

Alchemy Journal



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The History of Alchemy in America - Part 2



by [Mark Stavish](#), M.A.

The AMORC Period: Round One

Soon after its founding in 1915 in New York City, the Rosicrucian Order, AMORC, known simply as AMORC, found itself in a variety of 'authenticity struggles' that would last until the present day. Behind AMORC's growth and longevity, something many other organizations have publicly and privately envied, was its claim to being the only authentic, authorized Rosicrucian body operating in America. This claim to being the only one and true Rosicrucian body attracted not only disillusioned seekers

from other organizations, but also attracted new members who felt comfort and security in the idea of belonging to an organization that had not only 'traditional' roots in antiquity, but historical ones as well. Fancy charters from Europe, stories of ancient initiations and the trials of seeking out the 'secret chiefs' or "Unknown Superiors" of the Order's High Council in France added to the mystery and the attraction. Yet, none of this would have been possible if it weren't for the keen and brilliant mind of the organization's founder, first Grand Master, and ultimately Imperator (*Emperor*), Harvey Spencer Lewis.

Born in Frenchtown, N.J. on November 25, 1883, Harvey Lewis developed the talents early in life that would serve him as the single most important force in modern Rosicrucianism. Writing, painting, public speaking, and a sense for the 'positive spin' helped him develop an early and lucrative career in advertising. Then after a series of experiences, he abandoned his career in search of the Rosicrucian Order in Europe, allegedly going to Toulouse, France, [\[x\] where his contacts were made. While much is debated about the degree and genuineness](#) of these contacts, it is clear that he believed that they were genuine, and as such were the moving force behind his organization. After a false start in 1909, AMORC finally got off the ground in 1915, and by 1917 had several Grand Lodges established in the United States, along with other smaller bodies, where members would receive the teachings and initiations in a strictly oral format. However, Harvey's love for the advertising world never left him, and he developed and promoted AMORC like it was next best thing to sliced white bread. Adopting a Masonic style lodge pattern and initiations from the 17th century Gold-and Rosy- Cross (of twelve degrees, not ten), similar to that used by the Golden Dawn (Neophyte, Zelator, Practicus, etc.), [\[xi\] he single](#) handily mainstreamed esotericism and Rosicrucianism for the American public. With emphasis on practicality, not abstract metaphysics or obtuse rituals, AMORC's membership grew. But that was not all that sold AMORC, for Harvey and AMORC were one and the same. Harvey Lewis had a keenly developed psychic sense, and was at the forefront of proving that what he was selling, the teachings of AMORC, worked. To this end, he decided that it was time for the 'Big Show' and announced in 1916 that he was going to publicly transmute a base metal into gold using alchemical means. An article describing the event was written by Harvey Spencer Lewis, using a nom de plume, and appeared in the organization's magazine, "The American Rosae Crucis", in July of that year. In summary, the article stated the following:

On Thursday night, June 22, 1916, "a demonstration of the ancient art, or science, of transmutation" was given to the officers and councilors of the Supreme Grand Lodge in New York City. Stating that this was the first time that such a convocation was held in America, and very well could be the last for some time to come, it was permissible for each Grand Master to demonstrate once in their lifetime and term of office the process of transmutation.

It further stated that all of the laws necessary for such an accomplishment were clearly stated and explained in the first four degrees of the Order. In preparation, fifteen members of the Fourth degree drew at random a week earlier cards upon which were written the ingredients each was to individually bring and that all of the ingredients were non-toxic, with the exception of the nitric acid used to test the metal at the end of the demonstration, and easily obtainable. Each was to pledge secrecy and that they were not to unite with the others the total of the ingredients on their own for at least three years after the death of the Grand Master General, Harvey Spencer Lewis.

Dressed in regalia, but devoid of ritual, the procedure began after a brief introduction on the history and theory of alchemy. In an attempt at objectivity, the article stated that, "In order to meet the demand for one outside and disinterested witness, a representative of the *New York World's* editorial department was invited."

The critical phase of the transmutation took exactly 'sixteen minutes' and resulted in second and third degree burns to Lewis' hands. Examinations were made on zinc placed in the crucible to show

that it was the matching half to the piece that was not used. The *World's* representative was invited to examine the pieces as well, and to place his initial on them before the operation began to insure that no slight of hand was involved. The article further stated that half of the metal was sent to "the Supreme Council of the Order in France along with an official report" as well as the admonishment of the unnamed journalist that while the experiment was fantastic, he is in no position to judge whether an actual change took place. The transmuted piece of zinc and its unaffected matching half were left on display and observed by "Newspapermen, editors and several scientists (who) have examined them and gone away greatly perplexed."[\[xii\]](#)

Unfortunately, much of the information in this article is hardly objective or even verifiable. While the article has been reprinted several times, no photograph of the 'gold' produced, or replies from the French Supreme Council, or even of the implied news article from the *New York World*, have been produced along with it. If this had been all there was to AMORC's modern Rosicrucian alchemical legacy, it would have been written off as a failed publicity stunt, and ended up as a footnote in the development of American alchemy.

Despite the obvious questions regarding the article's validity, and complete historical accuracy, it was reprinted by AMORC in the March 1942 edition of the "Rosicrucian Digest", the organization's magazine having changed its name sometime in the early 1930's. This edition also included a footnote at the end of the article which advertised the availability of a 'home alchemy course' complete with herbs, glassware, even a small oven![\[xiii\]](#) [It also mentioned the 'extensive alchemical course given at Rose+Croix University' which brings us to the second phase of AMORC's alchemy period.](#)

The AMORC Period: Round Two

In the first part of the 1940's, AMORC's librarian and later Dean of the Order's Rose+Croix University (RCU), Orval Graves, proposed a series of classes on practical laboratory alchemy. In those early classes, the techniques of Paracelsus were generally followed, artificial stones were created, and students would often take turns staying up throughout the night, to regulate the heart of the furnaces for the herbal work. A great sense of harmony prevailed. Yet, not all of the results were purely spiritual. According to Russell B. House, F.R.C., and (at the time of his writing) member of AMORC's International Research Counsel, Frater Graves produced for him, at their meeting in June of 1989, several artificial stones alchemically manufactured during those early classes. Among the collection was included a large artificial diamond grown by the late French Rosicrucian alchemist F. Jollivet-Castelot. Castelot was among the leading practical alchemists in Europe at the turn of the century. He was past President of the *Alchemical Society of France* (Societe Alchemique de France) and editor of its journal, *La Rose+Croix* (The Rose+Cross).[\[xiv\]](#) [A photograph of Castelot in his laboratory has been repeatedly reproduced by AMORC in the front of its *Rosicrucian Manual* for its members.](#)[\[xv\]](#)

Of those gems produced during the RCU days of the '40's, one topaz was declared by a gemologist to be among the finest he had ever seen. In addition, Dr. A. Whaley, a member of the RCU faculty at that time, reproduced what was then current government research on the manufacture of synthetic precious stones, including diamonds. Aside from esoteric chemistry, the students of these classes also had a little help from exoteric chemistry as well. The DuPont Company sent some samples of its synthetic stones, and even revealed 'tricks of the trade'. The B&J Star Company of San Francisco lent a hand, however, not all of its methods could be reproduced, as the furnaces at RCU were not powerful enough.

During this time several articles appeared, and since have been reprinted, in *The Rosicrucian Digest*

regarding alchemy. Several by Orval Graves offer considerable insight into the purifying nature of fire and its esoteric implications.[\[xvi\]](#) [Several](#) from a Hungarian Rosicrucian, Victor Scherbak of Budapest, dealt with the mythological origins of alchemy, its relationship to Atlantis, Lemuria, and the creation stories in *Genesis*.[\[xvii\]](#)

[\[x\]](#) *Rosicrucian Questions and Answers with Complete History of the Rosicrucian Order* by H.Spencer Lewis, F.R.C. Supreme Grand Lodge of AMORC, San Jose, California. 1984. P. 16 photograph, p. 178.

[\[xi\]](#) *The Rosicrucian Manual*, Lovett Printing Co., Charleston, W. V., 1928; and Supreme Grand Lodge AMORC, San Jose, Calif., 1975.

[\[xii\]](#) An article published in the March 1926 edition of *The Mystic Triangle* states: "When a demonstration of the transmutation process was made officially by our Order in New York City a number of years ago, a piece of zinc was so changed in its nature that it looked like gold and stood the acid test of gold; in other words it would have served the same purpose as gold. But the transmuted piece of metal did not weight the same as gold would weigh, and therefore in that regard it was not gold& .is no reason for us believe that all artificial or transmuted gold must have the same weight as gold, which as impurities not existing in the other& .the& zinc weighed less, apparently after it had been transmuted& than before." (p. 27) A similar statement is made by Frater Albertus, in *The Alchemist of the Rocky Mountains*, page 123. However, here the gold is lighter by a mere fraction of its original weight, making it still almost three times heavier than zinc.

[\[xiii\]](#) A second kit was later offered, without the oven and of lesser quality in some respects. At some point in the 1980's this was discontinued, and all that became available to members was a 22-page lecture on basic water distillation techniques. The copy I have has no date or copyright, and may date back to the original alchemy classes during the 1940's.

[\[xiv\]](#) *The Alchemists* by M. Caron and S. Hutin. Translated from French by Helen R. Lane. Grove Press, Inc. New York, New York. 1961. P. 95.

[\[xv\]](#) An article appeared in the August 1926 edition of *The Mystic Triangle* describing the chemical recipe used by Castelot to artificially make gold. However, at the end of his letter he states, "Undoubtedly, there was a loss of gold in the experiment just as occurred in all my anterior attempts; because we know that arsenic, antimony and tellurium carry away gold during their fusion and volitilization." (p.130)

[xvi] "[Fiery Philosophy](#)" by Orval Graves. *The Rosicrucian Digest*, October 1944, pgs. 273-278, 287.

[xvii] "[The Mystic Path of Alchemy](#)", Dec. 1947; "[Ancient Traditions of Hermeticism](#)", Sept. and Oct. 1948.

Mark Stavish is a long-time student of esotericism and has written over a two-dozen critically received articles, book reviews, and interviews on western esoteric philosophy and practices. Email: MrkStavish@aol.com. More information about can be found at: www.hermetic.com/stavish/ and voxhermes, at www.yahoogle.com. Due to its length, his original article has been edited to include information about the Rosicrucian Order, AMORC for this issue. The remainder of the article will be published in a future issue of the Alchemy Journal.



The Pelican

By Rachel Lane (Madhyanandi)

Are we not alike,
O, Immaculate Heart--
alive beyond what
eye perceives?

My belly suggests
Your pregnant Soul,

full and round, yet
all-consuming Grace
in flight;

The heated muscles in
my feathered shoulders
push-me pull-me through
your salted Breath;

My pouched bill is
a lance,
a whaler's harpoon--
and suddenly diving,
wings tucked,
i pluck a silver fish
to feed our hungry young;

And when Your
capricious Grace shuts
His vast green eye
to our thirst,

Do i not,
like you,
open the vein
beneath my breast
and bid my babies drink?

The Ace of Swords: Seizing the Power of Discernment

By [Cheryl Lynne Bradley](#)

"For the word of God is quick and powerful and sharper than any two edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit and of joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart."
- Hebrews 4:12 KJV

I have an image in my mind of Steve Martin doing his stand up routine with the fake arrow on his head and playing his 5-string banjo. This is a true picture of the Ace of Swords. I'm trying to have a creative life in 5 minute intervals, raise a family, do work that I love and withstand the constant bombardment of an unhappy world - it's a wonder the laundry gets done. I feel like I have a sword stuck through my head and I don't know if it is going to slice me apart like an executioner's sword or hold me together like the toothpick that held together my club sandwich at lunch today.

Sometimes it is a sword through the head, other times it is your foot in your mouth - no matter your

circumstances - you are not a confused person, you are in a confusing situation. The first lesson of discernment. The most subtle changes in our perception of where and who we are in the world can create a "Butterfly Effect" for our mental, physical and spiritual wellbeing. So get out your fake arrows, do your best impression of Steve Martin - "We are just wiiiiilld and crazy people!!!!" - and lets explore the concept of discernment.

Historically the sword was viewed as a sacred ritual object signifying bravery and power. The flaming sword of Bodhisattva procured knowledge and freedom from desire while the sword of Vishnu represented pure knowledge and the destruction of ignorance. A knight's sword was two edged - one to strike down infidels, the other thieves and murderers and the point represented obedience. Traditional Christianity and chivalry viewed it as a "luminous tool for chivalrous tasks" with a power that united spirit and matter - the binding of heaven and earth.

The Suit of Swords has the elemental quality of Air and has associations with the astrological signs of Gemini, Libra and Aquarius. This brings complexity, complications, aridity, detachment and over analysis to our table. Air represents our spiritualization and is also viewed biblically in Genesis 1:2 and 8:1 as the emanation of the breath of the Spirit of God and as the Sword of Spirit in Ephesians 6:17. It can represent the wind in a more literal sense as well as the sense of spirit. In Ezekiel 37:1-14 he is commanded to invoke the life giving breath, wind or spirit of God. In Kabbalistic study it would relate to one of the Four Worlds. The *Olam Yetsirah*, the Formative World of the mind, ideas and intellect is given the elemental quality of Air.

The Ace of Swords is the sword of our own personal power and in order to deal with the forces unleashed through the journey of the swords, one must develop discernment and a still centre for tranquility. This is the sword that converges the mind and the intellect with the ability to see and express ones self clearly and assertively. If you start to feel marginalized in any way, reconsider where you think the centre is.

Our society is oriented on the collection of experiences. We are perceived as successful if we have "in" clothes, "the hot ticket", the best car, the biggest TV, a big house - as if the whole point of life is to be the richest person in the cemetery. Access to money allows you access to many experiences but not to the true satisfactions of life. Are you a collector of experiences or satisfactions? A satisfaction is a spiritual occurrence - like a moment of feeling perfectly at one with the world or the sweet smell of a baby's breath.

We perceive fear as a lack of or absence of courage but courage is not the absence of fear, it is a decision to not be held back by fear. Finding the strength and courage to change your thinking or your situation is one issue, finding the strength and courage to maintain the changes is another.

Anyone who has had an experience with earthly justice knows that facts carry weight over the truth. The truth has to find its own road. Earthly justice, although it manifests the three properties of soul within its Constitution (understanding), Enactments (will) and Precedents (memory), cannot discern if it wants to be rehabilitative and restorative, or restitutive and retributive. Spiritual justice wears no such blindfold and carries her own sword, the Sword of Truth, Relinquishment, Redemption and Righteous Rage. What should be, will be.

"For the Justice is in the honest expression of the Truth." - David-Edward Butterfield

A more challenging issue for discernment is the difference between a sex object and a sexual objective. We have all heard jokes at one time or another regarding the difference between love and lust. I may lust after George Clooney (sex object) but he is not a part of my sexual objective - the reality factor. It is, of course, a disappointment that George could not realistically be my sexual

objective but it is not a personal failure. This is another area of discernment that should be given some personal thought.

When it comes to dealing with people, you should always expect to be disappointed. The only time it could be perceived as a personal failure would be if you are unable to break a pattern of being drawn to people for what they need, you forget to value the gift of you and you make a bad bargain - then you are failing yourself personally. Let the Ace of Swords return the word "No" to your working vocabulary in an appropriate way. Who is saying "No" to you when they should be saying "No" to other people and situations? Who are you doing the same thing to?

We also tend to have a difficult time discerning between our logical thinking and our rationalization. Do you hate to lose more than you love to win? Do you hate to love? Do you love to hate? Will you fight to win? If we are thinking logically then we see both sides of any situation we are in and prepare for different outcomes. If we are too subjective, we can't see the forest for the trees and we rationalize one acceptable outcome. The problem occurs when we don't get the only outcome we were prepared for - the choice is not always ours. Feeling thwarted can lead to feelings of impotent rage - another quality of the Ace of Swords is strong, powerful emotions both good and bad. Our Guardian Angel just hit us in the head with a Sword to make us scrape our shoes and move on.

"I never came upon any of my discoveries through the process of rational thinking." - Albert Einstein

Don't waste time worrying about what "they" - meaning the nameless, faceless many - might think about you. "They" can think whatever "they" want to think - "they" have the freedom of their thoughts. So do you, no one can take that away from you. The Ace of Swords is a liberator. Just because we are discussing a cerebral experience does not mean it is an illusion. A boundary doesn't have to be a wall, walls can build bridges, passivity is not weakness, alone is not lonely, psychic is not always spiritual, delays are not denials and you can change your future but not your ultimate destiny.

"You can't control the wind but you can control the sails." - Author Unknown

It is a subtle shift in thinking on the journey to knowing ones true self. You have to discern between subjectivity to your own situation and objectivity. How are you using your personal power? What do you think you deserve to have happen in your life? You have to take one step back and decide if your course of action or reaction is constructive or destructive. There are very few problems in life that we will face that other people haven't faced as well. Very few things in life are absolute; there is a lot of gray area. Are you looking for problems or solutions? Are you holding on too tight? Are you running too loose? Are you confusing what you need with what you want? Is everybody listening but nobody is hearing a word you are saying? Do you repair or replace? Are you appeasing or are you strong enough to bend? Carl Jung viewed the sword as "penetration in a precise direction" and the desire to achieve a goal. At the end of desire, what you need and what you want becomes the same thing.

"But strong meat belongeth to them that are of full age, even those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern good and evil." - Hebrews 5:14 KJV

Seize the sword of your discernment and use it to cut through, open and release the conflicts, confusions and emotional machetes that challenge our journey through the Suit of Swords. See yourself, your situation and the people around you clearly and with balanced perception. See and speak your own truth. You will see all sides of your situation with more clarity, detachment and greater understanding of the other person's viewpoints. This tunes your mind to an almost painful level of

acuity. Discernment is the key. You can remove the fake arrow now.

Cheryl Lynne Bradley is President, Tarot Canada. © 2002. For more information about the Tarot, visit the organization's website: <http://www.tarotcanada.ca/>. Sources: The Holy Bible; King James Version; The Mammoth Dictionary of Symbols (Author: Nadia Julien. Robinson Publishing 1996; London, UK ISBN 1-85487-273-7); the [Gnosis Archive](#) .

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FEATURES

New Releases

(Book Review by [Jaye C. Beldo](#))



Dark Night, Early Dawn: Steps Towards an Ecology of Mind
by Christopher Bache (Foreword by Stanislaus Grof)

Paperback: 384 pages. 10.5 x 4 inch cover. **Publisher:** State University of New York Press. **ISBN:** 0791446069

< To Order this Book online, click on the bookcover!

Christopher Bache may be the world's first Cosmosopher. In his refreshing and innovative book, *Dark Night, Early Dawn: Steps Towards an Ecology of Mind*, he articulates transpersonal realms with a convincing intimacy, revealing a universe that is alive, intelligent and directly accessible within ourselves. The author has taken great care to share many of the entheogenic, meditative and philosophical experiences he has had which assist in fore-lightening the inevitable global/galactic revolution to come. The timing of his work could not be better. One only need look at current sociopolitical urgencies to appreciate Bache's efforts to move transpersonal psychology beyond its self referential orbit into more effacing, collective trajectories. *Dark Night, Early Dawn* offers a much needed alternative, encouraging us to explore a connection to a cosmos which may require the very ego death of the human species as a prerequisite for its realization.

In order to fully realize the transition, Bache suggests that we abandon what remains of the Newtonian, mechanistic worldview, i.e., the threadbare 3-D illusion that our consumer society depends upon for its own self- perpetuation. He suggests that we assist, through such things as rebirthing, holotropic breathing and meditation, in the realization/integration of multi-dimensional world where spiritually advanced beings exist. These beings can offer us compassion, wisdom and a kind of infinitely broad, celestial panorama which encourages us to adopt a more life affirming perspective on what appears to be a severely limited human future at present. Nemeses abound however at current time, dedicated to making sure that such a marvelous realization as described above will not take

place. Paranormal debunkers such as Paul Edwards are devoted to discrediting the claims of those who believe in rebirth, for example. Edwards insists that the last two thousand years of philosophical development with its emphasis on linearity and so-called 'rationality' is the end all, be all of human intelligence. Bache makes sure to point out the weakness of Edwards's argument and does so quite convincingly. He observes: 'If reincarnation can be proven to be true, then the modern Western philosophical paradigm will crumble because rebirth contradicts the core assumptions of that world view.' Such a remark enables one to perceive the unconscious fears which motivate people like Edwards, not to mention Martin Gardner and the CSICOPS cadre as well, who may very well be threatened by how integrated multi-dimensional awareness is becoming. Just imagine the CSICOPPERS all doing holotropic breathing and what kind of resistances within themselves they would have to deal with!

Fortunately, *Dark Night, Early Dawn* does not dwell on the 'infallible' 3-D consensus delusion and the organizations that continue to promote it. The author shows a balanced approach to transpersonal work and offers the reader an effective way to traverse a living, intelligent cosmos and come back home not only intact but spiritually integrated in a deep and lasting way. Citing the works of Stanislav Grof, Ken Wilber and Robert Monroe, as well as visionary mystics such as Teresa of Avila, Bache offers us a useful as well as fascinating means to explore the worlds these people describe so vividly. The author also shares his own inner experiences in which he himself connected with these spiritually evolved worlds:

"The time of rebuilding was suffused with an inner luminosity that signaled a profound awakening in the human heart. It was not the overwhelming brilliance of diamond luminosity that shines forth from individual awakening, but a softer luminosity that reflected the same reality but more gently present and more evenly distributed throughout the entire species. The whole of humanity was going to go through the death/rebirth experience, and the substance of awakening for the group was the same as for the individual, though realized more slowly and in smaller increments."

With insights such as described above, it is apparent the Bache has prepared himself sufficiently enough not only to share this kind of profound information with us but to inspire us to safely explore these transpersonal worlds as well. I found his as well as his students' journal entries to be most revealing and informative.

Sri Aurobindo once observed: "At present mankind is undergoing an evolutionary crisis in which is concealed a choice of its destiny." Books like *Dark Night, Early Dawn* will assist us in not only seeing the choices at hand beneath the surface of our culminating crisis but also how we can influence whatever destiny we collectively and perhaps competently choose for ourselves as a result.

Dark Night, Early Dawn is published by State University of New York Press. Check out their web site at: <http://www.sunypress.edu>

Jaye C. Beldo writes for the *Konformist*, *Disinfo.Com*, *ViewZone*, *Dream Network*, *UP!* and other venues on and off line. He can be reached at: Netnous@aol.com. © 2001 Jaye C. Beldo.

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Alchemy Lectures and Workshops



**Firedance Festival.
Santa Cruz, California. August 7-10, 2003**

The Firedance Festival is an alchemical event of personal transformation involving a community that joins together to celebrate and explore the beauty and mystery of life and self through co-created rituals of drumming, dancing and singing around a sacred fire at night until the rising of the sun -- and through performances, playshops, and other rituals during the day. It takes place in the Santa Cruz mountains in northern California from Thursday, August 7, through Sunday, August 10, 2003. Dennis William Hauck will be presenting an Integrative Playshop on Alchemy at 11:00 AM on Friday, August 8. For more information, visit their website at www.Firedance.org.



**Crucible 2003: Techniques of Transformation
Sacramento, California. October 11-12, 2003.**

This year's [Crucible](#) event led by Dennis William Hauck relocates to a beautiful new setting that offers a more tranquil atmosphere for the advanced techniques that will be taught in the workshop. The all-day event will be held on Saturday, October 11, 2003, at the Sierra 2 Center in Sacramento. Located on three acres of lush landscaping, the center is within easy reach of downtown and within walking distance of several restaurants, bookstores, and coffee houses. Next to Sierra Green park in the Curtis Park section of Sacramento, the center is known for its tranquil and inspiring setting. The workshop takes place in the large and airy Green Room and adjacent Meditation Courtyard, which features dozens of blooming flowers and trees, lovely landscaped lighting, and a serene waterfall. This year's experiential, multimedia event features powerful demonstrations of both spiritual and practical techniques in alchemy and will include live experiments and actual meditations used by the alchemists. Certificates of attendance will be issued through [Flamel College](#) and credit will be given in the Alchemy Home Study Program. There will also be refreshments, a light lunch, and a vendor area offering rare

books, recent titles, prints, tinctures, essential oils, videos, audio tapes, and many more unique products. Private consultations will be available on Sunday, October 12. Because of the individual work during this seminar, space is limited to 40 participants. Please register early! Tuition is \$79 per person (discounts are available for multiple registrations). [Register for Crucible 2003 Now!](#) Click here for [More Information](#).

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FROM THE EDITORS

From the Contributing Editor ([Dennis William Hauck](#))

First, I must apologize for not being able to put out the Spring issue of the *Alchemy Journal*. As many of you know, I have been traveling extensively doing research on Egyptian alchemy and working with the Alchemy Guild on projects for 2004 and beyond. I have also just finished my next book, *Sorcerer's Stone: A Beginner's Guide to Alchemy* (Citadel Press 2004). Unfortunately, my research and personal projects will require me to be on the road extensively for the next year or more. Accordingly, with my being on the road, I plan to do more workshops in the United States and will be living in Europe for at least part of the year. You may contact me in Europe in care of the Alchemy Guild (alchimie.gilde@berlin.de) or through ETX at DWHauck@alchemylab.com. Andrea Zuckavich (zuckavich@flamelcollege.org) should usually be able to track me down. I will still be working actively with all my students and hopefully will get to meet with more of them by traveling more.

Another reason for my traveling more is to continue my personal work, that is, the alchemical work within me. One of the first tenets of alchemical initiation is that you must experience the ancient truths firsthand. One might understand these principles by reading about them, but they must come "alive" for them to be alchemical. Sometimes this energy or "light of illumination" happens in the inspired presence of your teachers or friends who are on the same path, and sometimes it happens in the inspired space of your own private meditations. This inspired presence or space is a very real thing in alchemy. In fact, let me make this very clear: it is an actual *substance*. Call it First Matter, Life Force, or *chi*, it is real and can be accumulated and manipulated in the Hermetic Incubator, the Human Holy of Holies, where divine energy and wisdom pour down from Above. This is Mercury Space, the sacred realm of Thoth, where the Hermetic pattern is most obvious. If you cannot access this space, if you cannot purify your own environment (physically, mentally, and spiritually) to make the sacred space manifest, then you cannot finish your alchemical initiation. The Great Work is never just in the head, but in the real world, as well as it is in the heart and body. For my own inner work to proceed, I must regularly leave my office environment, unplug the word processor, and seek to accumulate more of this real yet invisible substance to understand it. I believe the time is coming when this living "stuff" will be the most important thing to everyone, even the most blatantly materialistic among us. But to access this magical material, the universe demands that we abandon ourselves socially to live on the edge, to slice open reality right down the middle, and follow our innate Intelligence of the Heart wherever it leads us.

At this time in my life, I am reminded of the words of the 16th-century alchemist, Simon Forman,

when asked to give advice to those interested in pursuing the Great Work. "Crave wisdom of God, the sense to understand," he warned, "or else meddle not herewith, nor take it in hand. For it will cost thee much worldly wealth and position. But trust no others, and do it yourself. Learn therefore, first to cleanse, purify and sublime; to dissolve, congeal, and distill; and sometimes to conjoin and separate, and how to do it all -- so that when you think to rise, you do not fall. Trust only yourself and no other. I can say no more to you if you were my brother."

I will use these pages as a continuing saga of my journeys and lessons, and to make sure I stay connected to the very special people who read the *Alchemy Journal*. Fortuitously, to insure the continued and regular publication of the *Alchemy Journal*, I am very happy to announce that Duane Saari has volunteered to take over the duties of editor. I will still be very active in the journal with updates, articles, and guest editorials, but Duane will handle all the duties of editor. He brings a wealth of expertise to this position. As an online instructor for the Empire State College of the University of New York, Duane is familiar with web publishing and editing. As a student of alchemy and social shamanism, he is an inspiring and wise teacher for anyone interested in Hermetics and the path of personal alchemy. I most heartily welcome his input and assistance!

From the Editor ([Duane Saari](#))

Mahatma Gandhi's words: "My life is my message and my message is my life" have resonated with me since reading them for the first time many years ago. It is with this perspective and a sense of excitement that I accept the responsibility of being the editor of the *Alchemy Journal*. It is another opportunity to live alchemy.

This is a time when alchemy and other ancient knowledge from the underground stream of hermetic teachings are resurfacing. This resurgence is due in part to the cyclical movement of nature. At the same time, in a world of unprecedented change and the dissolution of many structures, we seek out the core ground or essence of our lives to create a new foundation. The truths contained in the knowledge and practice of alchemy are key components of this essence. I see the *Alchemy Journal* as a vehicle that can make this knowledge more accessible and available. I also see the *Journal* as a spring in a shaded glen bringing water from an underground stream to the surface for weary travelers. Read on; you will find it refreshing and invigorating.

Included in this issue are three articles that show the influence and interconnectedness of alchemical concepts. In "The History of Alchemy in America Part 2", Mark Stavish continues the story of the individuals who practiced and promoted the Great Work in the United States. The end of his story will be told in a future issue later this year. Poetry by Rachel Lane, "The Pelican", reminds us of the sacrifice and commitment necessary not only for the Work but the relationships that lie at the heart of it. From another part of the underground stream come insights from the Tarot. Cheryl Lynne Bradley presents some of the significant themes associated with one of the cards in "The Ace of Swords: Seizing the Power of Discernment". Many of us involved in alchemy can appreciate the role of discernment in our lives and will recognize the correspondence between these two Arts.

If you have read this far, you have heard a lot of what I had to say. I know I speak for Dennis when I say we at the *Alchemy Journal* want to hear what you have to say as well. You can do this by sending a message to editor@achemylab.com and commenting on the contents of this issue, what you like about the Journal and what you would like to see included. As editor, I am particularly interested in your response to one of the following questions or both as your Spirit moves you: What would you like to know about alchemy? What would you like others to know?

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Submissions

Submit your articles on any aspect of alchemy. We are looking for biographies, historical articles, practical laboratory work, spagyric recipes, philosophical pieces, experiences in personal transformation, spiritual insights, Hermeticism, Gnosticism, book reviews, film and video reviews, website reviews, artwork, etc. Please submit your material or queries via email to editor@alchemylab.com.

Subscriptions

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Alchemy Resources

- **Alchemergy** (Modern Alchemy) <http://www.Alchemergy.com>
- **Alchemy Guild** (Membership Organization) <http://www.AlchemyGuild.org>
- **Alchemy Lab** (Alchemy Articles, Files, and Gallery) <http://www.AlchemyLab.com>
- **Alchemy Website** (Original Alchemy Texts) <http://www.levity.com/alchemy/>
- **Crucible Catalog** (Books, Tapes, Labware, Tinctures, Herbs) <http://www.Crucible.org>
- **Flamel College** (Alchemy and Hermetic Courses) <http://www.FlamelCollege.org>

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