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AN HISTORICAL AND PHILOSOPHICAL
EVALUATION OF ROSICRUCIANISM

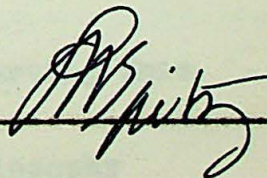
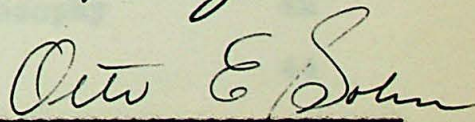
A Thesis Presented to
The Faculty of Concordia Seminary
Department of Systematic Theology

In Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Bachelor of Divinity

by
Edward W. Wessling

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Approved by:

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INTRODUCTION

The thesis will attempt to evaluate historically and philosophically a movement which for more than three decades has courted the eye and interest of American readers through advertising claims for "the system of metaphysical and physical philosophy intended to awaken the latent faculties of the individual whereby he may utilize to a better advantage his natural talents and lead a more happy life."¹

It was the air of "mysticism" surrounding Rosicrucian advertisements in magazines and newspapers that first aroused my interest--an interest that became further heightened by a visit to the headquarters of the order at San Jose, California, in December, 1948.

We shall divide the thesis into two chapters. The first will be a study of the history of the Rosicrucian Order, employing the historical material of Rosicrucian authorship, and then evaluating it through comparison with information in non-Rosicrucian sources.

The second chapter will treat the philosophy of the movement. Here again we shall note first the Rosicrucian presentation of the major characteristics of its system, and then proceed to an evaluation of each of those main points.

The writer's philosophical treatment will naturally be influenced in part by the Christian philosophy to which he adheres and for which he feels no need for apology.

1. The Happy Life, Time, LIII (April 11, 1949), p. 63.

Chapter I

AN HISTORICAL STUDY OF ROSICRUCIANISM

Somewhere in the development of man's progress, came the Dawn of Abundant Living. Man discovered that he had a mind-power as well as a brain-power; he learned that he had faculties and unawakened centers in his inner-consciousness that were of Divine heritage and easily applied to the mastery of his life. This was the starting point of man's supremacy over his fate and destiny. He was no longer a slave to conditions, no longer a serf to King or ruler, for he was a KING WITHIN, and the true ruler of his life Out of the mystery schools of Egypt and the Orient where man first discovered the power of the inner-self, came the birth of that great Brotherhood of Rosicrucians who proceeded to preserve this knowledge for future generations.¹

The organization claiming to be the present transmitter of this knowledge has its headquarters in San Jose, California. Through its advertisements and literature it has made famous the appellation, AMORC--the Ancient Mystical Order Rosae Crucis.

The mosque-like structures of Rosicrucian Park house a press from which books, pamphlets, and tracts emanate, an

1. The Dawn of Abundant Life, Rosicrucian Tract.

Egyptian and Oriental museum, a planetarium, a library, an auditorium, Rose Croix University with its Colleges of Fine Arts, Mundane and Arcane Sciences and Humanities, and a shrine dedicated to Pharaoh Amenhotep IV.²

Our purpose now is to present the claims of AMORC to having a continuous organizational ancestry dating back some one-thousand three-hundred and fifty years B. C., and then to investigate the validity of those claims. (A more detailed description of the status of AMORC today will be contained in the conclusion of the thesis.)

The Rosicrucian View of the History of the Order

Non-Rosicrucian sources contain little information ante-dating the 15th century in regard to the development of the Order. Thus the material that will constitute a major portion of this historical chapter must of necessity come from Rosicrucian sources.³

The order recognizes as its official text on Rosicrucian history the volume by H. Spencer Lewis, Rosicrucian Questions and Answers With Complete History of the Rosicrucian Order. According to Lewis, the history of the brotherhood must be divided into two general classifications: the traditional,

2. The Happy Life, Time, LIII (April 11, 1949) p. 64.

3. Arthur Cadbury Jones comments on the reality of this problem of source material: "The members were and are pledged to secrecy, and the paucity of records is a proof of their sincerity and devotion. It is an easier and more accurate task to give data of its history since about the year 1420." (Encyclopedia of Religion and Ethics, Vol. 9, p. 854.)

which has been perpetuated by word of mouth, "supported by more or less definite references in ancient writings or symbolical passages in the rituals or teachings; and second, that which is truly historical and supported by the records found in the various branches of the organization throughout the world."⁴

Whether one accepts all of the points of the traditional history or not, one is certain to feel that the origin of the Rosicrucian Order is found in the early mystery schools of the Great White Brotherhood. A study of the schools of philosophy and arcane wisdom in the Oriental lands preceding the Christian Era reveals that there is but one land in which the Rosicrucian organization could have had its birth . . . Egypt. And even the casual student of Egyptian history is impressed with the probability of the birth of the organization in that land.⁵

Lewis continues in the subsequent chapter of his book by comparing the Egyptian "high state of civilization and advanced learning at the beginning of the XVIII dynasty" to the French Renaissance.⁶ He points to the hieroglyphics on the pyramids, obelisks, and temple walls as evidence that the Egyptians desired to make their knowledge and learning permanent.

But the more profound secrets of nature, science, and art were not to be entrusted to the masses nor were they susceptible to preservation through writing upon papyrus. For this reason classes were formed by the most learned, attended by the select minds, at which the doctrines and principles of science were taught These classes or schools . . . were held in the most isolated grottoes at

4. H. Spencer Lewis, Rosicrucian Questions and Answers, Rosicrucian Press, San Jose, California. 1929. p. 9.

5. Ibid., pp. 12-13.

6. Ibid., p. 19.

times, and again in the quiet of some of the temples . . . In some cases classes of a very select nature were held in the private chambers of the reigning Pharaoh.⁷

Gradually, the members of these assemblies became "more and more select, the teachings more profound, and the discussions so dialectic that there arose a most autocratic and secret society of the truly great minds of the day. Thus was laid the foundation of the Great White Brotherhood."⁸

Lewis hurries through a list of the pharaohs under whose interest and, oftentimes, guidance these societies flourished until he pauses at Thutmose III,

. . . who organized the present physical form of the secret Brotherhood and outlined many of its rules and regulations . . . He appears to have been quite original in his application of the doctrines of mysticism . . . A gradual development in the existing mystical beliefs could be more easily and permanently accomplished by establishing a secret school of philosophy, the students of which would put into practice the high standards decided upon . . . [And] when Thutmose proposed that the "class" which had been meeting in his chambers become a closed and secret order, "there was no dissenting voice, and articles of limitation were established . . ."⁹

Although he mentions no source for his information, Lewis states that the date of this grand "Council Meeting" was sometime during the week of March 23th to April 4th of 1489 B. C., "according to our present calendar. It is

7. Ibid., p. 20.

8. Ibid., pp. 20-21

9. Ibid., pp. 22-23

generally conceded to have been on Thursday, April 1st, but this may be associated with Maundy Thursday, a later establishment."¹⁰

No worldly name was decided upon for the Brotherhood, the records showing that the predominating thought was the maintenance of secrecy. The organization had no publicity, required no propaganda other than personal advice to those whose presence was desired, and as the one word, translated into Brotherhood (a secret, fraternal body), was sufficient name for all purposes, we do not find any other term. This accounts for the widespread diversion of the name as adopted later."¹¹

As further reason for the attempt at subterfuge, Lewis cites the prejudice that is reputed to have existed toward secret orders. "Not only did certain bigoted religious organization condemn all secret orders as 'works of the devil,' but those orders . . . which claimed to have rare knowledge of the sciences were severely criticised by the various scientific bodies of the day."¹²

That he considers AMORC truly to be the treasure-store of the ancient-secret Egyptian Order he indicates when he maintains that, "though the Order had no definite name, Thutmose saw that it had very definite principles, rules, and modes of procedure, all of which have come down to us today without material change [*italics ours*]."¹³

10. Ibid.

11. Ibid., p. 24.

12. Ibid., p. 26.

13. Ibid.

After the "transition" (death) of Thutmose III the next pharaoh of concern to Rosicrucians is Amenhotep, "the last Great Master in the family of the founders and the one to whom we owe the really wonderful philosophies and writings used so universally in all Lodge work throughout the world,"¹⁴ and who had "a career unequalled by any pharaoh of Egypt."¹⁵

. . . His accomplishments for the Order must be treated at least briefly . . . He had been instructed in the secret philosophy. His mind and understanding were unusually keen . . . for in his fifteenth year he composed many of the most beautiful prayers, psalms, and chants used in the organization today, as well as contributing to the philosophy and sciences. To him came the inspiration of overthrowing the worship of idols and substituting the religion and worship of one God . . . , whose spirit was in Heaven and whose physical manifestation was the Sun--the Symbol of Life. This was in accordance with the secret doctrines, and it changed the worship of the Sun as a god to the worship of the God symbolized by the sun. This was the beginning of Monotheism in Egypt and the origin of the worship of a spiritual deity which "existed everywhere, in everything, but was nothing of the earth". . . .¹⁶

Amenhotep's desire for sweeping reform resulted in his changing also his own name (which meant "Ammon is satisfied") to Akhnaton ("pious to Aton" or "glory to Aton").¹⁷

At El Amarna, according to Lewis, Akhnaton built a temple for the Brotherhood. "Here was the beginning of mon-

14. Ibid., p. 29.

15. Ibid., p. 30.

16. Ibid., pp. 31-32.

17. Ibid., p. 33.

astic life, for within the boundaries . . . lived two hundred and ninety-six Brothers of the Order, each having taken an oath never to pass 'beyond the shadow of the Temple.'¹⁸ And it was during these years at El Amarna, says Lewis, that "the Brotherhood was being made into a concrete organization, and the Brothers at this community outlined the initiations and forms of service as used today."¹⁹

After the "transition" of Ahmaton, the worship of Ammon again came to the fore, and the Brotherhood was forced to become all the more cautious in its secrecy. Nevertheless, in 1203 B. C. several of the Brothers "were commissioned to go into other lands and spread the secret doctrines by the establishment of other Lodges."²⁰ Thus, information of the Order reached the ears of a certain Saloman, who, about 1,000 B. C., went to Egypt to learn more of the teachings at El Amarna. Although he did not complete his studies, he left the home of the Order in good-will, and eventually his wanderings--and marriages--led to his becoming ruler of Palestine. So it is that Saloman becomes identified as Solomon, whose busy life as Israel's wisest king evidently still contained sufficient

18. Ibid., p. 34.

19. Ibid.

20. Ibid. p. 44.

spare time to enable him to establish his own fraternity in Palestine!²¹

At this point, too, certain Greeks came to Thebes, imbibed the teachings of the Order (the headquarters of which were moved there from El Amarna), and then began the world-wide spread of the organization.²²

From this time onward toward the Christian period, great minds from many countries journeyed Eastward and Westward and Crossed the Threshold, and having completed the work and studies, passed again into the world's darkness to spread the light as they interpreted it.²³

Christ As An Historical Figure in Rosicrucianism

Lewis maintains that the Essenes in Palestine were actually members of the Order under a veiled name. The location of their monastery and temple was atop Mount Carmel, "where Elijah, as one of the descendants of the Great White Brotherhood, had previously established a retreat and had taught many of the mysteries of the Brotherhood."²⁴

21. Ibid., pp. 45-48. Lewis states further that Solomon "restricted his order to males and adapted a great many of the details of the Rosicrucian initiations and services . . . Of the growth of the Saloman brotherhood, one may read in all literature bearing upon Free Masonry. It has evolved into a semi-mystical speculative, secret, fraternal order of power and great honor, gradually altering the principles laid down by Saloman, . . . but doing so for the greater benefit of man."

22. Ibid., p. 49.

23. Ibid.

24. Ibid., p. 65.

Just about the time of the birth of Jesus . . . the Essenes Brotherhood in Palestine together with other branches of the Great White Brotherhood were preparing for the coming of the great Avatar [Incarnation] who was to be the reincarnation of Zoroaster, one of the famous Avatars of the Brotherhood in centuries past. The birth of Jesus in the family of Gentiles [Italics ours] living in the Essenes community at Galilee fulfilled the expectations of the Brotherhood, and from this time on the outer and inner activities of the Brotherhood became centered around the ministry of the great Master Jesus. . . . At the close of the life of Jesus the Christ, the disciples of Jesus and the high officers of the Great White Brotherhood planned to carry on the new cycle of illumination and revelation of doctrines as presented by Him, and an outer congregation or public movement was established known as Christine Church. . . . While it [the Church] was sponsored by the Great White Brotherhood, and all of the principal workers like unto the original Apostles were men chosen from the Essenes Gentile community at Galilee, the Great White Brotherhood did not establish the Christine Church as a part of its activities, because it was interested in the work of all religious movements in all lands, and did not become a part of any of them.²⁵

During the centuries that followed for what Lewis calls the "Christine movement," the Order continued to function in secret as a "non-sectarian, non-religious school of mystical, occult, and scientific teachings."²⁶

The period of the Crusades, the author continues, found the Order establishing an organization composed almost exclusively of men. Called the Militia Crucifera Evangelica, "its purpose was to protect the cross as a

25. Ibid., pp. 55-56.
 26. Ibid., p. 57.

mystical symbol [italics ours] against its misuse by those who attempted to carry on crusades of persecution against others who would not accept a sectarian interpretation of the symbolism of the ancient emblem."²⁷

About the year 800 the Order got a successful foothold in France--in fact, it "was given a very interesting ovation in the chamber of Charlemagne's throne."²⁸

From France the Order is reputed to have spread in- to Germany, where, Lewis claims, Charlemagne himself was the first to introduce it. "He [Charlemagne] never lived, however, to see his work bear fruit, for the restrictions placed around membership were severe and too stringent. But in 1100 a Lodge was established in Worms."²⁹

The work grew rapidly in Germany during the twelfth century, but it remained so secret and so inactive in its outward manifestations during its 108 years of inactivity that little was known of the Order or its members . . . But in the fifteenth century--at almost the last moment--the great revival came again. And whilst this great revival brought new life . . . to the Order in Germany, it has proved to be the most

27. Ibid.

28. Ibid., p. 71. Incidentally, in connection with the Order's appearance in France, the Rosicrucian historical relationship with the Masonic Order receives very brief treatment in Lewis' history: in 1623 "The masons in Lyons organized a Rose Croix degree in the same city to please the many Rosicrucians who were Masons. The Masonic body was organized at a Council held there July 23rd, 1623." (p. 73)

29. Ibid., p. 75.

perplexing one that came to the Order anywhere throughout the world [italics ours]. It has left a question, a doubt, unanswered and unsettled, in the laymen's mind and has caused more misunderstanding of the Order's true history and ancestry than this humble attempt by me will ever be able to make clear [italics ours].³⁰

Lewis at this point remarks on the necessity of referring to "one of the very mysterious and puzzling laws of the organization, the origin of which is lost in the traditional history [italics ours], but the general acceptance of which accounts for many of the peculiar breaks in the activities of the organization."³¹ He cites a regulation which the Rosicrucian mind views as a "periodicity of active and inactive cycles, each of 108 years. The number of 108 is significant in itself to all occult students, but just why this new regulation was brought into effect is not known."³² During these periods of quietude, the writer asserts, the members privately carried on the teaching in their own families, "but accepted no new members from the profane world [And thus] outwardly and in all of its general activities the Order seemed to have gone out of existence."³³

The Mystery of C.R.C.

An important issue concerning why the name "Rosicrucian"

30. Ibid., pp. 75-76.

31. Ibid., p. 77.

32. Ibid.

33. Ibid., p. 79.

has been applied to the organization is touched on by Lewis when he discusses a pre-Reformation manifesto or symbol, handed down by word of mouth, which "announced the opening of a 'tomb' in which the 'body' of a great master, C.R-C., was found . . . together with secret writings . . . which empowered the discoverers of the 'tomb' to establish the secret organization once again."³⁴

Later, he maintains, after the discovery of printing, the "tomb" incident was given wide circulation:

Coming at a crucial hour . . . in the evolution of religion and philosophy, and being so widely distributed, the pamphlets of the seventeenth century attracted such universal attention among persons who had never heard of the organization before that a common impression was created and recorded to the effect that a new organization, never known in the world before, had come into existence . . . This false impression was recorded in so many later histories, that even today we are required to explain the misconception.³⁵

Lewis goes on to say that it "must be apperent to the reader of this history that the discovery of a 'body' in the 'tomb' . . . of a person known as C.R-C. is allegorical." In support of this view the Rosicrucian historian states that the original meaning of the word "body" was "symbolical of something entirely different than [sic] the physical body of a man." Secondly, the initials C.R-C. did not stand for "Christian Rosenkreuz, except as the words

34. Ibid., p. 81.

35. Ibid., p. 81-82.

represented by those initials were translated in the German language."³⁶

Those writers of mystical and fantastical stories who have tried to present the story of C.R.-C., by stating that these initials were those of an individual, are wholly unacquainted with the facts. Even if the spiritual person represented by the "body" of C.R.-C., were the same in each cycle, through a series of reincarnations, such a reincarnated person would be a different earthly individual in each carnation. For that reason it must be understood that there was no one earthly person who was uniquely and exclusively known as C.R.-C., in any cycle of the Order's existence. Our records [italics ours] refer to at least twelve discoveries of "tombs" containing the "body" of C.R.-C. in different lands preceding the greatly popularized incident in Cassel, Germany, in the seventeenth century.³⁷

If anyone maintains differently from the view just quoted, Lewis dispenses with him rather easily in remarking, rather blandly, that such a person is "unfamiliar with the facts and has mistaken the allegorical story for an actual event."³⁸

It is at about this period--the sixteenth and seventeenth century--that information from non-Rosicrucian sources begins. For that reason we wish now to discuss and evaluate, on the basis of these additional sources, the claims of AMORC just cited: namely, that the name "Rosi-

³⁶. Ibid., p. 82.

³⁷. Ibid., p. 83.

³⁸. Ibid., p. 84.

crucian" is not traceable to any historical person.³⁹

Origin of the Name of the Order

The Rosicrucian view represented by Lewis sets forth the symbol of a cross with a single red rose in the center as the source of the Order's name.⁴⁰ Interestingly enough, the article on Rosicrucianism in the *Encyclopedia Britannica*, also presents this view. But more interesting still is the fact that the writer of the article is H. Spencer Lewis!

Taking issue with this opinion--that the name of the Order arose from a symbol--is the report in the Encyclopedia of Religion and Ethics, which introduces into the picture a man whose own name supplies another possible origin for the designation of the Brotherhood.⁴²

Christian Rosenkreuz was born in Germany in 1378. After a monastery education, he traveled in the area of the Holy Land, spending considerable time at Damascus, where he studied under "certain wise men," deriving as much as he could from them in the realms of philosophy and science. From there he went to Egypt, Fez, and Spain, "gleaning from each place the information which he was to use in

39. The evaluation of the traditional history of the Order, as we have presented it up to this point in the thesis, will be given in the closing section of Chapter 7.

40. "The rose (soul) evolves and gains beauty and fragrance while being crucified upon the cross (body)." Quoted by Th. Engelder, ed. et al., Popular Symbolics, Concordia Publishing House, St. Louis, 1934, p. 474.

41. H. Spencer Lewis, "Rosicrucianism," *Encyclopedia Britannica*, fourteenth edition, XIII, 560.

42. A. C. Cadmus, "Rosicrucianism," Encyclopedia of Religion and Ethics, IX, p. 856.

the development of the Fraternity that later bore his name
[italics ours]⁴³

He spent the five years of 1413-1418 in Austria, col-
lecting his knowledge, and acquiring three companions:
Fratres C. V., I. A., and I. O. To them he related what-
ever knowledge he had imbibed during his studies in re-
ligion, philosophy, and medicine. These four men were
"the original members of the Society of the Rose and the
Cross."⁴⁴

Their books, M (Magicon), Atomata, Rota Mundi, and
Protheus are known. "Their declared object, as narrated
in the Confessio, was to improve mankind by the discovery
of the true philosophy."⁴⁵

In the year 1487 Besenkrantz wrote an in-
teresting and curious treatise entitled
Chymische Hochzeit, which was published at
a later period; and in 1484 . . . he died
and was buried in a vault of seven sides
decorated with symbols, which had been e-
rected years previously for his resting
place . . . in this . . . tomb, . . .
and upon the door was fixed a brazen plate
. . . [with] the prophetic exclamation of his
own, that in 120 years after his death his
tomb should be reopened and his doctrines,
in a modified form, once more made avail-
able"⁴⁶

It must be admitted that there's a possibility of
the Order being called after the man named in the above

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43. Ibid.
44. Ibid.
45. Ibid.
46. Ibid.

paragraphs, gleaned from a bibliography of numerous English, German, and French works cited at the close of the article.⁴⁷ In contrast, Lewis cites no bibliographical sources for his view. He refers only to "records" and "traditions" unknown to anyone outside the Order--and we have come to wonder just to how many inside the Order.⁴⁸

Still another source with information pertinent to the origin of the name is The Catholic Encyclopedia. Hermann Gruber in his article credits the first printed appearance of the Rosicrucian Order to the pamphlet "Fama Fraternitatis" (in Cassel, Germany in 1614), which invited European men of learning to join the ranks of the secret society founded by a certain Christian Rosenkreuz.⁴⁹

In reaching a conclusion as to how the name "Rosicrucian" became applied to the Order under study, we favor it as an adaption from the fifteenth--century figure, Christian Rosenkreuz. And we do so for the following reasons:

- 1) His historicity as founder of the order is un-

47. Ibid., p. 858.

48. Lewis, Questions and Answers, p. 9.

49. Hermann Gruber, "Rosicrucianism," The Catholic Encyclopedia, XIII, p. 596. Gruber states also that the "Fama" was believed by some to have been written by the Lutheran theologian, Johann Valentin Andreae. No conclusive evidence is cited, however. Dr. J. T. Mueller, in "The Antichristian Teachings of Rosicrucianism," Concordia Theological Monthly, X, (Dec., 1939), p. 904, refers to Arnold's Kirchen- und Ketzerhistorie, in which the author endeavors to prove that it was Andreae who wrote the "Fama" originally as "a sort of elaborate satire composed in the Stift of Tuebingen."

contested by every source of our investigation, except Lewis (whose primary concern, it seems, is to establish the ancient character of the organization, and who would therefore find the "Rosenkreuz source" inimical to the case he attempts to build for the antiquity of AMORC.)

2) The name "Rosenkreuz" affords opportunity for an easy adaptation (by means of afterthought⁵⁰) to something with a strong mystical tinge. The phrase, "Rose Cross," which can readily be drawn out from the name "Rosenkreuz", lends itself well to any inventiveness that members of the order might possess. Perhaps Popular Symbolics contains an apt summary of this second reason: "Everything about the society is artificial, and the symbol here described, with its mystical meaning, is an afterthought, the term Rosicrucianism being in some way related to a charlatan [since little is known of Rosenkreuz's motives, we, personally, would feel some hesitancy at using a descriptive noun as strongly-connotated as this one] of the fifteenth century, Christian Rosenkreuz."⁵⁰

The History of the Order from A. D. 1600 to the Present

AMORC, through its spokesman, Lewis, considers the early years in the seventeenth century as comprising a revival period of the Rosicrucian work in Germany. In fact, 1610 to 1614 "constituted the beginning of one of the new cycles of one hundred and eight years."⁵¹

50. Th. Engelder, ed. et al., Popular Symbolics, Concordia Publishing House, St. Louis, 1934, p. 474.

51. Lewis, Questions and Answers, p. 94.

The activity spread quietly, and "a number of such organizations came into existence in France, Germany, and England, but in each case their existence was very short and left no records of importance [italics ours. We marvel constantly at an historian who, admitting the paucity of his sources, is able to proffer facts so glibly!]."52

It was in England that further developments took place between Freemasonry and Rosicrucianism, according to Lewis:

. . . Many of the most prominent Freemasons . . . formed research bodies or groups devoted . . . to unearthing . . . additional teachings or arcane knowledge as might be found in the various mystic schools of the day. It is not surprising, therefore, that a number of these men were attracted to the Rosicrucian Order, especially the English lodge . . . and became enthusiastic students and workers.53

Later, however, some of these men believed that "the members of both organizations might come together in a more social and informal manner at stated periods for the purpose of discussing the work and teachings found in both bodies," and that "out of this belief was born a new organization in England, the activities of which and the imitation of which has caused considerable confusion in the minds of those persons seeking to trace the origin and development of the Rosicrucian Order."54

52. Ibid., p. 104.

53. Ibid., p. 105.

54. Ibid., p. 106.

Application for membership, Lewis continues, would be limited to Freemasons who, after having mastered the elementary work in Masonry, might be desirous of philosophical knowledge "available just beyond the limited teachings of their organization." This group adopted the name, "Societas Rosicruciana in Anglia"--the initials of this title being used "as a brief form of name in their literature. Hence the initials S. R. I. A. became significant among Freemasons during that period, and have contributed to considerable confusion in Rosicrucian records ever since."⁵⁵

Lewis speaks favorably of Freemasonry, but he opposes the seemingly common opinion that Rosicrucianism is integrated with it. He cites Waite, the "Rosicrucian historian . . . and an eminent Masonic historian and writer as well," as showing that the S. R. I. A., while it was a "worthy, learned, and highly respected organization of gentlemen seeking for arcane wisdom, enjoying a banquet and social evening once a month, it was not in any sense a part of the Rosicrucian organization throughout the world."⁵⁶

Rosicrucianism in America

How did--and how does--the Order manifest itself in the United States? This is a practical question; for its answer is necessary in order to understand the source of the teachings that emanate from AMORC headquarters in San Jose.

55. Ibid., pp. 106-107.

56. Ibid., p. 111.

Preliminary to a discussion of its background in the New World, AMORC inserts the following paragraph in the early pages of its Manual:

The widespread confusion in the United States because of the popular use of the word Rosicrucian by so many movements, publishers, and small research societies-- a condition not permitted in foreign lands-- makes necessary the understanding of the following facts; and we trust that every member will refer to these pages in any discussion of the authority and rights of AMORC.⁵⁷

57. H. Spencer Lewis, ed., Rosicrucian Manual, Rosicrucian Press, San Jose, Calif., 1918. p. 5. The paragraph quoted doubtless refers especially to the Rosicrucian Fellowship established by Max Heindel at Oceanside, Calif. This Fellowship gained a temporary following for a short time after 1910. Although it still publishes a magazine, its influence seems negligible. It has neither the extensive facilities, nor the heavy advertising program of AMORC. For all practical purposes, the name "Rosicrucian" connotes for the American reader "AMORC."

Of Mr. Heindel's group, the Manual comments: "Mr. Heindel was a keen student of the Theosophical teachings, and journeyed to Europe where he studied under . . . a Theosophist, and not a Rosicrucian. . . . [He] returned to America and wrote his personal version of the teachings which he had received, and unfortunately used the term Rosicrucian to describe the work of his personal organization, and his personal philosophy. The Rosicrucian Fellowship does not maintain temples, lodges, and colleges . . . , as does the Rosicrucian Order, and its teachings are in nowise similar to, nor in any way connected with the genuine teachings, rituals, ideals, and principles of the Rosicrucian fraternity. The genuine Rosicrucian Order never prints and offers for sale any books or pamphlets claimed to contain the real inner, secret teachings of the fraternity, and it does not deal with the speculative and weird subjects included in the books and pamphlets of most of the mystical organizations which have appropriated the term Rosicrucian These comments are intended to be kindly, but perfectly frank and given in the spirit of defining the difference between the organizations. Pp. 188-189.

"In the year 1694, under the leadership of one Johann Kelpius,"⁵⁸ and according to "Sir Francis Bacon's original plan,"⁵⁹ a band of members of the Order started out from Europe in a specially chartered ship in 1693. In the following year they arrived at what is now Philadelphia and constructed some buildings in an area known today as Fairmount Park. Later they moved farther west to Ephrata, Pennsylvania "where many of the original buildings still stand."⁶⁰

The author in the Manual describes how the Order in the New World "grew into a large and potent power of considerable importance in the affairs of the birth of the American nation . . . But the ancient law that each 108 years was a cycle of rebirth, activity, rest, and waiting, made the great work in America come to a close, so far as public activities were concerned, in 1801" (which date would be 108 years after the original settlers left Europe, providing that the year 1801 is not arbitrarily set as the date for the date for the cycle of quietude).⁶¹

It is at the close of this rest period that H. Spencer Lewis himself enters the visible picture. The Manual portrays him as having had Esoteric knowledge preserved by

58. Anonymous, Democracy's Guarantee, a Tract, Rosicrucian Press, San Jose, Calif., p. 4.

59. Rosicrucian Manual, p. 5.

60. Ibid.

61. Ibid.

the descendants of the first foundation in America" passed to him in a proper way. Through a variety of courses, scientific and metaphysical studies, he prepared himself for the venture he would undertake in 1909. In July of that year, he went to France, where the proper authorities informed him of the mysteries and methods that he should employ for his life's task. 62

On his return to America, he held many "secret sessions" with people who (according to the Manual) "had been initiated into the Order in France and India and other lands, who formed with him the first foundation committee." For six years they worked together, "so that in the seventh year of preparation they could announce to the American public the reestablishment of the Rosicrucian Order." Their endeavors led also to the approval of the organization by the "International Convention in Europe," and this gave the Ancient and Mystical Order Rosae Crucis of North America the status of being "today the ONLY Rosicrucian movement in America having such authority and connections." 63

Lewis continued to be the guiding hand in the organization, also writing many of the publications, until his death in 1939. His widow, a son and daughter-in-law currently head the organization. 64

62. Ibid., p. 6.

63. Ibid.

64. Time, loc. cit.

An Historical Evaluation of AMORC

We have already listed our reasons for believing that the Order takes its name as an afterthought from the historical person, Christian Rosenkreuz. It is now our purpose in this concluding part of Chapter One to render an opinion on the validity of AMORC's claim of a true relation with the Rosicrucian Order purported to have existed since Amenhotep IV. For the following reasons, we feel obliged to conclude that AMORC propounds many exaggerated, if not fraudulent, claims in asserting to be directly linked with an organization of such remarkable--and still to be proved--age:

1) Even AMORC's greatest advocate, H. Spencer Lewis, admits a scarcity of sources for any early historical claims of the Order.

a) Note his observation that the early history is traditional, perpetuated by word of mouth, and "supported by more or less definite references in ancient writings or symbolical passages in the rituals or teachings."⁶⁵ Again, although he points to a belief that the Rosicrucian Order is predestined to function in 108-year cycles, he unblushingly states that the origin of this "law" is "lost in the traditional history."⁶⁶

65. Lewis, Questions and Answers, p. 9.

66. Ibid., p. 77.

b) AMORC's presentation is one that includes the bland assumption of facts; thus, "Whether one accepts all the points of the traditional history or not, one is certain to feel [*italics ours*] that the origin of the Rosicrucian Order is found in the early mystery schools of the Great White Brotherhood."⁶⁷ Again: "The history of the . . . Order in foreign lands has been well covered in many books [Lewis does not give their names, however.], though all are warned against giving any credence to the statements made in most of the encyclopedias wherein it is said that the Order started in Germany in the eighteenth century . . . and ended there."⁶⁸

2) Practically all of AMORC's dictums come from one man, Lewis, and are thus open to accusations of being extremely subjective in nature. His claim of having established the order on the basis of the information he obtained in Europe does not remove the possibilities that:

a) His European teachers may have been subjective in their presentation, not conforming (it would seem) to the usual norms of scholarship and authority, and that

b) he himself may have colored the information to his own liking, in order to set up his own system of

67. Ibid., p. 77.

68. Rosicrucian Manual, p. 5.

thought.

Point "b" above finds a support in the AMORC "scandal" reported in Time magazine, (April 11, 1949), from which we take the following:

Many a faithful U. S. Rosicrucian might be jolted by the picture of the San Jose order painted in a lawsuit filed by the widow of the co-founder. Mrs. Myra Kiimalahto . . . sued for her late husband's share in what she claims he and his partner had conceived as "a business of conducting rituals, ceremonials, lessons, instructions and the sale of books and periodicals . . ." They founded AMORC, she says, "as a device to disseminate information, lessons and instructions to others for a profit." The take, she contends, is good This successful blend of faith and finance, according to Myra Kiimalahto, was at first administered jointly by Thor, . . . her husband, and ex-Methodist Harvey Spencer Lewis, former president of an "Institute for Psychical Research." Together they applied modern U. S. selling methods to a potpourri of lore derived from the ancient esoteric Rosicrucian cult which dates back beyond the 15th Century. In 1928, the Lewis-Kiimalahto brand of Rosicrucianism found in San Jose a happy combination of favorable weather and favorable authorities. There Lewis incorporated it as a non-profit organization, and settled down to be "Imperator of the Supreme Grand Lodge." Kiimalahto sold his New York printing shop and came along to San Jose in 1936 as "Sovereign Grand Master."

Lewis died in 1939, Kiimalahto in 1948. Mrs. Kiimalahto, who has not been a practicing Rosicrucian for four years, says that she is not interested in money but in rescuing AMORC from the control of Lewis' son, daughter-in-law and widow. Last week Rosicrucian leaders filed their answer to Widow Kiimalahto's suit: the Kiimalahto-Lewis team, they said, had not been a business partnership. Meanwhile, the checks and money orders continued to roll in⁶⁹

69. Time, loc. cit.

We cite the foregoing article because Mrs. Kiimalahto's past intimate relation with the organization makes her testimony the most powerful, probably, that has ever appeared against ANORC. And we feel it affords strong support for the view that ANORC may well be the concoction of the mind of one man, who possessed a gift for subjective rationalizations that could work out a philosophical system motivated by personal profit.

Chapter 2

A Philosophical Evaluation of Rosicrucianism

What is the philosophy by which the "Ancient Mystical Order Rosae Crucis" seems to be conducting itself so prosperously? The answer to that question is the burden of this chapter.

The first problem that confronts us is that AMORC apparently is not interested in giving an analytical, concise definition or designation for its philosophy (e.g., "Epicurean," "Neo-Platonic," etc.), but merely claims throughout its writings and advertisements to have the hidden truth. In fact, it avows that the greatest philosophers in history derived much of their wisdom through membership in the Rosicrucian Order. Lewis lists such celebrated names as the following: Solon, Anaximander, Democritus, Socrates, Plato, Aristotle, and Epicurus; while The Mastery of Life has marginal paragraphs interspersed throughout, with the designation of "Rosicrucian"

1. H. Spencer Lewis, Rosicrucian Questions and Answers, Rosicrucian Press, San Jose, California, 1929, p. 60.

being given to such names as Lord Edward Bulwer-Lytton, Dante, Balzac, and Shelley.²

The Purpose of AMORC. We shall be helped in defining the Rosicrucian philosophy by first noting the purpose of AMORC; for its philosophy is, or at least should be, concomitant with its purposes.

According to the Manual, "the GREAT AIM of the Rosicrucians has ever been to assist all mankind in evolving to the highest degree of earthly perfection, and to render aid to every living being 'to the Glory of God and the Benefit of Mankind.'"³

To carry out this purpose, the Rosicrucians are banded together into "a fraternal order . . . of progressive men and women interested in exhausting the possibilities of life by a sane and sensible use their heritage of esoteric knowledge and the faculties which they possess as human beings." This is a knowledge which "they cherish, [and it] embraces every realm of human endeavor and every phenomenon of the universe known to man."⁴

Consequently, the Order describes itself as having an intensely practical mission; for the organization

2. Anonymous, The Mastery of Life, Rosicrucian Press, San Jose, California, c. 1945.

3. H. Spencer Lewis, ed., Rosicrucian Manual, Rosicrucian Press, San Jose, California, 1918, p. 48.

4. Mastery of Life, p. 16.

. . . is primarily a Humanitarian Movement, making for greater Health, Happiness, and Peace in the earthly lives of all mankind. Note particularly that we say the 'earthly lives' of men, for we have naught to do with any doctrine devoted to the interests of individuals living in an unknown, future state. The work of Rosicrucians is to be done here and now; not that we have neither hope nor expectation of another life after this, but we know that the happiness of the future depends upon what we do today for others as well as for ourselves.

Also, our purposes are to enable men and women to live clean, normal, natural lives, as Nature intended, enjoying all the privileges of Nature, . . . to be free from the shackles of superstition, the limits of ignorance, and the sufferings of avoidable Karma [the law of compensation that for each sorrow or pain one causes another, he will suffer in like degree].⁵

This practical appeal is further supplemented by one of the points in a list of benefits: "The privilege of direct and immediate advice in personal problems relating to health, business, social, financial, and ethical matters."⁶

But should a "sincere seeker after truth" wonder whether membership in the Order would conflict with his membership in a sectarian church, the policy of AMORC is to assure him there will be no religious conflict, for

The Temple of God [i.e., the "physical body"] is universal, non-sectarian, charged with Cosmic powers and vibrating forces, and designed by the Master Architect to continue His creative work in love, goodness, and justice; so our Temples should represent a place where universal minds, regardless of creeds or dogmas [*italics ours*], may abide, attuned with such vibratory forces

5. Rosicrucian Manual, p. 24.

6. Ibid., p. 47.

within as make for love, goodness, justice, and peace, that Nature may continue her creation without interruption or interference.⁷

Thus the Order looks upon itself essentially as a school or fraternity with a laboratory; and the members are students and workers. "The graduates are unselfish servants of God to Mankind, efficiently educated, trained and experienced, attuned with the mighty forces of the Cosmic or Divine Mind, and masters of matter, space, and time." Consequently, ANORC's purpose may be summarized in the words of this same paragraph, which states that the Order's activities should make its members "essentially Mystics, Adepts, and Magi--creators of their own Destiny"⁸

So much for the purposes of the Order. Now let us proceed to the philosophy itself that supposedly aims to accomplish the purposes just enumerated, following the suggestion of Randall and Buchler in approaching the study of a given philosophy by investigating its nature, methods, and foundations.⁹

A. The Nature of Rosicrucian Philosophy. How do some of the sources we consulted define this philosophy? The Catholic Encyclopedia refers to the "occult--cabalistic--thesophic 'Rosicrucian Brotherhood.'¹⁰

7. Rosicrucian Manual, p. 29.

8. Ibid., p. 24.

9. J. H. Randall and Justus Buchler, Philosophy: An Introduction, Barnes and Noble, Ind., 1942, p. 41.

10. Hermann Gruber, "Rosicrucianism," The Catholic Encyclopedia, XIII, p. 193.

The Encyclopedia of Religion and Ethics describes the philosophy as pantheistic.¹¹ Dr. Mueller calls it "evolutionistic, pantheistic, theosophic."¹² In Popular Symbolics Rosicrucian doctrines are described as bearing "the mark of a religion artificially constructed on the models of theosophy and Freemasonry."¹³

Thus, there seems to be a variety of descriptions for the nature of AMORC's dictums. Our personal study has led us to conclude that no one word will suffice; for we were impressed with four characteristics of Rosicrucian philosophy. The material we investigated can be filed in practically every instance under either "evolutionistic," "pantheistic," "theosophic," or "antichristian" headings.

By treating these four characteristics we expect to accomplish a simultaneous defining and evaluating of the Order's philosophical bent.

1. Evolutionistic. AMORC has as its great aim assisting "all mankind in evolving to the highest degree of earthly perfection."¹⁴ It defines evolution as the

11. A. C. Cadmus, "Rosicrucianism," Encyclopedia of Religion and Ethics, IX, p. 857.

12. J. T. Mueller, "Antichristian Teachings of Rosicrucianism," Concordia Theological Monthly, X (December, 1939), p. 911.

13. Th. Engelder, ed. et al., Popular Symbolics. Concordia Publishing House, St. Louis, 1934, p. 474.

14. Rosicrucian Manual, p. 48.

. . . progressive growth and perfecting of all that is manifest or in the conception of the Cosmic Mind. Even so-called devolution or disintegration is a part of evolution, is one of its phases. Evolution implies onward and forward. It is the fundamental law of nature and every element in nature is tending toward perfection and becoming higher in its rates of vibrations and more evolved in its manifestations.¹⁵

AMORC asks "why should pride be offended and vanity deflated by the doctrine of physical evolution, be it true or not? It was in mind, not in body, that man found his supremacy and distinction. In the contest of mind man has vanquished every species."¹⁶

Consequently, as for man himself, mind is everything. "This body we hail and call man, in what does it differ from the humblest of other species . . . ? In the decay of form, who can name the man?"¹⁷

Now, the important thing is not only that man realizes his mind is really that which he should regard as "himself", but that he realizes also that he is a free agent through the use of this mind. Man has the "power to choose in all his acts and all his thinking." The Rosicrucian philosophy, then, investigates the nature and source of the "impulses, urges, and inspirations that come before . . . man and which call for a choice or a choosing."¹⁸

15. Ibid., p. 164.

16. Anonymous, The Evolution of You, a Tract, Rosicrucian Press, San Jose, California, p. 3.

17. Ibid., p. 2.

18. H. Spencer Lewis, Self Mastery and Fate, Rosicrucian Press, San Jose, California, 1929, p. 28.

Thus, as people "decide, so will they determine their fates, and establish their destinies." So it is that the Rosicrucian philosophy claims possession of the hidden laws and periodicity (or cycles) of the universe that control "the impulses, urges and inspirations " that come to men, and on the basis of which they make their choices."¹⁹

It is largely from this assertion that AMORC seems to make its philosophic appeal. Hence, such statements appear in its tracts as: "Each is his own creator of the future, once the secret, simple methods are known. Thousands, for hundreds of years have found this to be true."²⁰

Man's evolution to his highest potentials can come only through mastering these hidden laws. At this point, AMORC draws heavily on its doctrine of "cycles."

The fundamental principle involved in self mastery . . . , evolved through observation and perfected through test and application, reveals that all life and all existence within the universe has its expressions in cycles, the periodicity of which is equivalent to the rhythm of certain measured and harmonious recurrences of stress or impulses of a Cosmic nature The rhythm is harmoniously related to the periodicity observable in the movements of the planets and the effects of rhythm on the tides of the waters of the earth, and the growth of plant life, as well as animal life.²¹

19. *Ibid.*, p. 31.

20. Anonymous, You and the Universe, Rosicrucian Press, San Jose, California.

21. Lewis, Self Mastery, pp. 18-19.

In carrying out this emphasis on cycles, the writer of Self Mastery and Fate uses a barrage of words, numbers, and sweeping statements, the presumption of which (we are strongly inclined to feel) speaks for itself, e.g.:

The life cycle of each human being, covering approximately one hundred and forty-four years, is divided into a period of seven years each Cycle number two is three hundred and sixty-five days in length, or in other words, renews itself and starts over again at each one of our birthday anniversaries This cycle is divided into seven periods, each having approximately fifty-two and one-seventh days. This means that each year of our lives . . . is divided into seven periods during which certain conditions are favorable or unfavorable for the things we wish to do and must do.²²

Lewis lends an almost anthropomorphic character to "business" when he states that if several men organize a new business on a given day, that would be the date of its birthday. It would then have a "cycle of progression beginning with today, just as though these persons had given birth to a human form with a soul /italics ours/.²³

Evolution will be truly a progressive development for him who had an understanding of his fate cycles. Those (including non-members) who wish to learn the dates of their cycles may do so at very reasonable cost, by sending fifty-cents to AMORC headquarters for a coin "made of light-weight,

22. Ibid., p. 67.

23. Ibid., p. 92.

strong alloy. One side shows the days and periods; the other, the hours of the day divided into A.M. and P.M." Of course, a pamphlet of instruction accompanies the coin, "fully explaining the things to be avoided during certain periods," and also giving the profitable periods that await the user!²⁴

The evolution of an individual does not cease with death, according to AMORC. In fact, death is a vital factor in the process of evolution. A Rosicrucian "not only looks upon death as inevitable, but as a necessary element in the cycle of life. Death and birth are synonymous in this sense, for so-called death is birth into another plane, while birth is likewise a transition." Both of these events constitute the "Great Experience" and are forms of "Initiation", granting opportunity for greater advancement. "On the other hand there is no death, whether we consider the transition from a material or spiritual view point. Matter is indestructible." It is also "in constant change." The soul "is immortal and cannot be destroyed, lessened, increased, or otherwise modified, except in growth of experience. After transition the material part of man, the body, does not cease to live, but is in fact still vibrant with spirit energy Hence neither body nor soul ever dies,

24. Anonymous, Worth While Books Are Life Time Friends, a Pamphlet, Rosicrucian Press, San Jose, California, p. 3.

and there is no death." It is merely a milestone in the evolution of the individual.²⁵

2. Pantheistic. "The Rosy Cross symbol is sacred, not as a religious symbol, but as a Divine Symbol, because it represents the true Divinity in Man and all Nature."²⁶

Lest someone say that the foregoing quotation does not imply a denial in the Rosicrucian philosophy that God is a transcendent being, existing separately from the universe, we submit also the following from the definition of God, found in the Manual:

To Rosicrucians there is but one God, ever living, ever present, without limiting attributes of definite form of manifestation--it is the God of our hearts The God which we conceive, which we can be conscious of, which sooner or later manifests in that strange intimacy within us, becomes the God of our hearts In ancient rituals we find this as part of the Rosicrucian pledge: "Man is God and Son of God, and there is no other God." But this has a mystical meaning and is not to be taken literally.²⁷

The Encyclopedia of Religion and Ethics portrays Rosicrucians as believing that "the whole universe is permeated with the essence of the Creator, that every rock instinct with life . . . every plant and tree . . . and that each living thing moves, acts, and thinks in accord-

ance with

25. Rosicrucian Manual, p. 87.

26. Ibid., p. 87.

27. Ibid., pp. 166-167.

ance with the supreme design by which all things exist . . .
 . . ."28

3. Theosophical. That Rosicrucianism in some respects sounds a note similar to Theosophy finds support in this statement of purpose in Theosophy: ". . . to investigate the hidden mysteries of nature under every aspect possible and the psychic and spiritual powers latent in man, especially."29 According to Theosophy, man is "constitutionally independent of the physical body." We may parallel this with the Rosicrucian claims that "the human consciousness can be instantaneously extended out of the body to remote places and events," and that "mental impressions and sight and sound sensations can be communicated at a distance without physical means."30 However, we found no evidence to justify any statement on our part that Rosicrucianism has premeditatively drawn from Theosophy. We feel qualified only to point out a basic resemblance, and there let the matter rest.

28. A. C. Cadmus, op. cit., p. 857. An example of the Rosicrucian bent of mind is Paracelsus, fifteenth century physician in Germany, whom AMORC points to with pride as having been a member of the movement in his day. Relevant to this discussion of pantheism is this description of him: "Fundamentally, his thinking is based on a visionary Neo-Platonic philosophy in which the life of man is regarded as inseparable from that of the universe." For Paracelsus the scriptural "dust of the earth" that composes man is primarily a compound of salt, sulphur, and mercury. "It is the separation of these mystic elements in man that causes sickness; . . . the failure of . . . an occult vital force which is situated in the stomach. "Paracelsus," Encyclopedia Britannica, fourteenth edition, XIX, p. 251.

29. Quoted in Popular Symbolics, p. 463.

30. Mastery of Life, p. 15.

4. Antichristian. For the writer of this thesis, at least, a discussion of Rosicrucian philosophy would be without practical benefit if it did not include an evaluation of AMORC's teachings in the light of Christianity. That we have come to consider Rosicrucian as grossly anti-Christian, finds adequate support, we feel, in the following paragraphs.

We are struck first of all by the difference in the concept of God as held by Christians on the one hand and Rosicrucians on the other. The God of the Christian is a Triune God who manifests Himself by the evidence of the nature He has created as a transcendental Being; by His revelation in Jesus Christ, the Man Who is also true God; and by His Holy Spirit, through Whom He works in the human hearts of those who accept the redemption from sin He proffers in the Atonement of Christ.

To the Rosicrucian, God is "the God of our hearts," the God "which we conceive, which we can be conscious of, which sooner or later manifest in that strange intimacy within us." This is really a restatement of the foregoing section in our thesis on pantheism. Thus, it is possible for the Rosicrucian (unlike the Christian who considers his religion the only true one) to say: "There never was a false God, nor was there ever really a false religion, unless you call a child a false man." Again: "When the so-called heathen prays to or worships an idol he is not

worshipping a false God, but rather a false interpretation of the one true living God, the God that he is trying to idealize, attempting to interpret--the God of his heart."³¹

Secondly, an essential of Christianity is faith--also in matters that are beyond human experience. In contrast, "the Rosicrucians ever held that one could not know of anything except through personal experience [hence its mystical approach] It is customary for a mystic to say that he either knows or does not know when speaking of the experiences, problems, or facts of life and nature; nothing is accepted by him on faith, and he has no beliefs [italics ours]."³²

Our third consideration is of extreme importance in emphasizing the "poles apart" natures of Christianity and Rosicrucianism. In the former, Jesus Christ is true God and true Man--simultaneously. In the latter, He is only one of the great masters of religion. Rosicrucianism denies many aspects of the record of Christ in the Four Gospels, e. g., His birth in Bethlehem, that the true story of the crucifixion is really known,³³ and "that there was a miraculous resurrection."³⁴

31. Rosicrucian Manual, p. 167.

32. Ibid., p. 169.

33. Th. Graebner, A Handbook of Organizations, Concordia Publishing House, St. Louis, 1948.

34. Th. Engelder, ed. et al., Popular Symbolics, p. 474.

A fourth antichristian characteristic of Rosicrucianism (and one that is a natural result of the first three) is its work-righteousness aspect. "True happiness consists . . . in good life, . . . in living understandingly. Neither is it great learning but good will that joins men to God."³⁵ Man can make his own heaven or hell. He may choose either right or wrong, "but the result of his choice will automatically follow, and this inevitable result constitutes a manifestation of the law of compensation. He who chooses rightly . . . becomes the master of his fate"36 (All the italics in this last quotation are ours.)

A fifth conflict between AMORC's philosophy and the Christian religion is the Rosicrucian acceptance of reincarnation. To the Christian, it is appointed for man "once to die, but then the judgment."³⁷ According to AMORC, "the doctrine of reincarnation is still a dependable and proven solution to the important problems of life. . . . Intelligent men and women have discovered that the biased and unfair attacks made on . . . reincarnation by some religious writers and by some scientists were for the purpose of taking away from men and women the one great answer to all their

35. Mastery of Life, p. 7.

36. Self Mastery and Fate, p. 33.

37. Heb. 9:27.

questions, and the great light which enables them to meet their daily problems and attain mastership and success."³⁸

In summary of its antichristian character we quote Dr. Mueller:

Rosicrucian philosophy is therefore a pantheistic and evolutionistic form of unbelief Amid all the wearying nonsense of its endless verbiage this is its cardinal teaching: The spirit of man, by endless striving and self-improvement through countless cycles of births and rebirths attains to perfection and thus to essential union with God. From beginning to end it is therefore diametrically opposed to the Christian religion, which it denies in its entirety, as in every individual doctrine. Rosicrucianism recognizes no Holy Trinity in the sense of the Christian Religion, . . . no salvation by faith in Christ's blood, no heaven and hell in the sense of Scripture. It uses practically all these terms, but only to misuse them in other basically heathen designations.³⁹

Having concluded our treatment of the actual philosophy of AMORC, we wish to touch just briefly on the two remaining phases, methods and foundations:

B. Methods. We wish to touch just briefly on the method of instruction that AMORC employs to disseminate its philosophy.

After the Initiate has been accepted into the Order--usually through correspondence--he receives twelve weekly sealed envelopes containing the secret and private monographs,

38. Anonymous, Why Are We Here?, a pamphlet, Rosicrucian Press, San Jose, California, pp. 5-6.

39. Mueller, op. cit., p. 911.

lessons, and instructions of the First Degree. Following are several sample topics from the monographs, lectures, and exercises of the First Degree: "Objective and Cosmic Consciousness, The Brain and Mind, The Meaning of Numbers, Experiments in Developing Psychic Consciousness, The Life Force," etc.⁴⁰

The member, after completing this first series, is then ready to take his Second Degree. And once again he must work through a similar collection of topics. This process continues through all the nine degrees.

All Rosicrucian members are urged to visit the headquarters of AMORC in San Jose, if at all possible, where library facilities are available for fratres and sorores with studious natures.

C. Foundations. This phase has been covered extensively in the first chapter on the history of the Order. However, a summarizing statement on the sources used by Rosicrucian adherents belongs also in this chapter on philosophy. In chapter one we pointed out the possibility that AMORC is an organization propounding the views collected and assimilated by one man, H. Spencer Lewis, whose statements he apparently felt should be accepted a priori as true. AMORC Brother Andrea comments on the origins and foundations of

40. Rosicrucian Manual, p. 47.

the philosophy in a manner similar to the assumptions of Lewis:

Obviously, for those who do not accept this fact of the existence of . . . Masters [i.e., those persons who have had full knowledge of the wisdom that the Order claims to possess, and who have transmitted it secretly down through the years], the technique of the Master and of his disciple can have little significance Its [Rosicrucianism's] laws and principles must emanate from perfected technicians who are conversant with that realm.⁴¹

And to those who consent to abide by statements like the above, broad is the way that leads to The Ancient Order Rosae Crucis!

41. Raymond Andrea, The Technique of the Disciple, Rosicrucian Press, San Jose, California, 1935, pp. 9-10.

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