



TONY LLEWELLYN, IX°  
M.W. Frater Supreme Magus 2021

***Paths to Utopia***  
&  
***In my End Lies my Beginning***

Being a digital pamphlet from fratres  
of the  
*Province of Greater London*  
*Societas Rosicruciana in Anglia*

**June MMXXI**





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*This pamphlet has been published by the Metropolitan Study Group of the Metropolitan College No. 1 of the Societas Rosicruciana In Anglia. The MSG is an open forum and we welcome all individuals, men and women, who are interested in exploring the deeper mysteries of Nature, Science and Truth.*

*We normally meet on the 3rd Saturday of the month, in Hampstead, London, however these physical meetings are temporarily suspended until further notice. All of our meetings can now be accessed virtually, and we host attendees from many countries.*

*If you would like to attend any future meetings, please contact our Suffragan and Director of Studies, Cheyne Towers: [heartmindtherapies@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:heartmindtherapies@yahoo.co.uk)*



*Untitled* by František Urban (1868-1919)

# ntroduction

## *Cari Friends and Fratres,*

It is with both joy and hope, and also a touch of personal and collective pride, that I introduce this, the third pamphlet of the Metropolitan Study Group of the Societas Rosicruciana in Anglia.

A year ago, almost to the day, a small group of the members of our study group, discussed what could we do in the unusual times we found ourselves in? To honour both the traditions of our society, and the application of its teachings, in a brave new world physically separated, yet technologically connected?

Being members of the Rosicrucian tradition, we reached out into the past for clues by which to inspire our future. And whilst the Western path contains many actors upon its esoteric stage, each with a true and valid role in a colourful, exotic, and inspirational fable, our particular triad of characters were known in this Universal play as the *Fama*, the *Confessio* and the *Chymical Wedding*.

The original manifestos were written during a time of religious and political conflict, encompassing and engulfing generation after generation. Although clouded in mystery and allegory, these publications offered hope of a Universal brotherhood of spiritual knowledge and awakening, and a utopian vision of peace, love and harmony.

It was during the confines of 2020's lockdown that the truth of these teachings became amplified and exulted. Without the white noise of the modern world, we were able once more to look at our lives, as did our elder brethren, with just the heartbeat of an animated Nature for company, as the mechanistic world of Man ground to a halt.

Why had this happened? What did it mean? What had our society become? Had the economic and technological 'wars' of the 21<sup>st</sup> century created a similar spiritual vacuum that inspired those original brethren of the 'Rosy Cross'?

And as with every eon of Humanity before us, we looked toward the heavens for clues, and discovered, perhaps to our surprise, the celestial gates of a new age opening before our very mortal eyes, the oft and celebrated entry of the Age of Aquarius.

With the harmony of the celestial spheres aligned, the original three 'characters' in our Universal Play once more began to breathe. What had been for so long parchments in the libraries of intellect, pulsed once more with life. And a long-lost Rosicrucian song of social and spiritual import, that enthused and inspired some of the greatest minds in the early pages of the moderns, began again to sing.

The members of the Metropolitan Study Group, many of whom have scoured the varied tracts of knowledge for living clues in their own personal journeys, remembered for some, and realised for others, that within the original manifestos, lies a living system. A system that is meant to be applied in every aspect of our lives, not to be bound in leather and placed on a dusty bookshelf.

So using modern technology, we connected on a global level with the many practitioners and friends of our arts, infusing the past year with vigorous discussion, teaching, and inspiration. Who knew we could meet and interact with so many, whilst locked away for so long! And whilst we connected via electronic means, we resurrected the idea of the pamphlets, and here we are, a year later, with the third edition in what I hope to be a long and worthy 'new' tradition.

It is our aim within the Metropolitan Study Group, to look anew upon all aspects of Rosicrucian study and find avenues of application for our daily lives. You will find in this pamphlet some wonderful work of a) the application of Rosicrucian teachings

today and b) the representation of the essence of The Work in a forgotten and physical symbol, yet replete and whole.

Over the coming months, as life returns not to 'normal', but hopefully with purpose to create anew, we hope, like our Rosicrucian brethren of old, that we can inspire and help those around us transmute the past year into a golden future, so that we may continue to 'cure the sick.....and that gratis'.

I hope you all enjoy the next few months of summer freedom, it has been well deserved for each and every one of us, and I look forward to writing once again as we huddle down in our winter hearths.

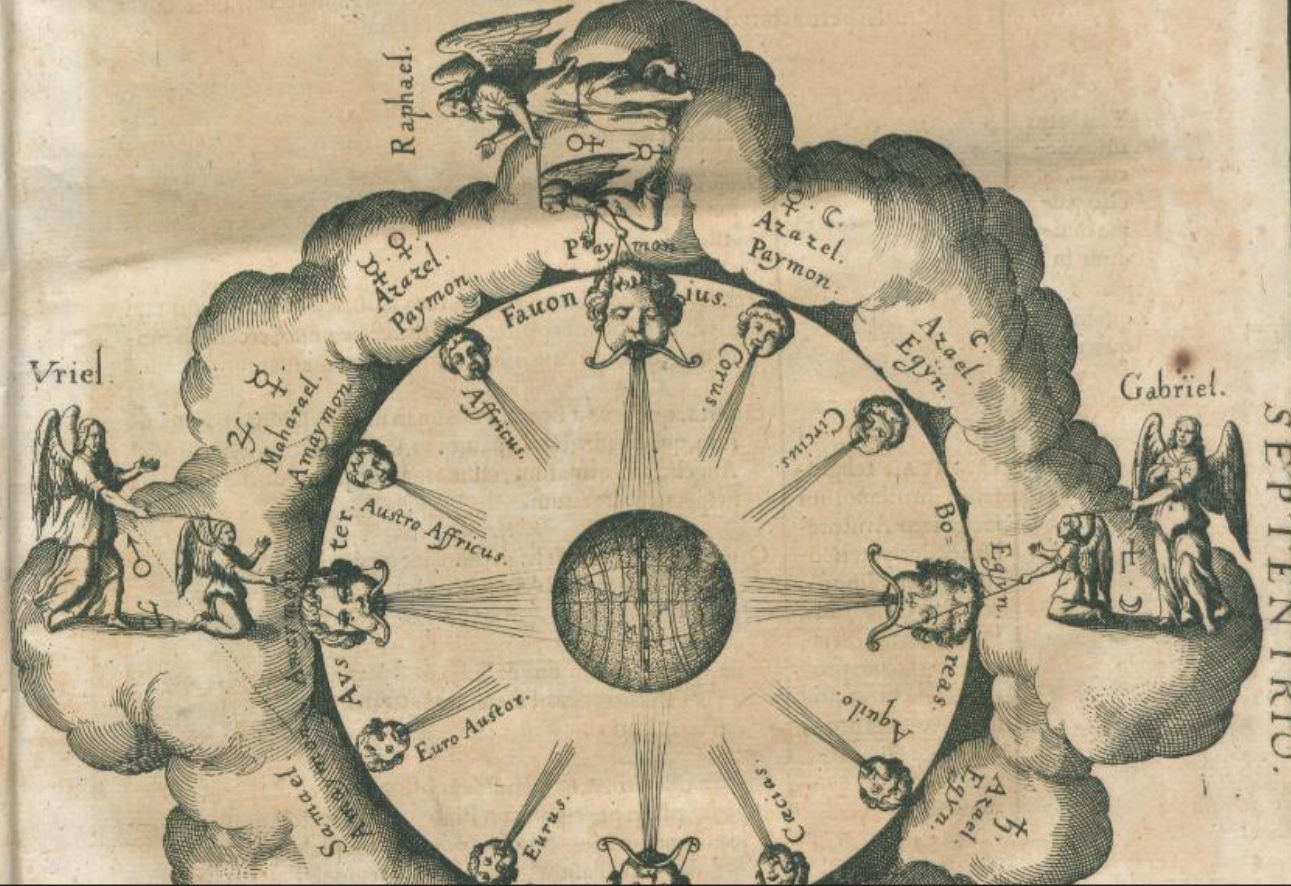
God bless,

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*Integrum Morborum Mysterium, Robert Fludd (1631)*

# Circle of Unity

## *Cari Friends and Fratres,*

For those of you who had the opportunity to participate in our Metropolitan Study Group SRIA meetings over the past two years, and especially the last year, you will no doubt appreciate the incredible success we are all achieving and enjoying, with regular attendance by Brothers and Sisters throughout the world.

I put it to you that this is no mere happy accident, but is in fact a manifestation of a strong Spiritual impulse which signifies the dawn of a New Rosicrucian Renaissance.

As we outlined in our previous two Pamphlets, published last June and December 2020, the Grand Celestial Alignments which took place on both the Midsummer and Winter Solstices ushered-in a mighty Spiritual 'turning of the tide' for Humanity.

However, it is up to us all to do the necessary work upon ourselves as individuals, as well as within our local societal institutions and frameworks to ensure that we are able

to assist Humanity through this great transition. To this end we must identify the things which no longer serve us, so that we can begin the incredibly complex and vitally important process of redefining our sense of Human identity, who and what we wish to become from hereon, and our relationship with the Spiritual Sanctity of All Life.

We are all creatures of habit, though sometimes our habits have become the means of our downfall... If left unchecked and unchanged.

As 21<sup>st</sup> Century Rosicrucians we have a duty and a great responsibility to do everything possible to assist each other in the Great Work of Regeneration, and my dear Friends, this task must be approached with a sense of Joy and a Lightness of Spirit.

Two sayings come to my mind in this regard...

*"The heavier the yolk, the Lighter the Work"*

*"The greater the responsibility, the more we must engage with the task like a child at play"*

Therefore to understand how we might approach the future challenges in this way, a prominent focus in the ongoing work of the Metropolitan Study Group SRIA throughout the coming years will be an exploration of Living Rosicrucian Practices.

As such I will have the privilege of leading the **June 19<sup>th</sup> 2021** meeting of the Metropolitan Study Group in a global exploration on the topic of **'The New Rosicrucian Renaissance'**.

On behalf of the Metropolitan Study Group SRIA, we invite you to join us for this wonderful event, and we encourage you to please share the details of the meeting with your trusted friends and family.

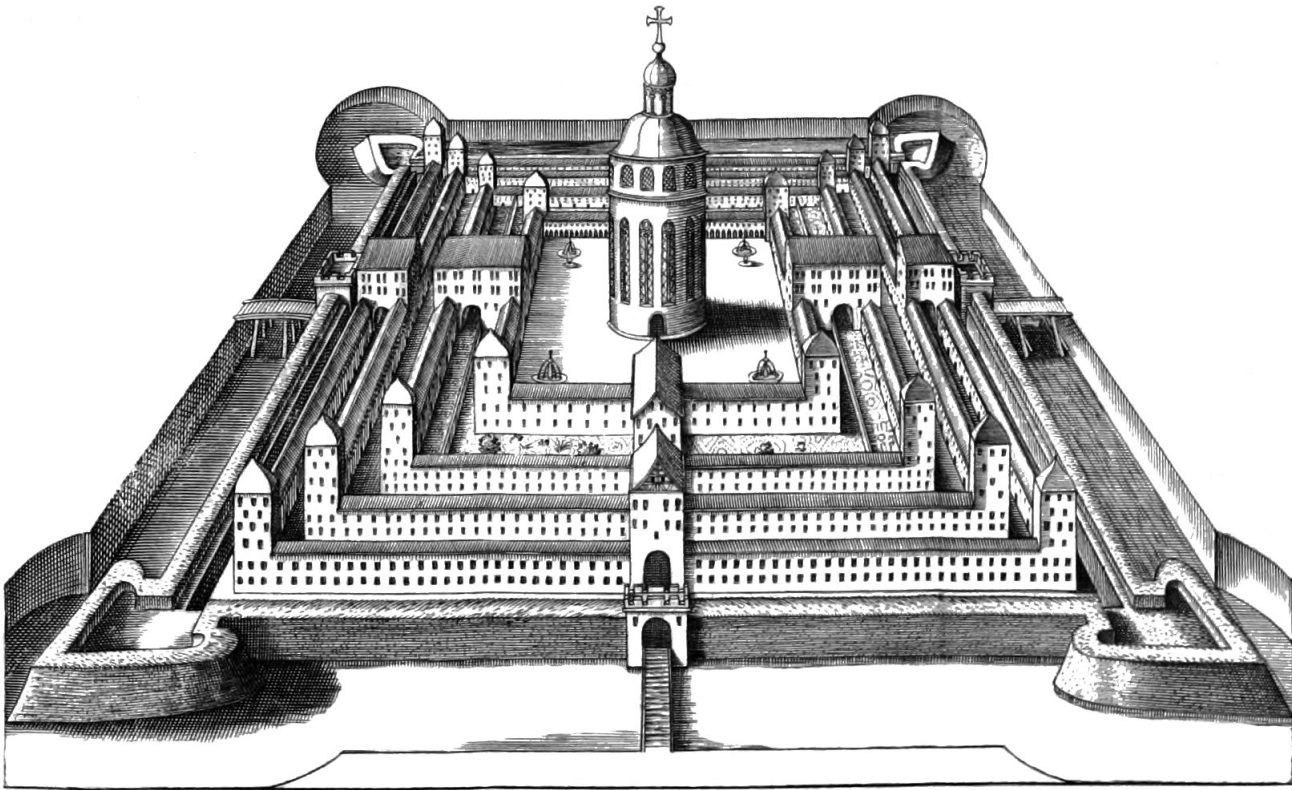
Our meetings have become a vibrant, highly relevant and practically inspirational network of Spiritual individuals who choose to approach our shared interest in the study of The Hidden Mysteries of Nature and Science with Love as our guiding principle... And there is no greater power than Love in all of creation!

*Welcome to our June 2021 Rosicrucian Pamphlet*

With Love, Light and Peace,

**Frater Cheyne Towers**

Celebrant, Metropolitan College No.1 SRIA  
Dir. of Studies, London College of Adepts



*Christianopolis, Johann Valentin Andreae (1619)*

# Paths to Utopia: Rosicrucian Engagement in the World Today

In the previous pamphlets we have considered how the Rosicrucian tradition is relevant to our lives in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, while also exploring the practical paths that are promoted throughout its history. Where we choose to take this practical work is highly personal, but each of us should ask the question: *what is the purpose of such work?*

The answer to this question is multifaceted and so this paper will take a look at what it means to proactively engage with the world as Rosicrucians. If we are conducting this work for more than just our own relationship with God, what approach can we take to public engagement and how should that inform our actions throughout our lives?

In similar fashion to how we examined the practical paths of Rosicrucianism, it is beneficial to look at the original manifestos and surrounding materials to consider how they approach the idea of engagement in the public sphere. By doing so, we can



see that our tradition speaks directly into ideas of social change and has a well-served thread of speaking truth to power; while also challenging many of the professional avenues we might undertake or other activities that could have a detrimental effect on the human condition. It is therefore important for us to view Rosicrucianism today as an assertive tradition. One that, from its very beginning, has sought to stand in opposition to many of the problematic areas of society in order to strive for a more harmonious and spiritually glorified way of being.

Rosicrucianism has had a long and illustrious past. From the initial outburst into public consciousness; to the numerous orders and organisations that have left their mark; individuals of significant influence; through to educational, theological and scientific reforms. However, in the 21<sup>st</sup> century our tradition has been relatively detached from the public sphere. Although there have been plenty of publications produced, they tend to fall into areas of historical research or promote an individualised spirituality that removes the tradition from direct engagement with the social contexts of the modern world.

This stepping back into intellectual and/or personal pursuit has coincided with large shifts in global society, including the rise of social media; the power of tech companies; and media outlets that find it difficult to merely report accurately on the news. The cynicism found in many of our political and socioeconomic institutions today highlights how they have moved increasingly further away from a well-defined sense of common good. Instead, in many instances they seem to be working towards the dissolution of truth in order to enhance profits and power; coupled with a turning away from compassion so as to become detached from accountability for the impact of their operations. This is the global context in which Rosicrucianism should be playing an active role in our collective destiny, as it has done so since its formation, and we must therefore reconsider our identity along such lines.

## **Social Purpose in the *Fama and Confessio***

The notion of public engagement is a central component of the original manifestos and their purpose. This is found not only within the actions that define a Rosicrucian (such as ‘curing the sick’ and ‘to follow the custom’ of other cultures), but within the worldly context that the legend of Frater CRC exists and the travels of the original Brethren to bring together different forms of knowledge “so that finally man might thereby understand his own Nobleness and Worth, and why he is called Microcosmus”<sup>1</sup>. Beyond even their content and primary instruction to “cure the sick, and that gratis”, the

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<sup>1</sup>All quotations from the *Fama and Confessio Fraternitatis* have been taken from the Thomas Vaughan translation into English, published in 1652 (digital scans available on the Internet Archive).

manner in which the manifestos were released and the way in which they were able to inspire discourse at the time shows how public engagement is held deep within the DNA of Rosicrucianism.

Within the *Fama Fraternitatis* we have direct examples not only of social engagement, but an international mindset that looks to harness the knowledge of different nations around the world. It is clear from the outset that Rosicrucianism is not an insular tradition existing along monastic lines, but rather one that builds up theoretical and experiential knowledge so that it can be shared with others of like-minded temperament and mission. Indeed, the *Fama* is an avowedly communal document and the members of the Fraternity travel far and wide without worry about national identity, concerned only with the corpus of human wisdom as a whole:

*“they separated themselves into several Countries, because that not only their Axiomata might in secret be more profoundly examined by the learned, but that they themselves, if in some Country or other they observed anything, or perceived some Error, they might inform one another of it”*

This is further acknowledged in the ‘five languages’ that the *Fama* was originally distributed in (and the affirmation in the *Confessio* that it will “*be set forth in everyone’s mother tongue*”) and is indeed self-evident in the assertive public declaration that the two initial pamphlets consist of. Because after all, the goal presented in the *Fama* is none other than a “*general reformation, both of divine and humane things*”.

Supporting the reformative foundations in the *Fama*, large sections of the *Confessio Fraternitatis* are focused on how the mysteries and secrets of Rosicrucianism should transform the wider world around them. There is a clear acknowledgement that such knowledge “*be manifested and revealed to many*” which provides the notion that they should be used to seed new ways of being. There is no doubt in the *Confessio* of the public nature of the tradition, as its Trumpet:

*“shall publicquely sound with a loud sound, and great noise, when namely the same (which at this present is shewed by few, and is secretly, as a thing to come, declared in Figures and Pictures) shall be free and publicquely proclaimed, and the whole World shall be filled withall.”*

Thus, an outlook of public engagement is undeniably part of the core modality of Rosicrucianism (even though the adepts behind such announcements remain invisible) and with the expected results being that the Fraternity “*inrich the whole World... and endue them with Learning, and might release it from Innumerable Miseries*”.

This is formulated, though, with the added recognition that these things would be overlooked or misunderstood by those who weren't ready to receive them ("*wherefore we neither can be seen or known by anybody, except he had the eyes of an Eagle*"). All combined with a call for people to request to join through public affidavits, while the Fraternity would be protected from any 'false hypocrites' by the fact that, unless their intentions are aligned with the Will of God, "*our Treasures shall remain untouched and unstirred, until the Lion doth come, who will ask them for his use, and imploy them for the confirmation and establishment of his Kingdom*".

The degree to which public engagement is present within the original manifestos cannot therefore be overestimated, as it is essentially the entirety of the message. That which was previously hidden would now come forth and shine light on the future to come:

*"what before times hath been seen, heard, and smelt, now finally shall be spoken and uttered forth, viz, when the World shall awake out of her heavy and drowsie sleep, and with an open heart, bare-head, and bare-foot, shall merrily and joyfully meet the new arising Sun."*

What we see, then, by looking back at the original manifestos is that they were clearly aimed at having a societal impact. Not only through the way in which they were disseminated and the recognition that they would "*dayly call, intreat and invite many more unto our Fraternity, unto whom the same Light of God likewise appeareth*", but also through the primary purpose of curing the sick accompanied by the rallying cry for an all-encompassing reformation. As Michael Maier states directly in his *Themis Aurea* (1618) that applauded the release of the manifestos:

*"The end for which these laws were made was the common good and benefit which partly belongs to the brethren themselves, and partly respects others, either in their minds or bodies to the furnishing of that with knowledge, and to the remedying of the diseases of the other, for they being ambitious to profit and advantage others, have taken a course suitable to their intentions."*<sup>2</sup>

This is echoed by the passionate words of Eugenius Philalethes (aka Thomas Vaughan) in his preface of the first widely available English translation of the *Fama* and *Confessio*:

*"This will be the right kingly Ruby... that he doth shine and give light in darkness, and to be a perfect Medicine of all imperfect Bodies, and to change them into the best*

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2 Maier, M. 1618, *Themis Aurea*, English translated edition published in 1656.

*Gold, and to cure all Diseases of Men, easing them of all pains and miseries.*

*Be therefore, gentle Reader, admonished, that with me you do earnestly pray to God, that it please him to open the heart and ears of all ill hearing people, and to grant unto them his blessing, that they may be able to know him in his Omnipotency, with admiring contemplation of Nature, to his honour and praise, and to the love, help, comfort and strengthening of our Neighbors, and the restoring of all the diseased.<sup>3</sup>*

Looking at the material surrounding the original manifestos, we see that at the core of the Rosicrucian tradition is a form of healing-based spiritual activism that crosses boundaries of religion, politics and science. A call to put right many areas that had gone astray; restoring the relationship between Humanity, Nature and the Divine that should be found at the heart of all our endeavours. They were concerned with forms of control that would denigrate the role of the sacred in our lives, mostly due to the corrupting influence of the search for wealth and power. They were standing against the negative elements of institutional religion, overreach of political organisations, and even the shady practices of their equivalent to 'Big Pharma' that we find issues with today<sup>4</sup>. Even though our level of scientific and academic knowledge has progressed substantially, there remains a pressing need to stand against de-harmonising structures and mentalities in a world that can quickly become off-balance if left unchecked.



*Heart of the Rose, Edward Burn-Jones (1889)*

<sup>3</sup> Philalethes, E. 1652, *The Fame and Confession of the Fraternity of R:C: Commonly of the Rosie Cross*

<sup>4</sup> This was also being called out in *The Triumphant Chariot of Antimony*, attributed to Basil Valentine, and other alchemical works that saw wider publication in the late 16<sup>th</sup>/early 17<sup>th</sup>-century and rallied against the excesses of exploitative medicinal practices.

## Visions of Utopia

There is a limitless field of activity in which such a proactive reformation could take place, but it's interesting to consider how the Rosicrucian manifestos existed within the sphere of the burgeoning *utopian* genre popularised by Thomas More's *Utopia* (1516). The search for ideal forms of human society, integrated closely with both divine and natural order, was hugely popular as a precursor to the worldviews that Rosicrucianism emerges alongside and, in many ways, helps evolve.

When exploring this aspect, there are two key texts that stand out: *Christianopolis* (1618) by Johann Valentinus Andreae and *New Atlantis* by Sir Francis Bacon (published posthumously c.1627). What's particularly intriguing about these texts is that their authors are both considered potential contributors to the genesis of the anonymous Rosicrucian movement. Indeed, in the case of Johann Andreae he was the self-stated author of the 'third manifesto' *Chymische Hochzeit Christiani Rosencreutz anno 1459* (*the Chemical Wedding of Christian Rosenkreutz*) published in 1616. There are also many who presume that he was the author (or at least one of the authors) of the original *Fama* and *Confessio Fraternitatis*. Whether that is true or not, both Andreae and Bacon were central to the development of the Rosicrucian tradition in its first decade and these two texts are a key part of the 17<sup>th</sup> century movement that took on its own dynamic life as it swept across Europe. Looking at the themes that appear in both *Christianopolis* and *New Atlantis*, then, allows us to consider how they might apply to our idea of social engagement and the purpose of being a Rosicrucian in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

Andreae's *Christianopolis* presents us with a highly structured community (per the illustration above the title of this paper), used to convey ideas most important to a flourishing society. At the outset is the acknowledgement that this can also be seen as a device for exploring the human condition, applicable within each individual ("*if you should call my own insignificant body by this name, perhaps you would not be so far from the truth*"<sup>5</sup>) as much as they are to how a society could function as a collective whole to become a "*stronghold of honesty and excellence*"<sup>6</sup>. There's importance placed on education and learning, from mathematics and astronomy to music and art; collective work effort with creative freedom; as well as agriculture that is "*attentive to natural simplicity*"<sup>7</sup> with a food system that provides for all. Educating the young is seen as a primary task and undertaken in a flexible manner that promotes the strengths of each individual. Combining an erudite approach with a strong moral compass, developed through religious devotion and ethical conduct, is paramount. This extends into the family unit, with

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5 Andreae, J. V. 1619, *Christianopolis*, Quoted edition Felix Emil, Editor and Translator, 1916. p140

6 Ibid. p144

7 Ibid. p151

state-provided housing and an acute sense of marriage as a sacred act.

The utopian vision presented by Andreae is one where *“religion, justice, and learning have their abode, and theirs is the control of the city”*<sup>8</sup>. He uses such foundations to create a communitarian outlook highly supportive of mutual respect; applauding the dignity of women (albeit with segregated responsibilities); and highlighting the importance of science and education over hollow superstition, in order to discover that:

*“This is the summit of happiness, to be able with one and the same effort to preserve the safety of the republic and the adjustment of the future life, so that the children which we bear here, we may find to our satisfaction have been born for the heavens as much as for the earth.”*<sup>9</sup>

In sum, we are presented with a forward-looking vision of society in which a great deal of faith and confidence can be placed in the notion that *“the champions of God, or the servants of a good cause, [can] remained unafraid...[for] nothing is more intolerable to impostors, than truth and uprightness”*<sup>10</sup>. An inspiring view, even if in some areas it can fall into hand-waving in which negative traits such as gossip or jealousy simply disappear and *“no one enters into legal dispute with another”*<sup>11</sup>. There are also aspects that, particularly from a modern perspective, veer into the overbearingly righteous (*“the only ark which can contain those to be saved”*<sup>12</sup>). This is not exactly surprising, considering also the kind of ‘general reformation’ that the Rosicrucian manifestos were positing, but it’s worth recognising that the search for purity can risk overwhelming the central components of love and compassion that are so desirable. A reminder that we must direct our transformative capacity to that which uplifts the human spirit and allows it to flourish in all its forms, knowing that: *“No power commands more effectively and none serves more readily than love.”*<sup>13</sup>

Contemporary to Andreae’s work, the drive to formulate a utopian ideal was also being undertaken by Sir Francis Bacon; whom had served as Lord Chancellor of England and whose *New Atlantis* provides an interesting companion to *Christianopolis*. Bacon is not as easily connected to the formation of Rosicrucianism on the European Continent, but

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8 Ibid. p173

9 Ibid. p206

10 Ibid. p136-37

11 Ibid. p246

12 Ibid. p233

13 Ibid. p182

it is clear that his works, such as *The Advancement of Learning* (1605), carry the same sentiments around a ‘fraternity in learning and illumination’ and provide an English counterpart (and potentially key influence) to the excitement that the Rosicrucian manifestos would themselves cause in Europe a decade later. In regards to *New Atlantis* specifically, Frances Yates states that “it is abundantly clear that he knew the Rose Cross fiction and was adapting it to his own parable”<sup>14</sup>. Regardless of whether or not Sir Francis Bacon was directly involved in the materials surrounding the Rosicrucian manifestos, he has come to be acknowledged as an important influence that the tradition calls upon and his work – even if in an apocryphal manner – provides further context with which to consider the purpose of Rosicrucianism as an agent of change in the world.

*New Atlantis*, through the island of Bensalem led by a meritocratic council under rule of King Salomona (after Solomon), presents another utopian vision built upon strong foundations of collectivism, familial bonds, universal education and scientific endeavour. Less focused on structural particularities and a much shorter text than *Christianopolis*, it assertively presents ideas on the importance of science and technology. While this text was unpublished (and left unfinished) during his lifetime, it exists within the wider body of Bacon’s work that had a substantial impact on the intellectual direction of English society and institutions that began to form around it such as the Royal Society.

Bacon’s use of Atlantis as a framing device not only builds upon the utopian provenance of Plato, but also places Bensalem within an internationalist mindset (albeit one that prefers to remain unseen). At the core of its purpose lies an institution (Salomon’s House) dedicated to scientific observation, analysis and enquiry of all kinds with an all-encompassing mission as “*The end of our foundation is the knowledge of causes, and secret motions of things; and the enlarging of the bounds of human empire, to the effecting of all things possible.*”<sup>15</sup> This is strengthened further when the purpose of the community and its outreach is laid out in description of its productive focus:

*“we maintain a trade, not for gold, silver, or jewels, nor for silks, nor for spices, nor any other commodity of matter; but only for God’s first creature, which was light; to have light, I say, of the growth of all parts of the world.”*<sup>16</sup>

Facilitating this keen focus ‘to have light’ within the utopia envisaged in *New Atlantis*, is the idea of intellectual and scientific outreach. There are numerous categories of

14 Yates, F. 2007 (1972), *The Rosicrucian Enlightenment*, p166

15 Bacon, F. 1627, *New Atlantis*, ‘Two Classic Utopias’ Dover Thrift Edition, 2018 p31

16 Ibid. p21

employment, including those designated as 'Merchants of Light', 'Mystery-Men' and 'Lamps' - terms that feel immediately relevant to our discussion on Rosicrucian engagement. Merchants of Light are learned travellers tasked with exploring the world to "bring us the books and abstracts, and patterns of experiments of all other parts."<sup>17</sup> Mystery-Men concern themselves with collecting "the experiments of all mechanical arts...liberal sciences, and also of practices which are not brought into arts."<sup>18</sup> While 'those we call lamps' are tasked with directing "new experiments, of a higher light, more penetrating into Nature than the former."<sup>19</sup>

There are numerous other categories besides, but these three together show both the wide variety of different forms of understanding gained through outreach with other cultures; alongside subtle underpinnings of a theurgic mindset that can also be found in brief descriptions, such as that: "There was somewhat supernatural in this island, but yet rather as angelical than magical."<sup>20</sup>

*New Atlantis* acknowledges that there is much to learn from proactively engaging with the world. Hospitality of strangers from afar and openness to the knowledge of other cultures (even if undertaken incognito) is key to the enlightened mindset put forward. There is an obvious parallel to the influential travels of Frater CRC in the *Fama Fraternitatis* and the importance placed on multicultural learning (while 'wearing the habit' of others) as well as the receiving of wisdom from afar by the eight original Brethren. What we have, then, is not only an overtly Christian tradition, but one based upon a global outlook that seeks out and embraces the wisdom found in other cultures to form a more complete understanding of the material universe and our purpose within it.

An interesting side note is that there is no indication that Andreae and Bacon were personally acquainted by one another, even just through correspondence, although it is possible that they shared mutual acquaintances that could have acted as a bridge between English and Continental intellectual circles<sup>21</sup>. However, they are clearly both feeding into the same drive for a new form of enquiry that is simultaneously faith-based and scientifically-minded. They share many literary devices and narrative elements (found in another contemporary utopian work, *The City of the Sun* by Tomasso Campanella, published in Frankfurt in 1623<sup>22</sup>); along with the fundamental

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17 Ibid. p38

18 Ibid. p38

19 Ibid. p39

20 Ibid. p15

21 For a detailed look, see the introduction by Dr. Felix Held in his 1916 translation of *Christianopolis*.

22 Also foreshadowed and likely influenced by other works of the time, such as *Civitas Veri sive Morum* (*The City of Truth or Ethics*) that was published in Paris in 1609 – per the illustration included here.





- A. Magna moles & quasi rupes, in rotunda planitie, in eamq. ascenditur viis quinque, quarum initia sunt à portis quinque vrbis Veri.
- B. Gradus scalarum quinq. in rupe incisi, quibus in summum adscensus est. Inter gradus autem ipsos, parte infima effigies, à laeva *SENSVS COMMVNIS & VIS IMAGINATRICIS*: à dextra *MEMORIAE*.
- C. Flama quæ in cælum ascendit, splendore suo denotat *MENTEM* siue *INTELLIGENTIAM*: calore *VOLVNTATEM*.
- D. Templum *SCIENTIAE*.
- E. Templum *ARTIS*.
- F. Templum *PRVDENTIAE*.
- G. Templum *INTELLIGENTIAE*.
- H. Templum *SAPIENTIAE*.
- I. *ARISTOTELES*.
- K. *REGINA*.

similarity of a perfected form of Christian society with a finely tuned devotional rhythm underpinning it. It is clear that *Christianopolis* is a more fully realised text than the posthumously published *New Atlantis*, that is best viewed in the broader context of Sir Francis Bacon's work and successful efforts to help bring about a new scientific era. Ultimately, they share the same general understanding of the collaboration between faith, culture, learning, science and the importance for each individual to have a deep relationship with both wider society and nature as a whole. We should thus consider them pre-eminent texts within the contemporary tradition of Rosicrucianism at its birth, that can directly inform us on the role of social engagement in our undertakings today.

Having examined these utopian ideals, it's important to recognise that there are elements in both texts that themselves need substantial reform. These include casual discriminations based on race or sex and there is often emphasis placed on puritanical ideals that have proven in practice to be just as detrimental, if not more so, as they might be beneficial. Rather than retaining any misguided notion that we have a fixed duty to uphold these texts in all their details, we should seek to understand their deeper purpose and continue on the path towards a more harmonious society that they were trying to envisage. Humanity moves ever onward and those in the future will correct our wrongs, as we must strive to correct the wrongs we ourselves inherited.

Texts such as *Christianopolis* and *New Atlantis* show us that the ideals conveyed through Rosicrucianism are not merely for study or curiosity. In order to be of true value, they must be lived and embodied. Not just at an individual level, either, but if we are to be custodians of universal truths then they must be applicable to society as a whole. These foundational texts were followed by many others throughout the centuries, including the scientific cataloguing and mystical expressions of Robert Fludd; the formation of schools of hidden learning such as the Orden des Gold- und Rosenkreutz and all that emerges from them; the 'Way of the Heart' expressed by Louis Claude de Saint-Martin; the birth of new movements in art through the Salon de la Rose + Croix of Joséphin Péladan; the codifying of the occult tradition into accessible terms by Dion Fortune; through to new forms of education and wellbeing as implemented by Rudolf Steiner, to name just a few. All of these expressions exist under the banner of Rosicrucianism and build up a loosely connected but undeniably inter-related body of work, one that illuminates the many paths to utopia found within Rosicrucian activism. Paths and means that can even be extended to the likes of the *Social Contract* from Jean-Jacques Rousseau or the era-defining life and career of Benjamin Franklin.

Rosicrucian engagement is imminently practical and focused on bringing together like-minded people so that they might form new ways of being and help overcome

the shortcomings of each era in which they exist. The formation of communities that harness wisdom, truth and love as manifested through peace, learning, scientific study and compassion is part of our intergenerational mission. That might sound like sentimental fancy, but there are numerous examples of attempts to realise such aims and envisage how they might actually come to fruition. Having an erudite and literary mind is not sufficient alone, but when combined with the radical message of illuminated enquiry that emerged from the mysterious Society of the Rosy Cross it can provide both the inspiration and praxis to shift the course of history and redeem some of the misfortunes that emerge from the human condition.

## **Rosicrucian Engagement in the World Today**

All of this presents a lofty goal and perhaps we shouldn't expect every Rosicrucian to commit themselves to becoming lifelong activists for the common good, nor necessarily feel comfortable with the idea of acting as guardians of spiritual liberation. There are two things, though, that we should always keep in mind. First, that there are no boundaries to the aspirations for social change that Rosicrucianism should consider possible. That is to say, collectively, we should be aiming high (Most High) for the impact of our tradition on the world around us. Second, that Rosicrucianism is inherently a path that looks outward and actively seeks to engage with the world at both the scale of the individual and that of society as a whole. In regards to each individual Rosicrucian, this means that we must see our work as being done for the purposes of the greater good and not just our own ends, peace of mind, or spiritual achievement. We are here to *'cure the sick, and that gratis'* and that is our primary goal and key trait that defines the Rosicrucian path apart from others that emerged out of the Hermetic, Neoplatonic and Christian theurgical milieu.

Holding this idea in mind brings up interesting points to consider. On a professional level (the point at which we 'labour at the furnace'), there are clearly livelihoods that should be considered incompatible with living a Rosicrucian life. Professions that prey on the vulnerable or seek to maximise material gain to the detriment of others (or with uncontrolled destructive impact on the environment) might be deemed acceptable under many political or socioeconomic understandings, but they should be considered at odds with the Rosicrucian goals of general reformation. It's difficult to talk about, as there will be some reading this who fall into professional categories that could be considered undesirable<sup>23</sup>. In this regard, nuance should always be considered and so it's important to remember that:

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<sup>23</sup> I have purposefully not named any directly, even though our Rosicrucian forebears certainly did!

- a) Our lives are influenced by external circumstances and should be understood holistically, with our career being one avenue for social impact among many;
- b) we can all evolve as we come to a deeper understanding of our spiritual purpose and the sacredness of a life lived in service to the common good.

Changing one's profession to pursue something more meaningful, whether in terms of social impact, spiritual vocation or creative output, is perhaps the most difficult part of living a life fully realised in the Spirit. We must also acknowledge that those with wealth and privilege will find such a shift easier to instigate. This is not only a difficult thing to talk about (while avoiding any conceited superiority that forgets we are all guilty of spiritual and moral transgressions); but it is an even more difficult thing to create the potential for such changes within our own lives. There are so many different factors working against such a pursuit that it can be detrimental to your own sense of peace and personal fulfilment to see this avenue as mandatory, so succeeding at such a task is truly a sign of deep spiritual and ethical maturity. Which also means that it deserves a great deal of respect and admiration when achieved, something that often seems to be lacking as we are conditioned to see success in primarily financial terms.

With these caveats in mind, ignoring one's professional output and compartmentalising it away from your spiritual practice will only prove detrimental in the long run. The concept of vocation is relevant here, because when we are able to discern what truly speaks to us we are able to find fulfilment while also having the greatest potential for positive impact in the world. This shouldn't just be seen as some unattainable goal of success, with many accolades and a lasting legacy. Indeed, such things can become a distraction to finding your vocation and allowing your life to grow within its labour.

For many people, vocation is found in reducing down one's sense of worldly ambition into a more localised and realised perspective of your role in the communities you find nourishment from. This applies equally to those in religious life as it does to teaching; it can be found in politics (if you have deep-seated integrity), but also in charitable work; it is present in medicine and science, as much as it is art and culture. There is even a great deal of need for it in the world of business and commerce, that desperately need to find new modes of operation outside of a sociopathic drive for endless profit.

In a real and meaningful sense we need to address the concerns of our modern age just as they were approached by the wise and learned of the past. Importantly, it is not good enough to presume that each of us can take a passive role in the formation of society. As Rosicrucians, we must proactively seek to better the world and fight against

those forces which work to oppress the divine spark within humanity. The texts of the past placed a great deal of importance on issues of education, restoration and devotion and so we must likewise continue to see our mission in these broad terms. The rapidly changing contexts of our digital age provide new avenues and modes through which to do so, but equally new challenges and distractions that draw us away from such a task. As we have more access to stimulus both information-based and sensory, we can quickly become overburdened and negatively influenced by the agendas of others who do not share our noble task.

Speaking truth into these new digital spaces and protecting the innocent through our ability to act with humility and compassion, in service of the common good, is as vital in today's world as it was for Rosicrucians of the past to enter the academies, councils and public squares of their own day. We must meet people where our presence is required most, embracing different means to act as beacons that hide not in the shadows but shine brightly from the centre of our souls – emboldened by the knowledge that *“whatever breathes the spirit, will have tremendous effect; [while] whatever smacks of artificiality will be powerless.”*<sup>24</sup> The modern world is facing a crisis of authenticity in which the artificial has begun to rule in both ideology and form, slowly corrupting the experience of goodness to be found at the core of the human condition. The utopias we envisage must not, therefore, be seen as distant islands separate from humanity; but rather as global networks of like-minded seekers, present in every community and bolstering one another's efforts to prove that there are genuinely uplifting and alternative paths that can be walked alongside others.

The transformation of humanity towards light and away from darkness is an ongoing struggle. Not only in the historical context that Rosicrucianism emerges into, but perpetually as part of the inherent nature of humankind and the internal dichotomy that we collectively represent. This is why our own daily practice, as discussed in the previous pamphlet, is a vital component. Social engagement quickly veers into hypocritical and corrupted, even violent forms if it does not emerge from a spiritually mature and self-reflective body of individuals. The relationship between *macrocosm* and *microcosm* applies to the societies we create, just as it does to the experience of humanity within the universe we inhabit. That which we create within ourselves emerges out as the constructive force of society just as, equally, society moulds the context within which our individual identity and perspective is born.

There is both inheritance and responsibility. We must transmute all that has been provided to us into a more enlightened form through our own influence and actions.

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<sup>24</sup> *Christianopolis*, p212

Both of these things (*daily practice* and *social engagement*) aren't really optional, in the sense that they will occur automatically as we go through our lives. We must therefore decide how to focus these functions of life in order to turn otherwise automatic processes into conscious acts of divine purpose and influence. As Rosicrucians embodying our path, we thus seek to move humanity toward the formation of a living Heaven and the expression of the Kingdom of God in the material realm. For all the intellectual, academic and even political terms we might consider our tradition in, it is these mystical truths that speak to generations of fellow seekers as we each hear the call and follow our duty to heal the corrupted ills of humankind.

The secret at the core of our tradition is that the creative force of the cosmos can emerge from within ourselves and impact the material universe. Rosicrucian engagement does not merely hope for a better and more harmonious future, it works to *create* such a future through our own active being. To participate actively in the formation of society is a central component of 21<sup>st</sup> century Rosicrucianism and it is not afraid to challenge established ways of thinking, particularly when they are having a detrimental effect on the collective soul of humanity. This could mean the intellectual exercises conducted by Andreae and Bacon; or it can manifest as other cultural, scientific or artistic expressions. There are those whom, in the true spirit of the original manifestos, focus on healing whether medical, psychological or spiritual. Rosicrucians are confident to stand up against power, but do so in a way that does not require recognition for it. Indeed, the fact that these manifestos had such a significant impact can arguably be placed down to the fact that they were released anonymously. There was a detachment from the shortcomings of individual personalities so that the higher ideals could properly resonate. Most forms of social engagement, of course, do require one to be identifiable as you are present and participating in an activity of some kind; but you can seek to do so with humility and as little projection of your own ego as possible. Healing for healing's sake alone. Love for the purpose of compassionate salvation. Truth that pierces through illusory structures. *To cure the sick, and that gratis.*

Such a selfless approach is particularly poignant in our current age; in which not only is there a global multiculturalism to be wholeheartedly embraced, but also a growing sense of distrust (often rightfully so) for ideological viewpoints that are too rigid and demand adherence. Within this context, the pointedly Christian nature of our work as Rosicrucians can sometimes lessen the impact of what we are trying to achieve. Which is why it is important that Rosicrucian engagement often happens under the guise of 'wearing another habit', assimilating with the communities around us so that our works might have the greatest impact without undue attention to ourselves or any requirement to acknowledge the source of our actions.

This is not, at all, to say that Rosicrucianism should move away from the Christian outlook that lies at its core (*Jesus Mihi Omnia...*) – but that we should conduct ourselves in a manner that acknowledges the heights of spiritual nourishment provided through the Living Christ, while recognising the detrimental outcomes that can result from unnecessary proselytising and dogmatic worldviews. We cannot deny the mysteries of the eternal flame, as they shine within different sanctuaries of the human soul. Wherever the Merchants of Light are to be found, we must recognise their wisdom and uplift their search for truth and harmony; for we share the same goals even though we might be walking different paths to utopia.

So far, we've been looking at the idea of Rosicrucian social engagement in a conceptual manner that is essentially timeless. However, it's important to respond to the fact that we live in unprecedented times and that the digital world is far from even the more fantastical visions of the mystics and mages of the past. Modern communications technology would be mind-blowing to a 17<sup>th</sup> century magician working with scrying; or consider our ability to cure the sick from afar through virtual surgical procedures; and the tools we have for effective clairvoyance through AI and pattern recognition would seem unimaginable even to adepts of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

It is still true that, from a metaphysical perspective, the advances of modern science and technology are but mimicry of the creative potential held within even a single cell of the infinite universe; but what they are mimicking is truly miraculous so they too should be understood as such. The tools we now have at our disposal need to be considered in light of our vocational duty as Rosicrucians. Immediately we think of the many different ways that they can do us harm: through addiction, obsession, manipulation and deceit. All of which must be carefully warded against. But just as the enemies of love and light are rushing to utilise these new all-encompassing channels, so must we too seek to harness the power they hold and ensure that an avenue always remains open for those called to find their way home.

In recent months, due in large part to the strange world that the pandemic has brought, we have seen an explosion of esoteric activity that has risen to meet a growing sense of hopelessness. We should be encouraged by this, as many have turned themselves with renewed vigour toward the search for love, light and truth. Rosicrucianism today includes social media, video conferences and online workshops; as much as it does activism, charity work or community organising. All these things are now inseparable, ultimately enabling the providence of God to find a leverage point within the crucible of our own souls so that we can "*observe the harmony and truth of the prophetic spirit*"<sup>25</sup>.

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25 Ibid. p243

## Closing Thoughts

Utopian literature emerges in times of social upheaval or crisis, when there is not only a need to re-visualise how society functions but also enough people that recognise a different path must be taken in order to survive. You already know the reasons why we are currently in such a period. We see it daily in the lack of empathy shown by structures that are meant to serve society, but are instead preventing us from repairing the injustices and imbalances of the world. We see it in our hollowed-out education and legal systems; in our housing and healthcare crises; in systemic inequality, racism, abuses of power and the pillaging of the environment with our insatiable need for more. It is manifest in the technology that has provided us with the capacity for infinite creativity and expression, but is often used to manipulate, invade, shame and dull the eternal spirit within every single one of us.

Humanity is at a cross-roads in which the thought forms that we create will become the future that we embody. We can be encouraged by the fact that in every period of crisis there has always been those guided by truth and emboldened to act as champions of love and peace; and that this is what lies at the heart of Rosicrucian engagement in the world today. We no longer have the luxury of delaying our actions and must stand alongside all those who act from a position of universal justice and compassion, with the humility to do so for the sake of others and not just themselves. That seek to *cure the sick, and that gratis*.

Part of our duty as Rosicrucians is to bring forth new visions of utopian society and work to enable them in a measured and holistic way. There is a need for a greater sense of integrity and authenticity that speaks into the trajectory of human destiny, rather than the selfish concerns of those seeking fame, wealth or power for their own devices. Some will be called to speaking truth and championing the sanctuaries of grace found both within and without in the world. Others will find their purpose in more practical terms, constructing the institutional avenues required to bring about social change. Some work to heal the physical, socioeconomic and spiritual maladies that face our fellows in humanity or beyond in the natural world. Others stand in opposition to those in power that are dampening the light of humanity under the shadows of narcissistic control. There are even those that see it best to stand aside and amplify the light of others, so they can share new perspectives in spaces previously held away from them.

Through whatever avenue we find our calling, it is vital to administer ourselves to it with the passion and dignity deserving of those who would bear the title Servants of the Lord. For it is only by doing so that we conduct ourselves in a manner befitting the divine birth-right provided to all of humanity. Nobody will do it perfectly and none of us



are entirely free from guilt or responsibility; but each of us, with each passing moment, chooses which path to take and we know the destination we should be aiming for.

There are no fixed set of proscriptions or rules that will bring you there. It is brought about by an individual journey into communion with the Word of God, along with the openness required to collectively manifest the results such experiences can bring.

For in the end there is but one Universal Medicine that will bring peace, love, light and truth to your soul. To experience and then *act upon* such instruction is to call yourself a Rosicrucian and be worthy of that sacred name.

**Frater Robert Gordon**



*Winged Figure*, Abbott Handerson Thayer, 1904



*Golden Salamander, Emblem of King Francis I*

## ***En ma fin est mon commencement: In my end lies my beginning***

*For nothing is secret that will not be revealed, or hidden that will not be known.  
What I tell you in the dark, utter in the light; and what you hear whispered proclaim  
from the rooftops.*

Matthew 10 v 26

*In my beginning is my end.  
In succession Houses rise and fall...  
Deployed in constellated wars  
Scorpion fights against the Sun  
Until the Sun and Moon go down  
Comets weep and Leonids fly  
Hunt the heavens and the plains  
Whirled in a vortex that shall bring  
The world to that destructive fire  
Which burns before the ice-cap reigns*

*East Coker, second of 'Four Quartets.' TS Eliot 1943*

## **In my end lies my beginning**

This paper is the third and final in a sequence that began with *In Ictu Oculi* and *The Radiance of Nature*, published by the Metropolitan Study Group in their June and December 2020 Pamphlets respectively. Each paper has linked themes but can be read separately. They were also intended to contrast and complement the papers written by Frater Robert Gordon with which they are paired in each Pamphlet.

This Pamphlet begins a consideration of how a Rosicrucian life can be led in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century. In that context the language and concerns of my paper might seem out of step. However, its purpose is to reveal that it is possible, even essential, to find in the world around us images of what we seek, which we may choose to call the *stone of the wise*, and of what we hope to become, *Christian Rosencruez*, whom we are pledged to follow, if we seek to live now as rosicrucians.

Each of my papers has used the language of alchemy. This was done not with an intension to render the truth obscure or shroud clarity with fog. It was because alchemy is the universal language of hermeticism, as the *Langue Verte* is of the Universal Church. It is the only language capable of imaging the apotheosis of Christian Rosencruez at the wedding feast of the bride and bridegroom.

## **An Hermetic and Prophetic Queen**

*En ma fin est mon commencement* (In my end lies my beginning) was the motto woven by Mary, Queen of Scots (1542-1587) into the cloth of state which hung behind her seat during her captivity in England. The cloth of state was, like heraldry, a representation of her sovereignty. As such every image and text that formed part of the design would have been most carefully chosen. Can we then know why this motto was chosen and the message it was intended to communicate?

These words are recognised by those who practise our art as both hermetic and prophetic. Hermetic because they teach us that at each stage of our work our materia must suffer death so that its form can be renewed, much as a child who emerges from the corpse of his father. We also learn that we are destined to experience a continuing cycle of life and death until by our labours and the grace of our Saviour, we may ascend unto glory.

The phrase was prophetic because it foretold the destiny of a Queen who was released from captivity into eternity by her martyrdom. A fate she embraced, wearing the red garment of the third stage. By that act, her son entered his full sovereignty as King of Scotland and heir to the throne of England, so realising the greatest achievement of the

House of Stuart. Her granddaughter Elizabeth, the Winter Queen of Bohemia, inspired the Rosicrucian movement and her direct descendant, Queen Elizabeth II, reigns still.

Where could this young Queen gain these hermetic and prophetic insights other than the royal court of France which had been so dominated by King Francis I (1494-1546), grandfather of her husband King Francis II (1544-1560). Francis I, a poet and artist, commissioned Leonardo da Vinci whom he entertained in chambers dominated by the Kings emblem, the golden salamander.

*This strange creature lacks organs of digestion and takes no food but from fire. It is through fire that it constantly renews itself and its virtue.*

Leonardo da Vinci

The salamander symbolises the secret fire, fire that is not fire, but rather a watery fire that is a solvent acting through energy and light. Light that through its virtue reduces imperfection to ash and raises the child to sovereignty.

And so, we come to a book that begins with a salamander and ends with a sundial dedicated to Queen Mary...



## A Book of Abstraction

I have, for many years, been interested in the hermetic science and royal art of alchemy. In particular, the work of a French alchemist who operated behind the nomen mysticum of Fulcanelli during the last years of the nineteenth, and the first quarter of the twentieth centuries. He is known through two books the *Mystery of the Cathedrals* published in 1924 and the *Dwellings of the Philosophers* published in 1929. The former concerns an interpretation of the alchemical symbolism of gothic cathedrals and has been available in translation for many years. The latter extends this interpretation to a series of architecturally impressive mediaeval buildings. I was unable to obtain a translation of this latter book till 2002. After 488 pages of rather obscure argument my attention was surprisingly drawn in its final chapter to a sundial which stands in the grounds of Holyroodhouse Palace in Edinburgh. In fact, in the entire book there are only two other buildings outside France that are referred to, both in London and including Westminster Abbey but neither, unlike the sundial, received a chapter dedicated to its interpretation.

Why did Fulcanelli choose this sundial above all other monuments outside France? First, let us look at the sundial, Queen Mary's Sundial, which is now situated in the north garden of the Palace both in full, and in close up (see images on next page).

For anyone unfamiliar with the sundial, as I was, you may be struck by just how unusual it is especially compared to those more simple sundials situated on public buildings.

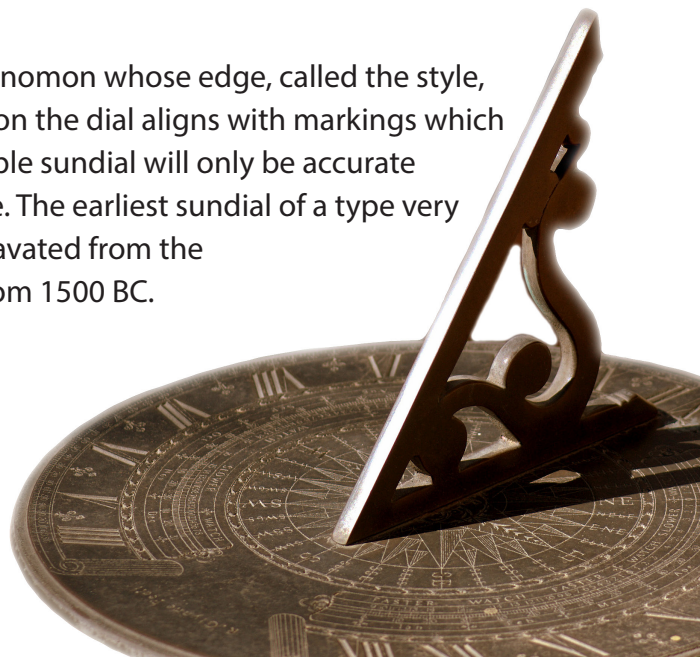
## Sundials

A simple sundial tells the time of the day by the apparent position of the sun as it moves across the sky.

It consists of a flat plate, the dial, and a gnomon whose edge, called the style, casts a shadow on the dial. The shadow on the dial aligns with markings which indicate the time of day. However, a simple sundial will only be accurate locally and at places of the same latitude. The earliest sundial of a type very similar to that in the illustration was excavated from the Valley of the Kings in Egypt and dates from 1500 BC.

Over time this simple timepiece became more elaborate as societies required ever more sophistication in the measurement of time.

In 2011, I came across Dennis Cowan's



book *The Ancient Sundials of Scotland* which, as its title suggests, includes a record of the ancient sundials found in Scotland. It also told the story of the Scottish sundials of the renaissance period and seventeenth, and eighteenth centuries. These ancient dials are not just more numerous than those of many other countries but are stylistically unique. They can be grouped into three main types.



First, the obelisk dial (top), which is unique to Scotland and of which there are only twenty-five known complete examples. The one I have shown is from Drummond Castle in Perthshire and has 76 separate dials.

Second, the lectern dial which originated in Scotland but is known elsewhere particularly in the Netherlands. It is called a lectern dial as it appears like a lectern. The example shown here is from Culzean Castle in Ayrshire.

Third, the multi-faceted dial is very elaborate and often polyhedral, of which Queen Mary's Sundial is a striking example. As you see in the images on the following page, the dial is in the form of a regular icosahedron which is a geometrical solid formed of twenty equilateral triangles.



In Scotland during the sixteenth to eighteenth century sundials developed from largely practical timepieces into elaborate architectural forms for reasons that are unknown. They were commissioned by royal, aristocratic, and civic patrons from artists and masons who possessed considerable mathematical, geometrical, and craft skills. However, as the decoration and geometry of dials became more elaborate, their practical use as timepieces diminished, and their purpose became largely symbolic. As Freemasons, we would say they are no longer operative but speculative.

In his PhD thesis published in 2012, John Packer of Edinburgh University commented on the coincidence between the period over which Freemasonry developed in Scotland and that of its unique sundials. He suggested that the range of symbols used on these dials, especially those that were hermetic, astrological, and even Egyptian,



were used to introduce operative masons to symbolic ideas.

Perhaps this is what drew Fulcanelli to Edinburgh and to Queen Mary's Sundial. He regarded its architecture and design as representative of an ancient hermetic and esoteric tradition that was indigenous to Scotland.

## Fulcanelli

Before I discuss more about what he saw, I first ought to say something about Fulcanelli. As I said earlier, he became known to the world through the publication of two books whose manuscripts he provided before he left Paris. The first, *The Mystery of the Cathedrals* published in 1922, which argued that the gothic Cathedrals of northern Europe were the last true temples built in unbroken succession from those of Ancient Egypt. Since their architecture and decoration symbolised all that is, the careful observer could understand from a study of those symbols the true meaning of the Great Work of alchemy. In 1929, *The Dwellings of the Philosophers* was published and extended this theme to the study of other buildings of hermetic significance. Papers that could have been used for a third book, *Finis Gloria Mundi*, have never been published in full.

There has been considerable speculation on the identity of Fulcanelli. I support the view that Fulcanelli was a literary creation and nomen mysticum of a loose group of individuals who called themselves the Fraternity of Heliopolis and were part of the French alchemical revival of the late nineteenth and early twentieth century. In particular, four individuals.



From the left, the artist and designer Jean-Julien Champagne (1877-1932) who illustrated the books and whose alchemical laboratory was supported by the family of Count Ferdinand de Lesseps.



Next, Rene Schwaller de Lubicz (1889-1961). De Lubicz provided the initial manuscript for first book but then spent much of his life abroad, particularly at Luxor.

Thirdly Eugene Cansiliet (1899-1982) who at the age of 16 became Champagne's pupil and later received the two manuscripts anonymously with the request that he act as Fulcanelli's literary executor.

The portrait to the right shows Pierre Dujols (1862-1925), who was the proprietor of the foremost esoteric bookshop in Paris and who produced the final text.



I see their intention as not dissimilar to the unknown group behind the *Fama*, *Confessio*, and *Chemical Wedding*. They acted partly through a traditional adherence to secrecy, but also to an understanding that by creating a mythical figure who personified the symbolic language and artistry of the literary text, the power of the text would remain volatile and energetic, not fixed, and inert.

Indeed, Cansiliet maintained his conviction that Fulcanelli was a real individual throughout his life, even reporting that he had met him on a visit to Seville in 1954. This together with a strange encounter between several French scientists and Fulcanelli during World War Two has enabled Fulcanelli, like Christian Rosencreuz, to exist well beyond the limits set by the books written by their creators.

## The French Connection

It now remains to discuss why 'Fulcanelli' travelled to Edinburgh. In her book *Fulcanelli and the Alchemical Revival*, Genevieve Dubois makes an intriguing suggestion. Marie Sinclair, wealthy in her own right, was married to the 14<sup>th</sup> Earl of Caithness from 1872 until his death in 1881. She was an enthusiastic spiritualist and early supporter of theosophy, largely financing its expansion in France where she lived after her husband's death. She met Helena Blavatsky in 1884 and was subsequently appointed President of the Theosophical Society in France and its overseas territories. From her apartments in the Avenue Wagram, she maintained an influential esoteric salon. A key feature of her apartment was the layout of the rooms and its gothic revival decoration, that intentionally resembled those of the Palace of Holyroodhouse. Indeed, Lady Caithness

regarded herself as a reincarnation of Mary, Queen of Scots. Dubois suggests that through membership of the Theosophical Society and attendance at her salon, Dujols and his fellow members of the Fraternity of Heliopolis would have become aware of Marie Sinclair's veneration of Holyroodhouse and seen pictures of Queen Mary's Sundial. Perhaps that was sufficient for Champagne to travel north. It is his illustrations that accompany the text.

## Understanding the Text

The comparison of Christian Rosencreuz and Fulcanelli as literary characters can also be extended to the books that the former appears in, particularly the *Chemical Wedding of Christian Rosencreuz*, and those the latter apparently wrote.

Johann Valentin Andreae author of *The Chemical Wedding* described it as a ludibrium, a lampoon, a humorous work of satire and irony that poked fun at alchemy through the books ritual drama's, masques, courtly ritual, and a 'play within a play'. Because we see so much that is alchemical in his book, we forget his genius was as a writer, particularly in the creation of his protagonist, Christian Rosencreuz.

The *Fama* and *Confessio* are altogether too serious to portray him, as Andreae does, as a man full of humanity who experiences anxiety, distress, ridicule, happiness, and despair during the events of the wedding despite being the guest upon which all depends. Andreae's achievement was to have written a successful work of literature whose language and concerns are highly alchemical. It uses the language of alchemy to communicate those spiritual truths that he regards as of the highest importance. These are the spiritual and divine principles active in the visible universe-it is these truths that are the meaning within the allegory.

*The Mystery of the Cathedrals* and *Dwellings of the Philosophers* appear to be very different texts from the *Chemical Wedding*, yet both are in a style of writing that also descends from Latin and Greek parodies, religious masques, and political satire combined with oral folk traditions. They share their energy with the festivals of boy bishops and the muddy entertainments of the Court of Miracles beloved of Victor Hugo. Rather than the language of alchemy directly, the voice of Fulcanelli uses architecture and classical allusion to form his allegory within which we find his hermetic meaning- the divine principles that are active in '*all that is*'.

Therefore, any reading of the description of the Queen Mary's Sundial should be a search for its allegorical meaning concealed within Fulcanelli's apparently erudite academic arguments.

## The Sundial of the Palace of Holyroodhouse

I will now consider Fulcanelli's description of the sundial in the sequence that he sets it out in his text before summarising what I understand it to mean. In his first paragraph he states:

*"...we cannot find an image analogous to this original and strongly featured work. It is more like an erected crystal, a gem raised on a support, than a genuine monument. And this gigantic sample of mineral production, would be more in its place in a minerology museum rather than in the middle of the park."*

So, we are directed to understand that what we are looking at should not be viewed as a 'genuine monument' but as a mineral excavated from a mine that has been refined to produce a pure crystalline solid. It is a metaphor for the identification and extraction of the prima materia, the living ore from the womb of the earth, which after much labour enables the crystalline *Stone of the Wise* to be *realised*. The sundial becomes, as I have suggested, an alchemical allegory.

### Builder

The sundial was commissioned in 1633 to mark the Scottish coronation of King Charles I, from John Milne who was the Kings Master Mason for Scotland. Milne had already been responsible for substantial building projects for aristocratic clients such as the Duke of Queensbury and later, as Master Mason, he would restore Edinburgh Castle. He had also been responsible for the sundial at Drummond Castle that I referred to earlier in this paper.

John Milne was a prominent Freemason being a member of the Lodge of Edinburgh Number 1 from 1633, and Master of the Lodge of Scone Number 3 from 1621- 1627. His membership of the Lodge of Edinburgh coincided with its first recorded initiation, though by no means the first such initiation, of a non-operative candidate suggesting that the Lodge had started to become speculative.

Milne was therefore not only a highly successful and prominent operative mason and builder he was almost certainly aware of, if not involved in, the promotion of speculative Freemasonry in Scotland.

On receiving such a prestigious commission for a monument at Holyroodhouse, Milne would intend, of course, to produce a masterpiece, indeed his polyhedral sundial is the earliest and finest of its type still to be found in Scotland.

## Greek Sundials

Fulcanelli then gives a short summary of various sundials of Greek antiquity but I will only mention only one, the 'Arachne' attributed to Eudoxus whose dial is marked by lines that appear to be similar to a spider's web. Arachne was the mortal transformed into a spider by the goddess Athene and who now sits at the centre of her web. Elsewhere, Fulcanelli suggests that *Arachne* is a form of *Ariadne* whose red thread guided Theseus through the labyrinth, and also the *lodestone* where the most valuable ore is mined. This sundial is again emphasised as both the site where the prima materia can be found and the guide to what lies at the centre.

## Parts of the Sundial

He then moves on to consider one part of the sundial, the gnomon. Gnomon is the Latin translation of the Greek word for that raised element whose edge indicates by the projection of a shadow on the plane, the movement of the sun. The word gnomon has had this definition from the time of the ancient Greeks whose mathematics explained the principles by which sundials were able to measure time. However, the word gnomon, also had a wider meaning '*one who knows*'.

Fulcanelli also refers to the fact that these very elaborate sundials were no longer simple timepieces, but have, as I have said, become symbolic through the elaboration of their decoration and symbolism. He refers to this '*strange icosahedron*' as an hermetic clock, a twofold gnomonic work.

For him, the gnomon signifies *he who has become enlightened*, who knows and understands more profoundly. Gnomon shares meaning with gnosis, *to have knowledge and doctrine*. Gnosis was the body of sacred knowledge, which the Gnostics kept secret and which, for its initiates, was the object of secret teaching. The text also draws attention to the word that links gnomon and gnostic, that is gnome, which in its ancient Greek meaning refers to *intelligence, spirit, mind*. In hermeticism, a gnome is the earth spirit that guards mineral treasures and is the form taken by the active spirit of metals.

Fulcanelli concludes this section with the following paragraph:

*"The gnomonic icosahedron of Edinburgh is therefore, apart from its standard purpose, a hidden translation of the Gnostic Work, of the Great Work of the Philosophers. For us, the purpose of this hidden monument is not only to indicate the daily hours, but also the progress of the sun of the sages in the philosopher's work. And the progress is regulated by the icosahedron, which is this unknown crystal, the salt of Sapience, spirit of fire incarnate, the familiar obliging gnome, friend of the good artist, who allows men to access the supreme knowledge of the ancient gnosis."*

## Order of the Thistle

At this point in the text a further question is raised. Is there a link between the sundial and the Order of the Thistle?

Historically there cannot have been because the Order of the Thistle was founded in 1689 by King James VII, some 56 years after the Sundial was commissioned. Whilst King James described his action as a revival there is no evidence of an earlier order of knighthood.



The thistle has been the national emblem of Scotland from about the last quarter of the 15<sup>th</sup> century and King James V was painted wearing a thistle collar in 1538.

Fulcanelli suggests that a secret order existed between 1540 and 1689. However, such a statement should never be taken at face value and is intended to direct the reader to a symbolic or esoteric interpretation of the Order of the Thistle.

The membership of the Order of the Thistle, as with that of the Garter, originally consisted of the Sovereign and twelve knights representing Christ and the Twelve Apostles. On their website you can see the habit and insignia of the Order as worn by the Queen.

<https://www.royal.uk/order-thistle>

The mantle and the sash underneath it are thistle green in colour, that is green with blue and a touch of red. On the left breast is the radiating star of the St Andrews Cross. From the black hat there is a spray of white egret feathers. The collar is made of gold and depicts thistles and sprigs of rue. The St Andrew is worn from the collar and depicts St Andrew wearing a green gown and purple coat holding a white saltire.

The thistle combine's a green plant and purple flower, the colours with which St Andrew is clothed. It symbolises both protection of the land and pride in that land. In the collar of the Order the thistle alternates with rue which represents purity and grace.

The colour thistle green is a sea green, a watery green that has hidden within it red, the secret fire, and hidden spirit.

The star of St Andrew is in the form of the 'X' cross, which is the Greek letter Chi, the first letter of word Christ. A star is of alchemical significance.

*"a king most pure...born into the world...you see his star...follow it to its crucible...  
you will see the Son of the Sun."*

*Philalethes*

The egret feathers on the cap are themselves emblems of divine knowledge, of the language of the birds.

These allusions would have been well known in the seventeenth century, the time of the *Chemical Wedding*, where display and courtly ritual still combined with masques and drama to convey meaning to the world. For the Stuart monarchy this meant promoting their divine right to the rule. Symbolically this also alludes to the *royal art* that seeks the *hidden king*, the *Son of the Sun*.

## **Alexander Seton**

Fulcanelli then draws attention to the Scottish alchemist Alexander Seton whose no-mon mysticum was *The Cosmopolite*. The details of his life are controversial and largely legendary but suggest that working in secret he perfected his art and achieved the stone just prior to an unexpected visit by shipwrecked Dutch sea captain in 1601 who he engaged to take him to the Netherlands. He then travelled throughout Europe before losing his life in 1605. Such a link between Scotland and Europe has previously been suggested as a key contributor to the development of speculative Freemasonry in Scotland. Perhaps it was also the route by which a form of rosicrucianism entered Scotland that would eventually give rise to the SRIS and the SRIA.

A short section then leads to the following statement regarding the hidden meaning of the sundial:

*"In our opinion, the Scottish sundial is a modern replica, at once more concise and more learned, of the ancient Tabula Samaragdina. The Table that was composed of two columns of green marble, according to some, or an artificial emerald sheet according to others, on which the Work of the Sun was carved in cabalistic script. Tradition attributes it to the father of Philosophers, Hermes Trismegistus, who claims to be its author, although his quite obscure personality does not betray in any way whether the man belonged to legend or to history."*

It therefore seems that this great French alchemist believed that on public display in the grounds of a royal palace in Edinburgh is perhaps one of the most important sources of alchemical knowledge known to exist.

## **The Emerald Tablet**

That the Emerald Tablet is green is self-evident, but the shade of green is said to be a sea green, green mixed with blue, a colour range within which you would find Thistle Green.

The text goes on to emphasise that when we read the text of the Emerald Tablet it is not Hermes or Thoth that speaks but the Emerald Tablet, and I quote:

*“The idea behind the Edinburgh Sundial reflects a similar preoccupation. However, apart from the fact that it restricts its teaching to the sole alchemical practice, it is no longer matter, in its qualities and nature, that it expresses, but its form or physical structure. It is a crystalline edifice the chemical composition of which remains unknown. Its geometric configuration allows us to recognise the mineralogical characteristics of certain bodies. It teaches that the mercury of the philosophers is a salt and that it can be found in the mineral realm. It is also what the Cosmopolite asserts when he teaches us that the salt of the metals is the stone of the philosophers... We can therefore reasonably see in this sundial a monument erected to the initial subject of the Philosophers Stone distinguished by the deep colour green.”*

At this point attention is drawn to the Greek word for green, *Chloros* from which the symbol for the colour was taken which consisted of the two consonants, Chi and Rho, XP. These two letters are also the initials of Christos, implying that the greenness of the prima materia, the child of Hermes, contains within it the hidden symbol of the Son of Man. In full, that the stages of the Great Work are a manipulation of matter that recapitulates each part of the life of our Saviour, triumphs with the Resurrection and the Ascension, and anticipates His return.

## **Baptism**

The first part of the work is to bathe the prima materia in dew collected in the spring months. Here the link with the sundial is clearer because, as those of us who are Companions of the Holy Royal Arch would be familiar, the icosahedron is one of the five platonic solids that are present on the Chapter carpet. Each of the solids is said to represent an element and the icosahedron represents the element of water.

Water has the passive qualities of coldness and wetness. It is that element into which substances dissolve- the alchemical solve- that is dissolution and transformation. It is in water that the materia decomposes losing its impure form as it blackens ready to be reformed to receive descending spirit.

## **Perception**

Moving on, before Fulcanelli makes his final conclusion, he remarks that:

*“few will see these other than the visitor powerful enough to be able to approach it, for without relevant motives few will receive the authorisation to do.”*

This has been misinterpreted by later commentators to mean that the sundial was not accessible to the public. This was not the case then as it is not now. The comment refers to the capability of the visitor to perceive the meaning of the sundial and the power that such knowledge confers.

## **Monograms**

The final symbols he considers include the monograms of King Charles I (CR), his wife Queen Henrietta (HR) and their son Prince Charles (CP). It is an obvious coincidence that the monogram of the King who commissioned the monument is the same as the revered founder of our Society, Christian Rosencreuz.

Interestingly in addition to the monograms, which are surmounted by the appropriate crown, there are five roses, traditional symbols of silence, secrecy, and wisdom. The crowned lion holding a sword, a recognised symbol of kingship in Scotland, is also carved into the dial. That symbol is also present within the *Chemical Wedding* and has other hermetic and alchemical symbolism.

## **Radiance of Nature**

In his final conclusion, Fulcanelli gives a context to his remarks on the sundial and perhaps suggests how we might best interpret what he has written:

*“This important point, where the elements and principles of the highest knowledge are concentrated, could not be searched for, or encountered in life, as life is within us, as it radiates around us and as it suffices to know how to observe it in order to grasp its different manifestations.”*



## **A Journey to Meaning**

Where then has the strange affair of the French alchemist and his interest in a Scottish sundial taken us? Firstly, we have discovered that Scottish sundials have a range, complexity, and elaboration which is unique in the world. Queen Mary's Sundial created to mark the Scottish coronation of Charles I is one of the finest in Scotland. Its design included elaborate royal, heraldic, and hermetic symbolism that transformed the sundial from a simple timepiece into an allegory in stone.

In the first quarter of the twentieth century the artist and alchemist Jean-Julien Champagne, a prominent member of the College of the Fraternity of Heliopolis, travelled to Edinburgh from Paris to draw and study the sundial. He is likely to have known of Holyroodhouse through the hermetic salon's held by the Countess of Caithness. What he saw so impressed him that following his return to Paris it was agreed that discussion of the monument be included in its own chapter, in *Dwellings of the Philosophers*, the only such monument outside France to receive this distinction.

Before giving my own view of the meaning of this allegorical sundial there is an obvious, though important point that should be made. With its wealth of hermetic, heraldic, and geometric symbolism it was created, as indeed was the Order of the Thistle for the purpose of containing meaning, and for that meaning to be understood. The *Chemical Wedding* also arises from that cultural milieu. John Milne clearly intended to create an object that was able to be seen as the embodiment of the '*art of our art*', one that could hold the most profound meaning.

Fulcanelli elsewhere states that the entire universe, *all that is*, exists within us, that there is nothing '*out there*'. Our search for truth is always in the context of '*the land of our birth and infant nurture*', that is our culture, education, experience, and perception. So, in one sense it is unsurprising that Jean-Julien Champagne, central as he was to the French alchemical revival, would see and experience and the sundial as an alchemical object.

## **An Allegory in Emerald**

Queen Mary's Sundial is the abstract representation of the form, that is salt, of alchemical mercury, the substance of our work. The colour of this substance is green.

As we see in the world around us, all is founded on rock and minerals. Earth, the compost in which all grows, contains living minerals and water from which vegetation becomes. Vegetation clothes the earth with a living garment of green, that pigment which uses light, to fix matter from air. All plants are drawn to the source of their life and rise remorselessly to the light.

And so to our art. As Armand Barbault explains, he who seeks the prima materia must find vegetation that is situated in a place that has received a unique energy which transforms the greenness from a pigment that absorbs light to a source of energy, a green light that we are taught is the radiance of nature. The materia itself is a source of illumination and teaching, this is what the Emerald Tablet symbolises - the perfect teaching of living matter to the skilful artist.

Within the living green is the hidden king, the Son of the Sun whose nativity will occur when the form of the substance is perfected within the laboratory of the sages. The Order of the Thistle alludes to this by the green garment worn by its knights and the St Andrew, a figure wearing a purple garment of sovereign power clothed by the green cloak of mercury. St Andrew bears a cross that shows that he knows Our Saviour.

## **For Nothing is Secret that will not be Known**

It is said that the triple unknown of the Great Work are *Crucible*, *Gold*, and *Time*. Time-when to act; the Crucible- the gesture appropriate to the present moment; Gold, whose presence signifies the completion of the Great Work. The sundial represents each of these unknowns.

## **Time and Gesture**

Determining the time when one should act is not through the measurement of chronological time but of philosophical time. It is by a knowledge of philosophical time that we *know* the *moment of our gesture* when all is in alignment and through the *artist and his stone* that the divine principles can act.

The dials on the faces of the polyhedral sundial have ceased to be effective in telling time, they allude through their hermetic decoration to the passing of philosophical time. It is the task of the *artist* to perceive the progress of the sun of the sages on the many faces of the polyhedral dial. The icosahedron represents water, the element that dissolves, purifies, and prepares the materia for reformation to receive descending spirit. That which is of stone symbolises water and shows that the Stone of the Wise *dis-solves imperfect form to purify it*, it is this *gesture* that prepares our materia to receive descending spirit, and so become renewed as materia prime.

## **Gold-the Stone of the Wise**

The defining geometric form of the sundial is that of an icosahedron. It is the fifth of the platonic bodies, that is regular convex polyhedrons, and the most complex that we

can perceive. The sixth platonic body can be described in theory but requires four dimensions to exist in form. Therefore, the icosahedron is a geometrical form at the limit of our perception in this world. As such it is a symbolical representation in geometry of the perfect mineral form, the Stone of the Wise.

## A Wise Stone

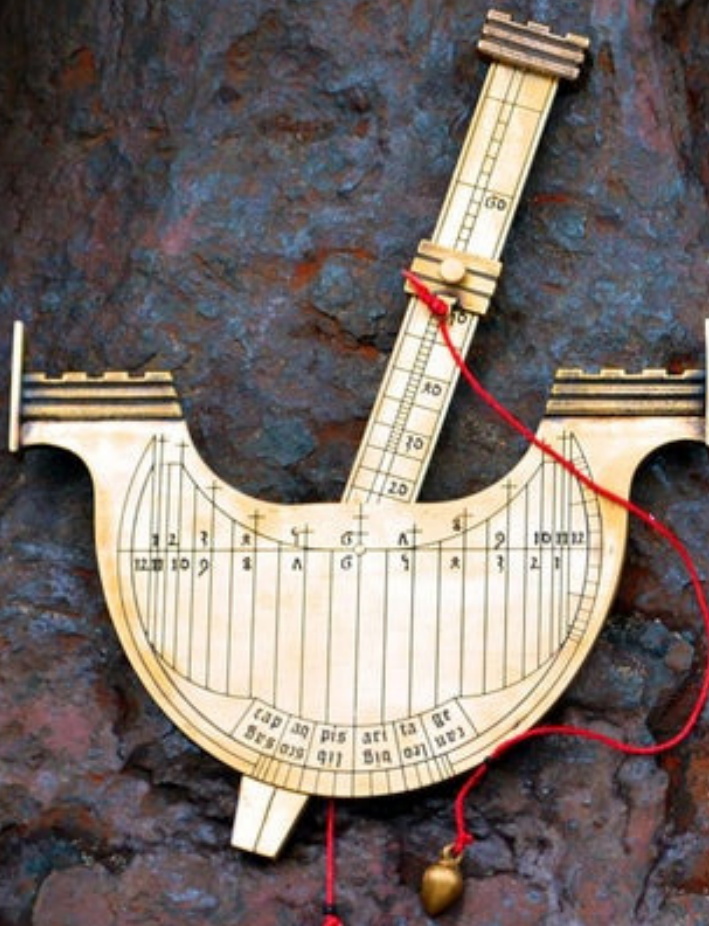
Thus, Queen Mary's Sundial is a representation of the matter forming the entire visible universe as an abstract geometric architectural monument in the perfect form of a crystalline mineral. The sundial is also the perfect form of *the artist who achieves the Stone of the Wise*. The *artist* is the wise stone, who knows time, makes the gesture of water, and *embodies* secret fire.

## In the Blink of an Eye

*In manus tuas, Domine, commendo spiritum meum*  
Into thy hands, O Lord, I commend my spirit.

Mary, Queen of Scots, and Queen Consort of France  
Fotheringhay Castle 8 February 1587

**Frater Stephen Goulder**



## Foot Notes

1. An earlier version of this paper was presented to a meeting of the Metropolitan College of the Societas Rosicruciana in Scotia (SRIS) held in March 2021. I would like to thank the Most Worthy Supreme Magus of the SRIS, Frater Ian Robertson, the Right Worthy Celebrant, and the fratres of the Metropolitan College, SRIS for the opportunity to present my paper and the very constructive feedback received.
2. Title image is of the golden salamander beneath a royal crown on a field of flame, emblem of King Francis I. Part of the decoration of the Chateau de Chambord.
3. I refer to King James II of England as James VII in accordance with the changes authorised by Queen Elizabeth II to the numbering convention of British monarchs.
4. The image at the end of this paper is of a Navicula de Venetiis or 'a little ship of Venice,' a sundial similar to that owned by King Francis I and which bore his royal emblem of the golden salamander.



*The Annunciation* by Paolo Veronese (1578)

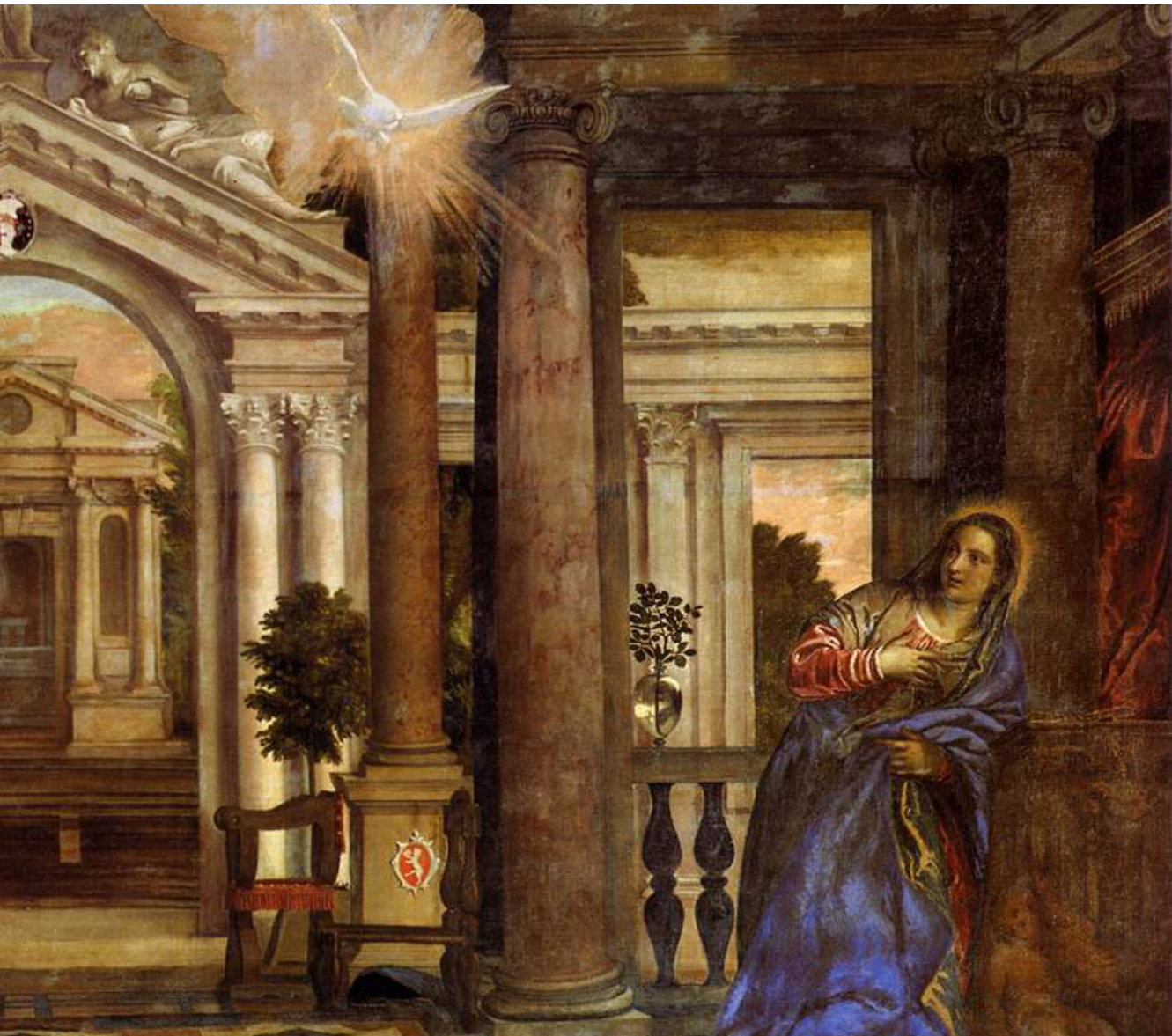
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*Earthbound* by Evelyn De Morgan (1897)

## Rosicrucian Salons III

In our two pamphlets last year we discussed our intentions to host a Rosicrucian Salon in 2021, which will now take place virtually and we are pleased to announce a 'hold the date' in this pamphlet.

This event will take place on one of the usual Metropolitan Study Group meeting dates, so please do mark down **Saturday 16th October 2021** for the first of our new Rosicrucian Salons. Save the date in your diaries!

The theme of this first Salon will be ***Living Rosicrucianism*** and will bring together Rosicrucians from different lineages and backgrounds, sharing knowledge and practice in the spirit of the original manifestos so that together we can learn from one another's travels and experiences around the world.

Full details will be released in due course, but the Salon will take place in multiple segments throughout the course of the day. Provided gratis and open to all interested in learning more about Rosicrucianism in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

In other great news, we can also share with you our plans to launch a website for the newly formed Province of Greater London. The history of the Province goes back to the founding of the *Society Rosicruciana in Anglia* and contains many interesting stories and materials.

With this new website we will be celebrating our history, including the formation of Metropolitan College No. 1 and the London College of Adepts No. 13; the important history of Stansfield Hall in Hampstead, that has served as both an administrative centre for the SRIA and a spiritual home in London for the past 50 years; biographies of many of the familiar (and not so familiar) fratres that have come before; along with highlights from our esoteric Archives collected over 150+ years.

If you would like to keep informed on these projects, please do contact our Suffragen and Director of Studies, Cheyne Towers ([heartmindtherapies@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:heartmindtherapies@yahoo.co.uk)).

We hope that you have enjoyed our third Rosicrucian Pamphlet and found the items within of value. Our aim is to open up the wisdom of the Rosicrucian tradition once more and allow it to flourish within the hearts and lives of many around the globe.

*May Light, Love, Peace and Truth guide us all.*

