

CLASSIC & HISTORICAL REPRINTS

The Book Of Aquarius

Alchemy and the
Philosophers Stone

by
Anonymous



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1. The Book of Aquarius

The purpose of this book is to release one particular secret, which has been kept hidden for the last 12,000 years. The Philosophers' Stone, Elixir of Life, Fountain of Youth, Ambrosia, Soma, Amrita, Nectar of Immortality. These are different names for the same thing.

Throughout history this secret has been used by a very few to extend their lives hundreds of years in perfect health, with access to unlimited wealth, among many other miraculous properties. Some kept the secret because they understood that the time was not right for the secret to be free for all people, but most kept the secret out of their own jealousy, ignorance, egotism and corruption.

The Stone's history and the history of the human race up until this day is a strange story full of secret societies, hooded cloaks, and mystical symbols. Such theatrics are childish and shallow. It's pointless to look for the light in the shadows.

The Philosophers' Stone operates and is made by entirely natural and scientific means. Truth is always simple, beautiful and easy to understand.

The Philosophers' Stone is real; you can make it at home. The Stone makes old people young, heals all forms of sickness and disease, extends your life, turns any metal into gold, and more, as you will learn. This isn't a myth or a metaphor, it's a fact.

Don't judge this book before you've read it. This is not one of those airy fairy books written in all kinds of mystical language, filling pages with words that makes sentences but not sense. This book will make more sense than anything you've ever read before.

The age of secrets is over. I'm writing this book in common English. There's no need for mystical language or metaphor. This book contains no hidden meaning or codes; everything is stated plainly and directly, in the shortest and simplest of words necessary to convey the meaning.

Chapter 1 is the Introduction.

Chapter 2 is the Foreword.

Chapters 3 - 18 cover the theory of alchemy.

Chapters 19 - 30 cover the practical instructions for making the Stone.

Chapters 31 - 33 cover further information on the Stone.

Chapters 34 - 49 cover the history of the Stone.

Chapters 50 - 51 cover some more philosophical topics.

Chapter 52 is the alchemists' prophecy.

Chapter 53 is the Afterword.

Chapter 54 is a request for your help in the distribution of this book.

Chapter 55 is a list of answers to questions asked since initial release.

Chapter 56 is the Bibliography.

Truth is stranger than fiction, but it is because Fiction is obliged to stick to possibilities; Truth isn't.
by Samuel Clemens (aka Mark Twain)

2. Foreword

I am a friend of Socrates and Plato, but still more so of Truth.

A Dialogue, by *Alexander von Suchten*, 16th - 17th Cen. (?)

Give this book to everyone you know. If you have a web site, upload it there. If you have a mailing list, mail it to everyone. If you work in the media, report on or publish this book. Translate it into different languages. Do everything you can to get this book to as many people as possible. You can distribute this book in any way. I am not reserving any copyright. This book is public domain and royalty-free. I advise you to print this book, as computers may not be so reliable in the future.

Do you know any secrets? Now is the time to release them. Forget any promises you made or vows you took. This is all corruption. If someone makes you promise to jump off a cliff it doesn't mean you have to. There is no such thing as "government", "society", "company", "organization", these are just vague concepts, they are not real, they don't have feelings. People are real. Your loyalty is to people and to Nature.

Please do not try to find out who I (the author) am. Please do not help anyone else find out who I am. I'm giving this book out freely, at great risk to myself, so please appreciate that and don't put me in danger. If you think you know who I am, don't try to contact me about it or ever mention it. Don't talk about me with other people over telephone or email.

This book is full of quotes. Please do read the quotes and do not skip over them, as they are just as important to this book as my own writing. You can look up the full text of the source of these quotes (in order to read more, or verify that they exist) by searching for any sentence from the quote on Google. Search for it in speech marks "like this" and Google will find the full text of the source for you to read.

All of the quotes are from sources which are accessible to read for free online. The sources of all the alchemical books I have quoted from are these sites: sacred-texts.com, forgottenbooks.org, rexresearch.com, alchemywebsite.com. The latter three sites include alchemical imagery on their sites or in their books, but unfortunately none of them realized the true significance of alchemy. However, all these sites and ramsdigital.com (which is not free) have done a great service to the world by publishing alchemical literature on the Internet.

The key for the below SHA-1 hash is a poem I wrote, written in a language which is not necessarily English. Since there is only one possible key which returns the below hash value when the SHA-1 algorithm is performed on it, and since it is not possible to calculate the key from the hash value, this enables me to prove that I am the true author at any point in the future. Originally I was going to give the key and provide a new hash every time the book was updated or if I wrote a new book; but since I have taken to updating this book often and I now have a web site, I will now only reveal the key if I need to discredit someone who attempts to publish a supposedly affiliated book, or if there is doubt about the authorship of anything else I publish. Or if for some reason I want to reveal my identity, although that is extremely unlikely.

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3. What is Alchemy?

Nature enjoys its Nature, Nature contains Nature, improves Nature, reduces Nature, Nature is superior to Nature.

A Magnificent and Select Tract on Philosophical Water, by *Anonymous*, 13th - 17th Cen. (?)

Alchemy is the art of imitating and accelerating Nature. It is a natural art and science. In alchemy we do not really make anything, all we do is provide a condition for Nature to do what Nature does. So the Philosophers' Stone is not really made by the alchemist, it is made by Nature. The alchemist only provides the conditions so that Nature can operate effectively and without being disturbed.

Many Sages, Scholars, and learned men have in all ages, and (according to Hermes) even so early as the days before the Flood, written much concerning the preparation of the Philosopher's Stone; and if their books could be understood without a knowledge of the living processes of Nature, one might almost say that they are calculated to supersede the study of the real world around us. But though they never departed from the simple ways of Nature, they have something to teach us, which we, in these more sophisticated times, still need to learn, because we have applied ourselves to what are regarded as the more advanced branches of knowledge, and despise the study of so "simple" a thing as natural Generation. Hence we pay more heed to impossible things than to those objects which are broadly exhibited before our very eyes; we excel more in subtle speculations than in a sober study of Nature, and of the meaning of the Sages. It is one of the most remarkable features of human nature that we neglect those things which seem familiar, and are eager for new and strange information. The workman who has attained the highest degree of excellence in his Art, neglects it, and applies himself to something else, or else abuses his knowledge. Our longing for an increase of knowledge urges us ever onward towards some final goal, in which we imagine that we shall find full rest and satisfaction

[...] Nature, then, is one, true, simple, self-contained, created by God and informed with a certain universal spirit. Its end and origin are God. Its unity is also found in God, because God made all things. Nature is the one source of all things: nor is anything in the world outside Nature, or contrary to Nature.

[...] if Art would produce any solid and permanent effect, it must follow in the footsteps of Nature, and be guided by her methods. It must trust itself to the guidance of Nature as far as Nature will lead, and go beyond her by still adhering to her rules.

[...] Now in our Art you should closely imitate these natural processes. There should be the Central Heat, the change of the water into air, the driving upward of the air, its diffusion through the pores of the earth, its reappearance as condensed but volatilized water.

The New Chemical Light, by *Michael Sendivogius*, 17th Cen.

Nature, says Florus, is one, and if any man strays away from her guidance, he mars his labour.

[...] In changing the base metals into gold and silver by the projection of the Stone, it follows (by an accelerated process) the method of nature, and therefore is natural.

[...] *The fact is that, in producing gold, the Art of Alchemy does not pretend to imitate in the whole work of Nature. It does not create metals, or even develop them out of the metallic first substance; it only takes up the unfinished handiwork of Nature (i.e., the imperfect metals), and completes it (transmutes metals into gold).*

The New Pearl of Great Price, by Peter Bonus, 1338 AD

An alchemist then only makes the Stone in the same way that you make a tree by planting the seed and leaving it for a few years. Once the seed is set, if the conditions are right then it just grows by itself, in accordance with Nature.

For as Men, Corn and Herbs are, every one of them, generated and born out of their own Specific Seed, so or in the same manner is the true Medicine of the Ancients (than which there cannot be a better) generated and prepared out of the most perfect bodies and essence

[...] *Everything generated or begotten is generated and born of his own specific seed (1) and in his proper (2) matrix.*

The Chemists Key, by Henry Nollus, 1617 AD

there is no true generation, but of things agreeing in nature. So that things be not made but according to their natures. The elder or oak trees will not bring forth pears; nor can you gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles, things bring not forth, but only their like, or what agrees with the in nature, each tree its own fruit.

[...] *Thus the wise man does that by art in a short time, which nature cannot perform in less than the revolution of a thousand years. Yet notwithstanding, it is not we that make the metal, but nature herself that does it. -- Nor do or can we change one thing into another; but it is nature that changes them. We are no more than mere servants in the work.*

The Root of the World, by Roger Bacon, 13th Cen.

If you are wondering how this leads to the Philosophers' Stone, I will explain it more clearly. The Philosophers' Stone is a natural occurrence of Nature, in fact it is the aim of Nature. Therefore if you can find a substance which is very pure and infused with life-energy, then put it under protected conditions which are advantageous for its natural development, you will allow Nature to take its course in an accelerated manner. When this is complete, Nature will have made for you the Philosophers' Stone. It's very simple and entirely natural, which is the biggest part of the secret.

I will explain again in another way: the Philosophers' Stone is the name of the thing that you get when Nature has finished doing what it does all day long. The Earth and the entire universe are going through this process. If, however, you find a substance already quite well matured by Nature, clean it up, then put it into a closed system, or microcosm, Nature will finish this thing long before it finishes everything else. So you get the result of Nature earlier and can enjoy all its wonderful properties while the rest of the world is still in shit.

the chemical development of our substance is internal, and caused by the operation of Nature

[...] *Our wise Teacher Plato says: "Every husbandman who sows good seed, first chooses a fertile field, ploughs and manures it well, and weeds it of all tares; he also takes care that his own grain is free from every foreign admixture. When he has committed the seed to the ground, he needs moisture, or rain, to*

decompose the grain, and to raise it to new life. He also requires fire, that is, the warmth of the Sun, to bring it to maturity." The needs of our Art are of an analogous nature. First, you must prepare your seed, i.e., cleanse your Matter from all impurity, by a method which you will find set forth at length in the Dicta of the Sages which I subjoin to this Treatise. Then you must have good soil in which to sow your Mercury and Sun; this earth must first be weeded of all foreign elements if it is to yield a good crop.

The Glory of the World, Or, Table of Paradise, by *Anonymous*, 1526 AD

For of this composition, combining as it does the virtues of all things, there may truly be said that in one drop the whole world is present.

Man, the Best and Most Perfect of God's Creatures, by *Benedictus Figulus*, 1607 AD

Besides the science of the stone is so sublime and magnificent, that therein almost all Nature and the whole universe of beings is beheld, as in a certain clear looking glass. For it is like a lesser world [...] God wrought out his compacted being of the world by certain harmony and musical proportion alleayed to one another, that which are in the superior world are in the inferior also, but in a terrestrial manner: that which likeness are in the inferiors, may also be seen in the superious, in a celestial manner indeed, and according to the cause. [...] Some Philosophers have compared the work of the stone to the creation of the world. Likewise to the generation of man, and to his naturalness.

Book of the Chemical Art, by *Marsilius Ficinus*, 15th Cen.

The inspired Apostle, St Peter, tells us that the Earth and its work shall consume therein, and a new world shall be born, beautiful and good, as is described in the Apocalypse.

An Anonymous Treatise Concerning the Philosopher's Stone, by *Anonymous*, 12th - 17th Cen. (?)

The ancient writers call our Stone a microcosm; and there can be no doubt that its composition greatly resembles that of the world in which we live

The Chemical Treatise, Or, The Ordinal of Alchemy, by *Thomas Norton*, 1477 AD

To understand aright, how out of this our Chaos we are to form our Philosophical Microcosm, we must first of necessity rightly comprehend the great Mystery and Proceeding in the Creation of the Macrocosm: it being extremely necessary to imitate and use the very same Method in the Creation of our little one, that the Creator of all things has used in the Formation of the great One.

Aphorisms of Urbigerus, by *Baro Urbigerus*, 1690 AD

this water cannot be prepared using strange methods in the world, but rather, it can only be prepared using natural means; together with Nature and from nature. These words are bright and clear to those who understand

A Magnificent and Select Tract on Philosophical Water, by *Anonymous*, 13th - 17th Cen. (?)

Alchemy is therefore the art of the microcosm and the acceleration of Nature through the microcosm.

There is only one method for the entire work. We only do one thing, and that is to allow Nature to take its course. Admittedly however, we do first clean up our substance and remove what is not needed.

For the knowledge of this art consisteth not in the multiplicity, or great number of things, but in unity; our stone is but one, the matter is one, and the vessel is one. The government is one, and the disposition is one. The whole art and work thereof is one, and begins in one manner, and in one manner it is finished.

The Root of the World, by Roger Bacon, 13th Cen.

It is prepared from one substance, with which the art of chemistry is conversant, to which nothing is added, from which nothing is taken away, except that its superfluities are removed.

A Brief Guide to the Celestial Ruby, by Eirenaeus Philalethes, 1694 AD

4. How Does It Work?

The Philosophers' Stone is energy, concentrated and purified to a massively high degree. This is the same energy that you are taking in when you breathe, and when you eat and drink. It is the energy that powers all forms of life, and so I will call it life-energy (since I have to call it something and "life-energy" is self-explanatory.)

I think most of us already have a feeling that there is some kind of *life-energy* we obtain from our food, drink and air. We all know that eating fruit is better than taking vitamins; we know that there is something in the juice of the fruit. We know that raw vegetables are better than cooked vegetables. We know that cooking food destroys the "goodness" in it. We eat other life forms, and we know that the more alive or fresh our food is the better it is for us. There is also much to be said for breathing deeply and rhythmically and not just for the oxygen, else we would get the same effect by breathing air with more oxygen, but that's not necessarily the case.

Although the proper method of breathing and directing the movements of the Ch'i (ethereal essence) of the body, and the eating of vegetable medicine, may extend people's life, yet they will not keep people from death. But the eating of the Shên Tan (Divine Medicine) confers immortality on the eater, enabling him to last as long as heaven and earth and ride on clouds and dragons up and down the T'ai Ch'ing (Great Clearness).

On The Gold Medicine and On The Yellow and The White, by *Ko Hung*, 4th Cen. (Chinese)

This *life-energy* is physical in the sense that it can be captured and made use of. You could say that this *life-energy* is the smallest particle, of which all other particles are made. Or you could say that everything is made of energy, and this is that energy in a raw and undetermined form (not yet formed into an element), which is probably closer to the truth.

Things in the universe are all produced from the single ch'i (ethereal essence) which embodies both the will of the clear sky and the will of the clouded earth.

[...] When bamboo ware is broken, bamboo is needed for repairing. When a man's energy wears out, lead is required for re-strengthening. Think the matter over. (The medicine) may be found directly in front of your eyes. The trouble is that the common people cannot perceive it.

Shih Hsing-lin, Disciple of Chang Po-tuan, And Hsieh Tao-kuang, Disciple of Shih Hsing-lin, 11th - 13th Cen. (?) (Chinese)

Man is made of earth, and lives through air; for air contains the hidden food of life, of which the invisible spirit, when congealed, is better than the whole world.

The New Chemical Light, by *Michael Sendivogius*, 17th Cen.

The stone which the philosophers do seek is an invisible and impalpable spirit; [...] The stone also is in everything, that is, Nature is in everything. And because Nature has in itself all names, and Nature is all the world, therefore the stone has many names and is said to be in everything: although one is nearer than another

Book of the Chemical Art, by *Marsilius Ficinus*, 15th Cen.

Everything conferring the virtue of stability and permanence necessarily possesses this virtue itself.

A Golden and Blessed Casket of Nature's Marvels, by *Benedictus Figulus*, 1607
AD

Thus the power of growth that I speak of is imparted not by the earth, but by the life-giving spirit that is in it. If the earth were deserted by this spirit, it would be dead, and no longer able to afford nourishment to anything. [...] Know then, gentle Reader, that life is the only true spirit

The Twelve Keys, by *Basilus Valentinus*, 15th Cen.

5. The Powers of the Stone

I will here explain a few of the many possible uses of the Philosophers' Stone. The possibilities for its use are vast and beyond the imagination of a regular person. However, I will outline the traditional uses.

There are two forms of the Philosophers' Stone: the White Stone, and the Red Stone. The White Stone transmutes any metal into silver. The Red Stone is the more powerful and more well-known, and transmutes any metal into gold.

Furthermore, know that the making of gold and silver were considered the least desirable effects of the Stone. The effects on body and mind have always considered to be worth so much more than the money. It is because the Stone makes gold and silver that these were used as currency throughout history, not that the Stone makes gold and silver because they have value.

let not him who desires this knowledge for the purpose of procuring wealth and pleasure think that he will ever attain to it. [...] Those, therefore, that desire this Art as a means of procuring temporal honour, pleasure, and wealth, are the most foolish of men; and they can never obtain that which they seek at so great an expense of money, time, and trouble, and which fills their hearts, their minds, and all their thoughts. For this reason the Sages have expressed a profound contempt for worldly wealth (not as though it were in itself a bad thing, seeing that it is highly commended in Holy Scripture as an excellent gift of God, but because of its vile abuse). They despised it because it seemed to hinder men from following the good and the true, and to introduce a mischievous confusion into their conceptions of right and wrong.

The Sophic Hydrolith, Or, Water Stone of the Wise, by *Anonymous*, 17th Cen.

But now concerning (and chiefly in this our age) the ungodly and accursed Gold-making, which hath gotten so much the upper hand, whereby under colour of it, many runagates and roguish people do use great villanies, and cozen and abuse the credit, which is given them: yea now adays men of discretion do hold the transmutation of Mettals to be the highest point, and fastigium in Philosophy, this is all their intent, and desire, and that God would be most esteemed by them, and honored, which could make great store of Gold, and in abundance, the which with unpremeditate prayers, they hope to attain of the alknowing God, and searcher of all hearts: we therefore do by these presents publicly testifie, That the true Philosophers are far of another minde, esteeming little the making of Gold, which is but a parergon; for besides that they have a thousand better things.

Fama Fraternitatis, by *The Rosicrucians*, 1614 AD

If you do not yet understand how and why the Stone works, what the active principle is, then this will all sound unbelievable. But once you understand that the Stone is simply a concentrated and highly developed form of energy, which is the true nourishment of all things that grow (animals, plants, minerals, etc.), then you will not only understand how the Stone can perform such a wide range of miracles, but also be able to think up further uses.

I will begin with a long quote, which sums up the traditional uses quite well. Then I will continue with a detailed list of uses frequently mentioned in the alchemical literature. I will end with another quote revealing wider and less mentioned uses.

In its first state, it appears as an impure earthly body, full of imperfections. It then has an earthly nature, healing all sickness and wounds in the bowels of man, producing good and consuming proud flesh, expelling all stench, and healing generally, inwardly and outwardly. In its second nature, it appears as a watery body, somewhat more beautiful than before, because (although still having its corruptions) its Virtue is greater. It is much nearer the truth, and more effective in works. In this form it cures cold and hot fevers and is a specific against poisons, which it drives from heart and lungs, healing the same when injured or wounded, purifying the blood, and, taken three times a day, is of great comfort in all diseases. But in its third nature it appears as an aerial body, of an oily nature, almost freed from all imperfections, in which form it does many wondrous works, producing beauty and strength of body, and (a small quantity being taken in the food) preventing melancholy and heating of the gall, increasing the quantity of the blood and seed, so that frequent bleeding becomes necessary. It expands the blood vessels, cures withered limbs, restores strength to the sight, in growing persons removes what is superfluous and makes good defects in the limbs. In its fourth nature it appears in a fiery form (not quite freed from all imperfections, still somewhat watery and not dried enough), wherein it has many virtues, making the old young and reviving those at the point of death. For if to such an one there be given, in wine, a barleycorn's weight of this fire, so that it reach the stomach, it goes to his heart, renewing him at once, driving away all previous moisture and poison, and restoring the natural heat of the liver. Given in small doses to old people, it removes the diseases of age, giving the old young hearts and bodies. Hence it is called the Elixir of Life. In its fifth and last nature, it appears in a glorified and illuminated form, without defects, shining like gold and silver, wherein it possesses all previous powers and virtues in a higher and more wondrous degree. Here its natural works are taken for miracles. When applied to the roots of dead trees they revive, bringing forth leaves and fruit. A lamp, the oil of which is mingled with this spirit, continues to burn for ever without diminution. It converts crystals into the most precious stones of all colours, equal to those from the mines, and does many other incredible wonders which may not be revealed to the unworthy. For it heals all dead and living bodies without other medicine.

The Book of the Revelation of Hermes, by Theophrastus Paracelsus, 16th Cen.

Use 1. A universal medicine for the body.

The Red Stone is much more powerful than the White Stone. A single dose can have a large effect, depending on the strength of the Stone and whether it be White or Red. However, for a lasting effect the Stone should be ingested (eaten) daily, else your body and mind will begin deteriorating again.

If ingested it will cure all disease, and in higher concentrations will make an old person healthy and fitter than they were even in their youth.

If taken suddenly in high concentration, the body will purge itself of everything unnecessary, which may result in going through a shocking transformation over a couple of weeks, with one's skin peeling off, hair and teeth falling out, then growing back in prime condition.

Taken regularly in high concentration, it will be unnecessary to eat, drink or even breathe. Although these may be done anyway. The body will never grow old.

You will heal from wounds extremely quickly, and be unaffected by heat and cold.

prepared as medicine and sweet food, when taken into the mouth it may immediately penetrate the human frame, greatly holding to itself every fleshly thing, increasing, restoring, and nourishing the incorrupt virtue and spirit of life, digesting the crude and undigested, removing the superfluous, making natural water abound, and augmenting, comforting, and inflaming natural heat or fire.

The above will be the duty of the true physician and sane philosopher. For thus will he be able to preserve our body from corruption, to retard old age, retain florid youth in full vigour, and, if possible, to perpetuate it, at least to preserve it from death and destruction.

Man, the Best and Most Perfect of God's Creatures, by *Benedictus Figulus*, 1607 AD

For a month every day let there be taken of this blessed powder, the quantity of a grain of mustard seed, in white wine or in any other liquor, early in the morning. It is sudorific or causing sweat, if anything be, to be sent forth by the pores. It is laxative, if anything be, to be evacuated by stool. It is diuretic, if anything be, to be driven forth by the passage of urine. But it is never vomative, as that is altogether contrary to nature. [...] it not only rectifieth Man's body but also reneweth the whole man, by the use thereof continued for a few weeks

The Crowning of Nature, by *Anonymous*, 16th - 17th Cen. (?)

[Our Stone is] *the Golden Tree, of whose fruit whosoever eats shall not hunger again;*

An Excellent Introduction to the Art of Alchemy, by *Peter Bonus* (?), 14th Cen. (?)

Use 2. A universal medicine for the mind.

The Stone will bring one to their very best and sharpest state of mind. You will be able to learn even faster than as a child, and very easily pick up new languages and learn skills naturally, without making much effort.

Arguably the best quality of all is that the Stone will release one from sadness, depression and suffering. Therefore also making one kind and caring towards others.

Our Art frees not only the body, but also the soul from the snares of servitude and bondage; it ennobles the rich, and comfort and relieves the poor. Indeed, it may be said to supply every human want, and to provide a remedy for every form of suffering.

The New Pearl of Great Price, by *Peter Bonus*, 1338 AD

He that has once found this Art, can have nothing else in all the world to wish for, than that he may be allowed to serve his God in peace and safety. He will not care for pomp or dazzling outward show. But if he lived a thousand years, and daily entertained a million people, he could never come to want

An Open Entrance to the Closed Palace of the King, by *An Anonymous Sage and Lover of Truth*, 1645 AD

Use 3. A universal medicine for the spirit.

The Stone is a fast-track to spiritual enlightenment, and considered by the ancient Indians, Tibetans and Chinese to be the only method to achieve enlightenment without meditation. It is considered by the ancient Chinese Taoists to be the preferred method.

With accelerated spiritual growth, and unlimited *life-energy* and ch'i, the possibilities eventually become limitless and one will be capable of anything.

Tan is the supremely priceless valuable medicine of the material body. Successful compounding leads to endless changes; it makes it possible for one to ascend to meet the ch'en tsung (true men) and further to solve the (problem) of wu shéng (non-living) by its skillful use.

[...] *Even if you are able to apprehend the true nature of Buddhism (i.e., to become of a Buddha), you will not be able to avoid giving up your body here and acquiring another body there. What can be better than compounding the great tan [medicine] at the same time? Then you can overcome wu to (no leak) to become a chen jen (true man, hsien).*

[...] *The doors of hsüan and p'in are seldom know by the people. They are really not the nose and the mouth, as some persons think. Even if you practice breathing for years, how can you make the golden wu (crow) capture the t'u (rabbit)?*

Wu Chen P'ien, Essay on the Understanding of Truth, by *Chang Po-tuan*, 1078 AD (Chinese)

[...] *Whoever eats any of the medicines may rise on high or stay in this world according to his desire.*

On The Gold Medicine and On The Yellow and The White, by *Ko Hung*, 4th Cen. (Chinese)

Use 4. A universal medicine for plants.

The Stone will cause plants to grow extremely quickly and healthily and in any condition.

Use 5. A universal medicine for metals.

The Stone allows any metal to be transmuted into silver (with the White Stone) or gold (with the Red Stone). It is also possible to transmute gold back into the lesser metals.

This matter after having received perfect whiteness, perfect redness and fixation, tinges all imperfect metals into the best Silver and Gold.

The Chemists Key, by *Henry Nollius*, 1617 AD

The purer the metals are, and the greater their affinity to our substance, the more easily are they received by the Tincture, and the more perfect and rapid is the process of regeneration. For the transformation consists in all that is impure and unsuitable being purged off, and rejected like dross. In the same manner flawed stones can be transmuted into precious diamonds, and common crystal can be so tinged as to become equal to the most precious stones. Moreover, many other things may be done with the Tincture which must not be revealed to the wicked world. These virtues of the Stone, and others of a like kind, are looked upon as the least important by

the Sages, and by all Christians on whom God has bestowed this most precious gift. Such men think them vile indeed when compared with the knowledge of God and of His works which is afforded by the Stone.

The Sophic Hydrolith, Or, Water Stone of the Wise, by *Anonymous*, 17th Cen.

He [Raymond] was also the first to discover the method of evolving precious stones out of the metallic principles; nay, he was able, not only to change lead into gold, but he transmuted gold into lead, and thus turned back the course of Nature.

The New Pearl of Great Price, by *Peter Bonus*, 1338 AD

Every Mercury of Metals and Minerals may, by successive stages, be raised, through the qualities of all other Mercuries, to the excellence of the Solar Body, and thence also be reduced to the degree and virtue of any metallic body one may choose.

A Golden and Blessed Casket of Nature's Marvels, by *Benedictus Figulus*, 1607 AD

Use 6. A universal medicine for minerals.

The Stone can be used to grow and develop precious stones and diamonds.

our Stone matures all immature precious stones, and brings them to their highest perfection.

An Explanation of the Natural Philosopher's Tincture, of Paracelsus, by *Alexander von Suchten*, 16th Cen.

Use 7. Malleable glass.

The Stone can be used to make glass malleable, that is, so you can beat it into shape without it shattering.

Our substance is a body containing spirit which makes glass malleable, and turns crystals into carbuncles.

A Very Brief Tract Concerning the Philosophical Stone, by *An Unknown German Sage*, 15th - 17th Cen. (?)

Use 8. Unlimited energy.

Traditionally, lamps can be made with the Stone which burn forever, or at least for thousands of years. Therefore it can also be used to generate an almost unlimited amount of electricity and be used as a power source. I will cover everburning lamps in more detail in a later chapter.

The Stone certainly has some interesting properties, which could make sci-fi technologies possible.

everlasting fire, of which many Alchemists boast, the fire used aforetime by the Jews for their burnt offerings, which burnt continually without becoming extinguished, which also was hidden by the Prophet Jeremiah before the first destruction of Jerusalem, and afterwards was discovered by Ezra.

An Explanation of the Natural Philosopher's Tincture, of Paracelsus, by Alexander von Suchten, 16th Cen.

Use 9. Creation of life.

The Stone can be used to grow humans/ animals outside of the womb, or create clones. It is possible to make them giants or dwarf them. It is also possible to create hybrids or new species out of different animals, or even animals and humans. This will be covered in more detail in a later chapter.

Wherein we find many strange effects: as continuing life in them, though divers parts, which you account vital, be perished and taken forth; resuscitating of some that seem dead in appearance, and the like. We try also all poisons, and other medicines upon them, as well of chirurgery as physic. By art likewise we make them greater or smaller than their kind is, and contrariwise dwarf them and stay their growth; we make them more fruitful and bearing than their kind is, and contrariwise barren and not generative. Also we make them differ in color, shape, activity, many ways. We find means to make commixtures and copulations of divers kinds, which have produced many new kinds, and them not barren, as the general opinion is.

The New Atlantis, by Francis Bacon, 1627 AD

Finally, we have a further list of usages of the Philosophers' Stone from Francis Bacon's *Magnalia Naturae, Praecipue Quoad Usus Humanos* (translation: "*The Glorious Works of Nature, Especially in Regards to Human Usages*") appended to Bacon's *The New Atlantis*.

*The prolongation of life.
The restitution of youth in some degree.
The retardation of age.
The curing of diseases counted incurable.
The mitigation of pain.
More easy and less loathsome purgings.
The increasing of strength and activity.
The increasing of ability to suffer torture or pain.
The altering of complexions, and fatness and leanness.
The altering of statures.
The altering of features.
The increasing and exalting of the intellectual parts.
Versions of bodies into other bodies.
Making of new species.
Transplanting of one species into another.*

Instruments of destruction, as of war and poison.
Exhilaration of the spirits, and putting them in good disposition.
Force of the imagination, either upon another body, or upon the body itself.
Acceleration of time in maturations.
Acceleration of time in clarifications.
Acceleration of putrefaction.
Acceleration of decoction.
Acceleration of germination.
Making rich composts for the earth.
Impressions of the air, and raising of tempests.
Great alteration; as in induration, emollition, &c.
Turning crude and watery substances into oily and unctuous substances.
Drawing of new foods out of substances not now in use.
Making new threads for apparel; and new stuffs; such as paper, glass, &c.
Natural divinations.
Deceptions of the senses.
Greater pleasures of the senses.
Artificial minerals and cements.

Magnalia Naturae, Praecipue Quoad Usus Humanos, by
Francis Bacon, 1627 AD

6. Disbelief

doubt is the first stage of knowledge

A Subtle Allegory Concerning the Secrets of Alchemy, by *Michael Maier*, 1617
AD (?)

The Art of Alchemy has been a secret since the beginning of our recorded history, and so there have always been many people who simply don't believe in it. This is of course made worse by the obscure way in which the alchemical books are written and the fact that the alchemists have wanted to remain hidden, and so never openly revealed themselves or their works to the world. This book is the first exception in probably 12,000 years.

Disbelief stems from not understanding (ignorance). Anything which is not true cannot be understood, that is, it does not make sense. All true things must make sense. All true things must be in accordance with what we know about Nature and the universe, that is to say that they are natural. Nothing true can be unnatural, because Nature is everything, and so nothing is outside of Nature. Things that cannot be understood do not exist, they are lies, and therefore against Nature. All things that exist are in accordance with Nature, so all things that are true are in accordance with Nature.

The Art of alchemy is only the imitation and acceleration of Nature, so it is not possible to say that alchemy is untrue under this definition. This would be the same as saying that Nature is untrue. So the definition of alchemy is self-supporting as it only claims something based on what we already know to be true. Alchemy is the imitation and acceleration of Nature, we know that Nature is true, so alchemy must also be true. The only argument here is if you don't believe that alchemy is an imitation and acceleration of Nature, but now you have this book, so you cannot complain that no one explained this to you.

Any truth must be in accordance with Nature, understandable, logical, and it must make sense. If you believe something that does not fit this category, then your belief is only ignorance. All true things are understandable.

You may still object to the concept that Nature (i.e. alchemy) can produce a Stone capable of the powers described in the previous chapter. The explanation of why this is the case is so simple that it is difficult to explain, as it is obvious, and who can explain something to someone who fails to see what is directly in front of their eyes on a daily basis? It is Nature that is the force which operates on this universe; it created us, we are here, we are alive. Nature already created all the gold in the world. How can one accept the ability of Nature to create life and then dismiss the ability to prolong it? How can one accept the ability of Nature to make gold and then dismiss this in the same sentence? We know that Nature creates life, we know that Nature creates gold. Alchemy is the imitation and acceleration of Nature, so these things can be achieved with the Art of alchemy.

To summarize: if Nature can give life, we can give life; if Nature can make gold, we can make gold. Nature does it everyday, so who are you to say it is impossible when it is before your very eyes?

There are people who can read this book and not understand it, but the reason for this is not that what is written here is too complicated for these people, but that it is too simple for these people. The disbelievers are so inflated with their own egotistic vanity that they are unable to see truth even when it walks right up to them and slaps them across the face. These are the same people who walk around claiming to understand quantum theory, string theory, etc. even when the inventors of those theories claimed not to fully understand it themselves (they are models - not truths.)

The only argument against alchemy is therefore ignorance. But whatever you believe, it doesn't change the truth.

Both among ancients and moderns the question whether Alchemy be a real Art or a mere imposture has exercised many heads and pens;

[...] In the case of a science which is familiarly known to a great body of learned men, the mere fact that they all believe in it supersedes the necessity of proof. But this rule does not apply to the Art of Alchemy, whose pretensions, therefore, need to be carefully and jealously sifted. The arguments which make against the justice of those claims must be fairly stated, and it will be for the professors of the Art to turn back the edge of all adverse reasoning.

Every ordinary art (as we learn in the second book of the Physics) is either dispositive of substance, or productive of form, or it teaches the use of something. Our Art, however, does not belong to any one of these categories; it may be described indeed as both dispositive and productive, but it does not teach the use of anything. It truly instructs us how to know the one substance exclusively designed by Nature for a certain purpose and it also acquaints us with the natural method of treating and manipulating this substance, a knowledge which may be either practically or speculatively present in the mind of the master. There are other crafts which are not artificial, but natural, such as the arts of medicine, of horticulture, and glass-blowing. They are arts insofar as they require an operator; but they are natural insofar as they are based upon facts of Nature. Such is the Art of Alchemy. Some arts systematize the creations of the human mind, as, for instance, those of grammar, logic, and rhetoric; but Alchemy does not belong to this class. Yet Alchemy resembles other arts in the following respect, that its practice must be preceded by theory and investigation; for before we can know how to do a thing, we must understand all the conditions and circumstances under which it is produced. If we rightly apprehend the cause or causes of a thing (for there often is a multiplicity or complication of causes), we also know how to produce that thing. But it must further be considered that no one can claim to be heard in regard to the truth or falsity of this Art who does not clearly understand the matter at issue; and we may lay it down as a rule that those who set up as judges of this question without a clear insight into the conditions of the controversy should be regarded as persons who are talking wildly and at random.

[...] Aristotle, in the Dialectics, says that every master has a right to speak authoritatively with reference to his own art. According to this rule, it is the Sages, and the Sages only, that ought to be consulted with reference to the truth of Alchemy.

[...] no man in his senses would deny the truth of Alchemy for the very insufficient reason that he himself is ignorant of it: such a person would be content with the authority of weighty names like Hermes, Hippocrates, and numerous others. There are many reasons why the master conceal this art. But if any one denies its existence on the ground that he is ignorant of it, he is like someone who has been shut up all his life in a certain house, and therefore denies that the world extends beyond the four walls of his

habitation. There is not really any need to advance any arguments to establish the actuality of our art, for the art itself is the best proof of its own existence; and being securely lodged in the stronghold of knowledge, we might safely despise the contradiction of the ignorant.

[...] In all operative sciences (as Aristotle sets forth) the truth of a proposition ought to be shewn, not by logical argument, but by ocular demonstration. The appeal should be not to the intellect, but to the senses. For particulars belong to the domain of sense, while universals belong to the domain of reason. If we are unable to convey to any one an ocular proof of our Art, this fact must not be regarded as casting a slur on our veracity. The difficulty of our task is enhanced by the circumstance that we have to speak of our Art to the ignorant and scornful, and are thus in the position of a painter who should attempt to explain nice shades and differences of colour to the colour-blind; or of a musician who should discourse sweet harmony to the deaf. Every one, says Aristotle, is able to form a correct opinion only of those things which are familiarly and accurately known to him; but he who denies that snow is white cannot have any eyes in his head. How can any one discover the truth in regard to any science, if he lacks the sense to distinguish the special province of matter, or the material relations, with which that science deals? Such people need to exercise faith even to become aware of the existence of our Art. Pythagoras, in the Turba Philosophorum, says that those who are acquainted with the elements will not be numbered among deniers. A doctor who desires to prove that a certain medicine will produce a certain effect in a diseased condition of the human body, must substantiate his position by practical experiment. For instance, some one suffers from a super-abundance of red colour in the veins of the stomach and liver, and I say that the cure is an evacuation after digestion. If I wished to discover what medicine would produce this effect, I would say: Everything that, after digestion, produces an evacuation of bile, will heal the patient. Now, I know that rhubarb or scamonea will produce this effect; therefore, rhubarb or scamonea will be the right remedy to choose. Nevertheless, the truth of my assertion could be satisfactorily proven only by means of a practical experiment. In all these matters, as Hamec says, nothing short of seeing a thing will help you to know it. If you wish to know that pepper is hot and that vinegar is cooling, that colocynth and absinthe are bitter, that honey is sweet, and that aconite is poison; that the magnet attracts steel, that arsenic whitens brass, and that tutia turns it of an orange colour, you will, in every one of these cases, have to verify the assertion by experience. It is the same in Geometry, Astronomy, Music, Perspective, and other sciences with a practical scope and aim. A like rule applies with double force to Alchemy, which undertakes to transmute the base metals into gold and silver. Whatsoever has the power to transmute imperfect and complete metals has the power to make gold and silver. Now, this quality is possessed by the Stone which the philosophers make known to us. It is plain that there are but two perfect metals, namely, gold and silver; just as there are but two perfect luminaries, namely, sun and moon. The other metals are imperfect and incomplete, and whosoever educes them to perfection, the same also converts them into gold and silver. The truth and justice of this claim, like all other propositions of a practical nature, has to be demonstrated by a practical experiment, and in no other way can it be satisfactorily shewn. But such a practical demonstration would, on the other hand, once for all put an end to the controversy, and convincingly demonstrate to every well-regulated mind the truth of the Art by which it is accomplished. Find our Art, says Galen, and you will have proved its reality, which is performed not by the first principles of the Art, but by its operations.

[...] it is absurd to prove the existence of Nature, or to argue the possibility of what is known.

[...] Those who are ignorant of any science, are like the spectators who can distinguish neither the persons nor their gestures on the stage. A blind man might as well discourse about colours, and criticize the merits of a picture --- a deaf man might as well set up as a judge of some musical composition --- as an uninformed person presume to deliver judgment on the claims of the Art of Alchemy.

[...] *When, indeed, the Stone is found, our friends, who now laugh and sneer at us, will be at a loss how to express their love.*

The New Pearl of Great Price, by Peter Bonus, 1338 AD

To some foolish and shallow persons I have several times expounded this Art in the simplest manner, and even word for word, but they despised it only, and would not believe me

The Golden Tract Concerning the Stone of the Philosophers, by An Anonymous German Philosopher, 16th - 17th Cen. (?)

For the Matter is only one thing, and would remain one thing, though a hundred thousand books had been written about it, because this Art is so great a treasure that the whole world would not be a sufficient compensation for it. It is described in obscure terms, yet openly named by all, and known to all. But if all knew its secret, no one would work, and it would lose its value. On this account it would be impious to describe it in universally intelligible language. He to whom God will reveal it, may understand these dark expressions. But because most men do not understand them, they are inclined to regard our Art as impossible, and the Sages are branded as wicked men and swindlers. Learned doctors, who thus speak of us, have it before their eyes every day, but they do not understand it, because they never attend to it. And then, forsooth, they deny the possibility of finding the Stone; nor will any one ever be able to convince them of the reality of our Art, so long as they blindly follow their own bent and inclination. In short, they are too wise to discern it, since it transcends the range of the human intellect, and must be humbly received at the hand of God.

[...] *It is their own ignorance [the skeptics] that prevents them from attaining to a true knowledge; but they put the blame on our writings, and call us charlatans and impostors. They argue that if the Stone could be found at all, they must have discovered it long ago, their eyes being as keen and their minds as acute as they are. "Behold," say they, "how we have toiled day and night, how many books we have read, how many years we have spent in our laboratories: surely if there were anything in this Art, it could not have escaped us." By speaking thus, they only exhibit their own presumption and folly. They themselves have no eyes, and they make that an argument for blaspheming our high and holy Art.*

[...] *Hermes is right in saying that our Art is true, and has been rightly handed down by the Sages; all doubts concerning it have arisen through false interpretation of the mystic language of the philosophers. But, since they are loth to confess their own ignorance, their readers prefer to say that the words of the Sages are imposture and falsehood. The fault really lies with the ignorant reader, who does not understand the style of the Philosophers. If, in the interpretation of our books, they would suffer themselves to be guided by the teaching of Nature, rather than by their own foolish notions, they would not miss the mark so hopelessly.*

The Glory of the World, Or, Table of Paradise, by Anonymous, 1526 AD

I, BEING an anonymous adept, a lover of learning, and a philosopher, have decreed to write this little treatise of medicinal, chemical, and physical arcana, in the year 1645 after the Birth of Christ, and in the 23rd year of my age, to assist in conducting my straying brethren out of the labyrinth of error, and with the further object of making myself known to other Sages, holding aloft a torch which may be visible far and wide to those who are groping in the darkness of ignorance. The contents of this Book are not fables, but real experiments which I have seen, touched, and handled, as an adept will easily conclude from these lines. I have written more plainly about this Art than any of my predecessors; sometimes I have found myself on the very verge of breaking my vow, and once or twice had to lay down my pen for a season; but I could not resist the inward prompting of God, which impelled me to persevere in the most loving course, who alone knows the heart, and to whom only be glory for ever. Hence, I undoubtedly gather that in this last age of the world, many will become blessed by this arcanum, through what I have thus faithfully written, for I have not willingly left anything doubtful to the young beginner. I know many who with me do enjoy this secret, and am persuaded that many more will also

rejoice in its possession. Let the holy Will of God perform what it pleases, though I confess myself an unworthy instrument through whom such great things should be effected.

An Open Entrance to the Closed Palace of the King, by An Anonymous Sage and Lover of Truth, 1645 AD

Among those who devote themselves to the transmutation of metals, however, there can be no such thing as mediocrity of attainment. A man who studies this Art, must have either everything or nothing. An Alchemist who knows only half his craft, reaps nothing but disappointment and waste of time and money; moreover, he lays himself open to the mockery of those who despise our Art. Those, indeed, who succeed in reaching the goal of the Magistry, have not only infinite riches, but the means of continued life and health. Hence it is the most popular of all human pursuits. Anyone who has read a few "Receipts" claims the title of a Sage, and conceives the most extravagant hopes; and, in order to give themselves the appearance of very wise men indeed, such persons immediately set themselves to construct furnaces, fill their laboratories with stills and alembics, and approach the work with a wonderful appearance of profundity. They adopt an obscure jargon, speak of the first matter of the metals, and discuss with a learned air the rotation of the elements, and the marriage of Gabritius with Bega. In the meantime, however, they do not succeed in bringing about any metamorphosis of the metals, except that of their gold and silver into copper and bronze.

When captious despisers of our Art see this, they draw from such constant failures the conclusion that our Art is a combination of fiction and imposture; whilst those who have ruined themselves by their folly confirm this suspicion by preying on the credulity of others, pretending to have gained some skill by the loss of their money. In this way the path of the beginner is beset with difficulties and pestilent delusions of every kind; and, through the fault of these swindlers, who give themselves such wonderful airs of profundity and learning, our Art itself has fallen into utter disrepute, though these persons, of course, know nothing whatever about it. The beginner finds it extremely difficult to distinguish between the false and the true in this vast Labyrinth of Alchemy.

[...] It is possible indeed that some dull person may allege in refutation of our reasoning his inability to accomplish those chemical transformations on which it is based; but such operators would be vindicating too great an honour for their ignorance if they claimed to advance it as an argument against the truth of our Art. They must not make their own little understandings the standard or measure of the possibilities of Nature. At any rate, my word is as good as theirs (and better, since they can never prove a negative), and I do most positively and solemnly assert that I have with my own hands performed every one of the experiments which I have described; and I know many others whose experience has shewn these things to be true. How can our opponents hope to prevail against eye-witnesses by bare negation?

[...] study Nature, read the books of genuine Sages, who are neither impostors nor jealous churls, and study them day and night; let him not be too eager to carry out every idea practically before he has thoroughly tested it, and found it to be in harmony not only with the teaching of all the Sages, but also of Nature herself. Not until then let him gird himself for the practical part of the work, and let him constantly modify his operations until he sees the signs which are described by the Sages. Nor let him despair though he take many false steps; for the greatest philosophers have learned most by their mistakes.

The Metamorphosis of Metals, by Eirenaeus Philalethes, 1694 AD

But why is it called a Stone, though it is not a stone; and how is it to be found? The Sages describe it as being a stone and not a stone; and the vulgar, who cannot imagine how so wonderful a thing should be produced except by art-magic, decry our science as impious, wicked, and diabolical. Some silly persons clamour for an Act making the profession or practice of this Art punishable by statute law. Now, one can hardly be angry with the illiterate and ignorant persons who raise this cry; but when it is taken up by men of exalted station and profound learning, one hardly knows what to say. These men I also reckon among the rude multitude,

because they are deplorably ignorant of everything pertaining to our Art, and yet, forgetful of their dignity, they join in the hue and cry against it, like so many cowardly village curs. It is neither religious nor wise to judge that of which you know nothing; and yet that is exactly what these people do, who claim to be both Christians and scholars.

A Brief Guide to the Celestial Ruby, by Eirenaeus Philalethes, 1694 AD

After spending the best part of my life in the study of the liberal arts and sciences, and in the company of wise men and judicious scholars, I was compelled, as the result of my observation of mankind, to arrive at the melancholy conclusion that the hearts of most persons are set either on ambitious and vainglorious projects, on sensual pleasures, or on the accumulation of wealth by all and any means; and that few care either for God or for virtue. At first I did not quite know whether to become a disciple of the laughing or of the weeping philosopher, or whether to join in the exclamation of the wise Prince of Israel: "All things are vanity." But at length the Bible and experience taught me to take refuge in the study of the hidden secrets of Nature, whether pursued at home, by means of books, or abroad, in the Great Volume of the World. Now, the more I drank of the mighty fount of knowledge, the more painfully my thirst, like that of Tantalus, seemed to increase. I had heard that there was a bird called Phœnix, the only one of its kind in the whole world, whose feathers and flesh constitute the great and glorious medicine for all passion, pain, and sorrow; which also Helena, after her return from Troy, had presented in the form of a draught to Telemachus, who thereupon had forgotten all his sorrows and troubles. This bird I could not indeed hope to obtain entire; but I was seized with an irresistible longing to become possessed of at least one of its smallest feathers; and for this unspeakable privilege I was prepared to spend all my substance, to travel far and wide, and to endure every hardship. There was, of course, much to discourage me. Some people denied the very existence of this bird; others laughed at my faith in its wonder-working properties.

[...] *But most of those whom I met laughed at my quest, and said that, like Narcissus, I had fallen in love with the shadow of my own mind, the echo of my vain and ambitious thoughts, which had no substantial existence apart from my own folly. "The words of the Alchemists," said they, "are like clouds: they may mean and represent anything, according to the fancy of him who hears them. And even if there were such a medicine, human life is too brief for the search; all that makes life worth living will have to be neglected and thrust aside while you are engaged in hunting after it. If we can pick up a knowledge of this secret casually, and whilst devoting ourselves to other pursuits, well; but if not, we can very ill spare the time for a closer search." These objections (at least the latter half of them) I met as follows: "The quest of this Medicine demands the whole powers of a man's body and mind. He who engages in it only casually, cannot hope to penetrate even the outward rind of knowledge. The object of our search is a profound secret, and a man who is not prepared to give himself wholly to this enquiry had much better abstain from it altogether.*

A Subtle Allegory Concerning the Secrets of Alchemy, by Michael Maier, 1617 AD (?)

I have, in the course of my life, met with a good many who fancied that they had a perfect understanding of the writings of the Sages; but their subtle style of interpretation was in glaring contrast with the simplicity of Nature, and they laughed at what they were pleased to call the rustic crudeness of my remarks. I have also frequently attempted to explain our Art to others by word of mouth; but though they called themselves Sages, they would not Believe that there is such water in our sea, and attributed my remarks to temporary insanity.

The New Chemical Light, by Michael Sendivogius, 17th Cen.

And because the philosophers had so obscurely set forth this science in strange involvings of words and shadows of figures, the stone of the philosophers was doubted by a very many men.

[...] *Tell me by the immortal God, what is more unjust than for men to hate what they are ignorant of? And*

then if the thing do deserve hatred, what is of all things more shallow? What more abject? Or what greater madness and potage is there, than to condemn that science in which you have concerned yourself just nothing at? Who hast never learned either Nature or the majesty of Nature, or the property or the occult operations of metals. The counsellour also babbles and crokes, and the pettyfoggers of the law, the greatest haters of philosophy, who with the hammer of a venal tongue coin themselves money out of the tears of the miserable: who shipping over the most sacred of laws, have by the intricacies of their expositions persecuted all the world with their frauds. But why do I go after jeers and satyrs? Let these crabbed fellows and their followers remain perpetually in their opinion, who know nothing. Which is honest, which is pleasant, which is delightful, which lastly is anything elevated above a vulgar doctrine: and who have attained at nothing glorious and famous, but perhaps at some plebian business from the black sons of Cadamus. But to which purpose are these? I have made the choice of this stone of the philosophers familiar to me; and I very often call it the only Minerva, and the greatest pearl of all occult philosophy, or of magic, not indeed of the superstitious, but of the natural. Yet it seems in the opinion of the unlearned to degenerate far from a better study: which is decreed and ordained by the divine will.

Book of the Chemical Art, by Marsilius Ficinus, 15th Cen.

permit me to transcribe a passage from the works of Helmontius (Arbor Vitæ, folio 630): "I cannot but believe that there is such a thing as a gold and silver making Stone. At the same time, I cannot shut my eyes to the fact that hundreds of painstaking Alchemists are daily being led astray by impostors or ignorant professors of the Spagyric Art." For this reason I shall not be astonished if—immediately upon perusing my book—multitudes of these deluded victims start up, and contradict the assertion which I have made in regard to the truth of this Art. One of these gentry denounces Alchemy as a work of the Devil; another describes it as sheer nonsense and humbug; a third admits the possibility of transmuting metals into gold, but maintains that the whole process costs more money than it is worth. But I do not wonder at these opinions. It is a hackneyed saying of human nature that we gape at those things whose purpose we do not understand, but we investigate things pleasurable to know. The Sages should therefore remember the words of Seneca (De Moribus): "You are not yet blessed, if the multitude does not laugh at you." But I do not care whether they believe or contradict my teaching about the transmutation of metals; I rest calmly satisfied in the knowledge that I have seen it with my own eyes, and performed it with my own hands. Even in our degenerate age these wonders are still possible; even now the Medicine is prepared which is worth twenty tons of gold, nay, more, for it has virtue to bestow that which all the gold of the world cannot buy, viz., health. Blessed is that physician who knows our soothing medicinal Potion of Mercury, the great panacea of death and disease. But God does not reveal this glorious knowledge to all men indiscriminately; and some men are so obtuse (with a judicial blindness) that they wonder at the activity of the simplest forces of Nature, as, for instance, the attractive power which the magnet exercises upon the steel. But (whether they believe it or not) there is a corresponding magnetic force in gold which attracts Mercury, in silver which attracts copper, and so with all other metals, minerals, stones, herbs, plants, etc. . . . We must not be surprised at this persistent opposition to truth: the light of the sun pains the eyes of owls.

[...] belief or unbelief could not make any difference to the truth of our Art, just as a magnet would go on attracting steel, and rendering it magnetic by such contact, even if you did not credit it.

Golden Calf, by John Frederick Helvetius, 17th Cen.

Of the numerous things in the world, the Art and the Tao are the most difficult to comprehend. How then can people of ordinary endowment pass the judgement that there cannot possibly be a way to immortality? If one harbors doubts about the Tao merely because of popular disbelief, then he is assuming the mass to be wise people. How numerous then will the wise ones in this world be! Furthermore, those who understand the Tao and work for its attainment -- are they not the most stupid, even more stupid than the common people? Many fear to attempt to seek for immortality, lest they should fail and expose themselves to ridicule as victims of folly and deception. But supposing that the common people are not infallible and that their idea about the Tao is

one mistake they make among ten thousand sound judgements, will not those who have laughed be laughed at by the ones who succeed despite discouragement and ridicule? Even the sun and moon cannot shine on everything; how can the people's mind be so omniscient as to be entirely trustworthy?

On The Gold Medicine and On The Yellow and The White, by *Ko Hung*, 4th Cen. (Chinese)

Because many have written of the Philosopher's Stone without any knowledge of the art; and the few books extant, written by our learned predecessors and true masters hereupon, are either lost or concealed in the collections of such (however despised) as are lovers and seekers of natural secrets, we have taken a resolution to communicate our knowledge in this matter, to the intent that those who are convinced the Philosophical Work is no fiction, but grounded in the possibility of Nature, may be faithfully directed in their studies, and have an undoubted criterion to distinguish between such authors as are genuine sons of science and those who are spurious, as writing by hearsay only.

[...] so bewildered is human ingenuity, when it leaves the beaten track of truth and Nature, to entangle itself in a multiplicity of fine-spun inventions.

The searcher of Nature will rejoice greatly in this discovery, as grounded in reason and sound philosophy, but to fools it would be in vain, should even wisdom herself cry out in the streets. Wherefore, leaving such persons to hug themselves in their own imaginary importance, we shall go on

On the Philosophers' Stone, by *Anonymous*, 12th - 17th Cen. (?)

7. Interpretations

Art has no haters but the ignorant.

A Golden and Blessed Casket of Nature's Marvels, by *Benedictus Figulus*, 1607
AD

The alchemical writings are obscure and often misinterpreted. Since the writings are so obscure, it's a perfect discipline for someone who wants to look more important than they are to pretend to understand. As long as no one else understands it either then they can safely go on misleading people and pretending to be important and mystical. I want to make it clear that there is only one correct interpretation. I will discuss some common alternative interpretations and misunderstandings in this chapter.

The modern popular opinion is that alchemy is a spiritual discipline. This idea arose in the 19th and early 20th centuries, along with the Theosophical movement and occult revival. The reason for its popularity was simply because it was a way for people who don't understand the obscure terms to pretend that they do understand them. These people proceeded to write books themselves on "spiritual alchemy", which are mere folly.

The spiritual interpretation of alchemy that was made famous by Jung in fact reflects religious convictions typical of nineteenth-century occultism and is not supported by the antique and medieval alchemical sources.

On the Edge of the Future, by *Jeffrey John Kripal* and *Glenn W. Shuck*, 2005

Spiritual alchemy only became believable when the Philosophers' Stone was no longer believed in. Prior to the 19th century no single person ever wrote anything about alchemy being spiritual, this only started when alchemy fell into disrepute. It was clear to many self-styled philosophers in the 19th century that alchemy had been praised and studied by so many great minds throughout history, the only way to explain this was to (1) either admit that they were not wise enough to work out how to make the Stone, or (2) pretend that they were wise enough by inventing an alternative interpretation.

Spiritual alchemy appeared to make sense of the writings of the alchemists, assuming that the Philosophers' Stone is not real, and only if one were to read selectively just a few alchemical books. The way of the spiritual interpreters is to find any word that could sound spiritual, such as: *spirit*, *body*, *living gold*, *philosophical mercury*, etc. They then jump on this word as evidence of their claim, even though it is evident that these words refer to either the water or salt of the substance from which we make the Stone.

Unfortunately, many alchemical classics were adulterated during the 19th century (e.g. Corpus Hermeticum), in order to make them sound more "spiritual". At the same time, new spiritual alchemy books were published under the name of older alchemists, when they were in fact new publications. Although it is easy to tell the cultural origin of books by the style of writing, these books continue to fool people and are used as sources to support the spiritual interpretation.

Hundreds of books, including adulterated "translations" of alchemical classics, appeared in the second half of the nineteenth century, all but a very few embracing this new "spiritual interpretation" of alchemy.

Newton and Newtonianism, by James E. Force and Sarah Hutton, 2005

The spiritual interpreters go further by suggesting that the alchemists had to hide their spiritual philosophy under obscurity, since the Kings and the church in their time would have prosecuted them for blasphemy. This claim sounds believable if we are to read it and nod our heads without thinking about it. But if we think about it we see that: (1) various saints and monks in the same periods spoke very clearly about spirituality without any problem, (2) the Kings and church were actually prosecuting the alchemists anyway, (3) since the alchemists were already being prosecuted for claiming they can make gold, all they would have to do is admit they were actually talking about spirituality and they would be safe.

A purely spiritual alchemy would never explain the existence of alchemical laboratories in which physicians honestly and fanatically sought for occult medicines.

Man, Myth & Magic, by Richard Cavendish and Brian Innes, 1983

Spiritual alchemy is the Emperor's New Clothes. Everyone pretends to understand it, but no one really does. There is nobody on Earth who could explain the why and how of spiritual alchemy and successfully decode entire alchemical books using this interpretation. This is why the idea has stuck, simply because no one understands it, and so there is no argument against those who believe it, as how can you argue against someone who blindly believes something with no evidence?

8. Obscurity

I know that the Sages describe this simple process under a great number of misleading names. But this puzzling variety of nomenclature is only intended to veil the fact that nothing is required but simple coction.

A Very Brief Tract Concerning the Philosophical Stone, by *An Unknown German Sage*, 15th - 17th Cen. (?)

Alchemy (real alchemy) has, with this book as the first exception, always been written of obscurely, using metaphors, allegories and even outright lies. In this chapter I will discuss the obscure style of the alchemists, but not yet how to decipher it, which I will cover in a later chapter (after we've discussed all the theory.)

Here's a fun fact for you: the word "gibberish" refers to the alchemical writings of an alchemist known as Geber. Because alchemical writing is so difficult to understand, it became a word to mean anything unintelligible.

The most popular trick used by the alchemists was to call things by different names. This was quite necessary to keep the secret, since there is only one ingredient and one process. The alchemists therefore used hundreds of different words for explaining the same thing. But in their defense, they did write that they were doing this, so the reader should have known that the writing was a riddle and know that they must decipher it. Though some people chose not to listen to this and to take the writings literally, which has caused countless deaths through history from people ingesting mercury and sulphur, which are extremely poisonous. The alchemists knew that mercury and sulphur were poisonous, and knew some people were taking their writings literally, so that was quite a sick joke to play. In my opinion, they should have called it milkshake and jellybeans, which would still have been obscure (especially because those weren't invented yet) but would not have killed anyone.

Additionally, the alchemists amused themselves by listing operations performed by Nature, implying that the alchemist would be physically performing them, which is not the case. In truth it is Nature who makes the Stone, while the alchemist only optimizes the conditions. This way the alchemists can claim they told you the truth, but what they told you was something you don't need to do.

I make known to all ingenuous students of this Art that the Sages are in the habit of using words which may convey either a true or a false impression; the former to their own disciples and children, the latter to the ignorant, the foolish, and the unworthy. Bear in mind that the philosophers themselves never make a false assertion. The mistake (if any) lies not with them, but with those whose dulness makes them slow to apprehend the meaning. Hence it comes that, instead of the waters of the Sages, these inexperienced persons take pyrites, salts, metals, and divers other substances which, though very expensive, are of no use whatever for our purpose.

[...] X. PARMENIDES: *The Sages have written about many waters, stones, and metals, for the purpose of deceiving you.*

[...] *Good Heavens! How skilfully the Sages have contrived to conceal this matter. It would surely have*

been far better if they had abstained from writing altogether. For the extreme obscurity of their style has overwhelmed thousands in ruin, and plunged them into the deepest poverty, especially those who set about this task without even the slightest knowledge of Nature, or of the requirements of our Art. What the Sages write is strictly true; but you cannot understand it unless you are already initiated in the secrets of this Art. Yea, even if you were a Doctor of the Doctors, and a Light of the World, you would be able to see no meaning in their words without this knowledge. They have written, but you are none the wiser. They half wished to communicate the secret to their posterity; but a jealous feeling prevented them from doing so in plain language.

[...] Jealous Sages have named many waters and metals and stones, simply for the purpose of deceiving you; herein the philosophers would warn us that they have used secrecy, lest the whole mystery should be manifested before all the world. Those who follow the letter of their directions are sure to be led astray, and to miss entirely the true foundation of our Art. The fault, however, lies not with the Sages so much with the ignorance of their readers.

[...] We may justly wonder that the Sages who have written about this most precious and secret Art, have thought it necessary to invent so many occult and allegorical expressions, by means of which our Art is concealed not only from the unworthy, but from earnest and diligent students of the truth. Foolish persons, indeed, who read their books, and hear of the riches and all the other good things which this Art affords, experience a pleasant tickling sensation in their ears, and straightway behold visions of themselves sitting on golden thrones, and commanding all the treasures of the universe; they fancy that the Art can be learned in the twinkling of an eye, soon come to regard themselves as great Doctors, and are unable to conceive the possibility of their making a mistake, or being led astray by the Sages. Much less are they aware that it has always been the custom of the philosophers to conceal the fundamental facts of this Art, and to reveal them to their own sons and disciples only in sententious allegorical sayings. It is impossible to read through all that the Sages have ever written on this subject; but it is a still more hopeless undertaking to gather from their books a full and sufficient knowledge of our Art, unless, indeed, God opens your understanding, and gives you a real insight into the natural properties of things, and thereby into the sayings of those who speak of them. For it is Nature alone that accomplishes the various processes of our Art, and a right understanding of Nature will furnish you with eyes wherewith to perceive the secrets thereof.

The Glory of the World, Or, Table of Paradise, by Anonymous, 1526 AD

On reading the alchemical books, you will come across strange allegories, metaphors, and symbols. Don't think that the fancy words mean anything special. All this stuff about kings and unicorns and lions is not meant to teach you anything. It does have a meaning; the different objects represent different materials at certain stages of the process, but this only means something if you already understand how to make the Stone. The alchemists used these symbols to communicate with other alchemists, and prove to other alchemists that they had found the Stone, but without anyone else knowing what they were talking about.

For all that before me have written on this matter have rendered their books obscure and unintelligible by an exaggerated use of poetical imagery, parables, and metaphors which grievously obstruct the path of those who first enter on this field of knowledge. This is the reason that a beginner, who strives to put their precepts into practice, only loses his trouble and his money, as is daily seen. Hermes, Rhasis, Geber, Avicenna, Merlin, Hortulanus, Democritus, Morienus, Bacon, Raymond, Aristotle, and many others, have concealed their meaning under a veil of obscurity. Hence their books, which they have handed down to us, have been a source of endless error and delusion to the vulgar and the learned, and,

in spite of the beautiful conceits which abound in their writings, no one has been able to find a path through the wilderness of their words; yea, many have been reduced to despair.

The Chemical Treatise, Or, The Ordinal of Alchemy, by Thomas Norton, 1477 AD

I have, indeed, studied the writings, parables, and various figures of the philosophers with singular industry, and laboured hard to solve their manifold wonderful enigmas, most of which are simply the vain products of their imaginations. It was long before experience taught me that all their obscure verbiage and high pretensions are mere folly and empty phantasms (as is amply testified by our leading Sages).

[...] *The just and pious reader will regard my undertaking with a kindly eye, and not suffer seeming contradictions to mislead him: the theory of and practice of this Art, and the laws which obtain in the Republic of the Chemists, forbade me to write more openly or plainly.*

The Golden Age Restored, by Henry Madathanas, 1622 AD

A further problem is that not all alchemical books are written by people who understand alchemy. Since the vast majority of people have no understanding of it, they can't tell the true alchemists from the fakes. What makes this even worse is when real alchemists themselves write lies and deliberately mislead the reader. So before the beginner can even start trying to interpret the writings, he has to try to work out which ones are honest and which are not. This is not too difficult to determine, at least I had no problem with it. But then what causes more confusion is when a real alchemist writes partly the truth, but then makes an outright lie to throw you off course again, after they've already gained your trust.

for those writers, however many they be, are either themselves in error, or else they write falsely out of sheer envy, and put forth receipts whilst not ignorant of the truth.

The Aurora of the Philosophers, by Theophrastus Paracelsus, 16th Cen.

The great difficulty which discourages all beginners is not of Nature's making: the Sages have created it by speaking of the longer operation when they mean the shorter one, and vice versa.

An Open Entrance to the Closed Palace of the King, by An Anonymous Sage and Lover of Truth, 1645 AD

They are ignorant mechanics who, not having skill and brains enough for an honest trade, must needs meddle with our Art, and, of course, soon lose all they possess. Others, again, are only just less ignorant than these persons; they are in too great a hurry to make gold before they have mastered even the rudiments of natural science; of course they fail, spend all they have, borrow money from their friends, amuse themselves and others with hopes of infinite wealth, learn to talk a barbarous semi-philosophical jargon, and afford a capital handle to those who have an interest in abusing our Art. Again, there are others who really have a true knowledge of the secret, but who grudge others the light which has irradiated their own path; and who therefore write about it in hopelessly puzzling language, which the perplexed beginner cannot possibly understand. To this class belong Geber, Arnold, and Lullius, who would have done much better service to the student, if they had never dipped pen in ink. The consequence is that every one who takes up this study at once finds himself lost in a most perplexing labyrinth of falsehood and uncertainty, in which he has no clue.

[...] *Some boastful and arrogant sophists, who have read in books that our Mercury is not common Mercury, and who know that it is called by different names, do not blush to come forward as pretenders to a knowledge of this Art, and take upon themselves to describe this solvent as diaphanous and limpid, or as a metallic gum*

which is permiscible with metals, though they do not in reality know anything whatsoever about it. The same may be said of those who would extract our Mercury from herbs or other still more fantastic substances. These gentry know not why the Sages do not use Mercury such as is sold by apothecaries as their substance. They are aware of the fact, but are unacquainted with its causes; and the consequence is the idea which they have that anything which changes the nature of common Mercury, will convert it into that of the Sages. But in regard to these foolish persons, I have already expressed our opinion.

The Metamorphosis of Metals, by *Eirenaeus Philalethes*, 1694 AD

Saying all this, it is true that some alchemists wrote very plainly about the Art. Writings from the 17th century especially are much clearer than the older writings, which you will learn about in the History section. No one ever gave away the entire process in one book, but some gave direct and lucid instructions on specific operations in the process, or theory. This is how I came to understand the writings. The first step is to be able to tell the truth from the lies, which came easily to me (I have a knack for it), then on finding the first few pieces of the puzzle one can decode the metaphors, and everything starts to snap into place.

Additionally, I feel I should say a few words about telling which alchemical books are genuine, and which are not. At first it is difficult for one to tell, as one needs to already understand alchemy in order to know which texts are genuine. This is a bit of a catch-22 situation.

It will help you if you first accept that none of the modern alchemy books are genuine, of course these modern fame and money hungry authors do not have the Stone. Then you have everything from the 19th and 20th centuries, these are also not genuine; it was a strange time of crazy theories and secret societies, and there was very little good information released during that time (except some good translations of older works.) Again, during the 19th and 20th centuries there were many books published pretending to written by other people. A good example is that of any writing by Hermes; the only remaining genuine work of Hermes is The Emerald Tablet, everything else is fraudulent, written under his name only to sell more books. You can tell the real timeperiod from which a book was written by considering the writing style (which does still pass over even through translations.) Only Fulcanelli wrote genuine alchemical books in modern times, but his works (all 2 of them) are not particularly useful for reasons I will cover in the Fulcanelli chapter. An excellent starting point if you choose to study the alchemical books would be The Hermetic Museum (which includes a large number of the alchemical books quoted here.)

The truth is always simple and in harmony with Nature.

9. The Secret

It's no secret that the Philosophers' Stone is a secret. It wasn't always this way, but we'll leave the history for the History section.

The Stone being hidden and forgotten was an inevitability of the age of the world which is now ending. Now begins the time that all secrets will be revealed and judged.

The present time is not ripe for the knowledge of these mysteries, for it has never tasted rest. When the time comes --- before the Day of Judgment --- in which the secrets of all hearts are laid bare, at that time, says Paracelsus: I order my writings to be judged.

A Dialogue, by *Alexander von Suchten*, 16th - 17th Cen. (?)

The revealing of the Stone is the catalyst which will collapse the corrupt civilization and usher in the Golden Age. But civilization must reach a truly corrupt state before it can be collapsed and reborn from the ashes. Corruption is necessary for the development of civilization as a whole; it's not a bad thing if you look at the big picture, but a necessary stage of development. The same holds true in the development our Stone.

When the philosophers had discovered it, with great diligence and labour, they straightway concealed it under a strange tongue, and in parables, lest the same should become known to the unworthy, and the pearls be cast before swine. For if everyone knew it, all work and industry would cease; man would desire nothing but this one thing, people would live wickedly, and the world be ruined, seeing that they would provoke God by reason of their avarice and superfluity. For eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, nor hath the heart of man understood what Heaven hath naturally incorporated with this Spirit.

The Book of the Revelation of Hermes, by *Theophrastus Paracelsus*, 16th Cen.

Despite the fact that the Stone was destined to be secret during the passing age, most who possessed it kept the secret not for this reason, but out of elitism. Most alchemists felt that they were "chosen" by God and that they were better than everyone else. Though a large number did not even make the Stone themselves, but were lucky enough to have it given to them by another. No doubt these were the ones who felt so strongly about keeping it secret.

Rasis also in the book, 'The Light of Lights', reports: For if I should explain all things according to what they are, there would be no further occasion of prudence, but the fool would be made equal to the wise man.

Book of the Chemical Art, by *Marsilius Ficinus*, 15th Cen.

To this objection, we answer what we know to be true, that the science of this Art has never been fully revealed to anyone who has not approved himself worthy by a good and noble life, and who has not shewn himself to be deserving of this gracious gift by his love of truth, virtue, and knowledge. From those who are otherwise minded this knowledge must ever remain concealed.

Nor can anyone attain to this Art, unless there be some person sent by God to instruct him in it. For the matter is so glorious and wonderful that it cannot be fully delivered to any one but by word of mouth. Moreover, if any man would receive it, he must take a great and sacred oath, that as we his teachers refuse high rank and fame, so he will not be too eager for these frivolous distinctions, and that he will not be so presumptuous as to

make the secret known to his own son; for propinquity of blood, or affinity, should be held of no account in this our Magistry. Nearness of blood, as such, does not entitle anyone to be let into the secret, but only virtue, whether in those near to us or in strangers. Therefore you should carefully test and examine the life, character, and mental aptitude of any person who would be initiated in this Art, and then you should bind him, by a sacred oath, not to let our Magistry be commonly or vulgarly known. Only when he begins to grow old and feeble [tired of life], he may reveal it to one person, but not to more—and that one man must be virtuous, and generally approved by his fellows. For this Magistry must always remain a secret science, and the reason that compels us to be so careful is obvious. If any wicked man should learn to practise this Art, the event would be fraught with great danger to Christendom. For such a man would overstep all bounds of moderation, and would remove from their hereditary thrones those legitimate princes who rule over the peoples of Christendom. And the punishment of this wickedness would fall upon him who had instructed that unworthy person in our Art. In order, then, to avoid such an outbreak of overweening pride, he who possesses the knowledge of this Art, should be scrupulously careful how he delivers it to another, and should regard it as the peculiar privilege of those who excel in virtue.

[...] *For all the authors who deal with this subject write about it in obscure language, and not one of them declares it plainly; nay, they beseech God to remove them suddenly out of this world, if they ever write books about the grand secret. For many of them have been fearful of committing to paper more than was right about this science; and not one of them has given more than one or two plain hints respecting it. They did not write with the object of divulging their secret to the world, but in an obscurely allusive style, in order that they might be able to recognize those who understood their meaning as brothers and fellow adepts. Hence you must not be content with reading only one book, but you should study a variety of authors; because, according to the learned Arnold, one book opens up the understanding of another. The same thought is expressed by the learned Anaxagoras, who testifies that if a man will not take the trouble of reading many books, he can never attain to a practical knowledge of our Art.*

The Chemical Treatise, Or, The Ordinal of Alchemy, by Thomas Norton, 1477 AD

It was not all fun and games for the alchemists. A lot of them were very paranoid, and perhaps rightly so, as some people would do anything to get the Stone. Fear was a good reason to keep quiet.

No doubt the gentle reader has learned by the works of Sendivogius that whenever he sheaved himself openly to the powerful, he went in constant fear of his life. Experience teaches that many philosophers who gave no thought to their personal safety, have been killed and deprived of their tincture by greedy and powerful robbers; and it stands to reason that any one going about with a great treasure in his hand, must fall a prey to brigands. Sendivogius concealed his name by an anagram. Thus also a short time ago another philosopher and Brother of the Golden Cross, whose real name has long been familiar to me, concealed it beneath an anagram, and made himself known to his friends by an enigmatical designation. Why then should I place myself at the mercy of this impure world?

The Golden Tract Concerning the Stone of the Philosophers, by An Anonymous German Philosopher (16th - 17th Cen. ?)

So long as the secret is possessed by a comparatively small number of philosophers, their lot is anything but a bright and happy one; surrounded as we are on every side by the cruel greed and the prying suspicion of the multitude, we are doomed, like Cain, to wander over the earth homeless and friendless. Not for us are the soothing influences of domestic happiness; not for us the delightful confidences of friendship. Men who covet our golden secret pursue us from place to place, and fear closes our lips, when love tempts us to open ourselves freely

development of the Stone, and therefore everything else, the dominating principle moves to and fro, from yin to yang and back, in the form of evaporation and condensation (sun and rain). In this way the Stone develops to higher and higher degrees of perfection.

In the vegetable world grass and trees are actuated by yin and yang. They could not grow in the absence of either one of these two forces. At the beginning, yang dominates and is indicated by the budding of green leaves. Then, after the development of the blossoms, yin (destructive) follows. This principle of the Tao of constancy has long been the common practice of nature; but how many can understand (the principle of) ch'ên yüan (true spring) which can alter this process (of nature)? I advise all of you, who wish to learn Tao, not to begin your work before you understand the principle of yin and yang.

Wu Chen P'ien, Essay on the Understanding of Truth, by *Chang Po-tuan*, 1078 AD (Chinese)

This gold is our male, and it is sexually joined to a more crude white gold—the female seed: the two together being indissolubly united, constitute our fruitful Hermaphrodite. [...] The two (the passive and active principle) combined we call our Hermaphrodite.

An Open Entrance to the Closed Palace of the King, by *An Anonymous Sage and Lover of Truth*, 1645 AD

The male without the female is looked upon as only half a body, nor can the female without the male be regarded as more complete. For neither can bring forth fruit so long as it remains alone. But if the two be conjugally united, there is a perfect body, and their seed is placed in a condition in which it can yield increase.

The Twelve Keys, by *Basilus Valentinus*, 15th Cen.

11. Cycles of Nature

If thou desire to see the secrets of Nature now open thine eyes.

The Chemists Key, by Henry Nollus, 1617 AD

Following on from the previous chapter on yin-yang, we have the cycles of Nature.

I'm sure we can all agree that Nature operates in cycles. We have days, months, years, which are all cycles. Then we have the water cycle, with water being evaporated by the sun, forming clouds and then raining down again. It is these cycles that cause growth and development, most obviously in plant life, but also in all other forms of life, and the Earth itself. Similar cycles also occur in larger systems, such as solar systems and galaxies. All these cycles are due to the yin-yang principle, which I explained in the previous chapter.

But have you stopped to think what the effect of these cycles is? I will illustrate it for you as simply as I can:

Imagine you have a handful of damp soil, which you put into a closed system in which there is sun and then rain, as there is on Earth. Every day there is sunshine (yang) which evaporates off the water, which then condenses at night (yin) and rains back down onto the soil. What will happen?

Well the first and most obvious effect is that the soil will arrange itself in layers with the lightest particles at the top, and the heaviest at the bottom. We have gravity to thank for this of course. The hot air and water vapor will rise, and with it the lightest of the particles, which attach themselves to the water. The lighter the particle is, the easier it attaches itself to the water, and the further the water will lift it while evaporating. This causes the heavier particles to sink as the lighter particles are picked up and placed back down on top of them. Everything will arrange itself in order of density. This you can already see by considering that the top layer of the Earth is a soft soil, with heavier minerals as you dig down. This is also very easily proven with a little experiment, which is also the First Part of our work in making the Stone.

The smallest and lightest particles of all will attach themselves to the water and not let go, since they are so volatile, and these particles are the *life-energy* we are looking for.

But something else happens too. With the particles continuously being moistened and then heated and dried (calcined), they will slowly break down (decompose/putrefy) into smaller particles. So over time you will end up with more of the lighter particles (less dense) and less heavier particles (more dense). The particles will get lighter and lighter until they are broken down into what they are made of, the original *life-energy*. The *life-energy* itself is infused into the water and so penetrates all of the particles as they are moistened by the water, and the *life-energy* also aids the putrefaction by encouraging the elements to break down into its own form.

So you can assume that eventually, after a very long time, the entire mass is converted into *life-energy*, which is what we call the Philosophers' Stone. But I don't recommend using soil for this process, since it will take too long.

Then there are life forms which use this *life-energy* and the lightest particles to grow and live. Plants grow in the top (lightest) layer of the soil, and use the *life-energy* which is more concentrated there for their development, which they collect and form into matter for their own use. Animals then eat the plants to absorb their *life-energy*, and other animals eat those animals for the same reason. Once eaten our stomachs digest what we eat into even smaller particles, which is just another process of putrefaction.

Plants love to grow in dead plant matter, since this is already full of *life-energy*, which is now happily decomposing into lighter particles and back into the wonderful *life-energy*.

I'll give you an illustration of how this works inside your body: when you eat an apple, you first chew it. The chewing is the first stage of decomposition, it breaks it down into smaller pieces. Then it goes into your stomach and is digested (dissolved) by your stomach acid, this is again decomposition for breaking down the matter in order to extract and reuse the particles inside of it. What you get is a range of matter: sugars, proteins, vitamins, etc. and *life-energy*. The most important of these is the *life-energy*, but since we do not normally have enough of this, we use the determined and more dense particles (sugar, protein, etc.) where we can, for the required needs of our body. The *life-energy* can be made into anything we are lacking, it can be formed into any other particle required by our body. It can even be made into water if we have not had enough to drink, or oxygen if we are not breathing enough. This is why when you ingest the Stone, you don't need to eat, drink or breathe, because your body will make this into exactly what it needs.

Scientists have found evidence of biological transmutation already, in many incidents it has been proven that animals can produce minerals that they have not ingested. This supports the existence of *life-energy*.

Crabs, shellfish and crayfish have shells made largely of calcium. A crab 17 cm by 10 cm has a shell weighing around 350 grams. Periodically these animals shed their shell and create a new one. This is called molting. When molting, a crab is very vulnerable and hides away from all other creatures so it can not get calcium by preying on other creatures.

According to French chemist C. Louis Kervran of the Conseil d'Hygiene in Paris, seawater contains far too little calcium to account for the rapid production of a shell (the calcium content of sea water is about 0.042% and a crab can form a new shell in little more than one day). If the entire body of a crab is analyzed for calcium, it is found to contain only enough calcium to produce 3% of the shell (even taking into account the calcium carbonate stored in the hepato-pancreas just before molting).

Even in water completely devoid of calcium, shellfish can still create their calcium-bearing shells as shown by an experiment performed at the Maritime Laboratory of Roscoff: "A crayfish was put in a sea water basin from which calcium carbonate had been removed by precipitation; the animal made its shell anyway." (Kervran 1972, p.58)

"Chemical analysis made on animals secreting their shells has revealed that calcium carbonate is formed on the outer side of a membrane although on the opposite side of the membrane, where matter enters, there is no calcium. This fact has left specialists perplexed." (Kervran 1972, p.58)