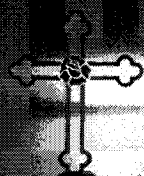


Rosloftonian
DIGRESS



Meditation

Its History and Value

by Ralph M. Lewis, F.R.C.

TREASURES FROM OUR MUSEUM



The Goddess Sekhmet

Diorite - 18th Dynasty (c. 1350 B.C.)

The goddess Sekhmet, "She Who Smites," was one of the most powerful and popular goddesses in ancient Egypt. The patron of pestilence and warfare, Sekhmet was also thought to be a great healer. All the surgeons of ancient Egypt bore the title "Priest of Sekhmet."

This statue of Sekhmet, nearly a meter tall, was ordered created by Pharaoh Amenhotep III, father of Akhnaton. Suffering for years from painful tooth abscesses, Amenhotep III wanted to thank the goddess for the healing he had been granted. Many similar statues were placed in his mortuary temple, and later moved to the great temple at Karnak. This is presumed to be one of these votive statues.



This Sekhmet is remarkably graceful, with a very benevolent and compassionate expression on her face. In her left hand Sekhmet holds a lotus, the Egyptian symbol for life from nothingness; and in her right hand she holds the ankh, symbol of life. The statue is carved from diorite—the hardest stone worked by the Egyptians—and could only have been created from months of grinding with sand, as there was no metal harder than diorite available to the Egyptians at that time. The beauty of this work is truly a testament to the stoneworkers who created her.

This image of Sekhmet is featured prominently in the Rosicrucian Egyptian Museum's special exhibit, *Women of the Nile*, and is also a featured artifact in the exhibit's catalog.

Lisa Schwappach, M.A.
Curator
Rosicrucian Egyptian Museum


Research on the Egyptian Museum's collection is ongoing. Donations and bequests to facilitate acquisitions, research and other museum projects are gratefully acknowledged.

RC 1605

ROSICRUCIAN DIGEST

No. 1 1999

Vol. 77 • No. 1



**Official Magazine of the
Worldwide
Rosicrucian Order**

Editor
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Established in 1915 by the Supreme Grand Lodge of
the English Language Jurisdiction, AMORC,
Rosicrucian Park, San Jose, CA 95191.

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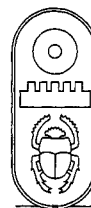
ROSICRUCIAN DIGEST (ISSN # 0035-8339) is
published quarterly for \$12.00 per year, single copies
\$4.00, by the Grand Lodge of the English Language
Jurisdiction, AMORC, Inc., at 1342 Naglee Ave., San
Jose, CA 95191. Periodicals Postage Rates paid at San
Jose, CA, and at additional mailing offices. **POST-
MASTER:** Send address changes to ROSICRU-
CIAN DIGEST at 1342 Naglee Ave., San Jose, CA
95191-0001.

Subscription outside the U.S. and Canada: Please
send payment through the usual remittance procedure
for your area. But, if you are remitting directly to the
U.S., your payment must be in U.S. dollars.

Statements made in this publication are not the offi-
cial expression of the organization or its officers unless
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Meditation

It's History and Value

by Ralph M. Lewis, F.R.C.
Past Emperor of the Rosicrucian Order, AMORC
1939-1987



WHAT IS MEDITATION and how is it attained? Today the word *meditation* has become a virtual umbrella beneath which reside a conglomerate of experimentation. Meditation has been related to concentration, contemplation, and recollection; yet not one of these techniques is the sole process or its result.

However, there are two general categories into which all the different attempts to experience meditation fall. These are the *supernatural* and the *psychological*. In the supernatural, there is the belief that the meditator must disassociate himself or herself from the physical self. There is, it is expounded, a nexus, an ethereal bridge between the mortal side and a source of divine gnosis, that is, wisdom. Simply, the supernatural seeks an afflatus, a momentary flight of the soul into the cosmic realm, by means of this bridge.

The other category, the psychological, is a more organic mechanistic approach. In other words, it consists of utilizing the natural, subliminal force of the mind and the consciousness. A greater perception of self and its cosmic relation is had by either of these methods. We will consider these methods as we proceed.

The current popularity of the term *meditation* would make it appear to be a relatively new phenomenon. However, techniques for experiencing meditation have been in existence for several millennia. What caused such inquiry into this phenomenon?

It is reasonable to say that meditation began with the mind's introspection of self; in other words, when humans realized an apparent duality of self. One set of perceptions were physical; that is, humans could relate them to their receptor senses and the external world in which they lived. The other set of perceptions were strange feelings and sensations that had no apparent physical counterpart, such as dreams, certain emotions, and the increasing mystery of nature.

Early humans thus eventually recognized the division between the greater forces of nature outside themselves and the mysterious world of feelings within. At times, human beings must have experienced what seemed an escape from the physical world into this inner ethereal one. The sensations were different—at least they seemed so—from those of the physical. It is reasonable to believe that at this point, humans

began their inquiry into the realm of the psychic self and the origin of what we term *meditation*.

Let us briefly consider some of these historic versions of meditation. We say "briefly" because the literature on this subject, both archaic and modern, is extremely voluminous. No matter how extensive a work on this subject may be, it is at best only an abridgment.

In India, the subject of *yoga* is understood to be 1) contemplation raised to a formal art, and 2) a system with a philosophical basis which ranks as one of six systems of Brahmanic philosophy. Yoga, the system, contains "contemplation" exercises for attaining a higher state of consciousness.

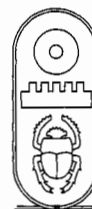
Attaining a Higher State

Right here we are confronted with the term, "a higher state of consciousness." Why is one state of consciousness higher than another? Further, what is the standard for allotting a higher quality to one state than to another? Is it mere difference that accounts for the gradation? Possibly it is because our awareness—our objective state of consciousness—has seeming limitations, in the form of limits on our receptor senses. The other states of consciousness of which we are aware suggest an *infinite* nature. They appear to have no dimensional quality and, therefore, in their apparent vastness, imply a cosmic infinity transcending objective perception.

However, the attempts by Hindus to attain this higher state of consciousness had a great influence on later Buddhism. The Indian literature on yoga is regarded as a branch of the Sankhya, which is one of the major systems of Hindu philosophy.

It is declared that the doctrine of *absorption* is the most effectual means for attaining that "secured emancipation." Here again, we are confronted with terms which for comprehension need explanation. *Emancipation* is to set free—but freedom from what?

In the yoga system, absorption is called "yoking." This means a diversion of the senses from the external world; in other words, an emancipation, a freedom from the sentient world of everyday. To further explain, this is an absorption with the "higher consciousness"



within. There is a varying and lengthy explanation of the procedure as to how the senses may be withdrawn from the objects of the senses, and reduced to inactivity in relation to the inner powers of self.

Practice consists of several stages. Various body attitudes, called *Asana*, are prescribed. These, for one, consist of the inhalation and exhalation of the breath and the concentration of the gaze on a definite point, as for example the tip of the nose.

There are different explanations for the breathing exercise. An obvious one is the vitalizing of the body through the oxygen supply, by holding the fresh breath deep in the lungs. However, other reasons are given that are not of a physiological cause, but a *psychical* one.

One result of these external practices is the loss of consciousness, the so-called "yoga sleep." Actually, this is none other than *hypnotic* sleep. It is well known, because of being induced by other hypnotic exercises.

What is the yogi's intent in using hypnotic sleep? The yogi is attempting to reach our

psychic side, the *subconscious*, and causing it to release its collected wisdom; such wisdom being conceived as having been divinely deposited there and as constituting a higher judgment, which humans seek. Those who have practiced this yoga method have said that, when in this "yoga sleep," they hear many sounds, such as music, drums, thunder, and so on. This also has been said to be simply the result of self-suggestion. However, this is not sufficient to invalidate the yoga explanation of its system.

Ascent to a Higher Plane

The *Upanishads* are part of the group of Vedic treatises dealing with humanity's relation to the universe. The *Upanishads* relate that the Brahman priest can attain union with the Brahman by meditating on the word OM. It also asserts that after all OM is but a word and, "ascending from it, man attains to *nothingness*, in that which is not a word."

More concisely, this means that OM is only a mantra, a tool to ascend to the plane of nothingness. This nothingness is devoid of form, dimension, and worldliness.

In the philosophical writings of India, it is said: ". . . that the Brahman of the *Upanishads* is no metaphysical abstraction, no indeterminate entity, no void of silence . . . It is a living, dynamic spirit, the source and container of the infinitely varied forms of reality." Brahma is the chief member of the Trinity of Brahma, Vishnu, and Siva.

Buddhism

In Buddhism, contemplation and meditation are interchanged, implying a similar nature. Both are termed *Dhyana* in Sanskrit. Contemplation or concentration of thought is considered indispensable to knowledge. Yet we cannot agree that meditation and contemplation are identical processes in nature. We shall further expound on what the Rosicrucians consider to be the difference and its importance.

In Buddhism, meditation presupposes simultaneous action of two factors. These are *isolation of the body*, that is, life in retirement; and *isolation of thought*, which is construed as an indifference to all worldly desires. The mind is therefore "absolved in contemplation," simply, being

detached from the distraction of the senses. The mind is then able to deeply penetrate the ideas which it is about to apply. This is called *Dhyana*, meditation.

Here we see that concentration and contemplation have the same function: a fixity of thought—the holding fast to an idea. Meditation transcends this, as we shall later consider. However, as we have said, the object, the method, and the details vary with the different schools. It is said that all of these methods lead to possession of knowledge, or wisdom, and perfection of contemplation, as the study of certain truths intended “to destroy impurity, vice, and passion.”

There is the attempt to experience a universality of human feelings; that is, to have empathy, to share with others the goodness of life—inwardly—as the following from the Upanishads indicates: “What joy means to me, it means the same to others”—in the same way, suffering. Also, “I must do for others what I do for myself.”

The State of Enlightenment

In Buddhism, meditation must be clearly distinguished from *absorption*. Meditation only becomes absorption when the subject and object, the meditator and the meditated, are so completely blended into one that the consciousness of separateness altogether disappears.

In other words, the meditator must become so absorbed in the end in mind, that is, the “object,” that he is no longer conscious of himself. At this point, according to this method, true meditation then begins. It is then, in Buddhism, when *arhat-ship* is attained, which is, therefore, “the sole object of Buddhism.” (An *arhat* is a Buddhist monk who has attained the state of enlightenment.)

Several practices are used in Buddhism to prepare for meditation, according to the ability of the meditator:

1. A quick-tempered novice should practice the meditation on love—which is to regard all sentient beings as his brothers, desiring their happiness.
2. A novice, who needs concentration of attention, should practice at first the method of counting the number of his inspirations and expirations (of the breath).

3. Another novice, whose impure desire is hard to suppress, should meditate on the impurity and impermanence of the body.

Details are also given as to how to attain the *four meditations*. When one becomes accustomed to suppression of the senses, one attains a state of ecstasy. This can be compared with the relief one has of a debt paid or of a prisoner being released.

However, this state of ecstasy has four stages, or degrees:

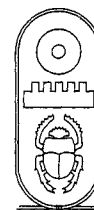
1. A state of joy, the meditator having separated himself from all sensuality and sin.
2. A state of deep tranquillity, without reflection or investigation, as these have been suppressed.
3. A state of awareness of the destruction of passion.
4. A state of purity of equanimity and recollection without sorrow.

Renowned Mystics and their Views on Meditation

What do some of the renowned mystics say of their methods of meditation? How did they arrive at certain of their practices? Jakob Boehme (1575-1624), though of humble background, schooled himself in the study of mysticism, theology, and alchemy. He wrote that one day, seated in his room, he “gazed fixedly upon a burnished pewter dish which reflected the sunshine with grand brilliance.” He then went into an inward ecstasy, and it seemed to him as if he could enter the deepest foundations of things.

It is said that Saint Ignatius of Loyola (1491-1556), mystic and theologian, was sitting on the bank of a rushing stream when “the eyes of the mind were opened, not to see any kind of vision, but as to understanding and to comprehend spiritual things. . . .” In Buddhism, this experience is said to be “recollection in meditation.” In other words, it is the calling

“What joy means to me, it means the same to others”



forth from memory of some object, or perceiving a particular thing that fixes an invariable concentration upon it. This can induce a state where objective consciousness ceases and the mind is open to impressions from the subconscious. Hindu mystics, in this practice, contemplate a sacred word; Christians, a fragment of scripture or a symbol. Such fixed concentration overpowers the stream of small suggestions which pour in from the outer world. Therefore, one slips into the deeper stream of consciousness.

Aristotle said of the life of contemplation, it is "a laying hold on immortality as far as is possible for men."

Modern Psychology

And what has modern psychology to say of meditation? Not much under that particular word, but a good deal under related subjects such as insight, altered states of consciousness, and intuition. Robert Ornstein, in his book, *The Psychology of Consciousness*, says the brain's right hemisphere is the locus of intuitive ability, insight, and that form of consciousness such as meditation.

Psychology is now interested in what is termed "altered states of consciousness"—*altered*, in this sense, meaning, "the unusual states of existence that do not represent our ordinary conscious state." But sleep is accepted as an ordinary, common state. In fact, sleep occupies a third of our lives. Therefore, from the psychological point of view, the act of contemplation (meditation) is for the mystic a psychic gateway, a method of going from one level of consciousness to another. Technically, meditation is a shift in the "field of perception and obtains an outlook on the universe." The shift can attach itself to the emotions, intellect, and will.

The principal concepts of the mystical and psychological systems of meditation can be summarized for practical use. We shall attempt this summary. Obviously, however, it will be necessary to delete certain aspects of the other systems. They are those elements which we consider to be mere ritualistic and religious appendages, and actually not essential to the phenomenon of meditation.

Stream of Consciousness

Let us begin with *consciousness*. We will recognize consciousness as a stream and not as a series of separate segments. We may use the analogy of a piano keyboard, every key figuratively representing a separate note; yet, all are united in the keyboard of sound.

Consciousness has its keys, or levels, of different phenomena, or manifestations. Yet all are part of and related to the *one* stream of consciousness. There are lower and upper levels of consciousness in this stream, just as there are upper and lower octaves in the piano keyboard.

The differences between the upper and lower levels of consciousness, we may say, is the frequency of the energy of which they consist. Just what this energy is, is not yet universally agreed upon. But it is most probably of the *Vital Life Force* that impregnates every living cell.

The lowest level of this stream of consciousness, the *objective*, is the one of which we are most commonly aware. It is responsible to our receptor senses—sight hearing, feeling, smelling, and tasting. It is also that level of consciousness by which we perceive externality—both the world around us and our physical being as such.

We are also commonly aware of another level just above the objective. This is generally known as the *subjective*. Its attributes are, for example, our reasoning processes, memory, imagination, and will. However, these work in close conjunction with the objective level.

We consider the subjective level higher because its functions seem more all-embracing, more infinite than is the objective. They do not appear to directly relate to the sensation derived from our receptor sense.

The Subconscious

There is yet another level of consciousness which we arbitrarily consider higher than the subjective. This is commonly referred to as the *subconscious*. However, other names have been assigned to it, such as the preconscious and the unconscious. This level is the most mysterious to us. We ordinarily attribute hunches, intuition, and insight to it. It appears to constitute a form of *superior judgment*. The subconscious will, at

times, come forth with a flash of inspiring ideas or solutions to problems which our reason failed to resolve. It is more expressive of what we think of as our human psychic powers.

Beyond the Subconscious

But here we enter into the mystical and metaphysical concept of the stream of consciousness. There is the belief, as the result of further research, that there are other levels of consciousness beyond the subconscious, and that such levels are in relation to *Cosmic Consciousness*. Mystically and metaphysically, Cosmic Consciousness is a directing intelligence that constitutes the order manifesting throughout all Reality. It pervades each cell of our being; however, we are ordinarily aware of only certain levels of it, which we have previously mentioned. Nevertheless, mysticism and metaphysics, and modern parapsychology as well, assert its existence and endeavor to demonstrate it. They attempt, by different exercises, to penetrate this level for its noetic, intellectual direction and wisdom.

True mysticism and metaphysics do not hold that these "levels" of the subconscious have access to a virtual library of unique knowledge and enlightenment. Rather, a superior form of analysis takes place—an editing, if you wish, of our knowledge, resulting in an exalted form of judgment. More simply, this superior judgment uses the knowledge we have gained in our objective experiences and by our reason, and then assembles them into a form of greater perspicuity. Therefore, individuals will be guided in terms of their personal understanding and enlightenment. If this were a unique superior and different language, then mortals would not have this guidance, for they would not understand it.

Concentration, Contemplation, Meditation

In entering into an exercise of meditation to reach these higher levels of consciousness, it is necessary to distinguish between concentration,

contemplation, and meditation. Meditation is the use of these higher faculties, but they, in themselves, are *not meditation*. For a simple analogy, although breath and breathing are not speaking, they are a contributing requirement of speech.

Just what is *concentration*? It is the focusing of our attention. For example, as you read this you are focusing your attention on the words you see. You are using the objective level of consciousness to do so.

Concentration, by this means, is the *lowest level* of the stream of consciousness, as we previously noted.

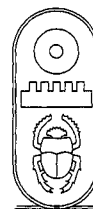
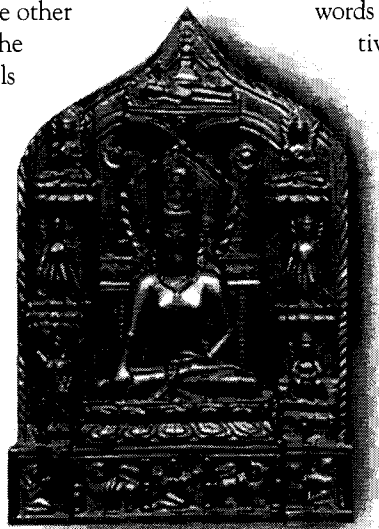
Contemplation is likewise a form of concentration, but it is introverted; that is, it is turned *inward*. When we reason, when we think about something or try to recollect, we are concentrating inwardly. In both instances, our consciousness is arrested, that is, fixed to either the objective or the subjective level of consciousness. The self, then, is not able to move upward into the subconscious and beyond, to the still higher levels of consciousness.

Since the purpose of meditation is for the self to have an awareness of these other levels of consciousness, obviously it cannot confine itself to one of the lower levels if it desires to make sublime contact with the Universal Consciousness, that is, the provider of the "unlearned knowledge."

As for the technique by which this is accomplished, we offer the following stages:

Stage 1: Place yourself in an area of silence where you will not be disturbed—that is, none of the senses will be particularly aroused.

Stage 2: Select some object in the room upon which to focus your attention constantly. You are then engaging your lower level of consciousness, the *objective*. The steady concentration prevents other sense impressions from entering your consciousness and interfering.



Stage 3: When you feel that you have accomplished the above stages, then a transference of the self must be made to the *subjective* level of consciousness. It is best to close your eyes at this point. This stage is accomplished by dismissing the attention from the object upon which you originally focused your gaze. Now think, contemplate upon your purpose, that is, why you are meditating. Why do you wish to enter upon the sublime levels of consciousness?



purpose, that is, the reason you had in mind, and enter what we referred to earlier as the plane of nothingness. This is why the "hypnotic sleep" is produced by the Hindus and the Buddhists; but it is not so stated.

You might ask, "Just how does one think of nothing?" One cannot actually do so, for even under hypnosis, there is a state of consciousness.

Let me explain in objective terms what we mean by this "nothingness." It is like, for analogy, the dark heavens without stars, without dimension, without form. Let us attempt a picture of this in our mind and then mentally move the self into this great canopy of nothing. You should attempt this for at least five minutes.

Then open your eyes, sit passively, feet apart, and hands unclasped in your lap for at least ten minutes. Try to have no thought. Difficult? Yes! You are now ready for what will come to you from the greater depth and level of your stream of consciousness.

Do not always expect an immediate idea or a flash of brilliant enlightenment to enter your consciousness. Such may come later. When? A day, a week, or more. There is no specific schedule. It varies with the individual. It is very similar to the experience of having suddenly remembered something that you had forgotten.

- A. What you think must not be a complex thought; rather, a simple but complete idea. If you want enlightenment, hold in mind what such enlightenment would relate to, particularly for yourself, such as health, domestic affairs, finances, or further knowledge about a particular subject.
- B. In thinking, don't select any thought or plan that would oppose your moral and ethical standard. In other words, don't think of hurting or seeking revenge upon someone. Simply, do not plan what your conscience tells you is immoral or even unethical, for to do so would be to oppose your own subconscious, your own true personality. You cannot deceive your higher self so as to assist you in opposition to its moral code.

Stage 4: When you feel that the thought alone now occupies your consciousness—the *subjective level*—you are then ready to enter the *subconscious*, which is the bridge to Cosmic Consciousness; that is, the *full* state of consciousness.

Stage 5: At this point moderate deep breathing is advised. Take at least six deep breaths and hold them as long as possible without discomfort; then exhale fully. There is a good practical reason for this breathing exercise. Each breath contains the vitalizing force of life. It carries with it a positive potential of energy. It strengthens will and aids in the transference of your thought to the subconscious.

If the procedure is well done, the response always follows; but we repeat, with no specific time schedule. You may need further practice, or what you seek may not be in accord with your conscience.

"One of the rarest of all requirements is the faculty of profitable meditation. Most human beings, when they fancy they are meditating, are, in fact, doing nothing at all, and thinking of nothing." —Boyd



Stage 6: This is a difficult stage. You now disengage your thought from your



Two New Board Members Appointed

Two new members have been appointed to the English Grand Lodge Board of Directors as of December 12, 1998.

New appointees Soror Maryann Miller and Frater Louis E. Domenech join President and Grand Master Kristie E. Knutson; Vice President and Secretary Sandra Huff; Treasurer David Burnet; and Directors David Eccleston; Lonnie Edwards, M.D.; and H. Calvin Jonas for a total of eight Board Members.

By way of introduction, Soror Maryann Miller hails from Flowery Branch, Georgia. A Rosicrucian for almost 30 years, Soror Miller served as Regional Monitor for Central California and later the Southeastern Region. She was eventually appointed Grand Councilor for the Southeastern Region in 1981, and more recently served as Grand Councilor for the Pacific Southwest & Hawaii Region. Her professional background is in personnel



Maryann Miller, S.R.C.

management, real estate, and the florist business. She has a college and business school education.

Frater Louis E. Domenech joined the Order almost 25 years ago. Born in Cuba, he now makes his home in Cambridge, Massachusetts. Frater Domenech has an MBA in Business



Louis E. Domenech, F.R.C.

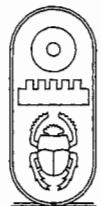
Administration and is employed as a manager in the accounting and finance field. Frater Domenech was appointed Grand Councilor and T.M.O. Provincial Master for the New England & Bermuda Region in 1994.

We welcome both of these new members to the English Grand Lodge Board of Directors and thank them for their steadfast dedication to the work and principles of the Rosicrucian Order, AMORC.



Mission Statement

The Rosicrucian teachings enable people to find themselves, turn their lives, and influence the universe. We are educators, students, and seekers devoted to exploring inner wisdom and the meaning of life. We offer an ancient time-tested system of study and experimentation which reveals the underlying principles of the universe. Our method offers practical tools applicable to all aspects of life. The Rosicrucian teachings allow individuals to direct their own lives, experience inner peace, and leave their mark on humanity.



Women of the Nile Exhibit Explores Women's Role in Ancient Egypt

Madame Jehan Sadat

Officially Opens Rosicrucian Egyptian Museum Exhibit

by Moorea Warren
AMORC Public Relations Manager

Photos: Pat Kirk



*Museum Director Jill Free
poses with Mrs. Sadat.*

THE SPLENDORS of ancient Egypt were illuminated recently at the opening-night gala for the Rosicrucian Egyptian Museum's new exhibit *Women of the Nile*. This is the first major public exhibit in the San Francisco Bay Area to explore the roles of women in ancient Egypt. *Women of the Nile* opened on January 30, with the blessing of modern Egypt's most famous woman, Madame Jehan Sadat, widow of former Egyptian President Anwar Sadat.

Upon their arrival at the Museum, the over 400 guests were treated to a laser light show, which projected various Egyptian symbols on the front of the Museum building. Once entering the Museum, visitors could choose from numerous festivities, since every exhibit hall was bustling with activities—from belly-dancers to musicians, from a delicious buffet dinner to luscious desserts. They even had the opportunity to bid on silent and live auction items such as a weekend at the famed Luxor Hotel in Las Vegas, a diamond ring, an exquisite antique beaded bag created to celebrate the opening of King Tut's tomb, or dinner at a selection of San Jose's finest restaurants.

The most anticipated event of the evening, however, occurred when everyone convened at the Francis Bacon Building to hear opening



Opening Night Gala guests enjoying the banquet in Museum Gallery B.

remarks by Madame Sadat, the Consul General of Egypt Hagar Islam Bouly, and Museum Director Jill Freeman.

In her remarks, the Consul General pointed out the importance of the long-lasting ties of friendship between the United States and Egypt, and the significance of there being an Egyptian Museum in Silicon Valley.

In introducing Sadat, Museum Director Freeman stated that "... back when we were having our brainstorming sessions, we thought, if we could get just one person to signify women in Egypt, that person would be Madame Sadat. Throughout her life she has exhibited incredible grace under fire and has maintained a sense of dignity while helping the women of her country gain additional freedom."



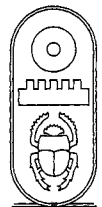
Mrs. Sadat graciously greeting guests and signing programs. In photo (from left to right) are General Soued, Mrs. Sadat's Military Attaché; Mrs. Sadat; Hagar Islam Bouly, Egyptian Consul General; guest Victoria Hunter and companion.

Although Sadat was suffering from a terrible case of laryngitis, she gracefully attempted to give her planned talk. When her voice completely gave out, Freeman, showing her own sense of grace, stepped in to read from Sadat's written remarks. But a hoarse voice did not stop Sadat from stepping in from time to time with lively anecdotes.

Sadat's Speech Addresses Women's Issues

In her remarks, Sadat explained that for over 5000 years women have been shaping Egyptian culture. She pointed out that although there is no single homogeneous group that represents all Egyptian women, they do have one thing in common—their unique place in Egyptian society where, in ancient times, they were considered the equal of men.

She referred particularly to Nefertiti, Hatshepsut, and Cleopatra as ancient women who were powerful and influential. However, she pointed out, that women's influence did not decline with the end of the Pharaonic society. She then went on to describe three modern Egyptian women who have helped to shape today's society along the Nile.



First she talked about Huda Sharawy, a leader of the women's movement in 1919. Sharawy established the first school for girls in 1910, was the first to remove her veil, and actively protested the British occupation of Egypt.



Guests enjoying the Women of the Nile exhibit.

Next, she told the crowd about Nabawya Mousa, who fought for equal salaries for equal work. Sadat said that as a direct result of Mousa, Egypt now has laws that guarantee women will be paid equal to men for the same work, something that American women do not yet enjoy.

Finally, Sadat spoke of Dr. Souher Kalamawy, a scholar, political activist, former member of Parliament, and one of the first women to receive a university degree and an academic doctorate. Incidentally, Kalamawy, who teaches at Cairo University, instructed Sadat when she returned to school for her degree.

"I love her so much," she said of Kalamawy, "And I am imitating her, really."

"So, the stage is firmly set for the women of the future in Egypt, eight of whom are my granddaughters," she said. Sadat added that one is studying to be a doctor and two are working towards degrees in political science.

Which brings up the point that, in her modesty, Sadat did not refer to her many accomplishments in furthering the role of women not only in Egypt but around the world.

At fifteen, she met a military man twice her age, who had just spent two and a half years behind bars for resisting British occupation and was unemployed. She admired him for his courage, his loyalty to his country, and his determination to see Egypt free from occupation. His name was Anwar Sadat, and she did not relent until her parents blessed their union.

She began fighting for women's rights long before becoming first lady. In her home village of Talla, she formed an emancipation movement that trained women to become more self-sufficient through making handicrafts. Named the Talla Society, it now includes men and assists with university tuition. A longtime social activist, Sadat was among the first to reach the Suez front in the 1967 war to visit and comfort the wounded.

Although she does not challenge the traditional family structure in Egypt, in which the man is the head of the household, Sadat believes there should be greater participation by women in public life. In 1975, she headed the Egyptian delegation to the International Women's Conference in Mexico City, and a year later she pushed a new civil rights law through the Egyptian parliament, which gave more rights to women and more security to the family.

She initiated and developed the SOS Children's Villages to help orphans lead a better life and the Wafa Wa Amal City Rehabilitation Center for handicapped veterans.

Mrs. Sadat (second from right) poses with (left to right) Museum Director Jill Freeman, AMORC Grand Master Kristie E. Knutson, and AMORC Public Relations Director Moorea Warren.



Vital Role of Education

At forty-one, she returned to college, inspiring many women to do the same. She eventually earned a doctoral degree. Currently, she spends part of every year teaching women's studies at the University of Maryland and the remainder in Cairo, where she has four children, ten grandchildren, and another grandchild on the way.

Sadat has spoken before the United Nations and fights against illiteracy, believing that "the most precious capital any country can have is an educated citizen." Additionally, she is the founder of the Arab African Women's League, among numerous other charitable organizations and is the recipient of many international awards.

After her opening remarks, Sadat stood for at least two hours greeting guests and signing programs back at the Museum. Even though she was not feeling well, she would not allow the



Museum guests discuss some of the antiquities on display in the Women of the Nile exhibit.

Museum staff to cut off the long line that formed. Nor would she even sit down. Sadat's genuine warmth seemed to touch everyone she came in contact with, and her own face would light up at the mention of her late husband, Anwar.

Museum Director Freeman urged everyone to remember as they walked through the exhibit that all the artifacts were, "either held, made, or thrown away by someone thousands of years ago."

"These were people just like us," she added. "Someone was probably complaining about working on that darn pyramid again. Someone else was caring for a new-born baby. The people who owned these objects were real and with some of the same life concerns that we have today."



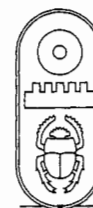
Auctioneer Risley Sams conducting a live auction to raise funds for the Museum.

The exhibit contains 100 objects that bring to life the strong influence had by women in ancient Egypt. The artifacts in the exhibit come from the Museum's own collection and from the Harer Family Trust. *Women of the Nile* is divided into four sections: Daily Life, Temple, Palace, and Afterlife in order to encompass the entire spectrum of ancient Egyptian life.

Women of the Nile's artifacts include a lovely mummy case of a young woman, which is painted with inscriptions and scenes of gods, goddesses, and vignettes from the afterlife. Nearby that case is the wrapped mummy of a small child, its face hidden by a gilded face mask still covered with the perfumed oils administered by family members during the burial over 2000 years ago.

One of the most beautiful objects on display is a life-sized granite statue of a Ptolemaic Queen, probably Arsinoe II. Other highlights of *Women of the Nile* are a life-size replica of a women's birthing room, one of only three replicas of the famous bust of Nefertiti (the original now resides in the Berlin Museum), and a rare carved wooden statue of one of Egypt's first goddesses, Neith.

Women of the Nile continues through May 23 at the Rosicrucian Egyptian Museum.





Rosicrucian Egyptian Museum's
**Women of the Nile
Speaker Series**

March - May 1999

by Moorea Warren
AMORC Public Relations Manager

WHAT did an ancient Egyptian woman's daily routine entail? How was her social status determined? How did she worship her gods? And finally, just how much power did royal women wield? The Rosicrucian Egyptian Museum's *Women of the Nile Speaker Series*, held in conjunction with the exhibit, will illuminate these and other mysteries of ancient Egyptian society.

Three respected Egyptologists: Lisa Schwappach, Curator of the Rosicrucian Egyptian Museum; Dr. Gay Robins, Professor Ancient Egyptian Art, Emory University; and Dr. Emily Teeter, Associate Curator, Oriental Institute, University of Chicago, present the series, which centers around the areas of daily, palace, and temple life. Tickets, which include admission to the exhibit, are \$20 each for the general public and \$15 each for members of the Rosicrucian Order and Museum members. The lectures will be held on three Saturdays. The lecture dates are: March 20 (*Mistresses of the Temple*), April 10 (*Life in the Shadow of the Pyramids*), and May 1 (*She Who Must Be Obeyed: Women of the Palace*). Times are: 6 p.m. - 7 p.m. for exhibit viewing, and 7 p.m. - 8:30 p.m. for the lecture.

"By exploring the lives of women in ancient Egypt through the exhibit and *Speaker Series*, we hope to heighten awareness of how unique women's roles were in every facet of ancient Egyptian life," said Museum Director Jill Freeman. "Egyptians were progressive and great thinkers and we hope that we can shed some light on what it meant to be an Egyptian woman during this time."

Women's status in Egyptian religion is the topic of *Mistresses of the Temple* presented by Dr. Teeter on Saturday, March 20. "I think people will be surprised at the important roles women played as temple priestesses," noted Teeter. "They held a wide variety of positions, from sacred singers and dancers to the highest clerical posts in the country.

"Egyptian religion was very sensual, and priestesses were not celibate. On the contrary, sexuality and reproduction were the hallmarks of their religion, which was based upon regeneration. They were able to marry and were quite active in temple life and in positions of authority."

Dr. Teeter also pointed out that Egyptians worshiped a great number of deities, and goddesses were an important part of their religion. Prominent goddesses included Neith (associated with protecting the king), Isis (the perfect image of motherhood), and the cat goddess Bastet (a benevolent and procreative goddess).

Dr. Teeter received her Ph.D. in Egyptology from the University of Chicago and is currently the Associate Curator at the Oriental Institute Museum at the university. Her area of specialization includes the history and religion of second millennium B.C. Egypt with emphasis upon popular religion and cult ritual. Additionally, she has participated in expeditions to Giza, Luxor, and Alexandria.

The Rosicrucian Egyptian Museum's Curator, Lisa Schwappach, discusses daily life in ancient Egypt with *Life in the Shadow of the Pyramids* on April 10. She holds bachelor's and master's degrees in Anthropology and Ancient Egyptian Archeology/Art History from the University of California at Berkeley. She also serves as an instructor of anthropology at Chabot College in Hayward, California.

"Because of their practice of mummification, many people think that Egyptians were morbidly obsessed with death. Actually, they had wonderful lives filled with beautiful things, music, and festivals. Life was so joyful, Egyptians sought to continue it in the next world," Schwappach said.

Women's unique place in the rituals of daily life provided a crucial balance to the man's outwardly focused role, according to

Schwappach. The home was the woman's exclusive domain. She controlled household industries such as linen weaving and beer production. She raised the children and protected her family from threats both physical and magical.

A skilled Egyptian housewife ensured that her home produced a surplus of beer and cloth. These items would then be traded for other products and luxury goods. Furthermore, while it was the man's duty to work outside of the home, it was not unusual for a woman to take over her husband's business affairs if he left town on business.

The *Speaker Series* concludes on May 1 when Dr. Gay Robins presents *She Who Must Be Obeyed: Women of the Palace*. Robins holds degrees in Chinese and Egyptology from the University of Durham, England, and a Ph.D. in Egyptology from Oxford University. She is currently a professor of art history at Emory University. Her main area of research is women of ancient Egypt, and she has written over sixty articles and six books on Egyptological subjects.

According to Dr. Robins, ancient Egypt's government was controlled by a line of hereditary rulers, called *pharaohs*. While most

pharaohs were male, at times, women reigned over Egypt, most often as regent, and occasionally as sole ruler. Sole rulers included Merneith, Nitokret, Sobeknefru, and Tausret. Robins will shed light on these rulers and on the most famous female pharaoh, Hatshepsut. When Hatshepsut seized power from her stepson, she governed not as queen but as pharaoh, and even wore men's clothing and the pharaoh's false beard in public. During her twenty-one-year reign, she restored peace to a warring Egypt, revitalized foreign trade and created some of its finest monuments, including the temple at Deir el-Bahri.

The *Women of the Nile* exhibit runs through May 23, 1999, at the Rosicrucian Egyptian Museum, and for those readers in the area or those who can make it to San Jose on the evenings of March 20, April 10, and May 1, the *Women of the Nile Speaker Series* will expand upon and enhance our understanding of this wonderfully exciting exhibit.



Women of the Nile Speaker Series Info:

WHEN: Saturday, March 20

Dr. Emily Teeter:

Mistresses of the Temple

TIMES: Exhibit Viewing: 6 p.m. – 7 p.m.

Lectures: 7 p.m. - 8:30 p.m.

Saturday, April 10

Lisa Schwappach:

Life in the Shadows of the Pyramids

WHERE: Rosicrucian Egyptian Museum

Corner of Park and

Naglee Avenues

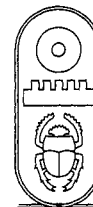
San Jose, California

Saturday, May 1

Dr. Gay Robbins:

She Who Must Be Obeyed: Women of the Palace

INFO : Tickets, (which includes admission to the exhibit) are:
\$15 each (for members of the Rosicrucian Order and Museum members),
\$20 each (for the general public), and can be purchased
by calling 408/947-3633 or visit www.rosicrucian.org.



Celestial Sanctum

Convocation: Its Purpose and Symbolism

by Maryann Miller, S.R.C.
Member, English Grand Lodge Board of Directors

THERE ARE MANY reasons for attending affiliated bodies. They provide a loving atmosphere where members may experience group work and grow beyond intolerant differences of individual personalities or other prejudices. They also provide a place where members may be enlightened by a discourse and enjoy various social activities. These activities are most enlightening as well as entertaining, but they may not always seem important enough to constitute a reason for regular attendance. After all, we can study our monographs at home and there are many other social activities that vie for our attention. But most importantly, affiliated bodies provide each member an opportunity to participate in the true esoteric work of our beloved Order.

Sometimes members who first attend Convocation view it as a beautiful ritual only to be observed. However, all members eventually realize that they have an exciting opportunity and sacred obligation to become active participants in the spiritual work that is being conducted.

Each member present is a potent point of consciousness and the clarity of each member's contact with the Master Within determines the frequency or quality of consciousness that is made available to be directed outward for the benefit and evolution of the collective consciousness of our planet. This is the service each member is dedicated to and conducts during the Convocation Ritual.

In providing this service, we each raise the vibratory level of our consciousness, align with our Master Within; harmonize our consciousness with the sublime frequencies of Life, Light, and Love; and then, to the best of our ability, direct that energy outward in service to humanity. This, *fratres and sorores*, is the purpose of the Convocation Ritual and affiliated bodies offer a meeting place for this sacred purpose to unfold.

After gaining experience with the ritual, understanding its innermost meaning and committing to serve its true esoteric purpose, some members of affiliated bodies are afforded the honor and privilege of serving as a member of the ritual team. Together, the assembled members and the ritual team conduct one of the most metaphysical and practical applications of Rosicrucian principles that can be performed in service to the evolution of consciousness upon this planet.

All aspects of the Convocation ritual and temple setup are designed with this specific purpose in mind. The actual proportions of the temple, the placement of the stations, as well as each accouterment symbolically represent, in miniature, the greater life in which we live, move, and have our being. The temple floor, whenever possible, is constructed according to the divine proportion. The temple layout and ritual comprise a blueprint for incarnating consciousness as well as the Path of return to conscious union with God. Members of the ritual team depict dynamic frequencies of energy or consciousness, and direct the movement of that energy within the temple.

The Seven Directions

The temple setup, with its accouterments, is unique to Rosicrucians but is based on ancient systems that are found all over the world and within nature itself. In most ancient temples only four directions or elements were represented. Within Rosicrucian temples however, are symbolically represented the four elements or directions of the compass, as well as a central point. This temple layout symbolizes humanity's mastery over matter, or the perfected human being as represented by the five-pointed star. In other words, it symbolizes our mastery over all of the North, South, East, and West elements within our life. We then

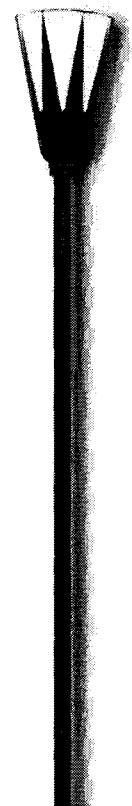
symbolically become the fifth point, or unseen Center within our personal universe. Through this self mastery we are able to transform the pairs of opposites which exist within reality by becoming the fulcrum, or balance point between all of life's seeming diversity. We then travel the middle path between the two pillars of life, known as good and evil, night and day, hot and cold, and so forth.

There are, however, at least two more directions that exist within a Rosicrucian temple. These two additional directions are Up and Down, and are used to invoke and radiate energy. So now we have North, South, East, West, Center, and Up and Down. So let's begin our journey around these seven directions or vortices of energy.

When a line is extended from East to West, then North to South, a cross is traced upon the temple floor. There is also an unseen three-dimensional cross within the temple. The directions of Up and Down and the energies that are invoked and then transmitted through these two additional directions, form the vertical and horizontal arms of an etheric, three-dimensional cross.

The vertical arm of this three-dimensional cross consists of exalted frequencies of energy directed downward toward humanity by the Cosmic Hosts. This energy enters through the unseen Center above the Shekinah, then moves to the unmanifested primordial darkness of the North. The North represents that unseen doorway through which all unmanifested energy enters. In this model the North represents the element Air and is Esoteric Sound, or the primordial, unmanifested, creative Word of God.

The energy then moves to the East where it manifests as a six-pointed star or the interlaced triangles. The element Earth is assigned to the East because it symbolizes Esoteric Light or First Matter before its descent into the lower worlds of form, as well as its ascent or redemption through the mystical marriage. Thus this primordial First Light radiates from the East of the Temple. The Master, having symbolically mastered the four directions or elements, then carries within the heart of his being a hologram of the temple and mastery over the four directions or



elements. He anchors or grounds this First Light in the outer world by directing its manifestation within the temple. The Master is receptive to this incoming Light and is causative to its radiation within the temple. So it is in the East that the unmanifested word or sound of the North takes on life and becomes manifested Light.

The Greater Light

This energy or Light is then directed along a straight line, past the Shekinah, to the West where the darkness of night and the moon, which is reflected light, allows the Greater Light to be seen. The Greater Light in the East is positive in relationship to the passive light of the West. The element assigned to the West is Water. The West represents the doorway into other subtle dimensions and is where the frequencies of the Greater Light of the East are reflected and given form.

The energy then moves to the South, or the "light of day." Following this model, the South is assigned the element Fire. Here, the journey of the Greater Light is related to the members assembled. The South is the doorway into physical manifestation for the energy that entered through the North then, in a lightening bolt pattern, circulated within the temple and sojourned to the East, then the West, and the South. In the South, which represents the fire of creation in the "outer world," the journey of consciousness or creation is objectively realized, then vocalized by the Chaplain so that all present may know and understand.

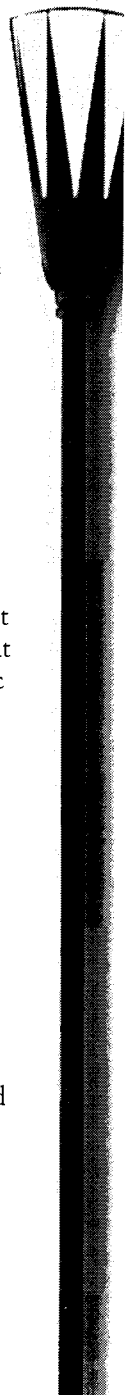
Through this directed movement within the temple and the members' collective meditation, the energy is amplified. Once it reaches the extent of its outward range, it returns, via a horizontal movement back to the East, where a gestalt in the original energy takes place. This horizontal movement of energy within the temple symbolizes the horizontal arm of the three-dimensional cross which was discussed earlier. The Master, via the Sanctum area between the East and the Shekinah, then directs this higher frequency of energy or consciousness back to the unseen Center above the Shekinah. This is why the Sanctum area may never be violated or breached.

The unseen Center above the Shekinah, symbolized by the rose upon the cross, represents the "Holy of Holies," and the three candles of Life, Light, and Love are evidence of the stages of consciousness that exist within the Unknowable One. A spiral of rotating energy within the unseen Center acts as a doorway from and to Divine levels of consciousness. It is an etheric doorway from the vibratory frequency of the Cosmic Hosts to our level of consciousness, then back again to the Cosmic Hosts. In other words, the unseen point above the center of the Shekinah is that point where the higher frequencies of consciousness are brought in for distribution to those assembled and it also serves as the doorway through which the vibratory energy that is generated during the Convocation Ritual is radiated upward.

Through the vowel intonations, the members' collective meditation, and a gestalt in the frequency of the energy that takes place in the East, a level of consciousness is created within the temple that is conducive to the work the Cosmic Hosts render humanity and all of the other kingdoms within nature. The frequencies of consciousness established through our Work and Worship are made available to the Cosmic Hosts for this service.

The Convocation Ritual is a step-by-step procedure for directing the power of these frequencies of consciousness, and we each must make the necessary internal preparation so that we may be "raised to an emotional and psychic plane where we may accomplish projection of thought and reception of thought," and become co-workers with the Cosmic Hosts in radiating Life, Light, and Love. We do this by attuning with that part of ourselves that represents the highest ideals and purest thoughts of which we are capable.

This, Fratres and Sorores, is the real purpose for our presence within Convocation and is the true spiritual work of our beloved Order. So, as we enter into our Convocations to Work and Worship together, as brothers and sisters of the Rosy Cross, may we always be aware of our spiritual function, and dedicate our hearts, minds, and beings to that sacred purpose. This is the meaning of the injunction to "ever be aware of the Sacred Light with which we are entrusted." So Mote It Be.



An Extraordinary Lesson



*Taking a chance can make life's journey
a little better down the road.*

by Kim A. Steigerwald

AT THE GRAND OLD AGE of seven I learned one of life's most valuable lessons. However, like most children of that age, I was too young to grasp the underlying aspect of the situation. It was simply filed away in my subconscious, awaiting the day I made that inevitable journey into adulthood. Then and only then could I look back and see the true significance of that childhood memory.

The teacher of this lesson was not a person or even a living thing. As unlikely as this sounds, it was a simple balloon. I remember the balloon was blue—the vivid blue of the sky on a clear summer day. It was from a festival or county fair, I can't recall which, but the memory of pure joy stays fresh within my thoughts. This was no ordinary balloon. It was a gift of love from the man I adored most in the world—my dad!

I was proud of my treasure, and in my eyes a hundred rare diamonds couldn't compare to the beauty of my gift. Although the balloon's string was tied to my little wrist, I held it anyway, clenched tightly in my hand. I wasn't about to take any chances on losing it. There it sailed along above my head, a brilliant burst of blue bobbing in the summer breeze. I was content to let it soar as long as I knew the string would keep it close to me. I had the power to control the balloon, its destiny was in my hand for as long as I desired it.

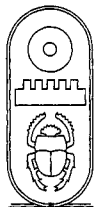
At bedtime I tied the string to my little white canopy bed. The moon was bright and I could see my balloon in the soft light coming in through the open window. It sailed high above my bed, like a flag above a royal castle, and I was the beautiful princess over whom it would stand guard each night as I slept.

I awoke the next morning from a peaceful night of magic dreams and fantasies of flying to the clouds above. I opened my eyes expecting to see my balloon flying high just where I had left it. But all I found was empty air where the balloon should have been.

In my innocence I didn't know about helium, so I had not realized that the balloon would deflate. To my sorrow I found my beautiful treasure shriveled up, lying pitifully on the floor. The string was still tied safely to the post, but now the balloon was too weak to fly away. Where once there was a thing of joy, now there remained but a withered shadow of its former self. In my seven-year-old mind, I had thought that I could hold the balloon forever exactly as it was, as long as I kept it safely on a string.

Now I see that this is the way of life and the dreams we all hold dear. Everyone has a dream somewhere down inside of them. It waits there, hoping one day it will be given the chance to spread its wings and burst forth into reality. A dream is sometimes quiet and so still that we hardly remember it is there. But it is there . . . beneath the surface it waits, and occasionally it gives us a gentle nudge to remind us of its existence. Your dream may peek out in a desire to dance or sing or paint a moment onto canvas that will last forever, exactly as it did within your mind. Perhaps you've always wanted to own a flower shop or a tiny corner café. It could be your wish to have a child to hold and teach and love, or a need to write a best-selling novel, or love poems to reach out and grab someone's heart. Your dream may even be as simple as the desire to slow down life's hectic pace and just

(continued on page 27)



A Movie Review

PLEASANTVILLE

by Tim Sika, F.R.C.



Tim Sika is a long-time member of the Rosicrucian Order and a member of the staff of the Department of Instruction. He also hosts Celluloid Dreams, a weekly radio show on KSJS (90.5 FM), San Jose, celebrating the art of film and the movie-going experience.

THE MEDIUM of film as an eclectic 20th-century art form reaches its full fruition when literary content and visual style blend into one harmonious whole, creating an experience where the intellect and emotions are engaged. When we, as the audience, participate in the narrative of such a movie, taking the journey the filmmaker lays out before us, we become transformed in some way which alters our life forever. Writer, director, and producer Gary Ross' *Pleasantville*—recently released in theaters across the country and now available on home video—is one such experience. It is a great American movie; a unique cinematic experience that defies categorization. An intelligent and skillful blending of allegorical content engaging the mind, with rich and textured themes exploring our humanity in all its complexities and contradictions, *Pleasantville* transcendently stirs the soul in ways only great films utilizing the medium to its full potential can do.

Ambitious, ingeniously executed and superbly conceived, *Pleasantville* is a provocative parable being presented on the surface as a commercial, high-concept, satiric comedy evoking the kinder, simpler era of the 1950s, as seen through the looking glass of a black-and-white television situation comedy—sanitized and homogenized to an almost absurdist degree of perfection.

Tobey Maguire and Reese Witherspoon play twin siblings from a '90s broken family, who through a series of events find themselves trapped in the alternate black-and-white TV

sitcom world of *Pleasantville*—where the temperature is always a perfect 72 degrees, and where the citizens are simple, cut-and-dried, naïve, complacent, and innocent. Roles are clearly defined. Men are the providers. A woman's place is in the home. It never rains. The basketball team always wins. Sex is rarely thought of or spoken about. The bathrooms have no toilets. The Fire Department exists to rescue cats caught in trees, since there has never been an actual fire. Thoughts about what is beyond the confines of *Pleasantville* have never been entertained. The town's library books are blank. Everything is done through routine. Though calm, predictable, stable, reliable, and secure, nothing changes in *Pleasantville*. There is no passion, no room for mistakes, or desire to create. In short—"everything is as simple as black and white."

But the teenagers bring with them an unexpected, and double-edged, gift to *Pleasantville*—a sense of possibility that is regarded as a threat by some, as a godsend to others. The citizens begin to experience the wonders of the alternate '90s world of the teenagers—sex, art, rain, and the power of ideas. And as the inhabitants connect with these elements—these things of which they had no concept existed—they slowly and gradually turn from black and white to Technicolor, each undergoing in their own manner and time frame an astonishing transformation. The invasion of color into a neutral world of black and white invigorates some, threatens others. As the citizens of *Pleasantville* turn to color, so do other things around them—flowers, cars, leaves, grass. For the first time *Pleasantville* becomes divided—suddenly rife with stark differences as it attempts to process the new and kaleidoscopic world before it.

The unique thing about *Pleasantville* is how it manages to successfully balance its comedy and drama aspects, its attempts at satire and its plethora of themes into one cohesive whole. It also manages to effectively employ the latest in

digital technology with a classic narrative story-telling style.

PLEASANTVILLE

questioning of her limiting identity in relationship to her husband. She falls in

The film's most forceful conceit in terms of evoking an emotional response from the viewer is that of the black-and-white characters of *Pleasantville* turning to color as they connect with an aspect of their inner self. And for each character it is different. For some it is the experience of sex which makes them whole. For others, it's coming to terms with an unacknowledged emotion. Actress Reese Witherspoon's character, who introduces sex to the world of *Pleasantville*, does not turn to color until she learns the power of engaging her mind and decides to read a book. Tobey Maguire becomes whole when he makes peace with the anger he feels for his mother for having divorced his father.

In addition to the satiric uses of several iconographic reference points taken from American film history (*Citizen Kane*, *Patton*, *To Kill A Mockingbird*) and classic theater (Ibsen's *A Doll's House*), the breadth of thematic and literary themes in *Pleasantville* is astonishing. Students of metaphysics and mysticism will no doubt note the strong themes of personal connection and wholeness in relationship to responsibility to self and others; living life fully; the spirituality of imperfection; the impact of personal transformation; the importance of individuality vis-à-vis community; the dangers of prejudice; the restrictions of conformity; the importance of acting on one's own behalf as prompted from the small, still voice within; the personal empowerment which arises from being a walking question mark; the futility of judging ourselves and others; the healing power of creation and art; and the inevitability and adventure of the unknown.

Perhaps the most powerful thematic strain in *Pleasantville* is the notion of *change*. The changes that occur within the confines of the town shake up its inhabitants. Those that resist the changes taking place within the inner selves of the characters appear to needlessly suffer; those that let go and embrace the change, grow, evolve, and are taken to new realizations of beauty and new levels of possibility. In what is arguably the most moving scene in the film, the characters of the perfect archetypal TV parents, George and Betty—portrayed by actors William H. Macy and Joan Allen—separate over Betty's

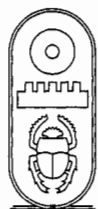
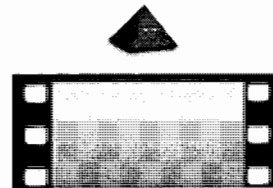
love with another inhabitant of the town who is expanding his horizons through his ability to create via

painting. In a courtroom scene where the husband, George, is interrogated by his son, he realizes the necessity of letting his wife go and unconditionally accepting the changes that have taken place within her if he is ever to be spiritually free and open to truly loving her—not only for what Betty was but for what she has become. This scene says more about the essence, mystery, and beauty of relationships than any scene from any film in recent memory.

The duality of existence is also powerfully explored in *Pleasantville*—the necessity of embracing and accepting our darkness if we are to fully experience our Light; if we desire happiness we can probably expect to be sad from time to time; that to be successful it behooves us to become comfortable with failure; and to create lasting beauty we must endeavor to understand life's ugliness.

Original, brilliant, and entertaining, *Pleasantville* belongs in the select group of American movies that can claim having mastered a unique visual style—essential to the visual language that distinguishes the cinema from other art forms—that so effectively and powerfully supports the themes of its screenplay. Other films that come to mind in this regard: Stanley Kubrick's *2001: A Space Odyssey*; Orson Welles' *Citizen Kane*; David Lean's *Summertime*; Jean Luc-Godard's *Breathless*; and Martin Scorsese's *Taxi Driver*. Its superb use of music—from its moving and powerful original dramatic score by Randy Newman to the stunning artistic use of Lennon and McCartney's *Across The Universe* over its end credits—also adds to its rich thematic tapestry and blend of classic 20th century storytelling with 21st century technology.

Living as we do in a time of rapid change, uncertainty, stress, and potential, *Pleasantville* strikes a chord of resonance within us, affectionately celebrating our past while presenting us with a vision of hope and possibility for the new millennium.



Egypt, Land of Horus

by

Helene Rochstein, S.R.C.

The author, a Rosicrucian for many years, is an adult education teacher and an AMORC Regional Monitor Emeritus. Soror Rochstein presents Harmony Seminars in the Florida region. She wrote this article after returning from a Rosicrucian Tour to Egypt in 1998.

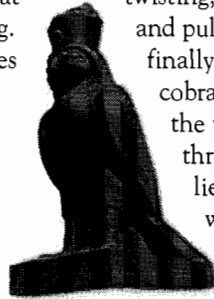
WHEN WE THINK OF EGYPT something ancient and profoundly mystical stirs deep within the recesses of our being, for Egypt is an age-old land of many contradictions. And although the present nation of Egypt officially and outwardly functions as a modern nation, its heart beats to an ancient rhythm. I became increasingly aware of this during last year's Rosicrucian Tour to Egypt.

From the moment we arrived in Egypt, I discovered with every step I took and everywhere I looked that this ancient heartbeat is always evident—underlying everything. Even on our flight from the United States to Cairo on a sleek Egypt Air jet, I realized that this modern airline has as its logo the ancient hawk-god Horus. Arriving in Cairo—a bustling metropolis of nearly fifteen million people—at every turn there are reminders that the old Egypt is still very much alive, not only for today's Egyptians, but also for the entire world, which draws on the knowledge and wisdom of this enigmatic and age-old civilization.

As a Rosicrucian, on a Rosicrucian tour to this wonderful cradle of culture, I felt privileged to have been specially prepared through my Rosicrucian studies for what I would find in this ancient land. After all, we Rosicrucians enjoy a different perspective on Egypt than your typical Western tourist! I soon realized that the ideas and concepts which originated in ancient Egypt's mystery schools and which constituted the core of their teachings are still influencing the evolution of today's sciences, religions, philosophies, and cultures throughout the world. And while the world is evolving these ideas from the original mystery schools, this vital wisdom continues to be alive and flow outward, like a scarabed sun disk spreading its wings and rolling the dung of planet Earth before its glorious face. That piece of dung, our fertile planet, gives birth to all living things and allows consciousness to evolve to higher levels of self and divine awareness.

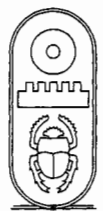
The "spinal cord" of Egypt is the river Nile, flowing out of Central Africa from the south to the north and eventually emptying into the Mediterranean Sea. Our spiritual journey began in the north with our visit to the Fayum Oasis and Lake Moeris, where we experienced the baptismal purification of the mind and heart, before flying south to Aswan where the journey north along the spinal cord began.

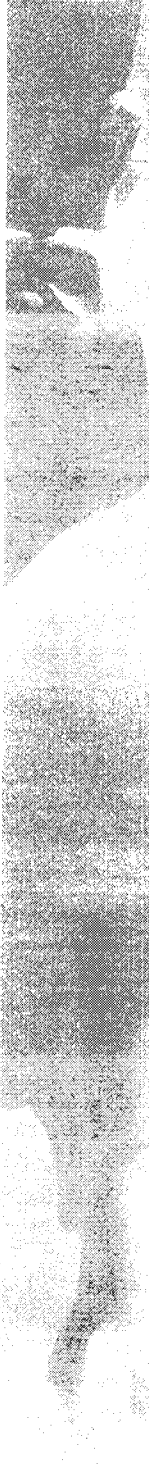
As we flew from Cairo to Aswan in Upper Egypt we viewed the Nile from the air. Flowing northward, the Nile is bordered by a narrow strip of fertile land as it snakes through the arid, yellow-orange desert covering North Africa. Look at a map of Egypt and you will see how the Nile resembles the image of a snake—more particularly a cobra—winding its way across the desert with its tail beginning in the south at Khartoum in the Sudan. Flowing, twisting, and turning through ancient Nubia, and pulling its energies into Egypt, the Nile finally branches out and widens into the cobra's head—the Nile delta. From there, the waters of the Nile energize the world through the Mediterranean Sea, which lies in the middle of the habitable world.



As Rosicrucians, we know that the spinal cord in the human system carries currents of energy which feed consciousness, the spinal cord of the world. The Nile, with its centers of learning and ancient mystical schools, supplies currents of energy to feed the consciousness of the entire planet.

There are centers of consciousness, energy, and power along the Nile—ancient temples, tombs and burial grounds, monuments—which curiously remind one of the psychic centers in the human constitution. We began our trip down the Nile near Aswan in Upper Egypt at the Temple of Isis on the Island of Philae. Isis was the sister-wife of Osiris, the god of resurrection and the renewal of life. Then we proceeded north to Kom Ombo, where we visited the temple of the gods Horus, the hawk, and Sobek, the crocodile—representing the duality of Light and darkness. Further down the Nile we visited the magnificent Temple of Horus at Edfu. The hawk-headed statue of Horus greeted us at the magnificent entrance to Edfu's temple. The next center of power is Luxor Temple, and connected to Luxor by an ancient walkway





bordered by ram-sphinxes, is majestic Karnak—the most extensive temple complex in the world. Across the Nile, to the west of Karnak and Luxor, are the Valleys of the Kings and Queens with their extensive rock tomb complexes. Further north lies the Temple of Hathor at Dendera (original home of the Dendera Zodiac), and Abydos, where is buried the head of Osiris. Then, farther north, at Tell el Amarna are the ruins and tombs of Akhnaton's city, Akhetaten, dedicated to the Sun God Aton. And finally, as we moved closer to the delta, we visited the pyramids of Sakkara and Giza, just outside Cairo.

The Osiris Myth

The myth of Osiris and Isis is the primal myth of mystical philosophies and religions which represents the basis of our mystical search. Briefly, it speaks of the female and male principles, where the male principle is killed by his evil brother, then dismembered, and all of his parts are scattered and hidden in various places (in this particular myth, they are hidden at various locations along the Nile). The female principle, Isis, searches and finds all the parts except one: the generative organs which were eaten by a crocodile. Isis later undergoes an immaculate conception, becomes impregnated by her dead husband, and gives birth to their son, Horus. For many years Horus combats Set, his evil uncle, and becomes a link between God and humans, thus saving humanity from annihilation.

Egyptian mythology is complex because it conceals the great mysteries of cosmic order in symbolism, not unlike Qabalah, Alchemy, and the world's great mythologies. Perhaps the ancient Egyptians believed in many gods because they dismembered the One into many, and instead of worshiping the whole, they worshiped its many parts. Similar situations arise in other religions where truth becomes diluted for the masses and is lost in the myriad aspects of the Divine which present themselves to our limited human understanding.

When the mystery schools began operating under the guidance of Pharaoh Thutmose III, culminating in the establishment of the monotheistic religion of Aton (the God hidden and emanating his Power through the solar disk) under Pharaoh Akhnaton, the cult of One God did not survive because polytheism was too

strong to peacefully give way to monotheism. It took many centuries of cultivation of the human mind to begin to integrate the sublime ideas of the cosmic order. Humanity is indebted to the mystery schools, more particularly to the Rosicrucians and Qabalists, for judiciously disseminating the truths of higher order to those who were ready to embrace the light of knowledge and carefully share it with humanity at large.

Horus in All His Aspects

Returning to ancient Egyptian mythology, the many protagonists in the drama involving creation of the world, emanations of divine energy, evolution and reintegration of consciousness are being played on the macrocosmic and the microcosmic levels. Let us briefly examine the god Horus, as one aspect of the divinity.

Horus represents consciousness as it passes through different stages of transformation: The name *Horus* is the Latinized form of the Egyptian *Hor* which means "face," and he was represented in the form of a falcon. His two eyes were the Sun and the Moon of the God Ra. The parentage of Horus is of a dual origin: the solar Horus' parents were either Atum, Ra, or Geb as masculine lineage, and Nut as feminine. There is also the Osirian Horus whose parents were Isis and Osiris.

As consciousness passes through different stages or levels, so Horus has many names which represent aspects of the deity. I shall briefly touch upon several of these names, and give a short description of them.

Haroeris, or Horus the Elder, was the son, sometimes the husband, of Hathor and the brother of Osiris and Set. In this function he was represented as holding the two eyes—udjats—in his hands. The eyes were the symbols of light—the Sun and the Moon. The right eye represented the Sun, and the left eye, the Moon. There are many legends relating to the eyes, the best known of these fables concerns the eye of Horus which is wounded by his eternal antagonist, Set. The injured eye must be healed; its parts gathered together. This task is accomplished by Thoth, who thus forms the Oudja (or whole, healthy) eye.

At Edfu, Horus the Elder's symbol was the winged disk. In this image Horus appeared over

entrances to sanctuaries. He also was shown as a falcon hovering above the pharaoh. Horus also could be shown as a man with a falcon head and the double crown of Upper and Lower Egypt.

Another aspect of Horus was embodied in *Harakhte*—known as Horus of the Horizon—who was identified with Ra and represented as a falcon or a falcon-headed man wearing the solar disk and triple crown.

Horus, Son of Isis & Osiris

Horus, the son of Isis and Osiris, was conceived by an act of immaculate conception and was a man-god. He waged many battles with Set, was wounded many times, but he would always recover. His name was Harsiesis—the son of Isis. In her book, *Egyptian Mythology*, Veronica Ions describes how Horus fought Set with fortunes turning one way or the other. At one point, Set tore Horus' eyes out and buried them in a mountain. Out of his eyes grew lotus flowers, and Thoth, god of wisdom, eventually restored Horus' eyesight. Finally, Osiris sent Maat, the goddess of truth, to judge all gods and humans, Osiris being the judge of them all in the land of the dead. Thus Horus' heritage was restored and he became a ruler of the two lands—Upper and Lower Egypt. He reestablished the reign of Maat. Ra became the ruler of heaven, Osiris remained in the underworld, while Horus acted as the link between human beings and the gods. After the death of each human being, Horus supervised the weighing of the heart of the deceased.

The ultimate transformation of Horus is Harmakhis, meaning "Horus in the Horizon"—symbolizing the rising Sun which brings the life force to the entire Earth. His famous representation is the Sphinx of Giza—the impressive and enigmatic statue of a recumbent lion with a human head wearing the uraeus. The Sphinx is the guardian of eternal wisdom and a symbol of Cosmic Consciousness.

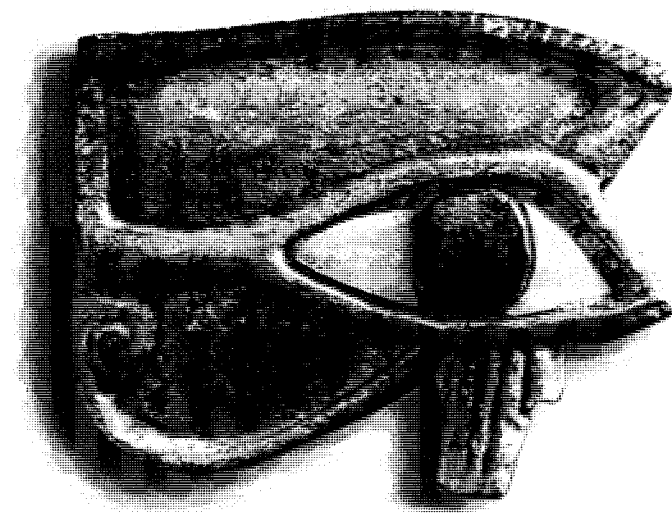
(Editor's Note: Rosicrucian students will be interested to know that Pharaoh Akhnaton raised a great obelisk at Luxor in honor of Re-Hor-em-akhet [an alternate spelling of Harmakhis or Ra Harakhte]. Aside from this, Akhnaton's solar city, Akhetaton is translated as "Horizon of the Sun Disk," while the name "Aton" itself is often identified by ancient Egyptians with the image of the great Sphinx at

Giza. Concerning this and other topics of interest, readers may enjoy the recently-published book, *The Message of the Sphinx—A Quest for the Hidden Legacy of Mankind*, by Graham Hancock and Robert Bauval, which is available from Alexandria Books and Gifts, item #511286.)

Mystical tradition further relates that from the Sphinx, mysterious underground passageways lead to hidden, legendary initiation hallways and chambers which connect the Sphinx, the Nile, and the larger Giza pyramids—all culminating in the Great Pyramid. The Great Pyramid, with its location, construction, and proportion, embodies and conceals the mysteries of the planet and the human condition in relation to the Cosmos.

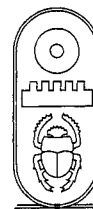
The Sphinx and the Giza pyramids evoke the stirrings of some ancient memory within us, as they seem to lead into the subconscious and archetypal memory of our origin.

Over the course of millennia, ancient Egypt became the cradle of civilization. Our own civilization owes much of its science, religion,

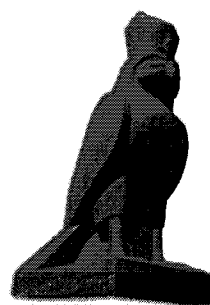
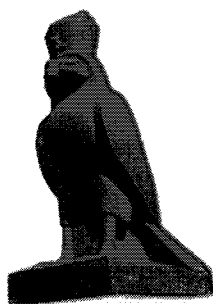


technology, and every progressive movement to the seeds sown along the Nile centuries ago. Human thought nourished those seeds with ingenuity and untold sacrifice, and spread them over the entire face of the Earth.

At the close of this millennia, and within our collective consciousness, Horus is still battling Set; Osiris is dying in order that Horus may be reborn and filled with divine powers in his eternal struggle; Isis continues to search for her dead brother/husband and to give birth to Horus. And while humanity is growing in consciousness and attempting to unravel the mysteries hidden



behind the enigma of the beast/man/god—the Sphinx—humanity cannot but follow the light of the Eye of Horus which, though hidden in the missing capstone of the Great Pyramid, is our guide for future centuries to come. The eternal truths do not change with the changing of the names of their symbolic representations.



searching for Light to find the answers to the riddle of their lives.

In this article I have presented a somewhat simplified portrayal of Horus—savior of humanity. However, this is just a beginning; much more research needs to be done. Meditation on ancient symbolism will also help one to receive insights of a higher nature. Such meditation raises one's consciousness to more sublime heights of Cosmic Wisdom. Although the ancient Egyptian mythology and religion seem to be discouragingly complex, it may be possible to partially penetrate its veil and receive glimpses of light and the sweetness of inner joy, Horus, himself, has given us that promise.

Humanity's collective consciousness, securely nested between the wings of Horus, continues to grow in light throughout the world. The true "Age of Illumination" is knocking on our doors, our hearts, our minds. We, as Rosicrucian students, have an obligation to prepare to joyously receive the fruits of the labors of many centuries so that we may offer this collected wisdom to all those who are



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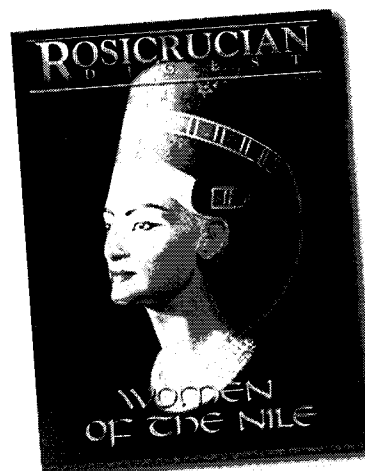
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Rosicrucian
Digest
No.1
1999

An Extraordinary Lesson
(continued from page 19)

enjoy the world in the pure way that a child does. There are a million different dreams out there to match a million different minds. It doesn't matter what form your dream takes. What counts is what you choose to do with it.

Most people spend their whole lives struggling to be the best and accumulate the most wealth and material possessions. They become so wrapped up in the destination that they miss the whole point of the trip. In the end, it isn't who won but the quality of the game that is important. Let's think of life as a long journey we must all take. It is the experiences we have and the choices we make along the way that make the trip worthwhile, much more so than the destination at the end.

We humans need more to live than mere food and water sustenance. To truly feel alive, we need to feed our hearts. Dreams come from somewhere deep inside of us. They are like little SOS messages calling out to us to nourish that which some call our soul. Dreams are from that magic land where roses sweetly bring us peace, and a child's laughter on a summer day can burrow itself down into our heart and fill it with a warmth unknown.

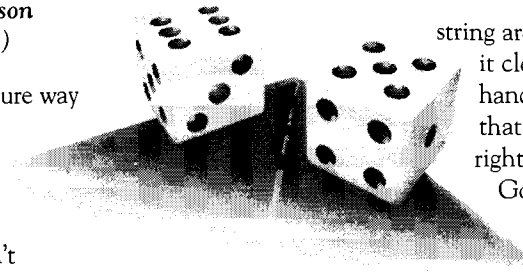
As children we naturally open our minds and allow ourselves to dream. But society says we must leave all that behind when we become adults.

Why?

I don't mean that we shouldn't become responsible adults, but why can't we allow ourselves the freedom to dream?

No matter what religion or race or sex you are, people all over this world are basically the same. It isn't our skin color or body shape or how much money we have that defines us. It is our hopes, our wants, and our dreams that make us who we are. It is these which truly give us our uniqueness and set us apart, one from another.

Each of us was blessed with life, and now it is up to us to decide how we live it. You can tie a



string around your dream and keep it clenched tightly in your hand. And even tell yourself that someday when the time is right you will bring it out again.

Go ahead, gamble with your dream. But like my beautiful balloon, it may stay safely tied away, only to become a sad

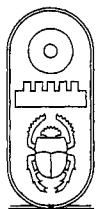
and withered shadow of the dream it could have become.

But what if you untie the string and dare to touch the stars? Life is so much more than breathing and paying taxes. In order to really be alive you must feel it in your heart. Maybe you could find a way to incorporate your dream into the life you already have; it could just take a tiny piece to bring contentment to you. Or take the risk and change your world. The choice is up to you.

But don't ever live in a way that brings regret back to you when your time is done. Take nothing and no one for granted. Make your choices well, and be willing to always give it your best shot. If you aren't willing to work hard and believe in yourself then you can't succeed. Look into the face of fear and say, "Courage is a hundred little risks I take without a thought each day." Life itself is a risk, from the first cry to the last breath. We are given an unknown amount of time to experience this world. How sad to waste a single day by letting fear control your life. Don't hang around waiting for the perfect time. Reach out *now* and make life happen. You have only yourself to blame if your life isn't the way you want it to be; you made it what it is, and only you can change it.

Dreams don't have to be life altering. The changes you make may be unnoticed by others, they may be hidden deep within your soul. But you will know of them.

Taking a chance can make life's journey a little better down the road. Yes, there are no guarantees in this world, and you may take a chance and fail. But maybe, either way, you will discover things about yourself you never would have known if you hadn't dared to dream.



KEEP YOUR EYES



on the PRIZE

A Mystic's Guide for the Next Century and Millennium

by Samuel G. Akpan, Ph.D., F.R.C.

The author, a long-time Rosicrucian, is a retired AMORC Grand Councilor for the West Central Region. This article is excerpted from a speech delivered by Frater Akpan at a recent Rosicrucian Conclave.

AN OLD CHINESE proverb says, "To prophesy is extremely difficult, especially with respect to the future." However, here I am, offering guidance for the next century and, even more daringly, for the next millennium. "I am doing so because there is nothing new under the sun. The principles I am going to discuss have been around for many centuries and many millennia. They have stood the test of time. The Master Jesus also taught them a couple of millennia ago.

As Rosicrucians, we often refer to ourselves as "students on the path." Being "on the path" implies that we are travelers, we have a destination in mind, and that we move to that goal in stages. What we achieve or obtain at the end of the journey is the *prize*. A prize is something we value highly. It is something worth striving for.

There are two aspects to the prize. First, the prize itself is an object of value. Secondly, it can be enjoyed. If we have chosen the right prize, its enjoyment is referred to by some as *beatitude*. Rosicrucians refer to this enjoyment as Peace Profound. On the other hand, if we have chosen the wrong goal, the result is disillusionment.

My purpose is not to tell you what goal or prize you should pursue, because the choice of what to pursue or strive for is an individual choice. My purpose is twofold: 1) to share with you how to choose appropriate goals wisely, and, 2) how to move expeditiously towards the chosen goals.

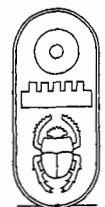
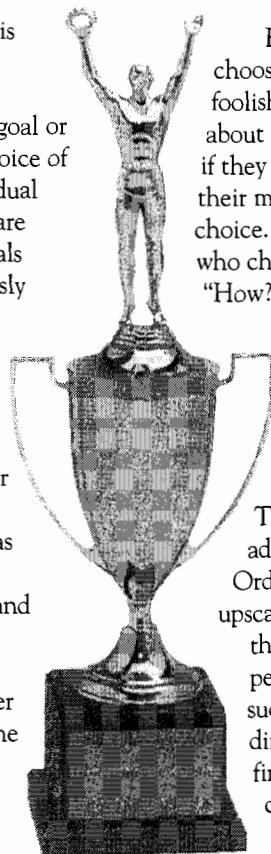
Back in 1974, at a Regional Conclave here in St. Louis, I talked with then AMORC Grand Master Chris. R. Warnken. About a year earlier I had become a Martinist. At the conclave I asked Frater Warnken why it was necessary to have two mystical organizations—the Rosicrucian Order and the Traditional Martinist Order—operating under the same roof. He replied that while the Rosicrucian Order was the first and foremost of the two, the two orders complemented one another. He explained that the Rosicrucian

Order answers the question "Why?", while the Traditional Martinist Order tells us "How to." To put it differently, the Rosicrucian Order deals primarily with the content of mysticism or spiritual life and the true end of being, while the Traditional Martinist Order deals primarily with the processes and skills we must acquire to attain that end. The answer to the question "Why?" tells us what type of goal or prize is worth striving for. The "How?" tells us the methods by which we can best prepare ourselves with deliberate speed to receive the prize.

Let us briefly consider the question "Why?" What type of prize should we strive for? St. Thomas Aquinas, in his *Summa Contra Gentiles* (Comprehensive Treatise Against the Gentiles), correctly pointed out that God directs all things to their various ends. But I would like to point out that God has also granted us the power to choose. We can either align ourselves with the Cosmic as we move towards our natural end or goal, or we can freely choose our own alternative goal. Karma is the proof that God has granted us the power to choose. Karma is also proof that we have almost infinite opportunities to keep choosing alternative goals until we arrive at the right one. It is in choosing the goal that our stages on the path are marked.

Experience tells us that some of us choose wisely, while others of us choose foolishly. There is something noticeable about those who choose wisely, or, at least, if they first choose foolishly, learn from their mistakes and move toward the right choice. What you will notice about those who choose wisely is that it is by asking "How?" and "Why?" that they are drawn to a real consideration of God and the eternal principles by which God expresses Itself. Rational thinking is, therefore, a good beginning.

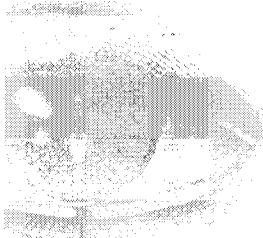
Let me give you two examples. The first example is from a recent advertisement for the Rosicrucian Order, AMORC. The ad features an upscale young man who says, "I have the degree, the career, and all the perks . . . Yet I want a different success. I believe there is another dimension to life, and I'm ready to find it." The second example is contained in a Sufi story.



I like Sufi stories because they are succinct and full of enlightenment.

The story begins with an old monk who was camped at the outskirts of a village. Awakening one morning at dawn, he began reciting his prayers, just as he had done every day throughout his life. While saying his prayers, he heard footsteps approaching from somewhere behind him. A voice suddenly shouted, "Master, Master, where is it?" Turning around, the old monk saw a young man—a peasant—running towards him in great haste.

The old monk said, "My son, where is what?" And the young man quickly replied, "I had a dream last night. In my dream I came to the outskirts of the village and met a great man, a teacher, and now here you are. And in that dream the great man gave me a precious jewel."



The old monk said, "Ah, well," and reached into the bag that carried all his worldly possessions. He took out a ruby the size of his fist and said, "I found this and have no need for it. You may have it."

The old monk gave this jewel of immeasurable wealth to the young peasant who had never had more than two copper coins in his hand at one time—and he had worked dreadfully hard for those. The peasant took the ruby and couldn't believe his good fortune. He held it up to the sun and admired it. It was radiant. He couldn't take his eyes off the ruby all the way home.

The next day, after a fitful night of sleep, the young man was out walking around the countryside with the ruby in his pocket when he came upon the old monk. Taking the ruby out of his pocket, the peasant handed it back to the old monk, and said, "I don't want this. What I want is what you know that made it so easy to give it away."

As you can see, these two people, the young peasant in the Sufi story and the young man in the Rosicrucian advertisement, have discovered through self-questioning that there is more to life than material well-being. In the Rosicrucian Convocation ritual you have heard the admonition "Know Thyself." Socrates once said that the

unexamined life is not worth living. We cannot know God until we know ourselves. We cannot know what true ideas or goals to strive for until we know ourselves.

Meditation Is the Key

But we cannot reason our way to God, because rational thinking deals exclusively with finite facts. Only proper meditation and attunement with the Master Within is the safest and fastest way to choose the appropriate end. Meditation is the key. Meditation, according to our monographs, is a way of "making ourselves receptive to more expansive octaves (levels) of the stream of consciousness." Meditation allows us to penetrate the spheres separating humans from God. Meditation allows the Master Within to reveal to our understanding our cosmic relations and the way to personal mastership.

Now, let us briefly consider the "How?" or the process. What must we do to attain our chosen or revealed goal?

Earlier I mentioned that we are all students on the path. The path can be wide; the path can also be narrow. The Master Jesus advised that for the best results we should stay on the straight and narrow path and avoid the wide path. Why?

It is easy to see why the Master Jesus would recommend that the path be straight. Simple geometry tells us that the shortest distance between two points is a straight line. Therefore, to move expeditiously towards our individual goal we have to use the straight path. I don't know about you, but experience tells me that it is extremely difficult to focus on something around the corner—out of our line of vision. Hence, the straight path is preferable. But a wide path can also be straight. So what is so special about a narrow path? Why must we use the narrow path?

Humans are social beings. We like to congregate and imitate. Therefore, we try to find salvation in the company of others because we feel that the company of others will make the journey easier. We are often told that there is safety in numbers. Since the wide path can accommodate more people at the same time, naturally, more travelers embark on this path, believing that the wide path will make the journey easier.

Unfortunately, on the mystic path, wider is not better. Most individuals traveling the wide path are spiritually lazy. They don't know where they are going or where they would like to go, and they are therefore prepared to go with whomever promises to take them "there" (wherever "there" is). They want everything, including self-mastery, handed to them pre-packaged. These are mostly people who want to know and master *all* the mysteries of life at the end of a one-day seminar. As a result, many swindlers are also attracted to the wide path. On the wide path you will find the fly-by-night, get-rich-quick, self-appointed "mystic masters" willing, for a fat fee, to guide the spiritually lazy to Cosmic Consciousness. Inevitably, confusion and too many distractions abound on the wide path. This is not a suitable path for the sincere student who wants to focus and concentrate.

The best path is the narrow path, because it is only wide enough for one person at a time. What does it mean to walk the straight and narrow? Most people think that it means being morally upright and ethically correct. I don't think that is what the Master Jesus necessarily had in mind.

The Master Jesus knew that each and every student on the path, the beginner and the advanced, experiences inner confusion—the dark night of the soul—from time to time. To face this dark night and deal with the confusion within, the student must move away from the outside confusion—the confusion surrounding us in our environment. As a student, you must separate yourself from the crowd. You must deal with your inner confusion alone in your isolation. There is a saying in Martinism which goes like this: "It is from yourself in all your loneliness, that you must grasp the principle of your own advancement. Learn, therefore, to be yourself."

Focus and Concentrate

I spent the summer of my junior year of college working on a construction job. The company I was working for was building a three-story apartment building. Frequently we had to walk a narrow beam to get from one end of the structure to the other. If you were on the third floor and didn't want to find yourself on the ground floor with broken bones, you had to learn to balance. The best way to do that was to look straight ahead to where you were headed.

On the narrow path you learn to focus and concentrate. Focusing means having a single eye. As the Master Jesus said, "If your eye is single, your whole body is full of light." If your eye is single and focused, you cannot miss the way and you cannot miss the prize.

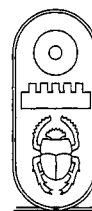
On the narrow path you learn to conquer the greatest fear, personal fear, and to gain self-confidence. You can't afford to look down; you can't afford to look sideways. You must look ahead to where you are going. You can't afford to carry unnecessary baggage on the narrow path. You must strip yourself of all frivolities.

The narrow path allows you to develop the skills necessary to unite the opposing forces of nature or what Shakespeare called the "rebel powers." It is in maintaining balance and harmony that we are able to communicate with the Master Within. The soul personality emerges perfected. The narrow path implies harmony and balance, the peaceful union of opposites. Again, in the words of Martinism, the narrow path is "the ancient equilibrating path leading to Mastership and profound spiritual unfoldment."

For the beginning student, the overall exercise, which should be practiced regularly throughout life, is the foundation for learning to walk, or learning to travel, the narrow path. Be constant in practicing your overall exercise, for inconstancy is a destroyer of light.

For the advanced student, the overall exercise, when combined with visualization, contemplation, and meditation, allows you to hit the G-spot of spiritual ecstasy which brings illumination of the mind, peace of the soul, and the quietness of the inner self.

Fratres and Sorores, as students on the path, travel the straight and narrow path. Be of single eye, focus on the prize, until you emerge from the pillars, a king.



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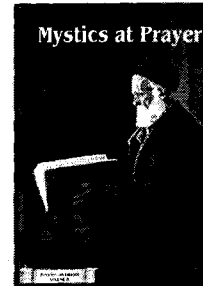


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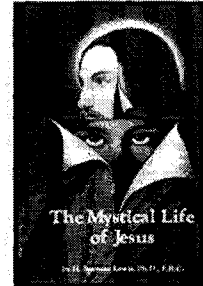


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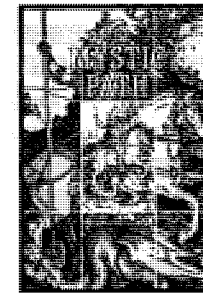


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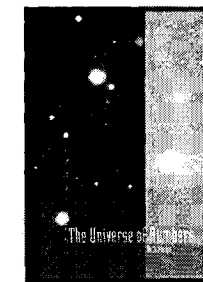


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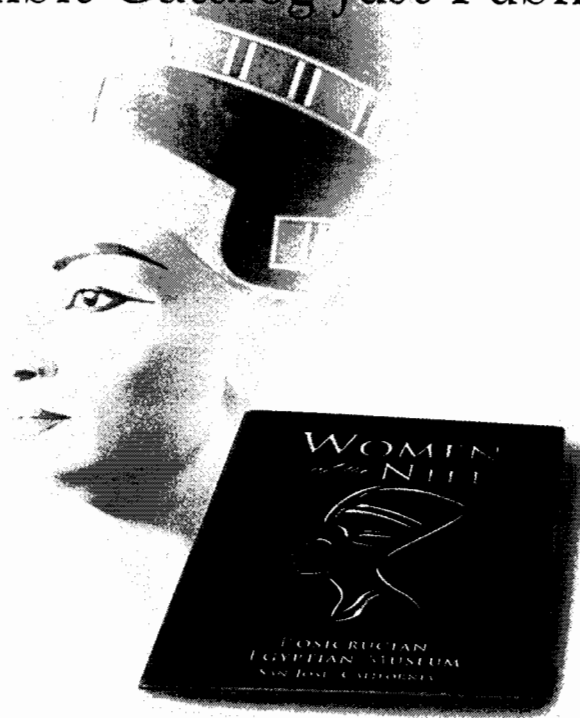
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