

**THE MODERN PATH OF
INITIATION THROUGH THE
BOOKS OF FORM, OF LIFE
AND OF CONSCIOUSNESS**



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THE MODERN PATH OF INITIATION THROUGH THE BOOKS OF FORM, LIFE AND CONSCIOUSNESS

Foreword

To enter the realm of forms, "reading" the esoteric book, does not mean learning to recognize plants botanically or animals zoologically and the like, but it means taking the first step into the world of the spirit, raising the first veil that hides from us the reality of higher worlds, and then set forth on that journey of conscious reconnection that is called the Path of Initiation.

This pathway, in essence, is a journey in three stages because there are three "veils" to lift, three levels of higher consciousness to develop. Reading the book of form, registering the intimate, hidden and spiritual essence of what we perceive, is the first step. The form of a thing is the "signature" by which God manifests Himself in things.

Today, the term "initiation" is certainly misused and, for the most part, it is used inappropriately. More or less in all places, cities, environment, you can come in contact with schools that promise initiation fee, or by self-styled masters who offer themselves to welcome new disciples (give the appropriate fee). This is the reality in which we live, the reality in which we can have almost anything we want to by, but it is certainly not the way that the Spirit works.

Just think about some passages of the Gospel that can address itself to the realities of today, hardly need further comment:

"freely ye have received, freely give" (Mt 10, 8).

"But be not ye called Rabbi: for one is your Master, even Christ; and all ye are brethren. And call no man your father upon the earth: for one is your Father, which is in heaven. Neither be ye called masters: for one is your Master, even Christ."(Mt 23, 8-10).

"And Jesus answered and said unto them, Take heed that no man deceive you. For many shall come in my name, saying, I am Christ; and shall deceive many." (Matthew 24: 4-5).

"Then if any man shall say unto you, Lo, here is Christ, or there; believe it not. For there shall arise false Christs, and false prophets, and shall shew great signs and wonders; insomuch that, if it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect. Behold, I have told you before. Wherefore if they shall say unto you, Behold, he is in the desert; go not forth: behold, he is in the secret chambers; believe it not."(Mt 24, 23-26).

"Neither shall they say, Lo here! or, lo there! for, behold, the kingdom of God is within you."(Lk 17, 21).

The term "initiation" means the development of a higher consciousness through which one can access secret or confidential knowledge, often of religious character, but this definition is not yet sufficient to draw a clear picture.

What we can say without doubt is that initiation has to do with knowledge and that, irrespective of what has been paid to the initiation school bursar, it has to do with consciousness and the individual's inner life, an area of life that has no connection with anyone's bank account.

From another point of view we can define an initiate as someone whose higher level of consciousness puts him or her about two thousand years ahead of their contemporaries. We could say that, compared to the average person who lived in year zero, all modern people have the level of consciousness of an initiate. This results in

both a greater capacity for comprehension, and in a proportional increase in knowledge of the secrets of the material and spiritual worlds. To give just one example, the Pythagoras' theorem, which is now studied by young school children, was once a secret passed down in the Pythagorean initiation school.

As Rudolf Steiner tells us in his book "Initiation",¹ the path of initiation is not something reserved for a select few, but today is something that everyone can access, for as we have seen, *the Kingdom of God is within you* (ie inside the heart - Luke 17:21). This path is, therefore, within and into our inner selves through experiences that are physical, and spiritual and in our souls.

The old and the new path of initiation

Of course, the path of initiation is not the same as the one before men of two thousand years ago, because now the conditions are profoundly different for mankind. The impulse brought by the descent of Christ to the physical plane has profoundly changed both the Earth and the cosmos, and our inner essence. In the past experiences were much more direct, physical, connecting with the will and, as it were, gorey (martyrdom is the extreme example). Today, however, these trials are mostly inner experiences.

Our task is to discover, step by step, the nature of the new path of initiation appropriate to modern man, in as much as it follows the path of Egyptian initiation from 3-4000 years ago which, contrary to some thoughts, does not constitute a step ahead in our current conditions. By this we do not want to denigrate the past. However, placing the ancient initiatory path alongside one appropriate to our times is a valuable basis for comparison for the purposes of this text.

For reference we will set up the following schedule which sets the modern initiation path alongside the ancient Egyptian path.

Degree	OLD EGYPTIAN	MODERN
1.	Door of Man (I)	Book of Form
2.	Door of self-consciousness Life	Book of Life
3.	Door of space and time	Book of Consciousness
3 +1.	Attaining the degree of Christopher	Permeated by the Spirit, witness, apostle

In each of the two columns of our scheme the path is split into three steps and, when a man has passed these three tests wholeheartedly, the spirit lets him climb a step further, by grace. In both columns, then the last line corresponds to the degree given by grace after crossing the three thresholds.

The first door of old, the door of Man

The motto, "Man know thyself", has been known since ancient times, a motto associated with the oracle at Delphi, the oracle of the solar forces of ancient Greece. This was, in the past, the key to prepare Man to know the world, because what was created on the outside is reflected within us. This is the meaning of the motto written on the Emerald Tablet of Hermes Trismegistus, the greatest Egyptian initiate: "As above, so below", a phrase that is echoed in the Lord's Prayer ("On Earth as it is in heaven"). The microcosm that is within us is in close and continuous dialogue with the macrocosm that is outside of us, so we can begin to know the world (and, therefore, the

¹ The most common English title is 'Knowledge of the Higher Worlds and its Achievement.'

Spirit of God, which is present in all things) from a basis that should most familiar: ourselves.

Only Man can know Man. An animal does not have this opportunity, since this is a job for our I, our spiritual part, which the individual animal does not possess. Only one I can recognize another self, and from this starting point, can then turn to external Nature as far as the stars, to discover the intimate connection with Man himself. Through this route one ascends, with his consciousness, from terrestrial physical man, to the primordial man, to Adam Kadmon, the first Adam who was created by God in His image and likeness, whose body is made perceptible in the stars of the Zodiac.² (In the spiritual-scientific view, even our physical body in its various parts is related to the twelve zodiac forces: the head to Aries, Taurus to the larynx, right down to our Piscean feet).

♈ Aries

♉ Taurus

♊ Gemini

♋ Cancer

♌ Leo

♍ Virgin

♎ Libra

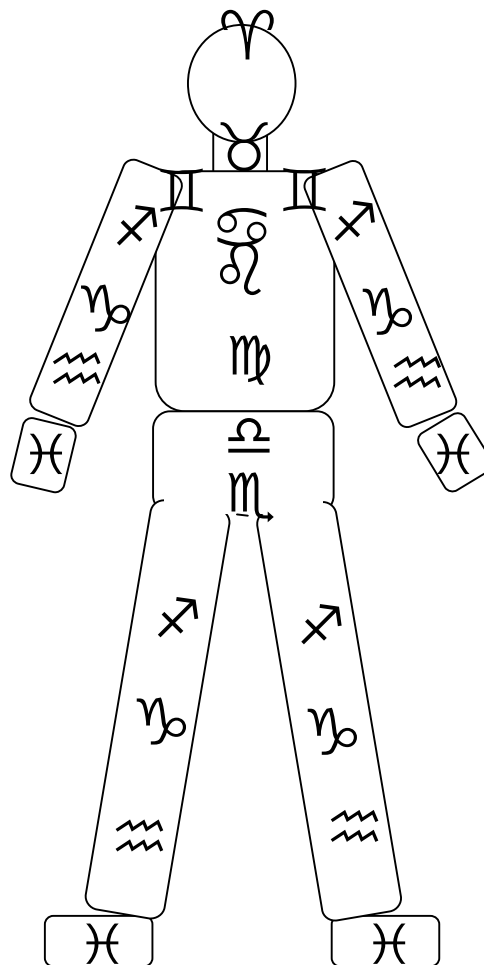
♏ Scorpio

♐ Sagittarius

♑ Capricorn

♒ Aquarius

♓ Pisces



Man in relation to the 12 constellations of the Zodiac

² See ‘*Spiritual Astronomy: A Spiritual-scientific Path from the Milky Way to Earth via the Zodiac and the Planets*’ by Enzo Nastati, Fabio Montelatici and Achille Minisini. All Enzo Nastati’s books are available via MM Publications – www.moodie.biz

An intermediate step between the first Adam and us is imaginatively represented by the Giant Imir of Jewish tradition, a massive creature whose giant head is the Earth and whose body extends into the planetary spheres right up to the Sun. Understanding the Giant Imir meant that the initiate has entered into connection with the planetary spheres along which he had descended on his path of incarnation onto Earth. Through initiation he reviews these same spheres and, therefore, he is born again.

The human ego experiences all this through his soul, since the soul is the instrument of perception through which the I makes its own developmental experiences, a tool that must be purified of all that is selfish through the work of preparation in order to resonate as much as possible with the spirit.

In ancient times, because as we said consciences were less awake than at present, the method that was used was to "shock" the soul. This made it highly receptive to experiences due to extreme fear of the unknown. Greek tragedy is a reminder of this, because it deeply moved the soul forces of the spectator. This method has a deep spiritual implication: when we experience fear, the reaction of our soul is to escape, to withdraw as much as possible. We can see this after a fright because we go white: since we are unable to move away physically, our blood - the physical basis of our self - retires and covers around our core. This kind of "inner condensation" meant that people, reducing their consciousness to a "point", found the infinite within themselves: as below so above, as the great Hermes said.

The second door of old, the door of living self-consciousness

After the novice initiate had put himself in relation to the cosmos, the second step was to realize that everything into which he had come into relation with is alive. All creation is living orderly movement, rhythm. At this level of consciousness the disciple became a conscious participant in the entire movement of the universe, realising how the cosmos is reflected in us and how we move in it. This is the level of consciousness at which one could feel the so-called *music of the spheres*³ that spiritual-science calls clairaudience. At this level the pupil had to be conscious of being alive as an I, as a self-determining individual, which is much more than the mere consciousness of existence that the soul can experience, as is the case for animals for example. Through the consciousness of the disciple's own inner life he became aware of his relationship with the cosmos.

To access all the other levels of consciousness, there are some specific preparatory exercises. The exercise to access this realm of consciousness is to grasp how the sensory impressions come into us, right into our soul, in full consciousness. For example, when we see a wall, and we see that the wall is yellow, this perception descends into us through twelve steps, and must pass through these twelve interactions with our body before we are able to perceive that the wall is yellow. The pupil should be aware of all these twelve steps.

The third door of old, the door of space and time

At this point the student must leave the constraints of space and time that have been established by our minds. We usually identify our mundane selves by the spatial limit of our physical body and by the time in which we are living, whilst our spirit can instantly expand to the most distant star and make investigations in which time plays no part. The pupil must overcome these conventional limits which result from humanity's loss of spiritual consciousness: he must no longer be exclusively subject to the familiar spatial-temporal concept/experience, but a universal being. Each one of us is destined for this experience – emerging from space and time to break through into a fuller experience of

³ This term means the ability to "hear" the harmonious weaving of the spiritual hierarchies in relation to their reference spheres as shown by the planets.

the Spirit, and this is the experience of death. The initiate is, by definition, he who can face this experience during his lifetime (naturally as a soul-experience and not as physical death) and to continue to live on with the experience, knowledge and abilities gained from this experience.

If the second step of initiation that we discussed related to the world of perceptions, this third step gave us the keys to regulate them: the initiate became a master of his own impressions, and he decides what to see, what to hear and what to edit out. Thus he became free, no longer subject to the necessities of the world.

This enables the student to avoid distraction by the thousand worldly "voices" that surround him and to facilitate listening to the inner voice, the Spirit who speaks within us and that is barely audible above the deafening stimuli of the world.

Because we talked about moving outside time and space, it follows that there is something else beyond these two entities (and entities they are, whose impact in our lower realms are the Time and Space with which we are all familiar). Inquiring into Time and Space is a vast and fascinating subject which would, unfortunately, lead us beyond the issues we are addressing here, so we will say only that, beyond time one does not enter eternity as might be thought, since eternity is also something created, however long, and so has a beginning and an end and thus retains its relation to time. Beyond time one finds oneself instead in what - however inadequately we label it - is called duration. Beyond Space, beyond what we perceive as physical space and its forms, we are in the ocean of unincarnated life forces, the etheric formative forces, also called *the sea of ethers* which renews, transforms and metamorphoses all things.

At this level of consciousness, the disciple abandons all that once characterized his religious background, since truth is a single unity and beyond the limiting clothes that Man puts on.

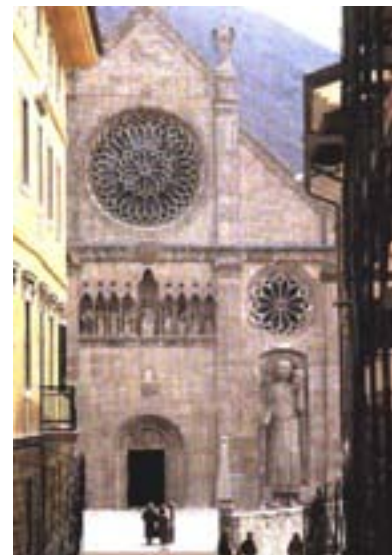
Being in duration and in this unity with the sea of the etheric forces gives us the inner experience of the *immortality of our divine nature*.

Synthesis of the three stages of initiation can be expressed by completion of the motto of the Delphic oracle: "*Man, know thyself and thou shalt know God and the whole world.*"

The ancient goal: the stage of the Christopher

When, after having achieved the previous stages, the old initiate entered the shrine itself, he found the germ of his own ego. This germ was the track to follow, the thread of Ariadne which was used to manage the initiatory journey. Finding God in his inner life he found that specific aspect of God Who has the task of bringing the principle of the ego to every Man, namely Christ. Thus having found Christ in oneself one becomes the *Christopher*, ie a carrier of the Christ. It is the level of consciousness that corresponds to becoming the giant Imir, the Christopher represented as a giant who has passed through the door living self-awareness.

The figure of Christopher is well represented in the sculpture that is located on the facade of the Duomo in Gemona del Friuli, a huge ferryman carrying the punt in one hand and a tiny baby on his shoulder, the Christ.



The facade of the Duomo of Gemona with, on the right, the Christopher

At this point it is good to make one thing as clear as we can: the encounter with Christ is not reserved solely for Christians, because Christ is present along all the true and authentic paths of initiation. Christianity makes explicit reference to the figure of Christ and, in particular, his Earthly incarnation, but already during the Atlantean epoch (about 50,000 years ago) Manu was spoken of as the leader of mankind, and **Manu**, the Solar oracle, is none other than a way to the "Son" aspect of the Trinity. Remember that the true name of Jesus was *Emmanuel*, that is the "divine Manu" (the *suffix-el* means "of God" as in Michael and Raphael).

Not I but Christ in me

Between the first and second steps of the ancient path we have considered, the second obstructive force is inserted, the forces of Ahriman⁴. He has brought the materialistic and mechanistic logic which is appropriate to the physical plane to the knowledge of spiritual spheres, with celestial mechanics, thereby hindering the ascent of humanity to the cosmos through consciousness.

To remedy this, the guides of humanity⁵ have opened up a new path of initiation, at the end of which one does not become just a bearer of Christ, but one is completely penetrated by Him: in the words of St. Paul, "Not I but Christ in me." This new route is still in three stages "plus" one, because the 3 + 1 (which is different from the number 4, which represents the process of manifestation on the physical plane) is the rhythm that resonates deeply with the Spirit.

Christ, the Lord of Karma

We spoke of the ego, the eternal and spiritual component in us, the part of the Spirit of God living embodied in our body. Through the experiences of the soul from existence to existence, this part approaches its ideal model which is the Risen One, the One who overcame the forces of death right into the physical plane component redeeming their fallen aspect from the original sin.

How do we experience the self, the I or ego, in everyday life? In us an awareness of the I only comes through meeting another I. For a child this is a meeting with the teacher (and thus it follows that it is essential that an educator is an upright and moral person). Our higher self wakes up and, recognizing the ego of the other, a spiritual meeting occurs. At this point karma becomes manifest, that which binds us to another person, and this relationship can be released by us or not (in which case we are going to encounter that person and situation again either in this or a future existence). The fact remains that, inevitably, a dialogue has begun, an "interweaving" of two lives.

An attribute of the entity of Christ is that he is also the *Lord of karma*, one who can grant us, by grace and at our request, to "pay" in this life, even the karma that we are accumulating for the next, freeing us from the necessity to incarnate again. Once dissolved we are free our karma to collaborate with the spiritual hierarchies to help humanity to evolve.

We have seen how fear and terror were the necessary conditions for the ancient initiatory path, so that the soul came into contact with the upper worlds. On the present path fear and terror are no longer needed, and indeed are extremely counter-productive: the new condition to which Man is called is to penetrate into the weavings of karma.

⁴ According to esoteric Christianity the forces of evil are also directed by a Trinity, composed of Lucifer (which acts by seduction and deceit), Ahriman (or Satan, who manipulates with lies and violence and brings us the materialist world view) and the Asura (almost unknown to us, who aim to replace the human ego and take over the physical body, and who act through virtual reality, anaesthesia, torture and genetic manipulation).

⁵ The highest spiritual entities who help the spiritual evolution of Man.

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