

**Alchemy and Initiation:  
Death, Resurrection, and Synthetic Life**

**PowerPoint Presentation Part 1 of 2**

**By Frater JF, V Grade**

**Presented November 19, 2017**

**Golden State College SRICF**

**Fairfield, CA**

# ALCHEMY AND INITIATION

DEATH, RESURRECTION, AND SYNTHETIC LIFE

\* FOR GOLDEN STATE  
COLLEGE SRICF ONLY \*

Frater JF, V°

Presented: November 19, 2017  
Fairfield-Suisun Masonic Lodge



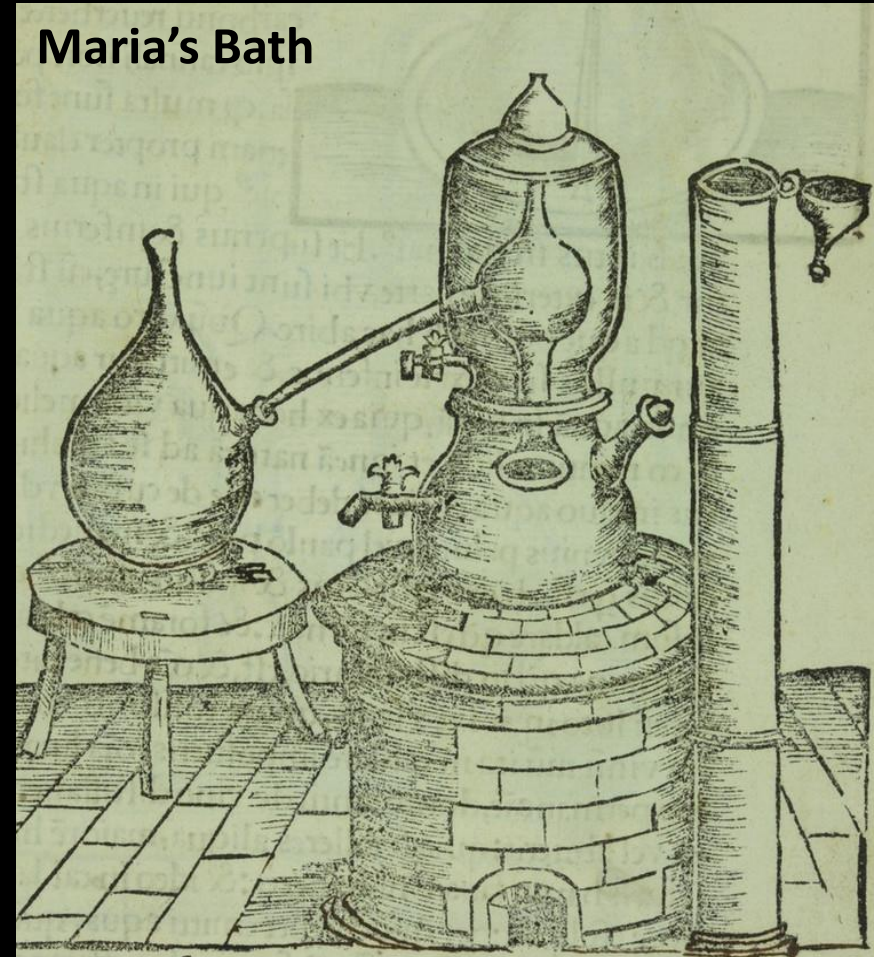
## Basic Premise:

Freemasonry utilizes the technology (*techné*) of ancient initiation – that is, a process of death and resurrection – to fructify spiritual life within the soul of the candidate.

# Definition/History of Alchemy?

- Earliest alchemical texts are Greek (ca. 100-300 CE)
- They trace the practice of alchemy to Egypt and metallurgy
- Maria the Jewess, mentions Philosopher's Stone
- Middle Eastern philosophers in the 6<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup>, 8<sup>th</sup>, century claimed to have created Philosopher's Stone
- These ideas were transmitted to medieval Europe, started to be called alchemists, Arabic prefix *al-* and Greek *chemeia*; al-kīmiyā' الكيمياء derived from the Greek "to pour together"
- Practiced as a mystery, secret, veiled language

Maria the Jewess (ca. 1-3<sup>rd</sup> century CE): inventor of various new chemical apparatus, thought to be the first true western alchemist



# Two types of Alchemical Practice

## Operative Alchemy

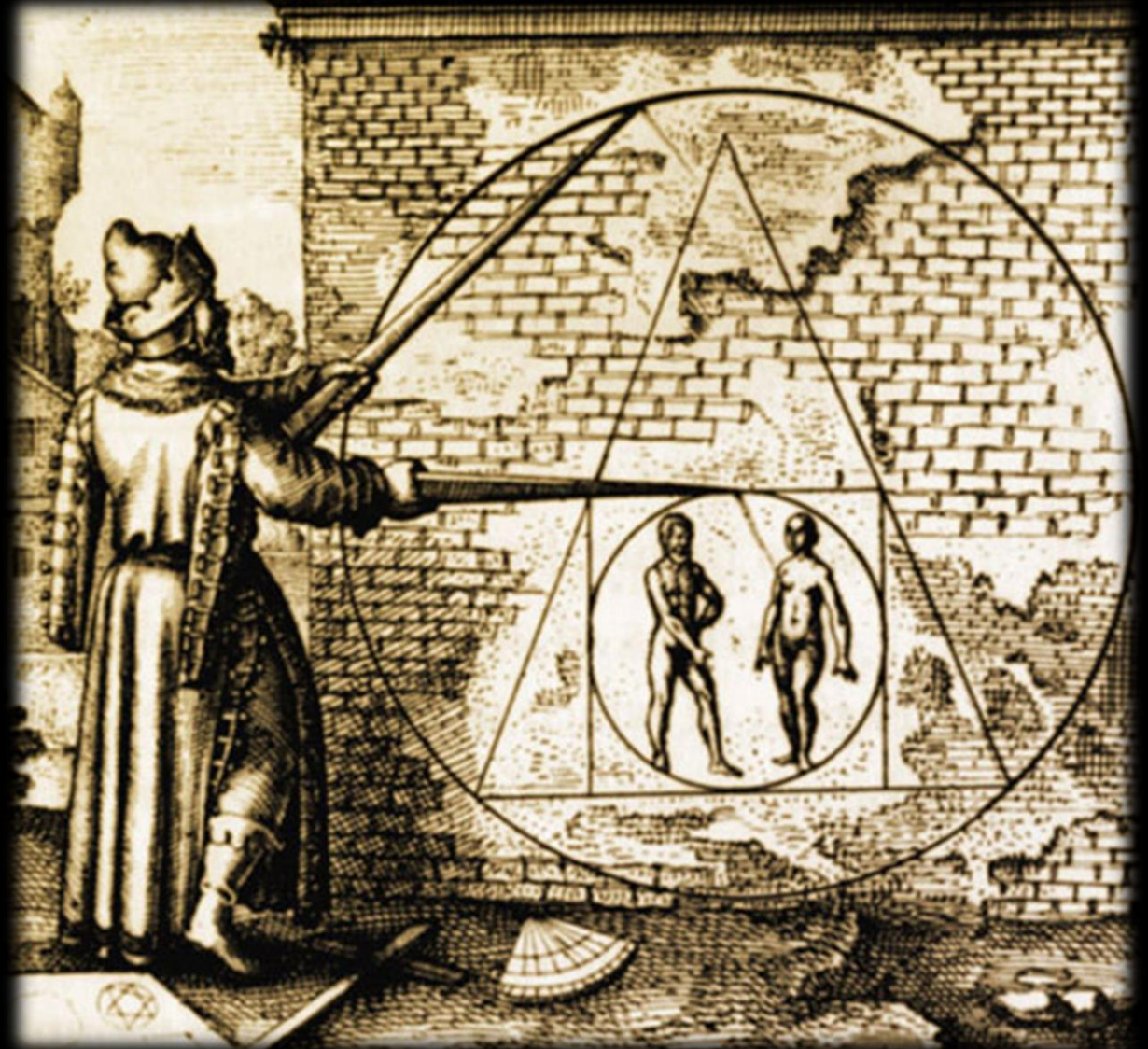
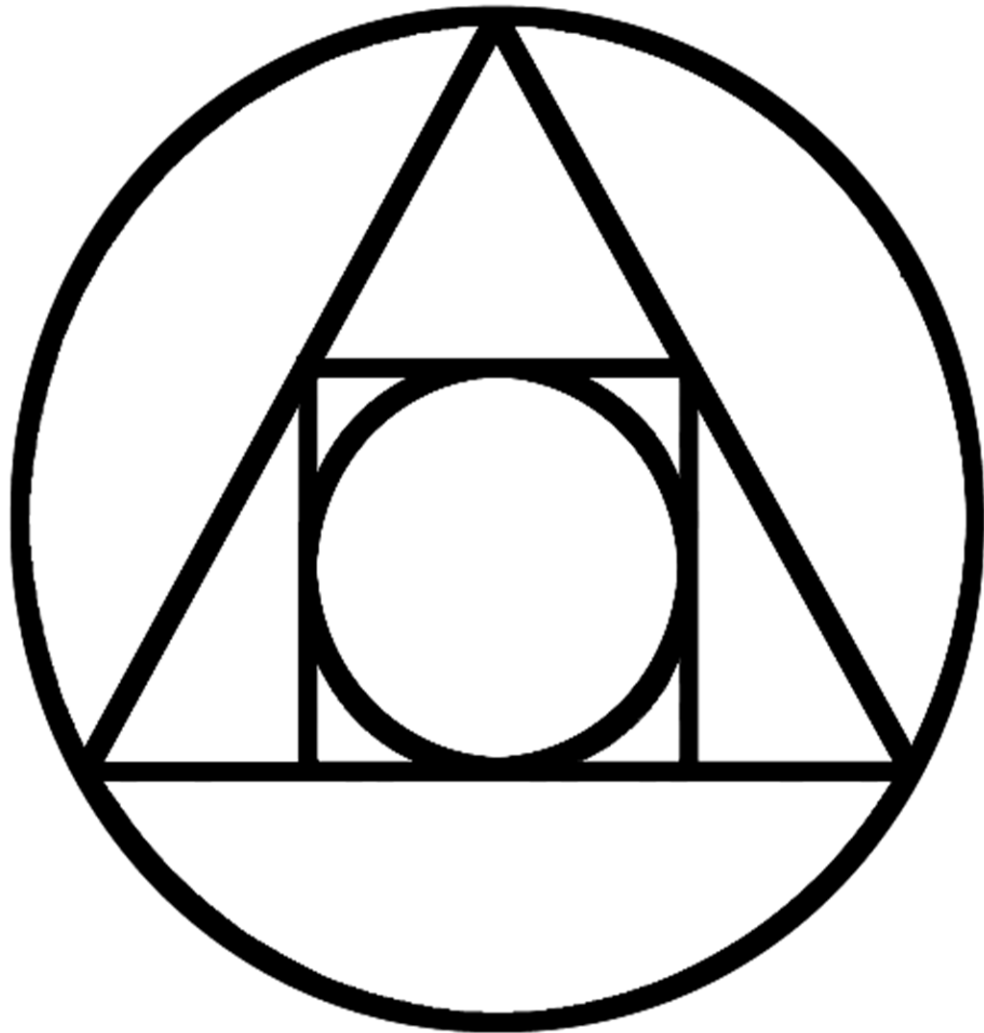
- Laboratory work, distillation processes
- Reminiscent of modern chemistry
- Transmutation of matter
- Base metals into gold
- Formation of Philosopher's Stone, creation of A.I.
- Herbs purified, transformed, creation of healing tinctures

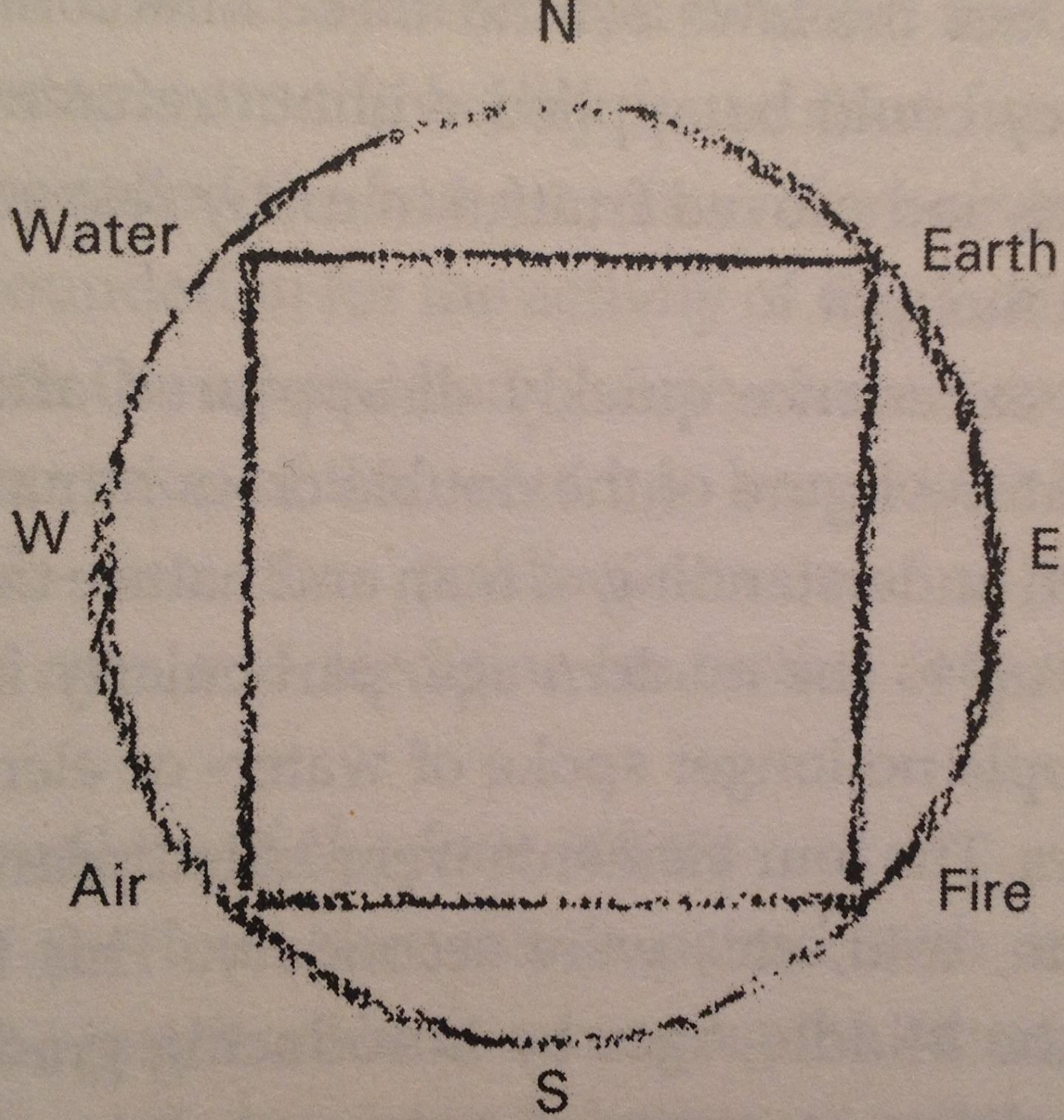
## Inner or Spiritual Alchemy

- Inner spiritual work
- Performed in contemplation and meditation
- Use of symbols and allegorical imagery
- Transformation of lower Self to Higher Self
- Process of Purification
- Transmutation of the gross soul into the gold soul (*sol*)

Depicting interactivity between four elements of matter, symbolizing the philosopher's stone

# The Squared Circle





Classical  
cyclic  
arrangement  
of  
elements

# Philippus Aureolus Theophrastus Bombastus von Hohenheim “Paracelsus” (1493-1541)

- Rejected theologian and physician turned alchemist and astrologer
- Placed high value on the lived experience of observing nature
- Prophet and a Rosicrucian
- Accepted the theory of the four elements, and taught a doctrine of *quintessence*, a 5<sup>th</sup> element or ether
- pioneered use of chemicals and minerals in medicine





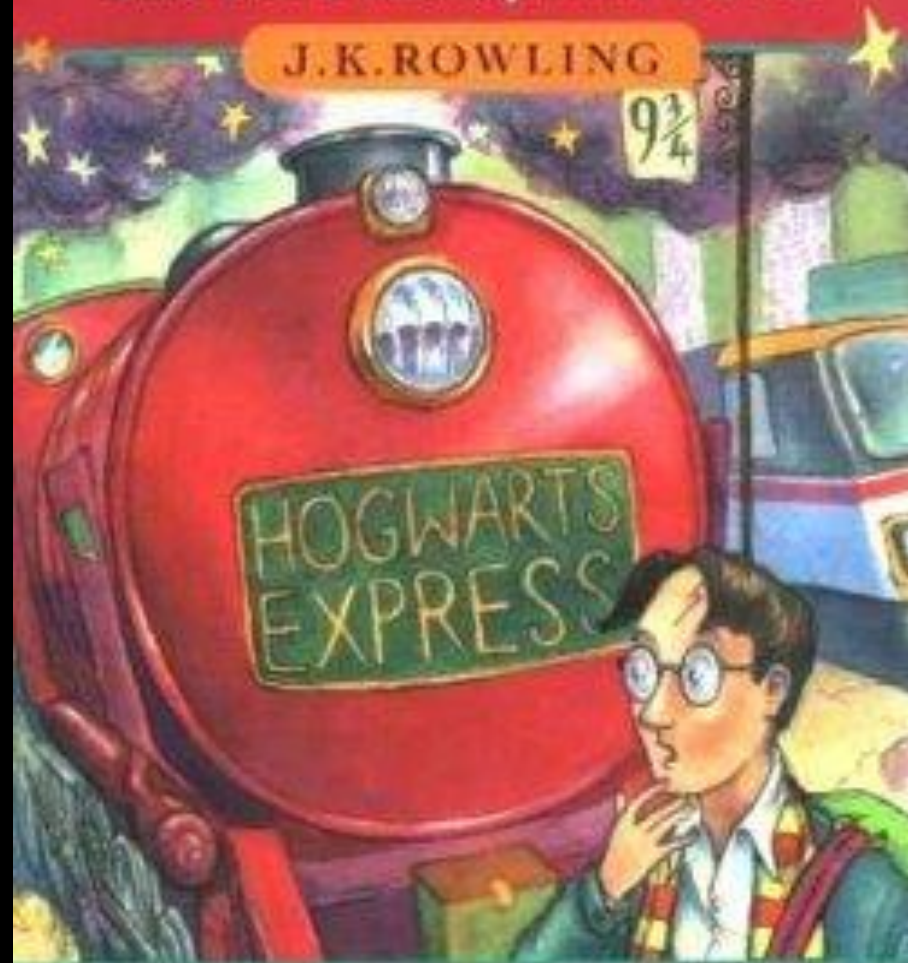
# The Philosopher's Stone

- Legendary Stone thought to possess magical powers
- Red or yellow powder liquid
- Common, everywhere and nowhere
- Ingesting of poisons and ingredients (cf. *kykeon*)
- Imploring the assistance of angels and demons
- The philosopher's stone is created through The Magnum Opus or Great Work
- The work is accomplished via a series of *color phrases*:
  - nigredo, albedo, citrinitas, and rubedo
- Immortality, elixirs
- Creation of the *panacea*

# HARRY POTTER

*and the Philosopher's Stone*

J.K. ROWLING



"...this is a terrific book." *The Sunday Telegraph*

“The Stone is found in the country, in the village, in the town, in all things created by God; yet it is despised by all. Rich and poor handle it every day. It is cast into the street by servant maids. Children play with it. Yet no one prizes it, though, next to the human soul, it is the most beautiful and the most precious thing upon earth, and has power to pull down kings and princes. Nevertheless, it is esteemed the vilest and meanest of earthly things. It is cast away and rejected by all.”

—First published in German as *Gloria Mundi sonsten Paradeiss Taffel*, Frankfurt, 1620

Elixir of immortality, often equated with the philosopher's stone, bestows eternal life and/or eternal youth

The mythological White Hare making the elixir of life on the Moon, from East Asian mythology.

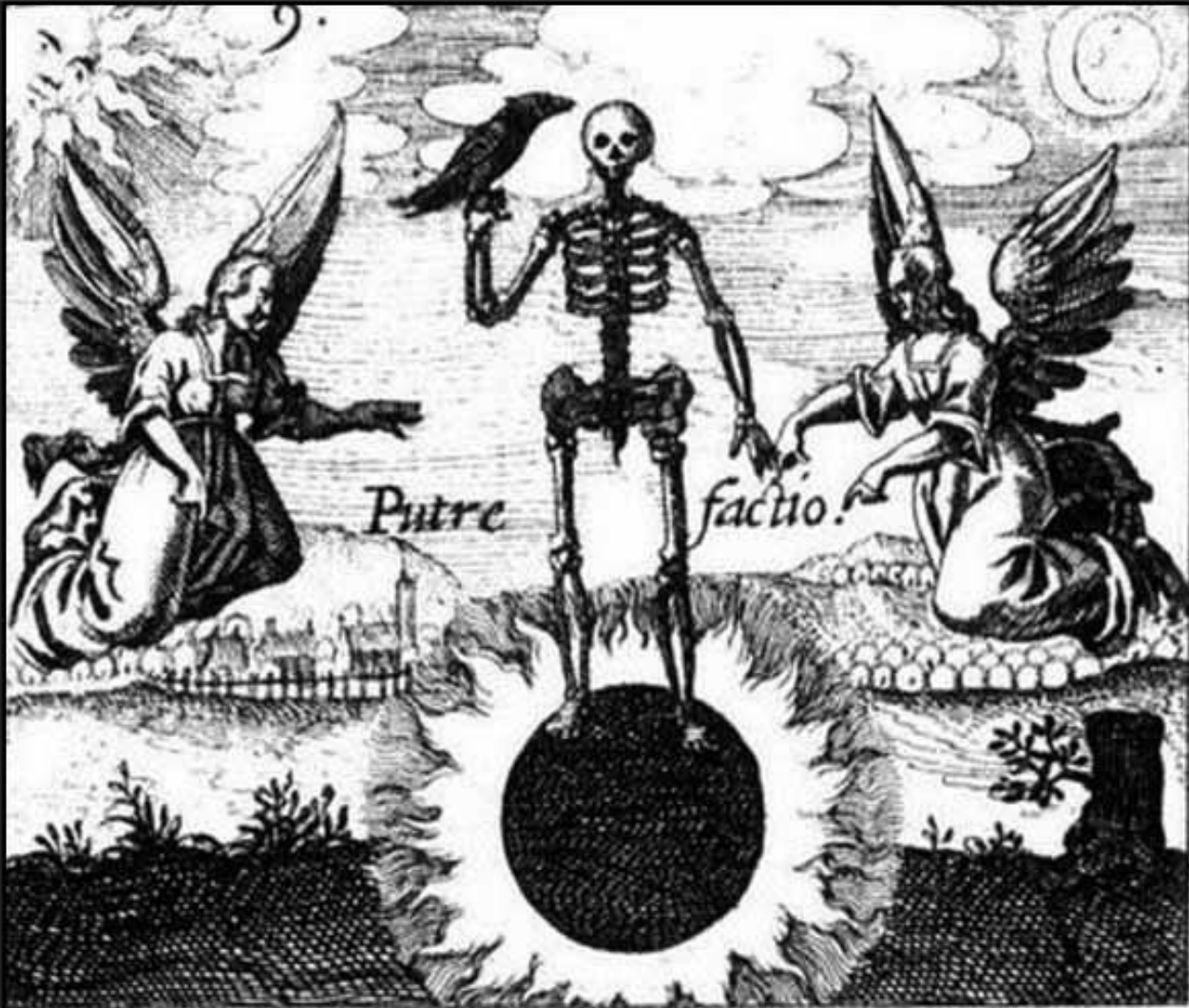


# Harnessing of the Death Processes

Indeed, the philosophers' stone was often described as the end result of processes figuratively pictured in terms of copulating kings and queens who are murdered and reborn" (233)



# Putrefaction



Breaking down of a dead body, decay = fermentation, or the decay of a substance or element

“I thank God that I recognize the greatest and highest secret in the light of nature, namely death and life, whereby a thing has been destroyed, killed, and brought to nothing, to its first form, and afterward has been much nobler in its form, power, and virtue than it was before. Only in the divine art of alchemy do I wish to demonstrate such a thing—that the noblest and best life originates through death.”

—Valentin Weigel, *Dialogus de Christianismo* (Newenstadt: Johann Knuber, 1618)



Plate III  
Alchemical beheading  
and dismemberment  
Splendor Solis





