

# **THE ROSICRUCIAN PHENOMENON**

**By  
Thomas D. Worrel**

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## **INTRODUCTORY REMARKS**

Aleister Crowley makes the following remark:  
"Incidentally, it is not very safe to talk about Rosicrucians,  
because their name has become a signal for letting loose the  
most devastating floods of nonsense." (*Magick Without  
Tears*, p. 15)

I hope we can avoid any such deluge here tonight.

When considering how to present a topic such as the  
history of the Rosicrucian movement, one can take a variety  
of approaches: we could look at the very symbols of the  
Rose and the Cross, exploring their symbolism in ages past -  
both individually and then conjoined as a unity. We could  
explore the history of relevant fraternal organizations from  
the remotest Egyptian priesthood or the later Pythagorean  
brotherhood, the Dionysian Artificers, and so on up to the  
emergence of the Fraternity of the Rosy Cross. Another

approach could look at the development of the Mystery Schools, their suppression, and subsequent re-emergence under new names and different forms. Or, we may even indulge a little in conspiracy theories about a secret brotherhood that stands aloof from mankind to watch and guide its progress - an Interior School of Masters or Invisible College. We could even just spend this time discussing the secret and not-so-secret societies that have emerged since the beginning of the whole movement. One would have to be completely crazy to even attempt to tackle any one of these approaches in the short time I have here tonight. So, I am afraid that the only solution is ... to do ALL of them.

Actually I am not going to subject you to all that but I do want to explore the development of a few diverse religious ideas whereupon, at a later time possibly, we can come back and fill in the missing parts. I will try and trace these early practices and beliefs that developed from different sources, evolve over time and seem to finally converge at a historical point - the early 1600s in Europe with the publication of the Rosicrucian manifestoes in Germany. From that point it sparked another and profounder movement that impacted much of European thought thereafter. My basic plan then is to build upon the many talks previously given here by myself and others. However, if you were not here, I will not leave you completely in the outer limits of darkness but will provide some light whereby you, if astute and erudite, may make your way to these higher realms of perception. You see, we are already talking like a Rosicrucian.

The labyrinth to traverse tonight will begin in antiquity moving towards that point in time - the early 1600s, when two short manifestoes and one larger allegory were published anonymously but claiming to be from a society calling themselves the Fraternity of the Rosy Cross. This "event", at this point in time, ignited the Rosicrucian movement. It has now become clear to historians of European history that this phenomenon was an extremely

significant event. Since that seed-event there has been an astonishing proliferation of letters, literature, treatises, inspiring art and music, nurturing not only religion and mysticism but also science; ... not to mention an ever expanding number of groups claiming to be either THE Rosicrucian Society or just hinting that they are.

The first area I want to consider are particular religious movements that emerged in the Hellenistic world, some later developments and regeneration of the same or similar doctrines in European history up to the time of the RC manifestoes. I covered this in some detail in an earlier talk so I will only give highlights now.

The second area to consider are certain individuals that either through their actions, writings, or both helped to unfold what was later to manifest in this RC phenomenon. Obviously, I can only consider a few of what I consider the more important ones.

Finally, I want to make you aware of some of the aftermath and effects that these manifestoes sparked all over Europe and that eventually spilt into America.

And if that isn't enough, I want to get into the more arcane and enlightening aspects that, hopefully, evoke in you an awareness of the incredible depth that is intrinsic within this material.

## **BROAD RELIGIOUS TRENDS**

The Hellenistic religious movements I want to review (and we could consider many more) include: that broad category called Gnosticism, as well as Hermeticism, Mithraism and Manicheism. I will also mention two later movements: the Cathars and the Troubadours. A couple of these traditions have been basically ignored until recent research (relatively speaking) has shown their influence as being far stronger than previously thought.

Gnosticism (Greek *gnosis*, knowledge) represents a

broad variety of spiritual teachings that spread throughout the Hellenized Near East in the first few centuries of the Common Era. Although Gnosticism had a Christian veneer, the teachings were blends of many traditions: Jewish, Persian, Egyptian, Oriental and incorporating many Greek philosophical concepts. The major theme focused on the idea that there was a hidden light (hidden light in Hebrew: *Aur Ganuz* numerically equals 273 as does Hiram Abiff) or truth, a gnosis, that could be awakened or realized - and by this realization, the soul would be liberated from this world. "The goal of Gnostic striving is the release of the inner man from the bonds of the world and his return to his native realm of light. (*Encyclopedia of Philosophy*) In other words, the typical definition may be something like they: "...believed in a divine spark in man, deriving from the divine realm, fallen into this world of fate, birth and death, and needing to be awakened by the divine counterpart of the self." (Ugo Bianchi) We have to add that a chief attribute was a world-rejecting dualism counterpoising the goodness of spirit and the evil of materiality. Therefore, the creator of the material world had to be evil. The establishment of new Gnostic schools ceased by the 2nd century but it still flourished into the 3rd century.

Hermeticism represents a group of writings probably dated between A.D. 100 and 300 - written in and around the progressive city of Alexandria. Although attributed to Hermes Trismegistus, they are written by many authors and exhibit a mixture of Greek philosophy, mostly Platonic, astrological teachings and general sympathies between heaven and earth. These writings include the collection of treatises referred to as the *Corpus Hermeticum*, one known as *Asclepius* and a few smaller pieces. These works show a philosophical and religious tradition that leads to regenerative experiences and ecstatic states of consciousness wherein Truth is encountered firsthand. There are similarities with Gnosticism in many respects but the glaring difference lies in the more world-affirming attitude of

Hermes.

Mithraism is an ancient Roman mystery school. I will quote from a scholar in this field: "Like the other "mystery cults" of the Graeco-Roman world, such as the Eleusinian mysteries and the mysteries of Isis, the Mithraic mysteries centered around a secret which was revealed only to those who were initiated in the cult. As a result of this secrecy, the teachings of the cult were, as far as we know, never written down. ... Mithraism was one of Christianity's major competitors in the Roman Empire. ... Mithraism began to spread throughout the Roman Empire in the first century C.E., reached its peak in the third century, and finally succumbed to Christianity at the end of the fourth century. At the cult's height *mithraea* could be found from one end of the empire to the other. ... many members of the cult were drawn from the ranks of the Roman army; that the cult's membership also included state bureaucrats, merchants, and slaves; and that the cult excluded women. ... inscriptional and iconographic evidence shows that the cult was organized as a series of "grades," or levels of initiation, through which the Mithraic aspirant gradually rose." (*The Origins of the Mithraic Mysteries* by David Ulansey)

Manicheism: Mani was born probably born in April of 216 CE on the Tigris River in Babylonia. He experienced his first revelation at age 12 (Vision of the Twin). Later visions (at 24) gave him his mission as an "apostle of light". There were, he felt, angels and messengers protecting him. One, in particular, was his syzygos - his Twin, Companion or Guardian Angel. Mani "... performs his great deeds as a religious teacher, and at one point goes into hiding for years in a cave. He is known as "an artisan and has a crippled foot." (Symbols of Transformation, Carl Jung, p. 333) "The terms "son of the widow" and "children of the widow" appear to be of Manichaeian origin. The Manichaeians themselves were called "children of the widow". (*Mysterium Coniunctionis*, Carl Jung, p. 18) Mani died in prison in chains

in 277. His corpse was mutilated. Ensuing persecutions became commonplace for his followers. Diocletian prohibited it in AD 290. Nevertheless by A.D. 300 the "teaching of light" can be found in Syria, Northern Arabia, Egypt, and North Africa (St. Augustine was a member before his conversion). From Syria it spread to Palestine, Asia Minor and Armenia. Then on to Rome, Gaul, Italy, the Balkans and Spain. Christian emperors began outlawing it from AD 377. By the 7th century it reached China by route of the Silk Road. It even reached Tibet. In other words, it spread from the far reaches of Europe to the far reaches of Asia. It has to be classified as a world religion by any standard. It had a history of 1,000 years. The core of the church was structured by the "elect" (electi) or "perfect", 12 Apostles or teachers (magistri), 72 bishops or deacons, and 360 elders (presbyters). Manicheism practiced the sacraments of baptism and communion but they did not accept the divinity of Jesus. The progress of the sect was entrusted to an inner circle of initiates that had several degrees of initiatory rites, signs, and passwords. Manicheism influence arises later in the Paulicians, Bogomils, and Catharists. About A.D. 1000, Manicheism from the Byzantine Empire, and particularly Bulgaria started spreading toward Western Europe. By the 11th century it penetrated into southern France (became Cathari). (note: Scholars have been able to establish that the Sethian texts found in the Nag Hammadi discovery have links with Manicheism.)

Catharism was the most radical of medieval heresies. "The rise and fall of the Cathar heresy from the twelfth to the early fourteenth century was a major event in Western European history. The reaction which Catharism provoked led directly to the Albigensian Crusade, and to the end of one of the highest cultures of Europe at that time. This religious movement struck absolute fear in the established Church. "The Cathars subscribed to a doctrine of reincarnation and to a recognition of the feminine principle in religion." Clergy were of both sexes. "The Cathars insisted

on direct and personal knowledge, a religious or mystical experience apprehended at firsthand. (They) were heirs to knowledge which partly came from the East and was known to the Gnostics and the early Christians. The basis of this secret was the transmission of the power of love." (*The Cathars* by Lambert)

In the years 1051-52 several were hanged or burned - it was called by the Church "heretical leprosy". The Church launched the Albigensian Crusade in 1209 to destroy them. Body count included: at Beziers - between 15,000 - 20,000 massacred; at Minerve in 1210 - 140 people died in mass burning; at Lavaur - 400 people; at Languedoc in 1244 - 200 perfecti were burned after a 10 month siege.

The remaining Cathars fled to northern Italy, to the Alps, and also back to the Balkans. By around 1330 the Catharist church ceased to exist in France (according to Faivre). One of the major Cathar centers in the Languedoc region of southern France was best known for the Troubadours who we will now consider.

The Troubadours came to light in southern France, Italy, and northern Spain from the 11th to the 14th Centuries. They were probably members of a secret fraternity or group. There is evidence to suggest they had rituals and grades. Wolfram von Eschenbach (died 1220) was both a Troubadour and a Knight Templar. It has been speculated that Dante (1265 - 1321) was probably a troubadour and there is evidence he was also a member of an adjunct Templar Order. Of course the symbol of the Rose was of extreme importance to both the templar and the troubadour as it also represented the supreme enlightenment for Dante.

As an aside, another initiatory organization is the Fedeli d'Amore. Representatives of the movement are documented in the thirteenth century in Provence and Italy as well as in France and Belgium. The Fedeli d'Amore constituted a secret and spiritual militia, devoted to the cult of the "One woman"

and to initiation in the mystery of "Love". They used a 'hidden language' (parlar cruz) so that their doctrine should not be accessible to 'la gente grosa' ..." (taken from an internet source) The symbol of "Woman" symbolized the transcendent intellect, Wisdom. "... In the writings of the Fedeli d'Amore we find allusions to a 'widow who is no widow'; this is Madonna Intelligenza, (Mircea Eliade, *Rites and Symbols of Initiation*) It is thought that the Fideli d'Amore was an outgrowth of a confederation of the Ismaili Order of the Faithful Ones of Love with the remnants of the Order of the Temple.

We can conclude this section with an understanding of why these religious movements may have some small or even large role in the later formulation of the tradition we now call Rosicrucianism. The possibilities lie in the probable transmission of certain key religious ideas. The ideas of a special unconscious gnosis hidden within us, a hierarchical structure to the cosmos, a planned gradual revelation through rites, an inner genius or angelic presence, symbolic passwords, signs, and modes of recognition, and the symbolism of the rose as representing the highest unfoldment of mankind as the mystical Christ whose symbol is the cross.

## **SIGNIFICANT INDIVIDUALS WITHIN THESE TRENDS**

Before considering specific persons we need to review some ancient writings. In what way they are significant may not be exactly clear at the moment but will later. The apocryphal books known as *Esdras* and *Enoch* have some relevance on this subject. The first book of *Esdras* "is a chronicle of the exile to Babylonia and the return to Jerusalem, largely identical with the narrative in Ezra and Nehemiah. It has been dated as late third century B.C.E. The second book of *Esdras* is an apocalypse. It was written after the death of Nero (AD 68) and at least four chapters of

it are obvious Christian additions. (*The Apocrypha*, Introduction by Moses Hadas) Esdras is a priest living in Babylon. The second book of *Esdras* is a series of visions by the angel Uriel who basically becomes Esdras' guide. (We know that Pico della Mirandola was influenced by this book). Uriel means variously: Light of God, Fire of God, and Radiation of God)

The *Book of Enoch* is dated around the 2nd to 1st century B.C.E. For almost 2000 years we only knew of it through preserved fragments and through quoted passages from the church fathers: Irenaeus, Origen and Clement of Alexandria. So obviously it was known and actually revered by the early Christian Church; but then it virtually disappeared. It was later discovered in 1773 (by Bruce in Abyssinia) in three copies written in Ethiopian. A first translated edition was published in 1821. (*The Book of Enoch* translated and introduction by Richard Laurence) Aramaic fragments were found later at the caves at Qumran, the so called Dead Sea scrolls. (For your information, Ethiopian is a Semitic language.)

What is of interest to scholars is that this manuscript reveals the forgotten source of many Christian dogmas and mysteries. In the Old Testament, Enoch lived for 365 years on earth before seemingly disappearing or ascending. Although different tabulations of genealogy will place him differently, the *Epistle of Jude* claims that Enoch was the 7th from Adam. *Jude* is a very small epistle right before Revelations. The *Book of Enoch* is basically in 7 sections. The underlying theme is God's Judgment. It is from this book where we find the stories of the descent or rather Fall of certain exalted Angels (the Watchers) and the taking of brides among human females producing gigantic offspring. These angels taught mankind all the arts and crafts that Adam knew before the Fall. What is interesting also is the other main character after Enoch himself: that is the Angel Uriel. Uriel is the chief spokesman, so to speak. For example:

Chap 74: " Angel Uriel, the Angel who is the leader of them all, showed me ....

Chap 80: "And in those days the angel Uriel answered and said to me 'Behold, I have shown thee everything, Enoch, and I have revealed everything to thee."

Chap. 81: "And he (Uriel) said to me: Observe Enoch, these heavenly tablets, and read what is written thereon, and mark every individual fact..."

Later in the Rosicrucian manifestoes we will find Enoch mentioned again. One aside: in the commentaries of the *Zohar*, it is inferred that the Jewish Qabalistic scholars were probably aware of the entire text.

Another important point: it has become certain now that the part of the Manichaean canon known as "The Book of the Giants" is an elaboration of that section of *Enoch* called the "Book of Watchers".

After bringing these writings to light, we can proceed with a review of particular individuals whose influence added to the momentum of the later Rosicrucian phenomenon.

Joachim of Fiore (1135 - 1202) a twelfth century Cisterian who later founded his own Order. After returning from the Holy Land on a pilgrimage he "was meditating on the Scriptures on the day when the Lion of the Tribe of Judah rose from the dead, and suddenly with the eyes of the mind saw the plentitude of the Scriptures." Later at Pentecost, he received an infusion of the Spirit and in a vision with flashes of intuition which "unstopped the springs of creativity and set him writing in an ecstasy of inspiration." He then developed a doctrine of 3 stages or "Statuses of History" which influenced millennium movements for the next 700 years. It was a simple scheme that the first status was that of the Father - age of Law and O.T.; the Second was that of the Son - age of Grace and the N.T.; and finally that of the Holy Spirit - an age of love, freedom and the

Spirituales Intellectus - which proceeds from both Canons. The Apostle of the 3rd status was none other than St. John. These were successive stages and he felt that the end of the Second was imminent being about 1260 when the last age was to begin. The Antichrist was already in Rome. (42 generations of 30 years each = 1260) When he died he was considered one of the most influential spiritual leaders of his age and he left many disciples who carried on his work. With Joachim we find new elements arising: one, that he employed his direct visionary encounters with God as a mode of authentication for his theological writings. And, two, the way in which he saw the growth of the spiritual understanding of the trinitarian mystery as moving forward toward a stage of perfection within human history.

The next person or group to bring to your attention is the Careggi Circle which arose in Florence in the 15th century. This was a Neoplatonic group sponsored by the Medici family and centered around Marsilio Ficino. In 1462 Cosimo Medici gave a villa to Ficino for his work and to translate Plato and other philosophers into Latin. Of great importance he also translated the *Hermetic Corpus* into Latin. Cosimo's son Lorenzo continued to sponsor Ficino (as well as nurturing people like Botticelli, Michelangelo, and Leonardo da Vinci.) Ficino's work and fame spread throughout Europe. Giovanni Pico della Mirandola emerged from the Careggi Circle.

Trithemius (1462 - 1516) was a Christian Monk of the Benedictine Order. Leaving home at an early age he traveled and came into association with the German humanists of his day, including Johann Reuchlin. On a trip back home he got caught up in a blizzard and held up in a Benedictine Monastery at Sponheim. He stayed, became a novice and by 21 was elevated to Abbot. Trithemius was an avid scholar and eventually collected some 2000 volumes. He was learned both in Greek and Hebrew (advanced schooling by Reuchlin) and studied Pythagoras, Hermetics, and the

Kabbalah. We can only assume he carried on a regimen of spiritual practices and at one point had a visionary experience of an Angel which proceeded to instruct him in the secret technique he later called "steganography" which was the art of writing secret messages and transmitting them over long distances through the medium of angelic messengers. In 1499, he made the mistake of writing to a colleague (Bostius) in another monastery about this work. Unfortunately the friend was already an angel and the letter was opened and circulated to everyone's horror. He developed a reputation as a magician of the demonic arts. His work was not published until 1606 but it was long known and read in manuscript form. His was the main Renaissance manual of practical Qabala or angel-conjuring. His angels were divided into different functions: such as "district angels" who ruled over parts of the earth and "time" angels who ruled over the hours of day and night. Above them were the 7 angels connected with the planets.

But, his work was not only concerned with a type of angelic telepathy. It was also concerned with learning things about the spiritual worlds. It was in learning to use the chain linking earth to heaven and to the higher chain linking the celestial world through the angels to the divine Name.

In 1513, Trithemius was visited by Cornelius Agrippa (1486 - 1535). It is reported that Agrippa was overwhelmed and it is very likely a teacher/pupil relationship developed. There is correspondence that mentions Agrippa as a disciple. One can see some of this relationship at the front of *Agrippa's Three Books of Occult Philosophy*. Agrippa's book is by far considered the foundational work of all western magic since its publication.

It also seems that Paracelsus may have crossed paths with Trithemius. He makes reference to the "Abbot of Sponheim" and some even think Paracelsus was also a disciple, but if not, there is no doubt he was extremely influenced by him.

One more thing to mention here: by his own acknowledgment John Dee, Queen Elizabeth's astrologer, began the composition of his Cabalistically inspired *Monas Hieroglyphica* in 1564 after a chance discovery of a manuscript copy of Trithemius's steganographical handbook a year before. Dee was on one of his diplomatic assignments.

\*\*\*\*(The code that the so-called "Cipher Documents" were written in which made their way to the founders of the "Hermetic Order of the Golden Dawn" is from Trithemius's work *Polygraphiae et Universelle Escriure Cabalistique*. It was a cipher alphabet he developed.)

Paracelsus or Philippus Aureolus Theophrastus Bombastus von Hohenheim (1493 - 1541)

Paracelsus was a reformer of medicine and pharmacology. He was a chemist, philosopher and definitely an iconoclast. Born in Switzerland, he completed his doctorate in 1515. His father was a physician and at one point in his childhood they moved to a mining area where he was exposed not only to a monastery school but also the operations of metallurgy and alchemy. During his life he traveled extensively, studied alchemy, cabala, neo-platonism and hermeticism. He was always getting into trouble with the status quo, he rejected the canonical theory of Avicenna and Galen, and horror of horrors he lectured in German, not Latin, and actually attended to patients - which was way beneath the dignity of medical men of his day.

He pioneered the medical innovations of chemical urinalysis, biochemical theory of digestion, chemical therapy, antiseptics of wounds, use of laudanum, and combined the apothecaries and surgeon's arts (surgery was considered a craft!).

For our purposes, it is important to understand his take on the central importance of the analogies and

correspondences between the macrocosm and the microcosm. He was the first to apply this approach systematically to the study of Nature. "Since man was the climax of creation, uniting within himself all the constituents of the world, he could have direct knowledge of Nature on account of a sympathy between the inner representative of a particular object in his own constitution and its external counterpart. ... The work of Nature constitutes a visible reflection of the invisible work of God. ... In accordance with Gnostic ideas, Paracelsus conceived of all creation having two sides: a visible elemental (material) part and an invisible superelemental (astral) part. Man, the microcosm, likewise possesses a carnal elemental body and an astral body (*corpus sidereum*) which 'teaches man' and is able to communicate with the astral part of the macrocosm, the uncreated virtues or direct emanations of God in the world of Nature." (*Paracelsus: Essential Readings* by Nicholas Goodrick-Clarke)

### Caspar Schwenkfeld (1489 - 1561)

Schwenkfeld was a prince in Northeast Germany and a Knight of the Teutonic Order. He was an exponent of a mystical Christianity that had gnostic overtones. Schwenkfeld felt one should forsake the outer form of the eucharist because there was an inner one. "In 1524 (he) wrote *An Admonition to all the Brethren* in Silesia in which he urged the adoption of an inward Eucharist. He "posited a mystical flesh upon which only those who perceived Christ spiritually might feed." According to Schwenkfeld "The spiritual inner eucharist was part of a process of deification: a distinctively gnostic understanding of human potential. This process of deification - becoming divine (a process which was thought even to affect the nature of the flesh)...." "He regarded the correct institution of the Lord's Supper as impossible to reconstruct, its true nature lying in the sealed book of the Apocalypse." (*The True Story of the Rosicrucians*)

by Tobias Churton.)

### John Dee (1527 - 1608)

Born in London, England he was the greatest mathematician of his day, an alchemist, an astrologer, physician, engineer, and magician. We could spend several hours on this genius alone. His accomplishments spanned both the spiritual and the mundane world. He was in the employ of Queen Elizabeth I (whose mother -Anne Boleyn - grew up in Provence where Gnostic and Manichaeic beliefs had mingled with Troubadour poetry) (see *The Magical Philosophy* by Denning and Phillips, volume 1, p. 129.) It has been thought that John Dee also worked for the Queen as a spy - and as some have mused, he even signed certain documents as 007!

But his worldly accomplishments only concern us here tangentially. His spiritual works are, for our purpose, of the utmost importance. Because of this I do not care to go into all the controversy surrounding him; leaving that to others.

Dee was a very spiritual man, deeply involved in religious studies at every level. And the beginning of one of the fascinating occult tales occurs like this:

"In the year 1581,... (John Dee) knelt in prayer late one autumn, there suddenly glowed a dazzling light, in the midst of which, in all his glory, stood the great angel, Uriel. The spirit reportedly handed Dee a crystal 'most bright, most clear and glorious, of the bigness of an egg' and informed him that by gazing at it he could communicate with otherworldly spirits." Afterwards, he had little success in skrying and so he would use others to help. There were none that were satisfactory until he met up with another man name Edward Kelly in 1582. From that point on, Dee and Kelly recorded hundreds of spirit conversations which included an angelic language (referred to as Enochian). This all came about eventually, as the first communications were

sketchy.

But what was being conveyed? By one account this "begins the unfoldment of one of the most remarkable series of revelations in the history of magical seership. Thus was given to the magical world, piece by piece, fragment by fragment, the great Enochian system which is known in the magical world today as one of the most potent, and dangerous, and still one of the least understood, of the magical systems in existence." (*The Magical Philosophy Series* by Denning & Phillips, volume 1, pp. 132-133.) But what is the point? Like in the early texts of Enoch, these angels were directly involved with the evolution of human beings. Echoing Trithemius, these angels ruled over vast areas of the world. But most of all, these angels proposed the possibility of "the reshaping of the world by spiritual forces ..." (*Magical Philosophy*) The re-establishment of the Mysteries was to proceed. As the spirits told Dee "This it is which Philosophie dreameth of ..." and this magical system "opens true gates between the worlds."

Two other people that need to be mentioned as regards to their influence upon Europe in general:

Martin Luther nailed his treatise "95 Theses" on Halloween night 1517. This date marks the beginning of the Protestant Reformation.

Nicholas Copernicus a Polish monk, proposed the heliocentric model of the universe around 1529. This event signaled a new paradigm in the history of scientific revolutions.

Before leaving this section I wanted to point out some of the societies that either were formed or formulating prior to the publication of the manifestoes. In 1340 the "Order of the Star" was formulated in France by John II. In 1429, Phillip the Good, Duke of Burgandy formulated the "Order of the Golden Fleece". In 1577, the "Order of the Inseparables" founded in Germany. It seems that the founders were owners of mines and smelting works, and that alchemy was

of prime importance. Documents seem to indicate that they had 5 grades of rituals or designations whereas the fourth was concerned with alchemy. These documents were found in the archives of a masonic lodge in Berlin. It also seems that there are some connections with a later society – the Fruit-Bringing Society (see below).

In 1578 we know the “Order of the Holy Spirit” was founded by the French ambassador to England (who had given housing to Giordano Bruno for a couple of years). Around 1580 a society called the “Family of Love” existed with as many as 1,000 members in England. It was rumored that John Dee and Elizabeth I may have been members. These were just some of the groups known to us.

In conclusion of this section, several of the above people (or writings) added key elements to what later would be incorporated into the Rosicrucian world-view. With the *Book of Enoch* we have the idea that it is the role of the angels (specifically the Watchers) to teach mankind all the arts and sciences, including knowledge of the spiritual world. Later comes the idea that the kingdom of God on earth is being worked out in stages almost in an evolutionary manner. The Hermetic material and rites of magic become increasingly incorporated into the religious quest. Specific angelic rites become formulated and techniques employed to better communicate with the angels and to effect changes in human history. The astral links between microcosm and macrocosm become clearly formulated not only for spiritual purposes but also for healing. And also, that the spiritual work actually generates physical changes to eventually produce a spiritualized humanity.

Let us quickly get a fix on what has happened to the European world by the time of the appearance of the manifestoes. Not only had the Great Schism happened between the Eastern Church and the Roman Church but the Western Schism occurred as well. The Reformation had begun with Luther (whose coat of arms was a rose with a

cross in the center of a heart. There was a state of religious upheaval in the European world.

Paracelsus had pioneered a new and more powerful way to approach medicine. And Copernicus had started a revolution in the way we think about our place in the universe. A new land, the Americas, had been discovered.

And fresh fever was falling from the skies: Earlier a new star appeared in the constellation of Cassiopeia (the Queen) in 1572. To some this new star formed a cross with 3 other stars. This was startling. It must be remembered that the stars for still most was a "fixed" sphere. In 1602 a new star appeared in Cygneus (the Swan) causing more wonder. But in 1604 the great conjunction of Saturn and Jupiter (along with Mars) happened in Sagittarius that marked the commencement of great conjunctions in the "fiery trigon" (Sag, Leo, and Aries). And maybe more remarkable, a new star appeared right above it in Serpentario (aka Ophiuchus, the serpent-holder - Asclepius the Healer). This heralded a New Age to many sky watchers. And to the authors of the manifestoes, it was the time that Brother C.R.'s tomb was found and opened.

"In the year 1611, a messenger from Tubingen arrived at the castle of Plotzkau in north-east Germany with an extraordinary document: The *Fama Fraternitatis*, of A Discovery of the Fraternity of the most noble Order of the Rosy Cross. Prince Augustus von Anhalt, Calvinist, Hermetic aficionado, possessor of an alchemical laboratory and a secret printing press, was deeply impressed by what he read. In fact, he was astounded." (*The True Story of the Rosicrucians* by Tobias Churton)

The manuscript was circulated and caused several responses before it was ever published. It was first published in 1614 at Cassel and then again in 1615. Also in 1615, the Confession of the Rosicrucian Fraternity was published. To quote Paul Case: "The *Fama* and the *Confessio* tell the story of the Order and its mysterious Founder and

set forth its principles and philosophy. ... For six or seven years the Rosicrucian question engaged the minds and pens of European occultists." (*The True & Invisible Rosicrucian Order* by Paul F. Case)

And in 1616 a larger work, but entirely different type appeared titled: *The Chymical Marriage of Christian Rosenkreutz* also published anonymously. However, in later years Johann Valentine Andreae claimed in his autobiography that he wrote it. (Some still are suspicious of this claim) But the authors of the manifestoes never came forward.

WHO COULD HAVE BEEN THE AUTHORS? We have the possibility of many personalities that quite easily could be responsible; below is a partial list:

Johann Valentin Andreae (1586 –1654) and his friends Tobias Hess (1568 – 1614) and Christoph Besold.

J.V.Andreae was a brilliant Lutheran minister, hermeticist, and writer; disturbed by the way the Reformation had stifled. Andreae's tutor was chosen because of the tutor's knowledge of alchemy. His mother was an apothecary to Frederick I. Hess was a Paracelsian doctor, lawyer, theologian, cabalist, alchemist, corresponded with Studion about his *Naometria*. Besold knew 9 languages, (including Arabic and Hebrew), familiar with the Qabalah, magic, platonism, etc. The most evidence points to this circle of friends and associates; they also had numerous connections with the printers who published the manifestoes.

John Dee (1527 – 1608): His exploits in England and Europe have already been mentioned. It is possible he had a hand in the manifestoes either directly or indirectly. I think it would have been out of character for him to do this anonymously.

Francis Bacon (1561 – 1626): The ideas in his *The New Atlantis* including one character wearing a turban with a red

cross upon it has been noted by historians. Bacon was a member of an organization called the "Order of the Knights of the Helmet". There is much mystery and intrigue surrounding him. He was very interested in fraternities to advance science, sometimes writing anonymously. Some have tried to argue that his was the genius behind the formulation of speculative Freemasonry. The question remains open for both his involvement in Freemasonry and Rosicrucianism.

Joachim Jungius (1587-1657): Jungius was a mathematician and medical researcher. He founded a philosophical society in 1622 (obviously much later than the Manifestoes) called the *Societas Ereunetica*. Jungius was associated with friends of Andreae and he corresponded with Comenius. The philosopher Leibniz believed him to be the author of the first manifesto. But, we know the *Fama* to have existed as early as 1610, possibly earlier. He would have been very young to have written it even at that time.

Raphael Eglinus: Swiss Paracelsian. Worked as a theology professor until 1596. Met Giordano Bruno who highly influenced him. Secured position as an alchemist at the court of Hesse-Kassel, a court of renowned alchemical splendour. John Dee visited. In 1606 became lecturer of Hermeticism at the University of Marburg. His treatise *Oratio de Concordi Fratrum Societate* (1591) expounds on the "precious ointment" of Psalm 133.

Count St. Germain / Master Rakoczi: The story of this shadowy character is that he is several hundred years old. And, that it is his task to oversee the Rosicrucian (and other) Fraternities. Like Kwai-Chang Kane of Kung Fu TV fame, where he has been he has left no trace, and where he pops up again, is anyone's guess. There is not a shred of evidence anyone of this name was connected - but for those who like (or depend on) this story, it adds to the mystery.

## **THE AFTERMATH AND ENSUING FIRESTORM**

The aftermath of the publication of the Rosicrucian manifestoes was nothing short of remarkable. It was like shaking a bee's nest. The bees carry on a normal level of activity when suddenly, because of the injection of some powerful external force, the intensity of the hive increases substantially. In a similar fashion, there was an immediate reaction from the public arguing pro and con, believers and disbeliever's, commendations and ridicule. In his *Access to Western Esotericism*, Antoine Faivre tells us that: "Among the most important authors who helped spread Rosicrucian ideas were Robert Fludd (1574-1637), Julius Sperber (?-1619), Elias Ashmole (1617-1692), Michael Maier (1566-1622), Samuel Hartlib (1595-1662), Jan Amos Comenius (1592-1670), John Heydon (*The Holy Guide*, 1662), and Theophilus Schweighardt (*Speculum sophericum-Rhodo-Stauricum*, 1618), all of whom took up the seeds planted in the Rosicrucian fiction." (p. 65) Along with the individuals that came forward, there were groups forming that either claimed to be Rosicrucian or were, at least later, considered related:

In 1617 the Prince Ludwig of Anhalt founded "The Fruit-Bringing Society". It was based upon the Florentine Society with links back to the "Order of the Inseparables" mentioned before. Interestingly Johann V. Andreae was an early member of this group.

We know by 1620 the first non-operative lodge of masons was meeting in London.

In 1666 the Royal Society was founded.

In 1710, Sincerus Renatus, or Samuel Richter founded the Gold-und Rosen-Creutz Orden.

In 1717, the Masonic Grand Lodge system was instituted in England.

In 1754, there was the formulation of the "Order of the Elected Cohens" by Martines de Pasqually. The rites of this order are theurgical.

Also in 1754, the Baron von Hund formulated the "Rite of Strict Observance".

In 1757, the "Gold-und Rosenkreuz Order" was founded by Hermann Fictuld. Its grade structure was published in 1781 by Magister Pianco (Der Rosendreuzer in seiner Blöße or The Rosicrucian in his Nakedness). This same grade structure was adopted by SRIA and the later Hermetic Order of the Golden Dawn.

And you could extend this list for several pages up to the present day. Not only were there numerous Rosicrucian societies that surfaced, but also several Rosicrucian rituals appeared in the lodges and various Masonic bodies (some mentioned above). It was inevitable that sooner or later there would be competition and strife between these several groups. There was, and still remains so today. But my contention is that this "character trait" has been part of the Rosicrucian tradition from the beginning. See below example.

A typical silly Rosicrucian exchange:

1650 Thomas Vaughan under the name Eugenius Philalethes published *Anthroposophia Theomagica* dedicated to the "regenerated Brethren R.C."

Henry More (Cambridge platonist and friend of German Qabalist, Knorr von Rosenroth) wrote under the name Alazonomastix Philalethes attacked Vaughn in his: *Observations upon Anthroposophia Theomagica*

Vaughn replied with an article entitled: *The Man Mouse taken in a trap and tortured to death for gnawing the margins of Eugenius Philalethes*

Henry More responded: *The Second Lash of Alazonomastix*

Vaughan responded: *The Second Wash: or, the Moor, scour'd once more.*

Let me ask you, at least those currently involved in this tradition: have you seen this kind of behavior before? As evident from the above exchange, we can readily see that this kind of nonsense was part and parcel of the Rosicrucian way from the beginning. Those of you who have partaken in this kind of wallowing should feel justified, as you were just in tune with this tradition! I have to say it is much like taking a mud bath at the spas. If you are up to your neck in god knows what, you have to feel better once you get out!

Regarding many of the present day RC groups, I can do no better than to quote from the same master commentator who I quoted at the very beginning:

"To put the matter in a nutshell, tersely, concisely, succinctly, the world is being corrupted by all this (here Crowley gives a list of 1000 derogatory adjectives) ... nauseous thinking as we find in Brunton, Besant, Clymer, Heindel, Ouspensky, and in the catchpenny frauds of the secret-peddlers, the U.B., the O.H.M., the AMORC and all the other gangs of self-styled Rosicrucians - they should be hissed off the stage."  
(*Magick Without Tears* by Aleister Crowley)

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## **APPENDIX:**

Below I have listed a number of items for further explorations in relation to the above paper. They are listed merely for their interest.

ENOCH & METATRON (6 lettered as lower Metatron, 7 lettered as higher.)

Enoch transforms into the lower Metatron.

The gematria of Enoch being (cheth, nun, kaph) or  $8+50=20$  equaling 78.

The gematria of IHVH being 26.  $26 \times 3$  (threefold extension of Jehova) = 78

That which was, that which is, that which shall be.

The gematria of mezla (to drip, to flow down in drops) is (mem, zain, lamed, aleph) or  $40+7+30+1=78$ . Mezla is considered to be the descending power flowing down through the channels of the sephiroth. See Psalm 133 again: "Behold, how good and how pleasant ...."  
(Freemasons take note.)

$$1+2+3+4\dots+12=78$$

The number 37 and its properties: One of the angles of the 3,4,5 right triangle. It as a peculiar mathematical property:

$$111 \text{ as } 1+1+1 = 3 \times 37 = 111$$

$$222 \text{ as } 2+2+2 = 6 \times 37 = 222$$

$$333 \text{ as } 3+3+3 = 9 \times 37 = 333$$

and so on through 999.

DAMCAR/DAMAR of Arabia Felix. Damcar, thought to be Damascus, a center of learning. Damcar being listed on the Mercator map of Arabia of 1569. However, some scholars believe it was really referring to Damar (Yemen) where an important sect was active. "The Ssabians of Harran in the Baghdad area, ... adhered to an ancient pagan worship of the seven planets behind a veil of Hermetic revelation attributed to the prophet Idris, identified as the first Hermes or Enoch." (*Rose Cross over the Baltic* by Susanna Akerman.) It seems that this sect had a strong presence in Damar.

FEZ as center of religion, culture and commerce. Reached its zenith under the Marinid Sultans in the mid-14th century. On the trans-Saharan trade route, Fez was a capital at one time. The old city founded in 789 by Idris I. The new city

founded in 1276. Sufi presence.

### **The Motif of the Vault:**

Vaults and crypts have been used widely as symbols in the Western esoteric tradition. Below are some examples for further study and consideration:

The Royal Arch

13th Degree of Scottish Rite "The Royal Arch of Solomon" (Horizontal Crypt)

14th Degree of Scottish Rite "Perfect Elu" (Vertical Crypt)

13th Degree of Rite of Memphis

The Hidden Vault of our Father and Brother C.R.

### **Some Significant Dates**

In Chapter VI of the *Confessio* it is stated: "We could here relate and declare what all the time from the year 1378 (when our Christian Father was born) till now hath happened, what alterations in the world he hath seen these one hundred and six years of his life ..."

The year 1378 is the year of the Great Western Schism of the Roman Church. What did this event signal or begin?

Also an issue that occupies many discussions around the encampments of Freemasons is if the Rosicrucians had any direct connection with the Masonic fraternity. A fascinating coincidence, and it must be admitted, one against astronomical probabilities of occurring is the connection of

this date - 1378 - with the summation of the names of the three Grand Masters of Freemasonry. It goes like this (Paul F. Case is credited here but I do not know if he is the first to make this discovery.):

King Solomon (using its Hebrew spelling with number equivalents) = 465

Hiram, King of Tyre = 640

Hiram Abiff = 273

$465 + 640 + 273 = 1378$

Unbelievable coincidence? 1378 is also the "theosophic" extension of the number 52. ( $1+2+3+4+ \dots +52 = 1378$ ) The full spelling of the four-lettered Name of God in the Bible, IHVH, as yod-heh-vav-heh equals 52.

There are many other number puzzles within the documents showing deeper connections but that is not within our purview here.

Before leaving this subject it is probably well to point out that this type of number play is not unique by any means to these documents. But there was an immediate precursor. Simon Studion who wrote *Naometria* or "the measurement of the holy place" (whose work was known to both Hess and Andreae) used these devices:

"In particular, Studion offers a significant numerical computation on the Hebrew words for Rose and Lily (in Hebrew "hebsaleh" and "shushanna"), yielding  $530 + 661$ , adding up to 1191, the year of the founding of the (Knights of the) Teutonic Order. Similarly, Studion's militia evangelica is dwelling *sub rosa et lilio*." (Akerman)

Of course, the relation of the numeration of Divine Names and the architectural design of their temples is nothing new either. For examples of classical Greece see *Jesus Christ, Sun of God* by David Fideler.

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