
ROSICRUCIAN PURITY -- With Gold, Silver, Copper AND Stained-Glass Windows

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Years ago, when I first read about Fr. Christian Rosenkreutz journeying from Germany to Cyprus in preparation for a planned trip to the Holy Land region....I was intrigued that his traveling companion died at the country of Cyprus. From that moment on, Cyprus seemed to be a turning point of transition in his life. I always wondered "why?"

In the Rosicrucian Order, COPPER is a highly prized element. It is the element denoted by the symbol Cu. Significantly, the English word COPPER comes from Middle English "coper;" Old English "coper;" Germanic "kupar;" Late Latin "cuprum;" from Latin Cyprium (meaning "Copper of Cyprus"). As it turns out, the country of Cyprus was known in ancient times as the source of the best copper.

The North Carolina College of M.S.R.I.C.F. eloquently lays out the significance of the 7 Rosicrucian Banners, representing the 7 days of the week, the 7 planetary metals, and 7 gods of the planets:

	Gold	Sol	Sunday
	Silver	Luna	Monday
♂	Iron	Mars	Tuesday
	Mercury (Quicksilver)	Mercury	Wednesday
	Tin	Jupiter	Thursday
♀	Copper	Venus	Friday
	Lead	Saturn	Saturday

I want to focus on gold, silver, and copper: These elements have all been used as mediums of monetary exchange or storage of value. They are all elements which are good conductors of heat & electricity. They each have varied and widespread applications ranging from gold dental fillings to Silver Solder to copper water piping. All three elements have also been used in jewelry and adornment.

Some Rosicrucian tracts interlace alchemy (taking base metals and transforming them into precious metals) into their texts. To some extent, the Rosicrucian alchemical belief was heavily symbolic: The triune blending of the science of Chemistry with the tenets of



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Religion with the methods of philosophical Comprehension. Co-incidentally, the 3 areas I have listed (Chemistry/Religion/Comprehension) also form the initials commonly associated with Fr. Christian Rosenkreutz ---- C.R.C.

The principal Rosicrucian aim has always been to go from rough beginnings toward continual Improvement in Quality AND improvement in substance. This continued refinement has been described in Masonic nomenclature as going from the "rough ashlar" which was the stone initially deemed unfit for use, being later refined, polished and enhanced to later become the "perfect ashlar" fit for The Builder's use. The ancient stonemasons used IMPLEMENTS on objects to make them perfect. We as speculative Freemasons use implements symbolically for more noble and glorious purposes of character refinement. Masonic Rosicrucianism takes it to a higher plane by emphasizing PURITY.

Perfection can be deceiving in the eye of a beholder. Two objects may look identical. Their craftsmanship may appear identical. Their uses may appear identical. ; But the PURITY test is what separates the wholesome from the corrupt. To prove this, let us examine coinage:

Most of us have seen American "Indian Head" pennies (one cent pieces) dated 1859-1909. Their composition was .880 copper and .120 nickel. Lincoln cents dated 1909-1982 (with the exception of the 1943 Steel wartime penny) had composition of .950 copper and the remaining small mix of tin & zinc. They were over 95% copper.

A radical change took place in 1982, when it became evident that the copper content in pennies might exceed their face value..... The U.S. Mint, supported by Congress radically reduced the copper content to near nil. Today's Lincoln cents (those minted 1982 to the present) are 95% zinc, and 2.5% copper. That is astounding!!

Just within my lifetime, American pennies have gone from over 95% copper to over 95% NOT COPPER!! The country of Canada had one-cent coins made of .95 copper in the year 1865. They INCREASED it to .980 copper in 1942. Sadly, Canada has likewise greatly diminished the content of copper in its coins.

Visualize yourself in a transaction with a merchant today. The merchant hands you back two pennies in change from your transaction. They look the same and feel the same in your hands. They have the same inscriptions. One coin is dated 1964 and the other is dated 2005. Both are currently circulating and traded alike based on "good faith." Imagine that good faith and trust didn't exist.... and you had to judge REAL WORTH ...Which coin would you rather have? Almost certainly you would want the one with the better grade of precious metal with the highest level of PURITY.

My analogy using pennies proves the statement I said above: that perfection can be deceiving in the eye of the beholder. At first glance: the old and new pennies may appear to be perfectly made. But the older penny is the one which carries, "Actual Worth Beyond Mere Words." Both say they are worthy of value...but the higher PURITY of the mostly copper older one has a VALUE THAT WILL LAST the test of time.



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Similarly with silver dollars: The Liberty or Morgan Type (1878-1921) and the Peace Dollars (1921-1935) were composed of .900 fine silver. The United States eliminated minting of general circulation (true silver) silver dollars after 1935. To its credit, Canada minted their general circulation silver dollars from 1935 to 1967 and their composition was .800 silver and .200 copper. Sadly, today's Canadian dollar coins are a cheap mix of nickel & bronze.

When we look in history books and see where men have searched for improvement in life and in the quality of life, it is easy to see how Rosicrucian writings (supplemented by alchemical beliefs) became popular. Some people may ridicule it...but it was the hope of taking something common or ordinary and transforming it into something of precious value. That hope is noble and laudable. After all, a pile of lumber may have a set worth...but transforming that pile of boards into a beautiful house has enhanced their value.

However, I shake my head in astonished disbelief when politicians in governments make decisions in the opposite direction. For them to take a recognized means of value (silver or copper coinage) and devaluing/debasing it to where it becomes a cheap imitation is an action deserving of ridicule. That is a step backward in my estimation.

PURITY should always be prized. It distinguishes the genuine from the counterfeit. Even IVORY SOAP which has been used over 125 years, thankfully, still carries its 99 AND 44/100 percent PURE formula.

PURITY also extends to craftsmanship. One final area that I'd like to use an illustration is the craft of making stained-glass Windows. I feel that stained-glass Windows (especially antique ones) are so treasured in Churches, Museums, and Masonic Halls because they reflect purity in more ways than one.

The quality of being a tangible work of art is highly prized. The images convey images which can set a tone for reverence and awe. But, they also have the intangible quality of conveying a mood, which touches the soul. A person might look at those multi-colored images which were created by an artist of long ago, but the glass requires the presence of light from today. The final result or lasting impression varies in the eye of the beholder. Furthermore, the mental inspiration coming to the mind is essentially reborn or made anew, IF THE SUBJECT IS SEEN IN A DIFFERENT LIGHT (both literally & figuratively). Stained-glass Windows give us another type of that triune blending of CRC. Chemistry is involved in the making of the window; the religious settings often depicted; and our philosophical comprehension of words and symbolism depicted on those stained-glass images.

Throughout my travels, I have only seen one stained-glass window in a church depicting the All-Seeing Eye of Almighty God (which denotes His omnipotent, omnipresent, and all-seeing powers). The one I have seen is inside the St. John Catholic Church in Beloit, Mitchell County, Kansas. It is one of 29 colored windows inside the church; including one of the ascension scene, and another of St John the Baptist over the high altar. I found the images very inspirational.



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In my opinion, the emblem of the All-Seeing Eye was used in Rosicrucian circles before being introduced into Craft Masonry and the other degrees.

Working tools of Masonry are usually implements (such as the Plumb, Level, and Trowel, etc); whereas, Masonic Rosicrucians added symbols which symbolize life or aspects of what once was alive (such as the Rose and the Cross...which once was a living tree; the All-Seeing Eye; and the Beehive of Industry).

When purely Masonic symbols (like the Square & Compasses) are depicted on stained-glass windows side-by-side with the Rosicrucian signs of life --- It creates a powerful and deeply inspirational theme. And, again, another type of triune blending occurs: ---insight into our past, present, and future.

I have never been to England (would like to go someday just to see it); however, I did come across a computer website photograph of a particularly unusual stained-glass window at Ruskington near Sleaford, Lincolnshire in the south window: "Christ Blessing" with the inscription "-MAGISTER-" for Master, in a banner above the figure. Above that photograph (at the site: http://homepage.ntlworld.com/peter.fairweather/docs/stained_glass.htm) is a photo of a stained-glass window first designed as a Masonic memorial window in 1960, but made without the Masonic emblems, and inserted shortly after.

In conclusion -- whether it is antique pictorial stained-glass windows or gold, silver, or copper coins.....Quality shines through. We as individuals should not only strive toward "perfection", but also strive toward "purity" ---- Purity of heart, purity of mind, purity of body; purity of chaste and wholesome relations; purity in our dealings with our fellow man; purity of our souls; and purity in the eyes of our Creator.

PURITY enables anything of value to retain its value over time.

Suggested Readings/Sources:

- The American Heritage Dictionary, 1976 edition
- Mackey's Encyclopedia of Freemasonry
- North Carolina College MSRICF
- A Guide Book of United States coins, R S Yeoman, 52nd Edition, 1999.. pages 94-102
- The Charlton Standard Catalog of Canadian coins, 52nd Edition, 1998..pages 125-143.
- St. John Church, Beloit, Kansas ...history pamphlet
- Kempe, Skeat & other stained glass website ---
- http://homepage.ntlworld.com/peter.fairweather/docs/stained_glass.htm

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