

RELIGION AND ART

The Chymical Wedding of Christian Rosencreuz

The Fifth Day

Next morning, waking long before the cock,
I asked my Page to show me something Hidden.
So in the ground he did a door unlock
On which the words: "He who comes down
unbidden
May find the Lady Venus, who all mortal men
doth mock,"

Were writ in copper on an iron door.
My Page then took my hand, he first proceeding,
Down a steep stairway underneath the floor,
Along a corridor, to Treasures leading,
Which no unroyal human eye had ever seen before.

The Royal Coffins had been brought from here,
A glorious vault by huge carbuncles lighted.
In midst there stood an altar or a bier,
Triangular in shape, 'neath which I sighted
The three supporting beasts, a Lion, an Eagle
and a Steer.

And these were all of gold and precious stone.
A shining vessel, bright with copper moulding,
Contained an Angel, standing all alone,
Who in his arms a living Tree was holding,
Whose fruits when ripened soon dissolved, into
the vessel thrown.



tations. This excerpt from *The Chymical Wedding of Christian Rosencreuz Anno 1459, A Modern Poetic Version*, by Jon Valentine, with "Imaginations" by Arne Salomonssen, is reprinted through the kind permission of R. S. C. Press—St. George Publications, Fair Oaks, CA.

Completed in 1603, first published in 1616 in German, The Chymical Wedding is a "spiritual diary" that presents in picture-symbols soul-events encountered by one who strives to follow the path leading to a real knowledge and experience of the spiritual world. Its author, Johann Valentine Andreae, writes both an initiation narrative and an account of striving to know the nature and activity of those forces that work behind external happenings. It is, in fact, one of the first documents to represent the modern spiritual stream of Rosicrucianism. The main "test" in this fifth or Friday sequence is in allowing the force of love to work on one without being misled by its sensory manifes-

Opening a copper doorway to a stair,
The Page then led me down to realms of umber.
From a small flame he lit a mighty flare.
"So long as all the Royal persons slumber,"
He soothed my fears, "to light this torch of
knowledge we can dare."

Here by its light a rich bed I espied,
With lovely curtains strangely decorated.
It was my Page drew one of them aside
And lifted up the coverlet well-weighted.
The Lady Venus, naked lying! I was stupefied.

Such beauty almost put me in a fit!
"When all the fruit upon my Tree most tender
Has melted"—this behind the bed was writ,
"I will awake, arise again in splendor,
And to a King give birth, who then upon the
throne shall sit."

When to the Treasury we had returned,
I saw small pyrite tapers that I nearly
For precious stones mistook, because they burned
So stilly. 'Twas the heat from these that clearly
Melted the fruit upon the Angel's tree, as
I discerned.

Then in flew little Cupid all aghast:
"Old man, you were near stumbling on my Mother!"
He locked the copper door and made it fast,
Then pricked me on the hand, as many another,
With arrow heated in the pyrite flame as he
went past.



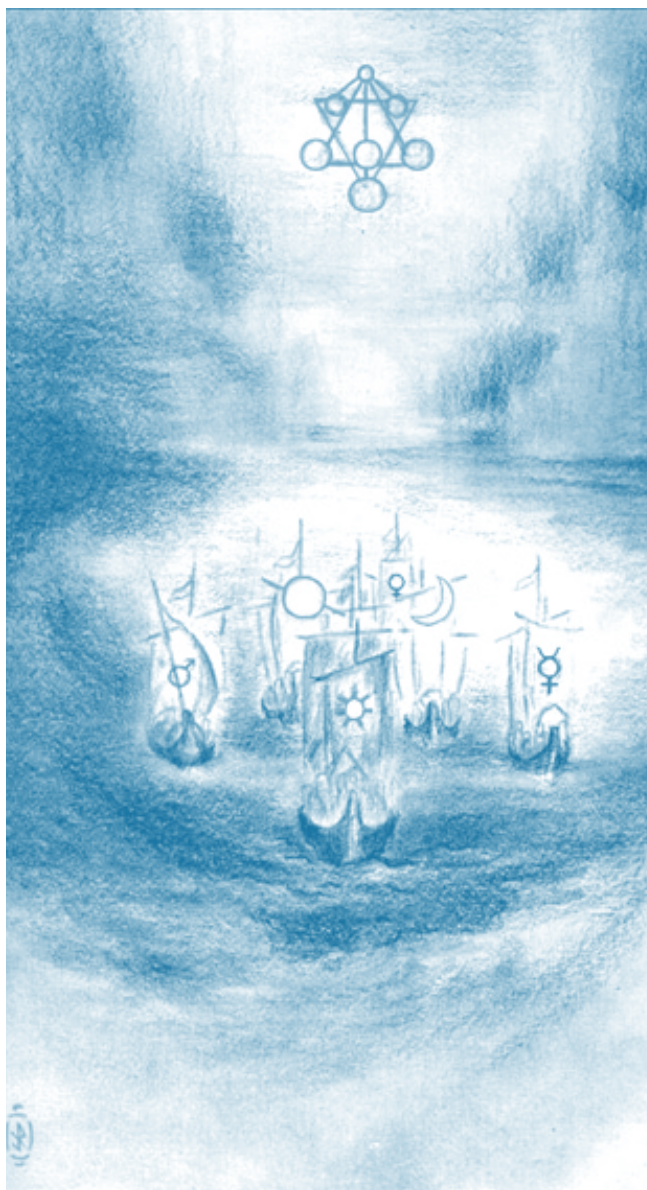
Shown at left is the crest of Johann Valentin Andreae (from Chymische Hochzeit). The reference to four red roses and a white cross in the Chymical Marriage of Christian Rosenkreutz identified Andreae as its author; for his family crest carries this design. The frontispiece to the first English translation, made by Ezechiel Foxcroft and published in 1690, reads "The Hermetic Romance: or the Chymical Wedding, written in high Dutch by Christian Rosencreutz." The text of the original translation, together with a bounty of other Rosicrucian documents, including hundreds of alchemical, cabbalistic, and Christian-occult illustrations, is contained in a volume entitled A Christian Rosenkreutz Anthology, edited by Paul Allen and available from Anthroposophic Press, R.R. 4, Box 94 A1, Hudson, New York 12534.

I joined my fellow guests now in the hall,
 Where Cupid still was teasing me and gloating.
 Our Maiden, dressed in black, now led us all
 To where six tombs (with Phoenix flags afloat)
 Contained six Coffins and a Shrine beneath a
 funeral pall.

I was the one on whom the truth could dawn,
 The others deemed the Kings to be here buried!
 But, to the Bridegroom we an oath had sworn—
 Our Maiden now reminded us—and hurried
 Us on, to sail in seven ships to sea, that very morn.

For we should travel to the island Tower
 Of Jove's Olympus, to assist in making
 Such healing medicines both sweet and sour
 As bring to life the Kings and Queens partaking.
 She then assigned us to the ships, which sailed
 within the hour.

The ships each flew a Planetary Sign.
 The first, with twelve musicians sweetly laden,
 Contained the Moor's head in its little Shrine,
 And flew a Pyramid. I and our Maiden,
 We flew a Globe, and sailed in single line
 'Twixt Mars and Mercury, to which our friends
 she did assign.



The stately ships whose flags were Moon and Sun,
 (Most secretly the Coffins in them hiding)
 Came next, and at the rear the Venus one,
 Where forty laurel-bearing Maids were riding.
 Soon Nymphs and Sirens rallied round to sing
 to us for fun.

Our Maid with care round ships of Sun and Moon
 Arranged the rest in pentagon protective.
 We much were startled by the Sirens tune.
 And even I could not remain objective.
 The head-wound of my early dream I grew
 aware of soon.

The Sirens sang:

I.

No thing on Earth is better
Than noble love, believe!
Grant God, our great Begetter
That we our friends not grieve.
The Kingly voice be singing,
And oceans wide be ringing.
Ask, and reply receive!

II.

Who led us into living? 'Twas love.
Who always grace is giving? 'Tis love.
In what way are we born, but by love?
Without what are forlorn? Without love.

Who helped us grow and flourish? 'Twas love.
Who did with food us nourish? 'Twas love.
What is to parents owing? Much love.
What makes them wise and knowing? 'Tis love.

Who helps the good succeeding? 'Tis love.
Who love to love is leading? 'Tis love
On all the world is smiling? 'Tis love.
All people reconciling? 'Tis love.

III.

So all may sing,
And echoes ring,
That love unceasing
May be increasing,
In these our Sovereigns high-hearted,
Whose life and soul, alas, were parted.
That we may live
As God shall give,
For loving's power
Made parting sour,
That we the flames of love be finding,
Once more the two together binding.

That all the pain
Of Earth's domain,
Though it take longer
In growing stronger,
Will for Eternity be freeing
The gods' divine-and-human being!



It has been proposed that the face of the author of the Chymical Wedding of Christian Rosenkreutz, as preserved on a rare print shown on the preceding page, shows a striking resemblance to that of Sir Francis Bacon, in spite of the age difference. If, as another conjecture maintains, he borrowed the name and identity of William Shakespeare, he could also have assumed, after the latter's mock funeral, the personality of Johann Valentin Andreae. The crescent moon drawn below the bust also appears upon the crest of Lord Bacon. In addition, the four letters (OMDC) in the frame at the lower right corner of the plate, by a simple Baconian cipher, can be changed into numbers whose sum gives 33—the numerical equivalent of the name Bacon. Should this proposal seem far-fetched, it is helpful to know that such practices were commonplace in Bacon's time. Max Heindel's simple explanation is that Shakespeare, Bacon, and Jacob Boehme were all influenced by the same Rosicrucian Initiate (Cosmo, p. 251).

The ships sailed on. We sighted soon the Isle
And Tower. In a pinnace came the Warden
To welcome us and guide us for a while—
A very ancient Lord. The island garden
Was guarded by a mighty wall, rectangular in style.

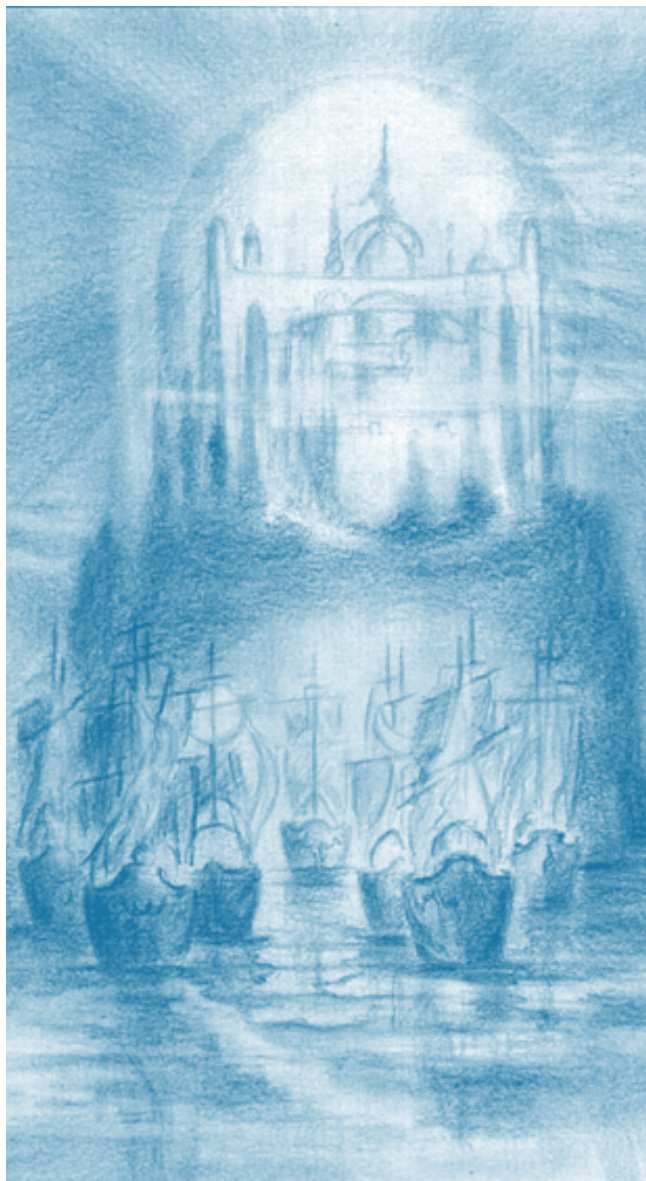
The Tower, built of seven towers round,
Was in the midst embellished by a spire,
The inside space a single large compound.
Reaching the Gate my friends did much inquire,
So I alone was left to see those Coffins reach
the ground.

Our Maiden down a winding staircase weaves
To a Laboratory, where she sets us
To crushing stones and washing herbs and leaves,
Extracting Tinctures. She not once forgets us,
And how to keep us well employed persistently
perceives.

By nightfall we completed all these tasks.
A little broth, a little wine are given;
A mattress laid for each of us who asks.
But I, who into garden paths am driven
By sleeplessness, behold the moon that in
the starlight basks.

Thus a Conjunction I alone behold
Of Planets, oh, the rarest things portending!
At midnight came those Spirits sevenfold,
Their way across the ocean to us wending.
They came to rest at last around the central
spire of gold.

But suddenly a violent wind arose,
Wild clouds around the radiant moon unfurling,
And brought my cogitations to a close.
Lulled by a silver fountain gently purling,
On the Laboratory floor I fell into a doze. □



The Rosicrucian Rose at right, from Geheime Figuren der Rosenkreuzer, is symbolic of spiritual unfoldment. The inner heart shape and the red color refer to the blood of Christ shed as substantiated love for the regeneration of Earth and its humanity. The blood is the carrier of the Ego. The five petals refer to the vital principle characteristic of the plant kingdom, the quintessence, which manifests through and organizes the four elements of the material world, signified by the cross.

