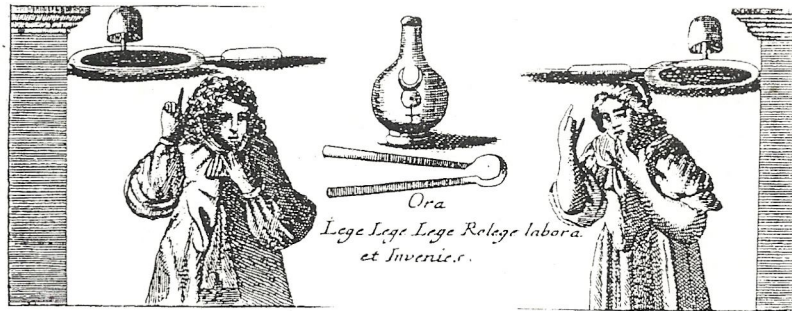


## THE GREAT WORK



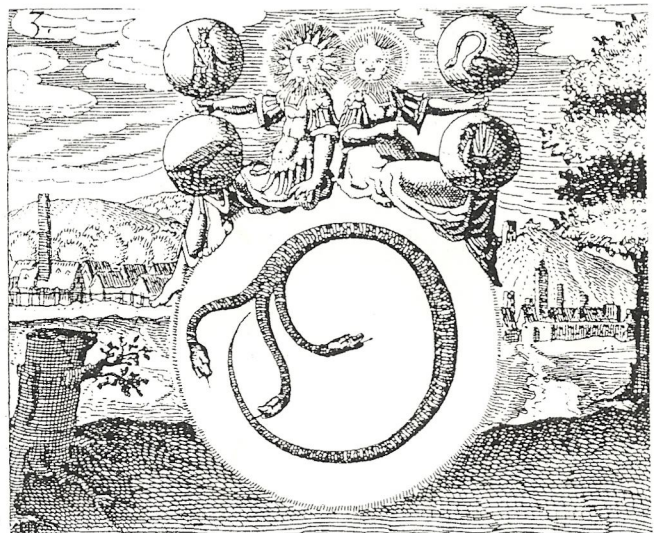
The idea of the Magnum Opus, or "Great Work", is essential to the Western spiritual tradition. Nevertheless, it has not been clearly explained and adapted to modern terms.

What after all is the Great Work?

ALCHEMY provides the answer in the form of a riddle, or a whole set of riddles, carefully translated by John Lash during 20 years of research and experimentation. His book -- now being revised for publication in the United States -- reviews and redevelops the ancient wisdom of Hermetics in an entirely new perspective. His interpretation is supported by extensive links to comparative mythology, the history of religions and the natural sciences. It is the result of a vast synthesis.

This is Alchemy Reborn, reincarnated for modern times and modern minds.

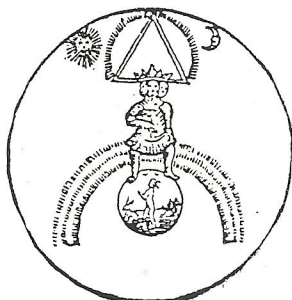
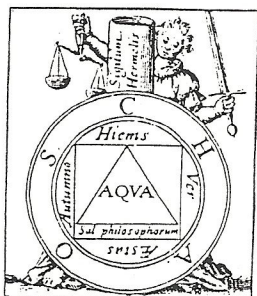
In short, the Great Work is the task of CO-CREATION: service rendered to Nature by humanity, as a way of completing the very process of creation.



Obviously, it will be impossible to pursue the task of assisting Nature if we do not encounter Nature, the created world, in a profound way. To revise Alchemy in modern terms, we must contact Nature as an awesome power. The Great Work is a program and guide to such an encounter.

The author shares his discovery that the alchemists were "atmospheric mystics" who experienced in a direct way how our mental and physical life is interfused with the processes of the terrestrial atmosphere. For example, they recognized the cycle of photosynthesis before it was technically identified. They knew as sensory fact the exchange of carbon dioxide between humans and plants. They considered the entire atmosphere as a *vas hermeticum*, a vessel where transmutations occur all the time. They sought to understand the role of the human form as a living "spore" embedded within the atmospheric medium.

In this unique view, the alchemists can be taken as the true forerunners of the ecology movement. In fact, since John Lash originally presented The Great Work in 1981, a new field called "teleo-psy-hology" has emerged in America. This term is obviously perfect to describe what he has accomplished.



### TAM ETHICE QUAM PHYSICE

"Moral as much as physical" is the alchemical principle that everything which happens physically within the earth's atmosphere has its moral equivalent in human nature.

This revisi6n of alchemy does not require a forge and apparati, the cooking of chemicals, or working in a laboratory but it does require the capacity to experience the entire atm?sphere around us as a laboratory.

It also requires the training of imagination to see how we are involved in the dynamics of the atmosphere. Among the alchemists the power of imagination was called the artifex, the tool for achieving the Work.

The Great Work might be described as a synthesis of cosmology and medicine. Its medical aspect reveals for the first time the true basis of homeopathy. The author explains that Samuel Hahnemann derived his concept of homeopathic medicine from alchemical teachings regarding the *Magnificatio*: the exponential effect of the infinite dose. He also develops the parallels between Hermetics, Einsteinian physics, mind/body disciplines and the latest atmospheric studies.

In its revised form The Great Work will serve as the key work of eco-psychology for the coming century.

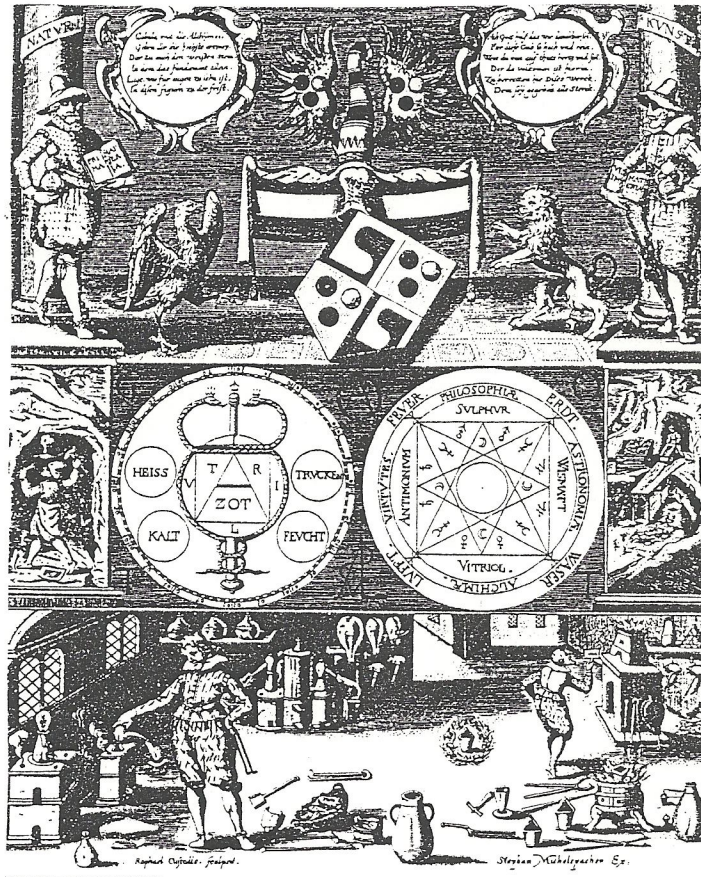
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JOHN LASH originally presented his work on alchemy as a 40-week course extending from Fall 1982 to Summer 1983. It was attended by 18 students in Santa Fe, New Mexico, and another 14 elsewhere in the USA and England.

"The Course", as it was originally called, was the result of investigations he began at the age of nine, inspired by his dreams and certain "clues" that came to him. It is amazing that a young boy living in a fishing village of 900 souls would find himself deeply engaged in the arcane subject of alchemy -- but this is how it began.

For years he studied the development of physics and the natural sciences with the intention of seeing how they were inadequate. Slowly he realized that the alchemists were not "quacks," mere fools who preceded the appearance of genuine scientists. In many cases, they knew what science knows today, but more deeply, more intimately, and they expressed their knowledge in a witty, sophisticated language. The author finally saw that alchemy was a code describing the interaction between human life and the ensemble of atmospheric workings. He discovered to his own amazement "the secret of the philosophers": how they impart their vital forces to the atmosphere where they are converted into currents that come to operate with effects equivalent to the laws of nature.

Alchemy, as he understands it, is the making of supernature from the human effect in the natural world.



For revision, John Lash will condense and refine his original text; a ms. of 540 single-spaced pages. He will also incorporate the latest findings of atmospheric science and ecological studies, especially the work of the last 12 years since "The Course" was written.

Revision and updating will require him to use alchemical libraries in Amsterdam and Edinburgh, as well as visit centers for atmospheric studies in Brussels and in Boulder, Colorado, USA. Time required for the revision will be about one year.



The Great Work IS BOTH A RETRIEVAL OF LOST KNOWLEDGE FROM THE PAST AND THE OPENING OF A WAY INTO THE FUTURE. IT INITIATES A **PATH** INTO THE AGE WHEN WE CAN LIVE AS CONSCIOUS CARETAKERS OF THE BIOSPHERE AND SHARE IN THE MYSTERIOUS DYNAMICS OF THE AIR WE BREATHE.