

SPIRITUAL HEALING



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1. Introduction

This paper is not intended to be an academic treatise on the history of Spiritual Healing. Although it will take a little time to trace its possible origins, the main focus of the paper is on its relevance to us in the present time, and how we can use this precious gift from God to help ourselves, our family, our friends and mankind in general.

The latter part of the Seventeenth Century saw the rise of modern science and so-called rational thinking, when Astronomy was born of Astrology, Chemistry from Alchemy, and Medicine from Herbalism, and Empiricism overtook Experientialism as the acid test. The development of powerful telescopes and microscopes, the mapping of the periodic table, the discovery of the circulation of the blood: all these things led to a culture of materialism and the belief that, if a thing couldn't be observed, measured and repeated, it didn't exist. This, combined with an increasing estrangement from the established church, led to a culture of cynicism and censure of all things not scientifically observable. It is interesting to note how quickly this attitude took hold – at least in public – against people who had only a few years before studied the old traditions alongside the new teachings. Newton wrote more books on Astrology than Astronomy, yet how many schoolchildren are taught that fact? And yet, even as the philosophy of this Age of Enlightenment sought to free mankind from the tyranny of tradition and superstition, applying the same kind of systematic thinking used in Newtonian physics to all aspects of human existence, another definition of the word 'Enlightenment' – “being spiritually illuminated by acquiring new wisdom or understanding” was being implemented, and often by the very people who were making such strides in providing the keys to unlock the secrets of the material world.

Alongside the very materialistic movement which drove the great advances in medicine and the sciences, which brought about the industrial revolution, the philosophy of enlightenment which overthrew the power of kings, pontiffs and states, and saw nobility in every man, woman and child on God's good earth, we find a deep search for the non-material, a higher understanding of the meaning of life, and the relationship of man with his God. Indeed, it is interesting timing that at the very beginnings of this rise of Reason, one of the most influential alchemical, spiritual and certainly subversive books in history should appear: the *Fama Fraternitatis* in 1615.

Alchemy, astrology, herbalism had never truly died – they simply went underground for a time, and changed their emphasis to suit a newer world. For they will always be relevant. Even now the extraordinary field of quantum mechanics is forcing die-hard scientists to admit that their cast-iron theories are imperfect, that there is room for the invisible, the magical, the unexpected. Indeed, they are truly coming to realize that there truly is “more in heaven and earth than is dreamed of in their philosophy.”

The main purpose of the paper, however, is to not to study these currents in detail – writers such as Francis King and René Le Forestier have covered this ground in far more detail than I could hope to – it is rather to reawaken us to the fruits of this labor, the importance of this part of our ministry and mission,

and most importantly to consider ways to bring the Rosicrucian injunction to heal back into the heart of our practice.

2. Early Signs of Spiritual Healing

Mankind has always wondered why people get hurt, become ill, and how and why some appear to recover while others succumb to their wounds or ailments. A long-held linguistic theory that the third earliest color distinguished by humans – and therefore which they named – after black and white (night and day) was red (blood). As the need to appease the forces which controlled thunder and lightning, inundation and harvest led to the creation of a people apart – a proto-priesthood or proto-shamanic tribe (remember that Melchizedek, the first priest, was a priest of the harvest, offering fermented wheat and fermented grape), so their powers extended to the cure of people as well as the appeasing of the gods.



It is rare to find a religion or cult, past or present, where the roles of god-appeaser and healer were not combined. Even in the Catholic Church I can, as a chorister, cite the Feast of St. Blaise on 15th February, when singers go to church to have their throats blessed by the priest, using two lit candles in a 'V' shape. Incidentally, is this so far from the New Age practice of ear candling and smudging? Yet the priest would laugh at these superstitions even while putting on his specially set aside robes, take up and bind the candles, place them either side of the kneeling person's neck while reciting incantations for health, and see no irony in this.

Early Civilizations, for example the Egyptians, have left us abundant clues to the importance of the priest-healer in their society, in the form of hieroglyphs, statues, medical instruments, and even Imhotep – doctor, high priest and architect to King Djoser, about whom a cult sprang up and who was deified, and who even had followers in Greece, where he was identified with Asclepius, another deified healer.

On occasions the ability to heal has also been associated with kingship. For example, the touch of the anointed monarchs of England was believed to cure the 'King's Evil', or scrofula. The Fisher King of the Grail Legends is often identified with a demi-god, upon whose health rests the well-being of the kingdom, and who guards the Grail, containing the precious blood of Our Lord. Which brings us naturally enough to the King of Kings – the King of Israel who made the lame to walk, the blind to see. Here we see the triple currents of priesthood, kingship and healer combined in one.

3. The Christian Avatar

In Exodus 15:26 God says “I, the Lord, am thy physician.” In Exodus 23:25 God says “I will take sickness away from the midst of thee.” And there are two quotations which tradition tells us refer to the Christos: “He sent his word and healed them, and delivered them from their destruction” (Psalm 107:20), and “with his stripes we are healed” (Isaiah 53:5).

Jesus, then, was a spiritual healer. One thing to note – and this is important for what came later – he worked many of his healing miracles as a man: and he would call upon God to work through him. Now Jesus used three techniques to heal. Sometimes he use words, sometimes touch, and sometimes he used simple herbs and medicines (for example, when he smeared mud and spittle on the eyes of a blind man (see John 9:6 – 7).

It is interesting to note that the means of healing – word, touch and elemental materials – were the very methods used by God to create mankind. He fashioned man out of clay (using spiritual ‘touch’ and the elements) and breathed the Word into him. Just as Adam Kadmon was tasked with creating the lesser creatures (God fashioned them but Adam was given the distinct privilege of naming them), so knowing the name of a person, angel or demon is to control them, as the ancient *grimoires* point out. Clay has the curious property of containing all the elements – it is composed of earth and water and air, and certain types generate heat, or fire when used on the skin in facial masques, a property long known by healers and cosmetologists. So placed it dries and draws out impurities. And when we spit into it, we introduce a part of ourselves – a living element – into the compound. And God did not think it beneath Him to breathe – or Jesus to spit – into this clay, in order to create something new which contained a part of Himself, be it Adam or a healing poultice.



He healed for love of mankind and the people He healed. He did not charge for this service. Likewise He could not heal everybody, but He did what He could within his sphere of influence. He lived among mankind – specifically among the Hebrew tribes in a small country on the East coast of the Mediterranean. He dressed like them, followed their customs, and spoke the Aramaic language. He healed the sick, and that gratis.

4. Superstition and Healing

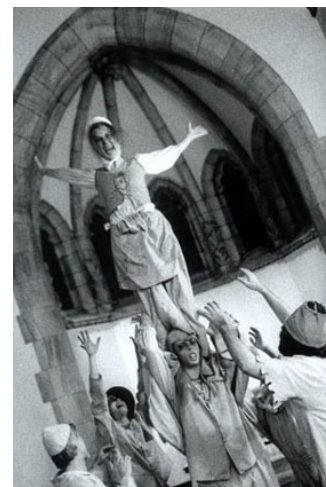
The Middle Ages saw some of the most bizarre interpretations of the Healing message, and as we can see with totalitarian governments of our current times, a power without a counterbalance, like the pillar of severity in the Tree of Life, is inherently unstable and will eventually topple over. Sometimes, however, it can take many centuries for such an unbalanced power to fall. The Catholic Church was no

exception, and a body which existed for nearly twelve hundred years virtually unchallenged from within is going to develop some weird ideas. One of the more bizarre in the realm of healing was the Trial by Ordeal, a semi-magical way to determining guilt by trials of fire or water. The trial by fire usually required the defendant to walk over nine red-hot ploughshares or grasp a red hot poker: if their wounds vanished then God had shown them to be innocent; if the wounds remained or festered after a given period they were clearly guilty. The trial by water had the defendant placed in cold water: if they floated they were deemed guilty and burned. If they sank they were deemed innocent – but did not live to enjoy the verdict! Even the Holy Church could not support this almost pagan interpretation of God's influence on daily life for long, and the practice was banned by Edict of the Lateran Council in 1215.



Medicine was at its most primitive. The Dark Ages had seen most of the ancient knowledge lost, and the Church encouraged the proletariat to focus on their spiritual, rather than their physical health. The classics had been proscribed and were unavailable to any but the most wealthy or the monks, whose large libraries were not subject to the same strict censorship. All empires grow stagnant, and Europe was no different under the rule of the Catholic Church. With the exception of architecture and armaments, and perhaps those arts which were allowed to flourish under royal and church patronage, there was little development in any field of human endeavor. Indeed, it was this atmosphere of rot and stagnation which provided the perfect breeding ground for the tiniest of creatures which eventually began first loosening of the Church's stranglehold. In 1347 the Black Death, a flea-borne plague, swept across Europe, striking good and bad, rich and poor alike. The Church promised cures for those who prayed, who gave to the Church, but it was all to no avail. The people wanted to know why they were being afflicted, and the Church had no answers. Priest and bishop alike abandoned their posts and fled into the country to avoid the plague. After twelve hundred years, the people began to question the power – and the purpose – of Christ's earthly Bride.

What better way to divert attention from one's own shortcomings than to direct the fear of the people in another direction. Politicians have been doing it for time immemorial, and fickle mankind is so easily led down false paths. In 1260 the pope authorized Inquisitors – those who are tasked with rooting out heresy in the church – to absolve one another of irregularities in the pursuit of their duties. This was essentially a license to torture, and now this body could act with impunity. Christianity was maintained by the aristocracy, but it was a veneer on the poorer classes, who still held strongly to the more ancient traditions which existed long before Christian proselytism. Local priests maintained an uneasy truce with villagers who would attend services in church, but still followed their 'old ways' out of it. Local and national festivals were absorbed into Christian feast days. There

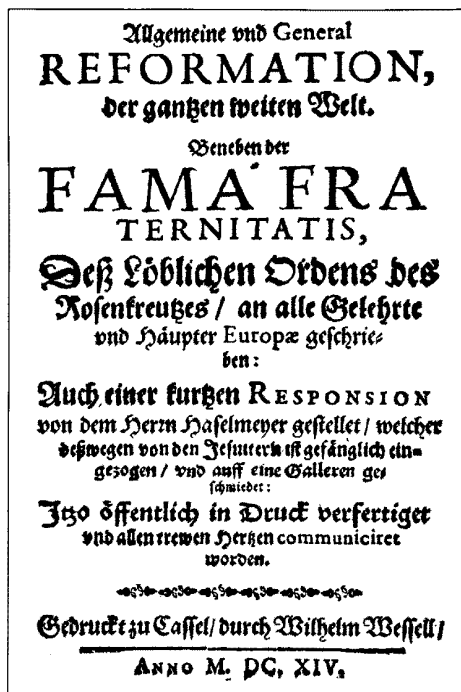


were even instances of the Church allowing pagan celebrations within their portals – the Fool’s Mass is an example.

In this nether-world ambience, locals saw no conflict in attending church and pouring blood on their fields to encourage a good harvest. Nor did they see any harm in trying the Church’s repertoire of oils, anointing and blessings to cure ailments, and if they did not have an instant effect, visiting the local healing women for one of her potions. These herbal practitioners, often inheriting generations of ‘old’ knowledge, were in a difficult position. If their cure worked they grew in reputation, which brought them in conflict with the Church outside whose bornes they worked: if they failed the irate visitor was likely to denounce them to the local Church as practicing witchcraft, and give witness against them. Loners were always a source of suspicion in those days. The Church recognized as saints the early Hermits, Anchorites, Stylites and other ‘holy loners’; but that behavior was no longer tolerated by a power which insisted on blind obedience and conformity. A person without a social or supportive network is an easy target. There was probably more than an element of jealousy, too, in the eyes of the local priest who could not understand why people went to the ‘old woman’ for help, rather than to him. The money she earned was similarly money not being spent at his door on masses or indulgences.

It wasn’t until the Renaissance, and the gradual loosening of the stranglehold of the Catholic Church, that the several currents of neo-Platonic thought, access to ancient texts, the increasing sophistication of astrology, the more general acceptance of theurgy, and the acceptance of medicines as a valid means of healing independent of the Church, that the stage was set for the next step.

5. The Rosicrucian Manifesto – Spiritual Healing Gets a Name



The *Fama*, *Confessio* and *Chemical Wedding* are so well known to those who claim Rosicrucian beliefs, it would be pointless to discuss their historical context or their content here. The environment had to be in place for the seed to take hold, and grow into the blooming rose which still amazes and delights our senses nearly four hundred years later.

Setting aside all the other teachings of these books, there is one point which is expressly stated to be the main purpose and function of the members of the Invisible College, without which their existence, their studies, their travels and their message would be in vain: “Their agreement was this: “First, that none of them should profess any other thing, than to heal the sick, and that gratis.” (*Fama Fraternitatis*, 1615). Surely this goes back to the heart of Jesus’ mission. He spoke through words; he taught in parables; he worked miracles. But the actions which really got the attention of the people and the priests was his ability to “heal the sick, and that gratis.”

At this time there was a particular fascination with the grimoires, and also the seminal Kabbalistic texts. One legend, not unlike that of the 'Lost Chord' was that of the 'Lost Word'. This, like the Holy Grail, took several forms. It was the word uttered by God to create the universe and the same word would end it. It was the word or breath – the Logos – uttered by God to give life to Man. It was His sacred name, Yahweh, which could also be any of the above. The idea that Jesus similarly used a word of power to bring about miracles, was a common belief. This brought a particular fascination with the Seven Words from the Cross, specifically the last one, which is a form of 'So mote it be', or 'So it is', or 'Amen'. Jesus said 'It is accomplished', or in the Greek 'Tetelestai'. And so the word, spoken with confidence, accomplishes the fact. In 'The Art of Rosicrucian Healing' (1947, pub. The Society of Rosicrucians) Dr. Winslow Plummer says: "Christ always used two processes. He required *some effort* on the part of the one desiring to be cured. Then he "*spoke the WORD.*" He elaborates: "(Speak the WORD) is *not so simple* when the practitioner understands the force that must be back of the WORD. The "WORD" consists of not more than three words. Christ used a formula which we can accept as an example. "Be thou healed." "Receive thy sight." "Arise and walk.""



Similarly, the obsession with meaningful and symbolic gestures and materials are rife in the *Chemical Wedding*. Take, for example, the following passage: "We were to moisten the ashes with our fore-prepared water till they became altogether like very fine dough...we having opened our little forms, there appeared two beautiful, bright and almost transparent little images." Note the similarity to Genesis and the healing of the blind man. Similar stories of 'homunculi' or beings created by the Alchemist (as we shall see later), as well as the biblical description of the 'teraphim', and the 'golem' of the Kabbalists have similar echoes. Also, given the preoccupation with healing in this epoch, from stories of the Holy Grail to alchemical allusions to the Elixir of Life and the Philosopher's Stone, it is interesting that the hero of the *Wedding* is dubbed a Knight of the Golden Stone, an alchemical goal which has its foundation and origin in the most common and reviled of materials...mud, perhaps?

The effects of this manifesto and the interest it stirred in some of the most influential and intelligent minds of Europe is well known – even at the time the Age of Enlightenment was knocking at the gate.

6. The Nineteenth Century Revival

While the currents continued through the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, they were largely underground currents, as the people who indulged in esoteric pursuits either feared ridicule before a public weaned on the God of Science, which had apparently replaced the Church as the master who required total obedience; or believed the masses unworthy of their labors and therefore worked in secret. Others used accepted Orders in which to practice their more occult interests: Freemasonry was a prime example of this. And yet this was about to change.

Given the above, it should not be surprising that the first signs of the esoteric revival were to be found in the family of Masonic Orders. In the end of the eighteenth Century we find Martinez de Pasqually hiding his peculiar form of Gnosticism within a Masonic Order; Saint-Martin proposing esoteric spirituality as the Unknown Philosopher; German Orders of Rosicrucianism and Baron Von Hund's Rite of Strict Observance. Many believe the Rosicrucian current continued unabated in England, and in 1866 Robert Wentworth Little established the Societas Rosicruciana In Anglia (S.R.I.A.), a body which drew its members from regular Masons, but was not in fact a Masonic body itself.



The latter part of the Nineteenth Century, together with a backlash against the excessive materialism of the time – especially in England where the burgeoning Empire of Queen Victoria both brought about a greater understanding of foreign cultures and a stronger focus on money, as well as in the invincibility of man and his inventions which lessened the hold of the church, some people began to want more out of life. In this *fin de siècle* atmosphere, it is not surprising that a significant number sought a greater meaning to their daily, materialistic existences. The S.R.I.A. was a good example of this early spiritual yearning, and in its fourth Grade of Philosophus the Philosophy to be studied was in fact comparative Theosophy, and the Philosophus was enjoined, from a Christian background, to study the other great world religions, which now included Judaism, Hinduism, Brahmanism, Buddhism, Islam, Confucianism, Zoroastrianism, Shintoism, and the religions of ancient

Egypt, Rome and Greece. – most of which would have been unknown to a majority of the English a century earlier.

In the last part of the Nineteenth Century there was an explosion of societies, groups, phenomena and scandals associated with the esoteric and the occult. Modern Spiritualism began in Hydesville, New York in 1848 with the Fox sisters. Faith Healing enjoyed new currency, and during this time Mary Baker Eddy founded the Church of Christ Scientist at Boston in 1879, following an experience she had in 1866. Their theology was strongly based on the idea that man is perfect, being made in God's image, and therefore all illness is but man losing his way, and through prayer – with no need for medical treatment – man can reestablish the close bond with God and in this close relationship illness cannot exist, for it is not of God. Among the many orders of Spiritualism perhaps the two best known were the Theosophical Society of Madame Blavatsky and the Hermetic Order of the Golden Dawn.



The former tried to graft Eastern spirituality on Western tradition, and the latter attempted to recreate the entire mystery tradition into one holistic system. Even the church itself was not immune, and in England, for example, attempts at reform resulted in the Oxford Movement in 1840, which saw the

reintroduction of Catholic practices into the Church of England, which proponents claimed had been hijacked by the Protestants; and what became the Liberal Catholic Church, which simplistically began as the church of the Theosophical Society, with Charles Leadbeater's extraordinary books reinterpreting the mass and its accoutrements in terms of angelic powers and esoteric currents.

Alongside the return to spiritual values, the Christos was now revisited as Avatar. Whether or not one saw Jesus as a historical figure, or God incarnate – and the rediscovery of early Gnostic texts was beginning to raise questions on this point – the idea that Jesus was actually a mortal who discovered God within himself and by this act became God, was a powerful one at this time, and it is interesting to note that one of the earliest 'heresies' of the Christian faith which the 'winners', the Catholics, stamped out mercilessly at that most political of meetings known as the Council of Nicea, became one of the more fashionable ideas at the turn of the Twentieth Century.

As well as the more extreme adherence to ideas of Spiritual Healing seen among Christian Scientists



other, gentler interpretations could also be found. Indeed, Dr. Winslow Plummer lists then in *The Art of Rosicrucian Healing*: "Homeopathy, Allopathy, Hydrotherapy, Osteopathy, Chiropractic." He points out that the treatments balance the four elements – Water as in hydrotherapy, or the use of water; Fire, or the use of light and cauterizing techniques; Earth, or the use of muds and physical contact; and Air, or specializing breathing techniques and the exposure of the body to solar rays.

One thing to understand from all these approaches was that they wanted to treat the human as a total being, as a spiritual as well as physical entity. They also wanted to treat the underlying cause rather than the symptoms alone. What these techniques had in common was that they saw an underlying spiritual cause to the problem, and whether they thought this should be treated by prayer alone, or by other methods, the intention was to cure the whole person and bring him or her back into harmony or vibration with God.

Finally, in this whistle stop tour of Rosicrucian or Spiritual Healing types, we find the schools of Homeopathy and Bach Remedies, both of which hark back to the early days of herbal medicine derided by the scientists, because it relied not only upon the physical constituents of the herbs, but also in the living force contained in them and the efficacy of harvesting them at precise times when the planets were said to be auspicious. Both Homeopathy and Bach use minute amounts of the substance macerated in alcohol or water. The term "homeopathy" was coined by the Saxon physician Christian Friedrich Samuel Hahnemann (1755–1843), and the method treats like with like – or minute doses of poison to treat a problem; while Bach remedies use dilutions of plant "essences", extracted by the sun's rays or by boiling, to treat emotional and spiritual conditions, including but not limited to depression, anxiety, insomnia and stress.

7. Examples of Rosicrucian Healing

We need look no further for the esoteric revival of Rosicrucian Healing than to the North-Eastern United States. We have already mentioned the work of Dr. Winslow Plummer in the American Societas Rosicruciana In America, an offshoot of the Societas Rosicruciana in Fœderatis Civitatibus, founded in 1879, and who was a practitioner rather than theoretician. The opening words of his work of healing follow: “The Rosicrucian system of healing differs from all other systems in several notable particulars. It has a remarkable lineage and an honorable record of achievement that occupies a permanent niche in both secular and arcane history. Its methods have been studied by initiates and sought by those outside the pale of the Fraternity for many centuries, but few have been willing to undertake the necessary labor and study required for attainment of proficiency in the Art.”

In England, the SRIA was largely a theoretical body devoted to giving lectures and the pursuit of knowledge. However, according to Dr. D. G Williams, many of its founders were practicing homeopaths, who were therefore disposed to this way of thinking. The Golden Dawn contained at least one alchemist – the Rev. W. A. Ayton. Dr. Felkin’s fascinating pamphlet on Rosicrucian Medicine, claims that Rosicrucian Medicine began with Paracelsus in the fourteenth century. He goes on to outline a number of practical techniques, with particular emphasis on light and the ‘photo-dynamic remedies’ of Dr. M Ritter. He goes on to list a large number of ailments and their cure. The point is expressly made that, although Culpeper, the famous herbalist, advocated drying herbs prior to use, this destroyed the life force which was as important as the medicinal aspects; so only living, green herbs should be used.

The flurry of activity in Eighteenth Century France, which had gone quiet during the revolution of the early Nineteenth Century and the subsequent upheavals, broke forth again in the latter years of that Century. In parallel with the esoteric revival in England, France was also undergoing an esoteric renaissance in the resurrection of ancient traditions and their grafting onto more modern vehicles. A number of churches arose based on either Gnostic or Cathar teachings. Doinel founded his Gnostic Church following a vision in which he claimed to have been spiritually consecrated as “Bishop of Montségur and Primate of the Albigenses” by the ‘Eon Jesus’, and later contacted a number of Cathar and Gnostic spirits in séances at the salon of Maria de Mariategni, Lady Caithness, Duchesse de Medina Pomar. At an early stage Doinel joined the fledgling Martinist Order of Papus, while Papus and Paul Sédir were, among others, consecrated bishops (Tau Vincent and Tau Paul) in the Gnostic Church. While the Gnostic Church certainly contained rituals of Spiritual Healing, as Gnostic they could not strictly be called “Rosicrucian”, and the ‘Consolamentum’ was more a spiritual preparation for union with God through death than an explicit act of ‘healing the sick, and that gratis’.





While most of the Orders united under the general Martinist banner, including the revival of the Elus Cohen, the Chevaliers Bienfaisant de la Cité Sainte, the Rites of Memphis-Mizraïm and the Church, none of these Orders could be said to focus upon Rosicrucian Healing as a major part of their philosophy. In Martinism the objective is to perfect oneself, as Saint-Martin called it, to become a 'Man of Desire' by lifting oneself above the 'Men of the Stream' living in the 'Forest of Errors'. Again, the objective is to heal oneself spiritually and there is little direct focus on physical healing. However, we will return to this point later!

There was, however, an exception to this focus in the family of French Rosicrucian Orders of the late Nineteenth and early Twentieth Centuries. In his book 'Templiers et Rose-Croix', Robert Ambelain informs us that: "This particular lineage has given us what in some occult Masonic circles, is now called the "Rose Croix d'Orient" ...this lineage came from the "Orient" (no doubt more simply from Syria and Armenia) through Greece." Also: "Before 1916 only two people possessed it in France. Georges Lagrèze, who had received it in Cairo, and Papus, to whom he had passed it." This Order was apparently promulgated by Demetrios Semelas, who was also responsible for founding the Order of the Lily and Eagle in Greece. This is one Order within the esoteric family whose main purpose is that of empowering the ability to heal the sick, and there is a specific ritual to be used to this end. I had the wonderful good fortune to accompany my dear friend and mentor, Gilbert Tappa, to Marseilles a few years ago, where he introduced me to an extraordinary man who had devoted years of his life to 'healing the sick, and that gratis'. He worked in his converted garage, which contained a small central altar. Every wall was covered with pieces of white paper which, on closer inspection, proved to be identical. Each one had a pentacle in a circle drawn upon it, and within the pentacle was a lock of hair, a small photograph or other link with the sick person. He received requests for help from all over Europe. He would take a piece of paper, place the personal object within the pentacle and say his special prayers over the paper. Then he would hang the paper on the wall. The letters of thanks for miraculous cures were as numerous as the letters for assistance. I know not whether he worked within the confines of the Rose Croix d'Orient or had his own empowerment, but he was a shining example of what we mortals are capable of if we put our mind to it.

Finally, we should mention that greatest of healers of these times, Maître Philippe Nizier, as well as his disciple and successor, Jean Chapas. Last Palm Sunday I stood in miserable weather in the cemetery in Lyons and participated in a healing circle formed by Martinists from as far away as South America, who had traveled there to remember the Maître on his special day. The power of a humble man to attract nearly seventy people to his graveside to perform a ritual in the pouring rain speak much for the love and respect in which he is held. He believed so fervently in the power of prayer, and knew his prayers would be answered, just as Jesus knew when he prayed to His Father that He would be heard, and his requests would be granted. Maître Philippe showed inspirational confidence as he continued to heal,

despite the persecution and ridicule of so-called professional doctors, who were terrified by a man who had no need of chemicals and poisons and operations to heal: after all, how dare he lay his hands on people and cure them without a doctor's certificate and ten years' learning how to dispense prescriptions and cut people open! It was he who raised the veil between the material and mystical worlds and showed to his followers – and many skeptics – that the invisible forces were just as important in curing the whole person as physical medicines. He reminded us not only that our bodies contain a spiritual element but also that to heal the symptoms one must focus on the whole person; that we must make ourselves in tune with God as well as see to our temporary discomforts. For no cure endures when the person is out of sorts with God and Nature.



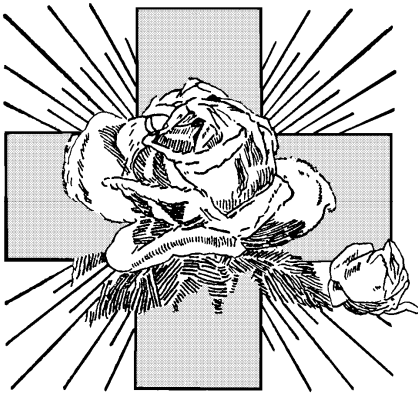
In a way the tenets of the Rose Croix d'Orient were influenced by Gnostic thought, which was quite prepared to see Jesus as a man. Indeed, one of the more prevalent theologies of the mass of beliefs called 'gnosticism' argued that Jesus was indeed a man upon whom the 'Christos' force descended at the time of his baptism, and which left him, mission accomplished so to speak, when he hung upon the cross. They argue that the desperate words "Eli, Eli lama sabachthani" reflect this desertion, before the time when the calmer vehicle of the Christos, a Jesus finally endowed with wisdom and understanding, commended his soul to God. One of the so-called Gnostic texts – I forget which – goes so far as to have the Christos sitting on a hill watching the crucifixion of the man Jesus and laughing. However, if we hold to this Gnostic idea that Jesus was a man, who was having a dialogue with his inner self when he asked permission to heal, then we have the powerful argument that if Jesus could heal while he was mortal, so can we. This newer thinking sees Jesus as Avatar or even Exemplar rather than the Son of God: and as we are all sons of God we all contain the divine spark, and we can also achieve divinity and be reunited with God through our own free will.

8. Modern Texts

Perhaps most pertinent to modern day Rosicrucian Healing are two books written by that doyen of mysticism, Robert Ambelain, called 'Spiritual Alchemy' and 'The Sacramentary of the Rose & Cross'. Both books he claims to be inspired by the teachings of the Rose Croix d'Orient, which seems appropriate given the healing tradition of that Order. The first book is more like a theoretical primer, and the second the practical application.

'Spiritual Alchemy' is dedicated to Georges Lagrèze, the man credited with bringing the Order to France. The basic premise of the book is that the alchemists of old, far from idly seeking instant wealth by converting base metal into gold, were in fact trying to implement the Hermetic axiom "As above, so below" in a practical manner, seeing their material experiments as a means of learning lessons to apply to themselves. In other words, the transmutation from base substance to philosopher's gold did not occur in a crucible: it occurred in themselves. The elaborate symbolism used and the cryptic descriptions of their activities were intended to keep the profane and the idly curious away from their true research.

Hekas, hekas, este bebeloi! However, like the ‘gutter press’ of today, as the alchemists would not write clearly about what they were doing, then someone else was there to do so, and to make up anything they didn’t understand! And that person would not be a fan! It is interesting to note that the nascent scientific community – so determined to observe and test every theory – was so keen to ignore their own principles in their condemnation of the ‘old ways’, dismissing them wholesale without applying any of their ‘scientific techniques’ to determine if there was any currency in their teachings. So alchemy and the ancient arts were driven underground, which was probably no great hardship to the already secretive community of alchemists, until the twentieth century, when it became more popular again under such apologists as Jean Dubuis and Adam McLean.



What is Spiritual Alchemy? Well, alchemy can be defined as being mineral, vegetable and animal. The mineral type is that of observing the transmutation of metals into gold, through a long process of refinement which takes the raw material from base substance to sublime state. From which are produced the Philosopher’s Stone and the ultimate panacea. Minerals being the densest of the three levels of existence, harsh chemicals and strong heat are used in what are often dangerous processes involving acids and crucibles. Vegetable alchemy is called ‘spagyrics’, and focuses on the extraction of the life essence of vegetation in order to create the Elixir of

Long Life. In such a way the higher force is extracted from the base material and concentrated. The heat or light source most often used is that of the sun or moon, and spagyrics is considered a more gentle path, and may have given birth to homeopathy and the Bach remedies, among others. Finally, spiritual alchemy is by logical deduction the art of the transformation of man. This is the most subtle process as it involves the most developed substance of the material plane: after all, man is closer to God than the angels, as the saying goes.

While practice and study of the mineral and spagyric forms of alchemy is most educational, the practice of spiritual alchemy, or self-transformation, can be practiced without previous experience in the other, more material forms. The fire which is referred to in all alchemical texts (a well-known Anonymous Text contains the following instruction: “I only command you to cook at the beginning, cook in the middle, cook at the end, and do not do any other thing...”) is, according to Ambelain, clearly prayer, which is the only human activity which should underline, underpin and continue through the entirety of any spiritual operation. Using diagrams develop from “A Open Entrance to the Closed Palace of the King”, attributed to Philalethes, he takes the reader through the four elements (earth, air, water, fire), the three principles (sulfur, mercury, salt), and the two philosophical metals (Philosophical Silver and Philosophical Gold) to create the *Summum Bonum*. He then interprets this diagram in terms of the four Cardinal Virtues, the three Theological Virtues, and to the two Sublime Virtues (Wisdom and Understanding). He also interprets this powerful image in terms of the mortification of the senses, and also the seven deadly sins and their progeny – Error and Blindness, which lead to spiritual darkness. Through these strong analogies he breaks the process of self-purification down into clearly understandable steps: and this is

an excellent Manual for anyone who wishes to work the process of spiritual alchemy upon themselves. His book also contains a virtual Sacramentary of prayers – well known to Elus Cohen – which he reminds us should, like the Philosopher’s athanor, permeate all our undertakings. Thus prepared, the practitioner is better prepared to work the Rosicrucian Healing outlined explicitly in his ‘Sacramentary of the Rose & Cross’.

This final book is fascinating – and from extensive practical experience, it works! At first glance, one might be put off by the Medieval tone. It reads as though it is claiming to be hundreds of years old, and yet there are enough clues to suggest it is of modern composition. Despite the quaint phrases and anachronistic situations, for example, ‘prayer before drinking water from an unknown or doubtful source’, ‘prayer for the discovery of a spring’, ‘prayer to obtain the pardon of one condemned to death’, ‘prayer to protect the fidelity of a wife or the chastity of a young girl’, the book is a veritable treasury of Rosicrucian Healing prayers: for women in various stages of labor and for their children, for general healings, prayers over herbal remedies, the healing of burns, healing at a distance, heart troubles. The list is long and involved, though again, occasionally quirky (for example, prayer for the healing of leprosy, prayer for the healing of madness – both easily adaptable to more practical use, but couched in mock-medieval terms. I particularly like the ‘Prayer Against Elephantiasis’!). These prayers are not sufficient of themselves: they are to be used in rituals: and remember Dr. Plummer’s injunction, that the actual moment of healing should involve The WORD, or a short and simple command to heal. This in no way negates the importance of prayer and the use of the preparatory orisons to prepare the healer for the actual task – but neither is efficacious without the other.

The important thing to note is that a prominent Rosicrucian, Alchemist, Martinist, Mason and Mystic has enjoined us to use these techniques, and in doing so we will rediscover a major part of our Rosicrucian legacy, as well as fulfill the prime objective: ‘to heal the sick, and that gratis.’

9. What We Can Do Today

One of the oldest forms in magic is the circle. In Church services the circle is a regular feature of movement and censing. In our Martinist tradition the cincture about the waist links us to our initiatory chain and also provide a protective circle about us. Almost every esoteric ritual has included the drawing of a circle of protection about oneself. Perhaps this comes from a primitive desire to define a boundary which was taboo for others to cross. If so, it is easy to see how this simple defensive mechanism was developed to include non-human beings and ultimate non-material worlds. So, the circle we draw in Assiah resonates in Yetzirah, too. And the material limit we draw on Earth provide an equally impenetrable barrier to spirits of higher realms.

Circles are found in almost every culture (with the interesting exception of Aborigines, who apparently did not know the form when they were first encountered). In America there is a popular household ornament



called 'Circle of Friends' which comes from the indigenous Indian culture, and which depicts a circle of primitive terracotta figures holding hands or resting their arms upon each others'. The legend says that if the people seated around the fire shared their good memories and stories, while the embers faded their friendship was sealed, bringing them ever closer together. A candle was placed in the center of the terracotta form, within the circle of friends, and lit to bring good luck to the owner and those who sat with them.

So the circle limits the bad and also contains the good. And in the center, according to many traditions, is God. Here, in harmony with the Indian tribes of North America, we place our candle at the Closing Ceremony. As the light of that candle, taken from its place upon the sheepskin – symbolic of insulation from Assiah and resident with our Past Masters in the world of Yetzirah, and placed firmly in Malkuth among us – radiates out beyond us and into the faces of those Masters of the Past who crowd around us in this most solemn of ceremonies, so we join hands in the ancient way and recite prayers celebrating the divine masculine and divine feminine forces, as so many have done before us. Remember the importance of the prayer, the Pater Noster, given to us by the Christos. Never underestimate its power. The many, many members of the exoteric Church of St. Paul recite it without feeling as a jumble of words on a daily basis, and it has a soothing effect as a mantra, perhaps. But we, who are of the esoteric Church of St. John better understand its esoteric nature, and we say it with feeling and can sense the power it generates. I commend you to read the works of Papus, Sedir, Chapas and others on the esoteric meaning of the Lord's Prayer.

We form a living battery, a positive charge of good as we bathe in the light of the flame and join with countless generations of Rosicrucians in that still, silent moment, an endless link of strength and power which can be harnessed to such good ends.

We are proud inheritors of the Rosicrucian tradition. It is imperative that we follow their prime directive. We must not let the divine energy generated at this moment evaporate into the æther with a casual shake of the hands! As I have mandated in the United States, I ask you never, never to form this powerful circle, and part without using it for healing purposes.

There are so many uses to which you can put this energy. You can pray for the health of an individual – it matters not if you are concerned with physical or spiritual health – or a relative; friends; a group known to you; or another member of the circle; the community; or the world. Be sure your prayer is focused – vague hopes for 'world peace' will elicit a warm, comfortable feeling, but do little to change the planet. The light needs to be focused. The prayers of attunement need to be followed by a clear statement of the intent of the circle, and then when the object of the healing has been clearly identified, the energy needs to be centered and



focused, and then projected to the person or people needing it, with a short command (remember the words of Dr. Plummer). If the person is present they can be put into the middle of the Pantacle (I recommend moving the candle first, or have the person hold it. The circle can then generate a powerful vortex of energy and, moving their joined hands forward to touch the person being healed, force the white light into the recipient by means of strong visualization.

Now visualization is an important part of the exercise, and as Martinists we are fortunate that our early times in the Order are spent performing meditations and visualizations, so some of the techniques will be familiar to you or easy to follow. There is no harm to be had in following the practices of other Rosicrucian Orders, either, for there are many roads to the summit of Mount Abiegnus. Feel absolutely free to use the Middle Pillar exercise of the Golden Dawn, the prayer techniques of the Theosophical Society, or any method with which you and your circle feel comfortable.

This is a wonderful practice, and we can bring a genuinely useful aspect of our beliefs to the service of mankind. Here we can give something back. I enjoin you never to hold hands in a circle of prayer without using the energy for a good intention. Because we are all Rosicrucians, because we are all spiritual healers, because we all contain the Light, what better way is there to employ it, than in following the injunction of our forebears: 'to heal the sick, and that gratis'?

To end, I would like to give you a practical example of what can be achieved, and why I insist on this being done at the Closing of every Martinist Chapter in the United States.

Following a meeting in which I was discussing these thoughts, I was approached by a Martinist who told me his wife worked as a teacher. That very day one of her young students had been attacked in the playground, and as a result he was lying in a coma in intensive care in hospital, limbs broken, and with a poor chance of pulling through. He asked me if we could try the technique I had just described. There were about fifteen of us from several Martinist denominations, attending a Masonic conference in the Hotel Washington, opposite the White House in Washington D.C. I asked the group to stand in a circle, lit a candle and placed it in the center, then asked everyone to hold hands, close their eyes and breathe rhythmically. After several minutes of calm we recited the Lord's Prayer and the Hail Mary, and then I asked those present to visualize a golden child forming above the candle. As the child grew I asked that we all imbue it with health and vitality, robust and strong. At length, when the child was fully formed, we filled it with the energy from our circle, and felt it vibrating with positive energies. We then sent it to the hospital and to the child. We felt drained but very positive after this experience.

The end to the story came the following day. I was sitting with a few colleagues, when my friend sought us out, beaming from ear to ear. He said the boy was out of danger, out of intensive care, and was now sitting up and communicating. He still had a long time to heal and his bones were still broken, but his family were overjoyed. The story becomes even more powerful when I tell you that his father is a priest. My friend's wife told him that a group was praying for his son, and he said: "I know. In fact, I can even tell you when they were praying, because I felt a presence in the room and at that moment my son woke from his coma and looked at me; and we know then that he was out of danger." I am sure I do not

need to tell you that the time he gave for this miracle was precisely the time that we were gathered together in that hotel room to send him our powerful ray of healing.

“HEAL THE SICK, AND THAT GRATIS!”

A Practicum

There will be a practicum after the talk, to give everyone an opportunity to take a little time to think about how they would add healing to their Chapter and/or their private Oratory work.

We will operate a Healing Circle, and also consider a simple ritual for private use.

Finally, all those present should write down the name of a person or a group of people who explicitly need healing, with the promise that they will work as a Chapter or alone to practice Rosicrucian Healing on that person or people at the earliest opportunity following the Conference.

Appendix A – A Simple Healing Ritual for Your Oratory

(Adapted from a ritual developed in the Whare Ra Temple, New Zealand)

Take an unlit candle (*preferably beeswax - ideally the one which was given to you for this purpose in the S.I. Grade*) by your left hand; transfer it to your right hand, and place it in a holder on a table or altar in your Oratory. Light a profane light (*a votary light is good, preferably in green or blue glass*). Extinguish all other lights. If you place a photo of the one to be healed on your altar, place the profane light at its head so that you can dimly discern it.

Put on your mask (*for it is not you who is healing - you are the anonymous vehicle of the Light*) and any other regalia you are entitled to wear. Sit in silence for a few minutes, breathing rhythmically and meditate.

Stand before the candle and make the Sign of the Cross upon yourself, saying “In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Amen.”

Pause briefly, then say: “I, <nomen mysticum>, of the <Name of Martinist Order> do, with the Divine permission, light this candle, that it may be a focus of the True Light for the helping and healing of <Name>.”

Moisten your thumb with your tongue, then draw the Martinist Pantacle upon the candle with your thumb. Light the candle with a taper from the profane light, then trace the Martinist Pantacle once more upon the candle.

Imagine yourself as the channel for the Divine Light, then project this Light upon the candle three times with the gesture ‘Caritas!’

Sit and relax, in view of the photograph if you have one on the altar. After several minutes sit back and close your eyes. Clearly visualize the person you desire to help, not as he (she) now is, but as you would wish him (her) to be - radiant with life and health in every aspect of his (her) being.

Stand and say the Lord’s Prayer, your arms in the position of your Grade, head humbly bowed.

Silently thank God for His mercies and for the gift he has bestowed today.

Leave the room and let the candle burn for ten minutes. Then return and extinguish it (*remember never to blow a candle out: us a snuffer or your moistened fingers*).

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