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Rosicrucian History *and* Mysteries

Christian Rebis

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by
Christian Rebis

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We would like . . . all human beings, together or individually, young or old, rich or poor, noblemen or commoners, men or women, to be fully educated and to become accomplished beings. We would also like them to be educated and informed completely, not only on such or such a point, but also on all that will allow them to achieve their essence integrally, to yearn to know the truth, not to be deceived by pretense, to love good and not to be seduced by evil, to do what should be done and to keep from What should be avoided, to speak wisely (and not to remain silent) about everything with everyone when it is necessary; lastly, to always treat things, men, and God with prudence and not lightly, and to never stray from their goal: happiness.

— Comenius, 17th-century Rosicrucian

CONTENTS

[Illustrations](#)

[Chronology](#)

[Introduction](#)

1. [Egypt and the Primordial Tradition](#)

The Primordial Tradition • The Greeks and Egypt • Thot-Hermes • Alexandria • The Corpus Hermeticum • Pax Romana • Alchemy, Magic, and Astrology • Neoplatonism • The Christians Before Hermes • The Sabaeans • Idris-Hermes • The Emerald Tablet • Arab Alchemy • Magic and Astrology • Eastern Theosophy

2. [Hermeticism and the Philosophia Perennis](#)

Islam in Spain • Alchemy in Spain • The Picatrix • The Qabalah • Astrology • The Expulsion of the Jews • The Academy of Florence • Philosophia Perennis • Natural Magic • Angelic Magic • The Voarehadumia • De Verbo Mirifico • Harmony of the World • Occult Philosophy • Giordano Bruno • Alchemy and Nature • Paracelsus • The Death of Hermes

3. [The Crisis of the European Consciousness](#)

The Infinite Universe • The Catalogues of the World • Human Anatomy Revealed • The Reformation • The Revolts • The Counter-Reformation • The Wars of Religion

- The Imitation of Christ • The Mystic Wedding
- 4. [**The Naometria and the Age of the Holy Spirit**](#)
 - Simon Studion • The Age of the Holy Spirit • The Naometria Nova • The Third Elijah • The Lion of the Septentrion
- 5. [**The Echoes of the Rose Cross**](#)
 - The Advertisements from Parnassus • Apollo's Reform • The Fama Fraternitatis • Arabia Felix • Fez, City of Gold • The House of the Holy Spirit • The Tomb of Christian Rosenkreuz • Paracelsus and Rosenkreuz • Adam Haselmayer • Hermes and Rosenkreuz
- 6. [**The Confessio Fraternitatis**](#)
 - The Monad • The Confessio Fraternitatis • Millennialism • The Liber Mundi • The Bible • Alchemy and Reforms • The Fortress of Truth • The Sources • The Tübingen Circle • Johann Arndt • Tobias Hess • Johann Valentin Andreae • An Initiatic Narrative
- 7. [**The Emerald Land**](#)
 - The Spiritual Filiation • The Imaginal World • True Imagination • Initiatic Narratives • Perfect Nature • The Old Sage • The Friends of God • The Green Island • The Fravartis • Spiritual Knighthood • The Ages of the World • The Paraclete • Hierohistory
- 8. [**The Chymical Wedding**](#)

Johann Valentin Andreae • The Story • A Baroque Opera • Inner Alchemy • The Spiritual Wedding • The Castle of the Soul • The Seven Stages • Knight of the Golden Stone

9. [The Rose in Bloom](#)

Michael Maier • Robert Fludd • Johannes Kepler • Frederick V • The Defenestration of Prague • White Mountain

10. [The Philosophers and the Rose-Croix](#)

René Descartes • The Three Dreams • The Placards in Paris • Polybius the Cosmopolitan • Holland • The Alchemical Temptation • England • The Faerie Queen • Francis Bacon • The Theosophists • Novum Organum • The Bee • New Atlantis • The Royal Society • Comenius • The Pansophy • The College of Light

11. [Rosicrucianism and Freemasonry](#)

Rosicrucians and Freemasons • Brother I.O. • Anderson's Constitution • Hiram and Rosenkreuz • The Egyptian Mysteries • The Noachite Religion • The Golden and Rosy Cross • The Golden Fleece • The Golden Rosy Cross of the Ancient System • The Essenes and Templars • Initiated Knights and Brothers of Asia • The Rose-Croix Degree • Spiritual Knighthood • The Enlightenment and Illuminism

12. [Magnetism and Egyptosophy](#)

The Enlightenment • Sensationalism • Man as Machine • Magnetism • The Society of Harmony • Art and Egypt •

The African Architects • Primitive Religion • Cagliostro • The Condemnation of Magnetism • Somnambulism • The Pyramid of the Tuileries • Napoleon and Egypt • The Friends of the Desert • The Memphis Rite • The Rosetta Stone • The Society of Magnetism • Between Science and Tradition • The Society of Spiritualistic Magnetizers of Paris • The Church and Magnetism • Jesus the Essene

13. [In Search of the Psyche](#)

Hypnosis • Spiritualism • Allan Kardec • Zannoni • The S.R.I.A. • Helena Petrovna Blavatsky • An Adventure Among the Rosicrucians • The H.B. of L. • Psychic Researches

14. [The Rose Garden of the Magi](#)

Monte Verità • The Templars of the Orient • The Golden Dawn • Joséphin Péladan • The Rosicrucians of Toulouse • The Kabbalistic Order of the Rose-Croix • The Rose-Croix of the Temple and the Grail • The Magic of Art • Symbolism • The Magnificents • The Rosicrucian Salons • The Confraternity of the Rose Window • Count Falkenstein

15. [The First “Rosicrucians” of America](#)

The First “Rosicrucians” of America 144 Pietism • Boehmism and the Qabalah • Millennialism • The Philadelphian Society and English Millennialism • The Departure for America

16. [Harvey Spencer Lewis](#)

The Mystic Awakening • New Thought • The Kybalion •
The New York Institute for Psychical Research

17. [The Journey to the East](#)

The Orient • The Manhattan Mystic Circle • Egypt • The
New Ontology • A Mystical Experience • The Journey to
France • Toulouse, the Rose-Red City • The Initiation • The
Secret of the Origins

18. [The Ancient and Mystical Order Rosae Crucis](#)

The Philomathic Society • The Martinist Project • The Visit
of an Old Lady • The Birth of AMORC • The First
Rosicrucian Lodge • An Alchemical Demonstration • H.
Spencer Lewis, Freemason • The First Rosicrucian
Convention

19. [International Alliances](#)

Theodor Reuss and the O.T.O. • The TAWUC • The
Rosicrucians of France • The Journey to France in 1926 •
André Lebey and the League of Nations • A Reception at
the Grand Orient in Paris • The Beginnings of
Rosicrucianism in France • Nicholas Roerich and the World
Council • The Polaires • The FUDOSI • The Triangle of the
FUDOSI

20. [The Contemporary Era](#)

The Teachings of AMORC • AMORC in the World • The
Fourth Rosicrucian Manifesto Conclusion Notes Thematic
Bibliography Index of Personal Names viii Illustrations

Conclusion

Notes

Thematic Bibliography

Index of Personal Names

ILLUSTRATIONS

1. [Michael Maier, *Symbola aureae mensae duodecim nationum*, 1617.](#)
2. [*Tabula Smaragdina Hermetis*](#)
3. [Apollonius de Tyana, from Jacques Boissard, *De Divinatione et magicis*, 1605.](#)
4. [Oswald Croll, *Basilica Chymica*, 1609.](#)
5. [Cornelius Heinrich Agrippa.](#)
6. [Cornelius Heinrich Agrippa, *De Occulta Philosophia*, 1510.](#)
7. [Portrait of Paracelsus by Augustin Hirschvogel, 1540](#)
8. [Valentin Weigel, *Studium universale*, 1695](#)
9. [Galileo, *Dialogue Concerning the Two Principal Systems of the Universe*, 1635](#)
10. [Otto Brunfels, *Herbarum vivae eicones ad naturae imitationem*, 1541](#)
11. [Henry IV of France.](#)
12. [Simon Studion, *Naometria*, drawing by Jakob Lederlin.](#)
13. [Simon Studion](#)
14. [Detail from Simon Studion, *Naometria*, drawing by Jakob Lederlin.](#)
15. [*Fama Fraternitatis*, first Rosicrucian manifesto, 1614](#)

16. [Heinrich Khunrath, *Amphitheatrum Sapientiae Aeternae*, 1603](#)
17. [The Rose Cross, from the 1614 edition of the *Fama Fraternitatis*](#)
18. [John Dee, *Monas Hieroglyphica*, 1564](#)
19. [Theophilus Schweighardt \(Daniel Mögling\), *Speculum Sopicum Rhodo-Stauricum*, 1618.](#)
20. [Stephan Michelspacher, *Cabala speculum artis et Naturae in Alchymia*, 1616.](#)
21. [Qaf, the Cosmic Mountain](#)
22. [Heinrich Khunrath, *Amphitheatrum Sapientiae Aeternae*, “The Emerald Tablet,” 1603.](#)
23. [*Theatrum Chemicum Britannicum*, text edited and annotated by Elias Ashmole, 1652.](#)
24. [Johann Valentin Andreae, *Chymical Wedding of Christian Rosenkreuz*, 1616.](#)
25. [Martin Luther’s emblem.](#)
26. [Johann Valentin Andreae](#)
27. [Inscriptions and cryptogram shown on the fountain of the *Chymical Wedding* \(fourth day\)](#)
28. [*Chymical Wedding of Christian Rosenkreuz*, drawing by Hans Wildermann, 1923](#)
29. [The alchemical flask of the royal wedding, from *Pandora*, 1582.](#)
30. [Joachim Frizius, *Summum Bonum*, 1629](#)

31. [Michael Maier.](#)
32. [Robert Fludd.](#)
33. [Robert Fludd, *Utriusque Cosmi*, 1617](#)
34. [Frederick V and Elizabeth at their coronation](#)
35. [Frontispiece from *Novum Organum* by Francis Bacon.](#)
36. [René Descartes.](#)
37. [Gabriel Naudé, *Instruction à la France sur la vérité de l'histoire des Frères de la Roze-Croix*, 1623.](#)
38. [Dutch edition of the *Fama Fraternitatis*](#)
39. [J.S. Torrentius.](#)
40. [Francis Bacon](#)
41. [Detail from the frontispiece of *New Atlantis*, 1627.](#)
42. [Frontispiece from *History of the Royal Society* by Thomas Sprat, 1667. Drawing by John Evelyn.](#)
43. [*Comenius* by Max Svabinsky.](#)
44. [“May violence subside from things and may everything flow from itself” Comenius’ emblem.](#)
45. [Rosicrucian manuscript of the 18th century](#)
46. [Elias Ashmole](#)
47. [Reception of the Master’s Degree](#)
48. [Illustration from an 18th century Rosicrucian ritual](#)
49. [Lodge room in the Rosicrucian Sovereign Prince Degree.](#)
50. [Masonic Jewel of the Rose-Croix.](#)

51. [Detail from *A Key to Magic and the Occult Sciences* by E. Sibley, c. 1800.](#)
52. [Mesmer's tub](#)
53. [Drawing from *Différentes manières d'orner les cheminées*, 1769.](#)
54. [Scenery from the *Magic Flute*](#)
55. [Fountain of Regeneration, detail of a drawing by Monnet, 1797](#)
56. [Diagram of a "pyramid" of the Friends of the Desert](#)
57. [The French consul general in Egypt](#)
58. [The Scales of Health from Hector Durville's *The Theory and Practice of Human Magnetism*, 1900.](#)
59. [Allan Kardec](#)
60. [Levitation experiment with the medium Eusapia Palladino, 1909](#)
61. [*Zanoni*, drawing by Robert Lanz](#)
62. [Franz Hartmann.](#)
63. [Cover of the official catalogue of the Rosicrucian Salon, 1893](#)
64. [Symbol of the Ordo Rosae Rubeae et Aureae Crucis, by Samuel Mathers, c. 1887-1888](#)
65. [Joséphin Péladan](#)
66. [Symbol of the Kabbalistic Order of the Rose-Croix](#)

67. [The Kabbalistic Order of the Rose-Croix](#)
68. [Seal of the Grail, drawing by François Merintier for the Rosicrucian Salon of 1893](#)
69. [Pietist college, 17th century German engraving.](#)
70. [Rosicrucian documents photographed by Julius Friedrich Sachse for his book *The German Pietists of Provincial Pennsylvania 1694-1708*](#)
71. [Johannes Kelpius, drawing by Christopher Witt, *The Original Canvass.*](#)
72. [Ephrata Community at Cocalico Creek](#)
73. [Harvey Spencer Lewis](#)
74. [The Metropolitan Temple of New York.](#)
75. [Phineas Parkhurst Quimby.](#)
76. [*New York Sunday World*, January 1907](#)
77. [May Banks-Stacey](#)
78. [*The Future*, February 1908](#)
79. [Clovis Lassalle.](#)
80. [Drawing by Harvey Spencer Lewis representing the place of his initiation](#)
81. [Letter written by Harvey Spencer Lewis to his wife on August 13, 1909, the day after his initiation.](#)
82. [AMORC's foundation charter of April 1, 1915](#)
83. [*American Philomathic Journal*, October 1912](#)

84. [*American Pronunziamento Number One, February 1915*](#)
85. [The New York Lodge.](#)
86. [Alfred E. Saunders.](#)
87. [Letter from Sâr Hieronymus \(Émile Dantine\) to Harvey Spencer Lewis.](#)
88. [Charter granted to the Grand Lodge of Denmark in 1920.](#)
89. [Theodor Reuss.](#)
90. [Excerpts from a letter written by Camille Savoie to Harvey Spencer Lewis on July 12, 1928.](#)
91. [Harvey Spencer Lewis.](#)
92. [Ralph Maxwell Lewis](#)
93. [A Rosicrucian temple](#)
94. [One of AMORC's official symbols](#)
95. [*Positio Fraternitatis Rosae Crucis.*](#)

CHRONOLOGY

This table brings together the important dates in the history of Western esotericism, as well as those dates concerning the emergence of various movements that are associated, rightly or wrongly, with Rosicrucianism.

100 B.C.

Beginning of Greco-Egyptian alchemy, of which Bolos of Mendes is one of the most important representatives.

A.D. 140

Claudius Ptolemy, an Alexandrian Greek, writes the *Tetrabiblos*, a treatise which codifies the principles of astrology. First Latin translation in 1535, by Joachim Camerarius.

260

Iamblicus, a Neo-Platonist, is initiated into the Chaldean and Egyptian rites, writes *The Mysteries of Egypt*.

383

Emperor Theodosius promulgates an edict against non-Christian cults, resulting in the end of the Egyptian religion, but the temple of Isis at Philae is not closed until the middle of the 6th century.

500

6th century: Appearance of the Secret Book of Creation by Balinus; reference to the Emerald Tablet and to Hermes Trismegistus.

1000

End of 11th century: Translation of Sefer ha Bahir (Book of Splendor), one of the first books concerning the Qabalah in Spain.
1100 12th century: Introduction of alchemy and the dawning of astrology and magic in the West by way of Spain, due to the translations of Arab texts.

1200

Moses ben Shern Tov of Leon writes the Zohar.

1471

Marsilio Ficino publishes his translation of the Corpus Hermeticum, before translating Plato.

1494

Johannes Reuchlin publishes De Verbo mirifico, a key work of the Christian Qabalah and the first European work completely devoted to the Qabalah.

1510

Cornelius Heinrich Agrippa publishes The Occult Philosophy (1510-

1530).

1558

Publication of the Zohar at Mantua, then in Cremona in 1560.

1564

John Dee publishes the Monas Hieroglyphica.

1589

Johann Huser publishes the Complete Works of Paracelsus in Basel (1589/1591). A second edition is issued in 1603. 1602 Lazarus Zetzner published the Theatrum Chemicum, a true encyclopedia of alchemy in six volumes.

1604

Simon Studion completes the Naometria Nova.

1608

The Tübingen Circle is constituted into a societas including Tobias Hess, Abraham Hözl, the pastor Vischer, and Johann Valentin Andreae.

1610

The manuscript of the Fama Fraternitatis (first Rosicrucian manifesto) circulates in the Tyrol. 1611 The first printed reference

to the Rosicrucians in a text by Adam Haselmeyer, *Apologia contra Hippolyte Guarinoni*.

1614

Isaac Casaubon proves that the *Corpus Hermeticum* is not of Egyptian origin.

1614

Publication of the *Fama Fraternitatis* in Kassel (first Rosicrucian manifesto).

1615

Publication of the *Confessio Fraternitatis* in Kassel (second Rosicrucian manifesto).

1616

Publication of the *Chymical Wedding of Christian Rosenkreuz* (third Rosicrucian manifesto).

1616

Robert Fludd publishes *Apologia Compendiaria Fraternitatem de Rosea Cruce suspicionis et infamiae maculis aspersam veritatis quasi Flucibus abluens et abstergens*; beginning of the controversies between the philosophers over Rosicrucianism.

1623

Appearance of the Rosicrucian placards in Paris: “We, Deputies of the principal College of the Brothers of the Rose Cross”

1623

Gabriel Naudé publishes *Instruction à la France sur la vérité de l’histoire des Frères de la Roze-Croix*.

1630

Petrus Mormius, in *Arcana totius naturae secretissima, nec hactenus unquam detecta, a collegio Rosiano in lucemp produntur*, mentions the Golden Rosicrucians.

1638

First reference to the relationship between Rosicrucianism and Masonry in a poem published in Edinburgh by Perth.

1641

John Comenius publishes *The Way of the Light*, where the subject matter of the Rosicrucian manifestos is discussed openly.

1694

German Pietists led by Johannes Kelpius depart for America aboard the *Sarah Maria*.

1710

Sincerus Renatus publishes *Die wahrhafte und vollkommene Bereitung des philosophischen Steins der Brüderschafft aus dem Orden des Gulden und Rosen Kreutzes*. . . with an appendix of the laws and rules under which the fraternity operated.

1717

Founding of the Grand Lodge of London and that of Westminster; beginning of Freemasonry.

1723

Publication of Anderson's Constitution.

1736

First edition of Ramsay's *Discourse* (beginning of the Scottish rite).

1757

First documentation of the existence of the Chevalier Rose-Croix degree (Enfans de la Sagesseet Concorde Lodge).

1777

Johann Rudolf von Bischoffswerder and Johann Christophe Wölner reform the Golden Rose Cross of the Ancient System (references to alchemy, Egypt, and the Essenes).

1783

Franz Anton Mesmer founds the Harmony Society.

1784

Alessandro Cagliostro inaugurates in Lyons La Sagesse triumpante (Egyptian Masonry).

1784

Convention of the Philalethes in Paris (1784-1787).

1785

Publication of the Secret Symbols of the Rosicrucian of the 16th and 17th Centuries (first part) in Altona; it is the most important Rosicrucian text after the manifestos.

1806

Alexandre Du Möge creates in Toulouse an Egyptian rite, that of the Friends of the Desert.

1814

The Bédarrides brothers create the Rite of Mizraim (Egyptian Masonry) (1814-1856).

1838

Jean-Étienne Marconis de Nègre, breaking away from the Mizraim,

founds the Memphis rite (Egyptian Masonry). The two rites are united in 1881 by Giuseppe Garibaldi.

1842

Sir Edward Bulwer-Lytton publishes *Zanoni*, a Rosicrucian initiatic novel.

1847

Experiences of the Fox sisters in Hydesville, New York, marking the beginnings of spiritualism in the United States.

1856

Allan Kardec publishes *Le Livre des esprits*, a textbook of spiritualism.

1856

Éliphas Lévi publishes *Dogme et ritual de la haute magie*; beginning of occultism.

1861

P. Beverly Randolph founds the *Fraternitas Rosae Crucis*.

1866

Robert Wentworth Little founds the *Societas Rosicruciana in Anglia* (S.R.I.A.)

1866

Expansion of New Thought by the followers of Phineas Parkhurst Quimby.

1868

P. Beverly Randolph founds the Hermetic Brotherhood of Luxor (H.B. of L.) (1864-1874).

1875

Mrs. Mary Baker Eddy publishes *Science and Health, with Key to the Scriptures*, the classic of Christian Science.

1875

Foundation of the Theosophical Society by Henry Steel Olcott and Helena Petrovna Blavatsky. 1878

1878

Firmin Boissin initiates Adrien Péladan into the Rose-Croix of Toulouse.

1882

Creation of the Society for Psychical Research in London.

1887

Stanislas de Guaita and Joséphin Péladan found the Kabbalistical

Order of the Rose Cross.

1887

S.L. Mathers, W.W. Westcott, and W.R. Woodman found the Hermetic Order of the Golden Dawn (1887-1888).

1888

Franz Hartman, secretary to Helena Blavatsky, founds the Esoteric Rose-Croix.

1889

Papus launches L'Initiation, a magazine that is an organ of the Martinist Order.

1891

Joséphin Péladan separates from the Kabbalistic Order of the Rose-Croix to create the Order of the Catholic Rosicrucians of the Temple and Grail.

1892

First show of the Rosicrucian Salons in Paris.

1909

Harvey Spencer Lewis is initiated in to the Rosicrucian Order in Toulouse.

1909

The theosopher Carl Louis von Grasshoff (Max Heindel) founds the Rosicrucian Fellowship.

1912

Foundation in London of the Order of the Temple of the Rosy Cross by Annie Besant, Marie Russak, and H. Wedgwood.

1913

Rudolf Steiner breaks with the Theosophical Society and founds the Anthroposophical Society.

1915

Foundation of AMORC (Ancient and Mystical Order of the Rose Cross) by Harvey Spencer Lewis.

1915

Arthur Edward Waite founds the Fellowship of the Rosy Cross.

1915

Creation of the Order of the Lily and Eagle (Rose-Croix of the Orient) by Demetrius Platon Semelas and Maria Rouchine.

1919

Jan Leene (Jan Van Rijckenborg), one of the directors of the

Rosicrucian association of Max Heindel, founds the Aquarius Bond, then the Order of Manicheans, which later becomes the Lectorum Rosicrucianum and the Golden Rose Cross.

1920

Creation of the Collegium Pansophicum in Berlin by Heinrich Tranker.

1923

Émile Dantinne founds the Rose-Croix universitaire.

1929

Jean Mallinger, Étienne Dantinne, and Léon Lelarge develop the Ordre Hermétiste tétramégiste.

1930

Zam Bhotiva (Cesare Accomani) launches the movement of the Polaires.

1934

Émile Dantinne, Victor Blanchard, and Harvey Spencer Lewis found in Brussels the FUDOSI (Universal Federation of the Sovereign and Initiatic Orders).

1940

Decree of the Vichy government dissolving and forbidding associations of a secret nature (August 13).

1949

Official debut of AMORC's activities in France under the direction of Jeanne Guesdon (reactivation of activities after World War II).

2001

Publication of the *Positio Fraternitatis Rosae Crucis* (fourth Rosicrucian manifesto).

INTRODUCTION

ONE OF THE Western world's most enigmatic initiatory societies is the Rosicrucian Order. Goethe once asked, "Who then has wedded the rose to the cross?" Indeed, the Order's symbol unites two elements of opposing essence: the cross, whose four branches recall the four cardinal points, symbolizes the material world, whereas the rose, whose subtle perfume represents the unknowable aspect of things, represents the soul. The Rose Cross thus represents the mystery of the conjunction of contraries, the marriage of body and soul.

Yet the Rose Cross is not only a symbol relating to human evolution; it also concerns the whole of Creation. During the 17th century, the golden age of Rosicrucianism, people readily perceived in the wedding of the rose and cross the process by which humans help nature to find its own regeneration. This is undoubtedly what Joséphin Péladan wanted to express in the motto appearing on the cover of one of his books: *Ad rosam per crucem, ad crucem per rosam, in ea, in eis gemmatus resurgam*. "To the rose by way of the cross, to the cross by way of the rose, in it [the rose], in them [the rose and cross], I emerge once more as a precious stone." Through the marriage of the rose and cross—of human beings and creation—the Divine reveals itself in increasingly brilliant splendor. These few elements help us to understand the attraction that the Rose Cross symbol has exerted for centuries upon so many seekers who have reflected upon the mysteries of God, humanity, and the universe.

It all began in 1614, with the publication of the *Fama Fraternitatis*, a mysterious text revealing to Europe the existence of a Rosicrucian fraternity. In the midst of an era torn apart by disturbing scientific discoveries, bitter religious controversies, and devastating epidemics, this text invited seekers to join a fraternity founded by Christian Rosenkreuz. The Rosicrucians offered to divulge their fabulous knowledge, whose virtues would allow a society in crisis to be restored. This first manifesto was soon followed by a second, the *Confessio Fraternitatis*, and then by a third, the *Chymical Wedding of Christian Rosenkreuz*, published respectively in 1615 and 1616. The three works enjoyed considerable success. They circulated throughout Europe and sparked the publication of a phenomenal quantity of books. Soon afterwards, in 1623, the Parisians marveled over placards on the walls of their city announcing that the Brothers of the Rose Cross were staying “visible and invisible” in the capital.

Who were these Rosicrucians who seemed to remain invisible and unknowable? Where did they come from? Were they the ones heralded centuries before by Joachim de Fiore as the founders of a new religion, that of the age of the Holy Spirit, which Joachim described as a time of bliss? Or did they embody Elias Artista, the man who Paracelsus predicted would reveal to humanity all the secrets of nature? What was this mysterious universal knowledge that the Rose-Cross fraternity claimed to possess? These questions preoccupied the speculations of numerous 17th century researchers, philosophers, and scholars, including René Descartes, and Isaac Newton.

For some people, the Rosicrucian Order was as old as the world; for others, it arose in the age of pharaohs and later brought together the heritage of the Pythagoreans, the Eleusinian mysteries, the Magi of Persia, the Essenes, the Templars, and the order of the Golden Fleece. Some saw in its emergence a Jesuit plot. A larger number felt that the Order did not exist, and that it was simply a legend invented in the 17th century by a group of intellectuals who were determined to have their contemporaries reflect upon the general drift of society. Finally, a few people thought that it was a fraternity belonging to the invisible worlds, composed of “Unknown Superiors” watching over the destiny of humanity.

Since the 17th century, many authors have pondered the history of the Rosicrucians, with their books attesting to the complex mystery surrounding Rosicrucian origins. Many, confusing legend with history, have launched into unreasonable speculations. Others, satisfied with what may be demonstrated by irrefutable documents, sometimes overlook basic points, as they forget the importance and value of the legendary in the very constitution of culture and, thereby, of that which underlies historical events. For the last several decades, university studies have shed some particularly interesting light on some aspects of Rosicrucianism and have allowed us to reconsider entirely a number of points of view expressed previously. However, much remains to be done.

The present work does not claim to be exhaustive, but tries to differentiate between legend and history, facts and mysteries. It involves two basic objectives: 1) to have Rosicrucianism assume its

proper place in the history of Western esotericism so that it can be better understood; and 2) to place within this panorama the emergence of the Ancient and Mystical Order Rosae Crucis, known throughout the world by the abbreviation A.M.O.R.C. The latter constitutes not only the most important of the Rosicrucian orders, but also one of the major initiatory movements of the modern era. Thus, we wish to shed further light on its origins.

As the history of Rosicrucianism fits into that of Western esotericism, it is important to emphasize what underlies this concept. The adjective “esoteric” comes from the Greek word *esoterikos*, which is derived from *eso* “within” and *eis* “into.” The word literally means “toward the interior” and describes that which is not directly accessible. It evokes the concept of moving toward the center, the interior. Thus, esotericism is the knowledge of that which relates to internal things, of which the intellect can touch upon only to a certain extent. In short, it involves a gnosis, a knowledge that leads to a transformation, a regeneration of the soul.

Furthermore, as shown by Antoine Faivre, esotericism constitutes more a way of approaching matters rather than a body of defined doctrines.² Its fundamental elements, such as alchemy, magic, astrology, Qabalah, magnetism, and various spiritual techniques with which it is associated, are not readily apparent. It has been pieced together slowly, has penetrated the West gradually, and has been subjected to various influences. Our study will thus lead us to places of its birth—mythical and real—and to those countries and times through which it has traveled. Therefore, we will visit Egypt;

Greece; the Arab lands; Europe during the Middle Ages, Renaissance, and Age of Enlightenment; France of the Belle Époque; and the New World. While on our journey, we will meet such extraordinary individuals as Hermes Trismegistus, Marsilio Ficino, Giordano Bruno, John Dee, Theophrastus Paracelsus, Franz Anton Mesmer, Joséphin Péladan, Harvey Spencer Lewis—not to mention someone as unexpected as Érik Satie. We will also come across numerous initiatory organizations that have played a more or less important role in Western esotericism or in the Rosicrucian movement.

Finally, to guide those readers who wish to delve further into these subjects, we have also included a thematic bibliography, a chronology repeating the important dates in the history of Rosicrucianism or esotericism, and an index of important people in Rosicrucian history.

As you will note while reading this book, the roots of the Rose Cross lie hidden in the mists of time, because its essence does not relate to the order of material things. Thus, once we seem to reach its roots, we are confronted with a mystery: that of the very genesis of human beings and of Creation.

I. HERMETIS ÆGY-
PTIORVM REGIS ET AN-
TESIGNANI SYMBOLVM.

*SOL EST EIVS CONIVGII PATER ET
alba Luna Mater, tertius succedit, vt
gubernator, Ignis.*



Primarium apud Aream Mensam locum
HERMETI ÆGYPTIO, tanquam proregi
& Vicario suo Regia virgo CHEMIA depu-
tauit & attribuit, vt iam antè commemora-
uimus,

A 3

uimus,

FIGURE 1. *Michael Maier*, *Symbola aureae mensae duodecim nationum*, 1617.

Chapter 1

EGYPT AND THE PRIMORDIAL TRADITION

QUESTIONS HAVE OFTEN arisen regarding the origins of Rosicrucianism. Although a consensus of researchers places its historical beginnings in the 17th century, we are of the opinion that the genesis of this movement dates from much farther back. Such was the belief of the German alchemist Michael Maier. In his work *Silentium Post Clamores* (1617), he described Rosicrucianism as having arisen from the Egyptians, the Brahmans, the mysteries of Eleusis and Samothrace, the Magi of Persia, the Pythagoreans, and the Arabs. Several years after the publication of the *Fama Fraternitatis* (1614) and *the Confessio Fraternitatis* (1615), Irenaeus Agnostus, in *Chyzeum veritatis* (The Shield of Truth, 1618), felt no hesitation in declaring Adam to be the first representative of the Order. The Rosicrucian manifestos likewise made reference to the same source: “Our philosophy has nothing new in it; it conforms to what Adam inherited after the Fall, and what Moses and Solomon practiced.”¹

THE PRIMORDIAL TRADITION

Adam, Egypt, Persia, the Greek sages, and the Arabs were

conjured up for good reason by Michael Maier. He alluded to a concept that was very wide-spread before the coming of Rosicrucianism. This concept—the Primordial Tradition—first appeared in the Renaissance,² especially after the rediscovery of the *Corpus Hermeticum*, a group of mysterious texts attributed to an Egyptian priest, Hermes Trismegistus. From him, this idea of a primordial revelation, of which Egypt was the cradle, would have considerable repercussions.

Our intention is not to describe Egyptian esotericism in full, but rather to indicate how this heritage was transmitted. The route connecting Egypt to the West is long and offers a varied landscape. We will not discuss all of its details, because this description would occupy an entire volume. However, certain salient points will allow us to understand Rosicrucian origins. While engaging in this undertaking it is necessary to follow a trustworthy guide, and Hermes appears to be the character most noted in the ancient writings. Indeed, the history and myths relating to this individual are particularly rich in information concerning our purpose at hand.

Since antiquity, Egypt's civilization has been much admired. Its mystery schools, which acted both as universities and monasteries, were the guardians of its wisdom. These schools experienced a distinctive flowering under the rule of Akhnaton (1353-1336 B.C.), especially after he introduced the concept of monotheism. The Egyptian religion is particularly intriguing because of its mysterious cults. Although Hermes had some of his origins in Egypt, in the god Thoth, he was primarily a Greek god. He was the son of Zeus and

of the nymph Maia. The Greeks considered him the god of shepherds, thieves, merchants, and travelers. He was also the inventor of astronomy, weights and measures, the musical scale, the art of gymnastics, and the cultivation of olive trees. Most of all he was the messenger of Zeus and the shepherd who guided the dead toward the world of Hades. His attributes were a caduceus and winged sandals.

In the Egyptian pantheon, Thoth enjoyed a special illustriousness. He was shown as an ibis headed man or as a baboon (cf. the Book of the Dead). Equipped with a palette, reed, and papyrus, he was always ready to transcribe the words of Re. He was the very epitome of a scribe; he was described as the inventor of hieroglyphs. Thoth was the protector of scribes, the teacher of medicine, astronomy, and the arts. He knew the secrets of magic; he was the initiator. On the statue of Amenhotep, son of Hapu, a high official and favorite of Amenhotep III (c. 1360 B.C.), it is written: “. . . but into the divine book, I have been initiated. Of Thoth, I have seen glory, and among mystery, I introduced myself.”

In a period as far distant as the Old Kingdom (2705-2180 B.C.), Thoth was already described as the messenger of the gods, a characteristic he preserved when passing into the Greek world in the guise of Hermes. In his capacity of judge, he stood between Seth and Horus. He was the protector of the eye of Horus.

In the Middle Kingdom (1987-1640 B.C.), he personified wisdom. He was particularly honored in Hermopolis, and the priests of this city attributed to him the *Book of the Two Ways*, a text which

described the voyage to the afterlife. The inscriptions found in the sarcophagi of this period also mention a “divine book of Thoth.” At the beginning of this period, Thoth appeared as the writer of sacred writings, the all-knowing teacher, the one who knew the secret magical rites. It is also reported that the sacred texts were found at the foot of his statue. This symbolic theme is found much later in the story describing the discovery of the tomb of Hermes Trismegistus by Apollonius of Tyana. In the Book of the Dead, Thoth plays the role of judge when weighing the heart of the deceased.

In the New Kingdom (1540-1075 B.C.), Akhnaton (1353-1336 B.C.) abolished the ancient pantheon when instituting the cult of Aton. Even so, Thoth preserved certain prerogatives during the pharaoh’s reign. After the disappearance of the founder of Egyptian monotheism, Thoth regained his qualities of all-knowing sage and the teacher of secrets. During this period, writings of an occult character became important. This is undoubtedly why H. Spencer Lewis regarded Amosis, the pharaoh who introduced this period, as being the organizer of the brotherhood of initiates that later gave rise to the Rose Cross. Moreover, he thought Hermes was a sage contemporary with Akhnaton. The occult knowledge of the Egyptians was considered secret. It was transmitted by “houses of life,” sometimes called “mystery schools.”

The opinions of the specialists are divided regarding the importance of occultism and magic in the time of the pharaohs. Erik Hornung, an Egyptologist at the University of Basel, feels that too

many historians have taken an overly positivist approach regarding this matter. He declares that it is “undeniable that at the beginning of the New Kingdom, at the latest, a spiritual climate propitious to the emergence of Hermetic wisdom dominated.” Emphasizing the important role of Jan Assmann, who concentrated on this subject while studying the Rameside period, he added that at present “there prevail conditions much more favorable to the discovery of Hermeticism’s possible Egyptian roots.”³

In the Late Kingdom (664-332 B.C.), Thoth was considered to be the teacher of magic. A stele calls him “twice great,” and he is presented sometimes as “thrice (very) great,” or even “five times great” (cf. the Story of Setne). In the Ptolemaic period, the Greeks and Romans were fascinated by Hermopolis and its cult of Thoth. There developed at this time an original synthesis between the Egyptian civilization and the Hellenistic culture.

THE GREEKS AND EGYPT

Considerable evidence relates to the relationships between the sages of Greece and of Egypt. In the 5th century B.C. Herodotus visited Egypt and conversed with the priests. In his history he discusses the Osirian mysteries celebrated at Sais. For him, the mysteries of Greece owed much to Egypt. Comparing the Greek and Egyptian pantheons, he observed that certain divinities of his country had their origins among the pharaohs.

There existed a strong tradition which claimed that the great sages of ancient Greece obtained knowledge from their Egyptian teachers.

It was claimed that many among them were initiated into the mysteries, thus assuring the transmission of Egyptian learning into the Greek world. Among them Herodotus spoke only of Solon (c. 640-558). In *Timaeus* and the *Critias* Plato (427-347), who himself had gone to Egypt and remained there three years, spoke of the discussions that Solon had with the Egyptian priests. In *The Republic*, he also emphasized the prestige of the Egyptian priests. Furthermore, he mentioned Thoth in the *Phaedrus*. Isocrates, a contemporary of Plato, made Egypt the source of philosophy and indicated that Pythagoras went there to be instructed. Apollonius of Rhodes (295-c. 230) claimed that Hermes, by way of his son Aithalides, was the direct ancestor of Pythagoras.

Diodorus Siculus (80-20) provided the greatest amount of information concerning the influence of Egypt upon the sages of Greece. He based this partly upon what he had gathered in his encounters with the Egyptian priests, and partly upon the *Aegyptiaca*, a work by Hecataeus of Abdera.

Diodorus stated first of all that Orpheus traveled to Egypt and was initiated into the Osirian mysteries. After returning to his homeland around the 6th century B.C., he instituted new rites that were called the Orphic mysteries. Diodorus also stated that rites observed in Eleusis by the Athenians were similar to those of the Egyptians. Plutarch (c. A .D. 50-c. 125) later remarked that the Orphic and Bacchic mysteries were really of Egyptian and Pythagorean origin. Diodorus also reported on the travels of Solon and of Thales of Miletus (624-548 B.C.), who visited the priests and measured the

pyramids. Plutarch declared that Thales brought Egyptian geometry back to Greece. Diodorus also claimed that Thales urged Pythagoras to go to Egypt, and it was in this country that the latter conceived the concept of the migration of souls. Iamblichus later added that Pythagoras had studied in the Egyptian temples for twenty-two years, and, after having received this training, he established his own school in Crotona, Italy, and he taught what he had learned in the Egyptian mystery schools. Finally, Diodorus reported that in the 5th century Democritus (c. 460-370 B.C.), discoverer of the atom, was taught by the geometers of the pharaoh, and then initiated in the Egyptian temples.

One of Plato's followers, Eudoxus of Cnidus (c. 405-355 B.C.), a mathematician and geometer, also made the voyage to the land of the Nile. While there, he was initiated on both the scientific and spiritual levels. Pliny specified that he would report in his country some important astronomical knowledge, as those which related to the exact duration of the year (365 $\frac{1}{4}$ days). His hypothesis of homocentric spheres constituted the point of departure of traditional astronomy. Plutarch, a member of the sacerdotal college of Apollo in Delphi, where he was high priest, also sought knowledge along the banks of the Nile. While there, he was initiated by Clea, a priestess of *Isis and Osiris*. In his book *Isis and Osiris*, Plutarch spoke of the "works called Books of Hermes" and emphasized the importance of Egyptian astrology. He also reported that many authorities declared Isis to be the daughter of Hermes.

THOTH-HERMES

In drawing a parallel between Zoroaster and Moses, Diodorus introduced a concept that would be in considerable vogue in the Renaissance, where he spoke of a *philosophia perennis* transmitted by way of the great sages from the beginnings of time. Beginning in the 2nd century B.C., the Greeks claimed that Thoth had for a son Agathodemon, who himself had engendered a son named Hermes. The latter, considered to be the second Hermes, was called *Trismegistus*—that is, “Thrice-greatest.” Thus, in the 3rd century A .D . the Greeks adopted Thoth, giving him the name of Hermes and describing him as *Trismegistus*— “Thrice-greatest.”

As Thoth was the teacher of speech and writing, it was natural that the Greeks made him the father of Homer, their greatest poet. In the 3rd century, Heliodorus indicated that Homer was the son of Hermes and an Egyptian priest’s daughter. Eventually each era added some detail, and little by little was forged the concept which stated that Egypt was the source of wisdom and knowledge.

ALEXANDRIA

With the conquest of Egypt by Alexander the Great in 333 B.C., the assimilation of the Egyptian culture by the Greek world was accelerated. The focus of this activity occurred in the city of Alexandria, founded in 331 B.C., where the waters of the Nile mixed with those of the Mediterranean. A crossroads of Egyptian, Jewish, Greek, and Christian cultures, it acted over the centuries as the intellectual center of the eastern Mediterranean. Therapeutae, Gnostics, and various other mystical movements developed around

this city. Its library, enriched by more than 50,000 volumes, gathered together all of the knowledge of the era. Alexandria was also the crucible where Greco-Egyptian alchemy flourished.

The city gave birth to a new science in the form of alchemy, a continuation of ancient Egyptian practices that was transformed and revived by Greek thought. Its originality consisted of offering a concrete and universal discipline free from the grasp of religion. Hermes Trismegistus, represented by Alexandrian alchemists as being the founder of this art, became the new transmitter of the ancient tradition. However, we should note that Alchemy already existed in China and India. Among the Alexandrian alchemists, Bolos of Mendes (100 B.C.) was a notable figure, often being described as the founder of Greco-Egyptian alchemy.

In 30 B.C., Alexandria became the capital of the Roman province of Egypt. The Romans assimilated the Greco-Egyptian Hermes with Mercury, their god of commerce and travelers. Mercury-Hermes was the messenger of the gods, the conductor or guide of souls. Rome rapidly adopted Egypt and its cults.

THE CORPUS HERMETICUM

Three centuries before the Christian era, texts that are now called the *Hermetica*—because their authorship is attributed to Hermes Trismegistus—began to take shape. This literature expanded considerably from the 1st century B.C., and in the Nile Delta region the composition of the *Hermetica* continued until the 3rd century A.D. Written in Greek, an Egyptian form of esotericism is quite

apparent. Clement of Alexandria (A.D. 150-220) spoke of the forty-two books of Hermes which the Egyptians carried about in their ceremonies. Iamblichus attributed 20,000 books to Hermes, whereas Seleucus and Manethro mentioned about 36,525. The most celebrated, written between the 1st and 3rd centuries, are the seventeen tracts which were gathered together under the title of *Corpus Hermeticum*.⁴ They are composed primarily of dialogues between Hermes, his son Tat, and Asclepius. The first of these treatises, *Poemandres*, discusses the creation of the world.

The *Asclepius* is also an important text as it describes the religion of the Egyptians and the magical rites they practiced for attracting cosmic powers meant to animate the statues of the gods. Finally, the fragments of *Stobaeus* constitute the third group of the *Hermetica*. These are composed of thirty-nine texts and consist of dialogues between Isis and Horus regarding the creation of the world and the origin of souls. These texts, generally attributed to Hermes Trismegistus, claim to be translated from the Egyptian. In truth, they contain few authentic Egyptian elements. They are essentially characterized by Greek philosophy, but also by Judaism and Zoroastrianism. They do not compose a coherent whole and present numerous doctrinal contradictions.

PAX ROMANA

Among the Greeks the influence of Egypt was felt primarily through its literature, but among the Romans the influence took a different twist. The latter were not content to travel to the land of

the pharaohs. In 30 B.C., after the suicide of Cleopatra and the conquest of Egypt by Octavian, the country became a Roman province. At the beginning of the 1st century A.D. the Romans controlled the Nile valley. They embraced its culture, and the emperor was compared to a pharaoh. The conquerors adopted certain rites of the land they had taken, and the cult of Isis found a home in Rome.

Rome adopted Egyptian architecture. Even now we can admire one of the last remnants of this era, the pyramid of Caius Cestius. Another, now vanished, was erected in the necropolis of the Vatican. The city also bristled with numerous obelisks taken from Karnak, Heliopolis, and Sais. Visitors to Rome may still admire more than ten of them. The existence of an Isiac college is attested around 80 B.C. By 105 B.C. a temple consecrated to the worship of Isis was located in Pompeii. The Iseum in the Campus Martius, which included a temple dedicated to Isis and Serapis, remained the most important evidence of the presence of Egyptian cults among the Romans. But the encounter of the two religions did not pass smoothly, and Caesar barely favored the gods of Egypt. Virgil (70-19 B.C.) and Horace (65-8 B.C.) described the battle of monstrous divinities, as Anubis brandished his arms against Neptune, Venus, and Minerva. Ovid (43-17/18 B.C.) saw things in a more flattering light. The cult of Isis was tolerated in Rome, and Nero (37-66) introduced some Isiac feast days in the Roman calendar. Marcus Aurelius (161-180) constructed a temple for the Egyptian Hermes.

In the 2nd century A.D. the *Pax Romana* established peace

throughout the Mediterranean world. In this era, we find a veritable passion for past civilizations: the Hindus, Persians, Chaldeans, and above all the Egyptians. Fascinated by Egyptian temples that were still in operation, rich Romans flocked to the land of the pharaohs. Apuleius, a Latin writer intrigued by the mysteries, also went there. In *The Golden Ass* he described for us the Egyptian mysteries in his colorful manner.

ALCHEMY, MAGIC, AND ASTROLOGY

Along with alchemy, magic and astrology assumed greater importance. Claudius Ptolemy (c. 90-168), a Greek living in Alexandria, wrote the *Tetrabiblos*, a treatise that codified all the principles of Greek astrology (with Egyptian and Chaldean influences): signs, houses, aspects, elements. Ptolemy was not merely an astrologer, he was also an astronomer to whom we owe geocentrism and the theory of the epicycles which dominated science until the 17th century. It was Ptolemy who transmitted Greek astronomical knowledge to the West. Clement of Alexandria (c. 150-213), a Greek church father, drew in his *Stromateis* a portrait of the Egyptian astrologers of his time, who always had to be ready to recite the four astrological books of Hermes.

Olympiodorus (5th or 6th century) presented alchemy as a sacerdotal art practiced by the Egyptians. The Leiden and Stockholm papyri (2nd century) depict the metallurgical procedures as effectively being linked to magical formulas.⁵ In the 3rd century, Zosimos of Panopolis settled down in Alexandria so as to dedicate

himself to alchemy. The first well-known alchemical author, he bestowed upon this science his concepts and symbolism. But his alchemical writings do not simply revolve around laboratory work; they also discuss the transformations of the soul and entail a mystical quest. Alchemy expanded so greatly in the 3rd century that Emperor Diocletian, disturbed by a possible devaluation of precious metals, promulgated an edict prohibiting the practice and condemning alchemical texts to the flames.

NEOPLATONISM

Neoplatonists were considerably interested in Egypt. Iamblichus (c. 240-c. 325), who was initiated into the Chaldean, Egyptian, and Syrian rites, is an enigmatic individual. Some extraordinary powers were attributed to the “divine Iamblichus,” the head of a Neoplatonist school. While in prayer, his body was said to rise more than ten cubits from the earth, and his skin and clothing were bathed in a beautiful golden light. Egypt held a chosen spot in his writings. In *De Mysteriis* (On the Egyptian Mysteries),⁶ Iamblichus presented himself in the guise of Abammon, a master of the Egyptian sacerdotal hierarchy and an interpreter of Hermetic teachings. He also promoted theurgy and Egyptian divinatory practices. A little later, another Neoplatonist, Proclus (412-485), also strongly affected by theurgy, believed himself to be part of the “chain of Hermes.” He had great influence on Sufism and on such Christian thinkers as Johannes Scotus Erigena, Meister Eckhart, and many others.

Nevertheless, this era saw Egypt fading away before an ever-expanding Christianity. Alexandria played an important role in the many controversies that marked the beginnings of this religion newly imposed by Constantine. In the 3rd century, the Egyptians abandoned hieroglyphs and adopted the Coptic script for transcribing their language. The Copts adapted the secret knowledge of the pharaohs to Christianity. Soon afterwards, Emperor Theodosius promulgated an edict against non-Christian cults, thus marking the end of the Egyptian clergy and their ceremonies.

THE CHRISTIANS BEFORE HERMES

Christianity, which began to gain in influence, was not unaware of Hermes. In the middle of the 2nd century a kind of Christian Hermes appeared in the pages of a book entitled *The Shepherd*, whose author was said to be Hermas.⁷ It is a Roman work in which Hermas, the “messenger of penance and penitent,” took the form of a prophet. *The Shepherd* is an apocalyptic work in which all the conventions of the genre are found. In the early Church Jesus is often presented as a shepherd, a role that is also attributed to Hermes. Yet in this instance it is not Jesus that Hermes designates, but the “angel of the penance.” Considered for a long time to be an integral part of the canonical scriptures, *The Shepherd* passed to the status of apocryphal scripture at the beginning of the 4th century.

The Church fathers generally loved to delve into mythology so as to disclose the beginnings of the Gospel. Hermes Trismegistus continued to garner respect among them. Lactantius (250-325), in

his *Divinarum Institutionum* (Divine Institutions), saw Christian truth formulated before the advent of Christianity in the *Corpus Hermeticum*. He placed Hermes Trismegistus in the first rank of Gentile prophets who foresaw the coming of Christ. St. Augustine (354-430), the Father of the Church, in his *City of God*, a fundamental treatise of Christian theology, made Hermes a descendent of God. He had read the *Asclepius* in the translation by Apuleius of Madaura, but even though he admired Hermes Trismegistus, he rejected the magic revealed in this work. Clement of Alexandria liked to compare Hermes-Logos to the Christ-Logos.

Emperor Julian the Apostate (361-363), the nephew of Constantine, attempted a brief return to the worship of the mysteries. He enacted measures against Christians and restored paganism. Influenced by Neoplatonism, he extolled ancient theurgy. This return was brief, however, and by 387 the Christian patriarch Theophilus undertook the destruction of the Egyptian temples with the idea of transforming them into places of Christian worship. Nonetheless, on the island of Philae an Egyptian temple continued to function. It was not closed until 551, by order of Emperor Justinian. It will be noted that the Egyptian temples remained active between the 1st and 6th centuries—that is, during the period which covers the composition of the *hermetica*. It is often remarked that these texts are pessimistic regarding the future of the Egyptian religion, which leads us to think that they were written in an Egyptian setting by a priestly class. Fragments from the Egyptian wisdom may repose in the *Hermetica*, but they are expressed in an

indirect fashion, having been submitted to the process of Hellenization.

Alexandria had been the starting point where Egyptian teachings entered the Greek and Roman worlds. It was where the ancient tradition was reformulated by way of alchemy, astrology, and magic. This point of departure, after having scattered such wisdom into a greater portion of the East, was already disappearing by the 6th century, and the Arabs now took up the torch.



FIGURE 2. From the 17th century, this image, called *Tabula Smaragdina Hermetis*, has been often associated with the text of the Emerald Tablet, as in *Aureum Velleus* (1599) or *Secret Symbols of the Rosicrucians of the 16th and 17th Centuries* (1785). This illustration is not, however, an adaptation of the text that it is supposed to illustrate. The oldest version of this image seems to be that of K. Widemann, a Paracelsian from Augsburg (1588-1589). Its first printed version is found in *Aurei*

Velleris Oder Der Güldin Schatz und Kunstkammer, Tractatus III, 1599, Rorschach. See Joachim Telle, “L’art symbolique paracelsien: remarques concernant une pseudo-Tabula Smaragdina du XVIe siècle” and Antoine Faivre, “Note sur la pseudo-Tabula Smaragdina et sur Le Secret des sages,” in *Les Cahiers de l’Hermétisme, Présence d’Hermès Trismégiste* (Paris: Albin Michel, 1988) pp. 184-235.

THE SABAEANS

Alexandria was seized by the Arabs in 642, a date which marks an end to this city’s days of glory. However, the conquest of this city was not the Arabs’ first encounter with esotericism. Rather, they had been aware of Hermes long before this time. For example, they had learned from the Sabaeans, inhabitants of the mythical kingdom of Sheba, which was supposed to be a place of earthly paradise. In ancient times it was also called *Arabia Felix* (Happy Arabia) and was said to be the land of the phoenix. Centuries later Christian Rosenkreuz was supposed to have visited the area so as to gather together the marvelous knowledge deposited there. The Bible states that the queen of this land, the queen of Sheba, visited King Solomon. Although the location of her land was not specified in the Old Testament, the Koran indicates that it was in southern Arabia (modern-day Yemen).

The Sabaeans were notable astrologers, and Maimonides indicated that this knowledge assumed a predominant role among them. Tradition claims that the magi who greeted Christ came from this legendary land. The Sabaeans possessed both the Hermetic alchemical writings and the *Corpus Hermeticum*. Being knowledgeable in such subjects, it is they who introduced science into Islam,

although they themselves evolved on the fringes of this religion. The Sabaeans claimed to have originated with Hermes, to whom they dedicated a special cult. They produced some books whose contents, they claimed, had been revealed by Hermes, such as the *Risalat fi'n-nafs* (Letter about the Soul) and the *Liturgical Institutions of Hermes* by Thabit ibn Qurrah, an eminent figure of Sabaeanism in Baghdad (c. 836-901).

IDRIS-HERMES

The 7th century signaled the beginnings of Islam. Although the Koran did not make any reference to Hermes, the hagiographers of Islam's early centuries identified the prophet Idris, mentioned in the Koran, with Hermes and Enoch. This assimilation helped to link Islam with Greco-Egyptian traditions. In Islam, Idris-Hermes is described as both a prophet and a timeless personage. He is sometimes compared to al-Khadir,⁸ the mysterious intermediary and sage who initiated Moses and who plays a fundamental role in Sufism as a manifestation of the personal guide.

Abu-Ma'shar, an 8th century Persian astrologer who became celebrated in Europe by the name of Albumazar, drew up an account tracing the genealogy of Hermes. This text, which had immense influence in the Islamic world, distinguished three successive Hermes. The first, Hermes Major, lived before the Flood. Identified with Thoth, he is described as the civilizer of humanity, as he had the pyramids constructed and engraved the sacred hieroglyphs for future generations. The second Hermes lived in

Babylonia after the Flood; he was a master of medicine, philosophy, and mathematics. He was also the initiator of Pythagoras. Finally, the third Hermes is described as having continued his predecessors' work of civilizing society. As a master of occult knowledge, he transmitted alchemy to humanity.



FIGURE 3. Apollonius de Tyana, from Jacques Boissard, *De Divinatione et magicis*, 1605.

THE EMERALD TABLE

In the same era there appeared the *Emerald Tablet*, a text which assumed an important place in the tradition. The oldest known version, in Arabic, dates from the 6th century. Many are those who cite this text without really knowing it; therefore, we feel that it would be useful to present it in its entirety.

True, without falsehood, certain and most true, that which is below is like that which is above, and that which is above is like that which is below for accomplishing the wonder of the one thing. As all things are created from one, by the will and command of the one United who created it, so all things are born from this one thing by dispensation and union. Its father is the sun, its mother is the moon, the wind carries it in its belly, its nurse is the earth. This is the father of all perfection in this whole world. Its power is perfect when it is changed into earth; so you should separate the earth from the fire, and the subtle from the thick or gross but lovingly with great understanding and discretion. It ascends from earth to heaven and from heaven again to earth and receives again the power of the Above and the Below. Thus you will have the splendor of the whole world. All lack of understanding and lack of ability will leave you. This is of all power the most powerful power, for it can overcome all subtlety and can penetrate all that is solid. Thus was the world created. Thus many rare combinations originated, and wonders are wrought, of which this is the way to work. And thus I am called Trismegistus, having the three parts of the wisdom of the whole world. All

that I have said concerning the work of the sun is fulfilled.²

This work is attributed to Apollonius of Tyana, a philosopher and thaumaturgist of the 1st century. As Julius Ruska has shown, the text comes to us through the translation composed by Saggius, a Christian priest of Nablus. It appears in *Kitab Sirr Al-Haliqa* (The Secret Book of Creation) by Balinus (the Arabic translation of the name Apollonius).¹⁰In this book, Apollonius relates how he discovered the tomb of Hermes. He claims to have found in this sepulcher an old man, seated on a throne, holding an emerald-colored tablet upon which appeared the text of the famed *Emerald Tablet*. Before him was a book explaining the secrets of the creation of beings and the knowledge of the causes for all things. This narrative would recur much later in the *Fama Fraternitatis*.

ARAB ALCHEMY

The role of the Arabs as transmitters of alchemy to the West in the Middle Ages is generally well known. They also left us with a vocabulary distinctive to this art (*al kemia*, chemistry; *al tanur*, athanor; etc.). Yet Islam's role is not simply limited to that of transmission, as the Arabs conceptualized it in a form which, afterwards, was to assert itself everywhere.¹¹ Their alchemy was not only an art of the laboratory, it was also meant to unveil the hidden laws of Creation, and it comprised a mystic and philosophical dimension. Although Arab alchemy claimed to be of Egyptian origin, its practice occurred after the Arab conquest of Egypt in 639. They received Greek alchemy through the Syrians, but their first

masters in this art were the Persians, who had inherited the Mesopotamian esoteric traditions.

The first known Arab alchemist, the Ummayyad prince Khalid ibn Yazid (?-704), was initiated by Morienus, a Christian of Alexandria. Within a short time alchemy spread throughout the Islamic world and the Greek treatises were quickly translated. The most illustrious figure of Arab alchemy was Jabir ibn Hayyan (died c. 815), known in the Western world as Geber. He advanced the fundamental concepts of the great work, and his reflections led to a spiritual alchemy on a grand scale. He is also credited with numerous discoveries in alchemy. The Jabirian Corpus is said to contain more than 3,000 treatises, most of which are apocryphal. They were probably the work of a school which formed around his teachings. Arab alchemy had many masters, of whom we will mention only a few: abu-Bakr Muhammad ibn-Zakariya', called alRazi or Rhazes (850-923); Muhammad ibn-Umail al-Tamimi, called Zadith the Elder (10th century); abd Allah al-Jaldaki (14th century). Before long their texts penetrated Europe through Spain and profoundly affected the Latin West.

MAGIC AND ASTROLOGY

Magic also occupied a central position in Arab spirituality. Islam made use of magical letters, much like the Hebrew Qabalah, for penetrating the Koran's secrets. Moreover, Arab magic, which Christian Rosenkreuz informed us much later was none too pure, encompassed a wide range: astrology, medicine, talismans, etc.

Astrology was ever-present in the Islamic world. Although suspect due to its pagan origins, it developed significantly from the 8th century, when the *Tetrabiblos* of Ptolemy was translated into Arabic. Astrology, in the era of al-Mansur, the second Abbassid caliph (754-775), was not only indebted to the Greeks, but also came under the influence of the Hindus, Syrian Christians, Judeo-Arameans, and undoubtedly the Essenes. In general, the various esoteric teachings played a fundamental role in Islam, particularly in the Shi'ite environment, as shown by Henry Corbin.¹² It is easy to understand why Christian Rosenkreuz came to the Arab lands to gather the essential elements from which he was to construct the Rosicrucian Order.

EASTERN THEOSOPHY

Around the 9th century ibn-Wahshiya, in a treatise entitled *The Knowledge of the Occult Unveiled*,¹³ presented many occult alphabets attributed to Hermes. He also made reference to the four classes of Egyptian priests descended from Hermes. Those who belonged to the third class—that is, the children of Hermes Trismegistus' sister—he called *Isbraqiyun* (“of the East”). Some years later, Sohrawardi (?-1191), one of the greatest Islamic mystics of Persia, revived the expression *Isbraqiyun* (signifying “Eastern theosophists”) to describe the masters who had experienced Illumination. Philosophy and the mystical experience were inseparable in his mind, and in his *Book of Oriental Wisdom*¹⁴ he described the chain of past initiates, the Eastern theosophists. For him this experience was tied to Hermes, whom he

made the ancestor, the father of the sages. These ecstatic philosophers, described as the “Pillars of Wisdom,” were Plato, Empedocles, Pythagoras, Zoroaster, and Mohammed. What makes Sohrevardi particularly interesting is that, in contrast to the authors we have discussed until now, he did not seek to establish a historical human filiation between Hermes and the sages of the different traditions, but a celestial initiatory filiation based on inner experiences.

The heritage left by Hermes Trismegistus is manifold. Its treasures (alchemy, magic, and astrology) constitute essential elements of traditional esotericism and have traversed many civilizations. Nonetheless, the latter have always considered Egypt to be the Mother of all traditions. In the Middle Ages, this ancient heritage penetrated the West, and by the time of the Renaissance it took on a new aspect in constituting what is generally called “Western esotericism.” It then developed in a special way so as to reach a critical threshold on the brink of the publication of the Rosicrucian manifestos.



FIGURE 4. Oswald Croll, *Basilica Chymica*, 1609.

Chapter 2

HERMETICISM AND THE PHILOSOPHIA PERENNIS

IN THE PREVIOUS chapter we observed how Thoth journeyed from Egypt to the Hellenic world. The Hermetic sciences—magic, alchemy, and astrology—flourished in the gardens of Alexandria. This heritage was then enriched in the 6th century by the Arabs, who added their own observations. But then Hermes Trismegistus traveled to the Christian West, with Spain, and later Italy, sheltering and developing Hermes, Äô ancient knowledge. To this new stage in the history of esotericism we will provide the proper elements for interpreting the journey of Christian Rosenkreuz and the contents of the Rosicrucian manifestos.

ISLAM IN SPAIN

In 711 the Arabs invaded Spain. Cordoba soon became the heart of Moslem Spain under the authority of the Umayyad prince Abd al-Rahman I. However, both the Christians and Jews, who were quite numerous in Spain, preserved their freedom of worship. This situation had positive repercussions, for it permitted cultural exchanges. Spain contributed to spreading throughout the West the entire cultural heritage arriving from the Arab civilization which, at

the time, was more advanced than that of Europe in many aspects. A large quantity of Greek texts, preserved by the Arabs and unknown until then in Europe, were made accessible through the Latin translations made by Spanish scholars.

Esoteric wisdom also penetrated the West by way of Spain. In Toledo, a number of alchemical, magical, and astronomical texts were translated, and this city quickly acquired the reputation of being the „Äúchair of the occult sciences.”¹ The discovery of the body of St. James at Compostela at the beginning of the 9th century contributed to stimulating the Christian *Reconquista of Spain*, an event that only came to a close several centuries later. This was almost accomplished in the 13th century, with the exception of the kingdom of Granada, which had to wait another two centuries to come under Christian domination. But, before then, by the 11th and 12th centuries, numerous pilgrimages to Compostela from all over Europe put Spain in touch with the rest of Christendom, thus contributing to an expansion of the esoteric corpus.

ALCHEMY IN SPAIN

As Robert Halleux pointed out in *La Réception de l'alchimie arabe en Occident* (The Reception of Arab Alchemy in the West), the translation of Arab alchemical texts opened the way to its development in the West.² Spain was the way by which alchemy entered Europe. Alchemy is generally thought to have made its debut in the West in 1144, the year when Robert of Chester, archdeacon of Pamplona, made his translation of Morienus. The preface of this

text recalled the legend of the three Hermes. In the years 1140-1150, another Spanish writer, Hugo de Santalla, translated from Arabic *the Secret Book of Creation*. In this work, Balinus (i.e., Apollonius of Tyana) recounted his discovery of the tomb of Hermes Trismegistus, in which he found the *Emerald Tablet*. In Toledo, Gerard of Cremona (114-1187) learned Arabic and translated texts from the immense body of works by Geber and Rhazes, while John of Toledo, a converted Jew, translated the *Sifr-al-asrar* (The Secret of Secrets) of the Pseudo-Aristotle, a fundamental alchemical text.

THE PICATRIX

Paralleling the development of alchemy, magic also experienced a renewal in the 12th century. During the Middle Ages, it was essentially linked to the remnants of paganism and did not use any direct sources. Its “vulgate” was based upon those passages concerning this subject which Isidore of Seville (560-636) included in his *Etymologies*. From the 12th century, and especially in the 13th century, the fundamental texts appeared in the West by the introduction of Arab and Jewish treatises. Afterwards magic arrived at the courts of princes and kings in a scholarly form, which allowed it to escape the condemnations of the Church.

Alfonso X, “the Learned,” king of Castile and Leon, had translated the *Sefer Raziel*, a Jewish magical treatise, and in 1256 he also translated the *Ghayat al-Hakim fi'l-sibr* (Goal of the Sages in Magic), more recently known as the *Picatrix*. The latter is a text of exceptional importance, because “it inserts the vast magical and

astrological heritage of antiquity, then of the Middle Ages, into a theoretical framework: the Neoplatonist philosophy on one hand and Hermetism on the other.”³ This Arab treatise, attributed to Abul’l-Qasim Maslamaal-Majriti, was written in Egypt between 1047 and 1051. This text, soon translated into Latin by Aegidius of Tebaldio, exerted considerable influence on Peter of Abano, Marsilio Ficino, and Cornelius Heinrich Agrippa. It deals with the sympathies existing between plants, stones, animals, planets—and the way they should be used for magical purposes. The author also discussed the power of magical images, which he claimed were invented by Hermes Trismegistus. He also stated that Hermes was the founder of Adocentyn, an ideal city existing in Egypt before the time of the Flood. This city was organized around a solar cult whose priest was Hermes himself. Tommaso Campanella would later draw upon this text for various concepts discussed in his *City of the Sun*.⁴

THE QABALAH

The presence of Jews in Spain played an important role in the diffusion of the Qabalah. However, this study, centering around the *Sepher ha-Bahir* (Book of Light), originally developed in Languedoc, a region of southern France, in the early 12th century. Many Qabalists were to be found in this region, such as Abraham ben Isaac (died 1180), president of the tribunal of Narbonne, and Isaac the Blind (1165-1235). Shortly afterwards, the Qabalah evolved in Spain, primarily in Catalonia (Gerona) and Castile (Toledo). There, the contemplative aspect of the Qabalah of the Languedoc was enriched by Jewish thought descended from the Greco-Arabic tradition, as well as by the doctrines of Plotinus. In Zaragoza, Abraham Abulafia (1240-1291), a great figure of the ecstatic Qabalah, perfected a technique of meditation on the Hebrew letters associated with breathing. Soon afterwards, in the 13th century, there appeared the Zohar, a voluminous text which attained considerable success in the esoteric world. In 1305, in Valladolid, Spain, Moses of Leon claimed to have preserved the original copy of this treatise.⁵

ASTROLOGY

Beginning in the 12th century, there followed Latin translations of Arabic texts which were to be instrumental in the growth of astrology in Europe. Although present in the West from the 6th century, astrology was heretofore a relatively immature science. The translation of texts such as the *Kitabal Uluf* of abu-Ma'shar

(Albumazar) led to its further development. This book, which recounted the legend of the three Hermes, is a summary of Persian, Indian, and Greek astrology. Access to the basic texts of ancient astrology set into motion a considerable expansion of this body of knowledge, as evidenced by the rapid growth of calendars, almanacs, predictions, and imagery using planetary symbolism. Nonetheless, it was only in the 14th century that a Latin translation of a major text of astrology, the *Tetrabiblos* of Ptolemy, would appear.

THE EXPULSION OF THE JEWS

After the 13th century, which marked the height of the *Reconquista*, Spain abandoned the religious tolerance established by the Moslems. The Jews were already experiencing difficulties, being given the choice between conversion, exile, or death. In 1391, many allowed themselves to be baptized so as to avoid massacre. Some of them, the Marannos, converted in public, but continued to practice their religion in secret. Afterwards came the expulsions, beginning in 1483 in Andalusia, followed in 1492 with the expulsion of all the Jews by Ferdinand and Isabella. Some settled in Italy, carrying with them a secret wisdom that flourished once again. This heritage was added to that already accumulated in Italy. In fact, in 1439, the Eastern Christians, menaced by the expansion of Islam, endeavored to reach out to their counterparts in the West. With this goal in mind, a number of Eastern scholars, such as the Neoplatonist Gemistus Pletho, came to Florence to participate in a council of reconciliation. They carried with them to Italy the texts of Greek

philosophers. The attempts at reconciliation were undertaken too late to prevent the catastrophe that would very soon overwhelm the Byzantine Church: the seizure of Constantinople by the Turks in 1453. As we will see in the following chapters, it is no coincidence that the author of the *Chymical Wedding* made 1453 the year in which Christian Rosenkreuz received the announcement of an intended wedding in a vision.

THE ACADEMY OF FLORENCE

The capture of Constantinople in 1453 allowed Greek culture—in particular the works of Plato, who was only known from various extracts—to penetrate Italy. Cosimo di Medici, the ruler of Florence, was aware of the importance of this event, and so he created the Platonic Academy of Florence and requested that Marsilio Ficino (1433r499) translate Plato. An indefatigable traveler, Ficino would provide the West with its first translation of Plato, as well as translations of Plotinus, Proclus, Iamblichus, and Dionysius the Areopagite. Soon afterwards, an important development took place. The *Corpus Hermeticum*, often mentioned in the Middle Ages, had disappeared and the *Asclepius* was the only text still extant. Then, in 1460, a monk in the service of the Medicis obtained a manuscript of the *Corpus Hermeticum*. Cosimo I considered the document to be so important that he asked Marsilio Ficino to interrupt his translation of Plato so as to work upon the newly discovered material. Shortly thereafter, in 1471, Ficino published the first translation of the *Corpus Hermeticum*. This edition garnered such a widespread

readership that it would be reprinted sixteen times until the 16th century.⁶

PHILOSOPHIA PERENNIS

Ficino was convinced that the original text of the *Corpus Hermeticum* had been written in Egyptian. Hermes Trismegistus was also described as an Egyptian priest who had originated and transmitted all of the secret wisdom. Ficino, in his *Theologia Platonica*, published in 1482, devised a family tree of philosophers to whom this knowledge had descended from Hermes: Zoroaster, Orpheus, Aglaopheme, Pythagoras, and Plato.⁷ This vision gave birth to a new concept, that of the *Primordial Tradition*, a primal revelation that was perpetuated from age to age, from initiate to initiate. This concept, previously endorsed by St. Augustine, experienced a renewal due to Ficino. It was formalized in 1540 by Agostino Steuco (1496-1549), in his concept of *Philosophia Perennis*—the eternal philosophy.

It is quite understandable that this concept of eternal philosophy would find such a favorable reception in Florence. It was claimed that after the Flood, Noah had established twelve cities in Etruria (i.e., Tuscany), and a legend even claimed that his body was buried near Rome. From this arose the notion that the Tuscan dialect had its source in Etruscan, and was thus older and superior to Latin.⁸ Little effort was needed to connect Florence with the very sources of civilization—and even to the author of the *Corpus Hermeticum*—seeing that Hermes Trismegistus was claimed to be a contemporary of Noah. These ideas, debated fiercely within the Academy of

Florence, were particularly cherished by Cosimo di Medici, who felt that they provided proof of the superiority of Florence and Tuscany over the rest of Italy.

NATURAL MAGIC

Although the *Corpus Hermeticum* mentioned the secret knowledge of the Egyptians, it was rather imprecise concerning its implementation. In Treatise 13 of the corpus, Hermes Trismegistus taught his son Tat the principles of mystical regeneration which could be obtained by suppressing the senses, in negating the ill-omened influences of the stars, and allowing the Divinity to be born in man.⁹ Marsilio Ficino was not only a priest but a physician; and thus, he had a sense of the concrete. He sought the application of these theories in Neoplatonism—but primarily in the Picatrix, the works of abu-Ma'shar, and in the writings of his compatriot Peter of Abano (1250-1316), who had studied Arab magic. Ficino arrived at a “natural magic” which linked these theories with the Christian concept of the Creator's Word. His natural magic achieved considerable refinement. He made use of the sympathies—such as the planetary characters inscribed in all the elements, minerals, plants, as well as perfumes, wines, poetry, and music (Orphic hymns) to capture the *spiritus mundi*,¹⁰ the subtle energies of Creation. Marsilio Ficino is a prominent figure in the history of Western esotericism, not only for his role as translator and commentator on the ancient texts, but also for such works as *De Triplici Vita*, which exerted great influence. As Antoine Faivre has remarked, thanks to

Ficino “esotericism formed itself into a philosophy until being made an integral part of the thought of the Renaissance.”¹¹

ANGELIC MAGIC

Ficino’s most illustrious pupil was the child genius Pico della Mirandola (1463-1494), who, when merely twenty-three years old, had already studied everything then known about various religions, philosophies, and esoteric sciences. Although Ficino scorned the Qabalah, Pico della Mirandola discovered a complement to his teacher’s form of magic in this tradition. He believed it useful to reinforce natural magic by use of Qabalistic magic which was based on the energies of the empyrean. This knowledge, which invoked the angels and archangels by their names in Hebrew—described as being the language of God—possessed considerable efficacy for him. Reviving the theories of St. Jerome and Nicholas of Cusa concerning the name of Jesus, he demonstrated that the Qabalah allowed Christ’s divinity to be proven. Thus, Pico established the foundations of a “Christian Qabalah.”¹² A universalist in his thinking, he also wanted to demonstrate that all philosophical systems converged. For that reason, in 1486 he published 900 theses drawn from various sources. Among the arguments which he advanced, let us just mention that he declared magic and the Qabalah to be complementaries of Christianity (Thesis No. 7) and that he campaigned in favor of Qabalistic magic (Thesis No. 11). Pico proposed to defend these theses in a public debate, but as can be imagined, the reaction was fierce and he was forced to flee Italy

to protect himself. Nevertheless, he was rehabilitated in June of 1493 by Alexander VI, a pope who looked quite favorably upon magic and astrology.

THE VOARCHADUMIA

During this period, Italy became an active center of esotericism. Venice played an important role in the dissemination of the Qabalah, astrology, the science of numbers, and alchemy.¹³ After the 13th century, the alchemical corpus transmitted by the Arabs was completely translated and led to a flowering of writings composed by Albertus Magnus, Thomas Aquinas, Roger Bacon, Arnold of Villanova, Raymond Lully, and Nicholas Flamel. In the 14th and 15th centuries, it was accompanied by a renewal of alchemy that had adopted the Christian allegory and took on a mystical connotation that was questioned by some people. Did it involve a “*practicum* expressed in religious terms, or a mystical experience expressed in alchemical terms”?¹⁴ This trend corroborated a movement that began in the second half of the 13th century with the *Aurora consurgens* (The Rising Dawn), a treatise attributed to St. Thomas Aquinas, which represented the alchemical process as an inner regenerative experience.¹⁵ In 1478 Michael Pantheus published in Venice a large treatise entitled *Voarchadumia* which emphasized the transcendental aspect of alchemy. Legend has it that the *Voarchadumia* was a Venetian secret society. Whatever the case, many scholars journeyed to Italy to study the occult sciences. Among them were Johann Reuchlin and Cornelius Heinrich Agrippa, who

both contributed to the diffusion of esotericism throughout Europe.

DE VERBO MIRIFICO

Included among the expelled Spanish Jews who settled in Italy after 1492 was Judah Abravanel (c. 1460-1523), a physician and Qabalist. A convert to Catholicism, he was passionately fond of Neoplatonism. After his death, his *Dialoghi di Amore* (Dialogues of Love) was published, a work in which he made a synthesis of Neoplatonism and the Qabalah, thus widening the field opened by Pico della Mirandola and Marsilio Ficino. But it was to a fourth individual, Johannes Reuchlin (1455-1522), that came the honors of synthesizing the work of his three predecessors. Reuchlin journeyed to Rome in 1482 to study Hebrew, and he then traveled to Florence to meet Pico. Upon returning to Germany, he became an avid promoter of the Christian Qabalah. He published in 1494 *De Verbo Mirifico* in which he investigated more thoroughly Pico's speculations upon the Word, *Leschouah*. The impact of this book was decisive, because it was the first European work entirely dedicated to the Qabalah. It was complemented in 1517 by *De Arte Cabbalistica*, one of the fundamental texts of the Christian Qabalah. Important developments which Reuchlin gave to angelology cleansed it of the demonological suspicions which tainted Ficino's natural magic.

HARMONY OF THE WORLD

Natural magic emphasized the occult sympathies existing between all things in Creation. This concept gained an added dimension

through the efforts of Francesco Giorgi (1450-1540), a Franciscan friar of Venice. In 1525 he published *De Harmonia Mundi*, an essential text of the Christian Qabalah. His originality derived from the fact that he combined Pythagorean numerological tradition, alchemy, and the architecture of Vitruvius (1st century A.D .) with the Qabalah of Pico della Mirandola and the Neoplatonism of Marsilio Ficino. This work exerted an enormous influence over English Rosicrucians, notably Robert Fludd, and over the group of French writers called *La Pléiade*, due to the translation of Le Fèvre de la Boderie.



FIGURE 5. Cornelius Heinrich Agrippa.

OCCULT PHILOSOPHY

For Johann Reuchlin angelic magic had taken on a more precise character, but it remained basically theoretical. It was Cornelius

Heinrich Agrippa (1486-1534) who, by his practical training as a physician, moved magic towards a more concrete dimension by publishing a genuine handbook of practical magic entitled *De Occulta Philosophia*. In its first edition of 1510, this book was strongly influenced by the *Picatrix*, *Corpus Hermeticum*, and the works of Ficino. In the second edition of 1533, the Qabalah assumed a greater role. With Reuchlin, magic was a method for uniting with the Divine, whereas with Agrippa magic touched upon other subjects in applying itself to the various problems of human existence. Therefore, his magic—whether “natural,” “celestial,” or “ceremonial”—lost the subtlety which Marsilio Ficino had given it. Agrippa combined angelology, the science of numbers, and Arab magic when composing his magical squares (see fig. 6), planetary seals, and tables of correspondences between plants, minerals, numbers, and angels. Agrippa’s book, despite being placed on the index of proscribed works by Pope Pius VI, experienced a level of success which has continued to the present day.¹⁶

GIORDANO BRUNO

Giordano Bruno (1548-1600), a Dominican priest and a great traveler, was one of the individuals who contributed enormously to the spread of esotericism in Europe. Strongly influenced by the writings of his Italian compatriots Marsilio Ficino and Pico della Mirandola, as well as Cornelius Heinrich Agrippa, he assiduously read the *Corpus Hermeticum*. In his book *Spaccio della Bestia Trionfante* (*The Expulsion of the Triumphant Beast*, 1584), he went so far as to

claim that Egyptian Hermeticism was superior to Christianity. At the beginning of this work, he describes a meeting of gods who assembled for the purpose of a general reform of humanity, which implies a return to the Egyptian religion.¹⁷ This theme for the necessity of universal reform had great influence, notably upon *I Raggiugliidi Parnaso* (The Advertisements from Parnassus, 1612) by Traiano Boccalini (1556-1613). One of the chapters of this book was afterwards used as the introduction to the *Fama Fraternitatis*. Bruno was closer to Ficino than the Christian Qabalists, and he was not at all interested in the Qabalah. With him, the figure of the Christian magus disappeared entirely. He preferred the Egyptian magic of the *Asclepius*. He claimed that the Christians had stolen the symbol of the cross from the Egyptians and prophesied a return to the Egyptian religion. He lectured upon his theories in Germany at the court of Emperor Rudolph II and in England. A colorful individual, Bruno was the author of a series of books which touched upon a multitude of subjects. His theological and scientific conceptions—for example, the universe conceived as being infinite, a theory borrowed from Nicholas of Cusa—got him into trouble with the Inquisition, and in 1600 he was burned at the stake in Rome.

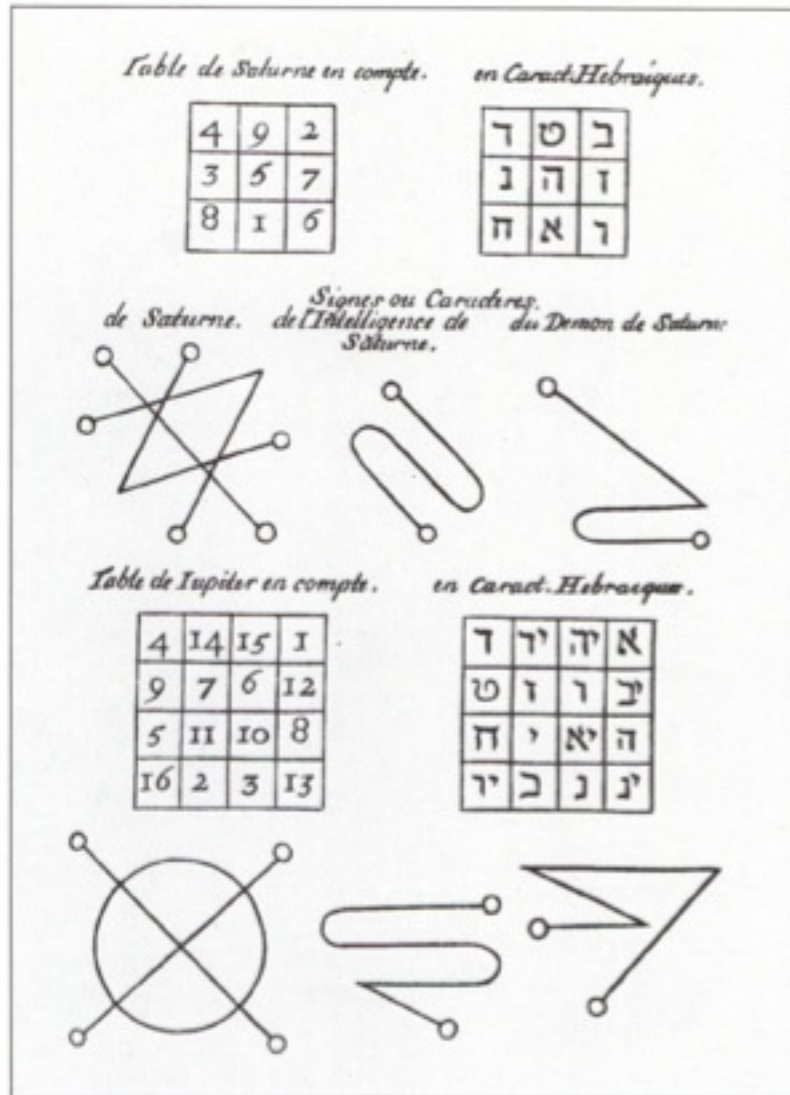


FIGURE 6. Cornelius Heinrich Agrippa, *De Occulta Philosophia*, 1510.

ALCHEMY AND NATURE

Hermeticism's spread into Germany was limited. Yet it penetrated the court of Rudolph II, nicknamed the "German Hermes," influencing in particular the alchemist Michael Maier and the astronomer Johannes Kepler, both of whom had read the *Corpus Hermeticum*. European alchemy had two periods of greatness: the 12th century which marked its genesis; and the Renaissance, where it

expanded rapidly especially in Germany which experienced in the 16th century a veritable “tidal wave of the spagyric sea.”¹⁸ In the latter period there appeared the great anthologies of alchemical texts, such as the celebrated *Theatrum chemicum* (1602), as well as the first alchemical dictionaries, which characterized the need for a thorough investigation and synthesis which had already manifested itself. Here it should be pointed out that 16th century alchemy was enriched by new qualities. The fabrication of gold was now of little concern. Instead, alchemy manifested strong spiritual connotations, stressed certain medical applications, and claimed to be a unifying science. Alchemy also sought to enter into a consideration regarding the history of Creation, of the tragic cosmogony which led not only to the fall of man, but also that of nature. The alchemist is thus not only man’s physician, assisting in his regeneration and giving birth again to his spiritual condition, but the alchemist is also nature’s physician, as his constant mission is to nurse nature so as to perfect it. Co-birth, rebirth, and nature are intimately linked in this alchemy. (Incidentally, the word “nature” comes from the Latin *natura*, the future participle of *nascor* which means “to be born.”)



FIGURE 7. Composition inspired by a portrait drawn by Augustin Hirschvogel in 1540. Lucien Braun indicates that the above-mentioned drawing is taken from *Buch Meteorum* by Franz Hogenberg (1566), while Walter Pagel describes it as coming from *Philosophia Magna* by Theodor Birkmann (1567). Josephus Stellatus (C. Hirsch), in *Pegasus Firmamenti* (1618), thought the three balls surrounded by the crosses shown on the coat of arms to be roses, and thereby concluded that these were an allusion to the Rosicrucians. On the other hand, E.D. Hauber, in *Bibliotheca Magica* (1739), claimed—without presenting any convincing arguments—that the vignettes surrounding the portrait recalled Rosicrucianism. In 1946, Josef Strebel improperly saw in these vignettes “all Rosicrucian symbolism” of Paracelsus, which the work of Walter Pagel, *Paracelse* (1962), contributed to popularize.

PARACELSUS

Theophrastus Paracelsus (1493-1541) was the individual most characteristic of this evolution in science. His work represented a gargantuan effort to make use of all of the knowledge of his era. He delved deeply into astrology, alchemy, magic, and popular traditions.¹⁹ As a physician, he protested the ideas of Galen who reigned supreme over a medicine that had been stripped of its effectiveness. In his *Volumen medicinae paramirum* and his *Opus paramirum*, he set forth the basis of a new medicine. The theory of man as a microcosm, already popularized by Johannes Scotus Erigena, took on a more exact meaning for him. For Paracelsus, philosophy was the discovery of “invisible nature.” Nature assumed an essential function for him, because God speaks to us both through the scriptures and through nature. Thus, we must attune ourselves by contemplating the Book of Nature. According to Paracelsus, man’s role is to reveal “nature in its light.” Nature remains incomplete, in its unknowing; however, its revelation may be found in man, who is born so as to lead it to its perfection.

The alchemist, in seeking to understand nature’s laws, engages in a dialogue with Creation. Through this exchange, nature’s hidden light is revealed and illuminates humanity. But the latter cannot arrive at this result without preparation, without regeneration. As Roland Edighoffer has remarked, Paracelsus described in a special way this transformation of man in his *Liber de resurrectione et corporum glorificatiorte* (1533). He repeatedly combines (seventeen times in six

pages) the symbols of the Cross and Rose and connects them with alchemical transmutation and resurrection. Paracelsus wrote: “True gold is that which emerges purified from the fire Thus, at the time of the resurrection, the impure shall be separated from the pure, it shall be born with a new body which, because it will be more luminous than the sun shall be called the glorified body.” The resurrection of Christ “is an image dear to us. . . from him unto him we shall rise, as the rose which is reborn from a similar seed.”²⁰ Paracelsus was an individual of considerable depth, and if we have emphasized certain aspects of his thinking, it is because they had a particularly important bearing on the *Fama Fraternitatis* and the *Confessio Fraternitatis*.

THE DEATH OF HERMES

The contribution of various traditions in the context of Renaissance humanism had given rise to the idea of tolerance between all religions, philosophies, and traditions. Nicholas of Cusa had formulated such ideas at the time of the council of Florence in 1439. Afterwards, Pico della Mirandola had sought to harmonize these diverse traditions. Others went much farther, such as Francesco Patrizi, who spoke of a universal philosophy, a “pansophia,” and in his book *Nova de Universis Philosophia* (1591) he had the temerity to ask Pope Gregory XIV to teach Hermeticism in Christian schools for the purpose of bringing about the establishment of a true religion. Alas, such avant-garde ideas carried little weight before the predominating politico-religious interests,

which had already given rise to a period of religious intolerance. The Wars of Religion, beginning with the 16th century, were soon to restrain the expansion of Hermeticism.

Another aspect, which passed unnoticed at this time, would soon bring into question the matter of the “Egyptian heritage.” In 1614, Isaac Casaubon wrote *De rebus sacris et ecclesiasticis exercitationes XVI*, a work in which he demonstrated that the *Corpus Hermeticum* was not of Egyptian origin and that it was written not by Hermes Trismegistus, but by Christians from around the 2nd century. This revelation put a halt to Hereticism in the Renaissance. Nevertheless, even though it severely weakened the esoteric tradition elaborated upon in the Renaissance, it did not obliterate the fact that there was in effect a transmission of knowledge to the West coming from a remote past, of an “Orient of Light” in which Egypt may be considered the center of attraction.

In any case, it may be said that the foundation of what constituted the edifice of Western esotericism—alchemy, astrology, magic, Qabalah, science of numbers, and divination—was established in the Renaissance. Thus it is astonishing to note that Casaubon’s discovery coincided with a reorganization, a refoundation of Western esotericism marked by the publication of the Rosicrucian manifestos in 1614. Christian Rosenkreuz was to replace Hermes Trismegistus and Egypt was to leave the scene, but it would eventually return, as we shall see later. This rebirth of the tradition, this renaissance, would come about in an atmosphere of crisis.



FIGURE 8. Valentin Weigel, *Studium universale*, 1695

Chapter 3

THE CRISIS OF THE EUROPEAN CONSCIOUSNESS

IN EXAMINING THE origins of Rosicrucianism, we have probed the roots of Western esotericism. It remains for us now to examine the environment which allowed the Rose to bloom on the Cross. Indeed, we need to sketch a full picture of the era in which the Rosicrucian movement developed, so as to understand the extraordinary impact that the publication of the Rosicrucian manifestos had on European civilization. At the dawn of the 17th century, Europe was being fully transformed. In describing this situation, the phrase “crisis of the European consciousness” has often been used. As Alexandre Koyré has written, during this period “the European spirit underwent—or completed—a profound spiritual revolution, a revolution which modified the foundations and even the framework of our thinking.”¹ We mention these matters so as to point out how the Rosicrucian writings appeared to offer a possible answer to the crisis faced at that time.²

THE INFINITE UNIVERSE

The development of a new cosmology was not at all unrelated to the disruptions characterizing the 17th century. Indeed, shortly after the discoveries of Nicolaus Copernicus (1473-1543), astronomy renounced the Ptolemaic system which had dominated until then. The image of a closed world was displaced by that of an infinite universe, where the Earth—and consequently humanity—was no longer in the center. At a single stroke, the theory of epicycles, which Ptolemy had used to explain planetary movements, was demolished. This ineffectual theory was mocked in Chapter 13 of the *Confessio Fraternitatis*.

This new vision of the world gave rise to three conflicting positions. The first, promulgated by Galileo Galilei (1564-1642), established a new scientific attitude and opened the way to a rational vision of the universe, that of a world reduced to geometrical dimensions. Exploiting a recent discovery of the Dutch, Galileo constructed a telescope that allowed him to combine mathematics and observation. We can easily imagine the Church's attitude when confronted with his vision of the world—a vision so contrary to that of the Scriptures. Churchmen condemned the Copernican system, and Galileo was soon forced to renounce such theories. This event, marking the rift between the Catholic Church and science, inaugurated a long period when scientific research was crushed by dogmatic fanaticism. Giordano Bruno and Galileo bore the brunt of this hostility.

Johannes Kepler (1571-1630) offered a third way. A contemporary of Galileo, he was the assistant to Tycho Brahe at the imperial court

of Rudolph II, the “German Hermes.” Kepler’s view of the universe differed in that it combined heliocentrism with the Hermeticism of the Renaissance. In his *Mysterium cosmographicum* (1596), he made the Sun the center of the World Soul, the source which imparted movement to the planetary souls. But before long Kepler would change his mind regarding this matter, and when this work was reissued in 1606, he found it advisable to replace the word “soul” with that of “force.” This change in attitude involved him in a celebrated controversy with Robert Fludd.³

This new vision of the cosmos suddenly disclosed a concept originally posed by Democritus— that of the vacuum in which the universe moved. Since the time of Aristotle, this subject had been considered to be of little merit, but in the 16th century it was seen in a different light. This theory, which challenged the omnipotence of God, is even now controversial.⁴ This is undoubtedly the reason why the *Fama Fraternitatis* makes this statement: “the vacuum does not exist.” All of these elements changed the relationship of humans with the universe. The latter was demythified, as it was now seen as a vast machine made up of cogwheels that could be investigated using one’s reason.



FIGURE 9. Aristotle, Ptolemy, and Copernicus on the frontispiece of a book by Galileo, *Dialogue Concerning the Two Principal Systems of the Universe*, 1635.

THE CATALOGUES OF THE WORLD

The same situation applied to the terrestrial world, as its limits were pushed back with the discovery of America in 1492 and of the maritime route to India in 1498. These voyages contributed to the creation of the first semi-accurate maps of the world, such as Sebastian Münster's *Cosmographia* published in 1544, a work which experienced immediate success, or the equally celebrated *Atlas* of Gerhardus Mercator. The progress of printing engraved materials also led to the rapid expansion of scientific works. In the 16th century, the first “catalogues” enumerating the many natural riches

of the world were published. Representative of this movement were the immense herbals published by Otto Brunfels of Strasbourg and Leonhart Fuchs of Tübingen, as well as similar works compiled by Konrad von Gesner of Switzerland; Ulisse Aldrovandi of Bologna, Italy; and Guillaume Rondelet and Pierre Belon of France. In this era, European princes also loved to collect the marvels of nature—hence the importance of curiosity cabinets, where various oddities were assembled. In this regard Emperor Rudolph II is particularly interesting in that he associated the possession of such curiosities with the assumption of their magical powers.⁵

HUMAN ANATOMY REVEALED

If the vision of the macrocosm changed, that of the microcosm also evolved. In 1543—the same year that Copernicus’ book on heliocentrism appeared—Andreas Vesalius (1514-1564) published a pivotal work in the history of medicine, *De Humani Corporis Fabrica*. This volume, which is the source of human anatomy, attacked the opinions of Galen (c. 131-201), long considered to be the foremost authority in medicine. Another group of writings which strongly influenced the evolution of medicine were those of Paracelsus. From 1560, Johann Huser began to compile the manuscripts of this medical pioneer, which eventually led to the publication of the complete works of Paracelsus in ten volumes (1589-1591). Also contributing to the advance of medicine was the invention of the microscope by Zacharias Janssen, a spectacles maker of Middelburg—although this invention is sometimes attributed to Cornelis

Drebbel or others. Shortly afterwards William Harvey (1578-1657), the “Copernicus of Medicine,” published his *De Motu Cordis et Sanguinis in Animalibus*, in which he revealed his discoveries regarding blood circulation.

These elements, as a whole, helped to modify humanity’s view of the universe. No longer did humans contemplate the mysteries of a world to which a vengeful God had exiled them. Theology was no longer needed to understand the world; rather, humans observed, calculated, and understood the forces ruling all creation. The role of master and possessor of nature had been bestowed upon humanity.



FIGURE 10. Otto Brunfels, *Herbarum vivae eicones ad naturae imitationem*, 1541

THE REFORMATION

While science was being transformed, religion was experiencing a

full-blown crisis. This was not an unprecedented event, as Christianity had already been torn apart by the Western Schism in 1378, when a group of ambitious cardinals elected two popes—one in Avignon, Clement VII, and the other in Rome, Urban VI—each of whom excommunicated his rival. This sorry spectacle of rival popes lasted until 1417. Furthermore, with the invention of printing, the circulation of ideas became more feasible and the humanism of the Renaissance opened the West to various sources of spirituality. Such principles were probably not irrelevant to the reflections of many thinkers when they pondered their own *naturae imitationem*, 1541. religion. They each questioned the way by which the Church accomplished its ministry and how it was overly preoccupied with temporal matters.

The unity of the Western Church was once again torn asunder by the Reformation, which claimed to be a return to the spirit of the Gospels. In 1517, Luther posted his ninety-five theses denouncing the commerce in indulgences and relics established by Rome. Reformers emphasized the fact that salvation is a grace derived from one's faith and not one's works, and they placed the authority of the Bible beyond the dogmas established by human beings. Luther also accused the Church of keeping people steeped in superstition. Within a few years, at the instigation of Henry VIII (1532), England separated itself from Rome, and the Nordic countries likewise dropped their allegiance to the Pope.

THE REVOLTS

Unfortunately, the Reformation gave rise to many excesses. Quarrels quickly arose concerning how reform was to be achieved. In the years 1522 and 1523 various German nobles wanted to spread the new “true faith,” and thus engaged in armed insurrections against higher authorities. Right afterwards, from 1524 to 1526, the Peasants’ War wracked Germany, when the peasants likewise took to arms. Being of the opinion that the princes and nobles of this world barred their path to the Gospel, and feeling that their mission was to reestablish the true faith, they did not hesitate to massacre all those opposing their aims. As can be seen, the Reformation generated innumerable political problems which threatened the equilibrium of the Holy Roman Empire. The emperors who succeeded Charles V after 1556 oscillated between religious tolerance (Rudolph II) and Catholic intransigence (Ferdinand II). The situation finally exploded in 1618 with the Defenestration of Prague, when the imperial governors were thrown out the window of Hradcany Castle by Protestants. This act helped to drag Germany into the Thirty Years’ War, during which almost half of Germany’s population was killed.

THE COUNTER-REFORMATION

The Catholic Church reacted to Protestant criticisms by starting the Counter-Reformation, which was inaugurated at the Council of Trent (1545-1563). This council was characterized by a tightening of discipline. The Inquisition took on a new life and the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith was created. The latter was charged

with publishing an index of prohibited books—a practice which was only discontinued in 1966. Innumerable esoteric and scientific works written during the Renaissance were placed in this index. Events such as these undoubtedly forced the practitioners of esotericism to form into secret societies, closed to outsiders.

THE WARS OF RELIGION

Germany once again was experiencing a fragile peace as a result of the Concord of 1554 and the Peace of Augsburg in 1555—but now it was France that burst into flames. The Massacre of Vassy in 1562, when French Protestants were slaughtered, launched the religious wars in France. The St. Bartholomew’s Day Massacre in 1572 marked a decisive turn in the conflict between Catholic and Protestant forces. Each camp was on the defensive: the Catholics created the Holy League to fight the Calvinists, and on the other side Protestant princes throughout Europe united in opposition. France finally returned to calm under the rule of Henry IV. His accession to the throne in February 1594 raised great hopes throughout Europe, as many saw him as a person who could reconcile all of Christianity. One of these was Giordano Bruno, who traveled throughout Europe preaching general reform. Having pinned his hopes on Henry III, Bruno now felt Henry IV was the man of the hour. Tommaso Campanella likewise had high hopes that this king would achieve such reform.⁶

Positions such as these were supported by a text circulating throughout Europe at this time. It described Henry IV as the “new

David,” the king “of the ancient prophecies,” who would restore the unity of Christianity before the return of Christ.⁷ As we shall see later on, Henry IV participated at this time in the creation of a league of Protestant princes. In 1610, the assassination of the king put a definite end to such hopes. The bitterness which laid waste to Europe may be noted in the *Advertisements from Parnassus*, a book published in 1612 by Traiano Boccalini. This work, which is a diatribe against the Catholic hegemony established by the Habsburgs, made Henry IV into a veritable hero. The author appeared disillusioned at the chances for establishing universal reform leading to peace in Europe. It was not by accident that a chapter from Boccalini’s work, entitled “Universal Reformation of the Whole World,” was placed at the beginning of the *Fama Fraternitatis* in several editions.

THE IMITATION OF CHRIST

During the same period, Europe was harvesting the fruits of movements which, since the 12th century, had attempted new forms of spirituality. These included such groups as the Brothers of the Free Spirit, the Friends of God, the Beguines, and the Beghards. Counted among them were such teachers as Meister Eckhart, Johannes Tauler, Heinrich Suso, and Jan van Ruysbroeck—individuals associated with philosophic procedure and inner quiet. The *Devotio Moderna*, a movement arising in the Netherlands at the end of the 14th century that sought to emphasize piety and inner asceticism, also developed in Germany. The jewel of this spiritual

movement is the *Imitation of Christ*, a book much esteemed by 17th-century Rosicrucians.



FIGURE 11. Henry IV of France.

THE MYSTIC WEDDING

Among advocates of this new spirituality, especially prominent in the Protestant movement, three names must be mentioned. The first, Valentin Weigel (1533-1588) is particularly interesting due to his efforts to synthesize various currents of his age—those derived from Eckhart's lineage; those from the Paracelsian magico-alchemical movement; and those from the spiritualists Caspar

Schwenckfeld and Sebastien Frank. He advocated a very internalized religious method, centered on a work of inner transformation and regeneration. He developed a theory of knowledge based on the ancient phrase “Know Thyself.”⁸ The second, Philip Nicolai (1556-1608), was a pioneer of the “new piety.” Like his predecessor, he stressed the processes of regeneration, which, in this instance, took the form of the mystic wedding. In his book *The Mirror of the Joys of the Eternal Life* (1599), he described the seven phases of this regeneration. This author had a strong influence on Johann Valentin Andreae. The third individual who is of special interest is Johann Arndt (1555-1621), considered to be the precursor of German Pietism. His book, *True Christianity*, was an immense success, going through more than 300 printings. We owe to this theologian and alchemist a commentary on Heinrich Khunrath’s *Amphitheatrum Sapientiae Aeternae*. Some excerpts of his writings regarding the “Book of Nature” can also be found, almost word for word, in the Rosicrucian manifestos.

As with his two predecessors, Arndt strongly emphasized the necessity of rebirth. Johann Valentin Andreae considered Johann Arndt to be his spiritual father. As we have noted, the religious situation in the 16th century was an explosive one. But with the third generation of Protestants, doubt had settled in. Protestantism, by attempting to justify its positions, had fallen into theological excesses that placed all blame on Catholicism. The Reformers now questioned themselves about the need for a second Reformation.

Imago Ioachinica &

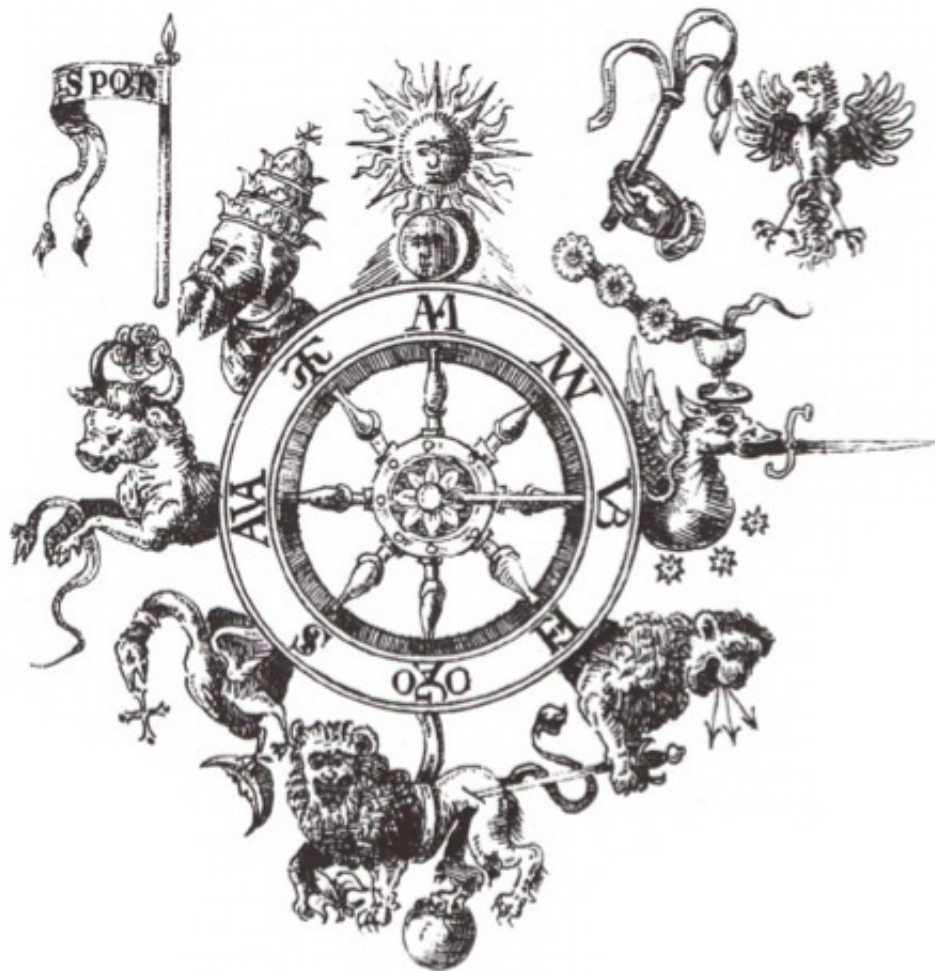


FIGURE 12. Simon Studion, *Naometria*, drawing by Jakob Lederlin.

Chapter 4

THE NAOMETRIA AND THE AGE OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

AT THE BEGINNING of the 17th century, Germany was beset with pestilence and famines resulting from particularly unfavorable climatic conditions. The people of this country sought signs of better times to come. In 1603 many detected a favorable portent in the trigon of Jupiter and Saturn—in astrology, a very positive aspect of 120° between two planets—located in the triplicity of fire (Aries, Leo, Sagittarius). The following year, a new star or supernova appeared in the same triplicity. Johannes Kepler in *De Stella nova et coincidente principio Trigoni ignei* (1606) detected in this the sign of imminent political and religious changes. He drew parallels between the appearance of this new star and the birth of an individual who would be the instigator of a new religious movement. The goal of this person would be to reconcile fellow Christians and to bring about “reasonable reform.” The second Rosicrucian manifesto, the *Confessio Fraternitatis*, referred to this development by observing that the Lord God gave proofs that we may read in the heavens, in the constellations of Serpentarius

and Cygnus—i.e., the Serpent and Swan

In the years 1604 and 1605, the appearance of a comet excited people's imaginations and gave impetus to a millennialist atmosphere. The Protestant world was particularly receptive to such circumstances, and many prophecies announcing the end of the world were in circulation. Even Luther, in *Supputatio annorum mundi* (1540), recalled the prophecy of Elijah. The latter was based on the announcement of the prophet Malachi: "Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the Lord: And he shall turn the heart of the fathers to the children, and the heart of the children to their fathers, lest I come and smite the earth with a curse" (Malachi 4:5-6). In the New Testament, St. John likewise announced that Elijah would return to the side of Christ at the end of time (Revelation 11:3-6). The one who had been raised toward heaven upon a chariot of fire (II Kings 2:1-13) would return so as to prepare humanity. The Talmud expanded further on the prophecy of Malachi, stating specifically that the universe would last 6,000 years, at the end of which the millennium marking the completion of time would begin.

The Qabalists of the Renaissance made this theory fashionable by indulging in speculations whose purpose was to calculate this fateful day. Guillaume Postel had announced in 1543 that the last age of the world was imminent, and Pico della Mirandola had indicated that 1583 would be the pantocratic year. For Luther, the year 1532 corresponded to the year 5640, according to the age of Creation. He thought, therefore, that the end of time was quite near. Chapter IV

of the second Rosicrucian manifesto, *Confessio Fraternitatis*, also made reference to this prophecy by speaking of “the next lighting of the sixth candelabra”—in other words, to the fact that the 6,000 fateful years were drawing near. Melchior Hoffman, an Anabaptist, also foresaw for 1533 the beginning of a thousand-year reign that would mark the end of the world.

In the 17th century many individuals engaged in such chronological speculations. Among them Simon Studion (1543-c. 1605) was an outstanding figure, as he has left us a voluminous body of work devoted to this subject that is entitled the *Naometria*. This text is of prime importance because its author wrote it in the very same region and period that Rosicrucianism was born and because certain concepts he revealed were later found in the *Fama Fraternitatis* and the *Confessio Fraternitatis*, the first two Rosicrucian manifestos. A curious coincidence may be noted: the date of the symbolic opening of Christian Rosenkreuz’s tomb is the same as that of the final draft of the *Naometria*: 1604. These characteristics have led certain historians to regard Simon Studion’s work as a Rosicrucian text. Arthur Edward Waite, in his book *The Real History of the Rosicrucians* (1887), described Rosicrucianism as an extension of the *Militia Crucifera Evangelica* spoken of by Studion. But soon afterwards Waite abandoned this hypothesis.

SIMON STUDION

Simon was the son of Jakob Studion, cook at the court of Württemberg at Stuttgart.¹ Like most of those who were part of the

17th-century Rosicrucian movement, Simon attended the highly renowned University of Tübingen. While there, he studied theology and devoted himself passionately to mathematics under a noted professor, Samuel Heyland. The latter, a famed astronomer and astrologer, introduced his young student to the science of numbers, which were said to reveal the mysteries of Creation. Simon wished to become a preacher, but in 1565 he was forced to renounce this career due to his stammering. Instead, he became a preceptor at the Latin school in Marbach, a little town near Stuttgart.

At this time his talents as a poet were revealed, and he gained a certain renown after writing a funeral eulogy for Johann Brenz (1499-1570), one of the greatest Lutheran theologians of the period. Studion's most important work was a Latin poem containing over 10,000 hexameters, which he composed for the wedding of Duke Ludwig of Württemberg in November 1575. In this work, he also revealed his talents as a historian, as he included in his poem a genealogical study of the ruling family. Indeed, Studion was not simply a poet, he was also a historian and a pioneer in the field of archeology. The archeologists of Württemberg revere him as the true father of Roman archeology. To this day one may admire in Stuttgart the collection of Roman antiquities he assembled, notably during his researches in Benningen. The respect he felt for past events was singular, because his researches led him to perfect a theory for calculating the hidden cycles of history. He recorded his reflections in the *Naometria*, a prophetic and visionary work in which he announced the imminence of great upheavals.

Naometria is a Greek word that means “measure of the temple” or “the art of measuring the temple.” In the preface to his work, Studion informs us that it was “from the book of the art of measuring the temple of God, the altar, and the worshipers who are found here, with the assistance of a rod.” What temple was Studion speaking of? Was it the one that the prophet Ezekiel had announced as appearing before the end of time for bringing together the chosen ones (Ezekiel 40-43)?

St. John also referred to this temple in Revelations. Like Ezekiel, he described the visions he obtained when he was transported to Heaven. There he saw God sitting on a throne in the midst of his heavenly court and holding in his hand the Book with seven seals. When a lamb opened these seals one after the other, extraordinary events occurred. After the sounding of the sixth trumpet, the visionary was entrusted with the gift of prophecy. He was then given a rod to measure the new temple of God.

In the *Naometria*, Simon Studion repeated this episode and adapted it. The visionary, who, in the Revelation of St. John, measured the temple was assisted by two witnesses charged with prophesying for 1,260 days. They were like two torches standing before the God of the earth (Revelation 11:3-4). Although they were not named, tradition claims that they were Moses and Elijah. In the *Naometria*, Studion also mentions two witnesses charged with prophesying during the time of trial. The first is Luther, who attempted to put Christianity back on the proper path. As for the second, it appears that Studion assigned himself this role. It might even be asked if he

is not also like “the man clothed in linen,” who, according to Ezekiel (Ezekiel 9:3) and St. John (Revelation 7:2-3), is charged with surveying the city so as to trace a cross on the foreheads of those who would be spared the final punishment. In the *Naometria*, these chosen ones are called the *Cruce Signati*—in other words, those who are marked by the sign of the cross. They are brought together in the Militia Evangelica so as to prepare for the Age of the Holy Spirit. Undoubtedly Studion describes this temple because he feels that the end of time is near, that the time of the last revelation has arrived, and that the new era—that of the age of the Holy Spirit—will soon begin.



FIGURE 13. Simon Studion (1543-c. 1605).

THE AGE OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

In the 16th century the subject of the Age of the Holy Spirit was as

popular as the Aquarian Age is popular in our own era; it is not surprising, therefore, that Studion refers to it constantly. During that period, many people felt that this age was near. This theory, which was also discussed in the Rosicrucian manifestos, was developed by Joachim of Fiore (1135-1202), an Italian monk and theologian.

According to him, the history of the world had unfolded in three successive ages. The first was the Age of the Father, which started with Adam. This was followed by the Age of the Son, initiated by Jesus Christ; and the third was the Age of the Holy Spirit, which would be marked by the end of time. With each of the eras he associated a flower. Thus, he gave a nettle to the Age of the Father, because during this period people lived in fear. With the Age of the Son he associated the rose, which represented the Christ who had freed humanity. Finally, he attached the lily to the Age of the Holy Spirit and made this period one of charity by which man would become the friend of God.

According to Joachim of Fiore, this final age would begin in 1260. He took this number from the prophet Daniel, who had announced that the duration of the rule of the impious would last until “a time and times and the dividing of time” (Daniel 7:25). This expression is interpreted as evoking three and a half years—i.e, forty-two months or 1,260 days (St. John took this number from Revelations). Joachim of Fiore interpreted this number as relating to the year 1260, which marked the appearance of a New Church, one that was more pure, replacing the one founded by St. Peter. This new religion, monastic and mystical in nature, would be advanced by the Order of the Boni

Eremitae.

Despite his audacious opinions, Joachim of Fiore was unconcerned. It should be noted that this erudite theologian was the friend of several popes. However, in 1215—about a dozen years after his death—the fourth Lateran Council condemned Joachim’s ideas as being subversive.² Nonetheless, the theory of the three ages became quite popular and lasted until the 17th century. Thus, it is not surprising that the theory is found in the *Naometria*. Simon Studion’s book also reproduced certain illustrations from the *Vaticina sive Prophetiae Abbatis Iochimi*, a collection of predictions attributed to Joachim of Fiore, which was published in 1598 (see fig. 12).

The subtitle of the *Naometria* indicates that it is an “introduction to the knowledge of sacred secrets, associated with an exploration of the unfoldment of all time in the Church of God and of its position by the grace of the Holy Spirit.” The author indulged in scholarly calculations, based on various numerical cycles including that of the 1,260-year cycle. He drew up numerous tables wherein the dates of great events in human history were placed in parallel columns. He tried to show that the year 1620 would feature the end of the Antichrist’s reign, the fall of the pope, and the fall of Islam. According to Studion, the Messianic time would begin in 1623, and he indicated that those individuals who had shown themselves faithful to God would become members of a completely regenerated religion and would be called together in a New Temple. His book consists of numerous speculations regarding the measurements of

this square temple. It includes designs of the different parts of this structure based on the descriptions given by the prophet Ezekiel (Ezekiel 40-44). It should be remembered that Simon Studion was not the only person in Tübingen to meditate on the temple announced by the prophet. One of the key individuals in the emergence of Rosicrucianism, Johann Valentin Andreae, worked on this subject for his teacher, the theologian Matthias Hafenreffer.

Simon Studion indicated that in July 1586 a secret conference was held in Lüneburg, which was attended by certain German Protestant princes, as well as representatives of the kings of France and Denmark and the queen of England. Their aim was to form a league of evangelical defense—the *Crucifera Militia Evangelica*, also called the *Militia Evangelica*—to counteract the harmful schemes of an imperialistic Catholic league that was shamefully using Christianity to justify its demands. The mission of the *Militia Evangelica* was to prepare for the new era. Studion mentioned its next meeting in Constance, in a gathering that he saw as the second Council of Constance—let us recall that the objective of the first (1414-1418) was to put an end to the Western Schism. With this new council, Simon Studion undoubtedly foresaw the coming of a Christianity unified through a religion of the Spirit.

Certain historians describe this conference as a Rosicrucian meeting. Had the conference of Lüneburg really taken place? No one knows for certain. However, in considering the role accorded by the *Naometria* to the duke of Württemberg, it may be seen as an allegory relating to the union of Protestant princes, then in full

gestation. The union would be founded a few years later, in 1608, by the duke of Württemberg. In 1586, the year to which Simon Studion refers, the preliminaries to this creation first appeared. The Earl of Leicester, acting upon Queen Elizabeth's instructions, made contact with most European Protestant princes for the purpose of forming a Protestant league. As part of this mission, the Earl of Leicester continued the work undertaken previously by Philip Sidney, who had met Emperor Rudolph II with the same purpose in mind. Furthermore, in 1597, Henry IV of France had sent Guillaume Ancel to Germany to bring about the creation of such an association. Henry IV directed this group, but it was Frederick of Württemberg who took the lead. Let us recall that the *Naometria* was dedicated to three monarchs: King Henry IV of France; King James I of England; and Duke Frederick of Württemberg. Moreover, Studion made Frederick the key individual of the great universal reformation he announced in the *Naometria*. He was also convinced that Württemberg would play a major role in the ushering in of a new age.



FIGURE 14. Detail from Simon Studion, *Naometria*, drawing by Jakob Lederlin.

THE NAOMETRIA NOVA

Simon Studion was aware of Duke Frederick's interest in the occult sciences, the latter being an Anglophile who was therefore in contact with the English Neoplatonic movements that had developed under the influence of John Dee. In 1596, Studion sent the duke the manuscript of the *Naometria*. Frederick was hardly prepared to give his undivided attention to the esoteric speculations of this text, as he had become wary of occultists. He had just arrested Georg Hanauer, an alchemist who had abused his trust, and in April of the following year Hanauer was executed. However, during this period some copies of the *Naometria* began to circulate, notably among the students of Tübingen University. This was when Johann Valentin Andreae and his friend Tobias Hess became aware of this amazing text. Another individual, Philip Ludwig, count palatine of Neuburg, became fascinated with the *Naometria* and

proposed to publish it. To satisfy the requirements of this edition, Studion had to revamp the text completely. This second version of his work, called the *Naometria Nova*, appeared in 1604.

By that time the manuscript, entirely in Latin, comprised 1,790 pages. Its dedication to the monarchs of Europe is followed by an introduction on the mysteries of the Holy Scripture and by a conversation between Nathanel and Kleophas, two witnesses to Christ's resurrection. The work finishes with the Beatitudes—in other words, the Sermon on the Mount. The entire volume is illustrated with many drawings executed by Jakob Lederlin. At the end of the *Naometria Nova* is found the score of a motet for six voices composed by Jean Brauhart which set to music an enigmatic text of Studion entitled “Up Towards the Imminent Destiny of Present Time”:

The Nymph honors the Lilies,
The Lion [honors] the Nymph.
All the other camps [honor] the Lion.
All of them are marked by the image of the cross.
The Lilies, the Nymph, and the Lion with the aid of God will
devastate
The Sun, the Moon, and the Bird of Quirinus.
The Earth will condemn to the wheel the Lilies,
The Water of the sea [will condemn] the Lion,
The Guardian of the Bear will condemn the Nymph with its
allies.

Simon Studion indicated that this poem was meant to celebrate the

eternal friendship between the Lilies, the Lion, and the Nymph. Was he speaking here of the friendship that united the lilies of Henry IV with the lion of England and the lion of Frederick of Württemberg? This text can also be interpreted as relating to the role of the Protestant leader Frederick of Württemberg (the lion) in driving out the Habsburgs, the corrupt Roman Catholics (the eagle), so as to usher in the era of the lilies characterizing the Age of the Holy Spirit.³

The text of the *Naometria* was never published, undoubtedly due to the fact that its author died in the year following its final revision, but fortunately the library of Stuttgart has carefully preserved the manuscript. What of the great upheaval announced by Simon Studion for 1620? Admittedly, the final revelation did not occur; but at this time Germany entered into one of the darkest periods of its history. On November 8, 1620, the terrible Battle of White Mountain took place, which witnessed the defeat of the Protestants by the Catholics. The Habsburg eagle triumphed over Frederick's lion, leading to the frightful Thirty Years' War (see Chapter 9).

THE THIRD ELIJAH

As noted previously, the name of Elijah was frequently used among those individuals who, since the Renaissance, had hoped for the coming of the revelation that would mark the end of time. However, Paracelsus gave the name a new dimension in the form of *Elias Artista*. In *De Mineralibus*, a work relating his own discoveries, Paracelsus announced that nature hid many more secrets and that

God would soon send a person who would reveal every marvel. Returning to this subject in another book entitled *Von den natürlichen Dingen* (1525), he stated that this chosen one, characterized as an accomplished alchemist, would be called Elias. Another text, *De Tinctur* (1570), long attributed to Paracelsus although it was written thirty years after his death, called this messenger Artista. Thus was born the myth of Elias Artista, who would enjoy great renown among both the followers of Paracelsus and the first readers of the Rosicrucian manifestos.

Some of these individuals made the connection between the coming of Elias Artista and the establishment of the Age of the Holy Spirit, the third era previously announced by Joachim of Fiore. In fact, when the first Elijah had been raised toward the heavens, a second Elijah would come in the person of John the Baptist to precede the Son (Matthew 11:14; 12:10-12). Moreover, the third age, that of the Holy Spirit, would be introduced by a third manifestation of Elijah, who was regarded by some to be the Elias Artista announced by Paracelsus. As Antoine Faivre mentions in “Élie Artiste ou le Messie des Philosophes de la Nature,”⁴ the references to Elias Artista multiplied at the beginning of the 17th century.

The most characteristic work of this period was *Disquisitio de Helia certum* (1606) by Raphael Eglin Iconius. This Paracelsian, a professor of theology and alchemist at the court of Maurice of Hesse-Kassel, seemed to have played a key role in the publication of the *Fama Fraternitatis*. In his work, he described Elias Artista as an ideal alchemist and examined the supposed benefits marking his coming.

Iconius pondered whether he should be considered a real being or whether he symbolized the “sidereal influence” that marked the golden age soon to be established.

For Benedictus Figulus, the hour of the revelation had sounded, and the time of Elias Artista had come. This alchemist of Utenhoven, in contact with the Rosicrucian movement of Tübingen, felt that the personage announced by Paracelsus had arrived and would usher in the Golden Age. This is what he expressed in two works published in 1608: *Rosarium Novum Olympicum* and *Thesaurinella chymica aurea tripartita*. Around the same time Oswald Croll, a celebrated Paracelsian and physician to Christian of Anhalt, stated in his *Basilica Chemica* that the third age, that of the Holy Spirit, would be marked by the coming of Elias Artista, the restorer of the “light of Grace and of Nature.

The works we have cited appeared during the period when the *Fama Fraternitatis* was circulating in manuscript form. What is amazing is that this first manifesto did not make any reference to Elias Artista, although he was constantly present in Rosicrucian circles. The question, therefore, is whether Elias Artista was transformed into Christian Rosenkreuz. Whatever the truth of the matter, such doubts were kept alive after the publication of the *Fama Fraternitatis* in 1614. The letter written by Adam Haselmayer, inserted into the first edition of this book, probably contributed to the establishment of this opinion. In this instance the author made the connection between Elias Artista announced by Paracelsus and the coming of Christian Rosenkreuz. Many other works took a

similar stand, such as *Helias Tertius* by Adam Bruxius and *Iudicium theologicum* by David Mederes, published in 1616. These two authors saw in the Rosicrucian fraternity the third Elijah prophesized by Malachi. As Antoine Faivre has stated, “During these decades, the name of Elias Artista would often not designate an individual, but a grouping of philosophers and scholars who are thought to have worked in favor of a spiritual, religious, scientific renewal.”⁵ These elements would help to assure the great popularity of the newly formed Rosicrucian movement.

THE LION OF THE SEPTENTRION

Adam Haselmayer’s letter reproduced in the first edition of the *Fama Fraternitatis* also referred repeatedly to a prophecy very popular in Europe at this time: that of the Lion of the Septentrion. Incorrectly attributed to Paracelsus, its origins can be placed around 1605.⁶ It announced an imminent upheaval, both religious and political, following the discovery of three immense treasures in Italy, Bavaria, and a place located between Spain and France. Those individuals who brought the treasures to light would use these riches for humanitarian ends. These treasures contained, among other things, a book containing the secret of the Great Work, following Paracelsian processes. The prophecy also spoke of the war against the Antichrist, and it attacked the Sophists as well as Aristotle and Galen, two individuals criticized in the early pages of the *Fama Fraternitatis*.

Undoubtedly the reason for the success of this prophecy was that

it announced an era when a yellow lion would come from the Septentrion (North) and struggle with the eagle before establishing an age of bliss. This prophecy could at times be read as an alchemical text (the lion and the eagle were used in alchemical iconography to represent the process of uniting sulfur and mercury) and at other times in a political light (the war between the eagle of Habsburg and the lion of Frederick V).⁷ Chapter VI of the *Confessio Fraternitatis* makes reference to this prophecy. A final prophecy deserves to be noted—namely, the one that Paracelsus announced in his book *Aurora Philosophorum*. He indicated that, just as Christ had come to redeem humanity, at the end of time a very pure individual would purify and liberate all Creation by exuding rose-colored drops of blood by which the world would be redeemed from its Fall.⁸

This brief survey demonstrates the complexity of the era in which Rosicrucianism was born, due on the one hand to the new findings of science, and on the other hand to the religious conflicts that had given rise to the expectation of the appearance of a new religion. These elements, combined with the eschatological environment then prevailing, give us a glimpse of the many fears assailing the people who lived at the end of the 16th century. What solution would present it self to free them from this impasse?

Allgemeine vnd General
REFORMATION,
 der ganzen weiten Welt.
 Neben der
FAMA FRA-
TERNITATIS,
 Des löblichen Ordens des
 Rosenkreuzes / an alle Gelehrte
 vnd Häupter Europæ geschrie- (1)
 ben: 519 Qu,
 Auch einer kurzen **RESPONSION,**
 von dem Herrn Haselmeyer gestellet / welcher
 deswegen von den Jesuitern in gefänglich ein-
 gezogen / vnd auff eine Gallere ge-
 schmiedet:
 Inzo öffentlich in Druck verfertiget /
 vnd allen treuen Herren communiciret
 worden.
 —————
 Gedruckt zu Cassel / durch Wilhelm Wessell /
 ANNO M. DC. XIV.

FIGURE 15. *Fama Fraternitatis*, first Rosicrucian manifesto, 1614

Chapter 5

THE ECHOES OF THE ROSE CROSS

ON THE EVE of the publication of the Rosicrucian manifestos, Europe was embroiled in the strife engendered by its moral crisis. Everyone was longing for a “new Reformation.” It was in this context that the Rosicrucians sent out their call proposing new means for restoring harmony. In general, we can say that the Rosicrucian Order proposed Hermeticism as a solution for the enveloping crisis. With this intention in mind, an anonymous manifesto usually called the *Fama Fraternitatis* was published in 1614 at the print shop of Wilhelm Wessel in Kassel, Germany. The complete title is: “Universal and General Reformation of the whole wide world; together with the *Fama Fraternitatis* of the Laudable Fraternity of the Rosy Cross, written to all the Learned and Rulers of Europe also a short reply by Herr Haselmayer, for which he was seized by the Jesuits and put in irons on a Galley. Now put forth in print and communicated to all true hearts.” The text constituting the middle portion, the *Fama Fraternitatis*, had already been circulating in Germany as a manuscript since 1610. It is the only part that has been retained in modern editions of this manifesto.

ADVERTISEMENTS FROM PARNASSUS

Introduced by a short preface, the first Rosicrucian manifesto consisted of three distinct texts. The first explained the necessity for a general reformation of the world. Although not indicated, this was a German translation of Notice 77 from Traiano Boccalini's book *I Ragguagli di Parnaso* (The Advertisements from Parnassus), a little known text published in Venice in 1612. However, it is important as it placed the Rosicrucian project in context—that is, in describing the necessity for a reorganization of a Europe in agony. Thus, it is pertinent that we present here the author's intentions. Boccalini, a friend of Galileo, belonged to the antipapal circle of the Venetian patriot and statesman Paolo Sarpi. Boccalini's satiric work used mythology to depict the political climate then prevailing in Europe. He criticized the hegemony of the Spanish Habsburg kings over Christian Europe. In many places Henry IV of France appears as a hero, and one of the scenes in the book emphasizes the despair felt after his assassination in 1610.

APOLLO'S REFORM

The portion of the *Advertisements from Parnassus* quoted in the *Fama Fraternitatis* describes how Apollo learned from Emperor Justinian that the Earth's inhabitants were suffering great despair due to the incessant quarrels which set them at odds with one another. Apollo was unstinting in his efforts to send countless guides and philosophers to humanity in order to teach them excellent morals, and so he decided to propose a universal reform that would be

conducive to restoring humanity to its original purity. To accomplish this end, he assembled on Parnassus the seven sages of Greece, among whom were Cato, Seneca, Thales, Solon, and others. Each of the sages made his proposals. Thales, who thought that hypocrisy and deceit were the primary causes of evil among humanity, proposed that a little window be drilled in people's hearts so as to bring about candor and transparency in their relationships. At once an objection was raised: if each person could see into the hearts of the princes who ruled this world, it would be impossible for them to govern! Thales' proposal was immediately shelved.

Solon felt that disorders were provoked by the hates and jealousies raging among humans. Thus, he counseled that charity, love, and tolerance be spread among them. He added that if property could be more equally divided, life would be better. But once again the critics protested and the sages of Parnassus called Solon's proposal "utopian." Cato proposed an extreme solution: a new flood to remove in a single stroke all "evildoers." Finally, after everyone had expressed their ideas, the project of Apollo's universal reform ended up in regulating the price of beans and anchovies. Through this satire, Traiano Boccalini illustrated how institutions—whether religious, political, or philosophical—are incapable of making things evolve for the better.¹

THE FAMA FRATERNITAT IS

The pessimism of this text, which despaired of seeing peace restored to Europe, was followed by the optimism of the first

Rosicrucian manifesto. After the initial text, the *Fama Fraternitatis* itself appears. Although this piece of literature is quite short, constituting some thirty pages in a book which includes a total of 147 pages, the *Fama* constitutes the heart of the first Rosicrucian manifesto. In this work, the brothers of the Fraternity of the Rose Cross appealed to the rulers, clerics, and scholars of Europe. After having paid their respects to their progressive era which had witnessed so many discoveries contributed by enlightened minds, they emphasized that, unfortunately, these discoveries had not brought the light and peace for which humanity had hoped. They blamed the scholars, who were more concerned with obtaining personal success than with placing their abilities in service to humanity. Likewise, they pointed to those who clung to the old doctrines—such as the supporters of the pope² and the defenders of Aristotle’s philosophy and Galen’s medicine—in other words, those who refused to question authority. The Rosicrucian brothers discussed the conflict between theology, physics, and mathematics. Their position was similar to that of Cornelius Heinrich Agrippa, especially in his definition of magic, which he described as being genuine science. At the beginning of the first book of his *De Occulta Philosophia*, Agrippa presented magic as being the acme of all science, since all philosophy is divided into three branches of knowledge which complement one another: physics, mathematics, and theology.³ Following this “inventory” of their era, the Rosicrucian brothers proposed to offer their contemporaries a regenerated knowledge. This knowledge of infallible axioms came to them from Father C.R., the founder of their fraternity, who laid down the basis

for a universal reform many years before.

Who was this mysterious individual, Father C.R.? The answer to this question occupies the remainder of the *Fama Fraternitatis*. It involves Christian Rosenkreuz, a young German, who, we are informed by the *Confessio Fraternitatis*, was born in 1378. At sixteen years of age, he accompanied a brother of a convent who was in charge of his education on a pilgrimage to the Holy Sepulcher of Jerusalem. This journey to the East was a true initiatic journey for young Christian. But on their way to Jerusalem, his companion died in Cyprus. According to mythology, Cyprus is the birthplace of Aphrodite (Venus), whose union with Hermes gave birth to Hermaphrodite, an androgynous child. This allusion to Cyprus in Christian Rosenkreuz's biography is replete with alchemical connotations, and served as the prelude for themes later developed in the *Chymical Wedding of Christian Rosenkreuz*.

ARABIA FELIX

Despite the death of his companion, Christian Rosenkreuz decided to continue his journey. However, his destination was changed and he went instead to Damcar. Contrary to what has sometimes been stated, Damcar is not Damascus, but rather a town in southwestern Arabia, as indicated by Mercator's Atlas (1585). Damcar was also mentioned by Abraham Ortelius in his *Theatrum Orbis Terrarum* as a city located in Arabia Felix. This region, celebrated for its incense, was the home of Ismaelism. It was known to have preserved the *Corpus Hermeticum*.⁴ In Damcar there was a university with no fewer

than 500 students.⁵ Under the direction of the Brothers of Basra, an important encyclopedia was compiled here that gathered together all forms of knowledge—both scientific and esoteric. In the 20th century, Henry Corbin, quite intrigued by this branch of Islam strongly tinged by esotericism, took delight in imagining a dialogue between the Brothers of the R.C. and the “Brothers of a Pure Heart” of Basra. He detected in the two fraternities a similar purpose.⁶ A little earlier Émile Dantinne made comments along the same lines.⁷ While at Damcar, Christian Rosenkreuz associated with magi who transmitted to him important knowledge, particularly in physics and mathematics, thus enabling him to transcribe the *Book M*—i.e., the *Book of the World*—into Latin. After three years of study, Christian set out once more on his journeys. After a brief sojourn in Egypt, he arrived in Fez, Morocco.

FEZ, CITY OF GOLD

According to the 16th century geographer Leo Africanus, Fez was an important intellectual center. Students flocked to this city, which possessed magnificent libraries. Since the Umayyad era (A.D. 661), its schools taught the alchemy of Abu-Abdallah, Imam Jafar al-Sadiq, and Jabir ibn Hayyan (Geber), as well as the magic and astrology of Ali-ash-Shabramallishi.⁸ Leo Africanus stated that at Fez a form of theurgical magic was practiced, which, beginning with a sort of circular pantacle traced on the ground, allowed the practitioner to approach invisible worlds. The *Fama Fraternitatis* informs us that the magic of these inhabitants of Fez was not

altogether pure. Nevertheless, what made a lasting impression on Christian Rosenkreuz was the spirit of sharing which reigned among the scholars in this city, in contrast to the situation in Germany, where most of the learned tended to keep their secrets closely guarded.⁹ In Fez, Christian Rosenkreuz perfected his knowledge of the harmony of the historical cycles. He also understood that, as every seed contains a tree in embryo, in similar fashion the microcosm (man) contains the macrocosm with all its components (nature, language, religion, medicine). The authors of the *Fama Fraternitatis* had “aken this vision from Paracelsus, who, in his *Philosophia Sagax*, stated: “. . . in this sense, man also is a seed and the world is its apple, and what’s true for the seed in the apple is equally true for man in the world surrounding him.”¹⁰

After having completed his studies in mathematics, physics, and magic, Christian Rosenkreuz became acquainted with the “elementary inhabitants who revealed unto him many of their secrets.” The latter were probably those which Paracelsus described in his *Treatise on Nymphs, Sylphs, Pygmies, Salamanders, and Other Beings*. These beings, which Paracelsus was said to have seen, did not descend from Adam, although they had a human appearance, but had a different origin. By contacting them, humans could learn the secrets of Nature.

THE HOUSE OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

After this initiatic journey to the East, Christian Rosenkreuz returned to Europe. On his way home, he stopped in Spain to share

with Spanish scholars what he had learned on his journey. He soon realized that these scholars did not wish to have their knowledge questioned. To the authors of the *Fama Fraternitatis*, the scholars of Spain symbolized those who are restricted to a doctrine which they do not wish to have questioned at the risk of seeing their authority disputed.

Disappointed by the closed attitude of the Spanish scholars, and having been met with similar criticism in other countries, Christian Rosenkreuz returned to Germany. There, he undertook to put into writing the sum of learning which he had obtained in the East. His aim was to create a society capable of educating the princes of Europe, for they would become the guiding lights. After five years of work, Christian Rosenkreuz surrounded himself with the first group of three disciples to assist him in his projects. Thus was born the Rosicrucian Fraternity. Together, the Master and his disciples wrote the first part of the *Book M*. Then the fraternity was enlarged with four more brothers. They then moved into a new building called the *Sancti Spiritus*—“House of the Holy Spirit.” The fraternity remained discreet and Christian Rosenkreuz died in 1484 at the age of 106 years. In 1604, long after the death of the first group of Rosicrucians, the brothers accidentally rediscovered the tomb of Christian Rosenkreuz as they were doing work on their building. Over the door of his tomb appeared the inscription: “After 120 years I shall open.” In this cavern, conceived as a “summary of the universe,” they discovered a quantity of scientific objects, heretofore unknown, and some texts containing all the knowledge gathered by

their Master.

THE TOMB OF CHRISTIAN ROSENKREUZ

The discovery of a mysterious tomb holding many manuscripts is a frequent theme in alchemical literature. The example of Basil Valentine, involving a manuscript discovered under the altar of a church in Erfurt is well known. The discovery of the tomb of Christian Rosenkreuz recalls that of Apollonius of Tyana. As we saw in an earlier chapter, the latter had discovered in the tomb of Hermes Trismegistus the famous Emerald Tablet and a book explaining the secrets of the creation.¹¹ This symbolic system referred to the concept wherein one may “visit the bowels of the Earth; by rectifying thou shalt find the hidden Stone.” Gerhard Dorn, in his *Congeries Paracelsicae Chemiae* (1581), gives this meaning to *Vitriol*,¹² a word which is likewise closely linked with Hermes Trismegistus, since it is associated with an alchemical drawing entitled “The Emerald Tablet” (see fig. 2). Moreover, the Emerald Tablet which Hermes holds in his hands seems to foreshadow the *Book T* of Christian Rosenkreuz.

The room where the tomb of Christian Rosenkreuz was discovered took the form of a cupola or heptahedron. According to Frances A. Yates, the appearance of the tomb may have been suggested by the portal depicted in Plate IV of the *Amphitheatrum Sapientiae Aeternae* by Heinrich Khunrath (1603).¹³ Placed in the center of a cavern, the tomb in which the perfectly preserved body of Christian Rosenkreuz reposed had a circular form. The tomb was

covered by a brass plaque on which enigmatic phrases were engraved. One of them proclaimed: “The vacuum exists nowhere.” Apart from the fact that it alludes to the controversy we have already mentioned, this phrase recalls a dialogue between Hermes and Asclepius in Treatise II of the *Corpus Hermeticum*. As we shall see before long, the third Rosicrucian manifesto includes many allusions to texts attributed to Hermes Trismegistus.

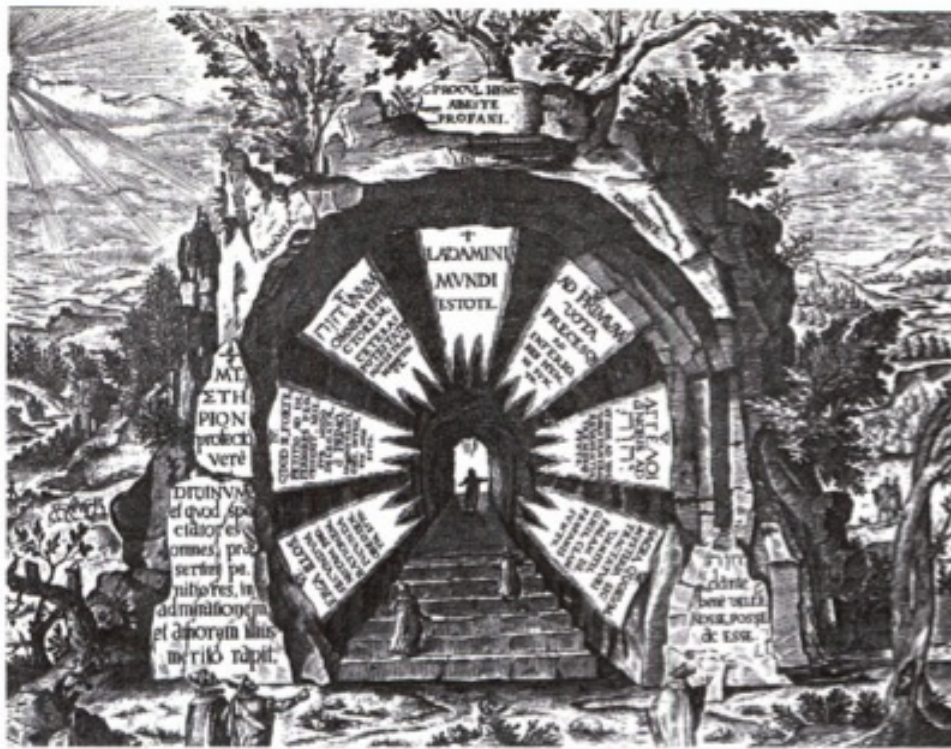


FIGURE 16. Heinrich Khunrath, *Amphitheatrum Sapientiae Aeternae*, 1603

PARACELSUS AND ROSENKREUZ

Especially noteworthy among the various writings represented in the tomb of Christian Rosenkreuz were *Book T*, which he held in his hands, and what is called the *Vocabulary of Theoph: Par. Ho*. The latter text is probably one of the vocabularies of Paracelsus, in particular

the *Dictionarium Theophrasti Paracelsi continens obscuriorum vocabularum* . . . published in 1584 by Gerhard Dorn, a disciple of Paracelsus. It may be noted that Paracelsus is the only author referred to in the *Fama Fraternitatis*. Moreover, many of the themes developed in this manifesto come from his works or those of his disciples. The *Book M*, which we mentioned previously, refers directly to his ideas. We will not delve into this subject here, as we will have a better opportunity to do so when discussing the *Confessio Fraternitatis*. Nevertheless, we need to point out the concept of Paracelsus' alchemy found in this first manifesto, particularly in the way it viewed the Great Work—namely, as being a “preliminary work of little importance” in regard to the spiritual procedure of the Rosicrucians. By this stand, the Rose Cross dissociated itself from the alchemical methods pervading Germany in this era that gave rise to considerable excesses.

After having gathered together the treasures of learning found in Christian Rosenkreuz's tomb, the Rosicrucian brothers closed it again. Fortified by this legacy based upon immutable axioms, they felt ready to bring to fruition the “divine and humane general reform” previously envisioned by their Master. The *Fama Fraternitatis* reveals that, like the brothers who had discovered a treasure of knowledge after having smashed the wall which concealed the opening of the tomb, Europe would open itself to a new era by adopting new knowledge after having set aside old beliefs that acted like walls to its advancement. However, as the *Fama Fraternitatis* states, the knowledge which the Rosicrucians proposed was “. . . not

a new invention, but as Adam after his fall hath received it.” Thus, it involves restoring a lost knowledge that some people are endeavoring to perpetuate. The first manifesto gave the names of various individuals who were the transmitters of this Primordial Tradition. These names recall those mentioned by Marsilio Ficino in a similar context.



FIGURE 17. The Rose Cross, from the 1614 edition of the *Fama Fraternitatis*.

ADAM HASELMAYER

The *Fama Fraternitatis* ends with an invitation to the men of science and to the sovereigns of Europe to join the Rosicrucian brotherhood by sharing in its reforming knowledge. However, this appeal is peculiar inasmuch as it specifies that “. . . although at this time we make no mention either of our names, or meetings, yet nevertheless everyone’s opinion shall assuredly come to our hands, in what language so ever it be, nor anybody shall fail, who so gives but his name to speak with some of us, either by word of mouth, or else if there be some let [i.e., issued] in writing.” This statement

indicates in effect that the house of the Rosicrucians “shall forever remain untouched, undestroyed, and hidden to the wicked world” This message was heard and the open letters to the Rosicrucians were printed at various places in Europe, such as the one that was published at the end of the first Rosicrucian manifesto. The text of this letter is what Adam Haselmayer (1560-?) published in 1612 with the title of “Answer to the Laudable Fraternity of Rosicrucian Theosophists,” after having read a manuscript of the manifesto which was circulating in the Tyrol in 1610, some four years before it was published. Many authors have considered Haselmayer to be an imaginary individual. This is not the case, as proved by Carlos Gilly, who, after patient research, succeeded in reconstructing the biography of this Paracelsian, who was a great collector of alchemical manuscripts.¹⁴

Adam Haselmayer was so enthusiastic about the *Fama Fraternitatis* that he asked Archduke Maximilian to subsidize research on the Rosicrucians. The text of his “Answer to the Rosicrucian Manifesto” is strongly influenced by the prophecy of the Lion of the Septentrion and by Joachimism. He made the Rosicrucians the forecasters of the Age of the Holy Spirit and felt that they were “those that God has chosen to spread the Theophrastical and divine eternal truth.” He announced that 1613 would mark the end of time and that the Great Judgment would take place in 1614. He thus thought that attending church was useless—an attitude which led him to be suspected of heresy. Refusing to retract such statements, Haselmayer was condemned to the galleys in October 1612. He

remained there four and a half years, but during this period he seemed to have enjoyed special treatment, because he remained in contact by letter with many other individuals equally fond of alchemy. According to Carlos Gilly, Adam Haselmayer's enthusiasm was excessive and was not in full accord with Rosicrucian philosophy.

HERMES AND ROSENKREUZ

As noted previously, it was in this context of moral crisis that the first manifesto advocated a program of reform in which esotericism held the place of honor. The Rosicrucians placed themselves in the mainstream of Renaissance esotericism, to which were added some specifically Christian mystical preoccupations. We may also note that this first manifesto did not hesitate to distance itself from the "puffers" of esotericism, just as it did with all ossified religions. The Rosicrucians wished to move closer to science, esotericism, and mysticism in an optimistic project of reform strongly characterized by Paracelsianism. In placing itself squarely within the Primordial Tradition, as it was defined in the Renaissance, the Rosicrucians relegated Egypt to a secondary role. The enigmatic Hermes Trismegistus, whose legitimacy was compromised by Isaac Casaubon in 1614, disappeared in favor of a more human personality, namely, Christian Rosenkreuz.



FIGURE 18. John Dee, *Monas Hieroglyphica*, 1564. On the frieze, which supports a starry vaulted pediment, there is written in Latin: “He who does not understand must remain silent or learn.” The pillar on the left is that of the sun and fire, while the pillar on the right is that of the moon and air. From each star descends dewdrops collected in cups. On the lower part of the drawing appear these words: “God dispenses the dew of the heaven and the fatness of the earth,” an allusion to Genesis, chapter 27, verse 39. The Monad is shown in the center, encircled by

phylacteries which state: “Mercury shall become the parent of the king of all the planets when he is made perfect by a fixed point.”

Chapter 6

THE CONFESSIO FRATERNITATIS

IN 1615, THE year following the publication of the *Fama Fraternitatis*, Wilhelm Wessel published a second manifesto in Kassel, Germany. Just as the previous manifesto had been supplemented by the *Advertisements from Parnassus*, this second manifesto was accompanied by a text entitled *Secretions Philosophiae consideratio brevis a Philippo a Gabella*. The full title of the latter translated into English reads: “A Brief Consideration of the More Secret Philosophy, written by Philip a Gabella, a student of philosophy, published for the first time with the updated Confession of the R.C. Fraternity.”¹ The author of this text remains anonymous. In the introduction, he points out that this work involves a philosophical treatise, after noting “that it is embellished by the actions, studies, and knowledge of the R.C. Fraternity.” A short preface follows, signed “Frater R.C.,” wherein the author indicates that this “Brief Consideration ” was derived entirely from Hermes, Plato, Seneca, and other philosophers.

THE MONAD

However, this “Brief Consideration” is not at all related to Hermes

or any other philosophers, but is instead an adaptation of *Monas Hieroglyphica* (1564), a work by John Dee (1527-1608). In this book, the leading alchemist, astrologer, and mathematician at the court of Queen Elizabeth I of England proposed to explain a hieroglyph—namely, the monad—in twenty-four theorems. Following the methods of Cornelius Heinrich Agrippa, whom he read assiduously, John Dee composed this magical character by basing it on geometrical principles. According to Pierre Béhar, the monad, apart from its magical aspect, is an alchemical symbol that designates the Stone of the alchemists, the Mercury of the Sages.² The symbol composed by John Dee was also repeated in the third Rosicrucian manifesto, the *Chymical Wedding of Christian Rosenkreuz*, by Johann Valentin Andreae.

The “Brief Consideration” was composed beginning with excerpts taken from the first thirteen theorems of the *Monas Hieroglyphica*. The author repeats the passages dealing with the different parts composing the hieroglyph of the *Monas*. Sometimes, the term *monas* is not preserved, but is replaced by the word *stella*. The author of the “Brief Consideration” presents himself as an eminent spagyrist who wishes to combine the theorems of John Dee with the teachings of Basil Valentine concerning Vitriol. His text is a kind of alchemical treatise that attempts to teach his students how to live on the rose, the most beautiful and fragrant of the flowers. The author teaches them how to make honey with the nectar of this flower without being pricked by its curved thorns. This text is completed by a prayer signed “Philemon R.C.”

THE CONFESSIO FRATERNITATIS

The first manifesto announced the forthcoming publication of a “Confession” in which thirty seven reasons for which the Order exists would be set forth. The second manifesto did not provide these reasons, but provided information that attempted to make the *Fama* more clear by reformulating “anything too deep, hidden, and set down over dark in the *Fama*.” *The Confessio Fraternitatis, or the Confession of the Laudable Fraternity of the most honorable Order of the Rosy Cross, written to the Learned of Europe*, was divided into fourteen sections, although later editions did not always observe this division. In this text, the Rosicrucians emphasize that they possess the antidote for the disease which gnaws at science and philosophy, because they hold the key to all knowledge, whether it be the arts, philosophy, theology, or medicine. They also give new particulars as to the sources of their knowledge, indicating that they do not simply come from investigations carried out by Christian Rosenkreuz, but also from those revelations he obtained by divine illumination brought about through the mediation of angels.

MILLENNIALISM

Whereas the text of the first manifesto, apart from Adam Haselmayer’s letter, did not allude to the prophecy of the Lion of the Septentrion, the *Confessio Fraternitatis* speaks of it by announcing that “our treasures shall remain untouched and unstirred until the lion doth come . . .” (ch. 6)³ and the roaring of this lion would coincide with the next fall of the pope (ch. 5). As a whole, we may

say that this new manifesto is millennialist in character. As such, it was part of the anticipated reform movement we mentioned previously, in the chapter entitled “The Naometria and the Age of the Holy Spirit.” In comparison to the optimism displayed by the *Fama Fraternitatis*, which foresees the advent of a new age enriched by the contribution of fresh knowledge, the *Confessio Fraternitatis* appears more pessimistic. It proclaims that “the Lord Jehovah (who facing the Lord’s Sabbath is almost at hand, and hastened again, his period or course being finished, to his first beginning) doth turn about the course of Nature” (ch. 1). This end of time is that of the Millennium, the period of 1,000 years which will follow the 6,000 years already elapsed (in reference to the prophet Elijah), because the Rosicrucians have received the mission of lighting the “sixth candelabrum” (ch. 4). This period corresponds to Joachim of Fiore’s third age—that of the Holy Spirit or the opening of the sixth seal. The Rosicrucians explain their revelation as being a final grace offered by God “to the world before her end, which presently thereupon shall ensue” (ch. 7). It will permit humanity to enjoy for a while a “truth, light, life and glory, as the first man Adam had, which he lost in Paradise” (ch. 7). Here the *Confessio Fraternitatis* revisits a theme presented in the first manifesto, that of the “primordial revelation” received by Adam after the Fall.

It may be asked whether the authors of this manifesto really thought that the end of time was near. This age may be thought of in terms of “metahistory”—to use a term coined by Henry Corbin—rather than linear history.⁴ This is not a question of an event

arising within human time, but on the time of the spirit, lived in the interior of a soul regenerated by illumination. Moreover, the *Confessio Fraternitatis* speaks of the Rosicrucians as being individuals having the faculty of projecting themselves in time, past or future, to distant lands (ch. 4).

THE LIBER MUNDI

The *Confessio Fraternitatis* returns to a theme touched upon in the first manifesto, that of the *Liber Mundi* or the “Book of the World,” by speaking of “those great letters and characters which the Lord God hath written and imprinted in Heaven and Earth’s edifice” (ch. 6). Here we discover an essential aspect of the thoughts of Paracelsus. For him, the only fundamental book, aside from the Bible, was the Book of Nature. “These characters and letters, as God hath here and there incorporated them in the holy scripture the Bible, so hath he imprinted them most apparently into the wonderfull creation of Heaven and Earth, yea in all beasts” (ch. 9). The concept, derived from Paracelsus, states that Nature is the key to everything in existence, that it is not a mechanical system of laws, but a living reality with which humanity may enter into a dialogue for the purpose of “co-birth.

THE BIBLE

Although the second manifesto assigns importance to the Book of Nature, it also insists upon the importance of the revealed Word and exhorts one to “read diligently and continually the holy Bible.” It

claims “that from the beginning of the world there hath not been given unto men a more worthy, a more excellent, and more admirable and wholesome book than the holy Bible” (ch. 10). As with the *Fama*, the *Confessio* vilifies the pope by accusing him of tyranny. When announcing the crushing of the pontiff, it states: “Therefore one day it will come to pass that them outh of those vipers will be stopped” (ch. 11), and then adds that “he also shall be scratched in pieces” (ch. 5). These statements reflect themes frequently found in Paracelsus’ *Pronosticationes and Practica*. This stance, which is quite understandable in a Protestant environment that considered the pope to be the Antichrist, was the origin of the strong hostility of Catholicism to Rosicrucianism. Undoubtedly, in a move to put the earlier praise of the Arab civilization into perspective, the second manifesto also found fault with Mohammed. However, this last comment may be a reiteration of the *Naometria* which condemns “the pope and his son of perdition, Mohammed.”

ALCHEMY AND REFORMS

The *Confessio Fraternitatis* returns to the criticism lodged against the pseudo-chemists in the first manifesto. For Rosicrucians, true alchemy should lead to a “knowledge of Nature,” but this is secondary, as the primary aim is “that we be earnest to attain to the understanding and knowledge of philosophy” (ch. 11). The Order also urges one to act cautiously in regard to the proliferation of alchemical texts that flourished at this time. Indeed, the most extensive publication of books concerning the Great Work occurred

during the 17th century.⁵

THE FORTRESS OF TRUTH

The *Confessio Fraternitatis* declared that the sages of the city of Damcar would set an example for Rosicrucians, “according unto which example also the government shall be instituted in Europe.” These individuals were said to have a plan established for this purpose by Christian Rosenkreuz. As in the first manifesto, the Rosicrucians invited the people of their era to join their fraternity and proposed that these seekers unite with them for the purpose of constructing a “new fortress of truth.” They promised health, omniscience, and inner calm to everyone who wanted to be initiated into the heritage of all of Nature’s bounties. However, they warned those who were “blinded with the glistening of gold,” and who wanted to join their fraternity with the aim of obtaining material profits, that they would never be admitted.

In summary, we can say that the *Confessio Fraternitatis* places more emphasis upon religion than did the first manifesto. The *Confessio* tried to rehabilitate the heritage of the Renaissance so as to serve Christian millennialism (with the difference that it did not speak of Christ’s return) and presented the imminence of the final revelation under the auspices of the Rose Cross.

THE SOURCES

Countless scholars have speculated as to who wrote the first two Rosicrucian manifestos and what the sources were that they drew

upon. We may note here the influence of the medieval era, as the infallible axiomatics to which the manifestos refer recall the *Ars Magna* of Raymond Lully, whose works were published in 1598 by Lazarus Zetzner, the famed publisher of Strasbourg.⁶ The Rhenish mystic had also considerably influenced the authors of the early Rosicrucian writings, particularly by way of Johann Arndt, who shall be discussed later. However, the *Fama* and the *Confessio* draw essentially from three currents of the tradition: Paracelsianism, contemporary Neo-Joachimism, and the Hermeticism of the Renaissance.⁷

It is not by accident that Paracelsus is the only author praised by the manifestos, as he constituted a primary source for the ideas presented in these writings. The need for sharing the knowledge acquired from various parts of the world, the fact that man is a microcosm, the reference to the *Liber Mundi*, and to the dwellers of elementary worlds— or more particularly, the metaphor of the seed —are themes in the manifestos originating with Paracelsus. Let us add that in Christian Rosenkreuz's tomb there appeared a book called the *Vocabular of Theoph: Par. Ho.*, identified as being one of the dictionaries of Paracelsian terms published in the 17th century. Such influences are perfectly understandable in that Paracelsian texts were widely read during the time of the manifestos. Between 1589 and 1591 Johann Huser had published Paracelsus' complete works, following the enormous task of researching his manuscripts. A second edition was then issued in ten volumes between 1603 and 1605 by Lazarus Zetzner, the future editor of Johann Valentin

Andreae's works.

Neo-Joachimism is ever-present in the manifestos. As we explained earlier, the theories of Joachim of Fiore experienced a revival of interest in the 16th century, as had the Prophecy of Elijah or that of the Lion of the Septentrion—along with the many predictions of channeling the people's aspiration for a renewal—a reformation that allowed the 16th century's numerous conflicts to be calmed. Renaissance Hermeticism is also present in Rosicrucian texts, particularly in connection with alchemy. However, it should be noted that the Qabalah, both Jewish and Christian, occupies a minor role here. Other influences are equally apparent, such as those regarding time, which is presented as being cyclic. These texts could very well refer to Ishmaelism, with Damcar being one of the sources.

THE TÜBINGEN CIRCLE

The study of the ideas expressed in the manifestos allows us to hypothesize about their authors. Most present-day experts agree that they were not the work of one person, but rather of a small group of students and scholars living in Tübingen, a university town in Württemberg. This group was called the "Tübingen Circle." It was formed around 1608 and consisted of about thirty individuals who were passionate about alchemy, Qabalah, astrology, naometry, and Christian mysticism. The most important individuals included Johann Arndt, Johann Valentin Andreae, Tobias Hess, Abraham Hölzel, the pastor Vischer, Christoph Besold, and Wilhelm von

Wense. They conceived the project of another reformation, complementing those of Luther and Calvin, which were judged to be inadequate. Two of these scholars, Tobias Hess and Abraham Hölzel, were previously involved in a movement for circulating esoteric and mystical works among the faculty of the university.



FIGURE 19. Theophilus Schweighardt (Daniel Mögling), *Speculum Sophericum Rhodostauricum*, 1618.

JOHANN ARNDT

Johann Arndt (1555-1621), considered by Andreae to be his spiritual father, was the group's mentor. A pastor, theologian, physician, alchemist, and keen follower of Johannes Tauler and Valentin Weigel, he was the author of a commentary on the plates of Heinrich Khunrath's *Amphitheatrum Sapientiae Aeternael*. According to a letter written on January 29, 1621, to the duke of Brunswick, his desire was to lead students and researchers away from polemical theology and to bring them back to a living faith, to a practice of piety. He was the popularizer of *The Imitation of Christ*. His mystical tendencies are noticeable in his sermons on the Gospels or on Luther's *Small Catechism*, and in his collection of prayers entitled *Paradies Gartlein Aller christlichen Tugenden* (1612). He wrote a devotional text entitled *Vier Bücher vom wahren Christentum* (Four Books on True Christianity, 1605-1610) that was one of the most widely read until the 19th century. Both a mystic and an alchemist, he attempted to integrate the Paracelsian heritage with medieval theology, and in this latter work, he developed the idea of an inner alchemy, of a spiritual renaissance.”

Roland Edighoffer has shown that an entire passage of the *Confessio Fraternitatis* discussing the Book of Nature is taken almost word for word from the final volume of Arndt's *Four Books on True Christianity*.⁸ In his *De Antiqua Philosophia* (1595), Arndt emphasizes that wisdom is found not in speculation, but in the practical—a concept also found in the manifestos. He is considered to be one of the instigators of Pietism. In 1691, Johannes Kelpius and his followers took Arndt's works with them as they left for the New

World. According to a letter from Johann Arndt found among the papers of the theosophist Christophe Hirsch, Johann Valentin Andreae acknowledged having written the *Fama Fraternitatis* with thirty other people. Another letter, sent by Johann Valentin Andreae to his friend John Amos Comenius, made the same claim. However, some questions have been raised regarding the authenticity of these letters.²

TOBIAS HESS

Tobias Hess (1558-1614) was one of the most important members of the Tübingen Circle—perhaps even its instigator. His preoccupations synthesized perfectly the various elements presented in the manifestos. Hess, who was a member of Tübingen University, a Paracelsian physician, Qabalist, philosopher, and admirer of Simon Studion, Julius Sperber, and Joachim of Fiore, probably played a fundamental role in drafting the *Fama* and *Confessio*. In 1605, he was accused of practicing naometry and continued to promote millennialism in certain publications where he expressed himself to be in favor of worldwide reform. The *Fama* repeated his idea which basically declares: “It is wrong to claim that what is true in philosophy is false in theology.” Hess was also accused of being an instigator of a secret society. Even though his accusers did not provide the name of this society, it is probable that they were referring to the Rosicrucian Order, whose first manifesto was circulating at this time in manuscript form.

Tobias Hess was associated with Oswald Croll, a disciple of

Paracelsus. Due to his medical talents, Hess had healed Andreae of a terrible fever, and the latter admired him immensely. Hess died in 1614, just before the publication of the manifestos, and his funeral oration was delivered by Andreae. This text was printed afterwards, and curiously enough, as Roland Edighoffer notes, it included the following words in italic type, *Tobias Hess* and *Fama*—the only ones in the book—as though to emphasize a link between the two. An astonishing fact should be mentioned: In 1616, Andreae published anonymously *Theca gladii spiritus* (The Sheath of the Glory of the Spirit), indicating in the book’s preface that it was authored by Tobias Hess. Interestingly enough, forty-eight passages of this book are taken from the *Confessio!* In his autobiography Andreae would later acknowledge that all of the text found in the *Theca* was his. Can we not conclude from this that Hess was the author of either a part or the entirety of the *Confessio Fraternitatis*?

JOHANN VALENTIN ANDREAE

As early as 1699, in his *Unparteyische Kirchen und Ketzer Historie* (History of the Church and of Heretics), Gottfried Arnold claimed that Johann Valentin Andreae was the author of the Rosicrucian manifestos. For a long time this theory was considered to be authoritative. In Andreae’s case we are dealing with a particularly noteworthy individual whom we will discuss in further detail when we touch upon the third manifesto, *The Chymical Wedding of Christian Rosenkreuz*. However, Andreae took pains to distance himself from the Rosicrucians, and in one of his books, *Menippus* (1617), he

speaks harshly about the Rosicrucian Fraternity when he deals with *ludibrium*—in other words, farce or mockery. Nevertheless, as Frances A. Yates indicates, these terms are not forceful pejoratives when spoken by Andreae, because he attached considerable importance to the moral influences of stories and the theater.¹⁰ His literary output likewise testifies to this interest.¹¹ It should be added that throughout his life, he did his best to organize societies or associations corresponding in many ways to the project presented in the manifestos. It appears that Andreae basically took an official position in opposition to the manifestos so as to protect his religious career. It may be said that unforeseen circumstances led to the publication of the *Fama Fraternitatis* at the exact moment when, after a series of difficulties, Andreae finally obtained the post of deacon at Vaihingen and married Elisabeth Grüninger, the daughter of a pastor and niece of a Lutheran prelate.

Much speculation has swirled around the subject of the possible authors of the manifestos; however, none of them is entirely satisfactory. Although the “author” of the early manifestos has kept his secret well, Tobias Fless and Johann Valentin Andreae probably played a fundamental role in developing these works.

AN INITIATIC NARRATIVE

Let us return to Christian Rosenkreuz, the individual presented by the manifestos as the founder of Rosicrucianism. Are we dealing here with a real or a mythical individual? As many have stated, these texts do not recount the biography of one person, because they

involve initiatic narratives that present many facets. What can be generally said is that through the travels of Christian Rosenkreuz, his sojourns in the Arab lands and then in Spain, we may rediscover the advances which various esoteric sciences made when passing from the East to West. These sciences, after having experienced further development in Europe, were to come into full bloom under Paracelsus. After his death, Valentin Weigel and other individuals succeeded in rectifying any flaws and enriched them with the mysticism of the Rhineland and Flanders. What Rosicrucians proposed was to recover this heritage and include it in the body of knowledge of an era that they envisioned as being the dawn of a new age.

Many elements contribute in proving that the manifestos are symbolic narratives. For example, the important dates in Christian Rosenkreuz's life correspond to significant historical events. The year of his birth, 1378, corresponds to the year of the Great Schism of the West in which Avignon and Rome were at loggerheads. And that of his death, 1484, corresponds to the year that Martin Luther—the individual who attempted to reform Christianity—was born. Although it is now thought that Luther was born in 1483, his own mother wavered between 1483 and 1484, and Luther himself opted for 1484. There exists an astrological tradition based on the studies of Paulus von Middleburg and Johannes Lichtenberger, who saw his birth sign in the conjunction of Jupiter and Saturn that took place in Scorpio in 1484. Equally significant is that the writings relating to Paracelsus' texts were placed in Christian Rosenkreuz's tomb in

1484. But keep in mind that Paracelsus could not have written anything yet, seeing that he was born in 1493! The theme of the discovery of a tomb is a recurring symbol in the tradition, and we will have occasion to return to this subject later.

Only one step separates symbol from invention, and certain authors do not hesitate to cross the threshold. Several historians have pointed out that the authors of the manifestos did not need to adapt the biographies of real persons to invent Christian Rosenkreuz. Paul Arnold has shown that several mystics bear uncanny similarities to Christian Rosenkreuz.¹² First there is Joachim of Fiore, who undertook the foundation of a fraternity after his travels to the Orient. Then there are Rulman Merswin (1307-1382), the founder of the Friends of God,¹³ and Gerhard Groote (1340-1384), the creator of the Brothers of the Common Life. The latter group promoted the *Devotio Moderna*, a spiritual movement which emphasized the inner experience. The most beautiful flowering of this movement is seen in *The Imitation of Christ*, a book which had considerable influence on Rosicrucians.¹⁴ Paul Arnold's observations are of interest in that the parallels between these personalities and Christian Rosenkreuz are striking, even though notable differences do exist. In addition, many of the ideas promulgated by these mystics are found in the manifestos.

It is possible to view such matters from another angle as the manifestos can also be read as the account of a spiritual experience. They fall within an indisputable historical context, but, as with all initiatic accounts, they are associated with a metahistory that goes

beyond a mere chronology. This is where we leave the historical realm and place ourselves on another level, one whose characteristics need to be defined so that we may understand the meaning of the Rosicrucian manifestos.



FIGURE 20. Stephan Michelspacher, *Cabala speculum artis et Naturae in Alchymia*,

1616.

Chapter 7

THE EMERALD LAND

As we learned previously, from a strictly historical standpoint, the Rosicrucians appeared only at the beginning of the 17th century. Should we conclude, therefore, that they did not exist before then? According to Sédir, “the Rose-Croix bore this name only in Europe and in the 17th century. We may not reveal the names it had elsewhere either before or after.” He added: “As for the essential Rose-Croix, it has existed since man has lived on Earth, because it relates to an immaterial function of the Earth’s soul.” Aware of the inadequacy of his own research, Sédir thought that the real origins of the Rosicrucians could not be found on paper, because it did not pertain to the Earth, but to the invisible.¹

A study of the origin of the initiatic orders based only on their objective and chronological aspects would lead to historicism—in other words, to an essentially positivist and reductionist vision of their genesis. Would this not then run the risk of overlooking the essential: their connection with the sacred? As Mircea Eliade points out, “The history of religions, from the most primitive to the most complex, is constituted by an accumulation of hierophanies, by the manifestations of sacred realities.”² It is the same for the initiatic orders. Their history takes root in numinous experiences³; and that is why we must now touch upon this aspect. Just as Christian

Rosenkreuz journeyed to the Arab world, in the following pages we will travel to the Islamic civilization.

THE SPIRITUAL FILIATION

René Guénon tried to define initiation as being the transmission of a spiritual influence whose source is suprahuman—although he remains imprecise concerning the origin of the latter, which he places in time immemorial. He mentions two modes of this transmission: a vertical one, which descends directly from the invisible toward humanity, and a horizontal one, which is the retransmission of this sacred trust from one initiate to another. Most people who study the history of initiatic orders generally content themselves with recalling the horizontal filiation, because it is true that the former remains imperceptible to the historian. However, by proceeding in this way, they often confine the subject of initiatic filiation to the level of some administration issuing certificates and diplomas. Other individuals, such as Henry Corbin, give greater importance to the vertical transmission and make the mystical experience, spiritual filiation, a fundamental criterion of traditional validity.



FIGURE 21. Qaf, the Cosmic Mountain, whose summit is none other than the most elevated center of the human psyche. On this summit, one finds the emerald stone which tints the heavenly vault green.

THE IMAGINAL WORLD

At the end of the previous chapter, we hinted at the similarities which exist between the biographies of certain founders of spiritual movements and that of Christian Rosenkreuz. Henry Corbin mentioned the same personalities—and even added a few others—

but drew conclusions that were more interesting than those of Paul Arnold. He noted the manifestations of “primordial images” which call attention to identical spiritual experiences. He also speaks of the principle of a common source through a filiation that is not earthly, but heavenly, and which takes root in the *mundus imaginalis* (imaginal world). Corbin does his best to explain the meaning of this world in his many works, and in particular in those devoted to Shihaboddin Yahya Sohrawardi (1155-1191), the great philosopher and mystic of Islamic Iran. Hermes, Plato, and Zoroaster were the primary influences who nourished the thoughts of this Platonist of Shiite Islam.

Sohrawardi presents the imaginal world (*alam al-mithal*) as being a dimension located between purely spiritual and material spheres.⁴ Designated theosophically as the *Malakut* (the world of the soul and souls), the imaginal world plays the role of mediator between the world of forms and the world of pure essences. It is designated as the *Hurqalya*—the “Eighth Clime,” “the Land of the Cities of Emerald.” Sohrawardi speaks of it as being the world that the spiritual pilgrim encounters in his mystical experiences. To describe the process of raising the soul toward this level of awareness, Iranian symbology talks about the ascent of Mount Qaf. This is a cosmic mountain whose summit is none other than the most elevated center of the human psyche. On this summit is found the emerald stone which tints the heavenly vault green. This is where the Holy Spirit, the Angel of Humanity, resides. Among Sufis, the emerald is the symbol of the cosmic soul. It is also amazing to find a similar

concept among Christian Qabalists. For instance, when discussing the soul of the world, Johannes Pistorius, in *De Artis cabbalisticae* (1587), talks about the “green line” of the last heaven when dealing with the Soul of the World. This concept is also found in Knorr von Rosenroth’s *Cabala denudata* (1677).⁵

TRUE IMAGINATION

The imaginal world performs a function connected with the inner experience. According to Sohrevardi, man has access to this dimension by means of a special faculty of the soul—namely, the active imagination. Paracelsus likewise talked about this faculty of *imaginatio vera*, true imagination, which he insisted should not be confused with fantasy, the “folly of logic.” As was shown by the psychologist Carl Jung, true imagination is a fundamental key for understanding the Great Work. Furthermore, the *Rosarium* (14th century) indicates that the alchemical opus should be accomplished with true imagination, and Martin Ruland, in his *Lexicon alchemiae* (1612), stated that “imagination is the star within man, the celestial or supracelestial body.”⁶ Jacob Boehme also spoke of the imaginal world in the guises of the Holy Element or the Soul of the World where the Sophia dwells—a representation which recalls to some extent the Spenta Armaiti, the Sophia of Mazdaism.

The imaginal world is of particular interest to us in that, as was shown by Corbin, it is the timeless dimension where the events related in myths or great epics “unfold.” It is the “place” where the visions of prophets and mystics take place, where the guides of

humanity receive their mission. It is also the “place” of mystical initiations and, furthermore, of the “spiritual filiations whose authenticity is not within the jurisdiction of documentation or archives.”⁷ This imaginal world is a meeting point between the material and spiritual worlds; it is called the “land of visions” and “land of resurrection,” because it is where the initiate finds his glorious body (the “Man of Light” also spoken of by Zosimos, the 2nd century Alexandrian alchemist), which makes possible the marriage of the soul, the meeting with its Perfect Nature. For Sohrevardi, those individuals who succeed in this spiritual experience become the disciples of Hermes.

INITIATIC NARRATIVES

The pilgrims of the spirit who have attained this level of awareness of the soul have generally related their experiences by means of symbolic narratives. The latter, which have become the basic texts of the spiritual movements originating in their wake, possess several characteristics. First of all, as Corbin points out, they are not myths in the common sense of the word; they refer to events whose reality, time, and place are not of the order of everyday history but of the imaginal world, the world of the soul. They relate to hierohistory—in other words, sacred history. Thus, they should not be understood in their literal sense, but in their “inner sense” (to use an expression of Emanuel Swedenborg), and only hermeneutics allows one to apprehend their meaning. They then possess a capacity for transformation, because they are the carriers of a light which

touches the intimate center of the reader on the verge of perceiving such profundity. Furthermore, it is in this sense that they are truly initiatic narratives. One of the most celebrated among these texts is the one that reported the discovery of the tomb of Hermes Trismegistus.

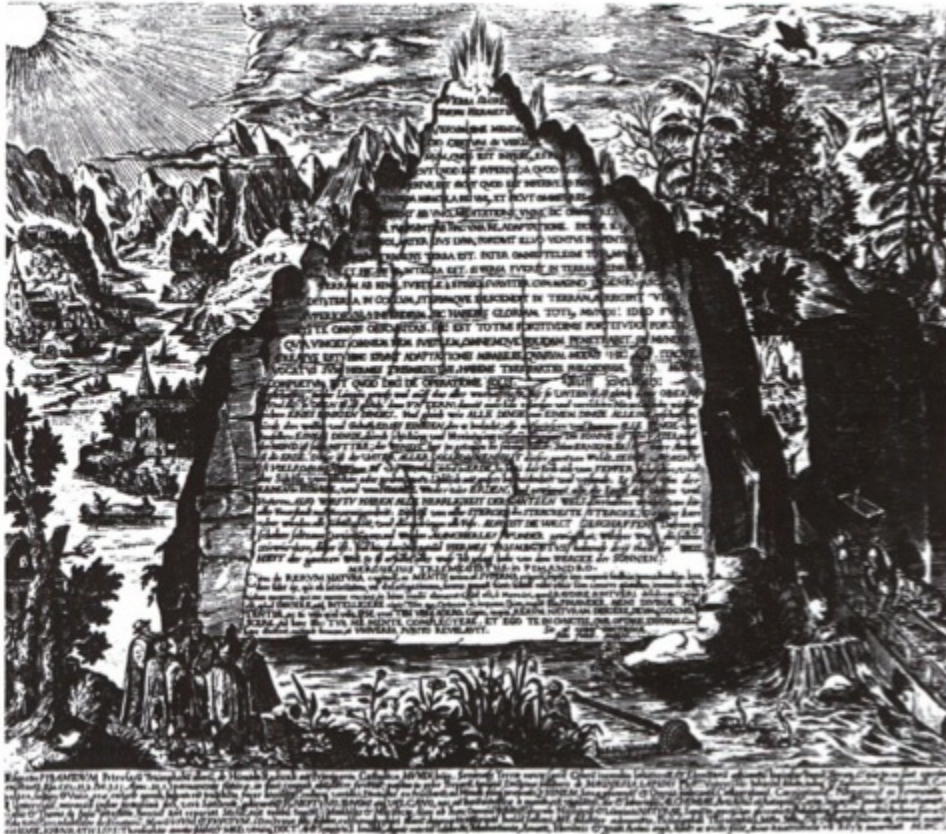


FIGURE 22. Heinrich Khunrath, *Amphitheatrum Sapientiae Aeternae*, “The Emerald Tablet,” 1603.

PERFECT NATURE

Several historians have noted that Christian Rosenkreuz appeared at the moment when Hermes Trismegistus vanished, after his legacy was called into question by Isaac Casaubon (1614). According to Antoine Faivre, the *Fama Fraternitatis* marked the refounding of

Western esotericism. Therefore, it is interesting to note that the description of the discovery of Christian Rosenkreuz's tomb recalls that of the sepulcher of Hermes. According to Corbin, the account in which Balinus—or rather, Apollonius of Tyana— reports his discovery of Hermes' body is the typification of man's encounter with his soul, his "Perfect Nature."⁸ Hermes holds in his hand the Emerald Tablet and a book containing the secrets of Creation. These elements recall the concept which states that the person who attains selfknowledge, by entering into his own depths, will know the secrets of God and the universe.

It appears that Balinus' narrative was taken from a passage in the *Picatrix*,⁹ in which Socrates discussed the subject of the Perfect Nature. This discussion, recalling the testimony of Hermes, points out that it represents the spiritual entity of the philosopher, the inner guide which unlocks wisdom. Another part of the *Picatrix* includes a prayer supposedly belonging to the astral liturgy of the Sabaeans of Harran. It invokes Hermes by specifying that he is called 'Otared in Arabic, *Tir* in Persian, *Hams* in Rhomaic, and *Budha* in Hindi.¹⁰ Let us add that this encounter between man and his Perfect Nature is also mentioned in the *Poemandres*, the prologue to the *Corpus Hermeticum*

THE OLD SAGE

The tomb represents the place of transition to the other world, and certain texts associate it with the passage toward the imaginal world. It symbolizes, in effect, the place of the metamorphosis of the body

into spirit, of its resurrection. For Jung it also represents the descent into the depths of the unconscious. The bodies of the two masters, Christian Rosenkreuz and Hermes Trismegistus, discovered in their sepulchers, are those of elderly men. Jung analyzed the presence of this symbol in myths, stories, or dreams as being the expression of an archetype—that of the “old sage.” He thought that when an individual had attained a certain stage in his quest, the unconscious changed appearance in his inner life. It then appeared in the new symbolic form representing the Ego, the innermost center of the psyche. For women, it would be represented by a priestess or sorceress, and for men, it generally manifested in the form of an old wise man, an initiator. Jung also saw the archetype of the alchemical process, of initiation, in Hermes. He associated Hermes-Mercury with the unconscious and made it an element of primary importance in the process of integration—in other words, of the discovery of the center of being: the Ego.

THE FRIENDS OF GOD

At the end of the final volume of his masterly work *En islam iranien*, Henry Corbin ponders the resemblances existing between the biographies or accounts of individuals who founded certain spiritual movements. He notes various common themes, such as the concept of the Friends of God, the color green, the idea of cycles, as well as the revelatory recurrences of an identical spiritual experience.¹¹ There are common references to a voyage to the Orient, to the discovery of a tomb, to the project of creating a spiritual movement

on the fringes of official religion, of a form of secular—or even spiritual—kighthood bringing together the Friends of God.

Corbin emphasizes that one of the points differentiating Shiite Islam from Sunni Islam is the concept of the cycles of divine revelation. Among Shiites, the cycle of the prophets began at the moment that Adam was driven from Paradise and when his son Seth had received the sacred trust (Gabriel also gave him a cloak of green wool). This period is completed by Mohammed, the Seal of the prophets. A new period then began, because the Word continued to circulate in Creation; this is the cycle of the *walayat*, whose object was the revelation of esotericism in prophecy. Those who transmitted it were represented as knights and called the “Friends of God.” These beings were perfect men, true epiphanies of God, who had achieved a high spiritual realization. They were necessary for temporizing the imbalance of Creation which had lost its connection to the Divine.

One of the greatest representatives of Iranian Sufism, Ruzbehan Baqli Shiraz (1128-1209), said in this regard: “They are the eyes through which God still looks upon the world.” We also find the theme of the divine friendship in the Gospels. St. John states: “Henceforth I call you not servants; for the servant knoweth not what his lord doeth: but I have called you friends; for all things that I have heard of my Father I have made known unto you.” (John 15:15)

THE GREEN ISLAND

The expression “Friends of God” found its way to the West, where it designated the group founded by Rulman Merswin after he had encountered a mysterious wanderer, the “Friend of God from the Oberland.” This small community, which Johannes Tauler visited, had chosen to reside in Strasbourg, in a place called the Green Island. This name brings to mind the secret dwelling, also called the Green Island, of the “Hidden Imam,” where Shiite Moslems await the return to eschatological time. Merswin thought that the time of the monasteries was past and that another kind of structure must be created, taking the form of a new order not made up of clerics. We should also note that Merswin’s works, written on wax tablets, were placed in his tomb at the time of his death in 1382.¹²

Other individuals, such as Tauler, Eckhart, and those grouped around Suso, were called the Friends of God. Suso’s followers even proposed forming a “Brotherhood of Eternal Wisdom.” Johann Valentin Andreae also used the expression “Friends of God” in his *Theca gladii spiritus* (The Sheath of the Glory of the Spirit, 1616), a book which repeated numerous passages from the *Confessio Fraternitatis*. According to the thinking of the individuals or the groups we have mentioned, the title of Friends of God generally designates the Chosen, the Guides of Humanity, those who lived an illuminating experience.

THE FRAVARTIS

In Islam, the concept of the Friend of God supports the theme of

a spiritual knighthood. The Ismaelian *da'wat* fraternity, with which the Templars had established some connections, took on the appearance of a chivalric order. In Shiism, we even find the idea of knighthood common to the three religions of the Book. According to Corbin, the idea of such a “spiritual knighthood” had taken root in Zoroastrianism, a religion of pre-Islamic Iran. It referred to the first moments of Creation, to a mission given to certain beings, called the *fravartis*, to reestablish harmony in the world. This concept, which cannot be fully discussed due to space limitations, is linked with that of man’s initial nature, his Perfect Nature, his dimension of the Man of Light, which he wins back through a mystical experience.

Those who lived this sort of experience, the illuminated—in the noblest sense of the word—are those who have encountered Elijah, the spiritual initiator. According to a Sufi tradition originating in Yemen, Khezr-Elijah is the initiator of the owaysi, disciples who receive their initiation through a spiritual experience, without going through an earthly master. Examples of such disciples are Oways al-Qarani, Ibn Arabi, and Hallaj. It is worthwhile noting that Khezr (also known as Khidr or al-Khadir, or by the name of Khawadja Khidr in India) is often compared to Hermes Trismegistus or to Seth. According to tradition, he inhabits the place where the celestial and terrestrial oceans touch. It is said that his cloak was colored green after he had bathed in the fountain of life. Khezr is none other than the designation for Perfect Nature, the Angel of Knowledge—in other words, man’s most luminous nature, his

Master Within. Those who lived this experience are placed in the lineage of a spiritual knighthood.



FIGURE 23. *Theatrum Chemicum Britannicum*, text edited and annotated by Elias Ashmole, 1652. The Master Adept bestows upon a worthy Son of the Art the secrets of alchemy. “Receive,” says the seated Old Sage, “the gift of God under the Sacred Seal.

SPIRITUAL KNIGHTHOOD

We find traces of such a spiritual knighthood among the various individuals we have discussed. Around the time that Joachim of Fiore (12th century) undertook the foundation of a monastic order in the spirit of primitive Christianity, Wolfram von Eschenbaeh developed in Germany the idea of a knighthood common to Christianity and Islam. His *Parzival*, which Richard Wagner made into *Parsifal*, is derived from an Arab text that Kyot le Provengal had obtained in Toledo. This version of the Grail legend is of Iranian origin.¹³ It is amazing to realize that the Grail in *Parzival* is a precious stone upon which the dove of the Holy Spirit descended. One tradition states that the stone is an emerald from which the chalice of the Grail was cut.

After having studied the biographies of the various Friends of God mentioned here, we are encouraged to think that they all witnessed similar spiritual experiences connecting them to a common spiritual filiation. This idea fully preoccupied Corbin, and it is upon this subject that he ended his masterpiece, *En islam iranien*.¹⁴ He believed that a similar line of force, going back into time immemorial, gave rise within Shiism to the concept of a knighthood common to all Abrahamic tradition, as it kindled in the West the idea of an ecumenical knighthood bringing together Christian and Islamic knights.¹⁵ Among such individuals, do we not see a project common to the supporters of Eastern and Western esotericism? Do we not observe here “the most precious spiritual secret of all our Western traditions”?¹⁶ This spiritual knighthood possesses eschatological

purposes and binds together the prophets, chosen ones, guides, and initiates who have worked since the beginning of time for the coming of a Dawn that restores Light to the world.

THE AGES OF THE WORLD

Many traditions claim that the divine revelation which totally enlightens humanity concerning God's plans will be spread out over many millennia. We find this idea in Judaism, Christianity, and Islam. Judaism indicates that the universe will exist a mere 6,000 years, and at its conclusion Elijah will return to purify the world before the coming of the Messiah. This return is also recalled in the Gospels (Mark 9:12 and Matthew 14:11). This prophecy also characterizes the 12th century when Joachim of Fiore allocated the cycles of divine revelation among the three persons of the Holy Trinity. After the ages of the Father and the Son, he announced the imminence of the third age of the Revelation, that of the Holy Spirit, which would be marked by Elijah's return. The Church of Peter would be replaced by the Church of John. These ideas of cycles and the appearance of a New Church were to have considerable influence on mystical movements which advocated an inner religion, such as that of Rosicrucianism and Pietism.¹⁷

THE PARACLETE

As Corbin shows, the concept of a revelation stretched out as cycles also plays an important role in Islam. Moreover, he emphasized the affinities existing between the Calabrian monk's

theory regarding the three ages of the world and that of the *hexaemeron* in Shiite Islam.¹⁸ The principle of the *hexaemeron* was revealed by the Iranian philosopher Nasir-e Khosraw a century before Joachim of Fiore had formulated his theory. He drew a parallel between the six days of Creation and the appearance of the six great religions (Sabaism, Brahmanism, Zoroastrianism, Judaism, Christianity, and Islam). Each of these stages is characterized by the coming of a prophet who sheds new light on the Divine. However, these six days form “the night of religion” and only on the seventh day would the spiritual and esoteric meaning of all revelations be unveiled. In Islam, many texts develop this same theme. These include *The Wisdom of the Prophets* by Ibn Arabi (11th century), who perceived in the prophets the exemplification of the degrees of the hierarchy of being and of wisdom, and *The Rose Garden of Mystery* by Mahmud Shabestari (14th century), who perceived here the symbolization of mystical states. For his part, Semnani (14th century) associated the prophets with the seven subtle centers of being.

In the 12th century, Shiite theosophers had a predilection for the Gospel and the Revelation of St. John. They were the Johannites. Furthermore, they likened the parousia of the twelfth Imam to the Paraclete, the Holy Spirit, announced by St. John. In the 17th century, at the time that the Rosicrucians flourished, the Shiite school of Isfahan already identified the hidden Imam (the twelfth) with the *Saoshyan*—i.e., the Savior—who, according to Zoroastrianism, would come at the end of the twelfth millennium to

restore Creation to its original Light.

HIEROHISTORY

Nikolai Berdyaev and Henry Corbin have shown that the cycles of the revelation we have mentioned, invoked by both Christians and Moslems, do not have to be understood as chronological stages. These relate not to history, but to what these scholars call hierohistory—a sacred history in which events do not succeed one another in a linear sequence. Their framework is placed in the world of the soul, the world of *hierophanies*. Thus, they feel that these periods refer to stages of man's inner development and not to some historical period. The historical facts reported here are not a historicizing of events of sacred history whose revelations are meant to edify us. Moreover, whereas certain people are only on the first level of revelation, there are still others—those who have experienced the Eighth Clime, the imaginal world—who already live in the time of the Spirit because they have become the Friends of God through their inner experience.

It is to such development that authentic initiatory orders lead. The mystical experiences of their founders have given rise to groups that are branches of one tree connected to the trunk of the same spiritual knighthood. For example, Jean-Baptiste Willermoz spoke of a “High and Holy Order” that had its origin at the beginning of the world.¹⁹ As for modern Rosicrucianism, it refers to the invisible order—i.e., the Great White Brotherhood—of which the Rosicrucian Order is simply a manifestation on the visible plane. It

is in this connection that we should seek its source.

This origin certainly cannot be proved by documents, and we must understand that such a concept is rejected by rationalistic historians. It will be less upsetting to those individuals who, in the tradition of Mircea Eliade, call for a fresh glance at the origins of esoteric and initiatic spiritualist movements. Henry Corbin's studies have proven themselves invaluable in this regard, and this is why we have made considerable reference to his writings in this chapter. His thoughts lead us to imagine that the biography of Christian Rosenkreuz may be read as a visionary narrative, in whose image the Emerald Tablet may be discovered. It relates a spiritual experience, an encounter with Perfect Nature that reveals the secrets of Creation. It is not the biography of a man who once existed, but the story of an "individual" who returned to the imaginal world, a world that Corbin considered to be the possible source of initiatic filiations. Thus, the *Fama Fraternitatis* takes its place in the tradition of initiatic narratives which, since the beginning of time, have encouraged people to join the fraternity that has worked in secret for the restoration of Light to the world.

We may better grasp what Michael Maier was trying to say when he presented Rosicrucianism as having issued from Egyptian and Brahmanic spirituality, from the mysteries of Eleusis and of Samothrace, from the Persian magi, the Pythagoreans, and the Arabs. Yet we may sense where the origin of an initiatic movement goes beyond history and fits into the framework of hierohistory, that which is read not simply in documents, but in the world of the soul.

Did not Newton say in his alchemical writings that the real truths are incarnated in myths, fables, and prophecies?

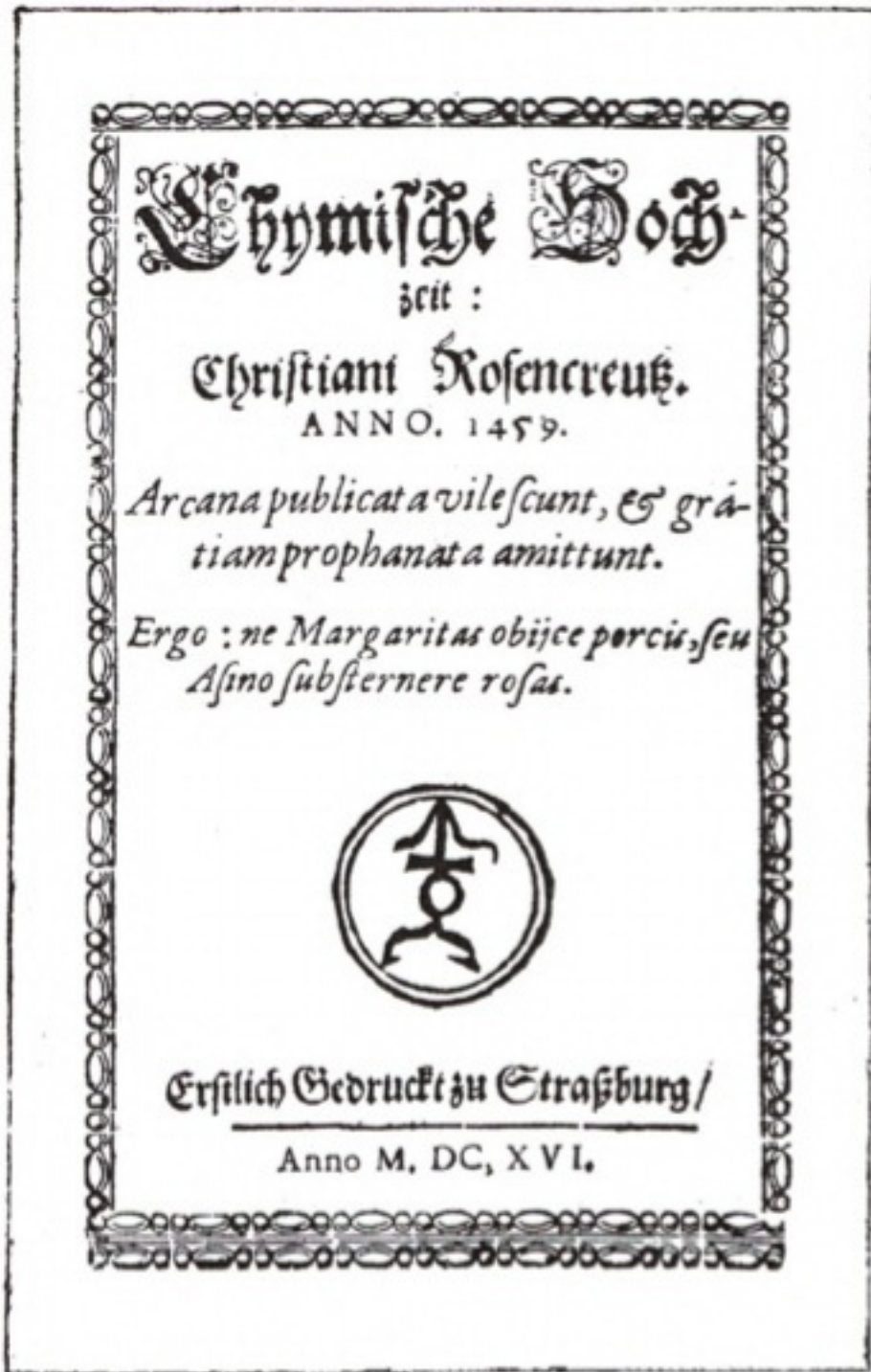


FIGURE 24. Johann Valentin Andreae, *Chymical Wedding of Christian Rosenkreuz*, 1616.

Chapter 8

THE CHYMICAL WEDDING

The *Chymical Wedding of Christian Rosenkreuz*, a book that is considered to be the third Rosicrucian manifesto, made its appearance in 1616. It was printed in Strasbourg by Lazarus Zetzner, the publisher of *Theatrum chemicum* and numerous other alchemical treatises. This work differs considerably from the first two manifestos. First of all, although it was likewise published anonymously, it is known that Johann Valentin Andreae was the author. Secondly, it is unusual in form in that it is presented as an alchemical novel and as an autobiography of Christian Rosenkreuz.

Despite the important development of science during this period, alchemy remained a potent force. It contributed by enriching the thoughts of researchers, prompting Frank Greiner to state: “The invention of the modern world did not arise essentially from the triumph of machinery, but also found some of its ferment in the alembics of goldmakers and extractors of the quintessence.”¹ In the 17th century alchemy broadened its perspectives. It claimed to be a unifying science that included medical applications and developed a more spiritual dimension. It also sought to become part of the thinking on the history of Creation, of the tragic cosmogony which

brought about not only the fall of man, but nature as well. Thus, the alchemist was not only a physician who helped humanity to regenerate itself so as to be reborn to its spiritual condition, but the alchemist was also nature's physician. As St. Paul pointed out, Creation is in exile and suffering, and it is awaiting its liberation by man.² Gerhard Dorn, a follower of Paracelsus, was an individual who was typical of this evolution.³ And it was in this set of circumstances, so rich in published works, that the *Chymical Wedding of Christian Rosenkreuz* took its place.



FIGURE 25. Martin Luther's emblem.

JOHANN VALENTIN ANDREAE

The author of this manifesto, Johann Valentin Andreae (1586-1654), came from an illustrious family of theologians. His grandfather, Jakob Andreae, was one of the authors of the *Formula of Concord*, an important document in the history of Lutheranism. In recognition of his meritorious services, the Count Palatine Otto

Heinrich granted him a coat of arms. Jakob's design incorporated the cross of St. Andrew, in reference to his family name, with four roses, in deference to Martin Luther, whose armorial bearings depicted a rose. The emblem of Luther (see fig. 25) may be described thus: in the center is a black cross, bringing to mind mortification and recalling that faith in the crucified Christ leads to redemption. This cross reposes in the center of a red heart, the symbol of life. The latter is placed on a white rose, the sign of joy and peace. The whole is surrounded by a golden ring symbolizing eternal life. It is possible that this emblem was inspired by the writings of St. Bernard of Clairvaux, which were deeply appreciated by Luther. Indeed, in his sermons on the *Song of Songs*, St. Bernard often used the image of the cross united with a flower when describing the marriage of the soul with God.

From childhood, Johann Valentin Andreae was brought up surrounded by alchemy. His father, a pastor in Tübingen, owned a laboratory, and his cousin, Christophe Welling, was also an enthusiastic follower of this science. Young Johann Valentin followed in his father's footsteps in theological studies. He was a friend of the theologian Johann Arndt, who considered him to be his spiritual son and greatly influenced the youth. Arndt was part of the tradition of Valentin Weigel, a tradition which tried to achieve a synthesis between Rheno-Flemish mysticism, Renaissance Hermeticism, and Paracelsian alchemy. Johann Valentin was also the friend of Tobias Hess, a theologian who pursued Paracelsian medicine and naometry. Devoting himself to this science of

“measuring the temple” while at Tübingen, young Andreae assisted his teacher and protector, the theologian Matthias Hafenreffer, by drawing the illustrations for a study on the Temple of Ezekiel. The youthful scholar was likewise intrigued by the mediating role of symbols in the spiritual experience. In this regard he shared the preoccupations of his teacher Johann Arndt, who was noted for his mysticism and who was considered to be one of the precursors of pietism.

The author of the *Chymical Wedding* considered the theater to be a worthwhile means for inducing his contemporaries to ponder serious matters, and some of his works were influenced by the *commedia dell’arte*. This is true in the case of *Turbo*, a play in which Harlequin made his first appearance on the German stage. This play, published in the same year as the *Chymical Wedding*, makes reference to alchemy. This important work would later serve as the model for Goethe’s *Faust*. However, although the author’s learning in the Hermetic art is readily apparent,⁴ his view of alchemists is also ironic. Generally speaking, whether in theology or science, what interested Andreae was useful knowledge and not vain speculation. For instance, he and his friend John Amos Comenius helped to revive pedagogy in the 17th century. In 1614, he was named suffragen pastor of Vaihingen. Later he became the superintendent in Calw, and then the preacher and counselor at the consistory of Stuttgart. After having held various offices, he ended his career as the abbot of Adelberg, a town where he died in 1654.⁵

Johann Valentin Andreae left an impressive body of work.⁶ It was

in 1602-1603, when he was not yet seventeen years old, that he made his first attempts as an author. He wrote two comedies about Esther and Hyacinth, as well as the first version of the *Chymical Wedding*. The protagonist of this novel already went by the name of Christian Rosenkreuz—although this name may only have been added at its publication in 1616. As the manuscript for the first version of this text has disappeared, it is difficult for us to know. However, what we can say for certain is that the symbols of the rose and cross rarely crop up in the novel. We also know that Andreae revamped the text for the 1616 edition. It is intriguing to note that the *Chymical Wedding* was issued in the same year and by the same publisher as *Theca gladii spiritus* (The Sheath of the Glory of the Spirit). This book repeated twenty-eight passages from the *Confessio Fraternitatis*. However, the name of Christian Cosmoxene was substituted for that of Christian Rosenkreuz, and the author did not seem to adhere to all the concepts presented in the first Rosicrucian texts. It is worth recalling that in the year in which the *Fama Fraternitatis* was written, Andreae proposed the creation of a *Societas Christiana*, a group which, in some respects, resembled the project formulated in the manifestos. Throughout his life, he was constantly creating societies of learning, such as the Tübingen Circle, or organizations of a social character, such as the Foundation of Dyers, which is still in existence today.



FIGURE 26. Johann Valentin Andreae

THE STORY

The third Rosicrucian manifesto differs considerably from the two preceding ones. Briefly, here is the story. Christian Rosenkreuz, an elderly man who is eighty-one years old, describes his adventures over a seven-day period in 1459. After being summoned to a royal wedding by a winged messenger, Christian leaves his retreat, situated on a mountain slope. After various incidents, he arrives at the summit of a high mountain, and then passes through a succession of three gates. Once within, he and the other people who have been invited are put to a test in which they are weighed on scales. If they are judged virtuous enough, they are allowed to attend the wedding.

The select few receive a Golden Fleece⁷ and are presented to the royal family. After being brought before the royal family, Christian Rosenkreuz describes the presentation of a play. This is followed by a banquet, after which the royal family is decapitated. The coffins containing the corpses are loaded onto seven ships bound for a distant island. Arriving at their destination, they are placed in the Tower of Olympus, a curious seven-story edifice. For the remainder of the narrative we witness the strange ascent of the guests through the seven stories of the tower. At each level, under the direction of a maiden and an old man, they participate in alchemical operations. They carry out a distillation of the royal skins from which a liquid is obtained that is afterwards transformed into a white egg. From this a bird is hatched that is fattened before being decapitated and reduced to ashes. From the residue, the guests fabricate two human-shaped figurines. These homunculi are fed until they become the size of adults. A final operation communicates to them the spark of life. The two homunculi are none other than the king and the queen who have been restored to life. Shortly afterwards, they welcome their guests into the Order of the Golden Stone, and all return to the castle. However, Christian Rosenkreuz, at the time

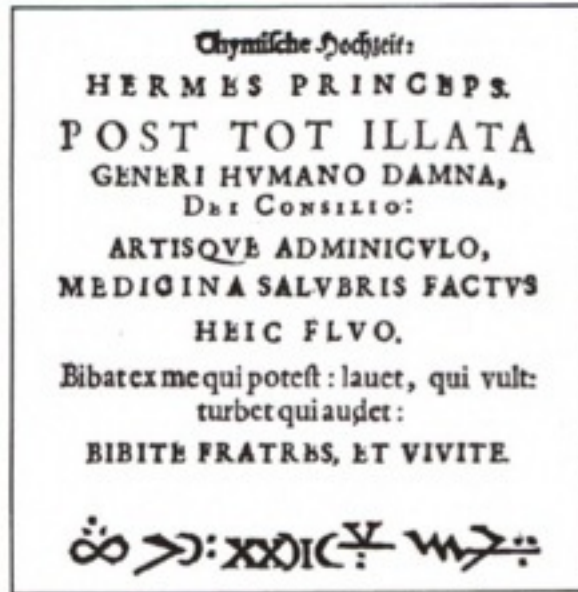


FIGURE 27. Inscriptions and cryptogram shown on the fountain of the Chymical Wedding (fourth day). of his first day in the castle, committed the indiscretion of entering the mausoleum where the sleeping Venus reposes. His inquisitiveness condemns him to become the guardian of the castle. The sentence does not seem to be executed, because the narrative suddenly ends with the return of Christian Rosenkreuz to his cottage. The author leaves us to understand that the hermit, who is eighty-one years old, does not have many more years to live. This last statement seems to contradict the *Fama Fraternitatis*, which claimed that Christian Rosenkreuz lived to the venerable age of 106. Moreover, other aspects of the narrative depict a Christian Rosenkreuz who is quite at odds with the one presented in the earlier manifestos.

A BAROQUE OPERA

As Bernard Gorceix has remarked, Andreae's work bears the imprint of 17th century culture, that of the Baroque, where allegory, fable, and symbol occupy a preeminent place. According to Gorceix, this novel is a significant historical and literary work. It is, in fact, one of the best examples of the emergence of the Baroque in the 17th century. The taste for the marvelous and the primacy of

ornamentation are quite apparent.⁸ The castle where the wedding takes place is sumptuous, and its gardens reflect the era's interest in parks adorned with fountains and automatons.⁹ They serve to embellish many scenes in the story—most memorably that of the judgment in which the guests, one by one, put themselves in a balance that weighs their virtue. The author also has us witness strange processions of veiled maidens who are barely perturbed by the arrows shot by a rather undisciplined Cupid. Moreover, we encounter such fabulous animals as unicorns, lions, griffins, and the phoenix.

The costumes of the various characters are luxurious, and during the narrative some of them change from black to white and to red, according to the stage of alchemical transmutation in progress. Various feasts and banquets, served by invisible valets, punctuate the narrative. Music, often played by invisible musicians, accompanies the narration. Trumpets and kettledrums mark the changes in scenery or the entrance of characters. The text is sprinkled with poems, and the general plot is interrupted by a play. Nor is humor absent from this alchemical treatise. It manifests at often unexpected moments, as for example in the episode of the judgment (third day), which gives rise to several broad jokes. At the moment when the transmutation is virtually achieved (sixth day), the director of the operations tricks the guests into believing that they are not going to be invited to the final phase of the work. After seeing the effects of the joke, its perpetrator laughs so hard that “his belly was ready to burst.” The narrative involves hidden inscriptions and a riddle in

ciphers which Leibniz tried to fathom. As can be seen, we are face to face with a literary work of great opulence, and in a style very different from that of the *Fama Fraternitatis* and *Confessio Fraternitatis*.

INNER ALCHEMY

In 1617, the year following the publication of the *Chymical Wedding*, the alchemist Ratichius Brotoffer published *Elucidarius Major . . .*, a book in which he tried to establish the correlations between the seven days of the *Chymical Wedding* and the stages of alchemical work. He acknowledged, however, that Andreae's text is obscure. In more recent years, other authors, such as Richard Kienast (1926) or Will-Erich Peuchkert (1928), did their best to decipher the mysteries of this text. More recently, Bernard Gorceix, Serge Hutin, and Roland Edighoffer in particular analyzed this work judiciously.¹⁰ The text of the *Chymical Wedding* barely resembles the works of the alchemical corpus. It is not at all a technical treatise, and its object is not to describe the operations in a laboratory. And we should note in passing that the story does not involve developing the Philosopher's Stone, but of producing a couple of homunculi. In regards to the seven days described in the tale, it is essentially at the beginning of the fourth day that alchemical symbology occupies center stage.

Paul Arnold tried to show that the *Chymical Wedding* was simply an adaptation of Canto X of *The Faerie Queene* by Edmund Spenser (1594), which describes the Red Cross Knight. Yet his argument is hardly convincing. For his part, Roland Edighoffer showed that

Andreae's story bears a striking resemblance to *Clavis totius philosophiae chimisticae*,¹¹ a work by Gerhard Dorn, a follower of Paracelsus. This book was published in 1567, and then included in the first volume of *Theatrum chemicum*, published by Lazarus Zetzner in 1602.¹² In this text, Dorn indicates that the purification carried out on matter by the alchemist should also be accomplished on man himself. His book presents three characters who typify the different parts of man: body, soul, and spirit. While at a crossroads, the three have a discussion regarding what route they should follow so as to reach three castles situated on a mountain. The first of these castles is made of crystal, the second of silver, and the third of diamond. After several adventures and a purification at the Fountain of Love, these characters attain the seven stages which mark the process of the inner regeneration of being. There is a striking resemblance between the basic plot of this story and that of the *Chymical Wedding*.

THE SPIRITUAL WEDDING

In the epigraph to his book, Andreae indicates that “the mysteries are demeaned when revealed and lose their power when profaned.” Indeed, the initiatic mysteries lose their virtue when they merely pass through the filter of the intellect. Under these circumstances, how can we analyze the work that interests us here without stripping it of its virtues? We do not make the claim that we can reveal all of the arcana, but we feel that three important themes presented in Andreae's initiatic novel need to be emphasized: the wedding, the

mountain of revelation, and the seven stages of the work.

The sacred wedding, the hierogamy, occupies an important place in the ancient mysteries. In Christianity, with St. Bernard of Clairvaux (1090-1153), this subject was elaborated upon in his commentaries on the Song of Songs. In his treatise *On the Love of God*, he described the journey of the soul towards the higher spheres, with the final stage being that of the spiritual marriage. This symbolic system was developed in greater detail by the Rheno-Flemish mystics, notably with the Beguines and Jan van Ruysbroeck, author of *The Adornment of the Spiritual Marriage* (1335). Among numerous other authors, such as Valentin Weigel, the theme of the spiritual marriage is associated with that of regeneration and rebirth. Among the latter, alchemical symbolism is added to that of Christianity.

The royal wedding generally occupies an important place in alchemy, and psychologist Carl Jung showed that it was particularly well suited for describing the phases of the process of individuation. The wedding of the king and the queen represent the union of the two polarities of being, the animus and the *anima*, leading to the discovery of Self. Jung set forth his research in many books, of which the most representative is *Psychology and Alchemy* (1944). However, it was in *Mysterium Coniunctionis, An Inquiry into the Separation and Synthesis of Psychic Opposites in Alchemy* (1955-56), that Jung's investigations are thought to have reached their greatest development. In this work, the *Chymical Wedding of Christian Rosenkreuz* is a key element in his thinking. Contrary to what the title

suggests, Andreae's narrative does not speak of a wedding. The marriage ceremony is not described in the novel, but rather its action revolves around the resurrection of a king and a queen. As with St. Bernard and the mystics of previous eras, it is the wedding of being, understood as a regeneration, that Andreae refers to in his book.



FIGURE 28. *Chymical Wedding of Christian Rosenkreuz*, drawing by Hans Wildermann, 1923.

THE CASTLE OF THE SOUL

The wedding location is on a mountain. In traditional symbology, this place, the point where the earth and sky touch, is the abode of

the gods and of revelation. As has been so well demonstrated by Marie-Madeleine Davy in *La Montagne et sa symbolique*,¹³ when a person determines to climb the mountain, he sets out on the quest for self and embarks on the ascent toward the absolute. The invitation brought to Christian Rosenkreuz indicates that he must reach the summit of a mountain crowned by three temples. However, in the following episode of the narrative, castles are mentioned instead.

Christian Rosenkreuz passes through two portals and arrives at the castle where preparations for the great transmutation are taking place. Then, it is in a third place, in a tower situated on an island, that the Great Work is accomplished. We find here the theme of the castle of the soul spoken of by Meister Eckhart (1260-1328) and St. Theresa of Avila (1515-1582). For them, the quest of the soul is often presented as the conquest of a castle. Alchemical texts combine the two elements in describing a castle on a mountain. We previously observed that Gerhard Dorn spoke of three castles on a high mountain. Whether mountain, castle, temple, or tower, all of these symbolic elements in our narrative are meant to conjure up the notion of a journey and an ascent.

Yet the temple or castle situated on a high mountain also has an eschatological aspect by recalling the temple to come which Ezekiel spoke of in his visions. After the destruction of the temple and the city of Jerusalem, the Jews were deported to Babylon, and it is then that Ezekiel prophesied the vision of the future temple. He drew a parallel between the exile of the Jews and the expulsion of man from

Paradise. This destruction of the temple brought about the retreat of God from Creation, God then becoming the only “place” where man could worship. However, Ezekiel announced the establishment of a new temple, a third, which would coincide with the restoration of Creation. The prophet described this as being situated on a “high mountain,” and he declared that the archetype of this temple existed previously in the superterrestrial world. This vision greatly influenced the Essenes and was the source of all apocalyptic literature.¹⁴ We are reminded of the importance of the vision of Ezekiel’s temple in Simon Studion’s *Naometria*, and, as previously mentioned, we know that Andreae also had the opportunity to work on this subject with Matthias Hafenreffer (see above, “Johann Valentin Andreae”). Moreover, as Roland Edighoffer has shown, the *Chymical Wedding* includes many eschatological aspects. It is surprising to note that we will soon encounter this idea of an eschatological temple with Robert Fludd. For him, the mountain on which the temple is erected is none other than that of initiation.

THE SEVEN STAGES

In the *Chymical Wedding*, the number seven plays a fundamental role. The action unfolds over seven days; seven virgins, seven weights, seven ships are described; and the final transmutation takes place in an athanor which sits enthroned in a seven-story tower. Although this may not always be the case, alchemists generally divide the process of the elaboration of the Great Work into seven phases. Gerhard Dorn talks about the seven degrees of the work.

Here we encounter a fundamental theme which is far from being unique to alchemy. As Professor Ioan P. Couliano has shown, the theory which states that the process of the elevation of the soul encompasses seven stages is found in numerous traditions.¹⁵ His researches indicate that according to a Greek tradition also found in Dante, Marsilio Ficino, and Pico della Mirandola, these ascents toward ecstasy are accomplished through the seven planetary spheres. Couliano also noted another form of ascent following a tradition dating back to Babylonia, and which later passed into Jewish and Judeo-Christian apocalyptic literature, as well as Islam. Without making reference to the planets, it also speaks of seven stages to spiritual ecstasy.

This element is also found in Hermeticism. The *Poemandres*, the first treatise of the *Corpus Hermeticum*, after having touched upon the cosmogony and the fall of man, speaks of the seven stages of the soul's ascent through the framework of the spheres. It describes the seven zones that the soul, after the dissolution of the material body, must pass through so as to purge the self of its defects and illusions before ascending toward the Father.¹⁶ It is interesting to note that the tenth treatise, which provides a summary of the Hermetic teachings, reconsiders this ascent toward God by defining it as the "ascent toward Olympus." Is it not striking that, in the *Chymical Wedding*, the tower where the seven alchemical phases are accomplished is appropriately called the Tower of Olympus?

This septenary concept is also found in the Christian tradition, notably with St. Bernard, who was highly admired by Andreae. The

dream recounted on the first day of the *Chymical Wedding* derives its theme from St. Bernard's sermon for the fifth Sunday after Pentacost. In this dream, Christian Rosenkreuz is locked away in a tower in the company of other people. Moreover, the tools which the wedding guests receive for going from one floor to another in the Tower of Olympus (sixth day)—a rope, ladder, or wings— are taken from the symbology of St. Bernard.

We find reference to the seven stages of the inner life among two individuals praised by Andreae. The first, Stephan Praetorius, the pastor of Salzwedel, speaks of "*justificatio, santificatio, contemplatio, applicatio, devotio, continentia, beneficentia.*" The second person is Philip Nicolai (1556-1608), a pioneer of the "new piety," who, when speaking of the mystic wedding, describes the seven phases which mark the regeneration of the soul (*The Mirror of the Joys of Eternal Life*, 1599).

THE SEVEN DAYS OF THE WEDDING

1st Day, Preparation for the Departure:

The heavenly invitation - The prisoners of the tower - The departure of Christian Rosenkreuz for the wedding.

2nd Day, Journey to the Castle:

The crossroads of the four paths - The arrival at the castle and the passage through the three gates - The banquet at the castle - The dream.

3rd Day, The Judgment:

The judgment of the unworthy guests - The bestowal of the Golden Fleece on the chosen - The execution of judgment - The visit to the castle - The weighing ceremony.

4th Day, The Blood Wedding:

The fountain of Hermes - The bestowal of a second Golden Fleece - Presentation to the six royal personages - The theatrical presentation - The execution of the royal family - The departure of the coffins on seven ships.

5th Day, The Sea Voyage:

The mausoleum of Venus - The false interment of the royal personages - The sea voyage - The arrival on the island - The seven-story tower - The laboratory.

6th Day, The Seven Phases of Resurrection:

The drawing of lots - The ceremony around the fountain and cauldron - The suspended globe - The white egg - The birth of the bird - The decapitation and incineration of the bird - The circular furnace - The fabrication of two figurines from ashes - The spark of life - The awakening of the royal couple.

7th Day, The Return of Christian Rosenkreuz:

The Knights of the Golden Stone - The return by ship - The punishment inflicted on Christian Rosenkreuz - His return home after his pardon.

KNIGHT OF THE GOLDEN STONE

At the end of the seventh day of the *Chymical Wedding*, Christian Rosenkreuz is dubbed “Knight of the Golden Stone.” This title gives him mastery over ignorance, poverty, and illness. Each knight takes an oath in promising to dedicate the Order to God and his servant, Nature. In effect, as Johann Valentin Andreae indicates, “Art serves Nature” and the alchemist participates as much to his

own restoration as that of nature. In a register, Christian Rosenkreuz inscribed these words: “The highest knowledge is that we know nothing.” This phrase refers to the “learned ignorance” preached by Nicholas of Cusa (1401-1464). The latter, part of a tradition including Proclus, Dionysius the Areopagite, and Eckhart, opposed rationalistic logic. “Learned ignorance” does not consist of, as often thought, the rejection of knowledge, but the recognition that the world, being infinite, cannot be the object of complete knowledge. Nicholas of Cusa advocated a gnosis, an illuminating knowledge, one capable of surpassing the world of appearances by understanding the coincidence of opposites.

In conclusion, the *Chymical Wedding of Christian Rosenkreuz* is an initiatic narrative, that of a person’s quest on the way to the marriage with his soul. This ascent of the soul is part of a process encompassing both man and nature. When reading the book, we are struck by the richness of the language which testifies to the erudition of its author. Indeed, it would take an entire volume to point out all of the references to mythology, literature, theology, and esotericism . In this chapter, we have only made a brief sketch of this marvelous story. Rather than explain its various meanings, our primary aim has been to motivate you to read or reread this work that is fundamental to the Rosicrucian tradition and occupies a prominent place in the history of European literature.



FIGURE 29. The alchemical flask of the royal wedding, from Pandora, 1582.

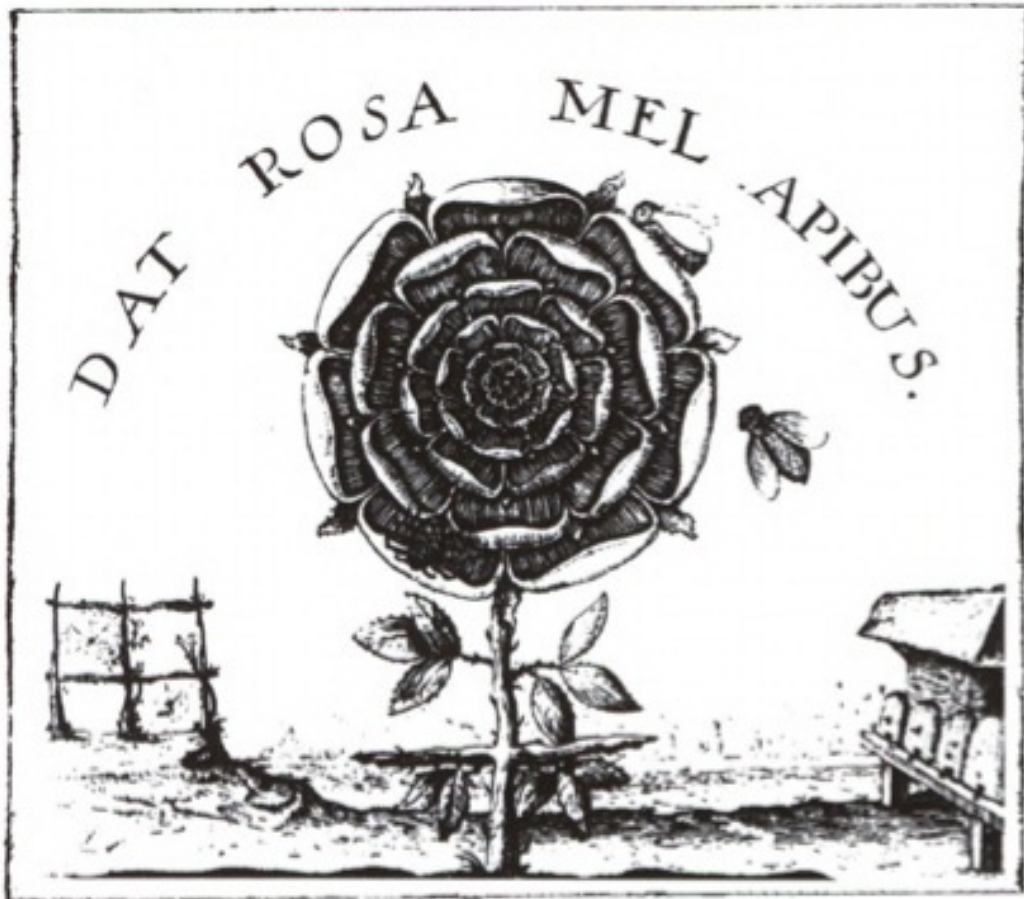


FIGURE 30. "The rose gives honey to the bees." From *Summum Bonum* by Joachim Frizius (1629). This text was published as an appendix to *Sophiae cum Moria Certament (Battle of Wisdom with Folly)*, a violent response of Robert Fludd to Mersenne's attacks upon the Rosicrucians. It is often thought that Joachim Frizius was a pseudonym used by Robert Fludd. However, certain authors, such as William G. Huffman in *Robert Fludd and the End of the Renaissance* (1988), claim that some other author is involved.

Chapter 9

THE ROSE IN BLOOM

THE PUBLICATION OF the Rosicrucian manifestos had important repercussions throughout Europe. The manifestos were quickly reprinted and gave rise to a large body of literature in which detractors and partisans confronted one another. If we restrict ourselves to the period extending from 1614 to 1620, more than 200 books can be counted which express either their support or criticisms, and if we extend this period to the 18th century, we arrive at 900 books. This abundance makes us realize how important Rosicrucianism was to the 17th century. From this literary profusion we will single out several authors who seem to be the most representative spokesmen of these literary debates.

The German physician Andreas Libavius was one of the first to take part in the controversy. Even though he was a Paracelsian, he objected to the magical aspects of Paracelsus' theories and claimed to be a scientific alchemist. Between 1615 and 1616, he published many works in which he called Rosicrucians heretics and denounced their use of magic, which he judged to be diabolical. Robert Fludd (1574-1637), an English physician, countered Libavius in 1616 by publishing "A Compendious Apology for the Fraternity of the Rosy Cross, pelted with the mire of suspicion and infamy but now cleansed with the waters of truth."¹ He showed that Rosicrucian

magic is a “natural magic,” in the sense defined by Marsilio Ficino²: an art perfectly pure and legitimate. Robert Fludd made the most of this publication by publicly seeking his admission to the Rosicrucian fraternity.

Julius Sperber, councilor to Prince Christian of Anhalt, defended the Rosicrucians with his “Echo of the God-illuminated Fraternity of the illustrious R.C. Order” (1615)³ According to him, the order was not of recent formation, because it perpetuates a secret wisdom which had been entrusted to Adam long ago. Sperber indicated that this wisdom had been transmitted from generation to generation through the Chaldeans and Egyptians, then passed into the Christian world with St. John and St. Bernard. He also evoked such personalities as Guillaume Postel, Pico della Mirandola, Johannes Reuchlin, and Cornelius Heinrich Agrippa, who were its guardians. Other writers, such as Michael Potier, in his “New Chemical Treatise” (1617)⁴, also showed their support of the Rosicrucians.



FIGURE 31. Michael Maier.

MICHAEL MAIER

Michael Maier (1569-1622), the celebrated German alchemist who was also the personal physician to Rudolph II, was one of the most ardent defenders of Rosicrucianism. In 1617, in “The Silence after the Clamors,”⁵ he responded to the criticism of those who had openly exhibited their desire to join the Rosicrucians, but had not received any answer to their request. He stated that they had heard nothing because they had not been judged worthy of entering into the order. He added that he himself did not merit such an honor. For Michael Maier, the Rosicrucian fraternity truly existed; it was no hoax. He perceived this order as being one of those colleges of wise men that had existed for all time and among all people. Thus, he represented the Rosicrucians as being the guardians of an ancient

tradition that originated with the Egyptians and Brahmans, and descended from the mysteries of Eleusis and Samothrace, the magi of Persia, the Pythagoreans, and the Arabs.

Friedrich Crick went further concerning this matter. Using the pseudonym of Irenaeus Agnostus, he published “The Shield of Truth,”⁶ a treatise both laudatory and caustic concerning the Rosicrucians (1618). He dated the origin of the Rosy Cross to Adam and provided a fanciful list of forty-seven Imperators of the order, including Seth, Philo, Al Manor, and Jacobus de Voragin—all the way up to Hugo de Alverda, the Imperator in 1618. In the very same year, Joseph Stellatus referred to his support for the “venerable society of the Rose-Croix” in his book “The Pegasus of the firmament, or a brief introduction to the true wisdom, such being formerly called Magic by the Egyptians and Persians, but today received from the venerable R.C. Fraternity, the lawful name of Pansophia.”⁷ This “adept of the secret philosophy” was an attentive reader of the manifestos. However, he soon attacked the Rosicrucian order within his publications, thus engendering many reactions among the fraternity’s defenders. Under the pseudonym of F.G. Menapius, he published in 1618 “Cento according to Virgil on the Brothers of the Rosy Cross”⁸ and in 1619 “the Menapius of the Rosy Cross, or Considerations of the Society all entire”⁹ These books raised an important question: Did the Rosicrucian order really exist or was it an illusion? Many writers came to the defense of the order. Florentinus de Valentia (Daniel Mögling) published “Jesus is everything for us! The Rose blooms . . . ,”¹⁰ which concerned a

“Replica of the calumnies of Menapius against the Rosicrucian society.” As for Michael Maier, he proposed to demonstrate the real existence of the order by publishing in 1618 “Golden Themis, or the Laws and Ordinances of the illustrious R.C. Fraternity.”¹¹ In this book, he described in a veiled manner the meeting place of the Rosicrucians. According to Frances A. Yates, this description brings to mind Heidelberg Castle, a place that we will soon discuss.¹² In 1618 Heinrich Neuhaus, in his “Pious and very useful admonition on the subject of the Rosicrucians. Do they truly exist? What are they?,”¹³ stated that if the Brothers were no longer encountered in Europe, it was because they had left to settle in the Orient. In the many publications flourishing at this time, each author tried to pull the Rose Cross in the direction which interested him. In connection with this, Johann Valentin Andreae, in his *Tunis Babel* (1619), discussed the confusion which followed the publication of the Rosicrucian manifestos.



FIGURE 32. Robert Fludd.

ROBERT FLUDD

During the years marking the emergence of Rosicrucianism, Michael Maier and Robert Fludd in particular were the most zealous defenders of the Rosicrucian fraternity. However, neither of them ever claimed to be a member of the order. An intellect of wide-ranging interests, Robert Fludd was especially versed in the wisdom of the *Corpus Hermeticum* and in the works of Marsilio Ficino and of such Christian Qabalists as Johannes Reuchlin and Francesco Giorgi. Both a physician and alchemist, he was keenly interested in the concepts of Paracelsus. It was probably at the beginning of his enlistment in favor of Rosicrucianism that Robert Fludd developed

a close relationship with the German Rosicrucian circle, although this relationship may have developed only at the time Michael Maier visited England, between 1611 and 1613. What can be said for certain is that the books of the English doctor began to be issued in Germany beginning in 1617. They were published by Jean Théodore de Bry, a printer living in Oppenheim, a city in the Palatinate, who also underwrote the cost of their publication. These works were noted for the quality of the engravings executed by Matthaus Merian. On that score, the books of Robert Fludd are genuine masterpieces—the title pages are decorated with magnificent engravings which summarize the author’s intentions.

In these books, Robert Fludd devoted himself to presenting the harmony between the macrocosm (the world) and the microcosm (man). Endowed with vast knowledge, he took an interest in the harmonic correspondences existing between planets, angels, parts of the human body, music, etc. He attempted to establish a synthesis of all knowledge, and his “Theologico-philosophic treatise. . .” (1617)¹⁴ indicates that he also presented fragments of the ancient wisdom which had survived Adam’s fall. It should also be mentioned that this book is dedicated to the Brothers R.C. In 1617, Robert Fludd began publication of his “Metaphysical history, physics and technique of the one and the other world, to know the great and the small”¹⁵ Within this veritable encyclopedia, which encompassed all fields of knowledge, Fludd endeavored to reveal the Universal Wisdom that would preside over the universal renewal announced in the Rosicrucian manifestos. He tried to show how the Creation had

been engendered by the World Soul, from which arose mathematical models presiding over the harmony of the Creation. His demonstration rested upon *De Harmonia Mundi*, written by Francesco Giorgi, and on the translation and commentaries of Plato's *Timaeus* published by Marsilio Ficino. He also recalled principles that the latter had taken from Macrobius' commentary on *The Dream of Scipio* concerning numbers and the World Soul.

Fludd's position on the World Soul resulted in a confrontation with the astronomer Johannes Kepler and the French philosopher, mathematician, and physician Pierre Gassendi (1592-1655).¹⁶ Nor could the monk Marin Mersenne (1588-1648), a French philosopher and savant, and a savage critic of the Hermetic philosophy of the Renaissance, refrain from attacks. This friend of René Descartes reproached Robert Fludd for having placed Jesus Christ, angels, and the World Soul on the same level. The extent of the reactions stirred up by this English physician's writings show that his works were widely known throughout Europe and were at the heart of one of the great debates of that time.



FIGURE 33. Robert Fludd, *Utriusque Cosmi*, 1617

JOHANNES KEPLER

Johannes Kepler (1571-1630), a graduate of Tübingen, frequently visited Johann Valentin Andreae. Between 1600 and 1612, he was

both a member of the “Magical Court” of Rudolph II and the assistant to the great astronomer Tycho Brahe. Strongly influenced by the Neoplatonism and Pythagoreanism of the Renaissance, Kepler reiterated the system of the World Soul in the original edition of *Mysterium cosmographicum* (1596). However, when rewriting this work in 1606, he changed his position by replacing this concept with that of a “force.” According to him, the movements of the planets were not directed by a World Soul, but rather by a force. As an indication of his retreat from Hermeticism, he did not dedicate his book to Hermes Trismegistus, but rather to King James I of England, who was now described as the “thrice greatest.” Later, in 1619, Johannes Kepler published a work in competition with Robert Fludd’s “Metaphysical History. . . .” In this text, *Harmonices Mundi*, Kepler declared that its thesis was based on mathematics, not on Hermeticism as was true of Robert Fludd. He also accused the latter of confusing the two.

Robert Fludd immediately replied with *Veritatis proscenium* (1621), clearly stating that his theories repeat those of Francesco Giorgi and those of the Rosicrucians. There then followed a reply by Kepler, *Apologia* (1621), to which Robert Fludd responded in 1622 with his *Monochordum mundi symphonicum*.¹⁷ The works of Isaac Newton soon confirmed Kepler’s theories, but in the final analysis, although the term “force” has replaced that of “World Soul,” the question as to the origin of this force remains a complete mystery!

FREDERICK V

The evolution of Rosicrucianism took a decisive turn with the advent of Frederick of the Palatinate. To understand why, it is necessary to summarize the situation in Bohemia during this time. This province of the Holy Roman Empire had been placed under the Habsburg crown by Ferdinand I (1503-1564). His son and successor, the emperor Maximilian II (1527-1576), was a Catholic, but he was not hostile to Protestantism . He even seemed to be open to esotericism, seeing that John Dee had dedicated *Monas Hieroglyphica* (1564) to him. Upon Maximilian's death, he was succeeded by his son Rudolph II. This Habsburg ruler held himself aloof from his nephew Philip II, the very Catholic king of Spain, disapproving the religious fanaticism of the latter. Rudolph II was a refined individual, passionate about science, art, and Hermeticism . He presided over a court where such important individuals as Tycho Brahe, Johannes Kepler, and Michael Maier rubbed shoulders. All the European magi came to his court, and both Giordano Bruno and John Dee frequented it. It was during the reign of this monarch that the *Fama Fraternitatis* was written, with the text circulating in manuscript form throughout Germany.

When Rudolph II died in 1612, he was succeeded by his ineffectual brother Matthias. Rudolph's "Magical Court" then scattered, with its members finding shelter with the many Protestant princes who shared Rudolph's interests. One group settled in Heidelberg, at the court of Frederick V, elector Palatine and son-in-law of the king of England; another joined that of Christian of Anhalt, Frederick's councilor, a prince whose physician was Oswald

Croll, one the great disciples of Paracelsus.¹⁸ Finally, some of them, such as Michael Maier, went to the court of Maurice of Hesse-Cassel. The latter probably played an important role in the promotion of Rosicrucianism. Indeed, the publisher of the first two Rosicrucian manifestos, Wilhelm Wessel, could not print anything without first receiving the approval of the landgrave of Hesse-Cassel. During the reign of Emperor Matthias II, the conflicts between Catholics and Protestants were reignited, because the new monarch lacked the tolerance of his predecessor. During this period the *Fama Fraternitatis* was published (1614), and then the second manifesto, the *Confessio Fraternitatis*, was written and published. The pessimism of the new work was symptomatic of an era in which catastrophes seemed imminent.

THE DEFENESTRATION OF PRAGUE

Little by little, Matthias began to remove Protestants from important imperial posts. Then, in 1618, he closed a church in Prague. This incident lit the powder keg. The townspeople, attached to their religious freedoms, revolted, and on May 23rd, the Protestants tossed three representatives of the emperor out of a window. This incident, the so-called Defenestration of Prague, marked the beginning of the Thirty Years' War (1618-1648), a conflict which soon ravaged the Empire. Matthias' death the following year, in March 1619, only worsened the situation. His nephew, Ferdinand of Styria, previously declared king of Bohemia in 1617, succeeded him as emperor. By taking measures to abrogate the

Protestant faith, this pupil of Jesuit priests put an end to the religious tolerance restored by Rudolph II.

The people of Bohemia refused to submit to Ferdinand's authority and instead chose to replace him with Frederick V, head of the Protestant Union. The latter benefited from the support of the Protestants of France and England. After the death of Henry IV in 1610, certain individuals considered Frederick to be the right man for reconciling Catholics and Protestants. Some people even saw in the lion decorating his armorial bearings the sign of the prosperous times foretold by the prophecy of the Lion of the Septentrion.¹⁹ According to the historian Frances A. Yates, Frederick's palace was the center of nascent Rosicrucianism. In 1643, Frederick wed Elizabeth, daughter of King James I of England. This important event sealed the union of the Protestants of Europe. The marriage was initially celebrated in England, and then continued with sumptuous ceremonies at Heidelberg Castle. It is quite possible that these ceremonies were the inspiration for several scenes that Johann Valentin Andreae included in his *Chymical Wedding of Christian Rosenkreuz*.²⁰ This cultural center possessed gardens richly ornamented with grottoes, "talking statues," and automata conceived by Salomon de Caus.²¹ It was considered to be the eighth marvel of the world.

WHITE MOUNTAIN

Frederick V knew that by accepting the crown, he would be opposing the armed might of the Habsburgs. Driven by destiny, he

had no other choice than to accept. He was crowned in November 1619 at the cathedral of Prague. Alas, he was only a “winter king,” because the Habsburg forces, which had recovered their strength, were unleashed against him. His allies, the kings of France and England, fearful of a conflict with Spain, preferred not to commit themselves. On November 8, 1620, near Prague, the sorrowful Battle of White Mountain took place. Frederick’s troops, commanded by the prince of Anhalt, were slaughtered by the Catholics, and Ferdinand was restored to his throne. Frederick and Elizabeth fled to The Hague in Holland. This battle ushered in the Thirty Years’ War, which included many frightful episodes. Pierre Chaunu describes this conflict as a “catastrophe without equal.” As for P. Mols, he called it “the greatest demographic cataclysm in all the history of Germany.” The consequences were astounding: the Palatinate lost 70 percent of its population; Württemberg, 82 percent; and Bohemia, 44 percent. To this should be added the exile of more than 20,000 people. Overall, the population of Central Europe lost 60 percent of its population during this war.²² Due to such circumstances, it’s no wonder that the Rosicrucian project was aborted!

After Frederick’s defeat, the Habsburgs circulated satirical engravings in which Frederick was associated with Rosicrucianism. Their victory, that of Catholicism over Rosicrucianism, was seen as a continuation of the intentions of the Council of Trent, which had condemned Protestantism and Hermeticism. In one of the illustrations Ferdinand’s imperial eagle is seen perching on a pillar at

whose foot lies a lion —symbolizing Frederick. In the inscription to this engraving, the Rosicrucian motto ending the *Fama Fraternitatis* (“Under the shadow of thy wings, Jehovah”) was transformed into this parody: “Under the shadow of my wings, the kingdom of Bohemia will prosper.”²³

Thus, the fraternal ideal proposed by the Rosicrucians clashed with religious intolerance, and the Thirty Years’ War prevented the creation of a genuine order. Although the Rosicrucian project did not come into full bloom during the period, its ideal would nonetheless circulate throughout Europe, notably in England and France. It is during this troubled period that René Descartes began his research on the Rose-Croix. As we will soon see, his return to France coincided with mysterious placards being plastered on walls that announced the stay of the Rose-Croix in Paris. And in England, the Rosicrucian project would experience an unforeseen development through Francis Bacon.



FIGURE 34. Frederick V and Elizabeth at their coronation (National Portrait Gallery).



FIGURE 35. Frontispiece from *Novum Organum* by Francis Bacon.

Chapter 10

THE PHILOSOPHERS AND THE ROSE-CROIX

THE BEGINNING OF the Thirty Years' War, sparked by the Battle of White Mountain (1620), marked the end of the blossoming of Rosicrucianism in Germany. However, the Rosicrucian writings had spread throughout Europe, and many philosophers had become aware of their message. Among them, René Descartes, Francis Bacon, and John Amos Comenius are mentioned most often.



FIGURE 36. René Descartes.

RENÉ DESCARTES

Many historians of esotericism have attempted to make René Descartes into a Rosicrucian, in the fullest meaning of this word. One of the individuals most responsible for this situation was Pierre Daniel Huet (1630-1721), bishop of Avranches. In 1692, using the pseudonym of G. de l'A., he published *Nouveaux Mémoires pour servir à l'histoire du Cartésianisme*, a satire which claimed to provide revelations about Descartes. Here we are told that Descartes had brought Rosicrucianism to France and that he was one of the inspectors of the Order. Huet also asserted that the philosopher did not die in 1650, as he was guaranteed to live 500 years, but rather he secluded himself among the Laplanders where he directed the Order. This clearly improbable book gave rise to some of the Rosicrucian legends regarding Descartes. In much more recent years, Charles Adam, in his edition of Descartes' complete works (1937), also claimed that the philosopher was a Rosicrucian initiate.

In the period preceding the Thirty Years' War, René Descartes (1596-1650) took an interest in the Rosicrucians. In 1617, he enlisted in the army, a career that took him to Holland and Germany. During these travels, he met Johan Faulhaber, a brilliant mathematician who was interested in astrology, alchemy, and the Qabalah, and who was one of the first (1615) to publish a book dedicated to the Rosicrucians: "Arithmetic Mystery; or Cabalistic and Philosophic Invention, new, admirable and elevated, according

to which numbers are rationally and methodically calculated, Dedicated with humility and sincerity to the Illustrious and celebrated Rosy Cross Brothers.”¹

René Descartes was also connected with Isaac Beeckman, a Dutch physician, philosopher, and mathematician. His correspondence (April 1619) with the latter reveals that he was also interested in the occult sciences, particularly in Cornelius Heinrich Agrippa and Raymond Lully. It is probably through Faulhaber and Beeckman that Descartes became aware of the Rosicrucian manifestos. His biographer, Adrien Baillet, tells us that he praised the extraordinary knowledge possessed by a brotherhood of learned men established in Germany for some years under the name of the R.C. Brothers. “He felt within himself the stirrings of an emulation for this Rose-Croix which touched him all the more in that he heard about it at the time he was most concerned about the means to take so as to seek the Truth.”² Intrigued by them, Descartes decided to begin his search.

In March 1619, Descartes left for Bohemia, arriving there in August. He then attended the coronation of Ferdinand of Styria at Frankfurt.³ Certain historians believe that Descartes took the opportunity to travel to nearby Heidelberg Castle, a visit that may be reflected in many passages of his *Traité de l’Homme* and *Experimenta*, which seem to describe the automata built by Salomon de Caus in the castle gardens. This place enjoyed such renown that the intelligentsia were all attracted here, which was probably also true for our philosopher. Furthermore, as Frances A. Yates points out,

René Descartes' interest in the court of Heidelberg near the end of his life leads us to think that he was aware of its past glory, and prompts us to ask what was his true relationship with this Mecca of Rosicrucianism.⁴

THE THREE DREAMS

In this period, Descartes was fully engaged in his quest for knowledge. He was to discover the answers for two of the three mathematical problems that no scholar since antiquity had succeeded in solving—namely, doubling the cube and trisecting an angle. In March 1619, he announced to his friend Isaac Beeckman that he was working to establish “an entirely new science . . . a universal method that goes beyond mathematics” and allows one to resolve all types of questions. He felt an exhilarating jubilation of the mind, completely happy to have found the basis of a wonderful knowledge. Descartes spent November 9th meditating upon the object of his quest. It was during that night, near the city of Ulm, that he experienced three dreams which turned his life upside down. In the first dream, he was pushed by a raging wind toward a mysterious college where he encountered a man who gave him a melon. He awoke and, fearing this dream to be the work of an evil spirit, offered up a prayer. Going back to sleep, he almost immediately experienced a second dream, followed by a third. In these dreams, he was presented with a dictionary and a collection of poems in which philosophy was blended with wisdom. In consulting this collection, he stumbled across these words: “What path shall I

follow in life?”

The interpretation of these three dreams has given rise to many commentaries. As several authors have noted, the events which he experienced in these dreams resembled certain episodes related in *The Chymical Marriage of Christian Rosenkreuz*.⁵ Descartes was aware of having experienced a fundamental change and he immediately set about analyzing it. He judged these dreams to be so important that he transcribed them in a collection which he entitled *Olympica*. This experience confirmed his belief that he was on the right path and that mathematics was an essential key for understanding the mysteries of Creation.

For Marie-Louise von Franz, an associate of Carl Jung, the illumination experienced by Descartes may be seen as a breaking through of the collective unconscious that led him to an intuitive comprehension of the archetypes conveyed by numbers.⁶ Descartes himself said that it involved “the most important affair of my life,” and until his death he would always keep this text with him. Four years later, in 1623, he returned to Paris. It was then that his name became associated with the Rosicrucians.

THE PLACARDS IN PARIS

In the same year, a notice placarded on the walls of Paris announced the “visible and invisible” presence of the Rosicrucians. Gabriel Naudé, in his *Instruction á La France sur la Vérité de l’Histoire des Frères de la Roze-Croix* (1623) provided a version of this text which stated:

We, the deputies of our Head College of the Rose Cross, now sojourning, visible and invisible, in this town, by grace of the Most High, towards Whom the hearts of sages turn, do teach, without the help of books or signs, how to speak the language of every country wherein we elect to stay, in order that we may rescue our fellow men from the error of death.

This placard was soon followed by a second, which stated in part:

. . . But, to arrive at the knowledge of these marvels, we warn the reader that we can divine his thoughts, that if mere curiosity should prompt the wish to see us, he will never communicate with us, but if an earnest determination to inscribe himself in the register of our confraternity should actuate him, we will make manifest to such a one the truth of our promises, so that we by no means expose the place of our abode, since simple thought, joined to the determined will of the reader, will be sufficient to make us known to him, and reveal him to us.⁷

These placards created a considerable stir. Gabriel Naudé wrote, “If we seek for the precise origin of this squall of wind which now whistles over our country, we shall find that the report of this fraternity having been spread abroad some short time since in Germany.” Within days pamphlets attacking the Rosicrucians circulated. It was claimed that the Order had sent thirty-six deputies into the world and that six of them were in Paris, but that communication with them was possible only by thought. They were ironically called the “Invisibles.” Naudé increased the attacks in

books with such evocative titles as *Effroyables pactations faites entre le diable et les prétendus Invisibles* (Frightful Compacts between the Devil and the So-called Invisibles, 1623). However, in later years, he became more conciliatory, as indicated in his *Apologie pour tous les grands personnages qui ont été faussement soupçonnés de magie* (Apology to All the Great Dignitaries Who Have Been Falsely Suspected of Magic).⁸

The fact that the appearance of posters coincided with the return of Descartes was enough to stir the imagination of some Parisians. The rumor spread throughout the capital that Descartes had been admitted into the fraternity—and that he was even responsible for these mysterious posters. To nip the rumors in the bud, the philosopher brought his friends together to show them that he was not “invisible” and that he had nothing at all to do with the posters. He explained that he had actually searched for Rosicrucians in Germany, but had not encountered any. Was he telling the truth or was he seeking to protect himself? Whatever the truth of this matter, the situation was such that even if he had encountered Rosicrucians, which seems probable, he would have remained silent.

Indeed, in this era, France was hardly receptive to the Rosicrucians. In connection with this Frances A. Yates has spoken of “the Rosicrucian scare” which then reigned in the country.⁹ The Church believed it a Protestant plot and considered the Order a diabolical society. In the same year as the affair of the posters, a friend of Descartes, the abbot Marin Mersenne, philosopher and scholar, violently opposed Rosicrucianism. He published *Questiones*

celeberrimae in genesim . . . in which he refuted Hermetic philosophy and the Qabalah of the Renaissance, as well as their various proponents. He found particular fault with the English Rosicrucian Robert Fludd. In fact, Mersenne was afraid of what he did not know, and his understanding of esotericism was laughable. He imagined France to be overrun by invisible sorcerers spreading their perverse doctrines everywhere.

One of Mersenne's closest friends, the philosopher and mathematician Pierre Gassendi, also took on Robert Fludd. During the same period, François Garasse published *La Doctrine curieuse des beaux esprits de ce temps* (1623), wherein he condemned the "Rosicrucian sect and its secretary Michael Maier." And in 1625 the faculty of theology at the University of Paris officially censured Heinrich Khunrath's *Amphitheatrum Sapientiae Aeternae*.

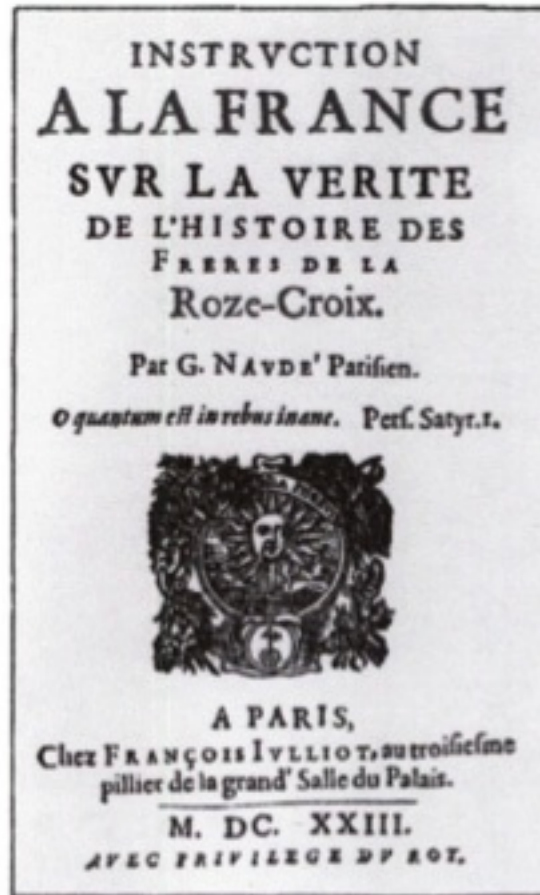


FIGURE 37. Gabriel Naudé, *Instruction à la France sur la vérité de l'histoire des Frères de la Rose-Croix*, 1623.

POLYBIUS THE COSMOPOLITAN

In a study devoted to Descartes' dreams, Sophie Jama returned to this episode in the philosopher's life.¹⁰ As part of this project, she examined an early unpublished text of Descartes entitled *Trésor mathématique de Polybe le Cosmopolite*. In this manuscript René Descartes proposed to resolve all mathematical obstacles, and indicated that this work was offered "to the learned of the entire world, and especially to the F.R.C. [Rosicrucian Brothers], very well known in G. [Germany]."¹¹ Jama felt that the purpose of this book

was like that of many other 17th-century thinkers who were responding to the call of the Rosicrucian manifestos. However, the dramatic events following the Battle of White Mountain in Bohemia and the sectarianism that prevailed in France while it was engaged in the Counter-Reformation undoubtedly prompted him to abandon this project. Let us add that the purpose of this text resembles the one dedicated to Rose-Croix by his friend Johan Faulhaber, in his book *Mysterium arithmeticum*.

Even though René Descartes denied having met any Rosicrucians, we need to consider his adherence to Rosicrucian concepts. In comparing the main concepts of the Rosicrucian manifestos, the *Olympica*, and Descartes' other writings, Jama has shown in her book that far from having been a marginal episode in the philosopher's life, the Rosicrucian concepts contributed to the enrichment of his thinking. She goes so far as to suggest that even if Descartes had not met any Rosicrucians in Germany, he could have encountered the Rose-Croix through a visionary experience, such as he had in his three dreams.

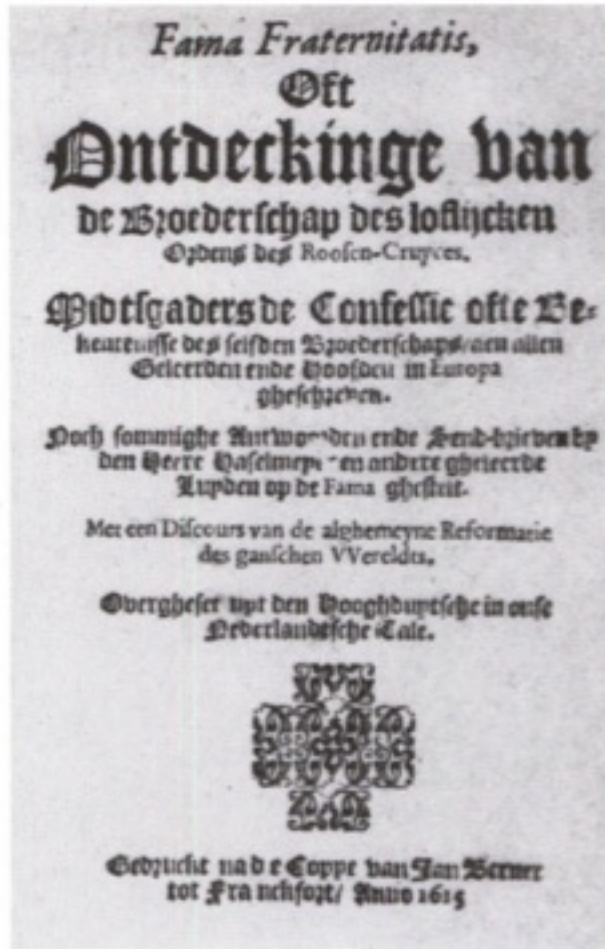


FIGURE 38. Dutch edition of the *Fama Fraternitatis*.

HOLLAND

Descartes found the agitation that dominated France to be so disturbing that he moved to the Netherlands in 1628. He settled near Leiden, where he could work in tranquility and dedicate himself wholly to research. Certain historical elements have shown that Rosicrucianism spread rapidly in this country.¹² As we discussed in the previous chapter, it was here that Frederick V sought refuge after the Battle of White Mountain (1620). As early as 1615, the *Fama Fraternitatis* had been translated into Dutch as *Fama Fraternitatis*

Oft Ontdeckinge van de Broederschap des loflijcken Ordens des Roosen-Cruyces (Gedruckt na de Copye van Jan Berner, Franckfort, Anno 1615). This translation included a letter in which Andreas Hoberveschel von Hobernfeld asked for admission into the Rosicrucian Order. This man, originally from Prague, followed Frederick V into exile in The Hague. We are also aware of the presence of Rosicrucians in Holland through a letter written by Peter Paul Rubens, the famed painter of Antwerp, to Nicolas-Claude Fabri de Peiresc. In this correspondence, dated August 10, 1623, Rubens reported that the Rosicrucians were active for some years in Amsterdam. However, this information, as well as Orvius' statement that the order owned a palace in The Hague, is too imprecise for us to know the true development of Rosicrucianism in the Netherlands.¹³

What can be said for certain is that letters dated January 1624 were written between several individuals in the Court of Justice that denounced the existence of a Rosicrucian circle in Haarlem. The theologians of Leiden complained about the presence of an order contesting the integrity of the Church. They felt that the group would cause political and religious problems.¹⁴ In June of the following year the magistrates ordered an inquiry. The Hof van Holland asked Leiden's theologians to proceed with an analysis of the *Fama Fraternitatis* and *Confessio Fraternitatis*. This study resulted in a report entitled *Judicium Facultatis Theologicae in Academia Leydensi de secta Fraternitatis Roseae Crucis*, which led the magistrates to hunt down the Rosicrucians.

Johannes Symonsz Torrentius (originally van der Beeck), a painter

practicing alchemy, was soon portrayed as the leader of the Dutch Rosicrucians.¹⁵) He was arrested on August 30, 1627, along with his friend Christiaen Coppens. During legal proceedings lasting five years, the painter underwent harsh interrogations, but despite the tortures he suffered, he denied belonging to the Rosicrucians. However, he was condemned to being burned at the stake, a sentence that was soon changed to twenty years' imprisonment. Fortunately for him, Torrentius was incarcerated for only a few years. With the assistance of his painter friends and the intervention of King Charles I of England, he was freed in 1630 and allowed to settle in London.¹⁶ During the same year, Peter Mormius published at Leiden his *Arcana totius naturae secretissima, nec hactenus unquam detecta, a collegio Rosiano in lucem produntur* (The Entire Secrets of Nature . . .),¹⁷ a book which described the creation of a Rosicrucian movement founded by Frédéric Rose, a Frenchman born in the Dauphiné. We will return to this subject before long.



FIGURE 39. J.S. Torrentius.

THE ALCHEMICAL TEMPTATION

During this period, the Catholic Church engaged in a veritable witch hunt. In 1610, after an endless trial, Giordano Bruno was burned alive at the stake in Rome. Soon afterwards, Galileo was persecuted. When Descartes learned of the condemnation of the latter in 1633, he considered destroying *Le Monde* (The World), a treatise of cosmology which made reference to heliocentrism. He felt it wise to be cautious. Also, in his *Discours de la méthode* (Discourse on Method), which he completed in 1637, Descartes preferred to condemn “the bad doctrines”—those of alchemists, astrologers, and magicians.¹⁸ In correspondence dating from July

1640 with his friend Mersenne,¹⁹ he criticized alchemy and its esoteric language, and he challenged the principle of the three elements: sulphur, salt, and mercury. However, his letters show that he was interested in alchemy and that he was aware of its principles. His interest in this science appeared to extend over several years. Concerning this matter, Jean-François Maillard brought to light a rarely noted fact. He reported that around 1640, Descartes devoted himself to alchemy in the laboratory of his friend Cornelis van Hogelande.²⁰ In connection with this, he spoke of a temptation that was not averted, but aborted, by reason. In effect, the attention of the author of the *Method* was spurred on by other sciences such as mathematics, geometry, meteorology, medicine, or optics.

It must be emphasized, therefore, that despite his interest in alchemy, Descartes distanced himself from the esotericism of this era. He rejected thought by analogy, the theory of correspondences, and the principle of symbolism. For him, only clear and distinct ideas, in which all concepts can be completely analyzed, will lead to “true knowledge.” It is mathematical truths, innate in humans, that will allow us to understand the world.

Moreover, Descartes thought that if we are able to apprehend the ideas of perfection and the infinite, it is because God has placed a token of himself in us. Moreover, Descartes rejected final causes, because he refused all attempts at understanding the purpose of Creation and of things. If he “based his physics on metaphysics,” it was because he felt that the mathematical truths innate in our soul allow us to explain the natural world through physics and make

humanity “nature’s master and owner.” Descartes purged the natural world of its occult qualities and, thanks to the certainty of mathematical truths, conceived it as a succession of geometrical volumes articulated according to the model of automata and measurable volumes. This mechanistic conception of Creation was indeed different from that propounded by Paracelsus, who saw nature as the key to everything in existence and as a living reality with which man may communicate. Nonetheless, Descartes’ approach allowed humanity to leave a period of a tortuous obscurantism and move toward modern scientific knowledge, free from dangerous prejudices and extravagant superstitions.

However, we may note that certain aspects of Descartes thinking approached that of the Rosicrucians. His rejection of sterile speculation and his aspiration to “knowledge which is very useful in life” recalls the fundamental points in the *Fama Fraternitatis* and the *Confessio Fraternitatis*. Serge Hutin points out: “As for ‘methodical doubt,’ putting the emphasis on experience, to the need for struggle against superstition, these points of view fit quite well into the general perspectives of Rosicrucianism .”²¹ We may also note that in many regards, especially in the complementary role of intuition and deduction, or in the function of the pineal gland,²² Descartes’ thinking is very close to modern Rosicrucian theories. Although René Descartes was not a Rosicrucian in the fullest sense of the word, we may nonetheless consider him to be a Rosicrucian to the extent that, at a given moment in his life, he took an interest in the Rosicrucians. This interest should be taken into account in the

maturing process that led him to work out his philosophical system.

Curiously, near the end of his life, Descartes became a close friend of Princess Elizabeth, the daughter of the unfortunate King Frederick V, protector of the Rosicrucians. Indeed, she became one of his disciples. Among the works the philosopher dedicated to her were the *Principia* (1644) and the *Treatise on the Passions*. After the Treaty of Westphalia (1648), which marked the end of the Thirty Years' War, the princess recovered her property in Bohemia and invited Descartes to settle nearby. Unfortunately, this project was never realized because the philosopher died in February 1650 during a visit to the Swedish court, at the invitation of Queen Christina.

ENGLAND

In England, the Rosicrucian project developed in a special way, even though, in contrast to what occurred in the rest of Europe, Hermeticism remained relatively unobtrusive.²³ However, the writings of John Doget (15th century) showed the influence of the *Corpus Hermeticum*, and the Christian Qabalist Francesco Giorgi enjoyed a great reputation during the reign of Henry VIII. The king, in fact, entrusted Giorgi to search through the sacred texts for arguments in favor of his divorce from Catherine of Aragon. As for Catherine, she turned to Cornelius Heinrich Agrippa for advice. Despite the enthusiasm of Thomas More (1478-1535) for the writings of Pico della Mirandola, it was only during the reign of Elizabeth I (1533-1603) that the Hermeticism of the Renaissance gained influence. Its major proponents were Philip Sidney (1554-

1586), diplomat, writer, and friend of Giordano Bruno; Walter Raleigh (1554), navigator, writer, and favorite of Elizabeth; Thomas Harriot (1560-1621), a mathematician; and John Dee (1527-1608). The latter, strongly influenced by Agrippa's writings, was the true leader of the Elizabethan Renaissance, and the queen was fond of visiting the rich esoteric library he owned.

THE FAERIE QUEEN

During Elizabeth's reign, occult philosophy provoked debates that left traces in the literature of the day. For instance, the great poem of Edmund Spenser (1552-1599), *Faerie Queene*, and his *Foure Hymnes*, are tinged by the Neoplatonism of the Renaissance and by Christian Qabalism. The movement also had its opponents, such as Christopher Marlowe (1564-1593), whose play *The Tragical History of Dr. Faustus* (1594) denounced Hermeticism. Its main character is presented as a disciple of Agrippa practicing diabolical magic. This work enjoyed enormous success, which was also true of *The Jew of Malta* (1592), wherein the author, through his criticism of the Jews, found fault with the Christian Qabalah. Ben Jonson (1573?-1637) attacked Hermeticism in his play *The Alchemist* (1610).²⁴ As for William Shakespeare (1564-1616), he took the opposing position by responding to Marlowe's *The Jew of Malta* with the *Merchant of Venice*, a work in which the influence of Francesco Giorgi's *De Harmonia Mundi* may be detected. This is also true of some other Shakespearean plays, including *As You Like It* (1598) and *The Tempest* (1611), which were influenced by Agrippa's *De Occulta*

Philosophia. *The Tempest* was performed during the festivities celebrating the wedding between Elizabeth, daughter of King James I, and Frederick V of the Palatinate. Frances A. Yates, the great expert on English Rosicrucian history, considered this work to be a veritable Rosicrucian manifesto.



FIGURE 40. Francis Bacon.

FRANCIS BACON

When speaking of the beginnings of Rosicrucianism, Francis Bacon (1561-1626), lord chancellor of England and philosopher, is

frequently mentioned. In a long list of authors who have examined his relationship with the Rose Cross, John Heydon, the author of numerous works on Rosicrucianism, was the first, but his theories are often extreme. His book entitled *The Holy Guide leading the Way to the Wonder of the World* (1662)²⁵ contains a narrative, “The Voyage to the Land of Rosicrucians,” which is an adaptation of Bacon’s *New Atlantis*. It combines elements from the *Fama Fraternitatis*, not hesitating to make Solomon’s House, mentioned by Francis Bacon, into the “Rosicrucian Temple.”

In 1788 Nicolas de Bonneville published *La Maçonnerie ecossaise comparee avec les trois professions et le secret des templiers du XIVe siecle*. In this book, he emphasized the role played by Francis Bacon in the formation of Rosicrucianism. He indicated that at the beginning of the 17th century, a Rosicrucian society, the Brahmins of the North, was created according to the ideas revealed in the *New Atlantis*, a work of the English philosopher. For its symbols this society used the Sun, Moon, compass, carpenter’s square, square, triangle, etc. De Bonneville noted that the Royal Society arose in the wake of the Brahmins of the North in 1646, but as the new group did not conform to the desires of the Rose-Croix, a new Rosicrucian society coming closer to the Grand Brahmin’s ideas was formed the very same year. He then added that Freemasonry borrowed its symbols from this society. However, de Bonneville also stated that this society was only the rebirth of the ancient Rose-Croix, renewed in Germany by Johann Valentin Andreae and in England by Robert Fludd. He added that Bacon had drawn the symbols of the

Brahmins from the *Speculum sophericum Rhodo Stauroticum* (1618) of Theophilus Schweighardt and *Mythologiae Christianae* (Christian Mythology) of Johann Valentin Andreae (1618).²⁶

A century later, in his book *Franc-Maçonnerie, ordre chapitral, nouveau grade de Rose-Croix* (1860), Jean-Marie Ragon reiterated these ideas.²⁷ A whole stream of writers have also done their best to show that Bacon was the author of William Shakespeare's plays. Some, such as Alfred Dodd, went so far as to see the English dramatic poet as the founder of Freemasonry.²⁸ The author who went farthest in his investigations was probably W.F.C. Wigston with his book *Bacon, Shakespeare, and the Rosicrucians* (1888). His ideas were repeated by Mrs. Henry Pott in *Francis Bacon and his Secret Society* (1892) and by numerous other authors. However, apart from some interesting observations, the latter often launched into extravagant speculations.

THE THEOSOPHISTS

The members of the Theosophical Society were however quite responsive to such hypotheses, particularly those members who were part of the Rosicrucian movement established within the society: the Order of the Temple of the Rosy Cross.²⁹ Thus, in her book *The Masters* (1912),³⁰ Annie Besant put forward the notion that Bacon was one of the incarnations of Christian Rosenkreuz, a member of a line of initiates to which the Comte de Saint-Germain also belonged, and which had its source in the royal house of Rakoczi. One of her associates, Marie Russak, soon afterwards published in the magazine *The Channel* a series of articles repeating

such ideas. We find the same principles in another work, *The Rosicrucians* (1913), published by Le Droit Humain, a Masonic obedience close to the Theosophical Society, in which H. Clarke and Katherine Betts claimed that Bacon was the author of the Rosicrucian manifestos.³¹ The author who contributed most to popularizing all of the theories relating to Bacon's role in Rosicrucianism was the Theosophist and Belgian senator Franz Wittemans. His book *Histoire des Rose-Croix* (1919) offered a mixture of interesting elements and highly arguable contentions. He repeated the concepts of W.F.C. Wigston, Mrs. Pott, Dr. Speckman, E. Udney, and certain Theosophists.

In *Francis Bacon: from Magic to Science* (1968), Paolo Rossi has shown that if some of Bacon's ideas parallel those of the Rosicrucian manifestos, it is basically because they come from the same source: the Hermetic tradition of the Renaissance. Paul Arnold and Frances A. Yates arrived at the same conclusions. It is true to say that, during the last few decades, the discoveries made by historians have permitted a better understanding of the genesis of Rosicrucianism, and the notion that Bacon was the author of the *Fama Fraternitatis* and the *Confessio Fraternitatis* has become obsolete. However, this does not hinder us from placing this English philosopher in the Rosicrucian movement of the 17th century. In some ways, he was one of those who was most successful in promoting the Rosicrucian ideal. This is undoubtedly the reason why certain people saw him as being one of the most important personalities of contemporary Rosicrucianism. Moreover, in her *Rosicrucian Enlightenment*, Yates

shows that even though Bacon distanced himself from 17th-century Hermeticism on various points—particularly in his stance against Paracelsianism and his rejection of the concept of man as a microcosm—he remained strongly influenced by Rosicrucianism.³² A true proponent of the movement, he gave it new expression through a project of reforming the sciences which would shortly give birth to the Royal Society—that is, the British academy of sciences.

NOVUM ORGANUM

Francis Bacon's project undoubtedly originated with his father, Nicholas Bacon. After Henry VIII's break with Rome, the elder Bacon was entrusted with the task of reforming the universities. Francis Bacon, after trying to persuade Queen Elizabeth, attempted to involve James I in his project of reforming the sciences. At the beginning of his book *Advancement of Learning* (1605), Bacon addressed the king in these persuasive words:

It indeed seems a great thing in a monarch, if he can find time to digest a compendium or imbibe the simple elements of science, or love and countenance learning; but that a king, and he a king born, should have drunk at the true fountain of knowledge, yea, rather, should have a fountain of learning in himself, is indeed little short of a miracle. And the more since in your Majesty's heart are united all the treasures of sacred and profane knowledge, so that like Hermes your Majesty is invested with a triple glory, being distinguished no less by the

power of a king than by the illumination of a priest and the learning of a philosopher.

Quite simply, the project set forth by Bacon was the restoration of learning. His goal was that learning would no longer merely be the object of idle speculation, but rather that it would become a proper instrument in providing prosperity and happiness for humanity. In his book, he suggested a fraternity be created that would assemble learned men from all countries, with each member exchanging knowledge for the greatest benefit of all. This concept brings to mind the purpose of the *Fama Fraternitatis*.³³

THE BEE

Francis Bacon desired to institutionalize the sciences through programs of collective research and he wanted to see laboratories organized rationally and methodically. It can be generally said that Bacon's project foreshadowed the academies that sprang into being soon afterwards. He wanted to substitute the ancient apriorist and deductive logic with a new logic, one that was experimental and inductive. To symbolize the attitude that the researcher should adopt, he used the images of the ant, spider, and bee. The first accumulates (empirical philosophy), the second encloses in its web (rational philosophy), but the third, after having gathered pollen hither and thither, creates honey (a balance between the two philosophies). "The Rose gives honey to bees" Robert Fludd also stated when using similar symbology.³⁴ The English alchemist Thomas Vaughan indicated that, according to Virgil, there is among

bees a scintilla of divine intelligence of Empyrean emanations (*Anthroposophia theomagica*, 1650). Bacon's fundamental work, *Novum Organum* (1620),³⁵ proposed doing away with the ancient logic of Aristotle. It should be pointed out that, owing to his prudence and inclinations, little room was allowed for esotericism in his writings.

However, Francis Bacon was unsuccessful in imposing his project of reform. Despite his first disgrace in 1601 which had been brought about by the fall of his protector, the earl of Essex, the queen's favorite, Bacon gained the confidence of the new king, James I. He was appointed Keeper of the Seal in 1617, and in the following year he attained one of the kingdom's highest offices, that of Lord Chancellor, and he became Baron Verulam. His career was interrupted in 1621, at the moment when, after having been named Viscount St. Albans, he was the victim of a new scandal which completely removed him from power. It is during this period that he wrote *New Atlantis*.³⁶ Having failed in furthering his ideas through institutions, he again took up the theme that preoccupied him all his life in the form of a utopian story.³⁷



FIGURE 41. Detail from the frontispiece of *New Atlantis*, 1627.

NEW ATLANTIS

This book recounts the story of travelers who, after leaving Peru, sailed toward China and Japan, but, following unfavorable winds, their ship was in distress. Short on rations and considering themselves near death, they finally sighted an unknown island. Upon reaching the island, some messengers handed them a parchment scroll informing them of certain requirements for their stay. Affixed to this document was a seal showing cherubin's wings by a cross, an emblem which recalled the expression at the end of the *Fama Fraternitatis*: "Under the shadow of thy wings, Jehovah." This land, called Bensalem, was inhabited by a strange people who had successfully combined wisdom and learning.

Learning was both the goal and principle of its inhabitants' social structure. They seemed to have accomplished the "Great Instauration" of knowledge. They had rediscovered the paradisiacal state before Adam's fall, a goal envisaged by Francis Bacon and the Rosicrucian manifestos. The travelers were lodged in the Strangers' House. Before long, an ambassador explained to them that this country was directed by Solomon's House, or the College of the Six Days' Work. This allusion brings to mind that blessed time in which Rosicrucians would light the "sixth candle," which, according to the *Confessio Fraternitatis*, preceded the end of time. However, it may refer to the prophecy of Elijah, which was relatively popular in Europe at this time and was the same source used by the Rosicrucian manifesto. "Solomon's House . . . had for an end knowing the causes and secret movement of things and of moving back the boundaries of the human kingdom in view of realizing all things possible."³⁸ This group of priest-scientists had vast laboratories where they engaged in research concerning science as well as agriculture, husbandry, medicine, mechanics, the arts, etc. The results of these researches benefited all the inhabitants of this paradise of science where prosperity and peace reigned.

The core of the *New Atlantis* describes the various scientific riches and the social organization of the society living on the island of Bensalem. The relatively short text remained uncompleted, and it was only published in 1627, one year after the death of its author, by his chaplain William Rawley. Although the name *Rosicrucian* does not appear in this text, nor in any other of Bacon's works, the

Rosicrucian influence can be sensed in numerous passages. This similarity did not escape the notice of John Heydon, who endeavored to emphasize the connections in his various writings. Bacon would have known about the *Fama Fraternitatis*, which was already circulating in manuscript form. Nor should it be forgotten that he was associated with the festivities which, in 1613, celebrated the marriage of Elizabeth, daughter of James I, to Frederick of the Palatinate, the protector of the Rosicrucians. Indeed, Francis Bacon had devised an entertainment, the *Masque of the Middle Temple and Lincoln's Inn*, which took place the day after the wedding.



FIGURE 42. Frontispiece from *History of the Royal Society* by Thomas Sprat, 1667. Drawing by John Evelyn.

THE ROYAL SOCIETY

Not many years after Francis Bacon's death, his project for reforming the sciences assumed material form. In 1645, at the height of the English civil war, meetings took place that gave rise to the

Royal Society. Among those in this first nucleus of individuals were many refugees from the Palatinate, who fled after the disaster of White Mountain.³⁹ Two of them were Theodore Haak and Dr. John Wilkins, chaplain to the Elector Palatine. Wilkins knew the concepts expressed in the Rosicrucian manifestos thoroughly. He cited the *Fama Fraternitatis* and the *Confessio Fraternitatis* in his *Mathematicall Magick* (1648), a book inspired by the writings of Robert Fludd and John Dee. Thus, it is not entirely surprising that Robert Boyle, another member of the group, when discussing these meetings in his letters, used the expression “Invisible College,” an expression frequently used at the time to describe the Rosicrucians. It is interesting to note that Robert Moray, one of the founding members of the Royal Society and a devotee of alchemy, was the patron of Thomas Vaughan (1622-1666). Vaughan, using the pseudonym of Eugenius Philalethes, published an English translation of the *Fama* and the *Confessio* entitled *The Fame and Confession* in 1652.

These thinkers wanted to put an end to the philosophical and religious heritage of their predecessors. In 1660, the meetings of this group gave birth to the Royal Society. As Frances A. Yates has indicated, although its main purpose involved the advancement of science, rather than universal reform or charity and education, this society adopted a part of the Rosicrucian ideals which had inspired Bacon himself. Thomas Sprat, in his *History of the Royal Society* (1667), seemed to have understood this. The frontispiece of his book shows the bust of the king of England, Charles II, between William Brouncker, first president of the society, and Francis Bacon. The

wing above the philosopher seems to evoke the Rosicrucian expression: “Under the shadow of thy wings, Jehovah.” It is interesting to note that the artist who created this engraving, John Evelyn, originally came from Bohemia.



FIGURE 43. Comenius by Max Svabinsky.

COMENIUS

Included among the men who participated in the foundation of the Royal Society were many notable individuals who had direct links with the Rosicrucians of Bohemia. One of the most engaging was the Czech philosopher, pedagogue, and writer Jan Amos Komensky (1592-1670), better known as Comenius. When he was twenty-one years old, Comenius left his native Moravia to continue his studies at Heidelberg. He then witnessed the coronation of Frederick V and

Elizabeth. All through his life, he supported the royal couple of Heidelberg, and even after the disaster of White Mountain (1620), he held out hope for Frederick's return to the throne. Following this tragedy, Comenius' house was burned, he was forced to flee, and soon afterwards he lost his wife and children. A few years later this friend of Johann Valentin Andreae became enthusiastic about the project of reform spelled out in the Rosicrucian manifestos. His book, *The Labyrinth of the World and the Paradise of the Heart* (1623), which is a great classic in Czech literature —and, according to some, a classic of world literature —recalls the hopes he had placed in Rosicrucianism. This book is that of an idealist whose expectations had been destroyed by the beginnings of the 'Thirty Years' War. In Chapter 12, entitled "The Pilgrim Bears Witness to the Rosicrucians," Comenius speaks in a veiled manner about the disaster that followed the end of Frederick's reign in late 1620 and which gave rise, through Frederick's downfall, to the project of reform launched by Rosicrucianism. It is understandable that, in contrast to the utopias of his friend Johann Valentin Andreae (*Christianapolis*) and of Tommaso Campanella (*The City of the Sun*), he describes a city where everything goes wrong, science, employment, etc., and that there is hardly any place where a person may find peace and knowledge —or rather, "the paradise of his heart." He dreams instead about a time when all swords would be beaten into plowshares and spears into pruning-hooks.

THE PANSOPHY

This sorrowful period led Comenius to reflect on the importance of education, and the ideas of universal reform presented in the Rosicrucian manifestos most likely contributed to the birth of a system he was to plan, the pansophia or universal knowledge, based on the macrocosm-microcosm relationship. At this time he wrote one of his major books: *Didactica Opera Omnia or the Universal Art of Everything Taught to Everyone* (1627-1632).⁴⁰ This text is composed of a philosophical and mystical section, and of another in which he speaks of pedagogical methods and tools. In effect, Comenius was not only preoccupied with reflecting upon pedagogy; he was also interested in its results. The book included his theory of universal history. He saw education as the means of restoring humanity to the purity it had lost after Adam's fall, and he believed that education was the best means for preparing oneself for eternal life. His desire was that all human beings, whatever their circumstances, have access to education. This work was followed by an essay written by Johann Valentin Andreae called "Exhortation," which invited everyone to follow the method proposed by Comenius.

After many years of forced exile, Comenius was invited by his friend Samuel Hartlib, an old school chum from Heidelberg University, to travel to England and participate in his project of educational reform and the organization of philanthropic societies. These two admirers of Francis Bacon felt themselves mandated to construct his "New Atlantis." It was in England that Comenius wrote *The Way of Light* (1641),⁴¹ where the themes of the manifestos are so apparent that certain historians have called this book the

“Fama of Comenius.” In the preface to the version that he published in Amsterdam in 1660, he even spoke of members of the Royal Society as being *Illuminati!*

THE COLLEGE OF LIGHT

In 1645, Comenius began drafting a work which represented the culmination of his work: *The Universal Consultation on the Reform of Human Affairs*. The central concept of this work—i.e., the necessity of proper reform for the establishment of an era of prosperity and peace—recalls the basic concept of the Rosicrucian manifestos. The work was to be divided into seven parts (only two were completed), a number whose symbolical significance is beyond the scope of this work. Each part bore a name whose prefix *pan* emphasized universality: panegersia, panaugia, pansophia, panpedia, panglossia, panorthosia, pannuthesia—these being distinctive sciences leading humanity to reflect on its place in Creation, to contemplate the universal light, to have access to universal wisdom, to adopt a universal language, to promote the education of all people, etc. He also proposed a new world organization where each country would be directed by three organizations—a College of Light, an Ecumenical World Consistory, and an international Tribunal of Peace—institutions which foreshadowed such great international structures as the United Nations and UNESCO, which came into being centuries later. Although Comenius died before he could complete this work, he did manage to finish most of it.⁴²

It can be said that through Comenius, Rosicrucianism contributed

to the establishment of a new method of conceiving education, and, in fact, Jules Michelet described him as the “Galileo of Education.” The pedagogue Jean Piaget, who admired him profoundly, considered Comenius to be one of the precursors of pedagogy, psychology, didactics, and the relationships between schooling and society.⁴³ Comenius is an individual praised and respected for his humanism. In December 1956, UNESCO solemnly paid homage to him. At the general conference given on this occasion, Comenius was described as one of the leading proponents of ideas which inspired this organization at its founding.

As we have observed, the Rosicrucian manifestos engaged the philosophers of the time and played a role in the development of European culture. However, following this period, esotericism, philosophy, and science were to go their separate ways, with the Enlightenment on one side and Illuminism on the other. At this juncture we witness the birth of the first major groups that were to characterize Western esotericism for a long time to come. Until then the supporters of esotericism had formed loose groups rather than true organized movements, but now there appeared initiatic orders, such as those of the Rose-Croix and of Freemasonry, organized into lodges where initiations were transmitted.



FIGURE 44. “May violence subside from things and may everything flow from itself” Comenius’ emblem.

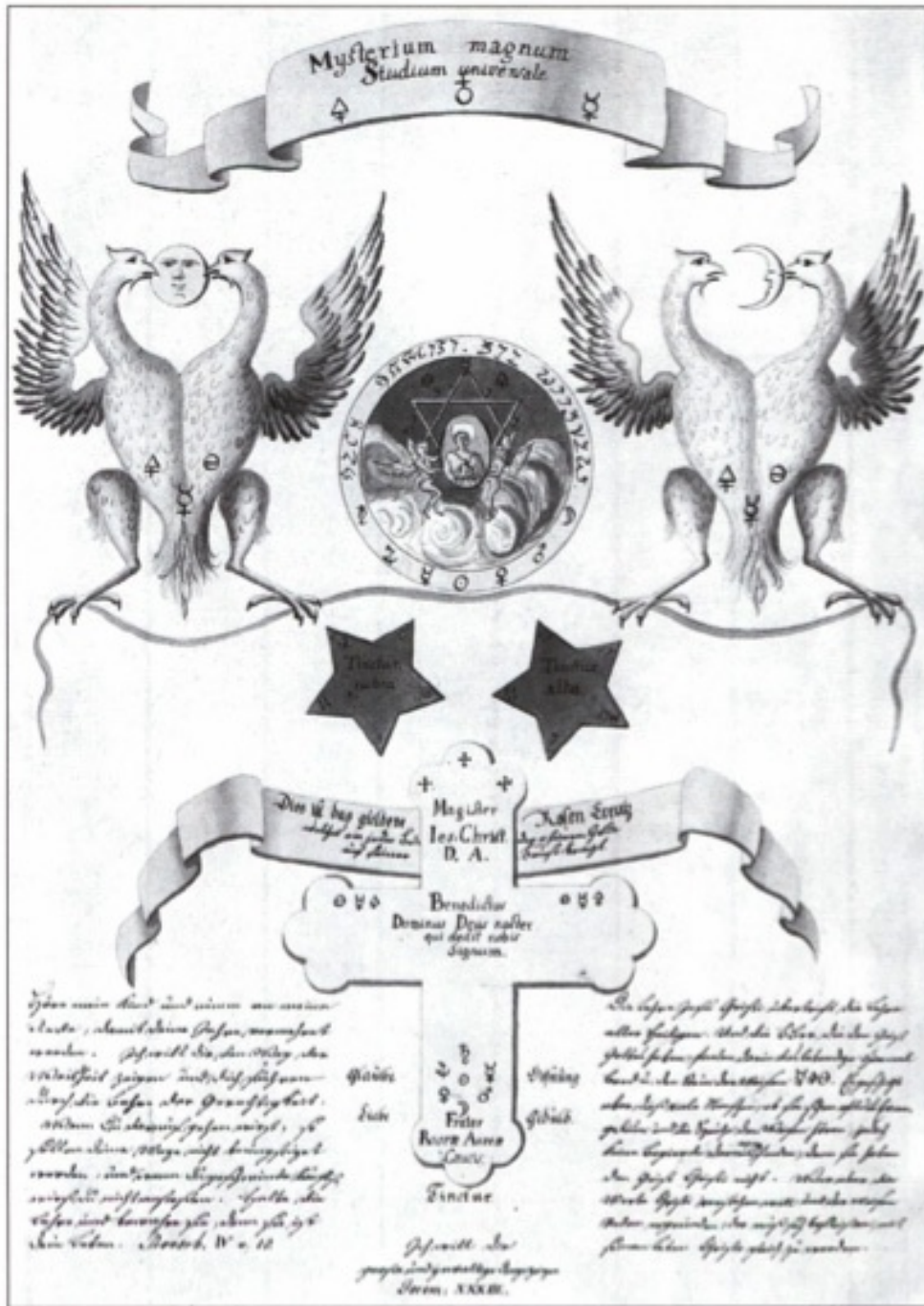


FIGURE 45. Rosicrucian manuscript of the 18th century (AMORC Archives).

Chapter 11

ROSICRUCIANISM AND FREEMASONRY

The Egyptian, Essenian, and Templar Origins

With the onset of the Thirty Years' War, Rosicrucians withdrew from the public eye. In Germany they took refuge in the alchemical movement, which experienced significant growth at this time. However, in England, Rosicrucians were involved in the beginnings of Freemasonry. They would reappear in the middle of the 18th century, priding themselves on origins preceding those of Freemasonry and Christianity by claiming a filiation dating back to the Egyptians.

ROSICRUCIANS AND FREEMASONS

Freemasonry arose in England in the 18th century from fertile ground prepared by Rosicrucianism. Such authors as Johann Gottlieb Buhle (in 1804) and Thomas De Quincey (in 1824) described Freemasonry as emanating from Rosicrucianism. As early as 1638 the relationship between the two movements was described in "The Muses Threnody," a poem by Henry Adamson that was published in Edinburgh. In this work he wrote: "For we be brethren of the Rosie Cross; We have the Mason's Word and second sight,

Tilings for to come we can foretell aright.” Some years later, on October 10, 1676, the *Poor Robin’s Intelligence*, a London newspaper, published this notice: “The Ancient Brotherhood of the Rosy Cross and the Company of Accepted Masons intend all to dine together on the 31st, November next, at the Flying Bull in Windmill, Crown Street.” This connection was again emphasized in this article of the *Daily Journal* of September 5, 1730: “It must be confessed that there is a society abroad, from which the English Freemasons have copied a few ceremonies, and take pains to persuade the world, that they are derived from them. These are called Rosicrucians from their Prime Officers (such as our Brethren call Grand Masters, Wardens, etc.) being distinguished on their High days by Red Crosses.”

BROTHER I.O.

It is striking to note that the two oldest references relating to Masonic initiations concern individuals who were in direct or indirect contact with Rosicrucianism. The first reference, dating from May 20, 1641, involves Sir Robert Moray, who was initiated into Masonry in the Mary’s Chapel Lodge in Edinburgh. Interestingly enough, Moray, one of the founding members of the Royal Society and an exponent of alchemy, was the benefactor of Thomas Vaughan (1622-1666). The latter, using the pseudonym of Eugenius Philalethes, was the author of *The Fame and Confession* (1652), the English translation of the *Fama Fraternitatis* and the *Confessio Fraternitatis*.

The second reference discusses Elias Ashmole (1617-1692), the

noted English antiquary, who was admitted into a Masonic lodge in Warrington on October 16, 1646. Six years later he published the *Theatrum Chemicum Britannicum* (1652), a volume composed of an important collection of alchemical treatises. In the very first lines of this book Ashmole refers to the *Fama Fraternitatis*. He recalls that the first Rosicrucian manifesto described the coming to England of “Brother I.O.,” one of the first four companions of Christian Rosenkreuz. Other facts show that Ashmole took special interest in Rosicrucianism. For instance, found among his papers in the Bodleian Library is a translation in his own hand of the Rosicrucian manifestos, as well as a letter in which he applied for admission into the Rosy Cross fraternity. Over a century later Nicolas de Bonneville (1760-1828) went so far as to say that Freemasonry had borrowed all its allegories, symbols, or words from the Rosicrucians (*La Maçonnerie écossaise comparée avec les trois professions et le secret des templiers du XIVe siècle*, 1788). Although it would be incorrect to state that Freemasonry originated with the Rosicrucians, we must note that the first Freemasons were members of the English Rosicrucian movement of the 18th century.

ANDERSON’S CONSTITUTION

Masonic activities began in the 18th century and it is generally acknowledged that the foundation date of the society was 1717, when the Grand Lodge of London was constituted. But the crucial moment in the founding of Freemasonry involves the publication of Anderson’s *Constitution* (1723) by the Duke of Wharton, its grand

master at the time. This text, presented as a reorganization and correction of “old Masonic archives,” was edited by James Anderson, John Theophilus Desaguliers, and George Payne. The materials used were the *Old Charges*, texts belonging to the ancient fraternities or guilds of stonemasons, the oldest of which date from the 14th century. The prime examples are the *Regius MS* (c. 1390) and the *Cooke MS* (c. 1410). But rather than directly descending from the old operative Masonic guilds, Freemasonry was rather a society of thinkers (the term “speculative” Masonry was commonly used) who described themselves as part of a lineage going back to Adam and claiming to have inherited the Liberal Arts, knowledge that was inscribed long ago on the two pillars surviving the Great Flood.

Apart from the legendary history of Freemasonry, Anderson’s *Constitution* provided the Order’s rules, as well as some songs meant to accompany lodge meetings. Generally speaking, the Constitution’s plan was more social than spiritual. In an era marked by divisions engendered by the Reformation and Counter-Reformation, Freemasonry was content to exhort its members “to that religion in which all men agree, leaving their particular Opinions to themselves: that is, to be good men and true or Men of Honour and Honesty, by whatever Denominations or Persuasions they may be distinguished”¹



FIGURE 46. Elias Ashmole.

HIRAM AND ROSENKREUZ

Freemasonry in the early 18th century was not the organization we know today. Only after several years did it adopt its basic structure composed of three degrees—Apprentice, Fellow Craft, and Master (*Blue Masonry*, or *Craft Degrees*, in the English-speaking world). Originally it was composed of only two degrees, those of Apprentice and Companion. A third, called the Master, appeared around 1730. Official references to this degree were only found in the second edition of Anderson’s *Constitution* (1738), and it was not until 1760 that the symbolism attached to it, the Hiram legend, was truly adopted in England.² In some ways, Hiram assumed some of the characteristics of Christian Rosenkreuz. This is particularly true of the symbolism connected with the discovery of the Master’s tomb. As Antoine Faivre has suggested, should Hiram be perceived as being the son of Christian Rosenkreuz? “Also a mythical founder,

the former was in that case a Christian reduced to the relative abstraction in the gallery of great hieratic figure of the “Tradition.”³

In the beginning, Freemasonry did not appear as a truly initiatic society. In fact, its ceremonies were called “rites of reception.” The term “initiation” only appeared in print around 1728-1730 and did not become official in France until 1826.⁴ Although the rituals characteristic of Masonry conferred a mysterious aspect to its meetings, the lodges were essentially places where philanthropy was practiced and the fine arts were cultivated. Only gradually did it develop an initiatic and esoteric aspect.⁵

THE EGYPTIAN MYSTERIES

In contrast to the Renaissance, references to Egypt had practically disappeared by the 17th century. There were, however, a few exceptions. Gerhard Dorn, a disciple of Paracelsus, for example, in casting a critical eye over the esotericism of his era, felt that the Primordial Revelation, confided long ago to Adam and perfected by the Egyptians, had been distorted by those who had transmitted it to us—namely, the Greeks. Another exception was Athanasius Kircher (1610-1680), a Jesuit scholar who was an expert in archeology, linguistics, alchemy, and magnetism. Over several decades he endeavored to unravel the secrets of Egyptian hieroglyphs. In the book *Oedipus Aegyptiacus* (1652), he claimed that these mysterious characters concealed the remnants of the knowledge confided to humanity before the Great Flood. Thus, he felt Egypt was the cradle of all knowledge.⁶ Before Champollion discovered the meaning of

the hieroglyphs in the early 19th century, Kircher's writings were the basic reference works regarding Egypt.

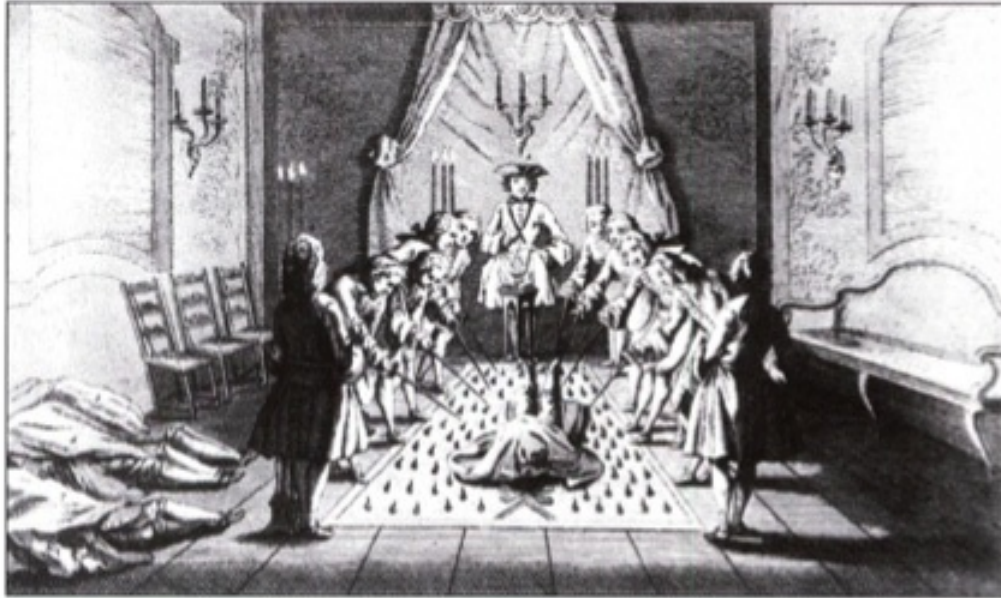


FIGURE 47. Reception of the Master's Degree, 18th century engraving.

Two novels testifying to the renewal of interest in Egyptian esoterism were entitled *Les Voyages de Cyrus ou la Nouvelle Cryopédie* (1727) by Andrew Michael Ramsay (1686-1743) and *Sethos, histoire ou vie tirée des monuments, anecdotes de l'ancienne Égypte* (The Life of Sethos, taken from private Memoirs of the ancient Egyptians), written in 1731 by the Abbé Jean Terrasson (1670-1751). In the first book, after having conversed with Persian Zoroastrian “theologians,” Cyrus traveled to Thebes where he learned the story of Hermes Trismegistus, the founder of their school. This novel, which was critical of contemporary atheism, enjoyed considerable success and was translated throughout Europe.⁷ 111 the second book, Abbé Terrasson allowed the reader to witness the initiation of an Egyptian prince in the secret temples of Memphis.⁸ The trials of purification

by the four elements —earth, water, fire, and air—to which its heroes were subjected (tome II, book III), were repeated by Freemasonry in its ritual. As stated by Boucher de la Richardière, the author “provided such a degree of verisimilitude to the disclosure of the mysteries of Isis, reputedly impenetrable until then, that you would think that they were revealed to him by one of the initiates or one of the Egyptian priests.”⁹ These books made Egypt fashionable once more, as made evident by Jean-Philippe Rameau’s opera-ballet, *The Birth of Osiris* (1751). Some years later Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart would compose *The Magic Flute* (1789), an opera which blended Masonic initiation and Egyptian tradition. The Noachite Religion The ideas developed by Ramsay and Abbe Terrasson were to stimulate the imagination of countless Freemasons in the creation of new degrees which soon made their appearance. Indeed, within a few years, the hierarchical structure of the Masonic grades was considerably enriched. On December 26, 1736, the Scottish chevalier Andrew Michael Ramsay, a follower of

Fénelon and of Mme. Guyon, delivered an epochmaking speech before the Louis d’Argent Lodge in Paris which gave rise to the appearance of what are called the “high degrees” (or “side degrees”) —in other words, degrees superior to that of Master.¹⁰ In his oration, Ramsay described Freemasonry as being the resurrection of the “Noachite religion,” a primordial, universal, and undogmatic religion. He added that this Holy Order was brought back to Europe by the Crusades, but was eventually forgotten, except in the British Isles —and Scotland in particular. Freemasonry would now expand

from Great Britain to the rest of Europe. Before long, the legends relating to the Templars, Chivalry, and Old Testament described by Ramsay would awaken the curiosity of the originators of the high degrees.¹¹ Egyptian themes, along with occult knowledge such as alchemy, astrology, Qabalah, and magic, were also included in these transformations. Between 1740 and 1773, the high degrees proliferated in a rather unruly way, and among them the Rose-Croix reappeared in the form of a high degree. Within a short time the latter enjoyed considerable prestige; it was seen as the final grade, even the *nec plus ultra*, of Freemasonry.¹²

However, certain systems of the high degrees were constituted into independent orders. This was especially true in France, with the rise of the Ordre des Chevaliers Magon Élus-Cohens de l'Univers (Order of Knight Masons, Elect Priests of the Universe) of Martínez de Pasquales (1710?-1774) around 1754; or in Germany, with the creation of the Rite of the Strict Templar Observance of the Baron Johann Gottlieb von Hund (1722-1776) around the same time. It is in this period that Rosicrucianism again had the freedom to establish an autonomous order.

THE GOLDEN AND ROSY CROSS

The Rose-Croix was to reappear initially under the auspices of alchemy. Between 1700 and 1750, the Hermetic art experienced considerable growth, and numerous circles of alchemists were formed in Saxony, Silesia, Prussia, Austria, and Bavaria. It was stated that in Vienna, alone, there were thousands of alchemists.¹³ Most of

them claimed to have drawn their inspiration from Rosicrucianism . One of these groups was the Alchemical Society of Nuremberg. According to certain authors, Gottfried Wilhelm von Leibniz (1646-1716) was the secretary of this society.

In 1710, seven years before the publication of Anderson's *Constitution*, Sincerus Renatus (Samuel Richter), a Lutheran pastor with Pietist leanings and reportedly a follower of Paracelsus and Jacob Boehme, published *Die wahrhafte und vollkommene Bereitung des philosophischen Steins der Brüderschafft aus dem Orden des Gulden und Rosen Kreuzes* (The True and Complete Preparation of the Philosophers' Stone of the Brotherhood, from the Order of the Golden and Rosy Cross). This alchemical treatise consists of practical laboratory procedures and includes an appendix of fifty-two rules governing the Order of the Golden and Rosy Cross. These regulations indicated that the order could not be composed of more than sixty-three brothers, and that it should be directed by an imperator elected for life. In his preface, Sincerus Renatus notes that this text is not his own work, but copied from a manuscript provided by a "Professor of the Art," whose identity he could not reveal. He indicates that the order had two centers, one in Nuremberg and the other in Ancona, but that its members had left Europe for India a few years previously so that they could live in a more tranquil setting.

This work by Sincerus Renatus was inspired by Julius Sperber's *Echo der von Gott hocherleuchteten Fraternitet* (*Echo of the God-illuminated Fraternity of the Venerable Order R.C.*, 1615) and Michael

Maier's *Themis Aurea* (1618). It had also taken certain rules from the Order of the Inseparables, an alchemical order founded in 1577. In fact, the order described by Sincerus Renatus did not seem to have ever existed. Let us note in passing that he mentions a name, that of the Golden Rosicrucians, which Peter Mormius had already used in 1630 in *Arcana totius naturae secretissima, nec hactenus unquam detecta, a collegio Rosiano in lucem produntur* (The Entire Secrets of Nature . . .). Mormius was the author of a legend which claimed that Frédéric Rose, who had lived in Dauphiné, had founded in 1622 a secret society of three members called the Golden Rosicrucians. The phrase "Golden Rosicrucians" became relatively well known and some of its rules were found much later in the Masonic-Rosicrucian degree of the Prince Knights of the Rose-Croix.

The GOLDEN FLEECE

In the following years a Rosicrucian order was to see the light of day. In 1749, Hermann Fictuld published *Aureum Vellus*, in which he spoke of a society of Golden Rosicrucians which he described as being the heirs of the Golden Fleece founded in 1429 by Philip the Good, duke of Burgundy. Around 1757 he created a Masonic rite—the *Societas Roseae et Aureae Crucis* (Fraternity of the Golden Rosy Cross)—that had alchemical and Pietist leanings, and was composed of a series of Rosicrucian degrees. This fraternity thrived in many towns, such as Frankfurt am Main, Marburg, Kassel, Vienna, and Prague. It appears to have become extinct around 1764, but in actuality it reformed itself through the efforts of Dr. Bernhard

Joseph Schleiss von Löwenfeld and Joseph Wilhelm Schröder. It finally gave rise to another Rosicrucian Masonic rite which appeared between 1770 and 1777 in Bavaria, Austria, Bohemia, and Hungary. It was first adopted by the Crescent of Three Keys, a Masonic lodge in Regensburg. In 1771, it was adopted as well by the Hope Lodge in Vienna, which gave rise to the Three Swords Lodge. The latter became the breeding ground of this Rosicrucian Masonic rite which fostered alchemy and theurgy.

THE GOLDEN ROSY CROSS OF THE ANCIENT SYSTEM

In 1776 some members of the Three Swords Lodge constituted a new Rosicrucian Masonic order called the Order of the Golden Rosy Cross of the Ancient System. Instrumental in this effort were Johann Rudolf von Bischoffswerder (1714-1803), a Prussian officer who became minister of war after the death of Frederick the Great, and Johann Christoph Wöllner (1732-1800), the economic advisor to the king of Prussia. The Grand National Mother Lodge of the Three Globes of Berlin became the center of this order's activities. A hierarchy of nine degrees was adopted —namely, Zelator, Theoreticus, Practicus, Philosophus, Adeptus Minor, Adeptus Major, Adeptus Exemptus, Magister Templi, and Magus—whose symbolic aspects were incorporated into the documents reformed in 1777 during the convention held by the order in Prague.

As René Le Forestier has indicated, the teachings of the Juniores (Zelatores) copied 110 pages of Georg von Welling's *Opus Mago-*

Cabbalisticum et Theosophicum (1719), a book which introduced Goethe to Rosicrucian thought sometime later. The instructions and ritual of the Theoretici were borrowed from the *Novum laboratorium medicochymicum* of Christoph Glaser (1677). As for the alchemical operations taught to the Magistri, these were taken from two books by Heinrich Khunrath: *Confessio de Chao Physico-Chemicorum Catholico* (1596) and *Amphitheatrum Sapientiae Aeternae* (1609). The rituals and teachings of this order were now clearly oriented toward alchemy.¹⁴

This movement, which blended alchemy, Rosicrucianism, and Freemasonry, produced the celebrated book entitled *Secret Symbols of the Rosicrucians of the 16th and 17th Centuries* (Altona, 1785 and 1788).¹⁵ Composed primarily of magnificently illustrated alchemical treatises, it is often presented as the most significant Rosicrucian book after the three manifestos.

THE ESSENES AND TEMPLARS

The Masonic Order of the Golden Rosy Cross of the Ancient System—we specify here “Masonic” so as to distinguish this movement from recent groups which use the same name without having any connections with the 18th-century Rosicrucians—possessed a characteristic which differentiated it from 17th-century Rosicrucianism : it claimed a lineage dating back to Ormus, or Ormissus, an Egyptian priest baptized by St. Mark. Ormus thus Christianized the Egyptian mysteries and founded the Order of Ormusiens, bestowing upon it the symbol of a golden cross enameled in red. In A.D. 151, the Essenes were combined with

them, and the order then took the name of the Guardians of the Secret of Moses, Solomon, and Hermes.

After the 4th century, the order never counted more than seven members. In the 12th century, it admitted a few Templars, and when the Christians lost Palestine in 1118, the members of the order scattered around the world. Three of them settled in Europe and founded the Order of the Builders of the Orient. Raymond Lully was admitted into this order, and soon afterwards he initiated Edward I of England. Eventually, only members of the houses of York and Lancaster could be dignitaries of the order. It was for this reason that the rose, the badge of both families, was placed on a golden cross, the symbol of the order.



FIGURE 48. Illustration from an 18th century Rosicrucian ritual.

INITIATED KNIGHTS AND BROTHERS OF ASIA

It was in this way that the Masonic Order of the Golden Rosy Cross came into being. Despite its mythical lineage, this order, which arose in Germany in the 18th century, basically developed in the wake of the Strict Templar Observance, which was at the time the most important Masonic rite in Germany. It should be

emphasized that until this period Rosicrucianism had only given rise to small groups whose rituals have remained undiscovered, whereas the Masonic Order of the Golden Rosy Cross of the Ancient System has left numerous documents attesting to its activities. It expanded widely throughout central Europe, and many individuals, such as Prince Frederick William of Prussia and Nikolai Novikov, a Russian journalist and philanthropist, were members. It was disbanded by its founders in 1787, after having given rise to the Initiated Knights and Brothers of Asia (1779), of which Landgrave Charles of Hesse-Cassel was the Grand Master. The enigmatic Comte de Saint-Germain was, no doubt, part of this movement, seeing that he resided with Landgrave Charles, his pupil and benefactor, from 1778.¹⁶

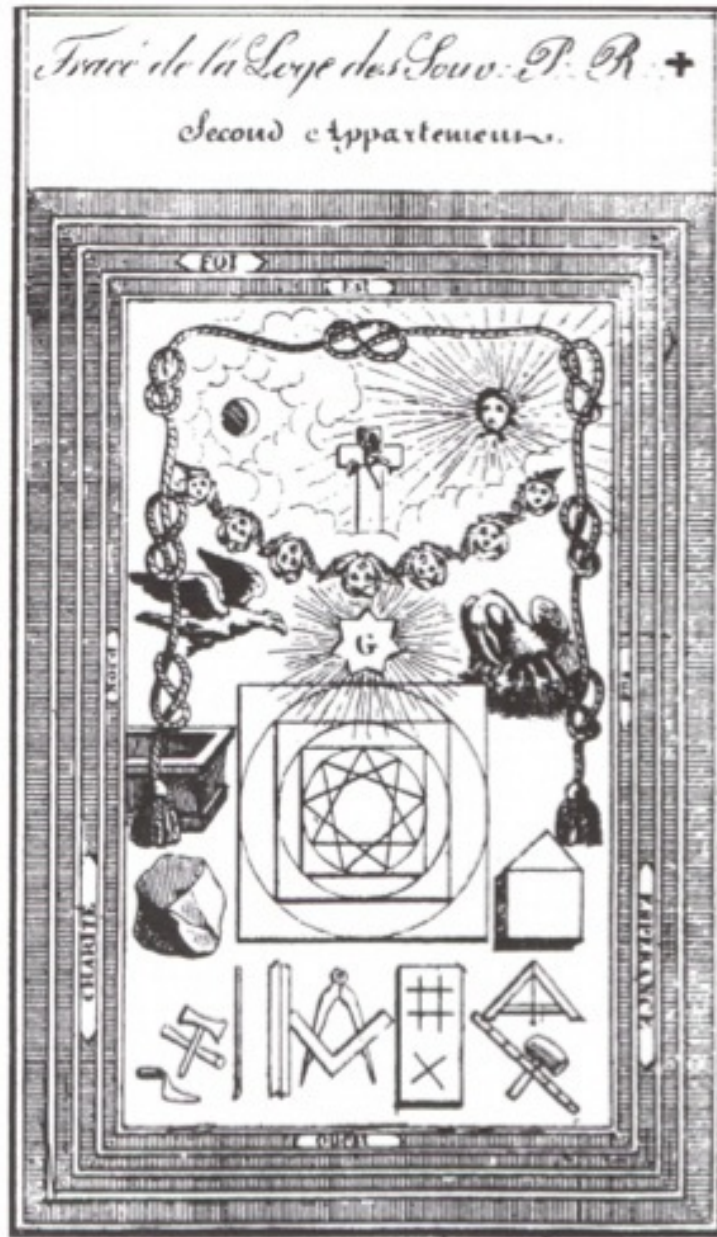


FIGURE 49. Lodge room in the Rosicrucian Sovereign Prince Degree.

THE ROSE-CROIX DEGREE

The Rose-Croix degree appeared within Freemasonry at practically the same time as the Order of the Golden Rosy Cross of the Ancient System. The existence of this high degree was confirmed for the first time in 1757, under the title of Rosicrucian Knight, in

the activities of the Children of Wisdom and Concord Lodge. As we have already seen, the Rose-Croix degree was quickly considered to be the *nec plus ultra* of Masonry. It was the seventh and final degree of the Rite Français of 1786, and the eighteenth of the Ancient and Accepted Scottish Rite. It did, however, present a specific aspect that was to inspire countless debates. Until then the entirety of the Masonic degrees emphasized the universality of wisdom, whereas this degree was specifically Christian in character. For that reason, certain Freemasons tried to dechristianize it in the 19th century by proposing a philosophical interpretation of its symbolism.¹⁷ In his *L'Étoile flamboyante* (1766) the Baron Charles Theodor Tschoudy saw it as “Catholicism put into degree form.” It is true that its symbolism does not refer to themes found in 17th-century Rosicrucianism. Rather than discussing Christian Rosenkreuz, it describes Calvary on Golgotha and then the Resurrection of Christ, and is composed of a love feast in which bread and wine are shared, a ceremony resembling the Last Supper. While being initiated into this degree, the recipients relive the wandering that followed the destruction of the Temple of Jerusalem. They seek the Lost Word, and their journey allows them to discover the three virtues of Faith, Hope, and Charity. Finally, the secret meaning of I.N.R.I. is revealed to them.

The most ancient rituals of the Rose-Croix degree date from 1760 (Strasbourg) and 1761 (Lyons), just a few years after the appearance of the Societas Roseae et Aureae Crucis of Frankfurt. An exchange of correspondence in June 1761 between the Masons of Metz and

those of Lyons inform us that the latter carried out a degree unknown to their brothers in Metz—that of the Knight of the Eagle, Pelican, Knight of St. Andrew, or Mason of Heredom, which are simply other designations of the Masonic Rose-Croix degree. The discourse accompanying another version of this degree described the order's origins by referring to the Sabaeans, Brahmins, Magi, Hierophants, and Druids which it describes as being the ancestors of the Rosicrucians.¹⁸ The Rosicrucians are portrayed as the heirs of an initiatic chain whose links comprise the Egyptians, Zoroaster, Hermes Trismegistus, Moses, Solomon, Pythagoras, Plato, and the Essenes. This lineage recalls the one put forth by Michael Maier in *Silentium Post Clamores* (1617) by reviving the concept of the Primordial Tradition cherished by the Hermeticism of the Renaissance. This concept is again found in the *Regulator of the Knights Masons or the Four Superior Orders According to the Regime of the G.O.* (1801).

SPIRITUAL KNIGHTHOOD

The elements found in the Masonic Rose-Croix degree undoubtedly originated in a manuscript discovered in Strasbourg in 1760. This text, entitled *De la Maçonnerie parmi les Chrétiens* (Of Masonry Among Christians), touched upon the origins of Freemasonry in a singular manner by suggesting that Masons are the descendants of the canons of the Holy Sepulchre, who were the Rosicrucian guardians of the Essenian traditions. These canons would later confide their secret teachings to the Templars.

Egypt, the Essenes, and the Templars are generally referred to in these 18th-century MasonicRosicrucian degrees as being initiatic sources. They try to connect Rosicrucianism with the sages of the ancient religions and with an often idealized original Christianity through the Essenes and Templars.¹⁹ In fact, they again pose the problem of what the sources of the tradition are and how the different initiatic currents are related.

Admittedly, the way such origins are depicted cannot be taken literally, and Henry Corbin takes René Le Forestier to task for being content in looking at such subjects only from this perspective. It matters little whether such an individual as Ormus ever really existed. For Corbin, this lineage can be understood only by putting aside historical institutions. The Essenes, the canons of the Holy Sepulchre, or the Templars should be considered basically as symbols referring to a new higher reality. Thus, some orders hold themselves up to ridicule when they pretend to be the Templars' successors by reviving rites and accouterments that have lost their meaning. As Joseph de Maistre (1753-1821) said in his *Memoire au due de Brunswick*, initiation existed before the Templars and it will continue to be perpetuated long after them.

Corbin observes in the myths connected with the orders we have just mentioned some elements reflecting a spiritual filiation through a spiritual knighthood. This Fraternity of Light has operated since the beginning of Creation itself for the elevation of humanity toward the Spiritual Temple— in other words, to the reconciliation of humanity and God. As he states, the “continuity of this tradition is

not dependent on an immanent historical causality; it can only be expressed in symbols. Its transmitters are raised to the rank of symbolic personalities.”²⁰

The filiation of the movements working for this purpose are not to be found in visible history, but in hierohistory, sacred history. In this sense it is not incorrect to see a filiation in these different movements, provided that it is not taken literally. However, it should be noted that in the era of which we are speaking the Rose-Croix was often presented as the jewel of this spiritual knighthood.

THE ENLIGHTENMENT AND ILLUMINISM

Thus, the 18th century witnessed the creation of a multitude of initiatic orders. We have mentioned here only those related directly or indirectly to Rosicrucian Masonry. The proliferation of such orders often engendered confusion in the esoteric world. In its midst a clash was already taking place between positivists favoring the Enlightenment and spiritualists favoring Illuminism. With the Napoleonic campaigns in Egypt, the fascination with this ancient land grew, and Western esotericism was shaken by a discovery opening up new horizons: magnetism.



FIGURE 50. Masonic Jewel of the Rose-Croix.



FIGURE 51. Detail from *A Key to Magic and the Occult Sciences* by E. Sibley, c. 1800.

Chapter 12

MAGNETISM AND EGYPTOSOPHY

IN THE 18TH century, Hermetic science was confronted by the Enlightenment, which marked a turning point in Western history. During this period, the proponents of esotericism were enthralled by Egypt and became addicted to the new science of magnetism. These new elements appearing in the Age of Enlightenment are important because they conveyed ideas that must be considered so that we can understand the evolution of Rosicrucianism.

THE ENLIGHTENMENT

The philosophical movement known as the Enlightenment was characterized by the complete confidence placed in progress. Reason was considered to be humanity's infallible guide, and everything revealed by religion or tradition was viewed with distrust. The light sought by humanity was not that of God, but that which shines within each of us through our intelligence. This attitude, which marked the beginning of a heightened materialism, could undoubtedly be seen as a reaction to the failure of religion which, weakened by theological quarrels, was regarded as an institution of

the state, incapable of justifying its dogmas in face of the great scientific discoveries.

Throughout the Age of the Enlightenment people observed the world from a new perspective. Within a few years human knowledge was considerably expanded. In 1747, King Louis XV was given one of the first demonstrations of electricity, at which time its fantastic possibilities could be glimpsed. The discovery of steam power by Denis Papin found its first applications in navigation. This new energy would soon revolutionize the organization of work and stimulate the growth of industry. In November 1783 Parisians witnessed an event that was immensely successful: the first manned hot-air balloon flight. The work of Antoine Laurent de Lavoisier placed a permanent gap between the researches of alchemists and the experimental demonstrations of chemists. The works of the naturalist Georges Louis Leclerc de Buffon proclaimed evolutionism, which created an enormous rift between a scientific comprehension of the phenomena of life and the creationist theories defended by religion.

SENSATIONALISM

The 18th century was not only an era of scientists; it was also an era of philosophers, although the latter were primarily scholars. Étienne Bonnot de Condillac declared sensation to be the source of all knowledge. According to him, each person gained awareness of himself and his potentialities not by what he thought, as Descartes stated, but by what he sensed. Condillac introduced sensationalism,

a movement that included Claude Adrien Helvétius¹ and Paul Henri Dietrich d'Holbach. Both espoused an absolute materialism and atheism by presenting religion as an instrument of tyranny that was contrary to reason and prevented the attainment of happiness.

MAN AS MACHINE

The agenda of this era was not to improve the inner person, but to move toward that progress which brought happiness to each person. Moreover, this period cast doubt on the very existence of the inner man, of the soul. In the essay *L'Homme-machine* (Man A Machine; 1748), Julien Offray de la Mettrie reduced the human to a mere mechanism having no need of a Creator to find existence. Philosophers, for the most part, shared this point of view. Although Jean-Jacques Rousseau protested against this attitude, he nonetheless collaborated with such individuals as Helvétius, Voltaire, Montesquieu, and Condillac on the crowning achievement of the century of Enlightenment: the *Encyclopédie* of Diderot and d'Alembert (1751-1780). The rationalism and materialism of this encyclopedia exercised a major influence on the culture of the period. The Jesuits and Jansenists called it the “book of the devil.”

Given such definite stands, we are tempted to ask ourselves how the average individual of the 18th century could still believe that there existed in him or her a higher principle, a soul, relying on a hypothetical God. Certainly, the normal person was hardly aware of the various outlooks of the Enlightenment, but the advocates of Illuminism²— in other words, esotericism—were preoccupied by

this question. The appearance of a new science called magnetism led them to investigate the matter, thus stirring up debates in which spiritualists and materialists were violently opposed. Abbé Fournié, the former secretary of the order of Élus Cohens, was to declare that magnetism had been sent by God to help us understand that we have a soul distinct and independent of our body.³

MAGNETISM

For Éliphas Lévi, the most important element of the 18th century was not the *Encyclopédie*, nor the philosophy of Voltaire or that of Rousseau, but the magnetism discovered by Franz Anton Mesmer. He stated: “Mesmer is like Prometheus: he gave men the fire of the heavens that Franklin could only divert.”⁴ Likewise, Arthur Schopenhauer felt that magnetism “is, of all the discoveries, the one that has the greatest importance, although it sometimes poses more enigmas than it resolves.”⁵ The founder of this new science was Franz Anton Mesmer (1734-1815), a physician born in the southern German province of Swabia. In 1766 he wrote his doctoral dissertation entitled *Dissertatio physico-medica de planetarum influxu* (Physico-Medical Dissertation on the Influence of the Planets)⁶ in which he discussed the cause of universal gravitation and its influence on health. He restated the hypotheses of Paracelsus and Robert Fludd regarding the World Soul, those of the alchemist Van Helmont on medical magnetism,⁷ and the theories of William Maxwell on vital spirit.⁸ Comparing these different viewpoints with the principles enunciated by Isaac Newton and his own reflections,

Mesmer concluded by developing his theory regarding “animal magnetism.” Under this name, he designated “the property by which bodies are susceptible to the action of a universal fluid surrounding everything in existence and whose purpose is to maintain the balance of all vital functions.”⁹

Franz Anton Mesmer claimed that this subtle energy could be collected for treating illnesses by restoring to patients the harmony necessary for their health. He also claimed he could heal all kinds of illnesses. In 1772, he began treatments with the application of magnets. Mesmer eventually realized that he could obtain interesting results by magnetizing with his hands. He also treated using magnetized water, but it is primarily with his celebrated *baquet* that he treated patients. This tub, which was approximately six feet in diameter, contained a mixture of shards of broken bottles, crushed sticks of sulfur, and iron filings. The tub was filled with water and covered with a lid pierced by iron rods arranged in such a way that a patient could place one of the extremities of a rod in contact with the part of his body meant to receive the restorative treatment.



FIGURE 52. Mesmer's tub, engraving.

THE SOCIETY OF HARMONY

Mesmer was soon suspected of charlatanism and even of dabbling in magic. However, his attitude was adamant, and throughout his life he unceasingly explained that magnetism had nothing to do with the supernatural, but that it involved physical phenomena. Exhausted from the attacks of his critics, he left Vienna and settled first in Munich and then in Paris. While in Paris he published *Mémoire sur la découverte du magnétisme animal* (Dissertation on the Discovery of Animal Magnetism; 1779), a booklet in which he attempted to justify the origin of his theory and in which he described a universal fluid circulating throughout the body. Although Mesmer proved himself to be rather arrogant regarding official science in numerous passages of his memoirs, he forwarded his book to forty-seven scholarly societies in lands all around the world, including America, Holland, Russia, and Spain.

This publication involved Mesmer in numerous quarrels with the Royal Academy of Science, the Royal Society of Medicine, and the Paris Faculty of Medicine. These disagreements compelled him to set out on the road again. He then settled in Spa, Belgium. Here Mesmer's patients were enthusiastic about the results that the magnetic cures effected on their health. Two of them, Nicolas Bergasse, a lawyer from Lyons, and Guillaume Kornmann, an Alsatian banker, helped him to set up an establishment where patients could be treated by magnetic cures and where this science could also be studied. Mesmer then founded in 1783 the Société de l'Harmonie (Society of Harmony), at which point magnetism experienced increasing success. Even Louis Claude de Saint-Martin was fascinated by it at this time.

Mesmer did his utmost to demonstrate that magnetism had nothing to do with occultism, yet surprisingly he gave the Society of Harmony a form resembling a Masonic rite. He called his society a "lodge" and used hieroglyphs and symbols to transmit its teachings. Furthermore, the members were admitted into the society by a reception ritual that had certain similarities to an initiation; and the meetings, where a penchant for secrecy was cultivated, consisted of ceremonies that were virtual rituals. In fact, it could be said that the Society of Harmony was a kind of paramasonic society. Mesmer himself was a Freemason, as were most of the members of the society, which also included many Martinists.¹⁰ Before long Mesmer authorized the creation of societies in various towns. The Marquis de Puységur founded the Société harmonique de bienfaisance des

amis réunis (Harmonic Charitable Society of Reunited Friends) in Strasbourg, while Dr. Dutrech founded the Concorde in Lyons. Dr. Mocet also founded a society in Bordeaux.

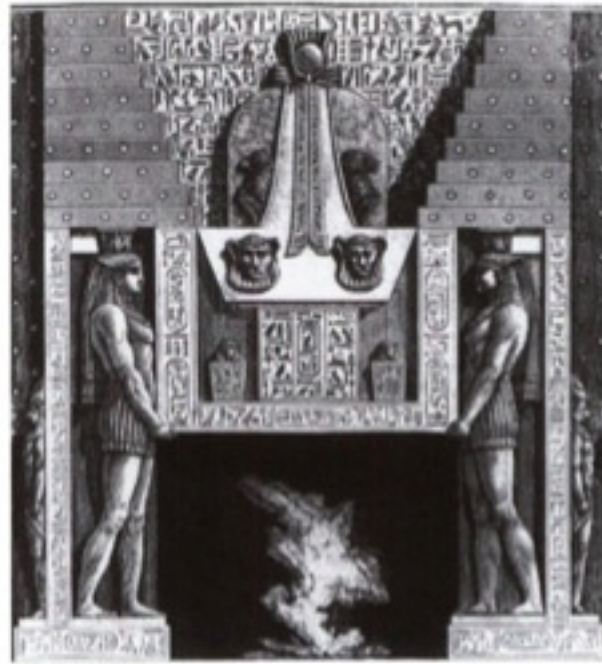


FIGURE 53. Drawing from *Différentes manières d'orner les cheminées*, 1769.

ART AND EGYPT

The Church's loss of influence in the 18th century led people to question other forms of spirituality more freely, and the attraction for Egypt, begun a few years earlier, added to this trend. This tendency first manifested in art in the 17th century. At Saint Germain-en-Laye Jean-Baptiste Lully presented *Isis* (1677), an opera inspired by Egypt; and in Paris, the Théâtre de Bourgogne presented a work by Jean François Regnard, *Les Momies d'Égypte* (The Mummies of Egypt; 1696), where Cleopatra and Osiris appeared on the stage. In the last chapter, we mentioned Abbé Terrasson's novel

entitled *Séthos ou vie tirée des monuments et anecdotes de l'Ancienne Égypte* (1731), which described initiations in the Great Pyramid and the temples of Memphis. A few years later, Jean-Philippe Rameau presented at Versailles a ballet entitled *Les Fêtes de l'Himen ou les Dieux de l'Égypte* (The Marriage Rites or the Gods of Egypt; 1747), in which Osiris appeared. Rameau later improved upon this theme in his ballet-opera, *La Naissance d'Osiris* (The Birth of Osiris; 1751).

Architecture was not to be outdone, and in his work entitled *Différentes manières d'orner les cheminées* (Different Ways of Ornamenting Fireplaces; 1769), Giambattista Piranesi suggested numerous decorations inspired by the Egyptian style. Queen Marie-Antoinette, who was strongly attracted to the Egyptian aesthetic, ordered various objects for the royal palaces, including the sphinxes at Versailles, Fontainebleau, and Saint-Cloud. Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart set to music *Thamos, King of Egypt*, a drama by Baron von Gebler, and afterwards he used some of this material again in *The Magic Flute* (1791). This opera, which blends Masonic and Egyptian symbology, perhaps took its inspiration from the Order of the Egyptian Architects, whose origins were discussed in the last chapter. Gottlieb Naumann premiered *Osiris* (1781), an opera of Egyptian inspiration, in Dresden. Other works followed, such as *Le voyage de Kosti* (1795), by Karl von Eckhartshausen, an initiatic novel describing how the heroes are instructed in the hidden meaning of Masonic symbols in the pyramids.¹¹

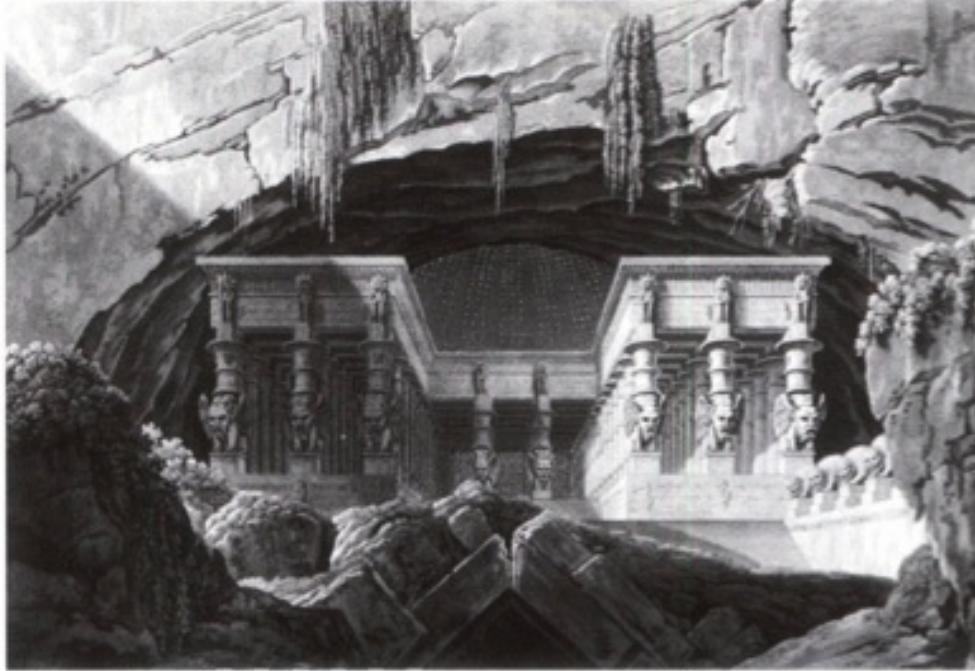


FIGURE 54. Scenery from the Magic Flute, painting by Karl Friedrich Schinkel.

THE EGYPTIAN ARCHITECTS

As we saw in the last chapter, the 18th-century Masonic rite of the Golden Rosy Cross made reference to Egypt. Under the impulse of Carl Friedrich von Köppen, commissioner of war in the service of Prussia, the group of African Architects separated from the Three Globes, the emblematic lodge of the Golden Rosy Cross. In 1770, this group published a booklet entitled *Crata Repoa: Einweihungen in der alten geheimen Gesellschafter der Egyptischen Priester*, that had widespread repercussions.¹² The order of the African Architects (“African” is employed here in the sense of “Egyptian”) took its origin from Crata Repoa, a secret group of Egyptians founded by Menes. It proposed a set of seven degrees that tried to reproduce the initiations once given in the pyramids. The first degree of the African Architects is that of Pastophoris. It corresponded to the

apprentice grade. The disciple was initiated into the mysteries of the hieroglyphs and dressed like an Egyptian. In the second, Neocoris, he was given a caduceus and taught to cross his arms over his chest in the attitude of Osiris. In the third degree, Melanophoris, which corresponded to that of Master, he was confronted by the kingdom of the dead and placed before the sarcophagus of Osiris. The degrees of Christophoris and Balahate followed, where he was initiated into alchemy. Then came the degree of Astronomus and that of Ibis which related to Hermes Trismegistus. Frederick II supported the African Architects. The order possessed a rich library and chemical laboratory. In 1773, lodges of this rite existed in Berlin, Switzerland, and France.

PRIMITIVE RELIGION

It was during this period that a publication appeared which marked a crucial stage in the study of comparative religion: *Le Monde Primitif analysé et comparé avec le monde moderne* (The Primitive World Analyzed and Compared to the Modern World; 1773-1784) by Antoine Court de Gébelin.¹³ In his own way, this author hastened the investigation of the Primordial Tradition through the study of the origin of languages. Seeking the Lost Word, he sought to rediscover humanity's original language and thereby restore it to its primitive purity. Court de Gébelin's reflections led him to believe that Paris was formerly the center of an Egyptian sanctuary. According to him, the name *Paris* came from *Bar Isis*—i.e., the “barque of Isis.”¹⁴ He indicated that a sanctuary dedicated to Isis once stood on the

present-day site of the Notre Dame Cathedral. Volume VIII of *Le Monde Primitif* (1781) also contained the first esoteric study dedicated to tarot, which the author described as being of Egyptian origin and having been created by Thoth.

In 1783, Court de Gébelin fell ill and was treated by Franz Anton Mesmer. His recovery had considerable repercussions, because the author attributed his cure to magnetism at a meeting of the Musée de Paris—an academic offshoot of the celebrated Les Neuf-Sœurs Lodge of which he was a member. In July, he composed a letter regarding magnetism that he sent to the king of France. Soon it was circulating throughout Paris and fueled the controversy surrounding Mesmer . . . all the more so as Court de Gébelin died the following year as a result of his illness. Etteilla (Jean-Baptiste Alliette, 1738-1791), his disciple, continued his researches on the tarot and Egypt, and founded a mysterious initiatic order, the Parfaits Initiés d'Égypte (Perfect Initiates of Egypt).

In a previous chapter concerning the comparative study of religions, we promised to mention the work that, after the demise of the author of *Le Monde Primitif*, had momentous repercussions. This book was *L'Origine de Tous les Cultes ou Religion Universelle* (The Origin of All Cults or Universal Religion; 1796) by Charles-François Dupuis. This vast treatise regarding mythology, whose middle section is made up of a “Treatise Concerning the Mysteries,” attempts to demonstrate that all doctrines, legends, and holidays have a common origin in a universal religion based on astronomical phenomena. The author, a Freemason, traced the mysteries from

their Egyptian source. He judged them to be bad, defective, and contrary to truth, because according to Dupuis, “truth has nothing to do with mysteries: they belong only to error and deception.” He tore Christianity to shreds by showing that it borrowed its components from the ancient religions but distorted their meaning. Dupuis’ book was enormously successful among the rationalists who made it into their bible.¹⁵

CAGLIOSTRO

Egypt and magnetism were brought together to some extent in an Egyptian Masonic rite created by Alessandro Cagliostro. The origins of this individual are enigmatic. He was initiated into Freemasonry at the Esperance Lodge of London in 1777. This lodge was attached to the Strict Templar Observance, an order created in 1750 by Baron Johann Gottlieb von Hund. It is thought that he had received a Rosicrucian initiation in Malta between 1766 and 1768. However, it is not known who his initiators were. Furthermore, during his numerous journeys around Europe, he came into contact with a multitude of esoteric groups. In 1778, he established in Holland the first of a new kind of lodge, namely, an Egyptian rite. After having traveled throughout Europe, Cagliostro arrived in Lyons in October 1784. In December of that year he inaugurated La Sagesse Triomphante, the mother lodge of his order. Like Franz-Anton Mesmer, he organized the two “quarantines,” that is, cures of an initiatic nature. The first allowed the Egyptian Mason to become “morally perfect,” and the second allowed him to become

“physically perfect.”¹⁶ According to Robert Amadou, even though Cagliostro’s ritualistic and personal practice did not proceed from a historical filiation connected with Egypt, it “embraced the lineage of pharaonic Egypt relayed through Coptic Christianity.”¹⁷ It contained theurgy, religious magic, and a search for immortality—and, in particular, elements belonging to the practices and aspirations of Egyptian wisdom.

The development of all sorts of rites—practicing or not practicing occultism, magnetism, Templarism, Rosicrucianism, Martinism—led many Freemasons to question their origins. During the years 1784-1785 and 1786-1787, the Masonic system of Philalethes convened a large international assembly.¹⁸ It is reported that on this occasion, in May 1785, Cagliostro stated:

Gentlemen, seek no further the symbolic expression of the divine idea: it was created sixty centuries ago by the magi of Egypt. Hermes-Thoth set down two words. The first was Rose, because this flower takes a spherical form, the most perfect symbol of unity, and because the perfume it exhales is like a revelation of life. This Rose is placed in the center of a Cross, a figure expressing the point where are brought together the apexes of two right angles whose lines can be extended to infinity by our conception, in the triple sense of height, width, and depth. This symbol’s material expression is gold, which signifies, in occult science, light and purity; the sage Hermes called it the Rose Cross—in other words, the Sphere of the Infinite.

Cagliostro's mission was short-lived. Following the *Affair of the Diamond Necklace*, he sought exile in England, but, hounded by the Inquisition, he was arrested on December 27, 1789. He was condemned for heresy and magic, and died in the fortress of San Leo on August 26, 1795. His public role lasted no more than thirteen years.

THE CONDEMNATION OF MAGNETISM

From the beginning of the 18th century the French royal court had lost its social preeminence and was replaced by the activity of the salons, where artists, writers, philosophers, and savants gathered. Magnetism soon held sway, and its sessions rapidly became an activity, even a diversion, highly appreciated by high society. However, this practice was a veritable challenge to Reason, elevated into a dogma by the followers of the Enlightenment. In 1784, King Louis XVI appointed a commission, composed of Antoine Laurent de Lavoisier, Benjamin Franklin, and four members of the Royal Academy of Medicine, to study the matter. This commission, although recognizing magnetism's curative effects, advised against it, judging it to be unscientific and overly laden with superstition. It was primarily seen as the effect of the imagination. Afterwards, pamphlets against magnetism became more numerous.

SOMNAMBULISM

At the close of the 18th century, Mesmerism was experiencing difficulties. In 1785, Nicolas Bergasse, Franz Anton Mesmer's

principal collaborator and translator (Mesmer's command of French was poor), was expelled from the Society of Harmony. He soon fell in with the spiritualists, who, like Louis Claude de Saint-Martin or JeanPhilippe Dutoit-Membrini, began to distrust magnetism.¹⁹ Mesmer, the eternal wanderer, left briefly for Toulouse and in March 1786 he moved in with the Du Bourgs, a family of Élus-Cohens closely connected with Louis Claude de Saint-Martin.²⁰ The Society of Harmony was disbanded a few years later, in 1789, and Mesmer passed to the "Eternal East" in 1815. For some years, however, magnetism had been moving towards occultism. In fact, Armand Marie Jacques de Chastenet, the Marquis de Puységur, a colonel in the artillery, made a discovery that led magnetism in a new direction: somnambulism.²¹

In April 1784, while being magnetized according to Mesmer's principles, the Marquis de Puységur discovered that when a subject is magnetized for a few minutes by means of passes, he falls into a form of lethargy called "magnetic sleep." He soon noticed that during these experiences, the personality of the person who undergoes this experience is changed. It produces in him a significant expansion of the senses that allows him to see and hear things ordinarily inaccessible to the human mind. Moreover, the subject becomes a medium endowed with amazing clairvoyance and capable of answering questions touching on things of the invisible. This marked the beginning of magnetic or artificial somnambulism, a discovery which led to a fundamental discovery, that of the unconscious.²²

Inevitably, all those who were attracted to the invisible sciences—and the Élus-Cohens were in the forefront—were seduced by this practice. The oracles of the somnambulists were recorded almost everywhere. Jean-Baptiste Willermoz did not escape this general infatuation, and it is probable that this practice was primarily responsible for the fall of the order of Élus-Cohens. Indeed, with somnambulism, there was no more need for asceticism or complicated rites for communicating with the invisible; all one needed to do was put a patient into a magnetic sleep and interrogate him, even though practical experience showed that things were not quite so simple. Willermoz, who created the Société des initiés (Society of Initiates; 1785) as part of this movement, would cover its expenses between April 1785 and October 1788.²³ He then fell in with the Martinists, but many among them, such as Rodolphe Salzman, considered him dangerous for wanting to raise the veil to another world without engaging in the work of sanctification.

In the 18th century, the Church did not concern itself with condemning magnetism. Instead, it was more resolute towards Freemasonry, because the infatuation with esotericism had caused many Christians to seek entry into the lodges. Freemasonry was denounced in a papal bull (*In eminenti*) of 1738, renewed by the bull of Benedict XV (*Providas*) in 1751. Yet this interdict remained ineffective, and the lodges expanded nearly everywhere in France. Freemasonry was even found in monasteries. José A. Ferrer-Benimelli estimates that nearly 2,000 clerics frequented the lodges.²⁴ In this period, around 650 Masonic workshops were distributed

around the country. With the onset of the French Revolution, nearly all of them went inactive.



FIGURE 55. Fountain of Regeneration, detail of a drawing by Monnet, 1797 (Musée de l'Armée, Paris).

THE PYRAMID OF THE TUILERIES

In 1789, France was to put an end to the Ancien Régime by overthrowing the monarchy. Yet it is surprising to note that the revolutionaries were not insensitive to Egypt. They appeared to project their primitive ideals of purity, justice, and wisdom onto this ancient land. And so, on August 26, 1792, a gigantic pyramid was erected in the Tuileries during a ceremony held to honor the martyrs of August 10. In August of the following year, a Festival of Regenerated Nature was held to commemorate the fall of the Ancien Régime. The Fountain of Regeneration, which took the form of a statue of Isis, representing Nature, was raised upon the rubble of the Bastille (see figure 55). In the same era, Jean-Baptiste

Lemoyne mounted *Nephté* (derived from the names of the gods Neith and Ptah), the first opera whose plot was set completely in the land of the pharaohs. The scenery, created by Pierre-Adrien Paris, included pyramids, tombs, and an alley of sphinxes leading to the temple of Osiris.

NAPOLEON AND EGYPT

A few years later, the passion for Egypt assumed much greater heights under Napoleon Bonaparte, and it incited the creation of initiatic orders claiming to be from the land of the pharaohs. In May 1798 Napoleon sailed toward Egypt with 54,000 soldiers and dozens of scholars, mathematicians, astronomers, engineers, draftsmen, and artists. He disembarked at Alexandria at the beginning of July 1798, and a few days later the Mamelukes were defeated at the Battle of the Pyramids. In the following year Napoleon set up a commission to study Egypt, which resulted in a prestigious publication, the *Description de l'Égypte*, encompassing nine volumes of text and eleven volumes of engravings, that were published between 1809 and 1829. This monumental work revealed to the world the splendors of this land and marked the debut of “Egyptomania.”²⁵

A seminal work was published separately before it appeared in the *Description de l'Égypte* namely, the papyrus of the text now called the *Book of the Dead*. It was published by M. Cadet under the title *Copie figurée d'un rouleau de papyrus trouvé à Thèbes dans un tombeau des rois ...* (Copy Represented on a Papyrus Roll Found in Thebes in a Tomb of Kings). In the following century, Henri Durville, the promoter of

modern magnetism, commented on it at length within the framework of the *Ordre Eudiaque*, an Egyptianized movement of his own creation. Once again, the land of the pyramids inspired artists, and in March 1808 Emperor Napoleon had the pleasure of attending the opening of *Amours d'Antoine et Cléopâtre*, a ballet by Jean-Pierre Aumer that was set to the music of Rudolphe Kreutzer. Isis continued to fascinate the Parisians, and in 1809 a commission studied the validity of the hypothesis formulated by Court de Gébelin regarding the origins of the name of Paris (*Bar Isis*). It concluded in favor of the truth of this legend by recalling the existence of an ancient cult to Isis. In January 1811, the Isiac origin of Paris was officially recognized, and for a time the Egyptian goddess was depicted in the armorial bearings of the city of Paris.

The publication of the *Description de l'Égypte* led to speculation regarding the mysterious knowledge retained by priests of the lands of the Nile. Alexandre Lenoir published *La Franche Maçonnerie rendue à sa véritable origine* (Free-masonry Restored to its True Origin; 1807), a book in which he attempted to link Freemasonry with the Egyptian religion, which he described as the natural and primordial religion. For his part, A.P.J. de Visme published his *Nouvelles recherches sur l'origine et la destination des Pyramides d'Égypte* (New Researches on the Origin and Destiny of the Pyramids of Egypt; 1812), a book in which he endeavored to demonstrate that they reveal the elementary principles of the abstract and occult sciences. He then reworked *Séthos*, which, on this occasion, experienced greater success than in its first edition. The

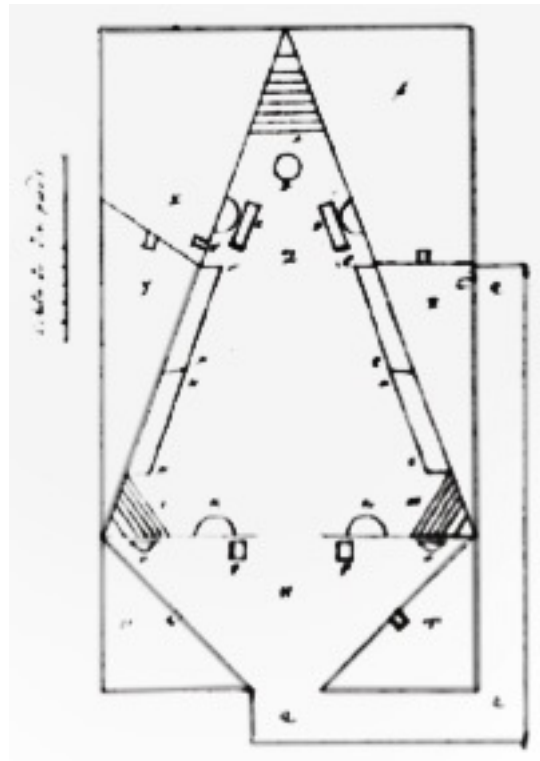


FIGURE 56. Diagram of a “pyramid” of the Friends of the Desert

FRIENDS OF THE DESERT

It was within this favorable climate, characterized by an often idealized Egypt, that numerous Egyptianized initiatic groups emerged. The first, the *Ordre des Sophisiens* (Order of Sophisiens; 1801), remained mysterious, being only mentioned in passing by Ragon. What interests us primarily is the group that arose in Toulouse through the efforts of Alexandre Du Mège (1780-1862), an archeologist who founded the *Société Archéologique du Midi* (Archeological Society of the Midi) — an association we will discuss further when describing the late 19th-century Rosicrucian movement of Toulouse. This Masonic officer in the Rose-Croix degree created *Les Amis du Désert* (The Friends of the Desert) in 1806, and he established its mother-lodge, *la Souveraine Pyramide*,

in Toulouse.²⁶ According to its founder's plan, the lodge should be in the form of a pyramid, the door guarded by two sphinxes. It was to include an altar dedicated to "God Humanity-Truth," erected before images of Isis and Osiris. Likewise, the walls had to be decorated with hieroglyphs copied from the engravings of ancient Egyptian monuments. The costumes of the order's members were to be in Egyptian style. We do not know whether this plan came to fruition, because this order seems to have had an ephemeral existence. Apart from Toulouse, it included "pyramids" in Montauban and Auch. However, it is not at all impossible that it survived in a modest way for several years. A little later, in 1822, two others in Toulouse, Colonel Louis-Emmanuel Dupuy and Jean-Raymond Cardes, the head archivist of Haute-Garonne, appear to have taken part in continuing this Egyptian plan through the creation of a lodge of the Misraim rite.



FIGURE 57. The French consul general in Egypt (Bibliothèque nationale, Paris).

THE MEMPHIS RITE

Around 1814, Marc and Michel Bédarrides, officers of Napoleon's army in Italy, brought back to Paris the Misraim (the Hebrew word for "Egyptians") rite. However, apart from its name, this order made little reference to Egypt in its ceremonies. This rite arose in the French military and administrative circles in Italy, established in that country following the Napoleonic campaigns and during a period when the French and English were at loggerheads over Egypt. The Freemasons were quite numerous in the French imperial armies, and it is understandable why these soldiers and officers wished to find another source for their order than that codified by Anderson, an Englishman. The marvels they discovered in Egypt had a bearing on their decision, to the extent that they lived in a period where esotericism and Egypt tended to be placed in the same category. As we have shown in earlier chapters, this perspective brought the Renaissance to the fore, which viewed the Egypt of Hermes as being the source of the Primordial Tradition.²⁷

In 1838, some years after the appearance of the Misraim Rite, the Memphis Rite was founded by Jean-Etienne Marconis de Nègre. Unlike its predecessor, this order attempted to incorporate elements taken from the Egyptian mysteries, such as those recorded by Diodorus Siculus and Abbé Terrasson in *Séthos*. No doubt Marconis de Nègre was also influenced by *Les Mystères d'Isis et d'Osiris, Initiation Égyptienne* (The Mysteries of Isis and Osiris, Egyptian Initiation; 1820). Its author, T.P. Boulange, a barrister at the royal court and professor of the faculty of law in Paris, denounced Dupuis' mistakes and demonstrated the initiatic value of the Egyptian mysteries which

he claimed were intended to train the disciple in the practice of virtue and the study of higher knowledge.

THE ROSETTA STONE

Until this time, speculations regarding Egypt gave rise to innumerable theories. However, the actual content of the Egyptian texts remained completely unknown. The hypotheses set forth in *Oedipus Aegyptiacus* by Athanasius Kircher, a scholar impassioned by archeology, linguistics, alchemy, and magnetism, remained the law. The situation changed suddenly in 1822. Thanks to the Rosetta Stone—which included a text written in three scripts: hieroglyphic, demotic, and Greek—JeanFrançois Champollion (1790-1832) was able to discover the key allowing the meaning of the hieroglyphs to be understood. All at once the hypotheses of Athanasius Kircher crumbled to dust, and Egyptology truly came into being. France felt that it had become “Egypt’s older sister.” The Louvre unveiled its Egyptian museum in 1827 with Champollion being its first curator.

THE SOCIETY OF MAGNETISM

After the French Revolution, the theories of magnetism were examined by the authorities once again. A commission of inquiry was formed by the Academy of Medicine. Under the direction of Dr. Husson, it resulted in a favorable report that provoked a scandal among the ranks of rationalist doctors. Although the report was printed, it was never distributed. Later, in 1842, another commission directed by M. Dubois, a fervent rationalist from Amiens,

condemned magnetism. These stands did not prevent the continuing progress of the movement brought into being by Mesmer. The Marquis de Puységur, a great magnetizer and benefactor (his home was always open to the poor and deprived), published many works in which he discussed healings and the results obtained by magnetic cures. Assisted by his pupil Joseph-Pierre Deleuze, he launched the first periodical devoted entirely to magnetism, the *Annales du Magnétisme* (1814-1816), and in 1815 the marquis caused quite a stir when he founded the Société du Magnétisme. Magnetism also found a choice recruit in the person of the Baron Du Potet (Jules Denis Dupotet de Sennevoy), whose magnetic séances were known throughout Paris. He was the author of the celebrated *Corns de magnétisme animal* (1834).

BETWEEN SCIENCE AND TRADITION

Some other currents of thought date from this period, notably following the theories set forth by Abbé Faria (1750-1818) in his book *De la cause du sommeil lucide* (1819). Fie brought to the fore a science developed by James Braid that was called *hypnosis*. A different approach was presented by Dr. Joseph Rodes Buchanan (1814-1899), an eminent American physician and psychist who invented psychometry. He was the source of the theories regarding suggestion that were brought to France by Dr. Durand de Gros from America and England. On the other hand, some approaches increasingly oriented toward esotericism continued to be developed during the same period. These included the Order of Universal

Harmony (c. 1815), a Masonic group that considered magnetism to be the secret that Freemasons should investigate; or the Asiatic Order, also called the Cercle Moral de la Noble Porte de l'Élysée, created about 1824 by Alaine d'Eldir (Mme. Mercier). Fabre d'Olivet attended this group at the time he was writing his *Histoire philosophique du genre humain*. In 1836 Charles Poyan, a French disciple of the Marquis de Puységur, introduced Mesmerism into America. This event consequently led to the appearance of spiritualism, a subject that will be discussed in the next chapter.

Some authors also tried to connect magnetism with Egypt. These included Dr. Alphonse Teste, a physician of magnetism and a homeopath. In his *Manuel Pratique de magnétisme animal* (1828 and 1840), he talked about the Egyptian sources of this practice. He stated that the “alleged intervention of the goddess Isis, who, according to the Egyptian priests, inspired within the faithful during their dreams the way of being healed of their illnesses, appears to us to be none other than the instinct for remedies with which our somnambulists are endowed.”

Likewise, an article of the magazine *Le Magnétiseur spiritualiste*, the official organ of the Société des Magnétiseurs Spiritualistes de Paris (Society of Spiritualist Magnetizers of Paris), made reference to Egypt. Dr. Martins discussed the visions of his medium who had seen an Egyptian temple-hospital where beds were arranged around a magnetic chain.

THE SOCIETY OF SPIRITUALISTIC

MAGNETIZERS OF PARIS

In 1847, one of the most celebrated magnetizers, Louis-Alphonse Cahagnet (1809-1885), founded the Society of Swedenborgian Students. By working with a medium named Adèle Maginot, he entered into contact with Emanuel Swedenborg's spirit, who dictated to him a book entitled *Magnétisme: arcanes de la vie future dévoilés* (The Celestial Telegraph; or, Secrets of the life to come, revealed through magnetism; 1848) containing irrefutable proof that magnetic somnambulists had the faculty of seeing dead persons and conversing with them. Always inspired by Emanuel Swedenborg, he founded in the same year the Society of Spiritualist Magnetizers of Paris, which replaced the Society of Swedenborgian Students. In the discourse delivered at the inauguration of this new society on November 27, 1848, he made reference to previously existing societies such as the Qabalists, Rosicrucians, Freemasons, and Templars, whose researches he felted only to arrogance and egoism. He wanted the society he had created to be a truly fraternal organization, where the spiritual properties of magnetism would be studied for the purpose of using such knowledge to alleviate the burdens of humans and to help them discover the mysteries of the soul. Members of the society were called brothers and sisters, and the meetings were ritualistic in character. A prayer began each session, and a person called a *lucide* was put into a slumber before entering into contact with Swedenborg's spirit. Music and religious chants were sprinkled throughout the meeting, which was completed by a love feast in which Swedenborg's spirit was asked to

act upon the bread and wine.

THE CHURCH AND MAGNETISM

The Church assumed an ambiguous position regarding magnetism. At first it condemned the practice in 1841, but adopted a more open policy in 1856. Actually, the Church could not reject a movement which, to some extent, fought against the materialism of the Enlightenment by attempting to prove the existence of the soul. For example, in *Le Monde occulte ou Mystères du magnétisme* (The Occult World or Mysteries of Magnetism; 1851 and 1856), Henri Delaage felt that magnetism was a proper means for bringing unbelievers back to the faith. His book was prefaced by the celebrated Father Henri Lacordaire who, from 1846, spoke favorably about this science after having assumed the pulpit at Notre-Dame in Paris. Delaage's work gave prominence to this statement of Alexandre Dumas: "If there is a science in the world that can make the soul visible, it is without question magnetism." Honoré de Balzac took the same position in *Ursule Mirouët* (1841). In the sixth chapter of this novel, entitled "Summary of Magnetism," Dr. Minoret rediscovers his faith following an experience with magnetism.

JESUS THE ESSENE

Meanwhile, the dogmatism of the Church disheartened those who were in search of a true and original Christianity. This was the case with Abbé Ferdinand Chatel (1795-1857), the promoter of his "French Catholic Church," which was linked with the NeoTemplar

Order of Fabré-Palaprat. Certain others, such as Pierre Leroux, believed Essenianism to be the true Christianity. His book *De l'Humanité, de son Principe et de son Avenir* (Regarding Humanity, Its Principle and Future; 1840) described Jesus as being an Essene in contact with eastern traditions. Daniel Ramée followed the same line with *La Mort de Jésus, Révélations historiques. . . d'après le manuscrit d'un Frère de l'ordre sacré des essèniens, contemporain de Jésus* (The Death of Jesus, Historical Revelations; 1863). Thus, Essenianism, which had started with the Golden Rosy Cross of the Ancient System in 1777, continued to preoccupy those who were in search of the Primordial Tradition. It was combined with Egyptosophy, a passion for the wisdom of a people whose basis was being rediscovered.

As we have seen throughout this chapter, the period that we have just examined was characterized by its new relationship with the higher realms. The magic that appeared in the Renaissance was now being transformed through new practices. With magnetism, we can almost detect the determination to create a science of occult worlds. Thus, in understanding its history we will have a better understanding of the way in which the esoteric heritage and its practices have evolved. Indeed, magnetism was to give birth to many movements which, beginning with this phenomenon, were devoted to the study of the human mind, its unused faculties, and the way of developing them so as to live more harmoniously.



FIGURE 58. The Scales of Health from Hector Durville's *The Theory and Practice of Human Magnetism*, 1900.

Chapter 13

IN SEARCH OF THE PSYCHE

BEGINNING WITH THE 18th century and all during the 19th century magic was secularized by magnetism. As the Baron Du Potet stated in *La Magie dévoilée ou Principes de sciences occultes* (1879), its mysteries were made clear due to magnetism. The trail blazed by Mesmer and Puységur led to spiritualism and spurred researchers into forming institutes of psychic research in an attempt to better understand the secret motives of the life of the soul. In fact, before founding the Ancient and Mystical Order Rosae Crucis (A.M.O.R.C.), H. Spencer Lewis (1883-1939) was the president of such an organization for several years. As a general rule, all of the occultists of the late 19th century, and particularly those who attempted to establish or reestablish initiatic orders, had backgrounds in magnetism or spiritualism.

HYPNOSIS

After the turbulence of the French Revolution, magnetism experienced a resurgence of interest. In France, magnetism was used successfully in such hospitals as Val-de-Grâce, Hôtel-Dieu, and Salpêtrière. However, it was the subject of considerable debate, and

magnetism was officially rejected in 1842 by the Academy. It found its way into the European courts and received a favorable reception in Russia, Denmark, and Prussia. In Germany, it attracted the interest not only of medical doctors, but also natural philosophers and romantic philosophers. One of them, Justinus Kerner (1786-1862), published in 1829 *Die Seherin von Prevorst* (The Seeress of Prevorst), a true case study of parapsychology before this term had even been coined. This book relates the communications of Frederica Hauffe, a patient that Kerner treated by the use of magnetism. During her crises, the young woman entered into communication with spirits who manifested themselves through noises, rappings, the movement of objects—means foreshadowing the manifestations experienced by the Fox Sisters in 1847. Justinus Kerner's book discussed his patient's visions, the relationships between the spirit world and our world, and the externalization or projection of fluidic bodies.¹ This episode foreshadowed spiritualism which, after its rise in the United States, came to Europe.

Around 1836, a follower of Puységur named Charles Poyan introduced mesmerism to the United States.² He gave lectures and conducted experiments in Belfast, Maine. Phineas Parkhurst Quimby (1802-1866) was particularly enthusiastic and soon proved himself to be an outstanding medium. He would become the precursor of the vast New Thought movement, from which Christian Science is also derived.

SPIRITUALISM

Included among Charles Poyan's students was an amazing individual named Andrew Jackson Davis (1826-1910). He was magnetized in 1844 by William Levingston, who discovered his gifts of lucidity. On March 7 Davis fell into a hypnotic state lasting two days during which he was in contact with spiritual "guides." The following year he began to give lectures in New York. During these talks he was put in a clairvoyant state by a magnetizer and dictated messages that he received from these guides. Between November 1845 and January 1847 he dictated more than 150 messages that were compiled and published as a volume of some 800 pages. This book, *The Principles of Nature: Her Divine Revelations and A Voice To Mankind* (1847), was an immediate success, so much so that it was reprinted seven times in the very year it was published. His works, such as *Harmonial Philosophy* and *Nature's Divine Revelations*, were immensely popular and he was given the title of the "prophet of Anglo-American spiritualists."³

Magnetism took a peculiar turn in the United States following some unexpected events in Hydesville, New York. There, one night in December 1847, two young sisters, Margaret and Katie Fox, heard some strange "rappings" on the walls. Doors opened completely on their own; furniture and other objects were moved about, as though pushed by invisible hands. Far from being afraid, the two little girls thought it was all a game and eventually established a code so that they could speak with the "spirit rapper." At the end of the conversations the spirit revealed that his name was Charles Rosna and he gave minute details about his life, the accuracy

of which were afterwards acknowledged. Soon, hundreds of curiosity seekers flooded in to witness the phenomenon.⁴ These events marked the beginning of spiritualism, a movement that grew to immense proportions within a short time. In the United States, it soon included three million followers, and nearly ten thousand mediums exercised their talents. As early as 1852 the spiritualists even held a congress in Cleveland, Ohio.



FIGURE 59. Allan Kardec.

ALLAN KARDEC

Spiritualism quickly swept over Europe. In France, the *Journal des Débats* of May 13, 1853, discussed the phenomenon of table-turning, which then preoccupied all of Paris. Hippolyte-Léon Rivail (1804-1869), a native of Lyons who used the pseudonym of Allan Kardec, was originally interested in magnetism. He was initiated into the practice of spiritualism and a few years later published a text entitled *Livre des Ésprits* (1857)⁵ which became the handbook for all

spiritualists. Not only did this work explain how to enter into contact with the spirit world, but it also presented the theories and philosophy of spiritualism. It revealed in particular the role of the *perisprit*, a fluidic envelope or psychic body situated between the soul and the physical body that allowed disincarnated spirits to manifest themselves. The work also popularized the theory of reincarnation, which was presented as a progression necessary for the soul's evolution, from which arose the celebrated spiritualist maxim: "to be born, to die, to be reborn, to constantly progress, that is the law." In 1858, Allan Kardec established the *Revue spirite*, founded the Société parisienne d'études spirites (Parisian Society of Spiritualistic Studies), and published works contributing to the spread of spiritualism throughout the world. He was considered to be the "prophet" of spiritualism.

Almost everywhere attempts were made to consult the invisible and make spirits appear. Automatic writing, telekinesis, and telepathy were practiced. Such mediums as Daniel Dunglas Home, Eusapia Palladino, Leonora Piper, Florence Crook, and Alexis Didier reigned as masters and made as many heads turn as they did tables, because fraud and falsification were commonplace.

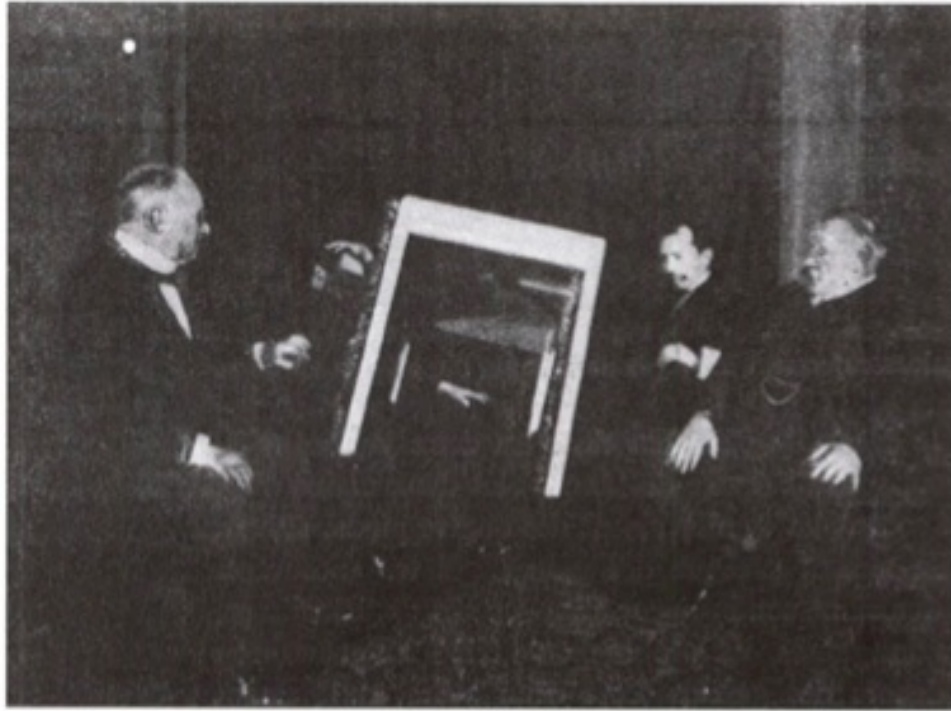


FIGURE 60. Levitation experiment with the medium Eusapia Palladino (1909).

ZANONI

At the moment that spiritualism was expanding, Rosicrucianism returned to the forefront through a novel called *Zanoni* (1842).⁶ It came out just before the first hints of the 19th century Rosicrucian resurgence. Its author, Edward Bulwer-Lytton (1803-1873), had gained international renown due to his historical novel *The Last Days of Pompeii* (1834). His new work, *Zanoni*, is the tale of two 18th century Rosicrucians, Zanoni and Mejnour, the last survivors of this august fraternity. The plot revolves around the transmission of the initiation to two disciples, Clarence Glyndon and Viola, wherein the author reveals the torments of the soul while seeking initiation. Although it is sprinkled with references to Hermeticism, Paracelsus, Agrippa, Cagliostro, and Mesmer, *Zanoni* is primarily a romantic

novel, having all the characteristics of that genre. However, it has remained one of the most celebrated novels of esoteric literature.

While perusing this book, the reader will probably wonder about the interest that Edward Bulwer-Lytton had in the Rosicrucians. From childhood, he had exhibited an inclination for paranormal phenomena and he later devoted himself to the study of the occult sciences. Twelve years after the publication of *Zanoni*, and while spiritualism was at its height, Éliphas Lévi (1810-1875) came to visit the novelist in London. Together they engaged in conjuring up the phantom of Apollonius of Tyana, using a ritual based on the *Magia Philosophica* (1573) of Francesco Patrizi rather than the method favored by spiritualists.

This strange experience was to mark the renewal of French occultism.⁷ William Wynn Westcott indicated that Edward Bulwer-Lytton had entered into contact with the Rosicrucians of the Charles à la Lumière naissante Lodge of Frankfurt, Germany. In fact, this lodge, founded in 1814 by Christian Daniel von Mayer, was at the crossroads of many 19th century initiatic orders, such as the Chevaliers Bienfaisants de la Cité Sainte (Charitable Knights of the Holy City) of Jean-Baptiste Willermoz, the Rite of Strict Templar Observance of the Baron Johann Gottlieb von Hund, and the Initiated Knights and Brothers of Asia, an offshoot of the Golden Rosy Cross of the Ancient System. And now, at this point, we come face to face with a somewhat orthodox Rosicrucian movement.



FIGURE 61. *Zanoni*, drawing by Robert Lanz.

THE S.R.I.A.

It has been sometimes claimed that Edward Bulwer-Lytton directed the Societas Rosicruciana in Anglia (Rosicrucian Society in England; S.R.I.A.). In fact, it was without his knowledge that he was named honorary president, and he categorically refused this office. The S.R.I.A. came into being in 1866, part of the activities of English Freemasonry. Its founder, Robert Wentworth Little (1840-

1878), was the treasurer of the United Grand Lodge of England. He claimed to have been initiated by Anthony O'Neal Haye into a Scottish Rosicrucian association in Edinburgh, but this claim has never been substantiated. Wynn Westcott emphasized that the society was initially a grouping of Freemasons who came together to study old Rosicrucian texts and to establish the ties between Rosicrucianism and Freemasonry. In an article published in 1880, he made it clear that the S.R.I.A. could not be considered the heir of past Rosicrucians.

It seems that Robert Wentworth Little set up the S.R.I.A. according to rituals found in the library of Freemason's Hall. He adapted the hierarchy of the Golden Rosy Cross of the Ancient System (Zelator, Theoreticus, Practicus, Philosophus, Adeptus Minor, Adeptus Major, Adeptus Exemptus, Magister Templi, and Magus) and restricted entry into the group to Christian Master Masons. The order expanded into Scotland, Canada, and the United States. Even though its origins were suspect, this society played an important role in the spread of esotericism. Included among the influential members of the S.R.I.A. were William Woodman, Kenneth R.H. MacKenzie, Hargrave Jennings, the spiritualist Stainton Moses, and William Wynn Westcott (1848-1925). The latter soon participated in the creation of another Rosicrucian Masonic order that we will discuss later, the Hermetic Order of the Golden Dawn. Many members of the S.R.I.A. also joined the ranks of the newly formed Theosophical Society.

HELENA PETROVNA BLAVATSKY

The Theosophical Society had its roots in places other than those we have discussed. However, we will mention a few of its aspects, as it manifested a certain affinity with Rosicrucianism. It was in 1873 that Helena Petrovna Blavatsky (1831-1891) appeared on the public stage by frequenting the spiritualistic circles of New York. Endowed with paranormal faculties, she participated in some experiments as a medium. It was on this occasion that she became acquainted with a person who was to become her close associate, Colonel Henry Steel Olcott (1832-1907), who at the time was investigating phenomena associated with spiritualism. Sometime later, the colonel proposed that they create a society for the study and elucidation of occultism, the Qabalah, etc. When they were choosing a name for their society, they considered many, including that of *Rosicrucian*. Finally, in September 1875, they settled upon the choice of *Theosophical Society*. The Theosophical Society had little to do with Rosicrucianism, but promoted instead an esoteric Buddhism. However, it was the source of two movements that did draw their inspiration from Rosicrucianism.

AN ADVENTURE AMONG THE ROSICRUCIANS

The first movement was the ephemeral Esoteric Rose-Croix, founded in 1888 by Franz Hartmann (1838-1912), a physician and Blavatsky's close collaborator and secretary. He devoted many works to the Rosicrucians, in particular a beautiful reissue of the *Secret Symbols of the Rosicrucians of the 16th and 17th Centuries* (1888).⁸ He was also the author of a strange novel entitled *An Adventure Among*

the Rosicrucians (Boston, 1887), that recounted the discovery of a Rosicrucian monastery during a hike in the Alps, not far from Basel. There the protagonist of the story met the Brothers of the Golden and Rosy Cross and their imperator. During a visit to an alchemical laboratory, a brother named Theodorus gave him the book *Secret Symbols of the Rosicrucians of the 16th and 17th Centuries*.

The revised second edition of this novel (London, 1910) has a preface stating: “The following account of a psychic experience has been gathered from notes handed to me by a friend, a writer of considerable repute. Whether the adventures told therein are to be regarded as a dream, or an actual experience on the astral plane, I must leave to the reader to judge.” The friend in question could well have been Theodor Reuss, the Theodorus of the novel, an individual to whom we shall return in a later chapter. This revised edition also included a supplementary chapter entitled “A Rosicrucian Institution in Switzerland,” where Hartmann indicated that a few years after the first edition of his book there was an attempt to put his ideas into practice in this country. His description seems to be that of Monte Verità, which we will discuss in the next chapter. However, the author concludes with the impossibility of establishing Rosicrucianism elsewhere than in the New World.

The second movement to arise from the Theosophical Society was that of the Order of the Temple of the Rosy Cross. This movement appeared during the confused period following the death of Colonel Olcott. It was established in 1912 by Annie Besant, who had succeeded him as the head of the Theosophical Society. This order

did not survive World War I. Marie Russak, one of its founders, joined the Rosicrucian Order, AMORC, after becoming acquainted with Harvey Spencer Lewis in 1916.

The third movement born in the wake of the Theosophical Society was created in 1913 by Rudolf Steiner (1861-1925). Like Annie Besant, the Secretary General of the German section of the Theosophical Society was quite interested in Rosicrucianism, the subject of many of his lectures between 1904 and 1913. After his break with Annie Besant caused by the controversy swirling around Krishnamurti, he created in 1913 the Anthroposophical Society, which he regarded as a continuation, a modern metamorphosis of the Rosicrucians. Two groups came from this movement: The Rosicrucian Fellowship of Max Heindel and the Lectorium Rosicrucianum of Jan van Rijckenborg.⁹



FIGURE 62. Franz Hartmann.

THE H.B. OF L.

Certain authors point out that Helena Petrovna Blavatsky and Henry Steel Olcott had founded the Theosophical Society following their exclusion from a mysterious order—the H.B. of L., which is the abbreviation for the Hermetic Brotherhood of Luxor. According to legend, this fraternity had its origins in an order founded more than 6,000 years previously on “the lost island of the West” (Atlantis), with Thebes and Luxor being its centers of activities. This order was said to be the source of all the great initiatic movements, such as that of the Rosicrucians. Around 1870, the H.B. of L. formed an outer circle to combat the dangers of scientism rampant in the West. This fraternity embarked upon the restoration of Western esotericism by giving it a scientific aspect. It also wanted to restrain the expansion of the Theosophical Society, which it accused of desiring to “pollute the Western spirit and to put it under the domination of Eastern thought.”¹⁰ As an example, this order was against reincarnation.

The outer circle of the Hermetic Fraternity of Luxor was founded by Louis-Maximilien Bimstein (1847-1927), a Pole who called himself Max Théon or Aia Aziz. He was a singular individual who possessed astonishing psychic faculties.¹¹ In 1870, he was living in England and selected a few members, notably Peter Davidson and Thomas H. Burgoyne. The former became the Grand Master of the H.B. of L.; Papus, who was a member of this order, considered

Peter Davidson as his “practical master.” In France it was F.-Ch. Barlet (Albert Faucheux, 1838-1921) who directed the order. It should be noted that most of the founding members of the Martinist Order were members of the H.B. of L., which for some time constituted a sort of inner circle of Martinism, a circle that was soon replaced by the Kabbalistic Order of the Rosy Cross. During 1885 and 1886, the H.B. of L. published a journal, the *Occult Magazine*. Thomas H. Burgoyne and Peter Davidson wrote for it using as pseudonyms Zanoni and Mejnour, the two Rosicrucians in *Zanoni*. Likewise, F.-Ch. Barlet used the surname of Glyndon, another character from this novel, when signing his articles in the magazine called the *Anti-Matérialiste*. The H.B. of L. was barely active from 1870 to 1886, and although it never included more than a handful of members, it exerted considerable influence. Beginning in 1886, Max Théon took no further interest in the H.B. of L. and left London for Tlemcen, Algeria. This order then became inactive and Max Théon tried to establish the Cosmic Movement, a group that remained marginal. It was while in Tlemcen that Max Théon received, between 1904 and 1906, two individuals with whom he was later associated, Sri Aurobindo and Mirra Alfassa (“The Mother,” 1878-1973).¹² Moreover, Max Théon’s ideals would wield a particular influence on Sri Aurobindo.

PSYCHIC RESEARCHES

During this period Spiritualism continued to expand in Europe. Around 1870, the “psychists” emerged from the spiritualist

movement. Indeed, experiments involving somnambulism led many researchers to ponder the supranormal faculties of humans. From 1875 the intellectual elite of Trinity College of Cambridge — including the professor of philosophy Henry Sidgwick—undertook the scientific study of spiritualistic phenomena. Afterwards, in 1882, there arose in London the Society for Psychical Research, under the leadership of the physicist Sir William Fletcher Barrett (1844-1925), the philosopher Henry Sidgwick (1838-1900), and the psychologist Frederic William Henry Myers (1843-1901).¹³ Scientific experiments were undertaken for studying the psychic faculties of mediums.

It was also in 1882 that the Society for Psychical Research coined the word “telepathy.” Helena Blavatsky, as was true of all the great mediums of the era, participated in these experiments during her stays in London. The English researches had international repercussions and contributed to the creation of many other circles, such as the American Society for Psychical Research in Boston in 1884, with the great American psychologist William James (1842-1910). In France, these researches, begun by Colonel Albert d’Aiglun de Rochas, were placed under the direction of Dr. Charles Richet (1850-1935), who won the Nobel prize for physiology in 1913. They were described as “metapsychic” and led to the establishment of the Institut Métapsychique International (International Metapsychic Institute) in 1919.

The entire 19th century witnessed an increase in the number of publications —both in the form of magazines and books— concerning magnetism, spiritualism, and spiritualistic powers.¹⁴ In

1887, Hector Durville revived, the *Journal du Magnétisme et du psychisme expérimental*, which had been founded and published by the Baron Du Potet from 1845 to 1861. This magazine was issued by the Société Magnétique de France. Included among the founding members of this society there were included, apart from various physicians, Helena Petrovna Blavatsky and Stanislas de Guaita. Present among the honorary members were Colonel de Rochas, William Crookes, Papus, François Jollivet-Castelot, Alfred Percy Sinnett, and Joséphin Péladan. Due to the work of Hector Durville and his sons Gaston and Henri, magnetism experienced a considerable revival.

Many scientists all around the world participated in researches on the psyche. Included among them were the chemist Dmitri Ivanovich Mendeleev; the chemists Pierre and Marie Curie; Alfred Russel Wallace, co-inventor of the theory of evolution; the celebrated physician and chemist William Crookes; the astronomer Camille Flammarion; the criminologist Cesare Lombroso; the author Victor Hugo; along with many others. In 1897, during a meeting of the Society of Psychic Research in London, William Crookes delivered an important address on magnetism and the vibratory frequencies associated with sound, electricity, and x-rays. He then proposed a table of vibrations that was popularized by Hector Durville and which would later inspire H. Spencer Lewis.¹⁵

The magic of the Renaissance had revealed the subtle energies uniting the various planes of Creation and proposed certain methods suitable for making use of these correspondences. Around

the middle of the 18th century, these methods were overthrown by magnetism, which scientifically demonstrated the existence of such energies. As was noted by Charles Fauvety (1813-1894) in *Le Regne de l'Esprit pur*, “Spiritualism, in becoming experimental with the manifestation of so-called spirits, plainly fulfilled the method of the natural sciences.” It could then be shown that humans possess faculties that would place them in contact with the invisible world. This movement gave birth to groups of a new type, spiritualists and associations of magnetizers. Scientists themselves questioned the perspectives opened by the psychic sciences. As we have seen, in this era the Rose Tree of the tradition grew new branches. Admittedly, not all these branches yielded fruit and certain roses lasted only one morning. Nonetheless, new flowers were to be born in the Rose Garden of the Magi.

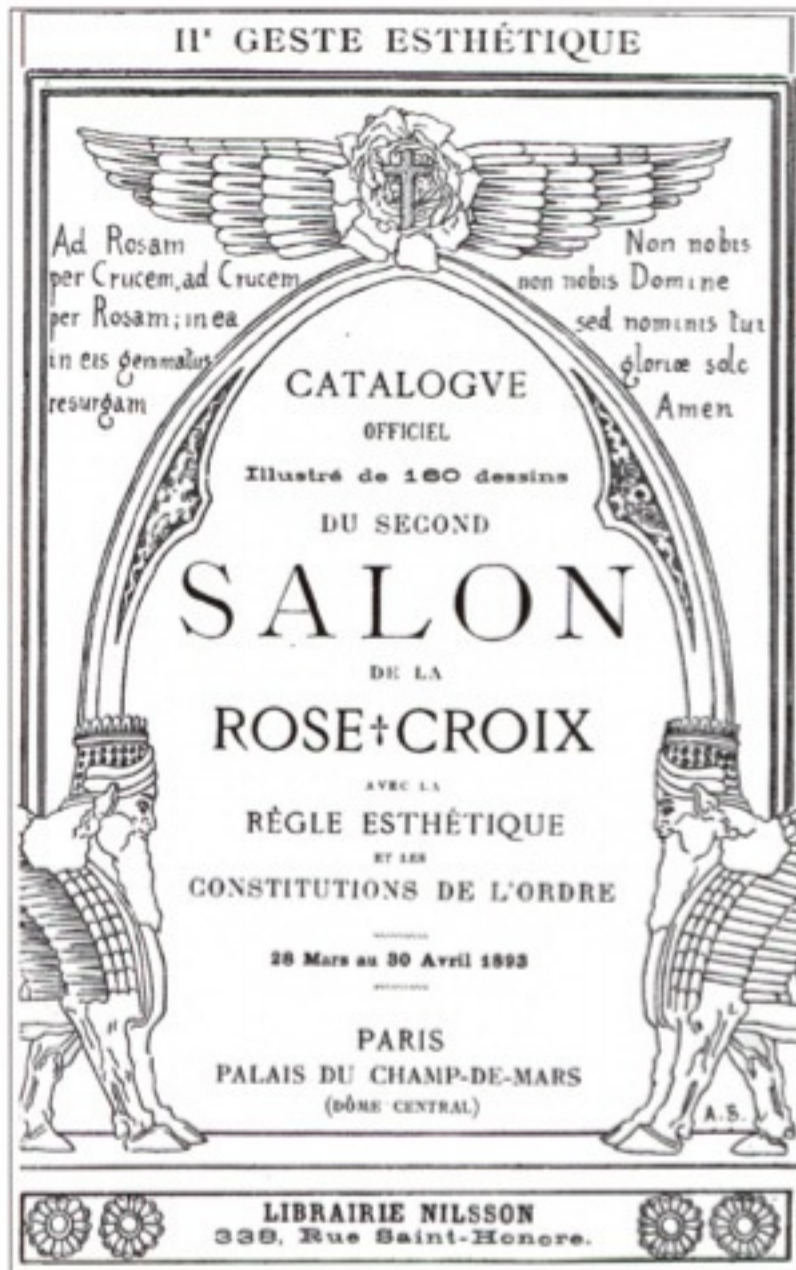


FIGURE 63. Cover of the official catalogue of the Rosicrucian Salon, 1893.

Chapter 14

THE ROSE GARDEN OF THE MAGI

THE LAST HALF of the 19th century and the first half of the 20th century witnessed a flowering of Rosicrucian orders. Generally, these movements had nothing in common with what we know of the Rosicrucians of the past, but each of them tried, with varying degrees of success, to place itself under their auspices. After having discussed the creation of some of these groups in the last chapter, we will now continue our investigations by entering into the “rose garden of the magi.”

MONTE VERITÀ

In the 19th century, Europe was shaken by the arrival of industrialization, as it radically changed the existing social structure. This crisis was particularly felt in Germany, where signs of rejecting the industrial world appeared by the 1870s. One response to the urbanization engendered by the reorganizing of labor came in the form of Naturism. Its followers advocated fleeing the polluted cities and creating communities and garden cities so that people could live in harmony with nature. Those who shared this point of view soon clustered around the *Lebensreform* (Life Reform) movement begun in

1892. Contrary to the 17th-century Rosicrucian manifestos and the literary utopias that followed thereafter, the Life Reform movement regarded scientific progress as a menace. This group included followers of vegetarianism, naturism, spiritualism, natural medicine, hygienism, the Theosophical Society, as well as artists.¹

As part of this movement, Alfredo Pioda, a Swiss theosophist, tried to establish in 1889 a lay convent. His group took the name of *Fraternitas* and resided on Monte Verità (“Mountain of Truth”), near Ascona, a town in the canton of Ticino, Switzerland. Franz Hartmann and the Countess Constance Wachtmeister, close associates of Helena Petrovna Blavatsky, participated in this ephemeral project. It was undoubtedly this experience which inspired Franz Hartmann to write “A Rosicrucian Institution in Switzerland” (see Chapter 13). From the ashes of the *Fraternitas* arose a community with a similar purpose named Monte Verità, founded in 1900 by Henri Oedenkoven and Ida Hofmann.² Many prominent individuals visited Monte Verità. These included the writer Hermann Hesse; the future philosopher Martin Buber; the politician Gustav Landauer; Émile Jacques-Dalcroze, the inventor of eurhythmics; and Rudolf von Laban, a choreographer and theoretician of dance

THE TEMPLARS OF THE ORIENT

Following closely in the footsteps of Monte Verità there arose Verita Mystica, a lodge of the Ordo Templi Orientis (O.T.O.; or Order of the Templars of the Orient). This order, created around

1893, was then led by Theodor Reuss, the director of the German branch of the S.R.I.A. (Societas Rosicrueiana in Anglia) from 1902. In a letter to H. Spencer Lewis, he later claimed that he had accepted an official position in that order so as to please William Wynn Westcott, but Reuss realized afterwards that Wynn Westcott's real motive was to obtain the German and Austrian Rosicrucian documents that Reuss had in his possession.³ Indeed, the O.T.O. claimed that it was continuing the work of past Rosicrucians. Theodor Reuss presented his organization as a kind of Masonic academy whose real function was to conceal a secret Rosicrucian order descending directly from "original and authentic" Rosicrucians.⁴ He also claimed that the secret headquarters of this order were in Reuss, a principality located near Leipzig, in the Thuringian forests. He stated that he was initiated into this order by Carl Kellner in July 1893.

In fact, as indicated by Gastone Ventura, Carl Kellner had founded the O.T.O., with the help of Franz Hartmann and Heinrich Klein, after returning from a trip to the Orient. Kellner was said to have been initiated into the ancient mysteries by the Arab monk Soliman ben Aifa and by the Hindu gurus Bhima Sena Pratapa and Sri Mahatma Agamy Paramahansa, practitioners of Tantric yoga.⁵ As can be seen, none of this involved Rosicrucianism. It was only after Kellner's death, around 1902, that Theodor Reuss was initiated into the O.T.O. However, his legitimacy was strongly contested, especially since his administration engaged in a veritable commerce in initiation certificates. In France the review *L'Acacia* revealed the

affair; however, Papus, like others, allowed themselves to be deluded for some time.⁶

Later, while World War I (1914-1918) raged, the O.T.O. appeared in a new light by organizing a pacifist congress at Monte Verità.⁷ Rudolf von Laban presented a ritualistic play, the “Song to the Sun,” done to Wagnerian choreography. As a member of the O.T.O. Rudolf von Laban was also the secretary of the Alliance Internationale de la Dames de la Rose-Croix, an auxiliary organization of the O.T.O. whose purpose was to work for the universal reconciliation of humanity, without any distinction as to race or religion. The Alliance advocated an altruistic economy based on sharing, and felt that art was the best means offered to humanity for healing the wounds inflicted by war—an idea dear to Joséphin Péladan. This utopian project did not seem to succeed, and eventually the O.T.O. was to experience a less glorious destiny. Aleister Crowley contributed to leading it towards some inadvisable magical practices that had nothing in common with Rosicrucianism or Freemasonry.

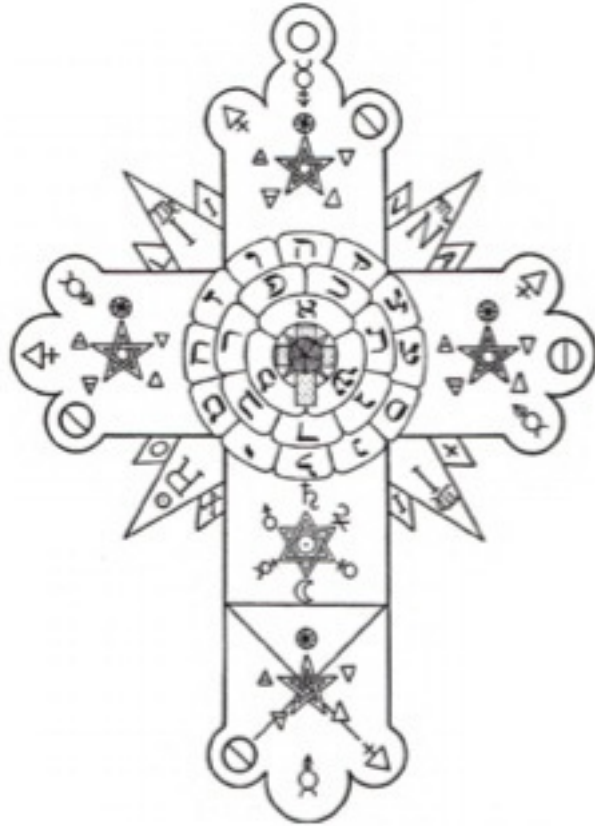


FIGURE 64. Symbol of the Ordo Rosae Rubeae et Aureae Crucis, inner. circle of the Golden Dawn. This drawing was created for Samuel Mathers around 1887-1888. It was composed from the cross shown in the Secret Symbols of the Rosicrucians of the 16th and 17th Centuries, “Mysterium Magnum Studium Universalis” (1785), to which were added some qabalistic elements relating to the symbology of the Golden Dawn. Israel Regardie provided a detailed study of this cross in *The Complete Golden Dawn System of Magic* (1984).

THE GOLDEN DAWN

In the last chapter we discussed the birth of the S.R.I.A. While the events we presented at the beginning of this chapter were playing out on the continent, the leaders of the S.R.I.A. were creating in England a new order called the Hermetic Order of the Golden Dawn, more commonly known as the Golden Dawn. In 1887, William Wynn Westcott collected manuscripts consisting of five

coded rituals. These texts, which had belonged to Ba'al Shem Tov and later to Éliphas Lévi, had been found at a second-hand bookstore in a copy of the *Secret Symbols of the Rosicrucians of the 16th and 17th Centuries*. The story goes that they included the address of Anna Sprengel, a representative of the Rosicrucian Order in Germany. After getting in contact with her, William Wynn Westcott, Samuel Liddell Mathers, and R. William Woodman founded the Isis-Urania Lodge in London, soon followed by the establishment of the Athathoor Lodge in Auteuil, France. Thus was born the Hermetic Order of the Golden Dawn, which Samuel Mathers (brother-in-law of the philosopher Henri Bergson), was to direct. As is true of most initiatic organizations, we are dealing here with a mythical account concerning its origins, because there is no evidence that Anna Sprengel ever existed, and the coded manuscripts were probably fabricated by Kenneth MacKenzie, a member of the S.R.I.A.

The Golden Dawn had some characteristics which seem quite unlike the Rosicrucianism of the 16th and 17th centuries. Indeed, its rituals involved theurgy and theories that borrowed extensively from magic and from the Christian Qabalists of the Renaissance. Many of these practices had been abandoned by earlier Rosicrucians in favor of a mysticism based on spiritual alchemy. It is probable that the rituals of the Golden Dawn were inspired in great part by the work *La Magie Sacrée ou livre d'Abramelin le mage*, which Mathers had often studied,⁸ as well as the texts of Cornelius Heinrich Agrippa, whose magic writings were used by Mathers in his own books. The order adopted an Egyptian-style symbology and placed considerable

emphasis upon the study of the tarot. The Golden Dawn reiterated the hierarchy of degrees used in the S.R.I.A. and it included an inner order, the *Ordo Roseae Rubeae et Aureae Crucis*.

Under the direction of its Imperator, Samuel Liddell Mathers (1854-1918), the Golden Dawn achieved immediate success and, between 1888 and 1900, became an important initiatic organization. Many Freemasons and Theosophists attended its lodges, which counted among its members such illustrious individuals as William Butler Yeats (Nobel prize in literature in 1923); Constance Lloyd Wilde, wife of Oscar Wilde; Gerard Kelly, president of the Royal Academy. However, the order experienced numerous schisms which gave rise to such rival organizations as the *Stella Matutina Temple*, with W.B. Yeats; *Alpha Omega*, afterwards *The Society of the Inner Light* with Violet Firth (alias Dion Fortune); and the *Fellowship of the Rosy Cross*, with Arthur Edward Waite. Nor should we overlook Aleister Crowley, the black magus who founded the *Astrum Argentinum*.



FIGURE 65. Joséphin Péladan.

JOSÉPHIN PÉLADAN

In France, during the period that the Golden Dawn came into being, Joséphin Péladan (1858-1918) published *Le Vice suprême* (1884), a novel in which he depicted contemporary morals. This atypical author played an important role in the evolution of 20th century Rosicrucianism.⁹ Anyone reading his books will note that he possessed a vast knowledge of the whole body of esoteric learning. This is especially apparent in his *Histoire de la magie de Pierre Christian* (1870), a voluminous work dedicated to the occult sciences.¹⁰ The protagonist of *Le Vice suprême* is the magus Mérodack, who is not an ordinary occultist, but rather an initiate who places his knowledge

in the service of an exalted ideal.

This book, which includes a eulogistic preface by Barbey d'Aurevilly, brought immediate success to the youthful author. Stanislas de Guaita (1861-1897) was one of its most attentive readers. In the month of November, he sent a letter to Joséphin Péladan expressing his admiration, and afterwards the two men met and became friends. As their correspondence attests, Stanislas de Guaita was a neophyte in the subject of esotericism. In one of his letters, he emphasized: "I shall not forget this: it is due to your book that I have taken up the study of Hermetic science."¹¹

THE ROSICRUCIANS OF TOULOUSE

Joséphin owed his knowledge to his brother Adrien Péladan (1844-1885), one of France's first homeopaths. Adrien was a disciple of Paul Lacuria (1806-1890), a churchman and Christian Hermeticist,¹² who in turn was a follower of Fabre d'Olivet. Adrien Péladan is thought to have been initiated into the Rosicrucian Order in 1878 by Firmin Boissin (1835-1893). Joséphin Péladan described Firmin Boissin as a "member of the last branch of the order, that of Toulouse" and was made the "commander of the Rose-Croix of the Temple, prior of Toulouse, and dean of the Council of Fourteen."¹³ To this Toulouse branch of the Rose-Croix also belonged the Viscount Edouard de Lapasse (1792-1867), a former diplomat and alchemical doctor of Toulouse.¹⁴ Indeed, in 1860, the viscount spoke of the "Rose-Croix, a secret society of which there remain in our time some adepts."¹⁵ Although he did not describe himself as being a

member of this order, Firmin Boissin indicated that he passed, rightly or wrongly, for “the last member of this celebrated fraternity,” and he indicated that he “never neglected the occasion to promote the good name of the Rosicrucians.”¹⁶

The viscount loved to take part in social gatherings at the home of the Countess d’Albanés. There, in the company of Charles Nodier, Pierre Ballanche, Dr. Koreff, the Count d’Ourches, and the son of Cazotte, he would talk about magnetism, alchemy, the Qabalah, and Martinism. At a gathering in December 1839 the viscount showed to the onlookers a flask of rock crystal filled with “the divine Essence of the Rose-Croix” —a liquid composed partly from dew that was obtained from a hermit, Prince Balbiani, on the outskirts of Palermo. It was during a sojourn in Italy, between 1825 and 1831, that Lapasse met this individual, who was thought to be a Rosicrucian. The prince, who claimed to have met Cagliostro, directed the first steps of the viscount into the practice of alchemy.¹⁷ Finally, it should be added that the viscount was well acquainted with Alexandre Du Mège, founder of the Friends of the Desert, an Egyptian rite.¹⁸ Moreover, he succeeded Du Mège in directing the Société Archéologique du Midi. Like Alexandre Du Mège and Firmin Boissin, the viscount was a member of the ancient literary society called the Academie des Jeux Floraux (Academy of Floral Games).

What exactly was the Rose-Croix of Toulouse? Had the viscount founded a Rosicrucian order? In reading what Viscount Lapasse, Firmin Boissin, or Joséphin Péladan state, it appears that the Rose-

Croix of Toulouse did not constitute a well-structured order, but around 1860 it brought together a small circle of adepts that included Firmin Boissin, the initiator of Adrien Péladan. It is also known that its members defended themselves from being confused with Freemasonry, toward which they manifested an open hostility.



FIGURE 66. Symbol of the Kabbalistic Order of the Rose-Croix.

THE KABBALISTIC ORDER OF THE ROSE-CROIX

While Joséphin was savoring the success of his first novel, his brother Adrien died on September 29, 1885, poisoned by a medicine improperly measured by his pharmacist. An article announcing his death, in the newspaper *Le Messager de Toulouse*, described him as a Rosicrucian. The text was signed “a Catholic R+C.” The person behind this mysterious signature was Firmin Boissin, the editor in chief of this journal. Let us add that the latter knew the photographer Clovis Lassalle, whom he met through the printer Paul Édouard Privat. In turn, H. Spencer Lewis was to meet Clovis Lassalle many years later in Toulouse.

During this period, the friendship between Joséphin Péladan and

Stanislas de Guaita took shape, and upon Péladan's advice, the latter got in touch with Firmin Boissin. On August 12, 1886, Stanislas de Guaita informed Joséphin that he had received a long and learned letter from his friend "Bois+sin." The way in which he wrote this name, with a cross in its center, was strange, and it is interesting to note that after this correspondence Stanislas de Guaita signed his letters with the expression "R +C" and called Joséphin Péladan "my dear Frater."¹⁹ Can it be concluded that he had been received into the order by Firmin Boissin? Events seem to have come to a head at this time. Many occultists then living in Paris were members of the Theosophical Society, but they remained disappointed by its excessively Eastern teachings. Included among them was Gérard Encausse (1865-1916), better known as Papus. As a student of medicine he had the opportunity to work with Dr. Jules Luys, who had done some research in hypnosis at La Charité Hospital in Paris. It was there that he met Augustin Chaboseau (1868-1946), with whom he soon reorganized the Martinist Order. In 1888, after the death of its president, Louis Dramart, the French division of the Theosophical Society fragmented. Papus seized the opportunity to launch the revival of Western occultism. He published his *Traité élémentaire de science occulte* (Elementary Treatise on Occultism; 1888), a book with which he wanted to restore Western esotericism and put occultism on an equal footing with subjects taught in the universities.

Afterwards, in September 1889, Pierre-Gaëtan Leymarie (1817-1901), who had directed the spiritist movement since the death of

Allan Kardec, organized an international spiritist and spiritualistic congress in which Papus, F.-Ch. Barlet, Augustin Chaboseau and Chamuel participated. This important event allowed occultists to free themselves from the Theosophical movement, especially as the journal *L'Initiation*, launched by Papus and his friends in October 1888, began to experience some success. Seeking to place itself under the auspices of a secular tradition, the occultists attempted to make Rosicrucianism and Martinism the pillars of a new temple that they wished to erect. Joséphin Péladan and Stanislas de Guaita were associated with this project, and at the time when the Rose-Croix was ebbing away in Toulouse, they made the decision to restore it. “The ancient order of the Rose-Croix being on the point of going dormant, three years ago [the author wrote in 1890], when two direct heirs of its august traditions resolved to restore it by consolidating it on new foundations . . . and now life cycles throughout the mystical body of the rejuvenated colossus.”²⁰

Thus, moving from Toulouse to Paris (1887-1888), the restored Rose-Croix became the Kabbalistic Order of the Rose-Croix. This order was directed by a supreme council of twelve members, of whom six remained unknown, their role consisting of rebuilding the organization if it were to be dissolved for any reason whatsoever. Among those who were members of the “Council of Twelve” at one time or another were Stanislas de Guaita, Joséphin Péladan, Papus, A. Gabrol, Henry Thorion, F.-Ch. Barlet, Augustin Chaboseau, Victor-Émile Michelet, Sédir, and Marc Haven. The order was structured around a hierarchy of three degrees acquired by

examination (bachelor of Qabalah, master of Qabalah, doctor of Qabalah), and entry into the order was reserved to Martinists having achieved the S.I. degree.



FIGURE 67. The Kabbalistic Order of the Rose-Croix. Seated in front, from left to right, are Papus, Joséphin Péladan, and Stanislas de Guaita.

THE ROSE-CROIX OF THE TEMPLE AND THE GRAIL

Thanks to the journal *L'Initiation*, the order became well known, and before long a troop of eager occultists came knocking at the temple door. Stanislas de Guaita, who lived like a hermit in his first floor apartment on Trudaine Avenue, allowed Papus to organize matters. But the capricious personality of an artist such as Joséphin Péladan was hardly suited for associating with such a strongwilled organizer as Papus. The latter wanted to open up the order and broaden it. In contrast, Joséphin Péladan wanted to reserve access to carefully selected initiates and was not at all in accord with the

Masonic aspect that Papus wanted to impose upon the order. The positions of these two men were reconciled only with difficulty, especially as Joséphin Péladan reproached Papus for his taste in occultism and magic. Along with Abbé Alta, one of the eminent members of the Kabbalistic Order of the Rose-Croix, Joséphin reproached Papus for confusing occultism and esotericism. On February 17, 1891, Péladan wrote a letter to Papus, published in the April issue of the journal *L'Initiation*, that severed their relationship.

Heir to a tradition that he felt was on the verge of losing its mission, Péladan decided to work along different lines and thus founded in May 1891 the Order of the Rose-Croix du Temple et du Graal (also called the Order of the Rose-Croix Catholique du Temple et du Graal), which he had already outlined in *Le Vice suprême*, his first novel, in 1884. In June 1891, he designated himself as the Grand Master of this new order, using the name of Sâr Mérodack Péladan. This event was given considerable space in many articles of *Le Figaro*, and this great publicity profoundly irritated Papus and his friends who denounced Péladan's split.

THE MAGIC OF ART

Joséphin Péladan dreamed of a Rose-Croix “unsullied by Masonic filth, purified of all heresy, and blessed by the pope.” He wanted to “carry to Notre-Dame, in the steps of our lord Jesus, the homage of the Temple and the genuflection of the Rose-Croix,”²¹ because the order so founded could unite the Rosicrucian and Templar traditions. For example, he composed a motto, “Ad rosam per

crucem, ad crucem per rosam, in ea, in eis gemmatus resurgam,” to which he added that which the Templar had been already using, “Non nobis, Domine, non nobis, sed nomini tuo gloriae solae,” a text taken from Psalm 115 (113B).²²

Although it was established under the triple banner of the Rose-Croix, Templars, and Grail, the order founded by Joséphin Péladan was not a true initiatic society. It primarily took the form of a lay brotherhood bringing artists together. Its founder defined it as “a confraternity of intellectual charity, dedicated to the accomplishment of works of mercy according to the Holy Spirit, whose Glory it strives to augment so as to prepare the Kingdom.”²³ He wanted to establish a “universal confraternity of the intelligentsia.” His goal was to restore the cult of the ideal, with tradition for abase and beauty as a means. Indeed, for Joséphin Péladan, beauty expressed by works of art could lead humanity towards God. For him, art was thus a divine mission, and perfect work is that which is capable of elevating the soul. In an era which he considered to be decidedly in decline, he was convinced that the magic of art was the best means of saving the West from imminent disaster.

SYMBOLISM

Joséphin Péladan’s program followed in the wake of the Pre-Raphaelite and Symbolist movements. The former were members of the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood, an artistic movement born in England in 1848 as a reaction to the poverty of conventional Victorian painting. It was also opposed to an era obsessed with

efficiency and industrialization, and worked in favor of the renewal of the arts and crafts. The Pre-Raphaelite movement's founders—Dante Gabriel Rossetti, William Holman Hunt, and John Everett Millais, later joined Edward Burne-Jones and William Morris—idealized the Middle Ages and the traditional painting done prior to the 16th century artist Raphael. Hence their name: Pre-Raphaelites. They especially admired the works of the Renaissance painter Fra Angelico and the Italian primitives. This English movement was preceded by the Brothers of St. Luke, commonly known as the “Nazarenes,” founded by expatriate German and Austrian painters in 1809 in an abandoned monastery in Rome. The Pre-Raphaelites created the Neo-Gothic style, called the Gothic Revival in England. John Ruskin (1819-1900), writer, painter, professor, and art critic, was their mentor.

It may be said that Joséphin Péladan, as a writer and art critic, saw himself in the role of the “Ruskin” of French Symbolists, an artistic movement similar to what the English artists had organized. It was Jean Moréas who, in a proclamation published on September 15, 1886, in *Le Figaro's* literary supplement, formalized a movement that had already existed for about fifteen years. Its members—poets, writers, musicians, and painters—reacted against the excesses of Romanticism and Naturalism. They preferred the metaphorical, the symbolic, over the descriptive. They thought along the lines of Charles Baudelaire, who, in discovering the theory of correspondences conceived by Emanuel Swedenborg (1688-1772), adopted the latter's rules in his poetry. The Symbolists likewise

loved to play with the secret harmonies of a world where “perfumes, colors, and sounds correspond.”²⁴

Mysticism and esotericism were not absent in Symbolist preoccupations. Guy Michaud saw in occultism “the motor nerve and the key of the Symbolist movement.” As examples, we can only cite here a few works characteristic of this tendency that were written by Villiers de l’Isle-Adam (1838-1889). Rémy de Gourmont described him as “the exorcist of the real and the gatekeeper of the ideal” (*Le Livre des masques*). Villiers de l’Isle-Adam constructed his novel *Claire Lenoire* (1887) around the theories of the astral body, spiritism, magnetism, and hypnosis. In *L’Annonciateur* (1888) and *Vera* (1874), he borrowed from *Dogme et ritual de la haute magie* the vocabulary of *Éliphas Lévi*. His masterpiece, *Axël* (1872-1886), a novel depicting the Rosicrucians, was strongly influenced by Rosicrucian philosophy, discovered by its author in Zanon. Furthermore, he drew upon Edward Bulwer Lytton’s novel to write *Isis* (1860).²⁵ Villiers de l’Isle-Adam was a close friend of Augustin Chaboseau; he also knew Victor-Émile Michelet, Joséphin Péladan, and Papus, all eminent members of the Martinist Order and of the Kabbalistic Order of the Rose-Croix. Even though he simplified the subject of occultism, he aroused the curiosity of a whole generation in esotericism.

However, more than the writers, it is the Symbolist painters who are of concern to us. These painters, such as Gustave Moreau, Ferdinand Hodler, Pierre Puvis de Chavannes, Odilon Redon, and Paul Gauguin, were opposed to academic realism. Many of them

displayed their paintings in private salons, on the fringes of official shows. Joséphin Péladan wanted to make them mystics of art. He wanted to destroy realism and reform the Latin taste by creating an idealistic art movement. With this goal in mind, he established the Rosicrucian Salons, a series of exhibitions that marked the most important years of the Symbolist movement.

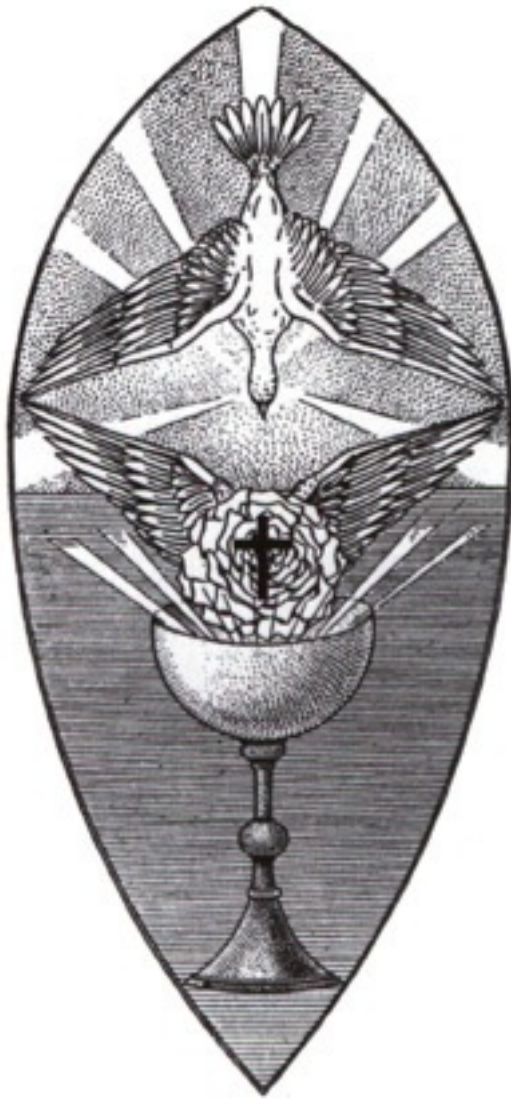


FIGURE 68. Seal of the Grail, drawing by François Merintier for the Rosicrucian Salon of 1893. Joséphin Péladan described it thus: “A communion cup from which shoots forth flashing rays; from the heart of the cup springs a winged rose, in the

center of which rests the mystical cross. The dove of the Holy Spirit surmounts it all, invigorating the holy cup with its seven rays.” The O.T.O. later appropriated this drawing to illustrate its constitution of 1906. Subsequently, around 1920, Theodor Reuss modified this design by adding a Masonic delta above the dove.

THE MAGNIFICENTS

Artists who wanted to participate in the Salons did not need to belong to the Order of the Rose-Croix du Temple et du Graal. The only condition for their participation was that their works had to adhere to a hard-and-fast rule that banned certain representations: military or historical scenes, domestic animals, and “occupations and other exercises that painters as a rule have the insolence to reveal.”²⁶ The master of the Rosicrucian Salons was partial toward mystical or inspirational religious works, decorative allegories, and sublime nudity. The selection was carried out by a jury whose members bore the title of “Magnificent.” It was composed of various personalities, the most well known being: the Count Antoine de la Rochefoucault, who was the financier of the Salons and later the patron of the Nabis; the Count de Larmandie, who was a long-term secretary of the Société des Gens de Lettres en France; Élémir Bourges, a member of the Goncourt Academy and author of certain books, such as *La Nef*, that were influenced by Joséphin Péladan’s ideas; Saint-Pol Roux, justly called “the Magnificent,” a writer proclaimed by the Surrealists as one of the masters of modern art; and Gary de Lacroze.

THE ROSICRUCIAN SALONS

The activity of the Order of the Rose-Croix du Temple et du Graal was thus entirely dedicated to the organization of shows and soirées dedicated to the fine arts. The first Rosicrucian Salon was held in 1892, from March 10 to April 10, at the famous Parisian gallery of Durant-Ruel.²⁷ The Salon was inaugurated with a ceremony, featuring music specially composed by Érik Satie, the order's official composer.²⁸ This was *Les Sonneries de la Rose-Croix*, a work written for harps and trumpets, that was made up of the “air of the Order,” the “air of the Grand Master,” and “air of the Grand Prior.” The score of the work was published with a cover decorated with a chalk drawing by Puvis de Chavannes, one of the greatest Symbolist painters. The days were rounded out with Rosicrucian soirées, dedicated to the theatre and music. A piece by Sâr Péladan, *Le Fils des étoiles*, for which Érik Satie composed three preludes for harps and flutes, was presented on the evening of Thursday, March 17, 1892. In addition to these performances, Sâr Péladan also gave lectures on art and mysticism, and the works of Vincent d'Indy, César Franck, Richard Wagner, Palestrina, Érik Satie, and Benedictus were played. Rémy de Gourmont, in his column for the *Mercur de France*, called the first Rosicrucian Salon “the great artistic show of the year.” The number of attendees was so large that the police had to be called in to control crowds that obstructed traffic in the street. By the time the doors closed, more than 22,000 visitors had been counted. The event's astounding success and the presence of foreign artists had repercussions all around the world. It can be said that the Rosicrucian Salons constituted one of the most important episodes of Symbolism.

Among the 193 artists who were represented at the Salons, let us mention the following: Edmond Aman-Jean, Émile Bernard, Antoine Bourdelle, Eugène Delacroix, Jean Delville, Charles Filiger, Georges de Feure, Eugène Grasset, Ferdinand Hodler, Fernand Khnopff, Henri Martin, Edgard Maxence, George Minne, Alphonse Osbert, Gaetano Previati, Félicien Rops, Georges Rouault, Carlos Schwabe, Alexandre Seon, and Jan Toorop.

There was a total of six Rosicrucian Salons. Each was placed under the auspices of a Chaldean god: Shamash (the Sun) for the first, Nergal (Mars) for the second, Marduk or Merodach (Jupiter) for the third, Nebo (Mercury) for the fourth, Ishtar (Venus) for the fifth, and Sin (the Moon) for the sixth. This last Salon was held in the prestigious Georges-Petit Gallery in 1897. in the presence of a flood of requests, a special preview was organized for 191 art critics and reporters. On the following day 12,000 visitors filed into this temple of art.²⁹ After this Salon, Péladan declared his order to be dormant: “I am laying down my arms. The artistic expression I have defended is now accepted everywhere, and why should one recall the guide who has shown the ford after the flood has passed?” However, the absence of some of the great Symbolist painters affected the overall success of this Salon. This was notably the case with Puvis de Chavannes, a painter whom Péladan valued most, and who had withdrawn at the last moment. This was also true of Burne-Jones and Gustave Moreau, who were both unwilling to go up against the artistic establishment, but urged their students to participate in the Salon.

Sâr Mérodack Péladandid his utmost to convince the public. However, it was said that his eccentricities —his beard and hair were cut in the Assyrian style and he wore violet-colored velvet clothing, a gold braided vest, camel-hair burnous, and boots of soft deerskin —were meant to shock. These strange clothing habits, which he made into a science that he called *kaloprosopie*,³⁰ drew the attention of countless journalists who never failed to draw a caricature of this unusual individual. By the end of the century, many other artists enjoyed wearing extravagant clothing as a sign of their rejection of bourgeois society. Until his death in 1918, Péladan continued his literary activity, which included about ninety volumes comprising novels, plays, and studies on art or esotericism.

THE CONFRATERNITY OF THE ROSE WINDOW

Péladan entrusted Jean Delville with pursuing his esthetic work in Belgium, and the Salon of Idealist Art in Brussels was in many ways a continuation of the Rosicrucian Salons. The Symbolists were quite active in Belgium, and Péladan often went there to give lectures. The artistic circle called *Pour l'Art*, spearheaded by Jean Delville, was in direct contact with both the Sâr and the literary movement of Raymond Nyst, who was his consul in Brussels.³¹ In France, the *Revue des entretiens idéalistes*, founded in 1906 by Paul Vulliaud, an admirer of Joséphin Péladan, tried to continue the Salons by mounting the exposition of Idealist Painters and Sculptors in 1907. From this short-lived attempt there arose the *Confrérie de la Rosace*

(Confraternity of the Rose Window), founded in March 1908 by Frère Angel, who worked in the same spirit as the Rose-Croix du Temple, but with very modest means. Péladan took no interest in this group, which included barely more than four followers. The Confraternity organized its first exposition in May 1909, a second in May 1911, and a third in October 1912, and then ceased to exist.

COUNT FALKENSTEIN

Joséphin Péladan was deeply scorned by Papus' followers, as the success of the Order of the Rose-Croix du Temple dealt a severe blow to the Kabbalistic Order of the Rose-Croix. During this time, the Kabbalistic Order of the Rose-Croix continued its activities to some extent. However, the order did not possess solid roots, and the occultist aspect provided by Papus moved it farther away from its original Rosicrucian spirit. Undoubtedly for this reason it ossified rapidly. As Victor-Émile Michelet, one of its first members, noted, the order "did not have a broad range and went dormant even before the premature death of its organizer."³² Indeed, in the same year in which the Rosicrucian Salons closed their doors, the Kabbalistic Order of the Rose-Croix lost its Grand Master, when, on December 19, 1897, Stanislas de Guaita died prematurely. F.-Ch. Barlet (Albert Faucheux) was elected as his successor. After trying to make peace with Péladan, Barlet allowed the Kabbalistic Order to become so inactive that it died out soon afterwards. It seems that the new Grand Master of the Kabbalistic Order of the Rose-Croix even had questions regarding the origins of Rosicrucianism. In July

1898 he published in the *L'Initiation* a translation of the *History of the Rosicrucian Order*, a work by Karl Kiesewetter. The latter claimed that the order existed long before the publication of the manifestos (1614-1615). He recounted its history through the lives of some of its leaders, such as Count Falkenstein, who was supposedly its imperator in 1374, and Johann Karl Friesen, imperator in 1468. Such events are pure legend, as Karl Kiesewetter relied on sources that lacked historical merit. He based his assertions on a manuscript that was only a late 18th-century copy, and the references he indicated, such as the text of volume IV of *Theatrum Chemicum*, did not contain the quotations that he relied upon.³³

It is probable that by supporting this text, Papus and Barlet tried to differentiate themselves from the various contemporary Rosicrucian trends that used 17th-century Rosicrucianism as their authority—such as the S.R.I.A., Golden Dawn, and the Order of the Rose-Croix Catholique du Temple et du Graal—by placing themselves under an older authority. However, their project failed. F.-Ch. Barlet went off in other directions with the H.B. of L., while Papus increasingly distanced himself from occultism. The war of 1914-1918 put an end to the great period of occultists.

The rose garden of the magi did not succeed in producing sufficiently viable flowers. However, in an era when the evolution of science and industry overturned the social structure, each group played a significant role by stimulating the interest of seekers of esoteric knowledge. Even though the followers of the magi had often confused occultism, esotericism, and mysticism, their quest

contributed to perpetuating a heritage necessary for fostering people's questions regarding their origins and destiny. But the rose garden of Toulouse would soon produce a new branch. Indeed, during this period, a young American named Harvey Spencer Lewis came to meet the Rosicrucians in the rose-red city. From this journey there soon arose the Ancient and Mystical Order Rosae Crucis, which was to spread all over the world and become one of the major initiatic organizations of the modern era.

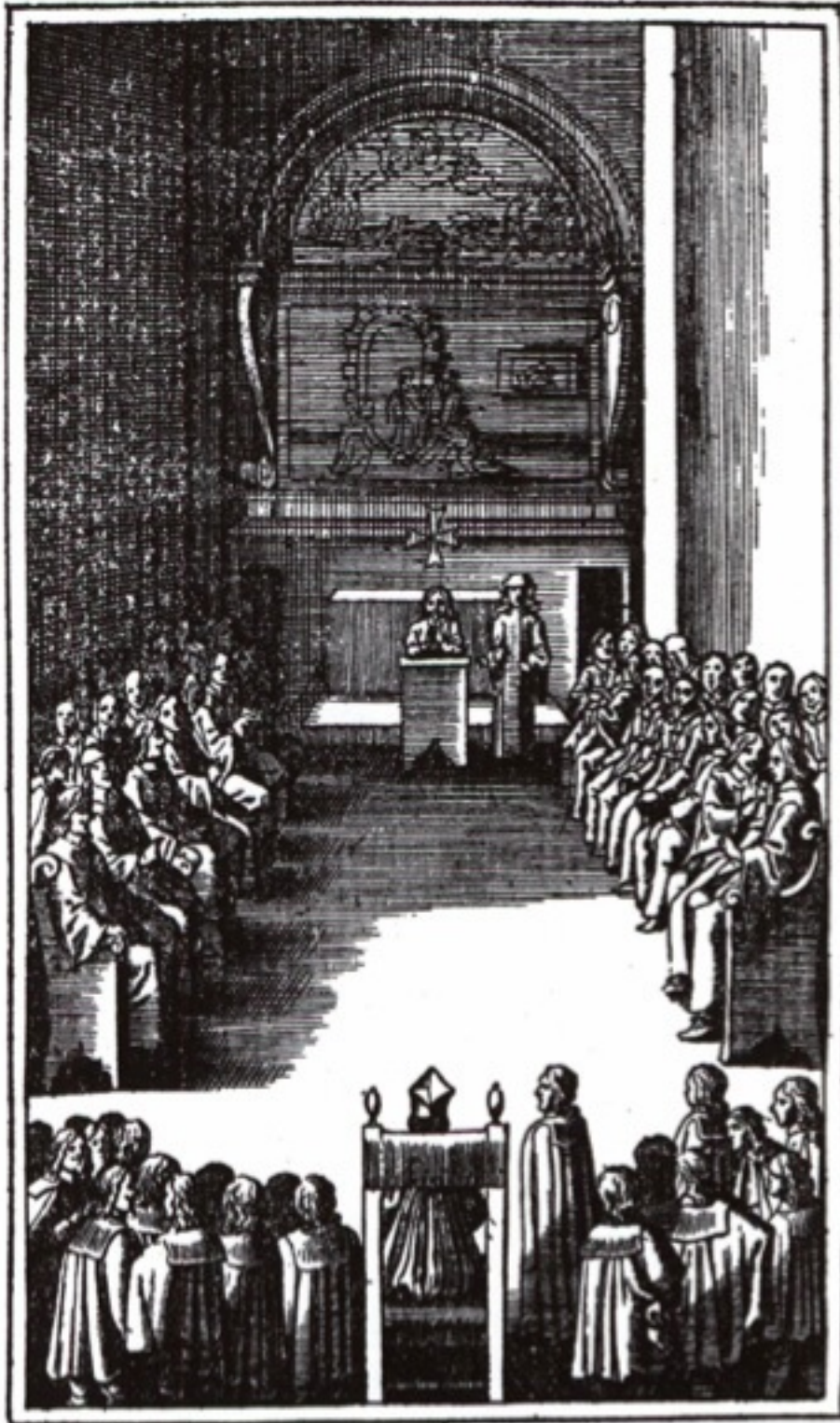


FIGURE 69. Pietist college, 17th century German engraving.

Chapter 15

THE FIRST “ROSIKRUCIANS” OF AMERICA

IN PREVIOUS CHAPTERS, we have attempted to show the relationship of Rosicrucianism to the general history of Western esotericism. After having described its genesis, from the 17th century until World War I, we will now focus on the Ancient and Mystical Order Rosae Crucis, more commonly known by the abbreviation A.M.O.R.C. This order, founded by H. Spencer Lewis (1883-1939) for the renewal and reactivation of the Rosicrucian tradition, constitutes one of the most important esoteric movements that has ever existed. Today it has lodges and grand lodges in most countries and includes nearly 250,000 members all around the world.

Our aim is not to present a detailed account of AMORC's history, as this would exceed the purpose of this volume, but rather to indicate the order's place in the history of esotericism by pointing out its origins and presenting some of the most important phases of its development. In doing so, we will draw upon information provided by H. Spencer Lewis in several works, the most well

known being “A Pilgrim’s Journey to the East,” written in 1916. However, since this account involves some elements that cannot be taken literally, we will study another version of this narrative, which, in many ways, constitutes the autobiography of H. Spencer Lewis. The latter presents the same history, but from a somewhat different, more “esoteric,” angle than the first work, which was written for the general public. It should be noted that this autobiography was never published in its entirety. We will also make use of articles published in various magazines of the Order, such as *The American Rosae Crucis*, *Cromaat*, *The Triangle*, *The Mystic Triangle*, and the *Rosicrucian Digest*,¹ which discuss the subject at hand. We will generally consider only their essential elements, leaving out those which emphasize the romantic rather than historical aspects. Moreover, we will use numerous documents found in the archives of the Supreme Grand Lodge of AMORC, because they will allow us to clarify in an interesting way the facts symbolically or vaguely reported in the texts that have been published until now.

First of all, it is important to emphasize that H. Spencer Lewis placed the Ancient and Mystical Order Rosae Crucis in the continuum of Rosicrucian activities previously implanted in North America at the end of the 17th century. Moreover, he did not speak of “creation” but of “awakening,” as he felt that he was starting the second cycle of Rosicrucianism in America. To support this position, Lewis based it on the researches that Julius Friedrich Sachse (1842-1919) set forth in two of his books: *The German Pietists of Provincial Pennsylvania 1694-1708*, published in 1895, and *The*

German Sectarians of Pennsylvania 1708-1742, dating from 1899. Sachse, a descendant of German Pietists, was the curator and librarian of the Masonic Temple of Philadelphia. In his books, he recounted the history of those emigrants who settled in America at the end of the 17th century. These settlers, first led by Johann Jacob Zimmermann, and then by Johannes Kelpius, accompanied the Pietists who wished to establish a colony in Pennsylvania. Sachse wrote the following:

. . . they were a company of Theosophical Enthusiasts—call them Pietists, Mystics, Chiliasts, Rosicrucians, Illuminati, Cathari, Puritans, or what you may—who in Europe had formed what was known according to their mystical dogmas as a “Chapter of Perfection,” and then came to the western world to put into execution the long-cherished plan of founding a true Theosophical (Rosicrucian) community; going out into the wilderness or desert, after the manner of the Essenes of old, as also did Moses, Elijah and other biblical characters, to perfect themselves in holiness, thus preparing themselves for the millennium which they believed to be approaching; or in case that their calculations should have misled them as to the ending of all things terrestrial, the community would prove a nucleus from which the individual members would be qualified to come forth among men again as holy men, to convert whole cities and to work signs and miracles.²

Thus, Julius Friedrich Sachse regarded these emigrants as being Rosicrucians. However, many authors have been critical of this

argument. One of them, Arthur E. Waite, felt that Sachse's researches were steeped in romanticism, and that the facts he provided could not allow such conclusions to be drawn. According to Waite, the fact that some of these Pietists had shown some interest in astrology, Qabalah, and the works of Jacob Boehme was not sufficient to call them Rosicrucians.³ Another author, Serge Hutin, argued that a relationship between these emigrants and the Rosicrucian movement could hardly be justified.⁴ To better understand such matters, we must consider their origins. It is a fact that Pietism was esoteric in nature and had some connection with Rosicrucianism. Let us add that Johannes Kelpius and Johann Jacob Zimmerman, both of whom were Pietists, had visited Tübingen, a city quite noted for the presence of Rosicrucians.



FIGURE 70. Rosicrucian documents photographed by Julius Friedrich Sachse for his book *The German Pietists of Provincial Pennsylvania 1694-1708*, published in 1895. In the middle may be seen two plates from the second part of the *Secret Symbols of the Rosicrucians of the 16th and 17th Centuries*, published in Altona in 1788.

PIETISM

Pietism, founded in Germany by the pastor Philipp Jacob Spener (1635-1705), grew out of the crisis that Lutheranism experienced in the 17th century.⁵ It offered a possible answer to the troubles faced by the Lutherans following the end of the Thirty Years' War (1618-1648).⁶ Spener, an advocate for the humanization of religion, emphasized personal religious experience and the inner life. He urged upon his contemporaries a *praxis pietatis*, an individual piety, a practice characteristic of sanctification and leading to a rebirth that marked inner regeneration. From 1670 he organized the *collegia pietatis*, schools of piety, within Lutheran parishes. The participants in these small groups studied the Bible and touched upon mysteries that usually could not be discussed in larger Christian gatherings. According to Antoine Faivre, there existed “some striking analogies between the structure of the initiatic societies and Pietism,” and “the *collegia pietatis* were truly, in one sense, the predecessors of the speculative lodges.”⁷ In Germany, this movement grew rapidly, and the colleges multiplied to the point of alarming the Lutheran authorities. Due to the dynamism of August Hermann Francke (1663-1727) who directed the faculty at the University of Halle, Pietism quickly expanded and communities were established in India and America.

Johann Arndt is generally considered to be the inspiration of this movement. Let us recall that this Lutheran theologian, physician, and alchemist was the spiritual father of Johann Valentin Andreae and the mentor of the Tübingen Circle,⁸ the group that was behind

the publication of the Rosicrucian manifestos. Both a mystic and alchemist, he attempted to integrate the Paracelsian heritage with medieval theology, and developed the idea of an inner alchemy, of a spiritual renaissance, a concept that Philipp Jacob Spener borrowed. Arndt wished to divert people from the polemics of theology and lead them back to a living faith and to a practice of piety. An advocate of *The Imitation of Christ* (1441), one of the fundamental works of the *Devotio Moderna*,⁹ he is best known for the *Vier Bücher vom wahren Christentum* (Four Books on True Christianity), written between 1605 and 1610.

This work is one of the most widely read Christian texts in the world, and Pietists consider it to be their second Bible. In 1675 Spener also published *Pia Desideria* (Pious Desires), the founding text of Pietism, as a preface to a later edition of this work. It is worth noting that Kelpius carried Arndt's works to America.

The ideas of Johann Valentin Andreae, the author of the *Chymical Wedding of Christian Rosenkreuz*, also exerted a certain influence over Pietism. As indicated by Roland Edighoffer, the *Societas Christiana*, the ideal society extolled by Andreae, announced “the vast and fruitful movement of Pietism”¹⁰ This movement was also the result of an exchange of ideas with English Protestants. The Germans were indeed influenced by the British Puritans, in search of a purified Christianity, one that came closer to that of the first disciples of Christ. In return, the Pietists exerted a certain influence upon English spirituality, especially upon the Methodism of John Wesley and George Whitefield.

BOEHMISM AND THE QABALAH

The founder of Pietism, Philipp Jacob Spener, was open to doctrines usually judged to be heretical.¹¹ Although not truly a Qabalist, he was the author of a poem on the sephiroth and looked favorably upon the doctrines of Jacob Boehme (1574-1624). Many Pietists were likewise enthusiastic about the Qabalah and the theories of Boehme, the theosophist from Görlitz. Included among the Pietists were some important individuals, such as Gottfried Arnold (1666-1714), who was one of Spener's protégés. He was a relative of Johann Georg Gichtel (1638-1710), the compiler and publisher of Jacob Boehme's writings in Amsterdam. Arnold was also associated with Pierre Poiret (1646-1719), a Boehmist and disciple of Madame Guyon, who exercised a certain influence over Pietism. Count Nikolaus Ludwig von Zinzendorf (1700-1760) and Friedrich Christoph Oetinger (1702-1782), two other eminent figures, were also strongly influenced by the thinking of the theosopher of Görlitz. Zinzendorf, who led a community gathering together nearly one thousand Pietists at his estate in Herrnhut, liked to use alchemical symbology. Like Jacob Boehme, he employed the expression of "tincture" to describe the regenerated blood of Christ. He came under the influence of the Qabalah and was strongly affected by the reformist ideas of John Amos Comenius. The second individual, Friedrich Christoph Oetinger, the father of Swabian Pietism, tried to wed Boehmist theosophy with the Qabalah. Lastly, we must not forget the Silesian pastor Christian Knorr von Rosenroth (1636-1689), a Boehmist and eminent

Qabalist, author of *Kabbala Denudata* (1677), the true bible of Christian Qabalah. Johannes Kelpius (1673-1708), undoubtedly during the period when he was a student at Tübingen University, had the opportunity to meet this Qabalist, whose doctrines could not have failed to influence him. When Kelpius left for America, he carried with him the works of Jacob Boehme.

MILLENNIALISM

Although Pietism cannot be considered a millennialist movement, this tendency could be found in many of its members. Generally, this attitude was the consequence of the crisis afflicting Germany during the 17th century, a religious crisis brought about not only by the Reformation, but also by an economic crisis engendered by disastrous climatic changes—what has been called the “Little Ice Age.” To these should be added epidemics that decimated the population. These events, which affected everyone’s daily life, led to a renewed interest in apocalyptic thinking and the theory of the three ages of the universe formulated by Joachim of Fiore.¹²

Although not a millennialist, Philip Jacob Spener could not help escaping its influence. In 1664 he defended the notion of the sixth angel of the Apocalypse, a concept strongly promoted by Johann Wilhelm Petersen. Petersen and his wife, Johanna Eleonor von Merlau, a person typical of this period, visited the Pietist groups of Württemberg where they proclaimed the end of the world and set forth the theory of the apocatastasis, the final universal regeneration.¹³ Johann Jacob Zimmermann (1642-1693) was

acquainted with this strange couple. This former student of Tübingen University, who was a theologian, mathematician, astronomer, and astrologer, also devoted himself to prophetic calculations. He thought that 1694 was the year of the Millennium—that is, the year of Christ’s return. To prepare for this event he decided to settle in a virgin land, in America. With Johannes Kelpius, another student from Tübingen, he gathered together a group of followers to make this great voyage.

The leader of Pietism in Württemberg, the philologist Johann Albrecht Bengel (1687-1752), regarded as the father of textual criticism of the Bible, also engaged in prophetic mathematics and wrote several treatises on the “ages of the world.”¹⁴ Like many Pietists, he revered Johann Arndt, whom he considered to be the angel the Revelations of St. John (14:6) spoke of—that is, the one who would announce the Last Judgment. It is also interesting to point out that in Württemberg, and more particularly in what is called the Rosicrucian movement, Arndt was often regarded as the incarnation of Elijah, the one who, according to prophecy, would appear before Christ’s return. Some even regarded him as the Elias Artista announced by Paracelsus.¹⁵

FIGURE 71. Johannes Kelpius, drawing by Christopher Witt, *The Original Canvass*.



Johannes Kelpius

THE PHILADELPHIAN SOCIETY AND ENGLISH MILLENNIALISM

Generally speaking, it was only at the end of the 17th century that Pietists no longer saw in their era the first hints of Christ's return, and they began to think that God had given humans a reprieve so that they could provide proof of their faith. Therefore, like the Quakers, they endeavored to establish communities in the world where they would live according to divine precepts. The Pietists of Halle financed their settlement in India and the North American colonies in Pennsylvania and Georgia.

Following the conflicts that led to the closure of the Pietist colleges in Erfurt in 1691, Zimmermann and Kelpius devised a plan of emigrating to America. Accompanied by a group of disciples, they left Germany in 1693. Their travels first took them to Rotterdam, where Zimmermann died. Kelpius then assumed leadership of the expedition, and Heinrich Bernhard Köster became his second in command, with Johannes Seelig, Daniel Falkner, Daniel Lütke, and Ludwig Biedermann being his assistants. Accompanied by thirty-four other brethren, they sailed for England. Arriving in London, the forty travelers made contact with the English Boehmists.¹⁶

The Boehmists professed an exalted chiliasm and an apocalyptic prophecy announcing the institution of a “New Church.” It should be noted that such theories were not related to Jacob Boehme’s philosophy, but showed the influence of concepts advocated by Joachim of Fiore, commonplace in England at that time. That is why Lodowicke Muggleton (1609-1698) preached the third spiritual dispensation and spoke of the “New Church ” that had come to replace that of St. Peter’s. For her part, Jane Lead (1623-1704), a disciple of Boehme who experienced Sophianic visions, stated in *The Wonders of God’s Creation* that “the Old Testament having been appropriate to the Ministration of the Father, the New to the Son, now the Third Day is come, in which the Holy Ghost will have His, which will excel all before it” In 1697 there arose, under her influence, the Philadelphian Society, a society which strayed from true Boehmism as it took on a millennialist character. Jane Lead was

convinced that the end of the world was imminent, and the Philadelphian Society became a purified Church, that of the Millennium. In *The Ascent to the Mount of Vision*, she spoke in idyllic terms of Christ's reign of one thousand years to come upon the earth, a preliminary stage at the end of time.



FIGURE 72. Ephrata Community at Cocalico Creek

THE DEPARTURE FOR AMERICA

Kelpius' companions could not have been left indifferent by such preoccupations, and indeed they came to visit Jane Lead. Serge Hutin indicates that the English Boehmists provided financial and material assistance to Kelpius' group, thus facilitating their voyage for America.¹⁷ In February 1694, the German Pietists sailed on the *Sarah Maria*. After a voyage of five months, the ship reached Philadelphia, the "city of brotherly love," founded by the Quaker William Penn several years previously. This city in Pennsylvania

brought together Quakers, Mennonites, and Native Americans who endeavored to live in peace by practicing non-violence.¹⁸

Shortly after their arrival, Kelpius' group left for nearby Germantown, a place where a large German community lived, and they settled a short distance away on a ridge overlooking the Wissahickon River. Here they built their center, made up of cells and communal rooms required for the monastic life that they intended to pursue. In the temple called the "Tabernacle Room" Kelpius endeavored to rally the different Protestant movements of the region to his ideas. He established his own place of retreat away from the community buildings, in a cave that still can be seen in Philadelphia's Fairmount Park.

The little community had an intense spiritual life. It was also quite active, and its members devoted themselves to the education of children. These Pietists were instructed in subjects as varied as astronomy, bookbinding, and watchmaking. Due to their knowledge in medicine and botany, they established the first herbarium of Pennsylvania. They constructed an astronomical observatory on top of one of their buildings so that they could search for the first signs of the Millennium that Zimmermann had predicted for 1694. Their knowledge of astronomy allowed them to produce one of the first American almanacs of the 18th century. Documents found by Sachse showed that Kelpius and his disciples were interested in astrology and magic, that they made talismans as well as pantacles, and they practiced a kind of theurgy. It also seems that some among them practiced alchemy.¹⁹ However, as with most Pietists, Kelpius

attached great importance to prayer. For example, he was the author of a magnificent treatise entitled *A Short, Easy, and Comprehensive Method of Prayer*,²⁰ whose principles are similar to those of the orthodox “prayer of the heart.”

The community prospered for a dozen years. However, the anticipated Millennium did not come to pass, and some of the brethren wished to abandon the monastic life and begin families. Under the direction of Heinrich Bernhard Köster,²¹ Kelpius’ lieutenant, a group of his members joined the Quakers to form the True Church of Philadelphia. When Johannes Kelpius died in 1708, the community was barely active. Even Justus Falkner, one of his closest collaborators, left the monastic life so as to marry. Johannes Seelig tried without success to lead the group, but he finally resolved to leave so that he could live as a hermit. Conrad Matthai succeeded him for a little while and then took the same path as his predecessor. The group gradually disbanded.

A few years later, in 1720, a few German Pietists, led by Conrad Beissel, a baker, settled by Cocalico Creek, near modern-day Harrisburg. In 1737, this leader organized a group of celibate men and women called the Ephrata Community. Their activities flourished, because far from being recluses, the members were practical people who established various facilities, including a gristmill, sawmill, flourmill, paper mill, and printing press, to conduct their business affairs. Their spiritual activities were numerous, and they were renowned for their choral music and hymns. After the death of Conrad Beissel in 1768, the community

waned and disappeared around the end of the . 18th century. However, the presence of these mystics had profoundly influenced Pennsylvania.

As we have just shown, the German mystics who emigrated to America could not be properly called Rosicrucians. They were Pietists strongly influenced by esotericism and millennialism. However, they had their roots in the spiritual movement of Tübingen, which may be considered the center of 17th-century Rosicrucianism. It should be remembered that Sincerus Renatus (Samuel Richter), a Lutheran pastor who was said to be a disciple of Paracelsus and Boehme, claimed that the Rosicrucians had left Europe so as to settle in India where they could live in peace.²² As we have seen, the Pietists of Halle settled communities here around 1706, and we know that in the minds of many people the Americas were also considered to be the Indies.

Johannes Kelpius and his disciples were thus part of a group of people who left Germany after the disasters of White Mountain and the Thirty Years' War with the intention of establishing in America a society where peace and fraternity would reign, much in keeping with what was outlined about a dozen years previously in the Rosicrucian manifestos. Thus, placing the Pietists of Pennsylvania within the Rosicrucian tradition is not at all implausible.



FIGURE 73. Harvey Spencer Lewis

Chapter 16

HARVEY SPENCER LEWIS

Harvey Spencer Lewis, a remarkable individual who was to give Rosicrucianism a dimension that it had never known before, was born on November 25, 1883. His family was of Welsh background and his ancestors had settled in Virginia before the American Revolution. His grandfather, Samuel Lewis, born on November 7, 1816, in Buckingham, Pennsylvania, was the descendant of farmers who had cleared land in this region. Samuel married Eliza Hudnut, a cultivated young lady of French extraction, and the couple settled in Kingwood, New Jersey. It was in this town that their son Aaron Rittenhouse Lewis was born on February 3, 1857. At an early age, his mother introduced him to French literature and communicated to him a certain sensitivity in spiritual matters. Family life alternated between work on their farm and activities in the Methodist church, since religion occupied a prominent place in Aaron's life. He was particularly devout, and he delivered some sermons at the church in Kingwood. Aaron married Catherine Hoffman, a dynamic young woman born on January 14, 1851, in Germany, where she trained to become a teacher. From their union Harvey Spencer Lewis was born on November 25, 1883, in Frenchtown, New Jersey.

Aaron Lewis gave the middle name of Spencer to his son because of the admiration he felt for the Spencer brothers, inventors of a

system of penmanship used in public schools for many years. Aaron was an excellent calligrapher, and this gift allowed him to leave the family farm after obtaining work as a teacher at a commercial school in a neighboring town. Due to his talents as an artist, he augmented his income by executing small illustrations in the evenings at home. Catherine added to their financial resources by following her profession of teaching. The family soon left Frenchtown and settled in New York City. It was there that Aaron Lewis became associated with Daniel T. Ames, a chemist specializing in the analysis of inks and papers. Together they devised a technique for the scientific analysis of documents to determine whether these were authentic or forgeries. They thereby created a new profession, and for over thirty years Aaron Lewis was the leading authority in this field.

When H. Spencer Lewis discussed his early years, he wrote: “Earliest recollections of my childhood were of a home in which my father spent many hours of the evenings and spare time in research and study. My mother had finally given up her teaching in the schools and diligently worked with my two brothers and myself on our home studies assigned by our teachers at school.”¹ Harvey Spencer was a young man with an insatiable curiosity. Having a passion for physics, electricity, and chemistry, he read all the books on science that he could lay his hands on. His interest in photography soon led him to construct his own camera. He also revealed artistic talents in drawing, painting, and music at an early age. He played the piano and organized in his school the second school orchestra in New York City. In June 1899, this group gave a

concert at the graduation ceremony marking the end of H. Spencer Lewis' formal studies.



FIGURE 74. The Metropolitan Temple of New York.

THE MYSTIC AWAKENING

H. Spencer Lewis' family environment contributed much to the development of his mystical sensitivity. His father, Aaron Lewis, made a point of devoting Sunday to religious activities. On this day the family was not content to simply attend church; they read and also discussed the Bible. Young Harvey participated enthusiastically in the activities of the Metropolitan Temple of New York, and until

he was sixteen years old he loved to sing in the choir of this Methodist center, which was an important gathering place for the youth of the city. He also listened attentively to the sermons of Dr. S. Parkes Cadman, the pastor of the church.

H. Spencer Lewis often spent his free time in meditating in this church, which had become his spiritual home. This attitude did not escape the notice of the pastor, with whom he often conversed regarding subjects touching on mysticism. Often, in the silence, the young Harvey contemplated the altar and reflected on the divine mysteries. When he discussed these moments of prayer in his biography, he noted: "I do not know what was necessary for me and, consequently, I prayed for nothing more than love and peace." It was in this temple that he had his first mystical experiences and he questioned himself about the profound nature of humanity and the possibility of contacting the most subtle part of being, the soul. In 1900, he completed his schooling and found employment as an office boy in Baker and Taylor Publishing. This job allowed him to have at his disposal the many books necessary for his insatiable curiosity.



FIGURE 75. Phineas Parkhurst Quimby.

NEW THOUGHT

It appears that an article published in the October 20, 1901, edition of the New York Evening Herald drew Lewis' attention. It described the case of Leonora Piper, a medium from Boston who was unrivaled in the history of the psychic sciences.² At this time, experiments with mediums were the rage in New York, a city where spiritualism drew a large following. As we saw in a previous chapter, spiritualism developed in the United States after magnetism was introduced to this country by Charles Poyan, a follower of Puységur, in 1836.³ The ensuing events led researchers to take interest in these phenomena, and their work resulted in the creation of institutions that engaged in the research of paranormal faculties. The most prestigious was the American Society for Psychical Research,

founded in Boston in 1884, two years after the founding of the Society for Psychical Research in England. H. Spencer Lewis was soon participating in a similar group.

The increasing importance of magnetism also led to the birth of New Thought, a movement that gained considerable popularity and foreshadowed, to a certain degree, the New Age. It may be defined as a philosophical movement with Judeo-Christian overtones that teaches the laws of the creative power of thought. Its goal is to lead each follower to a balanced, harmonious life and to self-realization. Moreover, it involves—and this is one of its essential aspects—therapeutic applications. This movement had its origins in the concepts of the Healer of Portland, Phineas Parkhurst Quimby (1802-1866), a clockmaker born in New Hampshire. After having attended the séances given by Charles Poyan, he used magnetism for healing purposes and eventually devoted himself entirely to this activity in Portland, Maine. By blending psychic sciences, philosophy, and Christian mysticism for leading each disciple to health and happiness, Quimby created what he called Mental Science, also called Christian Science or Science of Health. By 1840, his experiments were being reported in the newspapers of Maine. Although he was very popular, he never theorized about his practices or philosophy in books and pamphlets. His ideas are only known to us through a book written by Annetta Gertrude Dresser entitled *The Philosophy of P.P. Quimby, with selections from his manuscripts and a sketch of his life* (1895).

After Quimby's death, New Thought came into being with three

of his former patients and followers. The first was the Reverend Warren Felt Evans (1817-1889), a minister of the Swedenborgian faith. After being healed by Quimby, Evans was attracted to his theories and wrote the first book dedicated to mental treatment, *The Mental Cure* (1869). This was followed by numerous other volumes, such as *Esoteric Christianity and Mental Therapeutics* (1886). The second of Quimby's followers was Julius A. Dresser (1838-1893). After his cure in 1860, he dedicated his life to continuing his master's work. In some ways Dresser was the first modern psychic healer and may be considered as the founder of New Thought, a movement he discussed in *The True History of Mental Science* (1887). His wife Annetta Gertrude and his son Horatio Willis were also authorities and authors in this field.

Finally, Mary Baker Glover Patterson (1821-1910), Quimby's third disciple, is probably the most well known. In 1862 she too was cured of an illness that seemed incurable. However, after Quimby's death, she again fell gravely ill, but she healed herself by applying the principles of her teacher. She then began to perfect her own philosophy, which she called Christian Science. She married Dr. Asa Gilbert Eddy and wrote *Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures* (1875). In this book, Mrs. Eddy developed the concept that all illness was primarily of psychic origin, and that a "spirit cure" based on prayer and the adoption of positive thoughts would lead inevitably to the return of harmony. This book was phenomenally successful, and in 1898 it was already in its 140th printing. In 1881, aided by her husband, Mrs. Eddy founded the Massachusetts

Metaphysical College to teach Christian Science. Under her direction, the college prospered, with more than 4,000 students being instructed in her principles during this period. Then in 1889 she closed this institution so as to revamp her book and reorganize her organization. The college reopened its doors in 1899 and gradually the movement became a true church that included thousands of followers around the world.

THE KYBALION

In the United States, New Thought resulted in the publication of a whole body of literature whose most esteemed authors, apart from those we have previously mentioned, included: Ralph Waldo Trine, Henry Wood, Ella Adelia Fletcher, Oliver C. Sabin, Victor Turnbull, Emma Curtis Hopkins, Prentice Mulford, and William Walker Atkinson. The latter deserves particular mention, because he was one of the most eminent representatives of American New Thought. William Walker Atkinson (1862-1932), a Freemason, theosophist, member of the Pennsylvania bar, and professor of hypnotism, was one of the most important authors of New Thought. Between 1902 and 1915, he published about twenty works, both under his own name and that of Yogi Ramacharaka. Two books that are especially significant are *The Law of the New Thought* (1902) and *The Hindu-Yogi Science of Breath, a Complete Manual of Breathing Philosophy of Physical, Mental, Psychic and Spiritual Development* (1909). What makes this author original, in comparison to his predecessors, is that he included in his theories and practices some

elements relating to Hinduism or yoga. This was surely the result of two major influences in his life: the Theosophical Society, of which he was a member, and Swami Vivekananda. In 1893 the latter appeared in Chicago as the Hindu representative in the World Parliament of Religions, and afterwards he lectured in many cities before founding the Vedanta Society in New York City (1894). In his books, Atkinson touched on such subjects as health through magnetism, mystical breathing, karma, vibrations, polarity, the projection of thought and visualization.

Atkinson was probably the author of the celebrated *Kybalion, A Study of the Hermetic Philosophy of Ancient Egypt and Greece*.⁴ The cover indicates that this text is the work of “three initiates,” a slightly veiled allusion to Hermes Trismegistus. The author of the *Kybalion* claimed to reveal the royal art of the Egyptians, which is the synthesis of all knowledge, and from which India, Persia, and China have their source. He revealed the “seven Hermetic laws,” which he presented as being those of Hermes Trismegistus. Among these laws are those of correspondences, the vibrations of life, polarity, rhythm, causality (karma), as well as subjects that really have little connection with the contents of the writings of the *Corpus Hermeticum*, but which specifically reveal those of New Thought.⁵ Thus, the *Kybalion*, which tries to relate the principles of New Thought to those of Hermeticism, constitutes a marvelous synthesis of all the ideas in this movement.

Let us end this long digression concerning the authors of New Thought by pointing out one of the most notable books of this

movement, *The Heart of New Thought*, published by Ella Wheeler Wilcox in 1902. Her work experienced immediate success and went through fourteen printings within three years. This author is of special interest to us in that she worked with H. Spencer Lewis in the establishment of AMORC several years later.

Between 1860 and 1910, New Thought developed rapidly. The reason for its success was due no doubt to its pragmatic character, with the result that it tended to reduce the influence of the Theosophical Society. As Hermann de Keyserling has indicated, in contrast to the latter movement, New Thought rejected pure occultism, which it considered to be secondary in nature. It proposed instead a method of individual expansion oriented toward self-realization. Its applications were concrete and could be used to solve everyday problems. Furthermore, in contrast to the Theosophical Society, which was imbued with the Oriental culture, New Thought had its roots in Christianity.⁶ The American psychologist William James saw some striking analogies, from a psychological standpoint, between the mind cure taught by New Thought and the Protestantism of Luther and the Methodism of Wesley. He noticed the same liberating speech and the complete confidence in goodness.⁷

Despite the many testimonies of Albert Louis Caillet,⁸ New Thought had few followers in France, apart from Hector Durville (1849-1923).⁹ The latter, after having separated from the Theosophical Society and the initiatic movements directed by Papus (Martinist Order and Kabbalistic Order of the Rose Cross), founded

in 1893 his practical school of magnetism and massage as a way to expand psychic and hypnotic studies and to train therapists.¹⁰ Although he was part of the French magnetist movement—it should not be forgotten that he continued the work of the Baron Du Potet—he was influenced by New Thought, and in particular by the works of Prentice Mulford.¹¹ His *Journal du magnetisme* became widely known throughout the world. In 1909, the Magnetic College of New York, directed by Dr. Babbitt, worked closely with him.

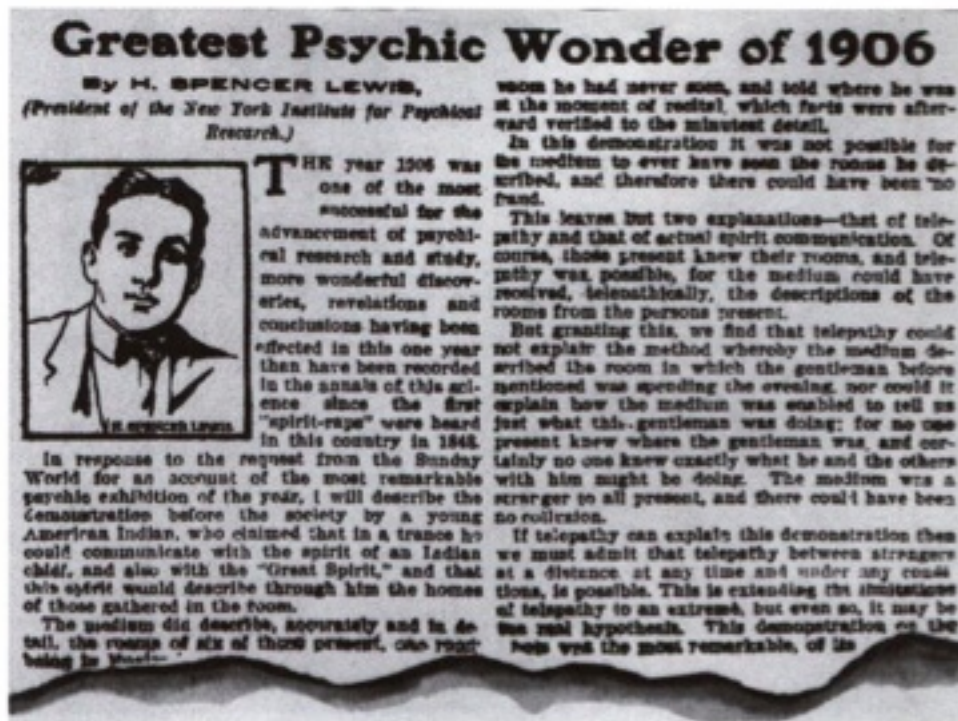


FIGURE 76. *New York Sunday World*, January 1907.

THE NEW YORK INSTITUTE FOR PSYCHICAL RESEARCH

Between 1902 and 1909 H. Spencer Lewis was intrigued by the spiritualist movement, and his personal investigations led him to put

its doctrines to the test. He quickly realized that the messages supposedly originating from spirits through mediums were of little interest. In 1902, desiring to broaden his research, he became part of a special committee investigating fraudulent spiritualistic mediums. This group of men and women from all walks of life organized experiments with mediums in an attempt to obtain a better understanding of these mysterious phenomena. At the end of two years, and when he was only twenty years old, Lewis was named president of this association. He owed this honor to the fact that he himself was endowed with uncommon psychic faculties. In 1904, with the assistance of the *New York Evening Herald*, where he presided over a committee investigating mediums, he founded the New York Institute for Psychical Research. This group, of which he was elected president, was composed of scientists and physicians. Among the members of the institute were such noted individuals as the writer and poetess Ella Wheeler Wilcox (1850-1919) and Dr. Isaac Kauffman Funk (1839-1912),¹² best known for his work on psychic science (*The Widow's Mite and Other Psychic Phenomena*, published in 1904 and *The Psychic Riddle* three years later).

During this period the American Society for Psychical Research, headquartered in Boston, predominated in the field of psychic research in the United States. But, by 1904, after the death of its director, Dr. Richard Hodgson, the group lost its momentum and ceased operations in 1905. Then, only one year later, Dr. James H. Hyslop reorganized the old institution in New York as the American Institute for Scientific Research.¹³ As can be seen, a void was left

when the activities of the Boston research group came to an end, which provided an opportunity for another organization, the New York Institute for Psychical Research, to come into being. Under H. Spencer Lewis' direction, the new group conducted investigations examining the true abilities of mediums, which resulted in more than fifty fakes being unmasked. The institute also worked with the New York police department and the *New York World*, a daily newspaper. During this period, Lewis published many articles concerning his researches in the *New York Herald* and in the *New York World*. One of the articles, entitled "Greatest Psychic Wonder of 1906," published in January 1907 in the *New York Sunday World* with a portrait of the author, discussed the experiments made by the New York Institute for Psychical Research with a young Indian medium.

These researches left Lewis dissatisfied, as he found it hard to believe that the phenomena produced through mediums were derived from the manifestation of spirits. Rather, he was persuaded that they originated in spiritual faculties yet unknown. It was during this period that he became aware of the works of Thomson Jay Hudson (1834-1903), among others. This author, a doctor of philosophy, enjoyed international renown after the publication in 1893 of his first work, *Law of Psychic Phenomena: a Working Hypothesis for the Systematic Study of Hypnotism, Spiritism, Mental Therapeutics . . .*¹⁴ Lewis avidly read this book that touched upon magnetism, spiritualism, duality of the mind, the conscious and the unconscious. It intrigued him all the more as it studied telepathy scientifically and described suggestion as the link between the

conscious and subconscious, the means that the mind can use to direct matter. He also read the works of Sir Oliver Lodge, including *The Survival of Man*, which studied faculties little known at the time, and *Life and Matter*, which was more oriented toward psychology.

During the years 1906-1907, Lewis abandoned psychic research, which he judged to be unproductive. What followed was a period of reflection. While engaged in his daily meditations, he became aware that he was finding the answers to questions touching upon the mysteries of life. As he noted in his autobiography, he experienced great peace during these experiences and, when returning to an awakened consciousness, he had the impression of having received inwardly some instruction on the laws and principles pertaining to God and nature. Puzzled by this, he confided in May Banks-Stacey, an elderly woman he had met at the New York Institute for Psychical Research. She revealed to him that, during such experiences, he had probably rediscovered the knowledge acquired in his past lives. She even suggested that during one or many previous incarnations he had surely belonged to a mystical fraternity like the “Rosicrucians of Egypt.” H. Spencer Lewis was astonished by this answer, as it established a link between the Rose-Croix and Egypt!

In the days that followed, he sought information on the Rosicrucians, but found no reference at all indicating that this order existed anywhere but in Germany. Until then, he had read nothing — nor even encountered the slightest allusion—concerning the existence of secret Rosicrucians. Beginning in the year 1908, all his

thoughts were directed toward a single goal: to discover what the ancient mystics had taught so that he might compare their teachings with what he himself was able to glean through his own spiritual experiences.



FIGURE 77. May Banks-Stacey

Chapter 17

THE JOURNEY TO THE EAST

ALTHOUGH HARVEY SPENCER Lewis considered her to be the cofounder of the Ancient and Mystical Order Rosae Crucis, May Banks-Stacey (1846-1919) has remained relatively unrecognized. We feel that it is important, therefore, to consider briefly the unusual journey of this Rosicrucian.¹ May Banks-Stacey, born Mary Henrietta Banks, was the daughter of Thaddeus Banks, a distinguished lawyer, and of Delia Cromwell Reynolds. She was an excellent student and eventually obtained a diploma in law. She was also a fine musician and possessed a lovely voice. A woman endowed with great elegance, she was part of the fashionable social circles of Washington and later New York. In 1869 she married Colonel May Humphreys Stacey (1837-1886), but then became a widow when she was only forty years old. This new situation allowed the relatively young woman to devote herself to activities that she had no time for previously.

THE ORIENT

After her husband's death, May Banks-Stacey lived most often at the home of one of her sons, Captain Cromwell Stacey. As is often

true of military personnel, his duties obliged him to travel abroad from time to time.² His mother generally accompanied him, and thus she had the opportunity to travel to China, Japan, India, Tibet, the Philippines, Europe, Cuba, and Australia.³ Her daughter stated that May Banks-Stacey met the chief of Zululand and many native rulers of India, and noted that she studied the philosophy of Bahauallah (1817-1892), the founder of the Bahai faith.

May Banks-Stacey was a member of the Theosophical Society and, as such, had the opportunity to become part of the Theosophist Inner Circle, the esoteric group that Helena Petrovna Blavatsky had formed within the society, and in which the members were directly bound to her by an oath.⁴ AMORC's cofounder also took an interest in the Orient and was attracted to the teachings of Swami Vivekananda (1862-1902), a follower of Ramakrishna who had left Bombay for the United States in May 1893.⁵ There, along with such individuals as Gandhi, he represented Hinduism at the World Parliament of Religions in Chicago, which opened its doors on September 11, 1893. He enjoyed great success and was invited to remain in America. For three years he traveled around the country, giving lectures and seminars in which he discussed the Vedanta and Ramakrishna's teachings. His ideas influenced all those who were part of the New Thought movement at the time. Romain Rolland has shown that even Maty Baker Eddy, the founder of Christian Science, came under his influence, and this was probably also true of William Walker Atkinson, the most Eastern-minded of the teachers of New Thought.⁶ On the other hand, Swami Vivekananda's

teachings also helped to restrain the expansion of the Theosophical Society and presented a more authentic image of the Eastern world. It is probable that May BanksStacey was present at the classes that Vivekananda gave in New York in 1894 and 1896, the years when she was initiated into Eastern philosophy.

THE MANHATTAN MYSTIC CIRCLE

May Banks-Stacey came from a family of Freemasons. In 1761, one of her ancestors, James Banks (1732-1793), was one of the founders of New Jersey's first Masonic lodge, St. John's Lodge No. 1, where he held the office of Junior Warden.⁷ We do not know whether her father was a Freemason, but this is probable, as his daughter became a member of Eastern Star, one of the oldest mixed Masonic obediences. Access to this organization involves what is called "Masonry of adoption,"⁸ as it is reserved to mothers, wives, sisters, or daughters of Freemasons. However, we should note that information regarding May Banks-Stacey's membership in Eastern Star remains imprecise and perhaps is unrelated to the Masonic organization just mentioned, but to the similarly named order founded by Annie Besant that was closely associated with the Theosophical Society.⁹ This is a logical possibility, as May BanksStacey was quite active in this movement.

AMORC's cofounder was also a member of the Manhattan Mystic Circle, a Masonic rite of adoption in which she appears to have been the prime mover. This side organization, founded in February 1898, took the form of a mutual aide society and charity composed of the

daughters, wives, sisters, and daughters-in-law of Freemasons. According to the *Constitution and Bylaws of the Manhattan Mystic Circle*, Lodge No. 1 O.M ., the person directing the lodge was called “Illustrious Mistress.” After consulting a copy of this document, we may surmise that this office was held by May Banks-Stacey.¹⁰ Outside of these esoteric activities, she also took an interest in national affairs. She was a Daughter of the American Revolution and a Colonial Dame, and in 1898 she served as the first vice-president of the New York Women’s Republican Association, which worked for the upcoming presidential campaign.

EGYPT

May Banks-Stacey was attracted to all forms of occultism—especially astrology, chiromancy, and white magic. During her travels to India and Tibet, she had acquired great wisdom , and her daughter noted in a letter: “I believe that she preferred Egypt to all other countries. She told me about certain impressions that she had experienced in visiting the ancient temples, the feeling that there was a time when she had to be an Egyptian in one of her numerous reincarnations.”¹¹ According to what H. Spencer Lewis relates, it was while she was in Egypt that the Rosicrucians gave May BanksStacey a “mystical jewel” and some sealed documents that she had to keep until another person came along and presented her with an exact copy of one of the seals and called upon her assistance to establish the Rosicrucian Order in America.

Who were the initiates that May Banks-Stacey encountered in

Egypt? H. Spencer Lewis does not say. Did he indicate by this name some Rosicrucians whose existence has been lost to history or some Freemasons of the Rose-Croix degree?¹² Let us not forget that, around 1863, JeanÉtienne Marconis de Nègre granted a patent to Joseph de Beaugard for the creation in Egypt of a Sovereign Sanctuary of Memphis, a rite that accorded special importance to the Rose-Croix degree. The Rosicrucian tradition was equally present with Demetrius Platon Semelas (1883-1924), a Greek Martinist living in Cairo. The latter was said to have obtained in 1902, at a monastery on Mount Athos, the legacy of the Rose-Croix of the Orient.¹³ In October 1911, he also conferred an initiation of the “R.C. Aspirant” degree on Georges Lagrèze, an inspector of the Martinist Order, who was traveling in Egypt. Tradition states that the latter afterwards transmitted this initiation to Papus.¹⁴ Could the Rosicrucian encountered by May Banks-Stacey in Egypt be Demetrius Platon Semelas? This remains only a hypothesis. However, if this were the case, it would resolve many questions, especially the fact that in 1913, Harvey Spencer Lewis was in contact with Eugene Dupré, who was Semelas’ assistant.¹⁵

H. Spencer Lewis tells us that after leaving Egypt, May Banks-Stacey journeyed to India, where, upon producing the documents she had received in Egypt, she was initiated into the Rosicrucian Order. She was named legate of the organization for America, but she was informed that the Order would not be established in that country until 1915, under the patronage of France. This episode in the life of AMORC’s cofounder remains enigmatic, because we lack

the vital clues for properly interpreting the initiation in India. We may see this as an allusion to a possible trip to Adyar, the headquarters of the Theosophical Society of which she was a member—keeping in mind that this organization has always had a certain affinity with the Rosicrucians, as was pointed out previously when we described how its founders were considering giving it the title of “Rosicrucian,” but settled instead on “Theosophical.” After the death of Helena Petrovna Blavatsky, Annie Besant emphasized this affinity. First she created the Eastern Star, and then in 1912 the Order of the Temple of the Rosy Cross, an ephemeral movement whose activities came to an end in 1918. Was this the organization that May Banks-Stacey contacted in India? The hypothesis seems plausible. Following this journey, H. Spencer Lewis recounted that she stopped in London, where she met a certain “BE, Deta Conts,” who was described as being an eminent student of occultism. Then she returned to New York and immersed herself in Masonic activities.

THE NEW ONTOLOGY

In the last chapter, it was mentioned that May Banks-Stacey was a member of the New York Institute for Psychical Research, the organization founded by H. Spencer Lewis. We do not know on what date she joined. In his autobiography, Lewis reported that he met her at the end of 1907. At this time, he was only twenty-four years old and was employed as an illustrator at a New York newspaper. He also enjoyed some degree of success as a

photojournalist. Along with these activities, he remained occupied with the Institute for Psychical Research and began to write some articles concerning psychic science and esotericism. In February 1908, he contributed to *The Future*, a monthly publication belonging to the New Thought movement.¹⁶ Under the pseudonym of Prof. Lewis he wrote several articles on astrology¹⁷ and, using the name of Royle Thurston, he also published the first article of a series entitled “The New Ontology.” He described this work as being a series of lessons on a new science explaining life and death, as well as all spiritual phenomena. He touched upon such topics as vital life force, diet, health, magnetism, hypnosis, and psychic energies. But his collaboration with this publication was of short duration, because two months later he was to have an experience that changed his life completely.



FIGURE 78. *The Future*, February 1908.

A MYSTICAL EXPERIENCE

Due to his busy schedule, H. Spencer Lewis had little opportunity of returning to the Metropolitan Church on Seventh Avenue in New York. In the spring of 1908, he felt an urge to go back to this place that had been his spiritual home seven years earlier. On the Thursday after Easter, around 4:30 in the afternoon, he entered the church and sat in a pew to meditate. It was then that he felt the presence of an invisible being whom he perceived to be a man with a long white beard who gave the impression of peace and harmony.

This mysterious individual told him that the knowledge to which he aspired could not be found in books but rather deep within himself. He was also informed that he had to go to France to be initiated into the Rose-Croix. Who was this mysterious being? Was he truly a spiritual entity? Did he correspond to the perception of the archetype of the old sage, such as that described by Carl Jung? What can be said for certain is that this mystical experience left a profound impression upon H. Spencer Lewis and became the starting point for his “pilgrim’s journey to the East.”

In the hope of obtaining some information regarding Rosicrucianism in France, he decided to write to a Parisian bookseller whose catalogue he had obtained. We have not succeeded in identifying this individual, who was also described as being the editor of a newspaper. It is possible that the person in question is Henri Durville, whose shop, both a library and publishing house, was located at 23 rue Saint-Merri in Paris. The *Librairie du Magnétisme*, a library possessing more than 8,000 books and magazines concerning magnetism and occultism, offered its lending services to seekers of rare works. It also had at its disposal a collection of about 700,000 engravings, portraits, autographs, and other documents relating to this specialty. As a publishing house, it provided an important catalogue of works that were marketed around the world. Henri Durville was also the director and sub-editor of the *Journal du magnétisme*. According to the October 1909 issue of this magazine, there existed in New York a college of magnetism, directed by Dr. Babbitt, that worked closely with Henri

Durville's Société magnétique de France.¹⁸ Whatever the identity of the bookseller contacted by H. Spencer Lewis, the latter soon received the following reply:

If you came to Paris and found it convenient to call at the Studio of M. —, the professor of languages at No. —, Blvd. St. Germain, he might be able to tell you something of the circle of which you inquire. It might be advisable to hand him this note. Certainly a letter to him announcing your coming (by date and name of boat) would be courteous.¹⁹

THE JOURNEY TO FRANCE

Although his financial situation did not permit him to consider such a voyage, an unexpected opportunity soon presented itself. His father, Aaron Lewis, an expert in authenticating documents as well as a renowned genealogist, needed an assistant while conducting research in France for the Rockefeller family. On July 24, 1909, the two men sailed for Europe on the *Amerika*, of the Hamburg Amerika Line. On Sunday, August 1, the ship arrived at Cherbourg, and the two travelers set off for Paris by train. The days that followed were entirely devoted to genealogical research, and it was only in the following week that H. Spencer Lewis was able to visit the bookshop and the professor of languages on Boulevard Saint-Germain. "A Pilgrim's Journey to the East" reported his meetings with the professor on Saturday, August 7, and on Monday, August 9. This man was about forty-five years old, spoke perfect English, and asked many probing questions to determine Lewis' intentions.

At the end of the second meeting, he recommended that his American visitor travel to southern France, where he would receive further instructions.

As we have seen previously, the contact with this professor of languages may have been established through Henri Durville. However, we may also wonder whether our traveler could not have done his investigations by going to the celebrated Librairie du Merveilleux founded by Lucien Chamuel. It is there that Papus and his friends organized the first meetings of the Martinist Order and the Kabbalistic Order of the Rose-Croix, and had launched the magazines *L'Initiation* and *Le Voile d'Isis*. The veritable meeting place of all Parisian occultists, this bookshop had been purchased by Pierre Dujols and Alexandre Thomas.²⁰ In 1909 the two men were working on Paracelsus' *Sept Livres de l'archidoxe magique*—a book that was published under the auspices of the Kabbalistic Order of the Rose-Croix. Pierre Dujols (1862-1926), an alchemist believed by some to be Fulcanelli, was also interested in Rosicrucianism. In a book entitled *La Chevalerie amoureuse, troubadours, félibriges et Rose-Croix*, he repeatedly spoke about this movement in connection with Toulouse and the Academie des Jeux floraux. “Some well-informed people still talk clandestinely about the modern-day Rosicrucians of Toulouse,” he notes in this text.²¹

In his autobiography, H. Spencer Lewis added several other facts. He states that the people who interviewed him in Paris suspected him of wanting to penetrate some secret of Freemasonry. Concerning this matter, he mentioned his connection with the

Parisian bookseller, whom he described as one of the officers of a branch of Freemasonry improperly holding some ancient manuscripts, seals, jewels, and old accessories belonging to Rosicrucian lodges that had fallen inactive. Despite their suspicions concerning him, Lewis was eventually directed toward those individuals who could guide him toward the light he was seeking. And that is how he received the advice that he should go to Toulouse.

It may be asked why his interrogators did not recommend that he meet with such individuals as Joséphin Péladan and Papus who were well known at the time for their Rosicrucian activities. Indeed, in June 1908—in the preceding year—the latter had presided at the Spiritualist Congress, which brought together more than seventeen initiatic organizations.²² However, this important event barely concealed the crisis affecting the initiatic groups directed by Papus—and the Kabbalistic Order of the Rose-Croix in particular. After Stanislas de Guaita's death in 1897, this group became inactive. In the same year, Joséphin Péladan shut down the Order of the Rose-Croix du Temple et du Graal. Consequently, we may understand why Harvey Spencer Lewis was not directed to these organizations. Instead, as we shall soon see, he was sent to Toulouse, the place where they had their origin.



FIGURE 79. Clovis Lassalle.

TOULOUSE, THE ROSE-RED CITY

Once again good fortune (or maybe more appropriately, Divine Providence) smiled upon our traveler, because his father had just planned to travel to southern France where he could continue his genealogical research for the Rockefeller family. On Tuesday, August 10, the two men left Paris, and following some adventures that H. Spencer Lewis interpreted as his having been put to the test, they arrived in Toulouse on Wednesday. On the following day, his father resumed his work and probably went to the *Donjon* (Keep or Old Tower) to consult the city archives.²³ Meanwhile, H. Spencer Lewis went to the *Salle des Illustres* (Gallery of the Illustrious) of the Capitol, where he met an individual who was instrumental in

bringing his quest to a successful conclusion. After a brief discussion, this person gave him a piece of paper on which was written the name of the street where he should go so as to meet some Rosicrucians.

H. Spencer Lewis does not disclose the name of this individual, but merely indicates that his profession was photography. Later, Ralph M. Lewis, his son, indicated that this person was an eminent photographer. In all likelihood, he was Clovis Lassalle (1864-1937), a photographer who specialized in the fine arts, archeology, commerce, and industry. This hypothesis is confirmed by the fact that H. Spencer Lewis' personal archives contain a letter that Lassalle wrote to him on August 26, 1909.²⁴ Furthermore, it should be pointed out that this photographer often had the opportunity of meeting Firmin Boissin at the home of the Privat family, who were printer friends of his.²⁵ And, as we have seen in a preceding chapter, "The Rose Garden of the Magi," it was Firmin Boissin who introduced Adrien Péladan and Stanislas de Guaita to the Rose-Croix!

Traveling by taxi to the address indicated by the photographer—since the trolley line did not go that far—Lewis rode out of the center of town, crossed the Garonne River, and went several kilometers before finding himself opposite a building that had an ancient tower similar to the one on the engraving that the Parisian professor had shown him a few days previously.²⁶ After climbing the steps of a circular staircase, Lewis arrived at the top story, where he was greeted by an old man with a long gray beard and slightly wavy

long white hair. The room he entered was a square chamber, its walls lined with books. The gentleman who received him was the archivist of a mysterious Rosicrucian Order, a group of initiates from Languedoc whose few members worked in the strictest secrecy. Lewis stated that his interrogator was also a member of the same small group of Freemasons to which the Parisian bookseller belonged. After showing him the archives, the old man stated that he had been judged worthy of further knowledge and that he was to meet the Grand Master of the Order on the very same day.



FIGURE 80. Drawing by Harvey Spencer Lewis representing the place of his initiation

THE INITIATION

Around 3 o'clock in the afternoon, Lewis engaged another taxi and went to the address provided by the archivist. Once again he traveled away from Toulouse on a road that ran alongside a stream.

After passing through the old town of Tolosa, he arrived at a stone edifice encircled by high walls and situated on a hill. It was in this castle that, according to “A Pilgrim’s Journey to the East,” he was initiated into the Rosicrucian Order. Although this text does not give any details regarding this ceremony, his autobiography provides some intriguing information. We learn that the person who greeted Lewis was Count Raynaud E. de Bellcastle-Ligne, a seventy-year-old man who lived here with his widowed daughter and whose means of living were modest, despite his noble origins. Speaking perfect English, he conducted Lewis to a drawing room where he questioned him about the psychic research he conducted in America, and showed great interest in his visitor’s previous mystical experiences.

At the end of the interview, the Count de Bellcastle-Ligne informed our pilgrim that the moment had now come for him to be initiated and asked whether he felt ready to confront the “terror of the threshold.” He was then led to the first floor of the chateau where he was shown what remained of an ancient Rosicrucian lodge. The count indicated that this temple had not been used for more than sixty years, although it had been visited by a few Freemasons on several occasions until 1890. His father had been the last presiding officer. We may thus place the period when this lodge had been active around 1850—in other words, the time of Alexandre Du Mège and the Viscount de Lapasse—several years before Firmin Boissin had received Adrien Péladan into the Rose-Croix.

The conversation continued until the count stopped before an iron door to tell his visitor that he must now enter three chambers one after the other, “alone with God and his Master.” Carrying out the command, Lewis entered the first room, an antechamber. He then went into the second room, a darkened place where he underwent the “test of the threshold”; he then had a mystical experience where he sensed once again the presence of the invisible being who had manifested to him the previous year. He finally came to the third room where the count awaited. The latter explained to him that this room no longer had the decorations or furnishings it once had, and consequently he was forced to adapt the initiation ceremony. The count led him to different places in the chamber and communicated the secret meaning of this ritual.

Now considering his visitor to be initiated, the old master led him into a little room. He recommended that the young man lie down, because he needed to rest in this room a few hours before meeting several other people. H. Spencer Lewis sat on a couch and dozed off. Upon awakening, he realized that he had slept for three hours. While asleep, he had dreamed the ceremony he was about to take part in. However, this time around, it was not the count who conducted him, but the “Master” whose presence he had perceived in the second chamber. After a short time, Bellcastle-Ligne introduced him to three elderly men whose ancestors as well as themselves had been members of the Rosicrucian Order. At the end of this conversation, Lewis was led once more into the former lodge, where the count placed around his neck a cross adorned with

a rose, thus signifying that he was now charged with the founding of the Order in America.

After this ceremony, one of the members present permitted Lewis to consult a collection in which the principles and major laws of the Order were represented. He was also allowed to copy the symbols and diagrams of the various Rosicrucian ceremonies. From a trunk placed in the middle of the room the count drew out some symbolic aprons, an altar cloth, and various archival documents so that the new initiate could take note of the symbols belonging to the different degrees of the Order. Afterwards the necessary information for the establishment of Rosicrucianism in America was communicated to him. The man directing the meeting at this point was not the count, but an individual named Lasalle, who acted as the master of ceremonies. Although the spelling of his name differs slightly, might this not be Clovis Lassalle, the photographer Lewis had met the same morning in the Gallery of the Illustrious? We would be tempted to think otherwise, seeing that the latter described the master of ceremonies as being the author of numerous historical documents, whereas we know that this photographer wrote no books. However, it is possible that his statement alludes to innumerable photographic works concerning archeology and prehistory that were produced by Clovis Lassalle.²⁷ Whatever the case, the master of ceremonies informed H. Spencer Lewis that he was now in possession of all the necessary instructions, but that other inner experiences were yet to come. He concluded by requesting that no lodge be opened in America before 1915.

On August 13, 1909, the day after his acceptance into the Rosicrucian Order, Lewis wrote to his wife Mollie:

. . . all my hopes on this trip have been realized, but not without many tests and trials . . . A pretty place, here. I have taken plenty of photos of the old fortress where I have participated in many strange ceremonies that I have never seen At last I am in the R+C, thank God—but the oaths and vows are severe. How many in America will I find to keep them with me?²⁸

A few days later, on August 26, when he was about to return to Paris, Lewis received a letter from Clovis Lassalle. On the following Monday, Aaron Lewis and his son traveled by train to Paris. After a stop in London, where they visited the British Museum , they boarded the *White Star*, of the MS Adriatic Line, on Wednesday, September 1, and sailed for New York. For Harvey Spencer Lewis, it was the beginning of a great adventure.

Hôtel de Florence *Paris to*
 26, RUE DES MATHURINS, 26 *Toulouse Aug 13, 1909*
 (Prix Fixe of la Gare St Lazare)

L. DAUMERIE, Prop^r
 CHAUFFAGE CENTRAL
 English Spoken

My dear:-
 Have arrived safely
 in Toulouse - way down South
 in France & so far all my
 hopes on this trip have been
 realized, but not without many
 tests and trials. At every turn
 I meet those who scan me closely,
 question me closely or ask me
 to do foolish things to see if
 I will obey orders.

At last I am in the R + C,
 thank God - but the baths &
 vows are severe. How many in
 America will I find to keep
 them with me.

Give my love to baby Reeth
 & your mother & all. I miss
 you & wish you could go
 with me through all the strange
 experiences.

Truly
 Harvey
 Aug 13, 1909

FIGURE 81. Letter written by Harvey Spencer Lewis to his wife on August 13, 1909, the day after his initiation.

THE SECRET OF THE ORIGINS

As you have probably noticed, the initiation received by Lewis comprised two aspects: a meeting with Rosicrucians belonging to a lodge whose last activities dated back to the 1850s, and some mystical experiences lived inwardly. A mystery surrounds the personality of his initiator. It is probable that Lewis used the name Raynaud E. de Bellcastle-Ligne to disguise the man's true identity.

This narration may also be considered as being symbolic to a great extent. The history of esotericism is replete with texts combining real facts and some mystical experiences lived in such a way as to constitute an edifying mythical account. In fact, it involves a characteristic that is often encountered when studying the history of the founders of great spiritual movements. During a conference on initiatic epics, Antoine Faivre underscored the importance of myth in the foundation of esoteric movements. For him, the presence of a founding legend constitutes in some ways one of the criteria of authenticity of traditional orders.²⁹ The founding narrative of Rosicrucianism—that of Christian Rosenkreuz's travels in the East—as well as the narrative concerning the discovery of the tomb of Hermes Trismegistus belong to this category, and it could be the same with the story of Lewis' initiation. Furthermore, Roland Edighoffer has proposed this interesting interpretation:

In this description, we encounter many traditional themes of initiation, of which certain ones appear in the *Chymical Wedding* of J.V. Andreae: the symbol of the tower, the spiraling

staircase which underscores the axial development of a gnosis, the square upper room that evokes the divine Tetragrammaton, the letter that he must be given at the entrance to the castle, the cave that is like the womb of a new birth. The two mystagogues, man and woman, recall the archetype of the “old sage,” whose ambivalence has been emphasized by Jung (*Gesammelte Werke*, Olten, 1976, 9/1, p. 231). The role of sleep is significant in the analysis of this text.³⁰

H. Spencer Lewis’ experience involves a genuine encounter with adepts belonging to a Rosicrucian circle. And although this circle was only partly active, its fires glowed strongly deep within the embers. What is fundamental to this experience is its spiritual aspect. In an earlier chapter, “The Emerald Land,” Henry Corbin stresses the importance of initiatic filiations resting upon spiritual experience. For Corbin, this is a fundamental requirement of their validity. As he emphasizes, this experience is not necessarily within the category of facts verifiable by historians, since it pertains to hierohistory. Nevertheless, such facts cannot be ignored, because a study that only takes objective and chronological facts into account in judging the sources of an initiatic movement will lead to historicism—in other words, to a perception that is essentially positivist and reductionist, and thus incompatible with the very nature of this type of movement. Thus, the main point may be missed, since the experience’s connection with the dimension of the sacred, the intemporal, will be overlooked.

It may be asked why the Rosicrucians of Toulouse conferred on an American the task of restoring Rosicrucianism. For the record, they had already charged Stanislas de Guaita and Joséphin Péladan with this mission, but the Order had gone inactive despite their efforts. Thus, it seemed impossible to reestablish it on a lasting basis in the Old World, a notion that had already been expressed in 1875 by Franz Hartmann. Moreover, we may surmise that the Rosicrucians, who have often been credited with a certain ability to foresee important events, had a presentiment of a major conflict in the heart of Europe and feared the resulting destruction. By entrusting their heritage to an American and by giving him the mission of establishing the Order in the United States, they probably felt assured that it would endure and perpetuate the Rosicrucian tradition.

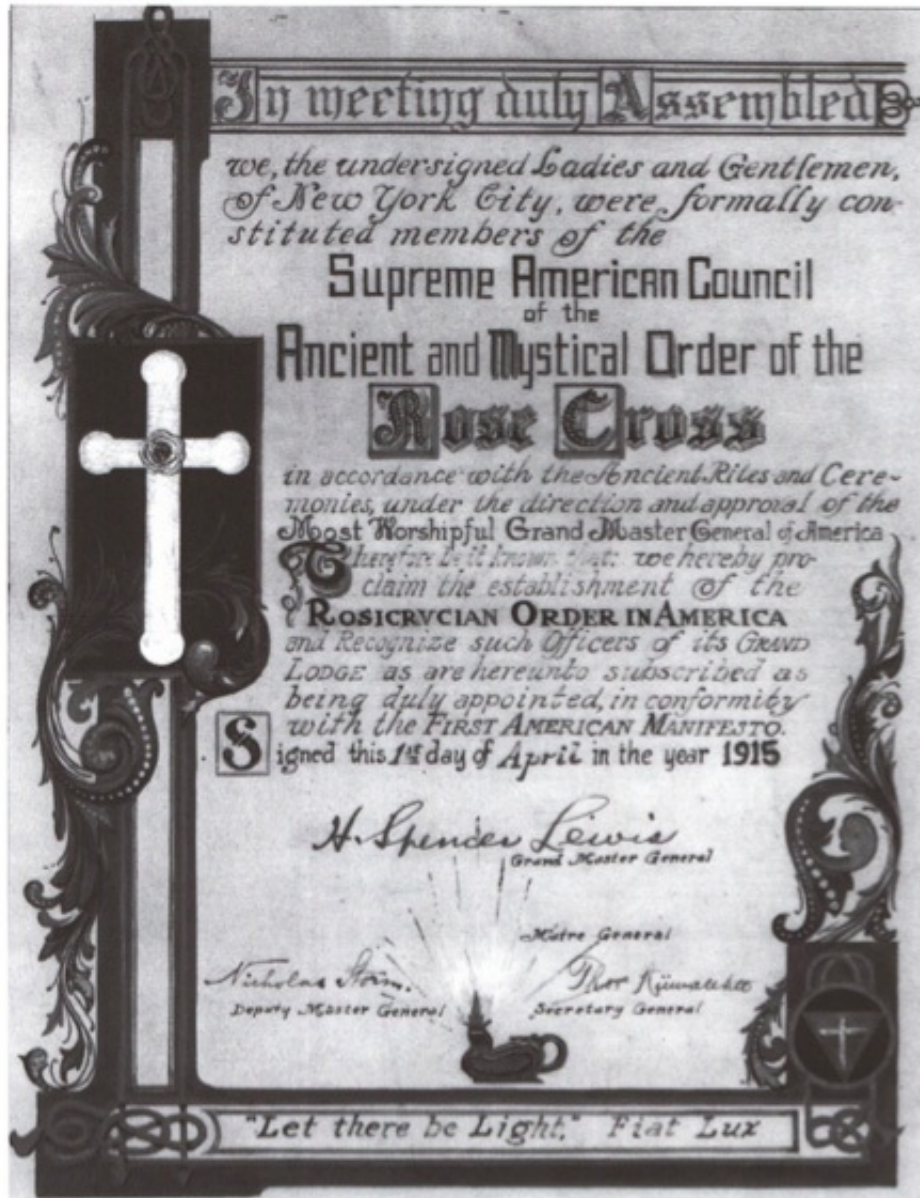


FIGURE 82. AMORC's foundation charter of April 1, 1915.

Chapter 18

THE ANCIENT AND MYSTICAL ORDER ROSAE CRUCIS

From the close of 1909 to 1912, H. Spencer Lewis prepared for the resurgence of the Rosicrucian Order. He established rituals and teachings from the documents he had been provided in France, and he also read all the books he could find concerning Rosicrucianism. At the same time he observed with much skepticism the various other attempts of reviving Rosicrucianism, such as that of the Societas Rosicruciana in Anglia. The American branch of the S.R.I.A. attempted to free itself from Freemasonry, but after the death of its leader, Sylvester Clark Gould, in 1909, the group was in turmoil. The Theosophical Society was likewise experiencing difficulties, and many of its members tried with some degree of success to give it a more Rosicrucian character. Franz Hartmann (1838-1912) had founded the esoteric Rose-Croix in 1888, and much later, in 1909, the theosopher Carl Louis von Grasshoff (alias Max Heindel) established the Rosicrucian Fellowship. Even Rudolf Steiner, who directed the Swiss and German branches of the Theosophical Society, separated himself from Annie Besant, the new

director of the organization. In 1913, Steiner organized the Anthroposophical Society, which he described as a modern metamorphosis of Rosicrucianism.

H. Spencer Lewis was only twenty-nine years old when he prepared himself for what was to become his lifework: the establishment of a Rosicrucian order independent of Freemasonry, the Theosophical Society, and any other organization. His professional activities evolved, and beginning in 1912, he was the head of publicity for the American Voltite Company. He also wrote some articles, such as “The Modern School of Science,” that appeared in the October 1912 issue of the *American Philomathic Journal*, the official journal of the American Philomathic Association. The latter presented Lewis as the former president of the New York Institute for Psychical Research, “Lecturer, Columbia Scientific Academy, Metropolitan Institute of Sciences, and VicePresident Psycho-Legal Society.”¹

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and Vice-Pres. Psycho-Legal Society.)



H. SPENCER LEWIS

One of the most interesting problems of the present century has been the intricate analysis of the phenomena grouped under the general heading of occult.

Not so many years ago it was natural, in the light of limited sci-

entific knowledge and investigation, to attribute much of the so-called weird occurrences to supernatural causes. But science stepped forward with the axiom that nothing should be attributed to supernatural causes which was susceptible of explanation by natural causes.

This opened a field for new research and study. The materialist found in it an opportunity to combat many of the claims of the spiritualist, and the latter, perforce, was in the position of either more satisfactorily proving his claims or retiring.

The result was the present widespread interest in the subject and the great advancement that has been made.

One of the first victories claimed by the truly scientific was the proven fact that much which had heretofore been called *spiritualistic*, or of a spiritual or supernatural nature, was nothing more or less than manifestations of the complex working of man's duality of mind.

By the laws of applied psychology it was demonstrated that the phenomena of telepathy, thought-transference, so-called second sight, inspirational writing, etc., ~~was~~ the result of conditions of perfectly natural, although not absolutely normal, human minds.

W.C.

FIGURE 83. American Philomathic Journal, October 1912.

THE PHILOMATHIC SOCIETY

The relationship that Lewis maintained with the Philomathic Society has remained enigmatic. This organization, whose main purpose was to bring scholars together, was one of many research associations that appeared at the beginning of the 19th century. The first philomathic society was founded in Paris, in December 1788, through the efforts of Augustin-François de Silvestre, an agronomist and Freemason. As André Thomas² has written, it was one of the learned associations that perpetuated, in a somewhat different form, the spirit of research which was the province of Masonic lodges before the French Revolution. The term *philomathic* is derived from the Greek word meaning “friend of knowledge.” The members of this society, who were called philomaths, had “Study and Friendship” as their motto. They envisioned their organization as a general meeting place, where new knowledge would be brought to the fore and broadcasted to the world of learning “by making an uninterrupted luminous chain of truths and instruction.” This society, inspired by the spirit of the Enlightenment, expanded rapidly by establishing networks of correspondents in France and many other countries. Some of the greatest researchers of the past, such as Lavoisier, Lamarck, Laplace, Chaptal, Gay-Lussac, Ampère, Pasteur, Berthelot, were members.

H. Spencer Lewis, who frequented the American scientific gatherings, seems to have been in contact with a French philomathic society. His first biography mentioned that his works had drawn the attention of European scientists—and the attention of Rosicrucians in particular. The text states that he was subsequently elected an

honorary member of the Philomathic Society of Verdun, France, and became a member “of the Franco Ecole R.C.” in 1904.³ That very year, the title of “Supreme Dignitary” of the Rosicrucian Order was offered to him. This information regarding Lewis’ first steps toward the Rose-Croix is surprising, because it is not in keeping with what is usually mentioned. It was never brought up after 1916. However, in a letter dated May 14, 1926, written to François JollivetCastelot, president of the Alchemical Society of France and director of the review *La Rose-Croix*, Lewis noted “I was admitted into the Rose-Croix (F.R.C.) and I owe this honor to the goodness of the member of the old College of Rosicrucians in Verdun, France.” On the other hand, Ralph Lewis mentioned many times the fact that his father was a member of the Philomathic Society of Verdun. Let us add that AMORC often used this name when it began its activities in certain countries, such as Mexico, where the Order veiled its existence under the name of *Sociedad Filomatica*.

THE MARTINIST PROJECT

While he actively prepared for the resurgence of the Rosicrucian Order, Lewis was in contact with various individuals in the world of esotericism. During 1913, he corresponded with Eugène Dupré, who acted as secretary to Demetrius Platon Semelas. As was mentioned previously, the latter, who directed a Martinist lodge in Cairo called the Essenian Temple, claimed to have obtained, in 1902, in a monastery on Mount Athos, the legacy of the Rose-Croix of the Orient.⁴ Beginning in 1911, he conferred the “R.C. Aspirant”

degree initiation on certain Martinists, such as Georges Lagrèze.⁵ We do not know whether Semelas or Dupré mentioned Rosicrucianism in their correspondence with H. Spencer Lewis, because a single letter dated July 23, 1913, is all that remains. The tone used by Eugène Dupré shows that the two men were friends. In this letter, only the subject of Martinism is brought up. Dupré wrote that he sent to H. Spencer Lewis, by way of London, the Martinist rituals, as well as the “S.I.” and “free initiator” certificates so that Lewis could create a Martinist lodge in America. However, due to the effects of World War I, this project only came to fruition after 1934 with the assistance of Victor Blanchard and Georges Lagrèze.

THE VISIT OF AN OLD LADY

In December 1913, Lewis confided to members of the New York Institute for Psychical Research his intention of establishing the Rosicrucian Order in America. For this purpose, he invited them to participate in a meeting that would occur that winter. Using his gifts as draftsman and painter, he created a richly decorated charter officially announcing the Order’s revival. The meeting brought together twelve individuals, but none of them enrolled nor signed the charter. In keeping with what had been announced in Toulouse, the Order would only manifest itself in America in 1915, but matters became more clear at the close of 1914.

In the fall of 1914, May Banks-Stacey, whom Lewis had previously met at the New York Institute for Psychical Research, again contacted him. Did she recognize him as being the man with whom

she would collaborate to help reestablish Rosicrucianism in America, as had been announced to her a few years previously?⁶ Whatever the case, during a second visit on November 25, 1914—in other words, on H. Spencer Lewis’ birthday—she gave him a magnificent red rose, a little chest, and some documents on which he recognized the same Rosicrucian symbols that he had seen in Toulouse in 1909. The two decided to pool their efforts, and, on December 20, 1914, they published an announcement in the *New York Sunday Herald* inviting people interested in Rosicrucianism to join them. Within a short time they met Thor Kiimalehto, who soon became one of Lewis’ closest associates.

THE BIRTH OF AMORC

Monday, February 8, 1915, was a significant day, as the first meeting marking the formation of the Ancient and Mystical Order of the Rose Cross was held at 8:30 in the evening in H. Spencer Lewis’ office, situated at 80 Fifth Avenue. (The organization is now more commonly known as the Rosicrucian Order, AMORC—a title that brings together the Order’s traditional name and the abbreviation of its full name.) As we may see in the notebook where Lewis set down various facts concerning the first meetings of the Order,⁷ nine people were present: his second wife Martha Lewis, May Banks-Stacey, Thor Kiimalehto, Mr. Colgen, Mr. Loria, Miss Burke, Mr. Crossman, Mrs. Col. Sears, and Lewis himself. They constituted the committee charged with organizing the Order.

Following this meeting, H. Spencer Lewis and Thor Kiimalehto

printed a document entitled *American Pronunziamento Number One*⁸ (see fig. 84), which announced the official debut of AMORC's activities. Several days later, the *New York Globe* published an article after which Thor Kiimalehto, the organization's secretary, received several hundred letters from people interested in the Rosicrucian Order. Seventy-five of them were invited to the informational meeting organized on March 3, 1915, at the Leslie, a hotel located on West 83rd Street, near West End Avenue. Eighty men and women eventually participated in the assembly. Included among them were many Freemasons, who were curious about the aims of the Order, as well as a certain number of scientists and skeptics. At the end of the meeting, fifty people decided to become members. Other meetings followed, held in the Empire Hotel under the leadership of Dr. Julia Seton.

On Thursday April 1, 1915, about thirty of the most active workers met on Seventh Avenue, in New York, in a place that was soon to become AMORC's first Rosicrucian Lodge. During this meeting, May Banks-Stacey solemnly gave to Lewis the documents she had received during her trip to India. The directing body of the Order, the Supreme Council, was then formed; after which the Grand Master General and Imperator was elected.⁹ In keeping with May Banks-Stacey's express wishes, H. Spencer Lewis was chosen unanimously to hold this office. The assembly then signed the illuminated charter created during the winter of 1913-1914 (see fig. 82). This document, dated April 1, 1915, proclaimed the birth of AMORC and the authority of its Supreme Council in America. It

needs to be emphasized that although this organization bore the imprint of its founder, it was also the work of numerous collaborators who assisted him in his first efforts. Among the many involved, let us mention: Martha Lewis, Thor Kiimalehto, Alfred E. Saunders, William B. Hodby, George Robert Chambers, Conrad H. Lindstedt, and Albert B. Brassard.

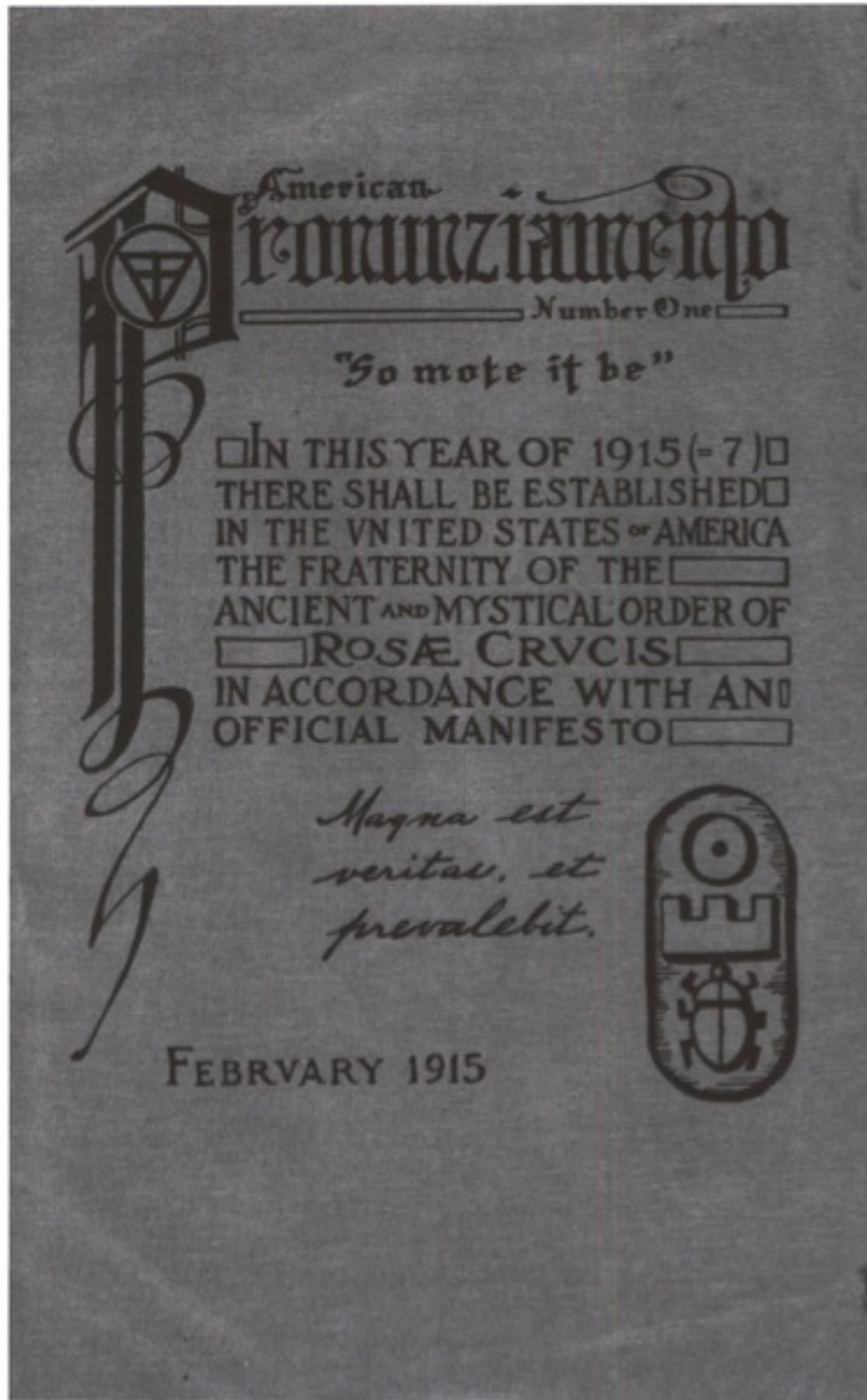


FIGURE 84. *American Pronunziamento Number One*, February 1915.

THE FIRST ROSICRUCIAN LODGE

H. Spencer Lewis and his collaborators adopted the hierarchical structure of the Rosicrucian degrees known since 1777,¹⁰ and the Emperor himself prepared the lessons provided to members in each degree. The first Lodge was established in quarters on Seventh Avenue in New York. It had all the necessary ritualistic accouterment for a Rosicrucian temple. The Lodge room was oriented toward the East, where Lewis had painted a fresco representing the Egyptian countryside, and symbolic stations were laid out at the four cardinal points in the Lodge room. The Lodge's overall appearance was inspired by pharaonic architecture. We should also emphasize that Egyptosophy, established in Rosicrucianism and esotericism since the 18th century, found a means of expression in AMORC. Indeed, Egyptian symbolism occupied a prominent place in the newly founded Rosicrucian Order and, to a certain degree, one of ancient Egypt's key individuals, Pharaoh Akhnaton, occupied in this Order a role similar to that of Hiram in Freemasonry.

The first “convocation”—the name by which AMORC designates its ritualistic meetings—was held on Thursday, May 13, 1915. All of the members received the Order's First Degree initiation. The first person to “cross the threshold” was Martha Lewis, wife of the Emperor. It was also in the New York Lodge that the teachings were provided to the members. As is stated in the *Rosicrucian Initiation*:

Each of the twelve degrees of our order has its initiation night, followed by seven to ten courses—usually two each

month—delivered in the temple. These courses are given by the master of each lodge, while the fratres and sorores sit with their notebook and make a note of signs, symbols and texts. The courses consist in the study of laws and explanations, based on the ancient teachings revealed continually in keeping with new discoveries and inventions made by the world's greatest minds . . . The courses are held in secret, under a sacred form, in tiled lodges (or protected and totally closed), so that none cannot learn some secret word here and reveal it, unless he is truly a member and duly initiated.¹¹

These lessons were often put into writing so that they could be studied in other Lodges. Later they were printed in the form of monographs, so that members living in areas too far away to attend convocation could study the teachings. However, all members had to go to a temple to be initiated. Only those who have been initiated into the Order's First Degree in a Lodge may be considered true Rosicrucians.

In the following year, the Order's rapid growth made it necessary to publish a magazine informing members of the organization's activities. In January 1916, *The American Rosae Crucis*, AMORC's first monthly magazine, was launched. It not only explored Rosicrucian philosophy, but also touched on subjects as diverse as astrology, ontology, esotericism, and symbolism. The increasing number of members led to the creation of new Lodges. On November 25, 1915, the Supreme Council signed a charter for the creation of the Pennsylvania Lodge, in Pittsburgh. At its opening, in January 1916,

no fewer than eighty members were initiated, under the leadership of William B. Hodby. Soon other Lodges were established in Philadelphia, Boston, Wilmerding (Delaware), Altoona, Rochester, Harlan (Iowa), and Detroit.

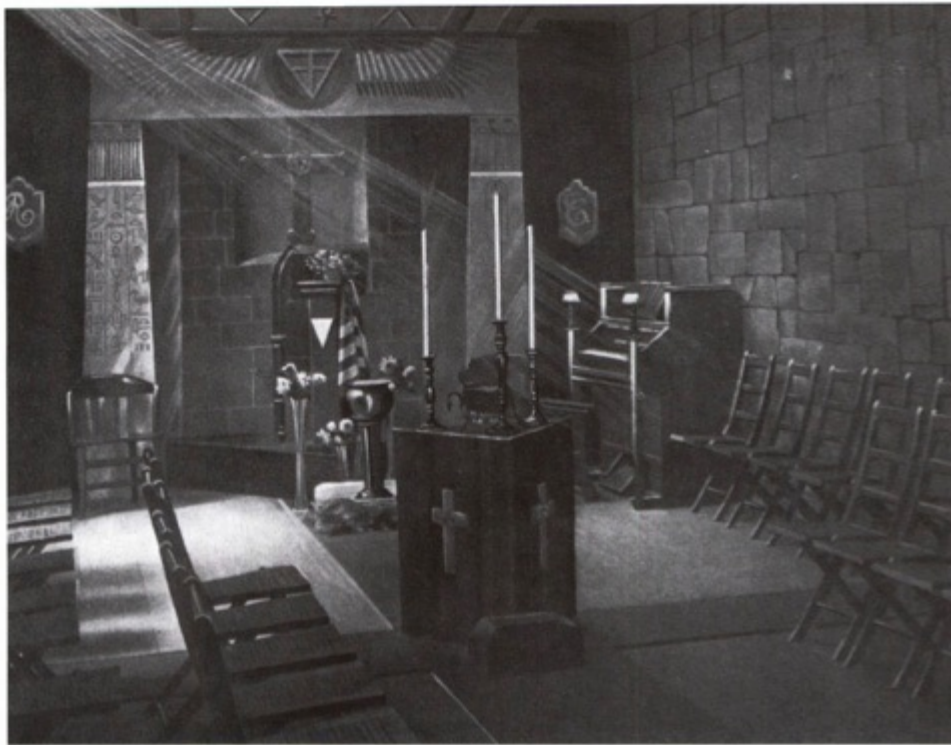


FIGURE 85. The New York Lodge.

AN ALCHEMICAL DEMONSTRATION

As a report published in the July 1916 issue of *The American Rosae Crucis* states, H. Spencer Lewis brought together members of the Order's Fourth Degree, as well as officers of the Supreme Grand Lodge, for a special convocation in the New York City Lodge on June 22, 1916. He wanted them to participate in a special mystical ceremony, at which time he carried out an alchemical transmutation experiment. A representative of the editorial board of the *New York*

World, Charles Welton, was also invited to witness the event. The experiment was carried out starting with a piece of zinc. After a few procedures that allowed him to authenticate the metal as being zinc, Lewis placed the metal in a small china dish, dropped in various powders, and placed it all into a furnace. At the end of this operation, the assembly noted that the zinc had changed in appearance, and an analysis revealed that it had been transformed into gold.

Had the Emperor truly carried out a transmutation by projection of an alchemical powder? The scientific procedure used allows us to neither confirm nor deny it. In any case, Lewis stated that he had been authorized only that one time to conduct this experiment. This alchemical transmutation made a big splash in the American press. The *New York World* reported this strange demonstration in two articles published on June 28 and July 2, 1916. Marie Russak's review, *The Channel—An International Quarterly of Occultism, Spiritual Philosophy of Life, and Science of Superphysical Facts*, also mentioned the alchemical transmutation in its October-November 1916 issue. Franz Wittemans later reported this transmutation in his *Rosicrucian History*, published in Adyar in 1925.

H. SPENCER LEWIS, FREEMASON

AMORC brought together men and women from all walks of life, and thus members belonging to the Theosophical Society and various Masonic obediences were also found here. One of Harvey Spencer Lewis' closest associates, Alfred E. Saunders, was a member

of the King Solomon Masonic Lodge. He had been a Master Mason since 1896, and held the 33rd and 95th degrees of the Memphis-Mizraim rite. He claimed to have been initiated, while living in England, by John Yarker (1833-1913), the Grand Hierophant of Memphis-Mizraim. He was also said to have been the close friend of Samuel Liddell Mathers, one of the founders of the Golden Dawn. Probably influenced by his associate, H. Spencer Lewis decided to enter into Masonry. In 1917, he received the initiations in the Apprentice and Companion degrees at the Normal Lodge No. 523, Masonic Hall, 46 West 24th Street, New York—the lodge to which Saunders belonged.

However, a conflict with Saunders put a premature end to H. Spencer Lewis' Masonic pursuits. Lewis, who had a keen sense of honor, had learned that his associate had fled England in 1903, following a morals charge.¹² He decided that they should part company. Saunders, an ambitious man, could not endure being removed from the management of AMORC. Consequently, he tried to spread rumors among members of the Normal Lodge, using some defamatory words against his old friend, so that Lewis would be prevented from obtaining the Master degree. An internal investigation showed that Saunders' allegations were motivated only by jealousy, and thus the officers of the lodge regretted that they had allowed themselves to be duped. Frank Stromberg, the secretary, then invited the Emperor to receive the Master degree if he so wished. However, Lewis, preoccupied by more pressing concerns, did not have the leisure to carry out this project.



FIGURE 86. Alfred E. Saunders.

THE FIRST ROSICRUCIAN CONVENTION

The activities of the Rosicrucian Order intensified: meetings, administrative tasks, rituals, and initiations followed one another in quick succession. The pace was such that by the end of the year, Lewis realized that he could no longer continue his professional activities. He then decided to dedicate himself exclusively to the Rose-Croix.

Despite significant financial problems, the Order developed

considerably, and in 1917 the Rosicrucians organized their first national convention, which occurred July 31-August 4 at Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. On this occasion, the Order's constitution was first examined and then adopted by the Supreme Council. At the end of this first national meeting, H. Spencer Lewis was satisfied by the work accomplished and realized that the Rosicrucian Order had entered into a new cycle of activity. He felt that the manifestation of the Order was regulated by cycles of activity and inactivity—i.e., a 108-year cycle of activity would be followed by 108 years of inactivity. It is possible that the Order had already functioned according to cycles, but it is difficult to demonstrate the exactness of this number. But if the number is reduced to its basic value—i.e., nine—using theosophical addition ($108 = 1 + 0 + 8 = 9$), it assumes an interesting aspect, since this latter figure represents, in effect, the concept of gestation and cyclical renewal. As Jean Chevalier and Alain Gheerbrant have stated, “nine, being the last in the series of numbers, announces both an end and a beginning—in other words, a transposition on a new level The last of the numbers of the manifested universe, it opens the phase of transmutations. It expresses the end of a cycle, the achievement of a journey, the closing of a ring.”¹³ Was not this idea of occultation and awakening already suggested by the announcement which, according to the *Fama Fraternitatis*, appeared on the door of Christian Rosenkreuz's tomb: “I will open in 120 years”?

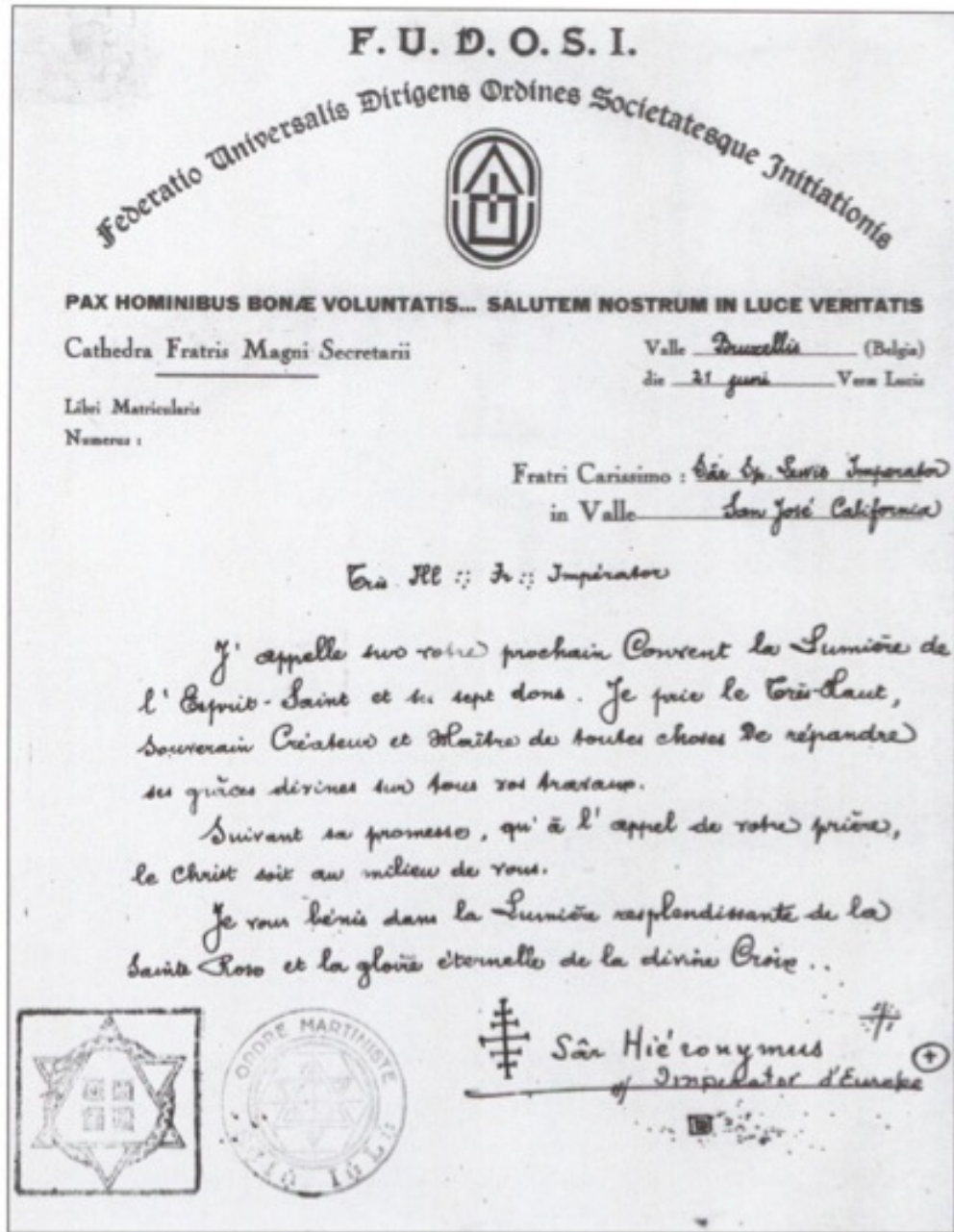


FIGURE 87. Letter from Sâr Hieronymus (Émile Dantinne) to Harvey Spencer Lewis. The official symbol of the F.U.D.O.S.I., seen in the letterhead just below the name of the organization, was designed by H. Spencer Lewis in 1934. This unique design incorporates elements of the principal mystical symbols of the orders of the F.U.D.O.S.I., artistically and effectively united. The body of legates and dignitaries attending the organizations 1934 congress unanimously accepted Lewis' design.

Chapter 19

INTERNATIONAL ALLIANCES

AFTER HAVING DISCUSSED the beginnings of the Ancient and Mystical Order Rosae Crucis in the last chapter, let us now consider some of the significant events in the following years, especially those involving its connections with other contemporary initiatic organizations.

AMORC's early years were marked not only by the enthusiasm which characterizes the beginnings of a great project, but also the tests and trials inherent to its realization. The situation was especially difficult, as the United States was passing through a period of recession, followed by the country entering World War I in April 1917. At the time the United States entered this conflict, the *Vaterland*, a huge German transatlantic luxury liner moored in New York harbor was seized as a war prize. It was the sister ship of the *Imperator*, both of the Hamburg-Amerika Line, with the latter becoming the source of unfounded suspicions on the part of the American government regarding AMORC. Some zealous federal agents imagined that the Order was in contact with Germany, seeing that its leader bore the title of Imperator. This grotesque mistake led to searches of the organization's headquarters. Eventually, the

government realized the foolishness of its actions, but many important documents were confiscated and lost, such as a pronunziamento attesting to the fact that H. Spencer Lewis had received in Toulouse the authority to establish the Rose-Croix in the United States. This document had been sent by the French Rosicrucians to Thor Kiimalehto, the Order's secretary, in October 1916.

Shortly afterwards, in 1918, AMORC experienced further adversity: due to embezzlement on the part of its treasurer, the Order's financial situation was placed in jeopardy. However, despite such obstacles, the Order succeeded in putting itself on a sound footing so as to best serve the growing number of men and women who desired to affiliate. In May 1919, due to the assistance of William Riesener, an industrialist and member of AMORC, the organization's headquarters were moved from New York to San Francisco.

As articles published at that time indicate, H. Spencer Lewis experienced a period of discouragement and even considered quitting all administrative duties. Such doubts were of short duration, however, because the Order's rapid expansion restored his enthusiasm. AMORC began to develop around the world. In September 1920 Denmark received a charter to establish a Grand Lodge under the direction of Svend Turning (1894-1952). The first Rosicrucian meeting in Denmark took place in Frederiksberg on September 1920, at IsolTemple on Mariendalsvej. In 1921, under the auspices of the Indian Academy of Sciences, India opened itself

to Rosicrucianism under the direction of K.T. Ramasami. AMORC was also establishing itself in such diverse places as Mexico and Java, and a secretariat was formed in England. In May 1921, an article in *The Mystic Triangle* reported that the Order had received a request from members residing in Paris for the creation of a Lodge that would welcome American Rosicrucians traveling through France. Around 1922, AMORC was set up in China and Russia, due to the efforts of M. Prinz-Visser, a Dutch member who, after having worked at the organization's headquarters in the United States, settled in Harbin, Manchuria.¹ At around the same time, Ralph M. Lewis, the Emperor's son, became a member.



FIGURE 88. Charter granted to the Grand Lodge of Denmark in 1920.

THEODOR REUSS AND THE O.T.O.

H. Spencer Lewis was aware that Rosicrucian activities had been

reduced to nothing in Europe due to World War I. He surmised, however, that a few members had survived the conflict, and thus on a number of occasions he attempted to contact them for the purpose of reconstructing the worldwide unity of the Rose-Croix. During 1920 he learned that a congress assembling many initiatic movements was held in July in Zurich, with the aim of uniting the different traditional orders within an international federation—much along the lines of what Papus had attempted in 1908. After obtaining the address of Theodor Reuss, its organizer, from Matthew McBlain Thomson, a Freemason of Salt Lake City,² Lewis wrote to Reuss on December 28, 1920, asking for an account of this event. Theodor Reuss (1855-1923) responded only on June 19, 1921, about six months later, stating that he had in fact decided to withdraw from the Zurich congress after Matthew McBlain Thomson had turned it into a mere money-making scheme.³

As the successor of John Yarker for the Memphis-Mizraim Rite and the Ancient and Accepted Scottish Rite of Cerneau, and as the director of the Ordo Templi Orientis (O.T.O.), Reuss attempted to reorganize the international activities of these three orders. However, his legitimacy was increasingly contested,⁴ and after being snubbed at the Zurich congress, he regarded Lewis as a golden opportunity to extend his influence to the other side of the Atlantic. As we saw in Chapter 14, Reuss claimed that the O.T.O. was an order descending from the 17th century German Rosicrucians.⁵ In his correspondence with Lewis, he described himself as a Rosicrucian.⁶ The Emperor, unaware of the O.T.O.'s exact nature,

seemed to believe him—at least for a few months—and thus proposed that they collaborate. How could Lewis doubt the sincerity of the person who claimed to be both the successor of John Yarker and the continuator of Papus? To seal their union, Theodor Reuss presented Lewis with a charter that conferred on him the 33°, 90°, and 95° of the Memphis-Mizraim Rite, and the VII° of the O.T.O. As this document indicates, he made the Emperor “a honorary member of our Sovereign Sanctuary for Switzerland, Germany, Austria and to represent our Sov. Sanctuary as Gage of Amity near the Supreme Council of the A.M.O.R.C. at San Francisco (California).”⁷ This was in fact a completely honorific charter, because Lewis had neither been initiated into the Memphis-Mizraim Rite nor the O.T.O. Thus, the function of this diploma was limited to making him O.T.O.’s ambassador to AMORC, which was confirmed by the correspondence accompanying the charter.



FIGURE 89. Theodor Reuss.

THE TAWUC

The two men tried to create an organization whose purpose was to direct Rosicrucianism on the worldwide level. Thus, in September 1921 the TAWUC (The AMORC World Universal Council) came into being. However, Lewis seemed to have certain reservations concerning Reuss. For instance, in the article published in AMORC's magazine concerning the new association, he referred only occasionally to his collaborator by name. Moreover, as their correspondence demonstrates, it was only after having been assured that Reuss was no longer associated with Aleister Crowley did Lewis feel willing to commit himself.⁸ In any case, Lewis' suspicions were well founded, because it soon appeared that he and his collaborator did not share the same objectives. When Reuss wanted it mentioned in TAWUC's constitution that one of the organization's principal objectives was to "propagate a holy Gnostic religion and to set up some departments of spiritual instruction, publications of political economics, social economics ...," the Emperor grew concerned and refused to move forward. Reuss then proposed to discuss the text of the constitution at a convention that he was organizing in Switzerland.

From that moment, the collaborative projects between America and Europe crumbled, and Lewis began to catch a glimpse of his correspondent's real intentions. He realized that he had acted too hastily and tried to stall for time. Sensing the hesitation of his correspondent, Reuss made some fresh proposals and suggested that a meeting be arranged between American and German Rosicrucians as part of a tourist excursion to Oberammergau, a Bavarian village

renowned since 1634 for its enactments of the Passion play. The director of the O.T.O. worked for an office that organized these theatrical productions, and he wanted the Emperor to attend the May 1922 production, accompanied by some 500 members. Seeing that his correspondent was primarily interested in using AMORC as a way of obtaining money, Lewis kept his distance. Beginning in September 1921, he no longer answered Reuss' letters—except for one last time on May 20, 1922—and the relations between the two men drew to an inconclusive end. The TAWUC project remained a dead letter, although it stirred the imaginations of some historians whose writings have become the source of many errors. Soon afterwards Theodor Reuss entered into a great silence as he passed “to the eternal East” on October 28, 1923, in Munich.⁹

THE ROSICRUCIANS OF FRANCE

H. Spencer Lewis had the pleasure of seeing his son Ralph increasingly involved in the activities of the Order. During 1924 the latter was elected Supreme Secretary of AMORC. In the following year, the evolution of the organization led to its moving once again, and its headquarters were set up in Tampa, Florida.

In 1925, Earle R. Lewis, the Emperor's brother and treasurer of the Metropolitan Opera Company of New York, became acquainted with Maurice Jacquet (1886-1954). This French pianist, orchestral conductor, and composer lived for some years in the United States with his wife Andrée AmalouJacquet, a renowned harpist.¹⁰ He liked people to call him the Duke of Misserini and gave concerts at the

Maxime Theatre in New York. As this musician was a Freemason who was also interested in Rosicrucianism,¹¹ Earle R. Lewis thought that it would be interesting to put him in contact with his brother. The Emperor proposed that they meet at a conference he was giving in New York in November 1925. Maurice Jacquet informed Lewis on November 21 of his obligation to be in Chicago for a concert on this date, but he stated at the end of his letter: “I am Rose-Croix.”¹²

Nonetheless, the two men did finally meet, and Maurice Jacquet did not hesitate to show his enthusiasm for AMORC. In 1926 he suggested that the Emperor get in contact with the highest authorities of French Freemasonry, and, with this purpose in mind, Jacquet put him in touch with André Mauprey, a playwright, 33° Mason, and a member of L’Effort Chapter directed by Firmin Gémier. As we will see, André Mauprey played an important role in the development of AMORC in France.

Maurice Jacquet’s wishes soon came true, because H. Spencer Lewis intended to go to Europe at this time to look into an unusual matter. In January 1926 he had received from Basel, Switzerland, a letter of invitation from Theodor Reuss—although the latter had died in 1923! He also wanted to take advantage of his travels to meet AMORC’s French members, who undoubtedly envisioned developing the Order in France. Moreover, in May 1926, due to the intervention of John P. Callaghan, a Rosicrucian living in Montreal, the Emperor was in correspondence with François Jollivet-Castelot, president of the Alchemical Society of France. This

eminent esotericist had published since 1920 a periodical devoted to alchemy entitled *La Rose-Croix*. At the end of May, he became an honorary member of AMORC.¹³

THE JOURNEY TO FRANCE IN 1926

Upon arriving in France on August 11, 1926, H. Spencer Lewis met M. Malherbe and his wife, two members of the Order, as well as Charles Lévy, a Freemason who would become the Grand Secretary of AMORC for northern France. He also contacted Firmin Gémier and Camille Savoie (1869-1951). The latter was one of the highest authorities of French Freemasonry. The Grand Commander of the Grand College of Rites, he was trying at that time to reorganize the activities of the Masonic Rose-Croix Degree. Enthusiastic about anything that could bring people together, he was interested in Rosicrucianism and manifested an especially keen interest in AMORC. Following their interview, a more official meeting was organized for the month of September. Meanwhile, Lewis did a little touring while pursuing his activities. He traveled to Toulouse, where he met Ernest Dalmayrac, a member of the Rose-Croix Chapter, of L'Encyclopédique Lodge.¹⁴ In one of the Emperor's albums can be seen a photograph of Dalmayrac's house in Toulouse, with the following inscription: "The R.C. Headquarters in Toulouse.

ANDRÉ LEBEY AND THE LEAGUE OF NATIONS

According to the accounts of his travels, Lewis participated in a

mysterious conclave in Toulouse.¹⁵ What were the Emperor's real activities in this city? It remains difficult to say. As was often the case with his reports, he blended personal mystical experiences with actual facts, so as to veil their precise meaning. Nonetheless, it is possible that, while in Toulouse, he took part in some meetings which brought together initiates from various backgrounds. However, in a sort of initiatic ecumenism, he often tended to describe Freemasons of the Rose-Croix degree as Rosicrucians, since these men adhered to the same concepts of peace and brotherhood as he did. One piece of information given by Lewis reveals this inclination. He stated that many of the conclave's participants took part one week later in the opening session of the League of Nations.¹⁶ This worldwide organization, headquartered in Geneva, was established immediately after World War I to help maintain peace between nations and to avoid having the horrors of war recur. It is possible that the meeting mentioned by the Emperor was a preliminary gathering held in a lodge in Toulouse at the end of August 1926, shortly before the session of the League of Nations in Geneva. Among the various individuals he met during his travels in France, let us also mention André Lebey (1877-1938),¹⁷ the Grand Orator of the Grand College of Rites and one of the French promoters of the League of Nations.¹⁸

In addition to the preparatory meetings held in Toulouse, it is possible that Lewis participated in those that were organized in Geneva by the officers of the League of Nations, when he returned to this city. Later, in a letter addressed to the American consul in

Geneva in response to the criticism of one of his detractors, he stated that the international conferences of Rosicrucians and Freemasons were held in Geneva in 1926, at the same time as the fall session of the League of Nations, and that he himself had participated in one of these meetings.



GRAND ORIENT DE FRANCE
GRAND COLLÈGE DES RITES
SUPRÊME CONSEIL
POUR LA FRANCE & SES COLONIES

Z. de PARIS, le 12 Juillet 1928 (n. v.)

Monsieur Spencer Lewis 33^{me}
Imperial au Suprême Conseil No. - Grè.

Mon tr. ch. et ill. ch. fr. et Impérateur.

J'ai reçu avec un grand plaisir votre lettre
m'annonçant votre visite pour cet hiver.

Cela sera une joie pour moi de vous recevoir
ainsi que nos fr. qui vous accompagneront et, si
vous voulez bien me prévenir d'avance, j'organi-
serais pour cette époque une tenue semestrielle
d'ateliers supérieurs.

J'ai, moi aussi, bien souvent pensé à vous
et regrette que mon ignorance de la langue
anglaise ne me permette pas de correspondre
plus fréquemment avec vous.

Vous avais demandé si vous n'aviez pas une
traduction française du cours initiatique que
vous aviez fait parvenir à notre fr. Levy.

Cela m'aurait beaucoup facilité dans
l'organisation d'un centre rosicrucien à
Paris, ainsi que je vous l'avais fait espérer.

Dans l'espérance et la joie de vous revoir
bientôt je vous renouvelle l'assurance de mes
sentiments de fraternité, affection et sans saluer
sous la fr. de droite :-

Le T. P. S. Grand Commandeur.

Camille Savoire
C.S.

FIGURE 90. Excerpts from a letter written by Camille Savoire to Harvey Spencer Lewis on July 12, 1928.

A RECEPTION AT THE GRAND ORIENT IN PARIS

After his trip to Toulouse, Lewis stopped in Nice at the beginning of September to meet once more with André Mauprey, who had invited him to spend seven days in his villa of Golfe-Juan. Together they discussed a possible collaboration between AMORC and the European Dramaturgical Society, of which the French were in charge. The relationship between the two men was quite brotherly, and André Mauprey would become the legate of AMORC for France.

Afterwards Lewis returned to Paris, where Camille Savoie had invited him to participate in a special meeting in the Temple No. 1 of the Grand Orient of France on September 20. The ceremony was a lodge meeting of the grand chapter—in other words, a workshop reserved to the regular members of the 18th degree, that of the Rose-Croix. The work was directed by Camille Savoie, Grand Commander of the Grand College. André Lebey, the Grand Orator, was present, as was Ernest Dalmayrac, who represented L'Encyclopédique Lodge of Toulouse. As the *Bulletin du Grand Orient* stated, during this meeting, “the T.I11.F. Spencer Lewis, 33°, Emperor of the R.C. of the United States, in Tampa (Florida), was brought into the grand chapter with the honors due his rank. Received solemnly by the Grand Commander who, in lofty words, welcomed him, thanked him for his visit, and invited him to take his place in the East, where, by his presence, he would honor this important lodge meeting, bringing together all the representatives of the chapters of the Federation.”

THE BEGINNINGS OF ROSICRUCIANISM IN

FRANCE

Before returning to the United States, H. Spencer Lewis continued his meetings in Europe. What was the result of his visit to Basel? He did not indicate, but it is probable that he met Theodor Reuss' successors, because, in 1930, the project that they had conceived together was taken up once again by Heinrich Tränker. It likewise came to a dead end.

Upon returning to Tampa, the Emperor remained in contact with Camille Savoie, because the latter wished to be personally involved in the development of AMORC in France.¹⁹ However, in a letter dated July 12, 1928, he brought up his difficulties in collaborating usefully, as his command of English was poor (See fig. 90).

H. Spencer Lewis did not seem to have been much in favor of the idea of developing Rosicrucianism under the wing of French Freemasonry. On this score, Maurice Jacquet was in agreement and deplored the “European Masonic trust” desired by the Grand Orient of France. Although some Freemasons wanted to become members of AMORC, the pioneering Rosicrucian groups in France were created outside the pale of Freemasonry. The first was established in Paris under the direction of Charles Lévy, and the second in Nice under André Mauprey. Two individuals in this group—Dr. Clément Lebrun (1863-1937) and Dr. Hans Critter (1874-1953)—distinguished themselves and were to experience a special destiny. In November 1933 H. Spencer Lewis proposed that Clément Lebrun replace Charles Dana Dean, the Grand Master for

the United States, who had just died. Although seventy years old, Lebrun left Nice for San Jose, where he occupied the office of Grand Master until his death in 1937. For Hans Grüter, he became Grand Master of France.²⁰ He was assisted by Jeanne Guesdon (1884-1955). The latter, who spoke perfect English, had joined the Order in 1926 while living in Cuba. She returned permanently to France in 1930, where she became a highly esteemed associate. Although she only had the title of Secretary, Ms. Guesdon was in fact the real director of AMORC in France.

NICHOLAS ROERICH AND THE WORLD COUNCIL

In November 1927, AMORC left Tampa, Florida, to establish its headquarters in San Jose, California. This was the beginning of activities in Rosicrucian Park, whose architecture was inspired by the ancient Egyptian style. Soon afterwards, in 1930, an Egyptian Museum was opened. Recognized by the International Council of Museums (ICOM) and by the Egyptian National Museum of Cairo, it has welcomed thousands of visitors over the years. It remains the largest Egyptian museum on the west coast of the United States and continues to mount important exhibitions. For example, in 1999 the museum's exhibit *Women of the Nile* attracted the attention of the major American television networks.

At the beginning of the 1930s AMORC's development in the world was such that it became necessary to create an International Supreme Council, the World Council, composed of those

individuals who directed the Order in the different parts of the world—France, Denmark, the Netherlands, Canada, Puerto Rico, Bolivia, Australia, Sweden, England, China, and Poland. Among these members, the presence of the Russian painter Nicholas Roerich (1874-1947) may be noted. According to what is revealed by the correspondence between Roerich and the Emperor between 1929 and 1940, he apparently became a member of the Order in 1929, the period in which he was proposed as a candidate for the Nobel peace prize.²¹ H. Spencer Lewis related that he met Nicholas Roerich at the inauguration of the Roerich Museum in New York, on October 17, 1929.

Named a legate for AMORC, Nicholas Roerich was charged with carrying out certain missions. Thus, in 1934, at a time when he directed, at the request of the American government, an expedition across China and Mongolia to find plants capable of combating the desertification of the American prairies, he stopped at Harbin in order to meet his Rosicrucian compatriots. The articles published between November 18 and November 24, 1934, in *Le Temps de Kharbine* retraced his activities. One of the articles, entitled “Nicholas Roerich—legate of the Great White Brotherhood—AMORC,” had the subtitle “The true face of the academician N. Roerich unveiled.” Indeed, he was suspected of being a Freemason in the pay of the American government. Certain journalists saw in the three circles that decorated the Banner of Peace designed by Nicholas Roerich—a special flag meant to protect cultural treasures in the case of war—the three points of Freemasonry. Nicholas Roerich protested in

these same newspapers, stating that he was a Rosicrucian and that the Order had nothing to do with Freemasonry and politics. What makes these documents important is that they demonstrate in an incontestable way that Nicholas Roerich was actively engaged in Rosicrucianism.

THE POLAIRES

Apart from its internal evolution, AMORC continued to maintain connections with other individuals in the world of esotericism. In September 1930 H. Spencer Lewis came in contact with Cesare Accomani (alias Zam Bhotiva), the director of the Polaires. This strange order claimed to be guided by the “Rosicrucian initiatic center of mysterious Asia.” It had as its mission the reconstruction of the “polar fraternity” with the aim of preparing for the coming of the Spirit under the sign of the Rose and Cross. The Polaires felt that the time was drawing near when “rods of fire” would once again strike certain countries on earth, and that everything destroyed by man’s selfishness and thirst for gold would have to be rebuilt.²² To prove their assertions, they made use of the “oracle of the astral force,” which served to communicate directly with what they described as being a Rosicrucian esoteric center located in the Himalayas.²³ This technique had been given to them in 1908 by Father Julian, a hermit living near Rome. Beginning in 1929 the oracle’s messages incited Zam Bhotiva to create a group called “The Polaires,” in reference to the sacred mountain, the symbolic center of the Primordial Tradition. The first meetings took place on Rue

Richelieu, on the premises of a Parisian newspaper. The information received from the oracle soon led to a dead end. In March 1932, after having searched in vain at Montségur, Zam Bhotiva became discouraged and left the order. Victor Blanchard (1884-1955), the Grand Master of the Martinist and Synarchic Order, then replaced him.

Whatever the seriousness of their aims may have been, the Polaires were to play a crucial role because a majority of French occultists, such as René Guénon, Maurice Magre, Jean Chaboseau, Fernand Divoire, Jean Marquès-Rivière, and even Eugène Canseliet, frequented their meetings. Furthermore, this order was to become one of the major groups of the *Federatio Universalis Dirigens Ordines Societatesque Initiationis*—the Universal Federation of Initiatic Orders and Societies, commonly abbreviated as FUDOSI.

THE FUDOSI

In the years preceding World War II great confusion reigned in the realm of esoteric organizations. Indeed, a certain number of movements, both in Europe and America, plagiarized the symbols, names, and rituals of traditional initiatic orders. Certain people were worried, particularly those who were part of the Rosicrucian movements created in Belgium by Émile Dantinne (1884-1969): the Order of the Rose-Croix Universitaire founded in 1923, and the *Ordre Hérmetiste Tétramégiste et Mystique* (O.H.T.M.)²⁴ instituted in 1927. After Joséphin Péladan's death in 1918, Émile Dantinne was presented as his disciple; however, he claimed an initiatic

filiation coming not from the Sâr, but from the “astral” Rose-Croix. The philosophy, rites, and teachings of these orders were similar to the magic of the Renaissance. In this regard they digressed from Joséphin Péladan, who rejected such practices.

The Belgian Rosicrucians were subjected to the criticism of the followers of Max Heindel, Rudolf Steiner, and the Theosophists. Most of them were Martinists and members of the Memphis-Mizraim Rite. They initially placed themselves under the direction of the Sovereign Sanctuary of Jean Bricaud, but became independent beginning in 1933. However, upon separating, they wanted to associate themselves with an organization of international stature. Following the advice of Franz Wittemans who was already in contact with the American Rosicrucians, Jean Mallinger (1904-1982), a close associate of Émile Dantinne, wrote the following to H. Spencer Lewis on January 11, 1933: “We will be very honored to affiliate ourselves with the eminent Rosicrucian Order, of which you are the Chief and Guide . . . we will be very happy to be able to collaborate in AMORC’s activities” It is from this first contact that FUDOSI came into being. The goal of this association was to federate the initiatic orders and societies in such a way as to protect them from numerous non-traditional organizations that appeared at this time. During its existence, from 1933 to 1951, FUDOSI brought together organizations as diverse as the Ancient and Mystical Order Rosae Crucis, Rose-Croix Universitaire, Order Hermetiste Tetramegiste et Mystique, Ordredes Polaires, Ordre Martiniste Synarchique, Traditional Martinist Order, Synarchical

Union of Poland, Kabbalistical Order of the Rose-Croix, Universal Gnostic Church, Society of Templar Studies and Researches, Order of the Militia Crucifera Evangelica, Order of the Lily and the Eagle, Order of the Unknown Samaritans. The Masonic Order of Memphis-Mizraim was also represented for a time.²⁵



FIGURE 91. Harvey Spencer Lewis.

THE TRIANGLE OF THE FUDOSI

The Federation, set up in Brussels, was directed by a triangle of Imperators: H. Spencer Lewis, Émile Dantine, and Victor Blanchard. Each represented one aspect of Rosicrucianism : the first, that of America (Ancient and Mystical Order Rosae Crucis); the second, that of Europe (Rose-Croix Universitaire et Universelle); and the third, that of the Orient (Fraternity of Polaires). Within FUDOSI, the three men bore an initiatic name: Sâr Alden (H.S.

Lewis), Sâr Hieronymus (É. Dantinne), and Sâr Yésir (V. Blanchard). The Federation held its first conventicle in Brussels in August 1934. H. Spencer Lewis took an active role in the FUDOSI from 1934 to 1939, the year of his death.

Despite its noble ideals, the FUDOSI project was quite utopian. First of all, a few young Belgian initiates attempted to use the Federation as a way to dominate the world of esotericism according to their own conceptions. Furthermore, it was Jean Mallinger, rather than Émile Dantinne, who directed the movement in Belgium, but his character was poorly suited to an organization that brought together orders following different methods and philosophies. Lastly, Europe was rent by tensions that soon would plunge most of the world into a terrible war. As reported by Ralph M. Lewis, one of FUDOSI's officers wanted the federation to assume unacceptable positions: first of all, he insisted that all the orders of the federation should conform to his personal conceptions as to their way of developing and functioning. Furthermore, he expressed his unhappiness over the fact that AMORC included members of the black race.²⁶ Although Ralph M. Lewis did not name the author of these scandalous words, it may be easily supposed that they were expressed by Émile Dantinne himself or by Jean Mallinger. Indeed, the documents published by Lucien Sabah lead us to believe that the two men were profoundly racist and that they adhered to the thesis of a "JudeoMasonic plot" dear to the Vichy government.²⁷ We can understand how this attitude was strongly deplored by other members of FUDOSI.

Let us specify that H. Spencer Lewis' position concerning race was always clear: for him, there did not exist any superior or inferior race. In his book *Mansions of the Soul*, published in 1930, he stated: “. . . it may be mentioned that this ancient understanding of the association of all egos with each other, and the uniting of all souls into one soul, was the foundation for the belief in the universal brotherhood of man through the universal fatherhood of all beings, and establishes the fact that all human beings are brothers and sisters under one creator and of the same essence, same vitality, and same consciousness, regardless of race, creed, color, or other distinctive elements of the ego.”²⁸ In another text, Lewis noted: “My sympathies, personally, extend to the so-called negro race because of the things they have had to suffer, just as the Jews in the early days after the Christian period had to suffer the loss of their land, their country and estates and their high standing because of prejudice, intolerance, and misunderstanding.”²⁹

As a whole, FUDOSI was composed primarily of worthy individuals in love with brotherhood and spirituality, who shared Lewis' tolerance and humanity. On the other hand, the innovations and avantgarde way of thinking of the Americans have often shocked Europeans locked into their traditions.

FUDOSI's work was interrupted by the war of 1939-1945, only resuming in 1946. It was Ralph M. Lewis who participated in the final meetings. After his father departed the earth plane on August 2, 1939, Ralph Lewis continued to work for the Federation despite the underhanded opposition of Jean Mallinger.³⁰ However, the

external conditions were not the same. Indeed, since the orders composing FUDOSI had acquired a recognition that protected them from the risks of plagiarism, the organization had little reason for continuing. Thus, on August 14, 1951, its members decided to disband the organization.

A page in the history of Rosicrucianism was turned with the departure of H. Spencer Lewis. Apart from the major role he played in the foundation of AMORC and the influence he exercised in the world of esotericism, he was an individual of eclectic interests. It should be remembered that he established the fifth planetarium in the United States and the first museum of Egyptology on the west coast of the United States. Some years previously, he had set up one of the first private radio stations of New York, which was devoted in great part to programs of a cultural and philosophical nature. To these should be added the numerous paintings that he completed on esoteric and symbolical subjects, some of which have acquired a national renown. He was also a member of numerous philanthropic societies and associations—his foremost quality, known to many, being humanitarianism. As with all extraordinary persons, he was naturally criticized and defamed,³¹ but H. Spencer Lewis worked with such ardor and conviction in serving Rosicrucianism that his contribution to the Rosicrucian heritage can never be slighted or overlooked.



FIGURE 92. Ralph Maxwell Lewis

Chapter 20

THE CONTEMPORARY ERA

After World War II, Ralph M. Lewis (1904-1987), the new Emperor, reorganized the activities of the Ancient and Mystical Order Rosae Crucis. Under his direction, Grand Lodges and Lodges were established in most countries of the world. In keeping with the wishes of H. Spencer Lewis, he proceeded with a revision of the teachings intended for the members. At the same time, he wrote a large number of articles concerning esotericism and philosophy, as well as many noteworthy books, such as *The Sanctuary of Self* (1948) and *Essays of a Modern Mystic* (1962). During Ralph Lewis' administration, he traveled all over the world to meet members of the Order and its directors, notably during Rosicrucian conventions. On January 12, 1987, he left this world, after having worked for forty-eight years in the service of the RoseCroix. He left us with memories of a cultivated man, an inspired philosopher, and a great humanist.¹

Following the death of Ralph M. Lewis, Gary Stewart was elected to the office of Emperor on January 23, 1987. Unfortunately, he did not rise to the task and committed grave errors. He was finally dismissed by all the Grand Masters on April 12, 1990. To replace

him, the Grand Masters unanimously chose Christian Bernard, who at that time was the Grand Master of the French-language jurisdiction. Having worked for more than twenty years in serving this jurisdiction, he now devoted his experience to the Order as a whole. Under his direction, AMORC has become increasingly internationalized, and its teachings have been revised once more, in keeping with the necessary rule that they always be kept up to date so as to respond to the evolution of consciousness and thinking.



FIGURE 93. A Rosicrucian temple

THE TEACHINGS OF AMORC

Concerning the teachings of AMORC, and without entering into details that have no place in a book that is primarily concerned with

Rosicrucian history, we will limit ourselves to stating that they take the form of monographs that cover twelve degrees of material. They generally deal with the great themes of the Tradition, including those of the origins of the universe; the nature of time and space; the laws of matter, life, and consciousness; the nature of the human soul and its spiritual evolution; the mysteries of death, the afterlife, and reincarnation; traditional symbolism; and the science of numbers. To these topics are added practical experiments devoted to learning such fundamental mystical techniques as mental creation, meditation, prayer, and spiritual alchemy.

As AMORC favors freedom of consciousness, its teachings are not dogmatic or sectarian in character. They are proposed to members as the basis for reflection and meditation, with the aim of passing on to them a traditional knowledge that contributes to their spiritual unfoldment. Thus, the ultimate goal of initiatic development is to reach the Rose-Croix state. It is important to emphasize here that the words *Rosicrucian* and *Rose-Croix* do not have the same meaning in AMORC. The first designates an individual who studies the Order's teachings and philosophy, whereas the second indicates an individual who, at the end of this study, has attained perfection, in the sense of being wise in his or her judgments and behavior. It is to this state of wisdom that every Rosicrucian aspires.

Along with the written instructional material that AMORC sends to its members, it perpetuates an oral instruction that may be obtained by attending the organization's Lodges. Although attending the Lodges is not mandatory, they are a useful complement to the

Rosicrucian study, in the sense that they favor the ritualistic aspect of Rosicrucianism and serve the framework of collective study.

It should also be noted that AMORC initiations, in their most traditional form, are conferred in these Lodges. It can be said that these initiations bring the Rosicrucian quest to its perfection. It should be mentioned that at the beginning of the 20th century AMORC sponsored a university that is now known throughout the world as *Rose-Croix University International*. Formed primarily of Rosicrucians specializing in some particular field of knowledge, this university serves as a framework of research carried out in disciplines as diverse as astronomy, ecology, Egyptology, computer science, medicine, music, psychology, physical science, and esoteric traditions. As a general rule, the result of such research is communicated only to members of the Order, but RCUI also holds conferences and seminars that are open to the public. It also publishes books.



FIGURE 94. One of AMORC's official symbols, with the Order's name in Latin. Among Rosicrucians, the cross represents the physical body of man and the rose represents his soul on the path of evolution.

AMORC IN THE WORLD

In the modern era, AMORC has expanded throughout the world and is composed of approximately twenty jurisdictions traditionally called "Grand Lodges," most of which cover all the countries where one language is spoken. All are part of a collective entity bearing the traditional name of "Supreme Grand Lodge." The Order as a whole is directed by a Supreme Council that is composed of the Emperor and all the Grand Masters of the world, each of whom is elected to his or her office by a mandate renewable every five years. This Council convenes on a regular basis to oversee the activities of the Order, both on the jurisdictional level and on a worldwide level. Each Grand Master enjoys the same prerogatives as the others, and

each Grand Lodge has the same ranking as the others.

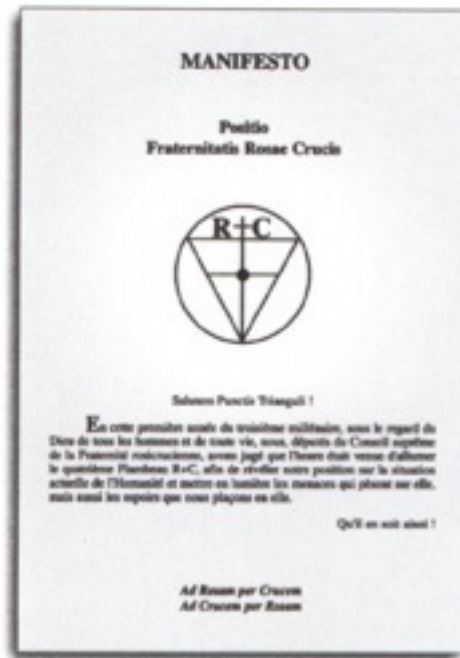


FIGURE 95. *Positio Fraternitatis Rosae Crucis*.

THE FOURTH ROSICRUCIAN MANIFESTO

In keeping with its motto: “The greatest tolerance in the strictest independence,” AMORC is independent of all religions and all political systems. However, it is interested in the evolution of the world. That is why it has expressed its position on the state of humanity in drafting a manifesto entitled *Positio Fraternitatis Rosae Crucis*. Dated March 20, 2001, this text was made public by Christian Bernard on August 4, 2001, at a world convention held in Göteborg, Sweden. This manifesto constitutes an important event in the history of Rosicrucianism, so much so that it was published simultaneously in twenty languages. Whereas the three Rosicrucian manifestoes of the 17th century were primarily addressed to an

intellectual, political, and religious elite, the *Positio*, which may be considered as the fourth Rosicrucian manifesto, is meant for the public at large. It launched an appeal to all those who, all around the world, are concerned about the meaning of human destiny and the fate of humanity.

In the foreword, AMORC makes explicit the reasons motivating the publication of the *Positio*: “History repeats itself and regularly re-enacts the same events, but generally on a broader scale. Thus, almost four centuries after the publication of the first three manifestos, we notice that the entire world, and Europe in particular, is facing an unprecedented existential crisis in all spheres: political, economic, scientific, technological, religious, moral, artistic, etc. Moreover, our planet—the environment in which we live and evolve —is gravely threatened, elevating in importance the relatively recent science of ecology. Certainly, present-day humanity is not faring well. This is why, faithful to our Tradition and our Ideal, we, the Rose-Croix of today, have deemed it advisable to address this crisis through this *Positio*.”

Although it highlights the crucial problems facing humanity at the dawn of the third millennium, the fourth manifesto does not in any way invoke ideas of an approaching doomsday or apocalypse. Rather, it reports on the world situation and brings to the fore those problems and trends which, according to the Rosicrucians, menace the Earth in the near future. According to the Rosicrucians, the crisis confronting humanity has arisen because modern societies are dominated by individualism and materialism. Thus, the *Positio*

appeals primarily to humanism and spirituality. At the same time, the manifesto emphasizes the need for an individual and collective regeneration of all humanity: “In this transitional period of history, the regeneration of humanity seems to us more possible than ever before because of the convergence of consciousness, the generalization of international exchanges, the growth of cross-cultural fertilization, the worldwide coverage of news, as well as the growing interdisciplinary movement among the different branches of learning. But we think that this regeneration, which must take place both individually and collectively, can only come about by favoring eclecticism and its corollary, tolerance.”

Among the key ideas expressed in the fourth Rosicrucian manifesto may be noted the unqualified condemnation of totalitarian ideologies—of which Rosicrucians themselves have been the victims—and the blacklisting perpetrated by political systems based on a single way of thinking. For Rosicrucians, if democracy remains the best form of government, “the ideal in this regard would be for each nation to help promote the emergence of a government bringing together the personalities most capable of governing the affairs of state.” We also note throughout the *Positio* a desire to reaffirm the humanism distinctive to Rosicrucians. Thus we read: “. . . each human being is an elementary cell of a single body—that of all humanity. By virtue of this principle, our conception of humanism is that all humans should have the same rights, be given the same respect, and enjoy the same freedoms, regardless of the country of their origin or the nation in which they

live.”

In another realm , that of spirituality, AMORC ponders in the *Positio* the fate of the great religions, and even lets it be understood that they are fated to disappear in favor of a universal religion. For what is properly called Rosicrucian spirituality, the fourth manifesto defines it in this way: “It is founded, on the one hand, on the conviction that God exists as an absolute Intelligence having created the universe and all that it contains, and on the other hand on the certainty that man possesses a soul that emanates from Him. Better yet, we think that God is manifested in all of Creation through laws that man must study, understand, and respect for his greatest good.” While this spiritualistic humanism may seem utopian, it is precisely what AMORC calls for, recalling that Plato, in the *Republic*, sees the form of ideal society in Utopia. Under these conditions, it is not surprising that the *Positio* ends with a text deliberately given the title of “Rosicrucian Utopia,” placed under the auspices of “God of all men, God of all life.”

The *Positio Fraternitatis Rosae Crucis* continues the lineage of the Rosicrucian manifestos published in the 17th century. We may even say that it constitutes their continuation beyond time and space. As such, it now forms an integral part of the Rosicrucian Tradition and builds a bridge between the Rosicrucians of yesteryear and those of today. Furthermore, since its publication this fourth manifesto has been the object of comments along these lines, on the part of historians of esotericism. Let us mention one in particular: Antoine Faivre, who has written, “It will certainly remain as an outstanding

document in the history of Rosicrucianism.”

CONCLUSION

IN CONCLUDING THIS book, and after having followed in the steps of Hermes Trismegistus and Christian Rosenkreuz, we are fully aware that this work does not constitute an exhaustive study of Rosicrucianism. Faithful to our initial plan, we have striven, first of all, to place Rosicrucianism in the history of esotericism. Thus, by traveling from ancient Egypt to the modern world, we have seen how Western esotericism has developed over the centuries. It may also be noted that in most eras Egypt has been perceived as the historical or mythical center of a mysterious primordial Tradition that initiates have endeavored to pass on from one generation to another.

Secondly, we have discussed the emergence of one of the most important present-day Rosicrucian movements: the Ancient and Mystical Order Rosae Crucis. We have not attempted to deal with all of its history, but we have chosen to present the essential stages. After nearly a century of existence, AMORC has kept alive the flame of Rosicrucianism by adapting it to the modern world, promoting a teaching that relinquishes occultism in favor of the personal and spiritual unfoldment of its members.

As this study has shown, many individuals have worked to establish Rosicrucianism over the centuries. when attempting to wed the Rose and the Cross, some of them have been wounded by the thorns that protect the flower of the soul, as they are not perfect

sages, but rather men and women with all of their human qualities and flaws. Nevertheless, each person has, to one degree or another, contributed to the elevation of humanity, by trying to encourage his or her contemporaries to look beyond the world of appearances, so that they could discover therein the presence of the Divine. And, in so doing, the questions that they have raised concerning the mysteries of the Rose and the Cross—that is, the why and wherefore of Humanity and Creation—remain a living actuality.

NOTES

1. The quotation found at the beginning of this book summarizes the goals of past and present Rosicrucians. It is taken from the first chapter of *Pampaedia*, a treatise on universal education written by Comenius, an individual who was closely associated with the Rosicrucian Order. The *Pampaedia* forms the fourth part of *The Universal Consultation on the Reform of Human Affairs (De rerum humanarum emendatione consultatio catholica)*, a treatise divided into seven parts, which Comenius wrote around 1650, shortly after the end of the Thirty Years' War. The passage is excerpted from John Amos Comenius, 1592-1670: Selections, a work published by UNESCO in 1957 with an introduction by Jean Piaget: *John Amos Comenius on Education*. With an introduction by Jean Piaget (New York: Teachers College Press, 1967, 1957). English edition of *Pampedia* (part 4 of *The Universal Consultation*): *Comenius's Pampaedia, or Universal Education*. Translated from the Latin by A.M.O. Dobbie (Dover, Kent: Buckland, 1986).

INTRODUCTION

1. As Antoine Faivre has demonstrated (*L'Ésoterisme* [Paris, Presses Universitaires de France, coll. "Que sais-je?", 1992] pp. 14-22), these elements may be synthesized into six great

categories. The first is the theory of correspondences, which stresses that everything is connected in the universe, and that a subtle relationship exists between the different parts of Creation. This first characteristic is closely associated with the second, that of living nature, which considers nothing to be fixed or inert in the universe and life to be present everywhere, with degrees of differing and complementary manifestation. The third point characterizing esotericism is the faculty of imagination and mediation—in other words, the ontological possibility, of which man is the carrier, of being able to ascend to the various levels of the cosmos by the mediation of symbols, rites, or myths. From this a fourth characteristic ensues, that of transmutation—in other words, the illuminative experience that permits the soul to regenerate. To these four fundamental elements can be added two secondary concepts: that of concordance, emphasizing that there exists, in all religions and traditions, a common root going back to a Primordial Tradition, an eternal philosophy; and that of transmission, emphasizing that knowledge can be transmitted, by means of initiation, from teacher to student.

Chapter 1

EGYPT AND THE PRIMORDIAL TRADITION

1. 1. Bernard Gorceix, *La Bible des Rose-Croix, traduction et*

- commentaire des trois premiers écrits rosicruciens (1614-1615-1616)* (Paris: PUF, 1970) 125 pp., p. 17.
2. Antoine Faivre, *Accès de l'ésotérisme occidental* (Paris: Gallimard, 1986) p.33. English edition: V01.1: *Access to Western Esotericism* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1994). Vol 2: *Theosophy, Imagination, Tradition: Studies in Western Esotericism* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2000).
 3. Erik Hornung. *L'Égypte ésotérisme, le savoir occulte des Égyptiens et son influence en Occident* (Monaco: Éditions du Rocher, 2001) p. 27. English edition: *The Secret Lore of Egypt: Its Impact on the West* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2002).
 4. Hermes Trismegistus, texts and translations by André-Jean Festugière. Vols. I IV (Paris: Les Belles Lettres, 1946-1954). See also A.-J. Festugière, *La Révélation d'Hermès Trismégiste*, Vol. I, "L'astrologie et les sciences occultes"; Vol. II, "Le Dieu cosmique"; Vol. III, "Les doctrines de l'âme, le Dieu inconnu de la gnose" (Paris: Les Belles Lettres, 1950). English editions of the *Hermetica* include: *Hermetica: the Greek Corpus Hermeticum and the Latin Asclepius in a new English Translation, with notes and introduction* by Brian P. Copenhaver (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995); Salaman, Clement, et al. *The Way of Hermes* (Rochester, VT: Inner Traditions, 2000); Scott, Walter. *Hermetica*. 4 Volumes. (New York: Shambala, 1985).
 5. Regarding the Greek alchemists, see Marcellin Berthelot,

- Collection des anciens alchimistes grecs* (Paris: G. Steinheil, 1887-1888). Regarding the history of alchemy, see Robert Halleux, *Les Textes alchimiques* (Turhout, Belgium: Brépols, 1979).
6. Iamblichus, *Les Mystères d'Égypte*, text edited and translated by Édouard des Places, S.J. Correspondant de l'Institut (Paris: Les Belles Lettres, 1966). English translation of Iamblichus: Iamblichus, *On The Mysteries*. Translated with introductions and notes, Emma C. Clarke et al. (Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2003.)
 7. Hermas, *Le Pasteur*, introduction and notes by Robert Joly (Paris: Éditions du Cerf, coll. "Sources chrétiennes," no. 53 bis, 1997). English edition: Carolyn Osiek, Helmut Koester, *Shepherd of Hermas: A Commentary (Hermeneia: A Critical and Historical Commentary on the Bible)*. (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1999)
 8. Corbin, Henry, *L'Imagination créatrice dans le soufisme d'Ibn Arabî* (Paris: Aubier, 1993) pp. 32, 49-59, 73, and 77. English editions: *Creative imagination in the Sufism of Ibn 'Arabi*. Ralph Manheim, translator (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1969); and *Alone with the Alone: Creative Imagination in the Sufism of Ibn 'Arabi with a new preface by Harold Bloom*. (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1998).
 9. Translation from the Latin Vulgate of the 14th century. Variants of this text (in Arab, Latin, and French) may be found, along with Hortulanus' *Commentary* (Hortulanus 14th

- century) and a translation of Apollonius of Tyana's *Book of the Secret of Creation* (Pseudo-Apollonius of Tyana. *Kitab Sirr al-khaliqah*), in Hermes Trismegistus, *La Table d'Émeraude et sa tradition alchimique*, preface by Didier Kahn (Paris: Les Belles Lettes, 1994). English edition of Hortulanus: Smith, Patrick. J. *The Emerald Tablet of Hermes Trismegistus*. Including the Commentary of Hortulanus. Translated, with additional notes. Smith. Alchemical Studies Series 5 (Edmonds, WA: The Alchemical Press Holmes Publishing, 1997).
10. Julius Ruska, *Tabula Smaragdina, Ein Beitrag zur Geschichte der hermetischen Literatur* (Heidelberg: Carl Winter, 1926). Concerning this text also see Françoise Hudry, "De Secretis Naturae du Ps. Apollonius de Tyane, traduction latine par Hugues de Santala du Kitab Sirr Al-Haliqa," *Chrysopoeia of the Société d'étude de l'histoire de l'alchimie: Cinq traités alchimiques médiévaux: Ps.-Apollonius de Tyane (Balinus): De secretis naturae (Kitab sirr al-haliqa); Ps.-Arnaud de Villeneuve: De secretis naturae; Flos florum (Le livre de Roussinus); Valerand du Bois-Robert: Epître à Madame de Bourgogne; Epître à Maître Abraham* (Paris: S.E.H.A.; Milan: Archè, 2000). *Chrysopoeia* Tome 6, 1997-1999. Notes, Introduction by Sylvain Matton. pp. 1-20; and Hermès Trismegistus, *La Table d'Émeraude*, preface by Didier Kahn (Paris: Les Belles Lettres, 1994).
11. Pierre Lory, *Alchimie et mystique en terre d'Islam* (Lagrasse: Verdier, 1989). Concerning this subject also see Georges C. Anawati, "L'alchimie arabe" and Robert Halleux, "La

reception de l'alchimie arabe en Occident,” in *Histoire des sciences arabes*, t. III, *Technologie, alchimie et sciences de la vie*, under the direction of Rashed Roshdi, Paris, Le Seuil, 1997, pp. 111-141 and 143-154.

12. Henry Corbin, *En Islam iranien* (Paris: Gallimard, 1971).
13. *La Magie arabe traditionnelle*, preface by Sylvain Matton (Paris: Retz, coll. “Bibliotheca Hermetica,” 1977).
14. Sohrawardi (Suhrawardi, Yahyá ibn Habash), *Le Livre de la Sagesse orientale*, translation and notes by Henry Corbin, edited and introduced by Christian Jamet (Lagrasse: Verdier, 1986).

Chapter 2

HERMETICISM AND THE PHILOSOPHIA PERENNIS

1. Juan Garcia Font, *Histoire de l'alchimie en Espagne* (Paris: Dervy, 1976). Spanish edition: García Font, Juan. *Historia de la alquimia en España* (Madrid: Editora Nacional, 1976).
2. *Histoire des sciences arabes* (Paris: Le Seuil, 1998) Tome 3. He reiterates Julius Ruska's thesis.
3. Eugenio Garin, *Le Zodiaque de la vie, polémiques anti-astrologiques à la Renaissance* (Paris: Les Belles Lettres, 1991) chap. II, p. 66; English edition: *Astrology in the Renaissance: the Zodiac of Life*. Translated by Carolyn Jackson and June Allen;

translation revised in conjunction with the author by Clare Robertson (London; Boston: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1983); and by the same author, *Hermétisme et Renaissance* (Paris: Allia, 2001) pp. 49-61. *The Picatrix* was published in *La Magie arabe*, introduction and notes by Sylvain Matton (Paris, Petz, coll. “Bibliotheca Hermetica”) pp. 243-317. English edition of the first two books of the *Picatrix: Picatrix = Ghayat al-hakim: the Goal of the Wise*. Translated from the Arabic by Hashem Atallah; edited by William Kiesel (Seattle: Ouroboros Press, 2002).

4. Frances A. Yates, *Giordano Bruno and the Hermetic Tradition* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1964) pp. 233-234 and 370. She demonstrates that Campanulla’s basic source was not in fact Thomas More.
5. Regarding this text, see the interesting study by Maurice-Ruben Hayoun, *Le Zohar aux origines de la mystique juive* (Paris: Noésis, 1999).
6. Regarding Marsilio Ficino, see Raymond Marcel, *Marsile Ficin (1433-1499)* (Paris: Les Belles Lettres, 1958).
7. He sometimes gives a different hierarchy in which Moses either preceded or followed Hermes.
8. Alfredo Perifano, *L’Alchimie à cour de Côme 1er de Médicis, savoirs, culture et politique* (Paris: Honoré Champion, 1997) pp. 144-150.
9. André-Jean Festugière (translator) *Hermès Trismégiste* (Paris:

- Belles Lettres, 1983) Vol II, pp. 200-207.
10. Yates, *op. cit.*, Chap. IV; and Daniel-Pickering Walker, *La Magie spirituelle et angélique de Ficin à Campanella* (Paris: Albin Michel, 1988). English edition: *Spiritual and Demonic Magic. From Ficino to Campanella* (London, 1958).
 11. Antoine Faivre, *Accès de l'ésotérisme occidentale* (Paris: Gallimard, 1986) p. 128. English edition: Vol 1: *Access to Western Esotericism* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1994).
 12. François Secret, *Les Kabbalistes chrétiens de la Renaissance* (Milan-Paris: Archè, 1985).
 13. Perifano, *op. cit.*, and Yates, *op. cit.*, who have shown that the Renaissance cannot be understood without knowing the contributions of Hermeticism.
 14. Robert Halleux, *Les textes alchimiques* (Turhout, Belgium: Brepols, 1979) p. 85.
 15. Concerning this basic text, see the study by Marie-Louise von Franz (a student of C.G. Jung), *Aurora consurgens, le lever de l'aurore*, translation by Étienne Perrot and Marie-Martine Louzier (Paris: La Fontaine de Pierre, 1982). English edition: *Aurora Consurgens: A Document Attributed to Thomas Aquinas on the Problem of Opposites in Alchemy*. Edited, with a commentary, by Marie-Louise von Franz. A companion work to C.G. Jung's *Mysterium coniunctionis*. Translated by R.F.C. Hull and A.S.B. Glover. (New York: Pantheon

Books, 1966.)

16. Jean Servier has made a good translation of *De Occulta Philosophia*, augmented by an introduction and numerous annotations in *La Magie naturelle, La Magie céleste and La Magie cérémonielle* (Paris: Berg, 1982).
17. Yates, *op.cit.*, pp. 214-216.
18. Bernard Gorceix, *Alchimie* (Paris: Fayard, 1980).
19. Concerning Paracelsus, see Walter Pagel, *Paracelse, introduction à la philosophie de la Renaissance* (Paris: Arthaud, 1963), English edition: Paracelsus; *An Introduction to Philosophical Medicine in the Era of the Renaissance*. (Basel, New York: S. Karger, 1958); and Lucien Braun, *Paracelse* (Geneva: Slatkine, 1995).
20. Roland Edighoffer, “La Rose-Croix au XVIIe siècle” in *Cahiers du G.E.S.C.* (Paris: Archè, 1993) p. 108.

Chapter 3

THE CRISIS OF THE EUROPEAN CONSCIOUSNESS

1. *Du monde clos à l'univers infini* (Paris: Gallimard, 1973) p. 9. English edition: *From the Closed World to the Infinite Universe* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Press, 1968,1974), *Publications of the Institute of the History of Medicine*, the Johns Hopkins University. Third series: The Hideyo Noguchi lectures v. 7.

2. This comment has been made particularly obvious in the various works of Roland Edighoffer, in *Les Rose-Croix et la crise morale du XVIIe siècle* (Paris: Dervy, 1998). In the present chapter, many statements have been inspired by the various works of this author.
3. Pierre Béhar. *Les Langues occultes de la Renaissance* (Paris: Desjonquères, 1996) pp. 201-242.
4. Amalia Perfetti and Michel Blay, “Vide/Plein” in *La Science Classique* (Paris: Flammarion, 1998) pp. 664-669.
5. Pierre Béhar. *Les Langues occultes de la Renaissance, op. cit.* (Paris: Desjonquères, 1996) pp. 163-198.
6. On this point, see Frances A. Yates, *Giordano Bruno and the Hermetic Tradition* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1964) pp. 390-391.
7. Thierry Wanegffelen, *L’Edit de Nantes* (Paris: Le Livre de Poche, 1998) pp. 106-108.
8. Alexandre Koyrè, “Un Mystique protestant, V. Weigel,” in *Mystiques, spirituels, alchimistes du XVIe siècle allemand* (Paris: Gallimard, 1971) chap. IV.

Chapter 4

THE NAOMETRIA AND THE AGE OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

1. Concerning this individual, see “Magister Simon Studio,

Lateinischer Dichter, Historiker, Archäologe und Apokalyptiker 1543-7 (frühestens, 1605),” *Schwäbische Lebensbilder*, im Auftrag der Kommission für geschichtliche Landeskunde in Baden-Württemberg herausgegeben von Max Miller und Robert Uhlend. 6. Band mit 20 Bildtafeln, W. Kohlhammer Verlag Stuttgart 1957. (“Master Simon Studion, Latin Poet, Historian, Archeologist, and Apocalypticist,” *Images of Swabian Life*, at the request of the Commission for Historical Knowledge of the Land of Baden-Württemberg; edited by Max Miller and Robert Uhlend, Vol. VI, Stuttgart, W. Kohlhammer, 1957).

2. Concerning Joachim of Fiore, see Henri de Lubac, *La Postérité spirituelle de Joachim de Flore* (Paris: Lethielleux, 1978) and Henri Mottu, *La Manifestation de l'Ésprit selon foachim de Flore, herméneutique et théologie de l'histoire d' après le Traité sur les quatre Évangiles* (Paris: Delachaux et Niestle, 1977).
3. In November 1993 the musical department of the Rose-Croix University International (RCUI) began to study this unpublished musical work, which was in the form of a manuscript that had been altered over time. In 1995, after painstaking musicological effort, the RCUI succeeded in transcribing this score into modern musical notation. This work was performed at the opening ceremony of the Rosicrucian convention held by AMORC in Paris in August 2000. It was also recorded as part of the fourth volume of the *Antiphonaire de la Rose-Croix: Antiphonaire de la Rose-Croix*,

- vol. IV (Le Tremblay-Omonville: Diffusion Rosicrucienne, 2000).
4. Antoine Faivre, “Élie Artiste ou le Messie des Philosophes de la Nature,” *Aries*, Vol. II, No. 2 and Vol. III, No. 1 (Leiden and Boston: Brill Academia Publishers, 2002 and 2003).
 5. Faivre, *ibid.*, p. 134.
 6. Roland Edighoffer devoted an entire chapter of his book to this prophecy, in *Les Rose-Croix et la crise morale . . .*, *op. cit.*, pp. 211-247.
 7. Frances Yates, in *The Rosicrucian Enlightenment* (Boulder, CO: Shambhala, 1978), provides an entire iconography on this point.
 8. Regarding this subject, see Carl Gustav Jung, *Alchemical Studies*, vol. 13 of Bollingen Series XX (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1967), pp. 290-295. For a long time this text was attributed to G. Dorn, one of Paracelsus’ followers, but Didier Kahn has shown that Paracelsus was the author instead.

Chapter 5

THE ECHOES OF THE ROSE CROSS

1. A French edition of this text was published in 1615 under the name *Les cent premières nouvelles et aduis de Parnasse par*

Traian Buccalin Romain, où sous admirable inventions, gentilles metaphors, et plaisans discours sont traictees toutes matieres politiques d'Etat de grande importance et preceptes mauraux choisis et tirez de tous les bons auteurs, published in French by Thomas de Fougasses, chez A. Perier, rue Saint-Jacques, au Compas, Paris. Chapter 77 occupies pages 457 to 515. The first German translation dates from 1644. The extract represented in the *Fama Fraternitatis* was probably translated into German by Wilhelm Bidenbach, a friend of Tobias Fless. The Rosicrucians of Tübingen admired Traiano Boccacalini. Christoph Besold quoted him in *Opus politicum*, and Johann Valentin Andreae's *Christian Mythology* shows his influence.

2. Thomas Vaughan mistakenly translated this as “Porphyry,” rather than the “Pope” or “Popery,” which the German manuscripts specify.
3. *La Magie naturelle*, Book I of Philosophie Occulte, translation and commentaries by Jean Servier (Paris: Berg, 1982) pp. 32-37. English edition: Agrippa von Nettesheim, Heinrich Cornelius. *Three Books of Occult Philosophy Written by Henry Cornelius Agrippa of Nettesheim, completely annotated with modern commentary*. James Freake, translator. Donald Tyson, editor (St. Paul, MN: Llewellyn, 1993).
4. Concerning this matter, see Chapter I, “The Sabaeans.”
5. The first edition of the *Fama* reads “Damascus,” but the erratum in the same work specifies that it should be

- “Damcar” instead. *L'Encyclopédie de l'Islam* (Leyden-Paris: 1965) Vol. II, p. 224, calls this town Dhamar.
6. Henry Corbin, *L'Imagination créatrice dans le soufisme d'Ibn 'Arabî* (Paris: 1955; reprint 1993, Aubier) p. 20. English editions: *Creative Imagination in the Sufism of Ibn 'Arabî*. Ralph Manheim, translator (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1969); and *Alone with the Alone: Creative Imagination in the Sufism of Ibn 'Arabî* with a new preface by Harold Bloom. (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1998).
 7. Émile Dantinne, “De l'origine islamique de la Rose-Croix,” in *Inconnues*, No. 4, 1950, pp. 3-17.
 8. Brockelmann, *Geschichte der arabischen Literatur*, Vol. II.
 9. For this study, two editions of the manifestos have been used. The first is that published by Diffusion Rosicrucienne in 1995 under the general title of *La Trilogie des Rose-Croix*. This French edition is based on the English translation that Thomas Vaughan made in 1652 from a German manuscript then circulating in England. We feel it would be useful to also refer the reader to Bernard Gorceix's translation, *La Bible des Rose-Croix* (Paris: PUF, 1970), which is based directly on the original German. The quotations in this edition are taken from this edition.
 10. Roland Edighoffer, “Les Rose-Croix et Paracelse,” *Aries*, No. 19, 1998, p. 71, from which we have taken the translation of Paracelsus' text.

11. See Chapter 1, “The Emerald Tablet.”
12. *Visita Interiora Terra Rectificando Invenies Occultum Lapidem—V.I.T.R.I.O.L.*
13. *The Rosicrucian Enlightenment* (London/New York: Ark Paperbacks, 1986) facing p. 48.
14. Carlos Gilly, *Adam Haslmayr, der erste Verkünder der Manifeste der Rosenkreuzer* (Amsterdam: 111 de Pelikaan, Bibliotheca Philosophica Hermetica, 1994).

Chapter 6

THE CONFESSIO FRATENITATIS

1. Papus provided a French translation of this text at the end of his *Traité élémentaire de sciences occultes* (Paris, 1903).
2. *Les Langues occultes de la Renaissance* (Paris: Dejonquère, 1996) chapter IV, pp. 101-115.
3. The quotes from this manifesto are taken from *The Fame and Confession of R:C:* by Eugenius Philalethes.
4. Henry Corbin, *En Islam iranien* (Paris: Gallimard, 1972) vol. I, XXIX. We will return to this fundamental point in the next chapter.
5. See “L’Alchimie au XVIIe siècle,” compiled under the direction of Franck Greiner, *Chrysopeia*, vol. VI, 1999, p. 7.
6. He was the publisher of many alchemical texts, including

the celebrated *Theatrum Chemicum* (6 vols.), the *Complète Works of Paracelsus*, the *Chymical Wedding of Christian Rosenkreuz* (10 vols.), and various other works by Johann Valentin Andreae, Christoph Besold, etc.

7. Antoine Faivre, *Das Erbe des Christian Rosenkreutz* (Amsterdam: In de Pelikaan, 1988). This text was repeated in *Accès de l'ésotérisme occidental* (Paris: Gallimard, 1996), tome II, pp. 263-289. English edition: *Theosophy, Imagination, Tradition: Studies in Western Esotericism* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2000).
8. Roland Edighoffer, *Les Rose-Croix et la crise de conscience européenne au XVIIe siècle* (Paris: Dervy, 1998) pp. 296-297.
9. See Paul Arnold, *Histoire des Rose-Croix et les origines de la franc-maçonnerie* (Paris: Mercure de France, 1990), pp. 120-122, who considers this information to be probable despite some misgivings.
10. See *The Rosicrucian Enlightenment* (Boulder, CO: Shambala, 1978) p. 50.
11. Roland Edighoffer has done a detailed study of this author's work in *Rose-Croix et société idéale selon Johann Valentin Andreae* (Neuilly-surSeine: Arma Artisk, 1982).
12. *Histoire des Rose-Croix . . .*, *op. cit.*, chap. V, pp. 136-156.
13. For more information about this group, see Bernard Gorceix, *Les Amis de Dieu en Allemagne au siècle de Maître Eckhart* (Paris: Albin Michel, 1984) and Henry Corbin, *En*

Islam iranien, op. cit., book VII.

14. *The Imitation of Christ* (1471) by Thomas à Kempis is, after the Bible, one of the most widely read books among Christians. Theophilus Schweighardt (Daniel Mogling), in *Speculum sophericum Rhodo-Stauroticum . . .* (1618), said that when reading Thomas á Kempis one is “already a semi-Rosicrucian.”

Chapter 7

THE EMERALD LAND

1. *Histoire des Rose-Croix* (Bihorel: Bibliothèque des Amitiés Spirituelles, 1932) pp. 110 and 332. This study, even though it contains numerous errors, remains interesting for more than its title.
2. Mircea Eliade, *Le Sacré et le profane* (Paris: 1965, Gallimard). English edition: *The Sacred and the Profane: The Nature of Religion*. Willard R. Trask, translator (San Diego: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1959). Regarding this subject, also see Mircea Eliade and Raffaele Pettazzoni, *L’histoire des religions a-t-elle un sens?* (Paris: Cerf, 1994).
3. A term coined by Rudolf Otto. From the Latin *numen*: God. See his book *Le Sacré* (Paris: Payot, 1949). English edition: *The Idea of the Holy: An Inquiry into the Non-rational Factor in the Idea of the Divine and Its Relation to the Rational*. John W.

- Harvey, translator (London, Oxford, New York: Oxford University Press, 1980).
4. See Henry Corbin, “Pour une charte de l’imaginal,” prelude to the second edition of *Corps spirituel et terre céleste, de l’Iran mazdéen à l’Iran shî’ite* (Paris: Buchet/Chastel, 1979). English edition: *Spiritual Body and Celestial Earth: From Mazdean Iran to Shî’ite Iran*. Nancy Pearson, translator (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, [1989], 1977).
 5. Antoine Faivre, *Les Conférences de Lyon* (Brainele-Comte: Éd. du Baucens, 1975) pp. 118-120.
 6. Carl Gustav Jung, *Psychologie et alchimie* (Paris: Buchet-Chastel, 1970)pp. 355-362.English edition: *Psychology and Alchemy*. R.F.C. Hull, translator (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1968).
 7. *Ibid.*, p. 12.
 8. See *L’Homme et son Ange* (Paris: Fayard, 1983) pp. 51-54, and *L’Homme de lumière dans le soufisme iranien* (Paris: Présence, 1971) pp. 34-37. English edition: *The Man of Light in Iranian Sufism*. Nancy Pearson, translator (Boulder, CO: Shambhala; [New York]: distributed by Random House, 1978).
 9. Concerning this text, see Chapter II, “The Picatrix.”
 10. Corbin, *L’Homme et son Ange*, op. cit., pp. 54-57.
 11. He developed these elements in *En islam iranien, op. cit.*, vol. IV, book VII.
 12. Regarding the Friends of God, in addition to the numerous

- writings of Henry Corbin, see also Bernard Gorceix, *Les Amis de Dieu en Allemagne au siècle de Maître Eckhart* (Paris: Albin Michel, 1984), and Roland Edighoffer, *Les Rose-Croix et la crise de la conscience européenne au XVIII^e siècle* (Paris: Dervy, 1998) pp. 249-263.
13. Jean Markale, *Le Graal* (Paris: Albin Michel, 1996) pp.258-263. English edition: *The Grail: The Celtic Origins of the Sacred Icon* (Rochester, VT: Inner Traditions, 1999).
 14. *En islam iranien, op. cit.*, vol. IV, book All, chap. III, pp. 390-460.
 15. *En islam iranien, op. cit.*, vol. IV, p.393.
 16. *L'Homme et son Ange, op. cit.*, p. 241.
 17. Regarding all of these points, see in particular the chapter "Juvenilité et chevalerie" in *L'Homme et son Ange, op. cit.*
 18. He touches upon this theme in many works, as in *L'Homme et son Ange, op. cit.* pp. 102-105.
 19. See the instruction for the reception of the Novice Knightly Brothers of the Benevolent Knights of the Holy City, in Élie Steel-Maret, *Les Archives secrètes de la franc-maçonnerie* (Geneva: Slatkine, 1985) pp. 92-113.

Chapter 8

THE CHYMICAL WEDDING

1. *Aspects de la tradition alchimique au XVIII^e siècle*, acts of the

- international conference of the University of Reims-Champagne-Ardennes on 2829 November 1996, under the direction of Frank Greiner, *Chrysopoeia* (Paris: Arch, 1998) p. 11.
2. Romans 8:19-22.
 3. Bernard Gorceix, *Alchimie* (Paris: Fayard, 1980).
 4. We find here numerous references to *Lexicon Alchemiae* by Martin Rulland (1612). English edition: *A Lexicon of Alchemy, by Martin Ruland the Elder*. A. E. Waite, translator (London: J.M. Watkins, 1964).
 5. Roland Edighoffer, *Rose-Croix et société idéale selon]ohann Valentin Andréae*, vols. 1 and II (Paris: Arma Artis, 1982 and 1987).
 6. Edighoffer, *Rose-Croix et société idéale . . .*, *ibid.*, vol II., brings together his entire bibliography: books, translations, editions, correspondence, and manuscripts, pp. 761-781.
 7. The Golden Fleece is a symbol which designated the Great Work. A fascinating work regarding this subject was written by Antoine Faivre, *Toison d'or et Alchimie* (Paris: Arche 1990). English edition: *The Golden Fleece and Alchemy* (Albany NY: State University of New York Press, 1993).
 8. Bernard Gorceix, *La Bible des Rose-Croix*, introduction (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1970) pp. XXXVIII.
 9. Regarding this subject, see the work of Salomon de Caus, *Hortus Palatinus* (1620) and in particular the reissue of *Le*

- jardin Palatin* (Paris: Éd. du Moniteur, 1990), with a postscript by Michel Conan which places S. de Caus in the Rosicrucian movement of Heidelberg.
10. We will not mention here the rather fanciful commentaries of numerous other authors.
 11. Roland Edighoffer, *Les Rose-Croix et la crise de conscience européenne au XVIIe siècle* (Paris: Dervy, 1999) pp. 282-302.
 12. See Marie-Louise von Franz, who, in *Alchimie et imagination active* (La Fontaine de Pierre, 1978) provides numerous excerpts of this text. English edition: *Alchemical Active Imagination*. Rev. ed. (Boston: Shambhala, 1997).
 13. Paris: Albin Michel, 1996.
 14. This idea was developed by Shozo Fujita, *The Temple Theology of the Qumran Sect and the Book of Ezekiel: Their Relationship to Jewish Literature of the Last Two Centuries B.C.* (Ann Arbor: UMI, Bell & Howell, 1970). (Princeton Thesis 1970). Henry Corbin summarized it in a chapter of his book *Temple et Contemplation* (Paris: Flammarion, 1980) pp. 307-422. English edition: *Temple and Contemplation*. Philip Sherrard and Liadain Sherrard, translators (London: KPI in association with Islamic Publications, 1986).
 15. See his book *Expérience de l'extase* (Paris: Payot, 1984), with a preface by Mircea Eliade.
 16. See *Hermès Trismégiste, I, Poimandrès* (Paris: Belles Lettres, 1991) pp. 15-16. English edition: *Hermetica: The Greek Corpus*

Hermeticum and the Latin Asclepius in a new English translation, with notes and introduction by Brian P. Copenhaver (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995).

Chapter 9

THE ROSE IN BLOOM

1. *Apologia compendiaria fraternitatem de RoseaCruce suspicionis et infamiae maculis aspersam, veritatis quasi fluctibus abluens et abstergens* (Leiden, 1616).
2. See Chapter 2, “Natural Magic.”
3. *Echo der von Gott Hoherleuchtetinen Fraternitet des löblichen Ordens R.C.* (Danzig, 1616).
4. *Novus Tractatus chymicus de Vera Materia, veroque processu Lapidis philosophici quo pleniorum atque fdeliorem hactenus non vidit mundus. Cui accessit sub calcem, ut verum ita sincerum de Fraternitate R.C. iudicium . . .* (Frankfurt, 1617).
5. *Silentium post clamores. . .* (Frankfurt, 1617).
6. *Clypeum veritatis; Das ist Kurtez, jedoch Gründliche Antwort respective . . .* (Amsterdam, 1618).
7. *Pegasus Firmamenti sive Introductio Brevis in vétérum sapientiam, quae olim ab Aegyptiis et Persi Magia, hodie vero a Venerabili Fraternitate Rosae Crucis Pansophia recte vocatur . . .* (Amsterdam, 1618). Joseph Stellat was a pseudonym used by Christoph Hirsch.

8. *Cento Virgilianus de Fratibus Rosae Crucis* and *Cento Ovidianus de Fratibus Rosae Crucis* (Amsterdam, 1616).
9. *Menapius Roseae Crucis, Das ist Bedencken der Gesamten Societet von dem . . .* (Munich, 1619). F.G. Menapius was a pseudonym for Theophilus Schweighardt.
10. *Jhesus Nobis Omnia! Rosa florescens, contra F.G. Menapii calumnias . . .* (Amsterdam, 1617 and 1618).
11. *Themis aureae hoc est de legibus Fraternitatis R.C. . . .* (Frankfurt, 1618).
12. See *The Rosicrucian Enlightenment* (Paris, Retz, 1985) p. 113.
13. *Pia et utilissima admonitio de Fratibus R.C. Nimirum an sint? Quales sint? . . .* (Danzig, 1618). An edition was published in France in 1623.
14. *Tractatus theologo-philosophicus . . .*, 1617, published under the pseudonym of Rudolfo Otreb, by Johann Théodor de Bry.
15. *Utriusque cosmi, majoris, scilicet et minori, metaphysica, physica atque technica historia . . .* (Oppenheim and Frankfurt: Johann Theodor de Bry, 1617-1624).
16. Regarding this controversy, see Jean-Charles Darmon, “Quelques enjeux épistémologiques de la querrelle entre Gassendi et Fludd: les clairsobscurs de l’Ame du Monde,” in *Aspects de la tradition alchimique au XVIIe siècle, transactions of the international conference of the University of Reims-Champagne-Ardenne* (November 28-29, 1996), under the direction of Frank Greiner, *Chrysopoeia* (Paris: Archè, 1998).

17. See Pierre Bréhar, who, in *Les Langues occultes de la Renaissance* (Paris: Desjonquères, 1996) pp. 200-243, summarizes the affair. Frances A. Yates previously brought up this controversy in *Giordano Bruno and the Hermetic Tradition*, chapter XXII.
18. Tobias Hess, one of the friends of Johann Valentin Andreae, personally knew Oswald Croll, and the *Fama Fraternitatis* repeated a few of his ideas.
19. Regarding this prophecy, see Chapter 3, “The Third Elijah.”
20. This is the opinion of Frances A. Yates in *The Rosicrucian Enlightenment*. In this work, the author describes the riches of this palace, pp. 13-28.
21. He was strongly impressed by certain works of John Dee (his preface to *Euclid*) and the architecture of the Renaissance. Before Denis Papin, he invented steam power. In the 1624 reprint of his work *Les Raisons des forces mouvants, avec diverses machines tant utiles que plaisantes*, originally published in 1615, he spoke of the grottoes and talking statues which he created for Heidelberg. He also described these gardens in his *Hortus Palatinus* (“The Gardens of the Palatine”), 1620, Johann Théodor de Bry. In his postscript to the reprint of the latter book, Michel Conan underscores the connections between the inventions of Salomon de Caus and the inventions described in the work of Robert Fludd (Paris: Éd. Du Moniteur, 1990).

22. These numbers are taken from the book by Henry Bogdan, *La Guerre de Trente Ans* (1618-1648) (Paris,1997) chap.12.
23. This engraving is reproduced in *The Rosicrucian Enlightenment*, *op. cit.*, plate 15.

Chapter 10

THE PHILOSOPHERS AND THE ROSE CROSS

1. *Mysterium arithmeticum sive cabalistica et philosophica Inventio . . .* (Ulmens, 1615), in quarto, by Johan Faulhaber (1580-1635), celebrated for his mathematical knowledge. Paul Arnold was wrong when he stated in *Histoire des Rose-Croix* (Paris: Mercure de France, 1955) that there was no indication that Faulhaber had any knowledge of the existence of the Rosicrucians.
2. Adrien Baillet, *La Vie de M. Des Cartes* (Paris, 1961) tome I, pp.87-88. English edition: *The Life of Monsieur Des Cartes: Containing the History of His Philosophy and Works: As Also the Most Remarkable Things That Befell Him During the Whole Course of His Life* (London: Printed for R. Simpson, 1693).
3. Ferdinand of Styria, king of Bohemia since 1617, succeeded Emperor Matthias II.
4. Frances A. Yates, *The Rosicrucian Enlightenment* (Boulder, CO: Shambala, 1978) p. 117.
5. G. Persigout first noted this distinctive feature in *Rosicrucianisme et cartésianisme* (Paris: Éd. de la Paix, 1938), but he simply scraped the surface, in contrast to later authors, such as Paul Arnold in his *Histoire des Rose-Croix* (Paris: Mercure de France, 1955), and most of all Sophie Jama

- who, in *La Nuit de songes de René Descartes*, has offered a particularly intriguing analysis of the three dreams (Paris: Aubier, 1998).
6. *Nombre et Temps, psychologie des profondeurs et physique moderne* (Paris: La Fontaine de Pierre, 1998). English edition: *Number and Time; Reflections Leading Toward a Unification of Depth Psychology and Physics*. Andréa Dykes, translator (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1974).
 7. Gabriel Naudé only reproduced the text of the first placard. Lenglet du Eresnoy reproduced the texts of both in his *Histoire de la Philosophie Hermétique* (Paris, 1742) tome I, pp. 376-377.
 8. The Hague, 1653.
 9. See *The Rosicrucian Enlightenment*, *op cit.*, p. 135.
 10. Sophie Jama, *La Nuit de songes de René Descartes*, *op. cit.*, pp. 195-196.
 11. The original manuscript of this text is lost. In the dedication some editors substitute “F. Ros. Cruc.” (Foucher de Careil).
 12. Govert Homme Siert Snoek made a careful and detailed study of the expansion of Rosicrucianism in this country in *De Rozenkruisers in Nederland, Een inventaristie* (The Rosicrucians in the Netherlands, An Inventory; Utrecht, 1998).
 13. Orvius, *Philosophia Occulta*, 1737.
 14. A few years earlier, in 1621, the Order had been attacked in

Miroir des Frères de la Rose-Croix.

15. A.J. Rehorst devoted a book to this individual: *Torrentius* (Rotterdam, 1939).
16. See *De Rozenkruisers in Nederland . . .*, *op. cit.*, notably the summary in French, pp. 295-299.
17. *Arcana totius naturae secretissima nec hactenus unquam détecta, a Collegio Rosiano in Lucem produntur* (Leiden, 1630).
18. *Discours*, Part I, 9. English edition: *Discourse on Method and Related Writings*. Translated with an introduction by Desmond M. Clarke (London: Penguin Books, 1999).
19. The latter, after having been very critical of alchemy in *Questiones celeberrimae in genesim . . .* (1623), appeared to be more open minded in *La Vérité des sciences* (1625). Later, he considered alchemy to be worthy of interest and indicated a desire for the creation of an academy of alchemy in *Questions inouyes* (question XXVIII) and *Questions théologique, physiques, morales et mathématiques* (1634).
20. See the article by Jean-François Maillard “Descartes et l’alchimie: une tentation conjurée?,” in *Aspects de la tradition alchimique au XVIIe siècle*, transactions of the international conference of the University of Reims-Champagne-Ardenne (November 28-29,1996), under the direction of Frank Grenier, *Chrysopoeia* (Paris: Archè, 1998). He refers to *De metallorum transmutatione*, by Daniel Georg Morhof (Hamburg, 1673), who reports this fact. Cornelis was the

nephew of Theobald van Hogelande, author of alchemical treatises published under the name of Ewaldus Vogelius.

21. Serge Hutin, “Descartes, initié rosicrucien?” *Rose-Croix*, No. 62, 1967, p. 30.
22. In his letter to Marin Mersenne of July 30, 1640, he made it the seat of the soul. This viewpoint recalls the one found in modern Rosicrucian teachings which makes the pineal gland the seat not of the soul itself, but of the consciousness which is characteristic of it.
23. On this point, see Frances A. Yates, *The Occult Philosophy in the Elizabethan Age* (Warburg Institute, 1987); and Antoine Faivre, “Flistoire des courants ésotériques et mystiques dans l’Europe moderne et contem poraine,” summarized in *Annuaire de l’École Pratique des Hautes Études*, Vol. XCVI, 1987-1988.
24. This date, and those of the works mentioned hereafter, are those of the first public performance.
25. *The Holy Guide, leading the Way to the Wonder of the World (a Compleat Phisician) . . . with Rosie-Crucian medecines . . .* (London, 1662).
26. Bonneville, Nicolas de, *La Maçonnerie ecossaise comparée avec les trois professions et le secret des templiers du XIVe siècle* (London, 1788) pp. 142-148.
27. *Franc-Maçonnerie, ordre chapitral, nouveau grade de Rose-Croix* (Paris: Collignon libraireéditeur, 1860) p. 17-20.

28. To avoid deviating from our subject, we will not delve into this matter which has given rise to an impressive quantity of publications. Rather, we will refer interested readers to the book of Ignatius Donnelly, *The Great Cryptogram: Francis Bacons CIPHER in the So-called Shakespeare Plays* (1887); to those of the mathematician Georg Cantor, *La Confession de foi de Francis Bacon, Résurrection du divin Quirinus Francis Bacon*, and *Le Recueil de Rawley* (1896; republished by Érick Porge chez Grec in 1997 under the title *La Théorie Bacon-Shakespeare*); to that of Dr. Speckman, *Bacon is Shakespeare* (1916); the studies published in 1922 and 1923 by General Cartier under the title “Le mystere Bacon-Shakespeare,” in the *Rosicrucian Forum*, August 1932, published in the magazine *Rose-Croix*, No. 136, Winter 1985, p. 22-24. Also see Dodd, Alfred, *Shakespeare Creator of Freemasonry* (London: Rider and Co. 1937). and the article “Bacon vs. Shakespeare,” in the *Rosicrucian Forum*, Vol. III, No. 1 (August 1932) pp. 25-27.
29. See Chapter 14, “The Rose Garden of the Magi.”
30. *The Masters* (London: Theosophical Publications, 1912). This work followed a series of conferences given by Annie Besant in London in 1907. Rudolf Steiner took a similar position during the same period. In 1912 Annie Besant, Marie Russak, H. Wedgwood, and other Theosophists created an order reminiscent of Rosicrucianism. Their work was interrupted in 1918. Marie Russak then became a member of AMORC.

31. The authors of this work only used their initials: H.C. and K.M.B. It was published in Paddington by Amy Bothwell-Gosse, an eminent member of the English branch of Le Droit Hurnain and the editor of the review *The Co-Mason*.
32. Frances Yates, *The Rosicrucian Enlightenment* (Boulder, CO: Shambhala, 1978) Chapter XI. For this information she relied on a study by Paolo Rossi, *Francis Bacon: From Magic to Science* (London, 1968).
33. Although the Fama Fratemitatis was not published until 1614, whereas *Of the Proficiency and Advancement of Learning Divine and Humane* was published in 1605, it should be recalled that the first Rosicrucian manifesto circulated in manuscript form many years before its publication.
34. “Dat rosa rnel apibus,” the celebrated illustration of *Summum Bonum* (1626). See fig. 30.
35. *Novum Organum* (London, 1620). English edition: *The Instauration Magna Part II: Novum Organum and Associated Texts*. Edited with introduction, notes, commentaries, and facing-page translations by Graham Rees with Maria Wakely. *The Oxford Francis Bacon* v.11 (Oxford: Clarendon, 2004).
36. There remains some uncertainty as to the date of its writing. It has been generally claimed he worked on this text in 1623. See, Michèle Le Doeuff and Margaret Llasera, *La Nouvelle Atlantide* (Paris: Payot, 1983) p. 13. Bacon wanted this text to be published following his *Natural History* (*Sylva*

- Sylvarium*), a work he had already issued as a draft in 1620.
37. As Blandine Kreigel has shown, in the Renaissance this theme of utopia is interdependent with the Copernican revolution. It testified to the search for a new balance in a new world. See “L’Utopie démocratique de Francis Bacon à George Lucas,” in *Revue des deux mondes* (April 2000) pp. 19-33.
 38. *The New Atlantis*, according to *Voyage dans la pensée baroque*, *op. cit.*, p. 72.
 39. See Chapter 9, “White Mountain.”
 40. *La Grande Didactique* (Paris: Kincksieck, coll. Philosophic de l’éducation, 1992). English edition: *The Great Didactic of John Amos Comenius*. Translated into English and edited with biographical, historical, and critical introductions by M.W. Keatinge (New York: Russell & Russell, 1967).
 41. *The Way of the Light* (1641): a work only in manuscript form from 1641. Modern editions of 1668 edition: *The Way of Light*. Translated into English, with introduction, by E. T. Campagnac. Includes reproduction of original title page, with imprint: “Amsterodami, apud C. Conradum, 1668.” (Liverpool: The University Press; London: Hodder & Stoughton, Ltd., 1938); and *Der Weg des Lichtes = Via lucis*. Translated into German, and with an introduction and commentary by Uwe Voigt (Hamburg: F. Meiner Verlag, 1997).

42. See his summary in Jean Prévot, *L'Utopie éducative, Comenius* (Paris: Belin, 1981) pp. 210-264.
43. He wrote a strongly eulogistic article on Comenius in the *Revue de l'UNESCO* in 1957, a text reproduced in the postscript of *Utopie éducative. . . op. cit.*

Chapter 11

ROSICRUCIANISM AND FREEMASONRY

1. Anderson's *Constitutions*, in *Textes fondateurs de la tradition maçonnique 1390-1760*, translated and edited by Patrick Négrier (Paris: Grasset, 1989) p. 226. English edition: *Anderson's Constitutions of 1723, with introduction by Bro. Lionel Vibert* (Washington, D.C.: The Masonic Service Association of the United States, 1924). Facsimile reproduction of London editions, 1723: p. 25-121.
2. On the appearance of the Master Degree, see Eugène Félicien Albert Goblet d'Alviella, *Des Origines du Grade de Maître dans la Franc-Maçonnerie* (Paris: Trédaniel 1983) and Roger Dachez, "Essai sur l'origine du grade de Maître," *Renaissance Traditionnelle*, No. 91-92, July-October 1992.
3. Antoine Faivre, *Acces de l'ésoterisme occidental* (Paris: Gallimard, 1996) tome 2, p. 285. English edition: *Theosophy, Imagination, Tradition: Studies in Western Esotericism* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2000).

4. Irène Mainguy, *Les Initiations et Vinitiation maçonnique* (Paris: Éditions Maçonniques de France, 2000) p. 80.
5. The newly coined word “esoterism” appeared for the first time in 1742, being introduced by Louis-François La Tierce. This Freemason was the author of *Nouvelles obligations et Statuts de la très vénérable confraternité des Francs-Maçons* (1742), an adaptation and translation into French of Anderson’s *Constitution* and Ramsay’s discourse.
6. Concerning this astonishing individual, see Jocelyn Godwin, *Athanasius Kircher, a Renaissance Man and the Quest for Lost Knowledge* (New York: Thames and Hudson, 1979) and also (Boulder, CO: Shambhala; New York: Distributed by Random House, 1979).
7. See Andrew Michael Ramsay, *Les Voyages de Cyrus*, critical edition of Georges Lamoine (Paris, Honoré Champion, 2002). English edition: *The Travels of Cyrus ...To which is annex’d, A discourse upon the theology and mythology of the pagans.* [By the Chevalier Ramsay ...] (London: Printed by T. Woodward [etc.], 1728); and the 8th edition (London: Printed by J. Bettenham, and sold by C. Hitch and L. Hawes, 1752). This book was inspired by *Télémaque* (1695), the educational treatise by Fénelon, a pedagogical novel bringing to mind the epics of Homer and Virgil that was meant to teach the young duke of Burgundy the art of governing undespotically. As with the heroes described by Fénelon, Cyrus obtained his education by traveling

- throughout the world. English edition: *The Adventures of Telemachus, the Son of Ulysses*. Translated by Tobias Smollett; introduction and notes by Leslie A. Chilton; the text edited by O.M. Brack, Jr. (Athens GA: University of Georgia Press, 1997).
8. Jean Terrasson's book was written as a result of Fénelon's *Télémaque*. In composing his story, he exhibited a vast erudition by recounting everything that had been written about Egypt. Among the authors cited were Diodorus Siculus, Clement of Alexandria, Herodotus, Iamblichus, and Athanasius Kircher. English edition: *The Life of Sethos. Taken from private memoirs of the ancient Egyptians. Tr. from a Greek manuscript into French. And now faithfully done into English from the Paris ed. by Mr. Lediard* (London: Printed for J. Walthoe, 1732).
 9. "Notice sur la vie et les ouvrages de l'abbé Terrasson," in *Séthos, histoire ou vie tirée des monuments, anecdotes de l'ancienne Égypte* (Paris: D' Hautel, 1813) tome 1, p. 12. English edition: *The Life of Séthos. Taken from private memoirs of the ancient Egyptians. Tr. from a Greek manuscript into french. And now faithfully done into English from the Paris ed. by Mr. Lediard* (London: Printed for J. Walthoe, 1732).
 10. In March of 1737 Ramsay wrote a second version of this discourse, longer than the first, in which he proposed the idea of a great encyclopedia.
 11. It should be noted that Ramsay did not create any rite or

degree. However, he is thought to have given impetus to this movement.

12. Concerning this subject, see the article by Michel Piquet: “Le Grade de Rose-Croix: les sources du ‘Nec plus Ultra,’” *Renaissance traditionnelle*, No. 110-111, July 1997.
13. René Le Forestier, *La Franc-Maçonnerie templière et occultiste aux XVIII^e et XIX^e siècles* (Paris: Aubier-Montaigne, 1970) Introduction, chap. III.
14. René Le Forestier, *La Franc-Maçonnerie ternplière . . .*, *op. cit.* Book II, chap. I, pp. 543-555.
15. This magnificent work is currently published by the Rosicrucian Order, AMORC: *Secret Symbols of the Rosicrucians of the 16th and 17th Centuries* (San Jose, CA: English Grand Lodge of AMORC, 1987).
16. Concerning the Order of the Asian Brethren and Saint-Germain, see Arthur Mandel, *Le Messie militant—Histoire de Jacob Frank et du mouvement frankiste* (Paris: Archè, 1989). English edition: *The Militant Messiah: or, The Flight from the Ghetto: The Story of Jacob Frank and the Frankist Movement* (Atlantic Highlands, NJ: Humanities Press, 1979). The celebrated alchemist was also mentioned in the book by René Le Forestier (*op. cit.*). Paul Chacornac also dedicated a work, *Le Comte de Saint-Germain* (Paris: Éditions Traditionnelles, 1947) to this individual, who could not be discussed further due to a lack of space.

17. Pierre Mollier: “Le grade maçonnique de RoseCroix et le christianisme: enjeux et pouvoir des symboles,” *Politica Hermetica*, No. 11, 1997.
18. This text dating from 1765 may be found in the Bibliothèque historique of Paris.
19. Le Forestier, *La Franc-Maçonnerie templière . . . op cit.*, pp. 68-84 and 157-164 and especially Henry Corbin, who, in *Temple et contemplation*, provides a fuller analysis (Paris: Flammarion, 1980) pp. 376-379. English edition: *Temple and Contemplation*. Philip Sherrard and Liadain Sherrard, translators (London: KPI in association with Islamic Publications, 1986).
20. Henry Corbin, *Temple et contemplation, op. cit.*, p. 373.

Chapter 12

MAGNETISM AND EGYPTOSOPHY

1. See his books *Le Christianisme dévoilé ou Examen des principes et des effets de la religion chrétienne* (1767) and *Traité des trois imposteurs*, referring to Moses, Jesus, and Mohammed. English editions: (1) *Christianity Unveiled: Being an Examination of the Principles and Effects of the Christian Religion*. Translated from the French of Boulanger by W.M. Johnson. (New York: Gordon Press, 1974). (2) *The Treatise of the Three Impostors and the Problem of Enlightenment: A New Translation of the Traité des trois imposteurs (1777 edition) with Three Essays in*

- Commentary*. Translated by Abraham Anderson. (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 1997).
2. Antoine Faivre devoted a very complete study to this subject, *L'Ésotérisme au XVIIIe siècle* (Paris: Seghers, 1973). On the same subject, also see the two volumes by Auguste Viatte, *Les Sources occultes du romantisme, illuminisme et théosophie, 1770-1820* (Paris: Honoré Champion, 1979).
 3. Pierre Fournié, *Ce que nous avons été, ce que nous sommes, et ce que nous deviendrons* (London: A. Dulau et Co., 1801) p. 363.
 4. Éliphas Lévi, *Histoire de la Magie* (Paris: Félix Alcan, 1922) book VI, chap. I, p. 416. English edition: *The History of Magic*. Translated by A.E. Waite (Boston: Weiser Books, 2001).
 5. *Essai sur les apparitions et opuscules divers* (Paris, 1911) p. 94; and *Le Monde comme volonté et comme représentation* (Paris: PUF, 1978) p. 200. English editions: (1) "Essay on Spirit Seeing and Everything Connected Therewith," in *Parerga and Paralipomena*, Vol. 1. Trans. E.F.J. Payne (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2000). (2) *The World as Will and Idea*. Translated from the German by R.B. Haldane and J. Kemp. [Die Welt als Wille und Vorstellung.] (New York: AMS Press, 1977).
 6. *Dissertatio physico-medica de planetarum influxu* (Vienna, 1766). This text was published by Robert Amadou in 1971 in a volume which, under the name of *Le Magnétisme animal* (Éditions Payot), brought together Mesmer's writings on

this subject. Included in this volume are his *Dissertation physico-médicale sur Finfluence des planétés*, *Discours sur le Magnétisme*, *Memoire sur la découverte du Magnétisme animal*, and his correspondence. English editions of some of Mesmer's writings may be found in *Mesmerism: A Translation of the Original Scientific and Medical Writings of F.A. Mesmer*. Translated and compiled by George Bloch; with an introduction by E.R. Hilgard (Los Altos, CA: W. Kaufman, 1980). Regarding the history of magnetism, see Bertrand Méheust's study entitled *Somnambulisme et médiumnité*, tome I, "Le Défi du magnétisme," and tome II, "Le Choc des sciences psychiques" (Le Plessis-Robinson: Institut Synthélabo, coll. "Les Empêcheurs de penser en rond," 1999).

7. *De Magnetica vulnerum curatione* (Parisiis: Vic. Leroy, 1621).
8. *De Medicina magnetica* (Frankfurt, 1679).
9. Taken from *Catéchisme du magnétisme animal*, a text that Mesmer gave to his followers. See FranzAnton Mesmer, *Le Magnétisme animal, op. cit.*, p. 225.
10. The title of *Martinist* is used here to designate those who placed themselves in the Élus-Cohens movement of Martínez de Pasquales, JeanBaptiste Willermoz, and Louis Claude de SaintMartin. The latter used it in this sense from 1787.
11. For further information concerning this subject, please

consult the magnificently illustrated work *Égyptomania, l'Égypte dans l'art occidental 1730-1930* (Paris and Ottawa: Réunion des Musées nationaux, 1994) English edition: *Egyptomania: Egypt in Western Art, 1730-1930* (Ottawa: National Gallery of Canada; Paris: Réunion des Musées Nationaux, 1994); and Jurgis Baltrušaitis, *La Quête d'Isis, essai sur la légende d'un mythe* (Paris: Flammarion, 1985).

12. *Crata Repoa or Initiations into Ancient Mysteries of the Priests of Egypt* was translated into Russian in 1779. In 1821, Antoine Bailleul and Ragon translated it into French. J. Yarker published an English translation in *Freemasonry of the Ancient Egyptians* from a French translation: Hall, Manly Palmer. *Freemasonry of the Ancient Egyptians, To Which Is Added an Interpretation of the Crata Repoa Initiation Rite or the Initiation of Plato*. 2nd edition (Los Angeles: The Philosophical Research Society, Inc, 1952). This text strongly influenced Helena Petrovna Blavatsky and John Yarker.
13. Concerning this individual and his work, see the book by Anne-Marie Mercier-Faivre, “Un Supplément à “l'Encyclopédie,” *Le Monde primitif d'Antoine Court de Gébelin* (Paris: Honoré Champion, 1999).
14. Anne-Marie Mercier-Faivre. “Antoine Court de Gébelin et le mythe des origines,” in Charles Porset and Cécile Révauger. *Franc-maçonnerie et religions dans l'Europe des Lumières. Series: Les Dix-Huitièmes Siècles* (Paris: Honoré Champion Editeur, 1998).

15. Concerning the genesis of this work, see the article by Claude Rétat: “Lumières et ténèbres du citoyen Dupuis,” *Chroniques d’histoire maçonnique*, No. 50, IDERM, 1999, pp. 5-68.
16. Arturo Reghini, *Cagliostro, documents et études* (Milan: Archè, 1987) chap. II, pp. 43-68.
17. See the article “Cagliostro” in *Encyclopédie de la franc-maçonnerie* (Livre de Poche, 2000) p. 247.
18. Regarding this general assembly, see Charles Porset, *Les Philalèthes et les convents de Paris* (Paris: Honoré Champion, 1996).
19. See the work of Jean-Philippe Dutoit-Membrini (under the pseudonym of Keleph Ben Nathan), *La Philosophie divine appliquée aux lumières naturelles, magiques, astrales, surnaturelles, céleste et divines*. He includes a critical text by Louis Claude de Saint-Martin which brings forth the dangers of magnetism.
20. This family practiced magnetism until the Terror. See Clément Tournier, *Le Mesmérisme à Toulouse* (1911).
21. The writings of Marquis de Puységur were published by Jean-Pierre Petér under the title of *Un somnambule désordonné?: journal du traitement magnétique du jeune Hébert* (Le Plessis-Robinson: Institut Synthélabo). For this edition Jean-Pierre Peter wrote a historical presentation and a precise critique of Puységur’s texts.
22. René Roussillon, *Du Baquet de Mesmer au “baquet” de S. Freud*,

une archéologie du cadre et de la pratique psychanalytique (Paris: PUF, 1992).

23. Concerning this subject, see Robert Amadou and Alice Joly, *De l'Agent inconnu au Philosophe inconnu* (Paris: Denoël, 1962) and Christian Rebisse, "L'Agent Inconnu," in *Pantacle* No. 1, January 1993, pp. 29-34 (French Grand Lodge of AMORC).
24. *Les Archives secrètes du Vatican et de la francmaçonnerie, histoire d'une condamnation pontificale* (Paris: Dervy, 1989).
25. On this subject, see the works by Robert Solé, *Égypt, passion française* (Paris: Le Seuil, 1997) and *Les Savants de Bonaparte* (Paris: Le Seuil, 1998).
26. Concerning this rite, see the article by Maurice Caillet, "Un rite maçonnique inédit à Toulouse et à Auch en 1806," *Bulletin de la Société Archéologique du Gers*, 1st quarter. 1959, pp. 27-57.
27. See the first two chapters of this book.

Chapter 13

IN SEARCH OF THE PSYCHE

1. Dr. Justinus Kerner's work, *Die Seherin von Prevorst* (Stuttgart: J.G. Cotta, 1829) 2 vols. in octavo, was translated into French by Dr. Dusart under the direction of Colonel de Rochas, and published by Chamuel in 1900 under the title *La Voyante de Prevorst*. English edition: *The Seeress of Prevorst*;

Being Revelations Concerning the Inner-Life of Man, and the Inter-Diffusion of a World of Spirits in the One We Inhabit. Communicated by Justinus Kerner. Translated from the German, by Mrs. Crowe (London: J.C. Moore, 1845).

2. Horatio W. Dresser, *Health and Inner Life* (New York and London: G.P. Putman's Sons, 1906) p. 24.
3. Andrew Jackson Davis wrote his autobiography: *The Magic Staff; An Autobiography of Andrew Jackson Davis* (New York: J.s.Brown; Boston: Bela Marsh, 1857). After his death in February 1910, the *Annales des sciences psychiques* mentioned him in an article entitled "La mort du prophète des spirites anglo-américains," where he was described as being as important an individual as Allan Kardec. Arthur Conandoyle, dedicated chapter III to him in *History of Spiritualism* (London: Cassell & Co., 1926).
4. Léon Denis provided numerous details concerning this affair in the book *Dans l'invisible, spiritisme et médiumnité*, new edition corrected and augmented (Paris: Librairie des sciences psychiques, 1922) pp. 205-210.
5. Allan Kardec, *Livre des Esprits, contenant les principes de la doctrine spirite, sur la nature des esprits, leur manifestation et leurs rapports avec les hommes, les lois morales, la vie présente, la vie future et l'avenir de Vhumanite. Ecrit sous la dietee et publie par l'ordre d'esprits supérieurs* (Paris: Dentu, 1857). ("The book of the spirits, containing the principles of spiritualist teaching, on the nature of spirits, their manifestation and relations with

- people, the moral laws, the present life, the future life and the life of humanity. Written under dictation and published by the Order of Superior Spirits.”) English edition: *The Spirits’ Book* (Philadelphia: A. Kardec Educational Society, 1996).
6. In 1858, Pierre Lorrain published a French translation of *Zanoni* (Hachette et Cie.). In 1924, Émile Nourry published another, more complete version including illustrations by Robert Lanz. This version was reprinted in French by Diffusion Rosicrucienne in April 2001. English edition: Edward George Bulwer-Lytton. *Zanoni* (San Bernadino, CA: Borgo Press, 2002).
 7. This event was related by Éliphas Lévi in *Dogme et ritual de la haute magie* (Paris: Germer Bailliére, 1856) chap. XIII, and commented upon by Paul Chacornac in *Éliphas Lévi, rénovateur de l’occultisme en France (1810-1875)* (Pahs: Chacornac frères, 1926) chap. X. English edition of *Dogme et ritual: Transcendental Magic, Its Doctrine and Ritual*. Translated, annotated and introduced by Arthur Edward Waite. (New York: S. Weiser, 1972).
 8. *Secret Symbols of the Rosicrucians of the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries* (Boston: Occult Publishing Company, 1888). This book was published in French as *Symboles secrets des Rosicruciens des XVIe et XVIIe siècles* (Le Tremblay, Diffusion Rosicrucienne, 1997). Current English edition: *Secret Symbols of the Rosicrucians of the 16th and 17th Centuries* (San Jose, CA:

English Grand Lodge of AMORC, 1987).

9. Carl Louis von Grasshoff (1865-1919), alias Max Heindel, a German residing in Los Angeles, became an important officer of the Theosophical Society. He claimed to have encountered a Rosicrucian during a trip to Germany in 1907. The latter may very well have been Rudolf Steiner, who, during this period, gave a series of lectures on Rosicrucianism in Leipzig and Munich. Two years later Max Heindel published *The Rosicrucian Cosmo-Conception* (1909), a work strongly influenced by the thinking of Rudolf Steiner, to whom this book was dedicated—although this dedication was removed in later editions. Max Heindel felt that he had been chosen by the Rosicrucian Brothers to replace another person who was proven unworthy by the Fraternity. According to René Guénon, although this person was not named, it evidently involved Rudolf Steiner (see Guénon, René, *Le Théosophisme, histoire d'une pseudo-religion*, chap. XXII). That is why Max Heindel founded The Rosicrucian Fellowship in Seattle in 1909. After his death in 1919, his wife, Augusta Fross, a celebrated astrologer, succeeded him and emphasized the teaching as a group on astrology. Max Heindel's Rosicrucian Fellowship then gave rise to another group led by Jan Leene (1896-1968), better known by the pseudonym of Jan Van Rijckenborg. This director of Max Heindel's Rosicrucian Fellowship for the Netherlands founded the Aquarius Bond, after having separated from

Max Heindel's group. He subsequently founded the Order of Manicheans, which later became the Lectorium Rosicrucianum, and finally took the name of Golden Rosycross. This group tries to combine two completely antagonistic currents of thought: Catharism and Rosicrucianism.

10. These facts are taken from Peter Davidson's essay, "Origines et object de l'H.B. of L.," published in *H.B. of L., textes et documents secrets de la Hermetic Brotherhood of Luxor* (Paris-Milan: Archè, 1988). Regarding this strange order, see the book by Jocelyn Godwin, Christian Chanel, and John P. Deveney, *The Hermetic Brotherhood of Luxor—Initiatic and historical documents of an Order of Practical Occultism* (York Beach, ME: Samuel Weiser, 1995).
11. Concerning this subject, see Satprem, *Mère, ou le matérialisme divin* (Paris: Robert Laffont, 1976) chap. VIII and IX. English edition: *Mother, or the Divine Materialism* (Paris: Institut de Recherche, 1979) and also Volume 1 of Satprem, *Mother* (New York: Institute for Evolutionary Research, 1977-1987). 3 volumes.
12. *Ibid.*, chap. VIII and IX; and Sujata Nahar, *Les Chroniques de Mère* (Paris: Buehet/Chastel, 2000) tome III, p. 43. English edition: *Mother's Chronicles* (Paris: Institut de recherches évolutives, 1985-) Book 3.
13. The major work of Frederick William Henry Myers, *Human Personality and Its Survival of Bodily Death* (London: 1903) was

published in French as *La Personnalité humaine, sa survivance, ses manifestations supra-normales* (Alcan, 1909). This book was reprinted in the collection *Les Essentiels de la métapsychique* (Chambéry: Exergue, 2000), and in a new English edition: *Human Personality and Its Survival of Bodily Death*. Edited by Susy Smith; foreword by Aldous Huxley (Mineola, NY: Dover Publications, 2004).

14. See the impressive bibliography provided by Bertrand Méheust, in tome 2 of *Somnambulisme et médiumnité* (Paris: Institut Synthélabo, 1999) in the series Collection *Les Empêcheurs de penser en rond* pp. 523-577.
15. Hector Durville, *Théories et procédés du magnétisme* (Paris: Librairie du Magnétisme, 1903) p. 15-18. English edition: *The Theory and Practice of Human Magnetism* (Chicago: Psychic Research Co., 1900).

Chapter 14

THE ROSE GARDEN OF THE MAGI

1. Individuals in this movement also dabbled in such subjects as the return to nature and primitive cults, nationalism, anarchism, the worship of the beautiful human body and of exceptional races.
2. Philippe Baillet, “Monte Verità (1900-1920) ou la complexité du ‘romantisme anticapitaliste,’” in *Politica*

- Hermetica* (2000) no. 14, pp. 199-218.
3. Letter written on September 12, 1921, to H. Spencer Lewis. AMORC Archives.
 4. Letter written on June 10, 1921, by Théodor Reuss to H. Spencer Lewis. AMORC Archives.
 5. *Les Rites maçonniques de Misraïmet Memphis* (Paris: Maisonneuve & Rose, 1986) p. 78.
 6. “L’affaire Théodor Reuss” in *Acacia*, January-June 1907, pp. 27-28, 202-204, 293-303, 387-389, 466-467.
 7. “Dal Monte Verità, Congresso Anazionale Cooper O.T.O.,” in the Italian newspaper *Dovere*, August 28, 1917.
 8. In 1898, Mathers published an English translation of *La magie sacrée que Dieu donna à Moïse, Aaron, David, Salomon, et à d’autres Prophètes, et qui enseigne la vraie sagesse divine, laissée par Abraham, fils de Simon, à son fils Lamech, traduite de l’hébreu en latin à Venise en 1458*, a book that dealt with angelic magic. English edition: Abraham ben Siméon, of Worms, *The book of the Sacred Magic of Abramelin the Mage, as Delivered by Abraham the Jew unto His son Lamech*, A.D. 1458. Translated from the original Hebrew into the French, and now rendered from the latter language into English, from a unique and valuable ms. in the “Bibliothèque de Parnassus” at Paris, by S. L. MacGregor Mathers. (New York: Dover Publications, 1975).
 9. For fuller information regarding this individual, please

consult Christophe Beaufils, *Joséphin Péladan 1858-1918, Essai sur une maladie du lyrisme* (Grenoble: Jérôme Million, 1993); and Édouard Berthelot, *La Pensée et les secrets du Sâr Joséphin Péladan* (Lausanne: Éditions rosicruciennes, 1952-1958) vols I-IV.

10. Although it was subsequent to the books of Eliphas Lévi, this work, a véritable encyclopedia of esotericism comprising 666 pages, far exceeds the others on these points. English edition: Pitois, Christian. *The History and Practice of magic*. Translated by James Kirkup and Julian Shaw. Supplementary articles by Mir Bashir, Margery Lawrence, and Julian Shaw. Emendations and notes by Charles R. Cammell [and others]. Newly translated from the French with additional material by modern authorities. Edited and rev. by Ross Nichols. 2 volumes in 1 (Secaucus, NJ: Citadel Press, 1972).
11. Letter of November 15, 1884, to Joséphin Péladan. *Lettres inédites de Stanislas de Guaita au Sâr Joséphin Péladan*, edited by Édouard Berthelot and Émile Dantinne (Neuchatel: Éditions rosicruciennes, 1952).
12. He published *Les Harmonies de l'Être exprimées par les nombres* (1844). Concerning this author, see Robert Amadou, "Un grand méconnu: l'abbé Paul Lacuria, le 'Pythagore français,'" *Atlantis*, 1981, Nos. 314 and 315; "L'abbé Paul Lacuria et les harmonies de l'Être," *Atlantis*, Nov.-Dec. 1981, No. 317. It is probable that this individual served as

the model for Joséphin Péladan when creating Alta, one of the main characters of *Vice suprême*.

13. Joséphin Péladan, *Comment on deviant Artiste* (Paris, 1894) p. XXIII.
14. The biography of Viscount Louis-CharlesÉdouard de Lapasse was recounted by Count Fernand de Ressayre, “Éloge de M. le vicomte de Lapasse” in *Jeux floraux* (Toulouse: Imprimerie Douladoure, 1869).
15. Viscount de Lapasse, *Essai sur la conservation de la vie* (Paris: Victor Masson, 1860) p. 59.
16. Firmin Boissin, *Visionnaires et illuminés* (Paris: Liepmannssohn et Dufour, 1869) p. 17.
17. See *Excentriques disparus*, which Firmin Boissin published under the pseudonym of Simon Brugal (Paris, Privas, and Toulouse: A. Savine, 1890) p p. 75-83.
18. See Chapter XII, “The Friends of the Desert.”
19. *Lettres inédites de Stanislas de Guaita . . . op. cit.*, p. 84.
20. Stanislas de Guaita, “Au seuil du mystère,” *Essais de sciences maudites* (Paris: Georges Carré, 1890) p. 158
21. Péladan, Joséphin, *L’Initiation sentimentale* (Paris, Édinger, 1887) p. II, dedicated to Stanislas de Guaita, and *Salon de la Rose-Croix, règle et monitoire* (Paris: E. Dentu, 1891) p. 28.
22. Joséphin Péladan used a Latin expression, adapted from Psalm 115, which varies according to his writings. It does

not correspond to the expression of this psalm which generally reads: *Non nobis, Domine, non nobis, sed nomini tuo da gloriam* — in other words, “Not unto us, O LORD, not unto us, but unto Thy name give glory.”

23. *Constitution de la Rose-Croix, le Temple et le Graal* (Paris, 1893) article 1, p. 21.
24. Charles Baudelaire, “Correspondances,” *Les Fleurs du mal*. English edition: *The Flowers of Evil*. Translated with notes by James McGowan; with an introduction by Jonathan Culler (Oxford & New York: Oxford University Press, 1998). Concerning the relationship between esoterieism and poetry (Nerval, Baudelaire, Poe, etc.) see Rolland de Renéville, *Sciences maudites et poètes maudits* (l’Isle-sur-la-Sorgue: Le Bois d’Orion, 1997).
25. Concerning this author, see A.W. Raitt, *Villiers de l’Isle-Adam et le mouvement symboliste*, especially chap. III, “L’occultisme” (Paris: José Corit, 1965) p. 185-216; and E. Drougard, “Villiers de l’Isle-Adam et Éliphas Lévi,” *Revue beige de philologie et d’histoire*, tome X. No. 3, 1931. In English, also see his biography: *The Life of Villiers de l’Isle-Adam* (Oxford: Clarendon Press; New York: Oxford University Press, 1981).
26. *Salon de la Rose+Croix, règle et monitoire* (Paris: E. Dentu, 1891) p. 8.
27. This episode of Rosicrucian history will only be summarized

- here, as it was described at length in *Rose-Croix*, No. 179, autom ne 1996, pp. 2-18 (French Grand Lodge of AMORC).
28. Concerning this musician, see “Esotériq Satie,” *Rose-Croix*, No. 168, hiver 1993, pp. 31-37 (French Grand Lodge of AMORC).
 29. The Count de Larmandie, one of the organizers of these Salons, wrote *L’Entracte idéal, Histoire de la Rose-Croix* (Paris: Bibliothèque Chacornac, 1903), a book that traces the history of each Salon.
 30. The word *kaloprosopie* comes from *kalos* “beautiful” and *prósopon* “person.” For Joséphin Péladan, this science was that of “the embellishment of the human appearance or, better yet, the relief of moral character by the usual movements He who realizes the exteriority of an idea realizes the inferiority.” Consequently, he accorded great importance to sartorial appearance, of which each element was in correspondence with an inner quality. See *L’Art idéaliste et mystique*, book I, “Les sept arts ou modes réalisateurs de la beauté, les arts de la personnalité” (Paris: Chamuel, 1894) pp. 55-73.
 31. On the connections between esotericism and art in Belgium, see the study by Sébastien Clerbois, “L’influence de la pensée occultiste sur le symbolisme beige: bilan critique d’une ‘affinité spirituelle’ à la fin du XIXe siècle,” (*A.R.I.E.S.*, Netherlands, Brill Academic publishers, 2002)

vol. II, No. 2, pp. 173-192. This article emphasizes the role of Kumris, a group founded by Francis Vurgey, a follower of Joséphin Péladan from Nancy.

32. *Les Compagnons de la hiérophanie* (Paris: Dobon, 1937) p. 22.
33. Roland Edighoffer, *Johann Valentin Andréae, Rose-Croix et société idéale* (Paris: Arma Artis, 1982) pp. 207-208; and Paul Arnold, *Histoire des Rose-Croix* (Paris: Mercure de France, 1955) pp. 72-81.

Chapter 15

THE FIRST “ROSICRUCIANS” OF AMERICA

1. The magazine *The American Rosae Crucis* was published from 1916 to 1920. *Cromaat*, published from 1919 to 1921, was replaced in January 1921 by *The Triangle*. In May 1925 the latter became *The Mystic Triangle*, which became, in October 1929, *The Rosicrucian Digest*. Most of the magazines were published monthly, and all together they constitute a collection of more than 1,000 issues.
2. Julius Friedrich Sacke, *The German Pietists of Provincial Pennsylvania 1694-1708*, pp. 37-39.
3. Arthur E. Waite, *The Brotherhood of the Rosy Cross* (London, 1924) p. 601.
4. Serge Hutin, *Les disciples anglais de Jacob Boehme aux XVIIe et XVIIIe siècles* (Paris: Denoel, coll. “la Tour Saint-Jacques,”

1960) p. 119.

5. Concerning this movement, see *Les piétismes à l'âge classique, crise, conversion, institutions*, Anne Lagny, editor (Villeneuve d'Ascq: Presses universitaires du Septentrion, collection "Racines et modèles," 2001).
6. Concerning the troubled period following the publication of the Rosicrucian manifestos, see Chapter 9, "White Mountain."
7. Antoine Faivre, *L'Ésotérisme au X VIIIe siècle* (Paris: Seghers, 1973) pp. 57-58.
8. Regarding this individual, see Chapter 6, "Johann Arndt."
9. A spiritual movement arising around the end of the 14th century in the Netherlands under the influence of Gerard Groote (1340-1384) and in an atmosphere permeated with the spirituality of Meister Eckhart and Ruysbroek. The Devotio Moderna seeks to orient the spiritual life toward personal prayer and inner asceticism. This movement was also active in France and Germany until the 16th century. *The Imitation of Christ*, written by Thomas à Kempis (1379/80-1471), a book characteristic of this movement, is, after the Bible, the most read work among Christians.
10. Roland Edighoffer, "Utopie et sodalité selon Johann Valentin Andreae," *Gnostica 3—Esotérisme, gnose et imaginaire symbolique, mélanges offerts à Antoine Faivre*, Richard Caron, Joscelyn Godwin, Wouter J. Hanegraaff, and Jean-Louis

- Vieillard-Baron (Leuven: Peeter, 2001) pp. 373-388.
11. Regarding the relationships between esotericism and pietism, see Pierre Deghaye, *De Paracelse à Thomas Mann, les avatars de l'hermétisme allemande* (Paris: Dervy, 2000); and by the same author, the article 'Piétisme *Dictionnaire critique de l'ésotérisme*, Jean Servier, editor (Paris: PUF, 1998) pp. 1044-1046.
 12. See Chapter 4, "The Age of the Holy Spirit."
 13. Eleonor von Merlau (Johanna Eleonora Petersen), *Glaubens-Gesprache mit Gott* (Frankfurt/Leipzig, 1691) and Johann Wilhelm Petersen, *Regnum Christi* (1698) [*Nubes testium veritatis de Regno Christi glorioso in septima tuba futuro testantium*. Frankfurt, 1696].
 14. Johann Albrecht Bengel, *Ordo temporum* (Stuttgart, 1741) and *Cyclus, sive de anno magno Solis, Lunae, Stellarum consideratio* (1745). His reflections on the meaning of the number 666 in Revelations led him to the conclusion that humanity had been living since 1143 under the influence of the Beast and that the final revelation was near. He felt that the year 1834 would see the return of Christ and the establishment of the Millennium.
 15. Antoine Faivre, "Élie Artiste ou le Messie des Philosophes de la Nature," *Aries*, Vol. II, No. 2; and Vol III, No. 1 (Leiden and Boston: Brill Academia Publishers, 2002 and 2003) pp. 119-152.

16. Concerning the different aspects of Boehmism in this country, see Serge Hutin, *Les disciples anglais de Jacob Boehme*, *op. cit.*
17. *Les Disciples anglais . . .*, *op. cit.*, pp. 119-120.
18. In 1652 the Quaker movement arose around the English preacher George Fox (1624-1691), and the Mennonites were Anabaptist followers of the Dutch reformer Menno Simonsz (1460-1561).
19. In regards to alchemy, Julius Friedrich Sachse shows a connection between Heinrich Melchior Mühlenberg and the Pietists of Halle. See *The German Pietists . . .*, *op. cit.*, p. 148.
20. Johannes Kelpius, *A short, easy, and comprehensive method of prayer*. This treatise was published by Christopher Witt, Philadelphia, 1761.
21. Heinrich Bernhard Köster was himself the author of a millennialist text, *De Resurrectione Imperii Æternitatus* (1697).
22. *Die Wahrhafft und vollkommene Bereitung des Philos. Steins der Brüderschafft aus dem Orden des Gulden und rosen Kreuzes . . .* (Breslau, 1710).

Chapter 16

HARVEY SPENCER LEWIS

1. Lewis, Ralph Maxwell. *Cosmic Mission Fulfilled* (San Jose, CA: Supreme Grand Lodge of AMORC, 1978, ©1966) p. 32.

The biographical facts relating to the Lewis family in this chapter are taken from this work. Other information comes from Harvey Spencer Lewis' autobiography, a document kept in the archives of the Rosicrucian Order, AMORC.

2. The astounding faculties of this medium, who had been discovered by William James in 1885, were studied by the Society for Psychical Research of London. One of its members, Sir Oliver Lodge, discussed this woman in *La Survivance humaine, etude de facultes non encore reconnues* (Paris, Felix Alcan, 1912) p. 150-216. English edition: *The Survival of Man; A Study in Unrecognized Human Faculty* (New York: George H. Doran Company, 1920). Regarding Léonora Piper, see also Bertrand Méheust, *Somnambulisme et médiumnité*, tome II, "Le choc des sciences psychiques" (Le Plessis-Robinson: Institut Synthélabo, coll. "Les Empêcheurs de penser en rond," 1999) pp. 63-68.
3. See Chapter 13, "In Search of the Psyche."
4. *The Kybalion; A Study of the Hermetic Philosophy of Ancient Egypt and Greece, by Three Initiates* (Chicago: The Yogi Publication Society, 1908, 1989). The *Kybalion* was translated into French by André Durville and published in 1917 by Henri Durville, with a preface by Albert Louis Caillet. The latter let it be understood that William Walker Atkinson was not unaware of its publication. Indeed, not only did this text reiterate the very themes that he had elaborated upon in his book, but it was edited by the same editor and included in

the same collection. The author of *Manuel bibliographique des sciences psychiques ou occults* was well aware of the subject seeing that he was one of the few Frenchmen, with the Durvilles, who was enthusiastic about New Thought. In *Traitement mental* (1912), he made a strong case for the *Kybalion* and mentioned its basic principles.

5. Let us add here that William Walker Atkinson published in 1918, under the pseudonym of Magus Incognito, a book entitled *The Secret Doctrine of the Rosicrucians* (Advanced Thought Publishing Co.). The author presented seven series of so-called Rosicrucian aphorisms, with long commentaries. These involve a kind of mixture of Western and Eastern esoteric doctrines, most of which come from *The Secret Doctrine* by Helena Petrovna Blavatsky.
6. “I see New Thought as being truly the only religious movement of our time founded on mysticism that cando good for the majority of humans,” stated Hermann de Keyserling in *Journal de voyage d’un philosophe* (Paris: Bartillat, 1996) p. 187.
7. William James, *L’Experience religieuse, essai de psychologie descriptive*, preface by Emile Boutroux, chap. IV, “L’optimisme religieux” (Paris: Alcan, 1906). The work was reprinted under the title *Les Formes multiples de l’expérience religieuse*, preface by Bertrand Méheust (Chambéry: Éditions Exergue, 2001). English reprint edition: James, William, 1842-1910. *Varieties of Religious Experience: A Study in Human*

Nature. With a foreword by Michael James and new introductions by Eugene Taylor and Jeremy Carrette (London New York: Routledge, 2002).

8. See the books of Albert Louis Caillet, such as *Traitement mental et culture spirituelle* (1912) or *La Science de la vie* (1913) in which he presents and analyzes the points of view of various New Thought authors, as well as his *Manuel bibliographique des sciences psychiques ou occultes* (1912), where he devotes considerable space to books relating to this subject.
9. Unfortunately no detailed biography has been written about Hector Durville. However, the reader may wish to consult “Hector Durville, sa vie, son oeuvre,” which his son, Henri Durville, wrote as an introduction to his *Bréviaire de la santé* (Paris: Durville, 1923) pp. 5-33.
10. His sons, André, Jacques, Gaston, and Henri, continued his work. Henri, who succeeded him, was the author of many bestsellers, such as *La Science secrete and Cours de magétisme personnel*. After World War I, the school founded by Hector Durville became, under the direction of his son Henri, the *Ordre Eudiaque*, an Egypt-style initiatory movement. The Durvilles were also publishers, and as such they printed French translations of many New Thought texts, such as the celebrated *Kybalion* and the books of Prentice Mulford, and William Walker Atkinson.
11. Prentice Mulford (1834-1891) published a whole series of booklets for the celebrated White Cross Library, in

Philadelphia. His book *Your Forces and How to Use Them* (1888) was described by Albert Louis Caillet as a véritable treatise of practical magic, very clear in what concerns psychic culture. He proposed a method adapted to all the practices of daily living that could provide happiness and riches to the person who followed it. This book was translated into French by Sédir and published by Chacornac in 1897 “ It was then reprinted in 1905-1907 in three volumes, under the title *Vos forces et le moyen de les utiliser*. André Durville also published a translation around 1933, *Les Forces mentales*, for the Eudiac Library of the Éditions Durville.

12. Dr. Isaac Kauffmann Funk, the director of Funk and Wagnalls Publishing Co., became active in psychic research and spiritualism after engaging in an experiment with Léonora Piper, through whom he received a message from Dr. Richard Hodgson, one week after the death of the latter in 1905. Dr. James Hyslop, of the American Society for Psychical Research of Boston, relates these experiences of Isaac Kauffmann Funk in *Contact with the Other World* (1919).
13. This association had two sections: one involved in abnormal psychological phenomena, and the other in psychic research. Only the latter was truly active and it worked in conjunction with the French doctors J.-M. Charcot and P. Janet.
14. Albert Louis Caillet described at length this important work

in *Manuel bibliographique des sciences psychiques ou occultes* (Dorbon, 1912) Tome II, No. 5298; and in *Traitement mental et culture spirituelle* (Vigot, 1912 and 1922) pp. 282, 316-321.

Chapter 17

THE VOYAGE TO THE EAST

1. The information was taken from various sources: “Mrs. May Banks-Stacey, Matre, Rosae Crucis America,” *The American Rosae Crucis*, Vol. I, No. 1, January 1916, p. 17; “The Supreme Matre Emeritus Raised to the Higher Realms,” Cromaat D, 1918, pp. 26-27; and Harvey Spencer Lewis, “The Authentic and Complete History of the Ancient and Mystical Order Rosae Crucis,” *The Mystic Triangle*, January 1928, pp. 335-336. Certain facts were taken from the correspondence between Delia Stacey Muller (May Banks-Stacey’s daughter-in-law) and Harvey Spencer Lewis, in 1930. These documents are part of the archives of the Supreme Grand Lodge of AMORC.
2. Captain Cromwell Stacey, of the 21st American Infantry, was the man who captured Garcia and killed the head of the insurrection in Samar, in the Philippines. Also, during his stay, he was named “precidente” of Parang.
3. The information provided by her daughter-in-law does not allow us to place these travels with accuracy. However, it seems that she began to travel after her husband’s death—in

other words, beginning in 1886, and up to 1906—or even 1912. She probably also traveled alone, without her son.

4. Unfortunately we do not know the dates corresponding to May Banks-Stacey's entry into Helena Petrovna Blavatsky's group. Without a doubt it must have occurred in the period after her husband's death in 1886. It is known that the Inner Circle functioned during two periods—the first between 1884 and 1888, and the second between 1888 and 1891. Therefore, she became a member of the Theosophy Society before 1891. It is probable that she quit after 1891 —that is, after the death of its founder, a period when this society experienced certain dissensions.
5. In his book *La Vie de Vivekananda* (Paris: Stock, 1930), Romain Rolland explains the context of this voyage and retraced the activities of Vivekananda in the United States. English edition: *The Life of Vivekananda and the Universal Gospel*. Translated from the original French by E. F. Malcolm-Smith (Mayavati, Almora, Himalayas, Advaita ashrama, 1953).
6. Romain Rolland pointed out the relationship between certain elements presented in *Science and Health*, Mrs. Eddy's famous work, and the fundamental concepts of Hindu Vedantism. See Romain Rolland, *op. cit.*, pp. 60-62
7. *Gould's History of Freemasonry Throughout the World*, Vol. VI (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1936) p. 5.

8. Masonry of adoption —i.e., Masonry for women —arose in France in 1740. It drew its symbolism from the Old Testament, and originally its activities were primarily dedicated to charity work. The work of Louis Guillemain de Saint-Victor, *La Vraie Maçonnerie d'adoption* (1779), defining its structure, which, depending upon the rite, had four to ten degrees. Eastern Star, founded in 1830 and revised around 1860 by Rob Morris (1818-1888), is one of the most important obediences in the world. Although including both sexes, its symbolism is essentially feminine as it refers to such illustrious biblical figures as Eve, Ada, Martha, Ruth, and Esther.
9. Annie Besant created this organization to facilitate the mission of Alcyone —in other words, Jiddu Krishnamurti (1895-1986), the son of a dignitary of the Theosophic Society, who she saw as the incarnation of Maîtreya, the Great Teacher. In 1922, the young Krishnamurti, who did not wish to play the role of messiah, rebelled and publicly broke with the Theosophists.
10. As in Freemasonry of adoption, the lodge of the Manhattan Mystic Circle possessed four cardinal points: Asia (East), Africa (South), Europe (West), and America (North). The sisters wore a white satin apron and a jewel representing a flaming heart with a pomegranate in its center. The jewel worn by the *Illustrious Mistress* depicted a ladder of seven steps decorated by five golden stars; that of the Inspector, a

cross surmounted by a white dove; and that of the Perceptor, a knot “of gold bent,” with an arrow. For further details, see *Constitution and by-laws of the Manhattan Mystic Circle, Lodge No. 1 O.M.* (New York: John Meyer, n.d.).

11. Letter written to Harvey Spencer Lewis by Delia Stacey Muller on November 4, 1930.
12. As we will see later, Harvey Spencer Lewis used this term quite frequently to designate members of the 18th degree of Freemasonry, important members of various initiatic organizations, and even mystics whose ideas he felt were related to the Rosicrucian ideal.
13. Starting from this legacy and following an important mystical experience had in Cairo, Demetrius Platon Semelas established in 1915 the *Ordre du Lys et de l’Aigle*. Concerning Demetrius Platon Semelas, see Christian Rebisse, “Le Pantacle et le Lys,” *Pantacle*, No. 4, 1996, pp. 35-48 (French Grand Lodge of AMORC.)
14. Georges Lagrèze had been mandated by Papus to settle some problems relating to the organization of Martinism in Egypt. Although the archives we have consulted accurately relate the initiation conferred on Georges Lagrèze, we have found no trace of the one that Lagrèze had transmitted to Papus. Thus, this transmission seems to be legendary. Robert Ambelain claimed afterwards to have received this initiation from the hands of Georges Lagrèze. However, considering how he criticized Demetrius Platon Semelas in

his book *Le Martinisme contemporain et ses véritables origines*, this is rather doubtful (Les Cahiers du Destin, 1948) p. 13.

15. On July 23, 1913, Eugène Dupré wrote a long letter to Harvey Spencer Lewis. This document was discovered in Ralph Maxwell Lewis' home in 1996, after the death of his wife. The tone of this letter is quite friendly and makes it apparent that the two men had been dealing with one another for some time. In this letter, Eugène Dupré provided H. Spencer Lewis with all of the necessary information for the establishment of a Martinist lodge in the United States. He also attached the rituals of various degrees of the order, as well as a certificate of the Martinist S.I. and Free Initiator degrees. Harvey Spencer Lewis was also informed that the mystical name of Moshea (or Hoshe) and the ciphered number "DPR D 24 A" had been attributed to him. It needs to be mentioned that H. Spencer Lewis was undoubtedly unable to proceed with this project due to the onset of World War I. It was only during the establishment of FUDOSI, in 1934, that he envisioned establishing Martinism alongside the Rosicrucian Order, AMORC.
16. *The Future* (New York: Future Publishing Co. of F.T. McIntyre).
17. In these articles— "What Has the Future in Store for You," an article that drew the horoscope of the United States for the year 1908 (pp. 46-49) and "Department of Astrology and Astral Sciences" (pp. 52-54)—he showed himself to be

a good astrologer.

18. The subjects treated in the *Journal du magnétisme*, the magazine of the Société Magnétique de France, correspond completely with the concerns that Harvey Spencer Lewis had at this time. Much of this magazine is composed of bibliographical notices and of a listing of books published by the Durville publishing house. It was distributed in many countries. The geographical location of Henri Durville's bookshop and its description may correspond to some of the information provided by Lewis in his narrative.
19. Lewis, Harvey Spencer, "A Pilgrim's Journey to the East," *The American Rosae Crucis*, May 1916, pp. 12-27.
20. During this period, following the affair of the renewed Templar Order, these two men were cool towards Papus. Indeed, in 1908, during a spiritualistic séance conducted by Martinists meeting in a hotel located at 17 Rue des Canettes, they received in writing the mission of founding of a Templar order whose leader would be René Guénon. Thus was born the renewed Templar Order, whose creation would bring about the exclusion of René Guénon from the Martinist Order. It was dissolved in 1911, at the time that Dujols had fallen gravely ill. It is interesting to note that among the seven degrees of this order, the fourth was curiously called the "Rose-Croix of Egypt."
21. It should be noted that before taking over the Librairie du Merveilleux, Pierre Dujols was a journalist in Toulouse. The

manuscript of the text mentioned here was written around 1912. It was published by La Table d'Emeraude in 1991, with an introduction and some commentaries by J.-F. Gibert. The excerpt cited is found on page 70 of this book. Another version of this text was brought out by Genèvieve Dubois under the title of *Les Nobles Ecrits de Pierre Dujols et de son frère Antoine Dujols de Valois* (éditions Le Mercure dauphinois, 2000) from the manuscript found in the municipal library of Lyons (Ms 5488).

22. This congress took place on June 7-10, 1908. It included a white Martinist assembly on the premises of the Droit Humain, in the presence of laymen and journalists. The news accounts were published in *Le Matin*, June 8, 9, 10; *L'Éclair*, June 8; *Le Figaro*, June 7-8; *L'Humanité*, June 8; *Liberté*, June 7; and *Le Monde illustré*, June 13. Papus wrote a book relating to the activities of this event: *Compte rendu complet des travaux du congrès et du convent maçonnique spiritualiste* (Paris: Librairie Hernretique, 1910).
23. The city archivist was François Galabert (1873-1957). Apart from his professional activities, he was a member of numerous scholarly groups, such as the Société d'archéologie du Midi, founded by Alexandre Du Mège. Jean Coppolani paid homage to him in this association's bulletin: "Notice sur la vie et les travaux de M. François Galabert, secrétaire général de la Société," quatrième série, tome II, 1954-1966, Tarbes, 1967, pp. 32-36.

24. Clovis Lassalle sent this letter to Harvey Spencer Lewis at a time when the latter was still in France. The importance of Clovis Lassalle's role is underscored by the fact that this letter was found in Lewis' personal papers, bearing the inscription "important historical documents."
25. Clovis Lassalle also knew members of the Société archéologie du Midi de la France, seeing that he worked with many of them. Notably, he collaborated with François Galabert in producing the *Album de paléographie et de diplomatique*, published in 1913, 1928, and 1933.
26. From all evidence, and contrary to what certain individuals have claimed, this tower is not the donjon of the Capitole, as Lewis left this building and took a taxi that took him out the city and to the place of his initiation. However, it should be noted that it symbolizes for many Rosicrucians the place where AMORC's founder was initiated into Rosicrucianism. Unfortunately the description he provided is insufficient for us to pinpoint its exact location. Furthermore, there exist a great number of towers not far from the center of Toulouse. Concerning this subject, see Alex Coutet, *Toulouse, ville artistique, plaisante et curieuse* (Toulouse: Librairie Richard, 1926), a book for which Clovis Lassalle provided photographs of the monuments.
27. Among Clovis Lassalle's contributions, it should be noted that he worked with Abbé Breuil, Dr. L. Capitan, D. Peyroni in publications concerning many prehistoric

grottoes, and that he collaborated, for the Société d'études archéologique du Midi, with Émile Cartailhac and François Galabert (both of whom were members of the Academy of Jeux Floraux). Let us add that he received a gold medal at the Universal Exposition of Paris in 1900.

28. This letter, as well as its envelope bearing the Toulouse postmark, are found in the archives of the Supreme Grand Lodge of AMORC.
29. This conference was organized by the magazine *Renaissance traditionnelle*, in Paris, in October 2001. The text we are referring to was published as “Les origines de la franc-maçonnerie: trois approches,” by Antoine Faivre in *Renaissance traditionnelle*, No. 129, 2002, pp. 5-12. Roger Dachez also touched upon this subject in “Sources et fonctions de l'histoire secrète chez W illermoz, dans la maçonnerie du XVIIIe siècle,” *L'histoire cachée entre histoire révélée et histoire critique* (Lausanne: L'Age d'Homme, coll. “Politica Hermetica,” No. 10, 1996) pp. 79-89.
30. Roland Edighoffer, *Les Rose-Croix* (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, coll. “Que sais-je?”, 1982 and 1986) p. 108.

Chapter 18

THE ANCIENT AND MYSTICAL ORDER ROSAE CRUCIS

1. *American Philomathic Journal*, Vol. III, October 1912, p. 7. The American Philomathic Association had its headquarters at 45 West 34th Street, in New York City.
2. *La Société philomathique de Paris*, edited by André Thomas (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1990).
3. *The American Rosae Crucis*, “H. Spencer Lewis, F.R.C.,” Vol. 1, No. 2, February 1916, p. 17. On the professional calling card that Lewis used at this time, and on which were found his various titles, may be read the name of the “Société philomatique de Verdun, France.” This society was a branch of the Société philomatique vosgienne, as can be seen on this organization’s bulletin for the years 1899-1900.
4. Concerning this unusual individual, see “Le Pantacle et le Lys,” *Pantacle*, No. 4, 1996, pp. 3548. (French Grand Lodge of AMORC.)
5. During World War I, Semelas was living in France and became a friend of Papus. Since the Kabbalistic Order of the Rose-Croix had become dormant, Papus tried to replace it with another organization. It should be remembered that this order constituted the Martinist Order’s inner circle. In 1916, Papus seems to have envisioned replacing it, with Semelas’ assistance, with the Order of the Rose-Croix d’Orient. Papus’ death, in October 1916, prevented the realization of this project, although one of his successors, Victor Blanchard, also attempted to bring it to fruition.

6. See Chapter 17, “Egypt.”
7. Harvey Spencer Lewis himself described the first meetings of AMORC in “The Authentic and Complete History of the Ancient and Mystical Order Rosae Crucis,” *The American Rosae Crucis*, July 1916, Vol. I, No. 7, pp. 11-15.
8. On March 19, 1915, Lewis sent a sample of this document to the New York Public Library, in a small notefile entitled “History of the Rosicrucian Order in America, original documents with annotations by the Grand Master General, H. Spencer Lewis, A.D. 1915.” This file contains an article published in *The Globe* on February 24 and the document entitled “American Pronunziamento Number One.” Unfortunately at some unknown time some crude handwritten notes were added to the latter so as to distort their meaning. Another example of this Pronunziamento is most fortunately in AMORC’s archives (See Fig. 84).
9. The Latin word *imperator*, which means “he who commands.” This name is formed from the verb *imperare* which means “to command, order.” The term *Imperator* thus designates a person who commands the Order, in the sense of assuming higher responsibility. From an esoteric point of view, it also evokes the concept of “mastering,” the deed of being the “master of self.” The oldest known mention of the office of Imperator in Rosicrucianism is found in the book by Sincerus Renatus (Samuel Richter), *Die Wahrhaffte und vollkommene Bereitung des Philos. Steins der Brüderschafft aus*

- dem Orden des Gulden und Rosen Kreuzes* (Breslau, 1710).
10. See Chapter 11, “The Golden Rosy Cross of the Ancient System.”
 11. “Rosicrucian Initiation, A Sealed Book of Instructions for Neophyte Initiates,” the first informational pamphlet published by AMORC, “The Temple Lectures,” New York, 1917, p. 16.
 12. Concerning this matter, see the article of the *Daily Post* of Birmingham dated July 15, 1903, p. 3, which states that Alfred E. Saunders was sentenced to pay alimony to a 20-year-old woman —the daughter of one of his friends — after having made her pregnant.
 13. Jean Chevalier and Alain Gheerbrant, *Dictionnaire des symboles, mythes, rêves, coutumes, gestes, formes, figures, couleurs, nombres* (Paris: Robert Laffont, coll. “Bouquins,” 1990) p. 665. English edition: *A Dictionary of Symbols*. Translated from the French by John Buchanan-Brown. (Oxford; Cambridge, MA: Blackwell, 1994).

Chapter 19

INTERNATIONAL ALLIANCES

1. A large community of Russian emigrants hostile to Communism lived in Harbin. In November 1926 the Grand Lodge of Russia merged with the Grand Lodge of China.

J.A. Gridneff was named Grand Master of the Order for Northern China, while F.J. Kafka directed the activities of Southern China.

2. In July 1919 Théodor Reuss had given to Matthew McBlain Thomson an O.T.O. certificate making him “33e, 96e, IXe, Souv. Grand Master General and Grand President General.” Matthew McBlain Thomson directed the International Masonic Federation of Utah. After having succeeded in bringing into his federation such individuals as Jean Bricaud, he experienced considerable difficulties. On May 15, 1922, he was condemned by the Federal Court of Salt Lake City for fraudulent use of the mails. Concerning this individual, see Evans, Isaac Blair. *The Thomson Masonic Fraud; A Study in Clandestine Masonry* (Salt Lake City: Printed privately, 1922).
3. Jean Bricaud’s magazine, *Les Annales initiatiques*, announced in May 1920 the preparation of this international congress slated to take place in Zurich on July 17-19, 1920, under the supervision of Matthew McBlain Thomson, illustrious Grand Prior of the Scottish Templars and Sovereign General President of the American Masonic Federation, with the purpose of creating the union of all the spiritualistic Masonic corporations and of forming a universal Masonic federation (Universal Masonic World Federation). In its October-December number, *Les Annales initiatiques* enumerated the results of this congress.

4. The series of articles published in the Masonic review *L'Acacia*, entitled "L'affaire Théodor Reuss," between January and June 1907, included serious accusations about the morality of the head of the O.T.O. engaging in a veritable trade in Masonic high degrees.
5. See Chapter 14, "The Templars of the Orient."
6. The correspondence between Harvey Spencer Lewis and Théodor Reuss, which lasted from December 20, 1920, to June 12, 1922, is found in AMORC's archives. It is made up of fourteen letters written by Théodor Reuss to Harvey Spencer Lewis (the first is dated June 19, 1921; and the last June 12, 1922) and of eight letters written by Harvey Spencer Lewis to Theodor Reuss (the first is dated December 28, 1920; and the last May 20, 1922).
7. A photographic reproduction of this charter was published in the *Rosicrucian Digest*, Vol. XI, No. 10, November 1933, p. 396.
8. In his letter of September 12, 1921, Theodor Reuss claimed that he had broken with Aleister Crowley in regards to the O.T.O. and indicated that he was also about to break with Charles Stanfeld Jones (called Achad), to whom he had given a charter on May 10, 1921, to replace Matthew McBlain Thomson as the head of O.T.O. for the United States. H. Spencer Lewis had no sympathy for Aleister Crowley, and from October 1916 he had severely criticized him as being a black magician. He emphasized that Aleister

Crowley was an impostor, that he had nothing to do with AMORC, and that he had not been the secret head of Rosicrucianism, contrary to what he tried to have people believe (“Some books not recommended, The Emperor reviews a few books,” *The American Rosae Crucis*, Vol. 1, No. 10, October 1916, pp. 22-23.

9. This misadventure was to make H. Spencer Lewis act more cautiously. However, he was to experience a similar setback in 1930 with Heinrich Tränker, one of Theodor Reuss’ successors. Heinrich Tränker, the leader of the Collegium Pansophicum, experienced some difficulties with Max Heindel’s order, but in April 1927, Dr. Hugo Vollrath, representing Max Heindel in Germany, was convicted for defaming Tränker.
10. This composer, whose repertoire was comic opera, remains little known. Some of his works were *Le Poilu*, *La Petite Dactylo*, *I’As de coeur*, *S.A. Papillon Messaouda*, *Romanitza*. The secretariat of the Beaux-Arts put him in charge of the large festival produced by the Opéra-Comique of Paris. For six years he collaborated with Firmin Gémier at the Odéon. During a performance of the Shakespearean Society he had the opportunity to direct *Shylock*, set to the music of H. Rabaud.
11. Maurice Jacquet was initiated on January 31, 1911, at the Admirateurs de l’Universe Lodge of Paris. From 1913 he was a member of the Ernest Renan Lodge, which mostly

brought together theater people. He was Junior Warden of this lodge, which was directed at the time by Firmin Gémier, the theater director of the Odéon, and included among its members André Lebey and André Mauprey. A holder of the Rose-Croix degree, Maurice Jacquet also frequented L'Effort Chapter.

12. When Maurice Jacquet was discussed in the articles of *The Mystic Triangle*, he was described as a “Rose-Croix of France” (February 1926, p. 16; “Brief biographies of prominent Rosicrucians by Fra Fidelis—No. 3: H. Maurice Jacquet,” August 1926, pp. 133-135; October 1926, pp. 174-176). All of the correspondence between H. Spencer Lewis and Maurice Jacquet is found in AMORC’s archives.
13. In his letter of May 28, 1926, François JollivetCastelot thanked Lewis for the honor bestowed upon him.
14. Ernest Dalmayrac lived at 3, Rue des Lys. For further details regarding L'Encyclopédique, one of the oldest Masonic lodges in Toulouse, please consult *Deux siècles d'histoire de la R.L. L'Encyclopédique (1787-1987)*, a commemorative work published by this lodge in 1987.
15. This account was published in several installments in *The Mystic Triangle*, under the title “Our Trip Through Europe,” October-December 1926.
16. *The Mystic Triangle*, December 1926, pp. 214-215.
17. André Lebey, a man of letters known under the pseudonym

of Yebel, was also a deputy of Seine-et-Oise from 1917 to 1919. The Grand Orator of the Grand Orient in Paris, he was an important member of the International Masonic Alliance (AMI), created in 1921 in Geneva after a universal congress of Freemasonry, to establish a connection between the S.D.N. and Masonic obediences. For the biography of this humanitarian, see Denis Lefebvre, *André Lebey, intellectual et franc-maçon sous la IIIe République* (Paris: EDIMAF, 1999).

18. Concerning the ties between the League of Nations and Freemasonry, see Georges Ollivier, “La Société des Nations,” *Revue internationale des sociétés secrètes*, No. 6, March 15, 1936, pp. 177-185. This article described the intercessions of André Lebey in behalf of the League during a congress held on Rue Cadet, between June 28 and 30, 1916. This meeting brought together Belgian, Italian, Spanish, Argentinian, and French Freemasons.
19. On November 22, 1926, Camille Savoie wrote Lewis: “First I wish to thank you for the great honor that you have done me in conferring on me the title of an honorary member of the fraternity of the R.C. of which you are the President. I will strive to do my best to acquire the knowledge and qualities necessary to fulfill the mission that this title imposes on me.” This letter is found in AMORC’s archives, along with those of different Masonic individuals we have cited above, or others such as Gabriel Gouaux, 33°

and secretary of the Grand Orient of France, or Francis Borrey.

20. H. Jaccottet retraced the biography of Hans Grüter in the article “Le Dr. Hans Grüter, Grand Maître rosicrucien,” published in two parts in the *Rose-Croix*, Nos. 38 and 39, June and September 1961, pp. 24-28 and 19-22. This dentist from Nice became a Rosicrucian in May 1930, due to his friend Clément Lebrun, who became a member before then. He was also a Freemason—he was a 31^o member—and a Martinist.
21. Nicholas Roerich and his wife Helena had been members of the branch of the Theosophical Society, probably before World War I. Furthermore, Helena had translated *The Secret Doctrines* into Russian. Around 1920, the Roerichs created the first study groups of Agni Yoga, a “movement for a living ethic which includes and synthesizes the philosophies and religious teachings of all periods,” and which advocated a yoga of action rather than asceticism. However, even though Nicolas Roerich was a member of various organizations, he was an independent spirit. He published his conception of the way towards illumination in the four cycles of poems written between 1916 and 1921 under the title of *Pismena Stikhi* (Moscow: Sovremennik, 1974). English edition of Roerich’s poetry: *Flame in Chalice*. Translated by Mary Siegrist (New York: Roerich Museum Press, 1930).

22. See *Bulletin des Polaires*, No. 1, May 9, 1930, p. 3. Considerable information regarding this movement is also found in Pierre Geyraud, *Les Sociétés secrètes de Paris* (Paris: Émile-Paul frères 1938) pp. 56-66.
23. It involves a divinatory practice based on mathematics, whose process was described by Zam Bhotiva in *Asia Mysterosa, l'oracle de la Force astrale comme moyen de communication avec les "Petites Lumières d 'Orient"* (Paris: Dorbon-Aîné, 1929). For a time René Guénon was enthusiastic about this oracle. He then distanced himself from the Polaires, judging the messages transmitted by the initiates of the Himalayas to be insignificant and pitiful (see his critique in *Le Voile d Isis*, February 1931).
24. In this instance we will use the most common name of this group. At its creation Émile Dantinne gave it the name of the *Ordre d'Hermès Trismégiste*, from which Jean Mallinger created the *Order of Hermès Tétramégiste*, also called the *Ordre hermétiste tétramégiste et mystique*, or *Ordre pythagoricien*.
25. Not all of them were members at the same time; thus, we have given them all together so as not to complicate matters.
26. "Qu'est-ce que la FUDOSI?" *Rose-Croix*, No. 128, hiver 1983, p. 4. (French Grand Lodge of AMORC).
27. Lucien Sabah, *Une Police politique de Vichy: le service des sociétés*

- secrétés* (Paris: Klincksieck, 1996) pp. 456-458. These documents enlighten in a fresh way the proceedings started against Émile Dantinne at the Liberation.
28. *Mansions of the Soul* (San Jose: Grand Lodge of the English Language Jurisdiction of AMORC, 1986). Paperbound edition p. 134.
 29. Extract from “The Colored Race,” *Rosicrucian Forum*, October 1932, p. 61. In the same magazine are some articles that H. Spencer Lewis wrote regarding this subject: “About My Jewish Attitude,” February 1938, pp. 118-119; “The Karma of the Jews,” April 1938, pp. 141-142; and “The Aryan Supremacy,” August 1939, pp. 24-25.
 30. The latter had already profited from Hans Grüter’s feebleness, who became nearly blind after an illness, by having him sign in July 1950 an insidious document regarding Harvey Spencer Lewis.
 31. Among them, let us cite the case of Reuben Swinburne Clymer (1878-1966), who spent much of his lifetime in criticizing or imitating AMORC. He invented a counterfeit of FUDOSI, the FUDOSFI, about which certain occultists, such as Constant Chevillon, appeared complacent. He was the author of numerous works concerning Rosicrucianism, where he gave proof of a frenzied imagination. He claimed to be the successor of the very controversial Pascal Beverly Randolph (concerning this matter, see the book by John Patrick Deveney, *Pascal Beverly Randolph—A Nineteenth*

Century Black American Spiritualist Rosicrucian and Sex Magician (New York: State University of New York Press, 1997) pp. 140-143. According to the American Medical Association journal (Vol. 81, No. 24, December 15, 1923), he directed in 1904 the International Academy of Natural and Sacred Sciences, which sold medical courses by mail and marketed various “youthelixirs,” “waters of life,” and “bioplasma.” Many times he was accused of fraud with the Philosophers of the Living Fire, who engaged in selling medical diplomas. Clymer himself bought a medical title from the Independent Medical College of Chicago, a véritable “diploma mill.”

Chapter 20

THE CONTEMPORARY ERA

1. Shortly after the death of Ralph Maxwell Lewis the Rose-Croix published a special issue containing many articles about the life and achievements of this exceptional man (No. 145, Spring 1988). English edition: *Rosicrucian Digest* Vol 65 (1987) Memorial Issue.

THEMATIC BIBLIOGRAPHY

As an aid to the reader, the following bibliography has been divided into subject categories. It does not claim to be exhaustive, but rather provides a selection that is helpful for those individuals who wish to deepen their knowledge of the subjects listed. So as not to overburden this selection, we have not included the esoteric texts themselves—the reader will find references to them in the endnotes—but rather the works dedicated to them.

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INDEX OF PERSONAL NAMES

Abano, Peter of
Abd al'Rahman I
Abraham ben Isaac
Abramelin
Abravanel, Judah
Abu-Abdallah
Abu-Ma'shar
Abulafia, Abraham
Accomani, Cesare, see Zam Bhotiva.
Adam
Adam, Charles
Adamson, Henry
Aegidius of Tebaldio
Agathodemon
Aglaopheme
Agnostus, Irenaeus
Agrippa, Cornelius Heinrich
Aia Aziz, see Théon, Max.
Aithalides
Akhnaton
Al Manor

Al-Jaldaki, Abd Allah
Al-Khadir
Al-Khezr, see Al-Khadir.
Al-Majriti, Maslama
Al-Mansur
Al-Qarani, Oways
Al-Razi, abu-Bakr Muhammad ibn-Zakariya'
Albanés, Countess d'
Albertus Magnus
Albumasar, see Abu-Ma'shar.
Aldrovandi, Ulisse
Alembert, Jean Le Rond d'
Alexander The Great
Alexander VI,
Alfassa, Mirra
Alfonso the Learned
Ali-ash-Shabramallishi
Alta, Abbé
Alverda, Hugo de
Amadou, Robert
Aman-Jean, Edmond
Amenhotep III
Amenhotep, son of Hapu
Amosis
Ancel Guillaume

Anderson, James
Andreae, Jakob
Andreae, Johann Valentin
Angel, Frère
Anubis
Aphrodite
Apollo
Apollonius of Rhodes
Apollonius of Tyana
Apuleius
Aristotle
Arndt, Johann
Arnold of Villanova
Arnold, Gottfried
Arnold, Paul
Asclepius
Ashmole, Elias
Assmann, Jan,
Atkinson, William Walker
Aton
Augustine, St.
Aumer, Jean-Pierre
Aurobindo, Sri
Ba'al Shem Tov
Babbitt, Dr.

Bacon, Francis
Bacon, Nicholas
Bacon, Roger
Baillet, Adrien
Balbiani, Prince
Balinus, see Apollonius of Tyana.
Ballanche, Pierre
Balzac, Honoré de
Banks, Thaddeus
Banks-Stacey, May
Barbey d'Aurevilly, Jules
Barlet, F-Ch.
Barrett, SirWilliam
Baudelaire, Charles
Beauregard, Joseph de
Bédarrides, Marc and Michel
Beeckman, Isaac
Béhar, Pierre
Beissel, Conrad
Bellcastle-Ligne, Raynaud E. de
Belon, Pierre
Ben Aifa, Soliman
Benedict XV
Benedictus
Benedictus Figulus

Bengel, Johann Albrecht
Berdyaev, Nikolai
Bergasse, Nicolas
Bernard of Clairvaux, St.
Bernard, Christian
Bernard, Émile
Besant, Annie
Besold, Christoph
Betts, Katherine
Bhima Sena Pratapa
Biedermann, Ludwig
Bimstein, Louis-Maximilien, see Theon, Max.
Bischoffswerder, Johann Rudolf von
Blanchard, Victor
Blavatsky, Helena Petrovna
Boccalini, Traiano
Boehme, Jacob
Boissin, Firmin
Bolos of Mendes
Bonneville, Nicolas de
Bonnot de Condillac, Étienne
Boucher de la Richardière
Boulange, T.P.
Bourdelle, Antoine
Bourges, Élémer

Boyle, Robert
Brahe, Tycho
Braid, James
Brassard, Albert B.
Brenz, Johann
Bricaud, Jean
Brot of fer, Ratichius
Brouncker, William
Brunfels, Otto
Bruno, Giordano
Bruxius, Adam
Bry, Jean Théodore de
Buber, Martin
Buchanan, Joseph Rodes
Buffon, Georges Louis Leclerc
Buhle, Johann Gottlieb
Bulwer Lytton, Edward
Burgoyne, Thomas H.
Burke, Miss
Burne-Jones, Edward
Cadet, M.
Caesar
Cagliostro, Alessandro
Cahagnet, Louis-Alphonse
Caillet, Albert Louis

Callaghan, John P.
Campanella, Tommaso
Canseliet, Eugene
Cardes, Jean-Raymond
Casaubon, Isaac
Catherine of Aragon
Cato
Caus, Salomon de
Chaboseau, Augustin
Chaboseau, Jean
Chambers, George Robert
Champollion, Jean-François
Chamuel
Charles I, king of England
Charles II, king of England
Charles of Hesse-Cassel
Charles V
Chatel, Abbé
Chaunu, Pierre
Christian of Anhalt
Christian, Pierre
Christina of Sweden
Clarke, H.
Clea
Clement of Alexandria

Clement VII
Cleopatra
Clymer, Reuben Swinburne
Colgen, Mr
Comenius, Johann Amos Komensky
Constantine
Copernicus, Nicolaus
Coppens, Christiaen
Corbin, Henry
Cosimo di Medici
Cosmoxene, Christian
Couliano, Ioan P.
Court de Gébelin, Antoine
Croll, Oswald
Cromwell Reynolds, Delia
Crook, Florence
Crookes, William
Crossman, Mr.
Crowley, Aleister
Curie, Pierre and Marie
Dalmayrac, Ernest
Dante Alighieri
Dantinne, Émile
Davidson, Peter
Davis, Andrew Jackson

Davy, Marie-Madeleine
De Quincey, Thomas
Dean, Charles Dana
Dee, John
Delaage, Henri
Delacroix, Eugène
Deleuze, Joseph-Pierre
Delville, Jean
Democritus
Desaguliers, John Theophilus
Descartes, René
Diderot, Denis
Didier, Alexis
Diocletian
Diodorus Siculus
Dion Fortune
Dionysius the Areopagite
Divoire, Fernand
Dodd, Alfred
Doget, John
Dorn, Gerhard
Dramart, Louis
Drebbel, Cornelis
Dresser, Annetta Gertrude
Dresser, Horatio Willis

Dresser, Julius A.
Du Bourg, family
Du Mége, Alexandre
Dujols, Pierre
Dumas, Alexandre
Dupotet de Sennevoy, Jules Denis, Baron
Dupre, Eugène
Dupuis, Charles-François
Dupuy, Louis-Emmanuel
Durand de Gros, Dr.
Durville, Gaston
Durville, Hector
Durville, Henri
Dutoit-Membrini, Jean-Philippe
Dutrech, Dr.
Eckhart, Johannes, called Meister
Eckhartshausen, Karl von
Eddy, Mary Baker
Edighoffer, Roland
Edward I, king of England
Eglin Iconius, Raphael
Eldir, Alained'
Eliade, Mircea
Elias Artista
Elijah

Elizabeth I, queen of England
Elizabeth, daughter of Frederick V
Elizabeth, wife of Frederick V
Empedocles
Encausse, Gérard, see Papus.
Enoch
Eschenbach, Wolfram von
Essex, Earl of
Etteilla, Alliette
Eudoxus of Cnidus
Evans, Warren Felt
Evelyn, John
Ezekiel
Fabr  d'Olivet, Antoine
Fabr -Palaprat
Fabride Peiresc, Nicolas-Claude
Faivre, Antoine
"Falkenstein, Count
Falkner, Daniel
Falkner, Justus
Faria, Abb 
Faucheux, Albert, see Barlet, F.-Ch.
Faulhaber, Johan
Fauvety, Charles
Fen lon

Ferdinand I of Habsburg
Ferdinand II of Habsburg
Ferdinand of Styria, see Ferdinand and II of Habsburg.
Ferrer-Benimelli, José .A.
Feure, Georgesde
Ficino, Marsilio
Fictuld, Hermann,
Filiger, Charles,
Firth, Violet, see Dion Fortune.
Flamel, Nicholas
Flammarion, Camille,
Fletcher, Ella Adelia
Florentinus de Valentia
Fludd, Robert
Fortune, Dion
Fournié, Abbé Pierre
Fox, Margaret and Katie
Fra Angelico
Franck, César
Francke, August Hermann
Frank, Sebastien
Franklin, Benjamin
Franz, Marie-Louise von
Frederick II, king of Prussia
Frederick of Württemberg

Frederick V, elector Palatine
Frederick William, prince of Prussia
Friesen, Johann Karl
Fuchs, Leonhart
Fulcanelli
Funk, Isaac Kauffmann
Gabriel
Gabrol, A.
Galen
Galileo
Garasse, François
Gassendi, Pierre
Gauguin, Paul
Geber, see Jabir ibn Hayyan
Gebler, Baron von
Gemier, Firmin
Gemistus Pletho
Gerard of Cremona
Gesner, Konrad von
Gichtel, Johann Georg
Gilly, Carlos
Giorgi, Francesco
Glaser, Christoph
Goethe, Johann Wolfgang von
Gorceix, Bernard

Gould, Sylvester Clark
Gourmont, Rémy de
Grasset, Eugène
Grasshoff, Louis von, see Heindel, Max.
Gregory XIV
Greiner, Frank
Grick, Friedrich, see Agnostus, Irenaeus.
Groote, Gerhard
Grüter, Hans
Guaita, Stanislas de
Guénon, René
Guesdon, Jeanne
Guyon, Jeanne-Marie Bouvier de La Mott, Mme
Haak, Theodore
Hafenreffer, Matthias
Hallaj, Abu al-Mughith al-Husayn al
Halleux, Robert
Hanauer, Georg
Harlequin
Harriot, Thomas
Hartlib, Samuel
Hartmann, Franz
Harvey, William
Haselmayer, Adam
Hauffe, Frederica

Haven, Marc
Hecataeus of Abdera
Heindel, Max
Heliodorus
Helmont, Jan Baptista van
Helvétius, Claude Adrien
Henry III, king of France
Henry IV, king of France
Henry of Navarre, see Henry IV.
Henry VIII, king of England
Hermaphrodite
Hermas
Hermes Trismegistus
Herodotus
Hess, Tobias
Hesse, Hermann
Heydon, John
Heyland, Samuel
Hiram
Hirsch, Christoph
Hoberveschel von Hobernfeld, Andreas
Hodby, William B.
Hodgson, Richard
Hodler, Ferdinand
Hoffman, Catherine

Hoffman, Melchior
Hofmann, Ida
Holbach, Paul Henri Dietrich d'
Home, Daniel Dunglas
Homer
Hopkins, Emma Curtis
Horace
Hornung, Erik
Horus
Hudnut, Eliza
Hudson, Thomson Jay
Huet, Pierre Daniel
Hugode Santalla
Hugo, Victor
Hund, Johann Gottlieb von
Hunt, William Holman
Huser, Johann
Husson, Dr.
Hutin, Serge
Hyslop, James H.
Iamblichus
ibn 'Arabi
ibn Qurra, see Thabitibn Qurra.
ibn-Umailal-Tamimi, Muhammad
ibn-Wahshiya

ibn Yazid, Khalid
Idris
Indy, Vincentd'
Isaac the Blind
Isidore of Seville
Isis
Isocrates
Jabir ibn Hayyan
Jacques-Dalcroze, Émile
Jacquet, Maurice
Jafar al-Sadiq
Jama, Sophie
James I, king of England
James, St.
James, William
Janssen, Zacharias
Jennings, Hargrave
Jerome, St.
Jesus Christ
Joachim of Fiore
John of Toledo
John the Baptist, St.
Jollivet-Castelot, François
Jonson, Ben
Julian the Apostate

Jung, Carl Gustav
Justinian
Kardec, Allan
Kellner, Carl
Kelly, Gerard
Kelpius, Johannes
Kepler, Johannes
Kerner, Justinus
Keyserling, Hermann de
Khawadja Khidr, see al-Khadir.
Khnopff, Fernand
Khunrath, Heinrich
Kienast, Richard
Kiesewetter, Karl
Kiimalehto, Thor
Kircher, Athanasius
Klein, Heinrich
Köppen, Carl Friedrich von
Koreff, Dr.
Kornmann, Guillaume
Köster, Heinrich Bernhard
Koyré, Alexandre
Kreutzer, Rudolphe
Krishnamurti
Kyot le provençal

La Rochefoucault, Antoine de
Laban, Rudolf von
Lacordaire, Father Henri
Lacroze, Gary de
Lactantius
Lacuria, Paul
Lagrèze, Georges
Landauer, Gustav
Lapasse, Viscount Édouard de
Larmandie, Count de
Lassalle, Clovis
Lavoisier, Antoine Laurent de
Le Févre de la Boderie
Le Forestier, Réne
Lead, Jane
Lebey, André
Lebrun, Clement
Lederlin, Jakob
Leene, Jan
Leibniz, Gottfried Wilhelm
Lemoyne, Jean-Baptiste
Lenoir, Alexandre
Leo Africanus
Leroux, Pierre
Lévi, Éliphas

Levingston, William
Lévy, Charles
Lewis, Aaron Rittenhouse
Lewis, Earle R.
Lewis, Harvey Spencer
Lewis, Martha
Lewis, Ralph Maxwell
Lewis, Samuel
Leymarie, Pierre-Gaetan
Libavius, Andreas
Lindstedt, Conrad H.
Little, Robert Wentworth
Lodge, Sir Oliver
Lombroso, Cesare
Loria, Mr.
Louis XVI, king of France
Lully, Jean-Baptiste
Lully, Raymond
Luther, Martin
Lütke, Daniel
Luys, Dr. Jules
Mackenzie, Kenneth R.H.
Macrobius
Maginot, Adèle
Magre, Maurice

Mahatma Agamya Paramahansa, Sri
Maia
Maier, Michael
Maillard, Jean-François
Maimonides
Maistre, Joseph de
Malachi
Mallinger, Jean
Manetho
Marconis de Nègre, Jean-Étienne
Marcus Aurelius
Marie-Antoinette
Mark, St.
Marlowe, Christopher
Marquès-Rivière, Jean
Martin, Henri
Martínez de Pasquales
Martins, Dr.
Mathers, Samuel Liddell
Matthäi, Conrad
Matthias II, Emperor
Mauprey, André
Maurice of Hesse-Cassel
Maxence, Edgard
Maximilian, Archduke

Maxwell, William
Mayer, Christian Daniel von
McBlain Thomson, Matthew
Mederes, David
Menapius, F.G.
Mendeleev, Dmitri Ivanovich
Menes
Mercator, Gerhardus
Mercier, Mme., see Eldir, Alaine d'
Mercury
Merian, Matthaüs
Merlau, Eleonor von
Mersenne, Marin
Merswin, Rulman
Mesmer, Franz Anton
Michaud, Guy
Michelet, Jules
Michelet, Victor-Émile
Millais, John Everett
Minerva
Minne, George
Mocet, Dr.
Mögling, Daniel, see Florentinus de Valentia.
Mohammed
Mols, P.

Montesquieu
Moray, Sir Robert
More, Thomas
Moreas, Jean
Moreau, Gustave
Morienu
Mormius, Peter
Morris, William
Moses
Moses of Leon
Moses, William Stainton
Mother, see Alfassa, Mirra.
Mozart, Wolfgang Amadeus
Muggleton, Lodowicke
Mulford, Prentice
Münster, Sebastian
Myers, Frederick William Henry
Napoleon
Nasir-e Khosraw
Naudé, Gabriel
Naumann, Gottlieb
Neptune
Nero
Neuhaus, Heinrich
Newton, Isaac

Nicholas of Cusa
Nicolai, Philip
Noah
Nodier, Charles
Novikov, Nikolai
Nyst, Raymond
O'Neal Haye, Anthony
Octavian
Oedenkoven, Henri
Oetinger, Friedrich Christoph
Offray de la Mettrie, Julien
Olcott, Henry Steel
Olympiodorus
Ormus, or Ormissus
Orpheus
Ortelius, Abraham,
Orvius
Osbert, Alphonse
Osiris
Otto Heinrich, Count Palatine
Ourches, Count d'
Ovid
Palestrina
Palladino, Eusapia
Pantheus, Michael

Papin, Denis
Papus
Paracelsus
Parîs, Pierre-Adrien
Parkes, Dr. S.
Parsifal
Patrizi, Francesco
Paul, St.
Payne, George
Péladan, Adrien
Péladan, Joséphin
Penn, William
Peter, St.
Petersen, Johann Wilhelm
Peuckert, Will-Erich
Philaethes, Eugenius, see Vaughan, Thomas
Philip a Gabella
Philip II, king of Spain
Philip the Good
Philo
Piaget, Jean
Pico della Mirandola,
Pioda, Alfredo,
Piper, Leonora
Piranesi, Giambattista

Pistorius, Johannes
Plato
Pliny
Plotinus
Plutarch
Poiret, Pierre
Postel, Guillaume
Potier, Michael
Pott, Mrs. Henry
Poyan, Charles
Praetorius, Stephan
Previati, Gaetano
Prinz-Visser, M.
Privat, Paul Édouard
Proclus
Prometheus
Pseudo-Aristotle
Ptolemy, Claudius
Puvis de Chavannes, Pierre
Puységur, Armand Marie Jacquesde
Chastenet, Marquisde
Pythagoras
Quimby, Phineas Parkhurst
Ragon, Jean-Marie
Raleigh, Walter

Ramakrishna
Ramasami, K.T.
Rameau, Jean-Philippe
Ramée, Daniel
Ramsay, Andrew Michael
Rawley, William
Re
Redon, Odilon
Regnard, Jean-françois
Reuchlin, Johannes
Reuss, Theodor
Rhazes, see al-Razi.
Richet, Charles
Richter, Samuel, see Sincerus Renatus.
Riesener, William
Rivail, Hippolyte-Léon, see Kardec, Allan.
Robert of Chester
Rochas, Colonel Albert d'Aiglun de
Rochefoucault, Antoine de la
Roerich, Nicholas
Rolland, Romain
Rondelet, Guillaume
Rops, Félicien
Rose, Frédéric
Rosenkreuz, Christian

Rosenroth, Knorr von
Rosna, Charles
Rossetti, Dante Gabriel
Rossi, Paolo
Rouault, Georges
Rousseau, Jean-Jacques
Rubens, Peter Paul
Rudolph II, Emperor
Ruland, Martin
Ruska, Julius
Ruskin, John,
Russak, Marie
Ruysbroeck, Jan van
Ruzbehan Baqli Shiraz,
Sabin, Oliver C.
Sachse, Julius Friedrich
Sagiyus
Saint-Germain, Comte de
Saint-Martin, Louis Claude de
Saint-Pol Roux
Salzmann, Rodolphe
Sarpi, Paolo
Satie, Érik
Saunders, Alfred E.
Savoire, Camille

Schleiss von Löwenfeld, Bernhard Joseph
Schopenhauer, Arthur
Schröder, Joseph Wilhelm
Schwabe, Carlos
Schweighardt, Theophilus
Schwenckfeld, Caspar
Scotus Erigena, Johannes
Sears, Miss
Sédir
seelig, Johannes
Seleucus
Semelas, Demetrius Platon
Semnani
Seneca
Senior Zadith, see ibn Umayl al-Tamimi
Mohammed.
Séon, Alexandre,
Serapis
Seth
Seton, Dr. Julia
Shabestari, Mahmud
Shakespeare, William
Sheba, Queen of
Sidgwick, Henry
Sidney, Philip

Silvestre, Augustin-François de
Sincerus Renatus, XIII
Sinnett, Alfred Percy
Socrates
Sohravardi, Shihaboddin Yahya
Solomon
Solon
Speckman, A.H.W.
Spener, Philipp Jacob
Spenser, Edmund
Sperber, Julius
Sprat, Thomas
Sprengel, Anna
Steiner, Rudolf
Stellatus, Joseph, see Menapius, F.G.
Steuco, Agostino
Stewart, Gary
“Stromberg, Frank,
Studion, Simon
Suso, Heinrich
Swedenborg, Emanuel
Tat
Tauler, Johannes
Terrasson, Abbé Jean
Teste, Dr. Alphonse

Thabit ibn Qurrah
Thales of Miletus
Theodosius
Théon, Max
Theophilus
Theresa of Avila, St.
Thomas Aquinas, St.
Thomas, André
Thorion, Henry
Thurston, Royle
Toorop, Jan
Torrentius, Johannes, see Van der Beeck
Johannes Symonsz
Trine, Ralph Waldo
Tschoudy, Charles Theodor
Turnbull, Victor
Turning, Svend
Udny, E.
Urban VI
Valentine, Basil
Van der Beeck, Johannes Symonsz
Van Hogelande, Cornelis
Van Rijckenborg, Jan
Vaughan, Thomas
Ventura, Gastone

Venus
Vesalius, Andreas
Villiers de l'Isle-Adam, Auguste
Virgil
Visme, A.P.J. de
Vitruvius
Vivekanand, Swami
Voltaire
Voragin, Jacobusde
Vulliaud, Paul
Wachtmeister, Countess,
Wagner, Richard
Waite, Arthur Edward
Wallace, Alfred Russel
Weigel, Valentin
Welling, Christophe
Welling, Georg von
Welton, Charles
Wesley, John
Wessel, Wilhelm
Westcott, William Wynn
Wharton, Duke of
Whitefield, George
Wigston, W.F.C.
Wilcox, Ella Wheeler

Wilde, Constance Lloyd
Wilde, Oscar
Wilkins, John
Willermoz, Jean-Baptiste
Wittemans, Franz
Wöllner, Johann Christoph
Wood, Henry
Woodman, R. William
Yarker, John
Yates, Frances Amelia
Yeats, William Butler
Yogi Ramacharaka
Zam Bhotiva
Zetzner, Lazarus
Zeus
Zimmermann, Johann Jacob
Zinzendorf, Count Nikolaus Ludwig von
Zoroaster
Zosimos of Panopolis

THE ROSICRUCIAN ORDER, AMORC

Purpose and Work of the Order

The Rosicrucian Order, AMORC, is a philosophical and initiatic tradition. As students progress in their studies, they are initiated into the next level or degree.

Rosicrucians are men and women around the world who study the laws of nature in order to live in harmony with them. Individuals study the Rosicrucian lessons in the privacy of their own homes on subjects such as the nature of the soul, developing intuition, classical Greek philosophy, energy centers in the body, and self-healing techniques.

The Rosicrucian tradition encourages each student to discover the wisdom, compassion, strength, and peace that already reside within each of us.

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