The Secrets of *Fire and Ice*
A Historical Supplement to the Text
(1995)

The text of *Fire and Ice* was almost fifteen years in the making.

It was in the mid-1970s that I first learned of the *Fraternitas Saturni*— from articles written in Richard Cavendish's *Encyclopedia of the Unexplained.* There I read of a "monumental compendium" of FS materials which had been published by a certain German professor named Adolf Hemberger. The book bore the suitably academic title: *Organizations-formen, Rituale, Lehren und magische Thematik der freimauerischen und freimauerartigen Bünde im deutschen Sprachraum Mitteleuropas. Teil I: Der mystisch-magische Orden Fraternitas Saturni.* The idea of such a lodge fascinated me, as I hoped for a more "original" form of the kind of magic and mysticism found among the Golden Dawn materials or the ideas of Aleister Crowley. I would search through inter-library loan lists for years to try to find this text— to no avail.

In the spring of 1982 I enrolled in a seminar at the University of Göttingen in Germany entitled: *Probleme im Okkultismus: Agrippa*— "Problems in Occultism (topic) Agrippa." Only in Germany could one get a course like that! In any event, the professor who led the seminar was Helmut Möller, noted scholar of the occult. Through him I gained access to the text of the study by Hemberger the title of which had started me on my journey toward the Saturnian mysteries. Besides this text, other Saturnian materials came to light during my stay in Germany. Some were being published at the time by a small sectarian press, while others came through more private channels.

It was also while I was in Germany that I attended some of the rituals of the *Armanen Orden*, which my researches led me to conclude were greatly influenced by the ritual methods practiced by the FS. (This was no doubt due to the fact that the Grand Master of the *Armanen Orden* was himself a member of the Brotherhood.) I mention this because, although I was never an initiate of the FS, my participation in the rites of the *Armanen Orden* did, I believe, give me some practical and experiential insight into the workings of the FS Lodge.

Originally the book had the academic sounding title: "The Magical Order FRATERNITAS SATURNI: The History, Doctrines and Rituals of a Modern German Occult Lodge." This would eventually be changed to *Fire and Ice* for marketing reasons. It is a factor, often not understood by many, that publishers usually have final say on things

such as the title of a book, its cover design and jacket designs, as well as advertising copy for the book.

One of the other chief misconceptions about this book stems from the fact that I am not, nor have I ever been, a member or initiate of the FS. The book was written from a purely scholarly perspective using as many *original* documents as possible to come to a coherent and sympathetically objective interpretation of the data at hand. To do this I had to use the perspectives I had gained in other initiatory environments. This is true of any scholar or writer on obscure and difficult topics such as this one represents. We all have our prejudices and points of view, absolute objectivity is an impossibility. So it comes down to a matter of selecting one's viewpoints in order to open the mind of the reader to new possibilities rather than selecting viewpoints that will close the mind. A book written on the FS by a Baptist minister would, I should expect, close the mind, whereas one of my initiatory bent might be more likely to point in sympathetic directions. I can report that no member of the FS has complained about my interpretations and viewpoints— and I am well acquainted with a number of high initiates in the Brotherhood.

It took two years for *Fire and Ice* to be published— and this was at a time when Llewellyn was usually turning books around from the manuscript stage to a completed book in the bookstores in a matter of about six months. The reason for this delay was the *disturbing* contents of the book. Much of this hinged on the "S-word," yes, you guessed it: **S**-A-T-A-N.

Ultimately it became necessary to remove some 14 instances of the dread name "Satan-" or "Lucifer" (and even the name "Anton LaVey— apparently the equivalent of "Satan") from the text. Most of these instan-ces occur in chapter 4 of the book. Other changes were also required.

Now it should be made clear that here again, I am not a promoter of the ideas that were originally contained in the manuscript of *Fire and Ice*— and that to my own way of thinking I do not consider myself to have been then, or to be now, a "Satanist." I became a member of the Temple of Set in February of 1984, and continue to be a member of that organization. The Temple of Set is a Left-Hand Path Initiatory organization. (It is perhaps most fully described in *Lords of the Left-Hand Path.*)

The *disturbing* quality of *Fire and Ice* even extended to the cover-art: Often the cover art for Llewellyn publications, beginning in the 1980s, could be criticized for being too "hokey" or "namby-pamby." Such could be said of the cover of *Rune Might* and certainly of *Northern Magic*, but not of *Nine Doors of Midgard*, and certainly not of *Fire and Ice*. I even got reports that members of the Llewellyn staff were "frightened" by the cover art of *Fire and Ice*. (My complements to the artist!)

These stories perhaps give some insight into the reasons behind the book's ultimate fate...

It is unlikely that I will ever again devote the time necessary to produce another complete book-length manuscript on the *Fraternitas Saturni*. However, not long after the publication of *Fire and Ice* I came into possession of literally *thousands of pages* of documentary evidence for the FS in addition to the materials I had previously gathered as reflected in the documentation of *Fire and Ice*. This came in the form of a set of *Blätter für angewandte okkulte Lebenskunst* published from 1950 to 1963. If there is a demand, I will perhaps produce more of these shorter studies in the philosophy and practices of the FS.

Some "Crowley fans" were shocked and registered their sense of outrage at the addition to the Thelemite motto: "**Compassionless Love,**" after the now familiar "Do what thou wilt shall be the Whole of the Law, Love is the Law, Love under Will..." Some of these had obviously not read II:21:

> We have nothing with the outcast and unfit; let them die in their misery. For they feel not. **Compassion** is the vice of kings: stamp down the wretched & the weak: this is the law of the strong: this is our law and the joy of the world. Think not o king, upon that lie: That Thou Must Die: verily thou shalt not die, but live.

Here the intelligence which dictated the *Book of the Law* instructs in the character of Compassionless Love. (Undoubtedly as the intelligence had read Nietzsche's *Also Sprach Zarathustra*.) It also seems that the intelligence was very familiar with the Holy Bible, as it repeats the words of the Serpent to Eve... *Nequaquam morte moriemini.*

Clearly the recent history of the domestic social policies of the United States of America shows the virulent and destructive power of *compassion*. Small evils are magnified to overwhelming evils through the application of compassion.

Another complaint of some readers of *Fire and Ice* is that it includes data written from a "Setian" perspective. The original text included much more of this type of perspective, but some of it was deleted at the publisher's insistence. To this charge I must plead guilty as charged. The reason for this is simple, and I offer it here as an example of how *meaningful* works of scholarship are actually created. (This is usually an *unconscious* process as practiced by most scholars, but I have given up unconsciousness in such regards.) Scholars, interpreters and commun-icators of various data must of necessity work through certain models of understanding which they have developed within themselves— these are their **theories of interpretation**. These theories act as **lenses** through which the data is observed and ultimately interpreted in a meaningful way. For me that lens was to a great extent the Left-Hand Path philosophy of the Temple of Set. I found that there was much in common between the philosophies of the FS and the T/S. The accuracy of that lens can be measured by reading Appendix A of this work.

It should be noted by all who find the FS material fascinating, and who would perhaps like to get involved with the FS, that the Order is

an entirely German-speaking one and that fluency in that language is an absolute prerequisite for membership. It is also only active in the central European geographical area.

Personally one of the most gratifying things about the text of *Fire and Ice* is the fact that in 1993 it was translated into German and published by Edition Ananael as *Feuer und Eis: Die magischen Lehren des deutschen Geheimordens Fraternitas Saturni*. It has now become the standard general introduction to the order in Germany, Austria and Switzerland.

Here follow two appendices to the book *Fire and Ice*. Appendix A is a study of the left-hand path character of the order and Appendix B is the original, and never-before-printed, preface to *Fire and Ice* written in 1988 by Michael A. Aquino, High Priest of the Temple of Set.

Appendix A
The FS as a Left-Hand Path Order

Because an open and frank discussion of the role of Satan in the doctrines of the FS were prohibited in order to preserve public sensibilities, I thought I would include some of it in this supplement intended for a more select readership. I draw material for this appendix from the unpublished manuscript of *Lords of the Left-Hand Path* and from two essays by Gregorius entitled "Mephistopheles oder Luzifer?" from the April 1953 edition of *Blätter für angewandte okkulte Lebenskunst* (pp. 1-7) and "Der Mensch in seiner höchsten Erkenntnisreife" (Humanity in its Fullest Intellectual Maturity) printed in the May, 1961 issue of that same journal. Neither of these articles were available to me at the time of the original writing of *Fire and Ice*.

In the manuscript *Lords of the Left-Hand Path* I define the left-hand path as follows:

> ...[T]he left-hand path is ... the path of non-union with the objective universe. It is the way of isolating consciousness within the subjective universe and, in a state of self-imposed psychic solitude, refining the soul or psyche to ever more perfect levels. The objective universe is then made to harmonize itself with the will of the individual psyche instead of the other way around. Where the right-hand path is *theo*centric (or certainly alleocentric— "other-centered"), the left-hand path is psychecentric, or soul/self-centered. Those within the left-hand path may argue over the nature of this self/ego/soul, but that the individual is the epicenter of the path itself seems undisputed. An eternal separation of the individual intelligence from the objective universe is sought in the left-hand path. This amounts to an immortality of the independent self consciousness moving within the objective universe and interacting with it at will.

To begin with, let us review some ideas about the Saturnian view of the cosmos— the world-order. The cosmological doctrine of the FS— or its Cosmosophy — is based on dualities and the interplay of dualities: light and darkness, inner and outer, male and female. To some extent this echoes Crowley's "monistic dualism" and his polarity between Hadit and Nuit— but in some respects it goes beyond

the structure found in Crowley's system. The synthesis of polar opposites is a much stronger theme in Saturnian teachings than it is in the writings of other "Western occult schools." And it is perhaps here that the structural link with the Northern Tradition is strongest.

From the theories of the "heretical" astrophysicist Hans Hörbiger (1860-1931) Gregorius gleaned a doctrine of the cosmic tension between centripetal and centrifugal forces— between the forces of repulsion/expansion and attraction/contraction. The center of the cosmos is symbolized by the center of the sun, while the outer limits of it is embodied in the orbit of the planet Saturn. (In ancient astronomy/ astrology Saturn was the outermost planet as the others were not visible.)

Saturnian teachings place a primary emphasis on darkness. Darkness is said to precede light and to provide a matrix for the manifestation of the light: Without darkness there is no light! The "dualism" of the FS is not one that seeks to destroy one pole in favor of the other, but rather it seeks to go beyond the polarities **through experience of both extremes**.

For Gregorius the New Aeon was to be as much determined by the transition into the much anticipated Age of Aquarius as by the Equinox of the Gods perceived by the Beast. In traditional medieval astrology the zodiacal sign of Aquarius is ruled by the planetary force of Saturn. In modern forms the planet Uranus is given primary rulership over that sign.

Gregorius begins his essay on "Mephistopheles oder Luzifer?" with a fascinating discussion of the origins of the name "Mephistopheles," which is naturally of great interest to Germans due to the fact that the demonic figure in *Faust* by the greatest German man of letters, Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, bore that name. Indeed, it is not just a "made up name"— it appears in a number of actual magical grimoires dating from the time of the historical Faust. Mephistopheles is usually interpreted as a Greek word meaning "He who does not love the light." An alternate, but more doubtful, theory connects it with the Hebrew words *mephir* "destroyer," and *tophel* "liar." This seems less likely as there is no plausible syntax to connect these isolated nouns into an actual *name*. Most interestingly, however, Gregorius mentions the name of a Roman female "demon," or malevolent spirit, named "Mefitis." The Roman historian Tacitus mentions that in the second battle of Cremona, a city in northern Italy embroiled in a civil war around 69-70 CE, the city was sacked and burned and that "...only the temple of Mefitis outside the city walls remained standing, defended by its position or the power of its divinity." (*Histories* Book III:33) It is noted that Mefitis is a goddess of pestilential vapors placated in many parts of Italy. Gregorius further notes that subterranean deities, such as Mefitis, were most usually placated with human sacrifices which were conducted in conjunction with sexual orgies. Mefitis, and demonesses like her, it seems, desired male counterparts to complete a sexual polarity. Gregorius speculates that the name Mephistopheles is actually derived from a

phrase meaning "the Lover of Mefitis": Mefitis-o-philos. This appears as far-fetched as the supposed Hebrew etymology of the word, however.

Whatever the origin or meaning of the name Mephistopheles, the interpretation of the name is clearly linked to **darkness** and to the telluric or chthonic realms **below** the Earth— it is the Demonium of the Earth, or Earth-Spirit as reflected in Goethe's *Faust*. This connection is greatly clarified by the Italic lore concerning the demoness Mefitis. This Demonium of the Earth is the most direct link to the power zone of Saturn, according to Gregorius.

The Saturnian initiate must go down into the depths of darkness in order to rise to the heights of the Saturnian sphere— here we find echoes of Nietzsche's famous formula represented in the first sections of *Also Sprach Zarathustra* that one must "go **under**" (*untergehen*) in order to become the **over**-man (*Übermensch*).

Obviously the FS doctrine of the nature and character of Satan is drawn from a structural understanding of the cosmos based on a "polarian" model— that everything is *polarized* with "positive" and negative" ends of a pole. Furthermore, the FS philosophy, or *cosmosophy*, makes use of an idea perhaps most clearly expressed in the Buddhistic schools of *Madhyamika* ("Middle-way") and the *Vajrayana* ("Thunderbolt-Vehicle") which use versions of the formula: *maya = nirvana*. Philosophically the *Madhyamika* school claimed that in fact there was no difference between *maya* and *nirvana*— both were equally void (*sunyata*) or alternately that the phenomenal world (*maya*) exists only in the mind of the perceiver. Thus, if *maya = nirvana* then indulgence in the phenomenal world can lead to the world of bliss. *Maya* is used to attain *nirvana*. In practical terms this opens the way to antinomianism. "Profane" things are made "pure" as an exercise of the mind.

> According to the law of polarization the negative principle has absolutely the same value as the positive and the opposition of forces is necessary and a basic condition for life in every phase of the manifestation of life as a maintenance of force. So the negative Luciferian principle is therefore not only of a divine origin, but it is also just as necessary as the Chrestos-principle as a balancing factor. ...
>
> Lucifer, the great Light-Bearer for humanity, who liberates the ego-centric power of the Solar-Logos with his own power, can function as a factor for salvation for individuals who understand it spiritually just as well as the Chrestos-principle of the Sun ... Therefore to pursue the Cult of Saturn is to grasp the higher octave of this Demiurge, to realize the Luciferian principle which lies within it as a spiritual and divine power, and consciously to harmonize this in the service of the Solar-Logos.
>
> *Blätter* April 1953, p. 6

Lucifer is then the *higher octave* of the Saturnian planetary sphere, while Satan is the lower octave. The octaves are cosmic principles, and exist beyond characterizations of "good" and "evil." They simply **are**. They exist as harmonics. Each is necessary to the entirety of the Saturnian sphere, but neither defines the sphere completely. They are each *pars pro toto*— parts of a whole.

On some level this polarized cosmology was understood by Goethe, as he has Mephistopheles identify himself as:

> *ich bin ein Teil des Teils, der anfangs alles war,*
> *ein Teil der Finsternis, die sich das Licht gebar*
>
> I am a part of the part, that was in the beginning everything,
> a part of the darkness, that gave birth to the light...
>
> *Faust I*: 1349-50

This idea perfectly reflects the Saturnian concept that the Darkness is primary and precedes the Light, and is therefore necessary to the existence of the Light. There is no Light without Darkness. This is true in the cosmic order— but it is just as true in the lives of individual initiates.

In "*Der Mensch in seiner höchsten Erkenntnisreife*" (Humanity in its Fullest Intellectual Maturity) delivered at the Easter Lodge of the FS in 1961, Gregorius discussed the nature of humanity— and again he returns to the model of *polarization*. As an individual being Gregorius sees the human as an entity caught between two opposing poles of life or creativity and death or destruction, or between knowledge and ignorance. But, of course, Gregorius does not see these as "good" *versus* "evil." He sees both poles as necessary to the evolution or initiation of the individual. However, as the FS philosophy has it, only an elite part of humanity will ever be able to see beyond the dualities or be able to make practical use of both poles of reality for the evolution of the self.

Ignorance, or "Agnosis," (German *Nichtwissen*), when recognized as such by the potential initiate, is a true spur to real knowledge or understanding. Here we are reminded of the declaration of the oracle at Delphi that Socrates was the wisest of men in all Greece because he claimed "to know nothing." All knowledge begins with an assumption of ignorance. But the ignorance is like a great weight on the spirit and soul— only the strong will be able to use this resistance to enlightenment for the purpose of self-transformation. The all-pervasive ignorance of the masses is a testing mechanism. The masses incapable of true Knowledge (gnosis) become prisoners of unconsciousness where external god-forms are projected in order to allay the humans' fear of having to doubt. The Saturnian elite, however, recognize that they are their own gods— they must be for there simply are no others. Gregorius writes that the Saturnian initiate "should elevate himself upon the pedestal of a god-like entity, despite his profound knowledge that there is no personal God— just as there is no Devil."(p. 4)

Despite the insistence upon the initiated individual as the true measurement of the divine, certain apparently objective figures of god-like dimensions play a part in the Saturnian cosmology. These apparent divinities are, however, not gods in the traditional sense. They are either objective concrete phenomena or psychogonic projections of individual or collective human minds.

To the former category belong entities such as Saturnus — the creative agency, or demiurge, of the cosmos as well as Lucifer and Satana/s— the so-called higher and lower octaves of the Saturnian planetary sphere. To the latter category belongs the GOTOS, the egregore of the *Fraternitas Saturni*. This entity has been built up through the ages as a result of Saturnian magical work by individual magicians and the FS as a whole. The Grand Master of the order stands in a special relationship with this entity as it is identified with the 33° of the order— the *Gradus Ordinis Templi Orientis Saturni* (G.O.T.O.S.).

The archetypes such as Saturnus and Lucifer become models for the evolution of the magician. They are the patterns of existence in the objective universe which initiates use to shape their own paths of transformation. But the entities that are the pure products of human will are utilized as tools for the creation of certain magical effects. The GOTOS holds together and empowers the FS in a general way and lends its power to individual members who know the keys to gaining access to that power. The creation of such egregores or psychogones (entities generated by the agency of the human psyche or will) is a common magical technique in the FS even on a much smaller scale.

The structural framework of initiation in the Fraternitas Saturni is provided by the 33 degrees based on the system of the Ancient and Accepted Scottish Rite. This becomes a vast training curriculum for the acquisition of magical skills and techniques. This progress is seen as a continuum through the 33 degrees with no annihilation of the self being a part of it.

The path of Saturn is constantly being called one that is both lonely and fraught with danger and suffering— all of which is taken on as a matter of self-determined volition. The role of antinomianism in the FS curriculum is significant. Not only is there an emphasis on dark and foreboding images and experiences, which is meant to weed out those unfit for Saturnian initiation, but there is also the common training principle of going against the grain of the initiate's natural inclinations. For example, if the person is naturally oriented toward intellectual and analytical pursuits, that person might be directed to emphasize emotive and intuitive methods in training.

The magical methodology created by Gregorius for the FS hinges on experience and knowledge— the experience of the Saturnian life and of the sacraments of the Brotherhood and knowledge of the Saturnian "Cosmosophy" or wisdom concerning the cosmic order. Solitude is cultivated so as to isolate the true subject of the transformation— the individual self. The transformational process follows along a path defined by the thirty-three degrees leading from Earth to the core of the Saturnian sphere. In that sphere, according to Saturnian Cosmosophy, is the true reality of the Solar-Logos. The Sun is the polar opposite of Saturn. But because the core on one extreme contains the essence of its opposite, the path to Saturn is the surest path to the Sun. In this way the alchemical "lead" is transformed into

"gold." Standard western magical symbolism ascribes lead to Saturn and gold to the Sun. This is the initiatory application of the Cosmosophical doctrines of polarization.

The chief function of the Brotherhood itself in this process for the individual is that the group builds and maintains a constant bond with the Saturnian sphere in the form of the egregore GOTOS. The egregore is the product of concentrated collective thought forms built up throughout the years by the FS. The bond with this egregore both aids in the "re-polarization" of the individual toward the Saturnian sphere and provides energy for bringing about practical magical ends.

Because the FS has as one of its main teachings that the world is passing into a so-called Aquarian-Uranian Age a fairly developed picture of the envisioned future emerges. It only bears a fleeting resemblance to the much publicized "Age of Aquarius" made popular in the 1960s and 1970s. The astrological sign Aquarius is traditionally ruled by Saturn with his dark and distant aspects. Only in more modern times, with the discovery of the planets outside the orbit of Saturn, was Aquarius assigned to the planet Uranus.

This Aquarian-Uranian Age, ruled by Saturn, will be one in which a spiritual elite will be increasingly powerful. But because the initiatory process of this Saturnian spiritual elite takes place on a very individualized basis, cooperation or fellowship between and among initiates will be a great challenge. This is part of the significance of the Brotherhood of Saturn itself. The individuals seek solitude for their spiritual development, but the physical basis needed to sustain the spiritual solitude requires social cooperation. One unrealized, yet definite part of the Saturnian vision was the establishment of a "monastery" for initiates. This monastery would serve as an educational center (and vacation site) for most members of the order, while it would be staffed by a group of high grade initiates who would live there. The monastery would provide the kind of physical and spiritual isolation conducive to Saturnian initiation.

Obviously there is nothing "evil" about the doctrines of the FS. However, at the same time the Brotherhood, because it was able in its early years to remain outside the public spotlight, was not particularly shy about addressing the true nature and character of entities such as Satan and Lucifer in an initiatory context. By so doing they discovered for themselves the powerful role these entities can and do play in the transformation of individuals through magical technologies. It perhaps seems a shame that more people are not willing at least to hear about these alternate forms of spirituality— but *on the other hand* the fact is that widespread acceptance of such ideas is simply not possible.

Appendix B
Preface to *Fire and Ice*
- by -
Michael A. Aquino

Germany is the most disturbing place in the world.

Other nations, other cultures have their folklore, their superstitions, their sacred groves and magical mountains. Tourists in England may imagine primeval Rites of Spring at Stonehenge, while visitors to Egypt or Mexico gaze at the towering pyramids in ecstatic awe of their age and grandeur. Pilgrims to Mecca adore a sacred rock covered in silk, while in Rome the faithful seek the favor of St. Peter by kissing the foot of his statue.

But all these sites, relics, and curios are tacitly assigned to a role apart from what modern civilization smugly defines as reality. Perhaps they were indeed real to an ancient civilization, or even to our own grandparents. In this technological era of computers and space shuttles, however, they are dismissed as mere baubles for the commercial titillation of tourists or religious fanatics.

In Germany this reassuring distinction does not exist.

Sail down the Rhine and you pass castles erected in the mists of prehistory by gods, giants, or dæmons, close by cliffs from whose heights phantom sirens enticed mariners to their doom; the river itself gleams with a golden hoard which brought about the ruin of the ancient world of the gods and inaugurated that of mankind in its place. Wander through the Teutoburger Forest to the Externsteine, that stark, haunted cairn which fixes the heavens in their place. In the vastness of Thuringia gaze upon the Kyffhäuser mountain wherein the Emperor Barbarossa slumbers, awaiting the call of his ancient warriors to lead them again across the frozen wastes to Kharkov. Enter Munich's *Frauenkirche* cathedral across the flagstones wherein the impression of the Devil's cloven foot burns to this day. Stroll through the bustling capital of Bonn amidst gleaming skyscrapers and polished Mercedes limousines— then raise your eyes to behold on a distant crag the baleful ruins of *Drachenfels*, the fearsome dragon-castle of hushed and unholy legend. In Germany the spectres of nameless things glide silently among the living, and that which ought never to be is only too real.

And so this nation has been instinctively feared by the rest of the world far beyond whatever military or economic power it has held at any particular time. When Mussolini dressed his *Fasci di Combattimento* in black-and-silver uniforms, observers dismissed it as comic and theatrical. When the same colors appeared on Nazi Germany's *Schutzstaffel*, however, it wasn't in the least amusing. Rather it heralded precisely what Germany's neighbors had dreaded for so long: the reawakening of ancient sorceries allied with modern science— Siegfried's enchanted sword reforged in the furnaces of the Krupps. Against the rest of the Axis, World War II was just another war. But against Germany it was a holy crusade against a metaphysical horror beyond mere politics— a desperate campaign to

withstand the emergent Powers of Darkness and banish them again to the Outer Spheres.

Today, a half-century later, the world has not yet recovered from that experience. Tolkien's Mordor is still felt to harbor the ghosts of Sauron and Morgoth beneath its affable *Gemütlichkeit*. Germany remains divided in two; like Siegfried's blade it is thought to be much less dangerous that way. Authors and screenwriters know that German villains are easily the most diabolical, and if you add a dash of the supernatural to their menace— as in *Raiders of the Lost Ark* — an exquisitely frightful combination results.

The roots of contemporary Western occultism are also to be found in the swirling *Nacht und Nebel* of Germany. The Freemasons, Vehm, Rosicrucians, Ariosophists, Thule Gesellschaft, and Illuminati all sprang from its enchanted soil. Even the famous Hermetic Order of the Golden Dawn, that most British of occult fraternities, seduced aspirants with claims of its German origins. When *Reichsführer—SS* Heinrich Himmler constructed Black Magical ritual chambers in Westphalia's Wewelsburg Castle as the *Mittelpunkt der Welt*, he was merely formalizing what occultists had known all along: that **here** was the wellspring of what some call knowledge and others, less boldly, call evil.

So why, amid the flood of books on contemporary occultism, has so little been written about the esoteric influence of Germany?

The answer is obvious, yet itself so controversial that it is rarely openly acknowledged. German occultism leads too quickly into forbidden realms such as racial differences, social Darwinism, unhallowed prehistoric civilizations and Judæo-Christianity's corruption of the human soul. Few are the authors and publishers who dare tread such dangerous ground, even fortified with suitably pious disclaimers. As for the self-professed pagans of today's Age of Aquarius, nestled in gentle fantasies of candles and crystals, they are among the first to cry for suppression of That which lies beyond, fearing that an aroused, hysterical public would savage them as cruelly as it would genuine disciples of the Black Arts.

Stephen Flowers has dared to open the gate which was not to be opened. In a series of books under the *nom de plume* of Edred Thorsson, he has already unveiled the mysteries of the Runes, that most mysterious of magical mechanisms, and has rescued Guido von List's classical treatise on that subject from the obscurity in which it has languished for almost a century. Now in the present work he has turned his attention to the *Fraternitas Saturni*. Why has he done this? And why for that matter should anyone care about this particular institution?

Books on occultism are generally written either by passionate pretenders frantic for self-advertisement, or by historians equally anxious to disassociate themselves from the bewildering absurdities they describe. Stephen Flowers, fortunately for the reader, labors under neither hindrance. The meticulous and methodical scholar, he received his Doctor of Philosophy degree in Germanic Studies from

the University of Texas and has gone on to teach a series of distinguished collegiate courses in that field. Just as systematically he has personally experimented with the various esoteric arts and sciences he has investigated, and is not the least apologetic for having done so. He is quitely recognized as an authority within several prestigious initiatory environments, and has been a mentor and counselor to a good many occult authorities whose names are more widely publicized than his own.

He undertook this particular book because the *Fraternitas Saturni* seemed to him both significant and unappreciated as an occult phenomenon. At first glance it appears to be little more than an early O.T.O. clone which was a bit more reluctant to be devoured by Aleister Crowley than its better known predecessor. Certainly its emphasis upon a sexual interpretation of magic stems from the O.T.O. Yet, as Flowers points out, the *Fraternitas Saturni* diverged from the O.T.O in one very meaningful respect. For Saturnine, magic was a means of **transcending** a naturally-ordered existence— **not** of ritual obliteration of the self within it. By this simple affirmation the *Fraternitas Saturni* removed itself from the Right-Hand Path and placed itself squarely on the *Via Sinistra*, whose distinctive feature is rejection of the universe as it is perceived to be structured.

Nevertheless the fraternity failed to successfully negotiate the Black Brick Road, relying as it did upon a natural mechanism of the body — sex — to catalyze its Workings. In an appendix to this book Flowers explores this delicate subject with more insight and candor than have ever graced far more turgid writings on the subject— including those of the *Fraternitas Saturni* itself. Per Flowers' analysis, one can see how so many would-be sex magicians have charged like lemmings into this alluring ocean. If they then vanish beneath the surface with a grunt and a squeal, should one be surprised?

You will enjoy this book. You will also learn a great deal from it. It is written by someone who knows his stuff, on a subject that is directly relevant to the major occult issues of our time. Let us all pester the author to write more books like it.