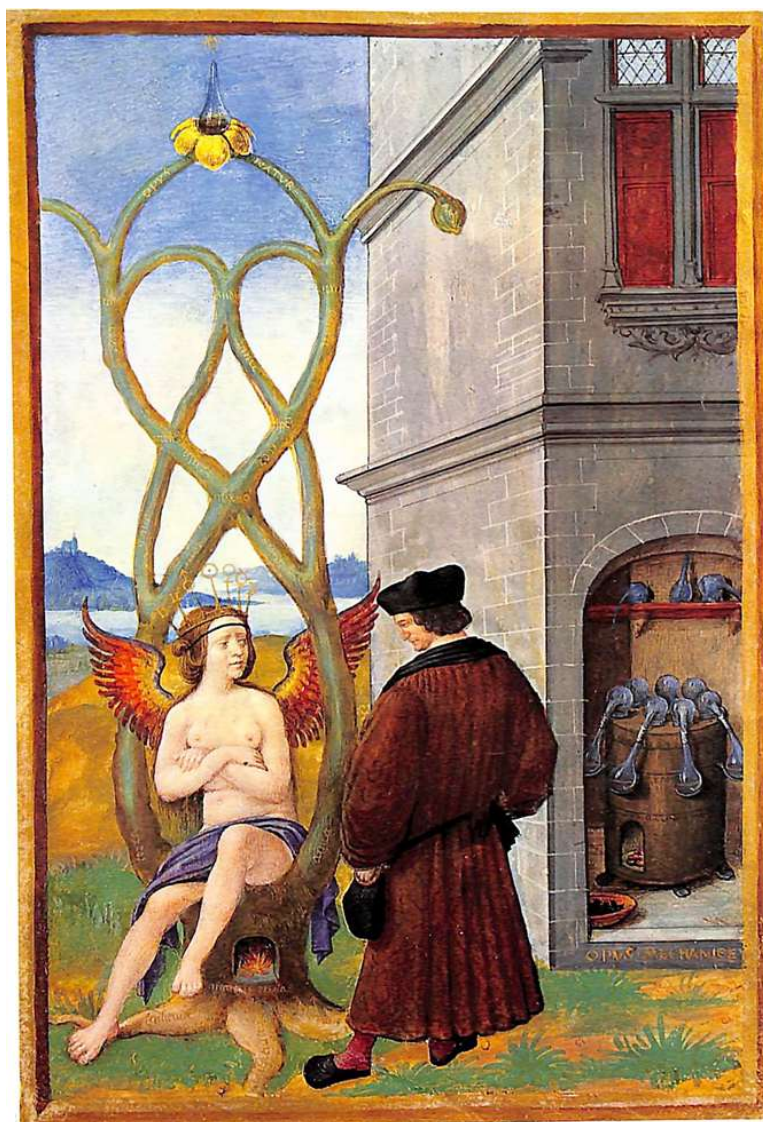




The Great Work Unveiled

Conversations with a Master Alchemist

By Frater S.:R.:

Reedited, amended and duly complemented by Frater Lazarus

Original translations by David Griffin

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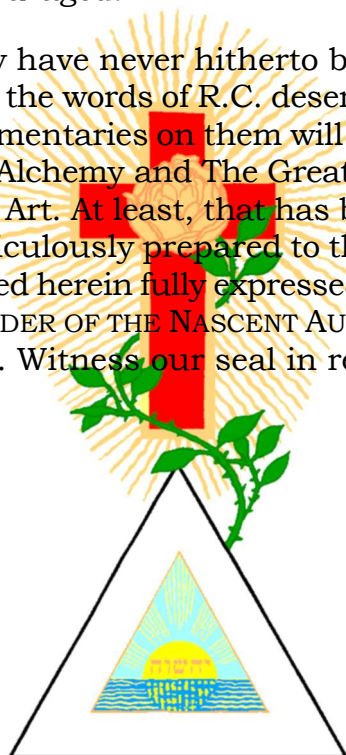
Introduction

One good outcome about heated debates in the Golden Dawn community is that it sometimes draws out the true Hermetic Masters from their hideouts in an attempt to set the record straight. Not that any words of wisdom from a Master will change the hearts of the majority. Let us not be that naïve. What one can hope for is that some few and earnest students of the Royal Art will benefit from the following words as contained in this manuscript – if their minds and hearts be sufficiently open and void of preconceptions.

The following text is a compilation of a series of six blog-post originally published from 2008 to 2010 on the **GYLLENE GRYNINGEN BLOG**. These texts are presented in one document divided into four separate segments. They contain lengthy quotations by Frater R.C., also known as Master R, a genuine Hermetic Master Alchemist and initiate of the Third Order of the grade of Magister Templi 8°=3°, being a euphemism of a secret Hermetic fraternity in Europe which originates from ancient times at the dawn of the Western Esoteric Tradition. This fraternity represents an unbroken link of succession preserving the ancient wisdom of the Egyptians and Chaldeans, today referred to as Hermetic Alchemy and Magic.

This fact makes the words of the Master authoritative and definitive on each of the four subjects which are being discussed – Hermetic Secrecy, the Dual Paths of Alchemy, i.e. the “Voie Externe” and “Voie Interne”, Solar Consciousness and last but not least The Solar Body of Light. The original texts have been written in an undisclosed European language and were originally translated by the polyglot David John Griffin into plain English. Although typos have been corrected, these texts have been preserved true to their original formats with only some minor edition and emendation. Pertinent commentaries posted on one of these blog posts, made by one anonymous contributor of a critical nature, have also been presented with due counter-arguments, as serious enquiries on these highly important topics must always be encouraged.

The secrets of true Alchemy have never hitherto before been as openly spoken about by anyone. Therefore, the words of R.C. deserve being repeated. Hopefully, they and any follow-up commentaries on them will help to clear up certain common misconceptions about Alchemy and The Great Work to a new generation of serious seekers of the Royal Art. At least, that has been the ambition of this manuscript that has been meticulously prepared to the reader. All of the concepts and philosophies as presented herein fully expresses the tenets of the Great Work as held by the HERMETIC ORDER OF THE NASCENT AURORA, as are those of all true Hermetic initiatory schools. Witness our seal in recognition!



On Secrecy in the Hermetic Tradition

In this first segment Frater R.C. presents an explanation of the principles of secrecy, as viewed from the traditional Hermetic perspective, in a very erudite and candid manner. This is the first principle of the Hermetic Arts, so gravely misunderstood by the modern mind. It was prompted by the following question to the Master: “Why do you speak in such a veiled manner, and why have the alchemists always spoken like this as well? Is this not only a manipulation?”

The primary function of secrecy in esotericism is not to manipulate others, which has unfortunately been done and continues to be done in bad faith by persons who are not Hermetic Masters. A true Hermetic Master never causes his students to suffer, but maintains secrecy of the more advanced practices rather to protect the body, soul, and mind of the Apprentice not yet prepared to assimilate these techniques, which when practiced by individuals not yet evolved enough would certainly destroy them.

Let us take a simple example. Let us say that one of my students tries to convince me to give him or her an advanced alchemical technique. I observe in the behaviour of the student that they are not yet ready to have and practice this particular processing as they have not yet reached the necessary degree of spiritual maturity. Because the disciple is insistent, however, I allow myself to be convinced, give in, and give the technique to them anyway. The student diligently begins with the practice and as a consequence either goes mad or dies, which, by the way, are very real dangers with Hermetic alchemy.

Now why did this tragedy occur? It occurred for the simple reason that the Apprentice used an instrument much larger than themselves that requires a profound level of spiritual maturity for its use, for which the student was unprepared. No true Master Alchemist would, of course, ever give such a dangerous technique to an unprepared Disciple of the Art.

No Hermetic Master who is a true Master would ever give everything all at once to an Apprentice. It is the proper development and spiritual maturation of the Disciple over time that determines their capacity to assimilate more advanced spiritual techniques with their attendant higher states of awareness and realization.

If we plant an apple tree, we accept that five long years will pass before the tree will ever bear fruit. Why then should we expect, it should be different with the Secret Hermetic Science?

Moreover, alchemical processes are not truly “secret.” On the contrary, all of the secrets of true alchemical processing are described in alchemical works very clearly. It is the infantility of or their laziness to study which prevents aspirants of alchemical wisdom from discovering for themselves the secrets of the Royal Art.

Aspirants today are unwilling to sweat on the books and in the laboratory as have done all true Children of Hermes and thus have discovered the true significance of every term and all of the sequences to put into operation the secrets of the Great Work.

But today, in the age of the Internet, aspirants want easy, immediate, and complete access to information. Above all, they do not want to sweat and work!

Of course not. They want to be able to go to a bookstore and buy a book like they do with Regardie’s *The Golden Dawn*, or even better yet, Google a website and voilà... to become a Hermetic Alchemist reading in clear text all of the secrets of the Royal Art!

Such is the mentality of the 21st Century.

But with Hermetic Alchemy, alas, this is not possible.

To explain why, let me give you an example from modern physics. There exist in libraries books with the knowledge to build nearly anything, either good or evil, explaining all of the accumulated science of man.

But how many people dedicate themselves to a profound study of the matter?

Likewise, many aspire to the light but only the fewest obtain it because it is “difficult” to study and to practice.

No... aspirants of today want to have everything clearly written and readily understandable.

And even the Hermetic Masters are accused today that “we keep secrets only to manipulate others,” merely because, as we have done for countless Centuries, we speak, write, and discourse with you using the very symbols of the Sacred Science itself.

But were I to reveal to you the deepest and most profound secrets of alchemical processing, how many of you would understand?

How many of you would have eyes to see?

How many, ears to hear?

How many would succeed to perceive the naked truth in itself?

Few.

In fact, only the fewest of the few.

I repeat to you once again, as has been written and said over and over by the Hermetic sages of all ages, in words that are as true today as they were in ancient times:

“Everything is clearly revealed, but not perceived.”

“Eyes behold but they do not see!”

“Ears listen but they do not hear!”

Therefore, I repeat:

Just as there exist symbolical languages for physics, chemistry, and philosophy, without which you cannot truly understand these sciences, so in alchemy there also exists a symbolical language that since millennia has been beneath the eyes of all in books, in cathedrals, and in every construction of the ancients. Even the fables of storybooks are full of these symbols!

Thus, you cannot accuse the Hermetic alchemists of hiding things from you or speaking in riddles. It is only that we are speaking in a different language, known in alchemy as “The Language of the Birds.”

How can you expect to understand this language any more than Sanskrit unless you likewise learn its rules and symbols with great effort, and to study, study, and study more?

Thus, it is not we, the Sons of Hermes, that you should accuse of speaking in riddles and of keeping secrets from you!

No.

You should blame yourselves instead for not having studied enough and researched enough!

In fact, the alchemical maxim is quite clear and enough to come to an understanding of the entire Opus:

“Lege, lege, relege, et Inveniens.”

For those of you who have not applied yourself to understand Latin, this means in terms that even limited understanding might yet grasp:

“Read, read, reread, and you will find.”

Thus, you may understand the truth that I speak to you as all of the Sons of Hermes who have come before me have also said, that everything is already written and it is only the ignorance and the intellectual laziness of those who approach the Sacred Sciences that serve as “natural selection” to screen out the undeserving by their own work from the truly deserving that are committed to and conquer the mysteries.

In the Sacred Science, not everything can be given to everyone even if it is revealed because:

the Science cannot be given, but rather...it must be conquered.

It is not enough to have faith to become a true Initiate, but one must above all study, work, and engage oneself to the very depths.

How many are capable of this?

Few.

This is why true Initiates have “always” been few...

and today are even fewer.

And everything not successfully conquered on one’s own remains shrouded in mystery waiting to be discovered, and becomes “secret” only to the degree that it does not become conquered and discovered by hard work and research.

It is like as if I should enroll to study Physics at the University. During my first year everything that the researchers of Theoretical Physics are doing will certainly remain “secret” to me. But if I apply myself, I can unlock their secrets, as they are already revealed but in a language that I must first learn. Unless I learn this language, however, theoretical physics will always remain a mystery for me.

But to return once again to your original question:

You asked me:

“Why do you speak in a veiled manner, and why have the alchemists always spoken like this as well?”

I do not speak in a veiled manner. I have always spoken forthright and clearly with you.

The problem is rather with your understanding.

I speak with symbols that you do not understand only because you have not studied them.

Study the symbols of Hermetic Science and you will understand me completely.

Then you asked me: “Is this not only a manipulation?”

I have already explained to you that unfortunately there are others who do use this science to manipulate others.

I do not manipulate anyone, however. In fact, I am not even interested in having Disciples.

...and like me, there “are” others, even if they are few.

RC



“What good are torches, light, or spectacles, to those who will not see?”

Regarding the Two Paths of Alchemy

The following are the fruits of an interesting exchange of discussion once held between some students of alchemy, including yours truly, and Frater R.C. I have edited the text somewhat, besides correcting typos, while in the process been trying to preserve the words of the Master in their original form as much as possible. The text is well worth its reading as it in a very erudite and candid manner explains the differences between the two paths of Alchemy, the Internal and External Ways. The words of the Master have been thought provoking and evoked some questions from several students of Hermes of which I have inserted some below.

In alchemy there are actually two paths and ways of processing. One path is the “voie externe” or external way, which is the way of powders and filters, and the other way uses inner substances. Each initiate follows one path or the other and each arrives at the same goal, although the way of Inner Alchemy is faster and more effective.

It is not, however, true that in acting symbolically upon symbols analogical, outer, lunar alchemy arrives at the same result as the solar, direct way in virtue of the laws of Hermes that must be understood very differently and not so simplistically as non-initiates understand them. The Hermetic maxim “As above, so below” is principally applied in the practice of the alchemical art and occults an important alchemical key, which cannot be revealed to the profane and the uninitiated. It is a true operative key and thus there is little that I may reveal to you about this publicly. In any case, alchemists in general, spoke ENTIRELY IN CODE AND CIPHERS THE KEYS TO WHICH ARE HELD BY US AND FEW OTHER ORDERS. Thus, you should also bear in mind the other alchemical maxim found so frequently in the works of alchemical authors, that “where we have spoken most clearly is exactly where we have misled you.”

Alchemy has nothing to do with chemistry and the alchemy one often refers to is nothing but Spagery, which is something else and not to be confused with alchemy itself which is ENTIRELY DIFFERENT AND UNDER PERENNIAL SEAL, WHICH MAY ONLY BE REVEALED UNTO THE MINDS OF THE ELECT. NOT EVEN AN ALCHEMICAL MASTER MAY TEACH UNLESS THE SOLAR INTELLIGENCES ILLUMINATE THE MIND OF THE DISCIPLE. Alchemy speaks of the union of nature and its processes give application to the HUMAN BEING and its nature and the PRODUCTION OF INTERNAL SUBSTANCES, THE NAMES OF WHICH HAVE BEEN TAKEN FROM VULGAR CHEMISTRY. You should read the introduction of Dom Antonio Pernety to Greek and Egyptian myths and perhaps you shall find the correct road to begin to understand that true alchemy has nothing to do with tantric or sexual yoga or Crowleyan Sex Magick. A mere study of this one text should prove enough to dispel the theses of the head of an ass.

—R.C.

Personally, I wouldn't be so quick to downplay on the similarities between traditional Eastern Tantra and Hermetic Alchemy as I in my studies have come to see ample evidence of common themes and practices (a topic we briefly will return to later in this manuscript where R.C. actually embraces Tantra). Furthermore, these somewhat ambiguous words from the Master prompted some questions on my behalf:

1. What is the difference between the “voie externe” of alchemy and the way of mineral spagery, both being outer experimental or laboratory paths?
2. Can outer ALCHEMY (as opposed to spagery) gain the same results as the way of Inner Alchemy? I.e. can the Philosophers Stone be produced in either of these two ways, the external and internal?
3. What is meant with “acting symbolically upon symbols in analogical, outer, lunar alchemy”? Does the Master refer here to “spiritual alchemy” or laboratory? I get the sense that he refers to using descriptions of analogical or outer processes in a symbolical way, i.e. not direct and operative.

Translators note: Below please find the response from RC to Frater SR. I have attempted to render a faithful translation throughout, yet I have no doubt that certain subtleties of meaning may have been lost along the way. In those instances where I have been uncertain of the best translation of a certain word, I have provided alternatives following in parentheses.

Dear Sincerus Renatus,

I am pleased to answer your questions, albeit constrained by tradition to speak in cipher and in veiled terms as has always been the rule with the Sons of Hermes. I can assure you, nonetheless, that I speak the truth and I am not in any way misleading you down a false path.

There are two principle alchemical paths (ways), which follow two methods of alchemical action, active and passive (called Solar and Lunar by the ancients). These two principal paths may be practiced either in an “external” (outer) or “internal” (inner) manner. When I speak of “internal” or “Hermetic Inner Alchemy”, I do not make reference to so-called “Spiritual Alchemy” (as has been misunderstood or mistakenly implied by others), which is but a form of mysticism and of little interest to the true alchemist.

In contradistinction to mysticism, including the mysticism mistakenly and confusingly called ‘Spiritual Alchemy’ in certain modern circles, Hermetic alchemy is an operative (practical, experimental) practice and a true technique that has no need of “morality” or “habits” (qualities, attributes) to be practiced or to reach the greatest of attainments. In fact, a disciple of the Royal Art can achieve alchemical attainment equally along a positive or a negative (black, sorcery) path, which is one important reason why true Hermetic alchemy, unlike magic, has been at all times guarded under a veil of strictest secrecy!

Magic functions according to the ability (quality) of the magician. In Hermetic alchemy, on the other hand, results are obtained independently of the skill of the alchemist, according to laws and principles as impersonal and inexorable as those

of chemistry, whether for good (positive) or for evil (negative). Thus, the ancients have called alchemy a precise practice (technique), which in modern terms one might call a science.

Hermetic alchemy is based entirely on physical principles and alchemical doctrine has nothing at all to do with spirituality in the mystical sense.

ALL IS ONE and thus neither ‘matter’ nor ‘spirit’ (energy) exist, but only one unique stuff (fabric, matter), which through alchemical elaborations in various stages be transmuted from gross to subtle and vice versa.

Hermetic alchemy does not only wash (purify) material substances rendering them subtle (spirits, alcohol), but may also by inverse process incorporate or densify spirits (alcoloids, subtle essences of plants, or oils of metals) so much as to produce a minimal particle (or “powder of projection”).

All of this may always be done, is repeatable, and may be accomplished either externally or internally. When I speak of “Externally”, I specifically mean spagerically or chemically in a properly equipped laboratory. When I speak of “Internally,” I also mean spagerically or chemically, yet entirely “within the human being.”

This yields the following formula:

The transmutation is possible of one’s own “inner” matter (“Inner” in the sense of the dense and material human body) to the point of reabsorption into its subtle principles in two manners:

1. either using external agents, spagerically or chemically elaborated in an external and well-equipped laboratory and applying these to the human body,
2. or by using the precise correspondences of these external agents, but produced entirely within the internal laboratory of the human body, likewise transmuting the physical body using alchemical processing.

The end result is the same.

1. The first, “Hermetic Outer Alchemy” is the way of the external laboratory and uses filters and powders.
2. The other way, “Hermetic Inner Alchemy”, is completely corporeal, using the human body of the alchemist itself throughout.

To avoid confusion and dispel the clouds of those who would deceive you as to the true nature of Hermetic Inner Alchemy, I must repeat that it has nothing to do with the mystical, so-called “Spiritual Alchemy” of Martinist and New Age derivation that has caused so much confusion regarding the true nature of alchemy in modern times.

Fulcanelli in his works speaks of the way of Hermetic Outer Alchemy, that is to say, the way of alchemical processing in an external, well-equipped laboratory.

Philaethes, on the other hand, speaks, for example, in his works of the means of processing of Hermetic Inner Alchemy, which uses the human body itself exclusively throughout the processing.

I sincerely hope that I have shed light to further clarify this matter to the extent that it is to me permitted. Indeed, I have spoken here more clearly than most Hermetic philosophers who have spoken out before me.

Fraternally,
RC

Although the Master is much generous to honour us with this information, I still have some comments and clarifications that must be addressed. First of all, he contradicts his previous statement (in the discussion on Secrecy) about Spagyry not being Alchemy. It seems it is after all.

The Master does clarify many issues that I have had regarding the differences between Outer and Inner Hermetic Alchemy, and the nature of each. He speaks of two ways, i.e. of the Active and Passive or the Solar and Lunar paths respectively. His wording (or perhaps a less-than-optimal translation struggling with the original language) seems to imply that BOTH paths can be practiced as an Internal OR as an External Way. However, let us not confuse the seeker more than is necessary. The true definitions are:

Active and Solar = Inner, or direct – the human body as the laboratory.

Passive and Lunar = Outer, analogical – the external laboratory with ovens, etc.

However, in a sense one could regard Lunar as having an “inner” and “outer” application in that spagyric and alchemical elixirs either may be used to transmute base matters from grosser states to finer or to be taken internally to provide and enhance an inner transmutation of the body of the alchemist, that will render it a quality which may be compared to the production of the Internal Solar Body (see the last segment of this manuscript). The latter result is the primary function of both paths of Alchemy. The “outer” function simply serves to test the Stone through projection if it is true to its intended purpose.

The Master also speaks of Hermetic Alchemy as a “science,” i.e. that certain practices inevitably will have certain results, regardless of the purpose and the spiritual maturity of the Alchemist. In my humble opinion this rule is more applicable to Inner Solar Alchemy in contradistinction to the Outer Lunar Path in virtue of the high innate potencies of the substances used with Inner Alchemy. Outer Alchemy, requiring much more manipulation on the subatomic levels for its substances and matters to be truly potent, in this respect is more similar to Theurgy or Magic, of which the Master speaks is dependable on the inner attitude and moral maturity of the Adept. Therefore, Outer or Lunar Alchemy requires an inner spiritual development as well as a true understanding of the operations and processes for results to manifest in the Outer Laboratory. These notions are confirmed both by older and contemporary Adepts such as Paul Foster Case, Frater Albertus and Jean Dubuis, of which I have great admiration, but also by my own personal teachers or mentors of which I have much respect.

I remember one of my early Alchemical teachers within my own Order recalling a fascinating anecdote about the Nigredo state of Putrefaction. The Apprentice took the flask and showed the lack of result and asked the Master how he could acquire the Nigredo state. The Master then took the flask in his hand and the matter immediately started to putrefy. The Master said: “You have to experience and embrace Nigredo in your own life and being before you can expect it to appear in your flask”.

I strongly believe that my early teachers were correct and that there is truth to these kinds of stories, i.e. that the Outer Alchemical Process actually requires a corresponding psycho-spiritual mental state within the Alchemist. So, in a sense there exists a true spiritual Alchemy, as there exists a true spiritual Theurgy; the processes in the laboratory, as that in the oratory, creates an environment for the spirit to gestate and cook within the bowels of the soul, or perhaps even the physical brain.

Peradventure in his effort to convey the central and poignant message, i.e. of the dangers of alchemical practices and the clear division between true Alchemy and “spiritual alchemy” so-called, associated with modern concepts prevailing the current Golden Dawn community and the works of C.G. Jung, the Master oversimplifies and overstretches the reduction of the spiritual component of alchemy somewhat. Or perhaps, “spiritual” even has a different connotation in his mind? There definitely is a change of consciousness involved in true Hermetic Alchemy (see the section on Solar Consciousness below, where R.C. also softens somewhat about spirituality and Alchemy). For most of us, consciousness and its change has a spiritual significance. For R.C. maybe it hasn’t – it’s perhaps simply a different kind of awareness, comparable to a psychological faculty. For him spirituality in this context perhaps is associated with lofty ideals about morality and about compassion, etc.? For me higher states of consciousness or mind *is* spirituality proper.



There does not, as the Master R.C. has pointed out, exist a real diffusion between matter and spirit; everything is the ALL. I personally have experience of this kind of parallel processes between what is happening in the flask and what is happening within my own soul. Outer Alchemy is the perfect form of meditation. And as Paul Foster Case has pointed out throughout many of his writings, meditation creates physical and real changes within the body and the brain. This makes the process of Lunar Alchemy both internal as well as external, excluding the digestion of Alchemically manufactured end results of these processes, i.e. the elixirs and stones.

One question that still lurks within my mind is if the administration (i.e. taking) of an Outer Alchemical Elixir or Stone (created in an external laboratory) is able to enhance the true Inner Alchemical Process (entirely of the body). Or should the two paths perhaps be kept strictly separate? Personally, I don't think they must or even should be kept separate. In my own work I combine both paths (i.e. taking both external and internal elixirs) and over the years I haven't experienced anything that works contrary to this assumption. R.C. seems to corroborate this fact further down in the discussion.

Let us now turn our attention towards two very interesting questions (showing deep and initiated knowledge of the Royal Art) posed by "Ormus" which eagerly were answered by the Master R.C. of which I find interesting enough to reproduce here:

Ormus: What is Mercury in the Human Body, and where can we find it IN and where OUT?

RC: I may only point you towards the keys of the *Mutus Liber* in your quest to understand where the "raw Mercury of the Gods" for the Opus may be found. Observe, however, that Mercury is the volatile part of the created composition; alcohol in the vegetable kingdom and as oil in the mineral. Now what could this be in the animal kingdom and specifically in the human body?

Ormus: What is the secret of the Diamond of the Sun?

RC: I invite you to meditate upon the following words: from carbon the diamond arises as well as from carbon arises the skeletons of all things. There exists in the human being a part that is indestructible, which is the most noble part once transformed.

From black, white. From soft, hard. From carbon, diamond. From the Moon, the Sun. From Mercury, Sulphur. From the thin, thick.

Remember that in alchemy the Sun is always understood with duplicate meanings, be it as analogy to the Sun as well as to the light. It is symbolical as well as physical and therefore manipulatable by proper alchemical techniques. For alchemy the diamond is nothing else but the Sun on Earth, or "obdurate light;" in the human body as well as externally in minerals.

Please excuse me and grant understanding, as both vows and Hermetic tradition proscribe me from expressing myself more clearly on these matters in public.

And now I feel compelled to present some more words of wisdom and pertinent questions from the Master R.C. addressed to all students of Alchemy which may feel sceptical to his words or perhaps find them overly controversial:

In an attempt to avoid further misunderstanding, however, please excuse me for once again presuming to admonish you not to further conflate Hermetic Inner Alchemy with either Tantra or Crowleyan sexual magick.

Aleister Crowley was never a Hermetic alchemist and what is practiced by the OTO is not Hermetic alchemy, but rather something else.

The practices of the OTO comprise an Occidental interpretation of certain Oriental Tantric notions filtered through a particularly Western filter. This is certainly not Hermetic alchemy, however, which is something else entirely.

Might I further presume to ask you a couple of elementary questions, on which subjects a well-educated practitioner of the Hermetic arts ought to be pleased for the opportunity to expound upon for the edification of us all.

I therefore respectfully submit the following two lines of inquiry to you in aspiration of further illumination for us all. To begin with, would you mind to please explain to us:

1. Where are the fires located inside the human being and what are the athanors, in both Internal and External Hermetic alchemy?

Also, please bear in mind, that it is written in the entire world that the mysteries are divided into Lunar, or external and analogical, and Solar, internal, and direct.

To this, I would like to add that in the various temples everywhere of the Golden Dawn, all of the arrangements made for the various grades are made in such a way as to carry the symbols into the mind of the initiate so as to speak directly to the subconscious in “symbol” suggesting “immediately” the true meaning of the “internal” mysteries.

My second, directly relevant question therefore pertains to one of the Grades of the Golden Dawn.

2. Would you therefore please illuminate us regarding the “true” meaning of the symbol presented during the Zelator grade advancement known as the “Hermetic Cross”? I am not referring to the “symbolical” meaning that has always been given in the lower, “Lunar,” “symbolical” grades of our order but rather its “true,” higher, operative meaning as directly relevant to the practice of Hermetic alchemy?

I eagerly await your answer [in the comments section] for our further edification as I am certain do many other readers of this [web page].

Should you by chance, however, feel humbled by these sincere yet simple lines of inquiry, might I respectfully suggest that it would be most unwise for any of us to remain imprisoned in the prejudice of our preconceived notions about Hermetic alchemy and the Golden Dawn.

Would it not be far wiser to diligently continue with our studies and to aspire to Hermetic wisdom with genuine humility and a pure and noble heart, rather than to harshly judge the expositions of others based merely on an “as yet” incomplete and imperfect understanding of both Hermetic Alchemy and the Golden Dawn?

Respectfully,
RC

Alas, there will always be someone who will challenge the view that the HERMETIC ORDER OF THE NASCENT AURORA adheres to regarding Hermetic Alchemy. Such as those who purport that claims about transmutation of base metals into gold in an actual physical laboratory never were meant to be metaphorical. In this instance the practice of modern-day alchemists, such as David Hudson, are considered to be proof of the truth found in results of laboratory or external alchemy. In Response, Frater R.C. has this to say:

You are partially correct in that there is indeed a branch of alchemy that advances one spiritually through the external transmutation of metals, herbs, or minerals. Where you are mistaken, however, is that you do not understand that there also exists alchemy that effects physical transmutation by using internal fluids and energies. You demonstrate that you have not fully understood alchemy in that you are separating the ONE – and the first law of alchemy is that “Everything is ONE”. Thus, each operation referring to an external metal may also be referred to a metal – literally – INSIDE MAN. Thus, you are only considering one aspect of alchemy and not ALL OF ALCHEMY – WHICH IS GLOBAL AND BASED ON UNITY.

Hudson is but a student who has remained only with the physical, external aspect of alchemy – and remains ignorant of the mysteries of Internal Alchemy. Yet for the complete Opus it is necessary that alchemy be complete. There are surely different branches of alchemy which should be studied separately and put into practice. Thus, the external alchemy of Hudson is only a part of alchemy, “chemical alchemy”, whereas we study alchemy WITHIN THE HUMAN BODY.

There are diverse paths to attainment that may be followed all together or separately. This is a choice. We prefer working with the subtle fires of the body itself, such as love and sexuality, and the fluids of the human body, whereas you prefer chemical substances that exist in nature. Yet these alchemical paths are the same in the sense that we use the same elements arising from the same root. The difference is that we use elements within the human body, whereas you use those without.

You should, however, always remember that true alchemy should always tend to the liberation of the energy that is contained within matter. Thus, the way of Hermetic Internal Alchemy is the most useful to man. Due to the processing practiced by Hudson and others like him – they have been called “Puffers” (Souffleurs) by the ancients. When alchemical texts speak of “puffers” this is exactly what they are referring to, as such ways of external processing are extremely long when contrasted with Hermetic Internal Alchemy – and thus best left to others.

Let there be no doubt about it. Hudson – and others like him – are “Puffers”. Hudson speaks not of “aLchemy” but rather of “aRchemy” – from which arises modern chemistry. Alchemy is something else.

You need consider only this one law:

”Use nothing external to the matter of the Opus itself – which is already complete as it is – and all you should do is – cook – cook – cook.”

How is it possible, therefore, that Puffers like Hudson seek to use things external to the human body or to the matter of the Opus, when everything you need to complete the Opus Magnum is contained within the human body itself?

Why do they not follow this most basic law of alchemy?

For only one reason: to sell their potions and products and to make money. This is a question of business for these individuals.

This is also why they are so upset with our order – because we reveal this truth about alchemy – and the truth is bad for their business!

– Master R.

To recapitulate the message of Master R, embellished (or rather tinted) by my own conclusions. There exist both an external and an internal path of Alchemy. The external works with outer substances and prima materials, such as Antimony (the Black Dragon) of the Dry Way and Cinnabar (the Red Dragon) of the Humid. Internal Alchemy works with the *prima materia* of the physical body. Whereas the Dry Way of external alchemy works with vulgar fire in an athanor made of brick and clay (oven), and the Wet Way of external alchemy with the secret fire of an athanor made of glass (flask), the internal path of alchemy works with the athanor of the body and the secret fire that is contained within the organism. Both paths, the external and internal, are legitimate. But one is more Royal than the other. Internal alchemy is more direct and active (Solar) while external is of a more analogical and passive (Lunar) type. Internal alchemy has greater potential and is shorter, while the external ways are harder to master correctly and takes longer to perform. Both paths use the same symbology and terms. To master Inner Alchemy one usually is required to master the external way as a preparation for the internal. But to reach the true Opus Magnum or succeed in the Great Work one must eventually master the internal path of Hermetic Alchemy.

On the Subject of the Solar Consciousness

During the first decade of this millennium certain revelations of a general nature were made by David Griffin concerning the true nature of the Great Work, as transmitted to him from the Master R.C. of the Third Order with whom he was in communion at that time. This revelation had a twofold purpose. One was to provide sincere students of the Hermetic Arts with some guidelines against the trappings of the maze or labyrinth which is the Alchemical Tradition. The other purpose was to provide proof that the Third Order actually does exist and that the Hermetic Alchemical Tradition it teaches likewise is authentic. In 2010 he made a summary of these revelations which I will reproduce in full albeit in a slightly amended format:

1. The true nature of the Opus Magnum is **ENERGETIC EVOLUTION**. This is the actual purpose of life on Earth. Human beings are but larval forms of a higher, purely energetic form of life that human beings are evolving towards.
2. The Prima Materia of Internal Alchemy is actually the living matter of the **HUMAN BODY**.
3. The alchemical transmutation of Lead into Gold is actually an analogy for the transmutation of the Physical Body (Saturn = Lead) into a **SOLAR BODY of LIGHT** (Sun = Gold).
4. The **ROYAL ART** of Alchemy is the science of **IMMORTALITY** – the science of the cultivation of **SOUL**: a Solar Body of Light that can survive the death of the physical body – and even render us **CONSCIOUSLY IMMORTAL**.
5. The **TRUE PURPOSE** of all Hermetic arts, whether **GOLDEN DAWN MAGIC**, laboratory alchemy, or Hermetic Internal Alchemy is the **ACCELERATION** of this Energetic Evolution that otherwise would require many incarnations to complete.
6. The **THIRD ORDER** of the Golden Dawn teaches **HERMETIC INTERNAL ALCHEMY** – the highest form of Hermetic Science – in the sense that it is the most powerful operative practice to **ACCELERATE** Energetic Evolution.
7. Hermetic Internal Alchemy is so powerful that – by using it – you can cultivate a Solar Body of Light in a single lifetime.
8. Hermetic Internal Alchemy uses a **SECRET FIRE** to “cook” and transmute the physical body into pure energy.
9. The true nature of this Secret Fire is the **FIRES** of the **PHYSICAL BODY** itself.
10. The most powerful and creative of these fires of the physical body are **LOVE** and **SEXUALITY**.
11. Hermetic Internal Alchemy thus cooks the Physical Body (Saturn = Lead) into a Solar Body of Light (Sun = Gold) by harnessing the fires of Love and Sexuality – and using them to accelerate Energetic Evolution.
12. The processes of Hermetic Internal Alchemy hold the secret keys to the true and correct preparation of the **PHILOSOPHER’S STONE**.

13. The Philosopher's Stone is an incredibly powerful ELIXIR of LIFE that can be used, on the one hand, to increase longevity, and on the other hand, to dramatically accelerate the cultivation of a Solar Body of Light.
14. The opening phase of this Opus Magnum of Hermetic Internal Alchemy involves cultivation and separation of the ASTRAL BODY.
15. For the first alchemical SEPARATIO (in order to separate the Astral Body from the physical body) it is necessary to first liberate the Astral Body from the turbulence caused by its constant bombardment with physical sensations, thoughts, emotions, etc., coming from the physical body. This is the true reason why real initiatic traditions universally require initiatic SILENCE.
16. True ASTRAL PROJECTION is only possible AFTER an Adept has first fully cultivated his or her ASTRAL BODY and achieved the FIRST ALCHEMICAL SEPARATIO. (This can only be achieved by first liberating the Astral Body from the domination of the Physical Body as described above).
17. This has nothing to do with the sort of waking visions involved in "Skrying in the Spirit Vision" or what is commonly understood as Astral Projection by the New Age community. Such waking, visionary states can only reach as far as the LOWER ASTRAL, the realm of illusion and self-deception.
18. True Astral Projection occurs in a completely DIFFERENT state of consciousness other than any sort of WAKING visionary or trance state. This state is known only to Adepts once they achieve the First Alchemical Separation. Only then, can we pierce through the LOWER ASTRAL with its deceptions and delusions – to achieve the TRUE spiritual vision on the HIGHER ASTRAL plane.
19. PROJECTING IN THE SPIRIT VISION is a higher and superior form of visionary experience available to Adepts of the THIRD ORDER of the Golden Dawn. Skrying in the Spirit Vision, as published by Crowley and Regardie, referred by analogy to this higher, THIRD ORDER technique all along.
20. This HIGHER visionary experience of the HIGHER ASTRAL PLANE opens only to the eyes of the Adept that has:
 - Fully cultivated her or his Astral Body – and
 - Liberated the Astral Body from the domination of the physical – and
 - Achieved the alchemical SEPARATION of the ASTRAL body from the physical body and mastered its PROJECTION – and
 - Awakened to full consciousness and awareness on the HIGHER ASTRAL.

These 20 statements of purpose constitute the greatest contribution to the esoteric community that has ever been granted by David Griffin and represents his greatest achievement to the Golden Dawn tradition. Credit should be given where credit is due, even though he has served as but a mouthpiece of the Third Order. At the time of these revelations, however, the resistance towards these simple 20 declarations was quite severe and even vehemently violent. Old habits die hard and cognitive conditioning seldom yield itself to revolutionary or groundbreaking concepts. This is an understandable human reaction. Besides, the esoteric community is by its very nature conservative oriented. And rightly so considering the

important task of preserving and protecting the tradition. The problem in today's Golden Dawn community is that "tradition" usually constitutes a quite baroque and sometimes immiscible blend of Aleister Crowley, Israel Regardie, Dion Fortune, New Age, Theosophy and modern psychology, predominately that of Carl Gustav Jung. In short, modernist interpretations of the *actual* Tradition.

Hence, at the time of this listing of the hermetic tenets there were suggestions being made that everything in its contents either were a rehash of old oriental Hindu and Buddhist Tantrik teachings, wrapped up in an occidental package, or that it had been extracted almost verbatim from the popular books of Kenneth Grant and Samael Aun Weor! Suggestions were even being made that this obsession with immortality and survival of the second death had a smack of "Left Hand Path". Thus, alchemical formulas of immortality were considered to be redundant as our souls are already immortal anyway. Being obsessed with immortality was nothing more than the fear of losing the ego, according to these detractors.

The bottom line was that the message of these 20 points presented above was nothing new and that it constituted quite common knowledge, quite simple to discern after some study of basic occult symbology. Initiates all over the world already practiced the active cultivation of the solar body. Thus, there were no need to uphold the mysterious cloak of secrecy and glamour of inaccessibility.

This of course provoked the good Alchemical Master to produce yet another statement to dispel all erroneous notions or strange suggestions once and for all. These are the words of the alchemical Master R.C.:

I certainly do not wish to deprive you of your cherished illusions. The actual creation of the Solar Body of Light, however, has never been published anywhere or at any time. In reality, the creation of the Solar Body of Light is the most carefully guarded secret of all the great initiatic traditions of the world, from the Pythagorean and Hermetic traditions in the West to the Taoist tradition in China, and the Tantric traditions in both India and Tibet. There do exist, however, documents where you might find vague indications, and in rare instances, perhaps even a pseudo instruction in the training of the Solar Body of Light.

But know this. All of the great traditions teach that the true creation of the Solar Body of Light CANNOT even BE communicated in writing. In fact, the TRUE secret can't even be communicated as oral tradition, but rather only energetically, from the Master having already achieved this development to the Disciple who receives this most sacred of initiations.

This transmission can only occur from SOUL to SOUL, and certainly not from a written page to a person. Read and study carefully the instructions that Christ gives to his disciples. Like Buddha, all true alchemical Masters have said over and over that you must have a particular YEAST to awaken gold, and that this yeast may be possessed only by one who has formed it by Divine grace or has received it from another son of Hermes. The former is extremely rare as we shall see.

This is because this formation can only be accomplished through a certain union of Souls and spiritual power passed to the Disciple from an alchemical Master who

in turn received it from his own Master, etc. This, however, is TRUE initiation, and not that as understood today in this period of spiritual decadence wherein so many do not even understand the spiritual value of silence, puffing themselves up instead by pretending to publish secrets in books, on the internet, etc.

The true mystery can only be obtained from one who has it. The same is true for initiation. To open a book and consider yourself an initiate merely because you read dead words on paper made from dead wood is a dead end that leads only to delusion and spiritual bankruptcy. This is also the true meaning of initiatic lineage. As it is written that: “None may become Priests and Priestesses of the Eternal unless consecrated by the Eternal itself.”

Only the rarest of human beings, having received their mission on Earth from on high, have received that rare gift of a fully formed Solar Body of Light or the ability to cultivate it in a single lifetime on their own – the great Avatars like Christ, Buddha, Krisna, etc. All others must raise their Solar Bodies with the sacred YEAST – that only another who possesses it – a Solar Master – may transmit.

Can you not see and understand that those who seek, awaken precisely when they come into contact with someone who has precisely this YEAST for their spiritual awakening? Think for a moment. Investigate for yourself, but do not allow yourself to be misled by a delusion of simplicity of something that I can assure you is not a simple matter at all. Do not allow yourself, through mere vanity, to be misled by dead words written on dead wood made into paper.

I repeat: This is the most occulted SECRET of humanity, carefully concealed in all of the religions and alchemical traditions of the world.

However, if you truly believe that to cultivate a Solar Body of Light on your own is such a simple matter, requiring only time and discipline (very laudable as they are) as you each claim, I invite you to prove this to us.

I will then, together with countless others, bow before the first among you who accomplishes this “simple” task – recognizing you as our new teacher and Master at the level of another Christ or Buddha.

The Hermetic tradition does not say that the soul is NOT immortal. According to the Hermetic tradition, the natural state of the soul is, of course, immortality, at least in the sense that the energy of the Soul survives death. But do the memories, etc. of the incarnation?

Even the Judaic tradition, in its esoteric aspect, teaches even if the Soul is immortal, however, it requires a vast amount of time until the evolution of the individual, following the normal course of nature, is such that the individual is fully conscious and aware within this immortality.

The Hermetic tradition teaches that everything in nature is evolving towards perfection. Alchemy merely shortens the interval required to achieve attained perfection.

The same is true for the energetic evolution of the human Soul. Initiation within the great alchemical traditions of the Earth, including the Hermetic, is a means of abbreviating the necessary time, or of accelerating this process. In their essence, this is that same function that has yoga, Qabalah, or even the mystical aspect of Buddhism or any other religion. Study the classics of excellent authors like Mircae Eliade and you will be able to follow this Ariadne's thread throughout the spiritual history of mankind.

It is useless to address nonsense you raise about the left-hand path, dark path, etc., except to say that such are comments one makes only when they do not know what else to say. I do not wish to be rude, but nor shall I remain silent in the face of nonsense like this, with its taste of Christian Integralism with its obscurantism of human reason and of the human Soul as it has been for Millennia.

Read the discourses of Buddha, of Zoroaster, the Sankara of Hermes Trismegistus, (the collection of hermetic authors called by this name), and other good authors – and you will see that it is not I who affirm these things, but that the tradition has always been on this solid ground. The TRUTH will set you free, not the obscurantism of misleading, sarcastic remarks.

The subject of the energetic evolution of the human Soul is quite complex and certainly cannot be fully covered with these few lines. This, however, may be sufficient as a small note to clarify my thinking, which is, I repeat, not based on my own ideas, but reflects the inherited wisdom of Millennia.

With respect,
Master R.C.

So ends the words of a Master. Personally, I believe the issues raised regarding the “Left Hand Path” are quite interesting, but perhaps a bit unexpectedly so. I once had a discussion with a Left-Hand Path practitioner of Qlippotic Qabalah, which was quite a learning experience for me. In the wake of that discussion, it has dawned upon me that dichotomies such as “Left Hand Path” and “Right Hand Path” are highly misleading. Out of spiritual ignorance I also used to do this separation between these two paths. But nowadays I find it way to limiting for my understanding. In my current opinion most genuine esoteric traditions, such as that of the Golden Dawn, has or should have aspects of both. Thus, the Hermetic Tradition is better designated as a “Middle Path of the Hands”.

Also, what is usually seen today as “Left Hand Path” in the occident (typically labelled as the “Qlippotic Qabalah”, “Chaos Magic”, or “Dark Magick”) isn't necessarily the same as the “Left Hand Path” of the orient. They share the antinomian character though. But here I must again remind the reader of the quite obvious and strong origins of the Sabbatian Qabalah, through Jacob Frank and the Asiatic Brethren, in the modern Golden Dawn style “Hermetic Qabalah”. Thus, in the Letters L.V.X. there is also the notion of Evil amongst the good (“which doth forward the good”), as well as an acknowledgement of a good and evil side of God-head – Lord of the Universe, Lord of the Light and of the Darkness.

But is it fair to compare Kenneth Grant, and whatever Qlippotic that is associated with his teachings and practices, with that of the Nath or Rasa Siddhas? The Tantrik tradition surely is very similar or akin to the Hermetic Tradition, and it does follow a path which is regarded by many profane Hindu devotees as both fearful and rebellious, and even blasphemous to some of the faint-hearted disposition. Still, it is the path of the alchemical initiate of the orient. In the east “Right Hand Path” has more to do with organized and religious practices of the outer world or the profane, whereas “Left Hand” is associated with the initiated Tantrikas. Thus “Left Hand” might equally be regarded to be “esoteric” and “Right Hand” exoteric, although there do exist paths of the esoteric Yoga which is more rightly designated as Right Hand Path. At least this very general categorization seems to be useful according to my present limited understanding of the Eastern Tradition.

Furthermore, the Hermetic Masters are not addressing the “little ego” here when they discuss the immortality of the soul. Instead, they refer – to use a Qabalistic term – to the Ruach or the self-conscious mind. Following Golden Dawn qabalistic philosophy the goal is to make the Ruach or Self-consciousness a transparent vehicle for the Higher Self or Neschamah. In this the Ruach must be anointed to become the king of the Soul, seated firmly on the throne as the New Adam with his Iron Rod. Or, to use a slightly different terminology, to become anointed as the Christos. In my opinion, and obviously also according to that of the Master R.C., Jesus Christ is a prime example amongst others of one who in fact did attain a Solar Consciousness; it is followed by an illumination and a full identification with the “Father” or True and Only Self.

In Internal Alchemy you aspire to separate the different “bodies” or “layers” in the human being to reunite them again into a new and glorious whole. At least this is how I perceive it reading the words of the Master. The end result is a fully Cosmic Consciousness in which the radiant Solar power of the Spirit is transmitted uninhibited through both the Soul and the Body. This is the transfiguration of the Christ into a Solar Body of Light.



The Resurrection of Christ by Matthias Grünewald

On the Creation of the Solar Body of Light

In response to Master R.C.'s discussion on the Solar Body of Light an anonymous detractor claimed that there are absolutely no references at all to the creation of a Solar Body of Light in any of the occidental alchemical writings and that the teachings of Master R.C. is simply a modern invention and deception. He (let us assume that it is not a she) holds that the Hermetic tradition doesn't concern itself with the creation of a Solar Body of Light. Instead, the liberation of the Spirit from the physical body and the yoke of its passions constitute its goal, ideas which are rather more reminiscent of Gnosticism than Hermeticism in my opinion. He furthermore holds that neither does the Hindu nor Tibetan Tantric traditions try to create a solar body of light, only to free the consciousness of the cycle of reincarnations and the ignorance resulting from incarnation and its sensual impressions upon the mind. This detractor even stated that any belief in an immortality of some individuality is considered to be foreign to the Indian and Tibetan traditions. These comments accordingly provoked the good Master to voice his erudite knowledge for a final exposition, thus:

In response to my recent article, I have been forwarded several letters and comments. I am pleased to observe the interest aroused by the present discussion. This is a positive development, as not enough has yet been written about Hermetic alchemy from an initiatic perspective. Clearly, certain points need to be set forth at this juncture, in accordance with what my own Alchemical Master taught and transmitted to me over the course of decades – in the same fashion as initiatic, alchemical knowledge has been transmitted from alchemical Master to Disciple for Millennia.

My words here may displease certain readers, but I will not hold back the truth merely because others may find it distasteful. I ask you to set aside for a moment all of your preconceived ideas and to read these few lines in a state of serenity and peacefulness of soul, aspiring that the light of consciousness may illuminate our discourse.

Many people today delude themselves with the mistaken belief that all knowledge may be found either in books and publications or on the internet. In the case of Hermetic wisdom in general, and of Alchemy in particular, published works include only the most minimal part of the legitimate teachings. These are, I must once again repeat, transmitted only through true initiation or from an authentically realized Master – and not from a mere thinker – as true transmission is energetic, from Soul to Soul, and not verbal.

In regard to recent questions and comments about the Solar body:

Everything within creation – merely by virtue of being manifest – possesses a vehicle through which manifestation is possible. The existence of form and non-form is one single reality, which is the true nature of the universe and of creation.

The transition from form to non-form is instantaneous and we are never conscious of the passage because, these are two sides of the same coin. Thus, even talking

about the change from form to non-form is inaccurate and incorrect – as such a notion imposes conditions appropriate for duality, whereas ultimately it is only unity that exists, which is instantaneously both existence and non-existence.

Consider a point in geometry. A point is indivisible and eternal yet non-existent at the same time. The same may be said about the true nature of the Mercury of the Philosophers.

Therefore, it is in reality not strictly correct to speak of the CREATION of the Solar Body because – since all is ONE – it already exists. Thus, the real task is to bring to consciousness the ONE that is within us and that IS us. This is the true mission of Alchemy and ancient Hermetic sciences.

In the orient, this same notion is implied in the statement that MAYA is reality and illusion at the same time, and that these are two sides of the same coin. In fact, it is also written in the East that MAYA is the same as MOKSA – absolute freedom – but this mere affirmation does not equal the realization of this truth or the attainment of absolute freedom!

Such intellectual discourse does not even approach the living truth that all is ONE and that all is *ipso facto* real and unreal. The truth, the reality or unreality of things, is created by our mind itself. This is the true meaning of the RAW MERCURY OF THE PHILOSOPHERS. This Mercury is “raw” in the sense that it is unprocessed. When processed by alchemical means, this Raw Mercury may be transmuted first into Silver, then into purest Gold.

I would like to stress that all that is said here about human beings can also be extended to materials of every nature and grade, and thus applies to physical transmutations as well. All of this – of course, observes the fundamental law of UNITY OF MATTER.

Thus, we see that the mind, or the eternal capability of matter, has the power to render real or unreal every single thing – even itself. This – in high degree alchemy – is called SULFUR [sic.] – the generative capacity of the mind – which uniquely and eternally exists.

When the mind, or Mercury, vibrates, creation IS – yet when it does not vibrate any longer...CREATION VANISHES. This is the power of the MERCURY OF THE PHILOSOPHERS – which can pigment all metals or states of matter.

Thus – when correctly understood – the creation of the Solar Body is the ability to cause your mind (or Mercury) to vibrate in such a way that, by creating waves of form, it generates a state of MATTER-SPIRIT-UNITY that is active in EVERY plane of creation itself. In other words, it is the capability of acting consciously on every gradation of the ONE that is EVERYTHING.

This is the Solar Body that indicates the LIGHT and wisdom of all things simultaneously that is eternal. Hence true Eternity and Immortality is the MIND’S CAPABILITY OF BEING AWARE OF ITSELF AND OF THE TRUE NATURE OF REALITY.

Therefore, every being creates, by its own will, its slavery or freedom. There are those who understand it early and put themselves on the path of wakefulness. There are others, however, who need a lot of time to acknowledge the subtle aspect of creation, in addition to its aspect of form.

Hence, we can talk about TRUE IMMORTALITY only when it is CONSCIOUS and AWARE. Otherwise, despite the perpetual eternity of being, we cannot speak of true immortality, when consciousness, not being aware, sinks into the chasm of illusions that are real for us and envelope us by the great power of mind (or Mercury) itself.

Marrying Mercury with Sulphur, creating the double nature, thus may be understood as joining the mind with its own power, thus becoming conscious of who we really are and of our true potentialities. This state we call the creation of the Solar Body and it is represented as a symbol with an OPEN EYE OVER A FOUR STEPPED PYRAMID, which indicates the four states of matter: solid, fluid, subtle, and radiant, which joined together and merged in the state of the mind, that is the QUINTESSENCE or FIFTH ELEMENT, become the Solar Body of Light, which is eternal and indestructible.



The methods to reach this, which on metaphysical basis are in the strictest sense incorrectly called “the creation of the Solar Body of Light,” have never been revealed openly – And even had they been, they would not have been understood by those who are unprepared, living their reality as they want it to be, rather than how it is in truth instead.

I hope I have been clear and that I answered all of your questions and inquiries. All that remains for me to add is that everything I have written and every mental procedure here described may be perfectly reproduced even in a laboratory through alchemy, archemy, or spagery – In other words, by making use of substances that appear – I repeat – that APPEAR – to be outside of us as living beings alone in this actual life on planet Earth.

With love and respect for all living beings,
R.C.

So ends the final words of a true Master. The interesting thing which immediately pops up in my mind through a reading of his words regarding the “Raw Mercury” is that it very much confirms the alchemical teachings of Paul Foster Case, a foremost Golden Dawn Adept, in his various courses which he wrote for the Builders of the Adytum (B.O.T.A). Re-reading some of these I found this important passage that basically resumes in one paragraph the entire Great Work better than anyone else has been able to since it was written in the 1920’s. It is much too important in this context not to be shared. *Ora, lege, lege, lege, relege, labora et invenies!*

The alchemical process is a physical process directed and controlled by mental means. It aims at a transformation of the human body. When this transformation is effected, the adept has a physical vehicle by means of which he is able to exercise unusual powers, among them being the ability to transmute metals. HIS OWN BODY IS HIS LABORATORY AND ITS ORGANS ARE THE "SECRET VESSELS" EMPLOYED IN THE WORK OF AN ALCHEMIST. (My emphasis. From *Introduction to Tarot, Lesson 10*)

It's obvious that Paul Foster Case wasn't lying when he claimed he was taught in the Royal Art by the Alchemical Master R. Although his emphasis is solely on the contemplative and meditative method, predominately using the 22 Keys of the Tarot instead of that of Sacred Sexuality, his words reveal insights which proves this to be highly plausible. In this context I suggest meditating on the image at the frontispiece of this manuscript, originally painted in 1516 by Johan Perréal, while contemplating Case's initiated words. I cannot stress enough the significance and importance of reading his works as a Golden Dawn student, which are now being readily available outside of the circles of B.O.T.A. through various publications.

Being an initiate of the path of Internal Alchemy, when re-reading Paul Foster Case's lessons I saw them in an entirely different light that I did when I first received them in the middle 1990's. I truly recommend the study of Case's correspondence courses in the Outer Order as a preparation for the reception of the Hermetic Alchemical formulae. When I first read these lessons, I had no clue what Alchemy was all about, but it obviously prepared me enough so that I could accept and assimilate the traditional teachings when I finally began to receive them orally and in an unveiled format.

My own thoughts on this matter, which the anonymous detractor raises, is the following. First of all, he is mistaken that there are no references at all to the creation of subtle "bodies" through Internal Alchemy in older alchemical traditions, although they are quite scarce and highly incomplete; one simply has to look in the right direction. It is variously referred to as the "Secret of Secrets", such as the "Arcana Arcanorum", "Secretum Secretorum", etc. I suggest the reader to look up these references through a search on Google, or even at the Archives section on this site.

Regarding the Eastern Tantric traditions not wanting to create "immortality" and "alchemical bodies", I suggest the reader too look up David Gordon White's excellently researched but arduous academic work *The Alchemical Body: Siddha Traditions in Medieval India*. This will dissipate any such erroneous notions. I was baffled and amazed by the many similarities between Hermetic Alchemy and the Hindu and Buddhist Tantric traditions, both in the general and particular levels of teachings.

Before reading this book, I remember seeing a documentary on the Tantric Buddhist tradition in Tibet, how they projected their consciousness at the moment of death to a so-called "rainbow body". When I saw this reference, I understood that the Ageless Wisdom is truly universal. White's book gives a solidly researched confirmation of this "body", variously referred to as "rainbow", "diamond", "sonic", etc., the differences being only that of language and culture.

Having but learned miniscule portions of Hermetic Alchemy in my personal alchemical work, I have suddenly started to see references to it in various kinds of traditions, lately also in the Gospels and in particular in the Eastern Christian Orthodox Church regarding the doctrine of the transfiguration of Christ. It is easily overlooked if one hasn't the eyes to spot it. Internal Alchemy, such as taught by Master R.C. and his contemporaries, is truly transformative not only in body but also in mind and the outlook on life and in particular on the different and apparently disparate esoteric and exoteric spiritual traditions. I hope that by reading this manuscript, the reader has started a chain or succession of associations that eventually will lead him or her to the first steps of true initiation of both body and soul.



The Saviour's Transfiguration by Feofan Grek

These reflections prompted the same anonymous person who originally had questioned the validity of the Hermetic teachings as promulgated by Master R.C. to voice his opinions again, which resulted in this exchange between himself and Frater S.:R.:

A polemical exchange with the anonymous detractor

Anon: Dear Sincerus Renatus, there truly is no reference to the solar body in alchemical texts.

SR: If so, that is only because the secret has been successfully guarded.

Anon: Or if so, it is just because there is no solar body in the alchemical tradition... The term secret of the secrets (*Secretum Secretorum* in latin) concerns [the] alkaest, or its form which is not visible to human eyes: the *spiritus mundi*. With a careful and serious reading of the alchemical texts, it can be seen without any difficulty. As for the term *Arcana Arcanorum*, it describes the same thing. The most hidden secrets of alchemy, the supreme arcanum, is the uptake of spiritus mundi. This recording can be done only with the magnet of the wise. This magnet of the wise is a salt which identity has never been expressly named in alchemical texts. The authors have described its characteristics and its properties. The difficulty is to know exactly what it is. And that is not given in the text. Only a profound reflection on the world and oneself can discover it. Then, to validate this finding, it must implement the laboratory.

We must get an oily water which radically changes all the materials in contact with one exception (the glass, and Fulcanelli explains why the glass cannot be touched). This action of the Alkaest on metals causes the “reincrudation”.

SR: I respect your views regarding the external processes of Alchemy. Honestly there shouldn't be any debate at all regarding this between us. I also believe in the possibility to create a “Philosophers Stone” simply using external processes.

May I please refer you to my essays on the paths on the Red Dragon and the Black Dragon as an example of my own view upon the external paths. You will find them in the Archives section on this site.

However, with this kind of rhetoric you put yourself on a pedestal as a sole authority on Alchemy. You seem to fail to understand that there are mainly two paths of alchemy, equally valid, the “internal” and “external”.

Anon: There is no internal alchemy. The concept of internal alchemy appeared with Carl Jung, not before. And Jung did not understand the alchemy. The Spagyric is the science of medicinal outcome [of] the laws of alchemy.

SR: True Internal Alchemy has absolutely nothing to do with C.G. Jung. Jung's interpretation of alchemy, although interesting from a purely psychoanalytical point of view, is more properly labelled as “spiritual alchemy”. I agree with you that “spiritual alchemy” so-called has nothing to do with real Alchemy. Historically evidenced proofs of the existence of Internal Alchemy predates C.G. Jung with almost two Centuries, at the very least.

Anon: Alchemy is the way to the Philosopher's Stone. This stone is external and requires laboratory work.

SR: I won't argue with you that there exists an external Philosopher's Stone, using "Mineral G" as the Prima Materia. But you fail to see or recognize that there also exists an internal Philosopher's Stone which uses your own body as the Prima Materia.

What you are doing is but referring to the "external" or "spagyric" type of alchemy. Fulcanelli, which you address, is an Alchemical Master of the external path, or at least that is what he is expounding in his books. But I have heard that he also taught "internal alchemy" as well. This is true of most French alchemists, such as the F.A.R+C. That latter organization also had an internal collage of 12 adepts which taught the "internal" path.

Anon: Fulcanelli was a Master in Alchemy as a whole, not Spagyric. He also differs significantly in its [sic.] books the difference between alchemy and Spagyric. Moreover, he cites the classic texts. And these texts corroborate Fulcanelli books. It is well to quote an author, but it's better to have read it...

Regarding the FARC, I know one of its first members. And I also know four members of the second circle of the FARC. In the college of 12 adepts, none had the Philosopher's Stone. Moreover, no former FARC has the true Philosopher's Stone. They have obtained a particular (archemy) in the path of cinnabar, which gives only very weak transmutations and medicinal mediocre results. Here, indeed, it's Spagyric.

For the spiritual part of the FARC, it was the universal church of the new alliance that served as support. And this church was first and foremost to return to the bosom of the Catholic Church. I also know several bishops of this church and they found nothing in the transcendent spiritual teachings of Roger Caro. They ended up going to see the side of the East...

SR: Interesting that you corroborate the opinion that the F.A.R+C in fact had an internal collage of 12. Thank you for that information. But you again seem to mix up "Spiritual Alchemy" with Inner Alchemy.

Anon: Those who have begun to talk about inner alchemy are those who have not understood the alchemical texts or who have abandoned the practice in the laboratory after having failed.

SR: This kind of argumentation against Inner Alchemy I have read many times before on the Rubellus Petrinus Forum. (Perhaps we have already met there?) But how many modern alchemists who try to interpret Fulcanelli as an external way have succeeded with the creation of the Philosopher's Stone? None. All they do is to debate what the Prima Materia actually is: is it Stibnite or is it Galena, or is it God knows what? The so-called alchemists can't even agree on such a fundamental question in their debates. Your rhetoric is also typical of the megalomaniac "hot air" character of alchemists on that Forum which, honestly speaking, is boring and non-constructive. Instead of broadening perspectives, it only narrows. Instead of opening boundaries, it bars.

I suspect that you are an Anglo-Saxon or else you wouldn't express yourself in this dualistic way. Sorry to say, but you are not looking in the right direction. Try again. Perhaps you could use the translation button and look at my text *En hemligheternas hemlighet* ("A Secret of Secrets") in the Archives section on this site.

Anon: I'm not an Anglo-Saxon. I speak just to give you the opportunity to study real alchemy, on the texts, practicing in the laboratory without preconceptions or bias. This alone can help you understand what alchemy [is].

SR: Who has any preconceptions or bias here? As I said before, I agree with you regarding the validity of the external paths. But, contrary to you, I also see that there exists an occidental Internal Path of Alchemy which is similar to Eastern Tantrik methodology. I also recognize that the external path is a reflection of the internal, and that one is understood in the light of the other, if one doesn't have any preconceived opinions or "darlings to kill".

Anon: Alchemy is not dual. There is no alchemy external and internal alchemy. There is only alchemy.

SR: It's true that there is "only alchemy". But as you are well aware of, there exists several paths or ways of Alchemy, even though they all belong to the same Royal Art. There are the dry, humid and mixed (amalgam) paths. And there are also internal and external ways which are analogous, hence two aspects of the whole.

Anon: Alchemy [only] requires laboratory work.

SR: Yes of course. But you fail to see that there are different kind of laboratories. There is also your own body which acts as a laboratory.

Anon: Laboratory work involves internal and spiritual evolution occurs naturally, just by the influence of matter evolving in the laboratory and by the understanding of yourself by the study of Nature.

SR: I agree. I have experienced this myself working with an outer laboratory. But this doesn't mean that Alchemy can be reduced to external laboratory practices and that only meditation and contemplation constitute the internal aspect of Alchemy. Besides, the Tibetan Buddhist Tantric tradition and its concepts of the Rainbow Body corroborate the Hermetic traditions of the Solar Body as a subtle vehicle of projecting your consciousness after your physical death.

Anon: The rainbow body is not at all a subtle body in which the Buddhist Tantric project their consciousness, because the rainbow body does not exist in the Tantras but in the Dzogchen.

SR: This is hair splitting. Why not call it the "Body of Light" instead, which is a synonym for the "Rainbow Body". Or to quote Wiki: "A rainbow body...is a body, made not of flesh, but instead consisting of pure light." This exactly describes the Solar Body of Hermetic Alchemy.

Anon: You cannot call the light body to replace rainbow body because they are not synonymous. But understand, we must really study the Dzogchen texts. There are few translations. For the rest, they should be read in Tibetan. But the ideal is any way to receive direct instruction from a master of this tradition.

SR: I haven't read any Dzogchen texts nor will I spend any time in learning Tibetan. However, I have three sources to base my view, that of David Gordon White, Wiki and that documentary (which I unfortunately don't remember the title of) which corroborates this opinion.

Let me quote White: "...[Indian] tantric...goal is the production of an immortal yet concrete diamond body that transcends the laws of nature...Tibetan Buddhist...alchemy...whose goal is the acquisition of a spiritualized body of light...the Hindu Trika Kaula...whose goal is the acquisition of a divinized body of sound. All three of these...systems were...refinements upon an original tantric synthesis."

Anon: For the Indian Tantrism, I do not know enough to say anything. But for Tibetan Buddhism, it is clear that there is no question of producing anything immortal.

SR: Hermetic Alchemy speaks of creating CONSCIOUS immortality. It is a big difference to simply saying "becoming immortal".

Anon: In the Kaula Trika or other currents of Kashmir Shaivism, it is about fusion in Shiva (the Self), by no means immortal personal production. Read the works of Abinavagupta, Uptaladeva for Kashmir Shaivism.

SR: But yes, of course. The outcome of Solar Consciousness is the union between the True Self and the "ego" or personal self. This is a valid definition of "Conscious immortality".

The documentary that I mentioned specifically addressed the phenomena of yogis killing themselves through mediational techniques. They compered this with the Tibetan monks surviving the physical death in their rainbow body, which became visible at the moment of death. How plain can it get?

You try to create diffusion when there are none. It is simply speaking different ways of expressing the same phenomena. Because it transcends our natural way of thinking and language, it expresses itself with a seeming diversity. But in truth, there are no such diversity.

Anon: This documentary is wrong. Read Shardza Tashi Gyaltsen. He is a master who has achieved the rainbow body. It is by no means to commit suicide by techniques of meditation. The rainbow body occurs naturally in the natural death of the practitioner. There is no question of a personal will in the manifestation of this phenomenon.

SR: Yes, the Tibetan monks didn't kill themselves. They projected their consciousness into the Rainbow Body at the moment of their natural death, as it the case with Hermetic Alchemists and their Solar Bodies.

Anon: The rainbow body is a physical manifestation of the dissolution of the elements of the physical body. This dissolution shows rays of colored light, like rainbows in the sky. For more information on this subject, I recommend reading the book of Shardza Tashi Gylatsen: Heart Drops of Dharmaka.

SR: I won't argue with this. This again only confirms the Hermetic Alchemical doctrine of the Solar Body, which is a refinement of the physical body.

Anon: I do not speak of refinement, but dissolution. There is nothing left of the physical body or its subtil [sic.] parts during the process of rainbow body. Shar-dza described well, but he is not alone. You can also read the Zhang Zhung Nyen Gyu, the Chaktri or the A Tri.

SR: Again, you are splitting hairs. Dissolution may be equated with “death”. A body must “die” to be able to “resurrect”. Having read the classical texts, you should be able to see this analogy with death and refinement. When you refine something out of something else, you have something new. You yourself have stated that the Rainbow Body stems from the dissolved elements of the physical body. Thus, the physical body is the Prima Materia from which is created the Rainbow Body, or Solar Body of Light. “Dissolution” and “refinement” are just words which perhaps both fail to properly describe the process.

Anon: The projection of consciousness exists in the Buddhist tradition, but that is what is called the “powa”. And that projection of consciousness is absolutely not the purpose of Buddhism. It is a kind of “escape hatch” which can then be embodied in a land of Buddhas to finalize our spiritual evolution by receiving extra lessons. The “powa” is not the purpose, the Awakening, but a result of much lower level.

SR: Again, let me quote wiki: “The rainbow body is the physical mastery state... the corporeal body ...which is now hallowed, returns to the primordial energetic essence of the Five Pure Lights of the five elemental processes... This is then projected as the mindstream through the process of phowa. The realiser of Jalus resides in the timeless, eternal space that is considered a mystery.”

And this is not a projection of the consciousness into a light body?

Anon: Wikipedia does not have innate knowledge... The reference to powa is false. Read the texts I mentioned and make your opinion but this time with the canonical sources.

SR: Thanks for the references. But again, I must say that I have three independent sources which confirms each other in the view that these spiritual systems of the East have a common goal of creating a “body” which transcends the physical and becomes the new vehicle for the soul to inhabit. Against this I only have your words as an anonymous writer that all my sources are wrong. And I don't even know who you are. Who am I (or anyone else) to trust? You, who are anonymous, or sources which easily identify themselves? If you want me to take you and your opinions seriously, I invite you to step forward and present yourself to me and my readers. Or else I'm inclined to believe that you are simply trying to create unnecessary confusion and obscurity through disinformation. (Postscript: He of course newer did reveal himself.)

“When, through having performed the ultimate practices of the Great Perfection, a yogin is on the verge of dissolving his or her body into rainbow light, he or she may concentrate awareness on the tips of the finger nails (which are considered dead parts of the body). This results in a body of light which remains visible for the sake of all sentient beings.... This is the wisdom form called the Rainbow Body of Great Transformation (‘ja’ lus ‘pho ba chen po)” – Matthieu Ricard, The Life of Shabkar: The Autobiography of a Tibetan Yogin

Finis.