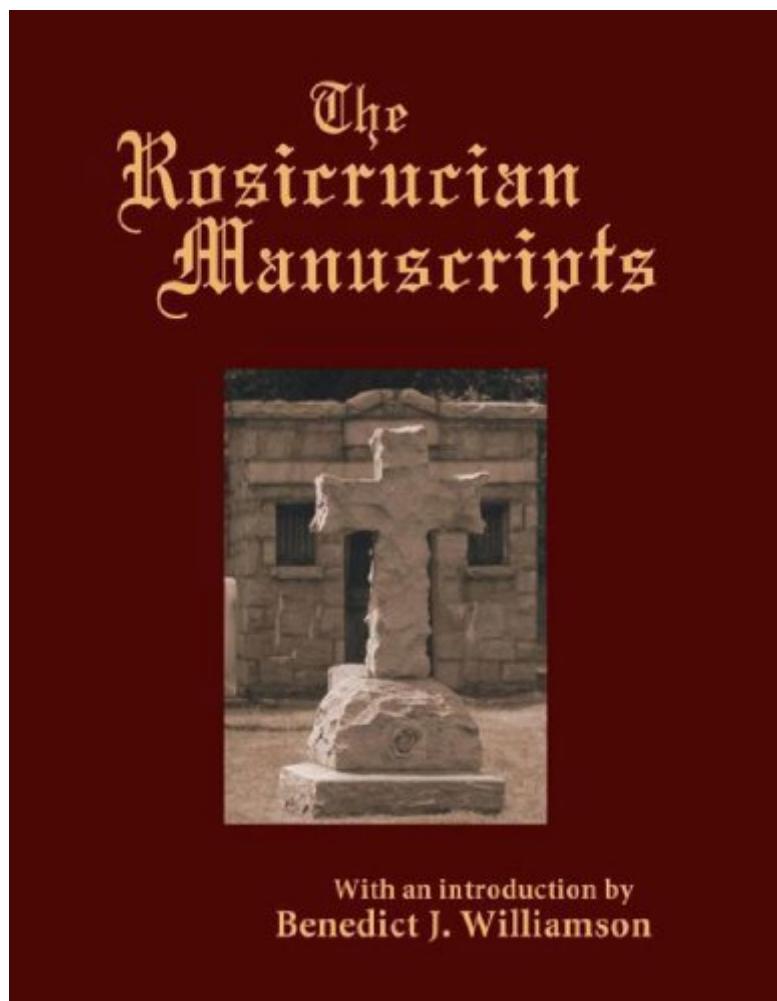


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The Rosicrucian Manuscripts



Synopsis

"What fire, air, water, and earth are not able to rescue from the holy ashes of our kings and queens, the host of faithful alchemists have collected here, in the Year of Our Lord, 1459." The Rosicrucian Fraternity announced their existence some four centuries ago. Since then there has been much speculation about the brotherhood regarding their secrets, their history, and their existence. Time has spawned numerous imitators, voluble detractors, and earnest defenders of the Fraternity. The only certainty lies in the early manuscripts and publications; these works are presented together in this volume. Herein are all of the crucial Rosicrucian documents. The Fama Fraternitatis proclaims the existence of the brotherhood to the world and calls for sincere Christian reformation. The Confessio Fraternitatis gives more details on their history and teachings. The Chemical Wedding is considered by some to be a key alchemical work by the brotherhood. When the Fama was first printed, it was accompanied by the by Trajano Bocalini. Each of these works is presented in an early English translation, along with the original prefaces. Also included is Thomas Vaughn's lengthy preface to the first English publication of Fama and Confession. This edition includes introductions to every Rosicrucian work, useful footnotes, historical information, and latin, german and greek translations from noted Rosicrucian scholar Benedict J. Williamson. Williamson has compared numerous translations of the various works to produce the most authoritative and accurate version to date of these forgotten historical treasures.

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Customer Reviews

This is an excellent, essential and almost complete introduction to the basic Rosicrucian literature of the Seventeenth century. Its merit lies in the selection of tracts included, however, and not on the critical apparatus contained therein. Editor Williamson's introduction is simplistic and unhelpful, apart from giving the reader a basic chronology of the publication history of the manifestos. Williamson appears unaware of the recent research by Carlos Gilly, et al. that illuminates the status of some of these reprints as pirated editions, etc. The book then goes on to include: The entirety of Thomas Vaughan's 17th century marginalia to the English 1652 edition of the manifestos, followed by; the first & second prefaces to the Fama Fraternitatis from the Kassel 1614 & 1615 editions; Traiano Boccalini's brilliant satire 'The General Reformation' which was published in the editio princeps of the Fama; the Fama itself; The Confessio and its preface; and lastly, the Chymical Wedding of Christian Rosencreutz, anno 1459 (Foxcroft's 1690 translation, with the marginalia deleted). An extensive selection: the only major missing texts are Phillipo a Gabella's 'Brief Consideration' and Haslmayr's 'Antwort'; both of which are important peripheral pieces. This particular edition is of usefulness because of the inclusion of some helpful annotations (although these are largely copied from F.N. Pryce's edition of the Fame & Confession), and the inclusion of the entire Boccalini extract (previously only available in a truncated form in Waite's Real History of the Rosicrucians). My recommendation, however, is that this text is read in conjunction with F.N. Pryce's earlier work.

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