

ALCHEMY

The Science of Enlightenment



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Introduction

Revealed for the first time is a comprehensive overview of the Great Secret of the Ages. This information is intended to be a brief introduction to a large and profound subject. The resources listed provide reference for additional research. I may someday expand this article into a book. I honor all spiritual traditions and this article is not intended to disrespect any other tradition.

Profile

Arion Love grew up in the revolutionary sixties in California. He is an independent researcher of alchemy. He has been studying the esoteric spiritual traditions since 1967 and has been practicing meditation since 1971. He was instrumental in organizing the first International Symposium on Vedic Astrology in California in 1992. He has a Ayurvedic Science degree from the Ayurvedic Institute of America.

Cover Illustration

Materia Prima Lapidis Philosophorum – Anton Kirchweger 1781 Germany. Symbolic of the transformation of the Chaos Philosophorum Materia Prima or First Matter into the Coelum Philosophorum the perfected First Matter or Lapidis Philosophorum also known as The Philosopher's Stone.

The Gift from Heaven

According to legend, the science of spiritual liberation known as Alchemy was imparted to humanity as a gift from the gods who descended from the heavens around the time of Atlantis and Lemuria some thirteen thousand years ago. The knowledge then made its way through Sumeria now modern day Iraq, considered one of the birthplaces of civilization. The knowledge continues through India, Egypt, China, South America, Israel, Europe, and North America. This cosmic drama spans the length of recorded history up to the present day and addresses the deepest questions of life.

This gift of spiritual technology is for the purpose of embodied liberation of the human soul where by ones evolutionary soul growth is accelerated to completion within one lifetime. The illusion of individual separation gives way to unity with the transcendent through the transformation of conscious awareness and liberation of the soul from the cycle of birth and death. The transmigration of the soul from incarnation to incarnation reaches completion and fulfillment. This is also known as illumination, enlightenment, transfiguration, ascension, or God realization.

To the ancients, this science of transformation was the highest valued knowledge and the ultimate culmination of the human experience. The science was intact up until about three thousand years ago when the knowledge became fragmented and to a large degree lost. Suppression by orthodox religion forced the knowledge underground into mystery schools. It has also been referred to as the Perennial Philosophy or the Underground Stream of knowledge due to its hidden nature encoded in symbols, myth, and scripture.

Although this sacred science of the soul is known by different names, it is known and misunderstood primarily by the name of alchemy. For most, alchemy has no definition. For some, alchemy has become a term in modern culture somehow relating to chemistry or is thought of as the attempt to change the metal lead into gold largely due to the influence of Hollywood. Transforming the lead of ignorance into the gold of enlightenment can be seen as a brief interpretation of this metaphor. The soul is defined as the divine spark of the infinite that manifests through the physical body.

Alchemy, due to its inherent power, has always been a highly guarded secret science in order to protect the student from harm and to protect the sacred from misuse by the profane. During the middle ages, it was additionally hidden to protect one from persecution by orthodox religion. The hidden aspect of alchemy has contributed to the lack of definition and confusion. Alchemy continues to be shrouded in mystery, controversy, and speculation.

It is the Arabians construct of the term that has remained in the English language. The Arabians originally acquired the science from Egypt. Before Egypt was invaded and re-named by the Romans, Egypt was originally known by its people as Khemit or the Land of Khem. They are also said to be the descendants from Atlantis before the great flood. The term Khem refers to the black fertile land from which the life giving crops grow. Esoterically, Khem refers to the dark mystery of the primordial first matter from which creation manifests and the science of transformation which is alchemy. The first matter is also equated with consciousness.

Alchemy, is said to be the Great Work of nature that perfects matter, whether it is expressed as the cosmos or our soul. The term Chemistry has its root in Khem. The science of modern Chemistry evolved from the Alchemists in Europe. Alchemy was brought to Europe by the Moors in Spain originating from the Arabians. The Arabians added the prefix Al referring to Allah or God. Therefore, alchemy can be defined as the Science of God Realization. It has also been referred to as the Royal Art or the Royal Path back to God. Originally, the lineage of priests, priestesses, and royal dynasties were associated with being the custodians of this knowledge.

Godfathers of alchemy were Shiva and Angiras of India, Anu of Sumeria, Thoth or Tehuti of Egypt, and the Eight Immortals of China. Thoth was known as Hermes by the Greeks and Mercury by the Romans. The Hermetic alchemical tradition stems from Hermes. It is the Hermetic tradition that took place in medieval Europe for some three hundred years. Additionally, some feel that alchemy evolved from the Shaman's of prehistory and is the result of the ancients living close to nature and unlocking her secrets. The gods were viewed as ambassadors from the heavenly realm with the mission of helping elevate humanity. With names like the Devas, Anunnaki, Neteru, and Elohim, they are collectively known as the Shining Ones.

The Emerald Formula

The foundation of alchemical philosophy and practice is reflected in nature's elements and universal pattern of transformation. The four elements are Earth, Air, Fire, and Water. The seven phase pattern of transformation is comprised of Calcination, Dissolution, Separation, Conjunction, Fermentation, Distillation, and Coagulation. This is also known as the Emerald Formula.

The elements are considered by the ancients to be the building blocks of manifest creation. The elements are not simply the physical elements, but are very broadly defined principles of nature. The Quintessence or Fifth Element corresponds to the Divine Essence or Essence of God. This divine essence or elixir was known as Soma, Rasa, or Amrita by the East Indians, Star Fire by the Sumerians, Ambrosia by the Greeks, Manna, Christos, or Living Water by the Hebrews, and The Philosophers Stone or Universal Medicine by the Europeans.

The term Elixir stems from the Arabic Alikir and Greek Xerion which means medicine. The elements make up the human body and mind. When one masters the five elements, one becomes an Adept, Siddha, or Perfected One. This is the transformation from mortal to immortal or human to godlike superhuman known as Apotheosis.

Hermes or Mercury is known as the Messenger of the Gods and is a recurring archetype in history who restores the knowledge of Divine Union with the absolute. He is traditionally pictured holding the Caduceus Staff which symbolizes the alchemical process of spiritual liberation. The goddess Athena is the female counterpart of Mercury.

What is striking when studying the various alchemical traditions from around the world and throughout history, is that they employ the same basic pattern of transformation mirrored in the Emerald Formula. Most notably, the Emerald Formula is reflected in the oldest known source book of knowledge, the Rig Veda of India. Rig means praise and Veda means knowledge. Soma researcher David Spess points out that all the aspects found in the Soma ceremony of the Rig Veda are found in the Emerald Formula.

A primary key in understanding alchemy is to view the science from three perspectives. Internal referring to the body, mind, and consciousness. External referring to outside the body and of the Earth. Celestial or heavenly referring to the planets, stars, galaxy, and universe. Alchemy is a reflection of the phases, cycles, processes, or transformations of nature. Therefore, the symbolism of alchemy can be interpreted on an inner, earthly, and celestial level. Most importantly, the macrocosm of the outer world is mirrored in the microcosm of the human body, mind, and consciousness.

The elements and pattern of transformation reflected in the Emerald Formula comes from the legendary Emerald Tablet attributed to Hermes. The Emerald Formula is said to contain the Secret of the Universe or Blueprint of Creation and was inscribed on a tablet made of emerald stone. It is reported the tablet was once on public display in ancient Egypt and thereafter became hidden. The Emerald Formula can be seen as having an integral correlation with the emerging science of Zero Point Energy or Free Energy technology. Some say the Emerald Formula is also mirrored in the symbolism of the Tarot that reflects the Royal Path back to God. The famous phrase "As Above So Below" comes from the Emerald Formula which is reproduced as follows.

"In truth, without deceit, certain, and most veritable. That which is below corresponds to that which is above, and that which is above corresponds to that which is below, to accomplish the miracles of the one thing. And just as all things have come from this one thing, through the meditation of one mind, so do all created things originate from this one thing, through transformation.

Its father is the sun; its mother the moon. The wind carries it in its belly; its nurse is the earth. It is the origin of all, the consecration of the universe; its inherent strength is perfected, if it is turned into earth. Separate the earth from fire, the subtle from the gross, gently and with great ingenuity. It rises from earth to heaven and descends again to earth, thereby combining within itself the powers of both the above and the below.

Thus you will obtain the glory of the whole universe. All obscurity will be clear to you. This is the greatest force of all powers, because it overcomes every subtle thing and penetrates every solid thing. In this way was the universe created. From this comes many wondrous applications, because this is the pattern. Therefore am I called thrice greatest Hermes, having all three parts of the wisdom of the whole universe. Herein have I completely explained the operations of the sun."

The Great Secret

The great secret of alchemy is the Divine Marriage of opposites which gives birth to the Spirit Body of transcendence associated with liberation of the soul. The exact process of metamorphosis leading to the creation and birth of the spirit body within the physical body has long been veiled in mystery and secrecy.

The spirit body is not to be confused with ones subtle body or subtle bodies which one already has from birth. The creation and birth of the spirit body is a entirely unique process found within the various world traditions of alchemy. The spirit body has gone by names like Deva Deha, Siddha Deha, Golden Pearl, Merkaba, Rainbow Body, Diamond Body, Star Body, and Immortal Body of Light.

You can find the most revealed aspects of this process in Chinese Taoist Alchemy and East Indian Tantric Alchemy. Traditionally, the process was taught from teacher to student in a step by step series of initiations. One did not progress until first mastering each successive step. The foundation for this process can be found in traditional Yoga comprised of physical postures, breathing, and mantra sound meditation. Yoga means union with the absolute.

Depending upon the culture, the opposites were variously know as Fire and Water, Sun and Moon, Soul and Spirit, Male and Female, Mercury and Sulfur, King and Queen, Heaven and Earth, Shiva and Shakti, Kan and Li, Yin and Yang, Ka and Ba, Isis and Osiris, Soma and Agni.

Also this marriage parallels the practice of Tantric sexual union and unfoldment of the inner life energy referred to as the Kundalini. This process is also mirrored in the Jewish mystical tradition of the Kabbalah when ascending the Tree of Life which esoterically is the seven energy centers or chakras that run up the spinal column to the brain.

The alchemical marriage of opposites can be seen in the symbolism of the intersecting triangles of the Jewish Star of David, Seal of Solomon, and the Sri Yantra of India. The upward pointing triangle symbolizes the male or fire principle, and the downward pointing triangle symbolizes the female or water principle. The Bindu point in the center of the Sri Yantra symbolizes the point of transcendence. The Yantra is a graphic symbol of the Mantra. The Mantra corresponds with the Five Elements and Logos or Word of God. Also the marriage of opposites can be seen in the symbolism of the Christian Cross.

The ancient Caduceus symbol used by the modern medical establishment symbolizes on an esoteric level the alchemical process. The staff represents the spinal column which correlates with the Sushumna Nadi channel of yogic esoteric anatomy. The two ascending spirals of snakes represent the solar and lunar currents known as the ida and pingala of the kundalini life force. The spiral pattern is similar to the spirals of the human DNA. The symbolism of Jacobs Ladder or Stairway to Heaven corresponds with the Staff of Life.

The sphere at the top of the staff represents the energy center of the brain or the seventh chakra also known as the thousand petaled lotus. The Wings at the top of the staff is the culmination of the alchemical process. This represents freedom or liberation of the soul from the cycle of birth and death. One transcends the bonds of ego and bodily identification. The spirit is released from the confines of matter. Ultimately, this is the unfoldment of consciousness where by one realizes oneself to be infinite also known as self-realization.

Most esoteric symbolism and myth reflects the process of alchemical transformation in both its inner and outer aspects. Dragon symbolism is a reflection of the life force. The Uraeus headdress of the Egyptian pharaohs in which the serpent protrudes from the forehead symbolizes the unfoldment of the Kundalini. The Phoenix bird rising from the ashes represents the alchemical process of transformation, rebirth, and liberation. The Christmas Tree can be seen as a reflection of this process. Also the Biblical story of Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden although edited by orthodoxy also represents the alchemical process. The Fruit of the Tree of Life can be equated with Elixir and Apotheosis.

One of the most well know references to alchemy in the Bible is the passage attributed to Jesus in John 3, "I assure you, unless you are born again, you can never see the Kingdom of God. The truth is, no one can enter the Kingdom of God without being born of Water and the Spirit." From the esoteric perspective, this is the marriage of opposites. Spirit is synonymous with Fire and breath. The Kingdom of God is Apotheosis.

The idea of rapture, resurrection, transfiguration, ascending to heaven, and becoming an immortal is based upon this process. There are numerous stories throughout history of those who practiced alchemy becoming immortal. This relates to the development and birth of the spirit body. This is the great spiritual rebirth, enlightenment, or illumination.

Through the marriage of opposites, one becomes whole or holy, or to become born again. This can also be seen as the marriage of Soul and Spirit and an expression of the highest form of healing. It is the exact process of how to create this marriage which has always been secret. Gnosis or direct experience makes up the Gnostic tradition of Esoteric Christianity. Both Jesus and Mary Magdalene are considered to be key figures in the alchemical nature of Esoteric Christianity. The exoteric or outer rituals of orthodox religion like the Seven Holy Sacrament's, Baptism, Anointing, Christening, Consecration, Holy Water, and the Eucharist are a reflection of the esoteric or inner practice of alchemy where faith is replaced with direct experience, and death is replaced with embodied liberation. The anthropomorphic deity is transcended and the infinite is realized.

The human body is the ultimate temple or alchemical laboratory where transformation takes place. The Spirit Body developed within the physical body is the ultimate vehicle of resurrection, ascension, and transcendence. It is said that to have a human body is a extremely rare gift and there are countless souls without a body waiting to take birth. Through the body and mind, one can realize ones true self. The focus of alchemy is to accelerate the growth of the human soul within one lifetime to completion or perfection.

One overrides the process of normal evolution involving countless incarnations where the soul is led by desire and attachment to the temporal which keeps one bound to the cycle of birth and death. The experience of the phenomenal world and its associated pleasures do not give lasting happiness. Humans are programmed by nature to continually seek happiness which is essentially a search for ones true self. For most, happiness is sought outwards in temporal pleasure.

Self-realization is about turning inwards and finding eternal happiness, peace, and fulfillment. The trials, tribulations, and lessons of life reach their culmination and fulfillment in self-realization. One transcends phenomenal creation and realizes the infinite source of creation within. With this awakening of awareness, one sees all of creation as an aspect of ones self. Alchemy accelerates the process of evolution thereby allowing one to step off the wheel of birth and death. One transcends desire, duality, karma, space, and time. Ones true nature is realized which is infinite.

The Science of Mercury

The medicine of India and China has a close connection with alchemy. Some say eastern medicine originated from alchemy. Both eastern medicine and alchemy have their foundation in the five element model of creation. East Indian medicine known as Ayurveda means the Science of Life. Unique to Ayurveda is the process of bodily purification known as Panchakarma and the process of physical and mental rejuvenation known as Rasayana. This is the science of longevity and is considered the sister science of Yoga. Rasayana employs various rejuvenating ingredients of both plant and mineral origin.

An advanced form of Panchakarma and Rasayana can be seen in the process known as Kayakalpa. Kaya means body and Kalpa means transmutation. One enters into a lengthy retreat involving deep purification in preparation for the ingestion of powerful alchemical medicine. The process results in a literal rebirth of body and mind leading to an extended life span. Maharaj by Anantha Murthy documents this process. The science of Kayakalpa currently remains fairly secret.

In India today, there are two forms of alchemy also known as Rasashastra or the Science of Rasa or Mercury. One form is taught in modern Ayurvedic universities and relates to the creation of medicines for the treatment of disease. Although not available in the west, these medicines can be purchased in the pharmacies of India. The other form of alchemy is the one of legend. This is the highest form of alchemy relating to the creation of the legendary elixir Soma also known as Rasa used for Jiva Mukti. Jiva means soul and Mukti means liberation.

The alchemy of legend is found in the East Indian tradition of Tantra. One can define Tantra as the weaving or uniting of energy. Three primary and complementary activities for a Tantric alchemist revolve around Alchemical Meditation, Laboratory Work, and Tantric Sex. The divine consort and also the laboratory assistant of the Tantric alchemist is known as the Tantric Yogini. The Alchemical Body: Siddha Traditions in Medieval India by David Gordon White documents this tradition.

It is the laboratory work of Tantric alchemy where you find the secrets of creating the external elixir. The outer laboratory is composed of equipment that mirrors the internal laboratory of the body. The Atharva Veda is considered the source book for this process. Various ingredients like cinnabar, mica, salt, gemstones, gold, and flowers were used in its creation. Laboratory work revolves around the progressive purification and transformation of mercury and sulfur to create elixir.

Mercury, which is a poison in its raw form, is transformed into an elixir. There are eighteen classical steps involved in its creation. Although you can find descriptions of the process in various texts like the Rasasarva also known as the Flood of Mercury, the exact process of creating elixir still remains veiled behind symbols and secrecy. The Nath Siddhas of Northern India and the Tamil Siddhas of Southern India are descendants of this tradition. Some feel the deepest secrets of this science were transferred from India to the remote reaches of the Himalayas and Tibet.

The Mystery Unveiled

The most revealed and clear presentation of the inner alchemical meditations currently comes from the Taoist perspective. You can also find parallel meditations in Tantric alchemy plus the alchemy of the Kabbalah, however they tend not to be as well defined as the Taoist. The foundation practice in Taoist alchemy is the circulation of ones Chi or internal energy in a circle within the body. This was originally known as the Circle of Gold and has been revived in the west by Mantak Chia who refers to it as the Microcosmic Orbit meditation. Mantak Chia's student Michael Winn carries on the Taoist alchemical tradition in the west.

Besides the Microcosmic Orbit meditation, other meditations of Taoist alchemy are known as Fusion of the Five Elements, Lesser, Greater, Greatest Kan (Water) and Li (Fire), Sealing of the Five Senses, Congress of Heaven and Earth, and Union of Human and Tao. The Tao can be defined as the way of the transcendent or God realization.

The difference between Tantric alchemy and Taoist alchemy is that Tantric alchemy employs elixir created within the body through meditation and outside the body through a laboratory. Taoist alchemy only employs elixir created within the body through meditation. Taoist alchemists once attempted to employ the outer elixir, however success with its creation was not complete and it was abandoned in favor of the internal elixir. In the Taoist tradition, inner alchemy is called Nei Dan and outer alchemy is called Wai Dan. Chi Kung, Tai Chi, and Kung Fu are related to Nei Dan since they were all developed by the Taoist sages.

It is said through Taoist alchemy, one can achieve liberation within one lifetime. Through Tantric alchemy, the process of liberation appears to be greatly accelerated. This is a subject of further research. Presently, there are no public teachers of Tantric alchemy. It is the outer aspect of alchemy, namely the knowledge of elixir, which has yet to be fully revived in terms of its creation and proper application. It would appear with elixir being a very high form of energy, the ability to circulate energy internally would be a prerequisite prior to its ingestion.

The creation of elixir within the inner laboratory of the body, centers around the progressive refinement of spiritual essence through a series of meditations. Both the inner and outer creation of elixir follows the seven phase pattern of transformation which is Calcination, Dissolution, Separation, Conjunction, Fermentation, Distillation, and Coagulation.

Internally, the secret process of transformation revolves around the Naval, Heart, and Head center. The naval center relates to the solar plexus and the element of fire or Agni. The heart center is where the divine marriage of fire and water takes place through love leading to the development and birth of the spirit body. Love is the key ingredient for the divine marriage. The head center relates to the element of water or Soma.

The fuel for this process is ones life force energy. In the Indian tradition this relates to Prana (Energy), Ojas (Essence), and Tejas (Spirit). In the Chinese tradition this relates to Chi (Energy), Jing (Essence), and Shen (Spirit). These are also known as the three treasures. In this process, ones life force or kundalini energy correlates with the conservation and circulation of sexual energy. This also relates to physical longevity. The life force energy that animates ones body or creates new life is the same energy one uses in this process of alchemical transformation.

The sacrum bone at the base of the spine is also called the sacred bone in esoteric anatomy. This is where the internal energy passes up through the spine to the brain then back down to the solar plexus and sex center creating a circle of energy. The sacrum is one of the gates that energy must pass through in order to circulate freely and completely. The symbolism of the Holy Grail cup and Holy Blood can be seen to correspond with the heart and elixir.

A key secret in this alchemical process is Inversion, or the process of placing Fire beneath Water. The esoteric details of this process are found in the alchemical meditations of Taoist and Tantric alchemy. Inversion is also key to circumventing the aging process. Placing Fire beneath Water transforms sexual energy into life force energy in order to develop the soul body which develops into the immortal spirit body.

The head center is called the Crystal Palace or Heavenly Heart in Taoist alchemy and the Cave of Brahma in Tantric alchemy. The head center contains the pineal and pituitary gland which is considered male and female in polarity. The pineal corresponds with the Ajna or Third Eye chakra and the pituitary corresponds with the Sahasrara or Thousand Petaled Lotus chakra. It is said a arc or spark of energy takes place between the pineal and pituitary relating to illumination. The pineal is related to the hormone Melatonin and the pituitary is related to the hormone Serotonin. The regulation of mood is related to Serotonin.

Entheogenic substances like LSD, Psilocybin Mushrooms, MDMA Ecstasy, and DMT are a subject of study for those in the field of consciousness research. Some feel the plant Ayahuasca or Vine of the Soul used by South American Shamans may have some correlation to the famed Soma of alchemy. Recently, the discovery of Monoatomic Gold and how it may or may not relate to the elixir of alchemy has generated much controversy. Researcher Laurence Gardner covers this subject in Lost Secrets of the Sacred Ark.

It is interesting to note that the Great Pyramid of Egypt is said to have been the place of alchemical initiation. It is likely the Great Pyramid is a exoteric representation of the internal anatomy. The grand stairway relates to the spine. The King and Queens chamber relates to the pineal and pituitary. Also there is the relation to the solar plexus since Pyra means Fire and Mid means Middle, hence Pyramid meaning Middle Fire.

The advanced meditations of Taoist alchemy employs the external energy of stars to hasten the creation of the internal Spirit Body. The seven stars of Ursa Major and Polaris are aligned within the microcosm of the body. This likely has correlation with the star shafts of the Great Pyramid. It is interesting how Polaris corresponds with the Bindu or Axis of Transcendence and the seven stars corresponds with the charkas and the Seven Rishi Seers who cognized the Vedas.

Angiras, godfather of Indian alchemy is also the name of the star Alioth in Ursa Major. Polaris or the North Star is also associated with the Thalamus gland and serpent-dragon symbolism of Draco who guards the white mercurial soma elixir in mythology. The serpent is the symbol of the kundalini. Astrology, the sister science of alchemy governs the timing of alchemical operations and the delineation of karma.

The eventual birth of the Spirit Body correlates with transcendence and the aperture at the top of the skull. This is embodied liberation or liberation of the soul while still alive in the physical body. The aperture is where one is eventually able to exit and re-enter the physical body with the Spirit Body through advanced alchemical practice. It is also said that the aperture is where the soul enters at birth and exits at physical death in normal mortality. The birth of the Spirit Body and union with the Light of Heaven or Transcendent is the apex of the alchemical process.

The Nectar of the Gods

The oldest source book of knowledge on the planet is the Rig Veda of India. The word Soma means "to extract" or "press out" hence the association with elixir. Within the Rig Veda is the Ninth Mandala, an entire book devoted to Soma praising it as an elixir of enlightenment. The secret of Soma and its preparation, as well as the secret distillation of the Vedas themselves, was called the Madhavidya or the Honey Doctrine.

There has been much debate over the years as to the definition and identity of Soma since it is veiled in symbolism and metaphor in the Vedas. Internally, Soma is associated with the Bindu point of transcendence located in the head center. The symbolism of the Bindu and Soma are both associated with the Moon. The Bindu point and crescent Moon are seen at the top of the Sanskrit Om symbol of infinity.

Through advanced meditation, Soma nectar is said to drop from the Bindu down to the throat or Vishuddhi chakra where one drinks the internal nectar. The symbolism of Soma is also associated with the Fountain of Life, Dew of Heaven, and Shiva. Somasundara is another name for Shiva. The complete union of Kundalini Shakti with Soma Shiva results in Samadhi or self realization.

From the external perspective, Gordon Wasson published a book in 1969 titled Soma where he associates Soma with the poisonous mushroom Amanita muscaria of the Siberian shamans. Recently, the work of Robert Cox has associated alchemically transformed mercury with Soma. The results of Robert's laboratory research are still in development. The Pillar of Celestial Fire by Robert is a landmark in the literature of alchemy. In Indian Alchemy: Soma in the Veda, Srinivasan Kalyanaraman identifies Soma as electrum, a gold and silver compound.

Also the work of David Spess has associated the Lotus and Water Lily flower with Soma. David spent many years in India with a teacher and the source texts associated with Soma. David claims he has the information that decodes the secret process of creating Soma found in the Vedas. The information is in a series of books that he has completed, however they have yet to be published.

In *Return of the Rishi* by Deepak Chopra, reference is made to Ayurvedic herbalist Dr. Balraj Maharishi who states that the Soma plant of legend still exists although extremely rare. He claims to have seen it three times in his life. In *Search of the Medicine Buddha* by David Crow, Dr. Narendra Tiwari describes the Soma plant as having fifteen leaves and produces and sheds its leaves according to the phase of the moon.

Whether Soma is internal, external or both and whether it is comprised of mineral or plant ingredients or a combination of both is a subject of further research. It is important to recognize Soma can be defined on numerous levels of manifestation. Vedic scholar Dr. David Frawley elucidates this idea in the following exposition.

"The Vedic ritual reaches its climax in the Soma offering, in which specially prepared plant juices are offered into the sacred fire (Agni) as the drink of the Gods. But this ancient ritual reflects a deeper internal ritual or alchemy of awareness that is its real import. In exploring this process, we will discover many secrets of the practice of Yoga, including the path of Self-inquiry or Jnana Yoga.

Soma is first of all part of a great universal symbolism. Soma pervades the outer world as water in its various forms on the earth and in the sky, as the sap of plants, the vital fluids in animals, the Moon, and even the waters (vibratory field) of space. Soma exists inside ourselves as a psychological principle of feeling, love and inspiration, including our creativity that we manifest in diverse forms.

Yet beyond this, Soma is a spiritual principle, an aspect of the infinite and a key to immortality. In the state of meditation, the brain and mind naturally secrete a special type of Soma or nectar of peace and contentment, which reflects this spiritual Soma. Ultimately Soma is the bliss of all existence, the Ananda through which the universe is created and into which it must return. It is this Soma or Ananda that is the prima materia or ultimate substance behind the entire world.

However, to really understand Soma, we must also understand Agni, the fire, light or energy principle, which is its counterpart. In Vedic thought, the twin principles of Agni and Soma are behind all workings in the universe on all levels. On an outer level, they refer to the great elements of fire and water, but their inner symbolism goes much deeper. Such a twofold division of reality takes many forms like Purusha and Prakriti, Vishnu and Lakshmi, and Shiva and Shakti. Indeed, Lord Shiva, the supreme Godhead, is said to be Agni-Somatmakam or both Agni and Soma in nature. His right side is Agni in nature—fiery, harsh or masculine. His left side is Soma in nature— watery, gentle or feminine. These are the basis of his two manifestations as fierce (ghora or Agni) and gentle (saumya or Soma).

Yet even as elements, Agni and Soma are more than any outer symbolism. Agni as fire represents light (Jyoti) in the broadest sense, which includes the light of perception and the light of consciousness, not simply light as a material principle. Soma as water (Apas) is the medium on which light can be reflected, which is ultimately a quality of light itself. In this regard Soma is not only water, but the mind and ultimately, the reflective power of consciousness itself.

Soma as a cosmic power, however, is not simply watery in its nature. It has an oily quality that can nourish and sustain fire. In this regard it has been compared to ghee (ghrita) in texture. All objects that we see are like fuel for the flame of our awareness. Soma also has a sweet quality and has been compared to honey (madhu). All that we see is like a flower, from which the honey of bliss can be extracted. These properties that can sustain light and provide joy pervade all of space.

Great yogis can access them with their subtle bodies (the linga or fire body) and move at will through all the worlds, finding nourishment and delight in all that they perceive. Soma is the delight which is the counterpart of light. On the deepest level, Agni is the fire of consciousness (Chidagni) that is reflected in the Soma or water of bliss. In this regard Agni and Soma are ultimately the same, two complementary aspects of Brahman (God)."

The Treasure of Destiny

The legend of the gods descending from the heavens and imparting alchemy to humanity begins a vast trail of mysterious treasure that one can trace from Atlantis right up to the founding of America. Artifacts relating to the treasure are seen in the stories of the Emerald Tablet, the Egyptian Hall of Records, the Ark of the Covenant, and the Holy Grail.

The treasure is said to have passed from Atlantis to Egypt and then on to King Solomon's Temple in Jerusalem Israel. Other places associated with the treasure are the Himalayas, Desert Iraq, and Axum Ethiopia. King Solomon's temple is a focal point for much of this lore. King Solomon was considered to have been a master alchemist. The name Solomon is a conjunction of Sol or Sun and Mon or Moon, which is the alchemical marriage of opposites. His temple is said to have housed the Ark of the Covenant until it was hidden from invaders. Control of the site, which was King Solomon's temple, now the Dome of the Rock, factors into the current Middle East crisis and terrorism.

The crosscurrents of alchemical knowledge from the cultures of Sumeria, India, and China are said to have met in the coastal Egyptian city of Alexandria and stored in its famed Library of Alexandria. One can only speculate how much knowledge pertaining to alchemy was lost with the destruction of the library by invaders, and how this knowledge could have altered the course of history.

The Ark of the Covenant is the artifact, which appears in most myths and legends relating to this trail of treasure. Some say there may have been multiple Ark's. Where the Ark or Ark's are currently hidden, is a trail of much speculation. The Ark of the Covenant is said to have contained Manna, the alchemical elixir. Additionally, it was said to contain two tablets, the Ten Commandments and the Tablet of Destiny which some speculate to be analogous to the Emerald Tablet.

According to Laurence Gardner in *Lost Secrets of the Sacred Ark*, one of the most explosive discoveries in history was regarding Moses and the Ark of the Covenant by English archeologist Sir William Flinders Petrie in 1904. It is stated that he discovered a temple on top of Mount Sinai relating to an alchemical laboratory. The purpose of the temple laboratory was for producing elixir that was consumed by the Pharaoh's in order to develop the spirit body and expand consciousness, which was associated with a realm called the Field of the Blessed. Artifacts and news of the find were hidden and suppressed by orthodoxy.

From King Solomon's Temple, the mysterious treasure is said to have been transported by the temple guardians also known as the Knights Templar to the village of Rennes le Chateau in France. Rennes le Chateau is another focal point for this lore. In this same area of France, the mystical sect known as the Cathars were associated with this treasure. The Roman Catholic Church considered the Cathars a threat to the church and had the entire Cathar population of a half million men, women, and children exterminated, constituting the first European holocaust.

The lore of Rennes le Chateau forms the basis for the controversial 1982 book *Holy Blood Holy Grail* which inspired Dan Brown to write *The Da Vinci Code*, which has become the best selling novel of all time. The forthcoming follow up book by Dan is to be titled *The Solomon Key* which is to take place in Washington D.C and revolve around the Freemasons.

From Rennes le Chateau, the treasure ties in with the Freemasons, Rosicrucian's, and Sir Francis Bacon who some feel was the original founding father of America. The treasure then makes its way through Chartres Cathedral France, Glastonbury England, Rosslyn Chapel Scotland, Tara Hill Ireland, and Bornholm Island Denmark. Chartres Cathedral is said to have been built by the Knights Templar and that the secrets of alchemy are openly displayed on the architecture of the cathedral, although veiled in symbolism. The original builders or stone masons of the Egyptian temples are reputed to be the custodians of the secrets of the temple that relate to alchemy. The Freemasons are claimed to be the heirs to the secrets of the Egyptian temple builders.

From Europe to North America, the treasure makes its way through Oak Island Nova Scotia, Williamsburg Virginia, Washington D.C. and Sanpete Valley Utah. Some feel this mysterious treasure lies hidden in various locations awaiting future discovery like a time capsule. The term Ark is related to Arch or Bridge, so perhaps the Ark is a container of seed wisdom linking the past to the future. The Knights Templar are said to have crossed the ocean from Europe following the star of La Merica and named the new continent America one hundred years before Columbus.

Most of the founding fathers of America were Freemasons whose philosophical roots stem from alchemical Egypt. Some feel the founding fathers had a long range spiritual vision and destiny for America that was alchemical in nature. Perhaps the most important example of this is the Constitution of the United States with the precept of spiritual freedom, which ultimately fosters spiritual liberation of the soul.

Another example is the United States Capitol Dome in Washington D.C. where on top the dome is the statue of Freedom, and suspended inside the dome is a painting by Constantino Brumidi rich in alchemical symbolism titled The Apotheosis of Washington. Illustrated is Mercury, the messenger of alchemy gives a bag of gold to Robert Morris the financier of the American Revolution. Vulcan the Greek Hephaistos or Sumerian Ia, god of smith craft or alchemy is also portrayed. We also see young America wearing the liberty cap standing besides Ceres goddess of fertility holding a cornucopia.

Also we see Neptune god of the sea, and Venus goddess of love holding the Atlantic cable uniting America and Europe, opening trans Atlantic communication and reviving the idea of the New Atlantis as a place of communication. Neptune holds the trident a symbol of Atlantis. Also seen is Minerva or Athena the spear shaker with Benjamin Franklin. However, the centerpiece is the Apotheosis of George Washington, the transformation of the founding father of America into a divine being.

Esoterically, the symbolism can be seen as the embodied liberation of the human soul through the alchemical process. The seven images of the painting represent the seven transformations of alchemy reflected in the Emerald Tablet. The unfoldment of the inner life energy also known as the kundalini is symbolized by Mercury holding the caduceus staff. Athena the spear shaker symbolizes the activation of the life energy. The liberty cap worn by America symbolizes the development and birth of the inner spirit body. The capitol dome symbolizes the cranium, and the statue Freedom on top of the dome symbolizes the ascension of the spirit body. Apotheosis, the elevation of one to God realization is a vision that can be seen the founding fathers held for America.

Additionally, the Great Seal of the United States was originally designed to include the alchemical phoenix. The Eye of Infinity atop the Great Pyramid on the back of the dollar bill was placed there by president Franklin Roosevelt a Freemason. Investigative mythologist, William Henry who has made numerous breakthrough insights in the field of mythology and alchemy, has made a compelling case that Franklin Roosevelt and Adolph Hitler were both in a secret race to uncover the mysterious treasure related to the Ark of the Covenant. Movies like Raiders of the Lost Ark, Seven Years in Tibet, and Revelation touch upon this theme.

In 2003, my research led me towards an aspect of the treasure in Los Angeles. I became aware of the Bruton Vault from Victoria Jennings. Victoria was instrumental in working with Marie Hall wife of Manly Palmer Hall. Manly wrote The Secret Teachings of All Ages and was the founder of the Philosophical Research Society in Los Angeles. Also my association with Charles Lutes who was a student of Manly and the School of the Mysteries was a key interest. With my research in alchemy, I was intrigued that the Bruton Vault may have a connection to the Ark of the Covenant, Secrets of Alchemy, plus the founding and destiny of America. The contents of the vault are considered so important that it is referred to as the Seventh Seal.

According to the story, back in the thirties Marie found a book in Manly's esoteric library titled the Wither Book by George Wither. The book contained code pointing to Williamsburg Virginia and the Bruton Vault. It is speculated that the vault contains the missing chapters of New Atlantis written by Sir Francis Bacon a Rosicrucian and godfather of Freemasonry in England. Some feel New Atlantis was the inspiration and model used by the founding fathers of America for the design of America. Also it is speculated that the vault contains information relating to the Book of Thoth analogous to the Emerald Tablet.

In 1938, Marie left Los Angeles for Williamsburg to search for the vault. Although she uncovered the foundation of the Bruton Parish church supposedly leading to the vault, according to Victoria, she was stopped from further exploration by the Rockefeller family. Through Henrietta Bernstein, author of Ark of the Covenant Holy Grail, I was fortunate to have met Marie in person. I was anxious to speak with Marie about her search and secret societies. Unfortunately, due to her advanced age, she was not able to communicate any details.

Henrietta mentioned that sources indicate the contents of the vault were moved and hidden beneath the Washington Cathedral or Washington Monument. Although I was not able to uncover any solid leads pointing towards the treasure, perhaps clues will manifest as we move into the future. It was rather surreal when the movie that paralleled my research came out the following year titled National Treasure.

Some feel the original esoteric practice of alchemy has been essentially lost and replaced by exoteric rituals that simply mirror the original esoteric practice. Many feel the ideals of America have become overtaken by political power to maintain the status quo and keep the masses dependent upon the current power structure. Most conspiracies tie in with the suppression of knowledge relating to individual freedom and liberation of the soul. Many of these conspiracies revolve around Adam Weishaupt of the Bavarian Illuminati, the Skull and Bones Society at Yale University, the Bohemian Grove in California, the Bilderberg Group, the Council on Foreign Relations, and the Trilateral Commission.

At the turn of the millennium in 1999, researchers Graham Hancock and Robert Bauval were prepared to lead an expedition to unearth the legendary Hall of Records in Egypt. The Hall of Records is purported to contain the origin and history of the planet plus the knowledge of the Emerald Tablet. What could have been an explosive discovery was stopped by Zahi Hawass director of the Supreme Council of Antiquities.

What is the great mysterious treasure that has been hidden, suppressed, and sought by some of the most powerful throughout history? Everything points to the esoteric secrets found in alchemy that pertain to spiritual liberation of the human soul. This is the Treasure of Destiny that awaits discovery.

The Return of The Science of The Soul

According to the ancient calendar, the complete knowledge of spiritual soul liberation is due to return. Some feel we have entered the time of the Apocalypse. The Greek term Apocalypse means "The Lifting of the Veil." This can be seen as lifting the veil on illusion to reveal that which is true. The age of Pisces is now fading and the age of Aquarius is now dawning. The symbol for Aquarius is the water bearer who pours out the alchemical elixir of transformation.

Not only is this a change of the zodiacal age, but the beginning of an Ascending Cycle of evolution that only takes place once every thirteen thousand years according to the Vedic calendar. The Vedic calendar indicates we are in the Kali Yuga or Age of Darkness where humanity lives out of harmony with nature. This is where humanity is in the dark or unaware of our divine identity and where the material overshadows the spiritual.

The Age of Aquarius is indicated to be a Golden Age of harmony and truth within the Kali Yuga. Additionally, the Mayan calendar ends in 2012. Some feel this correlates with the alignment of the earth with the center of the galaxy in which energy from the galactic center will bring unprecedented change and transformation to earth culminating around 2030. From the perspective of the Macrocosm and Microcosm, the galactic center can be seen as the cosmic heart, and the energy emanating from the galactic center reflects the macrocosmic kundalini that will lift the energy of the entire planet.

Humanity has come far in the past one hundred years due to material technology, however this technology has also brought untold destruction to where the survival of humanity and the planet is at stake. The world with its numerous problems and having lost touch with its spiritual heritage is in urgent need of the rediscovery of spiritual technology. We have certainly reached a crucial turning point in history.

It is said that it is darkest before the dawn with a conflict between the old and the new during this transition of ages. With numerous prophecies of destruction complete with Antichrist deception, humanity has the intelligence and freewill to alter such negative projections. Although the collective karma of the people is great, a return to the ways of nature is paramount for the restoration of balance.

The rediscovery of the secrets of alchemy promise to bring forth a Spiritual Revolution. This would also bring forth a Energy Revolution since the knowledge relates to Free Energy technology. The discoveries that scientists are now making related to Quantum Physics and the Unified Field Theory correspond to the rediscovery of alchemy. Currently, the idea of enlightenment or spiritual soul liberation is not widely recognized or valued in modern culture where pursuit of the temporal and superficial overshadows fulfillment in the eternal.

We shall see how the rediscovery of this vital knowledge manifests over the coming years. We have all incarnated at this momentous point in time to witness and participate in this grand cosmic drama. The choices we all make will lay the foundation for our future destiny that holds the promise for the birth of a whole new global culture based on spiritual values. Humanity stands at the threshold of making the leap from Homo sapien to Homo Luminous. What an incredible time to be alive!

Alchemy Resources

Books

The Pillar of Celestial Fire: The Lost Science of the Ancient Seers Rediscovered - Robert Cox
Creating the Soul Body: The Sacred Science of Immortality - Robert Cox
Awaken Healing Light of the Tao - Mantak Chia
The Taoist Soul Body: Harnessing the Power of Kan and Li - Mantak Chia
The Alchemical Body: Siddha Traditions in Medieval India - David Gordon White
Soma: The Divine Hallucinogen - David L. Spess
Flowers of Ecstasy & Immortality - David L. Spess Unpublished
Soma: Plant of Immortality - David L. Spess Unpublished
The Emerald Tablet: Alchemy for Personal Transformation - Dennis William Hauck
Lost Secrets of the Sacred Ark: Amazing Revelations of the Incredible Power of Gold - Laurence Gardner
The Tao & The Tree of Life: Alchemical & Sexual Mysteries of the East & West - Eric Yudelove
The Shining Ones - Philip Gardiner & Gary Osborn
Gateway of the Gods - Craig Hines
The Philosopher's Stone: A Quest for the Secrets of Alchemy - Peter Marshall
Indian Alchemy: Soma in the Veda - Srinivasan Kalyanaraman
Kundalini Tantra - Swami Satyananda Saraswati
Devatma Shakti Kundalini - Swami Vishnu Tirtha
The Great Alchemical Work - Rubellus Petrinus
The Book of Alchemy - Francis Melville
Alchemy: The Great Secret - Andrea Aromatico
Alchemy: The Golden Art - Andrea DePascalis
The Tower of Alchemy: An Advanced Guide to the Great Work - David Goddard
The Hermetic Tradition: Symbols and Teachings of the Royal Art - Julius Evola
The Path of Alchemy - Mark Stavish
Secrets of the Alchemists - George Constable
Alchemy and Metallic Medicine in Ayurveda - Bhagwan Dash
The Wealth of Indian Alchemy & Its Medicinal Uses - B. Mukherji
Alchemical Works - Eirenaeus Philalethes
Real Alchemy: A Primer of Practical Alchemy - Robert Allen Bartlett
The Mystery of the Cathedrals - Fulcanelli
Galactic Alignment - John Major Jenkins
The God Code - Gregg Braden
Beyond 2012 - Geoff Stray
The Hermetic Code in DNA - Michael Hayes
The Art of Tantric Sex - Nitya LaCroix
The Hermetic Code - Frank Albo
What Becomes of the Soul After Death - Swami Sivananda
Science of Soul - Swami Yogeshwaranand Saraswati
The Alchemy Code - Steve Silver, Mark Wysocki, Joseph Petersen
The Return of the Serpents of Wisdom - Mark Amaru Pinkham
The Field: The Quest for the Secret Force of the Universe - Lynn McTaggart
Beyond Einstein: The Cosmic Quest for the Theory of the Universe - Michio Kaku
Gehennical Fire: The Lives of George Starkey American Alchemist - William R. Newman

The Heart Doctrine - Christopher Holmes
DMT: The Spirit Molecule - Rick Strassman
Founding Fathers Secret Societies - Robert Hieronimus
Rule by Secrecy: The Hidden History - Jim Marrs
Meditation and Mantras - Swami Vishnu Devananda
Yoga and Ayurveda - David Frawley
Yoga and The Sacred Fire - David Frawley
Wisdom of the Ancient Seers: Mantras of the Rig Veda - David Frawley
Genesis of the Grail Kings - Laurence Gardner
The Irish Origins of Civilization - Michael Tsarion
Blue Tide: The Search for Soma - Mike Jay
Ploughing the Clouds: The Search for Irish Soma - Peter Lamborn Wilson
The Shadow of Solomon: The Lost Secrets of the Freemasons Revealed - Laurence Gardner
The Prophet Code: Precessional Encryption and the Apocalyptic Tradition - Stephen E. Crockett
Spagyrics: The Alchemical Preparation of Medicinal Essences, Tinctures, and Elixirs - Manfred Junius
Human Physiology: Expression of Veda and the Vedic Literature - Tony Nader
The Mysteries of the Great Cross at Hendaye - Jay Weidner & Vincent Bridges
The Mystery Traditions: Secret Symbols and Sacred Art - James Wasserman
Secret Chamber: The Quest for the Hall of Records - Robert Bauval
Fingerprints of the Gods - Graham Hancock
The A-Tomic Christ - William Henry
Starwalkers and the Dimension of the Blessed - William Henry
The Guide to Dan Brown's The Solomon Key - Greg Taylor
The Solomon Key - Dan Brown

Booklets

Fusion of the Five Elements - Mantak Chia
Lesser Kan and Li - Mantak Chia
Greater Kan and Li - Mantak Chia
Greatest Kan and Li - Mantak Chia
Sealing of the Five Senses - Mantak Chia

Articles

Vedic Alchemy: Soma The Food of the Gods - Robert Cox Private Article
The Complete Great Work Photographed <http://www.rexresearch.com/caro/caro.htm>
Star Fire: The Gold of the Gods <http://www.nexusmagazine.com/articles/starfire1.html>
Lost Secrets of the Sacred Ark <http://www.nexusmagazine.com/articles/lostark.html>
The History of Alchemy in America <http://www.hermetic.com/stavish/alchemy/history.html>
Utopia in America - Sub Rosa Issue 3 <http://subrosa.dailygrail.com>
National Secrets - Atlantis Rising Issue 50 <http://www.atlantisrising.com>
The Chymistry of Isaac Newton <http://www.chymistry.org>
Rasa Vidya <http://www.shrifreedom.com/alchemy.html>
The Flow of Soma <http://www.vedanet.com>
The Milky Way and the Cosmic Soma <http://www.vedanet.com>
The Ka, the Ba, and the Kabbalah <http://www.jayweidner.com/KaBa.htm>
Secrets of Divine Lovemaking <http://www.geocities.com/alchematron/secretsofdivinelove.pdf>
Seven Alchemy Formulas of Immortality http://www.healingtaousa.com/tao_alchemy_formulas.html

Videos

National Treasures: Signs & Symbols of the U.S. Founding Fathers - William Henry
Starwalkers and the Dimension of the Blessed - William Henry
The Light Body Effect - William Henry
Ring of Power <http://www.preferrednetwork.com>
The Doomsday Code - BBC Documentary
Origins and Oracles - Michael Tsarion
Sex: The Secret Gate to Eden <http://www.gnosticvideos.org>
Endgame: Blueprint for Global Enslavement <http://www.infowars.com>
Secrets of Alchemy: The Great Cross and the End of Time - Jay Weidner
The Lost Book of Nostradamus - History Channel Documentary
The Great Year <http://www.thegreatyear.com>

Elixirs

Tonic Gold <http://www.tonicgold.com>
Alchemia Nova <http://www.alchemianova.com>
Veriditas <http://www.veriditas.com>

Websites

Alchemy Lab <http://www.alchemylab.com>
Alchemy Conference <http://www.alchemyconference.com>
Universal Tao <http://www.universal-tao.com>
Healing Tao <http://www.healingtaousa.com>
American Institute of Vedic Studies <http://www.vedanet.com>
William Henry <http://www.williamhenry.net>
Laurence Gardner <http://www.graal.co.uk>
The Alchemy Website <http://www.alchemywebsite.com>
Graham Hancock <http://www.grahamhancock.com>
Triad Publishing <http://www.triad-publishing.com>
Monoatomic Gold <http://www.subtleenergies.com/ormus>
Rubellus Petrinus <http://pwp.netcabo.pt/r.petrinus/alchemy-e.htm>
The Apotheosis of Washington http://www.access.gpo.gov/congress/senate/brumidi/Brumidi_ii.pdf

