

Fernando Pessoa

There are many Kabbalas,

Initiation

There are many Kabbalas, and it is hard to believe that we cannot attain to union with God, whatever that may mean, unless we are acquainted with the Hebrew alphabet.

There are Errors of the Path, Errors of the Inn and Errors of the Cave. Those are errors of the path where the path itself is taken for its purpose. Those are errors of the Inn where halfway is taken for all the way. Those are errors of the Cave where the cave, which is at the base of the Castle, is taken for the Castle itself (is taken for the Hall of the Castle).

These errors are common to all paths, and that of Gnosis is no more free from them than the mystical and the magical paths.

I can dispense with asceticism, but not with truth, nor will I believe that God will not be manifest to me unless I can sit still for five hours or can breathe naturally through either nostril at will.

The fact is, however, that whatever the path that is taken, it should not be taken before the preparatory grades, the neophyte grades, have been traversed. Mysticism seeks to transcend the intellect (by intuition), magic to transcend the intellect by power; gnosis to transcend the intellect by a higher intellect. But to transcend a thing rightly you must first pass through that thing. The advantage of the gnostic path is that there is less temptation to reach the higher intellect without passing through the lower, since both are intellect and there is a difference of quantity between the one and the other, than in the mystic and the magic paths, where there is a difference of quality, not quantity, between emotion and intellect; between the will and intellect.

s. d.

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“Essay on Initiation.”