

Paul Kiritsis wins the Montaigne Medal for 'The Riddle of Alchemy'

Five months after its release, "The Riddle of Alchemy" surpasses hundreds of titles to achieve a special distinction.

REDWOOD CITY, CA, UNITED STATES, May 19, 2025 /EINPresswire.com/ -- "The Riddle of Alchemy" is the winner of the [Montaigne Medal](#) for 2025, an additional distinction beneath the Eric Hoffer Award umbrella. Each year, the Eric Hoffer Award presents the Montaigne Medal to the most thought-provoking books. These are books that either illuminate, progress, or redirect thought. The Montaigne Medal is given in honor of the great French philosopher Michel de Montaigne, who influenced people such as William Shakespeare, René Descartes, Ralph Waldo Emerson, Friedrich Nietzsche, Jean-Jacques Rousseau, and Eric Hoffer.



"The Riddle of Alchemy" front cover and Montaigne Medal

The Eric Hoffer Award had this to say about the book:

“

Alchemy's ambition to perfect Nature, to make gold of detritus and dust, has certainly contributed to its quixotic appeal"

The US Review of Books

"This is an interdisciplinary examination of alchemical practices and symbols, within a broader context of psychological, spiritual, and philosophical transformation. Part historical examination and science lesson, Kiritsis presents alchemy not only as a precursor to modern chemistry, but as analogous to forms of intellectualism that grapple with fundamental questions about existence, transformation, and the nature of reality. For example,

unconscious projections of the ego-self moving toward self-actualization are shown to correspond to alchemical symbols. One chapter discusses how Jung juxtaposed dream leitmotifs with alchemical symbols. Belief in alchemy is not a precursor to acknowledging the fact that any evolution of study has led human thought into the space that it inhabits now. Kiritsis successfully

demonstrates that alchemy by its very nature touches and has influenced various disciplines that we hold sacred. This comprehensive study contributes to both historical scholarship and philosophical discourse, inviting the consideration of numerous perceptions of alchemy while emphasizing its relevance in the quest for knowledge.”

The Riddle of Alchemy is available to order through [Amazon](#) and [Barnes & Noble](#). The book deals with alchemy’s rich, multifaceted tradition from three perspectives –history, psychology, and nomothetic science–something not seen in other books of the same subject. It addresses many fascinating questions: what is alchemy? Is there any empirical truth to ancient speculative pursuits like metallic transmutation? How does alchemy intersect with the Western mind sciences and science in general?

Part I - Alchemy: Histories concerns the interdisciplinary and cross-cultural intercourse that occasioned the rich tapestry of alchemical tropes, themes, narratives, and pursuits, addressing the harmonious fusion of Hellenistic nature philosophy, Gnostic mythology, and Egyptian crafts and metallurgical practices in late antiquity - and much more, including the alchemy's role during the Renaissance, its influence on Jacob Boehme’s theosophy, and its medieval imagery's integral role in Jung’s theory of the collective unconscious.

Part 2 - Alchemy: Processes of the Mind looks at the alchemical opus and its stages in the context of analytical, developmental, and clinical psychology, offering psychological interpretations of the Splendor Solis plates and integrated alchemical interpretations of personality, personal growth, and the human condition.

Part 3 - Alchemy: The Noetic Science examines the empirical validity of alchemical theory and pursuit, addressing the viability of metallic transmutation, the theory of esoteric correspondences - the planet-metal connections - and how its animistic paradigm and principles of transformation might connect to more innovative, radical ideas emergent within the nomothetic disciplines.

Paul Kiritsis is a licensed medical psychologist, author and poet, and artist living and working in the San Francisco Bay Area. He holds postgraduate qualifications in four different disciplines–clinical neurophysiology (MScMed), clinical psychology (PsyD), Western esotericism (MA), and English/professional writing and speech (Postgraduate diploma). To date he has authored eight books, including the creative compendium Confessions of a Split Mind (2017), the award-winning titles The Creative Advantages of Schizophrenia (2019) and A Critical Investigation into Precognitive Dreams (2020), and the bestselling collection of short stories Tales of a Spiritual Sun (2023). In 2014 he was awarded The Paracelsus Award by the International Alchemy Guild for his professional website Down the Rabbit Hole. The purpose of the award is to recognize and honor outstanding web resources, archives, and commercial, organizational, and personal URLs that elucidate the philosophy of alchemy or apply alchemical methods to the arts and sciences.

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