

# THE SEVEN STEPS OF WISDOM

## SOCIETAS ROSICRUCIANA IN ANGLIA (SRIA)

by Mike Crowson and Thomas Linacre College

---

*This is the draft of a seven-week course on what the SRIA is about, intended for interested inquirer (most, but not all of whom, would already be Master Masons) and those recently joined. It was written by Mike Crowson (Metropolitan College. Secretary of Met. Coll. Study Group, Michael Penrose College and Thomas Linacre College.) It should be treated as freely available, as long as: 1) You say where you got it; and B) you don't attempt to prevent others from using it just as freely.*

### THE SEVEN STEPS OF WISDOM – STEP 1

This is the first Step in the Seven Steps of Wisdom, which are taken symbolically during the ritual of initiation into the Society as a Zelator and which appear in the rituals of some of the other Rosicrucian societies as well. What is symbolized may become clear to you later. Read on.

#### Why Are You Reading This?

You are reading this either because you have just joined the SRIA and want to know exactly what you have joined or because you think you might want to join and want to know about us before committing yourself. (There are other possible reasons, like simple curiosity, but the first two possibilities are the more likely.)

#### What is the SRIA?

The letters SRIA are short for Societas Rosicruciana in Anglia (that's Latin), also once commonly referred to as Soc.' Ros.'. but now less often shortened in this way. We are a society of Masonic Rosicrucians ... so what, on God's green earth, are they?

About 1614 two strange documents were published in Germany, the *Confessio* and the *Fama Fraternitatis*. They told the story of a society – not actually secret but not openly public either - founded by Christian Rosenkreuz, (a German, educated in a monastery but not a monk, who died about 1490). Both the *Fama* and the *Confessio* were anonymous and academics are uncertain and divided as to whether the story is entirely true, allegorical and only loosely based on truth or entirely fictitious (and, if made up, why and by whom?). We will go into more detail about these, so called, 'Rosicrucian Manifestos' in a later 'step'.

The story of the society since 1614 is patchy, with occasional clear references to it during the 18<sup>th</sup> century, a number of obscure remarks which might refer to it and the emergence of the SRIA and SRIS (the same thing in Scotland) in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, as described in some detail in the History given to all newly initiated Zelators. There are several other Rosicrucian societies – AMORC (the Ancient and Meritorious Order of the Rosy Cross); BOTA (Builders of the Adytum); SRICF (Societas Rosicruciana in Citibus Federalis); SRIAm (Societas Rosicruciana in America) amongst several others. The SRIA is in amity (has friendly relations and co-operation) with the SRIS only, not the others.

The Masonic connection goes right back to the first recorded speculative Freemason, Elias Ashmole. A copy of the *Fama* in Ashmole's own hand and a copy of a letter seeking to join the Rosicrucians were found amongst his effects after he died in the 17<sup>th</sup> century. The SRIA at present accepts only Master Masons as members, but it is not, in itself, a Masonic organisation and the Society could change that rule (if enough members agreed!)

The SRIS is also Masonic, as is the SRICF, found only in the USA and not connected to us. The other main Rosicrucian groups all have women members as well as men.

### **But What IS Rosicrucianism and What are the Aims of the Society?**

Rosicrucians are Christians. To join this Society you must profess the 'Trinitarian Christian Faith', though there are no creeds or doctrines specified in our ordinances and no specific requirements of church attendance. There are in the SRIA practicing members of most denominations, as well as a good many who profess no particular denomination or church. There is in the Society probably an above average awareness of the ancient world into which Christianity came, but no dogma. Those who join are committed to a study of the great problems of life, the propagation of knowledge and mutual help in the study of culture, world religions, hermetic science and the 'secrets of nature'.

Remember the answer you gave in Lodge to the question 'What is Freemasonry'? You gave the reply that it is a "... system of morality veiled in allegory and illustrated by symbols." In the case of the SRIA, you add to that general Rosicrucian attitude to life mentioned above, a lifting of the veil and a study of the symbols.

The SRIA will explore the mystical side of Masonry and attempt to answer some of the questions related to it: if such things do not interest you, then probably the Soc.'Ros.'. is not for you.

### **What do you mean by 'Symbols'?**

"A symbol can be anything that carries meaning and that talks to us and to our world of imagination on a conscious or unconscious level. Symbols are used in art and poetry, within groups to represent secret matters, as well as a way of helping make conversation brief and direct ... The ancient Egyptians, the Mayas, the Masons and the Mathematicians of our world, all use symbols with more or less awareness of what they are activating." (from *The Star of Thirteen*, by Joanna Crowson and Selja Winther)

The flag of St George is symbolic – you must decide for yourself precisely what it symbolizes – at least two different sets of ideas! The cross, the crescent and the swastika are all symbols, which have been consciously imbued with meaning. What are the symbols of Masonry and what do they symbolize? This is a question to consider again in the meditation section.

### **The Structure of the Societas Rosicruciana**

The SRIA meets in Colleges, grouped into Provinces – a structure that will be familiar to Masons – each province is headed by a Chief Adept and his appointed deputy, called a Suffregan. Each College is headed by a Celebrant, assisted by an Exponent, a Secretary and Treasurer, a Director of Ceremonies, four Ancients and a Conductor of Novices: these represent the ritual element of our meetings, but the College and the Society is much more than its ritual. Short papers from ordinary members on a wide range of subjects form an important part of many College meetings and some members meet to discuss longer papers and more detailed ideas in study groups.

The normal form of address among members is 'frater' (Latin for 'brother' – plural fratres not fraters!!!). There are four grades making up the first order, three making up the second order and two the third order:

- Zelator I - *First Order*
- Theoricus II
- Practicus III
- Philosophus IV
  
- Adeptus minor V - *Second Order*
- Adeptus Major VI
- Ademptus Exemptus VII
  
- Magister VIII - *Third Order*
- Magus IX

Promotion within the first order is a matter for the College. Initiation into the Second Order as an Adept must usually be after not less than four years in the First Order (though any promotion can be authorized by the

Supreme Magus at his pleasure) and promotion is the decision of the Chief Adept, on the recommendation of the College Secretary. Promotion to the Third Order is the prerogative of the Supreme Magus alone.

There are very few Magisters – principally just the Chief Adepts of the various provinces, a few national officers and a few others. There are just 3 Magi (plural of the Latin word ‘Magus’) – the Supreme Magus, elected for a 5 year term of office and a Senior Substitute Magus and a Junior Substitute Magus, both appointed by the Supreme Magus, who also appoints the Chief Adepts.

### **What’s this about ‘Papers’ and ‘Study’?**

The SRIA is not a branch of Freemasonry. We do perform ritual to advance our members along the path of return to the source – but we also study. A ‘paper’ is just a way of sharing your thoughts and researches and not everybody can write and deliver papers. Some read the work of others, some let others read their thoughts and some do both. Many Masons not really committed to the objects of the society do neither! Others at least join in the discussions.

You may still be interested but put off by what seems too daunting: don’t be. Every member can contribute in some way, but those who are not interested at all may want to look elsewhere.

### **What About Developing the Psychic and Mystical Sides of the Personality?**

Touchy area, this. Many of the male founders of the well known Golden Dawn in the 1880s were members of this society first, but the SRIA does not practice any form of Ritual Magic (some members do, but that’s a different matter). A few members would deny the existence of the supra-natural, synchronicity, telepathy, astrology, clairvoyance and so on: other members would give you examples of how these psychic skills work for them, while most would be more circumspect and hold less dogmatic views. The fact remains that supra-natural talents can be developed in most people.

These first seven steps are intended to do several things. Of course we want to give you a taste of the SRIA and what it is about, but we want to help you find the right path for you, even if it’s not one we share. As a part of that, some of the course is devoted to meditation and reading – do it and you may begin to develop your Psychological and/or your Mystical side.

### **Keep a diary**

Obtain a little notebook, which will become a diary of your journey of self-exploration. Be honest about recording your thoughts and ideas ... there’s nobody but yourself to deceive and admit it – you wouldn’t want anyone to be less than honest with you, so don’t be. Don’t be slavish about maintaining your diary, but try to keep it up to date.

### **Meditation for the next Seven Days – What do you really want from Life?**

It might sound stupidly obvious, but it’s one of the great truths – if you don’t know what you want from life you won’t get it! In order to achieve your objectives you MUST first know what they are.

Set aside ten or fifteen minutes and think over what you want from life. Never mind what you don’t want. If you don’t like your job ask yourself what you’d rather do. If you dislike the place you live, ask where you would rather live. In your notebook write down your priorities – what you really want from life.

On a different day, look again at what you have written: are you sure that it expresses your main objectives in life? Some of God’s greatest gifts are unanswered prayers, but if you are quite sure about what you want, then follow it up by writing down the first steps you need to achieve your dreams, Clearly hold in mind what you want to achieve – not a detailed method, but a vivid insight into what it would mean for you.

Visualisation is nothing more (or less) than holding an image in mind and thereby telling your subconscious what your mental effort should be expended on. For those who have not tried visualization before, some of the seven

steps will deal with how you go about it. The proposed further courses are likely to require a much more extended study of internal skills.

### **A Book to Read.**

This is tricky: how to get an overview which can give a newcomer to these ideas an insight, without either insulting the intelligence of those more widely read or being so ephemeral that the more down-to-earth thinker/reader is not immediately put off. In the end we suggest you acquire a copy of:

*The Rosicrucians: The History, Mythology and Rituals of an Esoteric Order;*  
Christopher McIntosh; Samuel Weisner; 1997; ISBN number 0-87728-920-4

At this stage you need only read the introduction. (We don't mean you shouldn't read the rest of the book if you find it interesting – only that we do want you to read and think about the introduction in particular.)

### **Some Questions to Think Over**

You are the only person who will see any written answer you give at this stage, so check up on yourself, because no one else will!

Write your answers in your notebook, so that you can work over several sessions and see where you are.

1. Think back over your own 3<sup>rd</sup> degree ceremony and pick out some things that were symbolic. What did those symbols represent?
2. The 3<sup>rd</sup> Degree Tracing Board involves a number of symbols. What are they and what do they represent?
3. The introduction to the book '*The Rosicrucians*' suggests that the symbol of the rose and the cross is one that appeals to something very deep inside us. What meanings can you find for the cross symbol? For the rose symbol? For the combination of the Rose & Cross?

-More-

## 7 STEPS OF WISDOM - STEP 2

### In What Ways is Rosicrucian Thought Distinctive?

Rosicrucian philosophy assumes in the first place that:

- a. Each individual is a part of God, that the personality contains a divine spark; and that
- b. The whole purpose of human existence is that this immortal element must find its way back to, and merge with, the divinity whence it came.

### An Esoteric Tradition?

The appeal to both the Renaissance Mind of the 15<sup>th</sup> & 16<sup>th</sup> centuries and that of the 21<sup>st</sup> and late 20<sup>th</sup> Century thinking human, of an inherited and largely secret, or at the least confidential and little known, body of knowledge was (and is) considerable and there is some circumstantial evidence to support the idea.

The Zelator ritual implies on several occasions that the "... doctrines taught by the society of the Rose and Cross ..." are ancient and, in the lecture on numbers towards the end of the ritual, unequivocally state the "... we (ie: the SRIA) trace the growth of our philosophy in the perpetual advent of Sages through the remotest avenues of time ..."

The secrecy involved with any such body of knowledge is understandable: one has only to consider what happened to heretics in medieval times and to such scientists as Galileo, whose ideas challenged the inquisition and established Catholic ideas, to realize that any Group with a body of knowledge outside the accepted teachings of the Church was likely to be very wary of drawing attention to itself.

Part of any appeal would be, of course, a rebellion against the ruthless materialism of the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries. Indeed many individuals in western society 'know' that there is nothing beyond the measurable, weighable material world and the discoveries of quantum physics are widely ignored as too complex to understand, especially when they throw into doubt the 'facts' of the 'real' world. In practice the discoveries and theories of quantum physics grow ever closer to what the Western Mystery Tradition had always held about reality, and a growing number of bio-physicists in the field of vibratory medicine are running foul of mainstream biochemical and medical ideas. In the routine testing of drugs the placebo effect can be as high as 60% - some doctors and physicists are beginning to investigate why this should be.

### Possible Evidence of a Partially Lost Body of Knowledge

Because Mercury is much nearer to the sun than the Earth is, it orbits round the sun three times in each Earth year. Each year, therefore, Mercury lies exactly between the Earth and the sun three times (a 'superior' conjunction) and it is in line with the Earth on the far side of the sun three times (an 'inferior' conjunction). If you draw a circle and mark on it the three superior conjunctions as points 1, 2 & 3 and the three inferior conjunctions as points A, B & C and you link points 1, 2 & 3 and points A, B & C you get two perfect interlocking equilateral triangles – a hexagram: the Star of David (on an Israeli flag) or Seal of Solomon.

Venus orbits the sun eight times in five Earth years: the similar exercise produces a perfect pentagram.

Now, how is it that two very ancient symbols, treated throughout historical times as potent talismans – the Pentagram and the Hexagram – are actual representations of astronomical facts not known until the 20<sup>th</sup> century? One possible explanation is that they are part of a body of knowledge handed on by an esoteric elite. This, of course, begs the question of 'handed on from what?'

### The 'Great Work' - Return to the Source

The SRIA (and Christianity) represent one path among many of return to the source. Christianity speaks of 'atonement' – 'at-one-ment' with the God who created all things and appeared in human form to pay for the sins of the world. The idea of a self-sacrificing God is a potent one, but one which is harder for the post-Darwinian

thinker to accept, because what Jesus teaches flows against both the concept of survival of the fittest and the 'me' culture.

One of the later grades of the First Order looks in more detail at the other great religions of the world, for now it is enough to recognize that adopting one single path for yourself – as the right and true path for you - does not preclude another path as being more appropriate for another individual and this course will assume that you have chosen to adopt the Christian path back to oneness with God.

### **The Themes of the Grades of the First Order**

The ritual leading from one grade to another of the First Order all contain a lecture setting out the theme for study in the grade. Unfortunately, these lectures (apart from the one in the Zelator ritual) are often omitted for lack of time. It is true that the one in the 4<sup>th</sup> grade is a very long, but one has a strong suspicion that the real reason is that many members do not understand them and either don't want to admit to not understanding or think they represent ideas they reject.

The ritual for each grade is given to the aspirant at the close of each ceremony and the aspirant could (and should) read the lecture, but that is no substitute for hearing it.

#### **Zelator**

Towards the end of the Zelator ritual is the lecture on numbers. This talk involves a short review of the importance of study to the individual member, a suggestion that the newly initiated Zelator study Kabbalism and a review of the significance of numbers to 12 (and multiples of 12) The lecture is often (usually?) read and sometimes by those who do not understand it.

If you have already studied, even briefly, the Kabbalah you will know that a detailed study can last a lifetime As the Grade V ceremony refers to the Kabbalah in fairly simple terms, it is possible to deduce that, while you should be aware of the main points before you get to the Second Order, you don't need to make an in depth study at this stage. It should, however, be pointed out that some new members are already well acquainted with it and following an interest in that direction is to be welcomed.

Some Rosicrucian Groups hold 'gemetria' – the meaning of numbers - as important and explore all the significances of number and the numerical value of words. This, however, relates to the fact that, in the Hebrew alphabet letters are also numbers, there being no digits. This is not clear in the SRIA lecture and there is some cause for saying that introducing the concept so early without more explanation tends to link it many minds with the more superstitious elements of numerology, which is unfortunate (and misguided).

#### **Theoricus**

The idea of this grade is that the aspirant in this grade expands the study begun as a Zelator, but still only looking at theory.

In the ritual of this grade the lecture is on colour. The lecture is interesting, but it doesn't do anything: the aspirant is not even told to study it further. All the same, most of us are at least dimly aware (and some of us very much aware) of the effects of colour in our environment and in healing. Studies into the placebo effect, mentioned earlier, have shown that even the colour of a placebo pill has implications for its effectiveness. For the rest of us it should perhaps be a wake up call to explore the subject further.

#### **Practicus**

The lecture here is a long one on Alchemy and it is usually omitted sometimes with a mumbled injunction from the celebrant to read it. Probably very few aspirants actually do!

Rosicrucian images often include the language and symbols of Spiritual Alchemy – turning the self from Spiritual dross to Spiritual Gold. The lecture explains the links between physical and spiritual alchemy. Before

you decide that physical alchemy was a matter of either chasing a mirage or pulling a confidence trick, bear in mind that quantum physicists could actually make gold from base metals in a particle accelerator it just costs many times more to do than the gold is worth!

When the grade of Practicus refers to practice it does not refer to the practice of alchemy: what is meant that the aspirant will by this stage (assuming studies have been maintained) reached a level where ideas can be put into practice.

## **Meditation and Study**

### **Reading**

Last week we asked you to acquire and read the introduction to *The Rosicrucians: The History, Mythology and Ritual of an Esoteric Order*, by Christopher McIntosh. If you did obtain a copy, we would like you to read Chapter 1 and to study the illustrations that follow chapter 1. You should note that Chapters 2 & 3 are a confusing history of medieval Germany and unlikely to be of interest to many aspirants. We are not suggesting and ban on reading on if you're interested – just pointing out that we are not asking you to.

We'd like to suggest three other books that are more readable but would have the effect of widening your view of reality: Read any one of them to become aware of how close modern quantum physics is moving towards the mystery tradition:

- *The Holographic Universe*, by Michael Talbot, published by Harper Collins 1996 ISBN 0-586-09171-8;
- *The Field*, by Lynne McTaggart, published by Element, 2003 ISBN0-00-714510-1 ;
- *The Tao of Physics* by Fritjof Kafka (this is an older classic in several different editions: one paperback is published by Flamingo (a Harper Collins imprint) 1982 but try any edition. The book takes more reading, but it is a scientist's view.)

Don't take this as a suggestion to buy three books! We are suggesting that either of the first two would be much easier reading than McIntosh and be more entertaining. Of course, if you think study has always to be a miserable grind ... you possibly won't find a long-term home in the SRIA.

### **Meditation Topics**

Look through the illustrations following Chapter 1 of *The Rosicrucians*. Spend a few minutes studying them. Are you drawn to any of them? The usual reaction (there isn't a correct one) is to be put off by some of them and puzzled by some others but drawn to one or two.

We mentioned in Step 1 the need to hold an image in your mind. We said it was 'visualisation' and that it was a key skill in occult and esoteric activity, necessary if you are not to find other skills impossible and much of the esoteric world boring. You must first understand what it is you are doing, and then practice doing it.

Get a piece of paper and sign your name. Now try to write a description (or better still draw) of how you did it. How did you hold the pen? What was the angle between the pen and the paper? Close your eyes and see yourself doing it. Do it again and see whether you saw yourself correctly. You could try other very routine activities – tying a tie, tying shoe laces. You are "visualizing" yourself doing these things.

### **Diary**

Make a note in your diary each time you practice visualization and give yourself an assessment. Use a scale of: satisfactory; satisfactory + (when there is an improvement) and satisfactory – (when you are tired or distracted etc.) The main point is to do it – and that's satisfactory in itself!

Look at your objectives and priorities from last week – do you still think they're right? Now that you're getting better at visualization, picture yourself achieving your objective. What will it mean for you? See yourself achieving what you want, but leave the matter of how you get it to synchronicity and your subconscious.

### **Questions for Contemplation**

1. Do YOU think there is a 'mystery tradition? Where else might the images of the Pentagram and Hexagram have come from? (In a paper to Metropolitan College, Frater Audio Lego Igitur Cognosco suggested four possibilities, all equally unlikely.)
2. What is meant by the words 'Return to the Source'?
3. What is the 'Great Work' of Alchemy?
4. When you 'visualise' something you are seeing it in your imagination – why is imagination important and why should it not be dismissed as mere fancy?

Write down your answers to help order your thoughts, though no one but you will see them. Thoughts to share with others come soon enough!

-More-



### **THE SEVEN STEPS OF WISDOM – STEP 3**

We have said that the major purpose of Rosicrucian Philosophy is the renewal of self and the return of the eternal spark within us to the Divine Source from which we came, and that the purpose of the Soc.' . Ros.' is mutual aid in achieving the aims.

The aspirant promises in the Zelator ritual to study with persistence and enthusiasm ... Study what? The ritual itself says that 'among the subjects you have promised to study with zeal are ... the secrets of the Kabbalists ...' and the various First Order grade lectures include numerology, colour, alchemy and comparative religion. These seem at first sight a rather arbitrary selection of subjects: what do we really study? And what does the Society teach?

#### **Recent and Upcoming Subjects for the Metropolitan Study Group**

The Metropolitan Study Group, attached to Metropolitan College in central London meets on the third Saturday of every month except December. The usual format is a paper followed by a discussion. What are the subjects of the papers, because that would be a guide to the interests of members? In 2003 subjects included introductions to the Tarot and to Astrology – both easy and intended for newcomers wanting a taste of the subjects; discussion of what constitutes Trinitarian Christianity by author Bob Gilbert; a study of the way in which quantum ideas are approaching ever closer to the ideas of the Western Mystery Tradition and the sixth annual part of an intellectual scrutiny of the Chemical Wedding of Christian Rosenkreuz. In 2004 papers cover such topics as Shamanism; The Future of the SRIA, by the Supreme Magus; The Nature of Sacrifice; The Aryans and the Hindus and Dr Bob Black on the life of a famous alchemist. The subjects are very varied and look even more varied for 2005 when several first order members present their thoughts on an even wider range of topics for discussion.

#### **What constitutes the Esoteric Tradition?**

What constitutes this 'esoteric tradition' and in what ways is quantum physics saying something similar to that tradition about the nature of reality? There are, first of all, the 'psi skills': the tradition generally holds that these skills are real and can be developed. The Western Mystery Tradition is a loose body of knowledge that could be held to cover: telepathy, clairvoyance (the SRIA has one of Madame Blavatsky's 'Magic Mirrors') and clairaudience, dowsing, astrology, gematria, divination (geomancy etc), alchemy, the Tarot and most of all the Kabbalah.

With the subject matter has developed a methodology for developing the skills, meditating the issues and progressing generally on the path of the return of the soul. This is a body of teaching developed in Europe and the Middle East over millennia and a path developed by Adepts of the European tradition over centuries.

There are many philosophies one might follow and in saying that, as Christians, we are rejecting the other great religions and philosophies to follow the Western and near Eastern approach to spiritual enlightenment should not be taken as meaning we do not consider any other religion or path 'true' or that they offer something less valid. We mean only that we think the path is not valid for us. We should not judge another's soul or intentions, as long as they do not inhibit the right to pursue our own path. Rosicrucians and many Christian mystics have, over the centuries, lived under the direct threat of the Inquisition and the ridicule of western materialistic science themselves to have any taste for the ridicule or persecution of another for his (or her) genuinely held belief system.

#### **The 'Psi Skills'**

If you have taken our advice and started reading 'The Field' by Lynne McTaggart you will be now be aware of the overwhelming evidence in support of many of the abilities previously thought to belong to the realms of the psychic, fantasy or science fiction. Of particular interest are the eighteen years of study undertaken at Princeton University Engineering Faculty by a team headed by the former Dean of Engineering Bob Jahn. The team has amassed data from millions of trials and provided evidence of very ordinary people influencing the output of random number generators. Their experimental results are ten times better than those showing that aspirin substantially reduces some kind of heart attack ... it also helps prove some of the things which the esoteric

tradition and the spiritual masters have always said. Do read *The Field* and, if the topic interests you, another cheap paperback *Footprints in the Psychic Wilderness* by Dale Graff MSc., for 22 years director of the CIA/American Military's research into Remote Viewing.

### **Astrology & Numerology**

Critics of astrology often say that the idea that the movement of the planets can exert any influence over events on earth is ridiculous and point out that the daily readings in newspapers are vacuous and general, in that they would apply to a twelfth of the population, which is too general. Critics and sceptics point out that the dates applying to each sign of the zodiac is fixed as it was 2000 years ago when, in reality, the apparent position of the sun on any given day moves on as a result of precession.

Astrologists might answer that the system works in some way: sales of little horoscope books published for each sign and for each year vary in consistent ways between signs across countries and years, suggesting that something is happening. Most astrologers would regard the daily predictions in newspapers as being of highly questionable value.

Following the Stock Market crash, the US stock market commissioned a man called Dewey to look for any signs leading up to the crash, so that in future they might be forewarned. Dewey looked painstakingly at trends and took more than ten years to publish his findings: he found thousands of examples of 'cycles' of varying lengths applying to things like the price of Goodyear rubber shares, the price of butter in the US, taxpayer conscience payments in the UK, temperatures in Paris, the numbers of the skunk population in Canada ... etc. Perhaps Dewey's cycles are the raw material described by either or both of astrology and numerology.

Those of you who are reading *The Field* might also be wondering whether, since consciousness does operate at a quantum level and the Zero Point Field is universal, influence exists at a quantum level. Certainly astrology and numerology are legitimate studies for members though doubtless many members are skeptical.

### **The Tarot and the Kabbalah**

The word 'Kabbalah' is a transliteration – that is, a word originally in another language (in this case Hebrew) and the spelling attempts to render the word in English characters. It can equally be written Qabbalah or Cabbala and with or without the double 'B' or the final 'H'. The different spellings don't matter, though 'K' spellings tend to be used by people studying the mystic elements and 'Q' spellings by those with more practical interests.

The Kabbalah was written down by the Jews of Spain the 13<sup>th</sup> century but the oral tradition goes back much further – to the 2<sup>nd</sup> century BC at least and possibly much further back than that. There is speculation that, during the period of captivity in Babylon (anyone familiar with the ritual of the Royal Arch will or with Bible history will know what we are referring to), Chaldean ideas were picked up and became absorbed into Jewish mysticism.

The Kabbalah can be a lifetime study and some find it obscure and boring! However, even if you are not interested you should learn some basics. The idea, simple enough at it's elementary level, is built around a meditation glyph called the Tree of Life. This consists of 10 Circles call 'Sephiroth' (Hebrew word - one Sephira, two or more Sephiroth) representing aspects of God and also forces within the mind of man. These Sephiroth are linked by 22 paths. There are 22 letters in the Hebrew Alphabet, which are also used a numbers, leading to a host of other factors we will ignore for the moment (and which many members of the SRIA would ignore altogether.)

A Tarot pack has 22 Trumps, so the Tarot has been absorbed for several centuries into the Western Mystery Tradition, for fairly obvious reasons. One of the other Rosicrucian societies leans heavily on the archetypal images of the Tarot trumps and claims that it had its origin in Fez in Morocco around 1200. They would say that was brought back to Europe by Christian Rosenkreuz to appear in Italy, disguised as a game to keep it away from the Inquisition. There is, of course, no proof of the tradition.

There are variations of the format of the Tree of Life and the 22 paths and also of the numbering of Tarot Trumps (often referred to as the 'Major Arcana') and the paths attributed to them, but the version shown here is the most common. (most 'common' should not necessarily be taken as meaning most 'correct'.

In the Soc. 'Ros.', as in other Rosicrucian societies and in most Kabbalistic Orders, the grade relate to the Sephiroth: those of the First Order relating to Malkuth, Yesod, Hod and Netzach, in that order. The veil of the Adepts lies across the paths leading further and the Adept grades relate to Tiphareth, Geburah and Chesed, with the third order beyond.

### **Study Groups, the Internet and Thomas Linacre College**

There is a Metropolitan Study Group, mentioned earlier, and several other Colleges in various parts of the world have study groups or other arrangements for members who want to take their exploration of the subject further.

There is Library at Stansfield Hall, Hampstead, in north London with hundreds of esoteric works, some not available elsewhere. Most of these can be borrowed. If you are not able to attend the Study Group, email Steven Turner at Stansfield Hall to make arrangements to come at some other time or to borrow by post. (Steven's email address is <steven.turner@sria.net>

On the internet there is an informal SRIA correspondence circle run by John Priede, Secretary of the Adelaide Study Group. This circle includes sincere seekers from other Rosicrucian societies, including quite a few women contributors. You do not have to be an SRIA member to join but, if you're not, you will need to convince John you are a serious seeker after the light and will add to the circle. [<glossary@tpg.co.au>](mailto:glossary@tpg.co.au)

Finally there is the Thomas Linacre College. Based at Croydon (South London) the College was seriously considering giving up its warrant because of a falling roll. Instead the Supreme Magus took it over and said that **IN ADDITION TO ITS CROYDON MEETINGS** (4<sup>th</sup> Monday in February, September and October) it should meet wherever and whenever he directed and that it would be the premier research College, publishing its transactions. It has so far met in the West Midlands and in Florence, Italy.

### **Meditation & Study**

#### **Reading**

Continue reading selected bits of *The Rosicrucians*, by McIntosh: pp42-43 from "Fludd replied ..." to "...speculative Masonry." And pp 46-48 from: "Another important English figure. . ." to ". . . a highly active German Order." We repeat that we stress these pages rather than asking you not to read anything!

We also urge you to read "*The Field*" to which we have repeatedly referred this week.

#### **Meditation Topics**

Depending on the time of year, get a single flower of some kind. Sit in a comfortable chair with your feet on the floor and hands along your thighs and relax. Take the flower and study it every detail, then close your eyes and see if you can still see it in your imagination.

At first you may find yourself closing your eyes for only a few seconds at a time, but persist. Practice every night for a week and you will find yourself visualizing the flower.

You could also try getting a suitable picture. It needs to be a reasonable size, like an 8 x 10 photograph or magazine full page (and, if you're using a magazine picture, cut off anything that might distract you and make sure nothing shows through from the other side. Do the same with the picture as the flower.

Be sure to do this exercise every day for a week, at the end of which time you will find yourself improving a little.

#### **Diary**

Write up in your diary a record of how you are progressing. As before, you are both judge and record keeper, and no one will yet see anything you write.

### **Topics for Contemplation**

1. What do YOU think of astrology and numerology?
2. Have you any psychic skills yourself? Have you ever had any experiences which might be considered psychic?
3. Have you experienced examples of synchronicity – meaningful coincidence? Can all coincidences be explained in a mechanical universe or just shrugged off? If you have been reading The Field you will know that the Quantum behaviour of sub atomic particles has an uncertainty factor which can be disturbed by outside influence, including especially the mind of the human observer. Do you think this relates in any way to the experience of synchronicitous events?
4. Do you think that any of these skills or topics is un-Christian? For readers of The Field - can the sceptical scientist with religious (particularly) Christian remain doubtful of psychic abilities or continue to think of religion as apart from science?

-More-

## THE SEVEN STEPS OF WISDOM – STEP 4

### Who was Christian Rosenkreuz?

You will recall that there were three so-called ‘Manifestos’: the *Fama Fraternitatis*, the *Confessio* and the *Chemical Wedding of Christian Rosenkreuz*. They were published (to the best of our knowledge) in 1614, 1615 and 1617 but the Fama at least had been around in manuscript form since 1610 or earlier.

The story of Christian Rosekreuz was told in the *Fama Fraternitatis* as if he were a real person and the first toast at an SRIA festive board is "to the pious memory of our revered founder Christian Rosenkreuz." Academic opinion is split, with very few (if any) academics thinking that the story is entirely true and quite a number considering it to be entirely fiction, though they are divided as to the purpose of that fiction. More probably the truth lies somewhere between an amalgam of various individuals and an allegory – perhaps closer to the origins of the King Arthur and Robin Hood tales: certainly not entirely made up, but the actual origins lost in the mists of time and repeated retelling.

The fact does remain that the story as told in the Rosicrucian Manifestos has a degree of internal consistency and gives some specific dates, places and initials, how accurate they are one cannot say.

### So, What IS the story?

Christian Rosenkreuz (referred to in the *Fama Fraternitatis* only as ‘our Brother CR or CRC) was born in Germany of ‘noble parents’ about 1390 to 1410 and, though not a monk himself, was educated in a monastery. Aged about 16, with Brother PAL he determined to go to the Holy Land. Brother PAL died in Cyprus, Brother CR went on to ‘Damasco’ – almost certainly Damascus, because he is said later to be in that city – where he made a considerable impression as a doctor. He studied the ‘wonders of nature’ in Damascus, lost interest in Jerusalem and stayed where he was for several years.

CR went on to Egypt, but didn’t stay long and went on to Fez (in what is now Morocco). Fez was one of the centres of both science and medicine and of Moslem mysticism. Paul Case, (a Mason and member of the Golden Dawn in America who founded the Builders of the Adytum when the G.’. D.’. broke up) claims that there is a tradition that the Tarot was designed in Fez around 1300 and the Brother CRC brought it back to Europe with him. We think we are correct in saying there is no support for the idea apart from this tradition but that the cards did appear as game in Italy about the time of CRC’s return from his travels.

From Fez, CR went to Spain and thence back to Germany to reflect on what he had learned. We are told that he had improved his Latin, learned Arabic and gained a reputation as a physician. He has also studied alchemy and the Kabbalah. During this period of reflection, it is claimed, he conceived the idea of the fraternity.

Five years after his return he joined with Brother GV, Brother JA and Brother JO. These four wrote down all that he had learned on his travels but the demands on their time, particularly from healing the sick, led them to bring another four people into the Fraternity.

The Chemical Wedding has Christian Rosenkreuz signing his name and giving the date as 1459. As the Chemical Wedding is the most likely of the Rosicrucian Manifestos to be a fictional allegory, this date should be taken with caution. The Fama says that the vault where Christian Rosenkreuz was buried, was found accidentally 120 years after the body was buried. Working backwards from publication around 1614, CR died somewhere around 1490 to 1496.

### How Does the Fraternity Explain 120 years of Secrecy?

The Fama continues by explaining the annual attendance of the small group at the ‘Domus Spiritui Sancti – the headquarters house of the order somewhere in Germany - and the way in which each brother appointed his own successor. On the subject of secrecy, the Fama says only that they agreed amongst themselves that order should remain secret for 120 years. This seems an odd (and perhaps mildly suspicious) coincidence when considered alongside the fortuitous finding of the vault.

The Order is called in the Fama "The Fraternity of the Most Laudable Order of the Rosy Cross". Its members did not wear any special habit or dress, healed the sick and took no money for it and generally mixed with the population of the country in which they found themselves. As the group spent a long period writing down the

things learnt by Christian Rosenkreuz on his travels, one can assume there was a substantial body of knowledge to the shared and, as the aims of the Society appear limited, it would appear that we are still not being told the whole truth in the Fama.

In looking at the question of secrecy, before we dismiss the idea too lightly, we should remember that the sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries were dangerous times for any unconventional or less than orthodox philosophical or religious ideas, particularly within areas where the Inquisition could reach to impose orthodoxy in its own very unpleasant ways. A Fraternity like the one under discussion here would have to be extremely careful in avoiding persecution: the course of events surrounding the discoveries and teachings of Gallileo are warning enough.

### **What About the Years from 1614 to the Start of the Written History of the SRIA?**

The founding of Soc.'. Ros.'. and the years between the Manifestos and the SRIA are confused and confusing. If you have been tempted to read The Rosicrucians by McIntosh apart from the short extracts we have asked you to study from time to time, you will already be aware of this.

Paul Case (mentioned earlier) writes that the Rosicrucian Order is a body of knowledge rather than a direct physical entity. His book The True and Invisible Rosicrucian Order claims secrecy is more a matter that one Rosicrucian can recognise another but that there is no continuous order. He says:

"The Order is designated as being invisible by the manifestos themselves. It does not come into corporate form before the world, because by its very nature it cannot. True Rosicrucians know one another nevertheless. Their means of recognition cannot be counterfeited nor betrayed, for these tokens are more subtle than the signs and passwords of ordinary secret societies

...To say this is, of course, to repudiate any and all pretensions of societies claiming to be direct historical successors to the authors of the original Rosicrucian manifestos." <sup>1</sup>

This is one understanding of events, though it is somewhat challenged by tantalizing snatches of information emerging during those intervening years. The Grades used by the SRIA from the outset of its historical existence (and later by other Rosicrucian and similar occult bodies such as the Golden Dawn) are first mentioned in 1767. They are clearly linked to the sephiroth of the Kabbalah and are, with the exception of calling the Zelator the Junior, identical with our own.

We do not, incidentally, recommend you to read Paul Cases book (not yet, anyway) because it difficult, full of gematria, which loses the reader at times in its intricacies, and has obscure teachings of each grade based on the Tarot, and not entirely capable of being understood without reading two other books of his. It begins with the full text of the Fama and the Confessio. You will receive facsimile copies of the first English translation, along with a commentary when you are initiated into Adeptus Minor (Grade V), which gives you an indication of the book's difficulty. However, details are given below, should you wish to read it.

### **Meditation and Study**

#### **Reading**

Read The Rosicrucians: The History, Mythology and Rituals of an Esoteric Order by Christopher McIntosh, pp 69 (from " an even more important textbook ...to the end of the Chapter on p 75.

Those of you who have already joined the SRIA will recognize one or two phrases that are still used, and several writers mentioned appear in the Practicus lecture.

#### **Meditation Topics**

We would like you to use a couple of the images from the Tarot. Ideally buy a pack of Waite Rider cards if you haven't got one. If you rebel against spending your money in this way go for a book with good strongly presented, interesting colour illustrations and do colour photo-copies of a couple of them. Choose any of the images from the Major Arcana (Trumps): as you're not studying them as cards, it doesn't matter which. In the end, any interesting, evocative picture will do.

Sit comfortably in a straight-backed chair, feet firmly on the floor. Take deep, steady breaths and study your card (or picture) in every detail. Close your eyes for a few seconds and try to see the picture in your mind's eye. Open your eyes and see whether the remembered detail was correct.

The advantage of doing this exercise with cards from the Waite-Rider pack are that the designs are archetypal. The drawings were by the artist Pamela Coleman-Smith on the instructions of the great esotericist, scholar and author A.E. Waite.

Keep repeating the exercise for about 10 minutes and attempt it every day for a week, aiming to hold the picture in your imagination longer and more clearly each time.

### **Diary**

Write up in your diary a record of how you are progressing. As before, you are both judge and record keeper, and no one will yet see anything you write. However, you should now become stricter with yourself and make an entry every day, preferably at about the same time each day.

### **Topics for Contemplation**

1. Do you think the story of Christian Rosenkreuz was likely to be:

- Entirely or largely true?
- An amalgam of events involving different individuals but largely a true story?
- An allegory as Paul Case says?
- A complete fiction?

Be aware that whole books have been written on the subject by writers who take up a variety of positions. All we are asking you to do is to look at the story critically and make up your own mind tentatively.

2. If the story is an allegory, where has the teaching come from?

3. Do you think there is a more-or-less continuous Order, bearing in mind the similarity of the 1767 document to present thinking and ritual?

-More-

## **THE SEVEN STEPS OF WISDOM – STEP 5**

This step might well cause some of you to stumble, because it looks in rather more detail at how science and esotericism are moving closer together. We can't avoid talking about some things which will be challenging to those brought up in the materialistic science surrounding all mainstream thought in the 20<sup>th</sup> century and still accepted by a majority in the first decade of the new century.

### **Most Scientists would find Esoteric Ideas Totally Unacceptable**

Probably. A majority of scientists outside the field of quantum physics react to the discoveries of scientists working within the scope of the subject by assuming (without justification) that quantum behavior only applies to sub atomic particles and that 'orthodox' physics applies to everything else. Biologists and biochemists react by assuming (against a growing body of evidence) that quantum behavior only applies to lifeless matter. Mainstream science generally ignores evidence that doesn't fit with the materialistic version of reality, which we inherited. Do you? (Ignore or look askance at evidence that challenges your existing mindset) The evidence gathered over the last 20 – 30 years is vast and growing.

### **Prediction and Mind Over Matter**

In 1965 an aircraft engineer called Helmut Schmidt, originally German from Cologne but by then employed by the aircraft manufacturer Boeing in the USA, designed a machine which used the decaying of radio-active strontium 90 (about the most random thing in the universe) to light at random one of four lights in turn. Individuals who appeared to be (or claimed to be) psychic were invited to both predict which light would light up next and, in other tests, to try and cause a particular light to light up next. The results were statistically highly significant – psychics could do it!.

In the early 1970s Schmidt's machines and experimental data were taken up by a student at Princeton University doing some postgraduate work. Interested in her results, Robert Jahn, the Dean of the Engineering Faculty, set out to test whether these results could be reproduced on an even wider scale, using people who were not psychic. He set up the Princeton Engineering Anomalies Research (PEAR) mentioned in Step 4. This is a highly scientific study, which has accumulated evidence for more than 18 years in millions of statistically significant runs of a series of machines set to randomly generate 0s and 1s (those of you who are IT literate will see that this is a computerized version of tossing a coin). Participants were asked to do runs producing more 1s than 0s, runs producing more 0s than 1s and control runs when they did neither. The results show that:

- a. Most people can do it, even those who unaware that they have the skill. The only exceptions seem to be a few of those who are convinced that the possibility does not exist;
- b. While two randomly matched pairs show no particular improvement over the scores they achieve alone, bonded couples working together can achieve more than either one on their own.
- c. That men perform better when concentrating only on the task in hand but women do better when doing something else as well.

With respect to (b) Recall the biblical phrase "whenever 2 or 3 are gathered in my name..."? This supports the centuries-old occult idea that a group can achieve more power than an individual working alone! We are reminded of one of those who wrote this course going to a week-long management course at Bristol University. They were given questions to answer and then asked to answer them in groups of six. When the questions were marked the groups all scored higher than the individuals.

### **OK – Scientific Proof: What does the SRIA say?**

Unfortunately, a significant proportion of members of the SRIA either assume a conventional doubt of the existence of such powers or simply are uninterested (or both.) A majority of those members who know these psychic skills from personal experience tend to be unaware of the extent to which such things have been proved. There have been attempts to experiment from time to time in small groups within the SRIA, but it is a difficult business to design an experiment which is interesting, rigorous, doesn't take too long and isn't boring.



One interesting trial carried out within the SRIA involved a test of the claims made for quartz crystals. As you will know they are widely used in clocks and watches because they vibrate with absolute reliability (32,000 times a second) when a small electric charge is passed through them. Quartz crystals are also used in piezoelectricity, because the reverse is also true: if you put them under pressure you generate enough electricity to get a spark.

Other powers are claimed, such as helping plants to grow. A few years ago we bought some potted plants and set them up in the library at our headquarters in Stansfield Hall, the pots clearly numbered 1, 2, 3... etc. Peter Dudley, the then Secretary of the Met. Study Group buried a quartz crystal in one pot, wrote down a note of which pot had the crystal, sealed the note in an envelope and gave it to the then Senior Substitute Magus, Andrew Stephenson. For rather more than three months the plants were treated equally as to watering, sunlight etc. At the end of 3 months, Study Group members all said which pot they thought had the quartz crystal, on the basis of which plant was healthiest. It was winter and Stansfield Hall was too cold and too deficient in light for houseplants to do well. One plant died, the rest were scruffy specimens – except for the one with the crystal. Last we heard (about a year ago), one of the Study Group still had it.

The experiment was on too small a scale to be scientific, the more materialistic members of the Society are uninterested (partly because it would upset their materialism) and most of the rest of the Society has never heard of that or several other experiments.

### **So What has the Rest of the Western Mystery Tradition to Say?**

Very little really. Most scientists find excuses not to look closely at the evidence and the esoteric fraternity tends towards the view that 'We know that (or we believe that) anyway, so what is the interest?'

It is interesting to read from the writings of Rev Anne Davis (a former head of Builders of the Adytum) from more than thirty years ago. [The quote is from a private BOTA communication, but the two quotes are very short and used only to make a point, so we're sure they won't mind]:

"In essence, subconsciousness is the universal substance in which we move and have our being. Inasmuch as it is the Universal Substance ... it actually contains the underlying pattern for that self-conscious livingness which we discussed ... "

and

"... Subconsciousness, then, cannot be said to be something separate and particular to any one person. It is a universal fluidic flow, and it is this part of consciousness that we must shape in order to experience self-conscious [ness]."

Compare that with Lynn McTaggart writing of the 'zero point field':

"As the pioneers of quantum physics peered into the very heart of matter, they were astounded at what they saw. The tiniest bits of matter weren't even matter, as we know it, not even a set something, but sometimes one thing, sometimes something quite different. And even stranger, they were often many possible things at the same time. But most significantly, these subatomic particles had no meaning in isolation, but only in relationship with everything else. At its most elemental, matter couldn't be chopped up into self-contained little units, but was completely indivisible. You could only understand the universe as a dynamic web of interconnection."

and

"Some [quantum] scientists went so far as to suggest that all of our higher cognitive process result from an interaction with the Zero Point Field ... If living things boil down to charged particles interacting with a field and sending out and receiving and sending out quantum, where did we end and the rest of the world begin? Where was consciousness – encased inside our bodies or out there in The Field? Indeed, there was no more 'out there' if we and the rest of the world were so intrinsically interconnected.

It was this interconnectedness that John Dunne sensed when he wrote:

"No man is an island, entire of itself; every man is a piece of the continent, a part of the main. If a clod be washed away by the sea, Europe is the less, as well as if a promontory were, as well as if a

manor of thy friend's or of thine own were. Any man's death diminishes me ... therefore never send to know for whom the bell tolls: it tolls for thee."

The 'bell' is the funeral bell. Dunne was a Church of England cleric, a metaphysical poet and something of a mystic, rather than having an interest in the esoteric and the occult, but he shows an awareness of what all mystics have always known instinctively – that the universe is an undivided whole and that materialist science was wrong about dividing it into ever smaller particles. The material universe is an illusion.

### **What do you mean About the Material Universe being an Illusion?**

If a single atom were the size of a football stadium – say, Anfield or Old Trafford – or of St Paul's cathedral, the nucleus, which is the largest part would be smaller than a football – more like a tennis ball or a golf ball – and the smaller sub-atomic particles would be smaller than the studs on Wayne Rooney's boots or a small fly. The atom is mostly empty space yet that atom gives the illusion of being solid (or liquid or gas, of course) because the nucleus is vibrating so fast it fills the space. Physics measures the height and width and depth of the illusion. Physics weighs the illusion. Physics measures the melting point of the illusion or the temperature at which the illusion bursts into flames and converts into some other form of energy or the pressure of the illusion ... but physics can tell us nothing about the reality, only about the illusion.

When we want to study the reality we need traditional esoteric wisdom, to which quantum physics is moving ever closer and which more and more experimental data is confirming.

### **Meditation and Study**

#### **Reading**

We have suggested three titles so far, and asked you to read specific extracts of some of them. To recap they are:

*The Rosicrucians* by Christopher McIntosh; Samuel Weiser; 1997

*The Field* by Lynn McTaggett;; Element; 2003

*The Holographic Universe* by Michael Talbot; Harper Collins; 1996

*The Tao of Physics* by Fritjof Capra

If you're a reader you've probably read these already: if you're not you may not have acquired any of them yet! If you have decided already that the SRIA is for you, you might like to look at a couple of the books suggested by Director General of Studies of the SRIA, John Paternoster, in his notes for the Zelator: Try:

*The Rosicrucian Enlightenment* by Frances Yates

*Qabalah* by Joihn Bonner

#### **Meditation Topics**

The Golden Dawn required members of the Order to make their own magical tools and the present day Order has the same requirement. This is because the time and thought devoted to the work pays an important part in imbuing them with power, and several esoteric orders require you to draw and/or colour various images. It is a fact that doing something practical enhances learning and understanding.

We would like you to print out this black and white Kabbalistic Tree of Life and then colour it in and add the names. This will stand you in good stead and make an understanding easier at the appropriate time.

You could copy it into another file and colour it with your favourite computer printer programme,

Colour the Spheres (Sephiroth) Write in the Names And English Names

1. White Kether Crown
2. Grey Chochmah Wisdom
3. Indigo Binah Understanding
4. Blue Chesed Mercy
5. Red Geburah Justice
6. Yellow Tiphareth Beauty
7. Green Netzach Victory
8. Orange Hod Splendour
9. Violet Yesod Foundation
10. Russet/Olive/Citrine/Black Malhuth Kingdom

Continue with the daily visualization exercises of Step 4 – next Step we'll ask you to do something which will assume you've had a little practice in visualization.

### **Diary**

Record your progress in your diary. Include mention of the time you did your visualization, reading and other study and any striking results.

### **Questions for contemplation**

1. Why did John Dunne (like other mystics and esotericists) feel that 'No man is an island'?
2. What is the point of colouring in a labeling the Tree of Life?
3. Do you agree that the material universe is an illusion? What are some of the implications of this? Write some of them down in your diary, so that you can refer back to them later and see whether your views have changed.
4. How do you react to the evidence mentioned at the beginning of this Step (or set out in The Field). How do mainstream scientists and mainstream non-scientific thinkers react. How do reactions differ?

-More-

## **THE SEVEN STEPS OF WISDOM – STEP 6**

It is time to look more closely at the Rosicrucian path and see whether it is right for you. We can assume that, as a Mason, you believe in a supreme being, though the name and circumstances of worship might vary. If you're not already a member of the Society, you could quite well be a Jew, a Moslem, a Hindu, a Sikh or a follower of any of the great religions. The obligation Masons take refers only to a neutral title applicable to any Divine Being – the "Great Architect of the Universe", and a Mason would take that obligation on whatever Book of Holy Scriptures is appropriate to his religion – Christians on the Bible, Moslems on the Quor'an, etc.

At one time in the United Kingdom the vast majority of people belonged, more or less actively, to one Christian denomination or another and knew the main points of the Bible stories well. This is no longer true: a rapidly growing minority belongs to other religions and the majority of the rest practice no religion at all on a regular basis. The odds are that you do not go to church regularly ... do you belong in a Christian Society like the SRIA and, if you are a practicing Christian, are you going to be comfortable with the esoteric ideas the Society incorporates?

### **The Work of the Devil?**

The Chief Adept of one of our Provinces introduced the idea of a guided meditation based on the Tree of Life and the Paths upon it at every College in his Province whenever he attended a College meeting.

A father and son, practicing Christians, took exception to this and resigned from the SRIA. Now the question is not whether such a meditation is appropriate for everybody at every meeting – we would question that, though not on religious grounds – but whether the father & son were right, as Christians, to take exception to the Tree of Life and paths (and Tarot images connected with them.)

Make no mistake: each one of us is entitled to take whatever path back to the Divine Source is appropriate to him (or her). The question is much more one of whether they should ever have walked the Rosicrucian path as fratres of this Society. (Note that, when this paragraph was read over by non-members, it was thought to read as the SRIA rejecting them: the reverse is true - that they were right to reject the SRIA, but should have done so before.) We can think of one or two fratres whose Christian beliefs seem to hold a potential conflict of conscience for them, and we know the odd Masonic brother who thinks we dabble in things no good Christian should.

Be assured: Rosicrucians are Christians who seek to return to the divine source and (if you are not yet a member) you will be required to read and sign a declaration that you accept the 'Trinitarian Christian Faith' before you can be admitted. Within that broad declaration, however, there is a wide spread of belief from mainstream orthodoxy, through mysticism to a strong Gnostic element.

### **What Denomination is the SRIA?**

We have said several times that the SRIA holds no prescriptive dogma, though the Rosicrucian Manifestos appear to have come out of the reformation in Germany and at least one was probably written by a Lutheran pastor. However, if the manifestos are to be believed, the Order dates back to pre-reformation times. We know of several members of the Salvation Army in the Society, several Greek Orthodox members, at least one Roman Catholic and the Supreme Magus plays the organ in his Parish Church. Some provinces hold annual church services and, as has been said elsewhere, a majority of members would call themselves 'Christian' without being regular worshippers at any particular church and a variety of views are held within the SRIA.

### **So Why Have a Rosicrucian Order if You're All Christians?**

We live in secular world. It's easy to see why we need such an organization now: the much more interesting question is why we needed it in the 15<sup>th</sup>, 16<sup>th</sup>, 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> centuries. The probable answer has changed over the centuries, or some of the *raison d'être* of the SRIA has changed.

Initially, the evidence would suggest, there was a significant body of knowledge, likely to be misunderstood if it was simply disseminated. Later a significant part of any reason was centred around resistance to the growth of a materialistic science that excluded any spiritual element and tried explain the universe as a machine.

We have seen that quantum physics is supporting many of the esoteric ideas which materialist science thought absurd. Rosicrucian and other esoteric orders have kept the Western Mystery Tradition alive through the materialistic centuries and we should rejoice in this fact and welcome the discoveries of quantum physics and those described in *The Field* and other books.

### **Why Bring the Myth of Christian Rosenkreuz into Christianity?**

What is a myth? A myth is a story made up to explain a feature of existence or the environment. It may be entirely and consciously allegorical but is sometimes an unsubstantiated oral tradition with truth at its root.

The Christmas story as generally told may be a genuine oral tradition but is more likely to be an allegory at least in part. There are four gospels recounting the life of Jesus – Matthew, Mark, Luke and John. Mark and John don't mention his birth at all and Matthew only says Jesus was born in Bethlehem without going into details. Luke comes nearest to the traditional story, saying that Jesus was laid in a manger because there was 'no room' at the 'inn'. The word translated 'inn' could equally well be translated 'house' and the words translated 'no room' could equally well be translated "no provision". A wooden manger was often scrubbed out and used as a cot if there wasn't anything else, so we could have a situation where there wasn't a crib in the house so they brought in a manger. Shepherds are mentioned as coming to see the baby, but there is no mention of an ox or an ass and the shepherds only went to the 'place where the baby was laid'. The same is true of the three wise men. Nowhere is the any mention of a stable.

This, we stress, is not to say that the oral tradition is untrue, nor is it to say that the message implicit in the Christmas story is untrue either, or that it depends on the truth of the oral tradition to make it true. Like the story of Christian Rosenkreuz, the meaning of the Christmas story is true, whether the story itself is true or not – one has only to look beneath the commercialism to see the truth!

### **Meditation & Study**

#### **Reading**

We would like you to look at a copy of the New Testament and read the opening Chapter of the gospels of Matthew, Mark, Luke and John, just that you know what we're talking about and so that you can form your own opinion of our remarks. Knowledge is power (as is said in the Zelator ritual) so don't let anyone tell you what to believe.

#### **Diary**

You should continue to record your thoughts, the times you spent reading and meditating etc. On this occasion you should indicate which of the study topics you chose, whether you found it (and the choice) useful, etc.

### **Meditation Topics**

There follow several choices of meditation topic. We want you to spend day 1 considering which of these topics you want to try and doing any required preliminary work. The remaining six days you should spend on the exercises themselves. If you decide you have made the wrong choice, change, but record the fact and your reasons.

#### **Choice 1: Extension of Step 4 – The Tarot**

Exactly as described in Step 4, but choose 6 different cards from the major arcane (trumps) to study and visualize each night.

**Choice 2: Psycho-Kinetics – the ‘Sevens’ Test with Dice**

This will test your psycho-kinetic ability. Take 2 dice and a shaker. The aim is to make the total score for two dice faces together come up as seven: 1 + 6; 2 + 5; 3 + 4; 4 + 3; 5 + 2; 6 + 1. There is always one low face and one high face so that the effect of bias is almost completely eliminated.

1 Throw the dice together from the cup while concentrating on the two dice totaling seven. Do this at least 50 times and preferably 100 times.

2 Record the scores on the two faces separately, and record the combined total in a separate column.

The odds against a 7 total in any one throw are 5 – 1, so you would expect 6 in 36 by chance. Look at your scores on the table below:

Positive Psi	36 Throws	48 Throws	60 Throws	72 Throws
Excellent	14+	17+	21+	23+
Good	13	16	18-20	21,22
Some	11,12	14,15	17	20
No Psi Effect				
Some	1	2	4	5,6
Good	0	0	2,3	3,4
Excellent		0	1,0	2-
Negative Psi				

If you find after 72 throws that you have a ‘No Psi Effect’ result you can always do further runs if you are interested, but we recommend that you do NOT do a repetitive exercise again without a significant break, since the worst enemy of a psychic skill is boredom and a tired brain.

**Choice 3: Extension of Step 5 – The Paths on the Tree**

Print out again the black and white Tree of Life sent as part of Step 5 and colour the paths in accordance with the numbers shown below.

1. Yellow
2. Yellow
3. Blue
4. Green
5. Red
6. Red-Orange

7. Orange
8. Orange-Yellow
9. Yellow
10. Yellow-Green
11. Violet
12. Green
13. Blue
14. Blue-Green
15. Blue
16. Blue-Violet
17. Red
18. Violet
19. Violet-Red
20. Orange
21. Red
22. Blue-Violet

The explanation as to how these colours are arrived at is involved and may be touched on at a much later stage, but the arrangement is that used by the Golden Dawn and in some other Rosicrucian societies.

**Choice 4: An extension of Step 2 – A Creative Thinking Exercise.**

If you have a limited time slot to consider all possible uses of a glass bottle, how many alternative uses to the obvious one of ‘container for liquid’ can you come up with? Possibly, amongst others: Molotov cocktails; holding a firework (a rocket); part fill several bottles and blow across the tops to make musical notes ... and so on.

Now consider these items:

A scaffold pole Cotton Wool

A length of rope An empty tin can

A CD A shopping trolley

**Choice 5: Simple Clairvoyance with a Pack of Cards**

1. Take a pack of ordinary playing cards and shuffle them
2. Take the top 10 cards (still face down) and put the rest aside for the moment.
3. Try to guess the colour of the ten cards. Put those you think red in a pile on the right and those you think black in a pile on the left.
4. When you have finished turn the cards over. Score reds in the right hand pile and black in the left hand pile as correct. Make a note of the score.
5. Return the 10 cards to the pack, shuffle and repeat.

Total Number of guesses \_\_\_\_\_

Number Correct \_\_\_\_\_

Look up on the table below:

Positive Psi	100 guesses	200 guesses	500 guesses
Excellent	68+	124+	288+
Good	64-67	119-123	279-287
Some	61-63	115-188	273-279
No Psi Effect			
Some	37-39	82-83	222-227
Good	33-36	77-81	213-221
Excellent	32-	76-	212-
Negative Psi			

Note that Choices 2 and 5 are adapted from *Are You Psychic*" by Hans Eysenk and Carl Sargent; Prion; 1996

### **Questions for Contemplation**

After the next Step, we will be asking you to send us your thoughts on the some questions. This week you should record your thoughts in your diary, for your eyes only.

1. Do you think anything in the esoteric interests of the SRIA is 'Unchristian'?
2. Do you agree with us (and with the writer of this 6<sup>th</sup> Step) that it is unimportant whether the oral tradition surrounding the birth of Jesus is true, and that truth about the meaning of Christmas is not dependent on factual truth of the story?
3. Think of the story of the death of Hiram Abiff from the same point of view: is the truth of the meaning of that story also independent of the truth of the story itself.
4. Like the Christmas story and the Christian Rosenkreuz story, it might be factually correct. How do you rate all three stories? True? Partly true? Allegory? Myth?

-More-



## **THE SEVEN STEPS OF WISDOM – STEP 7**

This is the last of the Seven Steps of Wisdom – does that mean that you are now wise! Well, not really. If you are already "wise" the Seven Steps are unlikely (in themselves) to make you any wiser. If you are not "wise" they just represent a few Steps in one possibly right direction.

If you cast your mind back to the First Step, we said that one of the purposes was to give the enquirer enough of an understanding of Rosicrucianism in general or the SRIA in particular to decide whether this is a path you wish to explore. A second purpose we mentioned was to give the new Zelator a clear idea what he had joined.

A third possible motive for taking this short course, mentioned in passing was "mere curiosity". A decision of the High Council and the Supreme Magus would be needed for the SRIA as a whole to offer any possible further arrangements for those not Master Masons in good standing with the United Grand Lodge of England or a Grand Lodge recognized by UGLE, and living within traveling distance of a working College of the society. This will be discussed in more detail below.

### **Master Masons in Good Standing who Accept the Trinitarian Christian Faith**

Only you can decide what "accept" means and whether you are interested in joining the SRIA. If you are, then the following list of Provinces and Colleges will tell you whether there is a College within traveling distance.

#### **England & Wales**

Province College No College Name Location

Greater London

1 Metropolitan College Central London

13 London College of Adepts "

24 Thomas Linacre College Croydon

Home Counties

31 Thomas a Becket College Wokingham

62 Robert E. Rowland College Harrow

Eastern Counties

15 William Semken College Halstead, Essex

22 Michael Penrose College Chingford, Essex

40 Renaissance College Harlow, Essex

42 Hamon le Strange College Thetford, Norfolk

60 Sir Thomas More College Wickford, Essex

East Midlands

8 Hallamshire College Sheffield

23 John Dee College Retford, Notts

36 St Anselm College Alfreton, Derbys

45 Alan G. Davies College Sleaford, Lincs

North Eastern Counties

2 York College York

4 Newcastle College Newcastle upon Tyne  
6 Woodman College Halifax  
16 St John of Beverley College Beverley  
25 Thomas B. Whytehead College Castleford  
North Western Counties  
9 Lancashire College Chorlton cum Hardy  
53 Lord Kenlis College Garstang, Lancs  
55 Altiora Petimus College Alston, Cumbria  
67 Millenium College Darwen, Lancs  
South East England  
11 William Wynn Westcott Brighton  
48 Norman Stamford College Sutton, Surrey  
51 William Harvey College Paddock Wood, Kent  
61 St Augustine College Whitstable, Kent  
South Midlands & 10 Birmingham & Midland Birmingham  
South Wales  
26 Pythagoras College Bromsgrove, Worcs  
38 Severn College Gloucester  
56 Guy's Cliffe College Guy's Cliffe, Warwicks  
65 Aventius College Brigidend, South Wales  
South West Counties  
21 The Holy Grail College Saltash, Cornwall  
27 Paracelsus College Yatton, Somerset  
33 Corpus Christi College Torquay, Devon  
46 St Piran College Perranporth, Cornwall  
70 Blaise Pascal College Tiverton, Devon  
Southern Counties  
7 Robert Fludd College Andover, Hant  
19 Elias Ashmole College Cosham, Hants  
30 St Boniface College Ventnor, I o W  
43 Kryptos College Calne, Wilts  
Western Counties & 12 Mersey College Warringgton  
North Wales  
34 Tamworth Castle College Tamworth  
58 Bishop Wilkins College Chester  
66 Ckwyd College Buckey, Flintshire

71 Trevor Saxby College Macclesfield

**Province of France**

28 Bernard de Clairvaux College Paris

49 Montjoie St Denis College Marley-le-Roi

**Netherlands**

Province of the 54

The Netherland College Amersterdam

Netherlands 63 Hermes College Leiden

**Australia**

Victoria

3 Demiurgus College Melbourne

14 Thomas Vaughan College Victoria

29 Francis Bacon College Melbourne

52 Aquinas College Geelong, Victoria

59 Alan Spencer Williams College Belgrave, Victoria

64 St Christopher College Victoria

Queensland

18 Eugenius Philalethes College Brisbane

Western Australia

41 Sanctum Testamentum College Perth

South Australia

35 Albertus Magnus College Adelaide

**New Zealand**

Province of New 5 Christchurch College Christchurch

Zealand 50 Ashmolean College Auckland, NZ

57 Sirius College Petone, NZ

68 Felkin College Hawke's Bay, NZ

**Canada**

Ontario East 17 Michael Mair College Aylmer, Ontario

47 Mount Abiegnos College Chatham, Ontario

Ontario West 20 Toronto College Etobicoke, Ontario

37 Rosa Reviviscima College Ottawa

Prairie Provinces 32 Lux in Occident College Saskatoon

44 Aurora Borealis College Edmonton, Alberta

Pacific North West 39 Lumen Pacificae College Victoria, B. Columbia

69 Lmen Terrestris College Vancouver, B. Col'bia

### **Mentors**

It has been suggested that some of you might like a "mentor" – a particular and named "virtual friend" among the more experienced Adepts of the SRIA – to whom you can address problems or queries. An opportunity to express an interest in this facility has been included in the Questions for Your Response section at the end.

### **No College Near You or Not Eligible to Join?**

Wording uncertain – what do we offer? Should include at least the list below and a booklist. Possibly also a mentor. Maybe the suggestion of an approach to B.'O.'T.'A.' or the S.'I.'L.' .... ?

### **Meditation & Study**

#### **Meditation**

Consider the last 6 weeks and your objects and priorities. Have they changed in any way? Are you any closer to reaching them? Can you visualize – see clearly in your minds eye – what achievement of your goals in life would mean?

Spend this week "seeing" yourself succeeding and in contemplating the question set out below.

### **Diary**

Keep your diary up to date and record in it your answers to the questions below.

### **Questions for Contemplation and Return to the Organisers**

You should read through these questions and think about them before you attempt to answer them. Do not send them immediately on completion – review your answers at least a day later. Remember that there are almost no "right" answers – this is not a test.

You will probably be able to see from your answers where your own thoughts and inner needs are leading you: this of more value than any comments coming back from us.

[mike@mikecrowson.co.uk](mailto:mike@mikecrowson.co.uk)

[alanblackstone@hotmail.com](mailto:alanblackstone@hotmail.com)

### **Questions.**

1. Have you written down your objectives and your priorities for reaching them?
2. Has/will the SRIA help you meet those objectives, do you think? How?
3. What attracted you to this course?
4. Did you choose a Tarot trump to visualize for Step 4? What dictated that choice? If you didn't choose a card, what did you use?
5. Which task did you choose for Step 6? How did your efforts go?

6. Does the idea of a study group or the Thomas Linacre Research College (or it's communications) appeal to you? Why do you think this might be?
7. What do you consider to be the point of the SRIA.
8. After these brief studies, are you still interested in initiation into a college as a Zelator, [or in becoming an associate member of the Society and continuing the background studies as an associate Zelator?]
9. Which of the suggested books did you read? Would you like to suggest any you think might be more appropriate
10. Do you think it would help if we organized a mentor (as mentioned above)?