



¹ Image from, *The Tarot of the Egyptian Freemasonry of Cagliostro* by Grand Hierophant, Alexander Rybalka and artist, Alexander Naumov, Silhouette Publishing, 2015.



Entered Apprentice

In the Ancient and Primitive Rite of Memphis+Misraïm



ONE'S FIRST INITIATION INTO FREEMASONRY, NO MATTER THE Obedience, is a unique opportunity for enlightenment. Like all initiation, it is an *opportunity*, not a guarantee. Freemasonry's particular method is rather unique, however, and stands erect throughout the past few centuries as a testament to the enduring nature of the Ancient Mysteries, the continuation of a living philosophy, and the capability of men and women of various stripes to join together in a fraternal embrace of virtue. One of the single most elevating aspects of Masonry is the ideal that some branches live up to which is that of a society that does not distinguish between men or women, no matter their social class, nationality, ethnicity, race, religious persuasion, sexual orientation, or otherwise. A key *feeling* that the initiate of Memphis+Misraïm will experience is that of binding. Symbolized in some ways by how he is duly and truly prepared to receive the degrees, the new Mason senses that he is deeply bound to the brotherhood in a manner unlike any he has previously experienced. The new Mason feels himself suddenly continuous with a body made up of hundreds of thousands of members across time and space; he feels himself to be a true member of the human collectivity, operating in some mysterious way with the universal cause and intelligence inherent in reality.

It is in the symbols of Freemasonry that the apprentice finds he is truly "entered." Far beyond emblems for teaching the basics of morality, the rich symbolism of the APRM+M is a living, breathing experience of the spirit. The apprentice is presented with an array of

symbols in this first degree, all of which have their *double* on the inner planes which are revealed through meditation and scrying. A few, however, will no doubt bring about the bridging of the conscious and sub-conscious mind through the initiatory process and by virtue of suspending the primary sense of modern man: the vision.



From the opening onwards, the Entered Apprentice experiences the mystery of *transmission*. Transmission is the sacred key of our work; we are transmitting the word, the grip, the token, the sign, the steps...the Tradition altogether, to the newly initiated. Being introduced and brought into the Masonic egregore is something that one will not immediately feel unless he is hypersensitive. There is a Masonic consciousness. The Rites of Memphis+Misraim access this consciousness regularly, whether in a simple meeting of a Triangle, or in a full Lodge with scheduled initiations. A sense of something wholly “other” pervades the work of Egyptian Masonry and is inescapable from the first degree onwards.

As the candles are ceremoniously lit in conjunction with the sacred wording of old, particular gates are opened. This formula is ancient; it is a gift from the land of Khem. It may not be readily perceived in this first echelon, but it is here that it is carved into the ethers. In the Rites of M+M, the primary Officers *become* their orientations, their cardinal directions. It is through their mediation that the energies from these directions are allowed to flow. The Officer is the gate. The Officer is the spirit invoked. The Officer is the power, momentarily, of the “Ennead of Egypt,” or one of the nine sacred gods of Heliopolis.

In M+M, the initiate begins his journey in the Kingdom of the Dead, otherwise known as Amenti in Egyptian lore, which is symbolized by the Chamber of Reflection, after he writes his Philosophical Testament. The occult light that is brought to the candidate during this *trial of earth* is a glimmer of the ineffable light. He enters the Lodge proper in a stooping manner, which far from simply being emblematic of the candidate’s humility is a symbol of palingenesis—the way of return to the womb, the premier moment of rebirth. This is a playing out of the Gnostic’s remembering of his divine seed; the Coën’s “way of Return.” It also alludes, in the third echelon, to the Holy Sophia’s attempt to emanate and the resulting chaos that ensued from aberration, Ialdabaoth. The true nature of this transmutation is revealed in the grades of the *Arcana Arcanorum* (Naples Arrangement, Venice 1788) and hinted at throughout the hermetic and Kabalistic traditions.

When the candidate partakes of the magical philter, the “draught of forgetfulness,” he makes a sort of pact with the Egregore which has lasting effects. Having had many opportunities to turn back and recede into normal wake-a-day existence, he is now faced with the realities of true initiation. It will take a thorough purification, a cleansing of the outer and the inner man to complete this act in the second libation: the water of Mnemosyne. The

wording that accompanies this sacrament is serious and demanding. The hoodwinked candidate can do nothing more than blindly acquiesce to the experience if he be courageous enough. It will not be the last of such serious trials.

The purification of water is a simple affair and will remind the candidate of an experience in Martinism, if he be of that persuasion, and of the Egyptian Rite of Cagliostro, if he be a student of Masonry. Yet, in its simplicity, this action again has effects on the other side. This is the first action where the candidate is said to have been given permission to proceed from the guardian of the pylon. He is given the name of Mundus in this act and encouraged to proceed to the trial of air. The three actions of purification completing the act of purification by air, again return us to the Divine Cagliostro.

The intellect is opened unto the mysteries of Masonry in the singular act of purification by air. The passions may have been the primary drivers of the chariot thus far, but now it is to the mind—and more particularly to the *nous* as the Greeks termed it—that all action will be referred. The Platonists teach of the realm of ideas; this same realm becomes tangible and relatable when this experience fully takes in the 2nd and 3rd echelons.

The purification of fire is the most impressive of the four elements within the Lodge setting. It is impressive, not because of the action in the rubrics but because of the *nature* of the purification. Harkening back to the Chaldean Oracles and otherwise, the purification by fire becomes more of a *consecration*, enlivening the “central axis-fire” of the Élus Coëns within the worthy candidate. It is to the divine principle within that this action is referred and the candidate who is awake to Otherwhere will sense a quickening at this moment, and the subsequent actions which are not only heavy in their allusions, but which recall a time when the initiations were truly ordeals of the body, mind, and spirit.

The “seal” and the “mark” which accompany this initiation are mystical, magical operations of the highest and most exalted nature. Their actions are written upon the eternal; the sacrifices accomplished are accrued and taken account of unto the infinite. The act of transferring the mark to the oath is nothing short of a classical, grimoiric pact between the candidate and the powers invoked in the degree. The Coëns have an analogue to the seal and mark which those of the CHENU Order will recognize in their IVth and Vth degree workings.

The “chastened Master” is a macabre experience in the first degree of French Freemasonry and that of the APRM+M. It is a lived experience of the Death card of the Tarot and connects, immediately, the first degree with the third. Beyond all of the significations of the Tarot card, this experience reveals to the Apprentice (after he has studied the degree in full) a symbol of maleficence formed of the body of the chastened Master. It is a symbol of the Fall; it is a mark of the Demiurge, the jealous and angry God of the Old Testament. A ritual curse is enacted in this moment—yet another memento of the religion of the Nile.

The survival of the previous trial leads the candidate directly to the font of Mnemosyne. The three draughts of this philter transmit the entirety of the tradition, secretly, to the candidate. He is introduced to the occult soul of the Order in this sacrament: the Egregore itself. He may not perceive the power of this moment or understand the import of the operation, but the act will have its consequence.

The mystical “bringing to Light,” which reveals to the Candidate for the first time the *sacred doctrine*² arises in all of its mystique and glory and this juncture of the work. It is said that during this “mystical shock” the *blazing star shines for a moment*. This is an internal experience, as well as an external one, that will not be readily forgotten. The encounter with “The Light” will grow within the Candidate over time if he continues his labors into the 2nd and 3rd echelons. The previous question throughout history of whether or not Masonry is a religious practice becomes rather absurd in this moment in time, as there is no other word for the experience beyond the Latin *religare*, which literally means “to tie, or to bind.”

The next moment of transmutation comes when the oath and the Philosophical Testament of the candidate are projected into the invisible. This sole action, this occult transference of word, blood, idea, and promise to the immortal flame, is of such caliber that none living may revoke its action. One may renounce his Masonry; yet, he is forever a Mason. One may reject the universal brotherhood; yet, he remains a member of the stream of antiquity. One may lapse into forgetfulness again; yet, his soul yearns for reintegration into unity. This Projection by Fire completes the sacred doctrine brought about during the bringing to Light with the investiture and constitution of the Mason, an action that moves beyond the Chivalric to the inner dimensions of the Templar. Projection is also, of course, the penultimate goal of alchemy—that which transmutes lead into gold in the final stage. The ash from the Philosophical Testament vividly symbolizes the powder of Projection; the end is foreshadowed in the beginning.

The enemies of the soul are aplenty. When the individual decides to take that first step into Masonry, especially into esoteric Masonry, he should expect the forces of good to fly to his side along with the beginnings of a war with the darkness. One of the primary initiatory moments is the realization of the subtlety of the enemy. The enemy will often appear as an angel of light. When the candidate is made to turn around and face this most subtle of enemies, an opportunity for quickening ensues. What we have clung to, tooth and nail, fighting for its elevation, its solidification, its crystallization, its ossification—is revealed to be ghostly, spirituous, and fleeting. The enemy that we’ve identified our deepest selves with must be sacrificed.

A host of cogent, powerful symbols are jam-packed into the remaining moments of the degree when the Candidate is clothed in his Vestments of Light, receives the rose and

² An essay on the nature of this sacred doctrine is explored in ENKRATEIA, 2019, Transmutation Publishing.

the gloves, learns the sacred words and how to communicate them, the grip, the steps, and the sign or token. These strange anachronisms become practical to the mage as he enters the 2nd and 3rd echelon of working. There are more symbols and further instruction related to the degree that the Candidate is enjoined to not only study, but to allow to penetrate him to his core.

After instruction in these items, the Venerable Master hands the Candidate an envelope containing the ashes of the *Projection by Fire*. No mere emblematic activity or lesson in morality, this envelope becomes for the Candidate a sacred relic of his initiation, a true talisman containing an element that forever binds him with the Craft and which signifies the *telos* or “end” of Masonry’s term. It should be forever treasured and kept safely wrapped in silk within the cabinet of his home temple or oratory. It will swell with force and strength as the Candidate learns the Royal and Sacerdotal art.

As the newly made Entered Apprentice accomplishes his first “work upon the stone,” the nature of spirit building is revealed. We are enjoined to erect Temples within ourselves to serve the Most High, the S.A.O.T.U.! This is the ideal Temple not made by human hands which we can enter at will. It is here that we will practice the cult of the S.A.O.T.U. which is revealed through each degree, ritual, and symbol we encounter in our work. The Coëns of Pasqually’s system will recognize this language and see a sister system which works analogously with the Divine Cultus quietly as it has since the 19th century. Our spirit building becomes synonymous with the work of the true Gnostic as well, revealing in every step the means to acquire a direct, piercing experience of the divine.

PALAMAS 96°
Horus Lodge of Research
Ancient & Primitive Rite of Memphis Misraïm
Bertiaux-line