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Richard and Isabella Ingalese: The Nicholas and Perenelle of California [xviii]

The East Coast wasn't the only place of alchemical transmutations in the first half of this century. The land of the "Gold Rush," California, is home to America's own immortal alchemical couple. In the vein of Nicholas and Perenelle Flamel, these two American originals are reputed to have achieved "The Stone" and live on to this day. Left mostly to oral lore and legend, the story of the Ingaleses first appeared in print in the November 1928 issue of *Occult Review*, and later was mentioned in a sidebar on "Alchemy" in the encyclopedia, *Man, Myth, and Magic*, in 1970.

Their early years are unremarkable with the couple marrying in 1898. Richard was a lawyer specializing in corporate and mining law, and Isabella was a full time psychic, teacher, and healer. They lived in several locations across the country, until settling in Los Angeles around 1912.

In the 1928 article, the author, Barbara McKenzie, interviews Isabella regarding how she and her husband became interested in alchemy. With the approach of advancing age, Mrs. Ingalese states, she and her Richard sought to discover the Philosopher's Stone so that they might "...perhaps add another score of working years to man's so-called allotted span." Despite the many blinds and false routes given to alchemical work, the couple pursued their work guided by Mrs. Ingalese's psychic gifts.

In a pamphlet written by Richard, he describes their original goal as the creation of Oil of Gold, but instead chose to work with copper because of the cheaper price.

After six years of work, two mortgages, several explosions, and two asphyxiations later, Richard states that in 1917, they were able to produce the White Stone of the Philosophers. McKenzie was offered a sample of the White Powder, but readily accepted a sample of the Red Stone. It is not clear why she accepted one and refused the other, however, she records her experiences as follows: "...it was little more - on my tongue, saying it must lie there and not be swallowed. I immediately noticed an intense bitterness, which is said to be the gold, but other metals I could not detect. In two or three seconds it had been absorbed or dispersed, so that not even a flavor remained in my mouth."

Continuing their search for the Red Stone from 1917 to 1920, the Ingaleses felt they had achieved...
success and shared their results with members of their "renewal club," possibly made up of investors who supported their alchemical research. At the time of their discovery and potentizing of the Red Stone, Robert was 66 and Isabella 54 years of age. Richard states that they did not respond as well as others to the curative powers of the Stone. However, the usual claims of virility, fertility, and incurables being cured, are reported. Ms. McKenzie notes that she was unable to verify any of the Inglases claims in this regard. Richard is quoted as noting that they were familiar with other alchemists who were over 600, 400, and 200 years old. All looking and acting as if they were "about 40 years of age." The most remarkable part of the story however, is Richard's matter of fact description of the resurrection of the wife of a prominent physician who had been dead for thirty minutes.

"Half an hour had elapsed and her body was growing cold. A dose of the dissolved White Stone was placed into the mouth of the corpse without perceptible results. Fifteen minutes later a second dose was administered and the heart commenced to pulsate weakly. Fifteen minutes later a third dose was given and soon the woman opened her eyes. In the course of a few weeks the woman became convalescent, after which she lived seven years."

As for the methods they used, Isabella states that they followed the methods of Paracelsus, particularly Waite's edition of The Alchemical and Hermetic Writings of Paracelsus, but no further details were forthcoming. Several books were written by the couple, but are very difficult to obtain. While stories of their longevity survived them, it is quite clear that the Inglesees died in 1934, Isabella in May and Richard in October. Extensive debts were piled against their property, which included 440 acres of land in San Diego. The property was awarded to the plaintiff to satisfy the suit, and surprisingly, the property was acquired by a New Thought group in 1940, being operated as spiritual center continuously ever since.

It would be nice to believe that Isabella and Richard are still alive and that their deaths had been faked, but evidence is to the contrary. Unlike their alchemical predecessors, the age of bureaucracies was catching up with them. Death certificates on file in Los Angeles are full of details prior to and immediately following their deaths, as well as the causes. Maybe this should be a lesson to would be seekers of immortality, that even if death can be escaped, or at least delayed, you still need to have a Social Security Number.

How many students, all members of the Rosicrucian Order, AMORC that practiced alchemy at RCU is not easily known, however, at least two of its alumni would re-emerge later on: George Fenzke, and Dr. Albert Richard Riedel, better known by his pseudonym, "Frater Albertus". [xix]

Frater Albertus

While AMORC had done much to re-vivify the study of laboratory alchemy in twentieth century America, it was one of its students that would make it accessible to more than just the members of one, albeit large, esoteric fraternity. Dr. Albert Riedel, remembered by Frater Graves as "a little too complicated for the rest of us" went on to publish at least nine books, two of which have become almost standard reading: The Alchemist's Handbook, and The Seven Rays of the QBL.

It was in 1960 that his first title appeared, under the pseudonym "Albertus Spagyricus, F.R.C." which included the "Alchemical Manifesto 1960" declaring the opening of the Paracelsus Research Society. The use of the initials "F.R.C." after his name not only designates a general Rosicrucian connection, but also may have been an allusion to his having attained a particular status within the grade system of AMORC. At the Paracelsus Research Society (PRS) Frater Albertus conducted classes on plant, mineral, metallic, and animal alchemy. In the beginning, classes lasted for three two-week sessions, and were later expanded for a period of seven years, under the Latin titles of Prima, Secunda, etc. Albertus' specialty was spagyrics, along with antimony based on the alchemical text, Triumphal Chariot.
of Antimony. In addition, Qabalah, and specialized applications of astrology were taught. Among his students were his former classmate at RCU, George Fenzke, Hans Nintzel [xx], who was sent there by Israel Regardie (who also studied with Albertus) and Art Kunkin, founder of the L.A. Free Press, and inheritor of Regardie's library.

For over a quarter of a century, Albertus initiated hundreds of students into the modern practices of alchemy. Over 600 by one estimate attended his classes. Yet, in 1984, when he died, the Paracelsus Research Society was left without a successor; Albertus never planned for one. His dream of an alchemical university never materialized, although some of his students attempted it. After a brief period as the Paracelsus College, it finally closed its doors.

AMORC: Round Three

By 1988, the need for a new laboratory alchemical movement was growing. Many of the former students of Fr. Albertus were also current or former members of AMORC, as well as students of the Golden Dawn. It was at this time, that the administrators of RCUI approached Jack Glass to teach a new two-week class on alchemy in San Jose, California. In addition to being a member of AMORC, Glass brought with him over thirty years of experience in alchemy, fourteen of them with Albertus. George Fenske, Albertus' old classmate, co-taught the class as well.[xxii]

The first class debuted in June of 1989 and had over 40 students enrolled. Unfortunately, less than a year after the fires of the ovens were re-kindled, Frater Fenzke passed through transition in April of 1990. In an attempt to fill the void left by his passing, Glass asked Russell B. House to co-instruct the program. The course was originally designed to last for three years, with each class lasting for two weeks for eight hours per day. Plant, mineral, and metallic work were taught, with each class building on the work of the previous one. Originally, the classes were to be open only to those members of AMORC who had attained its Illuminati section, or beyond its Ninth Degree. This was later dropped and they were made available to any AMORC member who had completed the previous class, and was in the Fourth Degree or beyond. In 1991 the classes were shortened to one week each year. Alchemy I covered the basics of plant preparation, as well as history and theory. Herbal elixirs, tinctures, and methods of producing the 'plant stone' were examined and experimented with. The second year of the program consisted of Alchemy II or the mineral kingdom. Here tinctures were prepared with the toxic semi-metal antimony, along with oil of sulfur and tartar preparations. The curriculum for year three included the preparation of oils or "Sulfurs" for the seven planetary metals, and illusive Philosophic Mercury.

The program was so successful that a two-day intensive for RCUI extension campuses was developed with enough information to allow students to begin their own explorations into the world of plant work, or the Lesser Circulation. This program of activity was conducted by both Glass and House until 1993. After a brief period of inactivity, the program was re-instituted, and at the time of this writing is being taught by a former student of George Fenske.

Alden, LPN, and The Philosophers of Nature

After the demise of PRS, Paracelsus College was not the only one trying to keep alchemy alive. Scott Wilber, an AMORC member and PRS alumni, founded Alden Research. Presumably taking its name from H. Spencer Lewis's esoteric name "Alden", it attempted to verify early alchemical experiments to see if they matched chemical experiences. An associate of Wilber's, in 1985 heard from Hans Nintzel about a French alchemical organization
called "Les Philosopes de le Nature" (LPN) founded by Jean Dubuis in 1979.[xxiii] Dubois actually began his alchemical studies with one of the alchemical kits supplied by AMORC, and in addition was a former high ranking member of the AMORC in France and the Traditional Martinist Order (TMO). Dubuis derived some of his early work from research done by Albertus and PRS, and acknowledges a debt to Albertus for connecting alchemy and kabbalah. At the time, LPN was the only school of its kind offering a complete course of plant and mineral alchemical studies, along with kabbalah, and general esoteric studies. It required no oaths of secrecy from its members, only that they respect the copyright and ownership of the materials they received. All true initiation was seen as being strictly a personal and interior thing, not something conveyable by external means.

After making contact with LPN in France, arrangements were made for the lessons to be sent to the United States for translation into English. Initial funds for the project were supplied by Bill van Doren who had completed seven years of alchemical study with Albertus in PRS. However, it was made clear by Dubuis, that neither LPN nor he would accept any money for the lessons, they were given freely to the United States with no strings attached. This was his gift to esoteric students here, and in other English speaking countries that would derive benefit from the subsequent translations.

In 1986, LPN-USA was officially founded, and in 1994 changed its name to The Philosophers of Nature (PON) to show its independent status from the French parent organization.

Conclusion

So how many alchemists are there in the United States? There is no way to really tell. While several hundred have been trained by AMORC and LPN/PON classes and seminars, and 600 or more by Albertus, many of them overlap. According to Samuel Weiser Publications[xxiv], Frater Albertus' Alchemist's Handbook is in its fifth edition, making a total of 12,500 copies in print. How many copies of Manfred Junius's Practical Handbook of Plant Alchemy have been published is unknown, but could easily equal that of Albertus's book. So, does that mean that there are over 12,000 or 13,000 practical alchemists in America? Probably not. It would be surprising if over five percent of that total number actually continue laboratory work on a regular basis.

However, we do know, that alchemy is still alive, and very well in America. AMORC continues its summer courses in San Jose, with an occasional off-site seminar; PON distributes lessons and holds yearly week long seminars and weekend workshops, and many of the PRS alumni quietly go about their business of teaching what they have learned, the old fashioned way. Even the Internet has a Website by Adam McLean complete with an alchemical course ready for the downloading; along with PON's site offering sample courses for the esoterically curious.

Maybe Albertus' predictions of a new Golden Age of Alchemy, with scientist and layman working alike is right on target.[xxv]

So, as we enter the 21st century, the future for alchemy at least, looks bright. Maybe with this many people grinding, boiling, and macerating into the lonely hours of the morning, somebody will actually find the Philosopher's Stone. If they do, hopefully they'll break their pledge of secrecy and share it with me!

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NOTES


"Alchemy is Alive and Well" by Hans Nintzel, GNOSIS, No. 8, Summer 1988. Also, interview with the author, September 1994 (3rd Annual LPN Seminar, St. Charles, Illinois) and January 1995 (Dallas, Texas).

"Practical Alchemy and Physical Immortality, An Interview with Art Kunkin" by Christopher Farmer. Ibid.


Telephone conversation with Samuel Weiser, Publications, York Beach, Maine. Spring, 1996.

Albertus, Alchemist of the Rocky Mountains. P. 123.

Mark Stavish is a long-time student of esotericism and has written over a two-dozen critically received articles, book reviews, and interviews on western esoteric philosophy and practices. Email: MrkStavish@aol.com. More information about his work can be found at www.hermetic.com/stavish/ and Voxhermes at www.yahoogroups.com. Copyright 1996 Mark Stavish. All Rights Reserved. Special thanks to Russell B. House, current vice-president of the Philosopher’s of Nature (PON-USA), who without his freely sharing of his extensive experience, insights and articles regarding the world of modern alchemy, this article would be considerably less than it is.
Meditation on the Emerald Tablet
by Janet K. Turner

The Emerald Tablet not only operates on the grand scale of personal enlightenment but also on an every day, day to day, level when you are seeking answers to questions and situations. Each question or situation you find yourself to be perplexed about a seemingly small matter, by following the procedure of the Emerald Tablet and letting go of the dross and piercing the clouds of unknowing, the answer to that small matter will be revealed to you just as the experience of total enlightenment was. That is the whole theme of the Emerald Tablet, a continuing spiral stream of enlightenment – knowledge - by going from Above to Below and back again. No matter how small, no matter how large, it is the same – Above to Below and back again, a continuing spiraling process.

After Enlightenment – what next – chop wood, carry water, do the laundry. The small chores of life can be just as entangling as the search for your essence and so to retain your balance, your Enlightenment, you must continue to employ the same process over and over again seeking your answers in the Above and bringing them down to the Below. After all, as sophisticated as man is with his technology and his vast accomplishments and levels or organization, it is the small thing, the O-ring, the microbe, that can bring those “measures of mankind” crashing down into oblivion. And so the process goes, above to below, work and prayer, labor and oratory – always asking, checking, verifying, praying, being unattached – watching for the rock in the road. The big ones are easy to see. It is the small, the minute that are treacherous, that can spell unseen disaster and that is the message of the Emerald Tablet in so many words. As Above so Below – as Below, so Above – continually over and over – as long as you live this earthly life.

For it is in the Above, the universal knowledge, that unseen cosmic swirl of energy and information that you must tap into for your answers – for all your answers come from Above and all your questions come from Below.

For we, humans, came from above to learn these special earthly lessons – the answers and solutions and exercises come from Above to be realized here in the Below. So the Emerald Tablet is not just an archaically phrased bit of ancient knowledge for us to ponder it’s meaning in our lives. It is to be used each and every day, each and every minute, so to speak, constantly throwing off the dross, cutting to the chase – piercing the clouds of unknowing and reaching into the Above for the answer.

Those seven steps, seven precepts, can be used on all levels of reality – if you truly want to transform yourself, refine the leaden portion of that which is you into the Gold of sunshine, the shining drop of dew, the Silver of the Moon and the Fire of the Eye.
**FEATURES**

**From the Fire** (by Dennis William Hauck)

During a recent trip to Prague, I felt unusually sensitive to the spirits of the alchemists, unlike any time I had been there before. I felt a real empathy with all the suffering (both personal and social) these dedicated souls went through to practice their universal philosophy. I felt them still fighting the war for freedom of consciousness, still trying to dissolve the "salted" world of false beliefs and wrong judgments, to smash the delusional social matrix in which we still find ourselves trapped. Yet these "angry spirits of the alchemists" were new to me. I had always thought the alchemists suffered quietly, in peace with their souls. Now I realized these men and women were completely fed-up and pissed-off with the imperfect world around them. In alchemical terms, they were vitriolic, flowing with the biting and brutally honest sulfuric acid of the suffering soul. Perhaps it was the nearness of Mars that made these feelings surface in me, perhaps it was actually the ghosts of the alchemists walking the streets of ancient Prague, or maybe some synergistic combination of both. For whatever reason, I truly felt and deeply honored the sacrifices these men and women made to humankind.

My thoughts turned to how difficult it was for our species just to accept that we are not the center of the universe, that the earth is not even the center of our solar system, and only the divine Sun could occupy such an important position. (Is that not still our problem?) Yet for all Copernicus and Galileo sacrificed to cure the cancerous hubris of human beliefs, neither of these famous men gave as much as the obscure alchemist Giordiano Bruno. An accomplished adept, Bruno declared that the heretic Copernicus had not gone far enough. The sun was indeed the center of the solar system, but beyond that, he insisted, there were many suns in the universe, many solar systems. He even stated there were probably other earths and other sentient beings and suggested that the divine light of mind was not the privileged possession of just our species. That was too much for the Church. While they let Copernicus and Galileo apologize for their errant thoughts, the Church immediately burned Bruno alive in a public display of homeland security that left lasting impressions on alchemists everywhere.

To placate and honor the spirits of the alchemists, I would like to issue a corrected version of *De Crimine Falsi*, the decree against alchemy issued by Pope John XXII in 1317. The decree said in part: "Alchemies are here prohibited and those who practice them or procure their being done are punished. They must forfeit to the public treasury for the benefit of the poor as much genuine gold and silver as they have manufactured. If they have not sufficient means for this, the penalty may be changed to another at the discretion of the judge, and they shall be considered criminals." Of course, the Church failed to realize the official decree had actually validated the most controversial claim of the alchemists (changing base metals into noble metals) by demanding the alchemists turn over all "genuine gold and silver they have manufactured."

Therefore, in honor of all the alchemists past, I do herewith issue the new *De Crimine Falsi*: "Hypocrisies are hereby prohibited, and those who practice them or promote propaganda and spread falsity should be punished. They must forfeit to the public enlightenment all knowledge and records of past and ongoing atrocities committed through selfish acts and organizational politics, whether committed in the name of the people or in the name of God. If they have not sufficient integrity or
understanding to do this, then the penalty will be administered by the people, and all clerics, politicians, CEOs, and other wrongful rulers shall be considered criminals against the human spirit."

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**New Releases**

**Alchemical Healing: A Guide to Spiritual, Physical, and Transformational Medicine**


All people have inherent healing abilities. Within us dwell the memories of our ancestors, and the ability to more fully comprehend new mysteries bursting forth from our unfolding universe. We are all mystics and sages waiting to remember what we’ve misplaced. In the course of remembering, we are not limited to what is in our own heads; we have access to the gestalt of the entire accumulated wisdom. *Alchemical Healing* is a hands-on manual that provides a series of initiatory steps toward mastering a powerful healing form. It also offers stories from my own life and from others who have given and received alchemical healing. It provides the basics, the palette and tools for the work, without limiting the creative expression of what is more an art form than a doctrine. Skill is developed through practice, and by learning about the elements used, much as artists learns about the properties of their chosen medium. Author Nicki Scully describes this process: "Being a healer requires hyper-vigilance. It asks you to constantly question your motives while you strive to be completely present to each moment. One does not graduate to superhero status as a healer: if you think you've arrived, it's time to start over. Healing is a humbling experience. To understand who is actually doing the healing in Alchemical Healing, one must look at the dynamics of the healing process. A person is in need of healing. That person contracts with someone who has experience with bringing relief and healing, through skillful means that includes invoking and working with supportive energies. You now have the person seeking to be healed, the practitioner, and spirit-which includes the allies, elements, plant spirits, and any other sentients that are invoked in the process. You can't say that any one of those three components alone is the healer; it takes all three aspects engaged in order to make the healer, and to achieve the healing. When the three parts are working together, it is a dance for which there is music along with both human partners. The practitioner and the healing recipient are integral dancers moving the process. All participants share in directing the process. The practitioner may lead initially, but when the dance is happening in a fluid manner, the leading is transferred from one to another, with all three taking turns. The music for the dance comes from outside of the two people. Music, in this metaphor, is both the magic, and the result of magic. The person being healed gets into the rhythm under the guidance of the practitioner, who has experience both invoking the energies and guiding the person into awareness of them: the ‘healer’ starts the process and brings the person's attention to the music. By actively participating, they are moved by subtle energies that they become aware of as they engage in the process. The subtle energies are here all the time. It is through the process of forms such as alchemical healing that we become aware of them. The person being healed has invited the healer to apply his arts to invoke this process. Meanwhile, these rich resources come into play and have more sway with the physical realities. Who is the healer? The healer is the totality of all involved. The active combination of the healer, the healee, and the allies results in a whole that is greater than the sum of the individual parts."

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Alchemy Lectures and Workshops

Crucible 2003

Join Dennis William Hauck in a complete day of transformation. This year’s Crucible event relocates to a beautiful new setting that offers a more tranquil atmosphere for the advanced techniques that will be taught in the workshop. The all-day event will be held on Saturday, October 11, 2003, at the Sierra 2 Center in Sacramento, California. Located on three acres of lush landscaping, the center is within easy reach of downtown and within walking distance of several restaurants, bookstores, and coffee houses. Next to Sierra Green park in the Curtis Park section of Sacramento, the center is known for its tranquil and inspiring setting. The workshop takes place in the large and airy Green Room and adjacent Meditation Courtyard, which features dozens of blooming flowers and trees, lovely landscaped lighting, and a serene waterfall. This year's experiential, multimedia event features powerful demonstrations of both spiritual and practical techniques in alchemy and will include live experiments and actual meditations used by the alchemists. There will also be refreshments and a vendor area offering rare books, recent titles, prints, tinctures, essential oils, videos, audio tapes, and many more unique products. Because of the individual work during this seminar, space is limited to 40 participants. Tuition is $79 per person (discounts are available for multiple registrations). Register Now! Click here for Complete Information and Schedule.

Alchemy of Light

This introduction to the Great Art with Alan Sherry is meant to give participants insight into the inner Teachings of Ancient and Modern Adepts. The workshop will be held in Michigan on October 25. Following closely in the footsteps of nature we will seek out practical keys to the formation of elixirs, philosophical medicines and healing agents from the vegetable kingdom. We will give the Alchemists point of view concerning the ancient concepts of Body, Soul and Spirit. Their secret knowledge can be proven before the eyes of students, unlike many forms of metaphysical speculations and religious study. Two classes covering the fundamental principles of alchemy and the nature of light. Alan Sherry has studied with four world class Alchemists and others. These include Frater Albertus, Monfred Funius, and Jean Dubois. He has taught privately and professionally for 25 years. October 25: 11:00am – 4:00pm. $25. Michigan Contact: Butler Center, Attn: Loran Butler (517-568-4170); Indiana Contact: Rev. Charles Lauer (260-486-1294).

Announcements

- On August 24th, fifteen months and a few days since its opening, the Alchemy Museum welcomed its 10,000th visitor, Katerina Brennerova of Chomutov, northern Bohemia, who received a T-shirt commemorating the occasion. The museum is located in the Sankturinovsky House, one of the
oldest buildings in Kutna Hora in the Czech Republic. It was originally built in the 13th Century in Gothic style as a fortified building with a tower and later rebuilt in Baroque style. During its early days there was a metallurgy workshop in the cellar where silver ore was processed and refined. Admission is free. The director is Michal Pober. You can subscribe to the museum newsletter by sending an email to alchemymuseum.newsletter-subscribe@topica.com.

- Paulo Coelho's transformative novel The Alchemist is being made into a motion picture. The project has begun production and is being directed by Laurence Fishburne. No release information is available at this time.
- Anyone working on Oils of Metals and willing to share results or products, please contact Greg Schrum at ETX@alchemylab.com.

Send your event listings or announcements to editor@alchemylab.com.

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**EDITORIAL**

**From the Editor (Duane Saari)**

“Change is in the air” is a statement often used to describe the state of our environment or the state our state of being. The changes taking place today are many and varied.

The “unprecedented changes” I referred to in our previous issue of the Alchemy Journal seem like an understatement now, only two months later. Two countries are still trying to determine what caused the largest blackout to ever happen on the North American continent, the planet Mars is closer to Earth than it has been in 600 centuries, and the California gubernatorial recall election has just been recalled. Outside the spotlight of the national media, we are going through a quieter, but as powerful natural change. This one - the Autumn Equinox – is frequent and predictable.

Alchemy is a deliberate, planned and invited change that is considered successful when it results in personal transformation. In fact, alchemy can be considered a technology of spiritual transformation. The Work is a sacred and practical way to participate in the changes that are constantly taking place immediately around us, in our world and in the universe. Practiced with discipline and principle, it is also a way to use the energy of constant change to live a life of significant growth and development.

The two articles in this issue speak to the nature of change. Mark Stavish’s final installment about the history of alchemy reminds us of the passion for transformation that has led many individuals to make significant contributions to our practice. Janet Turner’s meditation on the meaning of the Emerald Tablet in her personal life focuses on the calling not only to alchemists, but to all of us, to be aware that there is a purpose to the constant, small demands for change we experience in our daily lives.

It is my intent to continue the development of the Alchemy Journal as a repository of information and ideas you can use to build your personal vehicle of change.
Submissions

Submit your articles on any aspect of alchemy. We are looking for biographies, historical articles, practical laboratory work, spagyric recipes, philosophical pieces, experiences in personal transformation, spiritual insights, Hermeticism, Gnosticism, book reviews, film and video reviews, website reviews, artwork, etc. Please submit your material or queries via email to editor@alchemylab.com.

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Alchemy Resources

- Alchemergy (Modern Alchemy) http://www.Alchemergy.com
- Alchemy Guild (Membership Organization) http://www.AlchemyGuild.org
- Alchemy Lab (Alchemy Articles, Files, and Gallery) http://www.AlchemyLab.com
- Alchemy Website (Original Alchemy Texts) http://www.levity.com/alchemy/
- Crucible Catalog (Books, Tapes, Labware, Tinctures, Herbs) http://www.Crucible.org
- Flamel College (Alchemy and Hermetic Courses) http://www.FlamelCollege.org