



The Summa Perfectionis of Pseudo-Geber: A Critical Edition, Translation, and Study (Supplements to Vigiliae Christianae)

By Geber the Arabian, William R. Newman

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Alchemy was a subject of no small controversy in the Middle Ages. To some scholastics, alchemy seemed to arrogate the power of divinity itself in its claim that man could replicate the products of nature by means of art; others viewed alchemy as a pure technology, unworthy of inclusion in a curriculum devoted to the study of "scientiae." The "Summa perfectionis" of Pseudo-Geber, written around the end of the 13th century as a defense of the art, became 'the Bible of the medieval alchemists, 'and was still being used as late as the 17th century. The present work contains a critical edition, annotated translation, and commentary of the "Summa,"

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Review

"...verdienstvollen Ausgabe..." H.M.S., "Deutsches Archiv für Erforschung des Mittelalters", 1993. "Von grossem Wert für ein breiteres Publikum ist seine beigegebene englische Übersetzung mit Kommentar, der viele Belege enthält... William R. Newman hat die Geber-Forschung entschieden voranbringen und...durch extensiven Textvergleich viel bislang Ungereimtes zurechtrücken können." Bernhard Dietrich Haage, "Mediaevistik", 1993

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About the Author

William R. Newman, Ph.D. (1986) in the History of Science, Harvard University, is Head Tutor, Department of the History of Science, Harvard University. His publications include various articles in international journals on Pseudo-Geber, the "Summa Perfectionis" and on late medieval alchemy.

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