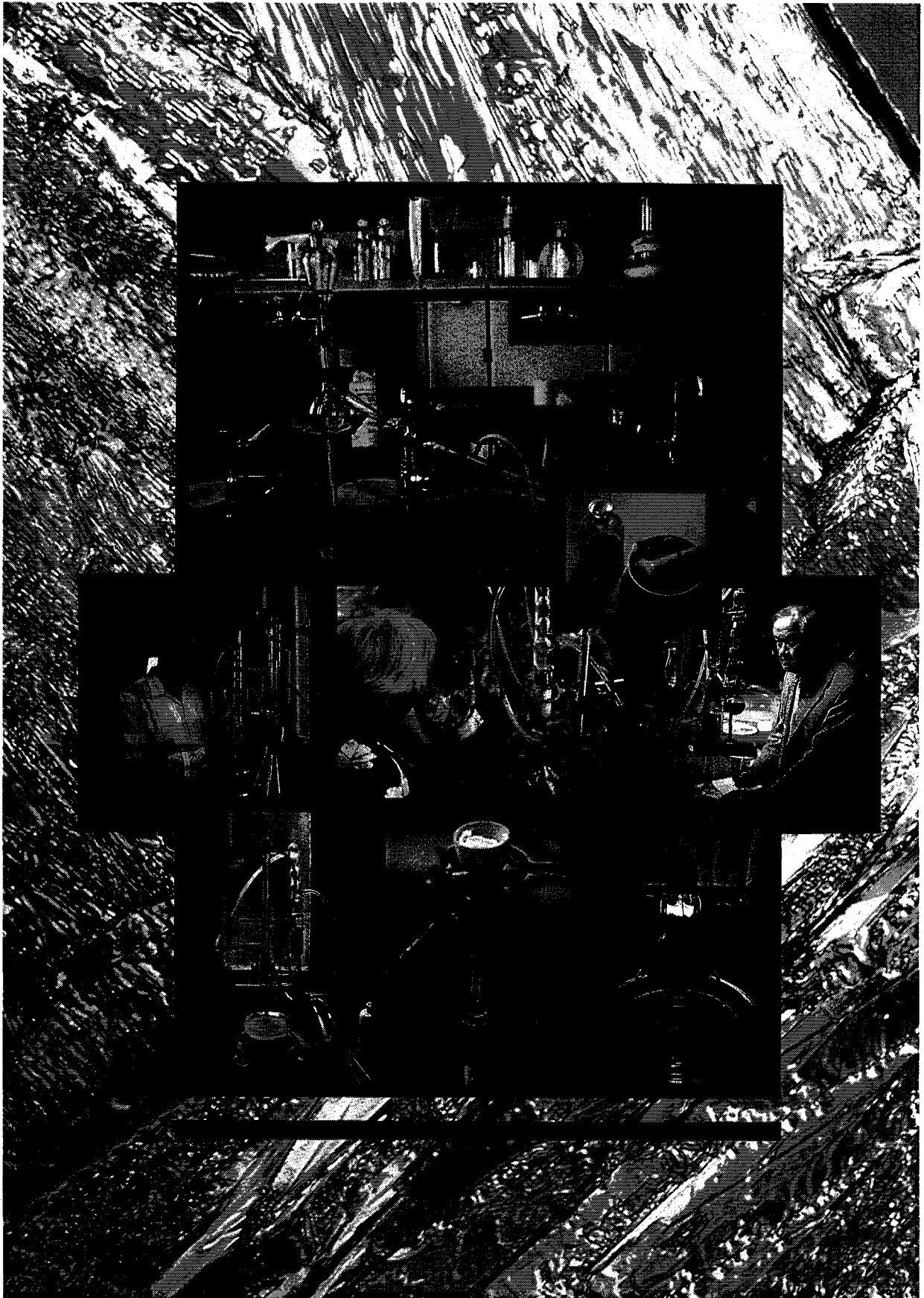
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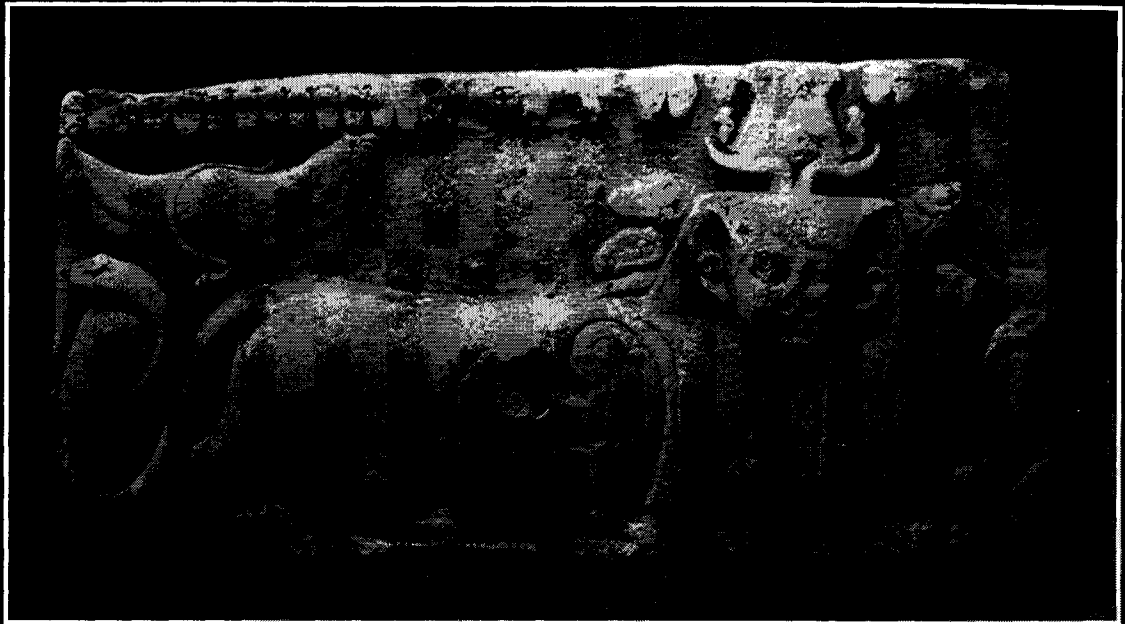
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