

SILENTIUM POST CLAMORES

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Michael Maier was born in the Holstein region of Germany in 1568. After having obtained his diploma of Doctor of Medicine and Philosophy, he entered the service of Emperor Rudolph II of Austria as his private physician. The Emperor held him in high esteem, conferring on him the title of Count Palatine. After the death of Rudolph, Maier associated himself with the landgrave Maurice of Hesse. Rudolph II and Maurice of Hesse were both fervent esotericists who practiced alchemy. Maurice of Hesse himself belonged to the Rosicrucian Chapter of Cassel. Johannes Valentinus Andreae, the presumed author of the *Chymical Wedding of Christian Rosenkreuz*, was also affiliated with the Cassel Fraternity. Michael Maier contributed to the dissemination of Rosicrucian ideas. He left Magdeburg and dedicated himself to completing his writings. He died in 1622.

Michael Maier was an eminent physician and dedicated philosopher. He struggled to defend the Rosicrucian Order against the malicious deeds, mockery, and blunders that it suffered during this period. He defended the Order in several of his works, particularly in *Apologeticus* (1617), a presentation of the historical origin of the Order, in *Silentium post Clamores* (1617), a praise from those who directed it or its members for their respect for secrecy; and in *Themis Aurea* (1617), (The Golden Rule), the Rosicrucians' code of ethics.

I address my discourse to all of you, you the venerable, very wise, and excellent brothers and members of this praiseworthy R.C. Order. In your very

lodge, where you are ever gathered until this very day, I encourage you to even go beyond this (although you know this and you certainly remember it yourselves), to go beyond what you yourselves are, up until now, beyond your own personal desire to lead people further, to excel in valuable service or to show charity, beyond the desire to accomplish things effectively and to never remain inactive. Yes, for it is recognized that your propositions still remain reliable, it is art, wisdom, and the friendship with others that you prefer [...] Make of your life and of your work a useful act so that both life and work become particularly rewarding. Although your wish is to dutifully keep your great wisdom hidden at all times, nonetheless, allow your doctrine to express itself publically now; your cordial, loving spirit, for your prosperity and advantage, and for that of others. May you also benefit from the greatest glory and the greatest honors while you take the commendable path at this stage, and may you continually persevere from the beginning to the end. Even though such a path, your path, is strewn with many pitfalls and reproaches and all sorts of blessings that will come your way on this path, nonetheless, may this not make you falter by making you refute your promise of loyalty [to the Order].

So wrote Michael Maier in 1617 in his work *Silentium post Clamores*. This text is one of the major historical confirmations of the existence of the Rosicrucian Order

in the seventeenth century, from its very ancient origins — not as fable, but in the form of a philosophical society which he calls in his text: *Orden und Fraternitat des Rozenkreutzes*: The Order and Fraternity of the Rosicrucians.

Silentium post Clamores is written just after the publication of the *Fama Fraternitatis* (1614) and *Confessio Fraternitatis* (1615). This book is the logical result of the call made to potential initiates by these two Rosicrucian manifestos. In them, Maier, an eminent member of the Rosicrucian Fraternity, explains why the Order should remain hidden. By revealing their membership, members would have in fact risked their lives. They could not do otherwise but to publish a document asking seekers to identify themselves. This is also the reason why the Order did not have a meeting place known to the public (or to their detractors) at that time, nor even to members who declared themselves as belonging to the Order.

Only those like Maier, who were close to a Monarch capable of protecting them, could take such a risk. So Maier is not just an apologist for the Rosicrucian Order; he explains it, justifies it, and supports it. He knows its nature perfectly, its source, and its members. He encourages the Brothers of the Order to be courageous, to trust, and to keep their promise to remain faithful to it.

This document is also written for “those who have sought it but have had no answer to their inclinations to be admitted in the R.C. Fraternity,” in spite of “numerous impetuous people with hostile cries, slander, and infamous discourses that have been released against these very persons.” This is why it is called *Silentium post Clamores*. Doesn't this sound like our current era? Although it was 400 years ago, nefarious and dishonest people still regularly attack the Order. Today, just as in the past, there are those who will always attempt to

either claim its renown for themselves or destroy it.

There are a few translated excerpts from this work presented here. But first, we will define the terms used here. First, the term “Chymical” does not mean crude alchemy or modern chemistry, but a sacred science of the Mystery of Being. The word “Art” is used with the meaning of “high science.” “Nature” is the entire universe from the invisible to the physical nature that manifests and is perceived by our senses.

The goal of the teachings is explained in the first chapter. It discusses the study of the Mysteries.

Like a great Mystery spreading throughout the four elements and in the orb of the World, Nature is hidden in every part of the Universe, and governs it, directing sentient species and particular creatures created by the will and the pleasure of the All Mighty.

This refers to an art or a science that respects nature.

Art has taken its source from the observation and reflection on natural things [...] If the objective and the ultimate goal of Art does not conform with Nature, it must be abandoned like an illegitimate thing to be considered as dishonest or monstrous [...] the theorems and secret discourses in the Arts and sciences of Nature must be in harmony with the works of Nature and must not distance themselves from the world in the least.

Philosophy followed neither in practice or effect is contrary to Art.

“Such things are no longer arts but to the contrary, they are considered as Sophism,” a thing that Raymond Lull would call *non-entia* (non-existent). Through these words, he considered that “the people's soul and memory became so scrambled and heavy and became pretentious to the

point that, subsequently, they only gave truth and reality a pitiful place.” Here we find the primary goal of the Rosicrucian teachings, which is to propose a reflection to the sincere seeker based on experimentation of this Chymical Art, which we now call mental and spiritual alchemy.

For Maier, the mystery of the Rosicrucians has been stated in a veiled manner in the *Confessio*. He explains this in chapter two of the *Silentium post Clamores*. First, the Rosicrucian teachings are based on experience.

It is undoubtedly evident that in Nature, there are strange properties and characteristics that cannot be understood solely by human meditation if not brought to light through experience.

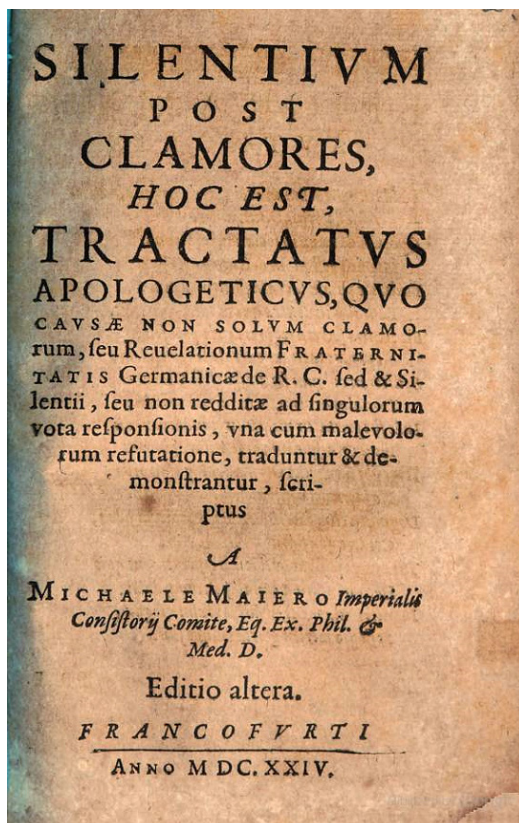
This is because...

The true and sure influences of art come from experience. Because of this practice, it leads to perfect reasoning, while when influences are born of reason alone, or from ordinary imagination, even if they may have a marvelous outer appearance, they bear no fruit or benefit.

But this cannot be achieved without regular practice.

The philosophers of the R.C. society of Mysteries described here offer each person [...] the way that they must [...] go reasonably toward their goal [...] in such a manner that what is still hidden from them, or what they know already, can almost be condensed, making it more specific and applicable on a daily basis.

In this chapter, Maier also warns against straying. It is indispensable to practice virtue. Virtue should drive all of our experiences, so that we avoid sinking in the “repugnant attachments of human passions,” the seekers end up “showing that



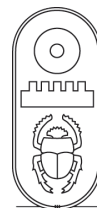
Frontispiece of *Silentium post Clamores*.

they have not the least affinity with their deeper nature, and from this they understand that they are no longer in harmony. Because of this, alone and discouraged by such an unexpected fall, they almost never manage to reach their goal in this art.”

He also insists on the meaning of this approach by the Rosicrucians, which is above all to help their peers without necessarily expressing it through words or writings.

One who dedicates oneself to virtue must apply oneself to this great work and expend everything completely on it, in such a way that it becomes a habit to contribute aid that one might give to other persons in need. Those who dedicate themselves to the service of others are the lights set upon the beacon of the world.

Chapter Three is dedicated to what he calls “universal medicine.” It is “the potential force of Nature that can be built as a



great Work, through natural means and productive actions,” and one that the Rosicrucians express as the “allegory of gold.”

A good science that the Brothers of this R.C. society preserve from the remains of humankind, great and useful secrets, and Mysteries like the excellent art of making gold, entrusted and borrowed from the All Mighty. From this art and these influences, as well as from nature and from art itself, they do not like to speak of with a common language.

But this does not concern crude gold because, “throughout time, true philosophy prefers virtue to riches and gold.”

There is a noble definition of Mystery in this chapter that is not something mysterious to the Rosicrucians; neither is it subject to eccentric and sometimes dangerous practices, like those we see in some New Age movements. The Mystery, or the Arcane are not those, “dreams that are not conceived in Nature or through reasonable experience.” As Maier has said, “we explain these things [the Arcane or the Mysteries] only through secret works of the potential force of nature, which can be erected into Work, through natural means, and through productive acts.”

This is in fact the Vital Life Force. What he called a treasure, is the Grace and the hand offered by the All Mighty, which, as he said, is extended to the human being to raise consciousness, but is extinguished if the individual reduces it to only that which they can alone understand.

The fourth chapter explains the search for the quintessence and the way of conducting the natural work that is found in Nature. This can only be assessed through the objective senses. “The senses do not exert themselves constantly with a true and just perception, and this form of science cannot be communicated to others through this means.”

Therefore, when he says that, “it is impossible that a real auric Force would not produce the energy capable of making gold in matter,” surely by these words he means the regenerative work of the Vital Life Force or “auric Force.” Perhaps it is a question of alchemical mental projection which consists in projecting the auric Force into form. While it is in this state, alchemical gold takes the form of mercury while mercury rises to the state of gold.

The fifth chapter is dedicated to the origins of the Rosicrucian Fraternity, which was active in nine ancient schools. Everything first began in ancient Egypt, where “the Order took its name from the divine cult of Osiris and Isis.” Maier describes the cult of the Mysteries and how the initiates were chosen.

However, in this school there were not only priests or philosophers. On the contrary, only a few were chosen among the priests and were considered capable of observing the secret art of the community and to benefit heart and soul from their art. The others were easily seduced by the outer layer. They were the only ones [the first: the least number] to be really conscious of the significance of Apis, Osiris, Isis, Typhon, Anubis or Theut, Thoth (who is called Hermetem in Greek [Hermes]), and Horus. They had a grasp of those qualities that they represented and the reasons for using ceremonies and allegories... Furthermore, they were not only satisfied with simply reading Hieroglyphica [hieroglyphs]; but they also had a complete understanding of them.

Then, the Order in Egypt was instituted in Greece by the *Eumolpidae*. “This Eumolpidae who came from the Egyptian priesthood, had brought in the Athenian territory a remarkable school of philosophy and sciences of Nature, and had set it

up in Eleusis with obedience rules.” Maier speaks here of the Eleusinean Mysteries, which he describes notably as a ceremony where the effigy of the deity of Creation is brought forth “by the high priest, the Hierophant, that of the Sun by the torchbearer, of the Moon by the servant of the altar, and of Mercury by the mystical herald or *Praecones*. On this occasion, the high priest holds a golden key before his mouth in a remarkable sign of discretion.”

There follows another description of other schools: the Mysteries of Samothrace, the sages of Chaldea, gymnosophists from the land of the Mauritians, Brahmans from India, and the Pythagoreans. To complete our list, he speaks of the school in Arabia that welcomed “the first founder of the R.C. Fraternity” before he traveled to Fez “to the school of the Mauritians.”

In the sixth chapter, he comes back to the subject of transmission of the Order.

It is clear that those schools aforementioned were not only created for teaching classic knowledge and the arts, which one could eventually benefit from just as in ordinary schools, but on the contrary, they were made to reveal the great Mysteries hidden in Nature.

This school was perpetuated and according to Maier, one should not be surprised that it seems recent, while in fact, “such mysteries were transmitted from one person to another, practically from hand to hand, with their statutes, rules, customs, and their way of life, with some distinctions in function of the period and the religion.

But in each period,

their core rule and principal precept was that one must honor and seek the Divine above all; we must make ourselves useful to all humankind, without excluding others, guiding the mul-



Harpocrates. Rosicrucian Egyptian Museum.

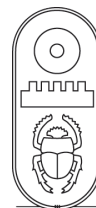
titude to seek the Divine, encouraging ourselves to lead an honorable existence, destroying the work of the devil within us (as with those possessed), be satisfied with the least gifts of nature in food and clothing, and finally, manifesting an aversion toward unbridled passions and vices.

Chapter Seven defends the non-revelatory nature of the Mysteries.

We should not reveal such things to ordinary people so that they make a mockery of it on the one hand or on the other, let them mistakenly ascribe to them.

He insists several times on the periodical resurgence of the Order.

And so it has been many years now that the R. C. society has existed and



has watched over the honor of the Divine, according to its own vows, and to the prosperity of humanity, until the time that it revealed itself once again, as it did in our era.

Maier justifies initiation in relation to the desire for revelation.

One who ignores has no desire [...] and consequently, holds no aspiration for the unknown [...] Revelation is in fact the first degree and the first stage of the Mysteries, similar to its objective placed before us.

Afterwards, there is the subject of the tomb symbolism — an allegorical revelation. He described many historical legends where the discovery of a tomb is associated with important events. He indicates that each time this history is related to “Chymical Artists,” these terms still evoke, once again, the quest for the Mysteries of Life.

Chapter Eight justifies the publication of the *Fama Fraternitatis*.

“When this society wanted to reveal itself, it could only do so by creating two written works: the *Fama Fraternitatis* and the *Confessio*.” The *Fama Fraternitatis* was the preparatory stage, the rumor, according to which there existed a mystical fraternity of great wisdom. While the *Fama*, was easier to understand and one might say accessible, the *Confessio* was the opposite, and remained inaccessible to most readers.

Those who did not want to believe in the *Fama* would have been even less interested in the *Confessio* [...] it has been deemed preferable to avoid giving complete knowledge at once, and consequently allow a slow, harmonious approach. One must also try to begin this initial enterprise progressively, so that great haste will not lead to unhappiness or damages.

This must be done in such a way that: when the lover of wisdom [...] is given

the reasons, the circumstances and the making of such a school or philosophical society, not only will one not deprive oneself of experiences and meditations on the Mysteries of Nature, on the contrary, one will benefit from these works and these actions.

It is interesting to note that in this chapter dedicated to the *Fama*, Maier uses the word “we.”

There was no reason that this society should remain hidden any longer. We could not see which form such opportunities might produce.

We would now like to quietly ignore other forms of arts. Yet we declare that the brothers and members of this R.C. society are open to the preparation of such things.

He was speaking here of the brothers who knew how to make automatons, which is proof that he was acquainted with them.

Other chapters follow, each one more interesting than the last. Maier explains that, “there is nothing in their writings which is contrary to reason or to Nature.” He justifies why,

among the many persons who ask to be admitted in this Fraternity, few of them are accepted. The reason for secrecy in the R.C. Fraternity is because it is observed in such a way so that the secrets of Nature are not revealed to the unworthy.

Maier includes considerable details and uses the symbolism expressed in the statue of the god Harpocrates, god of secrecy and silence, as an original example of this secrecy. Maier also explains how, during his time, when

the Order revealed its existence in many regions of the world [...], they found themselves confronted by insults, which was the reason why they had to hide for a certain time. This

obliged them to tolerate the first hostile attack — with patience.

This book is therefore for all historians or sincere seekers; it is an important tool for reflection, especially on the subject of tolerance. History endlessly repeats itself, and the same motivation of envy, jealousy, bias, and false judgments are always the motivators of calumny and defamation. Today, like yesterday, the Rosicrucian Order did well to keep quiet and not respond to the criticism of sectarian and intolerant people.

Other works of reference by Michael Maier:

- 1614 *Arcana Arcanissima. Hoc Est Hieroglyphica Aegyptio*
- 1617 *Symbola Aureae Mensae duodecim Nationum*
- 1617 *Themis Aurea, hoc est De Legibus Fraternitatis R.C.*
- 1618 *Atalanta Fugiens*



Michael Maier.

