



TEMPLE of THOTH-MAAT

Paper II: Introduction To The Great Work

There is no finer occupation for the human experience than to seek union with, and the guidance of, one's Holy Guardian Angel. That being which is the God Spark within each us. The nature of this being is universal but called by many names: Christ, Buddha, Adam Kadman, Krishna, and others. By whatever name it may be called, it is the mediator between the material man and the universal consciousness which is God, and throughout the history of mankind, this experience has been sought after and prized above all else. Achieving this state is the goal of the Great Work, the Magnum Opus.

In each age man has advanced his understanding of illumination and the process through which it happens. Today the process is best explained using the structure of the Psyche as revealed to us by the father of Jungian psychology, Dr. Gustav Jung. His school of thought is that man can achieve illumination through his own efforts, and can establish a relationship between himself and god by correcting and coordinating the parts of his personal psyche. In short, to quote Dr. Jung, "... the sole purpose of human existence is to kindle a light in the darkness of mere being."

You will receive a solid understanding of the Jungian process in your studies, but here is a brief overview. The capitalized words are terms exclusive to Jung and require explanation.

UNDIFFERENTIATED: The common condition of man wherein the psyche is disoriented, underdeveloped, and often in conflict.

DIFFERENTIATE: The process of fully developing all of the facets of the personality.

INDIVIDUATE: To make conscious what is unconscious. The personality must become conscious in order to proceed with individuation, to draw out and enrich, through education and exposure, what is already present but dormant in the person. All facets of the personality must be given an equal opportunity to become individuated, to become a fully formed individual.

INTEGRATION: After individuating all aspects of the personality, the work of balancing and integrating the parts of the Psyche is pursued.

TRANSCENDENCE

By uniting opposites and working towards unity of the whole, a transcendent state is achieved. This union of the personality with the individuality or higher self, in order to become a transcendent being, is the holy quest. It can be achieved by most people.

To individuate the personality to the point where it becomes fully differentiated and integrated is the goal shared by both the Western Mystery System and Jungian Psychology

THE GREAT WORK

The work offered to you in Temple work is presented in three general categories: building a philosophical foundation, training the mind and body, and developing the skills of ritual.

Some of the practices include: exposing your Higher Self to the finest experiences of life (such as music, art, mythology, literature, dance, poetry, etc.), teaching your ego-self to give anonymous service to your fellow man, giving your consciousness and being a healthy and fit atmosphere within which to function, and to teach your Ego to bend its knee through worship and prayer.

In the early stages of the work you will mostly be learning the basic skills and tools which you will need later. This first work, which can appear insignificant, is in fact the most important work you will do, because without mastering it you will have little hope of success later. It is like being given a beautiful automobile with no gas tank and no battery.

THE LIST OF BENEFITS:

Mental and physical well being,

Expanded consciousness,

A working philosophy of life for the God/man relationship,

The power to transform your life,

The answer to the questions “Who am I?”, “Why am I here?”, and “What is it I must do?”

To accelerate your evolution

THE METHODS

By way of introducing the methods of doing your work, here are two marvelous quotes from the works of Gareth Knight.

“On contemplating the problems involved in getting across some of the concepts of the tree of Life one is strongly tempted to list the basic symbolism, give a few simple instructions on meditation, and then tell the reader to get on with it.” G. K.

“ . . . ‘Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and you shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you. For everyone that asketh receiveth; and he that seeketh findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened.’ And it is perhaps not always realized that the giving of what is asked, and the revealing of what is sought, and the opening of the Way it is desired to tread, is done by the same being that does the asking, the seeking, and the knocking . . . “ G. K.

LESSONS AND LITERATURE:

The lessons in Western Qabalah, The Western Mystery System, and Jungian Psychology are given to you in the form of reading assignments, diagrams, and meditation sets.

LECTURES AND DIAGRAMS:

You are given lectures in the form of papers which enhance and expand your lessons.

EXERCISES AND PRACTICES:

You are given exercises to train the senses: To help you become aware of the subtle currents (sun, moon, and seasons), to help you become aware of others as well as yourself, and to develop the skills of the mind necessary for ritual and meditation.

Practices expand your consciousness through the use of prayer, meditation, and contemplation. The Higher Self is drawn near by giving it your attention, expressing your intent, and using your skills in ritual.

ESOTERIC GRADE WORK:

The grade work follows the tradition of the Golden Dawn, which was the source of most of the western systems. You are provided with flash cards and meditation cards for each grade.

Conclusion

The way of self initiation is slower than the ritual initiation of a Temple, but always available to those who are ready. As Dion Fortune put it ‘. . . one cannot teach a jelly-fish to sing by feeding it on canary seed’. The urge to quest is an indication of your readiness, and readiness is essential. Once that is established, you begin work on the essential skills.

You will develop the ability to concentrate, to build up images and hold them. This ability is used in ritual as visualization, and is absolutely essential in meditation which is the next skill you master. Meditation requires that you create a state where your body and mind do not distract you from your work. You are given instruction in this almost immediately. It is not difficult to learn.

In preparing for the skills of meditation, you are shown the techniques of research. To enhance your training you are given instruction in the form of lectures and practices. In Temple work this instruction is given in classes related to each grade. Most of the subject matter given in Temple classes has not been published as lectures, flying rolls, or curriculum side lectures because they are usually given verbally.

Finally, you must learn patience on the one hand and perseverance on the other. Your work will give some immediate results, but others come through a period of gestation. You must be tenacious at keeping notes of your work with the meditations and exercises. This at first sounds simple but there is a mystical reason why students start well but suddenly cannot keep up their diaries. You will learn how to overcome this.

The path to true initiation requires dedication and work. Start convincing yourself that you are ready and can learn the skills. Your rewards, and there are many, will start to come early on in the form of realizations that can powerfully effect your life. Others come at each stage of development. So do not waste any time debating if you can do this, or analyzing how far you think you can go, just start the work and persist.