

"The Name of the Rose" **(or the fight against obscurantism)**

Philosopher and Adept Francis BACON struggled against the darkness of his time by focusing on experience over dogma.

It is through experience alone that one can judge the values transmitted in this and other areas. If we cannot say "go see for yourself," we may convey false knowledge and false practices for a long time. Without being aware, we are self-programmed in a certain language that became coherent for ourselves - this is the trap - making others say that "we do not want to budge." Insidiously, intolerance took hold within us, and gradually obscures our mind.

Even if we can appreciate the values passed down, we know that we cannot sift through education with equal ease. A teacher who corrects a mathematics, physics or chemistry assignment is rarely said to be intolerant in judgment. These subjects rely on experimental control based on coherent logic coinciding with the general perceptions we have about the universe, leaving no room for doubt. The concept of tolerance or intolerance is practically nonexistent there. But as soon as we enter areas where knowledge may seem less rigorous because not measurable, such as philosophy, history, poetry, psychology, etc., doubt sets in. The professor who must assess a student's thought process is often found intolerant in this student's eyes when he gives bad grades.

In the domain of intolerance, we see that there three types. There are people who are born intolerant - those people who under any circumstance will not move one iota from their viewpoint. Then there are those "in good faith" intolerant people, like little children. The voluntarily intolerant ones, who are the most dangerous – are those who like to falsify data to manipulate their surroundings. Some denote a lack of maturity, others the purest cynicism, camouflaged, of course. These latter ones are more difficult to detect because under a mask of good faith they often act in areas where scientific rigor is lacking. History is a common example; as it is primarily based on documents. The powerful who were conscious of their reputation often distorted or eliminated any embarrassing story of their time. For the sake of personal power, these masks of good faith still infiltrate areas of politics, economics, religion or philosophy, and nowadays pseudo-esotericism. In these domains they have leeway to play guides, and to maintain the reins and hold the largest number under their yoke.

Whether we are victims of our own intolerance, which inevitably leads to bad faith, or we are victims of the intolerance of others, in both cases we must break free.

How can the student on the Path not stay trapped, when he is not quite yet a Free being? He has to work constantly, sweep his own house, keep vigilant and seek to understand things by himself through experimentation.

At the personal level, the practice of good will and letting go give good results. We gradually plug weaknesses and seek new balance points to readjust our own path. In addition, if it is beneficial to be tolerant of others, we must first be tolerant towards ourselves. We must love others, but we must first love the other in ourselves. Finally, when in doubt of knowing ourselves thoroughly, we can always look into the interior mirror for questioning. Incidentally, as we must move forward, it is better to guide the work of the mirror towards the future rather than the past.

Socially, the real Student lives in this world, not outside of it; he does not live as a hermit in a cave, although sometimes a few days of retreat can be beneficial for his mental fitness. Like all of us, he has many tools: the mind for reasoning, critical thinking, reflection (it's still a game of mirrors) and always the brains and the heart. It is not excluded that on his path he has to chase the merchants of the Temple. Remember that if the Adept has his head in heaven, he also has one foot in the sea and one foot on the ground.

On an esoteric level, we invite the student to make the motto of Siddhartha Gautama (Buddha) his own:

*"Believe nothing because you have been shown
the written testimony of some ancient sage,
Believe nothing on the authority
of Masters or Priests*

*But that which agrees with your experience
and after a thorough study
satisfies your reason and tends to your own good
this you can accept as true
and with it model your life."*

Authentically lived esotericism can be considered an experimental religion: the permanent job is to connect the two "selves." If the mystical or inner experience was of the same nature as scientific experiments, esotericism would, in terms of knowledge, be on the same level as the so-called exact sciences (almost exact should we say). So, religions and many things in "ism" would disappear, beginning perhaps with esotericism itself...!

But we know that esoteric experimentation is not externally measurable. It is interior to the being. It is therefore not transmissible to another. It is, however, possible to transmit the method or the process of the work that leads to experience. But if someone refuses the job, there is no way to raise his awareness. One can only hope that he has a spontaneous experience, which can occur because this is the manifestation of a slow inner ripening.

It is said in one of the Seven Commandments of the Fama Fraternitatis: "You shall not demonstrate the doctrine through miracles." Let's remember that the "real" miracle is only due to the fact that the Initiate, as opposed to the profane, has access to a higher level of natural laws that transcend those of our physical world. Those who have this power had better encourage students to make their own inner demonstrations rather than operate for them. Moreover, there are talented fraudsters, and we all know illusionists who have the art of "showing off".

Another difficulty lies in wait for the student on the Path. It is long and difficult to overcome the tutelage of one's father and mother, hence more than one is looking for a "master." The student who advances senses there are other dimensions, and he is also swift to think there exists "higher beings" if only because he makes a comparison with himself. No doubt, such beings exist, but, somehow, we can say they are beings who attended school before the others in a diligent manner.

We must strive to lead ourselves, and to be subjected to our Inner Self alone, for only our Inner Self is the true Master. "Subjected" in this case is meant in the sense of Listening. It is only by Listening this way that one can become Free.

It is obvious that one who lived an inner experience wants to share it with the people close to him, to convince them that it depends only on them that the veil is lifted. It is true that there are few paths that would give some experimental esoteric knowledge. Such are astrology, alchemy, Qabala, or other disciplines, but here we run into two problems:

If we try an alchemical experiment, for example, to a level sufficient to demonstrate the influence of spiritual forces on matter, we can do that in front of an audience of adequate inner level, in other words an audience that has almost no need for it.

The other reason is that we do not subject the spiritual to judgment of the profane. Only the reverse is possible. This is a Universal Law. As the Sepher Yetzirah states: Tali, the little king of this world (intellect) has to get up from his throne to greet the Great King (the Spiritual Self) for the Adept must come alone and Free to the Temple Gate.

For these reasons, the fight against obscurantism is still slow, especially as the Nadir has not been passed by all. However, most having passed it, we have seen for several years now a real interest in inner experience. Another fact in today's world is the challenges expressed at all levels. Although not always justified, this reflects a refusal to blindly receive external directives.

Nowadays we hear a lot about collaboration in the world, although it is often loose collaboration. This concept is still new to our mentality, although it foretells an opening to others. Listening, being available, even if not yet highly effective, gradually erodes intolerance and will dissolve obscurantism.

It is through those who want to Work that the Rose bud will finally blossom.

Jean DUBUIS