

NOTE FROM THE EDITOR

This final set of papers from the 1997 Karlsruhe conference, under the auspices of the International Academy of Philosophy of Science, focuses on technology and ethics. One of the papers, Giuseppe Del Re's "Technology and the Spirit of Alchemy," throws interesting light on that issue, but our policy does not allow it to be republished here. The interested reader can view it at

<http://rz70.rz.uni-karlsruhe.de/~ed01/Hyle>

Here is Professor Del Re's summary:

A historical perspective can throw light on problematic aspects of technology, regarded as part of the scientific approach to nature. The master reference in this respect is chemistry, a science which still gives priority, as did its mother alchemy, to the practical invitation and emulation of nature's most secret operations. The transition from the fogs of alchemy to the rigor of chemistry is often attributed to the abandonment of the religious foundations of the "alchemical philosophy." In this paper, I argue that, on the contrary, the complete elimination of the spirit of alchemy was an unjustified loss and a premise for the misuses of technology now seriously dreaded.