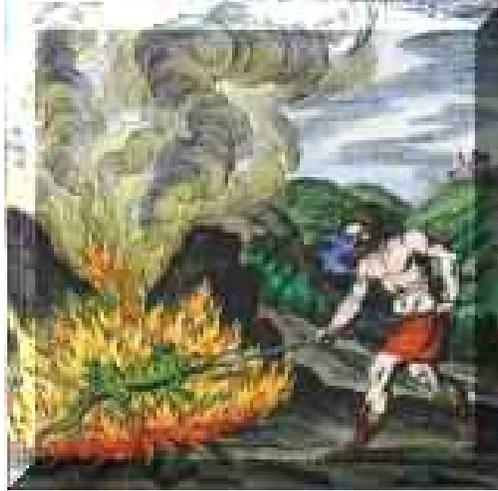


A Lucid Description of the Stone

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Chapter III The Salamander of Lisieux
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Salamander

...the philosopher's stone appears in the shape of a crystalline, diaphanous body, red in the mass, yellow after pulverization, dense and very fusible, although fixed at any temperature, and which its inner qualities render incisive, fiery, penetrating, irreducible, and incalcinable.

In addition, it is soluble in molten glass, but instantaneously volatilizes when it is projected onto molten metal. Here, in one single object, are gathered physiochemical properties which singularly separates it from a possible metallic nature and render its origin rather nebulous.

A little reflection will get us out of our difficulty. The masters of the art teach us that the goal of their labors is triple.



What they seek to realize first is the *universal Medicine* or the actual philosopher's stone. Obtained in a saline form, whether multiplied or not, it can only be used for the healing of human illnesses, preservation of health, and growth of plants. Soluble in any alcoholic liquid, its solution takes the name of *Aurum Potabile* (potable gold) (although it does not even contain the least atom of gold) because it assumes a magnificent yellow color. Its healing value and the diversity of its use in therapeutics makes it a precious auxiliary in the treatment of grave and incurable ailments.

It has no action on metals, except on gold and silver, on which it fixes itself and to which it bestows its own properties, which, consequently, become of no use for transmutation. However, if the maximum number of its multiplications is exceeded, it changes form and instead of resuming its solid crystalline state when cooling down, it remains fluid like quicksilver and definitely non-coagulable. It then shines in darkness, with a soft, red, phosphorescent light, of a weaker brightness than that of a common night light. The universal Medicine has become the *inextinguishable Light*; the light giving product of the *perpetual lamps*, which certain authors have mentioned as having been found in some ancient sepulchres. Thus radiant and liquid, the philosopher's stone is not likely, in our opinion, to be pushed farther; desiring to amplify its igneous quality would seem dangerous to us; the least that could be feared would be to volatilize it and to lose the benefit of a considerable labor.

Finally, if we ferment the solid, universal Medicine with very pure gold or silver, through direct fusion, we obtain the *Powder of Projection*, third form of the stone. It is a translucent mass, red or white according to the chosen metal, pulverizable, and appropriate only to metallic transmutation. Oriented, determined, and specific to the mineral realm, it is useless and without action in the two other kingdoms. ...It becomes clearly evident from the preceding considerations, that the philosopher's stone or universal Medicine, in spite of its undeniable metallic origin,

is not uniquely made from metallic matter. If it were otherwise, and if one had to compose it only with metals, it would remain subjected to the conditions ruling mineral nature and it would have no need to be fermented to operate transmutation. Furthermore, the fundamental axiom which teaches that *bodies have no action on bodies* would be false and paradoxical. Take the time and trouble to experiment, and you will recognize that metals have no action on other metals. Be they brought to the state of salts or ashes, or glasses, or colloids, they will always retain their nature throughout trials and, in the process of reduction, they will separate without losing their specific qualities.

Only the *metallic spirits* possess the privilege to alter, modify and *denature* metallic bodies. They are the true instigators of all the physical metamorphoses that can be observed here. But since these tenuous, extremely subtle and volatile spirits need a vehicle, an envelope capable of holding them back; since this matter must be very pure -- to allow the spirit to remain there -- and very fixed so as to prevent its volatilization; since it must remain fusible in order to promote *ingress*; since it is essential that it be absolutely resistant to reducing agents, we may easily understand that this matter cannot be searched for in the sole category of metals. That is why Basil Valentine recommends that we take the *spirit* out of the metallic *root* and Bernard of Trevisan forbids the use of metals, minerals, and their salts in the construction of the *body*. The reason for it is simple and self-explanatory. If the stone were made up of a metallic body and a spirit fixed on this body, the latter acting on the former as if it were of the same species, the whole would take the characteristic form of a metal. We could, in this case, obtain gold or silver or even an unknown metal but nothing more. This is what alchemists have always done, because they did not know the universality and the nature of the agent which they were looking for. But what we ask for, along with all the philosophers, is not the union of a metallic body with a metallic spirit, but rather the condensation, the agglomeration of this spirit into a coherent, tenacious and refractory envelope, capable of coating it, impregnating all its parts and guaranteeing it in an efficacious protection. This soul, spirit, or fire assembled, concentrated and coagulated in the purest, the most resistant and the most perfect of earthly matters, we call it our stone. And we can certify that any undertaking which does not have this spirit for guide and this matter for basis will never lead to the proposed objective.

-Fulcanelli