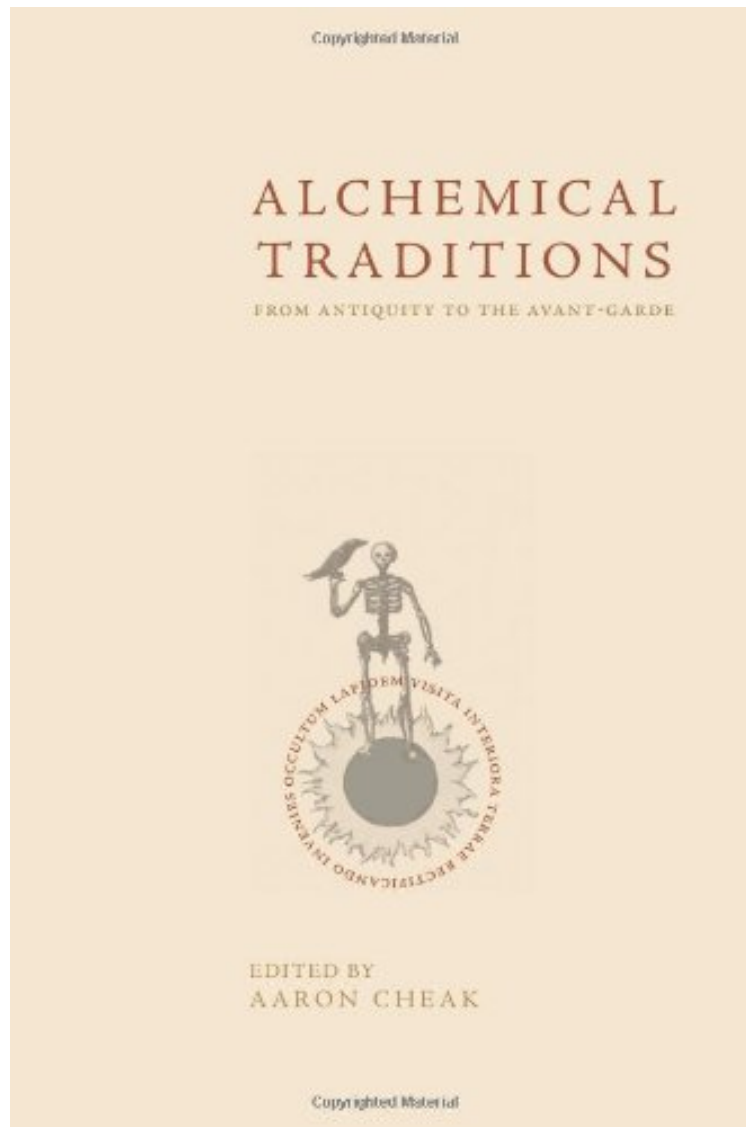


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Alchemical Traditions: From Antiquity to the Avant-Garde

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From Hadean Pty Ltd : Alchemical Traditions: From Antiquity to the Avant-Garde before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Alchemical Traditions: From Antiquity to the Avant-Garde:

12 of 12 people found the following review helpful. It is a must read!By Anita Strezova, PhDCutting across disciplinary boundaries, and featuring both emerging and established scholars, the generous book, Alchemical Traditions by Dr. Aaron Cheak provides an overview on the subject of alchemy perceived as a singular process, one

that affirms the divine act of transmutation of the whole world. Dr. Cheak, on the other hand, presents himself as a competent guide in unraveling and unifying all intricacies that have surrounded the study of the most influential as well as the less known aspects of alchemy [within the academy]. The first part of the book refers to the earliest alchemical traditions, with a particular focus on the Egyptian and Greek formation texts of alchemy. Furthermore, the influence of the various currents and alchemical formulas upon the intellectual and technical formation of alchemy as a non-dualistic process is also revealed in this section. This is especially pertinent to Chinese, Hindu and Tibetan alchemical traditions. The second part of the book provides a synthesis of the symbolism of alchemy and its philosophical, historical, art historical, and philological expressions, from the early European Alchemy right down to the Western alchemical cosmologies of the modern period. There are several notable contributions to the volume. Dr. Leon Marvell provides an engaging treatise on Surrealism and alchemy. Also, there is an interesting take on the Alchemical transfiguration of the Eros by Paul Scarpari. However, the detailed account on the Alchemy of Ren Schwaller de Lubicz by Dr. Aaron Cheak, the fascinating review of the Hindu alchemic tradition by David G. White and the intriguing article on Reading as alchemical process, by Dr. Mirco A. Mannucci, are some of my personal favorites. Overall, this book is a must read for those who have an interest in alchemy. Dr. Aaron Cheak is to be congratulated for presenting a skilful insight into the world of perfection (read purification) through the prism of the alchemical transmutation.

14 of 14 people found the following review helpful. Alchemies Galore! By David L. Zielke An excellent overview of differing cultures differing types of alchemy. But, if you are looking for an easy read, this is not it. You really have to pay close attention to what is being said, if the first section is an indicator for the rest of the book. Here you have various academics writing academically, and the language becomes dictionary-necessary. But it is the best book I have seen in a long time on the subject. Here you have the better-known European "physical" alchemy and the best of the more esoteric spiritual alchemies of the Asian cultures. I would recommend this collection for those who have some previous knowledge of the subjects here discussed.

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. "...Lege, Lege, Lege, Relege..." By G. Ridgeway Let me start off by saying that the Alchemical Traditions, especially that which relates to the physical art, especially experience, has never been of great interest to me. So my existing knowledge of it coming into this text was pretty limited. That being said, is one of the reason that I give this text 5 stars, as not knowing a whole lot really didn't matter, and what I ended up coming away with was ALOT more than I went into the book with. Though one caveat in this area would be that if you don't have any knowledge in Hermetic/Neoplatonic/Kabbala or even classical mythology (especially Greco-Roman and Egyptian) you're probably going to have a much harder time with this text. But even if this is the case, as long as you don't mind researching topics as you go along, then go for it. Just realize this is going to be quite a labor of love and you're probably going to miss quite a bit your first time through. What you get in this lengthy and weighty tome, is exactly (which is rarer than you might think) exactly what it says, the first half is a sweeping look from the beginnings, threw to contemporary times. Now of course it isn't all inclusive in this aspect, because you could fill probably a dozen volumes with that alone, but, it does an admirable job of covering a lot of terrain within the pages it does use. This book consists of different academic essays on different areas of Alchemy, from different viewpoints and so forth, because of this some of the essays can be pretty dry reading, though I felt that the bulk of the text wasn't too bad. Just keep in mind you may have to practice some resolve at times to trudge through some of the essays, Algis Uzdavyns essay, which is the second in the book, was probably the worst in dryness for me. Not because what he is talking about isn't interesting, it's just the man is really long winded. The second half of the book deals more so with the application of theory and the physical art itself, though the book combines the two staples of alchemy, which is physico-spiritual very very well, and stays with this moniker throughout. I loved more than half the essays in this book, and I will certainly be reading this book several times again as the years pass I am sure, but my two favorite are Mirco Mannucci's "Altus Ominous Aphorism: Reading as Alchemical Process" the quote he uses as the backbone of this rather small but wonderful essay, "...lege, lege, lege, relege..." or "Read, Read, Read, Reread." Words to live by! The second was Leon Marvell's, "Take two emerald tablets in the morning" Just the wit of the title alone had me giggling... but an excellent essay on surrealism. Over all, this is a difficult book, but if you are going into any weighty tome of esotericism, it's going to be this way. But not all tomes are worth their weight and effort. This one, solidly is! Granted the price for a paperback, kind of high, but the quality and quantity of the contents more than makes up for it. Normally this would be a bit of a check mark to four stars for me. But this book really blew me away. If the alchemical arts interest you and you want to have a solid understanding in the length and breadth of them, then get this book. You will not be disappointed. And even if you don't intend to read this book cover to cover, it is a book that I would find hard not to be used over and over again, even if as a reference.

Spanning the world's artistic, scientific and religious traditions, alchemy has embraced and continues to embrace the complete spectrum of existence. From metallurgy to metaphysics, alchemy engages the technical, fine and hieratic arts in order to provide a living phenomenology of the one, single, elusive process that acts through all things. Ultimately--in its guise as ars transmutationis--alchemy penetrates to the heart of the transfiguring spiritual intensity that underpins

the perfection of life, not only from 'mineral to man', but from humanity to divinity.