

turies of the Christian era, it seems to have been unknown outside Egypt, the land of its birth, where its study was confined to small circles. One of its components is Greek philosophy, but its other and larger part is of diverse and rather uncertain origin. In its later developments, in the Byzantine period in Constantinople, it had lost its experimental character. The study of astrology was connected with that of chemistry in the form of an association of the metals with the planets on a supposed basis of "sympathy." This goes back to early Chaldaean sources but was developed by the Neoplatonists. Nearly all this practical knowledge has been ascribed by older writers on the history of chemistry to the Arabs, who really derived it from the very source we are now considering. The Arabic name alchemy is merely the Alexandrian-Greek *chemeia* with the Arabic definite article *al* prefixed.³¹

Contrary to the notion that alchemy was an absurd belief, the Arabic word alchemy is the root of the modern word chemistry. In his book *Alchemy*, Titus Burckhardt examines this fact in detail. It is the New Testament that speaks of the dangers of chemical drugs. A danger that more and more people are falling victim to. Yet again we have the case of the meaning of Bible verses being changed to meet the needs of the Bible-makers.

THE SIN OF PHARMACOLOTRY

If you look for the word "drug" in any exhaustive concordance of the Bible (for example, Strong's) you will find that it does not occur once either in the Old or New Testament.

The Greek word is *pharmakeia* (or its close relative *pharmakos*). The original and primary meaning of *pharmakeia* is "drugging." It also has a secondary meaning, "poisoning," and a third meaning, "sorcery." In nearly all the English-language translations of the Bible, from the Tyndale New Testament of 1526 right through the New International Version of 1973, the original and primary mean-

ing of *pharmakeia*—drugging—is totally ignored, and the word is misleadingly given as the last and least significant of its meanings, sorcery (or some synonym of sorcery). The fourteenth-century Wycliffe Bible translated this key word as "venemyngis" (poisonings). But the source text for the Wycliffe Bible was the Latin Vulgate rather than the original Greek. Venemyngis is a rendering, not of the Greek *pharmakeia*, but of the Vulgate's Latin *veneficia*. The only translation from the original Greek which we have been able to find that correctly renders *pharmakeia* is a Greek inter-linear version of the New Testament by B. F. Westcott and F. J. Hort, done in 1881 and no longer in print. The result of this misreading of *pharmakeia* is that in the critical places where the authors of the New Testament were talking about the use of drugs, our English Bibles have them talking about something else—something that for the modern reader has no connection with drugs. What, after all, is sorcery to twentieth-century men or women, that they should concern themselves much with it? Sorcery is the "use of power gained from the assistance or control of evil spirits. . . ." (Webster) Most of us, on the rare occasion when we think of sorcery at all, regard it as something considerably less than a major contemporary problem. The primary meaning of *pharmakeia* is familiar enough to us in English from the many words having to do with drugs that are formed from it:

pharmacy—a drug store
 pharmacist—a druggist
 pharmaceuticals—prepared drugs
 pharmacology—the science of drugs; the properties and reactions of drugs
 pharmacopoeia—an official book listing and describing drugs³²

If the reader will substitute the word drug for sorcery and witchcraft in Galatians 5:19–21, Rev. 9:20–21, 18:21–23, 21:7–8, and 22:11–15, the profound prophecy within the Bible will be understood by all.

Are we not at this very moment living in a drug cul-