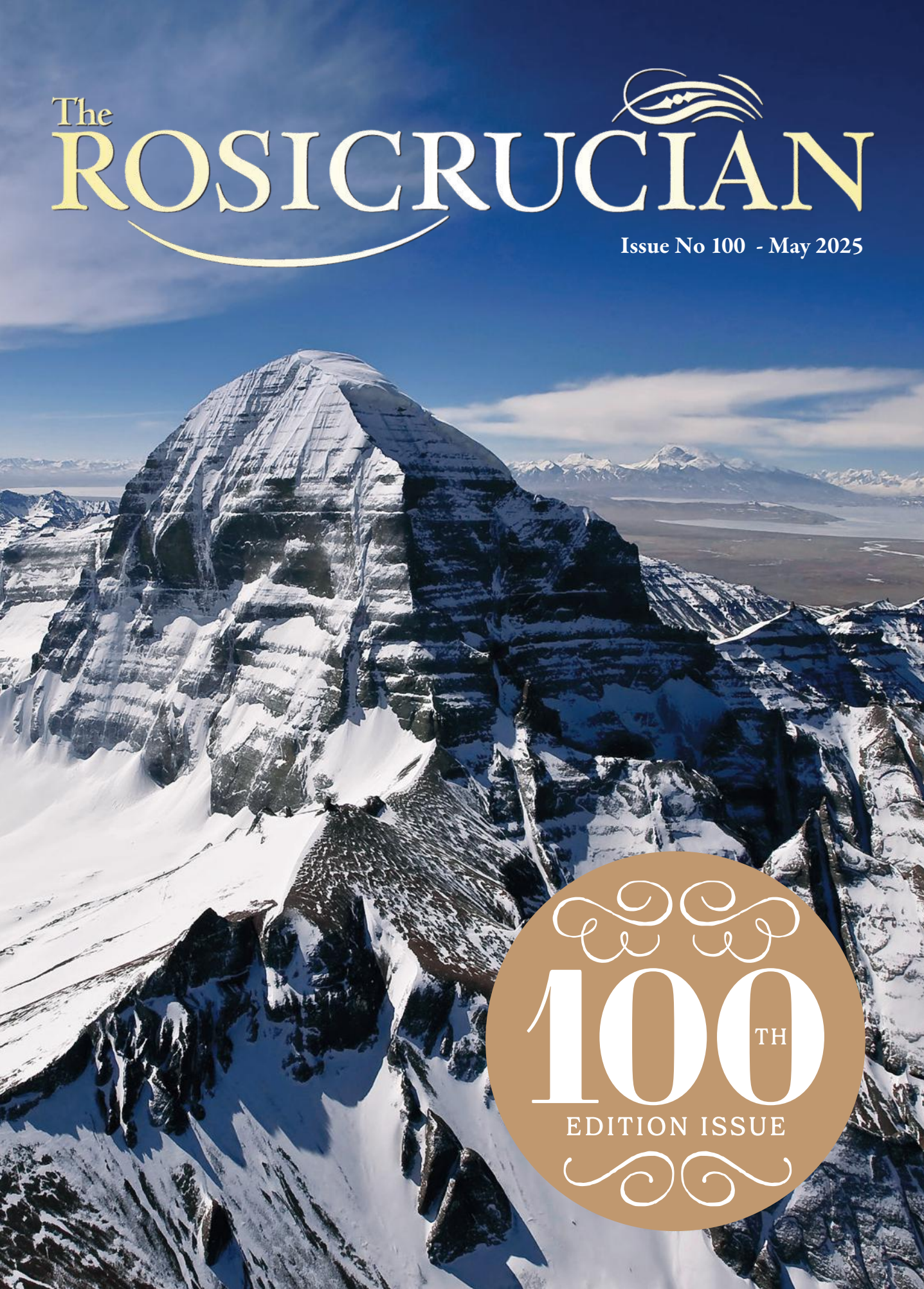
The ROSICRUCIAN

Issue No 100 - May 2025





Contribute to Peace

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When we survey the history of humanity from its very dawn to the modern day, we observe that it is littered with wars. Generally speaking, they are caused by vested economic, political or religious interests: for example, the goods belonging to one or another group of people are appropriated, a particular form of government is imposed, or people are forced to convert to a particular religion. Whatever the cause, the common factor is that the decision to conduct war and the waging thereof is people. People are responsible for the horrors they generate; it is not chance or fate, or even God. Throughout the ages, wars have caused the death of millions of men, women and children, plunging so many families into despair and chaos. Today, the situation is ever more disturbing now that humanity has the means to self-destruct on a planetary scale.

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My Contribution to Peace

I contribute to Peace when I strive to express the best of myself in my contacts with others.

I contribute to Peace when I use my intelligence and abilities to serve Good.

I contribute to Peace when I feel compassion toward all who suffer.

I contribute to Peace when I see all people as my brethren, regardless of race, culture or religion.

I contribute to Peace when I rejoice over the happiness of others and pray for their well-being.

I contribute to Peace when I listen with tolerance to opinions that differ from mine or even oppose them.

I contribute to Peace when I resort to dialogue rather than to force to settle any conflict.

I contribute to Peace when I respect nature and preserve it for generations to come.

I contribute to Peace when I do not seek to impose my conception of God upon others.

I contribute to Peace when I make Peace the foundation of my ideals and philosophy.

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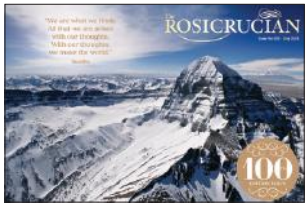
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In the holy power of silence, the sacred peak of Mount Kailash rises to 6,638m as if it is a beacon of light for the hope of peace on earth. Also known as Kangrinboqe Peak, it is located in Ngari Prefecture, Tibet Autonomous Region, China, close to the sacred lakes of Manasarovar and Rakshastal.

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Welcome to the 100th edition of *The Rosicrucian* Magazine

With the publication of this edition of the magazine we complete a significant milestone in its printing and distribution. *The Rosicrucian* continues to shine its light across the world in libraries and in the homes of Rosicrucians or anyone interested in those diverse topics centred around spiritual enquiry—whether it be in the natural world, in humanity or in the cosmos—giving joy to those with a seeking heart and a searching mind.

The Rosicrucian magazine continues a long tradition of the printing and publishing of spiritual, mystical and esoteric literature that has its foundations in 16th and 17th century Europe. It was one of the ways in which many great writers of that period were introduced to each other's works.

For example, the connection between Michael Maier and Robert Fludd was likely formed through sharing the same publishing house of DeBry in Oppenheim; similarly, the partnership of Franciscus Raphelengius and Christophe Plantin was formed in Antwerp and Leiden in the Netherlands when in 1586 they published Geoffrey Whitney's *A Choice of Emblemes, and other devises,* an esoteric allegorical publication. Interestingly, this book contains an image called 'The Scarabee' along with the Latin motto 'Turpibus Exitium'. Readers will notice the similarity with 'Dat Rosa Mel Apibus', a Rosicrucian symbol and motto first used at the head of Joachim Frizius's *Summum Bonum* and then adopted for Robert Fludd's *Clavis* in 1626.

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A copy of Geoffrey Whitney's *A Choice of Emblemes* is housed in the Earle De Motte Research Library of the AMORC Grand Lodge for Australia, Asia and New Zealand, where a rare books collection is located above the print room of *The Rosicrucian* magazine. This example shows the wonderful lineage perpetuated across the globe, even today, by Rosicrucian publishers and writers.

Of course, in the digital age, printing magazines is becoming something of a rarity due to the changing economic landscape and the rise in digital reading devices. *The Rosicrucian* magazine aims to be appealing in both printed and digital form—but still there is something almost otherworldly, a moment in which time stands still, that occurs when one picks up a magazine, for it heralds a time to be still, to be silent, and to breathe deeply and relax in a busy world. Turning the pages reminds us of turning the pages of one's life, and the act of reading brings our soul consciousness that much closer to our fingertips, quite literally.

Turning the pages reminds us of turning the pages of one's life, and the act of reading brings our soul consciousness that much closer to our fingertips, quite literally.

Making time for reading a variety of spiritual texts—perspectives from different authors about the way of life of our spiritual nature—gives us a sense that a divine universal actuality is perhaps made up of the collaborative sum of its parts. This of course includes the diverse and myriad forms of life sharing our magnificent blue jewel in the cosmos, planet Earth.

The first issue of *The Rosicrucian* magazine came out in July 2000. In the preface it stated:

In this year of the millennium, we are offering to our members and the public our main publication, entitled The Rosicrucian. *This magazine will also be published four times a year and will offer the readers articles on mysticism, philosophy, psychology, symbolism, history and the arts.*
– Paul Panikian, editor

Today, as we celebrate the occasion of publishing the 100th edition of our magazine, we would also like to thank the authors of articles and the graphic designers, proofreaders and editors of *The Rosicrucian* magazine, past and present. Many authors have preferred to write under pseudonyms, due to their humble personalities and not wishing to be glorified as authors. In particular, this is a moment to appreciate the tireless work of Grand Master Sven Johansson of the English Grand Lodge for Europe, the Middle East and Africa in preparing and generously supplying significant numbers of articles over the last 25 years, including those written by his own inspired hand, which have been so uplifting.

The Rosicrucian magazine will continue its wide-ranging exploration of the broad expanse of spiritual, esoteric and mystical enquiry of the last 25 years, including spiritual ecology as well as some of the wonderfully evocative authentic narratives of The Rosicrucian Order, AMORC.

Additionally, *The Rosicrucian* Magazine Online Reflections (single articles) will be published on our digital platforms once a month.

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A Holy Mountain of Peace

Celebrating 25 years of *The Rosicrucian* magazine

by **Lucy Crawford-Sandison**
Grand Master of the English Grand Lodge
for Australia, Asia and New Zealand



'Our peace shall stand as firm as rocky mountains.' [1]

William Shakespeare

This quote by William Shakespeare seems to me to be a fitting expression for beginning this message, as it symbolises the hope, which began 25 years ago, for the endurance of our much-treasured magazine, *The Rosicrucian*. If we can pause in deep inner silence and reflect upon the spiritual beauty of this quote, which is like a Rosicrucian motto, it invites us to make peace the firm foundation of our ideals and philosophy.

Not only this, but it has me wondering who each of us is waiting to meet on our soul's 'theatre stage of the earth' on our personal spiritual journey. Who will be standing among us as the agents of peace in future times, resolute and immovable— perhaps even as formidable protectors standing as firm as a rocky mountain with the message of peace—among those who increasingly experience themselves as *'citizens of the world?'*

We might observe that the motto conveys a dual activity in the building of peace. On the one hand it points out that being committed to the ideal of peace within us is also about protecting peace firmly. This could mean transforming negative, aggressive environments and systems into peaceful ones. On the other hand, and perhaps most crucially, it highlights that the energies of peace which are collectively built by humans will create veritable mountains of peaceful qualities in our world. Each day we build peace if we are well-attuned with our divine nature and are creatively drawing upon a permanent relationship of guidance with the highest and most sacred source of our existence. When we are elevating our consciousness towards a universal consciousness, we will build our most stable and high mountains of peace—personally, in groups and as humanity creating *'spiritual mountains'* of peace on earth.

As I ponder the 25 years since the publication of the first issue of *The Rosicrucian* magazine, it seems obvious that the Rosicrucian Order has grown in its international connectivity and collaborative landscape during the first quarter of the 21st century. Isolated operations and independent mindsets have gradually merged, birthing new potential for delivering the Order's message of peace in ever more integrative ways.

So the perception of a mountain of peace being gradually built through the dissemination of worldwide spiritual literature, such as we find in *The Rosicrucian* magazine, is a happy one. Material from a broad range of wisdoms has been earnestly gathered, providing diverse perspectives ranging from rational enquiry to reflective narrative, and from the poetic to the scientific. All have had the aim of giving insights into our spiritual nature across many cultures, peoples, places and times, and have thereby given insights into that peace which pervades humanity's collective soul life.

Peace is perhaps the greatest gift we humans can contribute to life on earth, in appreciation of our existence here.

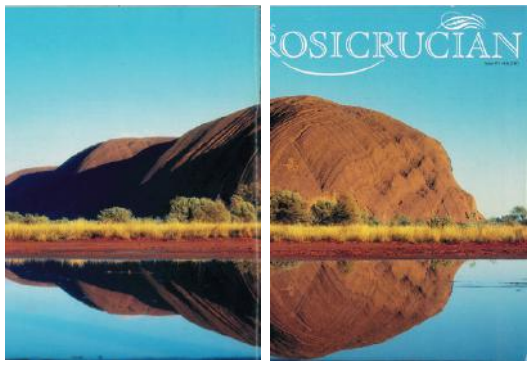
Despite the problems and atrocities committed daily in the world by the minds of those who have not yet learned the value of peace, there is an exponential growth of worldwide spiritual literature which has either directly or indirectly been contributing to the building of peace on earth. The peace that comes with an intimate awareness of the life of our soul is of course

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an abundant source of discovery about the dimensions and little details of the spiritual life within us.

Uluru on the cover of *The Rosicrucian* magazine No. 1, July 2000



The cover of the first *The Rosicrucian* magazine featured a truly ancient rocky symbol of *'the meaning of spiritual life within'*, namely, Uluru. This huge outcrop of sandstone, its surface ever-changing from a light orange radiance to deep purple hues, is vivified by the sun's daily journey around it. Uluru, *'the great pebble'*, has a powerful yet peaceful presence on the desert horizon in the red heart of Australia, which seems to be reinforced by a constant interplay of ever-changing light effects. Many a traveller who has gazed upon it will say it seems alive. This is no surprise, for Uluru has always held deep spiritual significance for its custodians, the *Anangu* people, who believe it is a living, breathing landscape created by ancestral beings.

To our ordinary vision, every fold in the rock, made by the wind or occasional rains, has etched physical impressions onto this great pebble's story. But to Uluru's custodians the outcomes are the effects of the activities of ancestral beings and laws which are recalled in Dreaming stories—some perhaps reflected in its ephemeral, crystal-clear ponds and others in its creased ravines and wavelike caves, which are used as didactic 'teaching walls' for sharing knowledge.

Tourists sitting around campfires, listening to the heritage being recounted by Uluru's custodians, surely leave with an impression that this place has been made sacred by the thoughts, words and actions of countless generations who have made it live through a deep spiritual relationship between people and place, ancestors and Dreaming.



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As with so many *'sacred sites'*, the whole atmosphere seems to me, from a mystical perspective, to be imbued with the thought-forms and subtle impressions of wisdom-bearing activities. Ritual life is granted pre-eminence over ordinary mundane activities, and even the functional tasks of life are, in many cases, just as valued as a part of the ceremonial and wisdom-bearing landscape. As Rosicrucians, when we attune and harmonise with the Cosmic—that body of universal laws and principles arising from a divine source—we are led to experience a beautiful unity between the natural world, the inner life of people, and the nature of the universe.

We experience the here-and-now, and yet our soul life is nourished by that which is beyond space and time. We may call this 'timelessness' or 'eternity', but a better description can be found in words such as *'being'* and *'becoming'* when we are attempting to bridge perceptions—almost as if the words are the soul's translation of *'space'* and *'time.'*

Nature-based conceptions and landscape energies

Those whose traditions hallow the importance of the *'earth mysteries'*, that body of wisdom which recognises signs and energies arising from the landscape, will stand firm on the importance of *'an archaeology of invisible energies.'* These are considered hidden, though waiting to be revealed through site-specific natural forces in the landscape.

Forces that have made particular places more conducive than others to becoming a holy place of reverence in the first place incorporate special vibrational qualities of the geology, movements of underground water, and natural, ready-made forms that are auspicious and have notable orientations to the sun or the stars. Beyond the physical credentials, a site's qualities are believed to be more or less conducive to retaining elevated thought impressions.

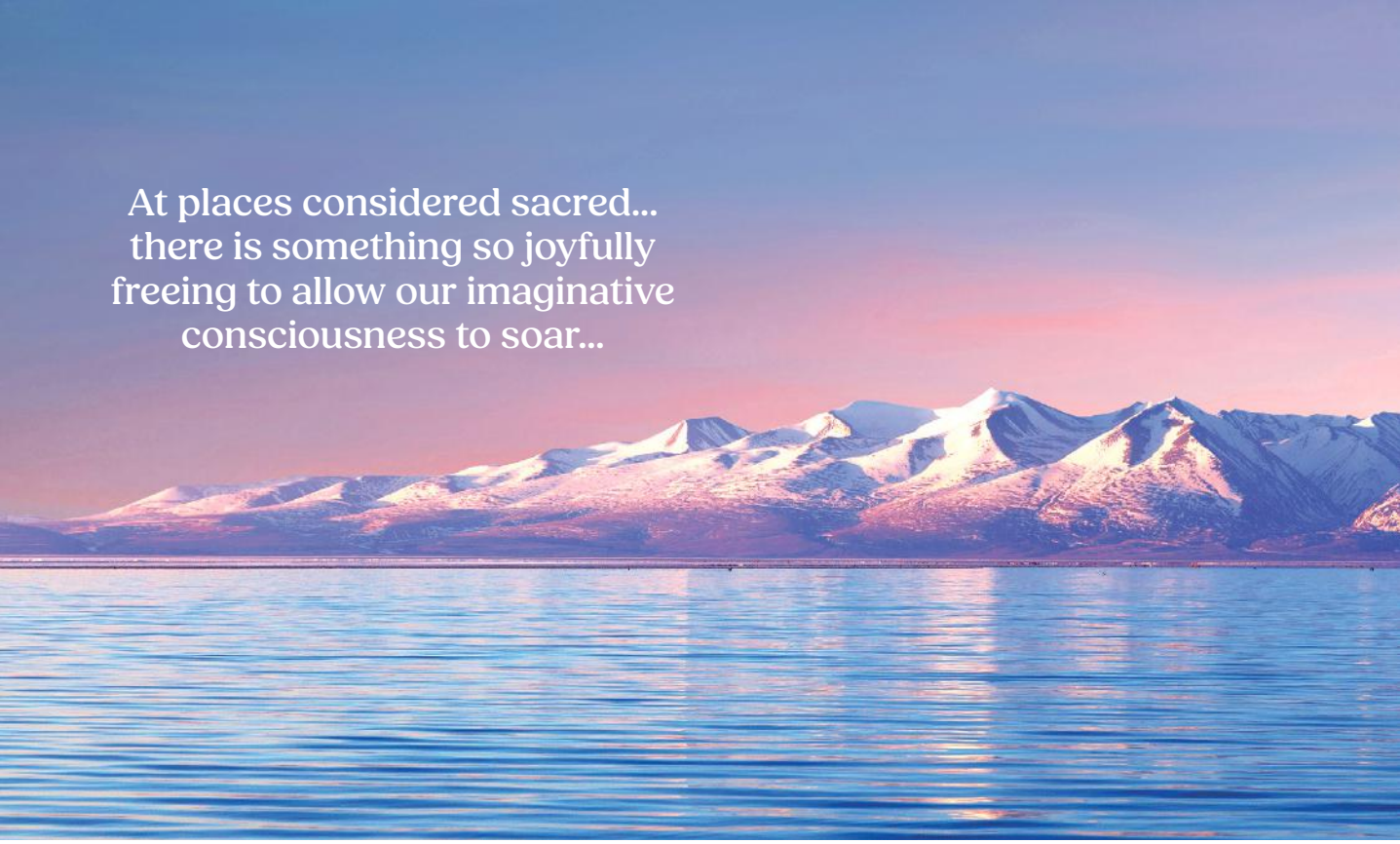


istockphoto / Anton Aleksenko

So, in this way, the deliberate movements, prayers, chanting and architecture of ritual life on a site only further embellish the natural readiness for high levels of resonance between people and the places believed to be holy environments. In this, a nature-based conception, even for a person with a deeply closed mindset, could be somewhat opened by such an environment. They will feel its peace, even if not being very aware of it. Some people might propose that, even thousands of years after all ceremonies have ended, the power of new reverent thought-forms in these once holy places will resurrect dormant impressions from the past.

It is no coincidence then that an array of narratives abounds about visitations by *'masters of wisdom'* to rekindle impressions left there, or to leave more impressions for future seekers. Whatever one's beliefs

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Lake Manasarovar

istockphoto / Zzvet

and authentic mystical experiences, it is certain that any place made sacred by our thoughts, words and conduct will envelop anyone who enters with a sense of peace, and they will leave feeling much the better for having had such an experience.

Tours to sacred places

When we hold Rosicrucian tours in Egypt, it is usual for participants to have an immersive experience of the holiness of a place. Generally, it is experienced as a subtle atmosphere which envelops them—perhaps even an imaginative or psychic experience of the place's former days, and glimpses of the ritual life held as ceremonies there. Many an instructive moment arises out of these place-based revelations. It is our innermost sanctuary of self which generates the impetus for imaginal thinking, intuitions and inspirations so useful to us.

Of course, we can never presume to truly know the sacred relationship that the ancient Egyptians felt towards their temples, any more than a visitor can understand the significance of Uluru. But nevertheless it is through our psychic faculties that a deeper understanding arises and becomes specifically meaningful or educative for our life's path. If we are wholeheartedly searching to build a pathway of peace, we will surely be given inspirations that will help us on our way.

Sacred landscapes

At places considered sacred, whether they be mountains, lakes or streams, and even trees or rocky outcrops, there is something so joyfully freeing that allows our imaginative consciousness to soar and to join together the high sanctuaries of reverence which are dotted across the face of the earth. Just knowing that these holy places exist and continue to be revered by people creates bonds of peace between us and the *'high spiritual places of the Earth'*, in whatever form that may be. Such invisible bridges represent the potential of a world community without borders; one that reveres and elevates the greatest wisdoms that humanity

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can outpour from its most refined expressions of the *Universal Soul*. These bonds unite our quest for the very best human contribution to life on earth.

If we close our eyes and imagine a pristine mountain stream filled with the light of the sun, it fills us with hope, reverence and joy. We observe the sparking outpouring of the soul, a light in the world that we see in the eyes of another. It symbolises everything that a mother sees in the gaze of her newborn child: the innocent glory of new life, untainted by the struggles and strains of life that can and will leave us with troubled minds and hearts if we do not learn spiritual techniques.

If we close our eyes and imagine a pristine mountain stream filled with the light of the sun, it fills us with hope, reverence and joy.

A pure stream symbolises the hope that all people remain true to their spiritual nature—that peace-filled divine child in touch with the universe. Abiding cheerfully in our divinity and being able to joyfully see the world though naïve eyes allows us the breathing space to build mountains of peace out of the transformed debris of our woes and troubles. It is not an easy task to constantly be transforming the debris of our most unrefined, even downright destructive, thoughts, words and actions—otherwise known quite simply as our *'Karmic debt.'* If we are tempted to put our feet up and just wallow in the superficial pleasures of human life and take more than we give to creating peace, it will certainly not be good for us or anyone else. As the mystic author J.R.R. Tolkien said in *The Lord of the Rings:*

> He loved mountains, or he had loved the thought of them marching on the edge of stories brought from far away; but now he was borne down by the insupportable weight of Middle Earth. He longed to shut out the immensity in a quiet room by a fire.

100th edition cover

In continuing the heritage of Rosicrucian ideals for peace—symbolised by those *'high holy places'* of peace—it seems fitting to celebrate this 100th edition of *The Rosicrucian* with a front cover picture which I feel complements Uluru and which resides as another holy place in the far reaches of the Australasian jurisdiction. This is the holy mountain of *Kailash*, located in the *Gangdisê* mountains of the western Tibetan plateau. It is sacred in the Buddhist, Hindu, Jain and Bon religions.

The holy mountain and its high mountain lake, *Manasarovar*, are surrounded by pristine mountain springs which are the source of four major rivers. Often



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For Hindus, Lake Manasarovar is the home of Lord Shiva.

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considered the physical embodiment of the mythical Mount Meru in Buddhist and Hindu cosmology, Mount Kailash thereby gains the association of being the centre of the universe. Tibetan Buddhists call it *'Kangri Rinpoche'* (Precious Snow Mountain). For Jains it is where their first spiritual leader, *Rishabhadeva*, was enlightened. And for Hindus it is the home of *Lord Shiva*, the god of creation and destruction united with the gentle, nurturing aspect of the goddess *Parvati*, in a state of perpetual meditation and accompanied by their holy family. Unanimously, it is revered by pilgrims as the *'land of absolute peace'.*

Juan Jimenez-Velasco tells us that:

> Tradition says that a single circuit around Kailash purifies the karma of a whole lifetime, and ten times around the Holy Mountain will purify the karma of numerous existences. One hundred and eight ritual circuits of the mountain will ensure freedom in this lifetime.[2]

'Tradition says that a single circuit around Kailash purifies the karma of a whole lifetime, and ten times around the Holy Mountain will purify the karma of numerous existences.'

Those intending to carry out a ritual encircling of the mountain, the *'Parikrama'*, must first take a ritual bath in Lake Manasarovar. Pilgrims leave small cairns of carefully carved stones to express their devotion, and make traditional prayers of *'Om Mani Padme Hum'* (Hail to the jewel of the lotus.) Visualise yourself standing on those shores, looking up at the great mountain and being enfolded in the deep peace and sanctity of it all.

The concept of having a relationship between *circumambulation cycles* and *karmic debt repayments* is, almost certainly, a form of allegorical education about qualities hidden in the landscape, both in the outer symbolic landscape and the inner landscape of the life of our soul. Laws of the universe are contained in the idea of the circumambulation of the universal spiritual mountain of peace, *Meru*. Spiritual principles are exchanged for effort. If we can imagine overlaying such a feat of resilience, almost as if watching ourselves in a tiny dewdrop held in the palm of our hand, we might witness the exact moment when we fully become humble and willing co-operators in transforming our own karmic debts in order to help build the mountain of peace.

And yet, when we leave the truly revered holy landmarks of our world, either mentally or physically, and reintegrate with the rest of the created world, we would do well to acknowledge that each and every part of the natural world resonates with the inner life of people. This being so, there should be no difference in the way we experience gazing upon a muddy meadow or a dusty, dried-out pond and they way we gaze upon an overwhelmingly beautiful horizon of snow-capped peaks. It is we who change to elevate any relationships with the environment around us, including other people.

Nevertheless, it is a part of being truly human that the sight of those elevated giants of rock and crystalline mass, such as Uluru or Kailash, beckons us to rise to the highest nobility that the life of our soul offers us—well above any petty, little-me, ego-driven insecurities of our identity. Attuning with those sacred pools and calm high mountain lakes, we are temporarily freed from the seeming *'thought-form density'* of cities, commanding our quiet, focused, serene reflection as a protective measure against the scattering, attention-grabbing information superhighways on our computer and mobile phone screens. These silent abodes invite us to truly abide in the complete restful state of balance on all

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levels of our being—physically, mentally, emotionally and spiritually—a state which eventually leads to a permanence of this unity, known to Rosicrucians as *'Peace Profound'.*

We know that, despite our cleverness, competitiveness and technology, we will never surpass the immaculate, exquisite refinement of the workings of the natural world. We know that the information superstore of AI cannot match even a square inch of the intelligence that the natural world displays in abundance. How can we even for one moment dare to downplay nature's role as being the prime mover of a finely honed instrument of the divine mind upon our earth?

It is my opinion that we can only be humbled and watch on in awe, building peace through our reverence and consecrating our interactions with the masterpiece of divine universal consciousness that is our earth. However, we are all a part of the natural world's evolution, its perfecting of divine beauty, truth and goodness. As such, we are co-creative agents in the spiritual structures built out of our wise designs using Light, Life and Love, within which can be felt our gift of peace on earth.

On the fourth Sunday of June each year, Rosicrucians hold a group event called *'Meditation for Peace'* and are asked to reflect on being agents of peace. The inside front cover shows the applicable words, which are applicable at any time and are especially uplifting to reflect upon when we are in natural settings, surrounded by myriad life forms—birds, trees, flowers and creatures large and small—who, like us, are custodians, in one way or another, of the life that will animate and bring life to another being one day—hopefully upon a peaceful planet Earth.

Footnotes

1. William Shakespeare, *Henry IV,* Part II, Act IV, Scene 1'
2. Juan Jimenez-Velasco, 'Mount Kailash', *The Rosicrucian*, February 2023



istockphoto / Leila Coker

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by **Claudio Mazzucco**
Imperator of AMORC

The Value of the Past

Go back to the past and
that will be real progress.
–– Giuseppe Verdi ––

These are fascinating words coming from the great maestro of Italian music who left his mark on global culture. Let us reflect on how this idea can help us evolve as we walk upon our path of spiritual unfoldment, the roots of which are lost to history. Many people tend to describe the past as a period when there was more respect between people, more discipline, respect for the public good, a sense of civic duty, and generally less superficiality. They see that, compared to the past, there is today a deterioration of the foundational values of society, dragging people into ever greater decline while more and more people from the younger generations are avoidably distracted by things that are entirely shallow and fleeting.

The human mind tends to value the past in a biased way, by preferentially remembering its benefits while often failing to see the benefits of our own times. Neuroscientists study this phenomenon to learn more about the

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functioning of the brain. For example, consider what a toothache meant years ago, or an infection before penicillin, and we realise how much worse life could be than it is today. And remember, in Europe only seventy-five years ago we were in the middle of a war that resulted in millions of deaths.

In looking at things like this, some might think that an initiatic Order is like a religion, preserving ancient customs that have lost their meaning, and that joining such an Order is a desperate attempt to preserve the past while not keeping up with the present. It is therefore necessary to clarify our position. Certainly, as Rosicrucians we do not want to return to the horse and cart, but if there is something of value in the past then this needs to be preserved. So we are talking about making a constant re-evaluation of what from the past may be considered *'real progress'* today rather than something that might be fascinating about the past but not of value today.

We use words, gestures and symbols that come down to us from a remote past, and these we strive to keep both living and unaltered.

The word *'value'* can be applied to distinguishing between what in the past should be continued and what should be discarded. For the Order, everything that raises human moral and spiritual consciousness has value. But we no longer post manifestos on church doors as our fratres of the past did because, while freely promoting our ideas has value, we use modern methods of communication to do so. Yet, as communication becomes more and more technological and effective, we still think it is essential for people to meet in person and not only via social networks.

There are aspects of human nature that have greatly changed over the centuries. We are beings who are shaped by relationships with the environment, with others, with ourselves and with our own ideas of God. All these relationships make us who we are and contribute to the process we call *'evolution'.* For this reason, our rituals are to be conducted as they always have been: in the privacy and solitude of our own Sanctum, or at an Affiliated Body together with other members. We use words, gestures and symbols that come down to us from a remote past, and these we strive to keep both living and unaltered.

From a certain point of view, Rosicrucianism can be seen as a chivalric tradition. This tradition has distant origins that can be found in the Christian world and the Islamic world, characterised by the high ideals of honour and justice. Respect for all people and their dignity is considered a value worth striving for. The sword, a knightly symbol, is a symbol of the justice to which we aspire. The horse is the ego that would drag the aspiring knight off to wherever its desires can be satisfied but which must be tamed and subjected to the will of its master.

The true Rosicrucian is, above all, a *'Knight of the Rose Cross'*, and although in the modern world every commitment must be signed by a notary to have any value, for a Knight of the Rose Cross his word is his bond before the symbol of the Rose Cross. The values of knighthood are still relevant and necessary, and as Rosicrucians we hold them dear.

Courtesy; respect for diversity; protecting the weak; emphasising justice, honour and the value of one's word; having a heart that can respond to sacred symbols; respecting different faiths; and sharing in a spirit of fraternity—these are all values that come from a distant past but which, when lived today, represent real progress for all humanity. As already mentioned, *'to change'* does not always mean creating something completely new, but often, as Verdi reminds us, bringing new life to the past.

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Australasian Pioneers of the Mystical Torch

by **Celestina Sagazio PhD**

This article was written from the valuable archives of the Grand Lodge Earle de Motte Research Library in the beautiful town of Strathalbyn, South Australia. It is an historian's dream to be surrounded by many books, historical documents, artifacts and photographs, and it has also been a wonderful experience to be close to nature and bird life.

The library was opened by our beloved Imperator Claudio Mazzucco on 22 January 2024, and we will continue to collect significant information as a legacy for our members. As a member who was lucky to know and be inspired by Fr Earle de Motte, I am delighted to share this information with you from the library bearing his illustrious name.

In 2030 the Rosicrucian Order AMORC will celebrate its 100th anniversary in Australasia, marking the centenary of the first Convocation conducted in Australia, on 5 January 1930. As an introduction to that auspicious occasion, and for this 100th edition of *The Rosicrucian* magazine, we celebrate in this article the wonderful pioneering spirit of many early dedicated Rosicrucians in our jurisdiction.

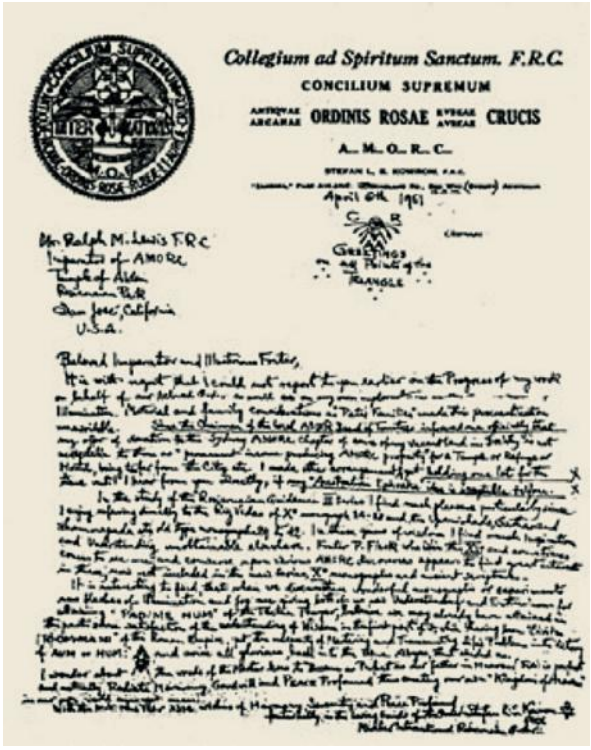
In 1915 the remarkable Harvey Spencer Lewis established the modern cycle of the Rosicrucian Order in America. It was a significant step forward for global consciousness as the teachings of the Order gradually spread throughout the world. The Supreme Council, whose headquarters became located at

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ORDO ROSAE CRUCIS

Rosicrucian Park, San Jose, California from 1927, had an overarching role in the management and development of AMORC groups across the world, including those far-away places in Australasia, whose members were issued teachings and directives for its activities by post. Handwritten letters between the leadership personnel in America and those elected to serve in Australasia became a beautiful testimony to the movement that was rapidly finding a home in the hearts of those who were deeply inspired to the mystical torch of the Order.

There is evidence that there were members in Australasia during the 1910s and 1920s. The first issue of *The American Rosae Crucis* (January 1916) tells us that the co-founder of AMORC, May Banks-Stacey, travelled to far-off countries, including Australia, China and the Philippines. While it is not known if May Banks-Stacey visited Rosicrucians in those countries, we do know that there were several Rosicrucian


Collegium ad Spiritum Sanctum. F.R.C.
CONCILIUM SUPREMUM
ORDINIS ROSAE CRUCIS
A. M. O. R. C.
April 6th 1921
Greetings
Mr. Ralph M. Lewis F.R.C.
Inspector of AMORC
Light of Asia
Rosicrucian Park
San Jose, California
U.S.A.

Early handwritten letter



Mary Henrietta (May) Banks-Stacey



New Zealander Jean Batten was nicknamed the 'Queen of the Skies' for her record-breaking flights of the 1930s.

associate editors of the journal who reported on countries now part of our Australasian jurisdiction: Miss M. Earsman (Australia), Professor George Brown (New Zealand), Lady Ida Brooks (China), Professor C. Magala Desai (Bombay, now Mumbai), Mohamed Ismail, I.G.O.H. (Ceylon, now Sri Lanka), Chavakar Annasame Rao (Madras Presidency) and Sir N. Irnathellickerjo Lemindar (Bengal).

The 1920s and 1930s were times of great tension, conflict and change as nations battled for world domination and endured economic crises. However, idealism survived, evidenced by the growth of spiritual movements such as ours. It was also an amazing, innovative period for pioneering feats, such as aviation adventure, that seemed to be mirrored by the growing activities of Rosicrucians across the Australian region. It is fascinating that, in 1919, the first flight from England to Australia was halfway through its month-long trip, en route touching down in many countries of our jurisdiction today: Pakistan, India, Myanmar, Thailand, Singapore, and Indonesia. During this time, Rosicrucian pioneers also travelled far and went to many lengths to share spiritual wisdom with others in many of these countries.

Early Rosicrucian endeavours in India were revealed in a 1921 edition of *Mystic Triangle*, which

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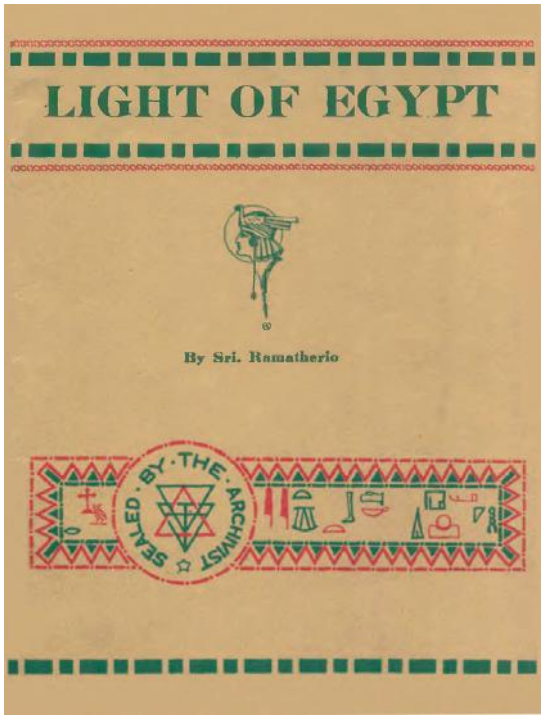
identified the location of a Rosicrucian temple located near Cape Coromin and the efforts to build a lodge in Java, East India. By 1927, at Surabaya in the Dutch East Indies, there were Rosicrucian activities through the Dutch pioneers of our Order.

There were also early Rosicrucians in China. In 1949 Frater I. Gridneff, who was for many years Grand Master of the Order's jurisdiction for Russia and China and a member of the International Rosicrucian Council, decided to leave China after the rise of communism and live in Sydney, where he enjoyed the activities of the Sydney Chapter.

It is interesting that two migrants to Australia played a formative role in our history. Soror Anna Olga Bindschedler, a Swiss Doctor of Law, has been celebrated as the first crusader and pioneer of the Light of the Rosy Cross on Australian soil. She arrived in Australia in 1924 for the second time and bravely endeavoured to spread the light of the Order across Australia, travelling great distances. Sr Anna's pioneering spirit propelled her to leave her native land and venture into a far-away country which held so much promise for accepting the spiritual path. But this period was predominately a materialistic, self-centred one, when most people were not ready for mystical wisdom. In a newspaper article in July 1937, it states that 'After



Frater Stefan L. Kowron showing his logo for attracting new membership.



having travelled and studied in most countries on the Continent [Europe], and in England and America, Dr. Anna Olga Bindschelder, Swiss Doctor of Laws, has come to make her home in Adelaide. She has been to Russia three times since 1930...' The article also reveals her promotion of women's roles in parliament and civil life, as well as describing her attendance at the University of Adelaide (in South Australia), where she was studying to reinforce her professional qualifications for use in Australia. According to our 1952 history booklet, she worked as a nurse. It is likely this was during the period when her professional qualifications were not recognised. The booklet also states that Sr Anna wrote a letter in 1928 to the Imperator, Dr Harvey Spencer Lewis, in San Jose, America. While the correspondence has not been found, we do know through contemporary accounts that Sr Anna was reporting on her efforts to spread the light in Australia and sought help.

Assistance was indeed on the way when another member of the Order had made an important life decision. In Shanghai, China, a Polish frater, Stefan

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L. Skowronski (later changed to Kowron), who was a tuberculosis sufferer, decided to move to a country with a better climate and chose Australia in early 1927. Fr Stefan Kowron was destined to advance the light of the Order in Australasia, but difficulties with immigration laws meant that he stayed only six months and travelled on to New Zealand. As a mystic who felt guided by the divine, Fr Stefan returned to Sydney in February 1928 and commenced his mission to grow the Order in this region.

With the approval of Imperator Dr Harvey Spencer Lewis, Fr Stefan worked from his flat in Bondi, Sydney and paid for advertisements in various publications, initially from his own pocket. A couple of the journals included articles on the Order, and a booklet 'The Light of Egypt' promoted the teachings and origins of the Order. In due course, membership applications began to be sent to the AMORC headquarters in San Jose.

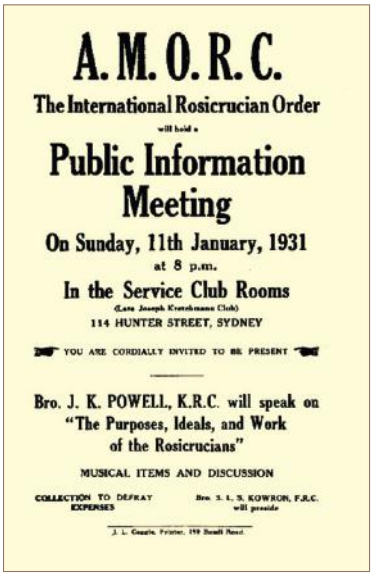
Fr Stefan contacted Sr Anna and warmly accepted the mystical torch to expand the Order. Shortly, he would receive the assistance of a loyal and dedicated group of helpers. Encouraged by this fine work, Sr Anna left Australia in 1929 and returned to Europe. Sr Anna Bindschedler has rightly earned a treasured place in our hearts and historical records as a dedicated pioneer. From her Swiss home, Sr Anna wrote a letter, dated 24 September 1929, to Fr Stefan with these inspiring and prophetic words:

'Never mind that the few new members are scattered all over Australia…You know that despite the fact that I could only win a few new members and most of my efforts seemed to meet with failure, I was always very optimistic about the future of the Rosy Cross in Australia. Australasia needs Light, Life, and Love, and it will be only a question of time when it will be ready to receive it.'

Sr Anna was proved right, for in the next decade two chapters, in New Zealand (1934) and in Sydney (1938), and a smaller group in Melbourne (1935) were born.



Soror Anna Olga Bindschedler



A. M. O. R. C.

The International Rosicrucian Order

will hold a

Public Information Meeting

On Sunday, 11th January, 1931

at 8 p.m.

In the Service Club Rooms

(Late Joseph Kretchmann Club)

114 HUNTER STREET, SYDNEY

YOU ARE CORDIALLY INVITED TO BE PRESENT

Bro. J. K. POWELL, K.R.C. will speak on "The Purposes, Ideals, and Work of the Rosicrucians"

MUSICAL ITEMS AND DISCUSSION

COLLECTION TO DEFRAY EXPENSES

Bro. S. L. S. KOWRON, F.R.C. will preside

J. L. Cousin, Printer, 199 Bondi Road.

Advert for a public information meeting in Sydney 1931.



Ancient and Mystical Order Rosæ Crucis

North American Jurisdiction

R C

THIS DISPENSATION

has been granted by the Ministers of the American Supreme Council of the above Order to Fratres:

Sholen L. S. Kowron, Albert G. Mitchell, C. A. Ramsay, Sarsaras, Annie Gammon, Mary Stanfield, Maud Moran, Ada E. Taylor

And the Brothers and Sisters Composing the Australian Subordinate Grand Lodge of AMORC

who are hereby and herewith empowered to organize a Lodge of this Order, in accordance with the Laws of the Ministers governing the Establishment of Chartered Groups.

It is understood, that this Dispensation grants its powers for a period terminating at the Annual National R. C. Election, in March of 1933, and that the rights and privileges of this Group, known as the

"Australian Subordinate Grand Lodge of AMORC"

are subject to the Laws of the Grand Lodge of said Order for the Jurisdiction in which it is located (Subordinate to North American Jurisdiction)

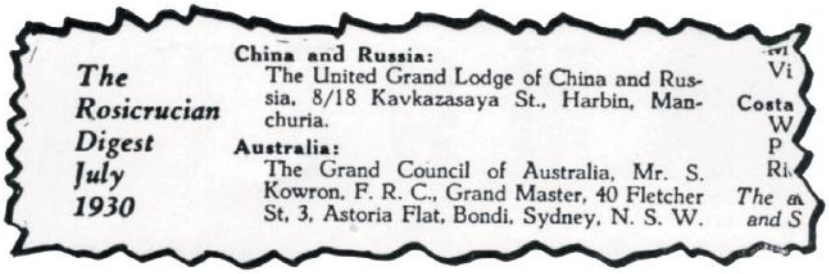
Signed and Sealed this 23rd day of May A. D. 1932.

Frank Thurston

SEALED BY THE AMERICAN SUPREME COUNCIL

Charter for Australian Subordinate Grand Lodge, 1932

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The Rosicrucian Digest July 1930

China and Russia:
The United Grand Lodge of China and Russia, 8/18 Kavkazasaya St., Harbin, Manchuria.

Australia:
The Grand Council of Australia, Mr. S. Kowron, F. R. C., Grand Master, 40 Fletcher St, 3, Astoria Flat, Bondi, Sydney, N. S. W.

Information from the Rosicrucian Digest, *July 1930 (USA)*

New Zealand members, like their Australian colleagues, were quick off the mark. Six members came together on 19 May 1931 for the purpose of forming a group. The first meeting of Rosicrucian members in Auckland was a study group which came together in May 1932, with nine present, and subsequent meetings were held until January 1934, when the first meeting of Auckland Chapter took place. On 9 July 1935 the first Convocation was conducted at room 317, Victoria Arcade, which was the home of the Chapter for nearly nineteen years. In 1949 a former church building was acquired with spiritual help from members (through prayers and visualisations) from their sanctums and places of employment. Such devotion paid off, for Auckland became the first Chapter south of the Equator (apart from South America) to have its own premises. Another fortuitous occurrence was that the incoming Master, Fr W. Beech, was an architect who was able to offer expert advice in establishing the new temple. The Chapter became a Lodge in 1949.

In the 1930s Melbourne members established the Order in their city. It is part of our folklore that two sorores met in synchronistic circumstances; some would call this encounter divine intervention. In 1935 a package of AMORC literature was wrongly delivered to Sr Olive Cox, a teacher who had joined the Order in that year, instead of Sr Emma Rawson. It was this act that brought together for the first time two members of the Order living very close to each other in the comfortable Melbourne suburb of Hawthorn. They placed an advertisement in a daily newspaper, which resulted in informal meetings of about a dozen Rosicrucians.

At first, the members met in each other's homes, such as Sr Olive Cox's house at 179 Rathmines Road, Hawthorn East, and then in rented premises and finally in their own building. It was largely the enthusiasm, high ideals and hard work of these sorores and their Rosicrucian colleagues over the next few years that laid the foundations of the Melbourne group, which went from strength to strength. In 1945 the informal group became Harmony Chapter, with Fr Fred Whiteway as the first Master and Sr Olive Cox as one of the administrative officers.



Members of Auckland Lodge, c.1980



Harmony Chapter officers in 1945.

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Harmony Chapter officers in 1953.



Members outside of Harmony Lodge in the 1970s.

In Brisbane, in 15 March 1947, the first meeting of some fifteen members of the Order met to discuss the prospects of obtaining official recognition by the headquarters in San Jose. The Brisbane Chapter was established in 1948 through the efforts of Fr John McKenna, the first Secretary of the Chapter, and other devoted members. This meeting led to lectures being given over a three-month period, during which many new members were admitted to the Order. The first Master was Fr William H. Monteith, and the first Convocation was held on 20 November 1948.

The formation of Adelaide Chapter occurred after San Jose lecturer Fr William Norris visited in 1948, inspiring members to band together. The first meeting was held on 2 April 1948; Fr Arthur Adamson was the prime mover in establishing the Chapter. Fr Arthur was elected the first Master, and the first Convocation was held on 16 August 1948. Adelaide Chapter was later renamed Light Chapter. The new premises were acquired at Pooraka in 1983.

The first Rosicrucian Bombay (now Mumbai) Pronaos was set up in 1950 by Fr Dhunjishaw D. Patel, Grand Councillor for AMORC in India, along with his friend and office colleague, Fr H. Daji, and the members were fortunate to have a permanent premises. In the late 1950s a visit by Imperator Ralph M. Lewis enchanted the members, who described him as 'one in a million'. The Pronaos stopped operating in about 1974. The Mumbai Pronaos was revived in 1998, initially as an Atrium, due to the impetus of two young women, Lovie and Nivie, at that time. An apartment was used as a venue for the Atrium. The Atrium became a Pronaos, and it continued to grow for the next twenty years. In more recent years, numbers have declined.



Rosicrucian Assembly in Bombay.

The Wellington Chapter in New Zealand was established in 1952, with Fr Norman Spencer as the first Master. The inaugural Convocation was held on 14 March 1952. Activities have included public meetings, film evenings, outings for orphans, and picnics. In 1952 Sr Winifred S. Crump became the first Treasurer of the Board of Trustees and later served two terms as Master. In 1963 Sr Winifred was appointed Inspector-General of AMORC for New Zealand, and one of her first tasks was to help the Imperator with the work of establishing

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the Australasian Administration at Auckland. Today there are another two Atrium Groups, in Nelson and Christchurch.

The Singapore Pronaos was established by 1957 (it was officially listed in government records in 1957 but could have existed before then) and later became a Chapter. Until 1974 the Singapore Chapter held meetings and other activities within the premises of the YWCA building on Raffles Quay. Then it met at other places, and during this time the Chapter reverted to the status of Pronaos. A highlight in recent years was the visit of our engaging Imperator Claudio Mazzucco for the 2024 Stella Convention, which took place in, and attracted members from, various parts of Southeast Asia, Australia and New Zealand.



Imperator Frater Claudio Mazzucco looking at a map of the Affiliated Bodies across the Australasian Jurisdiction, during the Stella 2024 Convention.

Some of the Order's Affiliated Bodies in the largest cities prospered in the 1960s and 1970s. Sydney Chapter became Sydney Lodge in 1962, with a broad range of well-attended activities and the membership growing to as many as 200 in later years. The Sydney group is currently a Pronaos.

In 1964 the Brisbane Chapter acquired its own premises, situated at 12 Princhester Street, West End, Brisbane. With its own building, the Chapter was able to embark on a fuller program, including lectures and social events. In 1978 the Chapter bought the beautiful former Masonic temple at Norman Park, and the Chapter became known as Brisbane Lodge in 1985. The Lodge added a two-storey masonry extension on the western side of the building in 1989.



Temple of Sydney Lodge, located in Redfern.

The foundation of Roy Eva Pronaos in Ballarat, Victoria was inspired by a Harmony Chapter Conclave (Convention), held in May 1966, to mark the 21st birthday of the Chapter. Senior AMORC official Fr Earle de Motte was an important player in contacting members in the Ballarat district and placing an advertisement in the local newspaper. There was a meeting on 19 November 1966, in which a petition to form a Pronaos was signed. There were twelve members present as well as nine members from Harmony Chapter to witness the event. Fr Ken Hall, a solicitor, was selected as the first Master. Imperator Ralph M. Lewis formally recognised the establishment of the new Pronaos by letter dated 7 December 1966.



Brisbane Lodge, Norman Park

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The first formal meeting of the Pronaos took place on 11 February 1967 at the boardroom of the Greater Ballarat Association, situated at the rear of the Victorian Tourist Bureau offices at 34 Lydiard Street North. Those present were twelve Pronaos members and four Harmony Chapter visitors, including Fr Earle de Motte and Sr Olive Cox, a Rosicrucian pioneer in Melbourne. Fr Roy Eva, who was born and raised in Ballarat, was appointed by Harmony Chapter as the liaison officer for Ballarat. He fostered close relationships with the Pronaos members and was a frequent visitor. It was fitting that the Pronaos was later named after Roy Eva in 1979.

Kuala Lumpur Pronaos began in 1967 and became a Chapter in 1969, with a healthy membership of around 57 a year later. It closed in November 1978 and was revived in June 1979.

In 1968 Fr Roland Vigo, Grand Councillor for Victoria, South Australia, Western Australia and Tasmania, was appointed the head of the Australasian Administration, which distributed AMORC literature from a Melbourne office. The office ceased its operations on 30 June 1976 and its major functions were passed to the work of the Order in Sydney.

The Philippine Pronaos in Manila, the first affiliated body in the Philippines, was established in October 1969 under the leadership of Fr Felipe Aguirre, the first Master. In 1975 this was the only group throughout the country recognised by AMORC to conduct rituals and other related activities. In 1983 the Pronaos became a Chapter. It was then elevated to Philippine Lodge but ceased operation in 1994.

In Melbourne in 1974, after regular and sincere visualisations by the Harmony Chapter members to find their own premises, Sr Evelyn McIntosh was driving along North Road in Ormond, a south-eastern suburb, and saw a 'For sale' notice on the RSL Hall. The hall was acquired, and Harmony Lodge was established in 1974-75, under the leadership of the first Master, Sr Margaret Stevens. In the 1970s the membership figure was about 170, and the Lodge has been renowned for its busy and extensive program.



Harmony Lodge temple

There are also several pronaoi in the Australasian jurisdiction. The first Convocation of Perth (Lemuria) Pronaos was held on 11 June 1953. During that year the Pronaos was host to Imperator Ralph M. Lewis and Fr James Whitcomb, the then Grand Treasurer, on their visit to Western Australia. The first Pronaos Master was Sr E. Reehorst. The Pronaos continued to exist despite great challenges. The group became a Chapter for a while then reverted to a Pronaos.

A group was formed in Newcastle, New South Wales in 1945, largely as a result of activities in Sydney, and it became a Pronaos on 21 March 1954. In Canberra, the first Convocation of the Canberra Pronaos was held on 27 August 1967. The second Philippine Pronaos, which was originally the Sampaguita Pronaos, was established in 1994 with Fr Felix Roces Jr as the first Master. Another significant Pronaos was in Gympie, Queensland, which began in 1985 with Fr Roger Ponton as the inaugural Master. The Newcastle, Canberra and Gympie pronaoi no longer exist.

The early history of the Hong Kong Pronaos requires further research. Grand Master Sr Kristie

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Members of Perth (Lemuria) Pronaos at a showcase event.

Knutson visited the Hong Kong Pronaos, along with other groups in Southeast Asia.

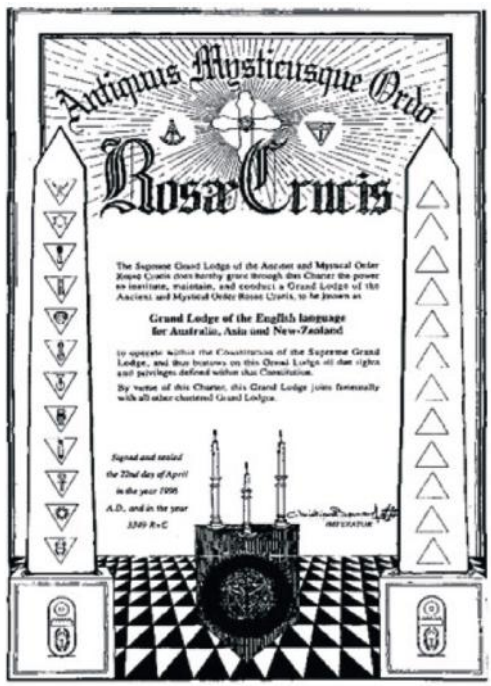
After some 80 years of care under the American jurisdiction, the establishment of the English Grand Lodge for Australia, Asia and New Zealand occurred in 1996, with headquarters located in Sydney. The inaugural Grand Master was Fr Peter Bindon, followed by Fr Paul Panikian. In 2021 the Grand Lodge moved to Strathalbyn in South Australia. Interestingly, the 2024 Australasian Regional Convention was held close to Adelaide University; therefore, attendees were perhaps retracing the pioneering footsteps of Soror Anna Bindschedler.[1] Our current Grand Master is Sr Lucy Crawford-Sandison, the first female Grand Master of the English Grand Lodge for Australia, Asia and New Zealand.

This article gives us only a glimpse of the rich history of Rosicrucians coming together in Australasian Affiliated Bodies to further their spiritual development. There were other closed groups that could not be mentioned in this brief account of our history. So much more can be revealed about our pioneers of the mystical torch. In preparation for the 100th anniversary of the Order in Australasia, we welcome further contributions on the formation and development of our valued groups in this jurisdiction and their interesting stories.

1 The Australasian Regional Convention took place in three parts and in three locations: Singapore, Adelaide and Auckland.

Sources:

American Rosae Crucis, January 1916; *The Rosicrucian Digest*, July 1930; Adelaide *News*, 21 July 1937; *The History of Sydney Chapter A.M.O.R.C.*, Sydney 1952; 'Australasian Handbook, The Rosicrucian Order: A Short Survey of the Order in Australia and New Zealand 1915–1965', Christchurch, 1965; 'Gympie Pronaos R+C History' (author Rudi Kark) 1999–2000; *Rosicrucian History and Mysteries* by Christian Rebisse, 2005; 'A History of Harmony Lodge 1930–2005' (authors Richard Gledhill and Celestina Sagazio), Melbourne, 2007; 'The History of the Rosicrucian Order AMORC in Australia, Asia and New Zealand', Leichhardt, 2014; 'The History of Roy Eva Pronaos (AMORC)' (author Drago Dragojlovic) 2017; report on the Mumbai Pronaos by Rusi Daruwala (2025); report on the Philippine Pronaos by Edna C. Legaspi (2025); report on the Kuala Lumpur Pronaos by Lee San Chin (2025); report on the Hong Kong Pronaos by Richard Ng (2025); historical information and correspondence from the archives of Affiliated Bodies of AMORC in Australasia and the archives of the Supreme Grand Lodge.


Antiquus Mysticusque Ordo
Rosæ Crucis
Grand Lodge of the English language for Australia, Asia and New-Zealand

1996 Grand Lodge Charter.

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Bringing Heaven to Earth

by **Sven Johansson**
Grand Master of the English Grand Lodge
for Europe, Middle East and Africa

Faced with so many distressing things happening in the world today, we need to remind ourselves how incredibly brief our sojourn on planet Earth is against the backdrop of the age of the universe—brief, in fact, even when compared to the age of our human species. Armed with this realisation we know, therefore, not to waste a single moment on thoughts, words or actions that are unworthy of our status as members of the most complex and intelligent species ever to have evolved in this tiny corner of the universe.

Despite the daily barrage of news about appalling war crimes being committed and of rampant corruption within political parties, often on open display with no redress for justice, we must do our best to live our lives on a higher plane of existence, as genuine mystics intent on working quietly in the background to bring Light to a darkened world. For, without doubt, there are always opportunities to do good if we are sufficiently attuned to the needs of mother earth and the many people and animals that pass us daily.

Each day can be an invigorating opportunity for advancing our attunement with the ultimate guiding force of our life, that intimate, personal realisation of the most refined creative force in the universe which Rosicrucians refer to in deeply personal terms as the *'God of my Heart'*. Communion with that inner *'divine spark'* leads us to the discovery of ever more complex and refined levels of personal intellect and a rediscovery of our past and how it so neatly dovetails into our present and future. Harsh as the realities of life are for many of us, it is still a good time to be alive.

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Solutions to worldwide problems are ours to apply, just there for the taking if we would but accept the challenge and do what is necessary to assist our increasingly damaged planet. Not only do we see a world greatly diminished and suffering on all levels due to human-created global warming, we also see the far greater damage that is occurring daily in the steady loss of biodiversity, a loss that is almost entirely due to the far too large human footprint on earth.

As is so patently clear to all who live in countries where accurate information is free to circulate, war..., and this time the possibility of a third world war..., is all too plain to see. Despite these worrying signs of approaching disaster for humankind, as spiritual beings we are still obligated to live our lives in the most kind, gentle, compassionate and constructive manner we can, and to help in practical ways wherever our assistance can do good for the world. This is the bare minimum of what we, as spiritual beings, should do daily.

Putting aside for a moment the broader, more glaring issues of misgovernment in many countries, we can still live lives of goodness and kindness to all, and we are entirely capable of exerting a positive influence within at least the small communities in which we live. It needs only a little bit of caring effort each day in order to make a constructive, positive difference. Best of all is to strive to live according to our highest ideals of justice and fairness to all.

We have a vast storehouse of knowledge from the past to draw upon. Through history books and sometimes through direct experience we have knowledge of the bitter experiences of innumerable past wars to draw upon too. At no time in the past have people, on a mass scale, had available to them such abundant information about the folly of war. Most important of all, we have the few periods of true peace and rapid intellectual advancement that we and our immediate parents and grandparents have enjoyed, and from those periods of stability we must actively draw upon the ethos and moral values that we have created during such times of peace and plenty.

Surely we can see that only in the absence of war and strife, only in the presence of a true and abiding love of humanity, can we find any assurance of peace, harmony, goodwill and personal inner development on a global scale? Our universe is not a mere chance arrangement of particles. It is an orderly, complex system of millions of instances of highly refined creative intelligences; most importantly, ones that are capable of connecting with each other in a new and far higher form of collective consciousness. It is a consciousness that Rosicrucians refer to as an *'egregore'* of united life, which has all the indications of itself being as alive, cognitive and capable of decision-making as any individual human part of that *'group consciousness.'*

As advanced as we believe our intellect is, we are but specks in an ocean..., tiny parts of an immensely greater 'collective whole'.

As advanced as we believe our intellect is, we are but specks in an ocean..., tiny parts of an immensely greater *'collective whole'.* We individually live and experience life, but so does the *'human collective'*, the *egregore*. Consider the galaxy in which we live. Among the billions of planets that exist in it today, and even many more that have existed in the past but are no longer in existence, how many other civilisations similar to ours must have risen to even greater heights than ours, yet still fallen into oblivion because of foolish, small-minded, selfish decisions resulting eventually in hasty and ultimately catastrophic actions? We must avoid such pitfalls, for as we grow in scientific

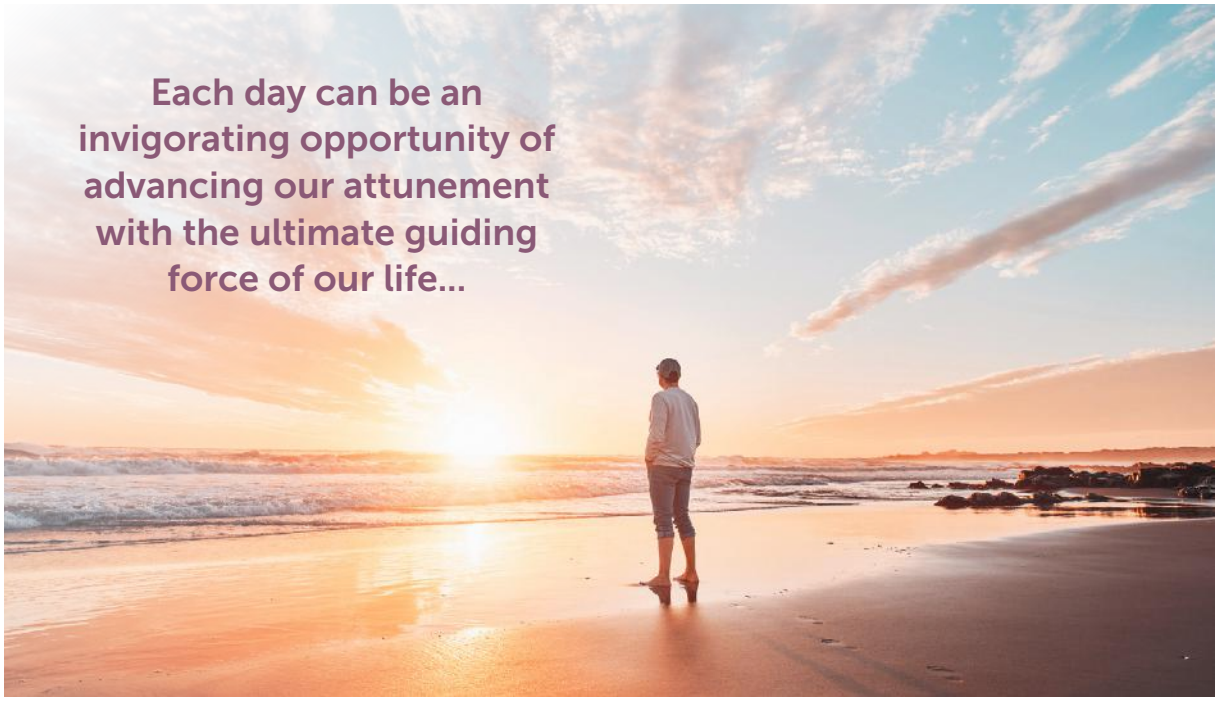
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knowledge and power we also expand our ability to destroy our world in a matter of mere hours. Whether it happens slowly, as we are doing at present through overpopulation, global warming and pollution, or whether it happens catastrophically quickly, as could happen with an all-out nuclear war, we must be aware that the time has come for people worldwide to realise what a treasure the world is and to act as if it is the greatest of all treasures that will ever exist for us. It is a gift beyond compare.

As I ponder in awe the majesty of our beautiful world, jam-packed as it is with the ugly and the beautiful and all shades in between, I am filled with enthusiasm and gratitude for being alive *now*, in this era, and for being part of the unique family of humankind. What a privilege it is to live in these exciting days. I cannot escape the feeling that unborn or discarnate entities (if such exist) envy us immensely for being here and experiencing life on this particular planet at this particular time. What a privileged species we are and what great responsibilities we must willingly share.

As each of us strives towards fulfilment, an admirable enduring human spirit survives—an *egregore*, a *collective consciousness*—which sets our species apart from all others on our planet. We must be seekers of Light and Life foremost and strive to manifest Love at every available opportunity. As simple, uncomplicated humans bent on making good happen, let us actively visualise *'the Good'*, as the ancient Greek philosophers referred to their concept of sanctity, and earnestly strive towards the dream of a collective liberation of the egregore of humanity into its inheritance of matter infused with wisdom and, indeed, holiness.

As avatars, masters, philosophers and religious leaders of the past have shown us repeatedly, it is possible to bring the metaphorical heaven down to earth and to live in harmony with nature. We simply need to try, try and try again..., until we eventually succeed in this life or in a future incarnation. I firmly believe there is no other way for us, as the small, insignificant species that we are, when compared to the vastness of our universe and the certainty that immensely greater and more evolved life forms exist in it.



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The Golden Verses of Pythagoras

The Code of Life of an Ancient Esoteric School

by **Alberto I. LaCava**

The Golden Verses, attributed to the great Greek philosopher, are a synthesis of the Pythagorean way of life: the principles of daily conduct leading to the divinisation or spiritual ascent of the soul personality.

Pythagoras and the Pythagorean School

Pythagoras was born around the year 570 BCE in Samos, Greece. Tradition and his several biographies suggest that at an early age he travelled around the ancient civilisations to acquire as much knowledge and wisdom as he

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could. Iamblichus[1] stated that Pythagoras spent 22 years in Egypt, studying under the priests, and that he studied the teachings of the Chaldeans and perhaps the Persians after that. It is assumed that the young Pythagoras learned the sciences and mathematics from these ancient civilisations. Many accounts, including those of Porphyry[2], also indicate that he was initiated into several Mystery schools in those countries. He is also assumed to have been initiated into the Orphic esoteric school, from where he acquired a deep love for music and its laws and symbology.

After much travelling and studying he returned to Samos, where he attempted to start his own philosophical school. He remained at Samos for a short time but, at the age of 40, was forced to leave the island, looking for a freedom that the tyranny of Polycrates[3] did not allow him to have.

Pythagoras then settled in Croton, Italy, and in that city he formed an esoteric school which became known as the *'Pythagoreans'.* This school had different groups or levels of students, equivalent to the degree system of modern esoteric schools. The Akousmatikoi (hearers) were the first-level students. These students went through a probational period of three years. They were supposed to listen to lectures and philosophical discussions, but they could neither talk nor ask questions.

The second group was the Mathematikoi (disciples), who were formally initiated into the esoteric school. These disciples lived in community and started their work by a period of silence which lasted several years. Their curriculum included philosophy, mathematics, music and the practice of a strict moral code of life. This code of life is beautifully exemplified in *The Golden Verses*.

'The Golden Verses'

The teachings of Pythagoras were given to the disciples in a veiled or highly symbolic language. As such, the words of the teaching often had a second meaning that was to be understood and practised by students of the superior levels, the Philosophers (or lovers of wisdom). Some scholars have maintained that *The Golden Verses* were originally a part of 'The Sacred Discourse', a piece written by Pythagoras as a rule of life for the students of his school. The verses were transmitted orally by the members of the school until the time when they were forced to leave Italy. At that point it was thought safer to commit the verses to writing in order to avoid losing their teaching.

The translation of *The Golden Verses,* published by K. S. Guthrie, is made available to us in his classical collection of the source texts of the Pythagoreans.[4] Since a complete analysis of the Verses would be too lengthy, only a few of the sentences will be considered in this article.



The town of Santa Severina in the Province of Croton, Italy.

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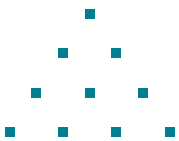
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On Numbers

> First honour the Immortal Gods, as the law demands;
> then reverence your Oath, and then the illustrious heroes;
> then venerate the divinities under the earth, due rites performing;
> then honour your parents and all of your kindred.

The above verses indicate a hierarchy of values deserving the respect and veneration of a good Greek citizen at the time of Pythagoras. As such, the verses seem just to be affirming something that was considered as good behaviour, but there are, however, some hidden meanings in the verses.

In the traditions of the Pythagorean School, the *'Immortal Gods'* were really the numbers. The numbers are symbolic of the Laws of the Universe and its creation in the teachings of the Pythagorean School. The 10 numbers are generated from the sum of the components of the Tetraktis (quaternary): 1 + 2 + 3 + 4 = 10. The Tetraktis was often represented by a triangle of ten points, thus:



The ten points of the four levels of the symbol represented creation and were understood by the Pythagoreans as follows:

- The Monad represented unity, the state we were in before creation.
- The Dyad represented the first movement towards creation, the splitting of the Monad into two polarities.
- The Triad represented the bringing together of the two polarities by an intermediate, the logos or the word, or the philosophical Mercury of the Hermetics.
- The Tetrad represented the achievement of the creation of the material universe through the four elements of the ancients (fire, air, water and earth).

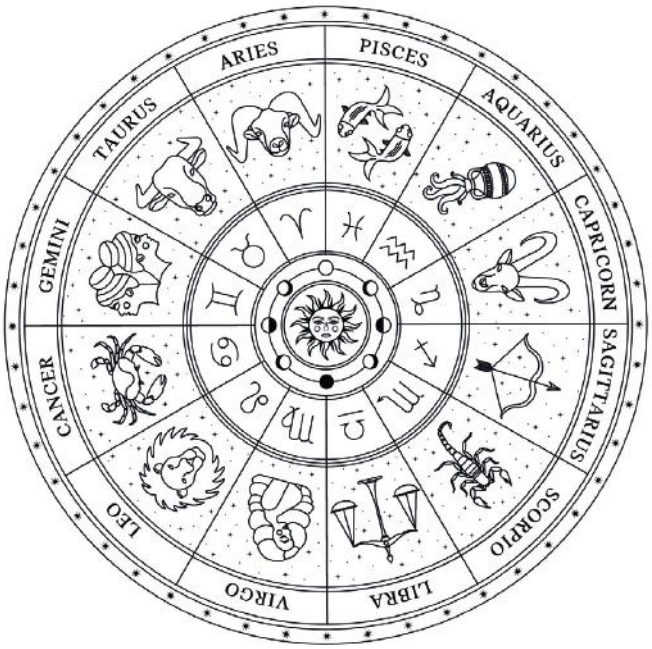
The Pythagorean concept that the universe was created following the Law of Number had a widespread influence in several systems of mysticism and metaphysics, as well as in the Neo-Platonic, Hermetic, Kabbalist and Gnostic traditions.

The reference to *'reverence your Oath'* underlines the importance that the oaths of secrecy given at initiation had for the students of the esoteric school. The Pythagorean Oath was very famous and is translated as follows:



Pythagoras writing in a book, as shown in Raphael's fresco 'The School of Athens'.

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I swear by Him who, in our souls,
has transmitted the sacred Tetraktis,
the spring of Eternal Nature.

This was the sacred oath taken by the Initiates of the Pythagorean mystery school. The oath is made on the name of the Master, who transmitted to the disciples the mystery of the sacred Tetraktis, or the mystery of the Quaternary. The Tetraktis was a symbolic synthesis of the Laws of Creation and as such contained the secret of perpetual creation. It was a symbol for an eternal spring or fountain of renewal and regeneration in the whole of nature.

On Health and Clean Living

Do not neglect the health of the body;
keep measure in eating and drinking,
and every exercise of the body.

It was one of the rules of the brotherhood to keep moderation in all uses of the body. Fitness of the body was very important in Ancient Greece, where it was considered that one only could have a *'a sane mind in a healthy body'.*

Avoid foods forbidden;
reflect that this contributes to the
cleanliness and redemption of your Soul.

The forbidden foods of the Pythagoreans included the eating of animal meat. The theory that the Pythagoreans believed in transmigration was proposed by some scholars as an explanation for this rule of the mystical school. According to many students of the Pythagorean School, this was not so. It is well-known that Pythagoras himself loved animals and felt, as many feel today, that killing animals to eat them is not a very kind thing to do.

The former Rosicrucian Grand Master Fr Rodman Clayson[5] gave an explanation of the Pythagorean teaching of the human soul passing through *'animal'* reincarnations. According to Clayson, the human soul was believed by the Pythagoreans to descend through the Milky Way and to reach each incarnation through each of the signs of the zodiac. Since many of these signs are represented by animals (the lion, the crab, the bull, the ram, the goat, etc.), the non-initiated believed



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The Pythagorean School incorporated many dietary rules in its teachings, one of which was the avoidance of beans.

that the Pythagoreans were teaching that the human soul incarnates into these different animal forms. The Pythagoreans were really teaching that the soul enriches itself through the variety of experience achieved by incarnating and expressing itself through different personalities, symbolised by the signs of the zodiac.

In order to enhance the health and wellbeing of its students, the Pythagorean School incorporated many dietary rules in its teachings. Some of these rules, however, had a hidden meaning. For example, eating beans, or any food that produced flatulence, was symbolic of feeding the mind with vain thoughts and ideas. These ideas would 'produce flatulence', i.e., would fill the student with vain emptiness. As such, beans were forbidden in the Pythagorean diet.

Practical Life Rules

Think, before you act,
that nothing stupid results.
To act inconsiderately
is part of a fool.

This rule made sure that the students went through a proper decision-making process prior to their taking any action. Acting upon impulse or under the control of strong human emotions was not favoured by the Pythagorean philosophers. Rational thinking and careful consideration of every action was, and still is, an important and necessary ingredient in attaining the Mastery of Life.

Do nothing beyond what you know,
yet learn what you may need.
Thus shall your life grow happy.

This rule still occupies a prominent place in the foreground of both individuals and institutions. As you may recall, it was during the early 1970s that numerous companies followed the fashion of venturing into markets and businesses they knew little about. However, the later 1980s and 1990s have been witness to a return to the basic Pythagorean rule of *'doing what you are good at.'* Simply put, it means investing more on the core business(es) of the companies and gradually excelling on the most important line of business. When thought-out on another level, one can see how this rule can also apply to individuals and how it also becomes an important prerequisite to the attainment of Mastery.

The Discipline of the Will

Never let slumber approach your wearied eyelids,
ere thrice you review what this day you did:
wherein have I sinned? what did I?

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what duty is neglected?
All, from the first to the last, review;
and if you have erred, grieve in your spirit,
rejoicing for all that was good.

The teachings of Pythagoras included a goal-setting and revision step early in the morning. The disciple was to decide and plan what he wanted to accomplish during the day. Later in the day there were to be revisions of what was accomplished and learned during the day. One of the revisions was typically done at noon, and the last was before retiring. Tradition has it that the revision was performing asking oneself the three questions of the verse.

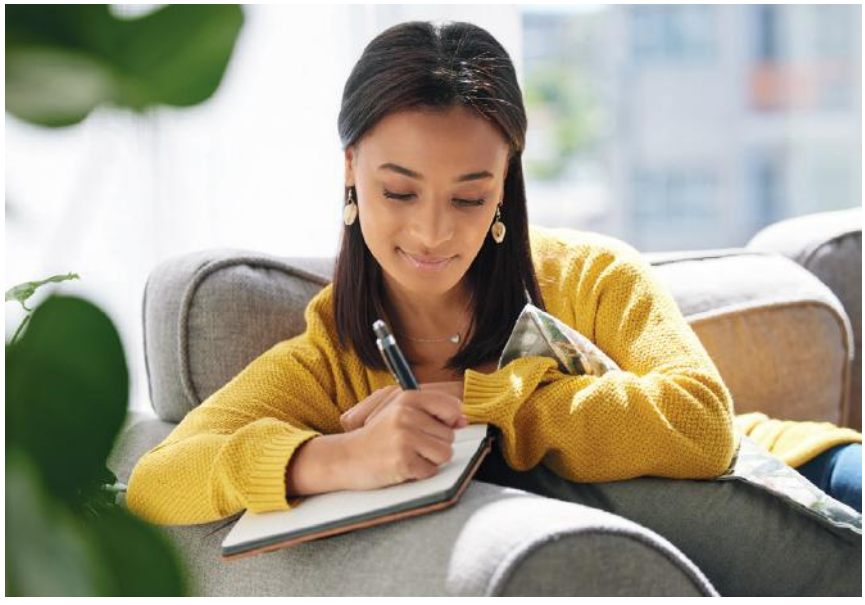
The acts of remembering each step performed during the day and evaluating the different actions were intended to increase the awareness of what was happening in and around the life of the disciple.

Setting goals or deciding what to do during the day is a very important part of successful living and is often forgotten. Something as simple as a *'to do list'* is normally what we need. Starting work during the day or leaving home without a plan would fully deserve the assertion of the Cheshire Cat in *Alice in Wonderland*: *'If you do not know where you are going, any road will take you there.'*

Recommended Exercise 1: In a relaxed position, consider what goals you want to achieve during the coming week. Form a mental plan of what you want to do on Monday, then on Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday. Form a mental plan of what you want to do during the weekend too. This exercise will help you to decide beforehand what you want to do or achieve. If you are without a plan or direction, your time and energies may not be utilised to drive you to the success you seek.

The review step of the Pythagorean teaching ensures worthwhile feedback in the decision-making process. For example, if a student decides every morning to do something but avoids doing it day after day, the review session will point to a lack of integrity in the decision process (i.e., a part of the individual decides to do something and some psychological inner barrier does not allow it to be done). If this happens, the student can either increase his willpower (in the case of procrastination) or can try to understand the reasons for his subconscious resistance to performing the planned task.

Recommended Exercise 2: In a relaxed position, go back in your mind to the moment you woke up this morning. What were the thoughts you had? Was there something special going on around you or in your thoughts when you took your shower and dressed? What did you eat for breakfast? Did you make any plans for today? Did you do all the tasks you planned? If you did not, was your planning realistic? Did you have any reasons for procrastination?



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Take this well to heart:
gain control of your habits;
First over stomach, then sleep
and then luxury and anger.

There is an ancient rule that says: *'Habits make the man.'* Our Rosicrucian teachings and monographs go in depth into the techniques of modification of undesirable habits. The Pythagorean School has a training process to increase the will of the student and to eliminate undesirable habits. The idea was to conquer one habit at a time, starting with the control of the basic appetites of the human body. The process starts by controlling overeating by dieting and fasting. After the habit of moderate eating has been firmly established, another undesirable habit is addressed next.

Sacred Rules

Whatever the sorrow, the fate of the Gods may
here send us bear, whatever may strike you, with
patience unmurmuring;
To relieve it, so far as you can, is permitted, but
reflect that not so much misfortune has Fate
given to the Good.

There are two key thoughts in this verse. The first is to bear adversity with patience and in silence, doing the best to relieve it within the limits of possibility. We are urged not to resist the forces of Destiny—and of course human nature is such that this is the first thing many of us would do.

The second point basic to the Pythagoreans is that the good person is favoured by Fate. In this, the belief in the law of cause and effect, the *Law of Karma*, indicates that the person who has lived a life within the laws of Cosmic Justice will not have to suffer in the same way as the one who is violating the Cosmic Law all the time. In Christianity this principle or law is expressed *'as you sow, so shall you reap'*, and it is a fundamental principle in all religions.

Whereof, if you have received,
so keep what I teach you.
Healing your soul, you shall remain
insured from manifold evil.

This verse reiterates the Pythagorean belief that the student who has *'healed his soul'* will be protected from evil. In other words, he who leads a good and virtuous life is cosmically protected.

Never start your task until you
have implored the blessing of the Gods.

This is a very important mystical rule. We implore the blessings of God, for in his name we go about his work of service to the Light, even in the smallest act or task of our lives.

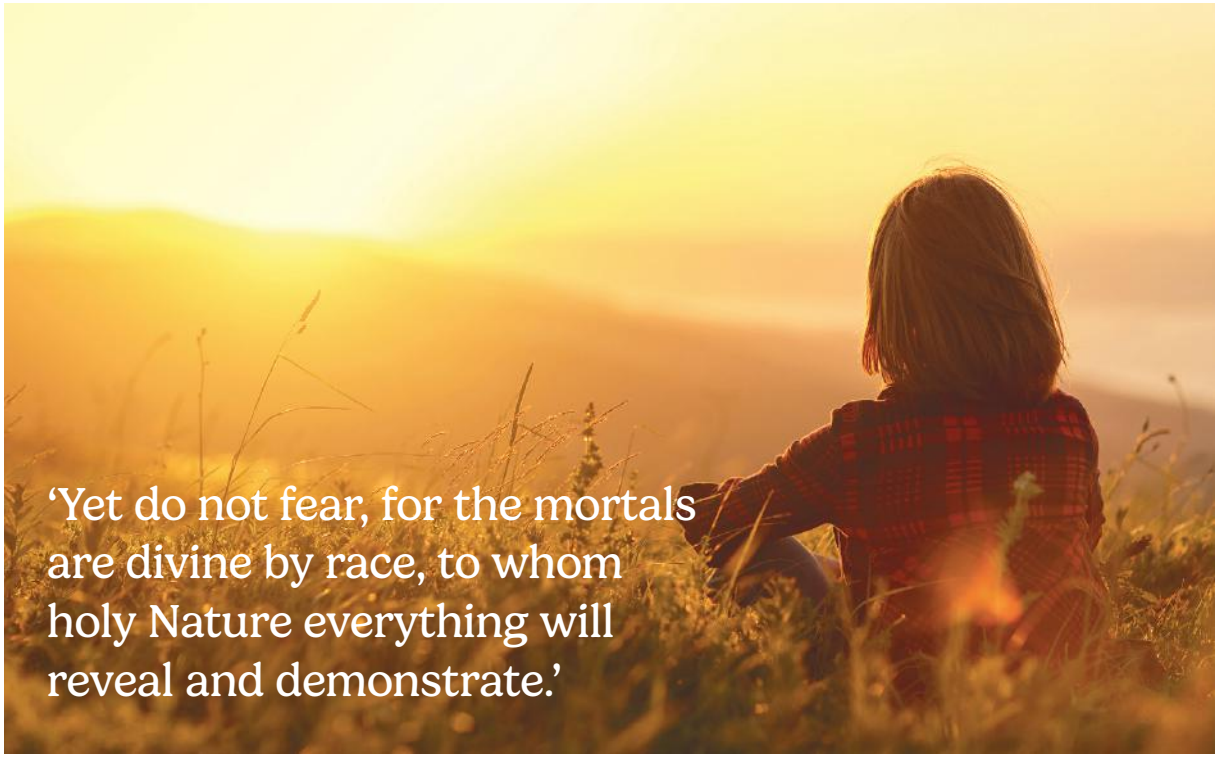
Our task could be viewed in one of two ways. One way can be cast in terms of the individual alone —how the task benefits oneself only. Conversely, one could feel that the Cosmic, working through us, is performing a task to benefit mankind. Consideration of this matter will reveal that only extremely selfish acts are of the first case, whereas in most cases, through our job and the work at home, we find ourselves participating in the work of the Cosmic in the functioning of the universe.

Yet do not fear,
for the mortals are divine by race,
to whom holy Nature everything
will reveal and demonstrate.

Humans are cosmic children. We are a part of the One, a non-separated fragment of the Great Universal Soul, and as such there is an Inner Self inside of us that is divine.

This divine being has inherited from its divine parentage the glory of nature and the glory of the universe. It has also inherited all the wisdom of nature

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and its Creator, and this wisdom is to be revealed to the seeker of Illumination.

> Let reason, the gift divine,
> be thy highest guide;

Reason is the faculty of the mind that distinguishes the human from the beast. As such, it is a Cosmic gift, the most divine part that the human has and our most important guide.

> then should you be separated from
> the body and soar in the aether.

The final goal of the student of the Mysteries is achieved when an evolved Soul Personality attains the close of the cycle of rebirth. After this it does not need to reincarnate again. Hence:

> You will be imperishable, a divinity,
> a mortal no more!

Footnotes

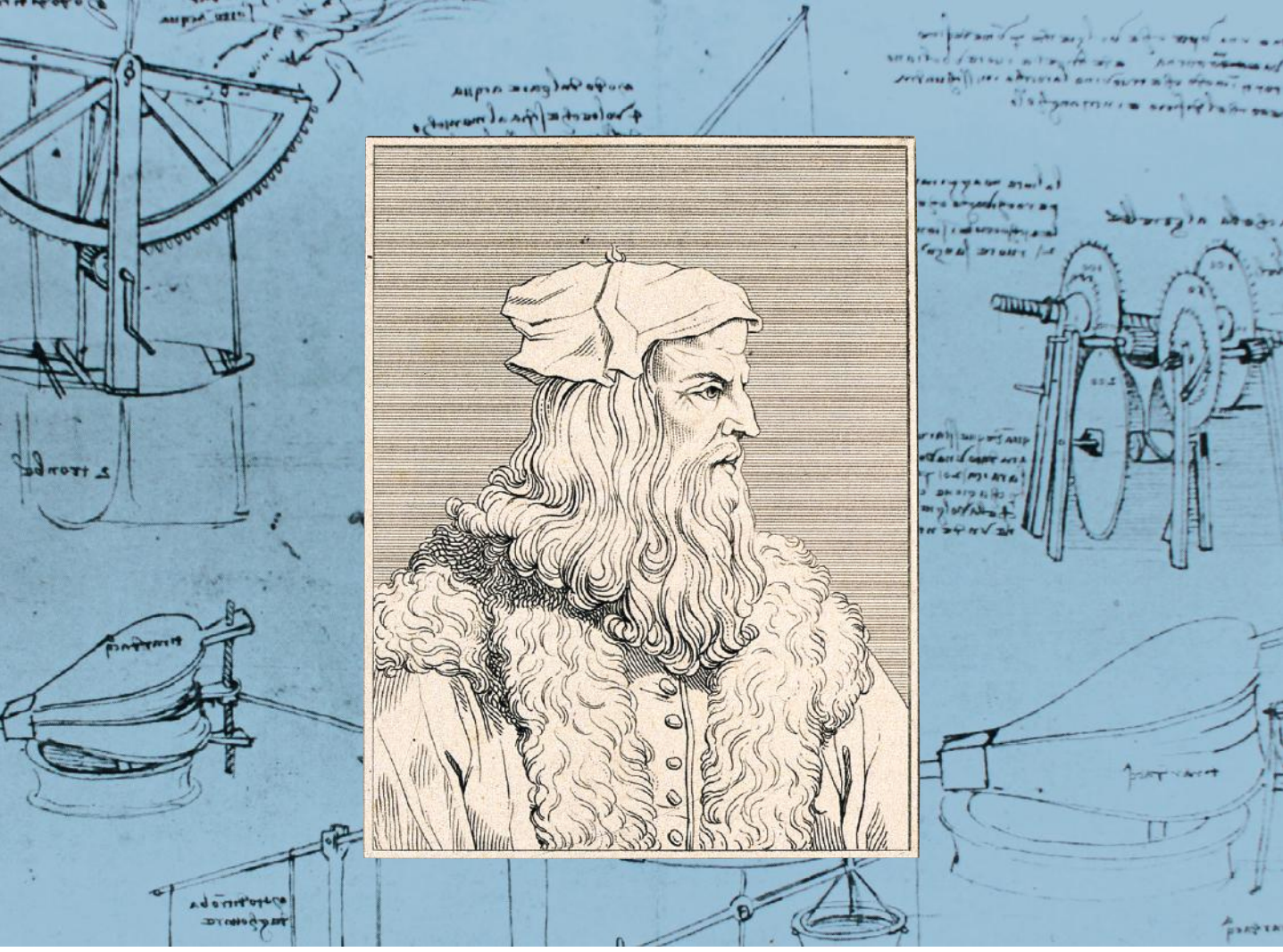
1. Iamblichus was a Neoplatonic philosopher who lived from about 250 to 330 AD. A student of Porphyry, he later established his own philosophical school in Syria. He wrote five influential volumes on Pythagoreanism.
2. Porphyry was a disciple of the great philosopher Plotinus and the editor of his works. Born in Tyre in Syria and lived around the years 233 to 304 AD. Became a disciple of Plotinus in Rome and an influential student of Neoplatonism.
3. Polycrates was a highly influential tyrant of Samos who established a despotic rule on the island and a strong military presence in the region. His rule lasted from 535 to 515 BC. He was finally defeated by Oroetes, the Persian governor of Lydia.

References

4. Guthrie, Kenneth S. *The Pythagorean Sourcebook and Library*, reprinting of the 1920 edition by Phanes Press (1988).
5. Clayson, Rodman R., ‘Symbology of the Zodiac’, *The Rosicrucian Digest*, 212-216, (1952).

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Leonardo da Vinci — Master Mystic

by **H. Spencer Lewis**

It seems to be the common practice in biographical and historical sketches to praise a person for his or her scientific attainments but to merely accept the fact of the person's greatness in art or music. The human mind seems to look upon greatness in music and art as a gift of the gods, not necessarily implying any effort, preparation, or worthiness to receive that blessing, whereas greatness in the sciences is considered an attainment through personal volition, effort and extreme sacrifices of time and thought.

For this reason, many writers speak only casually of Leonardo da Vinci's artistic abilities. While they acknowledge that some of his paintings represent the highest degree of mastership, they marvel more at his achievements in science and lead one to think that he was more of a scientist than an artist. On the other hand, most people are usually surprised to discover that one whom they

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had come to love and admire as the master painter of the *Mona Lisa* and *The Last Supper* should have known anything at all about the sciences.

What will probably interest our readers more than the fact that Leonardo da Vinci attained mastership in both art and the sciences is the fact that he attained mastership in mysticism. It is the latter fact that is unquestionably more responsible for his unique mastery in art and science than any other. Granting that a previous incarnation had established the foundation for both his artistic talents and his scientific knowledge, we must realise that it was his further development in the field of mysticism that enabled him to achieve the unique place he holds in both the other fields of knowledge.



It is said that Leonardo da Vinci was born in 1452 at Vinci, a Tuscan mountain town, as the illegitimate son of a Florentine notary and a peasant woman. Because of his father's great wealth, the young Leonardo was given an excellent education in Florence, which at that time was the intellectual and artistic centre of Italy. In his youth he was extraordinarily impressive: handsome in appearance, powerful in physique, and a very fine conversationalist.

He early manifested a natural ability to express the dreams of his soul and his consciousness in music, and was known as one of the most marvellous improvisers in the musical circles of the city. On the other hand, at odd times he manifested the ability to sketch and to express his thoughts in quick and deft strokes of pencil or crayon.

But there was also born in him, to be a companion of his genius, an insatiable desire for extraordinary knowledge, or that knowledge which was then considered arcane and secret. It was said of him that whenever he went to a library or the reading and reference room of an academy to seek facts pertaining to one of the academic subjects he was pursuing, he was always tempted by some casual subject in some forgotten book that required further research or more extended investigation. Long before he thought seriously of developing his natural artistic talents, he was deeply involved in the subject of natural sciences and especially in natural and spiritual laws.

After the development of his artistic talents, Da Vinci was commissioned by king and court and by church and state to produce certain paintings, which have never been equalled in spiritual significance. Because of the wide range of his work in painting and the great amount of it accomplished, few knew that he was interested in anything other than his art.

But to him there was another art as great as that which he had carried over from the past, and it was not long before his cosmic inclination in this direction brought him in contact with the art of the Rosicrucians, and he then began the dual career which made him an outstanding character in mystical literature.

'Mona Lisa' by Leonardo da Vinci. It is probably the most mysterious and difficult of any portrait to analyse.

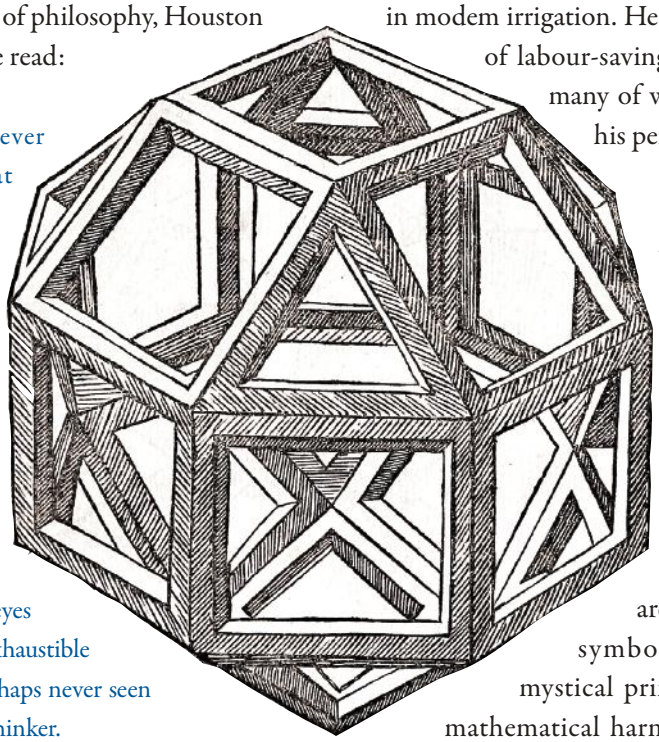
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Rosicrucian Association

Leonardo da Vinci's first contact with the Rosicrucians was in Florence, at about the time he was completing his academic studies. A few years later he made several journeys to a monastery believed to be situated in what is now known as Amalfi, where he came in contact with one of the secret schools of the Rosicrucian mystics.

At about this time he became initiated into their arts and mysteries and was gradually prepared to be proficient in the use of their manuscripts and laboratories. There began his experiments, which he recorded in manuscripts now known to be the secret writings of a great master. In an appreciation of Da Vinci, written in German by the publicist and student of philosophy, Houston Stewart Chamberlain, we read:

> No greater painter ever lived; and this great painter was like Durer, and even more than Durer, a pre-eminent mathematician and mechanician. At the same time, as we see every day more clearly, a man of an all-embracing intellect, a Seer who penetrated all that his eyes saw, a discoverer so inexhaustible that the world has perhaps never seen his like, a deep, bold Thinker.



Rhombicuboctahedron by Da Vinchi, as published in Pacioli's 'Divina Proportione' (1509)

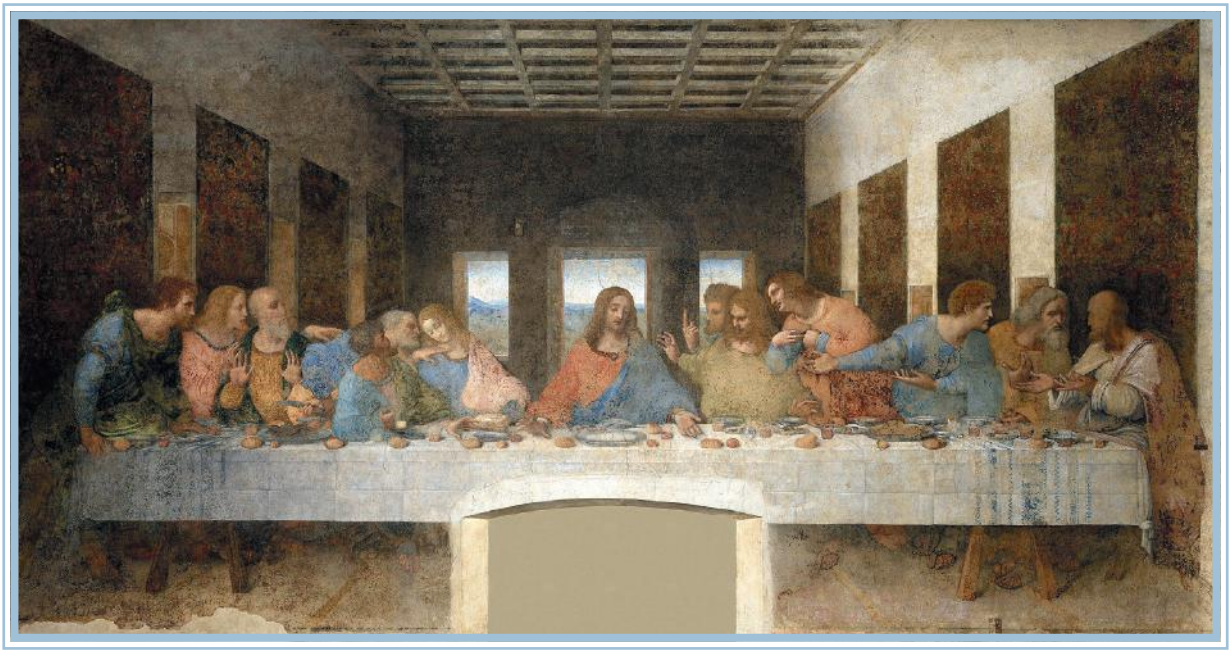
Many of Da Vinci's unpublished manuscripts are carefully preserved, waiting the proper time for publication. They contain scientific facts now secretly known only to the higher workers in the Brotherhood. Other manuscripts, published centuries ago, deal not only with cosmogony and physiology but also with astounding observations in meteorology, the moon's influence upon the tides, the manner in which to figure the elevation of the continents, the laws and principles pertaining to fossil shells, and so forth.

Da Vinci adhered to the mystical principle that *'In the beginning God geometrised.'*

It was Da Vinci who originated the science of hydraulics and invented the hydrometer, an instrument used for determining the specific gravity of a liquid. His plans for the canalisation of rivers are of great value in modem irrigation. He invented a large number of labour-saving devices and machines, many of which are remarkable for his period.

In keeping with the old arcane schools and their systems of study and writing, Da Vinci adhered to the mystical principle that *'In the beginning God geometrised.'* Therefore, all of Da Vinci's manuscripts are filled with geometrical symbols, and every law and mystical principle is worked out in mathematical harmony. Across the top of one of his most important manuscripts are written these significant words: *'Let no one read me who is not a mathematician.'* In other words, let no-one attempt to

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'The Last Supper' by Leonardo da Vinci. It is impossible to determine what it is that makes it seem to be a thing alive—with a spiritual, mystical story that explains itself to one's very soul.

read and understand my writings who is not a mystical geometriser.

Looking at his achievements broadly, one may ask what it is about his art that makes his painting so attractive, so impressive and so distinct as to put it in a class of its own. Unquestionably, it is the mystical element. The painting *Mona Lisa* is probably the most mysterious and difficult of any portrait to analyse. Even those unacquainted with the techniques of art are held in a spell of fascination, although they cannot explain the evasive smile on the countenance of the woman.

In the case of the famous painting in Milan known as *The Last Supper*, many thousands have stood before it in awe and spiritual humility, unable to determine what it is that makes it seem to be a thing alive—with a spiritual, mystical story that explains itself to one's very soul.

I have analysed the painting carefully and found at least seventeen mystical principles, yet I sense that I have not discovered others far more important. If one asks what it is in his scientific achievements that made Da Vinci famous as a scientist and, in fact, the foremost revealer of nature's great laws, one must admit that it is the mysticism which he revealed in those things usually considered grossly material and purely scientific.

Da Vinci believed that the objective senses and also the psychic and spiritual senses were ideal channels for the reception of universal truths

Channels of Reception

One of the foremost contentions of Da Vinci was that not only the objective senses but also the psychic or spiritual senses, and especially the eye and its functioning, were ideal channels for the reception of

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universal truths. He argued that the eye first, and the ear second, are the most important in this regard.

He claimed, however, that the poet fails to reveal the great truths which the artist can reveal, and that the musician comes nearer to revealing them than does the poet. The artist, in his estimation, is the most capable of all. Da Vinci's explanation for this is purely mystical, truly sound and rational.

He claimed that the poet fails to reveal the great truths which the artist can reveal...

He contended that the poet is able to give only one impression and one idea at a time, for the poet is limited to words, which have to be seen by the eye individually and which can convey only a limited impression at one time. Therefore, the ideas suggested in words are always lacking in that harmonious grouping and relationship to other essentials which make a harmonious composition.

The artist, on the other hand, is able to paint or depict his story in such a manner as to convey one central idea to the eye, with a proper grouping of secondary essentials so related to the primary one that all of them form a harmonious group, and so giving the mind a harmonious impression or a complete concept. The musician is able to do the same thing, but perhaps to a more limited degree.

As an accomplished musician, Da Vinci was competent to criticise and comment on musical compositions. He declared that in a simple melody, consisting of one note played at a time, we have the one-idea impression which the poet finds as his limit. In a chord, we have a composition of harmonious impressions conveyed to the ear all at one time, therefore giving to the spiritual and psychic natures a central idea, with its related and harmonious elements establishing a background and a more perfect picture.

With the proper harmonic notes played by a second hand giving us an additional chord, we add to the complex impression on the ear, for the tone colours and details of the composition cause an impression that is no longer a simple idea but a composite one, almost as complete as a picture.

In this argument we discover some of the mystical principles which Da Vinci used, not unconsciously but masterfully, in his paintings—principles which the technical critics of art have failed to realise since they are not students of mysticism. Every mystic, however, and everyone spiritually attuned, will sense them when he or she stands before one of Da Vinci's pieces.



'Lady with an Ermine' by Leonardo da Vinci

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Like a true mystic, Da Vinci warns of the work performed by those who have merely an imagination as a foundation for their creations, in contrast to those who have lived and experienced the things they portray. He constantly refers to the fact that experience is the only foundation for true understanding, and that we must come to experience the things of life, both good and bad and joyous and sorrowful, if we are to develop a true understanding of life. No amount of imagination or impersonal logic can supplant actual experience.

He constantly refers to the fact that experience is the only foundation for true understanding and that we must come to experience the things of life, both good and bad...



'Wild Berries' sketch by Leonardo da Vinci

Therefore, Da Vinci exhorts us to put no faith in authors who have sought, by imagination alone, to make themselves interpreters between nature and humanity. He warns, too, not to give ourselves to those things of which the human mind is incapable and which cannot be demonstrated by natural example.

You Must Compete With Nature

Da Vinci's whole life proves that he adhered to his injunction, which he proclaimed should be the law of every artist, poet, sculptor, and scientist: *'You must compete with nature!'* He claimed that in painting the artist must learn how to give that harmonious arrangement of essential elements in form, perspective, and colour which nature presents in her inimitable way.

While no artist can successfully compete with nature in such compositions and portrayal of colours, he or she must constantly attempt to do so, with the sculptor and the writer as well as the musician. In his scientific experiments Da Vinci constantly sought to duplicate nature's constructive processes, and he therefore experimented with transmutation and with spontaneous generation and other processes whereby nature created and produced the marvels which we witness today. It was through such experimentation that Da Vinci learned the truths which made him the greatest of all scientists.

Naturally, in his *aesthetic mysticism* and in the nobility and spiritual beauty of his life, Da Vinci attempted to imitate the Christ Spirit and to duplicate the spiritual, creative processes of the Cosmic. This made him a man beloved by his friends and, at the same time, feared by the enemies of Light and Knowledge. As the greatness of his career has become known, his whole life has been seen to be one of spiritual nobility and mystic sublimity.

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The ancient Persian city of Persepolis, Iran, featuring the Faravahar (sun symbol of Zoroastrianism)

In terms of civilisation and culture, we owe a great debt to ancient Persia. It is a fact that has been largely ignored by European cultures, for whom Greece and Rome were held to be the epitome of civilisation. Since these were the enemies of Persia, we have tended to be blinded by their writings. However, in recent years, much more has become available through translations to us in the West, and now we have the opportunity to reassess our beliefs about this marvellous civilisation.

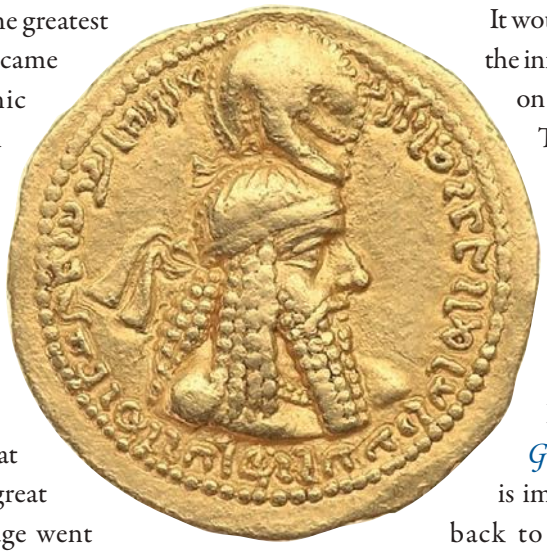
Jundishâpur, nowadays a ruined town in the southwest of Iran, not far from the border with Iraq, was once a world-renowned centre for healing. Later a university was founded there, which played a pivotal role in the dissemination of ancient knowledge. Although these days the area is better known for its oil and gas fields, it is still proudly remembered in Iran as one of the most famous universities of ancient times.

Mesopotamia is considered to be the cradle of Western civilisation. When *Alexander the Great* died and his empire was divided among his generals, Mesopotamia and Persia fell to the lot of *Seleucus*. However, eventually the Persians, under the leadership of the kings of the Parthian dynasty, gained their freedom around 240 BCE and Zoroastrianism became the state religion once again. When in 64 BCE the Roman armies under Pompey conquered what is now Syria, they encountered the might of the Parthian Empire. All through the early Roman Empire it was the Parthians that the Romans feared most. However, in 224 CE, the last Parthian king was defeated by one of his sub-kings, *Ardashir*, who rose in revolt against him.

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Most people think that the greatest threat to the Roman Empire came from the numerous Germanic tribes who eventually overran the western half of the Empire. But the Romans themselves regarded the Persian Empire, the other superpower, as their greatest rival by far and as a real threat to their existence. Like the Romans, the Persians were great builders of cities and ruled a great empire. Their cultural heritage went back further than Greece or Rome, and their religion, Zoroastrianism, had an influence on the Christianity that was soon to become the state religion of the Roman Empire.



Gold dinar of Ardashir I, 230 AD

The Other Superpower

Ardashir I (reigned 224–241 CE) was the founder of the *Sassanid dynasty* (224–637 CE), under whose rule the Persian Empire reached its greatest extent since the time of *Darius* and *Xerxes*, some 700 years before. Ardashir saw himself as both the spiritual and literal descendant of the *Achaemenid* kings. He embraced Zoroastrianism fervently as a means of reuniting his empire, which then took on a new lease of life. It was under the Sassanid dynasty that the Roman and early Byzantine empires faced their greatest threat. Some 300 years later, the Persian armies would conquer Syria, Palestine, Alexandria and northern Egypt, and even placed the capital city *Constantinople* itself under siege.

It would be foolish to underestimate the influence that Sassanid Persia had on European culture and thought. This dynasty is almost unknown in the West, compared to the Achaemenid dynasty of *Darius* and *Xerxes*, but its influence on *Judaism*, *Islam*, *Buddhism*, *Christianity*, the church and state of the Roman and Byzantine empires, *Gnosticism* and even *Catharism* is immense and can trace its roots back to the empire of the Persian *Shâhânshâh* (King of Kings). The ideas of crowns, thrones, halos around the heads of saints, angels, good versus evil, and knights on horseback are just a few of the ideas that ancient Persia transmitted to European civilisation. Rosicrucian teachings are also indebted to the sages and great minds of the Sassanian Persian Empire.

Better Than Antioch

In the southwest of Iran, on the border with Iraq, lies the province of *Khuzestân*, which has been called



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Constantinople (modern day Istanbul)

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Zagros Mountains near Borujerd, Iran

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'the nursery of modern man'. It lies at the crossroads between the Mediterranean region, India and China. The Khuzestân Plain is about 40,000 square kilometres (15,444 square miles) in area and is a prolongation of the great Mesopotamian Plain, through which the rivers *Tigris* and *Euphrates* flow. The plain lies at the foot of the *Zagros Mountains*, which border it to the north and east. In Iranian terms, it is a fertile plain. This province, with its many rivers, was the cradle of the mysterious ancient *Elamite* civilisation, a prosperous country on the borders of *Sumer*.

During the Achaemenid Persian Empire, which that Alexander the Great conquered, the winter capital of the Persian kings was at *Susa* in Elam. The ruins of *Jundishâpur*, about 30 kilometres east of *Susa*, are located south of the village of *Shâhâbâd*, which is about 10 kilometres south of the modern town of *Dezful*. The city of Jundishâpur was founded by *Shâpur I* and became the main urban centre of *Khuzestân*; in later times it expanded further during the reign of *Khosrow I*. It is now a vast site of sprawling indistinct clusters of low mounds, more than three kilometres long and nearly two kilometres wide. It is a prime example of ancient Greek Hippodamian urban design (gridlike street layout), and is almost certainly the work of town planners from *Antioch*. It had eight main streets along its length and width that intersected each other at right angles.

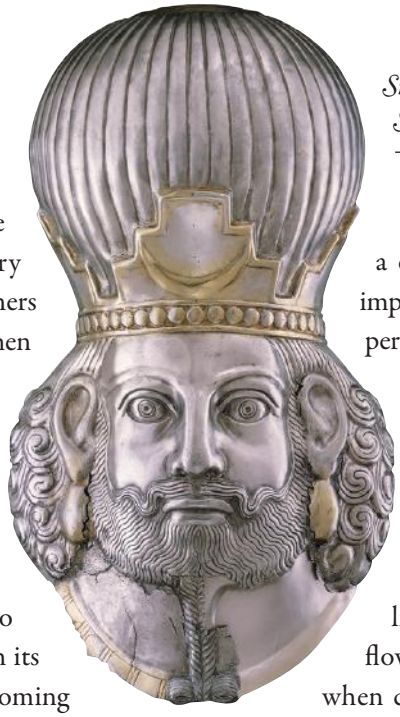
Ardashir and his son and successor, *Shâpur I the Great* (reigned 241–272), were renowned as great builders of cities. Shâpur built *Veh az Andiyok Shâpur* (*'Better than Antioch has Shâpur made this city'*), later known as Jundishâpur (*'The place of Shâpur's military camp'*). Shâpur I was a very successful leader who fought against and defeated three Roman emperors, one of whom, *Valerian*, he captured and led in triumph back to his capital at *Bishâpur* in 256 CE. After the war, the vast numbers of Roman, Greek and Syrian prisoners deported from Antioch and Syria, among them many Christians, found themselves transplanted to Khuzestân, where they formed a cheap but technically experienced workforce. They and their descendants continued to live and prosper in the province. Their presence led to an intricate mixture of ideas that later coalesced into the university-city of Jundishâpur.

Shâpur I rebuilt the town in the shape of a great rectangle, reminiscent of a Roman army camp, and gave his prisoners land grants in order to build homes and take up farming. These people were not slaves;



Gold dinar of Shapur I

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Fletcher Fund, 1965 Metropolitan Museum of Art

Silver head of a Sasanian king, presumed Shâpur I the Great

they were given their freedom, though they had to remain within Persia. The deportations also had a genetic and linguistic impact on the province, which soon became very cosmopolitan. Amongst the prisoners were large numbers of skilled craftsmen and artisans, sculptors, stonemasons and engineers to build bridges and dams, some of which still exist to this day. There was an expansion of irrigation works in the province too. Jundishâpur became a royal residence and it soon developed into a cultural and scientific centre with its own academy, at the same time becoming famous as the focus of Persia's silk production.

The beginning of a unique medical academy was started with Greek physicians who had accompanied the daughter of the Roman Emperor *Aurelian*, whom Shâpur had married and brought to live in Jundishâpur. The spread of *Hippocratic* medicine in Khuzestân can be traced back to Shâpur's time, as he and his successors promoted the study of medical science.

The Apostle of Light

For the time, Persia had the reputation of being a very tolerant society. Shâpur I was a particularly liberal and tolerant man, who allowed the many religious communities, including Christians, Jews and Buddhists, to practise freely within the empire. He himself was an active supporter of the prophet *Mani*, who was called the *'Apostle of Light'* and was the founder of *Manichaeism*, once erroneously called a *'Gnostic heresy'.* Although once considered a heretical form of Christianity, it was in fact a unique religion in its own right. Mani had converted two of the Shâh's brothers, *Mihrshâh* and *Peroz*, who became his powerful patrons.

Although Shâpur I remained a devout Zoroastrian, he was deeply impressed with Mani's message and gave him permission to travel and preach throughout the empire, which he did between 242–273. Mani tried to found a truly ecumenical and universal religion that would integrate the revelations of previous avatars such as Zoroaster, Buddha and Jesus. In his own words he likened his church to a river into which flowed smaller rivers (religions), which, when combined in Manichaeism, became a powerful current. As the other ancient books joined with Mani's writings, among which are the *Book of Mysteries*, the *Treasury of Life* and the *Shâburagân*, they formed a single, united source of wisdom such as had not existed in previous generations.

A *Sogdian* parable (ancient Iranian language) likens the Manichaean faith to a vast ocean that has received the waters of smaller bodies of waters (other religions) and has assimilated them. It was a dualistic religion that spread rapidly throughout Central Asia, into China and westwards into the Roman Empire as far as Spain and Africa, where St Augustine was a member before he joined the Roman Church. Its direct descendants were the *Paulicians*, the *Bogomils* of Bulgaria and the *Cathars* of France. As a major religion on a scale that rivalled Buddhism, Christianity and Islam, it became one of the significant forces in world religious history.

Mani, who was born in Babylonia on 14 April 216 CE, taught that Buddha, Zoroaster, Hermes, Plato, Jesus and St Paul had all taught God's message to humankind. To Mani, all the great religious leaders had been messengers of Light, and he was the latest to receive these personal revelations. His aim was to

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liberate the human soul from its enslavement in the material world. He produced a system of knowledge that can justifiably be called a kind of gnosis, where his followers were taught to look for the divine in the world. He also taught that the two realms of Light and Darkness had existed side by side for aeons, but he believed that God alone had existed for all time.

As in other religions, messengers were sent out to bring God's word to humanity. The fundamental concept in Mani's teachings concerned the *'Living Soul'*, the divine substance that was present both in the individual and throughout the material world. He taught that both human and animal souls are of the same substance as God and are, in fact, parts of God. He considered the soul to be the one life-force governing the cosmos and humanity. He also believed that the human body was a microcosm mirroring the macrocosm of the universe.

Like the Cathars, the Manichaean church was divided into two classes: initiates and ordinary believers or, as Mani called them, the *'Elect'* and the *'Auditors'* or *'Hearers'*. The Elect had to pass through strict initiation ceremonies and periods of preparation. They were vegetarians and were not allowed to kill any living thing, whether human, animal or plant, and they had to fast and control their thoughts. Men and women were equally eligible. They were the teachers who were expected to set an example and were expected to live in purity. The Auditors were encouraged to ask for the wisdom and knowledge of the gods and to think of the soul. They were encouraged to fast, pray daily and give alms. They were enjoined to never lie, steal, kill or be avaricious. They all believed in reincarnation, the *transmigration* of souls, and also seemed to believe in *karma*, although they had their own name for it. The Manichaeans were convinced that even plants and trees possess sentient life and can feel pain when injured.

Mani began his preaching in 242 CE at *Ctesiphon*, the Persian capital city near today's Baghdad. He sent missionaries into the Roman Empire to spread his doctrines, though these took hold mainly in Egypt and Syria. He died at Jundishâpur in 276. Within a century of his death, there were Manichaean churches established from *Xinjiang* province in China (around the *Tarim Basin*) and via the *Silk Road*, to *Carthage* in modern-day Tunisia. Even by the year 1000 they were still powerful in what is now western China.

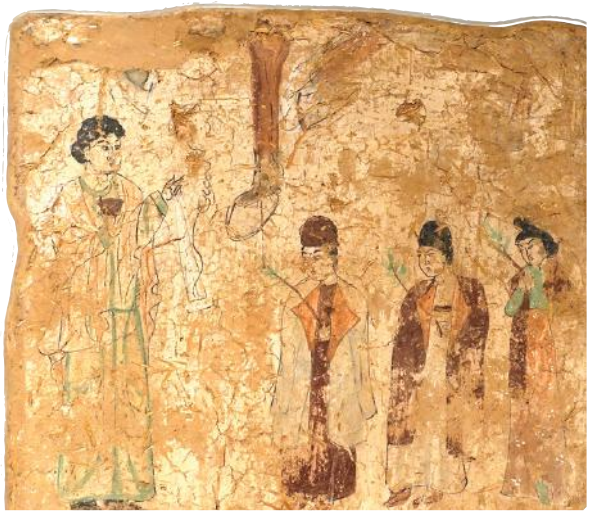
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The prophet Mani

Mani's teachings influenced the Gnostic sects of Christianity and thus became the direct ancestor of the Cathars. His influence on the Roman Empire, as an alternative to Christianity, was so feared that his followers were condemned as heretics. Wherever his churches spread, their spiritual headquarters remained in Mesopotamia. The names of several Manichaean hymns have come down to us, and their titles may strike a chord with some readers: *'Come*

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Nestorian priests in a procession on a wall painting from a Nestorian church in Qocho, China

hither, happiness, the wondrous bodies of radiant light', and from the Body-Soul hymn cycle, *'O light soul, great light self'.*

The Nestorian Influence

Manichaeism was not the only religion to take root and flourish in the region around Jundishâpur. In 489 the *Nestorian* church was founded by the followers of *Nestorius*, a former Patriarch of Constantinople. The origins of this schism lie in the Byzantine convolutions of Christian thought at this period, when Christianity had become the state religion of the Roman Empire. A large group of the church fled from persecution in the Roman Empire to Persia, much as the Pilgrim Fathers fled to North America, to develop their own church in a more tolerant atmosphere. There they became active in the flourishing academy at Jundishâpur, which they called *'Beth Lapat'* in *Syriac* (the language of Syrian Christians), especially after 498 when they severed all ties with the Roman Church. Secular Greek learning had, by this time, been thoroughly assimilated by Syriac speakers.

In April 484, the Persian Christians officially embraced the Nestorian creed at the *Synod of Beth Lapat*. Nestorius' doctrine of the two natures of Christ had found adherents in *Edessa* and its academy before it was closed by the Roman Emperor *Zeno* in 489 and the church members fled south. Joining the Nestorian Church was also a way to eliminate suspicion of a conspiracy with the old enemy, the Roman Empire, and thus prevent persecutions. The Sassanian Shâhs were well disposed towards this development. They promoted Nestorian culture and knowledge, and the *Katholikos-Patriarch* (the equivalent of the Roman Pope) became the head of the completely independent and autocephalous Christian Church of the Persian Empire. By 410, Jundishâpur had become the largest city in Khuzestân and the second largest city in the empire, and now it had become the seat of a Christian Metropolitan or Archbishop. The Nestorian Christian immigrants also brought with them the traditions and techniques from the medical schools of Antioch and Alexandria.

The Immortal Soul

It was during the long reign of *Khosrow I Anushiravân* (of the Immortal Soul) (531–579) that the University of Jundishâpur was founded. His long reign was the high point of the later Persian Empire. The empire now stretched from the Indus River to Libya, and even controlled Mecca and the Arabian Peninsula. Khosrow I instituted wide-ranging reforms in the empire, including the creation of a small class of gentry, or *dehkâns*, who were, after the Arab conquest, to play a vital role in the spread of Iranian ideas and administration to the Caliphs at Baghdad and, from there, to the rest of the Arab world.

For centuries afterwards, Khosrow I was remembered for his sense of justice and chivalry and for his care of the common people. He was also famous for his constant search for knowledge. Zoroastrian ideology regarded all knowledge as sacred and many books were written and translated during his reign. He, too, was a Zoroastrian but he tolerated other religions.

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He welcomed Greek physicians and thinkers to his court, especially when, in 529, the Roman Emperor *Justinian I* closed the *Platonic Academy* in Athens and the Greek Neoplatonist philosophers and other intellectuals emigrated to find sanctuary in Iran.

It was with their help that Khosrow founded the university at Jundishâpur in collaboration with his Prime Minister *Bozorgmehr*, who was also noted for his wisdom. The city enjoyed a state-of-the-art hospital and medical school, based entirely on scientific analysis rather than folk remedies and superstition. The Shâh's personal physician, *Burzoye*, was sent to India to bring back medical knowledge. Indian physicians and mathematicians flocked to this great centre of learning to teach alongside the Syriac-speaking Christians and the Persian-speaking Zoroastrians. It became the premier meeting ground for Greek and Indian medicine.

The library at Jundishâpur was the largest and most prestigious in the empire.

Khosrow I was devoted to literature and was well-versed in Greek philosophy. He had read Plato's *Timaeus*, the *Gorgias* and the *Phaedo*. He readily offered hospitality to the Neoplatonic philosophers who had become homeless after their school in Athens was closed down. One of them, *Priscianus Lydus*, described him as *'anxious to learn'.* Among his teachers were *Mar Barsauma*, the Bishop of *Qarda;* and *Paulus*, a Persian philosopher, a former Nestorian bishop and head of the Iranian Department of Logic and Philosophy of Aristotle. For the Shâh, he wrote an introduction to logic called the *Eisagogê*, which was based on the works of *Aristotle* and *Porphyry*.

The late Sassanian period was a time of great literary flowering. Khosrow I and his successors actively promoted literature, and many books were translated from Greek, Sanskrit and Syriac into *Pahlavi*, the written script of Iran at that time. Indian scientific material in astronomy, astrology, mathematics and medicine, Chinese herbal medicine and religion were also translated, as were works on veterinary medicine, agriculture, diseases, care and treatment of children, and tactics of warfare We also know of the existence of official astronomical tables like the famous *Shahryar Tables*. Astronomy had always been popular, and *Ahmad al-Nihavandi* was still making astronomical observations at Jundishâpur around the year 800. Among the books that have come down to us are popular Indian romances; the *'Book of Kings'*, or *Khwaday Namag*, which was a history of Iran from the legendary, heroic pre-Sassanian period to almost the end of the dynasty; as well as official records of many successive Shâhs' reigns. There were also many books on geography, such as the *Shahrestânihâ-ye Êrânshahr* about the provinces of the Persian Empire.

The library at Jundishâpur was the largest and most prestigious in the empire. Gradually, the synthesis of scientific knowledge, artistic techniques and religious beliefs of various nationalities created an essentially new material and intellectual culture. Foreigners were not discriminated against in economic, social or cultural terms. Everyone was a *shâhanshâh-e bandak*, a *'subject of the Shâh'*, and they were all treated as equals.

In the 20th year of the reign of *Khosrow II Parviz* (590–628), the physicians of Jundishâpur assembled for a scientific symposium by order of the Shâh. It took place under the presidency of *Jibril* (Gabriel) *Durustabad*, the personal physician of the Shâh. The high standard of education (the university was the Oxford or Sorbonne of its time) continued until the reign of *Caliph al-Mansur* (754–775), who was taken ill in Baghdad and summoned physicians from the medical elite of Jundishâpur to treat him, under the director of the hospital *Jurjis* (George) *ibn Jibril ibn*

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Bukhtishu. The physicians there had a high degree of sophistication in Hippocratic and Galenic medicine, and the city had been a great medical centre since the Byzantines destroyed the great Edessa medical centre in 489. Their medical traditions continued well into Islamic times and their influence was such that the organisation of Islamic hospitals seems to have been based on Sassanian models at Jundishâpur. The University of Jundishâpur impressed the Arabs, even though it may have passed its prime by the middle of the seventh century. When the Arabs conquered the Persian Empire, the university continued to flourish under Islam. *Ibn Bukhtishu*, a famous doctor in the time of the *Caliph al-Mansur*, was head of the medical school until Bukhtishu's death in 771.

Sustenance for the Soul

Jundishâpur was the greatest centre of learning in the Persian Empire, the apogee of intellectual activity. Its savants, translators, copywriters and researchers were citizens of the Persian Empire and the world. It was via Jundishâpur that Roman-Byzantine agricultural writings and the *Almagest* of Ptolemy found their way into Arabic literature, as did medical and pharmaceutical literature from East and the West, and Indian fables that later served as a source of inspiration to the 17th century poet *La Fontaine*. The Islamic scholar *Ibn Sina* (Avicenna) is said to have studied there. Hellenic culture was preserved in Jundishâpur and, together with the ancient knowledge of Mesopotamia, Central Asia and India, a great corpus of knowledge was passed on to the knowledge-hungry and inquiring minds of Baghdad. The malicious efforts of Christian zealots to obliterate all traces of *'pagan culture'* were ultimately thwarted, and Jundishâpur's contribution to the enlightenment of humanity was considerable.



Bayt al-Hikma (House of Wisdom), also known as the Grand Library of Baghdad

The importance of the university at Jundishâpur lies in the fact that it preserved and passed on a great body of knowledge that was almost completely lost after the destruction of the *Great Library of Alexandria*. In the cosmopolitan atmosphere of Jundishâpur, one of the greatest scientific centres of the world, knowledge was gathered from all over. When the Dark Ages and the clouds of ignorance spread over the Western world, when militant religions actively tried to destroy all but the revealed knowledge of their own holy books, Jundishâpur stood out like a beacon of light in a darkened world.

When the Arabs conquered the region in the mid-7th century they kept the school intact, and for two centuries more many of the leading minds of the new Islamic faith received their education there from Christian teachers. Thanks to their efforts and those of the *Abbasid Caliphs* of Baghdad who created the *Bayt al-Hikma* (House of Wisdom), which owed a great debt to the savants of Jundishâpur, that knowledge spread throughout the Islamic world and reached Western Europe through Cordoba and Toledo in Spain. From there, the amalgamation of Islamic and Jewish sciences spread to Western Europe, paving the way for the Renaissance, the early 17th century Rosicrucian revival and the world we know today. While Western Europe endured a decline in knowledge during the Dark Ages, the light of knowledge continued to shine in the East. It therefore seems fair to say that without the library and university of Jundishâpur, and the knowledge they safeguarded, the European Renaissance may never have happened at all.

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Sacred Flowers in Antiquity

by **Ralph M. Lewis**
Imperator of AMORC (1939–1987)

'And this our life, exempt from public haunt,
Finds tongues in trees, books in the running brooks,
Sermons in stones, and good in every thing.'

from 'As You Like It' by Shakespeare

We may sometimes hear trees that speak, we may read books in brooks, and we may hear sermons in stones, but what about flowers? Surely they have the deepest and most ancient of stories to tell? Indeed they do, and the tales associated with flowers are undoubtedly the earliest of all human stories, for they deal directly with the most refined forms of two of our most fundamental senses: smell and sight. The stories about flowers that have emerged in human minds carry forth to the modern world some of the most profound thoughts and transcendent ideals of humankind.

Botanically, a flower may be but a plant, a bloom of a plant or the means of its germination. Long before

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such physical characteristics were understood, however, flowers were a source of gratification to the human senses of sight and smell. The exquisite perfume of flowers represents one of the two general qualities of the sense of smell. Flowers therefore became the physical ideal of the olfactory sense, symbols of its satisfaction. A harmonious or agreeable state to the sense of smell would be one that is free of offensive odours and, obviously, would include the aroma of flowers.

Other scents are agreeable to humans too, but not in the same manner as the fragrance of flowers. The aroma of fruits, vegetables and cooking foods may have a tantalising appeal, but they provide also a negative kind of pleasure; for while they stimulate the appetite before one has eaten, after the appetite has been gratified these aromas lose their appeal. The scent of newly sawn timber or even the pungent odours of a stable may provide pleasant olfactory sensations for some people, but such satisfactions are primarily the result of the arousing of agreeable memories or because the scent falls into a pattern of habitual experience.

The perfume of a spring flower is no less wonderful because we have no fond memories associated with it.

The fragrance of a flower is abstract; it stands alone for what it is. Its enjoyment is not dependent upon reminding us of something else. The perfume of a spring flower is no less wonderful because we have no fond memories associated with it. A flower's perfume therefore symbolises not necessarily particular things or events but a particular state of mind, of imperturbability and freedom from aggravation. The full gratification of each of our physical senses is not realised in the source of their stimuli but in the sensations themselves. In the final analysis, it is not what produces pleasing sounds or exquisite fragrances but the ecstatic experience itself which is sought. A fragrant flower can therefore depict an exalted mood or a moment of rapture, no matter what its particular kind.

Colour and Sight

Colour is one of the dominant qualities of our premier physical sense, namely, sight. It is therefore quite understandable that we should be attracted by the vivid hues of flowers. Physical beauty is a gratification of the sense of sight; it is what is perceived as an agreement of perspective and of colour. Since human vision is capable of discerning varied wavelengths of the solar spectrum, a monochrome existence would produce for us a condition of monotony and ocular fatigue. Certain combinations and contrasts of colour consequently become physical ideals because of the satisfaction they



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provide. And habit of course also plays a part in our enjoyment of colour.

We become accustomed to combinations of colours in our environment and they become proffered arrangements. Unlike the olfactory sense, the visual sense has come to immediately identify flowers with other forms and associated experiences. The colours of some flowers remind us of the green of the sea, of the pallor of death, and of the fiery heat of the midday summer sun. The colouring and scent of flowers induced admiration in our early ancestors and invited them to take a closer look. The symmetry of their form and their geometrical structure suggested order.

For humans, things that have an easily comprehensible arrangement, uniformity and order are an indication of an underlying intelligence of sorts. The varied structure of flowers, their colouring and fragrance and the circumstances of their growth have served to objectify and portray in form our abstract spiritual and mystical ideas. Flowers therefore have become living symbols of the moral truths of an ever-evolving human consciousness. As the English poet Wordsworth said: *'To me the meanest flower that blooms can give thoughts that do often lie too deep for tears.'* Indeed, a profound statement.

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Any attempt to review, even partially, all the symbolism that has gathered around our common flowers would be an arduous undertaking. I have therefore selected but three which are particularly rich in meaning, and in particular they today influence our concepts of religious belief, mysticism, philosophy and art.

Traditionally, the rose was consecrated to Isis or the mother-nature goddess and was a symbol of regeneration.

The Rose

Tradition relates that the Ancient Egyptians used the rose as a symbol in their mystery rites and attributed to it a sacred function. Traditionally, the rose was consecrated to Isis or the mother-nature goddess and was a symbol of regeneration. Nothing, however, has come down to us in actual inscriptions from antiquity to confirm this tradition. But as we will soon see, Egypt has strongly influenced the symbolism of flowers generally, and we will consider much now related to the rose as having originated there.

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The rose of Jericho is indigenous to Arabia, Persia and Egypt. It is actually a small herb of the family *Cruciferae*. Upon the ripening of the seeds during the dry season, the leaves fall off and the branches curve inward. This causes it to assume a globular shape. When the herb becomes wet, the branches then unfold, and it assumes temporarily the appearance of a living plant. This characteristic caused it to depict resurrection.



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There is a text from the Aggadah stating that the rose had no thorns before the fall of man.

There is a text from the Aggadah (Hebrew rabbinical texts) stating that the rose had no thorns before the fall of man. Youth was described as a garland of roses, but age as a crown of thorns. The rose is said to have formed part of the bridegroom's garland in ancient Jerusalem. According to the *Halakha* (Jewish religious laws from the Torah), the rose oil was extracted and used by the wealthier classes instead of common oil derived from olives, grains and grape seed. Rosewater has long been the favourite perfume of the East.



Rose of Jericho

The Zohar

In the *Sepher Har Sohar* (the *'Book of the Splendour'*, which deals with the Kabbalah) the rose signifies ancient Israel. Its colour, red or white, refers to the periods of severity and mercy which alternated in the lives of the Israelites. Its five petals allude to the five ways of salvation and the five gates of grace. It is also related that *Maimonides* (Mūsā ibn Maymūn), the famed mediaeval Jewish scholar from Cordobá in Moorish Spain, used a rose preparation in his diet and prescribed it for others. Finally, the Hebrews ascribed to the rose the symbolism of Paradise. Dawn is the reflection of the rose of heaven, just as the glow of sunset reflects the flames of hell. Ancient Hebraic tradition relates that eight hundred of these flowers adorned the tent of each pious man in heaven.

Greek mythology recounts that the rose was sacred to the goddess Aphrodite ('Venus' to the Romans). It was also a palmary symbol of the Thracian mystery school. The mythological account states that the white rose was made red by Eros ('Cupid' for the Romans)

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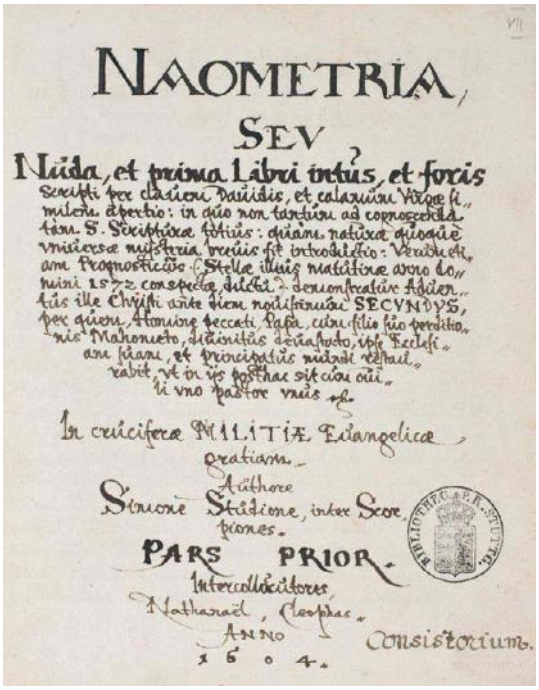
maladroitly upsetting a cup of nectar while dancing before the gods. The Romans honoured the rose by naming a state festival after it: *Rosalia* or the *'Festival of the Rose'* was in memory of the dead.

The catacombs in Rome became symbols of the hopes of future blessedness, because those buried there held such ideas. Subsequently, rose inscriptions on tombs came to represent Paradise or the future life.

Militia Crucifera Evangelica

Among the many titles given to the Virgin Mary in mediaeval times, we find 'Santa Maria della Rosa'. The rose being consecrated to her, it became in the Middle Ages a symbol of *virginity*. Dante wrote, *'Here is the rose, wherein the Word Divine was made incarnate.'*

The *Naometria*, published in 1614 by the Rosicrucian Simon Studion, was a chronicle of the first conclave of the Militia Crucifera Evangelica, held on 27 July 1586. This conclave was principally formed by Rosicrucians to protect the cross and to prevent it from becoming an instrument for the persecution of the nonconformists to Roman Catholicism. The *Naometria* has reference to the mystical significance of the rose. In fact, on page 271 of the book, there is an illustration of the *'Joining of the Rose and the Cross'.* Accompanying it is the Latin phrase *'Hierichuntis Rosa ex quotuor ins Partes'.*


NAOMETRIA,
SEV
Nuda, et prima Libri intus, et foris
Scripti tres claues Dauidis, et calamus Virgæ li-
mitem dirigens: in quo non tantum ad cognoscendã
tam S. Scripturæ totius: quam naturæ quoque
vniuersæ mysteria, præcipue sit introductio: Verum etiã
am Prognosticon Stellæ illius natalitiæ anno Do-
mini 1572 conspectæ, deducitur: denuncupatur Author
tus ille Christi ante diem nouissimum SECVNDVS,
per quem Atauismo peccati Papæ, cum filio suo perditio-
nis Mahometo, Humanitas deiformata, ipsi Ecclesiæ
ans suæ, et principatus mundi restituet,
rabit, vt in ijs posthac sit ouile vnum,
li vno pastore vnus &c.
In crucifera MILITIÆ Euangelicæ
creatam.
Authore
Simone Studione, inter Scor
piones.
PARS PRIOR.
Intercollucitores
Nathanaël, Cleophas.
ANNO
1604.
Consistorium.

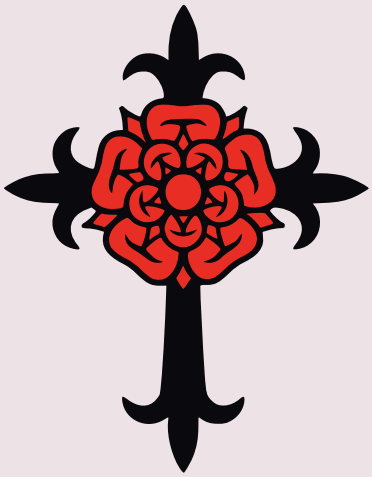
The term *'sub rosa'* (beneath the rose) came from the fact that the rose had long been a symbol of silence among the mystical sects in the Middle Ages. In the early centuries CE, after the advent of Christianity in the Germanic regions, a garland of roses was suspended from the ceilings of banquet halls and at private gatherings as a reminder not to divulge the conversation elsewhere. Perhaps the rose became the symbol of silence because it locks within its petals the source of its fragrance and some of its most beautiful hues, thus showing that virtue and noble intentions should be carefully guarded.

The term 'sub rosa' came from the fact that the rose had long been a symbol of silence among the mystical sects in the Middle Ages.

Michael Maier, a Grand Master of the Rosicrucian Order in Germany in the early 17th century, made much of the mystical significance of the rose. He spoke of it as the most beautiful and perfect flower, guarded, like a virgin, by its thorns. He also said that it abounded in the *Garden of Philosophy*, the latter being a poetic name for the Order of the Rosy Cross. He contended that, just as the natural rose is sweet and fragrant, so the philosophical rose exhilarates the heart and gives strength to the brain. As the actual rose turns toward the sun and freshens with the rain, so the metaphysical rose is nourished in the light until it reaches perfection.

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The rose placed in the centre of a cross...became the alchemical symbol for regeneration.



Wikimedia / RootOfAllLight

Rosicrucian alchemists often associated the rose with dew, since the Latin word *'rosa'* is related to another Latin word indicating the presence of dew. The rose, placed in the centre of a cross, depicted to alchemists the four principal manifestations of nature—air, earth, fire and water—and became the alchemical symbol for regeneration.

The Lotus

Among the flora of Egypt, so we are told by one Egyptologist, *'...the only kind which may be said to be sacred is the lotus.'* Some of his contemporaries, such as Wilkins, do not agree with him. However, the weight of evidence supports the conclusion that the lotus was a sacred symbol in ancient Egypt, and it is prominently displayed in the ancient Egyptian symbolism.

From the cup of the lotus blossom we see issuing forth the boy-god Horus in his aspect as the rising sun, symbol of resurrection. On sculptures and paintings of altars of offerings we see a profusion of lotus flowers. In the replica of an Egyptian tomb in the Rosicrucian Egyptian Museum, we have a statue of the Nile Goddess holding forth a tray of her offerings to humankind. The tray is richly inscribed with fowl and fruits, and a bas-relief of numerous lotus flowers. In an early Memphite ritual there is the salutation, *'Hail, thou lotus, thou type of the god Nefertum.'* The lotus, we do know, was symbolic of this god.

Plutarch tells us that the Egyptians thought that the sun sprang from the lotus plant. They undoubtedly did not believe that the sun came from the lotus flowers, however, but invented this symbolism because of the phenomenon of the lotus opening with the rising sun and closing at sunset. However, many are the inscriptions showing Ra, the symbol of the sun and the

'...the only kind which may be said to be sacred is the lotus.'



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Egyptian columns are often in the form of papyrus and lotus stalks.

istockphoto / Ibrahim Hamroush

eternal creative power of the universe, ascending from the lotus flower in the marshes. Also a hieroglyphic inscription reads in part, *'...the lotus at the nostrils of Ra',* revealing the association of the two.

The lotus came to represent the Upper Nile; and the papyrus plant, the Lower Nile. The two, the lotus and the papyrus, were joined together in a symbolic device typifying the king's rule over both regions, in the same manner as we would join two flags to indicate political unity of a region. Just why the lotus represented the Upper Nile has not yet been disclosed. The lotus, with the papyrus, also played a tremendous part in architectural ornamentation and design. Almost all primitive art begins with a copy of the indigenous manifestations of nature: flowers, fish, astronomical phenomena and animals.

The Incas, who lived along the coasts of Peru and Ecuador, used the marine motif in their decorations on pottery and in their weaving. Those who lived inland used the animals peculiar to those regions. The lotus and papyrus, being common to the Nile, influenced early Egyptian design in a similar manner. Egyptian columns are in the form of papyrus or lotus stalks, tied at intervals by bands, giving them a fluted appearance. The capitals of the columns mostly follow the form of the lotus, either open or closed. When open, the capital has an inverted bell-like shape. The lotus bud became conventionalised—that is, a balanced geometric design—and was used as a frieze or dado along temple walls or in tomb decorations.

It must be realised of course that the lotus has more than one colour. The white lotus was placed upon mummies. The lotus flower upon which the god Horus is always shown seated is the *seshni*, meaning 'white lotus'.

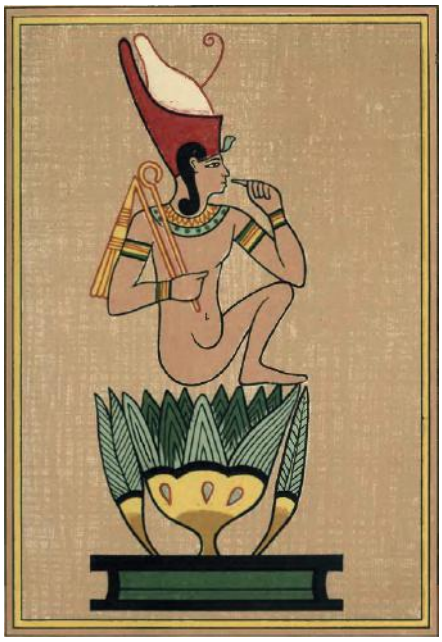
The lotus is mentioned in the oldest of the Vedas. It is there held to be an emblem of beauty to which the faces of the heroines are compared. In India it appears on the oldest architectural monuments and as a design in sculpture. In the Atharvaveda, the human heart is compared to the lotus. It is referred to elsewhere as *'the flower born of the light of constellations'.*

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The Lotus in Creation Myths

In the *Brahmanas* (prose commentaries on the Vedas), the lotus first appeared associated with the creator in cosmogonic myths. In fact, its relation to the divine birth and creation is very significant. The lotus is further conventionalised as a seat or pedestal upon which divinities may be found seated or standing. The most striking example is that of the Hindu goddess Lakshmi, always shown either seated or standing on a lotus, holding a lotus flower in each hand.

After Buddha became represented in sculpture, his image was continually given as seated cross-legged on a lotus seat, or standing on a lotus pedestal. The number of the petals varies from four to six. In this connection we must not omit mention of the well-known sacred prayer of the Buddhists of Tibet: *'Om Mani Padme Hum'*, which has one translation (there are several) as *'Yea [oh Lord], Jewel in the Lotus – Amen'.*



Horus seated on a lotus flower



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Hindu goddess Lakshmi, always shown either seated or standing on a lotus, holding a lotus flower in each hand.

To the ancient Aryans of India, the lotus symbolised superhuman or divine birth. We cannot help but see the similarity of the symbolism of the lotus flower in India to that in Egypt. Although the Aryans on their migration southward from Central Asia into India undoubtedly introduced the symbolism of the lotus wherever they settled, the concept was not unique to them alone. The Aryans were of Indo-European origin, some settling in what is now Iran, and almost certainly had contact with the great civilisation of Egypt.

Just as the script that evolved into Sanskrit may have originally come from a Proto-Indo-European dialect of Aramaic from northwest Syria, the symbolism of the lotus may have entered India from Egypt via early agriculturalist migrations. We have noted how in Egypt the lotus was shown as a seat for the god Horus. Is it just a coincidence that

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it was similarly shown as a seat for the Indian and Hindu deities?

The traditional Indian and Buddhist explanation of the glorious lotus flower is that it appears not to spring from the sordid earth but from the surface of water and is therefore perpetually unsullied and pure, no matter how impure the water. This symbolises all first-created objects arising from primordial chaos, confusion and darkness. In other words, from the dark, watery depths of the lotus plant's roots came light, beauty and form. In modern terms, no matter what one's environment, the spiritual truth latent in one's nature may blossom forth and remain uncontaminated if one turns toward the light.

As a symbol of divine birth, the lotus is the most common symbol in Buddhism, always identified with the sun. It was perhaps the same natural reason that caused Egyptians, Hindus and Buddhists to identify the lotus with the sun (the solar deity). The phenomenon of the sun suggested, symbolically at least, that it reseeded in the closed lotus flower in the underworld at night and was resurrected the next day. In Mahayana Buddhism (the Buddhist interpretation of theism or a supreme god), there is an important sacred scripture known as *'Lotus of the True Law'.* It is a dramatic play concerning creation, much as in the Book of Genesis of the Old Testament.



'Buddha seated on a lotus flower

As in Egypt, the influence of the lotus on the art of India has been considerable

As in Egypt, the influence of the lotus on the art of India has been considerable. In Tibetan literature there are references to the three lotus deities. The lotus order of deities represents the deified principles of certain functions within us. In other words, the lotus deities are but esoteric symbols of certain human capabilities. In the *'Dhammapada* (the *'Path of Law'*) there is a chapter on the symbolism of flowers and their relation to human virtues and frailties. There are, however, no particular references to the lotus.

The Lily

Much reference is made to the lily in ancient Egyptian literature. However, it would appear that the lily and the lotus are synonymous, for the same symbolism is often attributed to both. We have seen that the lotus is the symbol of the god Nefertum (*'beautiful one who closes'*), but we also find the following: *'...the blessed one rises like Nefertum, like a lily, at the nostrils of Ra. He appears on the horizon every day and the gods are purified by the sight of him.'* Elsewhere we noted that the lotus also was *'...at the nostrils of Ra'.* Wallis Budge (an eminent Egyptologist of the early 20th century), when referring to the symbolism of the lily, equates the lily with the lotus, thereby suggesting that they were used synonymously by the ancient Egyptians. The lily is also

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seen as growing out of streams and lakes with the figures or the four sons of Horus standing on the flower.

In a fragment of a lost treatise attributed to Hermes Trismegistus, entitled *'The Sacred Book'*, a section entitled *'The Virgin of the World'* is believed to have originated in ancient Egypt:

> I am the pure lily, carrying forth from the Lily of Light. I am the source of illumination and channel breath of immortal beauty.

This movingly symbolises spiritual life, beauty and illumination. According to mythology, the white lily is fabled to have sprung from the milk of Hera, who was the wife of Zeus. Here, too, it was a symbol of purity.

The Zohar of the Hebrew Kabbalah speaks of the 13 leaves surrounding the lily as the 13 attributes of God which encompass Israel. It similarly mentions that the five leaves of the rose are the first five words of the *shema* (short passages from the Pentateuch). The faces of the righteous are as a lily, we are told. Later Kabalists use the lily as a symbol of resurrection. In Hebrew scripture we find the words *'...as a lily withers in sunlight but blooms beneath the dew, so Israel withers away, except as God becomes dew for her.'* A lily among the Hebrews was likened to *'...Rebecca who remained pure amid evil surroundings.'* The opening passage in Psalms 130:1, *'Out of the depths I cry to you Lord...'* is a reference to the lily-of-the-valley.

The symbolism of the lily, as passed from Judaism to Christianity, almost certainly originated with the Egyptians, if the lotus and lily were held to be synonymous by the Egyptians. The Angel of the Annunciation is conventionally represented as bearing lilies. Then, again, in Matthew 6:28, we have the words *'Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow....'* This is interpreted as meaning that Jesus was alluding to the fact that no wealth or raiment can make any person as beautiful as the real nature of the flowers of the field, in this instances lilies. The *fleur-de-lis*, the emblem of the lily of France, had its origin in the ancient *crux ansata* (Egyptian looped cross or *ankh*), the symbol of the duality of the forces of nature. And the lily has also

"Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow...."

been used for centuries in the coats of arms of Florence and ancient Syria. At least we must concur with Francis Bacon, who said:

> God Almighty first planted a garden. Indeed it is the purest of human pleasures, the greatest refreshment to the spirits of man, without which buildings and palaces are but gross handiwork.



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THERE AND BACK AGAIN

Creation and Reintegration in the Work of J.R.R. Tolkien

Steven Armstrong, Research Associate at the Rosicrucian Egyptian Museum in San Jose California, was a Doctoral Candidate completing his dissertation in Historical Theology and Church History at the Graduate Theological Union in Berkeley. With an academic and professional background in Classics, Philosophy and Eastern Christian Theology from Yale, Fordham and elsewhere, his research included the convergences of Eastern Christian mysticism and liturgy with the teachings and practices of the Western Mystery Tradition in its many expressions.

Since its publication in 1954, millions have been enchanted and inspired by J.R.R. Tolkien's masterwork, *The Lord of the Rings*. Now millions more are enjoying his epic saga in the film version. Few may be aware of the fact that behind the engaging story is a fully articulated world, complete with languages, history and even a myth of creation and reintegration. Our experience tells us that the condition of the world we live in is splintered, beings sundered from one another. How do we return to the Divine Source from which all flows?

Myths are coherent bodies of stories that tell us truths about the universe and can assist us in envisioning this flowing out from the Source (the Alpha

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movement) and the returning to the Source (the Omega movement). Together with this, one of the key questions throughout mysticism and philosophy revolves around *'the One and the Many'*. How can diversity arise from unity, and how can diversity return to unity, or even coexist with unity? Does such a restoration result in the loss of individuality?



Osiris and Isis

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For Tolkien, an Oxford Professor of Philology, nothing could be truer than to say: *'in the beginning was the Word'*. He began his creative mythmaking by inventing more than a dozen fully articulated languages, complete with linguistic histories, evolution, etc.[1] Indeed, creation of language is a sign of the divine spark for Tolkien—*'the chief character of an Incarnate'*.[2] The idea that creation, creativity, language, and song are connected to the ancient problem of the One and the Many is as old as humanity.

Egyptian Creation Myths

For ancient Egypt, there was no one unified myth of creation but several.[3] Many varying theologies expressed the concept that from the original primal waters, or Divinity, all being arose. The Egyptian path of return is in the myth of Osiris. His dismemberment can be seen as the final stage of the dissolution of Creation, while Osiris' restoration by Isis and the birth of Horus represent the beginning of the return, the possibility of reintegration. Thus the King and, through him/her, the whole people and land must become Osiris in the next life, reintegrating with the Divine.

In another ancient approach, Neo-Platonic creation is usually understood as an emanation of being from the One to the Demiurge to the World Soul, which then incarnates the Divine Ideas in the Cosmos. The ladder of Being emphasises the iconic relationship of the Cosmos to the One: *'As above, so below; As below, so above.'*[4]

Plotinus and the Christian Gnostic Origen assert that the descent into matter is not evil but is *'a necessary moment in the unfolding of the Divine Intellect, or God. 'For this reason, the descent itself is not an evil, for it is a reflection of God's essence.'*[5] Theoria—contemplation of the Divine Nous—and the transformation of the self that results from such a contemplative orientation, accomplishes the return to the whole. Tolkien understood that we manifest our Divinity in creativity:

> Dear Sir, I said, although long estranged, Man is not wholly lost nor wholly changed. Disgraced he may be, yet is not dethroned, and keeps the rags of lordship once he owned: Man, Subcreator, the refracted Light through whom is splintered from a single White to many hues, and endlessly combined in living shapes that move from mind to mind.
>
> Though all crannies of the world we filled with Elves and Goblins, though we dared to build

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> Gods and their houses out of dark and light and sowed the seed of dragons, 'twas our right (used or misused). That right has not decayed: we make still by the law in which we're made.[6]

Humans are by nature subcreators. We create secondary worlds that have the *'inner consistence of reality'*,[7] since we create in the image and likeness of The One and therefore delight in the underlying principles of the Primary Creation. Creation is the supreme art, God's greatest achievement. Tolkien's supreme art was storytelling. He begins his world with creativity from the Divine:

Humans are by nature subcreators. We create secondary worlds that have the 'inner consistence of reality', since we create in the image and likeness of The One...

> There was Eru, the One, who in Arda is called Ilúvatar; and he made first the Ainur, the Holy Ones, that were the offspring of his thought, and they were with him before aught else was made. And he spoke to them, propounding to them themes of music; and they sang before him, and he was glad. But for a long time they sang only each alone, or but few together, while the rest harkened; for each comprehended only that part of the mind of Ilúvatar from which he came, and in the understanding of their brethren they grew but slowly. Yet even as they listened, they came to deeper understanding, and increased in unison and harmony.[8]

Then Eru propounds a musical theme and commands the Ainur to fashion it into a *'great music'.* This they do, making the most wonderful music of all, so powerful that it:

> ...went out into the Void, and it was not void. Never since have the Ainur made any music like unto this music, though it has been said that a greater still shall be made before Ilúvatar by the choirs of the Ainur and the Children of Ilúvatar after the end of days.[9]

This blissful state of affairs continues until Melkor, the most powerful of the Ainur, decides to weave themes of his own into the music and creates a dissonance, striving to create a reality of his own. His discord spreads until The One must intervene. He invites Melkor to join a new theme, but Melkor refuses and sticks to his old dissonance. Then Ilúvatar brings forth a music *'wide and beautiful, but slow and blended with an immeasurable sorrow, from which its beauty chiefly came.'*

Still Melkor refuses to cease his discordant theme, and Ilúvatar arises and declares that *'no theme may be played that hath not its uttermost source in me'.* He tells them that he will show them what they have wrought with their music. The One leads them to the Void and shows them a vision of the cosmos, which is the product and working out of their music, including Melkor's. They gazed in wonder at the vision of the world and its people. But it was a vision only, and it vanished after a while. The Ainur were troubled by this, so enamoured had they become, and so Ilúvatar declared to them:

> I know the desire of your minds that what ye have seen should verily be, not only in your thought, but even as ye yourselves are, and yet other. Therefore I say: Eä! Let these things Be! And I will send forth into the Void the Flame Imperishable, and it shall be at the heart of the World, and the World shall Be; and those of you that will may go down into it'. And suddenly the Ainur saw afar off a light, as it were a cloud with a living heart of flame; and they

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knew that this was no vision only, but that Ilúvatar had made a new thing: Eä, the World that Is.[10]

Ilúvatar urges their descent into the world. Instead of a disobedient fall, this is the Divine's way of making sure that they would want to descend into the unformed Arda to set about its effoliation![11] They find the world still *'on the point to begin and yet unshaped'.* It is their task to shape the world: this is to be their achievement. Many of the Valar—as the Ainur are known in the midst of creation—descend into Arda and begin their work. Melkor comes later and makes war upon his fellow Valar, constantly spoiling or limiting what they can do. Thus, Creation begins.

The Valar who descend into Arda are a company of fourteen male-female pairs and a fifteenth, alone, the rebel Melkor. The concept of the necessity of the balance of masculine and feminine energy is consistent with Egyptian and Qabalistic thought and that of Martinez de Pasquales.

Masculine-Feminine Energies

From Egyptian myth to Tolkien, one of the first steps in reintegration is a harmonisation of the masculine-feminine energies. Egyptian gods and the Valar are paired as male-female, except for Melkor. Perhaps Melkor's task, as the greatest of the Ainur, is to balance the male and female within the self, a task not yet accomplished in the circles of the world.

A musical creation enables Tolkien to work creatively with the concepts of unity and diversity. Harmony is a union of diverse elements, all oriented together. The unity of the One is not diminished by the diversity of the contributions by the Ainur, who after all are singing themes from his mind. Diversity in itself is not destructive of unity.

Much of creation is the work of the Valar, but the creation of elves and humans is Ilúvatar's own work. They have a similar role as Adam Cadmon or Adam-

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Eve in Martinez de Pasquales[12] and the Qabalah: to reintegrate the Cosmos with the One, even finally harmonising the music of the Ainur, since *'a greater still shall be made before Ilúvatar by the choirs of the Ainur and the Children of Ilúvatar after the end of days'.* A yet more wonderful music will be sung at the end of time by the Ainur and the Children of Ilúvatar:

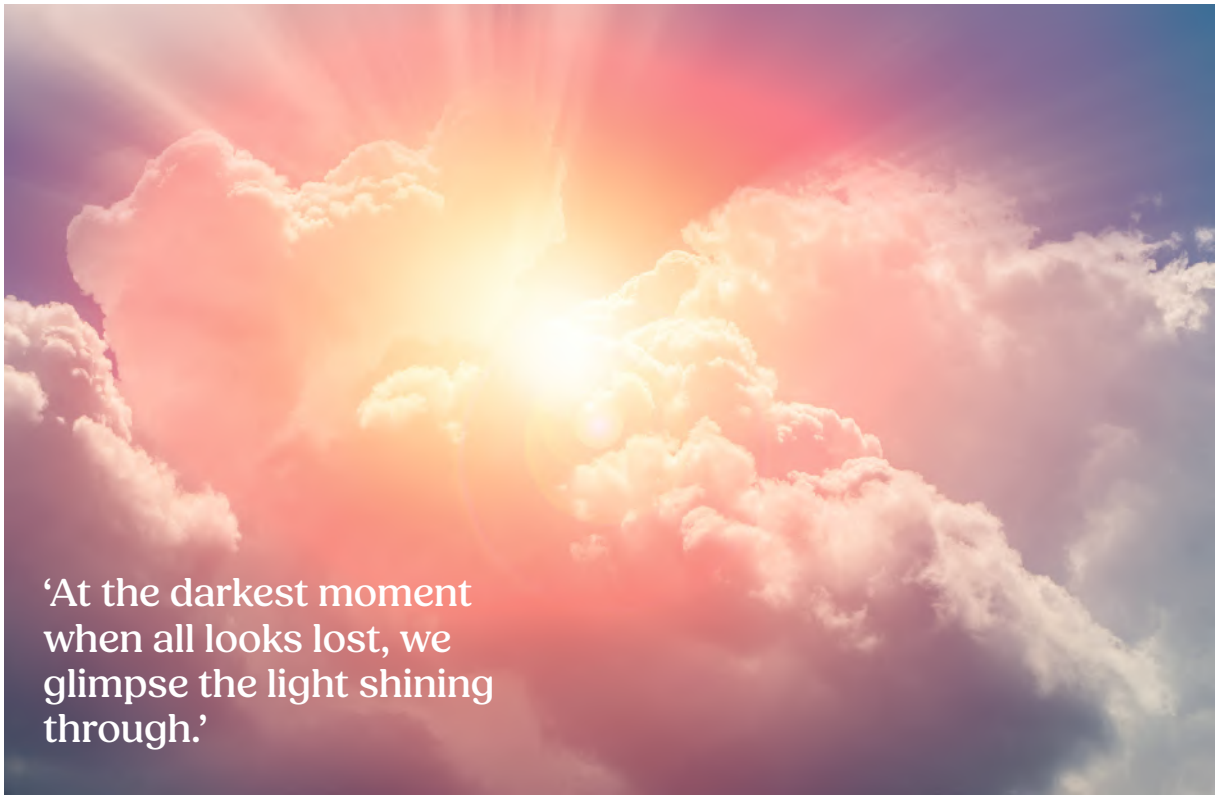
> Then the themes of Ilúvatar shall be played aright, and take Being in the moment of their utterance, for all shall then understand fully his intent in their part, and each shall know the comprehension of each, and Ilúvatar shall give to their thoughts the secret fire, being well pleased.[13]

The solution of the One and the Many takes place through balance, complementarity, and the harmonising of opposites—from male-female complementarities to the dual nature of the Children of Ilúvatar.

Universal Yearning for Reintegration

In Tolkien's Middle-Earth, humans have the *'gift of death'* and elves journey to the Undying Lands: the two races of the Children of Ilúvatar seem destined to eternal separation. Despite this, notable human-elf relationships—creative, military, spiritual and romantic—abound and are in fact the solution to most major crises in Tolkien's history. In *The Lord of the Rings*, it is the coalition of the five disparate peoples that undertakes the Fellowship of the Ring.

In an epilogue to *The Lord of the Rings*, Aragorn, the ruler of the restored Kingdom of Gondor, tells his elf-wife, Arwen Evenstar, just before their sundering at his death, that beyond the circles of the world there may yet be a reuniting of which they do not know, when the world is changed.[14] This same yearning and hoping for reintegration is signalled most poignantly in the note at the end of *The Silmarillion*:



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> Here ends the Silmarillion. If it has passed from the high and the beautiful to darkness and ruin, that was of old the fate of Arda Marred; and if any change shall come and the Marring be amended, Manw and Varda may know; but they have not revealed it, and it is not declared in the dooms of Mandos.[15]

This is an image of a world not yet at the bottom of the cycle of involution. In this history, there is much more disintegration to come, including the war against Sauron. The story does not end, even at the finish of *The Lord of the Rings*.

For Tolkien, the turn of events which begins the reintegration of the world with the One is the Christ-event, as it is for Martinez de Pasquales and for many of the later Neo-Platonists. For the mystic, this Christ-event symbolises the realisation that the Divine and the Created are not utterly sundered, but that the Cosmos comes from the Divine and can return to it, even more beautiful for its *'splintered light'*.[16]

Professor Tolkien even coined a new word for this kind of turn of events: Euchatastrophe, the happy ending.[17] At the darkest moment when all looks lost, we glimpse the light shining through. Everything we had hoped for is true, after all. As opposed to the artificiality of a *Deus ex machina*, however, this happy ending is completely consistent with history and reality. It bridges the sundering of our reality from our imaginations, and transcends them both:

> ...this story is supreme; and it is true. Art has been verified. God is the Lord, of angels, and of men–and of elves. Legend and History have met and fused.[18]

Humanity realises that it can begin the upward journey of reintegration, working to reconcile opposites and restore all. At the end of time, the music sung will be more wonderful than even the first music of creation. In Tolkien, there is no thought or hint of eternal punishment. Professor Tolkien seems to hope for universal salvation as taught by Gregory of Nyssa and other mystics: *anakephalai sis* (recapitulation), or *apokatast sis*. This is wonderfully illustrated by one of Tolkien's predecessors in the creative lineage, George MacDonald, whose novel *Lilith* is perhaps the finest modern fictional treatment of the universal salvation theme.[19]

We are part of the diversity of the Many, but it is also our work to harmonise the oppositions of the Many into the One.

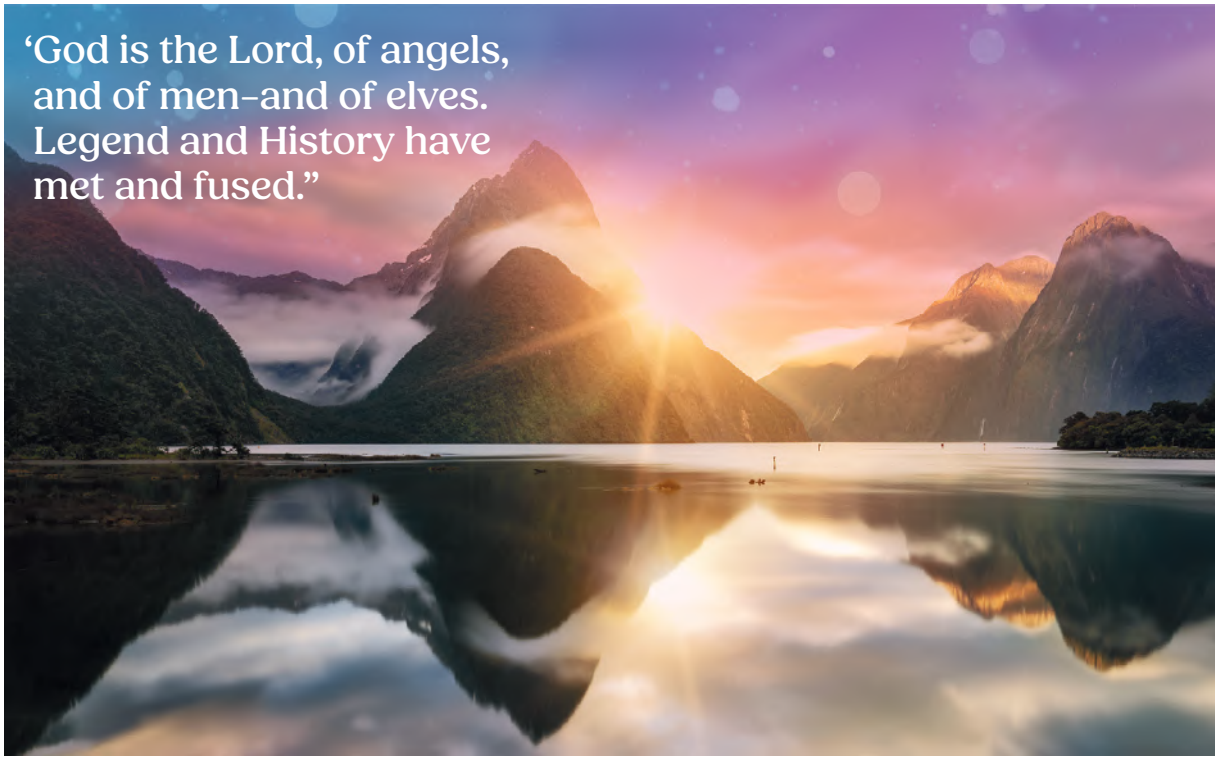
Our work of reintegration comes from our ability to create as well as contemplate. We are part of the diversity of the Many, but it is also our work to harmonise the oppositions of the Many into the One. The One has emanated the Cosmos from itself, and now, as the splintered light and song return, the One can be seen as a symphony or a multifaceted diamond. The necessary splintering of the light and melody return even more beautiful than before, as celebrated in the journey of Osiris from King, through dismemberment, to ruler of the next world. How else could infinity become more infinite, or eternity more eternal? Each necessary part harmonises with the whole.

When the forces of darkness, be they Melkor, Seth or others, dismember the light, they believe they are destroying it, but in fact it is all part of the journey to restore the melody reharmonised. Word, song and melody—these connect Egypt and Tolkien with all creative mystics in the journey There and Back Again. Let us take heart, bolstered by these myths of return, to live our melodies within the symphony of the One.

Footnotes

1 To explore the linguistic worlds of Professor Tolkien, visit the website created by Helge K. Fauskanger: Ardalambion: Of

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the Tongues of Arda, the Invented World of J.R.R. Tolkien: http://www.uib.no/People/hnohf/

2 Ibid. http://www.uib.no/People/hnohf/primelv.htm

3 For more information on Egyptian Creation myths, see: Allen, James P. Genesis in Egypt: The Philosophy of Ancient Egyptian Creation Accounts (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1988); Hart, George Egyptian Myths (London: British Museum Publications, 1990); Hornung, Erik Conceptions of God in Ancient Egypt: The One and the Many, translated by John Baines (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1996); and Idea into Image: Essays on Ancient Egyptian Thought, translated by Elizabeth Bredeck (New York: Timken, 1992).

4 Background and information about Neo-Platonism is available on the web at http://pict.spiritweb.org/Plotinus/ The complete English text of Plotinus’ Enneads is available at http://www.utm.edu/research/iep/n/neoplato.htm

5 Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy: http://www.utm.edu/research/iep/n/neoplato.htm

6 Tolkien, J.R.R. *On Fairy Stories*, in The Tolkien Reader, p. 74.

7 Ibid., p. 89.

8 Tolkien, J.R.R. *The Silmarillion* (Boston: Houghton, Mifflin, 1977), p. 15.

9 Ibid,. p. 15.

10 Ibid., p. 20.

11 Ibid., p. 21.

12 Traitais sur la reintegration des tres, edited by Robert Amadou (Paris: Diffusion Rosicrucienne). Available from http://www.rose-croix.com/ or http://www.drc.fr/ A new English translation by W. John de Campenhout is available in a limited edition from Johannine Press, 4A Antrim Crescent Box 907, Toronto, Ontario, M1P 4Y8 Canada.

13 Ibid., p. 16.

14 Tolkien, J.R.R. *The Lord of the Rings*, Vol. III, Appendix.

15 Tolkien, op. cit., *The Silmarillion*, p. 255.

16 The best study of Tolkien’s imagery of this return of the Light is found in Verlyn Flieger. Splintered Light: Logos and Language in Tolkien’s World (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1983).

17 Tolkien, op. cit., *On Fairy Stories* in The Tolkien Reader, pp. 87-90.

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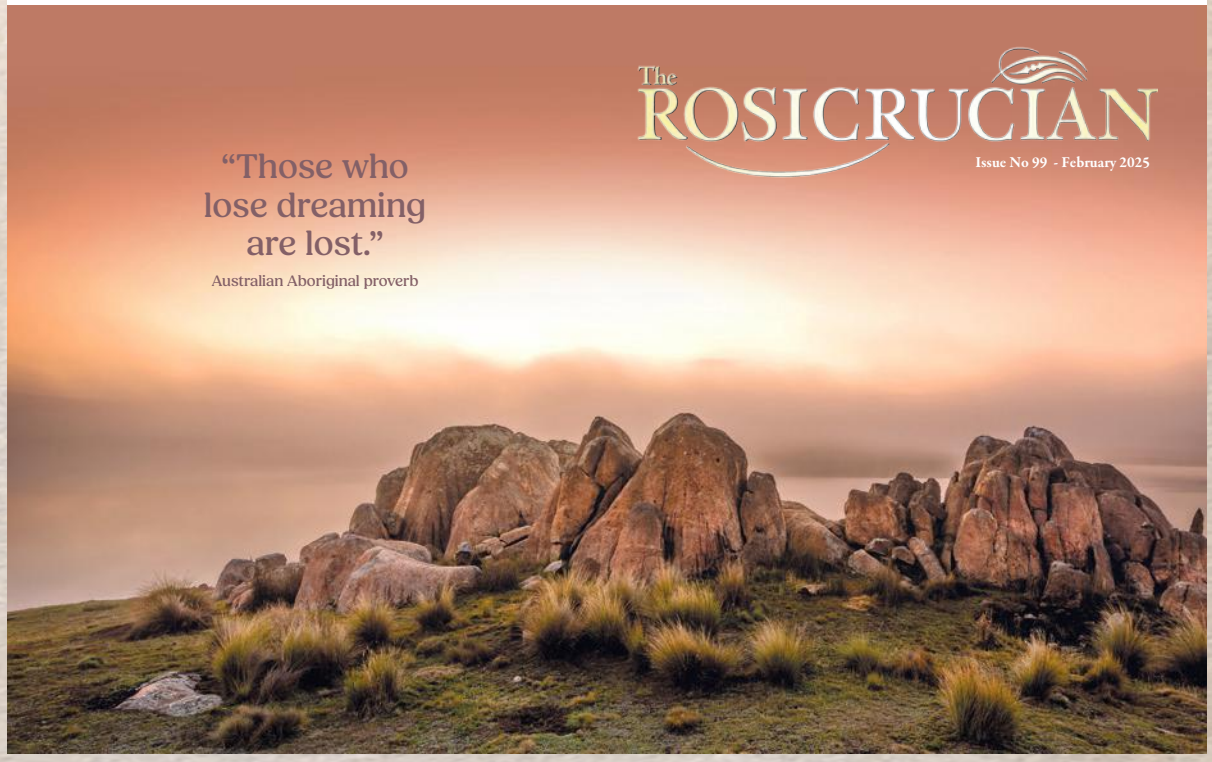
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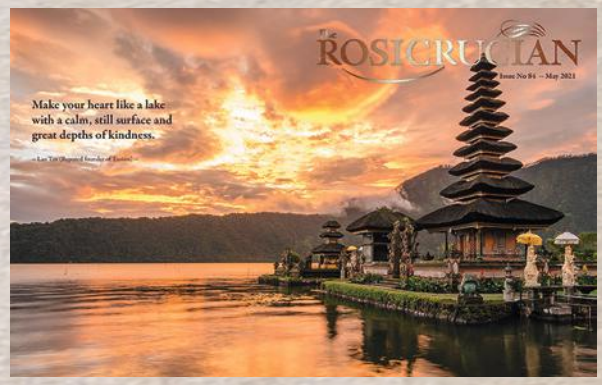
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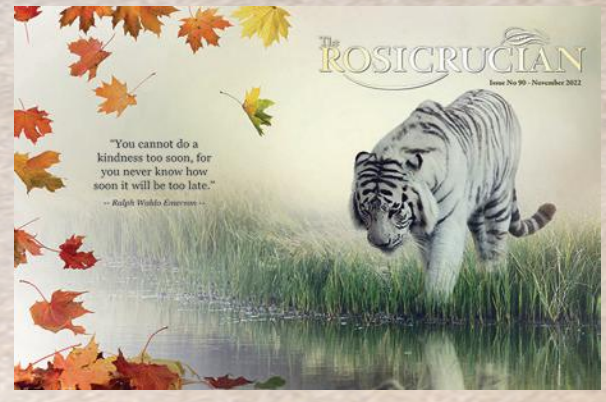
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“We are what we think.
All that we are arises
with our thoughts.
With our thoughts,
we make the world.”
Buddha