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Rafal T. Prinke - Hunting the Blacke Toade.

Article originally published in *The Hermetic Journal*, 1991, 78-90.

HUNTING THE BLACKE TOADE

Some aspects of alchemical symbolism



The study of alchemical symbolism is in many respects similar to that of Christian symbolism in works of art and literature. The major difference, however, is that the key to the latter is well known while the key to alchemy has been lost [\[1\]](#). Its re-discovery is not a matter of a single insight but rather of a meticulous and long-lasting comparative study of surviving texts and iconography. It is now fairly obvious that there were several "schools" of symbolism within European alchemy, sometimes overlapping, sometimes borrowing individual symbols from other systems, or even distorting the ideas of earlier writers. These schools should be clearly defined along with the kind of symbols used by them. Even though such "perfect" definitions may not reflect any actual alchemical works, it would be very useful for reference in any future studies, as well as for the analysis of chronological and geographical spreading of alchemical ideas. Some of such widely defined groups of symbolism and differences between them can be easily seen but have not been properly described yet.

Many scholars stress the fact that most alchemical notions, such as the Philosophers' Stone or the *Materia Prima*, are denoted by a wide range of names and symbols, and give long lists of examples. But a really helpful kind of "alchemical dictionary" would be to analyze particular clearly defined symbols as used by different alchemical authors and find out their various meanings. A full study of this kind is obviously beyond the possibilities of any individual researcher so I decided to make a small beginning by an attempt to clarify the symbol of the Toad. I chose it because it is not as common as the Lion or the Eagle, and therefore requires less research, but at the same time it is quite distinct and well defined.

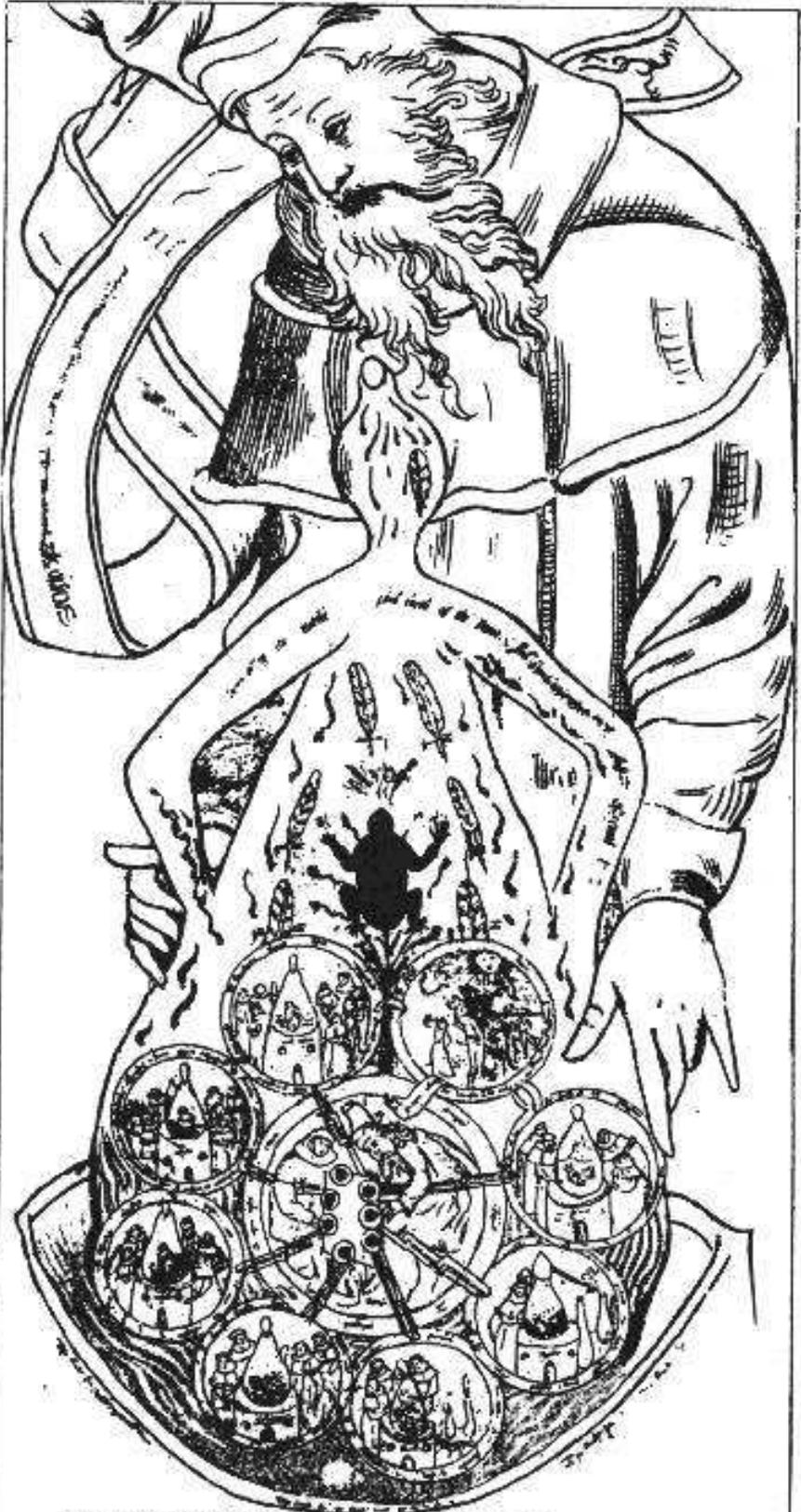
Any symbol appearing in an alchemical treatise should be studied from two points of view:

1. Its meaning in other symbolic systems of the period or earlier.
2. Its context in different alchemical treatises.

In the first case care must be taken not to refer to symbolism of the ancient Egyptians or Chinese, as over-enthusiastic occultists tend to do, but rather stick to medieval and renaissance Europe, with possible classical symbols that may have been known there. In the second case the special points to note would be the frequency (and therefore importance) of the symbol in question, whether it appears at the beginning or at the end of the process described, whether it is in a group of three, four, seven, or some other number of symbols, etc.

One of the earliest appearances of the Toad symbol in alchemical literature and iconography seems to be that in the works of George Ripley, in which it plays a very prominent, or even central, part. His short poem *The Vision* [2] describes an alchemical process veiled in symbols. The Toad first drinks "juice of Grapes" until it is so filled up that "casts it Venom" and "begins to swell" as a result of poisoning. Then the Toad dies in its "Cave" and the usual sequence of colour changes follows: black, various colours, white and red. Thus the Venom is changed into powerful Medicine.

The famous *Ripley Scrowle* has not been available to me in its entirety but from several published fragments [3] it seems that it presents a similar, though considerably extended, process of the Toad undergoing various chemical changes. It reappears in various points of this symbolic road, clearly suggesting continuity. In some versions the Toad is also the final symbol of the Philosophers' Stone [4].



my in the hall of the world, when I first the history of the world began

It would, therefore, appear that the Toad is here used as the symbol of the First Matter of the Great Work (as different from the cosmological Prima Materia), which is worked upon until the Stone is obtained. The symbolic sense of choosing this symbol finds confirmation in the fact that toad was believed by Ripley's contemporaries to be a venomous animal, highly repugnant, but containing a stone of great value in its head. That stone has the power of curing bites and is an antidote against poison. This common belief found its way to Shakespeare's *As You Like It*:

Sweet are the uses of adversity;
Which like the toad, ugly and venomous,
Wears yet a precious jewel in his head.

Another English author wrote in 1569: "There is to be found in the heads of old and great toads a stone they call borax or stelon, which being used in a ring gives a forewarning against venom" [5].

Eirenaeus Philalethes in his commentary to Ripley's *Vision* says that the Toad symbolizes gold. This view may have been influenced by Michael Sendivogius's statement that the Philosophers' Stone is nothing else but "gold digested to the highest degree" [6], especially as Philalethes was his admirer and adopted his pseudonym of Cosmopolita. As we do not know the First Matter of Ripley, it is difficult to say whether Eirenaeus Philalethes is right. Ripley himself in his most famous work *The Twelve Gates*, which is less symbolic and uses early chemical terminology, remarks in the first Gate (Calcination):

The head of the crow that token call we,
and some men call it the crow's bill.
Some call it the ashes of Hermes tree,
Our toad of the earth that eateth his fill,
and thus they name after their will.
Some name it by which it is mortificate,
The spirit of the earth with venom intoxicate. [7]

The Toad is therefore clearly identified here as the stage of Nigredo or Raven's Head, but also connected with earth. Interestingly in the ninth Gate (Fermentation, which is the same as Digestion) Ripley says:

Earth is gold, and so is the soul also,
Not common gold, but ours thus elementate. [8]

It is, therefore, clear that in Ripley's works the Toad symbolized the First Matter of the Great Work that was obtained in its first stage of Calcination or Nigredo. It may be gold but then the choice of the symbol would appear strange - it should rather be something base and vulgar. It is often said of the First Matter that it can be found everywhere but fools cannot see it, and this opinion would fit the Toad symbol much better. For instance, the anonymous author of the poem *Hunting the Greene Lyon* says:

And choose what thou shalt finde of meanest price:
Leave sophisters, and following my advice,
Be not deluded; for the truth is one,
'Tis not in many things, this is Our Stone:
At first appearing in a garb defiled,
And, to deal plainly, it is Saturn's childe.
His price is meane, his venom very great
His constitution cold, devoid of heat. [9]

This aspect of the toad symbol in medieval imagery is also stressed by the medieval writer Catelanus when he says that unicorns live in caves "amid toads and other noxious, loathy reptiles" [10].

The Toad as a symbol of only one phase in the alchemical process appears also in another poem by Ripley:

The showers cease, the dews, which fell
For six weeks, do not rise;
The ugly toad, that did so swell,
With swelling, bursts and dies. [11]

This is clearly the same chemical process as in his *Vision*, where almost exactly the same words are used:

A Toad full Ruddy I saw, did drink the juice of Grapes so fast,
Till over-charged with the broth, his Bowels all to brast:
And after that, from poyson'd Bulk he cast his Venom fell,
For Grief and Pain whereof his Members all began to swell.

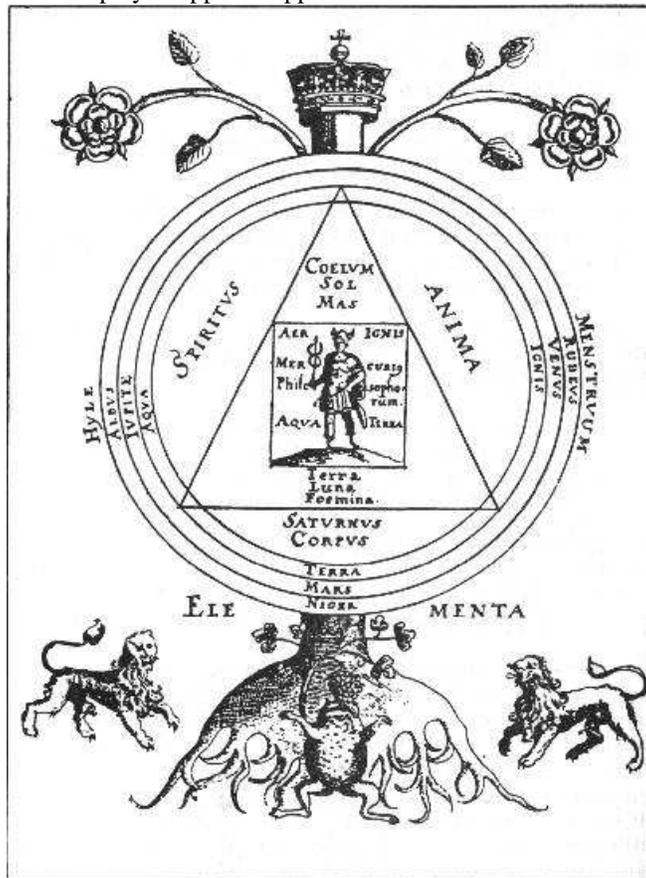
Another of the early English alchemists, Bloomfield, in his *Camp of Philosophy* lists the Toad as one of the names of the Elixir or Philosophers' Stone itself:

Our great Elixir most high of price,

Our Azot, our Basiliske, and our Adrop, our Cocatrice.
 Some call it also a substance exuberate,
 Some call it Mercury of metalline essence,
 Some limus deserti from his body evacuate,
 Some the Eagle flying fro' the north with violence,
 Some call it a Toade for his great vehemence,
 But few or none at all doe name it in its kinde,
 It is a privy quintessence; keep it well in minde. [12]

Mary Anne Atwood interprets all these names as reflecting the Stone on various stages of the Great Work: "being sublimed at first, it is called a serpent, dragon, or green lion, on account of its strength and crude vitality, which putrefying, becomes a stronger poison, and their venomous toad; which afterwards appearing calcined by its proper fire, is called magnesia and lead of the wise". [13]

It can be summed up, therefore, that in the English alchemical tradition the Toad is a symbol of the First Matter of the Work, which is Saturnine in nature (which does not have to mean lead but any substance associated with Saturn). Sometimes it refers only the the phase of Putrefaction or Caput Corvi, on account of its Saturnine symbolism ("Regnum Saturni"), sometimes also to the Philosophers' Stone itself, as the "jewel" hidden in the Toad's head (i.e. in the First Matter). This kind of symbolism seems to have been continued by later alchemists in England, through continuous interest in the works of Ripley displayed by such authors as Elias Ashmole, Eirenaeus Philalates, or Samuel Norton, the grandchild of Ripley's supposed apprentice Thomas Norton.

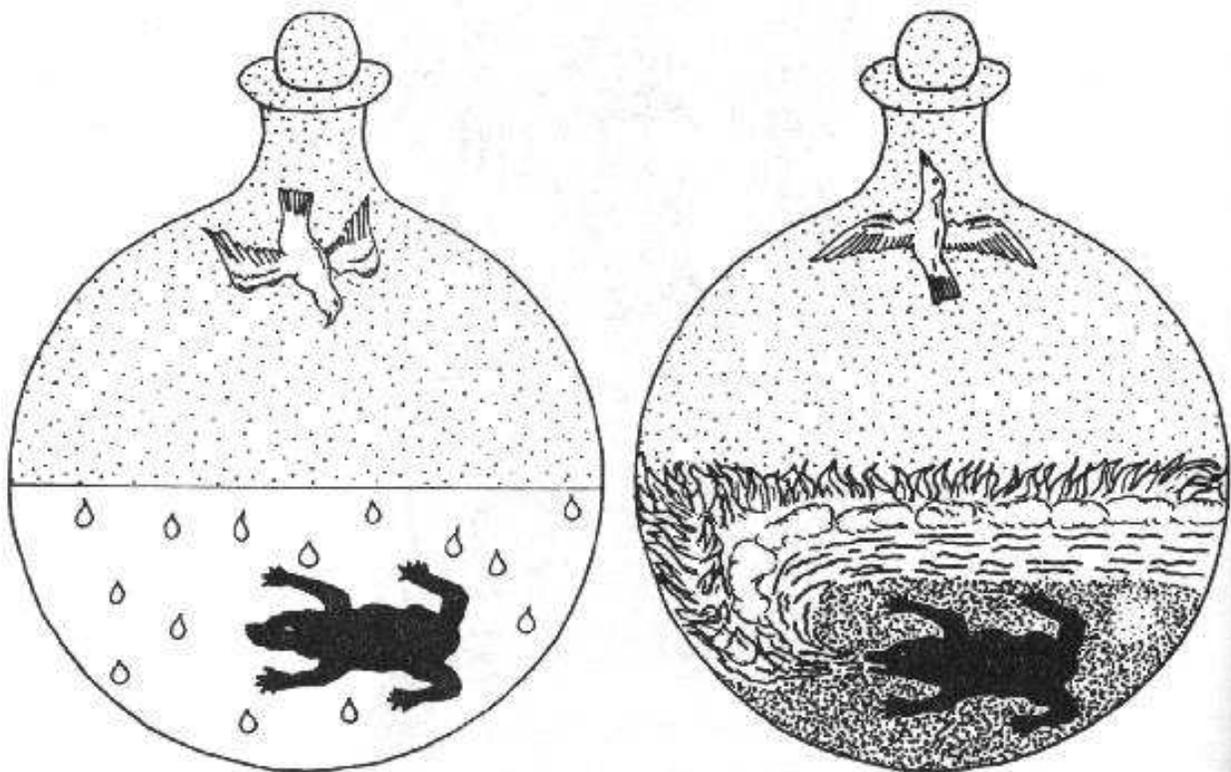


One of the interesting tree diagrams in Norton's *Mercurius Redivivus* presents the Toad at the roots of the Tree of the Great Work, with two lions at its sides. The Toad reaches for the Grapes above it, thus clearly referring to Ripley's imagery from his *Vision*.



The well known illustration from Ashmole's *Theatrum Chemicum Britannicum* shows the Toad at the bottom of the symbolic process, probably indicating its beginning. It is interesting that it joins the male and female figures, as if it symbolized the power of attraction with some sexual overtones. The whole figure is entitled "Spiritus, Anima, Corpus", of which the Corpus or Body is the male-female pair. The whole possible sexual aspect of alchemy is still completely unknown and waiting to be explained but it may be interesting to note that Thomas Vaughan, who illustrated Ashmole's collection, made numerous sexual references in his own alchemical works, especially *Aula Lucis*. In his notebooks Vaughan explained how he had made the "oil of Halcali" with the help of his wife. According to A.E. Waite this oil is the First Matter which connects it with our Toad symbol. [\[14\]](#)

The sexual symbolism of the Toad can also be found outside alchemy, which strengthens our argument. On the great painting of Hieronymus Bosch *The Garden of Earthly Delights*, on its right wing, there is a figure of a woman with a toad on her breast which symbolizes the sin of debauchery. [\[15\]](#) A sculpture in Strasbourg entitled *The Seducer of Unfaithful Virgins* depicts snakes and toads climbing up a handsome youth's back while he holds forth an apple. [\[16\]](#) So the toad may be understood to symbolize the power of sexual instinct, the force of attraction of the opposites, which in the official morality was seen as something loathsome and vulgar.



A work that would seem to spring from a totally different tradition, *The Crowning of Nature* [17], uses the Toad symbol in two of the 67 figures. These are numbers 17 Fermentation and 18 Separation of the Elements. The text accompanying the pictures, however, strongly resembles the Ripleyan ideas: "But by the Toad, here understand the sphere of Saturn swelling with tincture, or his heaven to be great and impregnate therewith, and by and by ready to bring forth, which by the ejection of the four elements appears most plainly in the next Chapter." [18] The Saturnine nature of the First Matter (or Chemical Subject, as it is called here) is confirmed in figure 2 and its text, which agrees with our conclusion reached above. Ripley's "casting of Venom" by the Toad is paralleled here in figure 18. In both cases the White Dove is above the Toad, probably signifying the volatile nature of the "tincture" or Ripley's Juice of Grapes.



The 18th century published version of the series (without text) produced by Johann Conrad Barchusen [19] has some additional figures, extending the set to 78. Plate 1 also utilizes the Toad symbol in connection with those of the Pelican, the Lion, and the Salamander, surrounding the Mercury of the Philosophers. Adam McLean interprets the whole as representing the four elements [20] but it is not quite obvious, as the bird at the top is clearly the Pelican, usually not a symbol of the Air. It is also difficult to see any obvious connection of the Lion with the Water. It is true that there are the standard triangle symbols of two of the elements beside the Lion and the Toad but in that case the symbolism of this plate would not be uniform with the symbolism of the whole series and would have to be treated as a later addition. On the other hand the creatures can be seen as representing the phases of the Great Work. In the original *Crowning of Nature* these are found in the following series of plates:

| | |
|-------------|--------------|
| Green Lion | 7-8 |
| Toad | 17-18 |
| Pelican | 37 |
| Salamander | 41-55 and 58 |
| Angel/Stone | 66-67 |

Seen in this light the first plate from Barchusen is a summary of the whole process of the Great Work and thus an integral part of the series. The only objection may be that the very important symbol of the Dove appearing on plates 10-36 is not included. It seems, however, (and is supported by the accompanying text) that the Dove is only the indication of the direction in which the Spirit (or the volatile principle) goes at any stage.



Of the 17th century Rosicrucian heirs to the alchemical tradition I found only two who used the Toad symbol. The less important in this context is Johann Daniel Mylius. In the very numerous engravings found in his works the Toad appears only on the title page of *Opus Medico-Chymicum*, inside the triangle of Air, chained to the Eagle above it. It probably refers to the volatile (and therefore "aerial") principle of solid bodies or, otherwise, to "fixing of the volatile". It is interesting that the same image of "bird above toad" appeared in *The Crowning of Nature* but without the chain joining them. In the text of the latter, however, mention is made about fixing the Elements cast forth by the Toad until they are inseparable. Some shift of meaning must have occurred between the two uses of this kind of symbolism.



The most striking thing, however, is that Michael Maier has exactly the same symbol in one half of his personal coat-of-arms as displayed on his portrait in *Atalanta Fugiens*, and that he used it also as the main symbolic emblem of Avicenna in *Symbola Aureae Mensae* where it is clearly explained as Fixing the Volatile.



Maier used the Toad symbol in a different context again in *Atalanta Fugiens* in emblem 5, where it is placed by a man on a woman's breast. The epigram to this emblem is in many ways similar to Ripley's *Vision*:

To woman's breast apply the chilly toad,
 So that it drinks her milk, just like a child.
 Then let it swell into a massive growth,
 And let the woman sicken, and then die.
 You make from this a noble medicine,
 Which drives the poison from the human heart. [21]

In this case the Toad drinks Virgin's Milk instead of Juice of Grapes, which may be just different terminology. However, it is the woman who dies, not the Toad. The sexual interpretation can also have been intended as a woman with a toad on her breast is identical with the symbol of debauchery or sexual attraction used by Bosch. The above cases of Toad symbolism in alchemy are probably very incomplete but even on this basis it can be concluded that there definitely is some continuity in its used from the 15th to the 17th centuries, although occasional shifts in meaning are also noticeable. These may possibly be due to the simultaneous shift from physical alchemy of Ripley and his contemporaries (i.e. probably describing actual chemical processes) to the highly spiritualized (and possibly incorporating the sexual aspect) alchemy of the 17th century Rosicrucian Enlightenment.

Notes:

1. Some scholars believe they have discovered that "key" but as the spectrum ranges from highly symbolic explanations of C.G. Jung (that are rather a presentation of his own system of psychoanalysis with the help of alchemical imagery) to strictly chemical ones of chemistry historians, it is difficult to accept such claims.
2. Reprinted with the commentary by Eirenaeus Philalethes from his *Ripley Redivivus* in *The Secret Art of Alchemy* by Stanislas Klossowski de Rola, p.23-30.
3. For example in Jung's *Psychology and Alchemy*, ill. 196, Klossowski de Rola's *The Secret Art of Alchemy*, pl. 65, Powell's *Alchemy, the Ancient Science*, p.66.

4. Manly P. Hall, *Meditation Symbols in Eastern and Western Mysticism*, Los Angeles, 1988, p.203.
5. For general discussion of toad symbolism see the article by E.A. Armstrong in *Man, Myth and Magic* p.2856.
6. In *Tenth Treatise* - see *Concerning the Secrets of Alchemy*, Llanerch Enterprises, 1989, p.116.
7. Quoted after *In Pursuit of Gold* by Lapidus, Weiser 1976, p.99.
8. *Ibid.*, p.126.
9. Quoted by Mary Ann Atwood in *A Suggestive Inquiry into Hermetic Mystery* p.317 (apparently from Ashmole's collection *Theatrum Chemicum Britannicum* but I could not verify it).
10. Quoted after Jung's *Psychology and Alchemy*, p.437.
11. Quoted by Mary Ann Atwood in *A Suggestive Inquiry into Hermetic Mystery* p.406, from *Ripley Redivivus*.
12. Quoted by Mary Ann Atwood in *A Suggestive Inquiry into Hermetic Mystery* p.94, from Ashmole's *Theatrum Chemicum Britannicum*.
13. *Ibid.*
14. See Colin Wilson, *Mysteries*, Panther 1979, p.433-35. His discussion is based on Kenneth Roxroth's introduction to *The Works of Thomas Vaughan*, University Books, New York, 1968.
15. Anna Boczkowska, *Tryumf Luny i Wenus*, Krakow, 1980, p.63.
16. *Man, Myth and Magic* p.2856.
17. Edited and published by Adam McLean, Edinburgh, 1980.
18. *Ibid.*, p.40.
19. *Elementa Chemicæ*, 1718.
20. *The Crowning of Nature*, op.cit., p.127.
21. The translation is by Joscelyn Godwin from Adam McLean's edition, Tysoe, 1987, p.85.

Rafal T. Prinke - The Wroclaw codex of the Magical Calendar.

Article originally published in *The Hermetic Journal*, 28 (1985), 26-29.

THE WROCLAW CODEX OF THE MAGICAL CALENDAR

The importance of the *Magical Calendar* attributed to Tycho Brahe was discussed by Adam McLean in his edition of it (Magnum Opus Hermetic Sourceworks No. 1). He also compared the engraved Latin version published in 1620 with the manuscript copy in Vienna and found that the latter contains a number of misspellings and therefore that the published version is earlier. But is it the original or was there an earlier manuscript version?

When I was looking through the book *Die Rosenkreutzer* by Will-Erich Peuckert, I found there a short note about a manuscript entitled *Ein immerwährender natürlich-magischer Calender* which, at that time (1928), was in the Breslauer Universitätsbibliothek. The note was not repeated in later, rewritten, editions of the same book which appeared under the title *Das Rosenkreutz*. As the title was similar to that of the *Magical Calendar*, I got interested in the matter and when an opportunity occurred I went to Wroclaw (Breslau) to see if the MS is still there, and if so to examine it. Fortunately, the University Library was not destroyed during the war and I found the MS in a very good condition.

few minor exceptions), so the relationship between them must be much closer than between the published calendar and the *Vienna Codex*. The most important thing, therefore, is to establish its date or, at least, which one of the two is earlier and possibly original. There are some clues which make it possible to put forward a hypothesis about it. First of all it is the handwriting, which is certainly early 17th or even may be late 16th century though, of course, it is difficult to date the handwriting to within a few years, as an elderly person would write in the style he had learned in his youth. The next point is that the MS is very beautifully executed suggesting "originality", especially as I have not found any misspellings or other mistakes. The latter fact also seems to indicate that the author of the *Wroclaw Codex* was not just a copyist but knew something about the subject matter of it, which is further suggested by the colouring of the various seals and talismanic figures according to the traditional colour correspondences of the planets and signs of the Zodiac. The use of parchment indicates that it had a great importance for the author or possessor; it cannot indicate an earlier date as one of the astronomical tables refers to the Old Style and the New Style calendars (just as in both the other versions) and therefore the earliest possible date is 1582. Perhaps the most important and informative clue is the fact that the *Wroclaw Codex* is not attributed to Tycho Brahe, nor to Trithemius, nor to any other more or less improbable author. However, the other two names associated with the calendar remain in their places: in the bottom left hand corner we read:

Auth. Johan Baptista

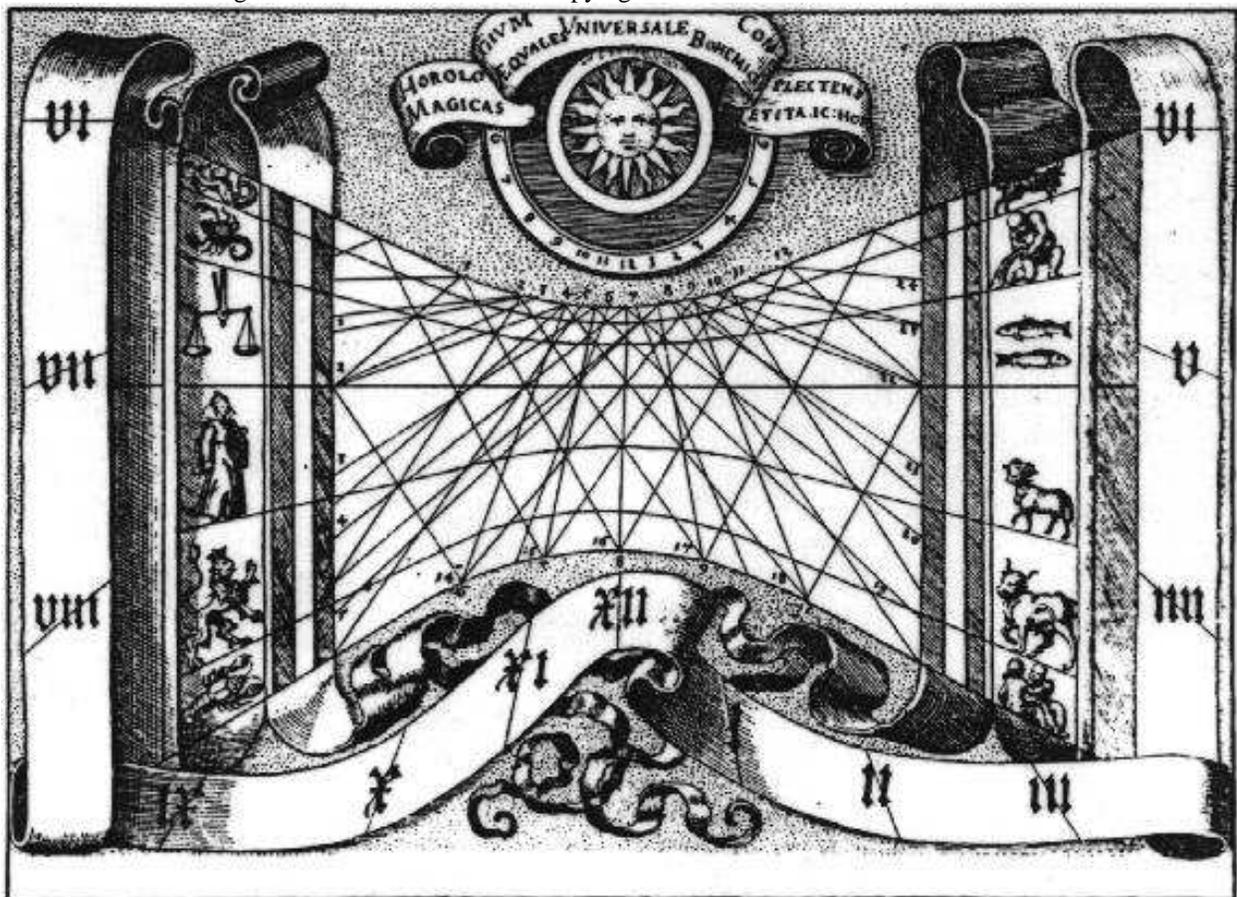
Groschedel ab Aicha

and on the right side at the same level:

Joh: Theodore de Bry

Excudebr.

This is again a suggestion that this manuscript is the original of the Latin engraved plate published in 1620. It has not been associated with Tycho Brahe yet when it was made and only the names of actual authors were recorded. It may also be noticed that the engraved version has "BAPTISTA", while the MS has the correct spelling "Baptista", so it seems that the engraver made a mistake while copying it.



One more considerable difference is the big sun-dial diagram (used by Adam McLean as the frontispiece to his edition). Besides being slightly different in graphic design, the MS version has the signs of the Zodiac in different

arrangement: they start with Aries in the middle of the left hand column and go upwards in the clockwise direction, while in the published version they start on the right hand column and go downwards (also in the clockwise direction). The engraved design has some Arabic numbers on the network of lines in the centre, while the MS has the same in Roman numerals and additionally two columns of figures on each side (four in all), each of which is surmounted by the letters "St. M." (probably "Stunde" and "Minuten", i.e. hours and minutes, as the figures suggest, e.g. 17.3, 16.12, 14.14. etc.). I know too little about sun-dials to judge which of these schemes is more correct astronomically (but the MS seems to be more precise). The inscriptions above the sun reads : "Eine Allgemeine Sonen Uhr" ("A Universal Sun Dial") as compared to the printed version's "The Universal clock, encompassing magical equalities, and striking the hours accordingly in Bohemia". It is possible that the "Bohemia" was added in order to make the Tycho Brahe association more credible. The great astronomer lived in Prague, Bohemia, as the court of Emperor Rudolph II, but he came there only in 1597, so "Bohemia" and "1582" are mutually exclusive as far as Brahe is concerned.

All these facts clearly suggest that the *Wroclaw Codex* is earlier than the published Latin version of the *Magical Calendar* (and, of course, than the *Vienna Codex*), and may even be the original copy. As it is not attributed to any improbable authors, I am inclined to believe that Groschedel and de Bry are its real authors. Adam McLean observed that Groschedel, who was the author of two alchemical books, was rather a compiler than an original writer. Since the *Magical Calendar* is a magnificent compilation, his authorship is quite probable. Also, if we accept that the published version was engraved by de Bry (or under his supervision), then it is probable that the Wroclaw MS was drawn by him. All the small pictures and sigils are exactly identical with the engraved ones, even in such minute details as the tents behind Moses in the top right hand corner and the "horns" on his head. They are executed with great artistry and precision, and the calligraphy is also very nice. If this hypothesis is correct, it may have considerable importance for our understanding of the role played by Johan Theodore de Bry in the Rosicrucian hermetic revival. Besides being a publisher and engraver of hermetic works, he may have also produced manuscript drawings, etc. for individuals or groups (the Rosicrucian Order, if such existed, or circles connected with such eminent hermetists as Fludd, Maier, Sendivogius, Boehme, etc.).

I wanted to give a list of colours used in the *Wroclaw Codex* but, on second thoughts, I decided that it would be too complex and would take up too much space to be worth publishing. However, if any of the readers is interested in it, I will be able to supply the colouring instructions individually on request.

It is also interesting that the MS of the *Magical Calendar* is bound together with a manuscript copy of the well known Rosicrucian text *D.O.M.A.*, about which I will write separately. It is difficult for me to date the leather binding but it is certainly not later than the 18th century. Curiously enough, Manly Palmer Hall, who obviously did not know about the Wroclaw MS, added the *Magical Calendar* plate to his edition of *D.O.M.A.* Perhaps he was guided by his intuition which told him that these two texts are somehow connected?

Rafal T. Prinke - Michael Sendivogius and Christian Rosenkreutz.

Article originally published in *The Hermetic Journal*, 1990, 72-98.

For later research and comprehensive presentation of Sendivogius in English see: Zbigniew Szydlo, *Water which does not wet hands. The alchemy of Michael Sendivogius*, London-Warsaw 1994.

MICHAEL SENDIVOGIUS and CHRISTIAN ROSENKREUTZ

The Unexpected Possibilities

Dame Frances A. Yates in her absorbing book *The Rosicrucian Enlightenment* advanced the theory that Rosicrucianism should be seen "as a movement ultimately stemming from John Dee" [\[1\]](#). The evidence she quotes is really massive and quite convincing, and yet on reading the book one still has a feeling that "something is lacking". Dee's journey to Central Europe and back through Germany, which, according to Yates, so stirred the minds of

continental intellectuals, took place between 1583 and 1589. This means a whole generation before the movement made itself known to the world at large through circulating, and eventually publishing, its Manifestos. Such a long time of germinating clearly indicates that there should have been some other figure of similar charisma that would have "passed the torch" to the young enthusiasts of Tübingen who were responsible for creating the Rosicrucian mythos. Another point is the stress that the Manifestos place on the healing activities of the R.C. Brethren (in the Paracelsian tradition) and their anonymity - neither of which can be attributed to Dee [2].

We should therefore look for an alchemist possessing the secret of transmutation and Paracelsian physician active in the first two decades of the 17th century, who was anonymous and yet well known and admired by his contemporaries, had contacts - also diplomatic - with the courts in Prague, Stuttgart and Cassel but, at the same time, was not dependent on the kings and princes. A person that travelled extensively in Europe and the Orient, meeting all the important hermetic scholars of his time and expounding to them his visions of the New Age of general reformation in religion, philosophy and science.

Among the many hermetic philosophers of that crucial period there is only one person that meets all the above mentioned criteria - the unfortunately neglected and misrepresented in modern writings on the subject Polish alchemist Michael Sendivogius. In my earlier article [3] I attempted to show how this unfair treatment began and what the truth about Sendivogius really was. Now I would like to draw some attention to the evidence that shows him as a possible key figure in the early development of the Rosicrucian movement and the type of thinking associated with it.

He may be seen not only as the missing link between Dee and the Manifestos but indeed as a model for the mythical Frater C.R.C. His activities and travels all over Europe made him a well known figure even before 1600, while after the publication of his *Twelve Treatises on the Philosophers' Stone* (later known as *Novum Lumen Chymicum* or *A New Light of Alchymie*) in 1604 and several publicly performed transmutations he was regarded as the greatest alchemist and hermetic philosopher of his time (he was also admired among the Tübingen university intellectuals, as I will show below). And still he wanted to remain anonymous and independent - it is very meaningful that all of his works were published anonymously and without dedications to any kings or princes - a truly Rosicrucian behaviour without precedence at that time!

In view of Frances Yates's statements about John Dee's influence on early Rosicrucianism, it is interesting to note the possible contacts of Sendivogius with his teachings. The Polish alchemist started his higher education at the Jagiellonian University in Cracow in about 1582. At that time there was a group of scholars interested in hermetic philosophy and teachings of Paracelsus there, whose protector was palatine Albrecht Laski (1536-1603) - the well known pretender to the Polish throne, responsible for bringing Dee and Kelley to Poland and Bohemia. His interest in the two magi was not only, as is sometimes suggested, connected with his political plans and hope to find funds for their realisation through alchemy, but he had a deep interest in hermeticism. In 1569 he financed the translation of two treatises by Paracelsus into Latin and their publication in Cracow and while in England he attended a public discussion of scholars from Oxford with Giordano Bruno organised to honour him. It is also possible that in fact Dee believed that Laski could make gold and that was one of the reasons he decided to go with him to Poland [4]. When Dee stayed in Trebona in Bohemia, Laski visited him there several times, so he certainly discussed his philosophical theories with him and could have passed them on to others in Cracow. Moreover, it is now known that Laski was actually an English spy, informing Dee on the current events at and political plans of the Polish court [5].

It is not exactly known who was the first protector of the young Sendivogius. It may have been Laski or his close friend and political ally Nicholas Wolski (1553-1630), with whom Sendivogius was later closely connected. Wolski was brought up at the imperial court in Vienna together with the later emperor Rudolph II and received good education at several European universities. From 1576 he stayed for ten years in Prague at the court of Rudolph as his cupbearer, at the same time visiting Cracow from time to time, as he also had the office of the great sword-bearer of Poland. Being an intellectual type, with deep interest in alchemy (he carried out some alchemical experiments together with king Sigismund III Vasa of Poland) and knowledge of several languages, he certainly must have met John Dee both in Cracow and in Bohemia.

As is well known, John Dee and Edward Kelley stayed in Cracow from March 13th (Old Style) to August 3rd (New Style) 1584, went for several months to Prague and came to Cracow again for the period between April 12th and August 6th 1585, when they returned to Prague again. This is also the time when Sendivogius went to the court of Rudolph II, probably recommended to him by Wolski, and therefore was in the midst of events. It might be an interesting hypothesis that he, being a protegee of Laski and Wolski, may have actually accompanied Dee on his way to Prague! This may find some confirmation in the fact that in Bohemia Sendivogius worked with the greatest Czech alchemist Bavor Rodovsky of Hustirany (1526-c.1600) [6], whose protector was Villem of Rozemberk, the host of Dee and Kelley when they settled down in Trebona, and who also resided there, working on Czech translations of the works of Paracelsus. But even if it was not so, Sendivogius most certainly knew the new ideas in

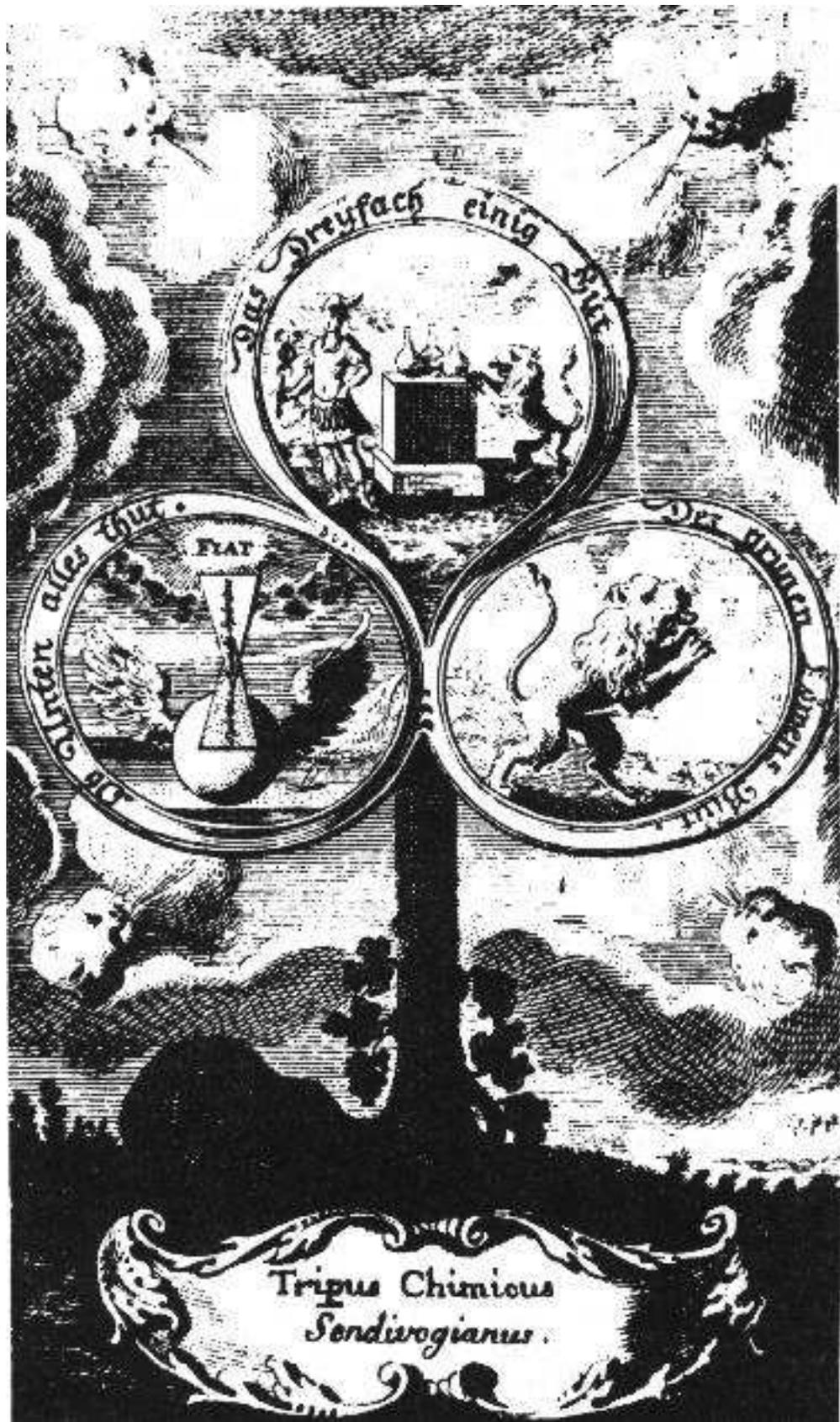
hermetic philosophy that Dee was spreading, especially if his visit was indeed so stirring as Frances Yates suggests. It is also certain that he was in contact with Edward Kelley after Dee's return to England, and after his death bought the estate Fumberk (which had been given to Kelley by Rudolph) from his widow.

All this clearly shows that Michael Sendivogius knew very well the intellectual current started by Dee in central Europe. During his years in the service of emperor Rudolph II, who made him his courtier in 1594, his councillor in 1598, and finally his "Truchsses", i.e. a courtier with rights to sit at the dining table with the emperor and live in his castle [7], Sendivogius first travelled around Europe, combining diplomatic missions with further studies. Still before 1588 he was sent to the Near East through Greece, where he is said to have met a Greek patriarch who taught him the secrets of alchemy. In his *Philosophical Letters* he says that he copied two very rare treatises by Hermes in Constantinople, while elsewhere his "praeceptor" from Egypt is mentioned, all of which is strongly reminiscent of the journey of Father C.R.C. to Damascus and Fez! Then he visited Rome, Padua, Naples and Venice, and possibly also studied at Cambridge, Frankfurt, Rostock and Wittenberg. In 1590 he was at the university in Leipzig where he made friends with Joachim Tancke (1557-1609), physician and alchemist, who later included Sendivogius's treatise in his *Promptuarium Alchemiae* (1614), and, what is especially significant, with Johann Tholde, the editor and probably author of the works ascribed to Basilus Valentinus, so important in the later Rosicrucian development [8]. A year later he was at the university in Vienna, and in 1594-95 studied in Altdorf, where he first met the Scottish alchemist Alexander Seton, the friendship with whom is the only explanation of his later (1603) involvement in freeing Seton from the prison of Christian II of Saxony. Far more interesting is, however, the relation quoted by Andreas Goldmayer in his *Harmonia chymica* (Onoltzbach 1655) that Sendivogius met in Altdorf a certain Armenian, whom he helped financially and who gave him the "Medicine" for transmuting base metals. Later the Armenian is said to have gone to Augsburg and Sendivogius to Stuttgart. This information is crucial as, on one hand, it may suggest that both Sendivogius and Seton had their tincture from the same source, and on the other - that Sendivogius visited Frederick of Wurttemberg (ruling from 1593) for the first time as early as 1595 and perhaps performed a transmutation with the Armenian's tincture, as he did the same the following year in Prague. The importance of the Duke of Wurttemberg for the beginnings of Rosicrucianism need not be emphasised here, as it was described at length by Frances Yates and earlier by Arthur Edward Waite. His court was a centre of alchemical and occult activities, with Simon Studion and Johann Valentin Andreae as its most notable Rosicrucian figures. After returning to Prague for a brief period, in 1597 he went to Dresden to the court of elector Christian II of Saxony, for whom he obtained some favours from the emperor (the fact that proved fruitful in the later Seton affair). The nature of the diplomatic activities undertaken for Rudolph II by Sendivogius during his travels is not known but most probably they were connected with "occult spying" on other rulers interested in alchemy and hermeticism. Similar missions were undertaken for Rudolph by the alchemist Hieronimus Scotus who was sent to German Protestant princes, especially landgrave William IV of Hesse-Cassel. But Sendivogius must have been doing especially well to have gained such great favours of the emperor. His travels in Germany and contacts established with both rulers and scholars must also have been more extensive than those mentioned above. He got married there and his wife was from Frankonia which might imply that he also stayed in Frankfurt for some time, where he may have met the "Rosicrucian publisher" Johann Theodore de Bry (in fact his first book was published simultaneously in Prague and Frankfurt).

When Michael Sendivogius with his family settled down in Prague in 1595 or 1596 he was already a well known and highly respected man, famous for his learning and enjoying the emperor's favours. The confirmation of this is found in a striking series of publications devoted to him: a collection of panegyric poems by the emperor's court poet Carolides of Karlsperk published in 1598 and dedicated to Sendivogius's son Michael Christopher (40 pages of various poems on the Sendivogius' family), some poems by Bartholomew Paprocki, a Polish and Bohemian herald and poet, on Sendivogius and his sons included in *Jina castka* (Prague 1598), dedication of the third part of the same author's massive work on history, heraldry and genealogy *Ogrod krolewski* (*Royal garden*) published in Prague in 1599, and the elegy on the death of the alchemist's wife - Veronica Stiberin - written by Joannes Chorinsky, a Moravian nobleman and poet, in 1599. All these authors knew Sendivogius personally and must have had some reason in seeking his favours.

In Prague Sendivogius also appears as an extraordinary physician - at first he lived at the house of Nicholas Lev of Lovenstejn, also a physician, and cured his son. Then he worked in the alchemical laboratory of a wealthy burgher Ludwig Koralek and became his family doctor, curing his daughter. It may be noted here that later, about 1606, when king Sigismund III Vasa was severely ill, he sent for Sendivogius even though there were several renowned physicians at his court. As may have been expected, Sendivogius's therapy proved effective and the king was cured. According to Lev of Lovenstejn he used white and red powders but his sound foundations in the art of medicine are obvious from his personal copy of *Pharmacopoeia Augustana* (Augsburg 1613) with copious marginal notes that is

now in the Jagiellonian Library in Cracow. This is important for the Rosicrucian connection because of the stress placed upon healing people in the Manifestos.



As is confirmed by archival materials in Prague, at that time Sendivogius possessed the White Tincture. He gave some of it to both of his hosts and they performed transmutations themselves: Lev of Lovenstejn changed some mercury into silver and Koralek did the same with a big nail and a screw from the wall in his house. The metal was carefully examined by an independent chemist and was found to be pure silver. Sendivogius, however, stressed the fact that he had got the tincture from his "praeceptor" from Egypt and had not made it himself. It is not known when the transmutation performed by Rudolph II with Sendivogius's tincture took place but it seems that it must have been some years later when he found the way of preparing the Philosophers' Stone himself. It was then that Rudolph ordered to place the marble slab with the inscription "Faciat hoc quispiam alius quod fecit Sendivogius Polonus" on the wall of the room where it was performed. Later the alchemist is known to have performed several other transmutations, including one of a part of a silver slab into gold in the presence of king Sigismund III Vasa of Poland (the slab was then taken to France, investigated and found to be of highest purity - Pierre Borel in his *Tresor de recherches et antiquites gauloises et francoises* published in Paris in 1655 calls it "the most beautiful example of transmutation in our times" as the gold part could not have been soldered and was porous due to the difference in specific gravity). Of special interest is, however, the information that Sendivogius sent through Jean de la Blaque, the French consul in Gdansk (Danzig), a bar of iron changed into gold to Bartholomew Schachmann, the mayor of that city. This must have taken place circa 1611 and was described by Adrian Pauli, a doctor of medicine and professor in the gymnasium in Gdansk (Danzig), in *Disputatio physica de metallis* published by Andreas Hunefeldt, the Rosicrucian publisher of Manifestos and the important work by Julius Sperber, in 1617 - at the height of the Rosicrucian furor! It may be important to note that Schachmann studied at the Jagiellonian University in Cracow at the same time as Sendivogius and so may be considered as his old friend.

Sendivogius continued his diplomatic activities in the service of both Rudolph II and Sigismund III. From at least 1599 he was a secretary of the latter - he also had two houses in Cracow, one of which was inherited from his father, so certainly must have visited that city quite frequently. A letter by king Sigismund III dated in Warsaw on June 13, 1600 which has survived starts "I am sending Your Imperial Majesty Michael Sendivogius in order to solve the problems of Moldavia. That province has always been under our protection...". (It is interesting that Albrecht Laski, some 35 years earlier, tried to win the Moldavian throne for himself and even later John Dee asked his spirits about this possibility [9].) Due to the nature of diplomacy little is known about the results of this and other missions undertaken by the alchemist but his abilities must have been very highly valued as in 1608 Sendivogius was asked by George Mniszech (d.1613), palatine of Sandomierz, to go to Moscow in connection with the False Dimitri affair and convince the Russian nobility to accept him as the tsar (he was Mniszech's son-in-law). The mission was obviously very dangerous but no details of it are known.

Sendivogius was not only an alchemist of the traditional kind but had deep interest in new technology, the fact that is well worth noting as Frances Yates stresses this in Dee as a sign of new "enlightened" thinking. He worked with Nicholas Wolski, by then the court marshal and from 1613 the great marshal of Poland, in his steelworks and factory producing needles, knives, swords, sheets of brass and copper, etc. Later, about 1621, Sendivogius started to organise a lead ore mine in Silesia for the emperor Ferdinand II, for which he received a salary and several land estates in Bohemia.

All the features of Sendivogius described so far show him as a figure of European renown - a diplomat, physician, technician and successful alchemist. He was also an adventurer - the fact that must have made him even more attractive in the eyes of his contemporaries. The Seton affair is well known and Sendivogius himself is known to have been imprisoned on at least two other occasions, and each time he managed to escape. In 1607 in Cracow he fought a duel with swords with Picus Zawadzki, a doctor of medicine from the Jagiellonian University known for his anti-Paracelsist views.

The question must be asked, however, if Sendivogius had actual contacts with the key figures who played an important role in the early Rosicrucian development. As we have already seen, it is quite certain that Sendivogius knew Dee and Kelley, through their protectors Albrecht Laski and Villem of Rozemberk, who were also his. Being a privileged courtier of Rudolph II, he must also have met some of the other important people, most significantly Heinrich Khunrath, whose *Amphitheatrum Sapientiae Aeternae* was first published in Prague in 1598 under the "privilege and protection" of Rudolph II and who stayed at the emperor's court as his physician for some time [10]. The work is described by Frances Yates as forming "a link between a philosophy influenced by Dee and the philosophy of the Rosicrucian manifestos" [11]. Khunrath met Dee in Bremen in the same year and was influenced by him, including mentions of his *Monas Hieroglyphica* and *Aphorisms* in the later full edition of *Amphitheatrum* (Hanover 1609). It is also significant that, like Sendivogius, he did not dedicate his works to any powerful protectors. This may be in fact one of the distinctive features of the early "true Rosicrucians" - if we accept it then Dee was not a fully grown Rosicrucian figure yet, while Khunrath was. He also presents a vision of a religious

philosophy evolving from Magia, Cabala and Alchymia which promises a new dawn for mankind, the theme later developed by the Manifestos [12]. But his works "do not appear to have received a great amount of known appreciation on their first publication" [13] and he died in 1605 so the ideas must have been spread by someone else. Another figure of crucial importance is Oswald Croll (1580-1609), another physician of Rudolph II and later of Christian of Anhalt who, according to Frances Yates, was the main architect of the political aspect of early Rosicrucianism. She even suggests that it was through Croll that the esoteric influences of the Prague court may have been brought to that of Anhalt. This is confirmed by Andrea Libavius's attack on the Manifestos in which Croll is often quoted as belonging to the same school of thought and clearly associated with the Rosicrucians. [14] We are lucky to know that Sendivogius was a close friend of Oswald Croll - they were both physicians of the already mentioned patrician of Prague Ludwig Koralek. In 1598 he became an alcoholic (it seems it is not a modern invention) which resulted in an incurable disease and eventually Karolek's death in June of 1599. As Sendivogius was the only physician that stayed with him to the end, his family later sued him for causing the death. One of the witnesses at the court was Croll who obviously defended Sendivogius. Later in his book *Basilica Chymica* (Frankfurt 1609, p.94) he called the Polish alchemist "Heliocantharus Borealis" - a descriptive name which seems to be of great importance in connection with the Rosicrucian Manifestos. It can be translated as "Glorifier of the Northern Sun" but the meaning of the phrase can only be discovered by turning to Sendivogius's own preface to his *Treatise on Sulphur* (first published in Cologne 1613) where he says:

"The times are at hand when many secrets of Nature will be revealed to men. The Fourth or Northern Monarchy is about to be established; a happy age is coming; enlightenment, the Mother of Sciences, will soon appear; a brighter Sun than in any of the preceding three Monarchies will rise and reveal more hidden secrets. This Monarchy (as the ancients foretold) God's Omnipotence will found by the hand of a prince enriched with all virtues who, it is said, has already appeared in this present age. In this our northern region we see a prince of uncommon wisdom and valour, whom no king can surpass in victories or in love of men and God."

"There is no doubt that in this Monarchy God will reveal to us more secrets of Nature than it took place in the pagan darkness or under the rule of tyrants. Philosophers used to describe these Monarchies not according to their powers but by their placement and the parts of the world they cover. On the first place they place the Eastern, then the Southern, then the Western and finally the Northern and last one which is expected in these countries and about which I will speak at length in my 'Harmonia'".

"In this Northern coming polar Monarchy (as the Psalmist says) mercy and truth will meet together, peace and justice will kiss each other, truth will spring up from the ground, and righteousness will look down from heaven. There will be one Shepherd and one fold, and knowledge will be the common property of all without envy. I look forward to all this with longing." [15]

This prophecy of "general reformation" might well have been taken from the Manifestos and precisely expresses their spirit. Of special importance is the use of the very term "Fourth Monarchy", so important in the Rosicrucian context. The well known fragment from the *Fama* says "In Politia we acknowledge the Roman Empire and Quartam Monarchiam for our Christian head; albeit we know what alterations be at hand, and would fain impart the same with all our hearts to other godly learned men". The mention of a prince who will establish the new Monarchy confirms the hypothesis of Frances Yates in a quite surprising way, while the words about "a brighter sun" that will rise are clearly the same theme as the statement in the *Fama* saying that "before the rising of the sun there should appear and break forth Aurora, or some clearness, or divine light in the sky". This Aurora is clearly Aurora Borealis, announcing the advent of the Northern Monarchy as foretold by Heliocantharus Borealis.

The whole subject of the coming reformation is only mentioned by Sendivogius here and the reader is referred to another work called *Harmonia* for further discussion. It is mentioned again in *Philosophical Letters* as having just been given to a certain Briquius for publication. So far it was generally accepted to have been lost but recent research of Prof. Bugaj suggests that it was published by Jacques Nuysement in Paris in 1618 and subsequently

attributed to him [16]. The dating of the letters is doubtful but the most probable year is 1616 which conforms with this possibility. There were two English editions of this work in the translation of Robert Turner from the Latin of Ludwig Combach (London 1657 and 1658). I have not been able to see this work but if it is really Sendivogius's *Harmonia* then it should be of crucial importance for the study of early Rosicrucianism. As Sendivogius was called "Heliocantharus Borealis" by Oswald Croll in the book published in 1609, he must have been teaching the theory of the Fourth Monarchy and the coming changes for at least a few years by then, maybe even as early as 1598-99 when we know they were in close contact. It is interesting that the same name or title was also used by Michael Maier to describe Sendivogius in *Symbola Aureae Mensae* (Frankfurt 1617) which shows that it was well known in the circles of alchemical philosophers of the period. Maier knew Sendivogius personally but they must have met later as he himself says he left his native Holstein only in 1608 [17], unless they first met in Altdorf or Rostock where both of them studied.

It is difficult to say who was the "great prince" that Sendivogius had in mind. It may have been Vladislaus IV Vasa, son of king Sigismund, who was seen by his ambitious father as the future king of Poland, Sweden and Moscow. But it is equally possible that Sendivogius visited Heidelberg on one of his journeys to Germany and was so impressed by its occult atmosphere that he began to regard Frederick V of Palatine as the future leader of the Fourth Monarchy. Alternatively his ideas may have inspired Christian of Anhalt (either through Oswald Croll or direct contact with Sendivogius) in his political plans connected with the young Elector. In any case it seems obvious that the initial impulse came from the teachings of Sendivogius.

In 1604 *De Lapide Philosophorum Tractatus duodecim* or *Twelve Treatises on the Philosophers' Stone* was published simultaneously in Prague and in Frankfurt. In Prague there were two editions in the same year and Rudolph II also ordered the book to be translated into Czech [18]. It stirred so much interest in Europe that numerous editions appeared in the following years and continued to appear in the 18th century, reaching over 50 different printings. But Sendivogius did not seek fame: the book bore his name hidden in the anagram "Divi Leschi Genus Amo" (Leschus or Lech was the legendary founder of Poland) and was not dedicated to Rudolph or any other patron. In his preface to the *Parable or Enigma of the Sages* added at the end Sendivogius wrote:

"If you ask who I am: I am Cosmopolita, citizen of the world. If you know me and wish to be good and honourable men, keep my name a secret. If you do not know me, forbear to enquire after my name, for I shall make public nothing more than appears in this writing. Believe me, if my rank and station were not what they are, I should enjoy nothing so much as a solitary life, or to have joined Diogenes in his tub. For I behold this world full of vanity, greed, cruelty, venality, and iniquity; and I rejoice in the prospect of the glorious life to come. I no longer wonder, as once I did, that the true Sage, though he owns the Stone, does not care to prolong his life; for he daily sees heaven before his eyes, as you see your face in a glass. When God gives you what you desire, you will believe me, and not make yourself known to the world." [19]

This statement expresses the reasons for remaining unknown in terms very similar to those at the end of the *Confessio*, while other fragments of the preface and epilogue to *De Lapide Philosophorum* bear strong resemblance to the closing paragraphs of the *Fama*.

The book must have been obtained by Frederick of Wurttemberg who, probably also motivated by the information on transmutations performed by Sendivogius, started corresponding with the alchemist, urging him to visit Stuttgart. Sendivogius finally agreed and came in the summer of 1605 together with his secretary and several servants. The duke greeted him with great hospitality, held long discussions with him in the palace gardens, and obviously asked if he could see a genuine transmutation. Sendivogius demanded that Frederick swears to keep all he sees in secret (which the latter did kneeling before the alchemist) and performed two transmutations of mercury into gold. The duke was so impressed that he gave Sendivogius the estate of Neidlingen that belonged to his court alchemist Hans Heinrich Muhlenfels which eventually proved disastrous as Muhlenfels then imprisoned Sendivogius and robbed him of all his belongings. This affair is of no concern to us here [20] so it is enough to say that Sendivogius managed to escape and both emperor Rudolph and king Sigismund intervened and after a trial Muhlenfels was hanged in 1607.

Another person with whom Sendivogius stayed in Stuttgart was the duke's councillor Konrad Schuler, who urged the alchemist to stay at the court permanently. It is interesting that there apparently was an edition of *De Lapide Philosophorum* of 1605 with a preface written by the same Konrad Schuler and addressed to the German princes.

This would be a most direct link not only between Sendivogius and the political plans of the Protestant League but also between these and later Rosicrucianism. Unfortunately no details of this seemingly very rare edition are known. The visit of Sendivogius in Stuttgart is even more important for his possible contact with the young members of Johann Valentin Andreae's circle at Tübingen. Andreae was 19 at that time and must have heard about the great alchemist and philosopher visiting the duke and performing transmutations, especially as the Muhlenfels affair became well known throughout Europe. It is quite probable that Sendivogius also visited the university at Tübingen and may have met its students. In fact there is an indirect proof that he was very popular there - some forty years later several books were published by Johann Harprecht (1610-1660) who called himself "Filius Sendivogii". He was a son of the professor of law at Tübingen university and, as Karl Schmieder in his *Geschichte der Alchemie* (Halle 1832) says, when he was a boy he always heard conversations about Sendivogius and his transmutations which made him devote himself to alchemy. Other authors even say that he was Sendivogius's son-in-law but there seems to be no proof of this, certainly very attractive, statement.

The activities of Sendivogius between 1608 (when he went to Moscow on diplomatic mission, as mentioned above) and 1616, or in the crucial period for Rosicrucian beginnings, are unfortunately not known. We can only guess that he stayed in Cracow and Prague, where he must have met Michael Maier, and perhaps made some other trips to German princes, as in 1616 we see him in Marburg. But before that the two Manifestos were published in 1614 and 1615 at Cassel.

As already stated, some similarities may be discerned between the general style and some fragments of the first Rosicrucian publications on one hand and the statements contained in prefaces and epilogues to Sendivogius's tracts. It is also significant that the date of opening the tomb of Christian Rosenkreutz was given as 1604, the year of publication of *De Lapide Philosophorum* (the same is often said of Simon Studion's *Naometria* that was completed in 1604). But that is not all. The whole theory of John Dee's influence on the Manifestos constructed by Frances Yates is ultimately derived from the fact that the *Consideratio Brevis* of Philip a Gabella, to which the *Confessio* was merely an addition or continuation, was based on Dee's *Monas hieroglyphica* (actually quoting verbatim from it). As Frances Yates says: "The Dee-inspired *Consideratio Brevis*, and its prayer, seems absolutely assimilated to the Rosicrucian manifesto, as an integral part of it, as though explaining that the 'more secret philosophy' behind the Rosicrucian movement was the philosophy of John Dee, as expounded in his *Monas hieroglyphica*" [21]. But only a part of this work is based on Dee's *Monas*, while the remainder is purely alchemical and its source has not been explained by either Yates or anyone else. In fact it is clearly based on Sendivogius's *De Lapide Philosophorum*!

There are numerous statements either taken directly from it or summarising its fragments, or saying the same things in different words. For instance the piece in the last paragraph of chapter 5 starting "If Hermes, the father of philosophy, were to be brought back to life today..." is taken from the second page of the *First Treatise* while the description of the working of Nature summarises the teachings of Sendivogius. Also the explanations about Mercury and its role in Nature set forth in chapter 6 show deep understanding of Sendivogius's theories on "our water that does not wet hands" referred to many times in *De Lapide Philosophorum*. [22]

There is, however, one fragment quoted verbatim - that is the last paragraph of chapter 6 which comes from the *Fifth Treatise* with the opening statement added: "As I have often told my sons of knowledge and wisdom...". So we have a quotation introduced in the first person! Moreover, it is introduced with the Sendivogius's favourite form of addressing his readers and fellow alchemists: "sons of knowledge and wisdom". Who, therefore, is saying these words? Philip a Gabella, of course, but nothing is known of his identity and Frances Yates suggests it must be a pseudonym referring to "Cabala". Could the whole text have been written by Sendivogius himself? It seems quite possible - he had been acquainted with Dee's philosophy and may have visited Tübingen again between 1608 and 1615. But then the question arises if he was the real moving spirit behind the Rosicrucian Manifestos or just the figure of a master that the first Rosicrucians admired and took as a model for Christian Rosenkreutz? This question will have to remain unanswered for the time being though we may examine the former possibility as well.

The Philosophical Letters of Michael Sendivogius were most probably written in 1616 from Brussels and were addressed to a new member of the Society of Unknown Philosophers of Cabala ("novo Cabalae Philosophorum Incognuorum dignissimo Sodali") in France. There were printed editions of them in French, German and Latin, and there are several manuscript copies of English translations [23], at least one of which is entitled *Letters of Michael Sendivogius to the Rosey Crucian Society* [24]. They seem to be not just a literary form but genuine letters to which replies were received. In the first of them Sendivogius says "I am sending you the Latin statutes of our Society" which is most intriguing.



STATUTS

Des Philosophes inconnus.

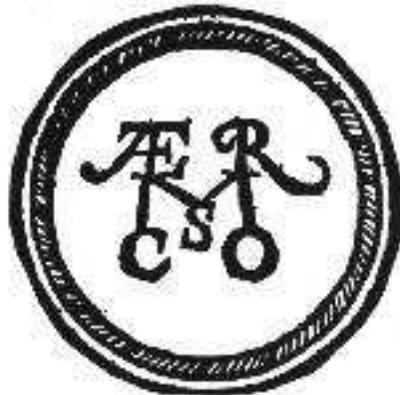
CHAPITRE I.

Division de toute la Compagnie.

Article I.

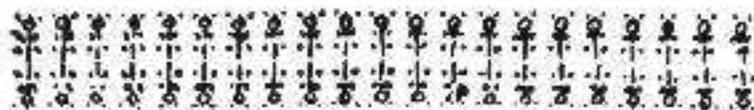
De quel pais doivent être les Associez.

The only published version of the Statutes of the Society of Unknown Philosophers

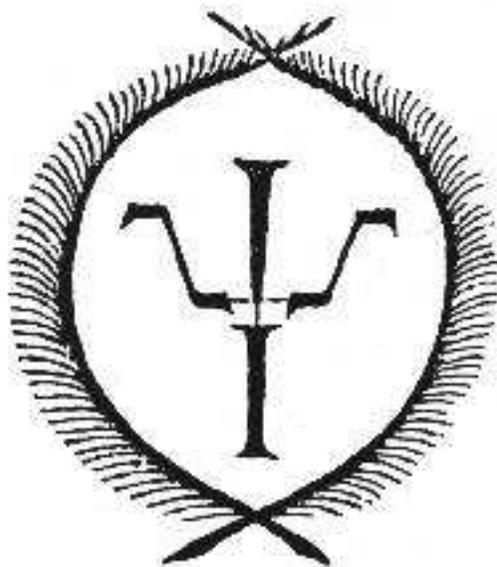


The seal of the Rosicrucian Brethren according to Maier's *Thermis Aureae*.
The letters MS in the centre might stand for Michael Sendivogius.

In 1691 there appeared in Paris an edition the *Letters* preceded by *Statuts des Philosophes inconnus* of 30 pages [25]. Could these be the same statutes? Sendivogius was writing his letters to a person in France and sent him the statutes, so it seems possible that they survived and were published there. But he writes that the statutes were in Latin. The well known French researcher Robert Amadou [26] has discovered two Latin manuscript copies of the *Letters*, one of which (Bibliothèque de Carpentras, Mss 288) also contains *Statuta philosophorum incognitorum*! As I have not been able to read these statutes, I cannot comment on their contents and how they compare with the rules of Rosicrucians as outlined in the Manifestos, but their very existence is quite meaningful.



SOMMAIRE ABREGÉ
De tout ce qui est contenu dans
ces Lettres, renfermé dans un
Sceau ou Hierogliffe de la So-
cieté des Philosophes inconnus.



CE caractère n'a pas été inventé &
choisi au hazard & sans dessein :
Car le Trident est le Neptune de nous

The hieroglyphic seal of the Society of Unknown Philosophers.
(The version from the printed edition.)

Another interesting thing about the letters is that in several versions there is at their end a "Hieroglyph of the Society of Unknown Philosophers" (or of "The Rosey Crucian Society" in Manly Palmer Hall's copy). But in the three cases I know they are totally different: in the Paris 1691 edition it is a "Trident of Neptune" (which looks rather like the Greek letter Psi) encircled by two feathers, in the Latin manuscript it is the letter M within a circle and with a horizontal line across, while in the M.P. Hall's English manuscript there are four circular figures taken from Jacob Boehme. This last case is of no interest as it is from the 18th century, but Neptune appears prominently in

Sendivogius's *Parable* and the letter M with some additions is also the chief motif of the Rosicrucian seal reproduced by Michael Maier in his *Themis Aurea* [27].

There has been some doubt concerning the authorship of the letters but all the known manuscripts and early editions ascribe them to Sendivogius. The title is usually given as *Apographum Epistolarum Michaelis Sendivogii seu J.J.D.J. Cosmopolitae vulgo dicti*, practically the same as in the edition of J.J. Manget in his *Bibliotheca chemica curiosa* (Geneva 1702). The four initials, that are not expanded in other editions, are explained on the margin of the 1691 Paris edition and in the Bibliothéque de Carpentras manuscript as "Jean Joachim Destinguel d'Ingrofont". As nothing is known of such character, Robert Amadou thinks it is a pseudonym but could not explain it. It is well known that Sendivogius had a liking of anagrams of his name - he signed his first book "Divi Leschi Genus Amo" and *The Treatise on Sulphur* bore the anagram "Angelus Doce Mihi Jus" (Angel, teach me the law). So can this pseudonym be explained in the same way? Indeed, IOACHIMUS D'ESTINGUEL is a perfect anagram of MICHAEL SENDIVOGIUS, in which all letters are used and every letter is used only once! This can be no coincidence even though it does not explain the remaining part of the name.

So it seems that there was a secret Society of Unknown Philosophers probably founded by Michael Sendivogius and that Sendivogius strongly influenced (or maybe even wrote himself) the *Consideratio Brevis* expounding the philosophy and alchemy behind the original Rosicrucian movement. At present it is not possible to state if the two societies were one and the same but such a possibility is definitely suggested by the evidence available.

After the Manifestos there appeared numerous publications, mostly letters addressed to the Rosicrucian Fraternity, seeking to establish contact with it. One of the most interesting for us is that written by Joachim Morsius (1593-1643), regarded as the epitome of "a Rosicrucian type of mind" [28]. The title of it was *Anastasio Philareti Cosmopolitae Epistola Sapientissime FRC Remissa. Philadelphia: Harpocrates*. This sounds like he was saying: "I am a Cosmopolita, too, and I can keep the secret like Harpocrates" which clearly refers to Sendivogius's remarks in *De Lapide Philosophorum*: "If you ask who I am: I am Cosmopolita" and "I doubt not that there are many persons of good conduct and clear conscience who possess this great gift of God in secret. I pray and conjure them that they should preserve even the silence of Harpocrates" [29]. So Morsius probably felt that there must be some connection between the teachings of Sendivogius (whose name he probably did not know then yet) and the Rosicrucian Manifestos.

It should also be considered that although the Manifestos were first published at Cassel, they were soon reprinted by others, of which the most important were Johann Bringer of Frankfurt and Andreas Hunefeldt of Danzig/Gdansk. Bringer issued several editions with the *Confessio* translated by him into German and also Dutch and French translations of both, all in 1615. In the same year there also appeared in Marburg a facsimile of Bringer's edition entitled *Fama Fraternitatis R.C. Ohne Reformation. Zeile auf Zeile Bringer's Ausgabe folgend* (as we shall see, Sendivogius visited Marburg the following year!). Bringer was also the main publisher of the letters and pamphlets that flooded Europe in response to the Manifestos, starting already in 1613 with *Epistola ad Reverend. Fraternalitatem R.-C.* and in 1614 with *Assertio Fraternalitatis R.C. quam Rosae Crucis vocant etc.* by Raphael Eglinus, both of which seem to have been published before the *Fama* which was then circulated in manuscript form. In this context it seems quite meaningful that Bringer was also the publisher of Sendivogius's 1611 edition (i.e. at the time when the *Fama* was probably first written) of *De Lapide Philosophorum*, a copy of which is in the University Library in Tübingen! [30].

I have already mentioned Sendivogius's connections with Danzig/Gdansk and indirectly with Hunefeldt but there is one more publisher of Rosicrucian texts that should be considered, namely Lazarus Zetzner of Strasbourg, who printed the *Chymische Hochzeit Christiani Rosencreutz* or *The Chemical Wedding* in 1616, as well as some "replies". And the same publisher seems to have been favoured by both Sendivogius (7 editions of his works between 1613 and 1628) and Andreae (several of his works including *Turris Babel*, *Mythologiae Christianae* and *Christianopolis*). The latter's *Menippus* has as the place of publication "Cosmopoli" which may well be a direct allusion to Sendivogius.

As already mentioned, Sendivogius's biography has a "lacuna" between 1608 and 1616. It is quite certain that he stayed in Prague and Cracow from time to time, as he had his houses and land estates there. In Prague he obviously met Michael Maier, at that time the physician of Rudolph II. In 1616 we see him visiting the laboratory of Johann Hartmann (1568-1631) in Marburg and probably also the court of landgrave Maurice of Hesse where Michael Maier now served. Hartmann was a friend of Maier [31] and a famous chemist, made "Professor of Chymiatría" by landgrave Maurice in 1609. From his surviving diary it is known that in 1615 among his students was Simon Batkowski from Poland, an alchemist and friend of Sendivogius, probably identical with "Badowski", his private secretary, with whom Sendivogius was in Stuttgart. The experiments and production of medicines in Marburg was based on the recipes from *Basilica Chymica* by Oswald Croll, another friend of Sendivogius. The Polish alchemist obviously visited Marburg as a honorary guest - possibly even invited by landgrave Maurice, whose copious

correspondence with alchemists of the period still survives and might throw more light on this. It should be remembered that he was a close associate of Frederick of Palatine and the dukes of Anhalt and Wurttemberg, and it was at his town of Cassel that the Manifestos were first published.



The greatest tribute paid to Sendivogius by his contemporaries was the publication of *Symbola aureae mensae duodecim nationum* by Maier (Frankfurt 1617) in which the teachings of twelve greatest alchemical adepts were discussed. This "chain" of wisdom starts with Hermes Trismegistos and ends with "Sarmata Anonymus" also called "Heliocantharus Borealis" who is none other but Michael Sendivogius (Poland was styled Sarmatia just as England was Albion). The fact that Maier did not reveal his name, though he obviously knew him, suggests that Sendivogius asked him not to do that. Such behaviour conforms with his request in *De Lapide Philosophorum* quoted above and his Society of Unknown Philosophers, while in the preface to the *Treatise on Sulphur* (published in Cologne in 1616) he says to the reader: "But you may be sure that no necessity is laid upon me to write at all, and that if I have come forward it is only out of love to you, having no expectation of personal profit, and no desire for empty glory, for which reason I here refrain, as I have before done, from revealing my identity to the public" [\[32\]](#). With my limited knowledge of Latin I was not able to read the monumental work of Maier to find out what he says about Sendivogius and J.B. Craven's short summary is of no help here. Roman Bugaj tells us only that he was enthusiastic and said that he had seen a transmutation performed by the Polish alchemist "with his own eyes".



The symbolic engraving of Sendivogius in the text of *Symbola aureae mensae*, showing him in the traditional dress of a Polish nobleman, was again used by Daniel Stolcius, a disciple of Maier in Prague, in his *Viridarium Chymicum* of 1624 (and once again, this time without the other eleven engravings, as the frontispiece in the Maier's posthumously published *Subtilis Allegoria*). Stolcius's poem accompanying it was:

Michael Sendivogius, a Pole

Though this name in the past Has been kept in oblivion, Its praise now penetrates the darkness, As it ought to be, indeed.

Prague in Bohemia Has well acknowledged his works. He has written twelve books And taught accordingly.

He said: Saturn Himself must water the earth If it, dear sun and moon, Shall bear your beautiful flowers. [\[33\]](#)

The alchemist's name was revealed for the first time in 1613 when his three works under the collective title *Tripus Chymicus Sendivogianus* were published in Strasbourg but this must have been suppressed by Sendivogius himself, as other editions of his treatises in the following years continued to be anonymous until the second printing of the same in 1621 and the final disclosure in the 1624 Erfurt edition of *Michaelis Sendivogi Poloni Lumen Chymicum Novum* with a commentary by Johann Ortelius which was later severely criticised in the third Strasbourg edition of *Tripus Chymicus* in 1628, probably as a reaction of Sendivogius himself.

Stolcius was a native of Prague and certainly knew Sendivogius himself so the statement that "Prague has acknowledged his works" cannot be an overstatement but rather is an expression of his admiration. The most interesting thing, however, is that four years later, in *Hortulus Hermeticus* (1627), he no longer mentions Sendivogius by name but returns to Maier's term "An Anonymous Sarmatian Chemist" [\[34\]](#). It seems as if he was asked, after his first book appeared, not to reveal Sendivogius's identity.

In fact there are other instances of similar refraining from mentioning his name by authors who certainly knew him. The most interesting example is that from John Jonston (1603-1675), a polyhistor born in Poland of a Scottish family, who was a friend of Comenius, visited Robert Fludd and John Hunyades in England, and had many other connections that make him a possible Rosicrucian of the second generation. In his *Naturae Constantia* (Amsterdam

1632, p.81), after some brief comments on the achievements of various contemporary alchemists including Kelley, Sethon, Croll and Hunyades, he concludes this short section with a very meaningful statement: "I also believe that everyone knows what a certain Polish physician did for vivifying planets". It seems as if Rosicrucians could not mention Sendivogius's name!

The next known event in the life of Sendivogius is that he was in Prussia in 1619, where he carried out some alchemical experiments. No more is known about that journey but it should be noted that the Rosicrucian centres in Danzig/Gdansk and Elbing/Elblag (with Samuel Hartlib and John Dury) were in that province of Poland and that Sendivogius's secretary and friend - Simon Batkowski - was a native of Prussia. Also the earliest reference to Rosicrucians in Polish literature comes from a poem *Theatrum diabolorum* by Jan Borawski, a Polish Protestant pastor from the small town of Brodnica/Strassburg in Prussia, that was published in 1621. The relevant fragment is:

Te solum fratrum roseae crucis expedit ordo
Anglicus ille nocens, sudor et atra lues,
Gorgonea illuvies, gangraena, corizque mundi,
Deformatores dixeris orbis eos. [\[35\]](#)

This shows on one hand that even provincial clergymen of Prussia heard about Rosicrucians, and on the other - that the whole matter was a subject of jokes and waggish satires. The book was apparently first published in Polish as early as 1607 but I was not able to confirm it yet nor check if the edition was identical. If it was, then it would be the earliest reference to Rosicrucians, antedating the *Fama* by seven years!

It is also not impossible that the journey had some diplomatic aspects - that was the year when Frederick "The Winter King" began his short reign in Prague - the town with which Sendivogius was so closely linked throughout his life. We do not know which side of the conflict Sendivogius was on but it seems that he was above the political and religious differences (like John Dee who did not mind taking the holy communion at the Roman Catholic mass in Cracow), while he may have been attracted by the perspective of the "Monarchia Borealis" of his dreams that was now at hand. Later close connections of Hartlib, Dury and Comenius with the court of Elisabeth at The Hague seem to indicate that Prussia was also of considerable importance, perhaps even next to Bohemia.

In the tragedy of 1620 Poland tried to stay neutral. Although both wives of king Sigismund were of the Hapsburg dynasty, Polish nobility generally represented anti-Hapsburg attitudes. They were very proud of the democratic institution of elective kings in Poland and were for introducing the same in Bohemia and Hungary. Some of the non-catholic magnates had direct contacts with Frederick V of Palatine, the most important of whom were Rafal Leszczynski (a Calvinist educated in England), the patron of Comenius and John Jonston, responsible for bringing Moravian Brethren to Poland, and prince Janusz Radziwill, a Lutheran, brother-in-law of Christian of Anhalt and a friend of Frederick. It is interesting that the latter's court physician and poet, Daniel Naborowski, wrote a beautiful poem entitled *On the eyes of the English princess who was married to Frederick, the pfaltzgrave of Rhein, elected the king of Bohemia* (published in 1621). As the poem was written in Polish, the "Winter King and Queen", and their cause must have been well known and certainly supported by some of the powerful Polish magnates. There were even rumours that Sigismund III Vasa would be dethroned and Frederick of Palatine would take his place [\[36\]](#).

It is almost certain that Sendivogius had contacts with both Comenius and Hartlib, as in 1631 a friend of them both - Cyprian Kinner - refused invitations to become rector of the Racovian Academy and the Klausenburg school in order to accept that from "baron Michael Sendivogius" to the imperial court in Prague. He did some services for Sendivogius there and was ennobled at his request by the emperor Ferdinand II [\[37\]](#). The mention of the Racovian Academy established by the Polish Socinians (Arians) is of additional interest in the light of the fact that Henricus Neuhusius in his *Pia et utilissima admonitio de Fratribus Rosae Crucis* (Danzig 1618) maintained that Rosicrucians were Socinians [\[38\]](#). One of the leading Socinians was Jarosz Hieronim Moskorzowski (died 1625), a nobleman who wrote several Socinian books but also was deeply interested in alchemy and had his own laboratory [\[39\]](#). There are several other connections with that religious movement that also had aims of social reform, one of the most interesting is that through Thomas Seget, a Scot who visited Polish Socinian centres in 1612 and was a friend of Poland's greatest poet of the time - Szymon Szymonowic (or Simon Simonides) - as well as several known Socinians including Martin Ruarus and Samuel Przypkowski. Seget gave the manuscript of Szymonowic's Latin poems to Joachim Morsius (the same who used the pseudonym of "Cosmopolita" when issuing his reply to the

Fama) for publication which eventually brought Szymonowic European fame. Seget was also a friend of Raphael Eglinus from Marburg, the author of the second earliest known reply - published before the *Fama*. The most important thing, however, is that in 1612 Szymonowic wrote to Seget from Prague (where Sendivogius was a celebrated personality) that they might correspond through the facilities of Nicholas Wolski - the lifelong patron and friend of Sendivogius! [40]

Little is known about the later life of Sendivogius besides the details of the various estates in Bohemia and Poland (Cracow) that he owned. After 1620 he was serving the new emperor Ferdinand II and became his councillor with the consent of king Sigismund III of Poland. He visited Cracow from time to time and made at least one more journey abroad - to Italy in 1623 - where he contacted John Brozek (1585-1652), a Polish mathematician and physician, later rector of the Jagiellonian University.

Mention should also be made of a curious incident reported by one of the early biographers of Sendivogius - the anonymous author of *Vita Sendivogii Poloni nobilis baronis*, describing himself as Sendivogius's lawyer. He reports that living in Krawarz Sendivogius received letters from and visits of scholars from all Europe and among them arrived two people, one old and the other young, who introduced themselves as representatives of "Societas rosae crucis" and invited the alchemist to join their fraternity. Although Sendivogius did not agree, there was later issued a book in German called *Rhodostauroticum* in which he was listed as a member but his name was not given. All of this sounds rather mysterious but it is possible that the two persons were connected with the spurious Rosicrucian Order of Philip Ziegler who styled himself "King of Jerusalem" and was active in France, Holland and England between 1623 and 1626, founding what he called "Rosicrucian Colleges" [41]. The book quoted in that report must have been *Echo Colloquii Rhodostaurotici* by one Benedict Hilarion of whom nothing else is known. As it was published in 1622 and described the "Colleges" of Rosicrucians, it must have originated from the Ziegler's circle or even was written by him. As A.E. Waite says [42], the author listed the people accepted into the Order giving their initials and the book was first printed in German, which conforms with the information in *Vita Sendivogii*. The whole episode clearly suggests that Sendivogius must have known the truth about the Rosicrucian Manifestos and that is why he refused to join the Ziegler's group.

Sendivogius died in 1636. But the image of the greatest alchemist of the "Rosicrucian Age" survived him and made his works extremely popular throughout the 17th and 18th centuries. There is no point in listing those later alchemists who regarded Sendivogius very highly (like Sir Isaac Newton) but it is well worth mentioning that the *D.O.M.A.* manuscript, better known in its published version as *Geheime Figuren* (Altona 1785-88), that may be considered to be a *Fama* of the 18th century, contains only one quotation that is not from the Bible - and it is obviously from Sendivogius's *De Lapide Philosophorum* [43]

The fame of Sendivogius also created folk legends - still today in his native town of Nowy Sacz it is said that his ghost appears on the town market square every New Year's Eve. He walks along it and throws gold coins around. Unlike most other apparitions, Sendivogius brings good luck to those who happen to see him - and there are people in the town who swear they did see him [44].

Although the evidence presented in this article is not definite, it certainly points to a possibility that has not been considered before - that Michael Sendivogius may have been the model of Christian Rosenkreutz and that he was certainly closely connected with the beginnings of the Rosicrucian furore that swept Europe in the early 17th century and may be felt even today. Perhaps further studies and research in archival sources, especially the correspondence of Sendivogius with rulers and alchemists of the period, will bring some even more revealing information to light.

REFERENCES

- 1) Frances A. Yates, *The Rosicrucian Enlightenment*, Boulder 1978 edition, p.39.
- 2) Even though Peter J. French in his *John Dee. The World of an Elizabethan Magus* (London 1972, p.52) suggests that "John Dee had much more than a passing interest in medicine", the only evidence for this is that he had many works of Paracelsus in his library (which should have been expected in "Elizabethan England's Greatest Library"). Otherwise French makes no reference to Dee's activities as a practising physician.
- 3) Rafal T. Prinke, "Michael Sendivogius - Adept or Impostor?", *The Hermetic Journal* 15. The book by Prof. Roman Bugaj *Michal Sedziwoj (1566-1636). Zycie i pisma* (Wroclaw 1968), the result of a lifetime research based on primary sources, still remains the basic biography and certainly deserves a translation into English. All the information on the life of Sendivogius in this article that have no references are from that book.
- 4) Ryszard Gansiniec ("Krystalomancja" in *Lud* vol.XLI, part 1, 1954, p. 305) mentions a note by Dee to that effect but does not give a reference. This must be taken from either Meric Casaubon's *A True and Faithful Relation* or J.O. Halliwell's *The Private Diary of Dr. John Dee*, as these are quoted elsewhere by this author.
- 5) Herman Zdzislaw Scheuring, *Czy krolobojstwo? Krytyczne studium o smierci krola Stefana Wielkiego Batorego*, London 1964.
- 6) Prof. Bugaj thinks that Sendivogius first read the treatises of Bernard de Treviso, later one of his favourite

alchemical authors, in the Czech translation of Rodovsky. In one of Rodovsky's manuscript works (now in the library of the National Museum in Prague) there is also a description of the vision of Bernard which is in many points similar to *Parabola* of Sendivogius.

7) He also must have received the baronial title that he used from Rudolph, as Poland had no aristocratic titles.

8) Tholde has even been called "the secret secretary of the Rosicrucian Order" but apparently there is no direct evidence for this.

9) John Dee, *Five Books of Mystical Exercises*, ed. by Joseph Peterson, Silian 1985, p.232.

10) Roman Bugaj, op.cit., p.75.

11) Frances A. Yates, op.cit., p.38.

12) Ibid.

13) J.B. Craven's notes on Khunrath in *The Amphitheatre Engravings of Heinrich Khunrath* ed. by Adam McLean, Edinburgh 1981, p.12.

14) Frances A. Yates, op.cit., p.52-53.

15) The English version of this fragment as published by A.E. Waite in *The Hermetic Museum* (reprinted by Llanerch Enterprises in 1989) is slightly abridged. The above quotation is based on the 1616 Cologne edition via Roman Bugaj's Polish translation in his edition of collected works of Sendivogius (Michal Sedziwoj, *Traktat o kamieniu filozoficznym*, Warsaw 1971).

16) Personal communication from Prof. Bugaj.

17) J.B. Craven, *Count Michael Maier*, Kirkwall 1910, p.1.

18) The manuscript of that translation by J.B. Bruck of Rotenperk was completed in 1605 and bound together with the printed Latin edition. It is now in the National Museum Library in Prague.

19) See *Concerning the Secrets of Alchemy and other tracts from the Hermetic Museum*, Llanerch Enterprises 1989, p. 128.

20) The original court documents of Muhlenfels's trial dated June 28, 1606 were published by C.G. von Murr, *Litterarische Nachrichten zu der Geschichte des sogenannten Goldmachens*, Leipzig 1805, p. 54-79. Much additional material is also in Hauptstaatsarchiv in Stuttgart.

21) Frances A. Yates, op.cit., p.47.

22) I am indebted to Christopher Atton for his translation of *Consideratio Brevis* (*The Hermetic Journal*, 1989, p.79-97) which made this important discovery possible.

23) As I have been informed by Adam McLean.

24) In the collection of Manly Palmer Hall - see Ron. Charles Hogart, *Alchemy. A Comprehensive Bibliography of the Manly P. Hall Collection of Books and Manuscripts*, Los Angeles 1986, p.297.

25) *Traitez du Cosmopolite nouvellement decouverts ou apres avoir donne unde idee d'une Societe de Philosophes, on explique dans plesieurs Lettres de cet Auteur la Theorie & la Pratique des Veritez Hermetiques*, Paris 1691.

26) "Le 'Philosophe inconnu' et les 'Philosophes inconnus'" in *Les Cahiers de la Tour St.Jacques*, 1961, 7.

27) Michael Maier, *Laws of the Fraternity of the Rosie Crosse (Themis Aurea)* facsimile of the 1656 English edition produced by M.P. Hall, Los Angeles 1976.

28) Christopher McIntosh, *The Rosy Cross Unveiled*, Wellingborough 1980, p.58-9. See also Ron Heisler, "Rosicrucianism: The First Blooming in Britain", *The Hermetic Journal* 1989, for information on Morsius's contacts with English Rosicrucians.

29) See *Concerning the Secrets of Alchemy*, op.cit., p.128, 126.

30) For bibliographical details of early Rosicrucian prints see Adolphe Peeters-Baertsoen's *Bibliographie des Ouvrages Imprimés et Manuscrits qui ont paru sur la Franc-Maconnerie, les Rose-Croix, etc.* that was published in parts as an addition to *Revue Internationale des Societes Secretes* in the first decade of this century.

31) Ron Heisler, "Michael Maier in England", *The Hermetic Journal* 1989, p.119.

32) See *Concerning the Secrets of Alchemy*, op.cit., p.143.

33) The translation from Paul Allen (ed.), *A Christian Rosenkreutz Anthology*, Blauvelt 1981, p.461.

34) Emblem 135. See *The Hermetic Garden of Daniel Stolcius* tr. by Patricia Tahil and edited by Adam McLean, Edinburgh 1980, p.144.

35) Quoted after Roman Bugaj, *Nauki tajemne w Polsce w dobie odrodzenia*, Wroclaw 1976, p.142.

36) Adam Szelagowski, *Slask i Polska wobec powstania czeskiego*, Lwow 1904.

37) G.H. Turnbull, *Hartlib, Dury and Comenius. Gleanings from Hartlib's Papers*, London 1947, p.384. I am grateful to Ron Heisler for bringing this reference to my attention.

38) See Frances A. Yates, op.cit., p.98.

39) Roman Bugaj, *Michal Sedziwoj*, op.cit., p.46.

40) Otakar Odlozilik, "Thomas Seget: A Scottish friend of Szymon Szymonowic", *Polish Review*, vol.11, no.1,

1966. This information was again supplied by Ron Heisler.

[41](#)) See Ron Heisler, "Rosicrucianism: The First Blooming in Britain", op.cit., p.52.

[42](#)) Arthur Edward Waite, *The Brotherhood of the Rosy Cross*, Secaucus 1973 edition, p.333.

[43](#)) The plate "About God and Nature" - see Paul Allen (ed.), *A Christian Rosenkreutz Anthology*, op.cit., p.260; M.P. Hall (ed.), *D.O.M.A. Codex Rosae Crucis*, Los Angeles 1938, plate 10.

[44](#)) Bogna Wernichowska, Maciej Kozłowski, *Duchy polskie*, Warszawa 1983, p.81-83.

Rafal T. Prinke - Lampado trado.

Article originally published in *The Hermetic Journal*, 30 (1985), 5-14.

LAMPADO TRADO

From the Fama Fraternitatis to the Golden Dawn

The concept of "tradition" is variously defined and usually not very precisely. For the purpose of this article I propose to understand it as a succession of people or groups that were in contact with those immediately preceding and succeeding them, passing on a certain body of teachings. Those teachings remain the same in crucial matters though they undergo many changes on the surface. The changes are the main causes of schisms and sectarian attitudes within almost every tradition. It is enough to mention all the christian denominations each of which traces its roots to the person of Jesus Christ, or the many rites of Freemasonry stemming from the Grand Lodge of England. The study of traditions is in many ways similar to genealogical research where the descendants of one person all have the same name but their personality traits may be radically different due to the genetic inheritance from the female ancestors who may be compared to the outside influence on occult groups and teachers. In this article I would like to trace just one "genealogical" succession within the whole "tree" of the Hermetic Tradition. My hypothesis already presented to the readers of the *Hermetic Journal* [\[1\]](#) is that there existed a Rosicrucian order which appeared simultaneously or shortly after the publication of the Manifestos of Andreae and his circle but was not connected with them. The most important work produced by that group was the text known as *D.O.M.A.* which was first published with some additional material in *Geheime Figuren* (Altona 1785-88) and later reprinted several times, also in English translations [\[2\]](#).

In the University Library in Wroclaw (Breslau), the capital of Silesia, I have found a manuscript copy of the *D.O.M.A.* text bound together with a manuscript of *The Magical Calendar* [3]. It was mentioned by Peuckert [4] who thought it to date from the second half of the 17th century on the basis of paleographic analysis. He even says that the earliest date possible is 1620 which is well before all other known manuscript versions of the same text. The most comprehensive study of several versions of the *D.O.M.A.* text to date is M.P. Hall's introduction to his edition of it [5]. The variants known to him are the following:

- 1) the Ms in his possession, published in facsimile with the English translation, dated to the second half of the 18th century (probably 1775-80),
- 2) the Sachse Ms, belonging to Dr Julius Sachse of Philadelphia and sold away by his daughter, dated to the beginning of the 18th century,
- 3) the Hauser Ms, later sold to a British collector, dated to the 18th century,
- 4) the Hitchcock Ms, later in an American library, imperfect copy, date unknown,
- 5) the Russian Ms, details unknown,
- 6) the French Ms, dated to about 1775.

The Sachse Ms is the oldest of the six and M.P. Hall even states that "there is a remote possibility that it may be the archetype from which the others were taken" (p. 38). However, on the basis of the four reproductions of it which he published after Sache's work [6], it is possible to show that it is also a copy. The plate shown on the right of p. 37 has the title "Figura divina Theosoph: Cabal: nec non Magia, Philosophia et Magia" which is an obvious error made by the copyist. The last word should be "Chimia" as in the other versions, instead of repeating "Magia" for the second time, which has no sense. The bottom left hand corner shows a sign composed of four arrows, which properly belongs to the central one of the small circles in the diagram. The Wroclaw Ms of *D.O.M.A.* is written in black, red and green ink. On both sides of the paper. The handwriting is less ornate, which suggests, along with other characteristics, that it belongs to the second half of the 17th century, as already mentioned. I have collated it with the Hall Ms and found quite a number of minor discrepancies, though in general it is exactly identical. All the plates are the same and in the same order.

Aus dem Vortage und der Natur

Das was nicht
von der Welt
ausgeht nicht
nicht geht.

Pons ad unum
unitus ad omnia.

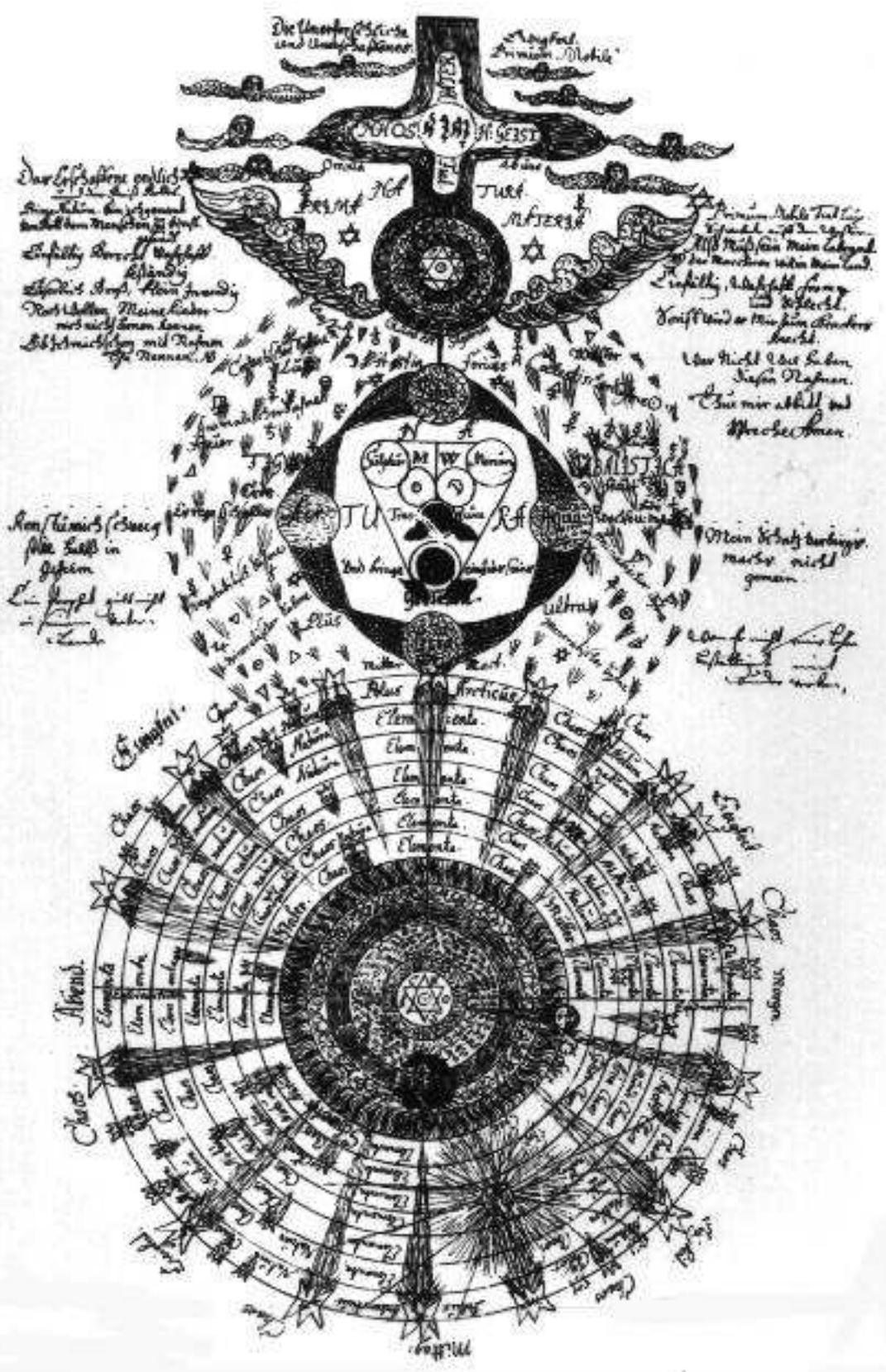


Handwritten notes on the left side of the page, including a large arrow pointing right.

Handwritten notes on the right side of the page, including a signature 'Signo & Simbo'.

It is obviously impossible to describe all those differences here, as at least one version should be reproduced so that the readers could follow my explanations. In general the Wroclaw Ms seems to be more logical and consonant with the hermetic tradition. For example, on the plate mentioned above, in the central part, there are words, "Sulphur philosophorum" on the left and "Sal philosophorum" on the right. In both Sachse and Hall Mss they are quite prominently written above the lower section of symbols in small circles while in the Wroclaw Ms and in the Altona publication they are placed on top of the two circles closer to the center. The latter placing is obviously correct and in keeping with the symbolic content of the plate. Another example is from the plate "Virgin Sophia", where in the lower right hand corner there are two small circles, one of which contains a symbol similar to Dee's *Monas* and the other has a double-headed bird (Phoenix, as the text says), in the Hall Ms these symbols are in each other's position, though the texts describing them remain in the original place and thus the "Monas" symbol is described as Phoenix, while the bird is described as a divining rod. The same mistake is repeated once more on the same plate with the circles of "The Raven's Head" and "Incombustible Oil". All the errors of this and similar kinds can be found in all the Mss and the Altona printing but I have not found anything like that in the Wroclaw Ms, which seems to suggest that it may have been the original or a very early copy into which the mistakes had not yet crept in. There is however one point of special interest which confirms my hypothesis that this is the original of all the other *D.O.M.A.* texts. On the plate entitled "Of God and Nature" (pl. 10 in Hall) there is an inscription added in a different hand (i.e. later) in the lower left hand part. In the other versions (i.e. Hall Ms and Altona) this note is incorporated into the text and moved up to the middle part of the plate.

Another note in a different hand, much later and in brown ink, is added in the lower left hand part of the "Figura Divina" plate. It is a reference to the work "Licht (?) der Natur" (I am not sure of the first word) by Anonimus von Schwarz" published in Frankfurt and Leipzig in 1706. As this note does not appear in Hall or in Altona, the Wroclaw Ms must have been copied by others between these two additions were made. Summing up, I suggest that the Wroclaw Ms of *D.O.M.A.* is the original of all the other texts and was produced in the second half of the 17th century (most probably around 1650).

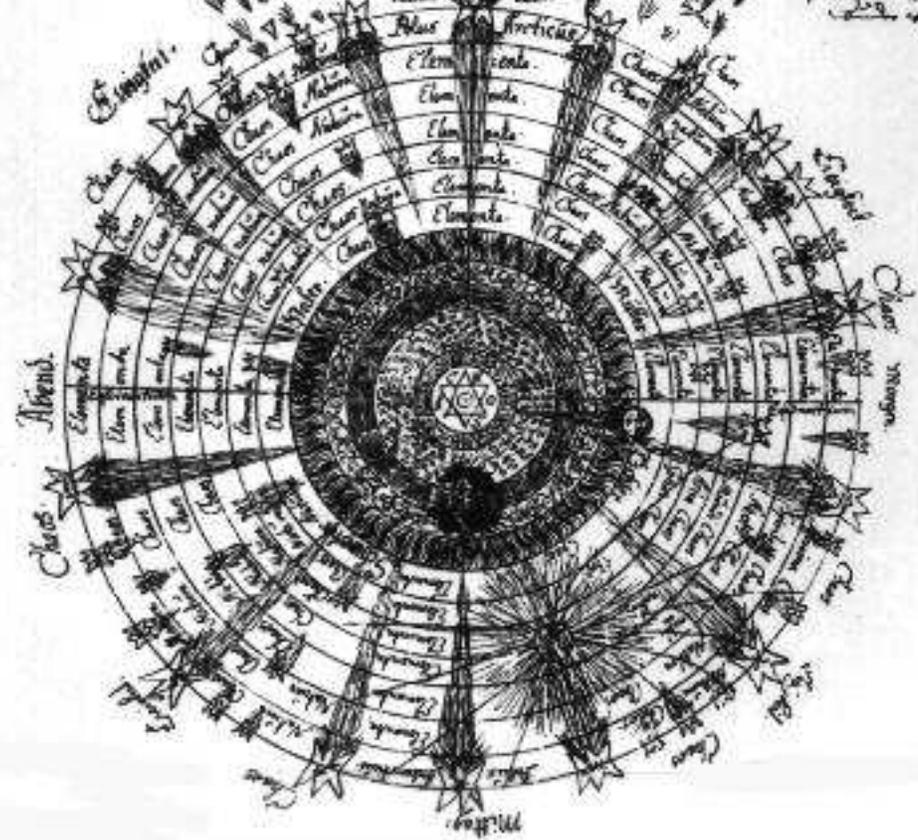


Das Erbsystem enthält
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 Einigkeit...
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Now, the question arises who was its author or authors? To answer it is quite difficult as there is nothing in the text itself that would be of any help however, we can speculate that the *D.O.M.A.*, manuscript from Wroclaw was produced in Silesia, i.e. that it was not brought there from some other part of Europe. If so, then we have a number of people connected with Rosicrucianism to take under consideration. First of all there is Jacob Boehme in Zgorzelec (Goerlitz) at the beginning of the 17th century. The influence of his thought on the *D.O.M.A.* is obvious in many fragments of the text though the diagrams are not similar to those in the Gichtel edition of his works. But, as M.P. Hall pointed out, Gichtel's illustrations are independent of Boehme's text and therefore the *D.O.M.A.* illustrations may have been inspired by Boehme in the same way. One of Boehme's friends and students was Abraham von Franckenberg, also from Silesia (actually he lived in Wroclaw), who was the first editor of the Teutonic Philosopher's writings. Von Franckenberg was actively interested in Rosicrucianism, which is confirmed by his extant letters which he exchanged with various people in all parts of Europe. He travelled to the towns where the Rosicrucian Order is said to have been active, especially Gdansk (Danzig), where he stayed on several occasions. Gdansk was the place of publication of several early Rosicrucian documents and replies to the *Fama* for example:

De Fratribus Rosae Crucis by Henrico Neuhusio (Neuhaus). 1610 (?) and 1617

Echo der ... Fraternitet des Lobl. Ordens R.C. by Julius Sperber, 1615 and 1620, one of the most important and influential early Rosicrucian documents.

Assertion oder Bestatigung der Fraternitet R.C., 1616.

Exemplarischer Beweis, dass das in der Fama und Confession ..., 1616.

Proeludium de castitate etc. Scriptum ad Ven. Fratres R.C., 1617.

Schnelle Botschaft an die Philosophische Fraternitet vom R.C., by Valentin Tschirness, 1617, the same was published a year earlier in Goerlitz and thus shows the connection of Silesian and Gdansk Rosicrucian circles.

Ohne die Reformation, 1618, an edition of *Fama* and *Confessio*.

Pia et utilissima admonitio de Fratribus R.C. by Henrico Neuhusio, 1622 and 1628, apparently the same work as he first one above, which would mean it had four editions in Gdansk; it should be noted that it is against Rosicrucians. Gdansk was also an important centre of alchemical activities at the time, with such eminent practitioners as Alexander von Suchten (actually Zuchta, as he came from a Polish noble family). Von Franckenberg also mentioned Rosicrucians in his writings, one of which includes a complicated mandala-like illustration of a definitely Rosicrucian character [7]. He formed a group of students of Pansophia, which is the term earlier used in "the fourth manifesto" *Speculum Sopicum Rhodo-Stauroticum*. One of his students became famous as the mystical poet Angelus Silesius.

Finally, one of the most important Rosicrucian works after the initial manifestos was *Die wahrhafte und vollkommene Bereitung des philosophischen Steins der Bruederschafft aus dem Orden des Gulden und Rosen Kreutzes* by Sincerus Renatus, published in Wroclaw (again!) in 1710. The author's real name was Sigmund Richter and he lived in Hartmannsdorf near Kamienna Gora (Landeshut) in Silesia. It is generally believed that Richter described a real order and that his book is the missing link between the older Rosicrucians and those of the 18th century. If so, then it is quite possible that the Silesian order produced the *D.O.M.A.* text as an "A.B.C." for its neophytes. The influences of Boehme, von Franckenberg and the early Rosicrucian publications are all brought together in this document circa 1650. And there is one more influence, that of alchemy. It is usually overlooked that the only modern author quoted by name in the *D.O.M.A.* is the great Polish alchemist Michael Sendivogius, mentioned on the right of the plate "Of God and Nature" (plate 10 in Hall).

All these influences add to the philosophical content of the *D.O.M.A.* but not to its way of presentation. This, I believe, can be traced to one of the early letters to the Rosicrucian Brotherhood which was published together with the *Fama* and *Confessio* (Cassel 1616 edition). The letter is entitled *Sendschreiben mit kurtzern Philosophischen Discurs an die Gottweise Fraternitet des Loblichen Ordens des Rosen Creutzes*.

I have found a copy of it in the Poznan University Library bound together with *Fama Remissa* and the work by Andreas Libavius defending the Order and bearing the letters *D.O.M.A.* on the title page. The book is in leather (probably 17th century) and stamped with "R. C." (18th or even 19th century) on the first page.

"The Short Philosophical Discourse" added to the letter seems to be very much in the character of the *D.O.M.A.* text and is similarly presented, though much shorter and without any diagrams. As it will not take much space, I enclose a verbatim translation in extenso:

A BRIEF DISCOURSE with a tenuous picture
of sacred Philosophy as well as the summa of wisdom.

IEHOVA TRIUNUS

All from Nothing

The Spirit of God moved upon the Water
CHAOS:
Primary Hyle of the Wise
Everything was created from Water
Firmament, Minerals, Vegetables, Animals
MACROCOSM
From the Centre and Quintessence
MICROCOSM
The most perfect creature of all creatures
MAN
The Image of God the Eldest
The immortal Soul : the invisible Celestial Fire
After the Error : Behold the MESSIAH
The Light of Grace and Nature
LILI. The Prime Matter of perfect Body
The Matrix of Medial Cosmos
Balsam and Mummy
The Magical Magnet in the incomparable Microcosm
The Water of the Wise, from which everything
and in which everything, which rules everything,
in which it is erred and in which the error corrects itself.
Sane Mind in Sane Body
Indefatigable prayer
Patience and Time
Matter, Vessel, Furnace, Fire, Coction
[a misprinted line]
The beginning, the middle and the End
Admit nothing alien and without perfecting that alien thing
That which is sought by the Wise is in Mercury.
FONTINA DIAPHANA [?]
Double Mercury
The Rotation of the Spheres of all Planets
And, behold, in a moment the fumes blacken
THERE WILL SHINE
DEATH AND LIFE
Regeneration and Renovation
The fixed beginning, the middle and the END
The sum and foundation of all magical secrets
R. [?] Quintessence of Macro and Microcosm
without Mercury
Philosophical
Invisible, Coelestial, living Fire
Salts of Metals or a.q.S. [?]
Let the art of philosophical magic be rotating,
solving, coagulating and fixing.
The Sum of Medicine
in which there is
great Wisdom, perfect Sanity and
sufficient Power.
All from One and All to One
Impatience and Ostentation ... ["ad Orcum" ?]
Enough has been said
simply and plainly: reject all malice
The obstacle of Pathmos [?]
Let the will of IEHOVA be done
Glory to the Only God.

By the Fire, finally,
the Name and the Age:
paVLVs.

It can therefore be concluded that the *D.O.M.A.* text was a descendant of all the principal influences which, taken together, constitute what is now called "Rosicrucianism", and that the main line of descent goes back to the circle of Jacob Boehme's students. It can further be suggested that the text was produced in Silesia around 1650 by a group connected with Abraham von Franckenberg and other "pansophists". Most probably it was not allowed to make many copies of it at first, though it may be supposed that Johannes Kelpius took one of them to America in 1694, a later copy of which may have been the Sachse Ms. The original Silesian group made itself known again through the work of Sigmund Richter (Sincerus Renatus) and then spread all over Germany, Austria, Poland, Russia and other countries as the well known Order of the Golden and Rosy Cross. This coincided with the appearance of more copies of the *D.O.M.A.* in wide circulation from France to Russia, leading to its final publication in Altona in 1785 and 1788. The Rosicrucian "genealogy" in the 18th century, as given by K.R.H. Frick [8], is as follows:
"Sincerus Renatus"

Herman Fictuld

Schleiss von Loewenfeld

Johann Christopher Woellner

It is interesting that Woellner, whose importance in the development of the German Golden and Rosy Cross cannot be underestimated, also came from Silesia, from Dobrzenice (Dobritz). He also seems to have been active in the publication of the Altona print as well as in the creation of the last phase of that period of Rosicrucianism, i.e. that of the Fratres Lucis or the Asiatic Brethren. Their leader was Hans Heinrich von Ecken und Eckhoffen otherwise known as "Magister Pianco", the author of *Der Rosenkreutzer in seiner Bloesse* (1781) where he described the system of grades later used by the Golden Dawn initiates. Another leader of the same order was a Jew named Hirschfeld who supplied kabbalistic and Talmudic knowledge. The Order of Asiatic Brethren was incorporated in Berlin but later its centre seems to have been in Austria. It was active for at least two decades in the 19th century and it is quite probable that it was the "Rosicrucian Order" into which Kenneth R. H. Mackenzie was initiated. The Jewish teachings incorporated into the order make the next important connection, namely that with a Frankfurt Jewish Masonic Lodge mentioned by Gershom Scholem [9] which was called "The Hermetic Order of the Golden Dawn" and which is said to have existed "from the days of Napoleon". The only conclusion may be that it was the original source for Mathers' order of the same name and that Freulein Sprengel and other "Chiefs" were real people. One of the latter's mottos was "Frater Lux e Tenebris" which is reminiscent of Fratres Lucis, especially as he seems to have been the principal source of information for Mathers. Thus it seems that the Golden Dawn and its later offshoots, too numerous to be mentioned here, were in the direct line of succession of the Rosicrucian Tradition, just as it claimed, and not a mere reconstruction. The tradition, as outlined above, is just one branch of the tree of "hermetic genealogy" and does not exclude other traditions stemming from the same source but coming down to us through other ways.

References:

[1] "The Jagged Sword and Polish Rosicrucians" in *Journal of Rosicrucian Studies* No. 1.

[2] A facsimile edition was published in Berlin in 1919, while English translations were published in Chicago in 1935 and in *A Christian Rosenkreutz Anthology*, New York 1968. The edition of Franz Hartmann was incomplete and distorted.

[3] See my article "The Wroclaw Codex of the Magical Calendar", in *The Hermetic Journal* No. 28

[4] *Die Rosenkreutzer*, 1928

[5] *Codex Rosae Crucis*, Los Angeles 1938

[6] *The German Pietists of Provincial Pennsylvania*, Philadelphia 1895

[7] See my article "The Great Work in the Theatre of the World" in *A Compendium on the Rosicrucian Vault*, Edinburgh 1984

[8] *Die Erleuchteten*, Graz 1973, tables V and VI

[9] Quoted by Gerald Suster in his afterword to Israel Regardie's *What You Should Know About the Golden Dawn*, Phoenix 1983.

Rafal T. Prinke - Hermetic Heraldry

Article originally published in *The Hermetic Journal*, 1989, 62-78.

HERMETIC HERALDRY



Arms of Johann Martin Baur von Eyseneck
from J.D. Mylius' *Anatomia Auri*, Lucas Jennis, Frankfurt, 1628.

Studies devoted to hermetic symbolism seldom touch upon its connections with heraldry though it seems that they

should be obvious even to someone with quite limited knowledge of both systems of symbolism. The only works on this area of mutual influence between hermetism and heraldry I could find are in French and include *L'hermetisme dans l'art heraldique* by F. Cadet de Gassicourt and Du Roure de Paulir (Paris, 1907, reprinted in *Les origines symboliques du blason* by Robert Viel, Paris, 1972) and *Le langage secret du blason* by Gerard de Sorval (Paris, 1981). Touching upon the problem are also *De sable et d'or. Symbolique heraldique. L'honneur du nom* by Christian Jacq and Patrice de la Perriere (Paris, 1976) and *Initiation chevaleresque et initiation royale dans la spiritualite chretienne* by Gerard de Serval (1985). Even though they are interesting and make a number of valuable observations, they lack a systematic approach to the subject and their conclusions are rather overenthusiastic and tend to be more esoteric than scholarly.

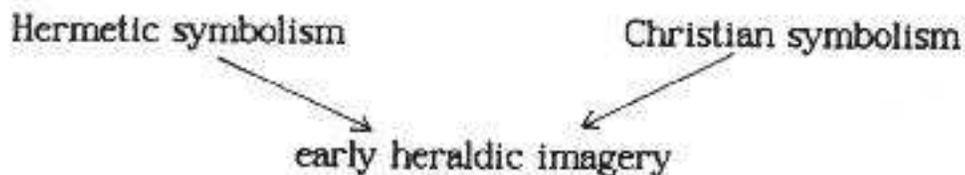
In my opinion the problem should be divided into two separate areas of research, namely:

1. HERMETIC HERALDRY which includes (a) the influence of early hermetic ideas on the development of the heraldic system of coat-of-arms symbolism and (b) the conscious use of hermetic symbols and emblems in later heraldic designs in order to show the owner's interests or make the arms "speak".
2. HERALDIC HERMETISM which includes the use of highly structured symbolic language of heraldry in hermetic iconography.

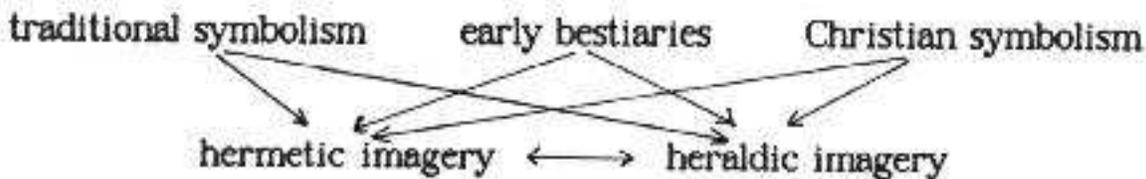
It may sometimes be difficult to differentiate between the two, of course, as they were often used simultaneously but the division may still be useful for methodological purposes.

European heraldry, as we know it, is the creation of the chivalric society of the early 12th century and therefore it is obvious that if any hermetic symbolism can be discerned in it, it must have preceded heraldry itself and not the other way round. This is not, however, as simple as it may seem because there is hardly any hermetic iconography from the times preceding heraldic iconography. All comparisons, therefore, have to be made between much later examples and from the 14th century onwards there was certainly much lateral influence between heraldic and hermetic art that makes the whole problem still more complicated.

The authors who have studied the impact of hermetic symbolism on heraldry tend to see its development like this:



I would argue, however, that both hermetic and heraldic symbolism developed simultaneously, taking from the same sources and influencing each other, which may be shown thus:



The influence of bestiaries, the books describing virtues and vices of various animals, including the mythical ones, is obvious in all later European systems of symbolic expression and thus cannot be questioned. It is interesting, however, that some animals are almost exclusively heraldic and hermetic symbols. While such creatures as the dove or the lion are often found in symbolic and alegorical pictures, the eagle seems to be absent from them but is one of the most important symbol of both heraldry and hermetism.

Christian symbols are quite common in both systems, so do not need special emphasis. The obvious examples are the four kerubic creatures (lion, eagle, bull, man), the dove, the lamb, etc.

Traditional symbolism, mentioned above, is meant to include ancient and Arab sources which are of greatest interest here. First of all the colours and their correspondences must be mentioned, as crucial to heraldry and also very important in hermetic theory and art. The basic arrangement of planetary colours is most probably of Babilonian origin and was developed as a part of the system of astrological correspondences. It was later adapted by the Hellenistic astrologers of Ptolemaic Egypt and inherited by the Islamic scholars of the 8th-10th centuries. There

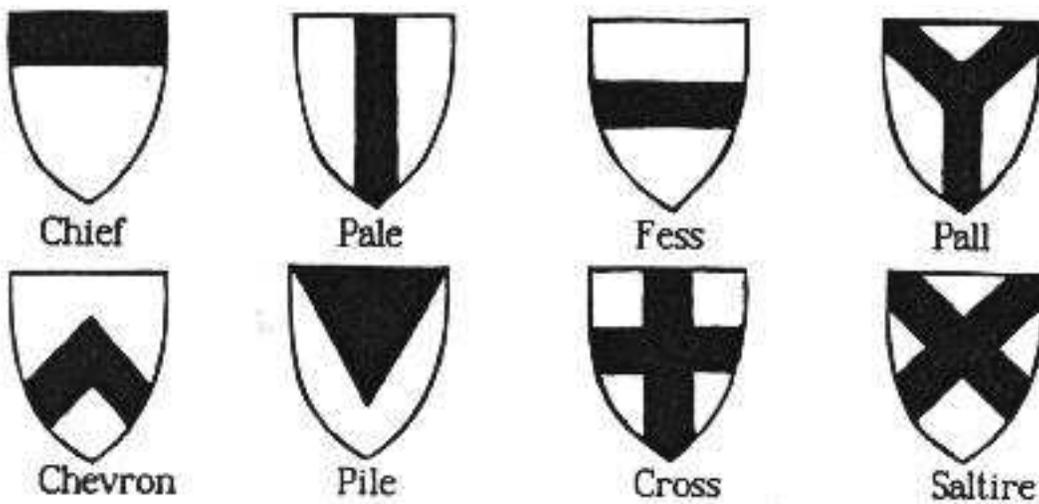
cannot be any doubt that the latter new it, as the whole scheme is clearly set out in the treatise on *The Perfect Man (Insan-ul-Kamil)* by the Sufi mystic Jili. In theoretical texts on European heraldry, the earliest of which are quite late, this system also appears, most notably in *Le blason des armoiries* by Hyerome de Bara (Lyon, 1581).

| COLOUR | PLANET | METAL | HERALDIC COLOURS | |
|-----------------|---------|---------|------------------|----------|
| white or silver | Moon | silver | argent | METAL |
| gray or purple | Mercury | mercury | purpure | TINCTURE |
| green | Venus | copper | vert | TINCTURE |
| yellow | Sun | gold | or | METAL |
| red | Mars | iron | gules | TINCTURE |
| blue | Jupiter | tin | azure | TINCTURE |
| black | Saturn | lead | sable | TINCTURE |

It is also interesting that a special role ascribed to the correspondences of the Sun and the Moon in the hermetic symbolism is also present in heraldry:

| System | Astrology | Alchemy | Heraldry |
|-------------------|------------|----------------|-----------|
| Sun/Moon corresp. | Sun/Moon | gold/silver | or/argent |
| Traditional name | luminaries | perfect metals | metals |
| Name of others | planets | base metals | tinctures |

It is very meaningful, in this context, that the beginnings of heraldry coincided in time with very close contacts of European knights and scholars with the world of Islam through the crusades and Arab occupation of Spain. The passing of the "lamp" of esoteric learning from the Arabian astrologers, alchemists and mystics to their European successors is well documented and cannot be questioned. It was the main source of occult ideas before the Renaissance translations of *Corpus Hermeticum* and other hellenistic gnostic texts. And for alchemy, which developed along somewhat different lines than the occult tradition connected with magic and the Kabbalah, the Renaissance intellectual revolution had little importance.



The same influence may be seen in the system of geometrical divisions of the heraldic shield called ordinaries. Mathematics and geometry of the Arabs at the time of crusades was highly developed and, as some authors say, "degenerated" into esoteric interpretations of the Neopythagorean school. The mystical significance of geometrical divisions and similar simple forms was studied both by architects and by Sufi masters. This is, however, a slippery ground for speculations as geometry also played significant role in Celtic and early Romanesque art symbolism. Heraldic charges, or pictorial images placed on the shield, of the earliest period are very often the same as the most important symbols used in alchemy. If we were to choose two leading symbols, these would certainly be Lion and Eagle. Later many more were incorporated into both systems and therefore it is difficult to say which are frequent

and which are not. The way of their presentation, in simplified and standardized way, is also very similar. Looking at some alchemical illustrations one may sometimes feel that they are collections of heraldic designs without shields. Winged beasts with strange attributes, dragons, double headed eagles, suns, moons, stars, crowns, fleur-de-lis, crosses, etc. are all present in almost identical shapes.



Eagle as spirit ascending from Prima Materia. [*Hermaphroditisches Sonn- und Mondskind* 1752]



Extraction of the spirit of Mercurius from Prima Materia. [Reusner, *Pandora* 1588]



Heraldic eagle as an alchemical symbol. [Mylius, *Anatomia auris* 1628]



The shield from Thurneisser *Quinta Essentia* 1574]



The arms from final plate of Mutus Liber. [Mutus Liber, 1677]

Turning to particular examples, some of the earliest seem to be the figures from *Buch der Heiligen Dreifaltigkeit* (circa 1400) and its later version Hieronymus Reusner's *Pandora* (1588), which use both heraldicized images and actual coats-of-arms. The main motif is the black double-headed eagle intended to denote the Philosopher's Stone, and some of the more complex heraldic devices incorporating that symbol represent the whole process of the Magnum Opus. The double headed eagle divided vertically ("per pale" in heraldic language) and with each half of a different colour is also present in *De alchimia* (16th c.) attributed to St. Thomas Aquinas as well as in some earlier alchemical treatises. Another interesting figure is that of Christ crucified upon fleur-de-lis, a heraldic symbol per se. Even more meaningful and set in real chivalric context is the beautiful illustration from *Aurora consurgens* of the late 14th century. It shows a tournament scene between personifications of the Sun and the Moon, appropriately presented as a knight and a naked woman which stresses the male-female duality, riding on heraldic creatures the lion and the griffin. The most interesting feature of it is, however, that they have shields with the opposite arms, i.e. the Sun-Knight has three crescent moons and the Moon-Lady has the sun. This is symbolic of the fight of the two opposites, each of which contains the root of the other, just as in the Chinese yin-yang symbol.



Alchemist as Herald
[Book of Lambspring]

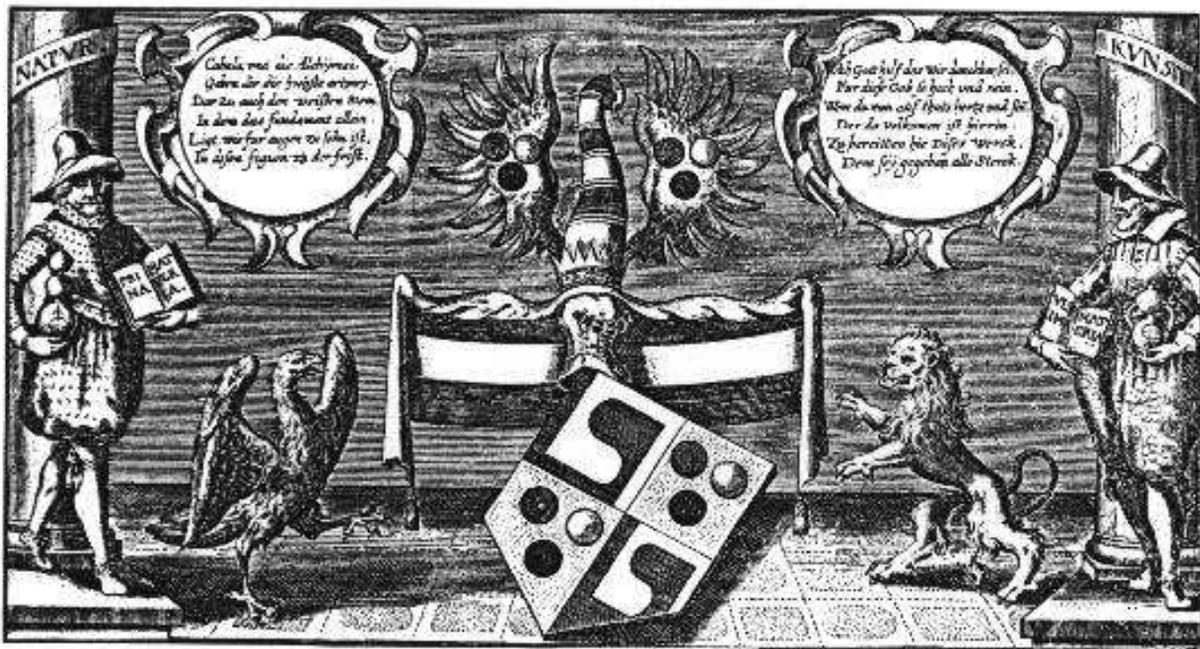


The Coat of Arms of Lambspring

In the case of Lambspring's *Tractatus de lapide philosophorum* (1678) the heraldic element is especially stressed, showing the alchemical adept on the title page dressed as the Imperial Herald standing beside the athanor which is also reminiscent of a palace. The symbolic significance of this emblem is not quite clear - probably it follows the same lines of symbolic association that appear in numerous representations of the alchemist as a gardener. The herald may be understood as the one who has power over "metals and tinctures" or heralding the Great Work, which involves some play on the meanings of the word "herald". The appearance of the double-headed black eagle on his breast is especially interesting, as the same heraldic device was used in *Buch der Heiligen Dreifaltigkeit* to denote the Great Work. In some manuscript versions of the work there is also a coat-of-arms of Lambspring, missing from the Frankfurt edition of Luca Jennis. The arms shows, appropriately, a lamb passant (i.e. with one leg raised) both on the shield and in the crest over the helmet. The obvious association in alchemical context is that with the Golden Fleece, so often used to symbolize the Philosopher's Stone.



Heraldic shields as symbolic commentary upon Tabula Smaragdina of Hermes Trismegistos [Stolcius, *Hortulus Hermeticus* 1627]



The full heraldic-hermetic achievement from Michelspacher, *Cabala, Spiegel der Kunst und Natur*, 1616]

A considerable number of alchemical treatises contain what they call Arma Artis, i.e. the arms of the Art of Alchemy. That in Trismosin's *Splendor Solis* (British Museum MS, 1582) consists of the Sun face with three

smaller faces forming the eyes and mouth on the shield and the triple crescent Moon surmounted with the Sun in the crest. The symbolism of the former clearly displays the theory of three alchemical principles - Mercury, Sulphur and Salt - as the constituents of the Philosopher's Stone, while the crest represents the *Conjunctio Oppositorum* of the two basic principles usually symbolized by the Sun/Moon or King/Queen duality.

A later version of the same work, *Le Toyson d'or* (1612), contains on its title page a well known emblematic figure incorporating three heraldic shields with the double-headed eagle, lion and seven-pointed star. The same emblem was also included among the engravings of *Viridarium chymicum* by Daniel Stolcius (1624) as illustrating the text of the *Emerald Table* of Hermes.

Similar theme of triplicity and duality appears in the full heraldic achievement on the first plate in *Spiegel der Kunst und Natur* attributed to Stephan Michelspracher (1654). The quartered shield displays in the 1st and 4th a pattern very similar to the Chinese Tao symbol and certainly representing the same idea of interpenetration of the two opposing forces (Yin and Yang, female and male, etc.). The 2nd and 3rd quarters contain three circles (or spheres), apparently in the field of golden colour (the engraving is not in colour, of course, but the pattern of dots is used in heraldry to indicate the metal of gold). The symbol is actually the same as in *Splendor Solis* - the three elements of which gold is made. The same basic symbolism is indicated by the crest - the duality of two wings, each of which contains the three elements. The supporters are lion and eagle, familiar alchemical symbols of the opposites or of White Gluten and Red Blood.

The same three elemental circles or spheres are also present in the same quarters of the shield on the engraving of the hermaphrodite Emperor in Thurneisser's *Quinta Essentia* (1574). The other two quarters contain what seems to be the chess tower which might indicate intelligence or skill.

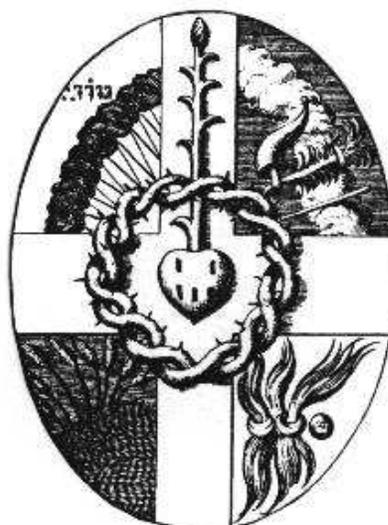
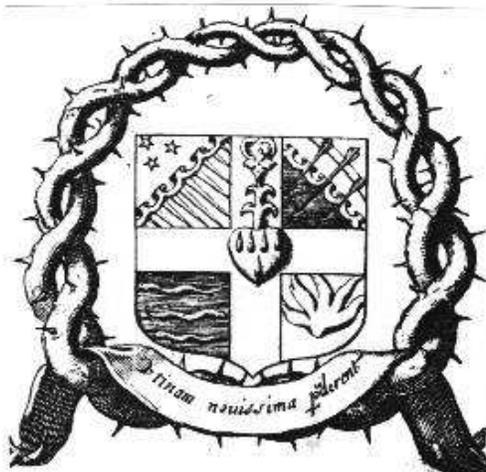
The last engraving from the *Mutus Liber* (1702) shows a shield divided by a chevron, with the three circles over a triple hill in the bottom half and what seems to be three shells (escallops that were used as badges of pilgrims in the Middle Ages) in the upper half. This reappearance of the same pattern of three circles in symbolic heraldic designs cannot be a mere coincidence.



Heraldic figure in Barchusen
Elementa chemiae 1718



Arms of Michael Maier



French alchemical designs illustrating the alchemical theories of pseudo-Aquinas and Flamel. [Lagneau, *Harmonie chymique*, 1836]



Figure from Reusner's *Pandora* 1500

The coat-of-arms from the fourth figure in Johann Conrad Barchusen's *Elementa chemiae* (1718), which is an edition of much earlier treatise *The Crowning of Nature* (the version published by Adam McLean in the Magnum Opus series, however, does not include this figure), again shows the lion-eagle duality, this time placed respectively on the shield and in the crest. The shield has a fess across the lion, thus suggesting the triple nature of Materia Ultima or the Philosopher's Stone symbolized by it.

Besides the two opposites and the three principles, alchemical theory made extensive use of the four elements of ancient philosophy: Fire, Air, Water and Earth. These can be found in "hieroglyphic" arms depicting the

Philosopher's Stone that were reproduced in David Lagneau's *Harmonie chymique* (Paris, 1636). According to the commentary they were designed on the basis of the teachings of St. Thomas Aquinas and Nicholas Flamel. The four quarters contain symbolic representations of the elements, which are not very heraldic, and in the centre is placed a heart with five drops of blood and a flower issuing from it. The symbols of blood and flower are often used in alchemy to represent the Red Tincture or "flowering" of the Great Work.

The most beautiful example of hermetic arms I could find is that from a German manuscript showing the Green Dragon biting its tail and holding Red Roses in its claws, with the White Eagle and the Phoenix or Dove above it. This is a heraldicized version of a well known alchemical emblem.

In modern continuation of the hermetic tradition the most outstanding example of utilizing the symbolic language of heraldry for expressing the ideas of the hermetic philosophy was the French work *Heraldique alchimique nouvelle* by Jorge Camacho and Alain Gruger (Paris, 1978). It contains a set of 47 coats-of-arms intended to reflect the stages of the Great Work. Unfortunately, I have not been able to see this publication.

Another field for possible research are the arms of hermetic writers and philosophers. Many of these had their inherited family crests and therefore finding occult symbolism may not be possible in all cases. An example may be the coat-of-arms of Robert Fludd or Heinrich Kunrath, though the latter's arms is displayed on the engraving of his laboratory in *Amphitheatrum sapientiae aeternae* (1604) which may indicate that even inherited arms may have been interpreted in hermetic terms just as Christian ideas or Greek myths were. Some armigerous alchemists modified their arms so that any possible hermetic symbolism was stressed. This approach may be seen in the coat-of-arms of Michael Sendivogius which, in the Polish heraldic system, was that of the clan Ostoja and showed a sword between two crescents with a green dragon in the crest. As the Green Dragon was an important alchemical symbol, he used a quartered shield so that it also appeared on it and not only above the helmet.



Michael Maier's arms seem to be a fusion of his hereditary crest and one with obvious hermetic symbolism divided "per pale". The latter shows an eagle above and a toad below connected with a thin thread, and a dove with a golden

ring in its beak above the helmet. The toad is the symbol of Prima Materia appearing already in medieval alchemical symbolism (e.g. Ripley's *Scrowle*) but here may refer, together with the eagle, to the Dense and the Volatile duality. The dove with the golden ring clearly indicates the completion of the Great Work, as it is often used interchangeably with the phoenix symbol in this meaning.

Some heraldic research would be necessary for classifying the arms of Johann Daniel Mylius, as it may be either inherited or adopted. This would be interesting, because it would show how one may see hermetic symbols in heraldry even if their use had not been intentional. The three fleur-de-lis on the shield may refer to the three principles of Mercury, Sulphur and Salt, while the crowned lion holding two fleur-de-lis and between two trumpets in the crest may well indicate the completion of the Magnum Opus (the Red Lion of alchemy with the Red and White Tinctures). The possibility of such interpretation is stressed by two traditional alchemical symbols appearing at the bottom of the engraving - the Pelican and the Phoenix.

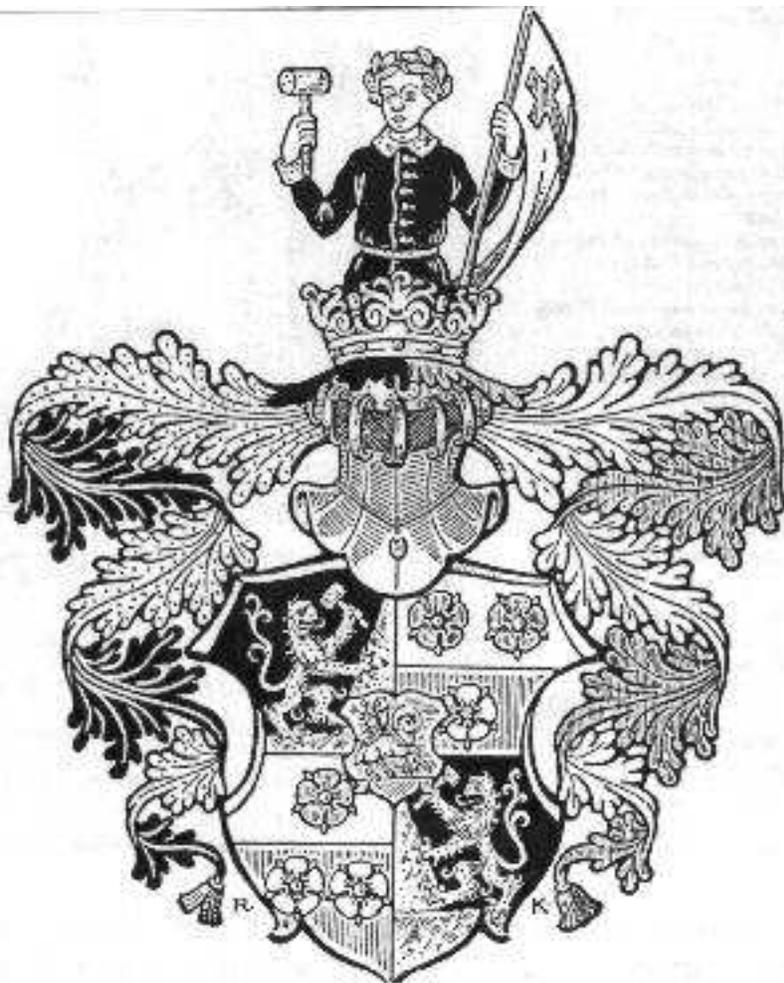


An interesting, and obviously thought out, hermetic coat-of-arms is that of one Cornelius Petraeus of Hamburg from the 17th century. It shows Mercury borne down on one side by a heavy weight, referring to the fixed, and borne up on the other side by the wings attached to his hand and leg, symbolic of the volatile. One of his feet is set on land,

while the other floats over the water. In the crest above there is a seven-pointed star representing seven planets and metals between two wings.



Perhaps the most famous heraldic device connected with the hermetic tradition is that of the Rosy Cross. It has been often stated that the symbol was derived from the coat-of-arms of Johann Valentin Andreae which displays an X-cross with four red roses. Another theory say it refers to the arms of Martin Luther of a rose surmounted with a cross of equal arms (though some sources state it is an apple flower). One of the numerous portraits of Andreae shows 16 coats-of-arms, presumably of his direct ancestors, which proves his preoccupation with heraldry and adds another argument for the theory that he was the real founder of the Rosicrucian Order. Whatever the truth is, the later Rosicrucian tradition always used a heraldicized rose emblem as its symbol which had also been used in much earlier alchemical tradition.



An interesting interpretation of the arms of the Schlegel family, granted to Christoph Schlegel (1613-1678), is attempted by his descendant A. Russell Slagle in Manly Palmer Hall's *The Rosicrucians and Magister Christoph Schlegel* (Los Angeles, 1986). Schlegel was a Protestant theologian praised by Andreae among "aetherei Spiritus zelotes" and connected with his Societas Christiana, and the arms was granted to him in 1651. The interpretation draws parallels with the symbols used in *The Chemical Marriage of Christian Rosencreutz* and though it seems to fit, it is not absolutely obvious that the arms is an example of hermetic symbolism.

One of the most important modern continuators of the hermetic tradition, Carl Gustav Jung, in his essay "The Tower" (in *Memories, Dreams, Reflexions*) describes his family crest which originally displayed the Phoenix referring to the meaning of the word "jung" (young) and so being a punning arms. His grandfather, who was a Grand Master of a Swiss Masonic Lodge, changed the arms so that it reflected freemasonic symbolism. The shield was quartered and displayed a blue cross in the first quarter, a bunch of grapes in the fourth, and a golden star in the second and third. Jung himself, however, interpreted it as being Rosicrucian and while, according to him, the Cross and the Rose symbolized the Christian and the Dionisian elements, so the Cross and the Grapes symbolized the Heavenly and the Chthonic principles. The Golden Star, he says, is a symbol of Aurum Philosophorum. Jung's interpretations of alchemical symbols are always disputable and they tell one more about his system of depth psychology than about alchemy itself. In this case Rosicrucian and alchemical connections of his grandfather's arms also seem to be wishful thinking biased by his interests. The same attitude may have been taken by earlier hermetic philosophers or present interpreters of heraldic symbolism.

An example of how an overenthusiastic researcher might see hermetic symbolism everywhere is the arms of a Polish town called Wejcherowo. It consists of a Maltese cross with a red rose in the middle of it, the whole surrounded by a laurel wreath and placed on golden field. As the town was founded in 1643, shortly after the height of the Rosicrucian storm that swept across Europe, and as it is near Gdansk (Danzig), known for Rosicrucian activities at the same time, one might conclude that it is a symbol of the Rosy Cross Order. The truth is, however, that the

founder of the town, Jakub Wejcher, was a member of the Order of the Knights of Malta and had a red rose in his own family arms, so just joined both symbols to give the coat-of-arms to the newly founded town. Even though everything seems to fit, there is no hermetic symbolism involved in this case, as possibly in many others.



Illustrations:

1. Heraldic ordinaries
2. Heraldic eagle as an alchemical symbol
3. Eagle as spirit ascending from Prima Materia [Jung, fig.229]
4. Extraction of the spirit of Mercurius from Prima Materia. Pandora by Reusner. [Jung, fig. 232]
5. Double-headed eagle divided per pale. *De Alchimia* by pseudo-Aquinas [Jung, fig. 20]
- 6-9. Heraldic drawings from *Buch der Heiligen Dreifaltigkeit*
- 9a. The tournament fight between the Sun-Knight and the Moon-Lady from *Aurora consurgens* [Stanislaus Klossowski de Rola, *Alchemy*, fig. 13]
10. Alchemist as herald. *Book of Lambspring*
11. The coat-of-arms of Lambspring.
12. "Arma Artis" from *Splendor Solis*
13. Heraldic shields as symbolic commentary upon *Tabula Smaragdina* of Hermes Trismegistos [in Stolcius's *Hermetic Garden - Christian Rosenkreutz Anthology* by Allen]
14. The full heraldic-hermetic achievement from Mihelespracher's *Cabala*

15. The shield in Thurneisser's *Quinta essentia*
16. The arms from *Mutus Liber*
17. Heraldic figure in Barchusen's *Elementa chemiae*
18. French alchemical designs illustrating the alchemical theories of pseudo-Aquinas and Flamel
19. Heraldic-alchemical designs [in *Alchemia* by E.E. Ploss, H. Roosen-Runge, H. Schipperges, München 1970]
20. The arms of Michael Sendivogius
21. The arms of Michael Maier
22. The arms of J.D. Mylius
- 22a. Book-plate of Cornelius Petraeus [Klossowski, *Alchemy*, fig.52]
23. Alchemical Red Rose from Ripley's *Scrowle* [Jung, fig. 30]
24. Portrait of Johann Valentin Andreae surrounded by coats-of-arms [M.P.Hall, *The Rosicrucians and Magister Christoph Schlegel*, p. 48]
25. The arms granted to Christoph Schlegel [M.P. Hall, *ibid.*, p. 144]

Rafal T. Prinke - Mantegna's Prints in Tarot History

Article originally published in *Manteia*, 4 (1990), 9.

MANTEGNA'S PRINTS IN TAROT HISTORY



The beautiful series of pictorial images known as the *Tarocchi di Mantegna* is well known to everyone interested in the tarot cards but its place in the early tarot history has not been sufficiently explained so far. These prints (as they

survived in uncut sheets only, it is not certain if they were cards at all) contain 50 images divided into 5 groups of 10 pictures each, all in a strictly set order starting with the Beggar, passing through the conditions of man, arts, sciences, virtues and the heavenly spheres crowned with the First Cause. Although some of these pictures strongly resemble some of the standard tarot Major Arcana, the whole series is obviously quite different.



In spite of the traditional name of this set, all the modern writers state that the engravings are not the work of Andrea Mantegna (1432-1506). Nobody, however, seems to have noticed the short fragment on Mantegna in the best source on Renaissance Italian artists - Giorgio Vasari's *Lives of Artists* - where it is clearly stated that he made copper engravings of trionfi which "were considered to be perfect, as no better ones were known". In the original Italian the sentence reads: "Si diletto il medesimo, siccome fece il Pollajuolo, di fare stampe di rame, e fra l'altre cose fece i suoi trionfi, e ne fu allora tenuto conto, perche non si era veduto meglio" (Giorgio Vasari, *Vite de' piu' eccellenti pittori, scultori e architetti*, Milano, 1809, vol. 6, p. 218). This short quotation is of utmost importance for tarot history. It proves that Mantegna was indeed the author of the engravings attributed to him (which are dated to circa 1460) and, what is even more important, that the term trionfi was not reserved for the standard tarot deck only but was a generic name for a certain type of cards including those of Mantegna (Michael Dummet in *The Game of Tarot* p. 82 and 83 says there are no such proofs).



Mantegna worked for Isabella d'Este of Ferrara who was closely connected with the earliest references to the tarot (trionfi) cards, and even painted two "trionfi" pictures for her: *Parnas or the triumph of love* and *The triumph of virtue*. It is now generally accepted that both early tarot decks and various other "triumph" themes in the early Renaissance Italian art have their common source in triumphal parades of the period and in Petrarch's influential poem *I trionphi*. The basic idea of these was a sequence of images or personifications, each of which "triumphed" over the preceding one, and the same scheme can be observed in the Mantegna series. Another hypothesis connects the tarot images with the hermetic art of memory but it has been overlooked that both of these theories converge in the person of Petrarch who was regarded as the father of that art. It seems, therefore, that it was Petrarch's idea to use the images of triumphal parade as vehicles for the art of memory images, while some later artist used the same idea for visual images of the earliest trionfi cards.



The earliest known tarot deck is that of *Visconti di Modrone*, also known as *Cary/Yale* deck, usually dated to circa 1440, though some authors place it even in 1428. It is very different from the later standard deck and contains not only one more court figure but also at least three additional Major Arcana cards - the theological virtues of Faith, Hope and Charity. There are also descriptions of two other decks of similar "triumphal" character, though much more different from the standard tarot, all made for the same person - Filippo Maria Visconti. One was by Michelino da Besozzo and the other is attributed to Marziano da Tortona. It seems, therefore, that around 1440 at the courts of Milan and Ferrara there was a fashion for cards with mythological and alegorical images which were used for playing but at the same time were imbued with deep hermetic symbolism intended for practising the magical art of memory.



It is interesting to compare the structure of Mantegna's cards with that of the "memory theatre" of Camillo (as described by Frances Yates in her *Art of Memory*) to see the striking similarity. Both are condensed symbolic representations of the hermetic universe and also the magical tools with which one could rule the universe applying the occult art of memory as developed by the Renaissance magi. Although the structure of the standard tarot Major Arcana series is not as clear as that of Mantegna's prints, it is similar enough to state that the function of the tarot must have been the same.

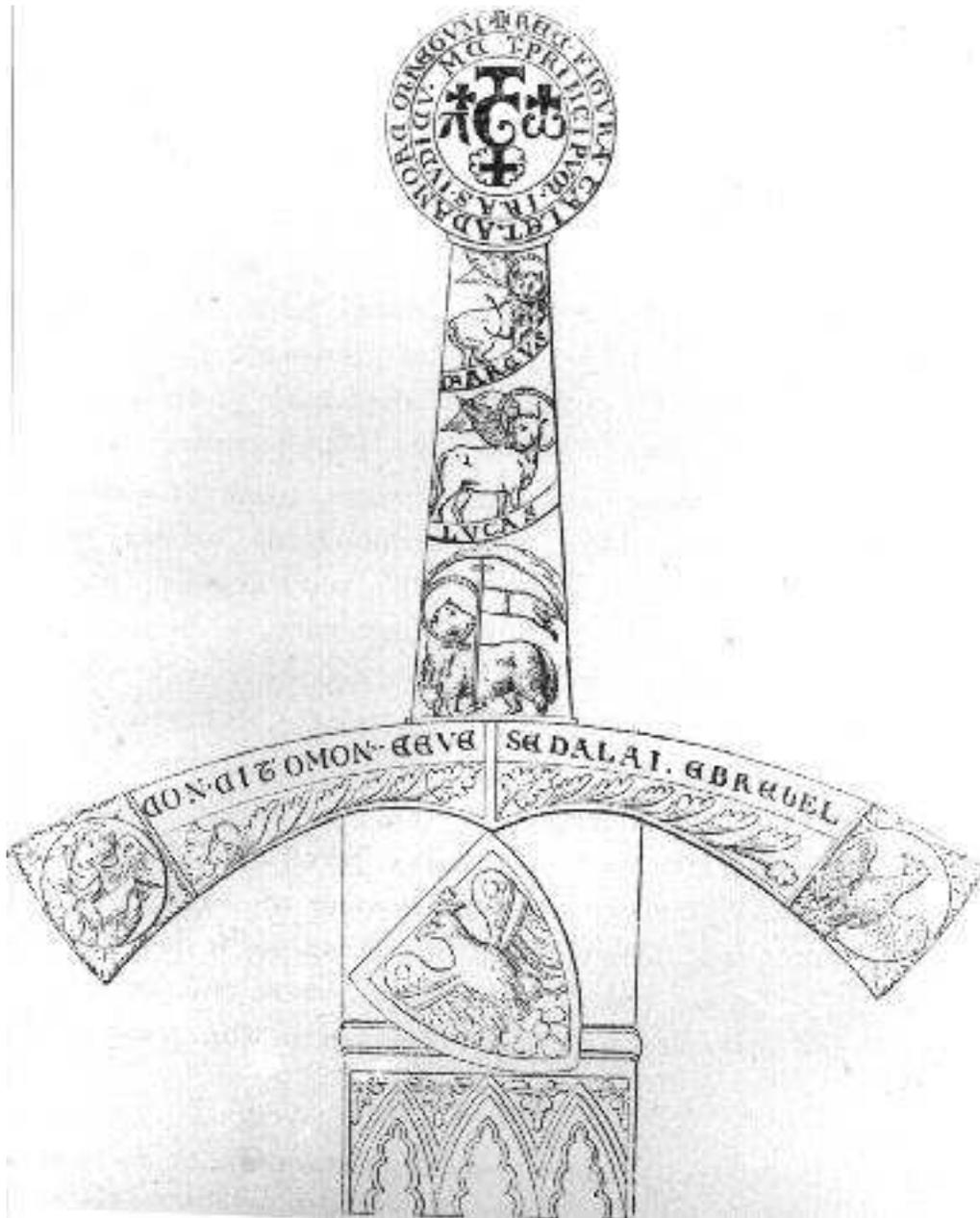
Of course this does not explain why the later standard of the Major Arcana won popularity nor what its structure really shows but at least it clarifies some of the issues of the early development of the tarot cards which can now be represented like this:



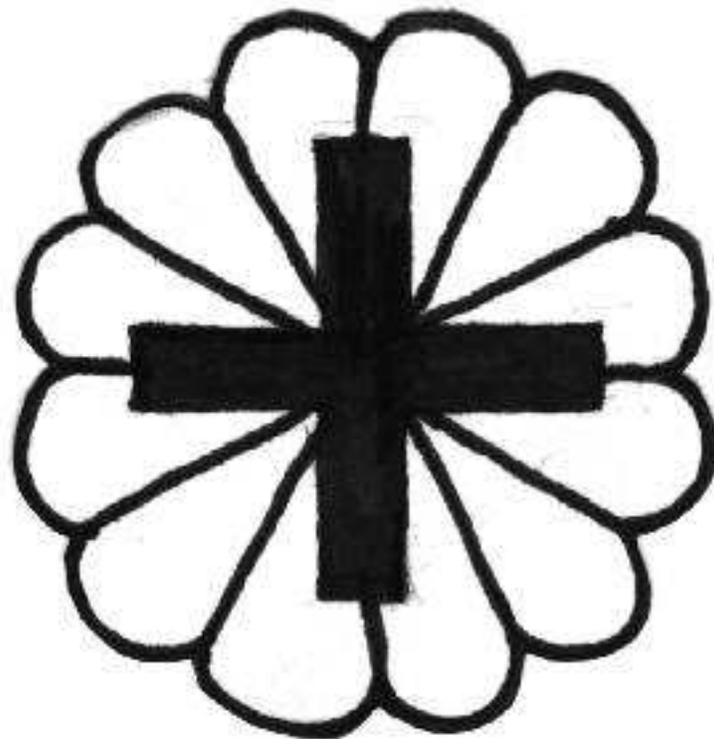
Rafal T. Prinke - The Jagged Sword and Polish Rosicrucians

Article originally published in *Journal of Rosicrucian Studies*, 1 (1983), 8-13.

The Jagged Sword and Polish Rosicrucians

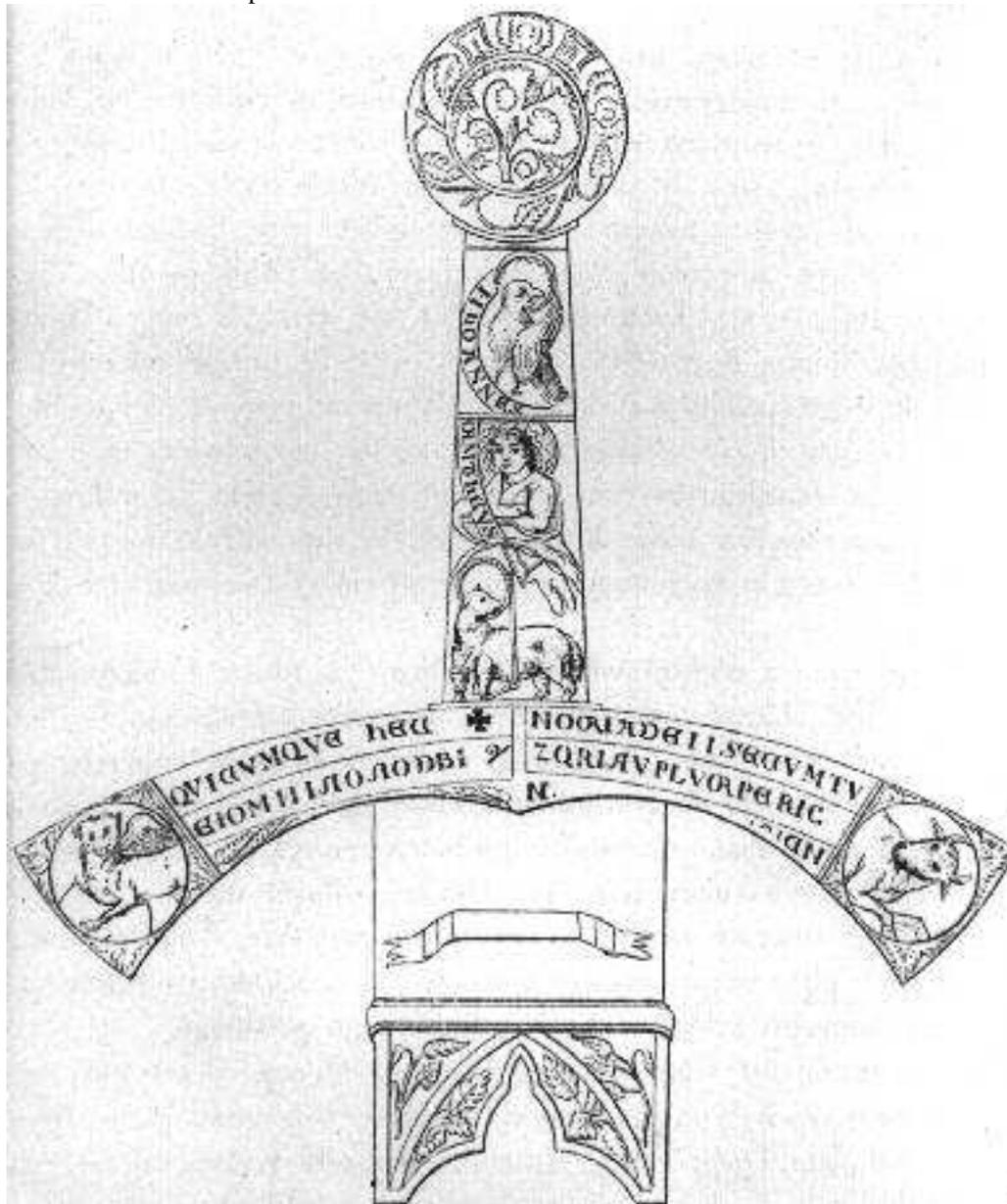


This article treats of various loosely connected facts which may throw some light on historical Rosicrucianism, especially in the context of Poland, though they may as well prove to be just barren speculations. My research along these lines started with the coronation sword of Polish kings known as Szczerbiec (The Jagged Sword) so I will also start with a description of this strange jewel. The legend links it with the first king of Poland, Boleslaus the Brave (ruled 992-1025), who is said to have jagged his sword against the Golden Gate in Kiev on his victorious entry into that city in 1018. However the one which is extant is of later date and does not show any signs of that event, only the name has been transferred to it. The sword is 98 centimetres long and is a piece of ceremonial armoury, most probably made at the end of the 12th century. The most interesting part of it is the hilt which bears some symbols and inscriptions of esoteric character. Starting from the top, the pommel has on one side of it a most curious sigil depicting a big letter T between Greek letters Alpha and Omega each surmounted by a cross. As the authorities have established (on the basis of the shape of the guard) that it is a Templar sword, the letter T may stand for "Templum" or the Order of Knights Templar, who possess the Alpha and Omega of all esoteric knowledge. It may also be noted in passing that the famous sword of Paracelsus had the word AZOTH also on the pommel and it has the same letters with the addition of Z, but this may be a coincidence. What is much more interesting is the small cross below the T, which is usually described a "a cross surrounded by a cloud". However, when I inspected the original on exhibition in Cracow, I found out with considerable surprise that it does not really look like a cloud but rather like a flower, with exactly twelve petals, three in each quarter (Fig. 3). The number is not only that of the signs of the Zodiac but also the number of petals of Robert Fludd's well-known Rose symbol. Therefore the question arises if this symbol may be considered as an early example of the Rosicrucian emblem and an indication of "Passing on the Torch" between Knights Templar and Rosicrucians. It cannot be given a conclusive answer on the basis of this very slight piece of evidence but it has to be remembered that a connection between the two orders has often been put forward, especially by the 18th century Rosicrucian and Freemasonic writers. It has been stated either that the masonic Rose Croix degree was invented by the Crusaders or that after the suppression of the Order of the Temple the surviving members formed a secret fraternity later known as Rosicrucians. These are only legends, of course, but on the other hand it is quite possible. In fact, from the esoteric point of view, such a connection should be accepted, as otherwise the whole notion of "tradition" would become meaningless.



I also believe, and as far as I know nobody has put forward this hypothesis yet, that the very symbol of the Rosy Cross may have originated with the Crusaders in the Holy Land. There was a flower called the Rose of Jericho which the Christian knights in Palestine held in high esteem because of its strange feature, namely its ability to

revive after it had been dried, and therefore it was a symbol of resurrection. Curiously enough it is not a rose at all, though it has this name, but belongs to the order called Cruciferae or cruciferous. This latter name is certainly of much later origin but it must have been inspired by some "cross-like" feature common to this order of plants. So it would appear possible that the flower depicted on the pommel of Szczerbiec is the Rose of Jericho, or Cruciferous Rose, or perhaps Rosy Cross, and that it was a symbol adopted by the surviving Templars, who continued the gnostic-hermetic tradition and hoped to 'resurrect' the order in future.



Coming back to the description of the Jagged Sword, around the symbols on the pommel there is an inscription within two rings which says: "Haec figura valet ad amorem regum et principum iras judicam", that is, "This figure serves to love kings and princes who judge contentions". Explanation of this curious phrase is very difficult. It seems to specify the aim which should be pursued by the owners of the sword. The earliest possessors of it are not known and it would be unnecessary to present all the hypotheses here. In short, it was probably made for a member of the royal Piast family, as several of them were involved in the Crusades at that time and also were connected in one way or another with military orders of knighthood. Most probably it was one of the Silesian princes, as in that region of Poland the Order of the Temple had many possessions. The known history of Szczerbiec starts in 1320, when it was first used for the coronation of the Polish king Ladislaus the Short, who reunited the small appanage

divisions after two hundred years. It may be significant that this was shortly after the suppression of Templars. An exciting, though far fetched, hypothesis would be that Polish kings became some sort of heirs to the Order of the Temple. In order to support this conjecture we may be reminded that from that time until the middle of the 17th century Poland (united in a commonwealth with Lithuania) was the greatest European country and one of the most powerful. At the same time she was a country of equality (there were feudal classes, of course, but there was no aristocracy) and tolerance (there have never been religious wars in Poland and it became a shelter for various heretics, Jews and Moslems), which was certainly in the spirit of the Rosicrucian manifestos and later of Freemasonry, and probably also of the Knights Templar. Another significant fact is that when the Jagiellonian dynasty died out and the "period of elected kings" began (the king was chosen by the gentry in a general election), the first one to be elected king of Poland was Henry de Valois, later Henry III, king of France. He was the rightful successor of Philip la Bel, the suppressor of Knights Templar, though from another line of the family. A few months after the election of Henry, he escaped back to France. There were certainly some political reasons for this, but these do not explain why Henry fled from Cracow at night and with only one man accompanying him. Had he perhaps learnt about the Templar oath to revenge Jaques de Molay?

Returning to Szczerbiec again, the reverse side of the pommel bears a floral ornament and the hilt itself, as well as the endings of the guard, show animal symbols of the four Evangelists and the Holy Lamb. These are not of special significance, as they appear very often in the art of the period. The guard, however, has inscriptions on both sides, which seem to be of great interest. On one side it says: "Quicumque haec nomina Dei I secum tulerit, nullum periculum ei omnino nocebit", and on the other: "CON CIT OMON. EEVE SEDALAI EBREBEL". The first inscription is in Latin and means: "Whoever carries these names of God I with him will never suffer from any danger." The "God I" is usually interpreted by historians as the first letter of the Tetragrammaton. The second inscription, however, is very mysterious. In the light of the first one it appears to contain the "names of God I", and, actually, they look like corrupted (or original?) forms of the names of God used in the grimoires of kabbalistic magic. The only attempt at elucidating these words that I could find among scholarly works devoted to the Jagged Sword states that the inscription is in corrupted Hebrew. And so EEVE is interpreted as an abbreviation for the phrase "I am that I am and that is", SEDALAI is "Sadi Eloï", i.e., "God the Omnipotent", and EBREBEL is "Ab Rabi El", i.e., "Father God the Omniscient". This interpretation can be accepted, I think, but the first three words of this inscription are far more difficult to explain. The interpretation I know explains them as abbreviations of either Latin "Cono citare nomina" or Hebrew "Kone Zitu Omon" (meaning "[they] inspire fervent faith"). Both of these are acceptable in this context but also both are rather strained readings. Therefore I thought of trying another, equally strained, interpretation, namely that these are words in the Enochian language. To verify this suggestion is almost impossible due to the fact that too little of Enochian is known, but it has to be remembered that John Dee and Edward Kelley received their specimen of it in Cracow where the Jagged Sword had always been kept. With the help of Dr. Donald C. Laycock's dictionary I found that the word "Om" in Enochian means "understand" or "know", while the suffix "on" signifies (in some cases at least) the Present Perfect tense (e. g. "gohon" = "they have spoken"). The meaning of "CON CIT" in Enochian cannot be established but the whole inscription may refer to those who "have understood" the names of "God I", and therefore define those who are to be the owners of the sword. It may be mentioned that "I" in Enochian is one of the "Fili Lucis" associated with the Sun. This interpretation is far from being convincing but it is useful in that it shows how strained explanations adopted by orthodox scholars can be compared with equally strained and unorthodox ones.

It may also be mentioned here that most of the Polish kings are known to have been interested in one or another of the hermetic sciences. For example, Ladislaus the Varnian (ruled 1434-1444) practiced crystalomancy and his manuscript handbook of it is preserved in the Bodleian Library. The last king of the Jagiellonian dynasty, Sigmund August, was especially noted for his interest in alchemy and magic. He had the second greatest library in Renaissance Europe, a major part of which was connected with the hermetica. In his last will he ordered that some big trunks with books and manuscripts should be burnt after his death, which was done.

On the whole, then, the Jagged Sword used at the coronation of almost all Polish kings seems to have considerable esoteric significance, besides its artistic value. It is a ceremonial sword of the Knights Templar, bearing a proto-Rosicrucian symbol and inscriptions indicative of its magical character.

I wrote about the possible connections of Michael Sendivogius, the great Polish alchemist, with early Rosicrucians in *The Hermetic Journal* No.15, but there are also some other facts referring to the Polish Rosicrucians. Their activities seem to have been centred in Gdansk (Danzig) where an early Rosicrucian apology was published in 1615. This was *Echo der von Gott hocheleuchteten Fraternitet, des loblichen Ordens R.C.*, by Julius Sperber, and is especially interesting because it presents Rosicrucianism in the occult/hermetic context, which has become connected with it ever since. As this book was published in 1615, i.e., a year after the *Fama* and in the same year as the *Confessio*, it may even be considered to be a part of the same plot. In that case we would have to accept the

existence of the Rosicrucian Order as an organisation having representatives in various parts of Europe. Though this is by no means certain, it is not completely impossible. Christopher McIntosh mentions a report of a Rosicrucian order working on alchemical lines which existed in 1622 in the Hague and several other cities including Gdansk. Probably the same order was described by Peter Mormius as active as early as 1620 and also preoccupied with alchemy. Significantly it was called the Golden Rosy Cross, the name of the later alchemically orientated organisation connected with Freemasonry in the 18th century. It seems possible that the alchemical organisation with lodges or centres in Gdansk and other cities was an offshoot of the original Fraternity or that it was a group founded during the "Rosicrucian craze" following the publication of the *Fama* and *Confessio*, due to the difficulties in contacting the original fraternity. In the latter case the founder (or one of them) may well have been Julius Sperber, mentioned above.

The Rosicrucian group in Gdansk continued to publish books until the late 17th century, among which were, for example, the works of Geber and *Chemia Philosophica* by Jacob Barner. One of the most interesting items published by them was *Ein ausführlicher Bericht von der Ersten Tinctur-Wurtzel...* (1681) by Wincenty Kowski or Koffski. It was a German translation of the work previously published in Latin as *Tractatus de prima materia veterum lapidis philosophorum* in the collection *Thesaurinella olympica aurea tripartita*, edited and introduced by Benedictus Figulus (Frankfurt, 1608). According to some accounts Figulus in his introduction alludes to a secret association of alchemists, but this is not of main interest here. Much more interesting is his account of the life of Wincenty Kowski, about whom nothing is known from other sources. Figulus states that he was born in Poznan, became a Dominican monk in a monastery in Gdansk and was an alchemist (from other sources it is known that Dominican monasteries were centres of alchemical practices). He wrote his *Tractatus de prima materia* at the end of his life, having finished it on May 3rd, 1488, and died in the same year. Before his death he had bricked it up in the wall of his cell. It was discovered on August 14th, 1588 and published in 1608. There would be nothing special about the story if a series of coincidences did not appear. First of all, we have Gdansk again mentioned as the place where the tract had been found (though it was first published in Frankfurt-am-Mein); it was then translated by the Rosicrucians of Gdansk into German, and finally the period of time from the death of its author to its publication was exactly 120 years, the same period that elapsed from the death of Christian Rosenkreutz to the opening of his tomb. As the whole story was printed long before the *Fama*, it may indicate the existence of a certain tradition which surfaced in different guises and in different places. Perhaps it may be connected with the work of Simon Studion, as some authors suggest, or it may point to the existence of an alchemical/hermetic organisation of a Rosicrucian character before the *Fama* and *Confessio* were circulated. It should also be mentioned that Kowski's tract is a short work (12 pages) and deals with "mystical" alchemy using allegorical language, and therefore is in line with what is generally termed "Rosicrucianism".

There is little more that can be said about the early phase of the Rosicrucian movement in Poland, as no printed sources are available. It is possible that Cracow was another centre of the order's activity, as it was the capital of the country and a university town. Paracelsian alchemy was intensely studied there and his books were published, and even Paracelsus himself visited the place on various occasions, as he had friends and patients there (especially the Boner family, Wojciech Baza and Dawid Mayer). Interestingly, Paracelsus also visited Gdansk at least once. Anyway, the Rosicrucian issue must have been well known and spoken about shortly after the publication of the manifestos before the order is mentioned in a satirical poem *Theatrum diabolorum* by Jan Borawski, published in Cracow in 1621. It mentions the Rosicrucian fraternity and its apothecary-chemist falsifying all remedies and being drowned in hell ("Te solum fratrum rosae crucis..."). It may also be remembered, without going into detail, that Comenius (Jan Amos Komensky), who is frequently believed to have been connected with the Rosicrucians, spent most of his life in Poland, in the town of Leszno.

The next phase of the history of Rosicrucianism, that of the Gold and Rosy Cross, started with the publication of *Die wahrhafte und vollkommene Bereitung...* by Sincerus Rhenanus or Sigmund Richter in 1710. It is significant that it was based mainly on the works of Julius Sperber of Gdansk and Michael Maier, who connects it with Michael Sendivogius, admired by Maier. However, the name of the Order of the Golden and Rosy Cross had already appeared in the 1620's and was also connected with alchemy. Therefore it may be assumed that the 18th century order was a continuation of the earlier one which had been active in the Hague, Gdansk and other cities. Another interesting lead for the history of Polish Rosicrucianism can be found in *Der Rosenkreutzer in seiner Blöße* by Magister Pianco or Baron Ecker or Eckhoffen, which contains a strange table purporting to reveal the secrets of the order. The table was partly reprinted in M.P. Hall's edition of *D.O.M.A.* and it contains, among other things, "Assembly places" for members of each degree. There are some places in Poland named for some degrees, namely "Camra in Poland" (which I could not identify) for the Magistri 2,8 degree; Krolewiec, Szczecin and Gdansk (Konigsberg, Stettin and Danzig) for the Minores 5,5 degree; Cracow, Wroclaw (Breslau) and Warsaw for the

Philosophi 6,4 degree. Of course it is not sure that the information given by Magister Pianco is true, but even if it is not, it proves that Rosicrucianism was associated with Poland in the 18th century.

When the Order of the Gold and Rosy Cross was "masonised" and actually became one of the numerous rites of Freemasonry, it also had lodges or "circles" in Poland, especially in Warsaw. This stream of Rosicrucianism was probably introduced in Poland by Jean Luc Louis de Toux de Salvarte, a masonic adventurer who travelled all over Europe before he came to stay in Warsaw in 1749. Before that he had been initiated into the highest degrees of the Gold and Rosy Cross Order in Vienna in 1741. Among the later members were: the last king of Poland, Stanislaw August Poniatowski, his brother Kazimierz Poniatowski, Josef Jerzy Hylzen, who was also the chairman of the Sublime Scottish Council of the Grand Orient of Poland, Samuel Okraszewski, a chemist who made experiments with balloon flights, and Karol Henryk Heyking, one of the most important figures in Polish Freemasonry. Near the end of the 18th century the master of Polish Rosicrucians with the title of "Justitiarius" was Count Karol Adolf Bruhl, known in the Order as Frater Oscarus. An important and influential member was Count August Moszynski, a magnate and alchemist, who had a laboratory in his palace in Warsaw and conducted alchemical experiments financed by King Stanislaw August Poniatowski. He is also known as the person who exposed the frauds of Cagliostro when the latter visited Warsaw in 1780.

There is almost nothing known about the Rosicrucians in Poland during the 19th century. There were a number of people interested in alchemy, as for example Jozef Bohdan Dziekonski, who wrote a novel about Michael Sendivogius and the Rosicrucian Fraternity (published in 1843), in many ways similar to Bulwer Lytton's *Zanoni*. There were also Polish patrons of Eliphaz Levi (Count Branicki and Count Mniszech), a member of Soc. Ros. in Anglia and the Golden Dawn (Dr. Edward Bogdan Jastrzebski), and other later connections, but it is doubtful whether these were within the true "Rosicrucian succession". As far as the problem of "succession" is concerned, it seems to me that there may be three possibilities to be taken into account: (1) that there were two distinct organisations using similar names, one of which was concerned with "universal reformation" in the spirit of various Utopias (this was probably very loosely organised and would include Andreae and his circle, Comenius, etc.), while the other was concerned with alchemy and the hermetic philosophy and included among its members Julius Sperber, Michael Maier, Michael Sendivogius, Robert Fludd, and others; (2) that these were two branches of the same organisation, the alchemical branch being called "Golden" to distinguish itself; (3) that there was only one order devoted to the study of alchemy and the hermetic/gnostic tradition, while the *Fama*, *Confessio* and the *Chymical Wedding* were a joke played by Andreae on the real Rosicrucian fraternity. The third possibility, as far as I am aware, has never been suggested, and it seems to me the most logical explanation of the whole mystery, especially as it is confirmed by Andreae himself who said that he had written the *Chymical Wedding* as a satire. He may have learnt about the existence of a secret association of people with rather doubtful beliefs and tried to combat it by issuing the manifestos in their name, not expecting that these would be taken seriously by the public.

Rafal T. Prinke - The Great Work in the Theatre of the World

Article originally published in *A Compendium on the Rosicrucian Vault*, ed. by Adam McLean, Edinburgh, 1985, 19-34.

THE GREAT WORK IN THE THEATRE OF THE WORLD

The symbolic significance of the Vault of Our Father C.R.C. as described in the *Fama Fraternitatis* and other supposedly Rosicrucian sources

General Remarks

The Vault of Christian Rosenkreutz, the story of its foundation, later discovery and opening, and its description form the central element of the first published document of the Rosicrucian Order, generally believed to be one of the three "official" publications. The document is of course the *Fama Fraternitatis* published in Cassel in 1614. The flood of various pamphlets and books on the subject which followed its publication and still continues to be issued by different groups and individuals (either claiming succession to the original authors or analysing the Rosicrucian phenomenon) contains surprisingly little additional information about the Vault and its meaning.

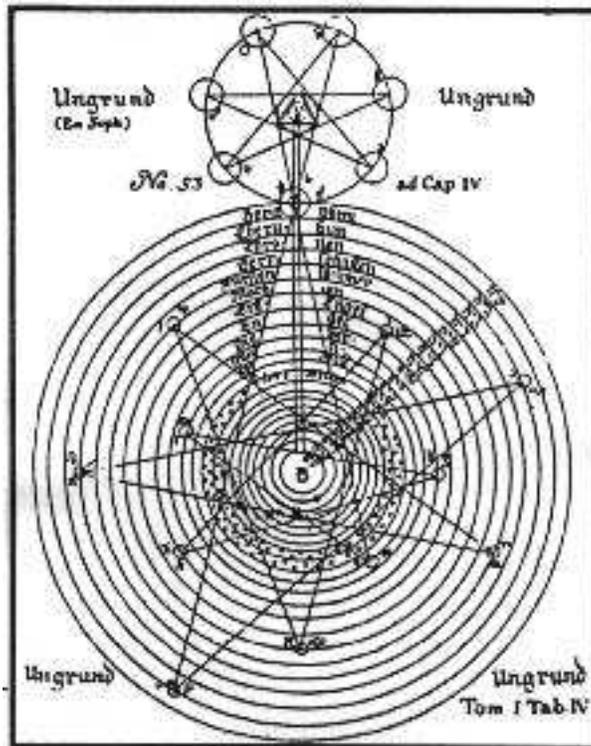
Before passing on to the presentation of my own ideas on the subject, however, I would like to devote some space to defining the approaches or angles from which the whole Rosicrucian problem can be (and is) studied. These can be roughly divided into the following groups:

1. Extreme orthodox scholarship: investigations are usually meticulous but are concerned with the facts relating directly to the problem and conclusions are strictly based on them. This attitude is shown especially by German historians such as Hans Schick.
2. Progressive orthodox scholarship: conclusions are drawn from a wider array of facts, also those which seem to have no direct relation to the problem, and far-reaching hypotheses are put forward, but no deeper significance or meaning of them is given. Examples of this attitude may be found in Frances Yates or W.E. Peuckert.
3. Sober esotericism combined with heterodox scholarship: existence of the esoteric tradition is accepted and facts are interpreted in its light but great effort is made to be in agreement with historically proven or provable facts. This attitude can be found in the writings of Arthur Edward Waite, Manly Palmer Hall, and Adam McLean.
4. Far-reaching esotericism: historical facts get a highly sophisticated interpretation but they are never contradicted by it, i.e. it is a magical interpretation. The best example of this approach is the work of S.L. MacGregor Mathers.
5. Naive esotericism: new and otherwise unknown "historical facts" are discovered by magical means (reading the Akashic record, communication with the Masters, clairvoyance, etc.) and conclusions are based on them. There are many examples of this attitude, most notably Rudolph Steiner, anthroposophists, theosophists, AMORC ("Echnaton was a Rosicrucian" !), etc.
6. Crazy esotericism: the whole problem is either developed ad absurdum (as in Hargrave Jennings) or is not taken seriously (as in joking remarks by Aleister Crowley).

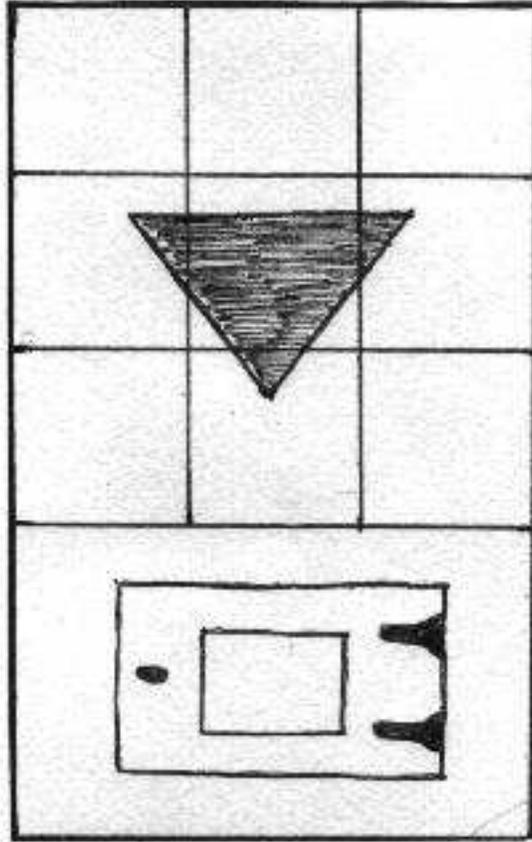
Personally, I believe that the best two ways of approaching the Rosicrucian enigma by an esotericist are the third and the sixth. The value of the former is obvious, while that of the latter lies in the fact that by making nonsense out of the whole thing it enables one to break through the conventional reasoning and get to the "deeper meaning". It is the way somewhat similar to the method of Zen. However, in this essay I will be concerned with the third approach only.

For this reason another, more general, differentiation has to be made. In the writings of early Rosicrucian apologists there are various strange "facts" given, which are obviously (for the most part, at least) not "historical facts" but something that can be called "traditional facts". Now, a question arises whether a "sober esotericist" should believe them or not. My point of view is that such facts are to be "believed" but with another kind of "belief". It is the difference between magical thinking and scientific thinking that presents itself here and an esotericist should learn to switch from one to the other without confusing them (as the "naive" esotericists do). In other words, the "traditional" or "esoteric" facts, such as the events in the life of Christian Rosenkreutz, have their meaning when perceived from one point of view but are a mere fable when examined from the other angle. If we confuse these two ways of looking at the evidence available, we will neither reconstruct the historical facts nor grasp the deeper significance of Rosicrucianism.

Bearing all this in mind, we can attempt to investigate the subject of the Vault of C.R.C. The first thing to do is to remind ourselves of the description given in the *Fama*. So there is a seven-sided chamber, each wall measuring 5 x 8 feet and divided into ten squares, with several figures and sentences and also having a small door for a chest hiding books and other things. The ceiling is divided into triangle with "another sun" in the centre, probably also containing inscriptions but this is not revealed in the *Fama*. The floor is also a heptagon divided into triangles and inscribed with something referring to "the inferior Governors". In the centre there is a round altar with an inscribed brass plate and apparently another extremely small altar containing the mysterious "Minutum Mundum" inside it. Leaving the brass plate on the altar aside for a moment (as it is comparatively precisely described and I shall return to it later), the above is all we know about the Vault from the "official" documents. The description is imprecise enough to be capable of various interpretations and, therefore to be treated as an archetype. It is similar to the case of the Tarot cards, and just as they can (and do) have different representations on the material plane, so the Vault of C.R.C. can have various models, all of them being only approximations to the archetypal ideal (both in form and meaning, both of which are impossible to be fully explained). In spite of this there is only one comprehensive model of the Vault, that of the Golden Dawn, and even very few suggestions concerning some elements of it or remarks of a general nature in all the numerous books on Rosicrucians. One of such remarks is the belief (repeated for instance by Manly Palmer Hall) that the 53rd diagram from Gregorius von Welling's *Opus Mago-Cabbalisticum et Theosophicum* (1735) is a plan of the Vault of Christian Rosenkreutz.



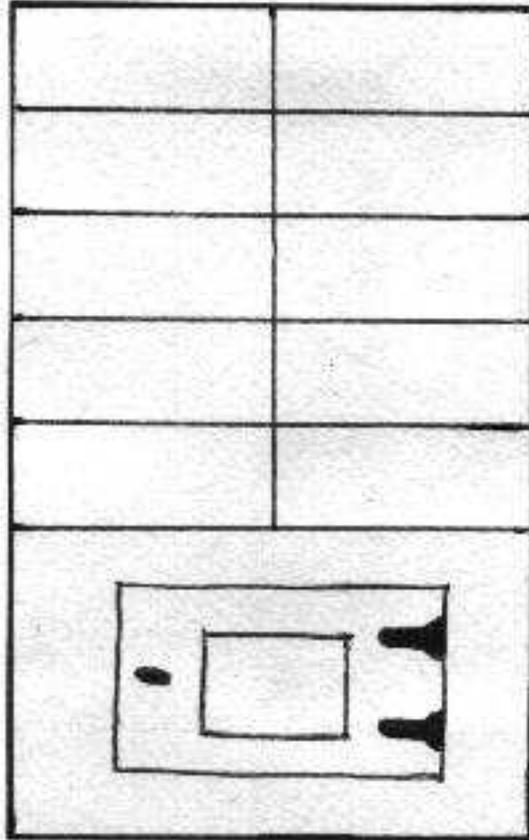
Though interesting, this suggestion is not based on any passage in the book itself (which I have inspected for this purpose). That curious work had a vogue among the 18th century Rosicrucians but it does not mention the Order or its mythical founder in any place. Also the short description of the plate in question (entitled "Schema de Mundo Archetypo") does not refer to any tomb or secret society. This idea must have been started by the book entitled *The Rosicrucians* written by theosophical authors at the beginning of the 20th century (Paul Allen quotes the relevant passage from it and it is in no way revealing). Therefore it may correspond to the plan of the Vault of C.R.C. only as far as both are "Compendiums of the Universe".



Another model of the Vault is its representation in M.P. Hall's *Secret Teachings of All Ages* (the plate facing page CXLI painted by A. Knapp). It is as realistic as it could be, following the *Fama* description in every detail. The main interpretative elements include: the walls divided into nine squares instead of ten, with an additional triangle on the central square; the position of the small door on each wall below the squares, which is logical though the *Fama* is not precise about it.



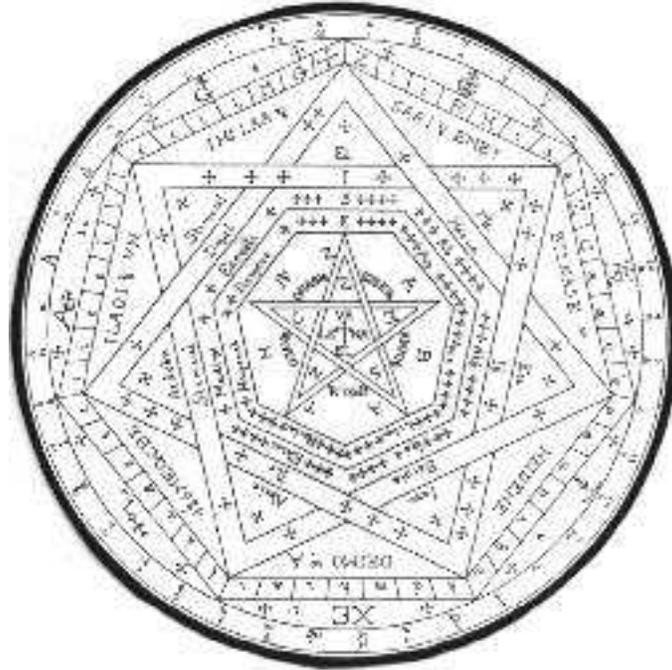
The Golden Dawn model is a much further departure from the Fama: S.L. MacGregor Mathers divided each wall of the Vault into 40 squares, ten of which correspond to the Sephiroth of the Kabbalistic Tree of Life, while others had other symbols (astrological, etc.). There were no "sentences", mentioned by the *Fama*, and no small doors hiding books and various technical inventions.



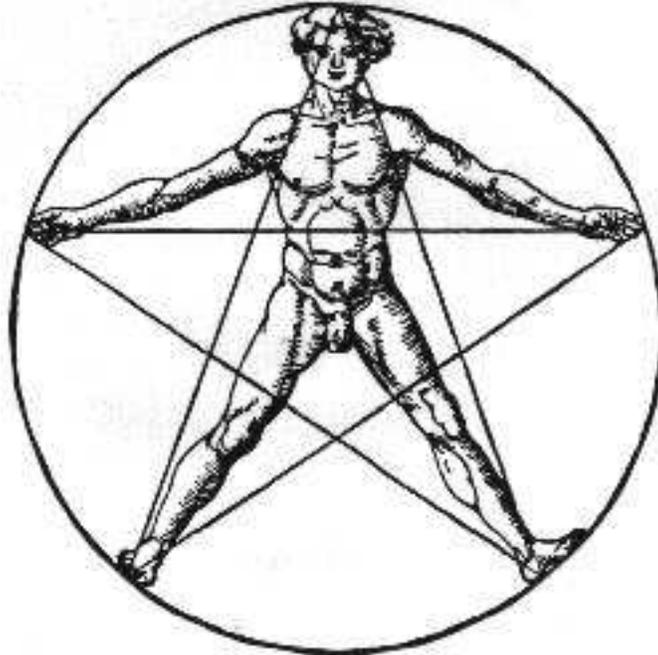
Finally, Adam McLean suggests that the squares on each wall are in two columns of five to incorporate an element of polarity.

I. Numbers and measures of the Vault

Since most authorities on the subject agree that the Vault of C.R.C. described in the Fama was not intended to represent any real building (just as the Collegium ad Spiritum Sanctum in which it was discovered), all its elements have to be regarded as symbols and will thus be analysed here. First of all we have the all important number seven (the number of walls and the triangles on the ceiling and the floor, as well as inherent in the heptagonal shape of them), the symbolism of which is so extensive and so well known to anyone interested in the hermetic tradition that there is no point in presenting it here in detail. I will just mention its correspondences with the seven planets of astrology, the seven metals of alchemy, the seven days of the week, etc. It is also interesting to note that heptagons are also quite common among hermetic sigils or talismans



(the most beautiful example is perhaps John Dee's Sigillum Dei Aemeth) and were also used as plans for symbolic structures (as in Khunrath's *Amphitheatrum Sapientiae Aeternae*). Besides number seven, which is the most prominent one in the description of the Vault, there are also numbers five and eight, being the width and height of each wall respectively. Again as the whole structure is most probably not real, these must be symbolic. (In fact, even if it were real, the Vault being a "Compendium of the Universe", its measurement would have to be meaningful). Five is another very important number in the magical/hermetic tradition. It is the number of the senses and therefore of the body (also the body of Jesus had five wounds). It is also the number of Man (whose body, with arms and legs extended, can be fitted into the pentagram, as for example on a figure in Agrippa's *De Occulta Philosophia*) and of Nature (the five elements of Aristotle: earth, water, air, fire and quintessence). It may therefore be considered to symbolise the whole of Creation - the Microcosm/Man and Macrocosm/Nature.



Eight, on the other hand, has always been associated with a new beginning, new life (fonts in churches were often octagonal), resurrection and Christ (the name "Jesus" in Greek has the numerical value of 888). In connection with five it may be interpreted as the new life for humanity or "General Reformation of the Whole World" as the Rosicrucians put it.

It does not end here, however, for the two numbers are obviously intended to be multiplied in order to obtain the number referring to the surface of each wall. The number is forty and it is even more meaningful. It appears in the Bible very frequently (being second only to seven) and was sacred to many ancient peoples. Traditionally it is the number of a period of preparation and waiting for regeneration, of purification and sanctification. As such it is often used by Jacob Boehme, which is of special interest here, since this mystic may have had some Rosicrucian connections. In *De Tribus Principiis* he writes, for example: "So the spirit of Christ rested in Father for forty hours, which it spent in the grave in the presence of the body... these were the same forty hours during which Adam remained asleep, when his woman was made out of him; also those forty days of Moses' ordeal on the mountain". Jewish Kabbalists of the same period regarded forty as the number of perfection, too. W.E. Peuckert in his *Pansophia* gives a Kabbalistic legend telling that when the archpriest Ezra ordered to write down the secret teachings, including the seventieth book of the Kabbalah, the Sanhedrin deliberated about it for forty days and then decided it could be read by those who were forty years old.

Agrippa in his *De Occulta Philosophia* also devotes some space to this number, stating in conclusion that it is connected with trial, experience, gaining the state of purity and readiness for a new life. This may have been one of the main influences on later Rosicrucian teachings, as Julius Sperber mentions Agrippa among the forerunners of the Order. Paul Sedir, a French esotericist and Rosicrucian historian, says that "regenerative mysteries had a numerical key, which was forty" (*Histoire et doctrines des Rose-Croix*). In alchemy the duration of the Great Work is often defined to be 40 days or 40 weeks.

Forty is also connected with birth (and rebirth) because for many centuries it was believed, on the authority of Aristotle, that forty days had to elapse between the conception of a child and the descent of soul into it. The whole time of pregnancy was in fact divided into periods of forty days each and there were seven such periods. Interestingly enough we have the same scheme in the Vault of Christian Rosenkreutz: there are seven walls, each of them having forty (5 x 8) square feet, which gives 280 or the approximate number of days in an average pregnancy. Therefore, the structure may be interpreted as intended for the symbolic process of ripening, growth and finally birth into a new life. It is a regenerative chamber between death and rebirth of Father C.R.C. symbolically understood as Man (5) and Nature or Christ (8). This interpretation will be confirmed again below.

The remaining numerical symbols mentioned in the *Fama* description of the Vault are 10 and 120. The former is the number of squares on each wall which are most probably connected with the Kabbalistic Sephiroth and I will deal with it later. The latter is the number of years during which the Vault was closed. The meaning of that period is not quite clear but it is not peculiar to the case of Father C.R.C. only. In my article in the *Journal of Rosicrucian Studies* No. 1, I mentioned the Polish alchemist Wincenty Kowski (Koffski). His treatise *Tractatus de prima materia* is said to have been bricked up in the wall of his cell in a Dominican monastery in Gdansk in 1488 (the year of his supposed death) and was published after 120 years (in 1608). Also in Simon Studion's prophetic work *Naometria*, so often associated with the early phase of Rosicrucianism, the period of 120 years figures prominently as "Candlestick period" (c.f. Adam McLean's article in *The Hermetic Journal* No. 19). It is interesting that the figure in which that period is found consists of seven candlesticks, each having forty nodes, thus corresponding to the seven wall of the Vault of C.R.C. of forty square feet each. The symbolic meaning of 120 years is not obvious. Most probably it is an extension of 12, the number of the signs of the Zodiac and therefore of the completion of a cycle of experience. If so, then it may be noted that in Hindu astrology 120 years is considered to be the natural length of human life.

Before finishing the analysis of numerological symbolism in the Vault of C.R.C. I would like to mention one more Kabbalistic correspondence. The number of the walls and the triangles on the ceiling and the floor totals 21 (3 x 7) and treating the artificial sun in the middle of the ceiling as an element of the same category, we have 22 elements which is the number of letters in the Hebrew alphabet and the Paths on the Tree of Life.

II. The Theatre of the World and the Time Capsule.

The richness of numerical symbolism in the description of the Vault of Christian Rosenkreutz clearly indicates that the author or authors of the *Fama* intended it to be read as a symbolic, carefully constructed puzzle. However, the numerology itself does not tell us much about the possible application of the structure. In my opinion the key to understanding the actual meaning of the design of the Vault is the sentence from the *Fama* stating that "if it should happen after many hundred years, the Order or Fraternity should come to nothing, that they might by this one Vault be restored again". It implies in no uncertain terms that the hermetic art of memory should be considered in

analysing the description of the Vault. An additional clue is the fact that the work published together with the *Fama* (or rather, to which the *Fama* was appended) was *The General Reformation of the Whole World* which was a translation of a fragment from *Ragguagli di Parnasso* by Traiano Boccalini. As it was translated by Wilhelm Bidembach, a member of "The Tübingen Circle" and a friend of Johann Valentin Andreae, there seems to have been a direct and close connection of the first Rosicrucians with the Italian hermetic circles. Now, the most famous example of applied Ars Memoriae in 16th century Italy was the *Memory Theatre* of Giulio Camillo. It was still well known among the "Brunonian" hermetists of Italy at the turn of the centuries and that is, I believe, the source where the original ideas for the design of the Rosicrucian Vault should be looked for. It would probably be going too far if I suggested that Giulio Camillo was the prototype of Christian Rosenkreutz (Frances Yates thought it was John Dee) but it is not impossible. Even the mysterious *Liber T* may be explained as *Liber Theatri* which may have been written by Camillo and preserved by his disciples (*Liber M*, translated by C.R.C., may have been *Liber Memoriae*). The Theatre of Camillo is described in considerable detail in *The Art of Memory* by Frances Yates so I will only point to some of the most striking parallels between the two constructions:

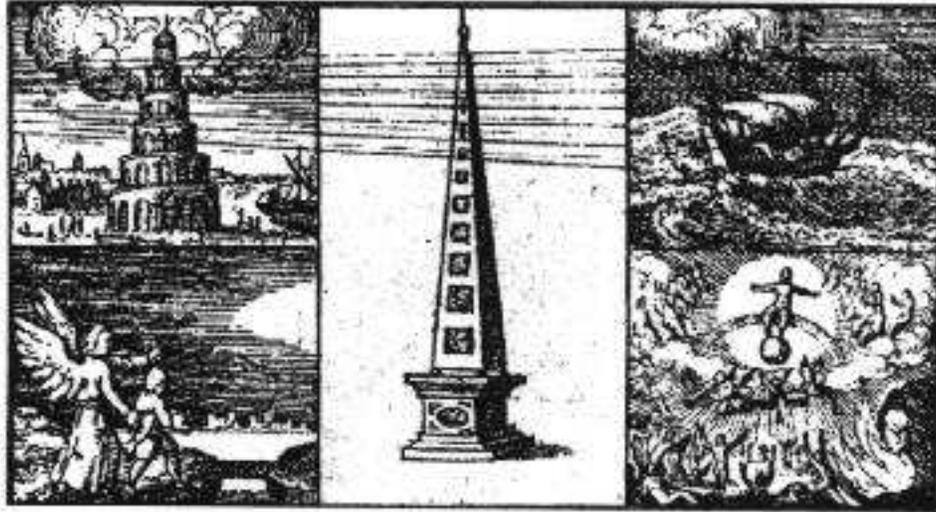
Camillo's Theatre of Memory

- 1) 7 passages with seven steps on each, surrounding the central "stage",
- 2) the gates have "images" or "emblems" and "mottoes"
- 3) below the "images" there are chests hiding books, and manuscripts,
- 4) the structure represents "everything that can be comprehended by the mind and everything that is hidden in the soul",

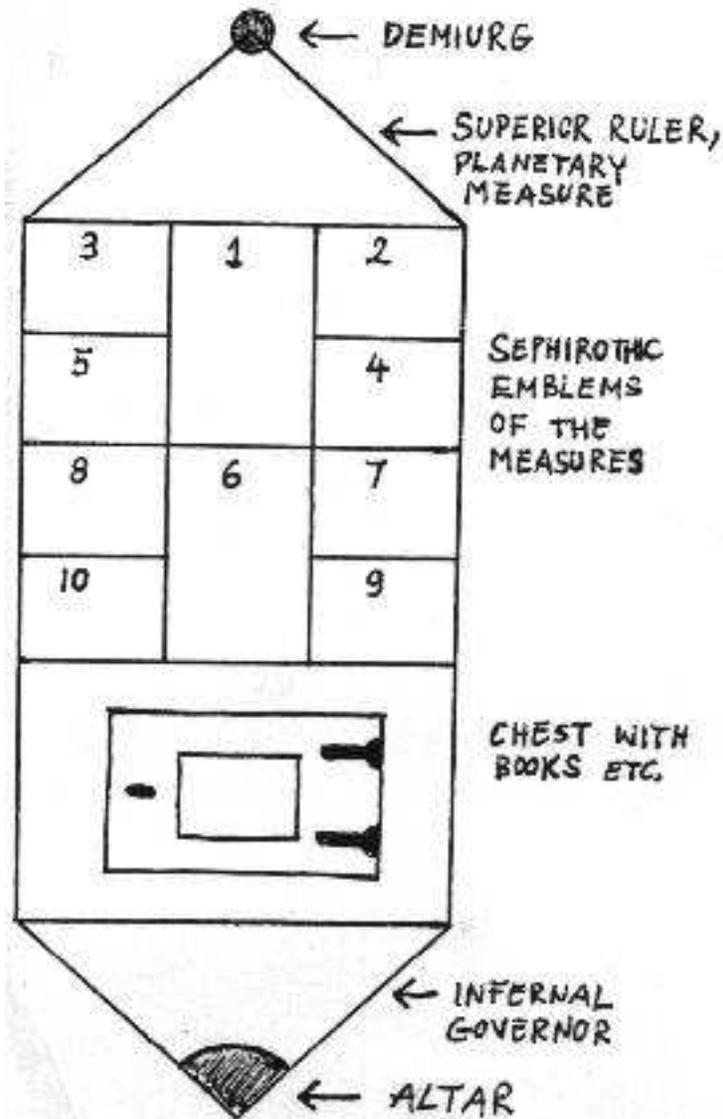
Rosicrucian Vault of C.R.C.

- 1) 7 walls with ten squares with gates on each, surrounding the central altar,
- 2) the squares have "figures" and "sentences" on them, on them,
- 3) below the "figures" there are boxes or drawers containing books manuscripts and mechanical inventions,
- 4) the structure represents "Compendium of the Universe",

There are many other, less obvious, similarities, all of which make it possible to reconstruct the Vault of Christian Rosenkreutz seen as a theatre of magical memory. In both cases the central place is occupied by the operator (on the stage of the Theatre and at the central altar of the Vault) who thus has the whole of the Universe, the Macro- and Microcosm, at his command. Around the stage of Camillo's Theatre there are "Seven Pillars of Solomon's Temple of Wisdom" representing the archetypal Ideas (in the Platonic sense) or the Seven Measures of everything or the Seven Rulers created by the Demiurge. In the Vault of C.R.C. the same basic principles underlying all creation (which are also identical with the Seven Spirits of God mentioned by Boehme in the Aurora) are represented by the seven triangles on the ceiling "running from the seven sides to the bright light in the centre", while the light itself stands for the Demiurge and the fuel that never runs out is the eternal God, the En Soph of the Kabbalists. The difference between the two structures in this respect is that in Camillo's Theatre the operator is placed in the position of God and acts as if he were omnipotent and could influence any part of the Universe by his divine will. The Rosicrucian concept is slightly altered and the operator in the Vault has to draw down the same divine powers into himself in order to use them.



Each passage of the Theatre of Camillo was assigned to one "Measure" or planetary principle, while each step represented succeeding stages of creation, so that any given door or gate contained images referring to one stage of creation in one of the Measures. Although Camillo listed the correspondences between the planets and the Sephiroth, it is clear that the latter are represented rather by the steps of the Theatre (stages of creation or emanations) than by the passages. Therefore each passage can be seen as the Tree of Life of one planetary principle (or emanated by one of Boehme's Spirits of God) just as in the Kabbalah each Sephira is said to contain the whole Tree of Life. He also states that he does not go beyond the seventh Sephira and therefore does not use the Supernal Triangle of the Tree. The Rosicrucian authors of the Fama expanded this arrangement to include all the Sephiroth, represented by the squares of each wall in the usual sequence from Kether above to Malkuth (unlike in Camillo's scheme, where the creative emanations proceeded from the centre upwards). The actual pattern of the squares is not known from the brief description of the Vault but it is quite possible that the pattern later used by Robert Fludd in his *Ars Memoriae* was applied. Fludd may have been a Rosicrucian and therefore his statement that groups of five images are the easiest to remember should not be ignored in this context. Fludd does not explain the fivefold emblem on the title page of his work, which makes it even more mysterious. It is also in agreement with Adam McLean's suggestion that there may have been two groups of five emblems stressing the element of polarity.



The nature of the "figures and sentences" on the squares is again not clear from the *Fama* description but these must have been emblems with mottoes similar to those appearing in Camillo's Theatre. The popularity of such emblems (not only in the hermetic context) in the 16th and 17th centuries confirms this hypothesis, and as those of them which are usually associated with Rosicrucianism are alchemical in nature, I tend to suppose that such should also be the "figures" on the walls of the Vault of Christian Rosenkreutz. In an attempt to restore the Vault we have no other choice but to find a suitable set of seventy emblems with mottoes in any Rosicrucian/alchemical work. I have found such a set of exactly seventy figures (with two additional ones, to be honest, but these are unnumbered) described in *In the Pronaos of the Temple of Wisdom* by Franz Hartmann (pp. 79-81) and taken from the 18th century book *August Vindelicorum* by Antonio Ginter. Although Hartmann calls them "Rosicrucian symbols" I do not think they are good enough for our purpose. Much better would be a selection from early 17th century Rosicrucian emblems, perhaps from Michael Maier's books, and especially from his *Atalanta Fugiens*, as they make much use of mythological figures which are also prominent in Camillo's *Theatre of Memory*. In fact many of Maier's emblems are identical with those of Camillo (as restored by Frances Yates) and he also uses mythological symbolism in his books devoted solely to the Rosicrucian problem, (*Silentium Post Clamores*, *Themis Aurea*). It would be interesting to reconstruct the Vault of C.R.C. along these lines, but it is impossible for me at present as I have no access to a complete set of Maier's emblems.

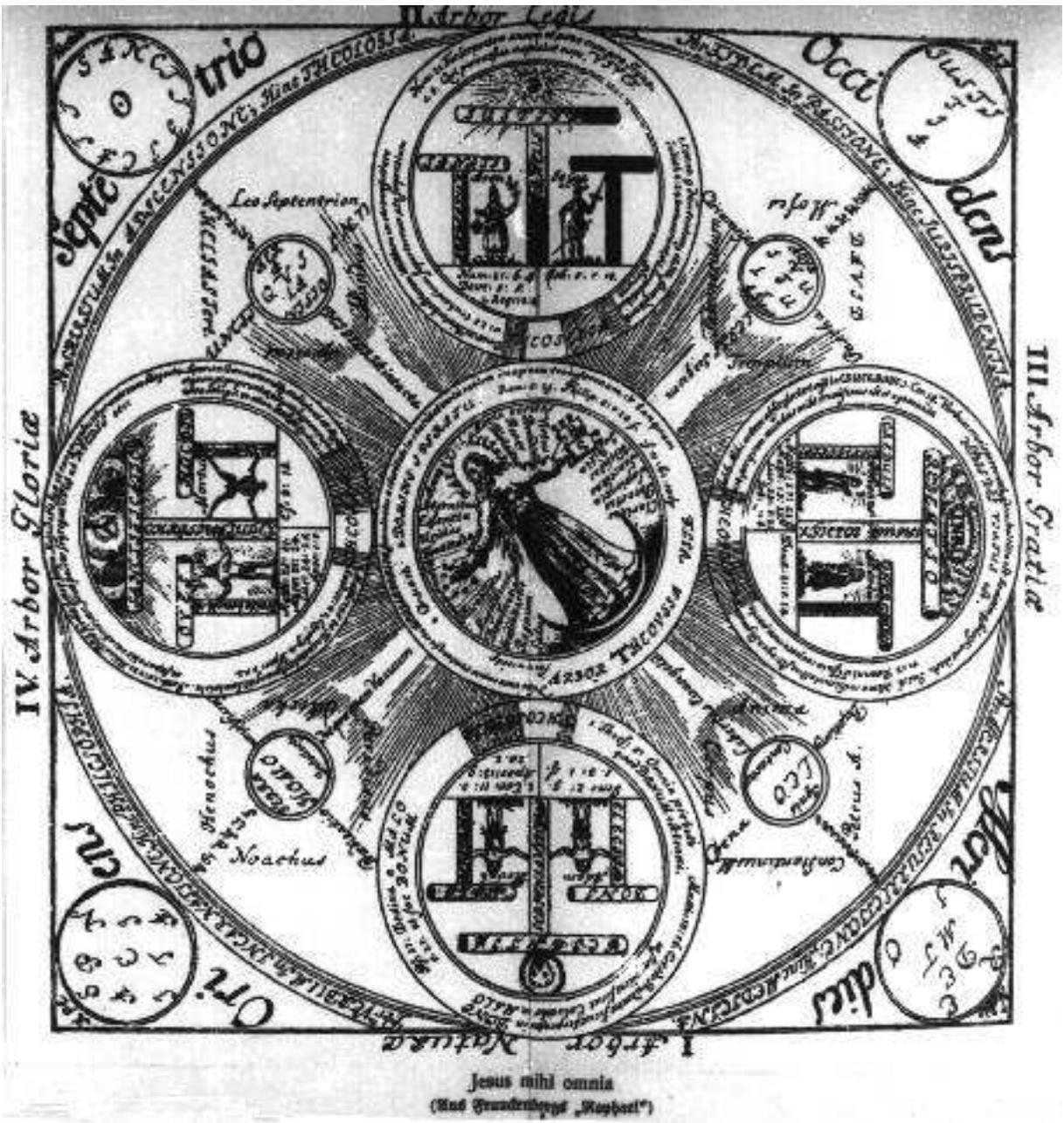


The next common element of both structures are containers for books and other things below the emblems. In the Rosicrucian Vault these were chests behind doors in each wall, while Camillo had special drawers in his Theatre for identical purpose.

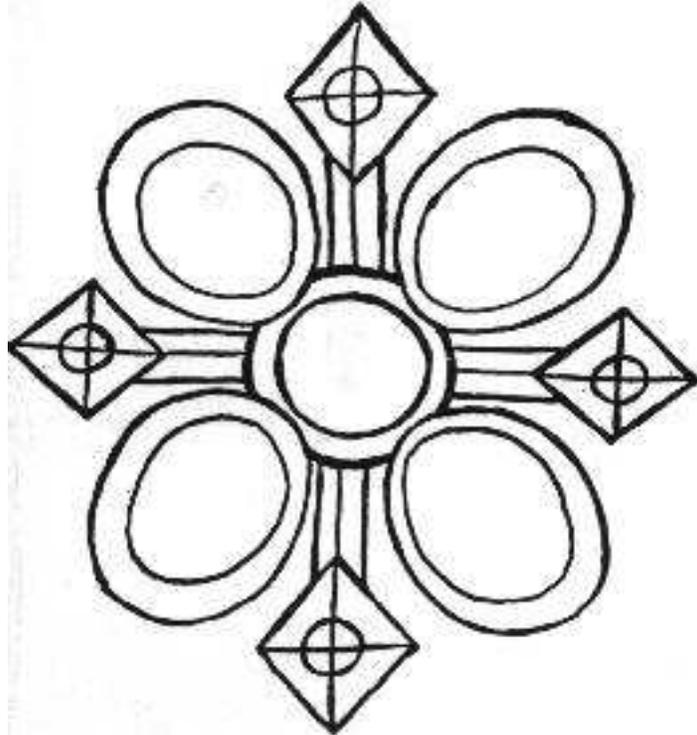
Finally, there are the seven triangles on the floor of the Vault, in which is described "the power and rule of the Inferior Governors". This element is missing from Camillo's Theatre but it is only a logical completion of polarity with the triangles on the ceiling which represented the Seven Rulers of the superior or heavenly spheres. The "evil serpent" mentioned in the *Fama* may be included in the design but it may as well be just a figure of speech. To sum up, seen as a Memory Theatre, the Rosicrucian Vault could really play the role of a "Time Capsule" which would transmit the Rosicrucian teachings even if the original Order died out. Other applications of it will be dealt with below.

III. The Altar-Mandala and the Minutum Mundi

The round altar that stood in the centre of the Vault is comparatively well described in the *Fama*. From what we know it is obvious that the brass plate on it was engraved with a mandala-like design, though the exact details are missing. Fortunately, it is not necessary to reconstruct it, as I have found an early 17th century illustration which depicts the altar plate. It comes from a book entitled *Raphael* by Abraham von Franckenberg, a Pansophist and Rosicrucian from Wroclaw in Silesia (at that time belonging to the Kingdom of Bohemia). This beautiful mandala is too complex to analyse it in detail here (it deserves a separate article), so I will only point to the elements corresponding to the *Fama* description or otherwise relating directly to the Rosicrucian issue.



The title of the whole illustration is "Jesus mihi omnia" but this sentence does not appear on the design itself, though in the Fama it is said to have been written "around the first Circle or Brim". The four sentences "A vacuum exists nowhere", "The Yoke of the Law", "The Liberty of the Gospel" and the "Entire Glory of God" appear on the arms of the central cross, which seems to be glowing. Between the arms of that cross there are four big circles with three Tau-crosses and two human figures in each, which may be taken to represent petals and thus completing a schematic Rosy Cross symbol together with the central circle.



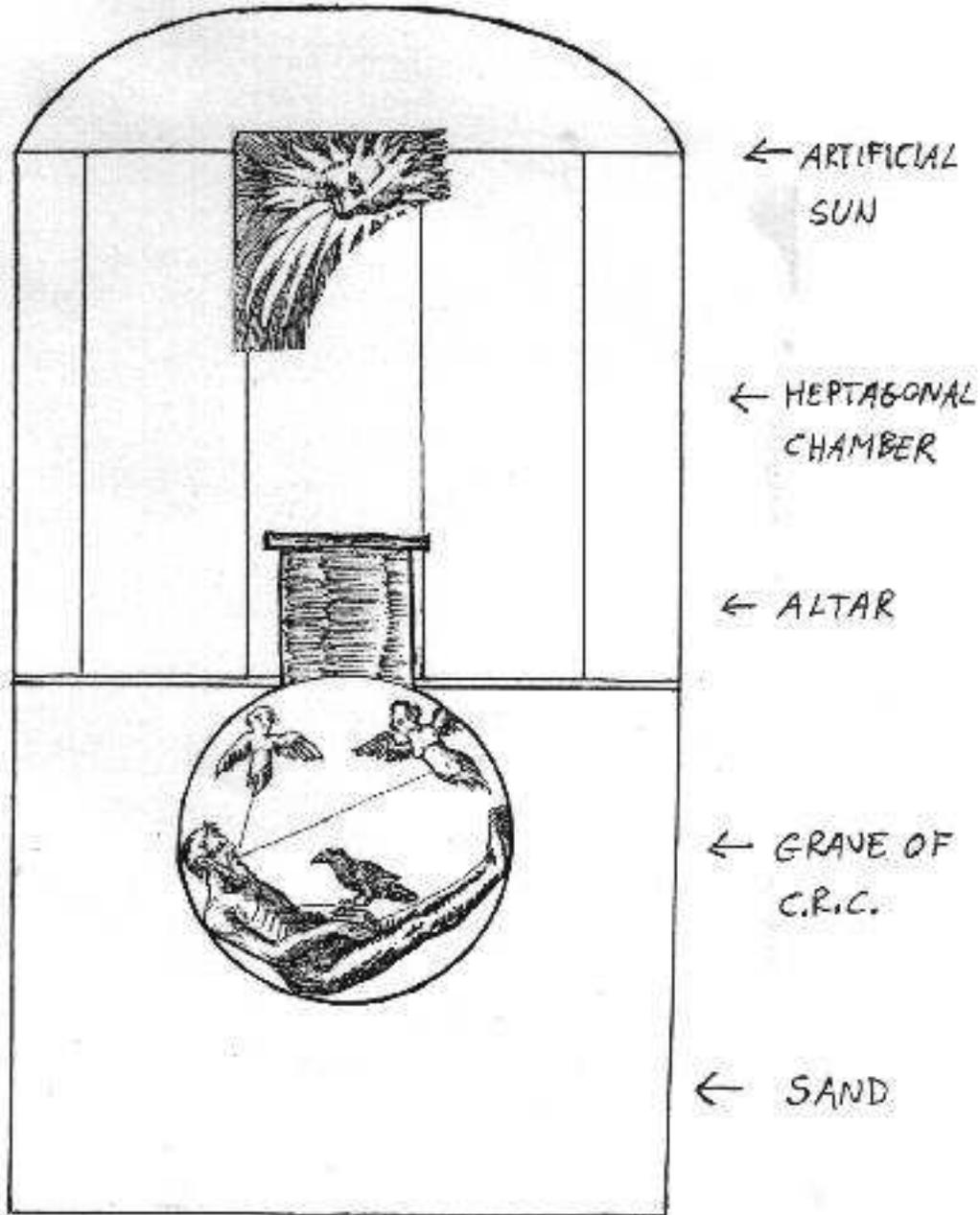
There are also four smaller circles at the end of each arm of the cross as well as four other circles outside the border of the main one corresponding to the four directions (these, I suppose, were to appear on the postument of the altar). All these elements contain many correspondences, quotations from the Bible, names from Biblical history, religious terminology, etc. The most interesting for the present purpose is, however, the central circle with the figure of Christ in it. This figure bears a certain resemblance to Christian Rosencreutz in his grave as described in the *Fama*. In his left hand he holds an open book with seven seals and with the letters Alpha and Omega, which may be identified with the *Liber T*. His right hand is surrounded by seven stars which are obviously symbolic of the seven planetary principles or Seven Measures of the created Universe, and therefore denote his mastery over the whole world. A sprout or branch extends from the right side of his breast and this reminds us of that mysterious statement from *Liber T* quoted in the *Fama*: "A Grain buried in the Breast of Jesus". On the other side of Christ's breast there is a small four-petalled flower, most probably a rose, while in the middle a black cross can be seen. All this indicates the Rosicrucian nature of this illustration and its connection with the brass plate on the altar in the Vault. Of course, as always, one cannot be sure that von Franckenberg was a genuine Rosicrucian and had access to the original design (if such had ever existed), but still it is the best (if not the only) representation of it of such an early date. The design seems to picture the tradition, and mostly the Christian religious tradition and teachings, and therefore is in accord with what we know about the altar plate from the *Fama*.

The other smaller altar containing the mysterious Minutum Mundum (or Minutus Mundus as Waite has it) seems to have been placed in the grave of C.R.C. beneath the altar. Little can be said about it besides that it was some kind of divinatory device and a miniature of the Macrocosm. Perhaps it was a very precise astrolabium, showing the movements of the heavenly bodies for any time in the past, present and future. In that case the divination would be astrological, but it also may have been a "fortune-telling machine" like the Prognometer constructed a few centuries later by Jozef Maria Hoene-Wronski, the Polish Messianist. Some occultists also see a deck of the Tarot cards in it.

IV The Athanor of Regeneration

Frances Yates in *The Rosicrucian Enlightenment* says that Rosicrucianism was the continuation of the earlier hermetic-kabbalistic tradition which reached a new level by assimilating the doctrines and symbols of alchemy. Therefore Rosicrucianism may be looked upon as the final bringing together of all the currents making up the Western Esoteric Tradition: hermetic gnosis and magic, Christian adaptation of the Jewish Kabbalah and alchemical lore. In the symbolic description of the Vault of Christian Rosenkreutz the hermetic and Kabbalistic parts of that

tradition were seen in treating the structure as a "Memory Theatre" and in analysing its numerological symbolism, so we now have to find the alchemical element in it. John Heydon, as quoted by Manly Palmer Hall, says that Rosicrucian adepts after having spent a certain period of time among people, were buried in "a proper womb" or the philosophical egg, in which they underwent the process of rejuvenation. Then again after some time they broke the shells of their eggs and came forth for a new round in the world. This symbolic account may suggest a kind of initiatory process of spiritual or inner alchemy going on in the Tomb of Christian Rosenkreutz, in which he is the *Materia Prima* (this view is supported also by the numerical symbolism outlined above).



When we imagine a cross section of the whole Vault then a kind of Athanor appears. The grave in the bottom part is the alchemical retort or philosophical egg buried in the earth or sand, its neck extending into the main chamber above as the altar and hermetically sealed with the brass plate. The artificial sun on the ceiling is the source of light or heat (as now used in growing chickens). This form of heating the retort in the sand for a long period of time was called *igne aperto* by the alchemists. The duration of the Great Work was often expressed symbolically as 12 days,

12 months or 12 years, so the 120 years in the case of the Rosicrucian self-transmutation or bringing oneself to the perfect state of the Philosophers' Stone is no surprise. On another level this can be seen as the Great Work going on in the Theatre of the World in order to obtain the Philosophers' Stone with which the General Transformation of the Whole World could be accomplished.

V The Vault of C.R.C. in Esoteric Workings.

As I have already said, the structure described in the *Fama* was most probably not a real building but a symbolic internal construction intended for visualisation, meditation and final self-initiation. It is a complex mandala extended in space which has to be "worked" (in the occult sense). The actual application of it in esoteric practice will demand the following preparations:

- 1) Drawing the walls, ceiling and floor of the Vault with all the emblems and mottoes on paper.
- 2) Memorising then so well that they can be easily visualised, both separately and as a seven-sided chamber.
- 3) Preparing (writing down) meditations, invocations or evocations based on the succession of emblems and memorising them with the help of the emblems (the technique of the traditional art of memory described by Frances Yates).

The various operations that now can be performed include for example:

- 1) Operations of ritual hermetic magic.

The invocations and evocations are mnemonically related to the emblems on one or more of the walls (depending on the planetary nature of the operation) and then recited with simultaneous visualisation of the emblems. This technique as applied by Giulio Camillo is described in Frances Yates' book *The Art of Memory*.

- 2) Astral Workings.

This is similar to "pathworking" in the Golden Dawn tradition: every wall of the Vault can be worked upon either from the light on the ceiling downwards or from the Infernal Triangles on the floor upwards. The emblems can also be used in the way similar to the Tarot cards for entering the Astral Plane.

- 3) Ritual of Self-Transmutation.

The whole Vault is visualised strongly with oneself inside the grave seen as the philosophical egg. A slight heat is felt as coming from above. After practising this for a considerable period of time the body should pass through various colours in the usual alchemical succession from black to red.

- 4) The Ritual of Universal Reformation of the Whole World.

Similarly to the above, the Vault/Athanor is visualised but inside the grave/retort the world or humanity is placed under a suitable symbol. Then it passes through the successive colours from the black state of putrefaction it is in at present to the red colour of perfection. The astral forces liberated in this way will finally complete the Great Work started by the first Rosicrucians.

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- 3) Hall, Manly Palmer: *Orders of Universal Reformation*, Los Angeles.
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- 5) Kepinski, Zdzislaw: *Mickiewicz hermetyczny*, Warsaw, 1980.
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- 11) Schick, Hans: *Das Altere Rosenkreutzertum*, Berlin, 1942.
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- 13) Welling, Georg von: *Opus Mago-Cabbalisticum et Theosophicum*, Frankfurt-am-Main, 1735.
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Rafal T. Prinke - Early Symbolism of the Rosy Cross

Article originally published in *The Hermetic Journal*, 25 (1984), 11-15.

EARLY SYMBOLISM OF THE ROSY CROSS

SEARCHING FOR A LINK WITH TRADITION

It may be stated, with a certain degree of probability, that much of the popularity of the Rosicrucian mythos was due to the beautiful though simple device in the early 17th century manifestos of the order, namely the symbol of the cross in conjunction with the rose (or roses). The history of that symbol prior to the 17th century, as well as its origin, still remains obscure. In my article in the *Journal of Rosicrucian Studies* I suggested that the Rosy Cross may have originated with the Knights Templar in the Holy Land on the basis of the fact that an emblem similar to it appears on a late 13th century Templar ceremonial sword, which later served as the coronation sword of Polish kings, and that a plant known as the Rose of Jericho was known to Templars and used as a symbol by them. As that evidence is rather slight and may not be convincing, I would like to add two other examples of proto-Rosicrucian use of the Rosy Cross symbol. Both of them contradict A.E. Waite's claim that "outside heraldry the marriage of Rose and Cross is not to be found in printed books prior to the seventeenth century, and I know not of any manuscript illustrated by such a device or alluding to such symbolism" (*The Brotherhood of the Rosy Cross*, p. 103).

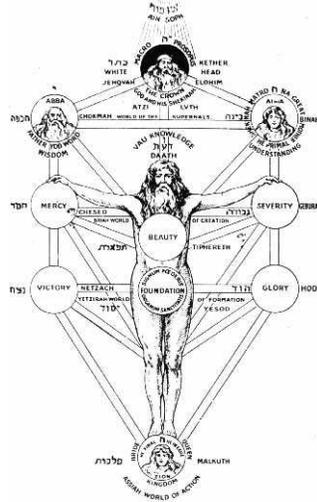


My first example is probably the same as that described by A.E. Waite and ignored by him : "The earliest example of the Rose in union with the Cross is perhaps the frontispiece of a work by Jacob Lochter, issued at Nuremberg in 1517. It exhibits a great circle of Roses having a Cross in the centre and the figure of the Christ thereon. There is, however, no to suppose that the circle is other than an ornamental border" (*The Brotherhood...*, p. 101). If I am right in identifying that frontispiece, it is a woodcut by Hans Suess von Kulmbach dated to 1515. Kulmbach was a friend and one time disciple of Albrecht Durer, whose art is full of Hermetic imagery (for example his famous *Melancholia*).

It does not seem to me that the circle of roses is only an ornament because there are five big roses in it which have a cross inside plus another similar one at the foot of the Calvary cross with the Christ figure. Those five roses separate every ten of smaller roses and are strikingly similar to the device on the Polish coronation sword and to the symbol in the *Geheime Figuren* (*Secret Symbols*). They are also similar to Martin Luther's coat of arms but as the woodcut precedes the time when he started to preach his doctrine (1516), it is impossible to suggest that these devices were inspired by Luther's arms. In fact Luther may have taken an already existing symbol for his coat-of-arms, as he was the son of a miner and therefore had had no family arms. (Moreover, I have found a reference that it was not a rose but an apple flower in his arms.)

The whole circle of roses is probably intended to suggest a rosary (between each ten small roses is placed a bigger one with a cross), but there are also some more roses inside the circle. Almost all of them appear to grow on the Calvary cross. The one that is not attached to the cross is placed on the breast of God the Father above. The Calvary

cross is therefore obviously an image of the Tree of Life archetype, but it may also be an interpretation of the Cabalistic Tree of Life. There are three small roses above Christ: one on the breast of God the Father (Kether) and one on each end of the horizontal arm of the cross (Chokmah and Binah), forming the supernal triangle of the Sephiroth. The three roses just below the feet of Christ form the lower triangle, and the big one with a cross inside which is placed below indicates Malkuth. There remain four roses, so probably Tiphereth is expressed by the two roses near the Christ's feet (for the sake of symmetry). The whole figure may be compared with the drawing on the frontispiece of Waite's *Secret Tradition in Israel*, which is almost identical.

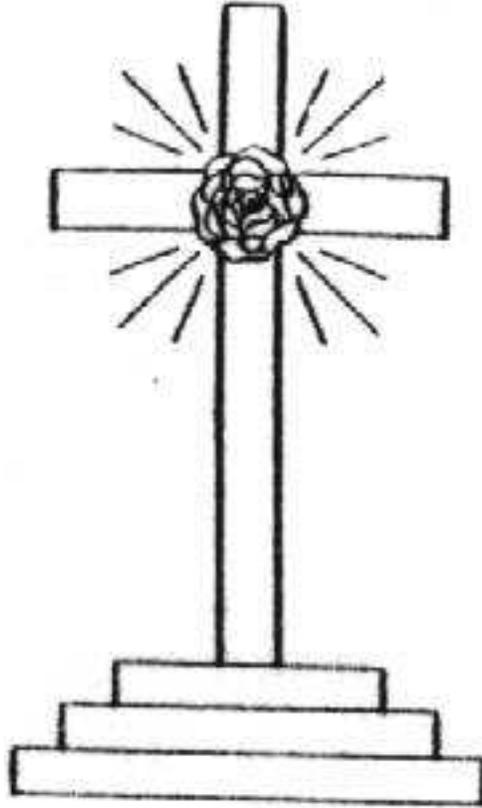


The Cabalistic interpretation does not end here. The space within the circle is clearly divided into four parts which correspond to the four worlds of the Cabala and correct Roses/Sephiroth of the Cross/Tree of Life appear in each world, as well as figures of gradually more and more spiritually evolved people. Above God the Father/Kether and outside the circle of roses is a veronica held by two angels which obviously corresponds to the veils of En-Soph (and is difficult to explain otherwise). And thus the woodcut by Kulmbach can be seen as containing a complete Cabalistic world view.

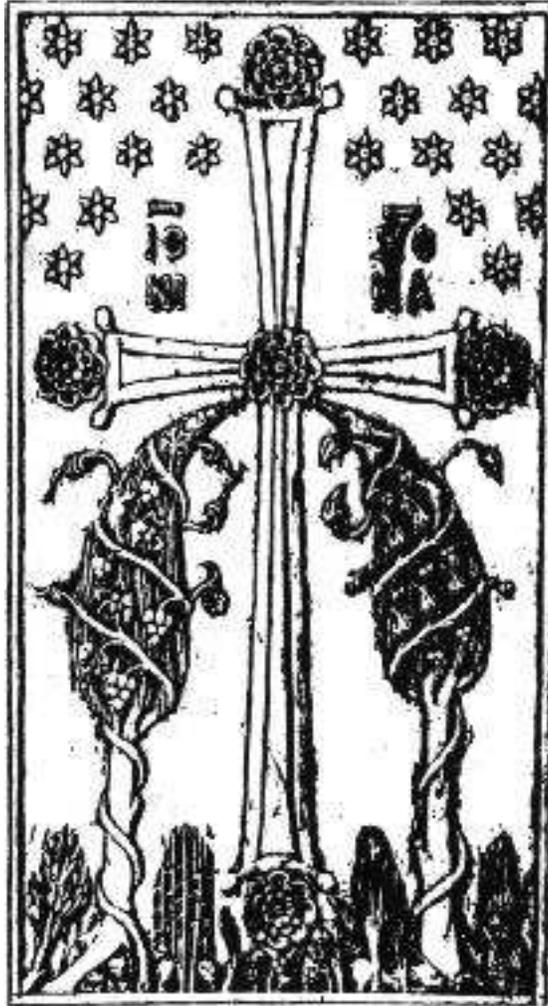


A question arises whether this woodcut contains genuine proto-Rosicrucian symbols or whether it is just a coincidence. To answer this question positively we must find a similar image in early Rosicrucian literature. Fortunately, it is not a difficult task, since a work often referred to as "the fourth manifesto", *Speculum Sophericum Rhodo-Stauroticum*, contains on its title page a detail which is identical in concept with the woodcut of Kulmbach, though simplified to a great extent. It is a small cross surrounded by a wreath containing four roses and it appears to

be the only image of the Rosy Cross in the earliest, and generally believed to be authentic, Rosicrucian writings. It is also the only rose and the only cross on that title page and therefore it must be the Rosy Cross of the Rosicrucians.



The other example of a rosy cross symbol I want to give is that shown on the central panel of *Herbaville Triptych*, which is Byzantine and comes from the 10th or 11th century. The symbol is a Calvary cross with a rose in its centre, which is identical with what Manly Palmer Hall considers to be the original symbol of the Rosicrucians. Additionally there are also roses at the end of each arm of the cross. The roses are eight-petalled and with three circles of petals, suggestive of the 19th century Golden Dawn symbol, but this is most probably a coincidence. The above does not prove, of course, that there existed any organisation or secret society using the Rosy Cross and possessing a body of esoteric teachings, as some modern "Rosicrucian" organizations maintains. However, the woodcut by Kulmbach seems to indicate that the rose joined to the cross was somehow connected with Hermetic thought as early as the beginning of the 16th century. The Byzantine Rosy Cross may confirm my previous hypothesis of the Templar origin of the symbol, as the Order of the Temple had connections with the Byzantine Empire. However, there is one more instance of that symbol, which suggests a still earlier origin. It occurs as a sceptre held by St. Luke on the miniature in St. Chad Gospels of the 8th century.



He holds it along with the bishop's staff and it is described as the royal sceptre of power. But it seems strange that St. Luke should hold a royal symbol, so perhaps the two staffs are symbolic of the two sides of the teachings: the exoteric (bishop's staff) and the esoteric (the rosy cross sceptre)?

Sources of Illustrations

- 1 *A Rosy Wreath* by Hans Suess von Kulmbach, woodcut, 1515 (Barbara Miodanska, *Miniatury Stanisława Samostrzelnika*, Warsaw 1983).
- 2 The device on the Polish coronation sword (drawn by the author as it appears on the original, *Journal of Rosicrucian Studies*)
- 3 The Rosy Cross from *Geheime Figuren* (Paul M. Allen, *A Christian Rosenkreutz Anthology*, p. 246, also in other books).
- 4 Adam Kadmon on the Tree of Life (*The Secret Tradition in Israel* by A.E. Waite, frontispiece).
- 5 The Rosy Cross detail from the title page of *Speculum Sopicum Rhodo-Stauroticum* (Paul A. Allen, op.cit.,p.342).
- 6 Byzantine Rosy Cross (Roger Cook, *The Tree of Life*, Thames and Hudson, p.102,ill.19.)
- 7 The original symbol of Rosicrucians according to M.P. Hall (*Codex Rosae Crucis*, p.44)
- 8 St. Luke with a rosy cross sceptre (R. Cook, op. cit., p.103,ill.21)