

Written in the nineteen-fifties by Walther Cloos, *Gemstones and Earth's History* is now available in English — we have expanded access to this remarkable book.

Cloos not only provides vivid descriptions of gems, he chronicles where they can be found, how they are embedded or related to their environment, and what time period of earth's history they arrived. Honestly, more than several moments of awe occurred while reading.

This book is the primer that would have prepared me , would have given this earth-context for all the earth science courses of my education. Chemistry experienced as merely factual and headache-inducing was transformed into surprise as I looked up the chemical structure of each gem while reading, eager to perceive the formerly tired chemical figures with fresh eyes.

The term “enlivened” is apt. This book enlivens gems along with the reader, science, history, and wonder of our earth.

Cloos clearly lays out the diversity of gemstones, and relates their uniqueness to the earth's evolution; a different time and phase manifests as different substance. In addition, someone familiar with a particular gem's geometric growth pattern can place where on the earth it comes from. This importance of place, this diversity, reflects how each and every location on earth is unique; each plot of ground beneath our feet, how a plant grows in one place is different to another, and on and on. A diamond is not just a diamond.

I am a “plant person” who readily gets to know a new environment from that kingdom’s perspective. Cloos has expanded my sense of nature to not only focus on plants, but how the earth and cosmos dance together to bring about all growth and evolution, plant, animal, and mineral. They intertwine and overlap. He describes plant-like growth patterns of gemstones, “...crystal formations that are otherwise only known in the rhythmic and spiral formation tendencies of plant growth.”

In the study of anthroposophic medicine, I learned about processes; in conventional medicine, we call a process a disease; one can surgically remove a tumor, but the process may not be removed at that time. A virus or bacteria is involved with infection, but the process of illness and healing goes beyond them. This background helped me grasp Cloos’ descriptions of how animal and plant “processes” exist within the mineral realm; his words have provided understanding of the earth’s evolution. I can now read about old Saturn, old Sun, old Moon, and ancient earth with more clear imagination—how we currently define a plant with its capacity to photosynthesize is specific to this current earth; in the far distant past, the shape of a tree trunk observed in a particular mineral reflects a similar process. . . .Same forming forces evoke similar appearances from different substances—the origin of the form is not just physical chemical makeup.

These perceptions offer intangible clues to why chrysolith is known as a healing force for the eyes, for example.

Cloos describes the arrival of chrysolith during the old Sun phase, the same time-frame as diamonds. Cloos quotes Goethe, “If the eye was not sun-like, it could never see the sun.” Cloos states “the eye is born entirely of the sun’s activity.” In my former prescribing of chrysolith for detached retinas, I just knew it worked.

Cloos provides other examples of various gems and their relationships to the senses; in the big picture, these relationships lead to further comprehension of the etheric realm.

The four different ethers are referenced in Cloos’ history of the earth and the origin of gems. Not just high heat or pressure is involved with gem origins, but light, moisture, and where they are embedded on our earth are components of each gem’s story—his description of a light-filled earth that contributed to the moonstone family during its arrival, for example.

My personal confusion about the association of gems with wealth and power is now transformed to wonder of gems—their beauties are sacred and unique; their roles in the earth’s well-being as well as forces for healing cannot be manufactured. Those prior gifts of pearls, turquoise, diamonds, and emeralds—I did not hang onto them given my lack of attachment to wearing them, and I have the unfortunate tendency to lose jewelry. With this newfound reverence, I wish I had held onto them not as investments, but to honor their special natures and to know them better.

Some books warrant an immediate second read; this one did. During the first go-through, I focused on the basics, including vocabulary—rock, mineral, ore, metal. The second time through, I began to grasp the earth's history and its transformation over time; what we now witness as solid rock formations were huge gelatinous masses that eventually solidified and differentiated, sometimes into crystals, sometimes not—and each gem had its own arrival within this evolution. The mystery of one gemstone completely enclosed within another, however, remains a mystery. . .

Cloos points out how gems' properties defy the usual perceptions of the mineral world; they are transparent yet dense which makes them entirely different from metals (how did I miss that?). That distinction alone is worthy of attention, especially in the context of medicine and the use of gems as remedies.

Cloos' love of minerals and our earth expressed in this book is palpable. Though this book does not have a medical focus, Cloos applied that love to his alchemical work as he developed many of my beloved remedies for Weleda as one of its first pharmacists; those remedies are still available. My understanding of how they are formulated and how they work in the human being is greatly enhanced after reading this book. And, his knowledge and understanding of the earth's history in relation to healing forces present not just in remedies, but in all of nature and our relationship to it, provide a sage perspective on the use of all medicines. Cloos provides

confidence that nature itself is a remedy. And how a remedy is received in order to be effective is as vital as the remedy itself.

If I had another fifty years, I would want to become a pharmacist like Walther Cloos, to continue his healing alchemical work with this deep knowledge about and wisdom of our earth. Instead, I will revisit various locations with new vision—like Rockhound State Park in New Mexico. This time, I will not just hike and camp, but will dig in. And I will read his other books available in English, *The Living Earth* and *The Living Origin of Rocks and Minerals*. His inspiration to love and cherish our earth—what better way to bring goodness to the world?

Lynn Madsen, a retired anthroposophic doctor, lives in Portland, Oregon, and is a biodynamic gardener, fiddle player, and writer.