

The Emerald Tablet:

And the Alchemy of Spiritual Transformation

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et al**

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Introduction

The Emerald Tablet - Unveiling The Secret

The fast-cut montage that begins *the Secret* video features scenes from a mysterious green tablet - the Emerald Tablet. The Secret book begins with an eight-word excerpt attributed to the Emerald Tablet, circa 3000 BCE: "As above, so below. As within, so without." But after the brief acknowledgement, Byrne and her team of best selling authors and coaches never again mention this Emerald Tablet nor the Hermetic philosophy and teachings associated with it.

Hermetic philosophy centers on Hermes Trismegistus, whose legend traces back thousands of years to ancient Egypt. Like many historical and religious figures from antiquity, man and myth have been hopelessly entangled, leaving us with accounts that are subject to interpretation, exaggeration, errors in translation, and outright

repudiation. Hermes Trismegistus appears to be a syncretism of the Egyptian god Thoth and the Greek god Hermes. The title "Trismegistus" means "Thrice Great" and refers to the three ancient branches of the wisdom of the universe - alchemy, astrology, and theurgy - that Hermes Trismegistus possessed and transmitted.

The Emerald Tablet was said to have originally been a mysterious stone or crystal-like green tablet on which a coded spiritual formula was succinctly written in bas-relief. According to documentation from eleventh-century German theologian Albertus Magnus, Alexander the Great found the Emerald Tablet in Egypt in 331 BCE when he discovered what he believed was Hermes Trismegistus's tomb. Alexander immediately ordered that the Tablet be transcribed and translated. By 400 CE, however, the Tablet itself was reportedly buried along with other texts and artifacts - some say on the Giza Plateau - to protect it from destruction by religious zealots who were burning libraries and from patriarchs who condemned the Tablet's mysterious and universal formula for personal transformation and collective evolution. But the wisdom was nonetheless protected and became the cornerstone for Hermetic sciences and philosophy.



The tablet reads -

The Emerald Tablet of Hermes

In truth, without deceit, certain, and most veritable.

That which is Below corresponds to that which is Above, and that which is Above corresponds to that which is Below, to accomplish the miracles of the One Thing.

And just as all things have come from this One thing, through the meditation of One Mind, so do all created things originate from this One Thing, through Transformation.

Its father is the Sun; its mother the moon.

The Wind carries it in its belly; its nurse is the Earth.

It is the origin of All, the consecration of the Universe.

Its inherent Strength is perfected, if it is turned into Earth.

Separate the Earth from Fire, the Subtle from the Gross, gently and with great Ingenuity.

It rises from Earth to heaven and descends again to Earth, thereby combining within Itself the powers of both the Above and the Below.

Thus will you obtain the Glory of the Whole Universe. All Obscurity will be clear to you. This is the greatest Force of all powers, because it overcomes every Subtle thing and penetrates every Solid thing.

In this way was the Universe created. From this come many wondrous Applications, because this is the Pattern.

Therefore am I called Thrice Greatest Hermes, having all three parts of the wisdom of the Whole Universe. Herein have I completely explained the Operation of the Sun.

In attempting to transmute lesser metals to gold, the alchemist is trying to achieve perfection, but not just in the material sense. At the same time he is striving to achieve perfection of the self. Just as compounds are broken down, dissolved and recombined in the alchemist's laboratory, death is not seen as the end of things but simply their breaking down into their components, a state from which they are combined with all things in existence.

It is the belief that the immortal 'spirit' can leave the mortal body behind and thus the self can become immortal.

"Leave the senses of the body idle, and the birth of divinity will begin." - Hermes

The Seven Principles Of The Hermetic Philosophy - Short Version

These Seven Principles will be discussed and explained later in the book. A short explanation of each, however, may as well be given at this point.

1. The principle of mentalism. ALL IS MIND, THE UNIVERSE IS MENTAL This principle explains the true nature of energy, power and matter.
2. The principle of correspondence. AS ABOVE, SO BELOW; AS BELOW SO ABOVE. This principle enables man to reason intelligently from the known to the unknown.
3. The principle of vibration. NOTHING RESTS; EVERYTHING MOVES; EVERYTHING VIBRATES. This principle explains that the difference between manifestations of matter, energy, mind and spirit result from varying rates of vibration.
4. The principle of polarity. ALL IS DUALITY. EVERYTHING HAS POLES; EVERYTHING HAS ITS PAIRS OF OPPOSITES; LIKE AND UNLIKE ARE THE SAME. Opposites are identical but different in degree. Opposites are only two extremes of the same thing, with many varying degrees between.
5. THE UNIVERSE IS RHYTHM. Everything flows out, and in.; everything has its tides; all things rise and fall. The pendulum swing manifests in everything, rhythm compensates. This principle of neutralization applies in affairs of the Universe, suns, worlds; in life, mind, energy, matter. There is always an action and a reaction, an advance and a retreat.
6. The principle of causation. EVERY CAUSE HAS ITS EFFECT; EVERY EFFECT HAS ITS CAUSE; EVERYTHING HAPPENS ACCORDING TO LAW. CHANCE IS BUT A NAME FOR LAW NOT RECOGNIZED. THERE ARE MANY PLANES OF CAUSATION, BUT NOTHING ESCAPES THE LAW.
7. The principle of Gender. Gender is in everything, everything has its masculine and feminine principles. Gender manifests on all planetary levels. Everything or person, contains the two principles within it, him or her.

These seven principles are simple keys to the mysteries of matter-energy, spirit-mind, and consciousness. They can open the gateways through which a profound transformation of conscious life becomes possible. This book is an argument for undertaking such a journey, demonstrating that transformation on the mental and energetic planes will have immediate consequences in the material realm. Not one principle stands alone: all affect each other in a mode of reciprocation, thereby assuring the cohesion and unity of the multifaceted universe.

The *Kybalion* further states: "*Mind (as well as metals and the elements) may be transmuted from state to state, degree to degree, condition to condition, pole to pole, vibration to vibration. True Hermetic Transmutation is a Mental Art*"

Intention plays a vital role in mastering mental transmutation, and each of the seven principles is affected to varying degrees by the conscious *and* unconscious intentions of the practitioner.

Upon his extensive study of alchemy and its symbols, Carl Jung, the founder of analytical psychology, wrote an exhaustive work entitled *Psychology and Alchemy*. In his preface to the second edition, Jung writes, "I was led to postulate a 'collective unconscious,' a source of energy and insight in the depth of the human psyche which has operated in and through man from the earliest periods of which we have records." Wallace D. Wattles tapped into the concept of the universe as thought, when he wrote his classic, *The Science of Getting Rich*, in 1910: "Thought is the only power which can produce tangible riches from formless substance." Throughout the twentieth century and into the twenty-first, numerous works similar to *The Secret* convey their own version of the law of attraction - among them, Shakti Gawain's popular *Creative Visualization*, Deepak Chopra's *Creating Affluence*, and Wayne Dyer's *The Power of Intention*. The idea that our thoughts influence the manifestation of our reality is neither new nor radical.

The Secret Eight Step

The Octad keeps recurring in our reality because it is fundamental archetype on all levels of creation. Physically, psychologically, and spiritually, the number Eight drives hidden processes of transformation. The secret Eighth was a basic component of Hermetic doctrine since the beginning and has been openly incorporated into a number of esoteric disciplines. The Universal Laws of Transformation always result in a new level of Creation that is the Eighth. The Eighth step is a second beginning, sometimes even a Second Body, organized on a higher level (or Octave) that represents the fulfillment of what the previous Seven Steps had prepared.



Could the One Thing of the Emerald Tablet be expressing itself in an emerging pattern as we approach a New Age? The apocryphal Gnostic texts of the Nag Hammadi speak of these coming changes: "Recognize what is in front of you, and what is hidden from you will be revealed to you, for there is nothing that will not be made manifest." In another Gnostic treatise, Discourse of the Eighth, Hermes Trismegistus offers to guide us from the Seventh Sphere, the last of the Seven steps in the physical realm, to the Eighth realm beyond words.

There is yet another step in our mandala, which is the eight step mentioned by Hermes and other mystics. It is depicted in the Azoth drawing as a return to the first ray, the ray of Salt and Saturn that points to the Cubic Stone. For at the end of the alchemical process, we arrive back where we started from, only now empowered and embodied in an eternal stone that represents an incorruptible higher consciousness.

There is one last message hidden in the Azoth drawing. All the Latin words contained in the outer ring that connects the rays of transformation spell out a summary of what has taken place: *Visita Interiora Terrae Rectificando Invenies Occultum Lapidem*. This means "Visit the innermost parts of the earth; by setting things right, you will find the hidden Stone." The first letter of these seven Latin words spells out the Hermetic word VITRIOL. Vitriol is the first of the arcana, which are secret chemicals in a laboratory experiment that summarizes the entire process of transformation. Acidic Vitriol is the fiery liquid energy that drives physical transmutation and becomes the brain ambrosia or hormone that brings on the materialization of spirit in man.

By recognizing and working with the forces of alchemy, anyone can not only tap into hidden sources of creative power but fundamentally transform themselves and their life

situations. The seven-stepped Emerald Formula, summarized in the phrase *Solve et Coagula* ("Dissolve and Coagulate"), is the driving force behind our physical, psychological, and spiritual lives, and by directly applying it - by beginning the Great Work within ourselves - we can change our reality on all levels. By mastering each step of the Emerald Formula we can transmute each of the hidden metals of our being into gold.

Alchemy: The Great Work

The alchemists attempted to perfect the One Thing of Hermes, which they called the First Matter, by using specific physical, psychological, and spiritual techniques that they described in chemical terms and demonstrated in laboratory experiments.

However, while the alchemistic philosophers spoke in terms of chemicals, furnaces, flasks, and beakers, they were really talking about the changes taking place within their own bodies, minds and souls.

Thought in their public writings the alchemists always scrambled the order of the steps of transformation, the Emerald Tablet presents them in their original order. The tablet, which seemed to contain a recipe for the perfection of anything; was the cookbook that guided the alchemists through their experiments.

As the first chemists, the alchemists believed they could harness the forces described in the tablet and actually transmute lead into gold in their laboratories. But there was one big difference between the alchemists and modern chemists: The alchemists believed their own state of consciousness would somehow affect the final outcome of their experiments, that the purity of their own souls was a factor in perfecting the metals. For that reason, they worked as much on themselves as they did with their chemicals.

As the first psychologists, the alchemists identified a mixture of seven metals, or mental traits, that were responsible for an individual's "temperament". The transmutation of these base metals into gold was the perfection of their personalities, and, as mystics, they meditated frequently, exposing their very souls to the processes of alchemy.

Actually, the alchemists always had two laboratories in which they worked. One was the laboratory of beakers and smelly chemicals in which they sought physical perfection. The other was an inner laboratory, a quiet place the alchemist created within himself, a place of no confusion where the Work could proceed on his soul.

So alchemy was never just an intellectual exercise or an artificial discipline. Alchemists were intimately involved in their experiments and believed their thoughts and feelings were actual forces that could influence the results. It is a view of the power of consciousness, the crucial relationship between observer and experiment, which some quantum physicists have only recently accepted.

The Emerald Tablet is a Rosetta Stone for deciphering the alchemists' secret manuscripts. their entire art was based on the principles it contained, and they followed the operations it described with religious zeal. In fact, in the so-called "Grail" layouts of the Emerald Tablet, in which the words were arranged in the shape of a chalice, the place where one grasps the Holy Chalice contains all seven steps. These seven operations are truly at the heart of both the tablet and the discipline of alchemy.

From the Nag Hammadi scrolls, discovered in 1945; it was learned that the followers of Hermes were practicing the Seven Steps of Transformation in their initiation ceremonies well before the third century. The probationary period began with the Lesser Mysteries, which were public lessons in the Hermetic texts and correct behavior in light of them. If the initiate progressed to the Greater Mysteries, he began an experiential journey through the seven planets.

By applying the operations of the alchemists, the initiate was able to overcome each of the planetary restrictions to return to the stars and be reborn as the true Self hidden in the soul, which is part of the Signature of God in each of us. Having conquered the planetary archetypes, the initiate became the adept, one who is skilled in the operations of alchemy. Next were oral teachings in a one-on-one setting in which the adept experience a profound alteration of consciousness and beheld the Hermetic truths directly. At this point, the adept became the Master.

The Emerald Tablet of Hermes Multiple Translations

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History of the Tablet

History of the Tablet (largely summarised from Needham 1980, Holmyard 1957)

The Tablet probably first appeared in the West in editions of the pseudo-Aristotelean *Secretum Secretorum* which was actually a translation of the *Kitab Sirr al-Asar*, a book of advice to kings which was translated into Latin by Johannes Hispalensis c. 1140 and by Philip of Tripoli c.1243.

Other translations of the Tablet may have been made during the same period by Plato of Tivoli and Hugh of Santalla, perhaps from different sources.

The date of the *Kitab Sirr al-Asar* is uncertain, though c.800 has been suggested and it is not clear when the tablet became part of this work.

Holmyard was the first to find another early Arabic version (Ruska found a 12th century recension claiming to have been dictated by Sergius of Nablus) in the *Kitab Ustūqus al-Uss al-Thani* (Second Book of the Elements of Foundation) attributed to Jabir. Shortly after Ruska found another version appended to the *Kitab Sirr al-Khaliqa wa San'at al-Tabi'a* (Book of the Secret of Creation and the Art of Nature), which is also known as the *Kitab Balaniyus al-Hakim fi'l-'Ilal* (book of Balinas the wise on the Causes). It has been proposed that this book was written may have been written as early as 650, and was definitely finished by the Caliphate of al-Ma'mun (813–33).

Scholars have seen similarities between this book and the Syriac Book of Treasures written by Job of Odessa (9th century) and more interestingly the Greek writings of the bishop Nemesius of Emesa in Syria from the mid fourth century. However though this suggests a possible Syriac source, none of these writings contain the tablet.

Balinas is usually identified with Apollonius of Tyna, but there is little evidence to connect him with the *Kitab Balaniyus*, and even if there was, the story implies that Balinas found the tablet rather than wrote it, and the recent discoveries of the Dead Sea scrolls and the Nag Hammadi texts suggest that hiding texts in caves is not impossible, even if we did not have the pyramids before us.

Ruska has suggested an origin further east, and Needham has proposed an origin in China.

Holmyard, Davis and Anon all consider that this Tablet may be one of the earliest of all alchemical works we have that survives.

It should be remarked that apparently the Greeks and Egyptians used the term translated as 'emerald' for emeralds, green granites, "and perhaps green jasper". In medieval times the emerald table of the Gothic kings of Spain, and the *Sacro catino*— a dish said to have belonged to the Queen of Sheba, to have been used at the last supper, and to be made of emerald, were made of green glass [Steele and Singer: 488].

Translations From Jabir ibn Hayyan.

0) Balinas mentions the engraving on the table in the hand of Hermes, which says:

1) Truth! Certainty! That in which there is no doubt!

2) That which is above is from that which is below, and that which is below is from that which is above, working the miracles of one.

3) As all things were from one.

4) Its father is the Sun and its mother the Moon.

5) The Earth carried it in her belly, and the Wind nourished it in her belly, 7) as Earth which shall become Fire.

7a) Feed the Earth from that which is subtle, with the greatest power.

8) It ascends from the earth to the heaven and becomes ruler over that which is above and that which is below.

14) And I have already explained the meaning of the whole of this in two of these books of mine.

[Holmyard 1923: 562.]

Another Arabic Version (from the German of Ruska, translated by 'Anonymous').

0) Here is that which the priest Sagijus of Nabulus has dictated concerning the entrance of Balinas into the hidden chamber... After my entrance into the chamber, where the talisman was set up, I came up to an old man sitting on a golden throne, who was holding an emerald table in one hand.

And behold the following_in Syriac, the primordial language— was written thereon:

- 1) Here (is) a true explanation, concerning which there can be no doubt.
- 2) It attests: The above from the below, and the below from the above —the work of the miracle of the One.
- 3) And things have been from this primal substance through a single act. How wonderful is this work! It is the main (principle) of the world and is its maintainer.
- 4) Its father is the sun and its mother the moon; the
- 5) wind has borne it in its body, and the earth has nourished it.
- 6) the father of talismen and the protector of miracles
- 6a) whose powers are perfect, and whose lights are confirmed (?),
- 7) a fire that becomes earth.
- 7a) Separate the earth from the fire, so you will attain the subtle as more inherent than the gross, with care and sagacity.
- 8) It rises from earth to heaven, so as to draw the lights of the heights to itself, and descends to the earth; thus within it are the forces of the above and the below;
- 9) because the light of lights within it, thus does the darkness flee before it.
- 10) The force of forces, which overcomes every subtle thing and penetrates into everything gross.
- 11) The structure of the microcosm is in accordance with the structure of the macrocosm.
- 12) And accordingly proceed the knowledgeable.
- 13) And to this aspired Hermes, who was threefold graced with wisdom.
- 14) And this is his last book, which he concealed in the chamber.

[Anon 1985: 24–5]

Twelfth Century Latin

0) When I entered into the cave, I received the tablet zaradi, which was inscribed, from between the hands of Hermes, in which I discovered these words:

1) True, without falsehood, certain, most certain.

2) What is above is like what is below, and what is below is like that which is above. To make the miracle of the one thing.

3) And as all things were made from contemplation of one, so all things were born from one adaptation.

4) Its father is the Sun, its mother is the Moon.

5) The wind carried it in its womb, the earth breast fed it.

6) It is the father of all 'works of wonder' (Telesmi) in the world.

6a) Its power is complete (integra).

7) If cast to (turned towards– versa fuerit) earth,

7a) it will separate earth from fire, the subtle from the gross.

8) With great capacity it ascends from earth to heaven. Again it descends to earth, and takes back the power of the above and the below.

9) Thus you will receive the glory of the distinctiveness of the world. All obscurity will flee from you.

10) This is the whole most strong strength of all strength, for it overcomes all subtle things, and penetrates all solid things.

11a) Thus was the world created.

12) From this comes marvelous adaptations of which this is the procedure.

13) Therefore I am called Hermes, because I have three parts of the wisdom of the whole world.

14) And complete is what I had to say about the work of the Sun, from the book of Galieni Alfachimi.

[From Latin in Steele and Singer 1928: 492.]

Translation from Aurelium Occultae Philosophorum..Georgio Beato

- 1) This is true and remote from all cover of falsehood
- 2) Whatever is below is similar to that which is above. Through this the marvels of the work of one thing are procured and perfected.
- 3) Also, as all things are made from one, by the consideration of one, so all things were made from this one, by conjunction.
- 4) The father of it is the sun, the mother the moon.
- 5) The wind bore it in the womb. Its nurse is the earth, the mother of all perfection.
- 6a) Its power is perfected.
- 7) If it is turned into earth,
 - 7a) separate the earth from the fire, the subtle and thin from the crude and course, prudently, with modesty and wisdom.
- 8) This ascends from the earth into the sky and again descends from the sky to the earth, and receives the power and efficacy of things above and of things below.
- 9) By this means you will acquire the glory of the whole world, and so you will drive away all shadows and blindness.
- 10) For this by its fortitude snatches the palm from all other fortitude and power. For it is able to penetrate and subdue everything subtle and everything crude and hard.
- 11a) By this means the world was founded
- 12) and hence the marvelous conjunctions of it and admirable effects, since this is the way by which these marvels may be brought about.
- 13) And because of this they have called me Hermes Trismegistus since I have the three parts of the wisdom and Philosophy of the whole universe.
- 14) My speech is finished which I have spoken concerning the solar work

[Davis 1926: 874.]

Translation of Issac Newton c. 1680.

- 1) Tis true without lying, certain most true.
- 2) That wch is below is like that wch is above that wch is above is like yt wch is below to do ye miracles of one only thing.
- 3) And as all things have been arose from one by ye mediation of one: so all things have their birth from this one thing by adaptation.
- 4) The Sun is its father, the moon its mother,
- 5) the wind hath carried it in its belly, the earth its nourse.
- 6) The father of all perfection in ye whole world is here.
- 7) Its force or power is entire if it be converted into earth.
- 7a) Seperate thou ye earth from ye fire, ye subtile from the gross sweetly wth great indoustry.
- 8) It ascends from ye earth to ye heaven again it desends to ye earth and receives ye force of things superior inferior.
- 9) By this means you shall have ye glory of ye whole world thereby all obscurity shall fly from you.
- 10) Its force is above all force. ffor it vanquishes every subtile thing penetrates every solid thing.
- 11a) So was ye world created.
- 12) From this are do come admirable adaptaions whereof ye means (Or process) is here in this.
- 13) Hence I am called Hermes Trismegist, having the three parts of ye philosophy of ye whole world.
- 14) That wch I have said of ye operation of ye Sun is accomplished ended.

[Dobbs 1988: 183–4.]

Translation from Kriegsman (?) allegedly from the Phoenician

- 1) I speak truly, not falsely, certainly and most truly
- 2) These things below with those above and those with these join forces again so that they produce a single thing the most wonderful of all.
- 3) And as the whole universe was brought forth from one by the word of one GOD, so also all things are regenerated perpetually from this one according to the disposition of Nature.
- 4) It has the Sun for father and the Moon for mother:
- 5) it is carried by the air as if in a womb, it is nursed by the earth.
- 6) It is the cause, this, of all perfection of all things throughout the universe.
- 6a) This will attain the highest perfection of powers
- 7) if it shall be reduced into earth
- 7a) Distribute here the earth and there the fire, thin out the density of this the suavest (suavissima) thing of all.
- 8) Ascend with the greatest sagacity of genius from the earth into the sky, and thence descend again to the earth, and recognise that the forces of things above and of things below are one,
- 9) so as to possess the glory of the whole world— and beyond this man of abject fate may have nothing further.
- 10) This thing itself presently comes forth stronger by reasons of this fortitude: it subdues all bodies surely, whether tenuous or solid, by penetrating them.
- 11a) And so everything whatsoever that the world contains was created.
- 12) Hence admirable works are accomplished which are instituted (carried out—*instituantur*) according to the same mode.
- 13) To me therefor the name of Hermes Trismegistus has been awarded because I am discovered as the Teacher of the three parts of the wisdom of the world.
- 14) These then are the considerations which I have concluded ought to be written down concerning the readiest operations of the Chymic art.

[Davis 1926: 875 slightly modified.]

From Sigismund Bacstrom (allegedly translated from Chaldean).

- 0) The Secret Works of CHIRAM ONE in essence, but three in aspect.
- 1) It is true, no lie, certain and to be depended upon,
- 2) the superior agrees with the inferior, and the inferior agrees with the superior, to effect that one truly wonderful work.
- 3) As all things owe their existence to the will of the only one, so all things owe their origin to the one only thing, the most hidden by the arrangement of the only God.
- 4) The father of that one only thing is the sun its mother is the moon,
- 5) the wind carries it in its belly; but its nourse is a spirituous earth.
- 6) That one only thing is the father of all things in the Universe.
- 6a) Its power is perfect,
- 7) after it has been united with a spirituous earth.
- 7a) Separate that spirituous earth from the dense or crude by means of a gentle heat, with much attention.
- 8) In great measure it ascends from the earth up to heaven, and descends again, newborn, on the earth, and the superior and the inferior are increased in power.
- 9) By this wilt thou partake of the honours of the whole world. And Darkness will fly from thee.
- 10) This is the strength of all powers. With this thou wilt be able to overcome all things and transmute all what is fine and what is coarse.
- 11a) In this manner the world was created;
- 12) the arrangements to follow this road are hidden.
- 13) For this reason I am called Chiram Telat Mechasot, one in essence, but three in aspect. In this trinity is hidden the wisdom of the whole world.
- 14) It is ended now, what I have said concerning the effects of the sun. Finish of the Tabula Smaragdina.

[See Hall 1977: CLVIII,]

From Madame Blavatsky

2) What is below is like that which is above, and what is above is similar to that which is below to accomplish the wonders of the one thing.

3) As all things were produced by the mediation of one being, so all things were produced from this one by adaption.

4) Its father is the sun, its mother the moon.

6a) It is the cause of all perfection throughout the whole earth.

7) Its power is perfect if it is changed into earth.

7a) Separate the earth from the fire, the subtile from the gross, acting prudently and with judgement.

8) Ascend with the greatest sagacity from earth to heaven, and unite together the power of things inferior and superior;

9) thus you will possess the light of the whole world, and all obscurity will fly away from you.

10) This thing has more fortitude than fortitude itself, because it will overcome every subtile thing and penetrate every solid thing.

11a) By it the world was formed.

[Blavatsky 1972: 507.]

From Fulcanelli (translated from the French by Sieveking)

- 1) This is the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth:–
- 2) As below, so above; and as above so below. With this knowledge alone you may work miracles.
- 3) And since all things exist in and emanate from the ONE Who is the ultimate Cause, so all things are born after their kind from this ONE.
- 4) The Sun is the father, the Moon the mother;
- 5) the wind carried it in his belly. Earth is its nurse and its guardian.
- 6) It is the Father of all things,
 - 6a) the eternal Will is contained in it.
- 7) Here, on earth, its strength, its power remain one and undivded.
- 7a) Earth must be separated from fire, the subtle from the dense, gently with unremitting care.
- 8) It arises from the earth and descends from heaven; it gathers to itself the strength of things above and things below.
- 9) By means of this one thing all the glory of the world shall be yours and all obscurity flee from you.
- 10) It is power, strong with the strength of all power, for it will penetrate all mysteries and dispel all ignorance.
- 11a) By it the world was created.
- 12) From it are born manifold wonders, the means to achieving which are here given
- 13) It is for this reason that I am called Hermes Trismegistus; for I possess the three essentials of the philosophy of the universe.
- 14) This is is the sum total of the work of the Sun.

[Sadoul 1972: 25–6.]

From Fulcanelli, new translation

- 1) It is true without untruth, certain and most true:
- 2) that which is below is like that which is on high, and that which is on high is like that which is below; by these things are made the miracles of one thing.
- 3) And as all things are, and come from One, by the mediation of One, So all things are born from this unique thing by adaptation.
- 4) The Sun is the father and the Moon the mother.
- 5) The wind carries it in its stomach. The earth is its nourisher and its receptacle.
- 6) The Father of all the Thelema of the universal world is here.
- 6a) Its force, or power, remains entire,
- 7) if it is converted into earth.
- 7a) You separate the earth from the fire, the subtle from the gross, gently with great industry.
- 8) It climbs from the earth and descends from the sky, and receives the force of things superior and things inferior.
- 9) You will have by this way, the glory of the world and all obscurity will flee from you.
- 10) It is the power strong with all power, for it will defeat every subtle thing and penetrate every solid thing
- 11a) In this way the world was created.
- 12) From it are born wonderful adaptations, of which the way here is given.
- 13) That is why I have been called Hermes Trismegistus, having the three parts of the universal philosophy.
- 14) This, that I have called the solar Work, is complete.

[Translated from Fulcanelli 1964: 312.]

From Idres Shah

- 1) The truth, certainty, truest, without untruth.
- 2)What is above is like what is below. What is below is like what is above. The miracle of unity is to be attained.
- 3) Everything is formed from the contemplation of unity, and all things come about from unity, by means of adaptation.
- 4) Its parents are the Sun and Moon.
- 5) It was borne by the wind and nurtured by the Earth.
- 6) Every wonder is from it
- 6a) and its power is complete.
- 7) Throw it upon earth,
- 7a) and earth will separate from fire. The impalpable separated from the palpable.
- 8) Through wisdom it rises slowly from the world to heaven. Then it descends to the world combining the power of the upper and the lower.
- 9)Thus you will have the illumination of all the world, and darkness will disappear.
- 10) This is the power of all strength– it overcomes that which is delicate and penetrates through solids.
- 11a) This was the means of the creation of the world.
- 12) And in the future wonderful developments will be made, and this is the way.
- 13) I am Hermes the Threefold Sage, so named because I hold the three elements of all wisdom.
- 14) And thus ends the revelation of the work of the Sun.

(Shah 1964: 198).

Hypothetical Chinese Original

- 1) True, true, with no room for doubt, certain, worthy of all trust.
- 2) See, the highest comes from the lowest, and the lowest from the highest; indeed a marvelous work of the tao.
- 3) See how all things originated from It by a single process.
- 4) The father of it (the elixir) is the sun (Yang), its mother the moon (Yin).
- 5) The wind bore it in its belly, and the earth nourished it.
- 6) This is the father of wondrous works (changes and transformations), the guardian of mysteries,
 - 6a) perfect in its powers, the animator of lights.
- 7) This fire will be poured upon the earth...
 - 7a) So separate the earth from the fire, the subtle from the gross, acting prudently and with art.
- 8) It ascends from the earth to the heavens (and orders the lights above), then descends again to the earth; and in it is the power of the highest and the lowest.
- 9) Thus when you have the light of lights darkness will flee away from you.
- 10) With this power of powers (the elixir) you shall be able to get the mastery of every subtle thing, and be able to penetrate everything that is gross.
- 11a) In this way was the great world itself formed.
- 12) Hence thus and thus marvellous operations will be achieved.

[Slightly altered from Needham 1980: 371.]

Textual Remarks

On #3 Some Latin texts have meditatione (contemplation), others mediatione (mediation). Some texts have adaptatione (by adaptation), some have adoptionis (by adoption).

On #6 'Telesmi' is a greek word, some texts have 'thelesmi'.

On #6, 7 In some texts 'Its Power is Complete' is a separate line. In the generally accepted reading, this runs into #7 producing 'Its Power is complete if versa fuerit to earth'. Where possible this has been indicated by diving these lines in 6, 6a, 7, 7a On #7, 8 In some texts the 'Wisdom, capacity' (magno ingenio) is read as referring to #7, and hence the operation of Separation is to be carried out 'carefully', in other readings the 'wisdom' is held to refer to #8 and the product of the Separation which thus ascends with 'wisdom'.

Needham quotes Ruska to the effect that sections 3, 12 and 14 are probably late additions (op.cit)

Commentaries

On #1 Hortulanus: "... the most true Sun is procreated by art. And he says most true in the superlative degree because the Sun generated by this art exceeds all natural Sun in all of its properties, medicinal and otherwise"

(Davis modified by `Linden')

On #2 Albertus Magnus: Hermes says "the powers of all things below originate in the stars and constellations of the heavens: and that all these powers are poured down into all things below by the circle called Alaur, which is, they said, the first circle of the constellations". This descent is "noble when the materials receiving these powers are more like things above in their brightness and transparency; ignoble when the materials are confused and foul, so that the heavenly power is, as it were oppressed. Therefore they say that this is the reason why precious stones more than anything else have wonderful powers" (60 –61). While the "seven kinds of metals have their forms from the seven planets of the lower spheres" (168).

Hortulanus: "the stone is divided into two principle parts by the magistrity, into a superior part which ascends above and into an inferior part which remains below fixed and clear. And these two parts moreover are concordant in their virtue since the inferior part is earth which is called nurse and ferment, and the superior part is the spirit which quickens the whole stone and raises it up.

Wherefore separation made, and conjunction celebrated, many miracles are effected."

Burckhardt: "This refers to the reciprocal dependence of the active and the passive... essential form cannot be manifested without passive materia.. the efficacy of the spiritual power depends on the preparedness of the human 'container' and vice versa.... 'Above' and 'below' are thus related to this one thing and complement one another in its regard".

Schumaker: "There are corresponding planes in various levels of creation, hence it is safe to draw analogies between macrocosm and microcosm, the mineral kingdom and the human, animal and vegetable kingdoms etc".

Needham: "the whole affirmation looks remarkably like the doctrine that extreme of Yang generates Yin, and vice versa".

On # Hortulanus: "our stone, which was created by God, was born and came forth from a confused mass, containing in itself all the elements– and hence our stone was born by this single miracle".

Trithemius: "Is it not true that all things flow from one thing, from the goodness of the One, and that whatever is joined to Unity cannot be diverse, but rather fructifies by means of the simplicity and adaptability of the One" "What is born from Unity? Is it not the ternary? Take note: Unity is unmixed, the binary is compounded, and the ternary is reduced to the simplicity of Unity. I, Trithemius, am not of three minds, but persist in a

single integrated mind taking pleasure in the ternary, which gives birth to a marvelous offspring" (Bran)

Burckhardt: "the undivided, invisible Light of the unconditioned One is refracted into multiplicity by the prism of the Spirit". As the Spirit contemplates the Unity without full comprehension "it manifests the 'many-sided' All, just as a lens transmits the light it receives as a bundle of rays".

Schumaker: As God is one, all created objects come from one thing, an undifferentiated primal matter.

On #4 Hortulanus: " As one animal naturally generates more animals similar to itself, so the Sun artificially generates Sun by the power of multiplication of...the stone.... in this artificial generation it is necessary that the Sun have a suitable receptacle, consonant with itself, for its sperm and its tincture, and this is the Luna of the philosophers"

Redgrove: Sun and Moon "probably stand for Spirit and Matter respectively, not gold and silver".

Burckhardt: Sun "is the spirit (nous), while the moon is the soul (psyche)".

Schumaker: "If the moon is associated with water, as because of its 'moisture' [as] was usual, and the sun with fire, the prima materia is understood to have been generated by fire, born of water, brought down from the sky by wind, and nourished by earth".

On #5 Albertus Magnus: by this Hermes "means the levigatio [making light weight] of the material, raising it to the properties of Air. And why he says the wind carries the material [of the stone] in its belly is that, when the material is placed in an alembic— which is a vessel made like those in which rosewater is prepared— then by evaporation it is rendered subtle and is raised towards the properties of Air... And there distills and issues from the mouth of the alembic a watery or oily liquor with all the powers of the elements" (17). In metals the moisture is not separated from the dryness, but is dissolved in it; and being so dissolved, it moves about there as if it had been swallowed by the Earth and were moving about in its bowels. And on this account Hermes said "The mother of metal is Earth that carries it in her belly".

Hortulanus: "It is plain that wind is air, and air is life, and life is spirit... And thus it is necessary that the wind should bear the whole stone.... [However] our stone without the ferment of the earth will never come to the effect, which ferment is called food"

Trithemius: "the wind carries its seed in her belly".

Maier: By "the wind carried him in its belly" Hermes means " 'He, whose father is the Sun, and whose mother is the Moon, will be carried before he is born, by wind and vapour, just as a flying bird is carried by air'. From the vapours of winds, which are nothing else but wind in motion, water proceeds, when condensed, and from that water,

mixed with earth, all minerals and metals arise". The substance carried by the wind is "in chemical respect.. the sulphur, which is carried in mercury". Lull says "'The stone is the fire, carried in the belly of the air'. In physical respect it is the unborn child that will soon be born". To be clearer, "All mercury is composed of vapours, that is to say of water, which the earth raises along with it into the thin air, and of earth, which the air compels to return into watery earth or earthy water" As the elements contained within are each reduced to a watery condition, they either follow the volatile elements upward as in common mercury, or they stay below with the solid elements as in philosophical Mercury "and in the solid metals". So "Mercury is the wind which receives the sulphur... as the unripe fruit from the mothers womb, or from the ashes of the burnt mother's body and takes it to a place where it may ripen".

Ripley says "our child shall be born in the air, that is the belly of the wind" [de Jong 1969: 55– 7.] Maier (2nd Comment) on "The earth is its nurse": Food changes into the substance of the eater and is then assimilated. "This harmony dominates the whole of nature, for the like enjoys the like".

The same happens in the Work and Nature "just as is the growth of the child in the mother's womb. So also a father, a mother and a nurse have been attributed to the philosophical child... it comes into being from the twofold seed and then grows as an embryo does". As a woman must moderate her diet to avoid miscarriage, "in the same way one must set about philosophical work with moderation". The Seeds also have to be united.

"Philosophers say that the one comes from the East and the other from the West and become one; what does this mean but combining in a retort, a moderate temperature and nourishment?". "One may wonder why the earth is referred to as the nurse of the philosophic child, since barrenness and dryness are the main properties of the element earth". The answer is that not the element, but the whole Earth is meant. "It is the nurse of Heaven not because it resolves, washes and moistens the foetus, but because it coagulates, fastens and colours the latter and changes it into sap and blood... The Earth contains a wonderful juice which changes the nature of the one who feeds on it, as Romulus is believed to have been changed by the wolf's milk into a bellicose individual" [de Jong 1969: 63 –5.]

Burckhardt: "The wind which carries the spiritual germ in its body, is the vital breath". Vital breath is the substance of the realm between heaven and earth, it "is also Quicksilver which contains the germ of gold in a liquid state". The earth is "the body, as an inward reality".

On #6 Burckhardt: the word talisman is derived from Telesma. Talismans work by corresponding to their prototype, and by making a "'condensation', on the subtle plane, of a spiritual state. This explains the similarity between the talisman, as the bearer of an invisible influence, and the alchemical elixir, as the 'ferment' of metallic transformation".

On #7 Hortulanus: The stone is perfect and complete if it is turned into earth "that is if the soul of the stone itself... is turned into earth, namely of the stone and is fixed so that the whole substance of the stone becomes one with its nurse, namely the earth, and the whole stone is converted to ferment"

Trithemius: it is the seed from #5 that must be cast upon the earth.

Bacstrom: "Process– First Distillation".

Burckhardt: "when the Spirit is 'embodied', the volatile becomes fixed".

Schumaker: if the prime matter is to be used it must be fixed into a substance "capable of being handled".

On #7a Hortulanus: "You will separate, that is, you will dissolve, because solution is separation of parts.."

Burckhardt: The separation "means the 'extraction' of the soul from the body".

Schumaker "Since the volatile principle is fire –or sometimes, air– stability is produced by its removal. Or, alternatively but less probably, the earth is impurity ('the gross') and a purified fire ('the subtle') is what is wanted.

On #8 Albertus Magnus: In intending to teach the operations of alchemy Hermes says the stone "'ascends to heaven' when by roasting and calcination it takes on the properties of Fire; for alchemists mean by calcinatio the reduction of material to powder by burning and roasting. And the material 'again descends from heaven to earth' when it takes on the properties of Earth by inhumatio, for inhumation revives and nourishes what was previously killed by calcination".

Hortulanus: "And now he deals with multiplication [of the stone]." "Although our stone is divided in the first operation into four parts... there are really two principle parts". The ascending, non fixed, and the earth or ferment. "It is necessary to have a large quantity of this non fixed part and to give it to the stone which has been made thoroughly clean from dirt.... until the entire stone is borne above by the virtue of the spirit"

"Afterwards it is necessary to incerate the same stone,..with the oil that was extracted in the first operation, which oil is called the water of the stone" Roast or boil by sublimation until the "entire stone descends... and remains fixed and fluent". "That which is coporeal is made spiritual by sublimation, and that which is spiritual is made corporeal by descension".

Trithemius: "When the ternary has at last returned to itself it may, by an inner disposition and great delight, ascend from the earth to heaven, thereby receiving both superior and inferior power; thus will it be made powerful and glorious in the clarity of Unity, demonstrate its ability to bring forth every number, and put to flight all obscurity".

Bacstrom: "Last Digestion". "The Azoth ascends from the Earth, from the bottom of the Glass, and redescends in Veins and drops into the Earth and by this continual circulation the Azoth is more and more subtilised, Volatilizes Sol and carries the volatilized Solar atoms along with it and thereby becomes a Solar Azoth, i.e. our third and genuine Sophic Mercury". The circulation must continue until "it ceases of itself, and the Earth has sucked it all in, when it becomes the black pitchy matter, the Toad [the substances in the alchemical retort and also the lower elements in the body of man –Hall], which denotes complete putrifaction or Death of the compound".

Read, suggests this section describes the use of a kerotakis, in which metals are suspended and subject to the action of gasses released from substances heated in the base, and from their condensation and circulation.

Burckhardt: "dissolution of consciousness from all formal 'coagulations' is followed by the 'crystalisation' of the Spirit, so that active and passive are perfectly united."

Schumaker: "Separate the volatile part of the substance by vaporization but continue heating until the vapour reunites with the parent body, whereupon you will have obtained the Stone".

On # Trithemius: When the ternary has returned to Unity cleansed of all impurities "the mind understands without contradiction all the mysteries of the excellently arranged arcanum".

Bacstrom: the black matter becomes White and Red. The Red "having been carried to perfection, medicinaly and for Metals" is capable of supporting complete mental and physical health, and provides "ample means, in finitum multiplicable to be benevolent and charitable, without any dimunation of our inexhaustable resources, therefore well may it be called the Glory of the whole World". Contemplation and study of the Philosopher's Stone ("L. P.") elevates the mind to God.

"The Philosophers say with great Truth, that the L.P. either finds a good man or makes one". "By invigorating the Organs the Soul makes use of for communicating with exterior objects, the Soul must aquire greater powers, not only for conception but also for retention". If we pray and have faith "all Obscurity must vanish of course".

Burckhardt: "Thus the light of the Spirit becomes constant..[and] ignorance, deception, uncertainty, doubt and foolishness will be removed from consciousness".

On # Trithemius: The Philosopher's Stone is another name for the 'one thing', and is able to "conquer every subtile thing and to penetrate every solid". "This very noble virtue... consists of maximal fortitude, touching everything with its desirable excellence".

Bacstrom: "The L.P. does possess all the Powers concealed in Nature, not for destruction but for exhaltation and regeneration of matter, in the three Departments of Nature". "It

refixes the most subtil Oxygen into its own firey Nature". The power increases "in a tenfold ratio, at every multiplication". So it can penetrate Gold and Silver, and fix mercury, Crystals and Glass Fluxes.

Burckhardt: "Alchemical fixation is nevertheless more inward... Through its union with the spirit bodily consciousness itself becomes a fine and penetrating power". He quotes Jabir "The body becomes a spirit, and takes on... fineness, lightness, extensibility, coloration... The spirit... becomes a body and acquires the latter's resistance to fire, immobility and duration. From both bodies a light substance is born, which.. precisely takes up a middle position between the two extremes".

Schumaker: The product of the distillation and reunion will "dominate less solid substances, but because of its own subtlety it will 'penetrate' and hence dominate, other solid things less pure and quasi-spiritual than itself".

On # Burckhardt: "the little world is created according to the prototype of the great world", when the human realises their original nature is the image of God.

Schumaker: "The alchemical operation is a paradigm of the creative process. We may note the sexual overtones of what has preceded"

On #12 Burckhardt: "In the Arabic text this is: "This way is traversed by the sages".

On # Hortulanus: "He here teaches in an occult manner the things from which the stone is made." "the stone is called perfect because it has in itself the nature of minerals, of vegetables and of animals.

For the stone is three and one, tripple and single, having four natures.... and three colours, namely black, white and red. It is also called the grain of corn because unless it shall have died, it remains itself alone. And if it shall have died... it bears much fruit when it is in conjunction..."

Newton: "on account of this art Mercurius is called thrice greatest, having three parts of the philosophy of the whole world, since he signifies the Mercury of the philosophers.... and has dominion in the mineral kingdom, the vegetable kingdom, and the animal kingdom".

Bacstrom: the wisdom of the world (?) is hidden in "Chiram and its Use". Hermes "signifies a Serpent, and the Serpent used to be an Emblem of Knowledge or Wisdom."

Burckhardt: "The three parts of wisdom correspond to the three great divisions of the universe, namely, the spiritual, psychic and corporeal realms, whose symbols are heaven, air and earth".

Schumaker: "The usual explanation of Trismegistus.. is that Hermes was the greatest philosopher, the greatest priest, and the greatest king".

General

Trithemius: "our philosophy is celestial, not worldly, in order that we may faithfully behold, by means of a direct intuition of the mind through faith and knowledge, that principle which we call God..."

Trithemius: "Study generates knowledge; knowledge prepares love; love, similarity; similarity, communion; communion, virtue; virtue, dignity; dignity, power; and power performs the miracle".

Newton "Inferior and superior, fixed and volatile, sulphur and quicksilver have a similar nature and are one thing, like man and wife. For they differ from one another only by degree of digestion and maturity. Sulphur is mature quicksilver, and quicksilver is immature sulphur: and on account of this affinity they unite like male and female, and they act on each other, and through that action they are mutually transmuted into each other and procreate a more noble offspring to accomplish the miracles of this one thing". "And just as all things were created from one Chaos by the design of one God, so in our art all things... are born from this one thing which is our Chaos, by the design of the Artificer and the skilful adaptation of things. And the generation of this is similar to the human, truly from a father and mother".

Blavatsky: the mysterious thing "is the universal, magical agent, the astral light, which in the correlations of its forces furnishes the alkahest, the philosopher's stone, and the elixir of life.

Hermetic philosophy names it Azoth, the soul of the world, the celestial virgin, the great Magnes, etc" It appears to be that which gives organisation ("the maze of force–correlations"), and form i.e. the perfect geometry of snowflakes.

Sherwood Taylor: "the operation of the Sun.. was carried out by a 'spirit', universal, the source of all things, having the power of perfecting them. Its virtue is integral [# 6a] (ie having the power to convert the diverse into a single substance), if it be turned into earth (ie. solidified). This conveyed that the Stone was to be a solidified pneuma. Pneuma was the link between earth and heaven, having the virtue of the celestial and subterranean regions– the power of the whole cosmos from the fixed stars to the centre of the earth. It overcomes every nature and penetrates every solid. It is the source of the whole world and so it can be the means of changing things in a wonderful way.

The three parts of the philosophy of the whole world are presumably of the celestial, terrestrial, and subterranean regions".

Shah: The table is "the same as the Sufi dictum... 'Man is the microcosm, creation the macrocosm _the unity. All comes from One. By the joining of the power of contemplation all can be attained.

This essence must be separated from the body first, then combined with the body. This is the Work. Start with yourself, end with all. Before man, beyond man, transformation".

A Commentary of Ibn Umail

HERMUS said the secret of everything and the life of everything is Water.... This water becomes in wheat, ferment; in the vine, wine; in the olive, olive oil.... The beginning of the child is from water.... Regarding this spiritual water and the sanctified and thirsty earth, HERMUS the great, crowned with the glorious wisdom and the sublime sciences, said [#1] Truth it is, indubitable, certain and correct, [#2] that the High is from the Low and the Low is from the High. They bring about wonders through the one, just as things are produced from that one essence by a single preparation. Later by his statement [#4] Its father is the Sun and its mother the Moon he meant their male and their female. They are the two birds which are linked together in the pictures given regarding the beginning of the operation, and from them the spiritual tinctures are produced.

And similarly they are at the end of the operation. Later in his statement [#7 ?] the subtle is more honourable than the gross, he means by the subtle the divine spiritual water; and by the gross the earthly body. As for his later statement [#8] with gentleness and wisdom it will ascend from the earth to the sky, and will take fire from the higher lights, he means by this the distillation and the raising of the water into the air. As for his later statement [#8a] It will descend to the earth, containing the strength of the high and the low, he means by this the breathing in (istinshaq) of the air, and the taking of the spirit from it, and its subsequent elevation to the highest degree of heat, and it is the Fire, and the low is the body, and its content of the controlling earthly power which imparts the colours. For there lie in it those higher powers, as well as the earthly powers which were submerged in it.

The natural operation and decay causes it to be manifest, and hence the strength of the earth, and of the air, and of the higher fire passed in to it. Later he said [#9] it will overcome the high and the low because it in it is found the light of lights: and consequently the darkness will flee from it.

[See Stapleton et al. p 74, 81.]

Appendix

Translation from Roger Bacon's edition of *Secretum Secretorum* made c 1445

1) Trough hath hym so, and it is no doubt,

2) that the lover is to the heigher, and the heigher to the lower aunsweren.

The worcher forsoth of all myracles is the one and sool God, of and fro Whom Cometh all meruelous operacions.

3) So all thynges were created of o soole substance, and of o soole disposicion,

4) the fader wherof is the sone, and the moone moder,

5) that brought hym forth by blast or aier in the wombe, the erthe taken fro it,

6) to whom is seid the increat fader, tresour of myracles, and yever of vertues.

7) Of fire is made erthe.

7a) Depart the erthe fro the fire, for the sotiller is worthier than the more grosse, and the thynne thyng than the thik. This most be do wisely and discretly.

8) It ascendith fro the erth into the heven, and falleth fro heven to the erthe, and therof sleith the higher and the lower vertue.

9) And yf it lordship in the lower and in the heigher, and thow shalt lordship aboue and beneth, which forsoth is the light of lightes, and therfor fro the wolle fle all derknesse.

10) The higher vertue ouer-cometh all, for sothe all thynne thyng doth in dense thynges.

11a) After the disposicion of the more world rynneth this worchyng.

13) And for this prophetisyng of the trynyte of God Hermogenes it called Triplex, trebil in philosophie, as Aristotle seith.

[See Manzalaoui 1977: 65 –6.]

Translation of same source, made c. 1485.

- 1) The trwthe is so, and that it is no dowght,
- 2) that lower thyngis to hyer thyng, and hyer to lower be correspondent. But the Werker of myraclis is on Godde alone, fro Home descendyth euiry meruulus werk.
- 3) And so alle thyngis be creat of one only substauns, be an only dysposicion,
- 4) of home the fadyr is the sonne, and the mone the modyr,
- 5) qwyche bar her be the wedyr in the wombe. The erthe is priuyd fro her—to.
- 6) This is clepyd or seyde the fadyr of enchauntmentis, tresur of myracclys, the yessuer of vertuys.
- 7) Be a lytil it is made erthe.
- 7a) Depart that qwyche is erthly fro that qwyche is fi Fry, for that qwyche is sotel is mor wurthy han that qwyche is grose, and that rar, porous, or lyght, is mor bettyr than qwiche is thyk of substauns. This is done wyseli or dyscretly.
- 8) It ascendyth fro the erth in—to heuyn and fallyth fro heuyn in—to erth, and ther—of it sleth the ouyr vertu and the nedyr vertu, so it hath lorchyp in the lowe thyngis and hye thingis,
- 9) and thu lordschyp pist vppeward and downward, and with the is the lyght of lyghtys. And for that alle derkness schal fle fro the.
- 10) The ouyr vetu ourcomyth alle, for euiry rar rhyng werkyth in to euiry thyk thyng.
- 11a) And aftyr the dysposicion of the mor world rennyth thys werking.
- 13) And for that Hermogines is clepyd threhold in filosofhye, and of the meruellys of he world.

[See Manzalaoui 1977: 174–5]

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Stages Of Transformation and Emerald Insights to Live by

The Seven Stages of Transformation



The alchemists believed that the universal formula contained in the Emerald Tablet was the basis for a spiritual technology first introduced on the planet in ancient Egypt more than 10,000 years ago. This formula consists of seven consecutive operations performed on the "matter" - whether it be of a physical, psychological, or spiritual nature.

To guide us through this process, we are going to make use of a tool actually used by the alchemists - a meditative mandala first published in 1759 as an illustration for the book "Azoth of the Philosophers" by the legendary German alchemist Basil Valentine.

The word "Azoth" in the title is one of the more arcane names for the One thing described in the tablet. The "A" and "Z" in the word related to the Greek alpha and omega, the beginning and end of all things. the word is meant to embrace the full meaning of the One Thing, which is both the chaotic First Matter at the beginning of the Work and the perfected Stone at its conclusion.

At the center of this remarkable drawing is the face of a bearded alchemist at the beginning of the Work. Like looking into a mirror, this is where the initiate fixes his or her attention to meditate on the mandala.

Within the downward-pointing triangle superimposed over the face of the alchemist is the goal of the Work, the divine man in which the forces from Above and the Below have come together.

The alchemist's schematized body is the offspring of the marriage between the archetypal Sun King, seated on a lion on a hill to his right, and the archetypal Moon Queen, seated on a great fish to his left. "Its father is the Sun", says the tablet, "its mother the Moon".

The laughing, extroverted Sun King holds a scepter and a shield indicating his authority and strength over the rational, visible world, but the fiery dragon of his rejected unconscious waits in a cave beneath him ready to attack should he grow too arrogant.

The melancholy, introverted Moon Queen holds the reins to a great fish, symbolizing her control of those same hidden forces that threaten the King, and behind her is a chaff of wheat, which stands for her connection to fertility and growth. The bow and arrow she cradles in her left arm symbolize the wounds of the heart and body she accepts as part of her existence.

In simplest terms, the King and Queen represent the raw materials of our experience - our thoughts and feelings - with which the alchemist works. The King symbolizes the power of thought, ultimately the One Mind of the highest spirit. The Queen stands for the influence of uncontrollable feelings and emotions, which are ultimately the chaotic One Thing of the greater soul.

The much anticipated marriage of the King and Queen produces a state of consciousness best described as a feeling intellect, which can be raised and purified to produce a state of perfect intuition, a direct gnosis of reality. "All Obscurity will be clear to you", says the tablet of this state of mind.

This goal of alchemy is to make this golden moment permanent in a state of consciousness called the Philosopher's Stone, and it all starts with the marriage of the opposites within.

In our drawing, the body of the alchemist is connected to the four elements. His feet protrude from behind the central emblem; one is on Earth and the other in Water. In his right hand is a torch of Fire and in his left a feather, symbolizing Air. Between his legs hangs the Cubic Stone labeled with the word Corpus, meaning body. The five stars surrounding it indicate that it also contains the hidden fifth element, the invisible quintessence whose "inherent strength is perfected if it is turned into Earth."

Where the head of the alchemist should be, there is a strange winged caricature that is variously interpreted as a heart, a helmet, or even the pineal gland at the center of the brain. The symbol evolved from the Winged Disk of Akhenaten and became the top of the caduceus, the magical wand of Hermes where opposing energies merge to produce

miracles. This knob represents the Ascended Essence, the essence of our souls raised to the highest level in the body - to the brain - where it becomes a mobile center of consciousness able to leave the body and travel to other dimensions of reality.

Touching the wings of the caduceus are a salamander engulfed in flames on the left side of the drawing and a standing bird on the right. Below the salamander is the inscription Anima (Soul); below the bird is the inscription Spiritus (Spirit). The salamander, as a symbol of soul, is attracted to and exposed in the blazing fire of the Sun. Likewise, the bird of spirit is attracted to the coolness of the Moon and is reflected in it. This is a subtle statement of the fundamental bipolar energies that drive the alchemy of transformation.

Spiritus, Anima, and Corpus form a large inverted triangle that stands behind the central emblem. Together they symbolize the three archetypal celestial forces that the alchemists termed Sulfur, Mercury, and Salt. Again, these are not chemicals at all, but our feelings, thoughts, and body.

First Stage - Calcination

CALCINATION is the first of seven major operations in the alchemy of transformation.

Chemically, the Calcination process involves heating a substance in a crucible or over an open flame until it is reduced to ashes. In the Arcanum Experiment, Calcination is represented by sulfuric acid, which the alchemists made from a naturally occurring substance called Vitriol. Sulfuric acid is a powerful corrosive that eats away flesh and reacts with all metals except gold.

Psychologically, this is the destruction of ego and our attachments to material possessions. Calcination is usually a natural humbling process as we are gradually assaulted and overcome by the trials and tribulations of life, though it can be a deliberate surrender of our inherent hubris gained through a variety of spiritual disciplines that ignite the fire of introspection and self-evaluation.

Physiologically, the Fire of Calcination can be experienced as the metabolic discipline or aerobic activity that tunes the body, burning off excesses from overindulgence and producing a lean, mean, fighting machine. Calcination begins in the Base or Lead Chakra at the sacral cup at the base of the spine.

In Society, the Calcination is expressed in the lives of revolutionaries, conquerors, and other warriors who try to overthrow the status quo. On the Planetary level, it is the Fire of creation, the formation of a livable environment from molten matter and volcanic ashes.

CORRESPONDENCES OF CALCINATION

- According to the Emerald Tablet, "Its father is the Sun."
- Element: Fire.
- Color: Magenta; Purple-Red.
- Planet: Saturn.
- Metal: Lead.

Second Stage – Dissolution

DISSOLUTION is the second major operation in the alchemy of transformation.

Chemically, it is the dissolving the ashes from Calcination in water. In the Arcanum Experiment, Dissolution is represented by iron oxide or rust, which illustrated the potentially corrosive powers of Water on even the hardest of metals. When processed, Vitriol breaks down into sulfuric acid and iron oxide, which are the first two arcana or secret ingredients. The Egyptians smelted Iron as far back as 1500 BCE and used iron compounds in tonics and as disinfectants.

Psychologically, this represents a further breaking down of the artificial structures of the psyche by total immersion in the unconscious, non-rational, feminine or rejected part of our minds. It is, for the most part, an unconscious process in which our conscious minds let go of control to allow the surfacing of buried material. It is opening the floodgates and generating new energy from the waters held back. Dissolution can be experienced as "flow," the bliss of being well-used and actively engaged in creative acts without traditional prejudices, personal hang-ups, or established hierarchy getting in the way.

Physiologically, Dissolution is the continuance of the kundalini experience, the opening-up of energy channels in the body to recharge and elevate every single cell. Dissolution takes place in the Genital or Tin Chakra and involves the lungs and spleen.

In Society, the process of steady growth through gradual Dissolution is exemplified by agrarian, monastic, or agriculture-based lifestyles. On the Planetary level, Dissolution is the Great Flood, the cleansing of the earth of all that is inferior.

CORRESPONDENCES OF DISSOLUTION

- According to the Emerald Tablet, "Its mother is the Moon."
- Element: Water.
- Color: Light Blue.
- Planet: Jupiter.
- Metal: Tin.

Third Stage – Separation

SEPARATION is the third of the operations of transformation in alchemy.

Chemically, it is the isolation of the components of Dissolution by filtration and then discarding any unguine or unworthy material. In the Arcanum Experiment, Separation is represented by the compound sodium carbonate, which separates out of water and appears as white soda ash on dry lake-beds. The oldest known deposits are in Egypt. The alchemists sometimes referred to this compound as Natron, which meant the common tendency in all salts to form solid bodies or precipitates.

Psychologically, this process is the rediscovery of our essence and the reclaiming of dream and visionary "gold" previously rejected by the masculine, rational part of our minds. It is, for the most part, a conscious process in which we review formerly hidden material and decide what to discard and what to reintegrate into our refined personality. Much of this shadowy material is things we are ashamed of or were taught to hide away by our parents, churches, and schooling. Separation is letting go of the self-inflicted restraints to our true nature, so we can shine through.

Physiologically, Separation is following and controlling the breath in the body as it works with the forces of Spirit and Soul to give birth to new energy and physical renewal. Separation begins in the Navel or Iron Chakra located at the level of the solar plexus.

In Society, Separation is expressed as the establishment of clans, cities, and nationalities. Separation on the Planetary level is represented by the formation of land masses and islands from the powerful forces of Air, Water, Earth, and Fire.

CORRESPONDENCES OF SEPARATION

- According to the Emerald Tablet, "The Wind carries it in its belly."
- Element: Air.
- Color: Orange-Red.
- Planet: Mars.
- Metal: Iron.

Fourth Stage – Conjunction

CONJUNCTION is the fourth of the seven operations of alchemy.

Chemically, it is the recombination of the saved elements from Separation into a new substance. In the Arcanum Experiment, Conjunction is symbolized by a nitrate compound known as cubic-salt peter or potassium nitrate, which the alchemists called Natron or simply Salt. Blue-colored Natron acid (aqua fortis) was made by mixing potassium nitrate with sulfuric acid and was used to separate silver from gold. The inert residue precipitated from the acid during the reaction like a child being born.

Psychologically, it is empowerment of our true selves, the union of both the masculine and feminine sides of our personalities into a new belief system or an intuitive state of consciousness. The alchemists referred to it as the Lesser Stone, and after it is achieved, the adept is able to clearly discern what needs to be done to achieve lasting enlightenment, which is union with the Overself. Often, synchronicities begin to occur that confirm the alchemist is on the right track.

Physiologically, Conjunction is using the body's sexual energies for personal transformation. Conjunction takes place in the body at the level of the Heart or Copper Chakra.

In Society, it is the growth of crafts and technology to master the environment. On the Planetary level, Conjunction occurs when primordial life forms are created from the energy of the Sun or lightning.

CORRESPONDENCES OF CONJUNCTION

- According to the Emerald Tablet, "The Earth is its nurse."
- Element: Earth.
- Color: Green.
- Planet: Venus.
- Metal: Copper.

Fifth Stage – Fermentation

FERMENTATION is the fifth operation in the alchemy of transformation.

Fermentation is a two-stepped process that begins with the Putrefaction of the hermaphroditic "child" from the Conjunction resulting in its death and resurrection to a new level of being. The Fermentation phase then begins with the introduction of new life into the product of Conjunction to strengthen it and insure its survival.

Chemically, Fermentation is the growth of a ferment (bacteria) in organic solutions, such as occurs in the fermenting of milk to produce curds and cheese or in the fermenting of grapes to make wine. In the Arcanum Experiment, the process of Fermentation is represented by a compound called Liquor Hepatis, which is an oily, reddish-brown mixture of ammonia and the rotten-egg-smelling compound hydrogen sulfide. Egyptian alchemists made ammonia by heating camel dung in sealed containers and thought of it as a kind of refined Mercury that embodied the life force. Liquor Hepatis means "Liquor of the Liver," which they believed was the seat of the Soul, and the color they associated with the compound was green, the color of bile. Surprisingly, Liquor Hepatis exudes a wonderful fragrance, and the alchemists made a perfume of it called "Balsam of the Soul."

Psychologically, the Fermentation process starts with the inspiration of spiritual power from Above that reanimates, energizes, and enlightens the alchemist. Out of the blackness of his Putrefaction comes the yellow Ferment, which appears like a golden wax flowing out of the foul matter of the Soul. Its arrival is announced by a brilliant display of colors and meaningful visions called the "Peacock's Tail." Fermentation can be achieved through various activities that include intense prayer, desire for mystical union, breakdown of the personality, transpersonal therapy, psychedelic drugs, and deep meditation. Fermentation is living inspiration from something totally beyond us.

Physiologically, Fermentation is the rousing of living energy (chi or kundalini) in the body to heal and vivify. It is expressed as vibratory tones and spoken truths emerging from the Throat or Mercury Chakra.

In Society, the Fermentation experience is the basis of religion. On the Planetary level, it is the evolution of life to produce higher consciousness.

CORRESPONDENCES OF FERMENTATION

- According to the Emerald Tablet, during Fermentation, we raise consciousness from the darkness of the animal body through personal meditation and planetary evolution. "Separate the Earth from Fire," it tells us, "the subtle from the gross, gently and with great Ingenuity."
- Substance: Sulfur.
- Color: Turquoise.
- Planet: Venus.
- Metal: Mercury.

Sixth Stage – Distillation

DISTILLATION is the sixth major operation in the alchemy of transformation.

Chemically, it is the boiling and condensation of the fermented solution to increase its purity, such as takes place in the distilling of wine to make brandy. In the Arcanum Experiment, Distillation is represented by a compound known as Black Pulvis Solaris, which is made by mixing black antimony with purified sulfur. The two immediately clump together to make what the alchemists called a bezoar, a kind of sublimated solid that forms in the intestines and brain.

Psychologically, Distillation is the agitation and sublimation of psychic forces is necessary to ensure that no impurities from the inflated ego or deeply submerged id are incorporated into the next and final stage. Personal Distillation consists of a variety of introspective techniques that raise the content of the psyche to the highest level possible, free from sentimentality and emotions, cut off even from one's personal identity. Distillation is the purification of the unborn Self $\frac{3}{4}$ all that we truly are and can be.

Physiologically, Distillation is raising the life force repeatedly from the lower regions in the cauldron of the body to the brain (what Oriental alchemists called the Circulation of the Light), where it eventually becomes a wondrous solidifying light full of power. Distillation is said to culminate in the Third Eye area of the forehead, at the level of the pituitary and pineal glands, in the Brow or Silver Chakra.

In Society, the Distillation experience is expressed as science and objective experimentation. On the Planetary level, Distillation is the realization of the power of higher love, as the life force on the entire planet gradually seeks to become one force in nature based on a shared vision of Truth.

CORRESPONDENCES OF DISTILLATION

- According to the Emerald Tablet, during the Distillation process, "It rises from Earth to Heaven and descends again to Earth, thereby combining within Itself the powers of both the Above and the Below."
- Substance: Mercury.
- Color: Deep Blue.
- Planet: Mercury.
- Metal: Silver.

Seventh Stage – Coagulation

COAGULATION is the seventh and final operation of alchemy.

Chemically, Coagulation is the precipitation or sublimation of the purified Ferment from Distillation. In the Arcanum Experiment, Coagulation is represented by a compound called Red Pulvis Solaris, which is a reddish-orange powder of pure sulfur mixed with the therapeutic mercury compound, red mercuric oxide. The name Pulvis Solaris means "Powder of the Sun" and the alchemists believed it could instantly perfect any substance to which it was added.

Psychologically, Coagulation is first sensed as a new confidence that is beyond all things, though many experience it as a Second Body of golden coalesced light, a permanent vehicle of consciousness that embodies the highest aspirations and evolution of mind. Coagulation incarnates and releases the Ultima Materia of the soul, the Astral Body, which the alchemists also referred to it as the Greater or Philosopher's Stone. Using this magical Stone, the alchemists believed they could exist on all levels of reality.

Physiologically, this stage is marked by the release of the Elixir in the blood that rejuvenates the body into a perfect vessel of health. A brain ambrosia is said to be released through the interaction of light from the phallic-shaped pineal gland and matter from the vulva of the pituitary. This heavenly food or viaticum both nourishes and energizes the cells without any waste products being produced. These physiological and psychological processes create the Second Body, a body of solid light that emerges through the Crown or Gold Chakra.

In Society, it is the living wisdom in which everyone exists within the same light of evolved consciousness and knowledge of Truth. On the Planetary level, Coagulation is a return to the Garden of Eden, this time on a higher level in tune with the divine mind.

CORRESPONDENCES OF COAGULATION

- According to the Emerald Tablet, "Thus will you obtain the Glory of the Whole Universe. All Obscurity will be clear to you. This is the greatest Force of all powers, because it overcomes every Subtle thing and penetrates every Solid thing."
- Substance: Salt.
- Color: Violet; Purple.
- Planet: Sun.
- Metal: Gold.

Emerald Insights to Live By

How does one become an alchemist in modern times? One way is to make the Emerald Formula live in us and distill it even further to make of it practical insights that we can use to rise above the trials and tribulations of everyday life. By working with the Emerald Formula on a daily basis, its precepts penetrate even deeper into the fiber of our lives and often work their wonders without us even being aware of it. The following seven principles capture the essence of each of the Seven Steps, but in deference to the profundity of the Hermetic Mysteries, we will label them neither "commandments" nor "insights" but "Arcana" -- the great secret ingredients of our lives that come together to make the Stone.

Arcanum One: Whatever remains always Below becomes its own worst enemy.

In our ignorance, we are constantly messing up the alchemy of our lives and that of the planet. The opportunistic growth of ego, whether in a person or in a nation, gradually takes over the whole organism and becomes its Tyrant King, who keeps power through disinformation and subterfuge. Ego, on whatever level it manifests, saps us of energy and positions us opposite the divine. By living under ego and not our essence, we are no longer living in truth and bring about our own demise. We lose innocence; our plans and goals become mockeries.

Calcination, the hellfire reserved for those who go against the emanations of the One Mind, who live outside the Operation of the Sun, can take place on a personal, marital, social, national, or planetary level. Nothing will ever go right, unless we are connected to the One source of all creation and purged of our enslavement to ego. The Rightful Ruler, the sacred Presence within each one of us, must overthrow this despot King. We must acknowledge the Presence beyond ego, for when it is coagulated and ruling our world, we, too, are divine; but when things are not going our way, we are experiencing the justice of Thoth himself. Jesus knew exactly what it meant to remain Below, and he expressed it in the *Gnostic Gospel of Thomas*: "If you bring forth what is within you, what you bring forth can save you. If you do not bring forth what is within you, what you do not bring forth will destroy you."

Arcanum Two: The way to truth is through Intelligence of the Heart.

Arriving at a solution to any problem requires psychological Dissolution, the suspension of previous assumptions and the discovery of new perspectives. However, one of the most basic and hardest assumptions to give up is the assumption that all problems can be solved rationally. Any scientist or mathematician will tell you that reality is made up of both rational and irrational components. The only totally rational world exists inside computers, where reality is artificial and limited to preprogrammed parameters. As

sentient beings, our only advantage is to live on the edge between "yes and no," in the chaotic zone where only our living intuition knows the way.

So, finding truth requires using our minds and following our hearts, which is why the alchemists sought to develop a feeling intellect. That is what they meant when they warned that the alchemist could transmute nothing until he had transmuted himself. At that point, the alchemist opens himself fully to feeling and experience. In fact, in many drawings, alchemists are shown burning or tearing up books to demonstrate that alchemy is not static knowledge or dogma but a living, experiential gnosis.

During meditative work in our own inner laboratories, we too can actually feel the Emerald Formula working within us and living in our heart of hearts. From the perspective of the Emerald Tablet, the only unforgivable sin is smugness, which is the unwillingness to be alive and open to new experience.

Arcanum Three: Every created thing carries the signature of its creator.

Nature is a book from which the wisdom of the divine can be read. By recognizing the divine signature of a thing, you can understand the connection between the Above and the Below through which it was manifested. Each thing has its own signature, the archetypal essence that can be identified by its similar expressions. By contemplating the relationship between the objects in our lives and the forces that created them, we can arrive at the "thing itself" and know its inherent identity. Only in this way can we understand what these objects or forces mean to us and whether they represent threats or assistance. This application of the Doctrine of Correspondences is fundamental, and by ignoring the congruencies between the Above and the Below we are holding back the wisdom of the universe. As alchemists, we must undergo a process of constant Separation in which we work only with the archetypal essences of people, things, and events.

The alchemists became very familiar with the signatures of metals, and we have seen how the physical properties of metals became associated with an individual's temperament. The alchemists saw that the metals carried the signatures of the planets, just as we carry the signatures of the metals. The same principle was adapted in Paracelsian medicine, in which the signatures of plants determine how they can be used to cure people. Apollonius of Tyana believed that the esoteric signatures of gemstones could also be used to heal. Such alchemical therapies work on both a subtle and a gross level at once, by working with the hidden signatures of things. Words and images have signatures too, and even religions have their own signature based on how they came into being. By the same token, the God whom people worship places his signature on their minds.

Arcanum Four: Continued enlightenment comes from living within the Operation of the Sun.

True enlightenment cannot come from earthbound philosophies. We must find a source higher than ourselves, and for the Egyptians and Hermeticists of all ages, that source was symbolized by the Sun. This is not primitive sun worship but a genuine regard for the higher alchemy of the universe expressed in the Operation of the Sun. It is a state of consciousness less cut off from the source of life and more in tune with the internal dimensions of the cosmos that are reflected within us.

Whether it is seen simply as the governor of dark and light, the revealer of Cosmic Ages, or the Mind of God, the Operation of the Sun demonstrates the Ouroboros -- the Fountain of Fountains -- the seemingly endless creation of light and energy feeding off the One Thing within itself. Each one of us can live the same way, if we tap into the inexhaustible reserves of our nuclear Self. To do that, of course, requires peeling away all the leaden layers of falseness that have grown over it in the course of our lives and withdrawing the carbon rods of control placed there by ego. This ouroboric reaction within us is an amazing and unbelievably powerful source of pure energy that can heal our faults and sustain high levels of health and enthusiasm, inspiration and bliss in our lives.

If you follow the Operation of the Sun, which is alchemy, something amazing will begin to unfold in your life. When you with a force instead of opposing it, you gain power, and you finally know what you have to do in your life. You experience a Conjunction in which the powers both Above and Below work together on all levels of your being. Truly astonishing synchronicities will occur at the intersection of your mind and the One Mind. It is as if your interest in alchemy will cause alchemy to become interested in you.

Arcanum Five: The gateway to the Above is through the True Imagination.

The True Imagination exists on the fine line between real and unreal, manifested and unmanifested. Where do you draw the line at what is real? Your fantasies? Your dreams? Your thoughts? Psychology -- is that real? Should we accept the view of quantum physicists that matter itself is an illusion? According to the alchemists, *everything is real*. Everything we perceive is all part of the same One Thing, and we are as connected to it as we want to be.

As the Gateway to the Above, the True Imagination is connected to the physical reality of the One Thing through the archetypes and to the realm of the One Mind through the light of consciousness. When these forces of Above and Below come together, anything can happen. Many people have experienced this power at the borderline between sleeping and waking, or between death and life. One ten-year-old boy, who had a near-death experience, described it as "walking inside your mind." At such times, we realize that the universe is alive with Mind, and Mind is a real place, even though the light that dawns there is the imagination.

Using the power of True Imagination, we enter the Greater Mysteries that begin with our Fermentation, in which we experience an influx of meaningful insight and higher inspiration. This altered state of consciousness reveals the true alchemy of a person's life.

Some will ascend and others descend during this experience in accordance with their personal alchemy. What is amazing is that both the ascent and the descent lead to the same place. That is the meaning of the Ouroboros.

What is the True Imagination? To the alchemists, it was the fusion of Mercury with Sulfur, the passionate union of imagination and will beyond all egocentric fantasy. This combination affects the very fabric of existence, creating a gravity of likely events that brings image to fruition. Using the True Imagination, we create a sacred space, a Hermes Field, that affects reality on all levels.

Within that sacred space exists the First Matter, the primordial substance that becomes the Stone. It is with the True Imagination that we first perceive the First Matter, and our Fermentation is when we realize that the First Matter is indeed the key to the Work. We learn to look for it everywhere and stay connected to it always. Yet the First Matter exists only in the present moment -- it has no past and no future. It is the eternal soul hidden in all created things.

Arcanum Six: Your feelings and thoughts are the feelings and thoughts of the Whole Universe.

For the ancients, who lived in accord with the principles of the Operation of the Sun, thoughts and words had tremendous power. To know something's name was to have complete control over it, because it provided a focus for the use of directed thought. Following the Doctrine of Correspondences, they believed that just as the Thoughts of the One Mind (what we would call the Word of God) created the universe, so can the thoughts and words of man change his reality Below. As we approach the millennium, more and more people are realizing this simple truth once again. Meditation groups are at work throughout the world trying to raise the "vibrations" of our planet and repair some of the damage caused by centuries of thoughtless negativity. Working with thoughts and feelings in this impartial way is what the ancients meant by Distillation.

We must remember that the intentional articulation of thought is how things are manifested. Consciousness is a force in the universe, and words really do have power. Words can be sacred, and being well-spoken in the Hermetic sense is connecting your words with the archetypal essences that give them power and meaning. You are yourself the living Word of the cosmos, and you embody the sulfuric awareness and mercurial imagination that materialize the salt of existence. And if you can clear yourself of all the falsity, fantasy, and ignorance around you, if you can return to your most innocent essence, you too can work the miracles of Hermes.

How can mortals work miracles? We work miracles all the time without even being aware of it. All of us are incarnations of Hermes and are constantly either creating lead or gold in our lives. Since we can feel what others feel and think what others think, we can change our personal reality by thinking and feeling like certain people. We must learn to think and feel like the person we want to become. We know what it is to be young; we know what it is to be completely healthy; we know what it is to be creative and insightful.

By applying the power of True Imagination, anything is possible. However, because the universe is alive with Mind, our empowered thoughts have repercussions which can produce results we do not expect. There is no way of escaping the power of Thoth, the God of Thought. If you deny it, it will hide from you according to your command. In alchemy, justice means you create your own reality whether or not you are aware of it.

Those who have undergone Distillation know that eternity is all around us. It is in every moment we let slip by. Forming a mystical connection to both matter and the present moment (both space and time) is the key to entering the final stage of alchemical transformation. Distill the present moment and find the First Matter and everything -- everywhere and everywhen -- is yours!

Arcanum Seven: The eternal Stone is a purified consciousness that remains intact on all levels.

As Hermes never tires of telling us, over and over, over and over: the One Thing and the One Mind are One. He means that mind and body, Soul and Spirit, male and female, positive and negative, Above and Below, are all One. All sexes, all races, all species, all life is One. All life, all death; all heroes, all villains; all angels, all demons; all gods, all devils are One. Unless you find this One Presence within you -- what the alchemists called the Stone -- you cannot escape the continual dance of becoming that is duality, even for an instant. "All Is One" is the message of the Ouroboros and the basis of the alchemical principle of changing one thing into another. Alchemical transformation would not be possible unless everything were really One.

Renaissance alchemists sometimes referred to the Stone as the "Telesma," which means a self-perfecting physical presence similar to our modern idea of the force behind nature or evolution. By working with the Telesma, the alchemists hoped to speed up the process of our species' evolution, to truly participate in the work of nature, to affect it and transform it, making of it not an evolutionary phenomena but a revolutionary happening within one's own lifetime.

The Stone is the emerging pattern that resulted from the tireless work of the alchemists in past millennia. It is our true legacy, a gift to each of us from each of them. Apollonius of Tyana even included it in his will to us! Yet for each of us, the only Stone, the only magical talisman we ever need to carry, is our own bodies -- on whatever level they manifest. We can either begin personal Coagulation and make of the Stone a truly living presence within us, or we can throw it all away. The choice is ours, yet if we do not accept it as our salvation -- if we do not suffer for this Stone -- all is lost. In her article "Annals of the Invisible College," recently published in *Lapis* magazine, author Jocelyn Godwin presents an impartial and startling summary of the Hermetic Tradition:

"There is nothing left of most people's souls once they have been filtered through the planetary spheres. The vast majority will be extinguished as personalities soon after death, then perhaps recycled as different people. The adept's ambition is to survive this general Dissolution, and if he should incarnate again, to do so only through deliberate

choice, not through bondage like everyone else. In order to pass beyond the boundaries of the cosmos, symbolized by the starry sphere, and enter consciously into another mode of existence, the adept must have forged, during life, a 'radiant body' as a vehicle for this individuality. Knowing of this hyper-esoteric stream makes it easier to understand alchemy. The forging of the radiant body goes in parallel with the chemical events, and its completion is marked by the appearance of the Philosopher's Stone."

How can there be only seven steps to the pattern and yet everything be One?

"There are seven steps on the ladder of becoming, and this is the Pattern from which the formula for ascent is derived. But having reached the seventh step, the eighth step is no longer on the ladder, and you stand beyond its Pattern. This is the Eighth Sphere, which is the Cosmic Stone, where light and dark, mind and matter, are eternally One. Only from this point can be seen the greater pattern, which I shall now envision, though thus do I take leave of you, since thought is my chariot. But what I see shall I reveal, which is all the science of the whole universe, for from the Eighth, I see only One.."

Hermes Trismegistus

from The Discourse on the Eighth & Ninth

The current astrological chart is an election dedicated to Hermes Trismegistus, the Thrice Greater Hermes, the Greek Hermes being analogous and combining with the Roman Mercury and the Egyptian Thoth, part of an exploration of the Hermetic Arts of astrology, magic and alchemy and Hermeticism as a Practical Path of Gnosis.

The election comes from the Discourse the Eighth and the Ninth, a Hermetic text in the Nag Hammadi Library. The Nag Hammadi Library consists of a collection of Gnostic and Hermetic manuscripts and codices, collected and hidden in Egypt in the 4th century. The texts themselves say that they were to be buried under the protection of a terrible guardian, "the Dreadful One" and that they would not be revealed, "until the end of time" Allogenes; Gospel of the Egyptians. They were re-discovered in 1945!

The Discourse on the Eighth and Ninth is an account of a Hermetic initiation. The initiate, having already attained to the wisdom of the first seven spheres, that of the planets, is instructed and then initiated by Hermes Trismegistus into the mysteries of the 8th sphere, that of the fixed stars or empyrean and finally into the 9th, the sphere of God. The initiate first learns intellectually, "I have understood, my father, each one of the books" Discourse on the Eighth and Ninth, Nag Hammadi Library in English (Harper, 1988) at 323, and has purified himself, "We have already advanced to the seventh [sphere] since we are pious and walk in your law." Discourse at 324.

Next he receives a spiritual initiation from Hermes Trismegistus, an actual mystic experience that confirms the intellectual knowledge, encompasses it and then transcends it. "When he had finished praising, he shouted, 'Father Trismegistus! What shall I say? We have received this light. And I see myself this same vision in you. And I see the eighth and the souls that are in it and the angels singing a hymn to the ninth and its powers. And I see him who has the power of them all, creating those [that are] in the spirit.'" Discourse at 325.

Hermes then commands the initiate to write this teaching in a book in hieroglyphic characters in a temple in Egypt, writing it on turquoise, "Eight guardians guard it with the [lacunae] of the Sun. The males on the right are frog faced and the females on the left are cat faced. And put a square milk stone at the base of the turquoise tablets and write the name on the azure stone tablet in hieroglyphic characters." Discourse at 326.

The Nag Hammadi Library

The Discourse on the Eighth and Ninth

Translated by James Brashler, Peter A. Dirkse, and Douglas M. Parrott

"My father, yesterday you promised me that you would bring my mind into the eighth and afterwards you would bring me into the ninth. You said that this is the order of the tradition." "My son, indeed this is the order. But the promise was according to human nature. For I told you when I initiated the promise, I said, 'If you hold in mind each one of the steps.' After I had received the spirit through the power, I set forth the action for you. Indeed, the understanding dwells in you; in me (it is) as though the power were pregnant. For when I conceived from the fountain that flowed to me, I gave birth."

"My father, you have spoken every word well to me. But I am amazed at this statement that you have just made. For you said, 'The power that is in me'." He said, "I gave birth to it (the power), as children are born."

"Then, my father, I have many brothers, if I am to be numbered among the offspring." "Right, my son! This good thing is numbered by ... (3 lines missing) ... and [...] at all times. Therefore, my son, it is necessary for you to recognize your brothers and to honor them rightly and properly, because they come from the same father. For each generation I have called. I have named it, because they were offspring like these sons."

"Then, my father, do they have (a) day?"

"My son, they are spiritual ones. For they exist as forces that grow other souls. Therefore I say that they are immortal."

"Your word is true; it has no refutation from now on. My father, begin the discourse on the eighth and the ninth, and include me also with my brothers."

"Let us pray, my son, to the father of the universe, with your brothers who are my sons, that he may give the spirit of eloquence."

"How do they pray, my father, when joined with the generations? I want to obey, my father." (2 lines missing) ... But it is not [...]. Nor is it a [...]. But he is satisfied with her [...] him [...]. And it is right for you to remember the progress that came to you as wisdom in the books, my son. Compare yourself to the early years of life. As children (do), you have posed senseless, unintelligent questions."

"My father, the progress that has come to me now, and the foreknowledge, according to the books, that has come to me, exceeding the deficiency - these things are foremost in me."

"My son, when you understand the truth of your statement, you will find your brothers, who are my sons, praying with you."

"My father, I understand nothing else except the beauty that came to me in the books."
"This is what you call the beauty of the soul, the edification that came to you in stages.
May the understanding come to you, and you will teach."

"I have understood, my father, each one of the books. And especially the ... (2 lines missing) ... which is in [...]."

"My son, [...] in praises from those who extolled them."

"My father, from you I will receive the power of the discourse that you will give. As it was told to both (of us), let us pray, my father."

"My son, what is fitting is to pray to God with all our mind and all our heart and our soul, and to ask him that the gift of the eighth extend to us, and that each one receive from him what is his. Your part, then, is to understand; my own is to be able to deliver the discourse from the fountain that flows to me."

"Let us pray, my father: I call upon you, who rules over the kingdom of power, whose word comes as (a) birth of light. And his words are immortal. They are eternal and unchanging. He is the one whose will begets life for the forms in every place. His nature gives form to substance. By him, the souls of the eighth and the angels are moved ... (2 lines missing) ... those that exist. His providence extends to everyone [...] begets everyone. He is the one who [...] the aeon among spirits. He created everything. He who is self-contained cares for everything. He is perfect, the invisible God to whom one speaks in silence - his image is moved when it is directed, and it governs - the one mighty power, who is exalted above majesty, who is better than the honored (ones), Zoxathazo a oo ee ooo eee oooo ee oooooo oooooo oooooo uuuuuu oooooooooooooo ooo Zozazoth.

"Lord, grant us a wisdom from your power that reaches us, so that we may describe to ourselves the vision of the eighth and the ninth. We have already advanced to the seventh, since we are pious and walk in your law. And your will we fulfill always. For we have walked in your way, and we have renounced [...], so that your vision may come. Lord, grant us the truth in the image. Allow us through the spirit to see the form of the image that has no deficiency, and receive the reflection of the pleroma from us through our praise.

"And acknowledge the spirit that is in us. For from you the universe received soul. For from you, the unbegotten one, the begotten one came into being. The birth of the self-begotten one is through you, the birth of all begotten things that exist. Receive from us these spiritual sacrifices, which we send to you with all our heart and our soul and all our strength. Save that which is in us and grant us the immortal wisdom."

"Let us embrace each other affectionately, my son. Rejoice over this! For already from them the power, which is light, is coming to us. For I see! I see indescribable depths. How shall I tell you, my son? [...] from the [...] the places. How shall I describe the universe? I am Mind, and I see another Mind, the one that moves the soul! I see the one

that moves me from pure forgetfulness. You give me power! I see myself! I want to speak! Fear restrains me. I have found the beginning of the power that is above all powers, the one that has no beginning. I see a fountain bubbling with life. I have said, my son, that I am Mind. I have seen! Language is not able to reveal this. For the entire eighth, my son, and the souls that are in it, and the angels, sing a hymn in silence. And I, Mind, understand."

"What is the way to sing a hymn through it (silence)?"
"Have you become such that you cannot be spoken to?"

"I am silent, my father. I want to sing a hymn to you while I am silent."
"Then sing it, for I am Mind."

"I understand Mind, Hermes, who cannot be interpreted, because he keeps within himself. And I rejoice, my father, because I see you smiling. And the universe rejoices. Therefore, there is no creature that will lack your life. For you are the lord of the citizens in every place. Your providence protects. I call you 'father', 'aeon of the aeons', 'great divine spirit'. And by a spirit he gives rain upon everyone. What do you say to me, my father, Hermes?"

"Concerning these things, I do not say anything, my son. For it is right before God that we keep silent about what is hidden."

"Trismegistus, let not my soul be deprived of the great divine vision. For everything is possible for you as master of the universe."

"Return to <praising>, my son, and sing while you are silent. Ask what you want in silence."

What he had finished praising, he shouted, "Father Trismegistus! What shall I say? We have received this light. And I myself see this same vision in you. And I see the eighth, and the souls that are in it, and the angels singing a hymn to the ninth and its powers. And I see him who has the power of them all, creating those <that are> in the spirit."

"It is advantageous from now on, that we keep silence in a reverent posture. Do not speak about the vision from now on. It is proper to sing a hymn to the father until the day to quit (the) body."

"What you sing, my father, I too want to sing."
"I am singing a hymn within myself. While you rest yourself, be active in praise. For you have found what you seek."

"But is it proper, my father, that I praise because I am filled in my heart?"
"What is proper is your praise that you will sing to God, so that it might be written in this imperishable book."

"I will offer up the praise in my heart, as I pray to the end of the universe and the beginning of the beginning, to the object of man's quest, the immortal discovery, the begetter of light and truth, the sower of reason, the love of immortal life. No hidden word will be able to speak about you, Lord. Therefore, my mind wants to sing a hymn to you daily. I am the instrument of your spirit; Mind is your plectrum. And your counsel plucks me. I see myself! I have received power from you. For your love has reached us."

"Right, my son."

"Grace! After these things, I give thanks by singing a hymn to you. For I have received life from you, when you made me wise. I praise you. I call your name that is hidden within me: a o ee o eee ooo iii oooo ooooo ooooo uuuuuu oo oooooooooo oooooooooo oo. You are the one who exists with the spirit. I sing a hymn to you reverently."

"My son, write this book for the temple at Diospolis in hieroglyphic characters, entitling it "The Eighth Reveals the Ninth.""

"I will do it, my <father>, as you command now."

"My <son>, write the language of the book on steles of turquoise. My son, it is proper to write this book on steles of turquoise, in hieroglyphic characters. For Mind himself has become overseer of these. Therefore, I command that this teaching be carved on stone, and that you place it in my sanctuary. Eight guardians guard it with [...] of the Sun. The males on the right are frog-faced, and the females on the left are cat-faced. And put a square milk-stone at the base of the turquoise tablets, and write the name on the azure stone tablet in hieroglyphic characters. My son, you will do this when I am in Virgo, and the sun is in the first half of the day, and fifteen degrees have passed by me."

"My father, everything that you say I will do eagerly."

"And write an oath in the book, lest those who read the book bring the language into abuse, and not (use it) to oppose the acts of fate. Rather, they should submit to the law of God, without having transgressed at all, but in purity asking God for wisdom and knowledge. And he who will not be begotten at the start by God comes to be by the general and guiding discourses. He will not be able to read the things written in this book, although his conscience is pure within him, since he does not do anything shameful, nor does he consent to it. Rather, by stages he advances and enters into the way of immortality. And thus he enters into the understanding of the eighth that reveals the ninth."

"So shall I do it, my father."

"This is the oath: I make him who will read this holy book swear by heaven and earth, and fire and water, and seven rulers of substance, and the creating spirit in them, and the <unbegotten> God, and the self-begotten one, and him who has been begotten, that he will guard the things that Hermes has said. And those who keep the oath, God will be reconciled with them and everyone whom we have named. But wrath will come to each one of those who violate the oath. This is the perfect one who is, my son."

The Seven Hermetic Principles and the Kybalion

The Seven Hermetic Principles

"The Hermetic tradition emphasized the existence of a supreme force called the One Thing, which has no perceptible form until it is 'grounded' or expressed in material reality... The Hermeticists saw the One Thing as a primordial, plastic energy that takes the form of the idea or thought projected by the One Mind"

Hermeticists believed that calming the mind and focusing our intention through meditation, prayer, and invocation allows us to consciously communicate with and influence this force. The Hermeticists' ultimate goal was to achieve divine consciousness.



The Emerald Tablet was a precursor to the Corpus Hermeticum, which was based on a number of ancient manuscripts assigned to Hermes Trismegistus and translated by the Greeks from Egyptian during the second and third centuries. Copies of the Corpus were widely circulated by scholars and influenced the civilizations of Egypt, Greece, Rome, India, Persia, and eventually Europe. Hermetic principles and passages were also quietly integrated into many major religions and belief systems, including Judaism, Buddhism, Islam, Paganism, and Christianity. Portions of the Gospel of John, for example, resemble some of the Hermetic writings, as with, "In the beginning was Thoth, and Thoth was in Atum, and Thoth was Atum in the unfathomable reaches of primordial space." The Hindu and Buddhist principles of karma and reincarnation are also found in the Corpus Hermeticum: "O son, how many bodies we have to pass through, how many bands of demons, through how many series of repetitions and cycles of the stars, before we hasten to the One alone?" Similarly, there are close ties in language and imagery between the Corpus and the Kabbalah. Indeed hundreds of mystery schools and schools of philosophy taught the hermetic philosophy, though it gets scant recognition.

In 1912, the Three Initiates, an anonymous group with ties to the Masonic Temple in Chicago, published The Kybalion. This book put into writing the "Secret Doctrine," a version of Hermetic philosophy that had been carefully shared and passed down for the previous two thousand years through various secret societies. The Kybalion explains the seven fundamental principles of Hermetic philosophy:

"The Principles of Truth are Seven; he who knows these, understandingly, possesses the Magic Key before whose touch all the Doors of the Temple fly open." -- THE KYBALION

The Seven Hermetic Principles, upon which the entire Hermetic Philosophy is based, are as follows:

THE PRINCIPLE OF MENTALISM.
THE PRINCIPLE OF CORRESPONDENCE.
THE PRINCIPLE OF VIBRATION.
THE PRINCIPLE OF POLARITY.
THE PRINCIPLE OF RHYTHM.
THE PRINCIPLE OF CAUSE AND EFFECT.
THE PRINCIPLE OF GENDER.

I. THE PRINCIPLE OF MENTALISM

"THE ALL IS MIND; The Universe is Mental." -- The Kybalion.

This Principle embodies the truth that "All is Mind." It explains that THE ALL (which is the Substantial Reality underlying all the outward manifestations and appearances which we know under the terms of "The Material Universe"; the "Phenomena of Life"; "Matter"; "Energy"; and, in short, all that is apparent to our material senses) is SPIRIT which in itself is UNKNOWABLE and UNDEFINABLE, but which may be considered and thought of as AN UNIVERSAL, INFINITE, LIVING MIND. It also explains that all the phenomenal world or universe is simply a Mental Creation of THE ALL, subject to the Laws of Created Things, and that the universe, as a whole, and in its parts or units, has its existence in the Mind of THE ALL, in which Mind we "live and move and have our being."

This Principle, by establishing the Mental Nature of the Universe, easily explains all of the varied mental and psychic phenomena that occupy such a large portion of the public attention, and which, without such explanation, are non-understandable and defy scientific treatment. An understanding of this great Hermetic Principle of Mentalism enables the individual to readily grasp the laws of the Mental Universe, and to apply the same to his well-being and advancement. The Hermetic Student is enabled to apply intelligently the great Mental Laws, instead of using them in a haphazard manner. With the Master-Key in his possession, the student may unlock the many doors of the mental and psychic temple of knowledge, and enter the same freely and intelligently.

This Principle explains the true nature of "Energy," "Power," and "Matter," and why and how all these are subordinate to the Mastery of Mind. One of the old Hermetic Masters wrote, long ages ago: "He who grasps the truth of the Mental Nature of the Universe is well advanced on The Path to Mastery." And these words are as true today as at the time they were first written. Without this Master-Key, Mastery is impossible, and the student knocks in vain at the many doors of The Temple.

The Principle of Mentalism is reflected in the Biblical quotation, "In the beginning was the Word." Ultimately all external reality is based on idea or concept. In the context of quantum physics, Mentalism means the physical world can be reduced to patterns of potential connections among potential concentrations of matter/energy that might or

might not come into form, depending upon the introduction of consciousness. Twentieth-century physicists and consciousness researchers are thus on the edge of unraveling the implications of Mentalism that Hermetic initiates have known all along. Now anyone can grasp it's meaning: the basic force in the universe is mental.

II. THE PRINCIPLE OF CORRESPONDENCE

"As above, so below; as below, so above." -- The Kybalion.

This Principle embodies the truth that there is always a Correspondence between the laws and phenomena of the various planes of Being and Life. The old Hermetic axiom ran in these words: "As above, so below; as below, so above." and the grasping of this Principle gives one the means of solving many a dark paradox, and hidden secret of Nature. There are planes beyond our knowing, but when we apply the Principle of Correspondence to them we are able to understand much that would otherwise be unknowable to us. This Principle is of universal application and manifestation, on the various planes of the material, mental, and spiritual universe--it is an Universal Law.

The ancient Hermetists considered this Principle as one of the most important mental instruments by which man was able to pry aside the obstacles which hid from view the Unknown. Its use even tore aside the Veil of Isis to the extent that a glimpse of the face of the goddess might be caught. Just as a knowledge of the Principles of Geometry enables man to measure distant suns and their movements, while seated in his observatory, so a knowledge of the Principle of Correspondence enables Man to reason intelligently from the Known to the Unknown. Studying the monad, he understands the archangel.

The Principle of Correspondence, "as above, so below," means that one can infer the nature of distant realms from local experience. The dynamics of cells are parallel to the dynamics of galaxies. Just as a small laboratory or computer program can simulate the behavior of stars billions of light years away, the consciousness of an individual being can confer with the Ultimate Consciousness that existed when there was only the word. This principle ensures, for example, that humans need not dread exposure to the idea of, say, extraterrestrials; they are derived from the same universal consciousness.

III. THE PRINCIPLE OF VIBRATION

"Nothing rests; everything moves; everything vibrates." -- The Kybalion.

This Principle embodies the truth that "everything is in motion"; "everything vibrates"; "nothing is at rest"; facts which Modern Science endorses, and which each new scientific discovery tends to verify. And yet this Hermetic Principle was enunciated thousands of years ago, by the Masters of Ancient Egypt. This Principle explains that the differences

between different manifestations of Matter, Energy, Mind, and even Spirit, result largely from varying rates of Vibration.

From THE ALL, which is Pure Spirit, down to the grossest form of Matter, all is in vibration--the higher the vibration, the higher the position in the scale. The vibration of Spirit is at such an infinite rate of intensity and rapidity that it is practically at rest--just as a rapidly moving wheel seems to be motionless. And at the other end of the scale, there are gross forms of matter whose vibrations are so low as to seem at rest. Between these poles, there are millions upon millions of varying degrees of vibration. From corpuscle and electron, atom and molecule, to worlds and universes, everything is in vibratory motion.

This is also true on the planes of energy and force (which are but varying degrees of vibration); and also on the mental planes (whose states depend upon vibrations); and even on to the spiritual planes. An understanding of this Principle, with the appropriate formulas, enables Hermetic students to control their own mental vibrations as well as those of others. The Masters also apply this Principle to the conquering of Natural phenomena, in various ways. "He who understands the Principle of Vibration, has grasped the sceptre of power," says one of the old writers.

The Principle of Vibration, which asserts that everything is in continual motion, is now a basic tenet of science. Subatomic particles are continually moving in relation to each other in every concentration of energy and mass in the universe.. The patterns of vibration occur in all manifestations- from dense stone, to gaseous molecules, to the thoughts and emotions of human beings. We have intuitively grasped the validity of this principle: we get "good vibes" about this or that. When we are on different frequencies with someone, we can wind down or increase the tension, thereby moving a situation to a congruent level of vibration.

IV. THE PRINCIPLE OF POLARITY

"Everything is Dual; everything has poles; everything has its pair of opposites; like and unlike are the same; opposites are identical in nature, but different in degree; extremes meet; all truths are but half-truths; all paradoxes may be reconciled." -- The Kybalion.

This Principle embodies the truth that "everything is dual"; "everything has two poles"; "everything has its pair of opposites," all of which were old Hermetic axioms. It explains the old paradoxes, that have perplexed so many, which have been stated as follows: "Thesis and antithesis are identical in nature, but different in degree"; "opposites are the same, differing only in degree"; "the pairs of opposites may be reconciled"; "extremes meet"; "everything is and isn't, at the same time"; "all truths are but half truths"; "every truth is half-false"; "there are two sides to everything," etc., etc., etc.

It explains that in everything there are two poles, or opposite aspects, and that "opposites" are really only the two extremes of the same thing, with many varying degrees between

them. To illustrate: Heat and Cold, although "opposites," are really the same thing, the differences consisting merely of degrees of the same thing. Look at your thermometer and see if you can discover where "heat" terminates and "cold" begins! There is no such thing as "absolute heat" or "absolute cold"--the two terms "heat" and "cold" simply indicate varying degrees of the same thing, and that 'same thing' which manifests as "heat" and "cold" is merely a form, variety, and rate of Vibration. So "heat" and "cold" are simply the "two poles" of that which we call "Heat"--and the phenomena attendant thereupon are manifestations of the Principle of Polarity.

The same Principle manifests in the case of "Light and Darkness," which are the same thing, the difference consisting of varying degrees between the two poles of the phenomena. Where does "darkness" leave off, and "light" begin? What is the difference between "Large and Small"? Between "Hard and Soft"? Between "Black and White"? Between "Sharp and Dull"? Between "Noise and Quiet"? Between "High and Low"? Between "Positive and Negative"? The Principle of Polarity explains these paradoxes, and no other Principle can supersede it.

The same Principle operates on the Mental Plane. Let us take a radical and extreme example--that of "Love and Hate," two mental states apparently totally different. And yet there are degrees of Hate and degrees of Love, and a middle point in which we use the terms "Like or Dislike," which shade into each other so gradually that sometimes we are at a loss to know whether we "like" or "dislike" or "neither." And all are simply degrees of the same thing, as you will see if you will but think a moment. And, more than this (and considered of more importance by the Hermetists), it is possible to change the vibrations of Hate to the vibrations of Love, in one's own mind, and in the minds of others. Many of you, who read these lines, have had personal experiences of the involuntary rapid transition from Love to Hate, and the reverse, in your own case and that of others. And you will therefore realize the possibility of this being accomplished by the use of the Will, by means of the Hermetic formulas.

"Good and Evil" are but the poles of the same thing, and the Hermetist understands the art of transmuting Evil into Good, by means of an application of the Principle of Polarity. In short, the "Art of Polarization" becomes a phase of "Mental Alchemy" known and practiced by the ancient and modern Hermetic Masters. An understanding of the Principle will enable one to change his own Polarity, as well as that of others, if he will devote the time and study necessary to master the art.

The Principle of Polarity embodies the truth that two seeming opposites are in truth compliments that differ only in degree-- the obverse and reverse sides of the same coin. This principle applies in all realms. Photon particles are inextricably linked in pairs, with each as either the positive or negative aspect of the other. Hot and cold are but different aspects of the same temperature gradient. Any characteristic in nature or cosmic experience has its own gradient--large and small, high and low, black and white, sharp and dull, male or female. Where does each pole end and the other begin? What about the shades of good and evil? The crucial point here is that all such polarities are

only different vibrations on the same continuum. One can be transmuted into the other employing the Principle of Polarity.

V. THE PRINCIPLE OF RHYTHM

"Everything flows, out and in; everything has its tides; all things rise and fall; the pendulum-swing manifests in everything; the measure of the swing to the right is the measure of the swing to the left; rhythm compensates." -- The Kybalion

This Principle embodies the truth that in everything there is manifested a measured motion, to and fro; a flow and inflow; a swing backward and forward; a pendulum-like movement; a tide-like ebb and flow; a high-tide and low-tide; between the two poles which exist in accordance with the Principle of Polarity described a moment ago. There is always an action and a reaction; an advance and a retreat; a rising and a sinking. This is in the affairs of the Universe, suns, worlds, men, animals, mind, energy, and matter.

This law is manifest in the creation and destruction of worlds; in the rise and fall of nations; in the life of all things; and finally in the mental states of Man (and it is with this latter that the Hermetists find the understanding of the Principle most important). The Hermetists have grasped this Principle, finding its universal application, and have also discovered certain means to overcome its effects in themselves by the use of the appropriate formulas and methods. They apply the Mental Law of Neutralization. They cannot annul the Principle, or cause it to cease its operation, but they have learned how to escape its effects upon themselves to a certain degree depending upon the Mastery of the Principle.

They have learned how to USE it, instead of being USED BY it. In this and similar methods, consist the Art of the Hermetists. The Master of Hermetics polarizes himself at the point at which he desires to rest, and then neutralizes the Rhythmic swing of the pendulum which would tend to carry him to the other pole. All individuals who have attained any degree of Self-Mastery do this to a certain degree, more or less unconsciously, but the Master does this consciously, and by the use of his Will, and attains a degree of Poise and Mental Firmness almost impossible of belief on the part of the masses who are swung backward and forward like a pendulum. This Principle and that of Polarity have been closely studied by the Hermetists, and the methods of counteracting, neutralizing, and USING them form an important part of the Hermetic Mental Alchemy.

The principle of Ryhthm means that everything manifests itself in a pattern of to and fro, up and down, in and out. The movement in one direction is always compensated for by a return. For every action, there is a reaction and for every advance there is a retreat.. The principle applies in all the affairs of the cosmos-stars, beings, mind, energy, and matter. It works in the interactions within a plane, and in communications between dimensions. Over time, the rythmns result in spiraling shapes that characterize much of the universe.

Understanding of the dynamics of this principle makes it possible to mitigate some of its more extreme effects. We can recognize that fatigue, followed by rest, leads to renewed energy. Anger gives way to remorse and pain succumbs to release. By being aware of the rhythms, one is less likely to resist their flow, thereby reducing the buildup of extremes

VI. THE PRINCIPLE OF CAUSE AND EFFECT

"Every Cause has its Effect; every Effect has its Cause; everything happens according to Law; Chance is but a name for Law not recognized; there are many planes of causation, but nothing escapes the Law." -- The Kybalion

This Principle embodies the fact that there is a Cause for every Effect; an Effect from every Cause. It explains that: "Everything Happens according to Law"; that nothing ever "merely happens"; that there is no such thing as Chance; that while there are various planes of Cause and Effect, the higher dominating- the lower planes, still nothing ever entirely escapes the Law. The Hermetists understand the art and methods of rising above the ordinary plane of Cause and Effect, to a certain degree, and by mentally rising to a higher plane they become Causers instead of Effects.

The masses of people are carried along, obedient to environment; the wills and desires of others stronger than themselves; heredity; suggestion; and other outward causes moving them about like pawns on the Chessboard of Life. But the Masters, rising to the plane above, dominate their moods, characters, qualities, and powers, as well as the environment surrounding them, and become Movers instead of pawns. They help to PLAY THE GAME OF LIFE, instead of being played and moved about by other wills and environment. They USE the Principle instead of being its tools. The Masters obey the Causation of the higher planes, but they help to RULE on their own plane. In this statement there is condensed a wealth of Hermetic knowledge-let him read who can.

The Principle of Cause and Effect is more commonly known by its ordinary meaning: "x" acts on "y" and causes "z". From the Hermetic perspective, to say each effect has many causes is more accurate. This multilevel reality is epitomized by Carl Jung's use of the word "synchronicity" to describe events that, though outwardly appearing to occur by chance, are actually the inner workings of one or more "cosmic laws". Indeed, all events are at some level the workings of cosmic law. What we attribute by "chance" is usually an event whose governing law is not evident. True chance or randomness probably occurs only at the level of quantum gaps, where there is a true break between past and future.

The Hindu concept of karma is an illustration of the principle of Cause and Effect, as is the Christian admonition, "as you sow, so shall you reap." Human societies are only now learning the dramatic effect of this principle in ecological systems. now humankind must become more aware of cosmic law in the realm of consciousness, in it's role as Conscious CO-Creators of the Universe.

VII. THE PRINCIPLE OF GENDER

"Gender is in everything; everything has its Masculine and Feminine Principles; Gender manifests on all planes." -- The Kybalion

This Principle embodies the truth that there is GENDER manifested in everything--the Masculine and Feminine Principles ever at work. This is true not only of the Physical Plane, but of the Mental and even the Spiritual Planes. On the Physical Plane, the Principle manifests as SEX, on the higher planes it takes higher forms, but the Principle is ever the same.

No creation, physical, mental or spiritual, is possible without this Principle. An understanding of its laws will throw light on many a subject that has perplexed the minds of men. The Principle of Gender works ever in the direction of generation, regeneration, and creation. Everything, and every person, contains the two Elements or Principles, or this great Principle, within it, him or her.

Every Male thing has the Female Element also; every Female contains also the Male Principle. If you would understand the philosophy of Mental and Spiritual Creation, Generation, and Re-generation, you must understand and study this Hermetic Principle. It contains the solution of many mysteries of Life.

We caution you that this Principle has no reference to the many base, pernicious and degrading lustful theories, teachings and practices, which are taught under fanciful titles, and which are a prostitution of the great natural principle of Gender. Such base revivals of the ancient infamous forms of Phallicism tend to ruin mind, body and soul, and the Hermetic Philosophy has ever sounded the warning note against these degraded teachings which tend toward lust, licentiousness, and perversion of Nature's principles. If you seek such teachings, you must go elsewhere for them--Hermeticism contains nothing for you along these lines. To the pure, all things are pure; to the base, all things are base.

Gender, the last Hermetic principle, has remained the most obscure because we tend to equate gender with primary physical sex characteristics. However, every being and every plane in the cosmos contain the dual elements of Yin and yang, feminine and masculine. The term "gender" recognizes the complementarity within all self contained units of the universe. Even in apparent single-sexed entities, one aspect is the receptive nurturer, while another is the expressing creator. The principle of gender itself obeys the Principles of Polarity and Rhythm, in one circumstance manifesting the masculine aspect and in another the feminine. Neither is ever totally absent: in space-time balance is assured. Fully aware cosmic beings seek harmony in living their dual nature (Gender), honoring the ebb and flow (Rhythm) called for by the organic developments in self, society, solar system, and cosmos.

The Most Famous of Hermetic Documents

Notes on the text: This is the most famous of the Hermetic documents, a revelation account describing a vision of the creation of the universe and the nature and fate of humanity. Authors from the Renaissance onward have been struck by the way in which its creation myth seems partly inspired by Genesis, partly reacting against it. The Fall has here become the descent of the Primal Man through the spheres of the planets to the world of Nature, a descent caused not by disobedience but by love, and done with the blessing of God.

The seven rulers of fate discussed in sections 9, 14 and 25 are the archons of the seven planets, which also appear in Plato's Timaeus and in a number of the ancient writings usually lumped together as "Gnostic". Their role here is an oddly ambivalent one, powers of Harmony who are nonetheless the sources of humanity's tendencies to evil. - JMG

I. Poemandres, the Shepherd of Men

1. It happened at a moment when my mind was meditating on the things that are. My thought was raised to a great height, the senses of my body were held back - just as men who are weighed down with sleep after having eaten too much, or from bodily fatigue.

I thought of a Being more than vast, in size beyond all bounds, calling out my name and said: What would you hear and see, and what have you in mind to learn and know?

Using meditation, the subject has an out of body experience. In that state, he has an experience with a "Being" – God, the One, etc. – who invites the subject to learn, as he will be able to learn directly from God.

Central to the Hermetic philosophy was the argument that direct experience of the One was possible; God did not need to be "believed in" – he could be experienced. Most believed that the experience was accomplished through a revelation, wherein the subject became divinely possessed and inspired. Those who acquired this insight became "ecstatic". In its literal sense, this means "standing outside oneself", an out of body experience. Many Hermeticists, including Plotinus, one of the most important Neoplatonists, stated that he had experienced this state many times.

The Hermetic "knew" that knowledge of God was innate to him, and could be accomplished by every human being.

2. And I said: Who are you?

He said: I am Man-Shepherd (Poemandres), Mind of all-masterhood; I know what you desire and I'm with you everywhere.

The first question asked can be seen as stupid, but "God" does not identify himself under that name. Instead, he calls himself "Man Shepherd", or Poemandres – the title of the first treatise.

The Shepherd of Men. He informs the subject that He is always there, everywhere.

Asking who it is the person is in contact with, acts as confirmation that the subject is experiencing the One – and not some impostor.

3. I replied: I long to learn the things that are, and comprehend their nature, and know God. This is, I said, what I desire to hear.

He answered back to me: Hold in your mind all you would know, and I will teach you.

4. Even with these words His aspect changed, and straightaway, in the twinkling of an eye, all things were revealed to me, and I see a vision, limitless, all things turned into Light - sweet, joyous [Light]. And I became transported as I gazed.

But after a little while, Darkness came settling down on part [of it], awesome and gloomy, coiling in sinuous folds, as if it were a snake.

And then the Darkness changed into some sort of a Moist Nature, tossed about beyond all power of words, belching out smoke as from a fire, and groaning forth a wailing sound that beggars all description.

After that, an inarticulate outcry rose from it, as though it were a Voice of Fire.

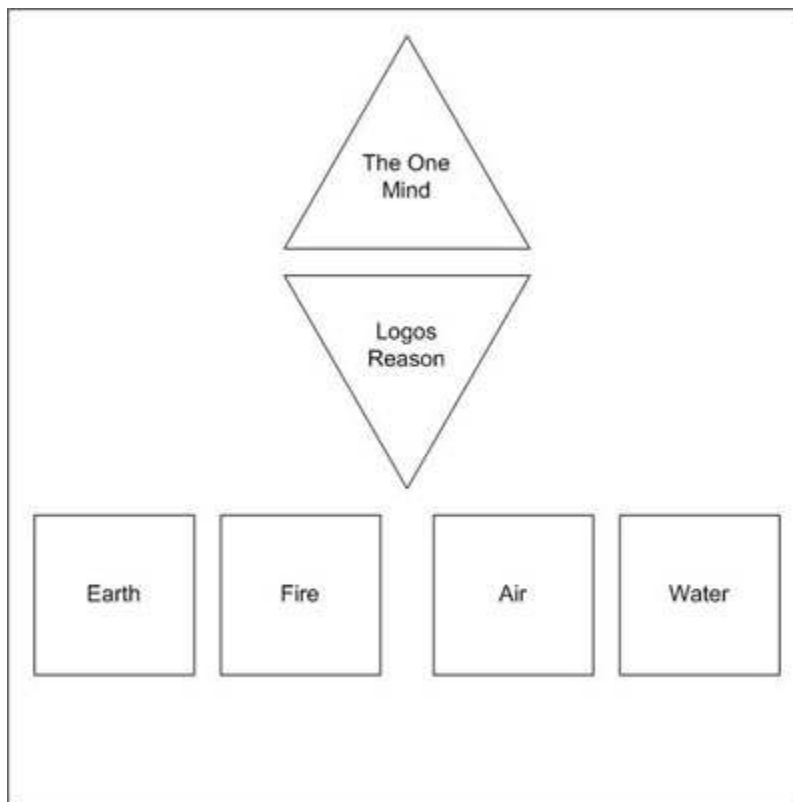
The subject will receive the ultimate revelation: all he wants to know, as a gift from God. Part of this revelation is a shift of his consciousness, into a world of Light, which is described as "sweet and joyous".

The Poimandres is, as should be customary for the first treatise, a revelation of the creation – the

Light – associated with The One – become Dark, then becoming something almost indescribable, but apparently taking on the appearance of what other cultures would have termed “Hell”, or “the Abyss” – or something else. What is happening? What is being created? The sun? A sun? The Earth? Stars and planets? At this moment in time, it would be tempting to suggest that the subject sees the birth of the universe, but only later will it become clear that this is – not yet – the case; the creation event here is something else.

5. [Then,] out of the Light [...] a Holy Word (Logos) descended on that Nature. And upwards to the height from the Moist Nature leaped forth pure Fire; it was light, swift and active too. The Air, too, being light, followed after the Fire; from out of the Earth-and-Water rising up to Fire so that it seemed to hang from it. But Earth-and-Water stayed mingled with each other in such a manner that no one could discern Earth from Water. Yet they were moved to hear by reason of the Spirit-Word (Logos) pervading them.

The creation myth of the Hermetica is standard for ancient cultures. In short, Light creates the Logos, out of which the four elements will be created. In this case, the first element is Earth, then Fire, then Air, then Water.



6. Then Man-Shepherd said to me: Did you understand this Vision?

No; that shall I know, I said.

That Light, He said, am I, your God, Mind, prior to Moist Nature which appeared from Darkness; the Light-Word (Logos) [that appeared] from Mind is Son of God.

What then? – I said.

Know that what you sees in you and hears is the Lord’s Word (Logos); but Mind is Father-God.

They are not separate from one another; it is only in their union that Life consists.
Thank you, I said.
So, understand the Light [He answered], and make friends with it.

The subject has been given a vision of the creation of the four elements and is asked whether he “understands”. For the Hermeticist, there was a vast difference between “knowing” and “understanding”. Understanding was true knowledge – “knowing” was merely being able to learn by heart – acquire “facts”.
God then identifies himself as the “primeval light”, out of which everything came. He makes a further clarification about the vision the subject has seen: pure light equalled God, equalling Mind. God/Mind then created Logos, Light-Word, also known as Son of God. It is the Logos that orders the four elements.
Most importantly, God then gives an insight into the human make-up. What we see and hear, with our senses, is Logos, but Mind, with which the subject is now seeing God in this vision, is “Father-God”, i.e. the Creator; the One. But as soon as God has stated that “we” are dualistic, made up of “Father-God” and “Son of God” (Mind and Logos) does he underline that actually this duality is exactly that: they are two aspects of one, they are not separate – yet together. In fact, “in their union, Life exists”.
Having demonstrated that knowledge of creation is one thing, but that God has just giving the subject understanding, the Light then instructs the subject to embrace this Light – learn to work with it.

7. And while speaking, He gazed for long into my eyes, so that I trembled at the look of him. But when He raised His head, I see in Mind the Light, [but] now in Powers no man could number, and Cosmos grown beyond all bounds, and that the Fire was compassed round about by a most mighty Power, and [now] subdued had come unto a stand.
And when I saw these things I understood by reason of Man-Shepherd’s Word (Logos).

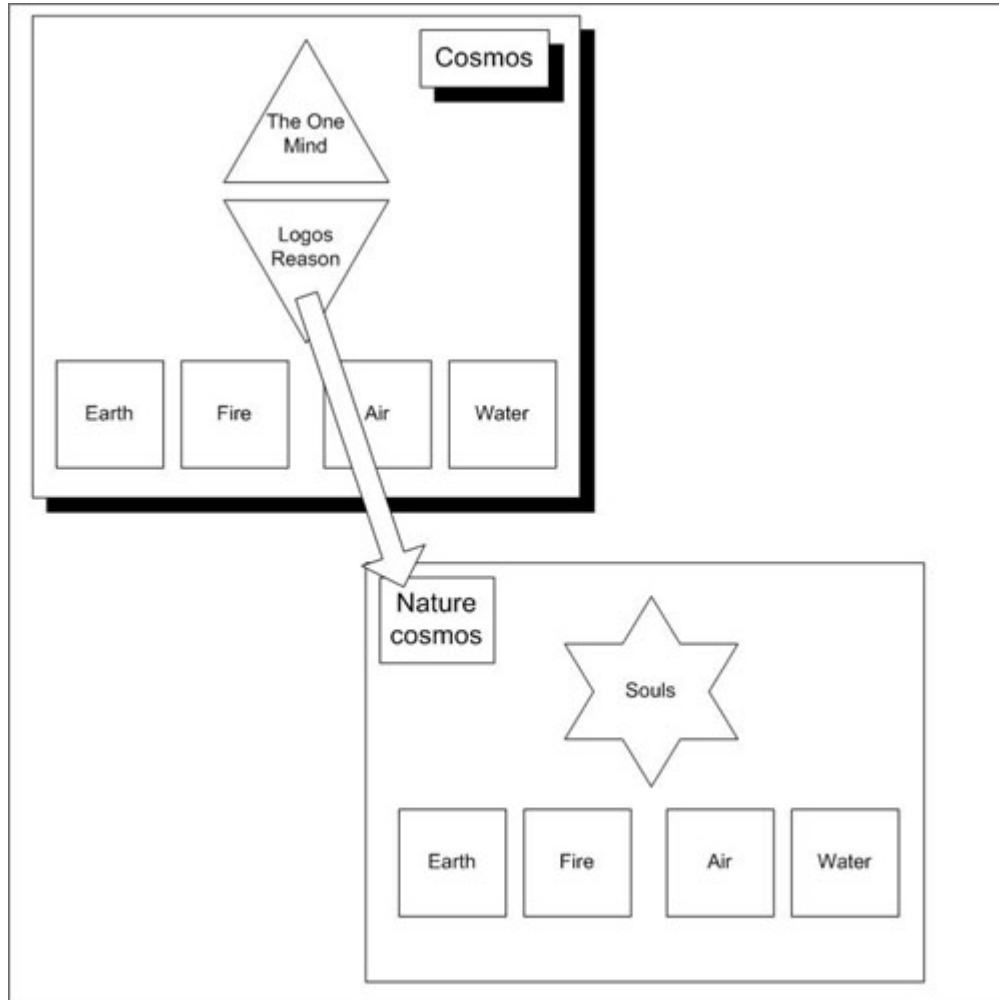
The Understanding is validated when the One looks into the eyes of the subject; the subject now sees the pure power of the Creator, which instils in the subject the realisation of the boundlessness of God. The subject then acknowledges that he now “understands” what the One is “by reason”. Mind and Reason have thus become in balance, and both “understand”.
He also see what happened next in the creation myth: Cosmos grows beyond all bounds, and the Fire has somehow become controlled.

8. But as I was in great astonishment, He said to me again: You beheld in Mind the Archetypal Form whose being is before beginning without end. Thus spoke to me Man-Shepherd.
And I said: From where then have Nature’s elements their being?
To this, He answered: From Will of God. [Nature] received the Word (Logos), and gazing upon the Beautiful Cosmos copied it, making herself into a cosmos, by means of her own elements and by the births of souls.

As if the One wants to make sure there is no room for error, he underlines what just transpired: the subject has just seen, in his Mind, the Creator God. When the subject “understands” that God is actually far removed from the physical world, the subject asks where “Nature” has come from. God answers that it was created from the Will of God. Nature received the Logos and when she sees the creation, Nature copied it, making herself into the universe, i.e. physical reality. She accomplished this by means of her own elements, and by the births of souls.
This is an often less understood passage of the creation, which is however vital for a proper

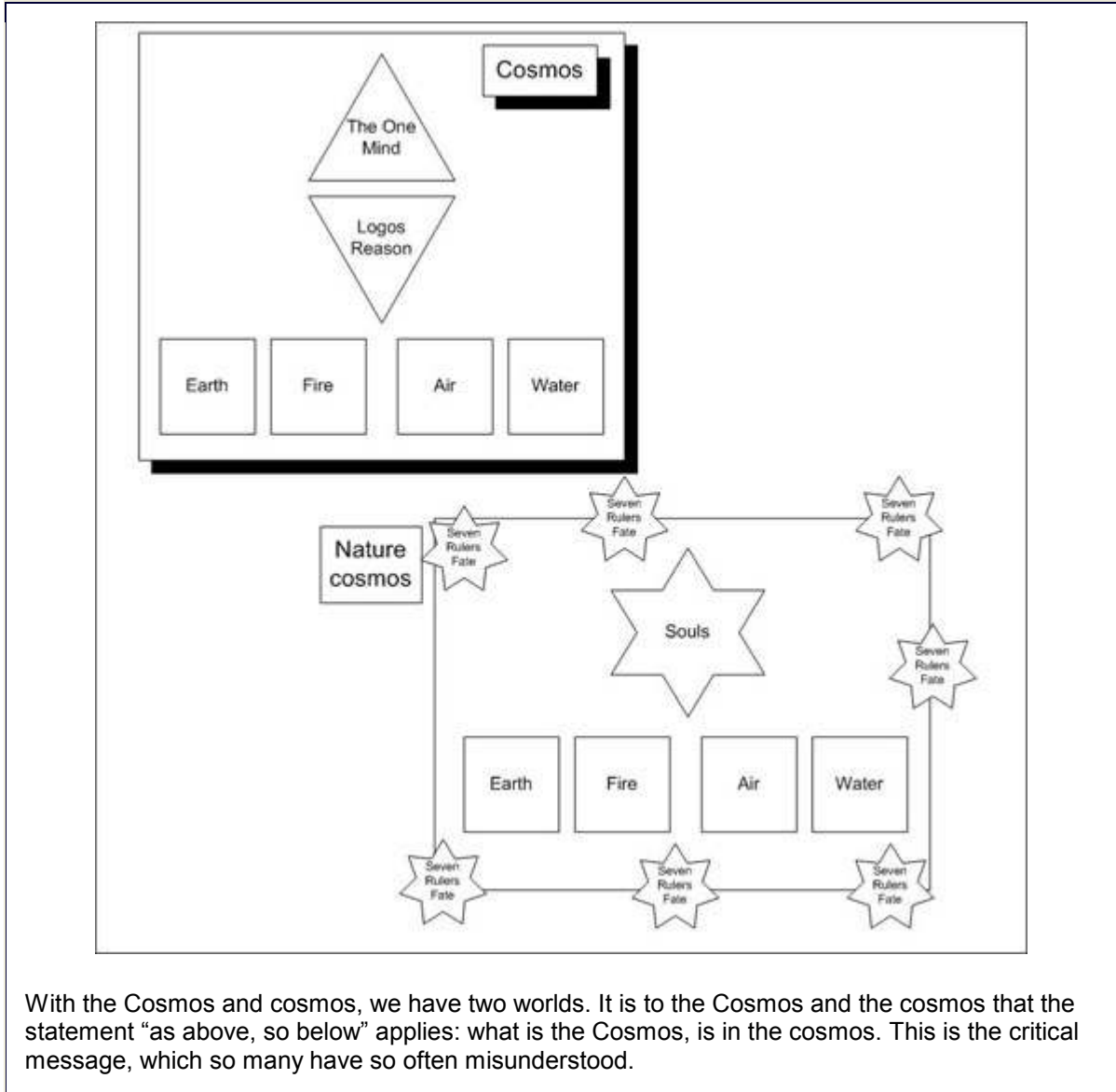
the Hermetic writings. Most importantly, most biographers trying to explain the life of Hermeticists, have completely misunderstood the message of the Hermeticist.

Though the subject has seen the creation and the “coming forth” of the elements, the subject realises he has not seen the creation of the physical universe, but of the “Cosmos” – the Otherworld. Nature, our physical reality, is a copy of the Cosmos. And Nature copied the Cosmos into the cosmos by creating souls, the physical “vehicle” for the Mind (and Logos) to sojourn in the cosmos.



9. And God-the-Mind, being both male and female, as Light and Life subsisting, brought forth another Mind to give things form, who, God as he was of Fire and Spirit, formed Seven Rulers who enclose the cosmos that the sense perceives. Men call their ruling Fate.

The One then creates another Mind, “to give things form”, who then himself creates Seven Rulers. Their ruling is called “Fate”.



10. Straightaway from out the downward elements, God’s Reason (Logos) leaped up to Nature’s pure formation, and was at-oned with the Formative Mind; for it was co-essential with it. And Nature’s downward elements were thus left reason-less, so as to be pure matter.

With this knowledge in “mind”, we are getting close to “our reality”. The four Cosmic elements enter into the cosmos, where they become one with “mind”. As to the four cosmic elements, they are left without reason – they are “pure matter”: the stones, water, sand and air of our physical world; the building blocks of the physical universe.

11. Then the Formative Mind ([at-oned] with Reason), he who surrounds the spheres and spins them with his whorl, set turning his formations, and let them turn from a beginning boundless unto an endless end. For that the circulation of these [spheres] begins where it does end, as Mind does will.

And from the downward elements, Nature brought forth lives reason-less; for He did not extend

the Reason (Logos) [to them]. The Air brought forth winged things; the Water things that swim, and Earth-and-Water one from another parted, as Mind willed. And from her bosom, Earth produced what lives she had, four-footed things and reptiles, beasts wild and tame.

The cosmic "Mind-Reason" then sets the universe/cosmos into motion. As to the four physical elements, Nature brings forth "reasonless lives" – birds, fish, reptiles and mammals – all without Logos. For the Hermeticist, animals are not like us, which modern scientists would label as the distinction between humanity's self-consciousness and the animal's instinctive behaviour.

12. But All-Father Mind, being Life and Light, did create Man co-equal to Himself, with whom He fell in love, as being His own child; for he was beautiful beyond compare, the Image of his Sire. In very truth, God fell in love with his own Form; and on him did bestow all of His own formations.

"Finally", Cosmic Mind created Man, in his own image.

13. And when he gazed upon what the Enformer had created in the Father, [Man] too wished to enform; and [so] assent was given to him by the Father.

Changing his state to the formative sphere, in that he was to have his whole authority, he gazed upon his Brother's creatures. They fell in love with him, and gave him each a share of his own ordering.

And after that he had well learned their essence and had become a sharer in their nature, he had a mind to break right through the Boundary of their spheres, and to subdue the might of that which pressed upon the Fire.

Man was then able to look upon the creation of the One and Man too wanted to create, which the One allowed him to do. The text then suggests that "Man" was, nevertheless not yet physical – Man had been created, but when he wanted to create, the One allowed Man to incarnate – "change his state to the formative sphere", i.e. cosmos. The other animals on Earth saw this and allowed it to happen, i.e. Man becoming a part of Earth. But, unlike the animals, Man had "Mind", with which he could "break right through the Boundary of their spheres" (i.e. cosmos), as well as subdue the power of the force that pressed upon the Fire – which will remain enigmatic for now... but should perhaps be linked with the "Baptism by Fire" that is often spoke of.

14. So he who had the whole authority over [all] mortals in the cosmos and over its irrational lives, bent his face downwards through the Harmony, breaking right through its strength, and showed to downward Nature God's fair form.

And when she saw that Form of beauty which can never satiate, and him who [now] possessed within himself each single energy of [all seven] Rulers as well as God's own Form, she smiled with love; for it was as though she'd seen the image of Man's fairest form upon her Water, his shadow on her Earth.

He in turn beholding the form like to himself, existing in her, in her Water, loved it and willed to live in it; and with the will came act, and [so] he vivified the form devoid of reason.

And Nature took the object of her love and wound herself completely around him, and they were intermingled, for they were lovers.

Man was now in charge of cosmos and all creations, but somehow is still merely "an idea". It is soon decided that this "idea" is fine, and hence Man is placed on earth.

15. And this is why beyond all creatures on Earth man is twofold; mortal because of body, but immortal because of the essential man.
Though deathless and possessed of sway over all, yet does he suffer as a mortal does, subject to Fate.
Thus even though above the Harmony, within the Harmony he has become a slave. Though male-female, as from a Father male-female, and though he's sleepless from a sleepless [Sire], yet is he overcome [by sleep].

Finally, we understand, from the very first act of creation down to the "contract" made between Mind and Nature, why Man is twofold: a mortal body, but an immortal Mind. Both above Fate, but subject to it. Though the Mind has no need to sleep, the body needs to sleep. In short, the treatise has explained not only the dual, but what many people have perceived as the contradictory nature of this reality.

16. Thereon [I say: Teach on], O Mind of me, for I myself as well am amorous of the Word (Logos).
The Shepherd said: This is the mystery kept hidden until today.
Nature embraced by Man brought forth a wonder, oh so wonderful. For as he had the nature of the Concord of the Seven, who, as I said to you, [were made] of Fire and Spirit - Nature delayed not, but immediately brought forth seven "men", in correspondence with the natures of the Seven, male-female and moving in the air.
Thereupon [I said]: O Shepherd, ..., for now I am filled with great desire and long to hear; do not run off.
The Shepherd said: Keep silence, for not as yet have I unrolled for you the first discourse (logoi).
Lo! I am still, I said.

The One confirms that the subject has now had this revelation. He adds further detail, stating that as to the "Seven Rulers", made out of Fire and Spirit, Nature then decided to create seven "men", the "physical transformation" of the "Fire-Spirit". These seven physical beings were male-female, and moved in the air – in what some cultures would later call the Seven Archangels.
This concludes the main lesson of the first class, but there is more to come.

17. In such wise than, as I have said, the generation of these seven came to pass. Earth was as woman, her Water filled with longing; ripeness she took from Fire, spirit from Ether. Nature thus brought forth frames to suit the form of Man.
And Man from Light and Life changed into soul and mind - from Life to soul, from Light to mind.
And thus continued all the sense-world's parts, until the period of their end and new beginnings.

The One does an executive summary of what "we" are, repeating the nature of Man and his relationship with Nature.

18. Now listen to the rest of the discourse (Logos) which you long to hear.
The period having ended, the bond that bound them all was loosened by God's Will. For all the animals being male-female, at the same time with Man were loosed apart; some became partly male, some in like fashion [partly] female. And straightway, God spoke by His Holy Word (Logos): "Increase yourself in increasing, and multiply in multitude, you creatures and creations all; and man that has Mind in him, let him learn to know that he himself is deathless, and that the cause of death is love, though Love is all."

And so lesson two of the first class begins. This world was not yet as our world is today. "Reality version 1" – "the First Time" – had ended and God decided to change certain things. Everything had so far had a dual male-female nature, but this was changed: the sexes came about. Through Logos, the One stated to have physical procreation through sex. The mission for Man is now to "learn to know that he is deathless", i.e. that he has Mind, a divine nature in him. At the same time, he needs to learn that the cause of death is love, though at the same time, the stakes of "Reality version 2" all revolve around Love – almost the "Fifth Element", which unites all four. This "change of mind" of the One is what other cultures have identified as "the Fall", but it is clear that in this section, there is no pejorative colouring to God's decision. It is almost as if God wanted a change, and upgraded the computer programme, by giving the characters in the game sexes.

19. When He said this, His Forethought did by means of Fate and Harmony effect their couplings and their generations founded. And so all things were multiplied according to their kind. And he who has thus learned to know himself, has reached that Good which transcends abundance; but he who through a love that leads astray, expends his love upon his body – stays in Darkness wandering, and suffering through his senses the things of Death.

With the rules of the game now changed – Man on a mission to "understand" his Divine nature – men and women began to copulate and procreate. Amongst these people, some were aware of their Mind, but others, led astray by love, became hooked upon the purely materialistic side of this cosmos... Unaware of who he truly was, he suffered, specifically suffering from Fate, the rulers of the cosmos, and he suffered death, for he thought that death signalled the end of everything, unaware as he was that Mind – "he" – was actually not subject to death, but that only his body was.

20. What is the greatest fault, I said, the ignorant commit, that they should be deprived of deathlessness?

You seem, He said, not to have given heed to what you heard. Did I not bid you to think?

Yes, I do think, and I remember, and therefore give you thanks.

If you do think about all of this, [He said], tell me: Why do they who are in Death merit death?

It is because the gloomy Darkness is the root and base of the material frame; from it came the Moist Nature; from this the body in the sense-world was composed; and from this [body] Death drains the Water.

The greatest fault Man could thus commit (to himself) was not to realise that he was immortal. And when these ignoramuses die, they think they are dead. They wander in Death, not realising there is the "Light" of their own Mind to which they can go – return. Where is Death? It is the gloomy Darkness, "the Abyss", "Hell", that "Moist Nature" that was created early on.

21. Your thoughts were correct, o you! But how does "he who knows himself, go unto Him", as God's Word (Logos) has declared?

And I reply: the Father of the universals consists of Light and Life, from Him Man was born.

You speak well. Light and Life is Father-God, and from Him Man was born.

If therefore you learn that you are of Life and Light, and that you happen to be out of them, you shall return again to Life. Thus spoke Man-Shepherd.

But tell me more, Mind of me, I cried, how shall I come to Life again... for God says: "The man who has Mind in him, let him learn to know that he himself [is deathless]."

The subject realises that knowledge and understanding is one, but how does the one who knows he has Mind go to the One? The One states that it is very simple: you only need to be aware that you have – are – Mind and you shall return to the One. Still, the subject – and so must any reader – has doubts... The solution to the game in Version 2 seems all too easy, for sure? “Just know that you are Mind, and you have won. When you die, you will return to the One.” “Game over.”

22. Have not all men then Mind?

You speak well. I, Mind, myself am present with holy men and good, the pure and merciful, men who live piously.

[To them] my presence becomes an aid, and straightway they gain gnosis of all things, and win the Father's love by their pure lives, and give Him thanks, invoking on Him blessings, and chanting hymns, intent on Him with ardent love.

And thus they give up the body unto its proper death, they turn with disgust from its sensations, from knowledge of what things they operate. No, it is I, the Mind, that will not let the operations which befall the body, work to their [natural] end. For being door-keeper I'll close [all] the entrances, and cut the mental actions off which base and evil energies induce.

Though everyone has Mind, not everyone knows that their mind is Mind. There needs to be an awakening. But for the awoken, that knowledge becomes an aid – if only because they realise that the physical world is not the total, but merely a game board. Death is not the end, but only an illusion. Life is an experience. They understand what is important in life, and how to live; a blindfold, the blindfold of the material world, has been lifted, and they can “see” – and they address their life to the service of the Mind. They enter in rapport with him, living not only a good life, but pray – talk – to Mind. They no longer love the physical, but love the Mind. When they die, they do not care about their bodily death. It is here that for the first time, a pejorative element comes into the narrative: for those with Mind, this section states, are disgusted with their sensations – their physical emotions. They are disgusted as to what these physical emotions can do to men: kill, rape, deprive, belittle, cheat, etc. It seems that the Mind then turns a switch and disallows these emotions to rule the awoken.

23. But to the Mind-less ones, the wicked and depraved, the envious and covetous, and those who mured do and love impiety, I am far off, yielding my place to the Avenging Demon, who sharpening the fire, torments him and adds fire to fire upon him, and rushes upon him through his senses, thus rendering him readier for transgressions of the law, so that he meets with greater torment; nor does he ever cease to have desire for inordinate appetites, insatiately striving in the dark.

This is what happens to those who understand. But for those who do not, they do not even seem to have any awareness that God exists. They instead worship “the Avenging Demon” – the Christian devil – who toys with them, torments them, plays with their emotions, states that if they so love money, why not have more. If they feed on sexual power, why not rape more? Even more infirm ones? Children? And most seem to take each temptation, falling ever deeper and deeper...

24. You have thought me well, as I desired, O Mind. And now, pray, tell me further of the nature of the Way Above as now it is [for me].

To this Man-Shepherd said: When the material body is to be dissolved, first will you surrender the body by itself unto the work of change, and thus the form you have does vanish, and you surrender your way of life, void of its energy, unto the Demon. The body's senses next pass back into their sources, becoming separate, and resurrect as energies; and passion and desire withdraw unto that nature which is void of reason.

The subject thanks God for having granted him this knowledge, which he understands. But what else is there to learn for those like him, who has not fallen vice of physical reality, but hopes to ascend?

God states that when the subject will die, he needs to let go of his body – the Demon will have the body. As to the senses: these are distilled – separated – into their original sources, and become energy; they are “but” energy, nothing more – there is no passion, no desire, just energy.

25. And thus it is that man does speed his way thereafter upwards through the Harmony. To the first zone, he gives the Energy of Growth and Waning; unto the second [zone], Device of Evils [now] de-energized; unto the third, the Guile of the Desires de-energized; unto the fourth, his Domineering Arrogance, [also] de-energized; unto the fifth, unholy Daring and the Rashness of Audacity, de-energized; unto the sixth, Striving for Wealth by evil means, deprived of its aggrandizement; and to the seventh zone, Ensnaring Falsehood, de-energized.

For those whose mind is on Mind, they speed through the spheres, giving their distilled sensual energies to each appropriate sphere he passes on his ascent.

Each sphere has its “deadly sin” – which is exactly that: upon death, emotions need to be let go off; the subject needs to realise that the emotions he experienced in life were just that: physical emotions. This is what near-death experiencers have called the “Life Review” and religions have called “the Judgment”. The subject, upon death, reviews his life and experiences the emotions associated with its events. But he needs to be aware that these emotions are physical – that he is Mind, not mind. And to go to the One, he needs to “survive” the life review – if he can “forgive himself” and “accept himself” – accept the life he lived – the emotional energies do not cling to him, but are transformed. And so, if he is able to do this, when he ascends to the One and passes through sphere, to each, he returns what could have been a “deadly sin”: a human emotion that he could not forgive himself during the Life Review – Judgment Day.

26. And then, with all the energisings of the harmony stripped from him, clothed in his proper Power, he comes to that Nature which belongs unto the Eighth, and there with those-that-are signs to the Father.

They who are there welcome his arrival with joy; and he, made like to them that sojourn there, further hears the Powers who are above the Nature that belongs unto the Eighth, singing their songs of praise to God in a language of their own.

And then they, together, go to the Father’s home; of their own selves they surrender the Powers, and [thus] becoming Powers they are in God. This the good end for those who have gained Gnosis - to be made one with God.

Why should you then delay? Must it not be, since you have all received, that you should point the way to the worthy, in order that through you the race of mortal kind may by God be saved?

When all this emotional clothing has been returned to the proper sphere, he enters the eight sphere, where he is met by “those who are there”, who are like him. He is now above the cosmos, above Nature. And, together they go the One – home. They are made “one” again with the One. With this in mind, it is essential not to delay in giving other people this message – this mission.

27. This when He’d said, Man-Shepherd mingled with the Powers.

But I, with thanks and blessings unto the Father of the universal [Powers], was freed, full of the power he had poured into me, and full of what He’d taught me of the nature of the All and of the loftiest Vision.

And I began to preach unto men the Beauty of Devotion and of Gnosis:

O you people, earth-born folk, you who have given yourselves to drunkenness and sleep and

ignorance of God, be sober now, cease from your surfeit, cease to be glamoured by irrational sleep!

Thus ends the lesson and the One disappears “into himself”. As for the subject, his life just begins: he is freed, knows and understands. And what he knows, he wants to tell to other people. And he does: he preaches. “Wake Up.” “You have Mind. There is more to this cosmos than just the physical.”

28. And when they heard, they came with one accord. Whereupon I said:
You earth-born folk, why have you given yourselves up to Death, while yet you have the power of sharing Deathlessness? Repent, O you, who walk with Error arm in arm and make of Ignorance the sharer of your board; get yourself out the light of Darkness, and take your part in Deathlessness, forsake Destruction!

And when they know that he is there, preaching, they come, and he tells them that death is not the end. He asks them to repent – abandon walking around blindly, and direct yourself to the Path of God.

29. And some of them with jests upon their lips departed [from me], abandoning themselves unto the Way of Death; others entreated to be taught, casting themselves before my feet. But I made them arise, and I became a leader of the Race towards home, teaching the words (logoi), how and in what way they shall be saved. I sowed in them the words (logoi) of wisdom; of Deathless Water were they given to drink. And when the evening came and the sun began to set, I asked them all to give thanks to God. And when they had brought to an end thanksgiving, each man returned to his own resting place.

Some who heard, could not accept and continued to err in the Darkness. But others listened. They “arose”. And the subject became a shepherd of those who wanted to return to the One. It seems that this confirmation involves drinking “Deathless Water” – a type of initiation, which in some cultures was a baptism; in other cultures, was more akin to drinking from the “Cup of Life” – or another similar name. At sunset, he asks them to pray, before they themselves return home.

30. But I recorded in my heart Man-Shepherd’s benefaction, and with my every hope fulfilled more than rejoiced. For body’s sleep became the soul’s awakening, and closing of the eyes - true vision, pregnant with Good my silence, and the utterance of my word (logos) begetting of good things. All this befell me from my Mind, that is Man-Shepherd, Word (Logos) of all masterhood, by whom being God-inspired I came unto the Plain of Truth. Wherefore with all my soul and strength thanksgiving I give to the Father-God.

The subject then summarises that this is who he became: a happy person, who rejoiced with every person that he awakened – who rose.

31. Holy are you, O God, the universals’ Father.
Holy are you, O God, whose Will perfects itself by means of its own Powers.
Holy are you, O God, who wants to be known and is known by Your own.
Holy are you, who by Word (Logos) makes the things that are.

Holy are you, of whom All-nature has been made an image.
Holy are you, whose Form Nature has never made.
Holy are you, more powerful than all power.
Holy are you, transcending all pre-eminence.
Holy are you, better than all praise.
Accept my reason's offerings pure, from soul and heart for I stretched up to you, O you
unutterable, unspeakable, Whose Name nothing but the Silence can express.

The subject then offers a prayer, which is obviously meant to be used – or adapted at leisure – by others who share his objective. The prayer ends with a return to the basic premise of the first sections of the treatise, in which it is noted that the true name of the One cannot be spoken... “nothing but the Silence can express” it.

32. Give ear to me who pray that I may never fail of Gnosis, which is our common being's nature; and fill me with your Power, and with your Grace, that I may give the Light to those in ignorance of the Race, my Brethren, and your Sons.
For this cause I believe, and I bear witness; I go to Life and Light. Blessed are you, O Father.
Your Man would be holy as you are holy, even as you gave him your full authority [to be].

Finally, the subject hopes that he will never fail on this Path. He hopes that the One will give him the power to continue, that he may give Mind to his fellow men. “This is my mission, to this manifesto I subscribe.” In fact, the very last paragraph's opening is almost like the final clause of a contract, a contract of the soul, in which the subject signs his soul to the One.

Summary:

Poimandres is a two part lesson. Part 1 tells a creation myth, including the Fall of Man, as he unites with the powers of Nature. We learn how Man is created by the supreme Mind or nous, and receives the qualities of the seven rulers (often seen as the seven planets that ruled astrology), which govern his destiny on earth. But there is another aspect to this, part 2, which is a mission statement for every human: Man, who shares the essence of Mind, also partakes of its absolute freedom, and he wills to 'break through the circumference of the spheres' and come to know his Maker. In other words, as soon as he desires to overcome Fate, he can, by realising and acting from the immortal part of his soul - Mind. All men are governed by Fate, says Poimandres, but those who are led by Nous do not suffer as others do. Man is a god, he only has to recognise it, and this very recognition can change his relationship with Fate. He will rule Fate – Fate will not rule him. And as a consequence, he will ascend – rise – to the One. This is Man's mission, and those who have taken it upon themselves, are also invited to preach the mission to Mankind, so that, in the end, everyone will know and hopefully agree to ascend – return to the One.

Theory and Practice of Alchemy

The Theory and Practice of Alchemy

Part One

ALCHEMY, the secret art of the land of Khem, is one of the two oldest sciences known to the world. The other is astrology. The beginnings of both extend back into the obscurity of prehistoric times. According to the earliest records extant, alchemy and astrology were considered as divinely revealed to man so that by their aid he might regain his lost estate. According to old legends preserved by the Rabbins, the angel at the gate of Eden instructed Adam in the mysteries of Qabbalah and of alchemy, promising that when the human race had thoroughly mastered the secret wisdom concealed within these inspired arts, the curse of the forbidden fruit would be removed and man might again enter into the Garden of the Lord. As man took upon himself "coats of skins" (physical bodies) at the time of his fall, so these sacred sciences were brought by him into the lower worlds incarnated in dense vehicles, through which their spiritual transcendental natures could no longer manifest themselves. Therefore they were considered as being dead or lost.

The earthly body of alchemy is chemistry, for chemists do not realize that half of *The Book of Torah* is forever concealed behind the veil of Isis (see the *Tarot*), and that so long as they study only material elements they can at best discover but half of the mystery. Astrology has crystallized into astronomy, whose votaries ridicule the dreams of ancient seers and sages, deriding their symbols as meaningless products of superstition. Nevertheless, the intelligentsia of the modern world can never pass behind the veil which divides the seen from the unseen except in the way appointed--*the Mysteries*.

What is *life*? What is *intelligence*? What is *force*? These are the problems to the solution of which the ancients consecrated their temples of learning. Who shall say that they did not answer those questions? Who would recognize the answers if given? Is it possible that under the symbols of alchemy and astrology lies concealed a wisdom so abstruse that the mind of this race is not qualified to conceive its principles?

The Chaldeans, Phœnicians, and Babylonians were familiar with the principles of alchemy, as were many early Oriental races. It was practiced in Greece and Rome; was the master science of the Egyptians. *Khem* was an ancient name for the land of Egypt; and both the words *alchemy* and *chemistry* are a perpetual reminder of the priority of Egypt's scientific knowledge. According to the fragmentary writings of those early peoples, alchemy was to them no speculative art. They implicitly believed in the multiplication of metals; and in the face of their reiterations both the scholar and the materialist should be more kindly in their consideration of alchemical theorems. Evolutionists trace the unfoldment of the arts and sciences up through the growing intelligence of the prehistoric man, while others, of a transcendental point of view, like to consider them as being direct revelations from God.

Many interesting solutions to the riddle of alchemy's origin have been advanced. One is that alchemy was revealed to man by the mysterious Egyptian demigod Hermes Trismegistus. This sublime figure, looming through the mists of time and bearing in his

hand the immortal Emerald, is credited by the Egyptians as being the author of all the arts and sciences. In honor of him all scientific knowledge was gathered under the general title of The Hermetic Arts. When the body of Hermes was interred in the Valley of Ebron (or Hebron), the divine Emerald was buried with it. Many centuries afterward the Emerald was discovered--according to one version, by an Arabian initiate; according to another, by Alexander the Great, King of Macedon. By means of the power of this Emerald, upon which were the mysterious inscriptions of the Thrice Great Hermes--thirteen sentences in all--Alexander conquered all the then known world. Not having conquered himself, however, he ultimately failed. Regardless of his glory and power, the prophecies of the talking trees were fulfilled, and Alexander was cut down in the midst of his triumph. (There are persistent rumors to the effect that Alexander was an initiate of high order who failed because of his inability to withstand the temptations of power.)

E. Y. Kenealy, quoting from the *Cosmodromium of Doctor Gobelina Persona*, describes the incident of Alexander and the talking trees, into the presence of which the King of Macedon is said to have been brought while on his campaign in India: "And now Alexander marched into other quarters equally dangerous; at one time over the tops of mountains, at another through dark valleys, in which his army was attacked by serpents and wild beasts, until after three hundred days he came into a most pleasant mountain, on whose sides hung chains or ropes of gold. This mountain had two thousand and fifty steps all of purest sapphire, by which one could ascend to the summit, and near this Alexander encamped. And on a day, Alexander with his Twelve Princes, ascended by the aforementioned steps to the top of the Mountain, and found there a Palace marvellously beautiful, having Twelve Gates, and seventy windows of the purest gold, and it was called the Palace of the Sun, and there was in it a Temple all of gold, before whose gates were vine trees bearing bunches of carbuncles and pearls, and Alexander and his Princes having entered the Palace, found there a Man lying on a golden bedstead; he was very stately and beautiful in appearance, and his head and beard were white as snow. Then Alexander and his princes bent the knee to the Sage who spake thus: 'Alexander, thou shalt now see what no earthly man hath ever before seen or heard.' To whom Alexander made answer: 'O, Sage, most happy, how dost thou know me?' He replied: 'Before the wave of the Deluge covered the face of the earth I knew thy works.' He added: 'Wouldst thou behold the most hallowed Trees of the Sun and Moon, which announce all future things?' Alexander made answer: 'It is well, my lord; greatly do we long to see them.' * *

"Then the Sage said: 'Put away your rings and ornaments, and take off your shoes, and follow me.' And Alexander did so, and choosing out three from the Princes, and leaving the rest to await his return, he followed the Sage, and came to the Trees of the Sun and Moon. The Tree of the Sun has leaves of red gold, the Tree of the Moon has leaves of silver, and they are very great, and Alexander, at the suggestion of the Sage questioned the Trees, asking if he should return in triumph to Macedon? to which the Trees gave answer, No, but that he should live yet another year and eight months, after which he should die by a poisoned cup. And when he inquired, Who was he who should give him that poison? he received no reply, and the Tree of the Moon said to him, that his Mother,

after a most shameful and unhappy death, should lie long unburied, but that happiness was in store for his sisters." (See *The Book of Enoch, The Second Messenger of God.*)

In all probability, the so-called talking trees were merely strips of wood with tables of letters upon them, by means of which oracles were evoked. At one time books written upon wood were called "talking trees." The difficulty in deciding the origin of alchemy is directly due to ignoring the lost continent of Atlantis. The Great Arcanum was the most prized of the secrets of the Atlantean priestcraft. When the land of Atlas sank, hierophants of the Fire Mystery brought the formula to Egypt, where it remained for centuries in the possession of the sages and philosophers. It gradually moved into Europe, where its secrets are still preserved intact.



The Tree of Alchimi

THE LEAVES OF HERMES' SACRED TREE.

Redrawn from an original manuscript dated 1577.

In his Key to Alchemy, Samuel Norton divides into fourteen parts the processes or states through which the alchemical substances pass from the time they are first placed in the test tube until ready as medicine for plants, minerals, or men:

- 1. Solution, the act of passing from a gaseous or solid condition, into one of liquidity.*
- 2. Filtration, the mechanical separation of a liquid from the undissolved particles suspended in it.*
- 3. Evaporation, the changing or converting from a liquid or solid state into a vaporous state with the aid of heat.*
- 4. Distillation, an operation by which a volatile liquid may be separated from substances which it holds in solution.*
- 5. Separation, the operation of disuniting or decomposing substances.*
- 6. Rectification, the process of refining or purifying any substance by repeated distillation.*
- 7. Calcination, the conversion into a powder or calx by the action of heat; expulsion of the volatile substance from a matter.*
- 8. Commixtion, the blending of different ingredients into new compounds or mass.*
- 9. Purification (through putrefaction), disintegration by spontaneous decomposition; decay by artificial means.*
- 10. Inhibition, the process of holding back or restraining.*
- 11. Fermentation, the conversion of organic substances into new compounds in the presence of a ferment.*
- 12. Fixation, the act or process of ceasing to be a fluid and becoming firm; state of being fixed.*
- 13. Multiplication, the act or process of multiplying or increasing in number, the state of being multiplied.*
- 14. Projection, the process of turning the base Metals into gold.*

Those disagreeing with the legend of Hermes and his Emerald Tablet see in the two hundred angels who descended upon the mountains, as described by the Prophet: Enoch, the first instructors in the alchemical art. Regardless of its originator, it was left to the Egyptian priests to preserve alchemy for the modern world. Egypt, because of the color of its earth, was called "the black empire" and is referred to in the Old Testament as "the land of darkness." By reason of its possible origin there, alchemy has long been known as "the black art, " not in the sense of evil but in the sense of that darkness which has always enshrouded its secret processes.

During the Middle Ages, alchemy was not only a philosophy and a science but also a religion. Those who rebelled against the religious limitations of their day concealed their philosophic teachings under the allegory of gold-making. In this way they preserved their personal liberty and were ridiculed rather than persecuted. Alchemy is a threefold art, its mystery well symbolized by a triangle. Its symbol is 3 times 3--three elements or processes in three worlds or spheres. The 3 times 3 is part of the mystery of the 33rd degree of Freemasonry, for 33 is 3 times 3, which is 9, the number of esoteric man and the number of emanations from the root of the Divine Tree. It is the number of worlds nourished by the four rivers that pour out of the Divine Mouth as the *verbum fiat*. Beneath the so-called symbolism of alchemy is concealed a magnificent concept, for this ridiculed and despised craft still preserves intact the triple key to the gates of eternal life. Realizing, therefore, that alchemy is a mystery in three worlds--the divine, the human, and the elemental--it can easily be appreciated why the sages and philosophers created and evolved an intricate allegory to conceal their wisdom.

Alchemy is the science of multiplication and is based upon the natural phenomenon of growth. "Nothing from nothing comes," is an extremely ancient adage. Alchemy is not the process of making something from nothing; it is the process of increasing and improving that which already exists. If a philosopher were to state that a living man could be made from a stone, the unenlightened would probably exclaim, "Impossible!" Thus would they reveal their ignorance, for to the wise it is known that in every stone is the seed of man. A philosopher might declare that a universe could be made out of a man, but the foolish would regard this as an impossibility, not realizing that a man is a seed from which a universe may be brought forth.

God is the "within" and the "without" of all things. The Supreme One manifests Himself through growth, which is an urge from within outward, a struggle for expression and manifestation. There is no greater miracle in the growing and multiplication of gold by the alchemist than in a tiny mustard seed producing a bush many thousands of times the size of the seed. If a mustard seed produces a hundred thousand times its own size and weight when planted in an entirely different substance (the earth), why should not the seed of gold be multiplied a hundred thousand times by art when that seed is planted in its earth (the base metals) and nourished artificially by the secret process of alchemy?

Alchemy teaches that God is in everything; that He is One Universal Spirit, manifesting through an infinity of forms. God, therefore, is the spiritual seed planted in the dark earth (the material universe). By art it is possible so to grow and expand this seed that the

entire universe of substance is *tinctured* thereby and becomes like unto the seed--pure gold. In the spiritual nature of man this is termed *regeneration*; in the material body of the elements it is called *transmutation*. As it is in the spiritual and material universes, so it is in the intellectual world. Wisdom cannot be imparted to an idiot because the seed of wisdom is not within him, but wisdom may be imparted to an ignorant person, however ignorant he may be, because the seed of wisdom exists in him and can be developed by art and culture. Hence a philosopher is only an ignorant man within whose nature a *projection* has taken place.

Through *art* (the process of learning) the whole mass of base metals (the mental body of ignorance) was transmuted into pure gold (wisdom), for it was *tinctured* with understanding. If, then, through faith and proximity to God the consciousness of man may be transmuted from base animal desires (represented by the masses of the planetary metals) into a pure, golden, and godly consciousness, illumined and redeemed, and the manifesting God within that one increased from a tiny spark to a great and glorious Being; if also the base metals of mental ignorance can, through proper endeavor and training, be transmuted into transcendent genius and wisdom, why is the process in two worlds or spheres of application not equally true in the third? If both the spiritual and mental elements of the universe can be multiplied in their expression, then by the law of analogy the material elements of the universe can also be multiplied, if the necessary process can be ascertained.

That which is true in the *superior* is true in the *inferior*. If alchemy be a great spiritual fact, then it is also a great material fact. If it can take place in the universe, it can take place in man; if it can take place in man, it can take place in the plants and minerals. If one thing in the universe grows, then everything in the universe grows. If one thing can be multiplied, then all things can be multiplied, "for the superior agrees with the inferior and the inferior agrees with the superior." But as the way for the redemption of the soul is concealed by the Mysteries, so the secrets for the redemption of the metals are also concealed, that they may not fall into the hands of the profane and thereby become perverted.

If any would grow metals, he must first learn the secrets of the metals: he must realize that all metals--like all stones, plants, animals, and universes--grow from seeds, and that these seeds are already in the body of Substance (the womb of the World Virgin); for the seed of man is in the universe before he is born (or grows), and as the seed of the plant exists for all time though the plant live but a part of that time, so the seeds of spiritual gold and material gold are ever present in all things. The metals grow throughout the ages, because life is imparted to them from the sun. They grow imperceptibly, in form like tiny shrubs, for everything grows in some way. Only the methods of growth differ, according to kind and magnitude.

One of the great axioms is, "Within everything is the seed of everything," although by the simple processes of Nature it may remain latent for many centuries, or its growth may be exceedingly slow. Therefore, every grain of sand contains not only the seed of the

precious metals as well as the seed of the priceless gems, but also the seeds of sun, moon, and stars. As within the nature of man is reflected the entire universe in miniature, so in each grain of sand, each drop of water, each tiny particle of cosmic dust, are concealed all the parts and elements of cosmos in the form of tiny seed germs so minute that even the most powerful microscope cannot detect them. Trillions of times smaller than the ion or electron, these seeds--unrecognizable and incomprehensible--await the time assigned them for growth and expression. (Consider the *monads* of Leibnitz.)

There are two methods whereby growth may be accomplished. The first is by Nature, for Nature is an alchemist forever achieving the apparently impossible. The second is by *art*, and through *art* is produced in a comparatively short time that which requires Nature almost endless periods to duplicate. The true philosopher, desiring to accomplish the *Magnum Opus*, patterns his conduct according to the laws of Nature, recognizing that the *art* of alchemy is merely a method copied from Nature but with the aid of certain secret formulæ greatly shortened by being correspondingly intensified. Nature, in order to achieve her miracles, must work through either extensiveness; or intensiveness. The extensive processes of Nature are such as are used in the transmutation of the pitch of black carbon into diamonds, requiring millions of years of natural hardening. The intensive process is *art*, which is ever the faithful servant of Nature (as Dr. A. Dee says), supplementing her every step and cooperating with her in all her ways. "So, in this philosophical work, Nature and *Art* ought so lovingly to embrace each other, as that *Art* may not require what Nature denies, nor Nature deny what may be perfected by *Art*. For Nature assenting, she demeans herself obediently to every artist, whilst by their industry she is helped, not hindered." (Dr. A. Dee in his *Chemical Collections*.)

By means of this *art* the seed which is within the soul of a stone may be made to germinate so intensively that in a few moments a diamond is grown from the seed of itself. If the seed of the diamond were not in the marble, granite, and sand, a diamond could not be grown therefrom. But as the seed is within all these things, a diamond may be grown out of any other substance in the universe. In some substances, however, it is easier to perform this miracle because in them these germs have already been long fertilized and are thus more nearly prepared for the vivifying process of the *art*. Likewise, to teach some men wisdom is easier than to teach others, for some already have a foundation upon which to work, while in others the thinking faculties are entirely dormant. Alchemy, therefore, should be regarded as the *art* of increasing and bringing into perfect flower with the greatest possible expedition. Nature may accomplish her desired end or, because of the destructiveness exercised by one element over another, she may not; but with the aid of the true *art*, Nature always accomplishes her end, for this *art* is not subject either to the wastings of time or to the vandalism of elemental reactions.

In his *History of Chemistry*, James Campbell Brown, late professor of chemistry in the University of Liverpool, sums up the ends which alchemists sought to achieve, in the following paragraphs:

"This, therefore, was the general aim of the alchemists--to carry out in the laboratory, as far as possible, the processes which Nature carried out in the interior of the earth. Seven leading problems occupied their attention:--

"1. The preparation of a compound named elixir, magisterium medicine, or philosopher's stone, which possessed the property of transmuting the baser metals into gold and silver, and of performing many other marvelous operations. * * *

"2. The creation of *homunculi*, or living beings, of which many wonderful but incredible tales are told.

"3. The preparation of the alcahest or universal solvent, which dissolved every substance which was immersed in it. * * *

"4. Palingenesis, or the restoration of a plant from its ashes. Had they succeeded in this, they would have hoped to be able to raise the dead. [Professor Brown takes a great deal for granted.]

"5. The preparation of *spiritus mundi*, a mystic substance possessing many powers, the principal of which was its capacity of dissolving gold.

"6. The extraction of the quintessence or active principle of all substances.

"7. The preparation of aurum potable, liquid gold, a sovereign remedy, because gold being itself perfect could produce perfection in the human frame."

ALCHEMICAL SYMBOLISM

In alchemy there are three symbolic substances: mercury, sulphur, and salt. To these was added a fourth mysterious life principle called *Azoth*. Concerning the first three, Herr von Welling has written: "There are three basic chemical substances which are called by the philosophers salt, sulphur, and mercury, but which are not to be confounded in any way with the crude salt, sulphur, and mercury taken from the earth or secured from the apothecary. Salt, sulphur, and mercury each has a triune nature, for each of these substances contains, in reality, also the other two substances, according to the secret arcanum of the wise. The body of salt is, therefore, threefold, namely salt, sulphur, and mercury; but in the body of salt one of the three (salt) predominates. Mercury is likewise composed of salt, sulphur, and mercury with the latter element predominating. Sulphur, similarly, is actually salt, sulphur, and mercury, with sulphur predominating. These nine divisions--3 times 3, plus Azoth (the mysterious universal life force), equals 10, the sacred decad of Pythagoras. Concerning the nature of *Azoth* there is much controversy. Some view it as the invisible, eternal fire; others as electricity; still others as magnetism. Transcendentalism refer to it as the astral light.

"The universe is surrounded by the sphere of the stars. Beyond that sphere is the sphere of *Schamayim*, which is the Divine fiery water, the first outflow of the Word of God, the flaming river pouring from the presence of the Eternal. *Schamayim*, the fiery androgynous water, divides. The fire becomes the solar fire and the water becomes the lunar water. *Schamayim* is the universal mercury--sometimes called *Azoth*--the measureless spirit of life. The spiritual fiery original water--*Schamayim*--comes through Eden (in Hebrew, *vapor*) and pours itself into four main rivers [the elements]. This is the river of living water--*Azoth* [the fiery mercurial essence] that flows out from the throne of God and the Lamb. In this Eden [vaporous essence or mist] is the spiritual earth [incomprehensible and intangible], or the dust *Aphar*, out of which God formed *Adam min Haadamah*, the spiritual body of man, which body must sometime become revealed."

In another part of his writings von Welling also says that there was no material universe until Lucifer, attempting to perform the cosmic alchemy, misused the *Schamayim*, or the Divine Fire. In order to reestablish the *Schamayim* which Lucifer had perverted, this universe was formed as a means of liberating it from the dark cloud within which it was locked by the failure of Lucifer's attempt to control it. These statements clearly emphasize the fact that the early philosophers recognized in the Bible a book of chemical and alchemical formulæ. It is essential that this point be kept in mind at all times. Woe to that seeker who accepts as literal the rambling allegories of the alchemists. Such a one can never enter the inner sanctuary of truth. Elias Ashmole in his *Theatrum Chemicum Britannicum* thus describes the methods employed by the alchemists to conceal their true doctrines: "Their chiefest study was to wrap up their *Secrets* in *Fables*, and spin out their *Fancies* in *Vailes* and *shadows*, whose *Radii* seems to extend every way, yet so, that they meet in a *Common Center*, and point onely at One thing."

The fact that the Scriptures reveal a hidden knowledge, if considered allegorically, is clearly demonstrated by a parable describing King Solomon, his wives, concubines, and

virgins, which parable occurs in *Geheime Figuren der Rosenkreuzer*, published in Ultona in 1785. Dr. Hartmann, who translated part of this work into English, declared that the wives of Solomon represented the arts, the concubines the sciences, and the virgins the still unrevealed secrets of Nature. By order of the King the virgins were forced to remove their veils, thus signifying that by means of wisdom (Solomon) the mystic arts were forced to disclose their hidden parts to the philosopher, while to the uninitiated world only the outside garments were visible. (Such is the mystery of the veil of Isis.)

As the alchemist must do his work in four worlds simultaneously if he would achieve the *Magnum Opus*, a table showing the analogies of the three principles in the four worlds may clarify the relationship which the various parts bear to each other. The early masters of the art of alchemical symbolism did not standardize either their symbols or their terms. Thus it required great familiarity with the subject combined with considerable intuitive power to unravel some of their enigmatical statements. The third and fourth divisions of the following table are given alternative renderings, owing to the fact that some authors did not draw a clear line between *spirit* and *soul*. According to the Scriptures, *spirit* is indestructible, but *soul* is destructible. Obviously, then, they are not synonymous. It is clearly stated that "the soul that sinneth, it shall die," but "the spirit shall return unto God who gave it." The table of analogies, as nearly as they can be established, is as follows:

The Triune Power in Four Worlds

| <i>WORLD OF</i> | <i>Father</i> | <i>Son</i> | <i>Mother</i> |
|-----------------|---------------|------------|---------------|
| 1. God | Father | Son | Holy Ghost |
| 2. Man | Spirit | Soul | Body |
| 3. Elements | Air | Fire | Water |
| 4. Chemicals | Mercury | Sulphur | Salt |

The alternative renderings of 3 and 4 are:

| <i>WORLD OF</i> | <i>Father</i> | <i>Son</i> | <i>Mother</i> |
|-----------------|---------------|------------|---------------|
| 3. Elements | Fire | Air | Water |
| 4. Chemicals | Sulphur | Mercury | Salt |

Paracelsus made a different arrangement, somewhat Aristotelian, in which the three phases of the Triune God are omitted, combining only the elements of the second, third, and fourth worlds:

| <i>WORLD OF</i> | <i>Father</i> | <i>Son</i> | <i>Mother</i> |
|-----------------|---------------|------------|---------------|
| 2. Man | Spirit | Soul | Body |
| 3. Elements | Air | Water | Earth |
| 4. Chemicals | Sulphur | Mercury | Salt |

The main point, however, is proved: the alchemical philosophers used the symbols of salt, sulphur, and mercury to represent not only chemicals but the spiritual and invisible principles of God, man, and the universe. The three substances (salt, sulphur, and mercury) existing in four worlds, as shown in the table, sum up to the sacred number 12. As these 12 are the foundations of the *Great Work*, they are called in Revelation the twelve foundation stones of the sacred city. In line with the same idea Pythagoras asserted that the dodecahedron, or twelve-faced symmetrical geometric solid, was the foundation of the universe. May there not be a relation also between this mysterious 3 times 4 and the four parties of three which in the legend of the third degree of Freemasonry go forth to the four angles of the cherubim, the composite creature of four parts?

A Table of Chymicall & Philosophicall Characters wth their significations as they are usually found in Chymicall Authors both printed & manuscript.

| | | | | | |
|---|--|---|--------------------|---|-----------|
| Saturne Lead | | Balnœu Mande Balnœu Veyria Bone Borax | MB V tr W | Mercur Mercur: precipit Mercur: Saturn Mercur Sublimat | |
| Jupiter Tinne | | Cakimare Cabe Cabe vve Calr ovorum Cayut moria Cannulore Cera | | Nota bene Nor | NB ppr |
| Mars Iron | | Christallum Cinis Cineros clavelati Cinalar Coagu laue Cobobario Crocus Lact Crocus Virens Ei vitem | | Quinta Essen Realgar Regulus Resorta | |
| Sol Gould | | Crucibulum Cucurbitum | | Sal comun Sal Alkali Sal Armoniac Sal Gemma Sal potra Supo Spiritus Spiritus Vini Strata supstrat Solvare Sublimare Sulphur Sulphur vve Sulphur Philosophari Sulphurnigru | |
| Venus Copper | | Dies Digerere Dissolvere Distillar | | Essence Fumus Equy Furue Flagma Fluore | |
| Mercury Quicksilver | | Eiffure | | Gumma | |
| Luna Silver | | Enus Equy | | Hora | |
| Acetum Acetū distilla Æs Ær Alembicus Alumen Amalgama Aunus Antimonium Aqua Aqua Fortis Aqua Regis Aqua Vita Arena Azaroncom Atramentū Aurichalkū Auripigmentū | | Ignis Ignis rota Lapis calami Lapis Lactare Lutum Sep Magnes Marchsita Materia Matrimonū | | Ignis Jgms Jgnis rota Lapis calami Lapis Lactare Lutum Sep Magnes Marchsita Materia Matrimonū | |
| Libra Libras C | | | | | |

A TABLE OF MEDIÆVAL ALCHEMICAL SYMBOLS.

From Valentine's The Last Will and Testament.

Hermetists used the curious symbols shown in this rare table to represent various chemical elements and alchemical processes. The full meaning of these strange characters has never been revealed, the characters concealing effectually within their own forms the occult secrets regarding the spiritual nature of the metals and elements which they represent.

In their allegories the alchemists also wed human, animal, and plant emblems; sometimes weird composite figures, such as the dragon, the winged serpent, the unicorn, and the phœnix. In almost every case they symbolized gold as a king with a crown on his head and often with a scepter in his hand. Sometimes they depicted him with the ace of the solar disc surrounded by rays. Silver was personified as a woman who they called the queen. She wore no crown but often stood upon a lunar crescent: much after the fashion of the Madonna. Mercury was typified as a youth with wings, often with two heads, carrying serpents or sometimes the caduceus. Lead they symbolized by an old man with a scythe in his hand; iron by a soldier dressed in armor. To aqua fortis was given the curious name "the ostrich's stomach," and to the attainment of the "Great Work" they assigned the symbol of the phœnix sitting upon a nest of fire. The union of elements they symbolized by a marriage, the Process of putrefaction by a skull, antimony by a dragon.

The following table shows the angles to which the parties of three (salt, sulphur, and mercury) go in search of *CHiram*:

| <i>The Four "Corners" of Creation</i> | <i>East</i> | <i>South</i> | <i>West</i> | <i>North</i> |
|---------------------------------------|-------------|--------------|-------------|--------------|
| The Fixed Signs of the Zodiac | Aquarius | Leo | Scorpio | Taurus |
| The Parts of the Cherubim | Man | Lion | Eagle | Bull |
| The Four Seasons | Spring | Summer | Autumn | Winter |
| The Ages of Man | Childhood | Youth | Maturity | Age |
| The Stages of Existence | Birth | Growth | Maturity | Decay |
| The Parts of Man's Constitution | Spirit | Soul | Mind | Body |
| The Four Elements | Air | Fire | Water | Earth |

One more table should prove of interest to Masonic scholars: one showing the relationship existing between the three substances, salt, sulphur, and mercury, and certain symbols with which Masons are familiar. This table also has an alternative rendering, based on the interblending of philosophic principles, which are difficult--if not impossible--to separate into chronological order.

| | | | |
|----------------------------|--------------|------------|---------------|
| 1. The Three Lights | Stellar Fire | Solar Fire | Lunar Fire |
| 2. The Three Grand Masters | Hiram | Solomon | Hiram of Tyre |
| 3. The Geometric Solids | Sphere | Pyramid | Cube |
| 4. Alchemical Substances | Mercury | Sulphur | Salt |

The alternative rendering of No. 2 is:

| | | | |
|----------------------------|---------|-------|---------------|
| 2. The Three Grand Masters | Solomon | Hiram | Hiram of Tyre |
|----------------------------|---------|-------|---------------|

In alchemy is found again the perpetuation of the Universal Mystery; for as surely as Jesus died upon the cross, Hiram (*CHiram*) at the west gate of the Temple, Orpheus on the banks of the river Hebros, Christna on the banks of the Ganges, and Osiris in the coffin prepared by Typhon, so in alchemy, unless the elements first die, the *Great Work* cannot be achieved. The stages of the alchemical processes can be traced in the lives and activities of nearly all the world Saviors and teachers, and also among the mythologies of several nations. It is said in the Bible that "except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." In alchemy it is declared that without putrefaction the *Great Work* cannot be accomplished. What is it that dies on the cross, is buried in the tomb of the Mysteries, and that dies also in the retort and becomes black with putrefaction? Also,

what is it that does this same thing in the nature of man, that he may rise again, phoenix-like, from his own ashes (*caput mortuum*)?

The solution in the alchemical retort, if digested a certain length of time, will turn into a red elixir, which is called the *universal medicine*. It resembles a fiery water and is luminous in the dark. During the process of digestion it passes through many colors which has given rise to its being called the *peacock* because of its iridescence during one of the periods of its digestion. If the augmentations of its power be carried too far, the test tube containing the substance will explode and vanish as dust. This commonly occurs and is the greatest danger involved in the preparation of the medicine for men and metals. If developed too far, it will also seep through the glass, for there is no physical container sufficiently strong to hold it, The reason for this is that it is no longer a substance but a divine essence partaking of the interpenetrative power of Divinity. When it is properly developed, this universal solvent in liquid form will dissolve into itself all other metals. In this high state the universal salt is a liquid fire. This salt dissolved with the proper amount of any metal and run through the different stages of digestion and rotations; of augmentations will eventually become a medicine for the transmuting of inferior metals.

The True Way of Nature by Hermes Trismegistus, given out by a genuine Freemason, I.C.H., describes the danger of over-augmenting the universal salt: "But this multiplication cannot be carried on *ad infinitum* but it attains completeness in the ninth rotation. For when this tincture has been rotated nine times it cannot be exalted any further because it will not permit any further separation. For as soon as it perceives only the smallest degree of material fire it goes instantly into a flux and passes through the glass like hot oil through paper."

In classifying the processes through which the chemical elements must pass before the Hermetic medicine is produced, lack of uniformity in terminology is evidenced, for in *The True Way of Nature* seven stages are given, while in the *Dictionnaire Mytho-Hermétique* twelve are noted. These twelve are linked with the signs of the zodiac in a manner worthy of consideration.

- | | | |
|------------------------|------------------------|------------------------------|
| 1. Aries, Calcination | 5. Leo, Digestion | 9. Sagittarius, Incineration |
| 2. Taurus, Congelation | 6. Virgo, Distillation | 10. Capricorn, Fermentation |
| 3. Gemini, Fixation | 7. Libra, Sublimation | 11. Aquarius, Multiplication |
| 4. Cancer, Dissolution | 8. Scorpio, Separation | 12. Pisces, Projection |

This arrangement opens an interesting field of speculation which may be of great service if intelligently carried out. These twelve "steps" leading up to the accomplishment of the *Magnum Opus* are a reminder of the twelve degrees of the ancient Rosicrucian Mysteries. To a certain degree, Rosicrucianism was chemistry theologized and alchemy philosophized. According to the Mysteries, man was redeemed as the result of his passage in rotation through the twelve mansions of the heavens. The twelve processes by means of which the "secret essence" may be discovered remind the student forcibly of the

twelve Fellow Craftsmen who are sent forth in search of the murdered Builder of the Universe, the Universal Mercury.

According to Solomon Trismosin, the stages through which matter passes in its journey towards perfection are divided into twenty-two parts, each of which is represented by an appropriate drawing. There is an important connection between the twenty-two emblems of Trismosin, the twenty-two major cards of the Tarot, and the twenty-two letters of the Hebrew alphabet. These mysterious Tarot cards are themselves an alchemical formula, if properly interpreted. As if to substantiate the claims of mediæval philosophers that King Solomon was a master of alchemy, Dr. Franz Hartmann has noted that the much-abused and misunderstood *Song of Solomon* is in reality an alchemical formula. The student of natural philosophy will immediately recognize the "dark maid of Jerusalem," not as a person but as a *material* sacred to the sages. Dr. Hartmann writes: "The '*Song of Solomon*,' in the Old Testament, is a description of the processes of Alchemy. In this Song the *Subjectum* is described in *Cant. i.*, 5; the *Lilium artis* in *C. ii.*, 1; the *Preparation and Purification* in *C. ii.*, 4; the *Fire* in *C. ii.*, 7, and *C. iv.*, 16, the *Putrefaction* in *C. iii.*, 1; *Sublimation and Distillation* in *C. iii.*, 6, *Coagulation and Change of Colors*, *C. v.*, 9 to 14; *Fixation*, *C. ii.*, 12, and *C. viii.*, 4; *Multiplication*, *C. vi.*, 7; *Augmentation and Projection*, *C. viii.*, 8, etc., etc."

A tiny particle of the Philosopher's Scone, if cast upon the surface of water, will, according to an appendix to the work on the universal salt by Herr von Welling, immediately begin a process of recapitulating in miniature the history of the universe, for instantly the tincture--like the Spirits of Elohim--moves upon the face of the waters. A miniature universe is formed which the philosophers have affirmed actually rises out of the water and floats in the air, where it passes through all the stages of cosmic unfoldment and finally disintegrates into dust again. Not only is it possible to prepare a medicine for metals; it is also possible to prepare a tincture for minerals by means of which pieces of granite and marble can be turned into precious stones; also stones of inferior quality may be improved.

As one of the great alchemists fittingly observed, man's quest for gold is often his undoing, for he mistakes the alchemical processes, believing them to be purely material. He does not realize that the Philosopher's Gold, the Philosopher's Stone, and the Philosopher's Medicine exist in each of the four worlds and that the consummation of the experiment cannot be realized until it is successfully carried on in four worlds simultaneously according to one formula. Furthermore, one of the constituents of the alchemical formula exists only within the nature of man himself, without which his chemicals will not combine, and though he spend his life and fortune in chemical experimentation, he will not produce the desired end. The paramount reason why the material scientist is incapable of duplicating the achievements of the mediæval alchemists--although he follow every step carefully and accurately--is that the subtle element which comes out of the nature of the illuminated and regenerated alchemical philosopher is missing in his experimentation.

On this subject Dr. Franz Hartmann in a footnote to his translation of extracts from *Paracelsus* clearly expresses the conclusions of a modern investigator of alchemical lore: "I wish to warn the reader, who might be inclined to try any of the alchemical prescriptions * * *, not to do so unless he is an alchemist, because, although I know from personal experience that these prescriptions are not only allegorically but literally true, and will prove successful in the hands of an alchemist, they would only cause a waste of time and money in the hands of one who has not the necessary qualifications. A person who wants to be an alchemist must have in himself the 'magnesia', which means, the magnetic power to attract and 'coagulate' invisible astral elements."

In considering the formulæ on the following pages, it must be recognized that the experiments cannot be successfully conducted unless the one who performs them be himself a Magus. If two persons, one an initiate and the other unilluminated in the supreme art, were to set to work, side by side, using the same vessels, the same substances, and exactly the same *modus operandi*, the initiate would produce his "gold" and the uninitiated would not. Unless the greater alchemy has first taken place within the soul of man, he cannot perform the lesser alchemy in the retort. This is an invariable rule, although it is cunningly hidden in the allegories and emblems of Hermetic philosophy. Unless a man be "born again" he cannot accomplish the *Great Work*, and if the student of alchemical formulæ will remember this, it will save him much sorrow and disappointment. To speak of that part of the mystery which is concerned with the secret life principle within the actual nature of man, is forbidden, for it is decreed by the Masters of the art that each shall discover that for himself and on this subject it is unlawful to speak at greater length.

The Theory and Practice of Alchemy

Part Two

All true Philosophers of the natural or Hermetic sciences begin their labors with a prayer to the Supreme Alchemist of the Universe, beseeching His assistance in the consummation of the Magnum Opus. The prayer that follows, written in a provincial German centuries ago by an adept now unknown, is representative: "O holy and hallowed Trinity, Thou undivided and triple Unity! Cause me to sink into the abyss of Thy limitless eternal Fire, for only in that Fire can the mortal nature of man be changed into humble dust, while the new body of the salt union lies in the light. Oh, melt me and transmute me in this Thy holy Fire, so that on the day at Thy command the fiery waters of the Holy Spirit draw me out from the dark dust, giving me new birth and making me alive with His breath. May I also be exalted through the humble humility of Thy Son, rising through His assistance out of the dust and ashes and changing into a pure spiritual body of rainbow colors like unto the transparent, crystal-like, paradisiacal gold, that my own nature may be redeemed and purified like the elements before me in these glasses and bottles. Diffuse me in the waters of life as though I were in the wine cellar of the eternal Solomon. Here the fire of Thy love will receive new fuel and will blaze forth so that no streams can extinguish it. Through the aid of this divine fire, may I in the end be found worthy to be called into the illumination of the righteous. May I then be sealed up with the light of the new world that I may also attain unto the immortality and glory where there shall be no more alternation of light and darkness. Amen."

THE ORIGIN OF ALCHEMICAL FORMULÆ

Apparently but few of the mediæval alchemists discovered the Great Arcanum without aid, some authors declaring that none of them attained the desired end without the assistance of a Master or Teacher. In every instance the identity of these Masters has been carefully concealed, and even during the Middle Ages speculation ran rife concerning them. It was customary to call such illuminated sages adepts, a title which indicated that they possessed the true secrets of transmutation and multiplication. These adepts were polyonymous individuals who unexpectedly appeared and disappeared again, leaving no trace of their whereabouts. There are indications that a certain degree of organization existed among them. The most powerful of the alchemical organizations were the Rosicrucians, the Illuminati, and certain Arabian and Syrian sects.

In the documents which follow, references are made to the "Brethren" or "Brothers." These are to signify that those who had actually accomplished the *Magnum Opus* were banded together and known to each other by cipher codes and secret signs or symbols. Apparently a number of these illuminated adepts dwelt in Arabia, for several of the great European alchemists were initiated in Asia Minor. When a disciple of the alchemical arts had learned the supreme secret, he guarded it jealously, revealing to no man his priceless treasure. He was not permitted to disclose it even to the members of his immediate family.

As the years passed, one who had discovered the secret--or, more properly, one to whom it had been revealed--sought for some younger man worthy to be entrusted with the formulæ. To this one, and to this one only, as a rule, the philosopher was permitted to disclose the arcanum. The younger man then became the "philosophical son" of the old sage, and to him the latter bequeathed his secrets. Occasionally, however, an adept, on finding a sincere and earnest seeker, would instruct him in the fundamental principles of the art, and if the disciple persisted, he was quietly initiated into the august fraternity of the Brethren. In such manner the alchemical processes were preserved, but the number of those who knew them did not increase rapidly.

During the sixteenth, seventeenth, and eighteenth centuries a considerable number of alchemical adepts made their way from place to place throughout Europe, appearing and disappearing apparently at will. According to popular tradition, these adepts were immortal, and kept themselves alive by means of the mysterious medicine that was one of the goals of alchemical aspiration. It is asserted that some lived hundreds of years, taking no food except this elixir, a few drops of which would preserve their youth for a long period of time. That such mysterious men did exist there can be little doubt, as their presence is attested by scores of reliable witnesses.

It is further asserted that they are still to be found by those who have qualified themselves to contact them. The philosophers taught that like attracts like, and that when the disciple has developed a virtue and integrity acceptable to the adepts they will appear to him and reveal those parts of the secret processes which cannot be discovered without such help.

"Wisdom is as a flower from which the bee its honey makes and the spider poison, each according to its own nature." (By an unknown adept.)

The reader must bear in mind at all times that the formulæ and emblems of alchemy are to be taken primarily as allegorical symbols; for until their esoteric significance has been comprehended, their literal interpretation is valueless. Nearly every alchemical formula has one element purposely omitted, it being decided by the mediæval philosophers that those who could not with their own intelligence discover that missing substance or process were not qualified to be entrusted with secrets which could give them control over great masses of humanity and likewise subject to their will the elemental forces of Nature.

THE EMERALD TABLE OF HERMES

The oldest and most revered of all the alchemical formulæ is the sacred Emerald Tablet of Hermes. Authorities do not agree as to the genuineness of this Table, some declaring it to be a post-Christian fraud, but there is much evidence that, regardless of its author, the Table is of great antiquity. While the symbol of the Emerald Table is of special Masonic import--relating as it does to the personality of *CHiram* (Hiram)--it is first and fundamentally an alchemical formula, relating both to the alchemy of the base metals and the divine alchemy of human regeneration.

In Dr. Sigismund Bacstrom's collection of alchemical manuscripts is a section devoted to the translations and interpretations of this remarkable Tablet, which was known to the ancients as the *Tabula Smaragdina*. Dr. Bacstrom was initiated into the Brotherhood of the Rose Cross on the island of Mauritius by one of those unknown adepts who at that time called himself *Comte de Chazal*. Dr. Bacstrom's translations and notes on the Emerald Tablet are, in part, as follows, the actual text being reproduced in capital letters:

"The Emerald Table, the Most Ancient Monument of the Chaldeans concerning the Lapis Philosophorum (the stone of the philosophers).

"The Emerald Table furnishes the origin of the allegorical history of King *Hiram* (rather *Chiram*). The Chaldeans, Egyptians, and Hebrews in what concerns *Chiram* have taken their knowledge from one and the same fountain; *Homerus*, who relates this history in a different manner, followed that original, and Virgil followed *Homerus*, as *Hesiodus* took the subject for his *Theogony* likewise from thence, which *Ovidius* took afterwards for a pattern for his *Metamorphosis*. The knowledge of Nature's secret operations constitutes the principal sense of all these ancient writings, but ignorance framed out of it that external or veiled mythology and the lower class of people turned it into idolatry.

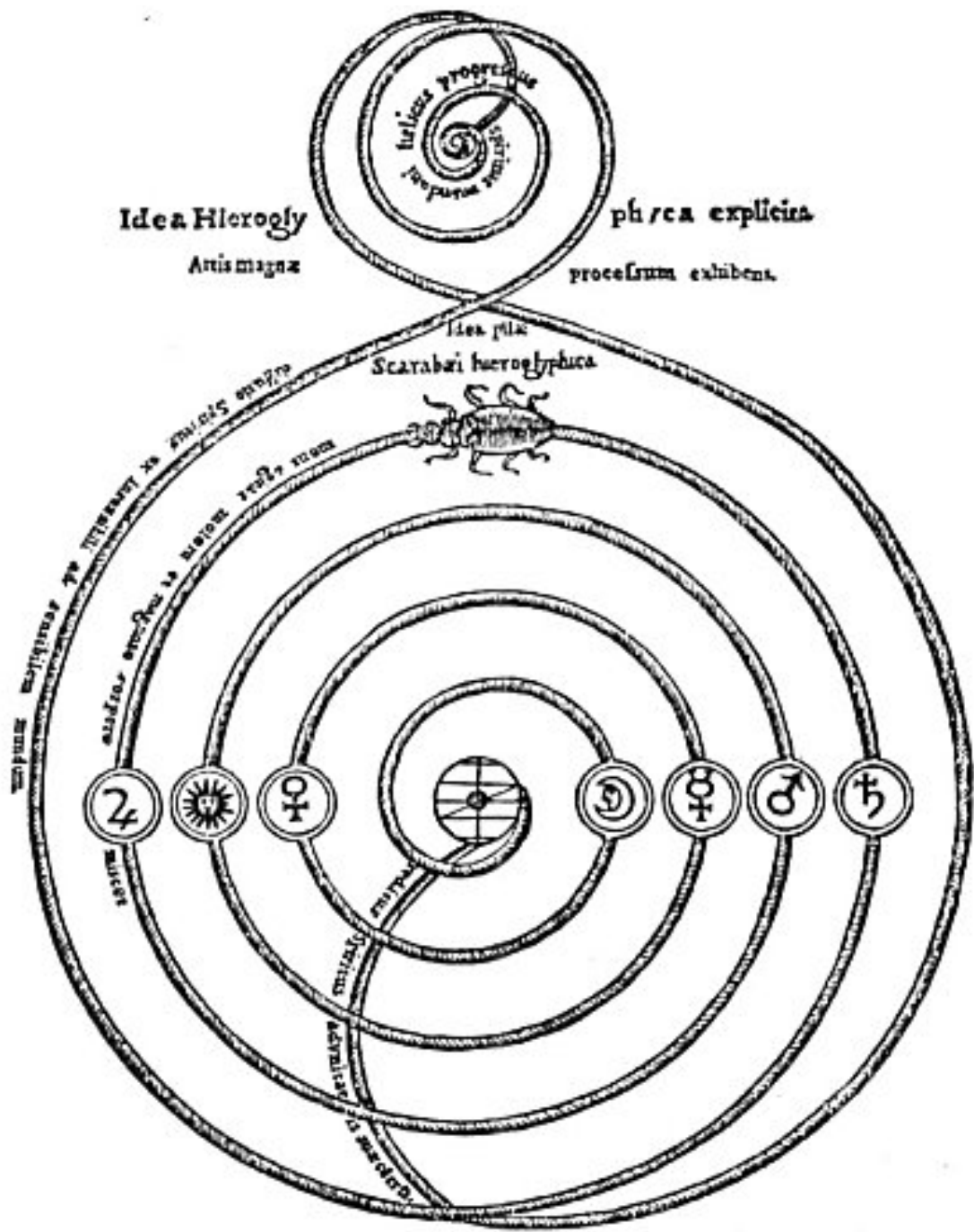
"The Genuine Translation from the Original Very Ancient Chaldee is as Follows:

"THE SECRET WORKS OF *CHIRAM ONE* IN ESSENCE, BUT THREE IN ASPECT.

"(The two first large words mean *the Secret Work*.)

"(The second line in large letters, reads: *Chiram Telat Machasot*, i.e. *Chiram the Universal Agent, One in Essence but three in aspect*.)

'IT IS TRUE, NO LIE, CERTAIN, AND TO BE DEPENDED UPON, THE SUPERIOR AGREES WITH THE INFERIOR, AND THE INFERIOR WITH THE SUPERIOR, TO EFFECT THAT ONE TRULY WONDERFUL WORK. AS ALL THINGS OWE THEIR EXISTENCE TO THE WILL OF THE *ONLY ONE*, SO ALL THINGS OWE THEIR ORIGIN TO THE *ONE ONLY THING*, THE MOST HIDDEN, BY THE ARRANGEMENT OF *THE ONLY GOD*. THE FATHER OF THAT *ONE ONLY THING* IS *THE SUN*, ITS MOTHER IS *THE MOON*, THE WIND CARRIES IT IN ITS BELLY; BUT ITS NOURSE IS *A SPIRITUOUS EARTH*. THAT *ONE ONLY THING* (after God)



THE KEY TO ALCHEMY ACCORDING TO THE EGYPTIANS.

From Kircher's Œdipus Ægyptiacus.

The priests of Egypt not only used the scarab as a symbol of regeneration but also discovered in its habits many analogies to the secret process whereby base metals could be transmuted into gold. They saw in the egg of the scarab the seed of the metals, and the above figure shows the path of this seed through the various planetary bodies until, finally reaching the center, it is perfected and then returns again to its source. The words in the small spiral at the top read: "The spiral Progress of the mundane spirit." After the scarab has wound its way around the spiral to the center of the lower part of the figure, it returns to the upper world along the path bearing the words: "Return of the spirit to the center of unity."

[paragraph continues] IS THE FATHER OF ALL THINGS IN THE UNIVERSE. ITS POWER IS PERFECT, AFTER IT HAS BEEN UNITED TO A SPIRITUOUS EARTH.

"(Process--First Distillation.) SEPARATE THAT SPIRITUOUS EARTH FROM THE DENSE OR CRUDE BY MEANS OF A GENTLE HEAT, WITH MUCH ATTENTION.


"(Last Digestion.) IN GREAT MEASURE IT ASCENDS *FROM THE EARTH* UP TO HEAVEN, AND DESCENDS AGAIN, NEWBORN, ON THE EARTH, AND THE SUPERIOR AND THE INFERIOR ARE INCREASED IN POWER. The Azoth ascends from the Earth, from the bottom of the Glass, and redescends in Veins and drops into the Earth and by this continual circulation the Azoth is more and more subtilized, *Volatilizes Sol* and carries the volatilized Solar atoms along with it and thereby becomes a *Solar Azoth*, i.e. *our third, and genuine Sophic Mercury*, and this circulation of the Solar Azoth must continue until it ceases of itself, and the Earth has sucked it all in, when it must become the black pitchy matter, the *Toad* [the substances in the alchemical retort and also the lower elements in the body of man], which denotes complete putrefaction or *Death of the Compound*.

"BY THIS THOU WILT PARTAKE OF THE HONOURS OF THE WHOLE WORLD. Without doubt as the black, pitchy matter will and must of necessity become *White* and *Red*, and the Red having been carried to perfection, *medicinally* and for Metals, is then fully capable to preserve *mentem sanam in corpore sano* until the natural period of Life and promise us ample means, in infinitum multipliable, to be benevolent and charitable without any diminution of our inexhaustible resources, therefore well may it be called *the Glory* [Honours] *of the Whole World*, as truly the study and contemplation of the L. P. [*Lapis Philosophorum*], harmonising with Divine Truths, elevates the mind to God our Creator and merciful Father, and if He should permit us to possess it practically must eradicate the very principle of Avarice, Envy, and Evil Inclinations, and cause our hearts to melt in gratitude toward Him that has been so kind to us! Therefore the Philosophers say with great Truth, that the L. P. either finds a good man or makes one.

"AND DARKNESS WILL FLY FROM THEE. By invigorating the Organs the Soul makes use of for communicating with exterior objects, the Soul must acquire greater powers not only for conception but also for retention, and therefore if we wish to obtain still more knowledge, the organs and secret springs of physical life being wonderfully strengthened and invigorated, the Soul must acquire new powers for conceiving and retaining, especially if we pray to God for knowledge, and confirm our prayers by faith, all Obscurity must vanish of course. That this has not been the case with all possessors, was their own fault, as they contented themselves merely with the Transmutation of Metals.

"(Use.) THIS IS THE STRENGTH OF ALL POWERS. This is a very strong figure, to indicate that the L. P. positively does possess all the Powers concealed in Nature, not for destruction but for exaltation and regeneration of matter, in the three Departments of Nature.

"WITH THIS THOU WILT BE ABLE TO OVERCOME ALL THINGS, AND TO

TRANSMUTE ALL *WHAT IS FINE* (□□) AND WHAT IS *COARSE* (□□ ♀ ♂ □ ). It will conquer every subtil Thing, of course, as it refixes the most subtil Oxygen into its own *fiery Nature* and that with more power, penetration and virtue, in a tenfold ratio, at every multiplication, and each time in a much shorter period, until its power becomes incalculable, which multiplied power also penetrates [overcomes] every *Solid Thing*, such as *unconquerable Gold and Silver*, the otherwise *unalterable Mercury*, Crystals and Glass Fluxes, to which it is able to give natural hardness and fixity, as *Philaletha* does attest, and is proved by an artificial Diamond, in my father's time, in possession of *Prince Lichtenstein in Vienna*, valued at Five Hundred Thousand Ducats, fixed by the Lapis [Philosopher's Stone].

"IN THIS MANNER THE WORLD WAS CREATED; THE ARRANGEMENTS TO FOLLOW THIS ROAD ARE HIDDEN. FOR THIS REASON I AM CALLED *CHIRAM TELAT MECHASOT*, *ONE IN ESSENCE*, BUT *THREE IN ASPECT*. IN THIS TRINITY IS HIDDEN THE WISDOM OF THE WHOLE WORLD (i.e., in *Chiram* and *its Use*). It is thought that *Hermes* was *Moses* or *Zoroaster*, otherwise *Hermes* signifies a *Serpent*, and the *Serpent* used to be an *Emblem of Knowledge or Wisdom*. The *Serpent* is met with everywhere amongst the Hieroglyphics of the ancient Egyptians, so is *the Globe with Wings, the Sun and Moon, Dragons and Griffins*, whereby the Egyptians denoted their sublime knowledge of the Lapis Philosophorum, according to Suidas, the hints in the Scriptures, and even *De Non* where he speaks of the sanctuaries of the ancient Egyptian Temples.

"IT IS ENDED NOW, WHAT I HAVE SAID CONCERNING THE EFFECTS OF THE SUN. FINISH OF THE TABULA SMARAGDINA. What I have said or taught of *the Solar Work*, is now finished. The *perfect Seed*, fit for multiplication.

"This I know is acknowledged to be the genuine *Tabula Smaragdina Hermetis*."

A LETTER FROM THE BROTHERS OF R. C. (ROSE CROSS)

Although Eugenius Philalethes disclaimed membership in the Rosicrucian Fraternity, it is believed that for a number of years he was the head of that Order. In a little work called *Lumen de Lumine, or A New Magical Light Discovered and Communicated to the World*, published in London in 1651, Eugenius Philalethes gives a remarkable letter, presumably from the Rosicrucian Order. Accompanying the letter is an emblematic figure setting forth in symbolic form the processes and formulæ of the Philosopher's Stone. This epistle is an excellent example of the Rosicrucian system of combining abstract theological speculations with concrete chemical formulæ. With the aid of the material contained in various parts of this present book the student would do well to set himself the task of solving the riddle contained in this hieroglyph.

"*A Letter from the Brothers of R. C. Concerning the Invisible, Magical Mountain, And the Treasure therein Contained.*

"Every man naturally desires a superiority, to have treasures of Gold and Silver [intellect and soul], and to seem great in the eyes of the world. God indeed created all things for the use of man, that he might rule over them, and acknowledge therein the singular goodness and omnipotence of God, give Him thanks for His benefits, honor Him and praise Him. But there is no man looks after these things, otherwise than by spending his days idly; they would enjoy them without any previous labor and danger; neither do they look them out of that place where God hath treasured them up, Who expects also that man should seek for them there, and to those that seek will He give them. But there is not any that labors for a possession in that place, and therefore these riches are not found: For the way to this place, and the place itself hath been unknown for a long time, and it is hidden from the greatest part of the world. But notwithstanding it be difficult and laborious to find Out this way and place, yet the place should be sought after.

"But it is not the will of God to conceal anything from those that are His, and therefore in this last age, before the final judgment comes, all these things shall be manifested to those that are worthy: As He Himself (though obscurely, lest it should be manifested to, the unworthy) hath spoken in a certain place: There is nothing covered that shall not be revealed, and hidden that shall not be known. We therefore being moved by the Spirit of God, do declare the will of God to the world, which we have also already performed and published in several languages. But most men either revile, or contemne that, our Manifesto, (the *Fama* and *Confessio Fraternitatis*) or else waiving the Spirit of God, they expect the proposals thereof from us, supposing we will straightway teach them how to make gold by Art, or furnish them with ample treasures, whereby they may live pompously in the face of the world, swagger, and make wars, turn usurers, gluttons, and drunkards, live unchastely, and defile their whole life With several other sins, all which things are contrary to the blessed will of God. These men should have learnt from those Ten Virgins (whereof five that were foolish demanded oil for their lamps, from those five that were wise) how that the case is much otherwise.

"It is expedient that every man should labor for this treasure by the assistance of God, and his own particular search and industry. But the perverse intentions of these fellows we understand out of their own writings, by the singular grace and revelation of God. We do stop our ears, and wrap ourselves as it were in clouds, to avoid the bellowings and howlings of those men, who in vain cry out for gold. And hence indeed it comes to pass that they brand us with infinite calumnies and slanders, which notwithstanding we do not resent but God in His good time will judge them for it. But after that we had well known (though unknown to you) and perceived also by your writing how diligently you are to peruse the Holy Scripture, and seek the true knowledge of God: we have also above many thousands, thought you worthy of some answer, and we signify this much to you by the will of God and the admonition of the Holy Ghost.

"There is a mountain situated in the midst of the earth, or center of the world, which is both small and great. It is soft, also above measure hard and stony. It is far off, and near at hand, but by the providence of God, invisible. In it are hidden most ample treasures, which the world is not able to value. This mountain by envy of the devil, who always opposeth the glory of God and the happiness of man, is compassed about with very cruel

beasts and other [sic] ravenous birds, which make the way thither both difficult and dangerous; and therefore hitherto, because the time is not yet come, the way thither could not be sought after nor found out. But now at last the way is to be found by those that are worthy, but notwithstanding by every man's self-labor and endeavors.

"To this mountain you shall go in a certain night (when it: comes) most long and most dark, and see that you prepare yourselves by prayer. Insist upon the way that: leads to the mountain, but ask not of any man where the way lies: only follow your Guide, who will offer himself to you, and will meet you in the way but you shall not know him. This Guide will bring you to the mountain at midnight, when all things are silent and dark. It is necessary that you arm yourselves with a resolute heroic courage, lest you fear those things that will happen, and so fall back. You need no sword, nor any other bodily weapons, only call upon God sincerely and heartily.

"When you have discovered the mountain, the first miracle that will appear is this. A most vehement and very great wind, that will shake the mountain and shatter the rocks to pieces. You shall be encountered also by lions and dragons and other terrible beasts, but fear not any of these things. Be resolute and rake heed that you return not, for your Guide who brought you thither will not suffer any evil to befall you. As for the treasure, it is not yet discovered but it is very near. After this wind will come an earthquake, that will overthrow those things which the wind hath left and make all flat. But be sure that you fall not off.

"The earthquake being past, there shall follow afire, that will consume the earthly rubbish, and discover the treasure, but as yet you cannot see it. After all these things and near the daybreak there shall be a great calm, and you shall see the Day-Star arise and the dawning will appear, and you shall perceive a great treasure. The chiefest thing in it, and the most perfect, is a certain exalted tincture, with which the world (if it served God and were worthy of such gifts) might be tinged and turned into most pure gold.

"This tincture being used, as your Guide shall reach you, will make you young when you are old, and you shall perceive no disease in any part of your bodies. By means of this tincture also you shall find pearls of that excellency which cannot be imagined. But do not you arrogate anything to yourselves because of your present power, but be contented with that which your Guide shall communicate to you. Praise God perpetually for this His gift, and have a special care that you use it not for worldly pride, but employ it in such works which are contrary to the world. Use it rightly and enjoy it so, as if you had it not. Live a temperate life, and beware of all sin, otherwise your Guide will forsake you, and you shall be deprived of this happiness. For know this of a truth, whosoever abuseth this tincture and lives not exemplarily, purely, and devoutly before men he shall lose this benefit, and scarce any hope will there be left ever to recover it afterwards."

If, as transcendentalists believe, the initiations into the Fraternity of the Rose Cross were given in the invisible worlds which surround and interpenetrate the visible universe, it is not beyond the range of possibility that this allegory is to be considered in the light of an initiatory ritual as well as an alchemical formula.

As has been noted, it is difficult to secure a complete formula for any of the alchemical operations. The one presented here is the most nearly complete of any available. The collecting of the rays and energies of the celestial bodies as precipitated in dew is a process which Paracelsus used with great success. Bear constantly in mind that these processes are only for those who have been properly instructed in the secret *art*.

"A TRUE REVELATION OF THE MANUAL OPERATION FOR THE UNIVERSAL MEDICINE COMMONLY CALLED 'THE PHILOSOPHER'S STONE.' By the celebrated philosopher of Leyden, as attested upon his deathbed with his own Blood, Anno Domini 1662. To my Loving Cousin and Son, the True Hermetic Philosopher--

"Dear Loving Cousin and Son:

"Although I had resolved never to give in writing to any person the secret of the Ancient Sages, yet notwithstanding out of peculiar affection and love to you, I have taken it upon me, to which the nearness of our relation obliges me, and especially because this temporal life is short, and Art is very dark and you may therefore not attain the wished for end;--but my Son because so precious a jewel belongs not to swine; and also this so great a gift of God may be treated carefully and Christianlike, in consideration thereof I do so largely declare myself to thee.

"I conjure thee with hand and mouth sacredly;

"1st. That most especially thou faithfully keep the same from all wicked, lustful and criminal persons.

"2dly. That thou exalt not thyself in any way.

"3dly. That thou seek to advance the honor of thy Creator of all things and the good of thy neighbor, preserve it sacredly that thy Lord may not have cause to complain of thee at the last day. I have written here in this treatise such a part of the Kingdom of Heaven, just as I myself have worked this treasure and finished it with my fingers, therefore I have subscribed all this work with my blood, lying on my deathbed in Leyden.

*"THE PROCESS--*In the Name of God, take of the purest and cleanest salt, sea salt, so as it is made by the sun itself, such as is brought by shipping from Spain, (I used salt that came from St. Uber) let it be dried in a warm stove, grind it in a stone mortar, as fine as possible to a powder that it may be so much the easier dissolve and taken up by our *Dew-water*, which is thus to be had in the months of May or June: When the Moon is at the full, observe when the dew falls with an East or South East wind. Then you must have sticks about one and a half feet high above the ground when driven in the Earth. Upon two or three such sticks, lay some four square plates of glass, and as the dew falls it easily fastens on the glass like a vapour, then have glass Vessels in readiness, let the dew drain from the sides of the glasses into your vessels. Do this until you have enough. The full of the Moon is a good season, afterwards it will be hard."

The solar rays descending from the sun carry with them solar sulphur--the Divine Fire.
These rays are crystallized by contact with

SCHOLÆ MAGICÆ TYPVS.



Ro. Vaughan, sculm.

THE INVISIBLE MAGICAL MOUNTAIN.

From Phililethales' Lumen de Lumine.

On Page 24 of Lumen de Lumine, Eugenius Philalethes describes the magical mountain as follows:

"This is that emblematical magical type, which Thalia delivered to me in the invisible Guiana. The first and superior Part of it represents the Mountains of the Moon. The philosophers commonly call them the Mountains of India, on whose tops grows their secret and famous Lunaria. It is an Herb easy to be found, but [for the fact] that men are blind discovers itself and shines after night like pearl. The earth of these mountains is very red and soft beyond all expression. It is full of crystalline rocks, which the philosophers call their glass and their stone: birds and fish (say they) bring it to them. Of these mountains speaks Hali the Arabian, a most excellent judicious author: 'Go, my son, to the Mountains of India, and to their quarries or caverns, and take thence our precious stones which dissolve or melt in water, when they are mingled therewith. Much indeed might be spoken of these mountains, if it were lawful to publish their mysteries, but one thing I shall not forbear to tell you. They are very dangerous places after night, for they are haunted with fires and other strange apparitions, (as a I am told by the Magi) by certain spirits, which dabble lasciviously with the sperm of the world and imprint their imaginations in, producing many times fantastic and monstrous generations. The access and pilgrimage to this place, with the difficulties which attend them, are faithfully and magisterially described by the Brothers of R.C.'" (Set accompanying letter.)

the lunar rays. The solar rays are also met by the emanations pouring upward from the earth's surface and are thus still further crystallized into a partly tangible substance, which is soluble in pure water. This substance is the "Magical Mountain of the Moon" referred to in the R. C. letter. The crystallization of the solar and lunar rays in water (dew) produces the virgin earth--a pure, invisible substance, uncontaminated by material matter. When the virgin earth crystals are wet, they appear green; when dry, white.

Von Welling makes a suggestion for the extraction of the solar life from stagnant water, but is reticent both as to naming the essence extracted and also as to the various processes through which it must pass to be refined and increased in power. His hint, however, is both valuable and unusual:

"Take sweet clean water and seal it in a large bottle, leaving about one-fourth empty. Place the bottle in the sun for some weeks until it rots, showing a precipitation in the bottom. This precipitation, when properly manipulated by distillation, will produce a clear, fiery, burning oil, the constituents and use of which are only known to the wise."

The philosopher of Leyden continues: "Now when you have enough of your dew close your glasses exactly, and keep it till you use it, that none of its spirits may evaporate, which may easily happen. Set it therefore in a cool place, that no warmth may come to it, or else the subtle spirit will rise and be gone; which will not so happen if after you have filled your glasses with Dew quite full, you close them very well with wax.

"Now in the Name of God, take of this Dew-water as much as thou wilt, put in a clean dissolving glass, then cast a little of your forementioned powdered salt into it to be dissolved, and continue to put in till your Dew-water will dissolve no more or till the salt lies in it four days without being dissolved, then it has enough, and unto your Dew is given its proper powder. Of this compounded water, take as much as thou wilt, I took about a pound and a half, and put it into a round vial with a short neck, fill it with out water and lute it with a good lute, a cover and stopple that fits it well, that the subtle and living spirit of the dew may not fume away, for if they should the soul of the salt will never be stirred up, nor the work ever brought to a right end. Let the lute dry very well of itself, and set it in the furnace of B. M. to putrefy. Make a slow fire and let it digest for forty days or fifty, and that the fume of the water be continually round about it, and you will see your matter grow black, which is a token of its putrefaction.

"As soon as you have taken it out, have your dry furnace ready. Set your glass with the matter into an inner globe to coagulate, give it a slow degree of fire, continue it equally for twelve or fifteen days, and your matter will begin to coagulate and to fasten round about your glass like a gray salt, which as soon as you see and before it be two days, slacken the fire that it may cool leisurely. Then have in readiness your putrefying furnace as before. Set your glass therein and give the same degree of fire as before. Let it stand twelve days, and again you will see the matter resolve and open as before, and open itself, but you must every time see that the lute and your glass is not hurt. When you set your glass in the putrefying furnace, take care that the neck of your glass is covered with

a wooden or glass stopper that fits it exactly, that the moisture of the water may not come at it.

"When you see it black set your glass as before to coagulate and when it begins to be of a grayish color and whitish, set it in a third time to putrefy, and coagulate to the fifth time, until you see that your water in its dissolution is clean, pellucid and clear, and that it appears in its Calcination of a fine white like Snow. Then it is prepared and becomes a Salt fixed which will melt on hot Silver plate like wax; but before you set this your Salt out, set it again [in] the furnace of putrefaction that it may dissolve of itself, then let it cool, open your Glass and you will find your Matter lessened a third part. But instead of your former Salt Water you will have a fine Sweet and very penetrating Water which the Philosophers have hid under very wonderful Names--It is the Mercury of all true Philosophers, the Water out of which comes Gold and Silver, for they say its Father is Gold and its Mother is Silver. Thus hast thou the strength of both these Luminaries conjoined in this Water, most true, in its right Pondus.

"Prescription. 5 Drops of this Water taken inwardly strengthens the understanding and memory, and opens to us most wonderful and sweet things, of which no man hath heard, and of which I dare not further write, because of the Oath I made God to the contrary. Time and the holy use of this blessed Water will teach us, as soon as you have taken it inwardly such influence will happen to thee as if the whole heavens and all the stars with their powers are working in thee. All Knowledge and secret Arts will be opened to thee as in a dream, but the most excellent of all is, you will perfectly learn rightly to know all creatures in their Nature, and by means thereof, the true understanding of God, the Creator of us, Heaven and Earth, like David and Moses and all the Saints of God, for the wisdom of our fountain of living Water will instruct thee as it did Solomon and the Brethren of our fraternity."

In his rare treatise on *Salt, Sulphur and Mercury*, von Welling discloses a secret: not generally revealed in alchemical writings, namely, that the alchemists were concerned not only with the transmutation of metals but had a complete cosmological and philosophical system based upon the Qabalah.

According to von Welling, the universal salt (in watery form) is a positive cure for all the physical ailments of mankind; it is in every living thing, but from some things it is more easily secured than from others: especially is this true of virgin earth; it is the universal solvent, the alkahest. The same writer also states that in the first stages of its preparation this salt will cure any and all diseases of the heart. The anonymous philosopher of Leyden continues:

"Would you now proceed further with our blessed Water to the forementioned intention of preparing a Tincture for Metals, hearken my Son--

"Take in the NAME of the Lord, of thy Paradisiacal Water, of heavenly Water of Mercury, as much as thou wilt, put it into a glass to dissolve, and set it in a slow heat of Ashes, that it may just feel the warmth, then have ready well purified Gold for the Red, or

Silver for the White Elixir, for in both the Processes are the same. Let your Gold or Silver be beaten as thin as leaf Gold, cast it by degrees into your dissolving Glass, that contains your blessed Water, as you did in the beginning with your Salt, and it will melt like Ice in Warm Water, and continue so to do till your Gold or Silver lie therein four days without dissolving, then it has received its due Pondus. Then put this dissolution as before into a round Glass, fill it two thirds parts full, seal it hermetically as before, let your Sigillum be well dried. Set it in the furnace of Balneum Vaporis, make a fire and let it remain forty days, as before, then will the Gold or Silver be dissolved radically and will turn of the deepest black in the world, which as soon as you see, have your other drying furnace in readiness."

Continuing: "Philosophers say there is no true solution of the body without a proceeding coagulation of the spirit, for they are interchangeably mixed in a due proportion, whereby the bodily essence becomes of a spiritual penetrating nature. On the other hand, the incomprehensible spiritual essential virtue is also made corporeal by the fire, because there is made between them so near a relation or friendship, like as the heavens operate to the very Depth of Earth, and producing from thence all the treasures and riches of the whole World.

"Admirandum Naturæ Operationem in Archidoxes Cognitam.

*"With this Powder--*You may as follows project on metals. Take five parts of fine Gold or Silver according as you work, and melt it in a Crucible. Wrap up your Medicine in Wax, cast it therein, give a strong fire for an hour, then take the Crucible out, as it were, calcined, then cast one part on ten parts of imperfect metals, be it what it will, and the same will be immediately changed into purer Metal, than what is brought out of the Mines and produced by Melting; and when you augment it in strength and virtue by resolving and coagulating, the fifth time it will resolve itself in three days and be coagulated in twenty-four hours time, to an incredible and most highly pellucid Stone or Red Shining burning Coal. For the white work it will become like a white stream of Lightning.

"Of this last coagulation take one part, cast it upon five thousand of melted Gold or Silver as before. It changes the same into perfect Medicine, one part whereof will tinge one hundred thousand parts of melted imperfect Metals into the very finest Gold or Silver. So far I have brought and further I would not come, for as I would set in the matter [to distill] six times in twelve hours, it subtilized so highly that the most part (like somewhat most wonderful to behold) past through the Glass causing an inexpressible odoriferous Smell. Take heed that it happens not to you.

"Many more wonders of this holy Art might be added, namely how to prepare therewith all sorts of precious Stones, and other most admirable things, but it would require too great a book to express the whole as it ought to be, especially as the Art is endless and not to be apprehended with one view, and my purpose has been, Loving Cousin and Son, devoutly to lead thee into the Mysteries of Nature and this holy Science, and I have faithfully performed it."

In conclusion, the letter states: "Go thou to work as I have done before thee, fear God, Love thy neighbour from the bottom of thy Soul sincerely. So will in the Manual operation, everything to thee, and when thou art at work therein many of our brethren will reveal themselves to thee, of our holy order, privately; For I have on my part by the Eternal God wrote the truth which I found out by prayer and searching into Nature, which work I have seen with my eyes, and with my hands extracted. Therefore also I have subscribed this Testament with my own blood, the last day of my Life on my deathbed. Actum Leyden, 27 March 1662."

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