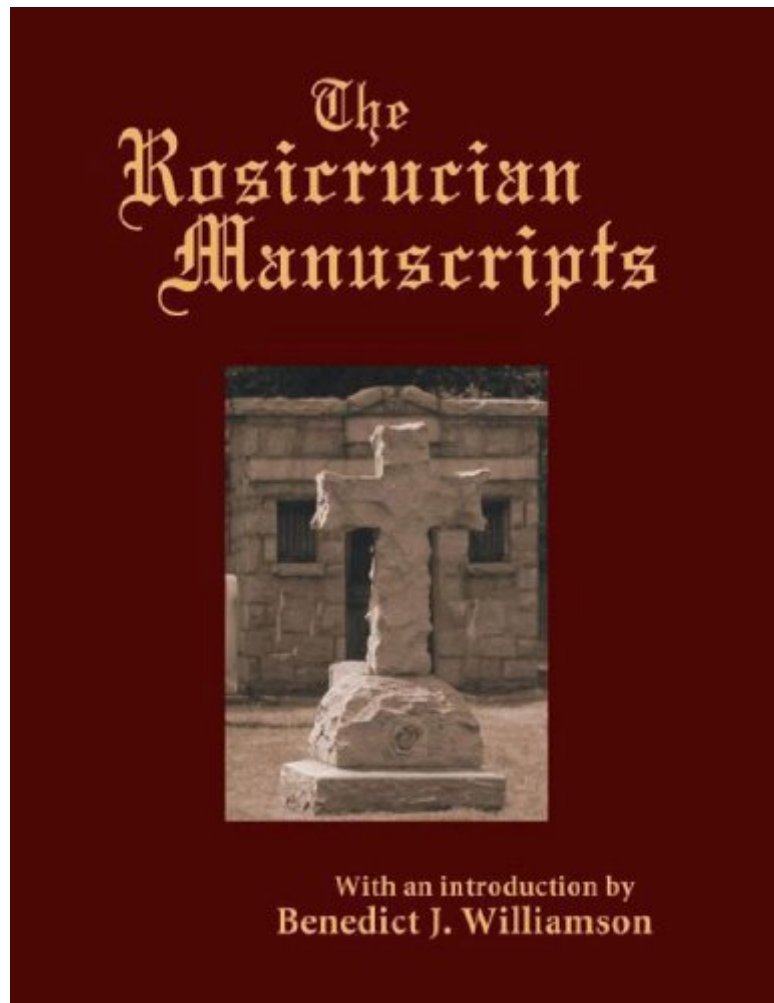




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The Rosicrucian Manuscripts



Synopsis

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

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Customer Reviews

Difficult to understand the message in the second part of the book, (Confessio). I'm sure there are lots of people who will say they get it but I didn't.

Product came in as described! Would recommend to others, great customer service!

Thanks

Great product

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

Williamson's clipped commentary, and each volume contains source materials not found in the other. As always, both books should be consulted in conjunction with more modern, and careful, scholarship: particularly of that of German scholar Carlos Gilly.

This book contains the three major original Rosicrucian works, Fama Fraternitatis, Confessio Fraternitatis, and The Chymical Wedding of Christian Rosencreutz, along with a few other short historical pieces. I knew that these were available in places on the internet, but this book was really worth the price because of Williamson's amazing editing job. He went back to the original texts and compiled the most authoritative edition in years. He added historical footnotes, references, and even translated the greek and latin parts of the text. He also placed the works into their historical context by adding easy-to-read introductions. All of the original graphics from the Chymical Wedding are included, so you get a bit of the RCs symbology. These stories are much clearer, cleaner, and more complete than any version I've seen anywhere. If you are interested in Rosicrucianism, put down all those modern New Age books written by people who don't know what they are talking about, and read these stories, which are the only ones known to have been written by the original Rosicrucians themselves.

I've given this book a five star rating because it is very well produced. I can't say I really liked the contents, though. It has the original Rosicrucian tracts, which seem to basically say that they think people ought to follow the teachings of Jesus (a fine idea). The first publication was accompanied by a spoof called "The General Reformation" translated from some Italian work, which implies that the whole suggestion of a brotherhood is a farce. To make matters more absurd, the first English publication was accompanied by an alchemical work (which is absolutely dreadful) -- this has an amazing amount of obfuscation just to hide the fact the author (Thomas Vaughn) didn't know anything. Likewise, at the end of the volume is another alchemical 'allegory' which is utter dreck, but is assigned to the Rosicrucians. According to the editor of this book, Williamson, this last work was even admitted by the author as being something to see how gullible people were (very, based on a brief search on the internet). Again, the book is very well done, and the editor has a nice introduction and some good footnotes (I wonder what his opinions on the Rosicrucians are -- he remains carefully neutral).

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