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Esotericism

Fama and Confessio Fraternitatis

(the Rosicrucian Manifestos)

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Anonymous (circle of J. V. Andreae); English translation by Thomas Vaughan

Thomas Vaughan (1652)

Credits

Author	Anonymous (circle of J. V. Andreae); English translation by Thomas Vaughan
Date	1614 and 1615 (English translation 1652)
Original language	German
Version	Thomas Vaughan (1652)
Edition	1.1
Translation	Eugenius Philalethes (Thomas Vaughan)
Source	Wikisource (en) — The Fame and Confession of the Fraternity of R: C:, tradução de Eugenius Philalethes (Thomas Vaughan), Londres, 1652 (ed. 1658)
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About:

The Fama Fraternitatis (1614) and the Confessio Fraternitatis (1615) are the two manifestos that gave birth to the legend of the Rosicrucians.

Published anonymously in Kassel, Germany, they announced a secret fraternity of Christian sages founded by the mysterious Christian Rosenkreuz, who was said to have travelled through Arabia, Egypt and Morocco, learned medicine, alchemy and natural magic from the wise men of the East, and returned to Germany to reform the sciences and religion.

The Fama tells the life of Rosenkreuz and the discovery, 120 years after his death, of his secret tomb, a seven-sided vault lit by an artificial sun, with his body intact and books of wisdom.

The Confessio, written "to the learned of Europe", explains the aims of the Order and invites worthy readers to join it.

The two texts stirred seventeenth-century Europe, provoked hundreds of replies and inspired alchemy, Hermetic philosophy and, later, Freemasonry and the modern Rosicrucian orders.

Most scholars today attribute them to the circle of the Lutheran theologian Johann Valentin Andreae in Tübingen.

The English text is the translation by "Eugenius Philalethes", the pen name of the Welsh alchemist Thomas Vaughan, published in London in 1652 (here in the 1658 edition), in the spelling of the time.

The translator's preface and notes are left out. The text is presented as a historical document of esotericism.

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Contents

Fama Fraternitatis

Confessio Fraternitatis

FAMA FRATERNITATIS

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1 Seeing the only Wise and Merciful God in these latter days hath poured out so richly his mercy and goodness to Mankind, whereby we do attain more and more to the perfect knowledge of his Son Jesus Christ and Nature, that justly we may boast of the happy time, wherein there is not only discovered unto us the half part of the World, which was heretofore unknown & hidden, but he hath also made manifest unto us many wonderful and never-heretofore seen, Works and Creatures of Nature, and moreover hath raised men, indued with great Wisdom which might partly renew and reduce all Arts (in this our Age spotted and imperfect) to perfection; so that finally Man might thereby understand his own Nobleness and Worth, and why he is called Microcosmus, and how far his knowledge extendeth in Nature.

2 Although the rude World herewith will be but little pleased, but rather smile and scoff thereat; also the Pride and Covetousness of the Learned is so great, it will not suffer them to agree together; but were they united, they might out of all those things which in this our Age God doth so richly bestow upon us, collect Librum Naturæ, or a perfect Method of all Arts: but such is their opposition, that they still keep, and are loth to leave the old course, esteeming Porphiry, Aristotle, and Galen, yea and that which hath but a meer shew of learning, more then the clear and manifested Light and Truth; who if they were now living, with much joy would leave their erroneous Doctrines.

2.2 But here is too great weakness for such a great Work: And although in Theologie, Physic, and the Mathematic, the Truth doth oppose it self; nevertheless the old Enemy by his subtilty and craft doth shew himself in hindering every good purpose by his Instruments and contentious wavering people.

2.3 To such an intent of a general Reformation, the most godly and highly illuminated Father, our Brother, C. R. a German, the chief and original of our Fraternity, hath much and long time laboured, who by reason of his poverty (although descended of Noble Parents) in the fifth year of age was placed in a Cloyster, where had learned indifferently the Greek and Latin Tongues, who (upon his earnest desire and request) being yet in his growing years, was associated to a Brother, P. A. L. who had determined to go to the Holy Land.

3 Although this Brother dyed in Ciprus, and so never came to Jerusalem, yet our Brother C. R. did not return, but shipped himself over, and went to Damasco, minding from thence to go to Jerusalem; but by reason of the feebleness of his body he remained still there, and by his skill in Physick he obtained much favour with the Turks: In the mean time he became by chance acquainted with the Wise men of Damasco in Arabia, and beheld what great Wonders they wrought, and how Nature was discovered unto them; hereby was that high and noble Spirit of Brother C.

3.2 R. so stired up, that Jerusalem was not so much now in his mind as Damasco; also he could not bridle his desires any longer, but made a bargain with the Arabians, that they should carry him for a certain sum of money to Damasco; he was but of the age of sixteen years when he came thither, yet of a strong Dutch constitution; there the Wise received him

(as he himself witnesseth) not as a stranger, but as one whom they had long expected, they called him by his name, and shewed him other secrets out of his Cloyster, whereat he could not but mightily wonder: He learned there better the Arabian Tongue; so that the year following he translated the Book M. into good Latin, which he afterwards brought with him.

3.3 This is the place where he did learn his Physick, and his Mathematicks, whereof the World hath just cause to rejoyce, if there were more Love, and less Envy. After three years he returned again with good consent, shipped himself over Sinus Arabicus into Egypt, where he remained not long, but only took better notice there of the Plants and Creatures; he sailed over the whole Mediterranean Sea for to come unto Fez, where the Arabians had directed him.

3.4 And it is a great shame unto us, that wise men, so far remote th' one from th' other , should not only be of one opinion, hating all contentious Writings, but also be so willing and ready under the seal of secrecy to impart their secrets to others.

4 Every year the Arabians and Africans do send one to another, inquiring one of another out of their Arts, if happily they had found out some better things, or if Experience had weakened their Reasons.

4.2 Yearly there came something to light, whereby the Mathematica, Physic, and Magic (for in those are they of Fez most skilful) were amended; as there is now adays in Germany no want of learned Men, Magicians, Cabalists, Physicians, and Philosophers, were there but more love and kindness among them, or that the most part of them would not keep their secrets close only to themselves.

4.3 At Fez he did get acquaintance with those which are commonly called the Elementary Inhabitants, who revealed unto him many of their secrets: As we Germans likewise might gather together many things, if there were the like unity, and desire of searching out of secrets amongst us.

5 Of these of Fez he often did confess, that their Magia was not altogether pure, and also that their Cabala was defiled with their Religion; but notwithstanding he knew how to make good use of the same, and found still more better grounds of his Faith, altogether agreeable with the Harmony of the whole World, and wonderfully impressed in all Periods of times, and thence proceedeth that fair Concord, that as in every several kernel is contained a whole good tree or fruit, so likewise is included in the little body of Man the whole great World, whose Religion, policy, health, members, nature, language, words, and works, are agreeing, sympathizing, and in equal tune and melody with God, Heaven, and Earth; and that which is dis-agreeing with them, is error, falshood, and of the Devil, who alone is the first, middle, and last cause of strife, blindness, and darkness in the World: Also, might one examine all and several persons upon the Earth, he should find that which is good and right, is always agreeing with it self; but all the rest is spotted with a thousand erroneous conceits.

6 After two years Brother C. R. departed the City Fez, and sailed with many costly things into Spain, hoping well, he himself had so well and so profitably spent his time in his travel, that the learned in Europe would highly rejoyce with him, and begin to rule, and order all their Studies, according to those sound and sure Foundations.

6.2 He therefore conferred with the Learned in Spain, shewing unto them the Errors of our Arts, and how they might be corrected, and from whence they should gather the true Inditia of the Times to come, and wherein they ought to agree with those things that are past; also how the faults of the Church and the whole Philosopia Moralis was to be amended: He shewed them new Growths, new Fruits, and Beasts, which did concord with old Philosophy, and prescribed them new Axiomata, whereby all things might fully be restored: But it was to them a laughing matter; and being a new thing unto them, they feared that their great Name should be lessened, if they should now again begin to learn and acknowledg their many years Errors, to which they were accustomed, and wherewith they had gained them enough: Who so loveth unquietness, let him be reformed.

7 The same Song was also sang to him by other Nations, the which moved him the more (because it happened to him contrary to his expectation,) being then ready bountifully to impart all his Arts and Secrets to the Learned, if they would have but undertaken to write the true and infallible Axiomata, out of all Faculties, Sciences, and Arts, and whole Nature, as that which he knew would direct them, like a Globe, or Circle, to the onely middle Point, and Centrum, and (as it is usual among the Arabians) it should onely serve to the wise and learned, for a Rule, that also there might be a Society in Europe, which might have Gold, Silver, and precious Stones, sufficient for to bestow them on Kings, for their necessary uses, and lawful purposes: with which such as be Governors might be brought up, for to learn all that which God hath suffered Man to know, and hereby to be enabled in all times of need to give their counsel unto those that seek

it, like the Heathen Oracles: Verily we must confess that the world, in those days was already big with those great Commotions, laboring to be delivered of them; and did bring forth painful, worthy men, who brake with all force through Darkness and Barbarism, and left us who succeeded to follow them: and assuredly they have been the uppermost point in Trygonoigneo, whose flame now should be more and more brighter, and shall undoubtedly give to the World the last Light.

8 Such a one likewise hath Theophrastus been in Vocation and Callings, although he was none of our Fraternity, yet nevertheless hath he diligently read over the Book M: whereby his sharp ingenium was exalted; but this man was also hindered in his course by the multitude of the learned and wise-seeming men, that he was never able peaceably to confer with others of his Knowledg and Understanding he had of Nature. And therefore in his writing he rather mocked these busie bodies, and doth not shew them altogether what he was: yet nevertheless there is found with him well grounded the aforenamed Harmonia, which without doubt he had imparted to the Learned, if he had not found them rather worthy of subtil vexation, then to be instructed in greater Arts and Sciences; he then with a free and careless life lost his time, and left unto the World their foolish pleasures.

9 But that we do not forget our loving father, Brother C. R., he after many painful Travels, and his fruitless true Instructions, returned again into Germany, the which he (by reason of the alterations which were shortly to come, and of the strange and dangerous contentions) heartily loved:

There, although he could have bragged with his Art, but specially of the transmutations of Metals; yet did he esteem more Heaven, and the Citizens thereof, Man, then all vain glory and pomp.

10 Nevertheless he builded a fitting and neat habitation, in the which he ruminated his Voyage, and Philosophy, and reduced them together in a true Memorial. In this house he spent a great time in the Mathematicks, and made many fine instruments, ex omnibus hujus artis partibus, whereof there is but little remaining to us, as hereafter you shall understand.

10.2 After five years came again into his mind the wished for Reformation; and in regard he doubted of the ayd and help of others, although he himself was painful, lusty, and unwearisom, he undertook, with some few adjoyned with him, to attempt the same: wherefore he desired to that end, to have out of his first Cloyster (to the which he bare a great affection) three of his Brethren, Brother G.

10.3 V., Brother J. A., and Brother J. O., who besides that, they had some more knowledg in the Arts, then at that time many others had, he did binde those three unto himself, to be faithful, diligent, and secret; as also to commit carefully to writing, all that which he should direct and instruct them in, to the end that those which were to come, and through especial Revelation should be received into this Fraternity, might not be deceived of the least sillable and word.

11 After this manner began the Fraternity of the Rosie Cross; first, by four persons onely, and by them was made the Magical Language and writing, with a large Dictionary, which we yet dayly use to Gods praise and glory, and do finde great wisdom therein; they made also the first part of the

Book M.: but in respect that that labor was too heavy, and the unspeakable concourse of the sick hindred them, and also whilst his new building (called Sancti spiritus) was now finished, they concluded to draw and receive yet others more into their Fraternity; to this end was chosen brother R.

11.2 C., his deceased fathers brothers son, Brother B., a skilful Painter, G. and P. D., their Secretary, all Germans except J. A., so in all they were eight in number, all batchelors and of vowed virginity, by whose was collected a book or volumn of all that which man can desire, wish, or hope for.

12 Although we do now freely Confess, that the World is much amended within an hundred years, yet we are assured, that our Axiomata shall unmovably remain unto the Worlds End, and also the world in her highest & last Age shall not attain to see any thing else; for our Rota takes her beginning from that day when God spake Fiat, and shall end when he shall speak Pereat; yet Gods Clock striketh every minute, where ours scarce striketh perfect hours. We also stedfastly beleeve, that if our Brethren and Fathers had lived in this our present and clear light, they would more roughly have handled the Pope, Mahomet, Scribes, Artists, and Sophisters, and had shewed themselves more helpful, not simply with sighs, and wishing of their end and consummation.

13 When now these eight Brethren had disposed and ordered all things in such manner, as there was not now need of any great labour, and also that every one was sufficiently instructed, and able perfectly to discourse of secret and manifest Philosophy, they would not remain any longer together, but as in the beginning they had agreed, they separated themselves into several Countries, because that not only their Axiomata might in secret be

more profoundly examined by the learned, but that they themselves, if in some Country or other they observed anything, or perceived some Error, they might inform one another of it.

14 Their Agreement was this; First, That none of them should profess any other thing, then to cure the sick, and that gratis. 2. None of the Posterity should be constrained to wear one certain kind of habit, but therein to follow the custom of the Country. 3. That every year upon the day C. they should meet together at the house S. Spiritus, or write the cause of his absence. 4.

14.2 Every Brother should look about for a worthy person, who after his discease might succeed him. 5. The word C. R. should be their Seal, Mark, and Character. 6. The Fraternity should remain secret one hundred years. These six Articles they bound themselves one to another to keep; and five of the Brethren departed, only the Brethren B. and D. remained with the Father Fra. R.

14.3 C. a whole year; when these likewise departed, then remained by him his Cousen and Brother C. O. so that he hath all the days of his life with him two of his Brethren.

14.4 And although that as yet the Church was not cleansed, nevertheless we know that they did think of her, and what with longing desire they looked for: Every year they assembled together with joy, and made a full resolution of that which they had done; there must certainly have been great pleasure, to hear truly and without invention related and rehearsed all the Wonders which God hath poured out here and there through the World.

14.5 Every one may hold it out for certain, that such persons as were sent, and joyned together by God, and the Heavens, and chosen out of the wisest of men, as have lived in many Ages, did live together above all others in highest Unity, greatest Secrecy, and most kindness one towards another.

15 After such a most laudable sort they did spend their lives; and although they were free from all diseases and pain, yet notwithstanding they could not live and pass their time appointed of God. The first of this Fraternity which dyed, and that in England, was J.

15.2 O., as Brother C. long before had foretold him; he was very expert, and well learned in Cabala, as his Book called H. witnesseth: In England he is much spoken of, and chiefly because he cured a young Earl of Norfolk of the Leprosie.

15.3 They had concluded, that as much as possibly could be their burial place should be kept secret, as at this day it is not known unto us what is become of some of them, yet every ones place was supplyed with a fit successor; but this we wil confesse publickly by these presents to the honour of God, That what secret soever we have learned out of the book M.

15.4 (although before our eyes we behold the image and pattern of all the world) yet are there not shewn unto us our misfortunes, nor hour of death, the which only is known to God himself, who thereby would have us keep in a continual readiness; but hereof more in our Confession, where we do set down 37 Reasons wherefore we now do make known our Fraternity, and proffer such high Mysteries freely, and without constraint

and reward: also we do promise more gold then both the Indies bring to the King of Spain; for Europe is with child and wil bring forth a strong child, who shall stand in need of a great godfathers gift.

16 After the death of I. O. Brother R. C. rested not, but as soon as he could, called the rest together, (and as we suppose) then his grave was made; although hitherto we (who were the latest) did not know when our loving father R.

16.2 C. died and had no more but the bare names of the beginners, and all their successors to us; yet there came into our memory, a secret, which through dark and hidden words, and speeches of the 100 years, Brother A. the successor of D.

16.3 (who was of the last and second row and succession and had lived amongst many of us,) did impart unto us of the third row and succession; otherwise we must confess, that after the death of the said A. none of us had in any manner known any thing of Brother R.

16.4 C. and of his first fellow-brethren, then that which was extant of them in our Philosophical Bibliotheca, amongst which our Axiomata was held for the chiefest Rota Mundi, for the most artificial, and Protheus the most profitable. Likewise we do not certainly know if these of the second row have been of the like wisdom as the first, and if they were admitted to all things.

16.5 It shall be declared hereafter to the gentle Reader not onely what we have heard of the burial of R. C. but also made manifest publickly by the foresight, sufferance, and commandment of God, whom we most

faithfully obey, that if we shall be answered discreetly and Christian-like, we will not be afraid to set forth publickly in Print, our names, and sirnames, our meetings, or any thing else that may be required at our hands.

17 Now the true and fundamental relation of the finding out of the high illuminated man of God, Fra. C. R. C. is this; After that A. in Gallia Narbonensi was deceased, then succeeded in his place, our loving Brother N.

17.2 N. this man after he had repaired unto us to take the solemn oath of fidelity and secrecy, he informed us bona fide, That A. had comforted him in telling him, that this Fraternity should ere long not remain so hidden, but should be to all the whole German Nation helpful, needful, and commendable; of the which he was not in any wise in his estate ashamed of.

17.3 The year following after he had performed his School right, and was minded now to travel, being for that purpose sufficiently provided with Fortunatus purse, he thought (he being a good Architect) to alter something of his building, and to make it more fit: in such renewing he lighted upon the memorial Table which was cast of brasse, and containeth all the names of the brethren, with some few other things; this he would transfer in another more fitting vault: for where or when Fra.

17.4 R. C. died, or in what country he was buried, was by our predecessors concealed and unknown unto us. In this Table stuck a great naile somewhat strong; so that when he was with force drawn out, he took with him an indifferent big stone out of the thin wall, or plaistering of the hidden door, and so unlooked for uncovered the door; wherefore we did with joy and longing throw down the rest of the wall, and cleared the door, upon which that was written in great letters, Post 120 annos patebo, with

the year of the Lord under it: therefore we gave God thanks and let it rest that same night, because first we would overlook our Rotam; but we refer our selves again to the confession, for what we here publish is done for the help of those that are worthy, but to the unworthy (God willing) it will be small profit: For like as our door was after so many years wonderfully discovered, also there shall be opened a door to Europe (when the wall is removed) which already doth begin to appear, and with great desire is expected of many.

18 In the morning following we opened the door, and there appeared to our sight a Vault of seven sides and corners, every side five foot broad, and the height of eight foot; Although the Sun never shined in this Vault, nevertheless it was enlightned with another sun, which had learned this from the Sun, and was scituated in the upper part in the Center of the sieling; in the midst, in stead of a Tomb-stone, was a round Altar covered over with a plate of brass, and thereon this engraven:

19 A. C. R. C. Hoc universi compendium unius mihi sepulchrum feci.

20 Round about the first Circle or Brim stood,

21 Jesus mihi omnia.

22 In the middle were four figures, inclosed in circles, whose circumscription was,

23 Nequaquam vacuum. Legis Iugum. Libertas Evangelij. Dei gloria intacta. This is all clear and bright, as also the seventh side and the two Heptagoni: so we kneeled altogether down, and gave thanks to the sole wise, sole mighty, and sole eternal God, who hath taught us more then all

mens wit could have found out, praised be his holy name. This Vault we parted in three parts. the upper part or sieling, the wall or side, the ground or floor.

24 Of the upper part you shall understand no more of it at this time, but that it was divided according to the seven sides in the triangle, which was in the bright center; but what therein is contained, you shall God willing (that are desirous of our society) behold the same with your own eys; but every side or wall is parted into ten squares, every one with their several figures and sentences, as they are truly shewed, and set forth Concentratum here in our book.

25 The bottom again is parted in the triangle, but because therein is discribed the power and rule of the inferior Governors, we leave to manifest the same, for fear of the abuse by the evil and ungodly world.

25.2 But those that are provided and stored with the heavenly Antidote, they do without fear or hurt, tread on, and bruise the head of the old and evil serpent, which this our age is well fitted for: every side or wall had a door for a chest, wherein there lay divers things, especially all our books, which otherwise we had, besides the Vocabular of Theoph. Far.

25.3 Ho. and these which daily unfalsifieth we do participate. Herein also we found his Itinerarium, and vitam, whence this relation for the most part is taken. In another chest were looking-glasses of divers virtues, as also in other places were little bells, burning lamps, & chiefly wonderful artificial Songs; generally al done to that end, that if it should happen after many hundred years, the Order or Fraternity should come to nothing, they might by this onely Vault be restored again.

26 Now as yet we had not seen the dead body of our careful and wise father, we therfore removed the Altar aside, there we lifted up a strong plate of brass, and found a fair and worthy body, whole and unconsumed, as the same is here lively counterfeited, with all the Ornaments and Attires, in his hand he held a parchment book, Called I., the which next unto the Bible, is our greatest treasure, which ought to be delivered to the censure of the world. At the end of this book standeth this following Elogium:

27 Granum pectori Jesu insitum.

28 C. Ros. C. ex nobili atq́ splendida Germaniæ R. C. familia oriundus, vir sui seculi divinis revelationibus subtilissimis imaginationibus, indefessis laboribus ad cœlestia, atq́ humana myseria; arcanavè admissus postquam suam (quam Arabico, & Africano itineribus Collegerat) plusquam regiam, atq́ imperatoriam Gazam suo seculo nondum convenientem, posteritati eruendam custodivisset & jam suarum Artium, ut & nominis, fidos ac conjunctissimos heredes instituisset, mundum minutum omnibus motibus magno illi respondentem fabricasset hocq́ tandem preteritarum, præsentium, & futurarum, rerum compendio extracto centenario major non morbo (quem ipse nunquam corpore expertus erat, nunquam alios infestare sinebat) ullo pellente sed spiritu Dei evocante, illuminatam animam (inter Fratrum amplexus & ultima oscula) fidelissimo creatori Deo reddidisset, Pater dilectissimus, Fra. suavissimus, præceptor fidelissimus amicus integerimus, a suis ad 120 annos hic absconditus est.

29 Underneath they had subscribed these,

30 Fra. I. A. Fra. C. H. electione Fraternitatis caput. Fr. G. V. M. P. C. Fra. R. C. Iunior hæres S. spiritus. Fra. B. M. P. A. Pictor & Architectus. Fr. G. G. M. P. I. Cabalista. Secundi Circuli.

31 Fra. P. A. Successor, Fr. I. O. Mathematicus. Fra. A. Successor, Fra. P. D. Fra. R. Successor patris C. R. C. cum Christo triumphantis. At the end was written,

32 Ex Deo nascimur, in Jesu morimur, per spiritum sanctum reviviscimus.

33 At that time was already dead Brother I. O. and Fra. D. but their burial place, where is it to be found? we doubt not but our Fra. Senior hath the same, and some especial thing layd in Earth, and perhaps likewise hidden: we also hope that this our Example will stir up others more deligently to enquire after their names (whom we have therefore published) and to search for the place of their burial; for the most part of them, by reason of their practice and physick, are yet known, and praised among very old folks; so might perhaps our Gaza be enlarged, or at least be better cleared.

34 Concerning Minutum Mundum, we found it kept in another little Altar, truly more finer then can be imagined by any understanding man, but we will leave him undescribed, untill we shal truly be answered upon this our true hearted Famam; and so we have covered it again with the plates, and set the altar thereon, shut the door, and made it sure, with all our seals; besides by instruction and command of our Rota, there are come to sight some books, among which is contained H.

34.2 (which were made in stead of houshold care by the praise-worthy M. P.). Finally we departed the one from the other, and left the natural heirs in possession of our Jewels. And so we do expect the answer and judg-

ment of the learned, or unlearned.

35 Howbeit we know after a time there wil now be a general reformation, both of divine and humane things, according to our desire, and the expectation of others: for it's fitting, that before the rising of the Sun, there should appear and break forth Aurora, or some clearness, or divine light in the sky; and so in the mean time some few, which shall give their names, may joyn together, thereby to increase the number and respect of our Fraternity, and make a happy and wished for beginning of our Philosophical Canons, prescribed to us by our brother R. C. and be partakers with us of our treasures (which never can fail or be wasted) in all humility, and love to be eased of this worlds labor, and not walk so blindly in the knowledge of the wonderful works of God.

36 But that also every Christian may know of what Religion and belief we are, we confess to have the knowledge of Jesus Christ (as the same now in these last days, and chiefly in Germany, most clear and pure is professed, and is now a-days cleansed and voyd of all swerving people, Hereticks, and false Prophets,) in certain and noted Countries maintained, defended, and propagated: Also we use two Sacraments, as they are instituted with all Formes and Ceremonies of the first renewed Church.

36.2 In Politia we acknowledge the Roman Empire and Quartam Monarchiam for our Christian head; albeit we know what alterations be at hand, and would fain impart the same with all our hearts, to other godly learned men, notwithstanding our hand-writing which is in our hands, no man (except God alone) can make it common, nor any unworthy person is able to bereave us of it.

36.3 But we shall help with secret aid this so good a cause, as God shal permit or hinder us: For our God is not blinde, as the Heathens Fortuna, but is the Churches Ornament, and the honor of the Temple.

36.4 Our Philosophy also is not a new Invention, but as Adam after his fall hath received it, and as Moses and Solomon used it: also she ought not much to be doubted of, or contradicted by other opinions, or meanings; but seeing the truth is peaceable, brief, and always like her self in all things, and especially accorded by with Jesus in omni parte and all members.

36.5 And as he is the true Image of the Father, so is she his Image; It shal not be said, this is true according to Philosophy, but true according to Theologie; And wherein Plato, Aristotle, Pythagoras, and others did hit the mark, and wherein Enoch, Abraham, Moses, and Solomon did excel; but especially wherewith that wonderful book the Bible agreeth.

36.6 All that same concurreth together, and make a Sphere or Globe, whose total parts are equidistant from the Center, as hereof more at large and more plain shal be spoken of in Christianly Conference.

37 But now concerning (and chiefly in this our age) the ungodly and accursed Gold-makings which hath gotten so much the upper hand, whereby under colour of it, many runagates and roguish people do use great villanies, and cozen and abuse the credit which is given them: yea, now a-days men of discretion do hold the transmutation of Mettals to be the highest point, and fastigium in Philosophy, this is all their intent, and desire, and that God would be most esteemed by them, and honored, which could make great store of Gold, and in abundance, the which with unpremeditate prayers, they hope to attain of the alknowing God, and

searcher of all hearts: we therefore do by these presents publickly testifie. That the true Philosophers are far of another minde, esteeming little the making of Gold, which is but a parergon; for besides that they have a thousand better things.

38 And we say with our loving Father R. C. C. Phy. aurum nisi quantum aurum, for unto them the whole nature is detected: he doth not rejoyce, that he can make Gold. and that, as saith Christ, the devils are obedient unto him, but is glad that he seeth the Heavens open, and the Angels of God ascending and descending, and his name written in the book of life.

38.2 Also we de testifie that under the name of Chymia many books and pictures are set forth in Contumeliam gloriæ Dei, as we wil name them in their due season, and wil give to the pure-hearted a Catalogue, or Register of them: And we pray all learned men to take heed of these kinde of Books; for the enemy never resteth, but soweth his weeds, til a stronger one doth root it out.

38.3 So according to the wil and meaning of Fra. C. R. C. we his brethren request again all the learned in Europe, who shal read (sent forth in five Languages) this our Famam and Confessionem, that it would please them with good deliberation to ponder this our offer, and to examine most nearly and most sharply their Arts, and behold the present time with all diligence, and to declare their minde, either Communicato consilio, or singulatim by Print.

39 And although at this time we make no mention either of our names, or meetings, yet nevertheless every ones opinion shal assuredly come to our hands, in what language so ever it be; nor any body shal fail, whoso gives

but his name to speak with some of us, either by word of mouth, or else if there be some lett in writing.

39.2 And this we say for a truth, That whosoever shal earnestly, and from his heart, bear affection unto us, it shal be beneficial to him in goods, body, and soul; but he that is false-hearted, or onely greedy of riches, the same first of all shal not be able in any manner of wise to hurt us, but bring himself to utter ruine and destruction.

39.3 Also our building (although one hundred thousand people had very near seen and beheld the same) shal for ever remain untouched, undestroyed, and hidden to the wicked world, sub umbra alarum tuarum Jehova.

40 A Preface of the Confession to the Reader who is desirous of Wisdom.

41 Here Gentle Reader, you shal finde incorporated in our Confession thirty seven Reasons of our purpose, and intention, the which according to thy pleasure thou mayst seek out and compare them together: thou mayst also consider with thy self, if they be weighty, and sufficient enough to bring and perswade thee for to take our parts.

42 Verily it requires no smal pains to confirm that which men have not yet seen, but when it shal once com to light we doubt not, but they will then justly be ashamed of such doubts, and conjectures.

42.2 And as we do now altogether securely, freely, and without any hurt call the Pope of Rome Antichrist, the which heretofore was held for deadly sin, and such in all Countries were put to death for it.

42.3 So we know certainly, that the time shal likewise come, what that which we yet keep in secret, we shal openly, freely, and with a loud voice publish and confess it before al the world; the which Gentle Reader wish

with us with all thy heart, that it may happen with speed.

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CONFESSIO FRATERNITATIS

✦

1 Whatsoever there is published, and made known to every one, concerning our Fraternity, by the foresaid Fama, let no man esteem lightly of it, nor hold it as an idle or invented thing, and much less receive the same, as though it were onely a meer conceit of ours. It is the Lord Jehovah (who seeing the Lords Sabbath is almost at hand, and hastened again, his period or course being finished to his first beginning) doth turn about the course of Nature; and what heretofore hath been sought with great pains and dayly labor, is now manifested unto those who make small account, or scarcely once think upon it; but these which desire it, it is in a manner forced and thrusted upon them, that thereby the life of the godly may be eased of all their toyl and labor, and be no more subject to the storms of unconstant Fortune; but the wickedness of the ungodly thereby, with their due and deserved punishment, be augmented and multiplied.

2 Although we cannot be by any suspected of the least Heresie, or of any wicked beginning, or purpose against the worldly Government; we do condemn the East and the West, (meaning the Pope and Mahomet) blasphemers against our Lord Jesus Christ, and offer and present with a good will to the chief head of the Romish Empire, our prayers, secrets, and great treasures of Gold.

3 Yet we have thought good, and fit for the Learned sakes, to add somewhat more to this, and make a better explanation, if there be any thing too deep, hidden, and set down over dark in the Fama, or for certain reasons

were altogether omitted, and left out; hoping herewith the Learned will be more addicted unto us, and be made far more fitter and willing for our purpose.

4 Concerning the alteration and amendment of Philosophy, we have (as much as at this present is needful) sufficiently declared, to wit, that the same is altogether weak and faulty; yet we doubt not, although the most part falsly do alledge that she (I know not how) is sound and strong, yet notwithstanding she fetches her last breath and is departing.

5 But as commonly, even in the same place or Country where there breaketh forth a new unaccustomed disease, Nature also there discovereth a medicine against the same; so there doth appear for so manifold infirmities of Philosophy, the right means, and unto our Patria sufficiently offered, whereby she may become sound again, which is now to be renewed and altogether new.

6 No other Philosophy we have, then that which is the head & sum,the foundation and contents of all faculties, sciences, and arts, the which (if we will behold our age) containeth much of Theology and medicine, but little of the wisdom of Lawyers, and doth diligently search both heaven and earth: or to speak briefly thereof, which doth manifest and declare sufficiently Man; whereof then all Learned who will make themselves known unto us, and come into our brotherhood, shall finde more wonderful secrets by us then heretofore they did attain unto, and did know, or are able to believe or utter.

7 Wherefore, to declare briefly our meaning hereof, we ought to labor carefully that there be not onely a wondering at our meeting and adhortation, but that likewise every one may know, that although we do highly esteem and regard such mysteries and secrets, we nevertheless hold it fit, that the knowledge thereof be manifested and revealed to many.

8 For it is to be taught and believed, that this our unhoped willing offer wil raise many and divers thoughts in men, unto whom (as yet) be unknown Miranda sextæ ætatis, or those which by reason of the course of the world, esteem the things to come like unto the present, and are hindred through all manner of importunities of this their time, so that they live no otherwise in the world, then blinde fools, who can, in the clear Sun-shine day, discern and know nothing, then onely by feeling.

9 Now concerning the first part, we hold this, that the Meditations, knowledge and inventions of our loving Christian Father (of all that, which from the beginning of the world, Mans Wisdom, either through Gods Revelation, or through the service of the Angels and spirits, or through the sharpness and deepness of understanding, or through long observation, use and experience, hath found out, invented, brought forth, corrected, and till now hath been propagated & transplanted) are so excellent worthy and great, that if all books should perish, and by Gods almighty suffrance, all writings, & all learning should be lost, yet the posterity will be able onely thereby to lay a new foundation, and bring truth to light again; the which perhaps would not be so hard to do as if one should begin to pull down and destroy the old ruinous building, and then

begin to enlarge the fore Court, afterwards bring the lights in the Lodgings, and then change the doors, staples and other things according to our intention.

10 But to whom would not this be acceptable, for to be manifested to every one rather then to have it kept and spared, as an especial ornament for the appointed time to come?

11 Wherefore should we not with all our hearts rest and remain in the onely truth (which men through so many erroneous and crooked ways do seek) if it had onely pleased God to lighten unto us the sixth Candelabrum? were it not good that we needed not to care, not to fear hunger, poverty, sickness, and age?

12 Were it not a precious thing, that you could always live so, as if you had liv'd from the beginning of the world, and moreover, as you should stil live to the end thereof? Were it not excellent, you dwel in one place, that neither the people which dwel beyond the River Ganges in the Indies could hide any thing, nor those which live in Peru might be able to keep secret their counsels from thee?

13 Were it not a precious things that you could so read in one onely book, and withal by reading understand, and remember all that, which in all other books (which heretofore have been, and are now, and hereafter shal come out) hath been, is, and shal be learned, and found out of them?

14 How pleasant were it, that you could so sing, that in stead of stony rocks you could draw to the pearls and precious stones, in stead of wilde beasts, spirits, and in stead of hellish Pluto, move the mighty Princes of the world?

15 O ye people, Gods counsel is far otherwise, who hath concluded now to encrease and enlarge the number of our Fraternity, the which we with such joy have undertaken, as we have heretofore obtained this great treasure without our merits, yea without any our hopes, and thoughts; and purpose with the like fidelity to put the same in practice, that neither the compassion nor pity of our own children (which some of us in the Fraternity have) shal draw us from it, because we know that these unhoped for goods cannot be inherited, nor by chance be obtained.

16 If there be some body now, which on the other side wil complain of our discretion, that we offer our Treasures so freely, and without any difference to all men, and do not rather regard and respect more the godly, learned, wise, or princely persons, then the common people; those we do not contradict, seeing it is not a slight and easie matter; but withall we signifie so much, that our Arcana or Secrets will no ways be common, and generally made known: Although the Fama be set forth in five languages, and is manifested to every one, yet we do partly very well know, that the unlearned and gross wits will not receive, nor regard the same; as also the worthiness of those who shall be accepted into our Fraternity are not esteemed and known of us by Mans Carefulness, but by the Rule of our Revelation and Manifestation.

16.2 Wherefore if the unworthy cry and call a thousand times, or if they shall offer and present themselves to us a thousand times, yet God hath commanded our ears, that they should hear none of them: yea, God hath so compassed us about with his Clouds, that unto us his servants no violence or force can be done or committed; wherefore we neither can be seen or known by any body, except he had the eyes of an Eagle.

16.3 It hath been necessary that the Fama should be set forth in every ones Mother Tongue, because those should not be defrauded of the knowledg thereof, whom (although they be unlearned) God hath not excluded from the happiness of this Fraternity; the which shall be divided and parted into certain degrees; as those which dwell in the City Damcar in Arabia, who have a far different politick order from the other Arabians.

16.4 For there do govern only wise and understanding men, who by the Kings permission make particular Laws; according unto which example also the Government shall be instituted in Europe (whereof we have a description set down by our Christianly Father) when first is done and come to pass that which is to precede.

16.5 And thenceforth our Trumpet shall publiquely sound with a loud sound, and great noise, when namely the same (which at this present is shewed by few, and is secretly, as a thing to come, declared in Figures and Pictures) shall be free, and publiquely proclaimed, and the whole World be filled withall.

16.6 Even in such manner as heretofore, many godly people have secretly and altogether desperately pusht at the Popes Tyranny, which afterwards, with great earnest, and especial zeal in Germany, was thrown from his seat, and trodden under-foot, whose final fall is delayed, and kept for our times, when he also shall be scratched in pieces with nails, and an end be made of his Asses cry, by a new voyce: The which we know is already reasonably manifest and known to many learned men in Germany, as their Writings and secret Congratulations do sufficiently witness the same.

17 We could here relate and declare what all the time, from the year of our Lord 1378. (in which year our Christian Father was born) till now, hath happened, where we might rehearse what alterations he hath seen in the World these one hundred six years of his life, which he hath left to our Brethren and us after his decease to peruse: But brevity, which we do observe, will not permit at this present to make rehearsal of it, till a more fit time: At this time it is enough for these which do not despise our Declaration, having therefore briefly touched it, thereby to prepare the way for their acquaintance and friendship with us.

18 Yea, to whom it is permitted, that he may see, and for his instruction use those great Letters and Characters which the Lord God hath written and imprinted in Heaven and Earths Edifice, through the alteration of Government, which hath been from time to time altered and renewed; the same is already (although as yet unknown to himself) ours: And as we know he will not despise our inviting and calling, so none shall fear any deceit; for we promise, and openly say, That no mans uprightness and hopes shall deceive him, whosoever shall make himself known unto us under the Seal of Secrecy, and desire our Fraternity.

19 But to the false Hypocrites, and to those that seek other things then Wisdom, we say and witness by these presents publikely, we cannot be made known, and be betrayed unto them; and much less they shall be able to hurt us any manner of way without the Will of God; but they shall certainly be partakers of all the punishment spoken of in our Fama; so their wicked Counsels shall light upon themselves, and our Treasures shall re-

main untouched and unstirred, until the Lion doth come, who will ask them for his use, and imploy them for the confirmation and establishment of his Kingdom.

19.2 We ought therefore here to observe well, and make it known unto every one, that God hath certainly and most assuredly concluded to send and grant to the World before her end, which presently thereupon shall ensue, such a Truth, Light, Life, and Glory, as the first man Adam had, which he lost in Paradise, after the which his succesors were put, and driven with him to misery: Wherefore there shall cease all servitude, falshood, lyes, and darkness, which by little and little, with the great Worlds Revolution, was crept into all Arts, Works, and Governments of Men, and have darkened the most part of them.

19.3 For from thence are proceeded an innumerable sort of all manner of false Opinions and Heresies, that scarce the wisest of all was able to know whose Doctrine and Opinion he should follow and embrace and could not well and easily be discerned; seeing on the one part they were detained, hindered, and brought into Errors through the respect of the Philosophers and learned men, and on the other part through true experience.

19.4 All the which, when it shall once be abolished and removed, and in stead thereof a right and true Rule instituted, then there will remain thanks unto them which have taken pains therein; but the Work it self shall be attributed to the Blessedness of our Age.

20 As we now willingly confess, that many principal men by their Writings will be a great furtherance unto this Reformation which is to come; so we desire not to have this honour ascribed to us, as if such Work were only commanded and imposed upon us; but we confess, and witness openly

with the Lord Jesus Christ, that it shall first happen that the stones shall arise, and offer their service, before there shall be any want of Executors and Accomplishers Gods Counsel: yea, the Lord God hath already sent before certain Messengers, which should testifie his Will, to wit, some new Stars, which do appear and are seen in the Firmament in Serpentario and Cygno, which signifie and give themselves known to every one, that they are powerful Signacula of great weighty matters.

20.2 So then, the secret hid Writings and Characters are most necessary for all such things which are found out by Men: Although that great Book of Nature stand open to all Men, yet there are but few that can read and understand the same.

20.3 For as there is given to Man two instruments to hear, likewise two to see, and two to smell, but only one to speak, and it were but vain to expect speech from the ears, or hearing from the eyes: So there hath been Ages or Times which have seen, there have also been Ages that have heard, smelt, and tasted: now there remains yet that which in short time, honour shall be likewise given to the Tongue, and by the same; what before times hath been seen, heard, and smelt, now finally shall be spoken and uttered forth, viz. when the World shall awake out of her heavy and drowsie sleep, and with an open heart, bare-head and bare-foot, shall merrily and joyfully meet the now arising Sun.

21 These Characters and Letters, as God hath here and there incorporated them in the holy Scripture the Bible, so hath he imprinted them most apparently into the wonderful Creation of Heaven and Earth, yea in all Beasts. So that like as the Mathematician or Astronomer can long before see and know the Eclipses which are to come, so we may verily fore-know

and fore-see the darkness of Obscurations of the Church, and how long they shall last: From the which Characters or Letters we have borrowed our Magick writing, and have found out, and made a new Language for our selves, in the which withall is expressed and declared the Nature of all Things: So that it is no wonder that we are not so eloquent in other Languages, the which we know that they are altogether disagreeing to the Languages of our forefathers, Adam and Enoch, and were through the Babylonical Confusion wholly hidden.

22 But we must also let you understand; that there are yet some Eagles Feathers in our way, the which do hinder our purpose. Wherefore we do admonish every one for to read diligently and continually the holy Bible; for he that taketh all his pleasures therein, he shall know that he prepared for himself an excellent way to come in to our Fraternity: For as this is the whole sum and content of our Rule, That every Letter or Character which is in the World ought to be learned and regarded well; so those are like into us, and are very near allyed unto us, who do make the holy Bible a Rule of their life, and an aim and end of all their studies; yea to let it be a Compendium and Content of the whole World: And not only to have it continually in the mouth, but to know how to apply and direct the true understanding of it to all times and Ages of the World.

22.2 Also, it is not our Custom to prostitute and make so common the holy Scriptures; for here are innumerable Expounders of the same; some alledging and wresting it to serve for their Opinion, some to scandal it, and most wickedly do liken it to a Nose of Wax, which alike should serve the Divines, Philosophers, Physicians, and Mathematicians, against all the which we do openly witness and acknowledg, That from the beginning of

the World there hath not been given unto Men a more Worthy, a more excellent, and more admirable and wholesom Book then the holy Bible; Blessed is he that hath the same, yea more blesed is he who reads it diligently, but most blessed of all is he that truly understandeth the same, for he is most like to God, and doth come most near to him.

22.3 But whatsoever hath been said in the Fama concerning the Deceivers against the Transmutation of Mettals, and the highest Medicine in the World, the same is thus to be understood, that this so great gift of God do in no manner set at naught, or despise it.

22.4 But because she bringeth not with her always the knowledg of Nature, but this bringeth forth not only Medicine, but also maketh manifest and open unto us innumerable Secrets and Wonders; Therefore it is requisite, that we be earnest to attain to the understanding and knowledg of Philosophy.

22.5 And moreover, excellent Wits ought not to be drawn to the Tincture of Mettals, before they be exercised well in the knowledg of Nature. He must needs be an unsatiable Creature, who is come so far, that neither Poverty nor Sickness can hurt him; yea, who is exalted above all other men, and hath Rule over that, the which doth anguish, trouble, and pain others, yet will give himself again to idle things, as to build houses, make Wars, and use all manner of Pride, because he hath of Gold and Silver infinite store.

23 God is far otherwise pleased, for he exalteth lowly, and pulleth down the proud with disdain; to those which are of few words he sendeth his holy Angel to speak with them, but the unclean Bablers he driveth in the Wilderness and solitary places: The which is the right Reward of the

Romish Seducers, who have vomited forth their Blasphemies against Christ, and as yet do not abstain from their Lyes in the clear shining Light: In Germany all their Abominations and detestable Tricks have been disclosed, that thereby he may fully fulfill the measure of sin, and draw near to go the end of his punishment. Therefore one day it will come to pass, that the Mouth of those Vipers will be stopped, and the three double Horn will be brought to nought, as thereof at our Meeting shall more plain and at large be discoursed.

24 For Conclusion of our Confession, we must earnestly admonish you, that you put away, if not all, yet the most Books written by false Alchimists, who do think it but a Jest, or a Pastime, when they either misuse the holy Trinity, when they do apply it to vain things, or deceive the people with most strange Figures, and dark Sentences and Speeches, and cozen the simple of their money; as there are now a-days too many such Books set forth, which the Enemy of Mans Welfare doth dayly, and will to the end, mingle among the good Seed, thereby to make the Truth more difficult to be beleeved, which in her self is simple, easie, and naked; but contrarily Falshood is proud, haughty, and coloured with a kind of Lustre of seeming godly and of humane Wisdom.

24.2 Ye that are wise eschew such Books, and turn unto us, who seek not your moneys, but offer unto you most willingly our great Treasures: We hunt not after your Goods with invented lying Tinctures, but desire to make you Partakers of our Goods: We speak unto you by Parables, but would willingly bring you to the right, simple, easie, and ingenuous exposition, Understanding, Declaration and Knowledg of all Secrets.

24.3 We desire not to be received of you, but invite you unto our more then Kingly Houses and Palaces, and that verily not of our own proper motion, but (that you likewise may know it) as forced unto it, by the Instigation of the Spirit of God, by his Admonition, and by the Occasion of this present time.

25 What think you, loving people, and now seem you affected, seeing that you now understand and know, That we acknowledg our selves truly and sincerely to profess Christ, condemn the Pope, addict our selves to the true Philosophy, lead a Christian life, and dayly call, intreat, and invite many more unto our Fraternity, unto whom the same Light of God likewise appeareth?

25.2 Consider you not at length how you might begin with us, not only by pondering the Gifts which are in you, and by experience which you have in the Word of God, beside the careful Consideration of the Imperfection of all Arts, and many other unfitting things, to seek for an amendment therein; to appease God, and to accommodate you for the time wherein you live.

25.3 Certainly if you will perform the same, this profit will follow. That all those Goods which Nature hath in all parts of the World wonderfully dispersed, shall at one time altogether be given unto you, and shall easily disburden you of all that which obscureth the Understanding of Man, and hindereth the working thereof, like unto the vain Epicides, and Excentrick Astronomical Circles.

26 But those Pragmatical and busie-headed men, who either are blinded with the glistering of Gold, or (to say more truly) who are now honest, but by thinking such great Riches should never fail, might easily be cor-

rupted, and brought to Idleness, and to riotous proud living: Those we do desire that they would not trouble us with their idle and vain crying. But let them think, that although there be a Medicine to be had which might fully cure all Diseases, nevertheless those whom God hath destinated to plague with Diseases, and to keep them under the Rod of Correction, such shall never obtain any such Medicine.

27 Even in such manner, although we might inrich the whole World, and endue them with Learning, and might release it from Innumerable Miseries, yet shall we never be manifested and made known unto any man, without the especial pleasure of God; yea, it shall be so far from him whosoever thinks to get the benefit, and be Partaker of our Riches and Knowledg, without and against the Will of God, that he shall sooner lose his life in seeking and searching for us, then to find us, and attain to come to the wished Happiness of the Fraternity of the Rosie Cross.

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