

# Initiates Corner

What is the purpose of Spiritual Initiation? What relation does it have to standard "religion"? Are their themes and goals the same, similar or dissimilar?

All initiates should know that real Spiritual Initiation does not engage any process which is incompatible with "religion" in the highest sense of that term. Indeed, correctly understood, true Spiritual Initiation furnishes the means of finally fulfilling the object of religion in its most universal form.

When we consider the "religions", whether Buddhism or Christianity, Muslimism or Hinduism we recognize their common denominator in the fact that—whatever their divergences of content—they comprise first of all *systems of ideas* (i.e. precepts, regulations, doctrines, codes, laws, beliefs, concepts to be "subscribed to" as faiths etc.). Such systems are meant to be means of unifying the given social order about a common set of principles. Religion appeals to principles which by definition are "highest", i.e. those purporting to be based on *spiritual* and thus *ultimate* dicta. On the negative side, of course, this tends to be a special plea for "ultimates" which impose an absolute-unchallengeable authority; the untestable (and thus formally mediated) character of such dicta is *established* by the fact that "religion" identifies its signs of spiritual sanctification *only* up to the degree of formulated idea. It *cherishes* the indirect or verbally transmitted nature of its authority. It's for this reason however we may identify "religion" in general as the Rule of social organization, since its precepts are *meant* to be followed automatically as articles of faith rather than as premises for independent exploration.

Something taken *on faith*, as unimpeachable idea, may produce immediate behavioral uniformity without having to be personally "verified" or individually confirmed. Thus the *object* of religion is a noble and viable one, i.e. to furnish a common set of principles setting sufficiently comprehensive patterns for behaviors as to establish the minimum social harmony necessary for unified functioning. At the same time, however, the *external* imposition of authority which religion achieves (etymologically, religion means "to bind"), serves to lock the collectivity into the system of automatic response-patterns representing a generally *low* level of mind/body integral adaptation.

Chronically functioning—on the whole—from such a weak level of mind/body integration, the given system is subject to a proportionately high degree of *friction*. The enforced *suppression* of personal development in terms of the scarcely suspected codes and (languishing) potential built into magazines of the mind/body pattern is reflected to the surface as vague dissatisfaction, unfocused resentment, projection of *internal* deficiency upon "external" causes and a chronic tension, a subliminal edginess due to the continuous pressure of imbalance. Since the very mode by which maximum social harmony is assayed at the same time answers as source of that tension and external friction continuously undermining its own aim, religion in itself tends to *aggravate* the conditions apparently recommending its progressively authoritarian control.

Thus the worthy object of religion is unattainable on its own—traditional—terms.

Why is this so? Why *should* this be so when—for example—the study of comparative religion hows there indeed exists a universality amongst spiritual ideas, a curious concord of certain recurring themes across disconnected lengths of space and time unmerited as mere efforts of rational interpretation etc.? Doesn't the evidence suggest there's a deep basis for religion's greatest ideals decisively beyond the needs of a given social order, justifying expectation of a more positive and productive outcome than has so far been achieved?

The basic agreements of the most diversified spiritual traditions stem from the unignorable fact that each major religion has had its origin in a *Realization*, i.e. the actual Awakened testimony and authentic teaching of a being brought alive to some significant degree in the underlying Truth of existence. The convergence toward unity of expression is therefore the result of a deep awakening *to* the basic Unity-of-being. The very persistence and manifest magnification exhibited by the greater religions throughout history, testifies to the measure of persuasive verity released by—and carried upon—the founding inspirational force; it doesn't affirm the measure of lingering "validity" that may attach to the corrupted carry-over of the Initiating power in the form of those interpretive codes ultimately coming to comprise the institutional eidolon, the Temple of social ceremony. *The*

*founding* Realization from which any religion derives its conceptual strength, was produced through a *transformation*. Transformation of the mind/body totality, drawing it significantly closer in congruence with its optimum integral potential, is a function of *Spiritual technology*.

Confronting the prospect of "religion" and the historical *limit* of religion, we find the missing Key to be that of the actual spiritual technology or transformative *means* through which the Living Cornerstone of the churchly edifice was first cut and set. This indeed is the "stone that the Builders rejected". Such technology belongs to the *inbuilt* mind/body potential with which all self-conscious beings are endowed; therefore its apparent "loss" or mysterious eclipse with respect to that part of "spiritual truth" officiated by the inevitable priests of the sacred language, can't be attributed to its having been physically misplaced like some codebook or mechanical artifice. It isn't the possible "crystal" or high-tech device (associated with some supercivilization colonized from space) that accounts for the occasional upsurge of real spiritual insight or first-person revelation in the midst of collective darkness. The real "codebook" is the complex of centers and systems common to the human form, in which the essential data is already entered; the only "device" that's necessary, is the axis through which the self-reflective psyche already functions. Since such means is always so close to hand, it isn't surprising to perceive the parallel propagation of that stream of *spiritual technology* coursing continuously, overtly or covertly as the case may be, alongside the official current of religious history. In the East that coexistence tends to be open, if classified; next to the Brahmin, there is the yogi with his breath and asana. In the West it tends to be hidden and even suppressed, so that rumors of a "Rosicrucian college", secrets in symbols of the Masonic Lodge perturb the priestly slumber like strangely-familiar shadows crawling across the tabernacle. The *historical* discrepancy in the degree to which the traditions of "spiritual technology" might be integrated with belief patterns of the social order, manifestly dissolves—in any case—when the cementing doctrine of every such order loses the security of its hemispheric parochialism and the respective "technologies" themselves are freed, in the upshot, from the interpretive restraints in which they were traditionally enclosed.

Such an auspicious circumstance certainly serves to supply a potentially new lease on life to spiritual technologies now *theoretically* separated from encrustations of doctrine (the distortive filters of mass interpretation meant to consolidate a social authority) and released to the surface of *a. general awareness* having a correspondingly greater degree of freedom available to it.

Presently reintroduced, not as experiential supplement to "spiritual theory" but as means of directly renewing Spiritual Truth through the expression of Living—unmediated—Awareness, the revised forms of spiritual technology may take their place with respect to the general order of things in a way never allowed before; unique to this present time, they may be made accessible on the larger scale so as to furnish the long-withheld means of practically *realizing* the highest social precepts previously posted as paper billet beneath church arches.

It suddenly becomes time to understand that there is no sound way of realizing the ideal degrees of tolerance, mutual respect, forbearance and courteous accommodation required of *anyone* adequately abiding by the articles of "faith", except insofar as those articles are brought to life as natural expression of a transformed pattern-of-being—a wholly renewed, integrated and spiritually magnified Form for which the progressively available modes of alert relaxation and gentle clarity-of-Being provide a suitably functional means of modifying behaviors according to the most beneficial standards of love and service. All spiritual initiates of Southern Crown should first understand, therefore, that the extremes of well-being, intensities of bliss and calm, spans of solid concentration and centered awareness to which they may attest are there to be valued not only for themselves but as the progressively consolidated *vehicles* of a more perfect life-service, permitting easy realization of just those "religious" ideals that seemed so subject to the frailties of "human nature".