

The Tarot According to Ra

The Major Arcana from the Perspective of One Student of Ra

by

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Part One

This book is many things all at once. It is a primer on the essential features of Ra's system (here, I mean Ra, from the *Ra Contact*, as channeled by L/L Research in the 1980's), often employing arguments that defend my specific interpretations. It is a philosophical work that offers answers to life's largest questions, usually without defending arguments, because the greatest evidence in favor of these answers is that they resonate within us as true. It offers an account of the fundamental nature of reality, a description of what and how we can know, a conception of free will, a conception of the nature of the soul, and a moral theory. As a philosophical work, it develops both a logically consistent system within which all experiential elements fit and a phenomenological exploration of these experiential elements to flesh out their nature as experienced. That is, I develop a structure and then, using that structure, I attempt a complete account of the features of the human experience. This book is also a work of psychology in roughly the Jungian tradition, since I articulate the elements and structures of the human psyche through an account of these elements as personas or tropes in the running narrative of our lives. This book is also a self-help manual, since I offer practical ways of making use of the information herein for the purpose of living our lives more fully, more consistently, in a condition of greater overall health. This book is finally a work of spiritual inspiration, since the ultimate goal of the entire effort is to help readers establish and maintain a connection with the one, great, infinite center of all existence, under whatever name we apply to this center (I prefer "Creator").

I expect that this book will be of interest primarily to two demographics: current students of Ra who want to understand Ra's teaching on the archetypes and current students of the Tarot who are interested in a new perspective on the old topic of the major arcana. I have designed the book with both groups in mind. While I make heavy reference to Ra's teachings, I believe that most of the important features of Ra's system are expressed internally to this book. There are some important elements that I have left out because I ran out of time to write (such as an explanation of the seven energy centers), but I intend to correct these exceptions in later drafts. What you are reading is, unfortunately, a first draft written in the span of two months. You have been warned.

Students of Ra who read this book should have read the conversation between Don and Ra at least once (preferably twice) in full before reading this book. Students of the Tarot who read this book should have already spent years working with the Tarot before reading this book. Those who have done neither of these things will likely find the work somewhat overwhelming. But it is ultimately for you to decide whether to press on. I do not believe that a person *needs* to be well versed in either of these subjects to get something out of this book: the subject of the book is the human experience itself, something that every potential reader has an interest in better understanding. So even if you do not meet these criteria, judge for yourself whether you are ready to read this book by paying attention to the feeling you have about it as you read it. You will know whether it is right for you.

You will notice that, though this is a "completed" first draft, it is not complete. I had meant to write a final set of sections in which I consider relationships between sets of three archetypes within a single classification (this will make more sense later) but ran out of time. I wanted to develop exercises for using each of the archetypes, but only ended up with one—though I think the nature of this one exercise should suggest what I had in mind for the other archetypes. I started out by attributing lists of virtues to

each archetype and then examining the unvirtuous expressions of these archetypes by considering what they would look like if they did not live up to these virtues. But, in the interest of saving time, I stopped doing so toward the end. I am also not fully happy with the names I have given the personas. I wanted to rename the Magician, for example, but never landed a name I thought fit. And the names I've given other personas are not always ones I stand fully behind. There are many other features I had meant to add to this book, but that I have not yet had time to write. I must also apologize that there are no images in this text. You can find a decent version of the Tarot deck I am using here: <http://www.thirddensity.com/tarot/>. For those unfamiliar with Ra, you can find the text in full here: <https://www.lawofone.info/>.

As an advance reader, I am asking for your assistance in improving this text. I do not want grammatical or spelling corrections. Those issues will be addressed in later drafts. What I would like from you is the following:

- Things that rub you the wrong way. The moral theory I present here has teeth, so it is bound to offend some people. If you are offended, I would like to know precisely how, so I can integrate that criticism and hone it into a better work. That is not to say that I will attempt not to offend you, but I will use the criticism to broaden my own view.
- Lists of virtues for each archetype. This is a lot to ask, so I don't expect you to do it. But if, while reading through my entries for the archetypes, certain virtues pop out at you as relevant but unmentioned, please write them down for me. This will help me develop the sections on distorted archetypes.
- Suggestions for better names for the archetypes and relationships. The names are fairly important to me, so I want them to be good. I want them to capture the essence of the archetype in a short, pithy way. And I want to modernize the naming so that they are more comprehensible as personas than names like "High Priestess" or "Judgment."
- Suggestions for corrections in my understanding of the archetypes. I do not claim to have gotten everything right. In fact, I change my views on this subject so frequently and so fundamentally that I have no reason to think that in 5 years I will still stand by everything I have said here. So if you think I got it wrong, let me know and let me know why.
- Suggestions for additional content. Aside from what I have already said I plan to include in this book, it would be helpful to know whatever else you think might be helpful for my intended audience.

1. How to Use This Book

When Don asks Ra what the "structure and contents of the archetypal mind" are, Ra demurs, saying that they prefer to listen to Don's observations on the subject and then "suggest further avenues of the refinement of these inquiries." Ra concludes, "We feel we might be of more aid in this way" (66.21). This quotation is relevant because this book is essentially my own attempt to answer the question, "What are the structure and contents of the archetypal mind?" Ra's answer suggests that answering this question in a straightforward way is not very helpful to the person asking the question because it does not require them to do their own work. This way of thinking parallels the occultist tradition in which a student is not told anything they cannot work out for themselves, while the world at large is kept in the

dark altogether because part of the student's required effort is discovering the existence of the occult in the first place.

The only way I know how to answer this conundrum is to speak from my own experience. My attempts to discover and understand the archetypes were hampered by a lack of information. The Tarot tradition, whether occult or mainstream, does not approach these images from a perspective that aligns easily with what Ra has to say on the matter. Additionally, the study Don and Ra began was far from complete when the contact ended. If the contact had continued, Don and Ra would have produced a far more accessible articulation of the archetypal mind, because Don did not want to set a subject aside until he felt he understood it. Ra was also aware that Don intended to publish. So, for whatever reason, it was acceptable to Ra that they give nuanced answers to Don's questions and for these answers to be forever set in black and white, but it was not acceptable to simply pontificate on the subject at length. The availability of the information to the public was not the issue; the issue, for Ra, was that someone had to specifically ask for information as part of a program of dedicated study. For Ra, it was enough that Don engaged in the study.

Interestingly, the result is that everyone who reads Ra must also engage in the study. When I first read Ra, I did not know what to make of the last 30-odd sessions, so I began to search the internet for work from others who had spent time with Ra's conceptual structure and fleshed out some of the details that Don and Ra never got the opportunity to flesh out. But no such work existed. On discovering this, I knew that I was going to have to create that work. I have spent ten years actively poring over these images and Ra's words, sifting through the various commentators on the Tarot, and conversing with other students. I do not consider it reasonable that others should have to reproduce my own considerable efforts: I consider it to have been a lifelong calling to write this book. It is my hope that this book makes the study easier and less confusing for others.

However, I do agree with Ra that each student should attempt to work out for themselves what the nature of the archetypal mind is. I do not think each student should begin with only the Tarot images, since this starting point is historically proven to be too nebulous a starting point to reliably identify the personas and their relationships to one another. Rather, I think what students need before beginning their study is an explanation of the *structure* of the archetypal mind. This explanation should be detailed enough that the student understands how the various elements in the archetypal mind fit logically together. With this structure in mind, the student can then approach the *contents* of the archetypal mind from the perspective both of their own experience and the tradition of commentary on the Tarot images. In other words, I believe that students should begin with a structure and attempt to flesh out the content through their own seeking efforts.

This book, however, presents *both* the structure *and* the contents of the archetypal mind, as I understand them. I have therefore divided the book into two parts. The first part is a primer for the student. It offers an overview and a detailed explanation of the nature and the structure of the archetypal mind. I recommend this first part to any serious student of the archetypal mind as Ra teaches it. The second part is my own unique attempt to flesh out the details of each archetype and all their relationships with one another. In the first place, I am far more confident that I have correctly articulated the structure than I am that I have correctly articulated the contents. In the second place, I think the idea of a "correct articulation" of the contents of the archetypal mind is something of an absurdity: each student will perceive the energies and personas of these 22 archetypes in her own way.

The second half of this book is how I perceive them. I do recommend this view to others because I believe it is fairly accurate, but I also recommend that each student develops her own unique assessment of the contents of the energies and personas of these archetypes. As Ra says in 76.9, we must each go beyond the written word and cultivate direct contact with the archetypes themselves. Internalizing everything I have to say about the archetypes will prove an impediment to the process of cultivating direct contact because some of the things I say will not resonate. For this reason, I recommend that students do not read the second part of this book until they have spent two years attempting to work out the contents of the archetypes on their own, using the structure I provide in the first part. If readers follow this protocol, then they should have opinions of their own by the time they return to this book to read the second part. This foundation will allow my thoughts on the nature of each persona to help the student further articulate her own thoughts and it will prevent students from dogmatically embracing everything I have to say on them.

2. The Fundamental Nature of Reality (and Illusion) in Ra's System

The philosophical system that Ra teaches must be understood holistically. The reasons for this are evident in the elements of the system itself. So I will begin at the beginning of all things.

The Law of One (the metaphysical law, not the publication) says that all things are a unity. This law declares that separation is an illusion and is the single foundational truth of all existence. But it is not called a "Law" merely because it is true. We should think of the Law of One as a law in the same sense as we think of the Conservation of Energy as a law: it is an inviolable principle that shapes the world itself. This feature of the Law of One has important consequences for the way the illusion of separation is constructed. The illusion can only hide the truth of unity, as the illusion itself is established on a foundation of unity. This means that in every apparently separate part of the universe, there is something that leads back to unity.

For Ra, "unity" and "infinity" are synonyms. There are some interesting consequences to the identity of these two concepts, such as the unity has infinite variety within itself, but the reason one should accept this identity is that unity and infinity are both terms that express the absence of boundaries. Or usual interpretations of the words imply that unity is a lack of internal boundaries (a unified thing) and infinity is a lack of external boundaries (a limitless thing). Ra sometimes refers to the basic unified, undifferentiated reality as "infinity" and other times as "intelligent infinity." For the purposes of clarity, I will stick to "undifferentiated unity" to name this concept.

But if the basis of reality is unity and separation is an illusion, why the illusion? This is another way of parsing Heidegger's question of being: why is there something rather than nothing? Heidegger considered this question unanswerable and Ra's assessment is similar. As Ra says, the creation "begins and ends in mystery."

Fortunately for us, Ra does have more to say on the matter. Within the primordial undifferentiated unity of reality, prior to both space and time, there was a sudden discovery. As Ra puts it, "Infinity became aware." The concept of awareness requires that there exist at least two things: a subject and an object. Awareness, then, is a relation between subject and object in which the subject beholds or is present to the object. The basic mystery of reality—the question of being—is the question of *how* and *why*

undifferentiated unity became aware. I will follow Ra and simply assert that there will be no answer to this question as it remains a mystery. I simply take it as a basic truth.

One of Ra's names for the basic truth that unity became aware is the First Distortion. Another of Ra's names is Free Will. These names give us an opportunity to better understand this second basic truth (the first basic truth being the Law of One).

I will begin with the concept of the First Distortion. The splitting of undifferentiated unity into a subject and an object is the creation of a boundary where no boundary previously existed. It is impossible for undifferentiated unity to be aware, because awareness requires differentiation between subject and object. This truth, then, declares that unity innovated a boundary within itself: it distorted its own nature in order to "be what it is not." Ra also refers to the First Distortion as the discovery of "finiteness" and "many-ness." This distortion is called the "first," because this one innovation is the entire basis for the entire illusion of separation. Every subsequent event in the production of the universe as we know it is a repetition of this one trick. Once the unity discovered the possibility for a boundary within itself, erecting additional boundaries (or distortions) was the obvious next step.

Now consider the concept of Free Will. The First Distortion, according to Ra, is not only the discovery of awareness and of the possibility for a boundary, it is also the discovery of free will. Remember that unity and infinity are synonymous for Ra. When unity distorted itself into awareness, it beheld itself for the first time. This new awareness became present to its own limitlessness; it found itself gazing upon a vast, unexplored potential. The innovation of the ability to distort its own nature left open the possibility of repeating this experiment over and over. In discovering itself, unity also discovered that it could become whatever it wanted to be. Free will, then, is the ability for an infinite being to embark on an exploration of its own infinite nature by taking on the illusion of separation. We should, then, understand free will as an expression of both the uniqueness and the lack of self-knowledge of the one who has it. To have free will is to be the kind of thing that is infinitely unique and ignorant of the possibilities of this uniqueness. Thus, Ra tells us, the First Distortion set unity (hereafter, the One Infinite Creator) on a path of self-discovery. Free will is the ability and desire to discover one's potential through the mechanism of illusory separation. At bottom, the Creator wants to know itself as both subject and object of experience. This is the First Distortion.

As the Law of One is the basic truth of all reality, the First Distortion is the basic truth of all illusion. Every part of the illusion is a reiteration of unity's one initial discovery. On every level of its existence, our universe manifests the discovery of awareness and the subsequent desire to explore the infinite potentials of that discovery: everything that exists is free to be itself and to know itself thereby.

The reiteration of the First Distortion is a difficult point to understand, so I will explain it another way. The discovery of awareness innovates a distinction between subject and object. In order for the subject to know itself as object, the object must undergo further distinctions that then present themselves to the subject. So just as the subject must become aware of itself as object, so the object must become a subject that is aware of itself as object. This is why the One Infinite Creator individuates itself into beings like us: we are distinct points of awareness within the total object (the creation) beheld by the primordial subject (the creator). Everything that exists takes on its own life, has its own will, and comes to know itself through more and more fine grained individuation. Thus, the whole universe is free to explore itself.

Ra uses the phrase “intelligent infinity” in two distinct senses. The first sense is the one discussed above. Intelligent infinity, in this sense, names the undistorted unity that abides throughout this experiment in distortion, unaffected by anything that happens here. To avoid confusion, I will not use the phrase “intelligent infinity” to mean undistorted unity. The second sense of “intelligent infinity” (which is how I will use the term) refers to the subjective side of the primordial awareness that comes about with the First Distortion. Ra commonly describes this split between the subject and object as a split between potential and kinetic. This terminology is intentionally physics-y. Ra wants us to draw an analogy between physical concepts and ontological concepts because there are many similarities between them (since the physical reflects or reiterates the ontological). The kinetic side, which Ra calls intelligent energy, is the part of the creator that takes on all the distortions that the creator conceives for itself. The potential side, which Ra calls intelligent infinity, is the part of the creator from which all these distortions emerge as novel concepts. The subject cuts the object into parts in order to know itself as an object cut into parts.

On the discovery of the First Distortion, there is still only a single split within unity: the split between subject and object, potential and kinetic, intelligent infinity and intelligent energy. At this point, unity beholds itself as undifferentiated, so the object (intelligent energy) does not yet have any divisions within itself. The Second Distortion is the innovation of a boundary within the intelligent energy, and it is a reiteration of the initial discovery of awareness that came about with the First Distortion. Just as infinity become aware, so intelligent energy finds focus. The new split within the kinetic is the split between the focus and the periphery. That split comes about as a consequence of the directive contained in the First Distortion: the creator will know itself. Intelligent energy begins as the object beheld by intelligent infinity, but it, too, feels the pull of the creator’s will to know itself. Through its free will, it reaches for self-discovery without any awareness of that reaching. And because it reaches, it finds. In finding focus, intelligent energy draws the attention of intelligent infinity to a single unique perspective, distinct from all other possible points of perspective within intelligent energy. In this discovery, intelligent energy becomes aware of itself, allowing the subject to enter the objective world, existing as both subject and object. Ra calls such a focus of intelligent energy a “Logos.”

Another name Ra gives the Second Distortion is the “Creative Principle.” The Logos is a point of perspective within the objective world that is aware of itself as infinite and so has at its command the power to shape the objective world around itself into an experiment in self-discovery. Intelligent infinity is the source of all power, but the Logos is the hand and mind capable and desirous of wielding that power. The reason Ra calls the Second Distortion the Creative Principle is that the combination of both the capacity and the desire to multiply the boundaries within intelligent energy produces an “infinite reaction” in which Logoi multiply and all the different possible modes of experience are imagined by those Logoi. A Logos, then, is an infinite mind that has both a particular perspective and the self-aware power to manifest an experiential continuum for itself that allows it to explore its particular perspective. And because each Logos is a distinct focus of intelligent energy, each Logos is unique.

According to Ra, the first distortion called forth by the Creative Principle is Light. Ra calls this the Third Distortion. The first Logos (or the One Logos), moved by the free will desire to know itself and possessed of the power to manifest itself within the periphery of intelligent energy, invented a reflection of itself: the physical universe. According to Ra, all matter is composed, at bottom, of photons (physicists have not shown this to be true, but it is what Ra tells us). This distortion of intelligent infinity is yet another reiteration of unity’s discovery of awareness. It, too, is a Logos (or a co-Creator, as Ra calls it) that has

free will. The desire of the physical universe is a mirror image of the desire of the Logos that constructs it: as the Logos wants to know itself in the physical world, the physical wants to make its way back to the Logos. Light itself is intelligent. This intelligence reveals itself in the self-organizing tendency of the material world: stars are born; stars beget planets; planets develop life; life evolves.

We have, then, four primal Laws. Notice that each next law presupposes and incorporates all the preceding laws.

The Law of One: The ultimate reality is undifferentiated unity.

The Law of Free Will: Separation is an illusion chosen as a means for the One Infinite Creator to know itself.

The Law of Logos: The Creator will know itself as a unique, perspectival focus of potential that manifests an experiential continuum around itself.

The Law of Matter: All physical matter is inborn with the desire to return to and achieve unification with the original source of creation.

As part of the infinite reaction to the Creative Principle (the Second Distortion), the energies that flowed through and surrounded the Logos took on patterns and became regularized. Ra does not say it, but I believe that this is when the octaves came about: during this regularization and patterning, intelligent energy took on a holographic structure of repeating systems of sevens. Thus, a precondition of the experiential continuum of the Logos is progression through octaves of experience. These octaves present themselves microcosmically in the energy centers of the human body, but they also present themselves macrocosmically in the densities that structure the path that Light follows on its return journey to the Creator. This return-journey is characterized by entering the physical illusion, working with the experiences of that illusion, and learning the basic lesson that the illusion is designed to teach. Once this lesson is sufficiently learned, the nexus of Light (that is, the incarnate entity) will be ready for the next planned density of experience. I will not dwell on the nature of the other densities, because this topic has no bearing on the subject of this book, which is the Archetypal Mind of our density in this octave of experience—the third density.

A Logos generates its own physical illusion. This Logoic physical illusion is characterized by a star that other cosmic bodies orbit. The star is the physical manifestation of the Logos itself (the focus), and the orbiting bodies are physical manifestations of the illusion that the Logos will experience (the periphery). Just as the primal distortions are nested, so Logoi are also nested. The universe, according to Ra, has one central Logos about which everything orbits. This Logos individuates (the intelligent energy around it finds new foci) into further Logoi, each of which manifests a galaxy around it. Within these galaxies there are suns around which planets orbit. These suns are what Ra calls “sub-Logoi,” because they are further individuated parts of the central Logoi they orbit. These suns generate life on the planets that orbit them, and these lifeforms (including ourselves) become individuated parts of the sub-Logoi. Which is why Ra calls us “sub-sub-Logoi.” And so the One becomes many.

Each Logos begins and ends its experiment with the illusion once per octave of densities: Ra’s cosmology follows something like the oscillating bang and crunch model, where the crunch is when a star becomes a black hole. the end of an octave, this Logos assimilates all the information from its experiment with the illusion to formulate parameters for a new octave of experience. Ra calls this harvest from previous

octaves the “One Original Thought.” The One Original Thought of an octave is a set of principles and concepts, discovered in previous octaves, that have proven themselves to the Logos to be an efficient way to gain plenty of novel experience about itself. This One Original Thought contains parameters specific to each density within an octave. The One Original Thought for our octave is the idea of experiencing life as the union of a mind, a body and a spirit, each of which undergo progressive evolution over the course of many lifetimes during this density. This evolution occurs by the progressive flow of experience from a “potentiator” (a sub-sub-Logos) to a “matrix” (the experiential continuum of the sub-sub-Logos), within a “significator” (a body, a mind, or a spirit).

The One Original Thought is the All-Mind: it expresses the foundational nature of all minds in our universe, without exception. You can see from the above schema just how basic it is. However, each galactic Logos adds details to this basic structure that differ from those incorporated by each other Logos. And the sub-Logoi within a galaxy offer further refinements to the structure offered by the galactic Logos. In other words, the One Logos had an idea of how it wanted to experience this octave, but there were many different ways to enact this idea. Due to the Law of Free Will, each of these options found focus and became its own Logos. But even these newly awakened Logoi realized that there were many different ways to enact their own ideas, so each of these options also found focus and became a sub-Logos. Our sun is one such sub-Logos. Its mind is what Ra calls the “Archetypal Mind” (I prefer and will use “Archetypal”) and it is a refinement of our galactic Logos’s refinement of the All-Mind. There is much more detail in the Archetypal Mind than in the All Mind. The third density Archetypal Mind of our sub-Logos is the mind we share with all of the human race. Ra has called it the “roots of mind,” suggesting it is well hidden within the collective unconscious.

To summarize so far: According to Ra, we are each individuated parts of an all-powerful, unified whole: a Creator. The purpose of this Creator is to experience its own infinite potentials, and it has decided that the best way to do that is by separating into and experiencing life as the countless entities that make up our universe. The Creator’s method is to plan the governing laws of a physical universe (or galaxy or star system), then to let that universe play itself out, and finally to use the information gathered to plan a new physical universe. The process of a universe playing out has turned out to follow a pattern of octaves, each made up of seven (or eight, depending on how one counts) densities. An entity graduates from one density to the next within an octave by learning the lessons the density (much like school). So the Creator’s goal is to gain novel experience and its method is to learn lessons that lead to new experience. The Archetypal Mind, then, depicts the mechanisms through which we can learn those lessons.

3. The Nature of the Archetypal Mind for Our Third Density Illusion

The Archetypal Mind, like the All Mind, is a system for the Creator to efficiently acquire novel experience of itself. Let’s expand on this idea. Ra says that “the archetypical mind...is a blueprint of the builded structure of all energy expenditures and all seeking, without distortion” (91.37). Notice that the Archetypal Mind is not a plan of action. It does not show us the Creator’s intention for how we are supposed to experience third density. On the contrary, just as the primal distortions lay down inviolable laws that structure the illusion, so also does the Archetypal Mind. If the Archetypal Mind is a blueprint, then, by analogy, third density is the building. And like a building with its blueprint, there is no possibility

of deviation. The building is already built and it was built according to the blueprint, so everything in the building appears on the blueprint. It is similar to a map, except that a map is created after the landscape, so it can't explain why the landscape is the way it is. A blueprint, on the other hand, contains within it all of the reasons and intentions of the architect who designed it—provided the blueprint's reader can understand what she is looking at. So just as there are no additional rooms in a building that are not on the blueprint, so there are no possible ways of expending energy or gaining meaningful experience in third density that are not represented in the Archetypal Mind.

The archetypal mind, as its name suggest, is a mental object. It is a not bodily object and it is not a spiritual object. But, as a blueprint, the archetypal mind is a *representation* of the bodily, the mental and the spiritual. So the stuff that the blueprint is made of is mental, but building it represents is bodily, mental and spiritual. In fact, only a mind can represent something to itself: that is part of what makes a mind a mind. Body and spirit have different roles to play in third density, as we will see when we examine the details of the Archetypal Mind.

The Archetypal Mind is constituted by 22 archetypes that have systematic, interlocking connections to each other. So what is an archetype? Ra compares the archetypes to molecules. As molecules are structured groups of atoms that have functional interactions with other matter, archetypes are structured groups of concepts that have functional interactions with other mental phenomena. Moreover, concepts can be simple and unified (like philosophers used to think was true of atoms). So there is a smallest particulate level of mind called "concepts," but, as in the body, we tend to experience mind at a more macroscopic level: concept complexes and networks of concept complexes. Archetypes are a special kind of concept complex. What makes them special is that the our Logos chose them as the blueprint for all possible energy exchanges in third density. Everything you can possibly do here that is meaningful in any way operates according to these special concept complexes. They are the natural laws according to which humans learn the lessons of third density.

Just as it is with matter, mental objects are both particle and wave. Each concept has a unique vibration, a unique resonance. So also does each concept complex have a unique vibration, like a musical chord that combines many tones into a single whole. Anything on the mental level that you experience as both conceptual particle (a structured object) and conceptual wave (a resonant signature) has *character*. The archetypes, though, are special concept complexes. They represent motion through third density, not merely the static features of third density (note that these static features are represented by the 10 spheres on the Tree of Life). Remember, the archetypal mind is the blueprint if *energy exchange*. So the archetypes have dynamic character: they are *personas*.

A persona is a perspectival complex of generalized concerns, desires and intentions, along with a set of capacities for energy expenditure. A persona is a characteristic point of view with a characteristic kind of concern and a characteristic way of addressing that concern. Much like a trope in fiction, the perspective, concerns and capacities of a persona do not change. Each archetype operates a different way, for different reasons. Moreover, each has a different *feeling*.

Stereotypes are similar to archetypes: both are personas. But there are three important differences between stereotypes and archetypes. First, stereotypes are not special in the way archetypes are. Because the archetypes cut nature at the joints, they offer a uniquely efficient path to learning the lesson of the density. The archetypes are pure, if you will, but stereotypes are a hodge-podge of distorted and often awkwardly combined archetypes. Second, stereotypes are personas that are

attached to specific cultures; they do not capture universal aspects of the human experience on Earth the way archetypes do. Third, and most dangerously, stereotypes are personas associated with a specific list of physical traits. We commonly use these lists of physical traits to quickly classify individuals as personas. But this is harmful to individuals because they can do what personas cannot: change from one persona to another. Stereotypes prevent us from understanding each other as human beings because they encourage us to classify individuals as personas. Archetypes, on the other hand, do not come with lists of physical traits: they are purely mental. However, because it is not possible to conceive of a persona in third density that does not include archetypes within it as basic elements, stereotypes must also be composed of archetypes. So while exploring stereotypes can be dangerous work, it is also an easy point of entry into a study of archetypes.

One of the most basic features of the Archetypal Mind for our third density experience is that there are two diverging paths that a person can follow and successfully graduate from this experience. Choosing and committing to one of these paths is the foundational lesson of this density. Ra has called these paths by a number of different names, but the most common names used in the Law of One community are *Service to Others* and *Service to Self*. I prefer to call them the right-hand path and the left-hand path (respectively), because these names are less ambiguous and because they have firm roots in the Western esoteric tradition that predates the *Ra Contact*. “Positive” and “negative” are another common way of naming the two paths, and I will occasionally use these names as well. Regardless of the name, the basic distinction is fairly close to the distinction between good character and evil character: the distinction is fundamentally moral.

I am aware that there are other ways of using the phrases “right-hand path” and “left-hand path” which do not directly track morality. I set these aside, since my aim is a moral distinction characterized by the opposition in human character between the desire to accept, support, unconditionally love, and protect the free will of others, versus the desire to subjugate, manipulate, oppress, unlovingly use, and violate the free will of others. This is the conceptual distinction I have in mind when I say “right-hand path” and “left-hand path,” and any other way of defining these terms does not capture the set of concepts I am targeting.

Because of the fundamental ethical duality embedded into third density, most archetypes have two opposing sides, each of which represents virtuous activity on one of the available two paths. In fact, Ra suggests that all archetypes admit of this kind of duality, except for the Matrices and the Potentiators (and, I think, the Choice). But this duality also entails that there is a spectrum of non-virtuous manifestations of these archetypes that lie between the two virtuous poles. Hence, it is possible to manifest an archetype in a fundamentally confused and self-defeating way by failing to live up to the virtue of the archetype.

The word “archetype” was popularized by Carl Jung and his followers. Ra’s usage of the term so closely resembles Jung’s that it is difficult to not draw a straight line from one to the other. However, Ra asserts that this system of archetypes is complete: there are no additional archetypes beyond the 22. Jung, on the other hand, was engaged in experimental psychology. He didn’t claim to have a complete system because you never know when an experiment will present new data.

Many of Jung’s heirs have used his method of myth and dream analysis to uncover all manner of persistent personas. This apparently unending multiplicity of archetypes suggests that there is no complete system of archetype, or at least that we shouldn’t hope to uncover one. But I believe this way

of thinking fails to appreciate the difference between a trope and an archetype. A trope is a persona that recurs in literature. Like stereotypes, they often also link to physical traits. But even if we do not think of them as linked to physical traits, they still lack one of the constitutive features of an archetype. The Greek word “*arche*” means “original” or “first cause,” so the etymology of the word “archetype” suggests that Platonic form theory is a progenitor of contemporary archetype theory. For Plato, the forms were the originals of whatever had that form (the form of a chair is the original chair, etc.). This Platonic doctrine corresponds to Ra’s conception of the archetypes: these 22 concept complexes establish the rules by which third density operates. So, if Ra is right, the 22 are the original personas and all the other tropes must be somehow derivative from them.

One analogy I’ve found helpful for understanding the fundamentality of the archetypes in relation to all other tropes is the analogy of the 22 proteinogenic amino acids. There are many different kinds of amino acids, but, for human beings, only 22 of them are used to build the proteins that do all the many different jobs the body needs done. Just as a protein is a complex physical construct built from a small set of basic amino acids, so the various tropes we see in our world are complex mental constructs built from a small set of archetypes.

4. On Studying the Archetypal Mind: Why and How

Why to Study

Here’s a common experience. A reader of Ra resonates with the *Ra Contact* and imbibes Ra’s words voraciously, recognizing that they just won’t understand some things on the first read through. But then the reader reaches session 75 or 80 and discovers that the content on the Archetypal Mind is supremely confusing, and that the in-depth archetype sessions from 90-100 only seem to magnify that confusion. So the reader decides that the first 75 sessions of the *Ra Contact* contain in them all she needs to know, and that someone else can attempt to make sense of the archetypes if that’s their thing.

This is an acceptable perspective, even for a reader who wants to graduate to the next density and serve others the best she can along the way. Study of the Archetypal Mind is not for everyone. I only recommend attempting it if it calls out to you. So if the reason you want to study the Archetypal Mind is that you think you should or you are worried you won’t make harvest, then this is not a good reason to study. A wise friend once told me that initiation should not be rushed. When you are ready to study the Archetypal Mind, you will know.

On the flip side of the coin, other readers of Ra will find the depth of Ra’s philosophical system fascinating. They see in Ra an endless number of details left unexplored by Don’s intellectual pursuit and find themselves motivated to hammer out all the details as if Ra left us a puzzle to figure out. I must confess that this desire to solve a difficult puzzle is part of my motivation for doing this work, but it is not my primary motivation—rather, the pleasure of solving a puzzle gives a symbiotic boost that helps me push through the difficulties of the work. But if the pleasures of intellectual pursuit *are* your primary motivation, then I think studying the Archetypal Mind will only be yet another intellectual distraction from your spiritual journey. Studying the archetypes is more than just a scholarly quest. It serves a practical purpose in the spiritual journey. If the archetypes call to you *and* your first priority is spiritual evolution, then you are probably ready to study.

Let's talk about the practical purpose of study. First consider how Ra describes the outcome of study. Ra indicates that study will "inform the mind" of its own nature through "articulation of the processes of potentiation, experience and transformation." This benefit is fairly clear from the nature of the Archetypal Mind. The mind's evolutionary path is increased self-knowledge; the Archetypal Mind is a detailed description of the nature of the mind and its interactions with itself, its body and its spirit; so a study of the Archetypal Mind is part of the path of increased self-knowledge.

Ra also says that study of the Archetypal Mind will help the seeker "enter a more profoundly, acutely realized moment" and that this study will "vivify the mind complex." The result of study follows upon the previous result. As you come to know the nature of your mind more clearly, the energized potentials coiled in each and every moment become more and more apparent. Study of the Archetypal Mind will reveal more clearly the patterns of spiritual evolution that penetrate your experience and the way these patterns layer atop one another. When you train yourself to see these details in the world around you, they cannot be unseen. In this way, the availability of work in each and every moment becomes more obvious, and the small events in life become obviously more significant. Thus, the mind is vivified.

The above two results of study of the Archetypal Mind, however, are more or less available just by studying the first 75 sessions of the *Ra Contact*. If you are reading this book as a supplement to your study of Ra, then you already know this. In my experience, though, studying the Archetypal Mind intensifies these results. I think the reason that studying Ra in general leads to these results is that in the first 75 sessions, Ra has, in their own way, been talking about the Archetypal Mind all along. If you continue reading, you will see that this basic claim will be a theme of this book. Ra's intention in communicating with the channeling group was to share a philosophical system of thought. That system just is the philosophical system expressed by the Archetypal Mind. Ra spent the earlier parts of the contact explaining the basic elements of the system, but Ra was finally able to explore the details when the channeling group committed to a study of the Archetypal Mind. It is noteworthy that Ra only uses the vocative expression "O student" when they are explicitly talking about the Archetypal Mind. I think Ra was excited to finally get into the juicy stuff.

But there is one benefit that is *not* accessible through any other route except studying the Archetypal Mind. Here is one particularly clear expression of this benefit: "we encouraged the initiate to learn to become each archetype and, most importantly, to know as best as possible within your illusion when the adoption of the archetype's persona would be spiritually or metaphysically helpful." Ra describes the ability to "become" or "cloth[e] oneself within the archetype" as the ultimate purpose of study.

The archetypes are powerful tools, but only if one sees them clearly and can reliably enter into the resonance of that archetype. What makes them powerful tools is that *they are the means of using the mind complex to be of the greatest possible service during one's lifetime*. Now, this claim might seem to be in conflict with the highest goal on the right-hand path: offering oneself up as an instrument for the Creator's use. But being an instrument is another way of saying that one is in *flow*. Consider the experience of playing improv music. If you have ever done this, then you know that improv is not just releasing the conscious mind to play whatever happens to flow. Good improv requires that one trains the body and mind to be able to smoothly transition from one lick to another. One must learn the licks and then, through flow, stop thinking about them. Becoming the archetypes follows a similar pattern. The archetypes are the licks on hand for the spirit complex to implement. So we must learn them and be

able to flow in and out of them so smoothly that no thought is required. When we are able to do this, our minds will be finely tuned for the use of the spirit to channel the Creator.

Th archetypes, then, are potent tools for walking either the right-hand path or the left-hand path. Becoming familiar with the resonances of the archetypes opens up the possibility of becoming a living manifestation of these personas in situations where that persona is most needed and most helpful. Often, we find ourselves in situations in which what another person needs is something we do not have to offer. This is because we all have go-to archetypes: ways of expressing our personalities that are familiar to us and beyond which we feel uncomfortable deviating. The most obvious sense in which this is true is with respect to the masculine and feminine archetypes. Men often feel comfortable and safe expressing the masculine archetypes and women the feminine ones. If we are to really be of maximal service to others, then we will need to be able to become whatever is called for in the moment. But, for this, we must study the archetypes.

How to Study

Considering that Ra's words have served as a *Bible* for many spiritual seekers who have rejected traditional religion, it can be surprising how often Ra endorses working within a traditional framework. Ra is not trying to our existing the systems of thought: they are trying to supplement and unify them. Ra considers it "appropriate" to choose and *commit to* one of the three existing avenues for studying the 22 archetypes of the Archetypal Mind. These options are: the 10 planets and 12 signs of astrology, the 22 paths on the Tree of Life, or the 22 Major Arcana of the *Tarot*.

One might think that it is best to integrate all three of these disciplines together to develop a comprehensive study of the Archetypal Mind, but Ra does not recommend this. Rather, Ra says that "it is well to investigate each discipline, not as a dilettante, but as one who seeks the touchstone, one who wishes to feel the pull of the magnet. One of these studies will be more attractive to the seeker. Let the seeker then investigate the archetypal mind using, basically, one of these three disciplines."

I want to dwell on the phrase "*as one who seeks the touchstone*." Esoteric literature and study are, in general, slippery territory. It is difficult to find a solid and trustworthy source that is not at some point contradicted by some other source. When this happens, it is hard to know whom to trust. If I value the channeled information from both Ra and Seth, how will I negotiate the differences in their messages? The answer, I think, is in identifying and committing to a source as a touchstone. Committing to a touchstone is neither a dogmatic commitment to doctrine nor a fawning cult of personality. It is more like a relationship in which one feels a deep attraction to another and a desire for that other to be a part of your life. It is right because it feels right in all the most important ways. Seth was at one time valuable for me to read, but Ra is my touchstone.

What is the benefit of a touchstone in spiritual seeking? I will attempt to answer this question through an analogy. Imagine that you are reading a poem written by a friend whom you love but who is not known for writing good poetry. If you are a good friend, you might read it twice, observing aspects that strike you as mistakes or poor choices, but setting those aside and accepting it the way it strikes you: as good but imperfect. After all, "good but imperfect" characterizes nearly all of us.

Now imagine that you are reading a poem written by a famously great poet whom you believe to have a deep and subtle mind, and whose skill you suspect is more nuanced than your ability to detect. Your read of this poem will be different. You will spend more time on it; you will not be so quick to make judgments about its quality. You will assume that what doesn't make sense to you or what seems ugly or lacking technique is just something you haven't yet understood. Now it is entirely possible that your friend's poem has this same depth and subtlety, but that you can't see it because you are not looking for it.

A genuine master is someone whose words and actions you are not in a position to judge because you believe that you do not yet grasp the totality of what is being taught. It is my belief that until one takes on this approach with a teaching, one is still a dilettante, exploring all the options without discovering the jewels that are hidden beneath any of them. This same thought applies to other areas of life as well: romantic relationships, for example. It is the difference between dating around and committing to a long-term relationship. One does not need to believe that one's lover is the best person ever; one only needs to trust that one's lover cannot be fully appreciated without long term commitment.

The benefit of a touchstone, then, is the depth of understanding that becomes available when one discovers it. Since Ra is my touchstone, I assume that everything Ra said matters, that every detail communicates more than I am able to understand. This assumption affords me the sustained energy to keep returning to Ra's words in the hopes that I will understand it a little more deeply this time.

Although Ra endorsed all three traditional systems of study of the Archetypal Mind as fruitful avenues, only one of those three stands out uniquely for those who, like me, have chosen Ra as their touchstone. And that is the *Tarot*. I will explain why.

Many Kabbalists have attempted to integrate the astrological signs and planets, the Major Arcana of the *Tarot*, and the paths of the Tree of Life into a single system. A Google Image search for "Kabbalistic Tree of Life" will reveal some of these efforts. But Ra's recommendation to choose only one of the three traditions suggests that this kind of integration is destined to fail. Ra says on more than one occasion that each student of the archetypes will see something different in them. The study is, in some ways, necessarily personal. As Ra puts it: "The Logos under which these [archetypes] stand is one of free will. Thusly the [archetypes] may be seen to have unique facets and relationships for each mind/body/spirit complex." I will have more to say about this passage in a later chapter, but for now let it remind the reader that there is no single, correct, objective perspective to take on the Archetypal Mind. It exists in along more dimensions than our minds can grasp, so each of our perspectives on the Archetypal Mind offers a slice of a reality that is greater than our capacity for comprehension. Because of this, all three systems offer a correct view of the Archetypal Mind, but we should not begin our study by attempting to develop one-to-one correspondences between the archetypes in each system, since this kind of project is appropriate only to a master of all three systems. In all my research, I have found no such master, despite the claims to mastery that various Kabbalists make.

Because one-to-one correspondences between different systems may be dubious, it is possible that Ra's unique systematization of the archetypes is only applicable to the *Tarot*. If we could classify the 22 paths of the Tree of Life using Ra's system of seven classifications, we would end up with one-to-one correspondences between the Tree of Life and the *Tarot* and we would then have a single comprehensive system. Suppose this is possible. Even then, Ra gave us no key for determining which of the paths on the Tree of Life corresponds to, say, the Transformation of the Body. So if Ra is your

touchstone, then using any traditional system other than the *Tarot* requires much more interpretive heavy lifting. For this reason, I have given up entirely on any attempt to understand the Archetypal Mind using either the Tree of Life or the astrological signs and planets. There is still some hope for a universal system which draws correct correspondences between all three systems. I will say more about this later. For now, I merely want to emphasize why this book uses the *Tarot* exclusively.

At this point, you might be wondering why a book like this one would be helpful to you if studying the Archetypal Mind is, as Ra says it is, a subjective endeavor. But notice that the *Tarot* is not a set of subjective images: the symbols and their arrangements are consistent across many traditional decks, including even the Rider Waite-Smith deck. When Don or Jim offers an interpretation of the symbols on the cards, Ra will either affirm or deny the correctness of the interpretation. In other words, within the system of the *Tarot*, there are objectively accessible truths. Not everything in this study is subjective. In my experience, the subjectivity of the study is most prominent in (a) the vibrational feeling of the archetype and (b) the lived manifestation of the archetype.

My intention with this book is to understand and communicate to you as much as can be communicated of the objectively identifiable features of the images of the *Tarot* and the archetypes these images represent. I will present interpretations of Ra and of the images and I will often give arguments for why I have come to these interpretations. In addition to this effort, I have also included my own judgments about the nature of each of the archetypes, as I experience them. It is my hope that you will understand why I have interpreted Ra as I have and that my efforts will be helpful in your study of the Archetypal Mind, provided that Ra and the *Tarot* are your touchstones. I hope to have done much of the intellectual work for you so that you can use my book as a launchpad into the more subtle work of connecting intuitively to the vibrational signatures of these archetypes.

You might wonder whether you are ready for this study. I cannot answer that question for you. But there is a related question I can answer. One worry you might have is that you have not experienced all of these archetypes yet and so you might not be able to identify them all in your experience. I believe that all archetypes are available to the experience of any seeker who has been attempting to polarize for a while and who has lived beyond their early twenties. I do not think the archetypes, even the ones at the end of the spirit cycle, are elusive experiences attained only by the most accomplished of spiritual seekers. Rather, they are the laws according to which all spiritual seeking happens. In 90.15, Ra says, "At the point at which an entity, either by accident or design, reflects an archetype, the archetypal mind resonates. Thusly random activation of the archetypal resonances begins almost immediately in third-density experience. The disciplined use of this tool of evolution comes far later in this process." Intentionally attempting to learn and use the archetypes is something that generally only spiritual seekers who have walked well along the path will consistently pursue. But chancing upon archetypal experiences as one meanders through life is a normal event that all of us will have done over and over.

So how should one study? I will answer this question by outlining my own method of study. First, choose a deck. The original images are, according to Ra, on the walls of Great Pyramid, but apparently no one in the modern era has seen them. I suppose they are either lost or hidden by the Egyptian government (like so many other elements of their ancient culture). This means that there is no authoritative deck available to us. The L/L Research channeling group used the *Brotherhood of Light* deck designed by C.C. Zain. Most students of Ra also use this deck, but it is not the only good choice. Zain's deck was, itself, derivative of the Saint Germaine deck. The Rider Waite-Smith deck is also a good one, but Waite was

liberal in his willingness to change the symbols, so it is not the best choice for the purpose of using Ra as a touchstone.

I recommend that you memorize the images. This will happen over time anyway, but it is helpful to always have the images available to your mind, so that a new thought about the archetypes can be readily weighed against the symbols on the card.

Remember that the cards are not themselves the archetypes. The *Tarot* cards are images that *represent* the archetypes. They are symbolic representations that are meant to help us construct the concept complex in our minds and thereby locate and use the vibrational signature of these archetypes. It is appropriate to think of *Tarot* as a book written by Ra about the Archetypal Mind—it's just that the book's content is written images rather than words. Hence I recommend that the reader think of these images as themselves part of the *Ra Contact*.

Develop a consistent method of interpreting the symbols on the cards and make sure that this method of interpretation is in conformity with what Ra says about them. In a later chapter, I will offer my own method of interpretation to you that you are, of course, welcome to adopt.

Make a dedicated effort to understand Ra's system of classification. No other source in the literature on the *Tarot*, as far as I know, has even come close to articulating this system of classification. Many commentators on the *Tarot* have noticed that the cards fall into natural cycles of 7, but Ra's classifications shed far more light on this idea. In fact, my reading of the *Tarot* literature has revealed that when commentators have no other touchstone but the images, there are many conflicting ways to interpret their meanings. If Ra is the touchstone, then a correct interpretation of the images must pass through Ra's classifications. I have also noticed that traditional interpretations of these images in the *Tarot* are generally shallower than interpretations that use Ra's system. I will have much more to say about these classifications in later chapters.

Attempt to integrate what prominent *Tarot* commentators have said about the images. If Ra and the *Tarot* are my primary touchstones, then the literature is a secondary touchstone. While these commentators are usually focused on using the cards as a system of oracle, they have spent a long time with these images and have developed their own intuitive connections to the archetypes. Their commentary is often helpful in elucidating aspects of the archetypes that you might have missed in your own reflections. So make use of this resource.

Take time throughout your study to attempt to access the vibrational quality of the archetype. The images on the cards are meant to transmit to you both the particulate conceptual content of the archetypes *and* their vibrations. They are carefully constructed tools meant to put a person in contact with the archetypes. The arrangement of the objects in the image indicates the relationships between the different concepts. However, the images do not straightforwardly tell a story. As Ra says, the images are meant to "haunt" us. This haunting is part of how we connect with the resonance of an archetype through a *Tarot* card. If your study leaves you immersed in symbolic interpretation with no sense of what the archetype feels like, then you've neglected part of the study.

Be on the lookout for moments in your life and in your larger cultural scene that seem to express archetypal qualities. These personas are the basic elements of human personality. They are everywhere. Every meaningful moment of your life has archetypal resonances. Remember that the purpose of study

is to ultimately be able to become any of the 22 archetypes at will. So it is important to observe yourself in moments when a persona seems to activate within you or within someone you know. This will help you see what it means and what it feels like to become an archetype.

Return to the drawing board frequently. When I want to understand an archetype better, I will review what Ra said about it; I will ask myself what some particular symbolic configuration could mean; I will think about a time in my life when I felt like the archetype was active; and I will ask myself “so what *is* the Catalyst of the Spirit?” And the results of this return to the drawing board often lead me to conclude that my previous interpretation of the archetype was incorrect. Even as I write this book, I am aware that in five years, I will probably have changed my mind about many of the interpretations I offer within it. So be prepared to get it wrong over and over.

Develop your own deck. Ra says that at some point in the study, the student may move “beyond the written.” There are countless ways to do this, but the essence of the project is the same: once you have mastered the tradition within which you are working, you may then make the discipline your own. One obvious way to do this if you have an artistic bent, is to draw and paint your own set of images. I lack this skill. So my approach to developing my own deck has been in naming them. I find that the names we have inherited for the archetypes do not help me understand the persona involved very well, so I have attempted to give them names that are more suitable for a 21st century audience. The very act of naming them, it turns out, changes the way I think about them. There is a feedback effect between studying the symbols and naming the personas, since the name I choose will often influence how I interpret the symbols. I recommend that after several years of study (5 years is probably enough), each student attempt to develop her own deck in her own idiom.

Identify your weaknesses and make an effort to strengthen them. Everyone has favorite archetypes. I don’t mean “favorite” in the sense of a character trope you like to see on TV; I mean that you have favorite personas to enter into and occupy in relation to others. Most commonly, men favor the masculine archetypes and women the feminine ones. This is not a hard and fast rule, but it is typical, since we have almost all been raised in conformity with a specific set of gender norms. So men will typically find that the feminine archetypes are uncomfortable and vice versa. When you discover weaknesses like this, it is your task to make a serious effort to become those archetypes and also to learn to enjoy being them. Each persona, after all, enjoys being what it is.

With the above recommendations for study laid out, I will conclude this section by speaking to Ra’s recommended protocol for study. Ra recommends studying the archetypes in groupings. There are two basic groupings that Ra endorses. The first grouping is to study all the archetypes of a single classification together. This, Ra says, helps us discover “the fundamental relationships between mind, body and spirit.” I will attempt to walk the reader through this study in the chapter dedicated to the classifications.

The second grouping is more challenging. After having studied the archetypes within their classifications, Ra recommends studying them in pairs: Potentiators with Matrices, Catalysts with Experiences, Transformations with Great Ways, and Significators with the Choice. Ra does not tell us why these pairings should be studied. But I believe the reason is that these pairings represent the basic archetypal relationships we encounter throughout our lives. In other words, I believe these twelve pairings represent all possible avenues of energy exchange between human beings. As mentioned previously, Ra says that the purpose of studying the archetypes is to become the persona that would be

helpful in whatever situation you find yourself. But how to identify which persona is needed? I think the pairings tell us. For example, if someone is manifesting the Matrix of the Spirit in relation to you, then that suggests that they are inviting you to become the Potentiator of the Spirit. I will attempt to walk the reader through a study of the relationships between the archetypes in sections that immediately follow upon the individual treatments of the archetypes. Immediately following the sections that individually explore the Matrix of the Mind and the Potentiator of the Mind, there will be a section that explores their relationship.

5. The Structure of the Archetypal Mind for Our Third Density Illusion

The Cycles

21 of the archetypes are structured into a system of seven classifications and three cycles, while the final archetype, the Choice, unifies them all and so belongs to neither a classification nor a cycle. Remember that the Archetypal Mind is a mental object that describes the laws governing the experiential nature of all three of mind, body, and spirit. To understand the archetypes on a mental level is not the same as living within the energies described therein. Each of these three realms of experience has a cycle of seven archetypes that describe the processes of lesson-learning that are built into the third density, and through which a person can graduate from third density into the next density of experience. This process of lesson-learning is what the Ra channeling group sometimes calls “spiritual evolution.” Thus, there is a mind cycle, a body cycle and a spirit cycle.

Clearly delineating between mind, body and spirit is difficult when interpreting Ra. Ra speaks at length on these concepts and even defines them, yet there are still questions. For Ra, the control we have over our bodies, the thoughts we have about ourselves and the mystical experiences to which we are subject all occur in different realms of these three (body, mind and spirit, respectively). However, academic philosophers have tended to include all these experiences (and all experiences as such) under the heading of the mind. Although it is inherently confusing that the common academic concept of the mind does not seem to match Ra’s usage, this is in any case how I will proceed. Hence, the experiences that psychologists have relegated to either the conscious or unconscious minds in fact span all three domains: the veiling cuts across mind, body and spirit. It seems, perhaps, silly to talk about a conscious or unconscious body, so I will avoid this usage. But when I do use this way of speaking, hopefully it will help to keep in mind (a) that the entire range of archetypes captures experiences that we can have, whether bodily, mental or spiritual and (b) that “conscious” and “unconscious” refer to the two sides of the veiling: the transparent and the hidden, respectively.

In 74.4, Ra says that the archetypal mind “contains all facets which may affect mind or experience.” But they also clearly delineate between experiences of mind, body and spirit. This is confusing. On one hand, it seems that Ra is saying only the mind can experience. That very idea does parallel the standard academic treatment of mind: the word “consciousness” is broadly understood in academic literature to refer to the event of experiencing, whether through sensation, imagination, memory, emotion, or thought. For an entity to be conscious means that there is something that it is like to be that entity. But then the very idea that there are experiences of body and spirit suggests that experience is broader than mind. One might conclude that Ra is saying in 74.4 that the body and spirit are experienced *by* the mind. But this does not fit either, since Ra, in speaking about the spirit as a shuttle, never describes the mind

as *entering* the shuttle. Rather, in Ra's descriptions, the mind is adjacent to the shuttle and the experiential awareness of the entity can enter the shuttle. So experience, then, seems broader than mind. I think, in general, we should not get too hung up on these terms. What is clear is that there are three realms of experience and that the unified, aware self can enter into each of them.

With these difficulties in mind, I think it will be helpful to lay out some definitions of mind, body and spirit. The mind is the part of the self that has beliefs and emotions connected to those beliefs. The mind constructs stories about its experiences and its desires and intentions are governed by how it sees itself and others within the stories it generates. Minds look at the world and see meaning and meaningfulness. The mind's actions and reactions are governed by the relationships between the thoughts and emotions it has within it and its attachments to these thoughts and emotions (Ra calls these attachments "biases"). Because the mind's relationship to itself is veiled, this cycle is characterized by the gradual process of coming to know the hidden aspects of one's own mind. On the right-hand path, the lesson of the mind cycle is to love self and other unconditionally.

The body, on the other hand, is the part of the self that exists as a vehicle for the mind's quest for meaning and meaningful action. As the mind is governed by the relationships between beliefs, thoughts, emotions, and attachments thereto, so the body is governed by intentions, actions, consequences, and the laws that govern relations of cause and effect. Our experience of the body is as the driver of the vehicle. Because the mind is hidden from itself, the divisions and conflicts within the mind express themselves in the body. The mind controls the body, so the internal conflicts in the mind are expressed through the body as external conflicts in intention, action and consequence. The spiritual purpose of the body is to offer the mind a mirror to better understand itself and thereby understand others as well. This cycle is characterized by the gradual process of developing the awareness and skill that allow one's intentions to successfully manifest in the physical world without unintended consequences. On the right-hand path, the lesson of the body cycle is to act in ways that genuinely serve others.

The spirit is the part of the self that connects the mind to the One Infinite Creator. The spirit is our personal link to the divine and to the source of all power. According to Ra, carefully and consciously accessing this link allows us to work literal miracles. The spirit is the emissary of the divine, so our experience of the spirit is characterized by the finite self opening up to an infinite whole. Again, the veiling of the mind has consequences for our experience of the spirit. Because the mind is hidden from itself, the wholeness of spirit is hidden from the mind. If the spirit were fully accessible to the mind, then the mind would be fully accessible to itself, since our presence to the truths of spirit will inevitably shine back down on the mind. The purpose of the spirit is to offer the us a pathway for return to the One Infinite Creator whose gravity attracts all in the illusion of separation back to itself. The spirit cycle is characterized by a gradual process of awakening to the fullness of the Creator and learning to enjoy the creation as an expression of the Creator. On the right-hand path, the lesson of the spirit cycle is to allow personal attachments and desires to fall away and allow the divine will to guide all thought and action.

Each cycle has the same basic elements within it, the same seven classifications. This means that the processes of spiritual evolution tend to mirror each other across the three cycles. Additionally, Ra tells us that these three cycles are nested, just as the primal distortions are nested. The mechanisms of the body cycle are subject to being overridden by the requirements of the mind cycle. In turn, the mechanisms of the mind cycle are subject to being overridden by the requirements of the spirit cycle. In addition to the basic process of bodily evolution, the body also serves as a means for the mind to know

itself. Likewise, in addition to the basic process of mental evolution, events in the mind also serve as an opportunity to awaken to the spirit.

Ra outlines an order for initiation to these three cycles. This order, predictably, tracks the numbering of the archetypes. Thus, Ra says, the mind must be initiated before the body. This is because the body cannot be properly used as a tool for honing one's ability to serve others unless the mind has a healthy relationship to itself. Without this first step in place, the bodily evolutionary mechanisms will always be overwhelmed by the overriding nature of the mind. It is not possible to initiate the body first because the body will constantly reflect the mind's own internal conflicts back to itself until the mind is initiated. A similar problem besets our attempts to initiate the spirit before the mind. Attempting to initiate the spirit before the body is especially dangerous, since one's actions will not have been tempered by the wisdom of experience. The danger here is that the manifestations of spiritual awakening will cause dire consequences when unwisely acted out. This recommendation also parallels Ra's recommendation that we open the energy centers of the body beginning from the lower centers upward. The mechanisms of the mind cycle tend to open and balance the lower four energy centers, the body cycle tends to refine the green energy center and open the blue (or throat) energy center, and the spirit cycle tends to open and refine the indigo (forehead) energy center.

Tarot commentators have historically been drawn to a treatment of the Major Arcana in which progress through the numbered archetypes is taken to mirror the seeker's path of spiritual evolution. However, the usual accounts of progress through these archetypes is treated as a linear description of the stages of one's life. I do not believe we should think about the cycles this way. Even the Ra's name "cycle" suggests that the process is not linear. But in order to describe progression through these archetypes, we will need to examine the seven classifications in some detail.

The Classifications

Let's hearken back to the fundamental nature of reality and illusion. Each of the four most basic laws are active across all levels of the holographic illusion the Creator constructed for itself. Every part of the creation has infinite uniqueness. The freedom to explore this infinite uniqueness is free will, the possibility of its existence is awareness, and the nature of this uniqueness is the infinite become finite. Our individual awareness, the subject/object relation we have to ourselves, is the reflection or reiteration of the First Distortion within us. Because the Law of One requires that all illusion is established on the foundation of unity, the structure of the Archetypal Mind has numerous unifying features embedded into it. These unifying features repeat the structure of the primal distortions.

Just as the First Distortion separates the subject from the object, so the first division of the Archetypal Mind separates the subject persona from the object personas. The unifying archetype, the Choice (commonly known as the Fool), has traditionally been represented as the subject or the witness that interacts with all the other archetypes. I believe this aspect of the *Tarot* tradition correctly reflects the nature of this archetype. This archetype reflects intelligent infinity as a potential and as witness to the dynamic drama that plays out in intelligent energy, a drama that allows the witness to know itself. Because intelligent infinity does not itself undergo the illusion of separation but only witnesses it play out, the Choice, which reflects this foundational aspect of nature within us, must be a single persona. Additionally, the Fool is typically thought of as both the first and the last archetype of the Major Arcana,

which reflects intelligent infinity's status as the beginning and end of all creation. The first division within the Archetype Mind, then, is between the Choice and the 21 archetypes that fall within the cycles and classifications. As the Choice represents the *subjective self*, the other archetypes represent the *objective self*. That is, these are the personas we discover within ourselves when we observe ourselves as if we are an object of observation and not merely a subject that observes.

I have already discussed the second division of the Archetype Mind, which is the three cycles of seven objective archetypes. The third division of the Archetypal Mind is the seven classifications. Let's consider the Matrix and Potentiator classifications. Remember that part of the fundamental nature of reality is the phenomenon of intelligent energy reaching for and finding focus. The Matrix and the Potentiator reflect this fundamental phenomenon within us. Because the objective self is also the One Infinite Creator, it, too, is capable of becoming aware. The awareness that exists within the illusion of the objective world (and not merely beyond it) is called the Logos. Once the Logos emerges, it can augment the experiential continuum of the intelligent energy that surrounds it. The Potentiator classification represents the sub-sub-Logos within us: the self within the illusion that is invested with the awareness and the omnipotence of the Creator. The sub-sub-Logos is, as I have said, the mind and hand of the unique part of the Creator that is the ultimate reality of each individual. The Matrix classification, on the other hand, is the experiential continuum that surrounds this sub-sub-Logos. Just as the witness (the Choice) observes the drama of the objective reality, so the Potentiator is the subject in relation to the Matrix: the changes in the experiential continuum are the experience of self that the Potentiator chooses and observes.

I will now attempt to describe the structural relationship between all the Classifications in a way that will hopefully make them more accessible.

A Logos is a center or point of creative awareness. It creates by augmenting the intelligent energy that surrounds it, which is its experiential continuum. The easiest example of the relationship between Logos and experiential continuum is your relationship to your imagination. You have creative authority to decide what will appear in your imagination. What is particularly interesting about this example, though, is that the Logos, which is the you that does the imagining, is repository of all thought within you. And the experiential continuum that you call "your imagination" is locus of awareness that only exists in the present moment. Through imagination and memory, you string together all the mental and emotional content that flows through your awareness when you imagine. So the Logos, in the case of the mind, is the repository of mental and emotional content and the experiential continuum is the point of awareness that dips and glides through the content in that repository. That is why our imagination, though clearly chosen by us, can be so surprising: much of the content is hidden and the reasons why some things come to mind and not others are mysterious.

The experiential continuum and the Logos cannot exist without one another, because it is a Logos's nature to create within the continuum and it is the continuum's nature to be both experienced and subject to augmentation by the Logos. Moreover, because of the Law of One, which attracts everything back to unity, these two long to connect in this way. The experiential continuum, or the Matrix, wants to be experienced by and augmented by the Logos. The Logos, or the Potentiator, wants to experience and effect change in the Matrix.

The Matrix, then, is a receptacle that takes on the changes chosen by the Potentiator. Because the receptacle is also intelligent, it requests change in its own unique way. Thus, there are two sides to free

will: the free will of the experienced and the free will of the experiencer. This is reflected in the example of imagination: your point of awareness, which is the stage on which the imaginary scenery plays out, is free to focus on a particular kind of imagination, thereby expressing its free will by choosing what to examine within the imaginary repository. Likewise, the source of the images (the Logos, or Potentiator, which is what you think of as “you”) has free will in what it offers to be seen on the stage of your momentary awareness. This free will is apparent in the surprising nature of the imagination, the you that is the source of the images you see is hidden and mysterious, so its preferences and choice of expression should be surprising when witnessed on the stage of our momentary imaginary awareness. The point of awareness (the stage of your imagination) is free to explore what the repository of images (you) has to offer, just as your repository of images (you) is free to reveal to the point of awareness (the stage of your imagination) whatever it deems appropriate to show.

The nature of the freedom that the Matrix and Potentiator have is not the ability to do otherwise. They can only be what they are, so they can only do what they in fact do. The nature of their free will is unique expression of an infinite self. This is the kind of freedom you have in virtue of being unlike anything else in the universe: you have your own perspective and your having that perspective just is freedom, because everything that comes out of you comes out of that unique perspective.

When the Matrix reaches for the Potentiator to make a change within it, the Potentiator’s choice to make such a change produces a reaction, the Catalyst, between the two which exposes the Potentiator’s choice to the Matrix in a coded way that allows the information to be interpreted along either the right-hand or the left-hand path. I think of the Catalyst as a turning gear between the Potentiator and Matrix, into which the content emerging from the Potentiator is fed. The Matrix, likewise, has an apparatus, the Experience, that decodes the information and records it into the Matrix as decoded. I think of the Experience as a second turning gear between the Matrix and the Catalyst. The Experience receives information from the Catalyst, converts it to a form recordable in the Matrix, then the Matrix receives the change.

In 92.34, Ra says, “each potentiation which has been reached for by the Matrix is recorded by the Matrix but experienced by the Significator. The experience of the Significator of this potentiated activity is of course dependent upon the acuity of its processes of Catalyst and Experience.” Ra also says in 80.15 that “The adept, whether positive or negative, has the same Matrix. The Potentiator is also identical.” This tells us that the Catalyst and Experience are variable and changeable in their natures along the dimension of moral polarity, but that the Matrix and Potentiator are not. These two quotations have had a profound impact on my interpretation of Ra’s system. This impact is apparent in my individual treatments of these archetypes, but I will elaborate on the basic idea here.

The existence of Catalyst and Experience allows the possibility of a veil between Potentiator and Matrix. The coding mechanism of the Catalyst and the decoding mechanism of the Experience lie along an axis of polarity. At the two extreme ends, the Catalyst and Experience mechanisms are radically opposed to one another. But there are countless variations between these two extremes. In other words, the change made by the Potentiator can be encoded into Catalyst in ways that favor one path over another, or ways that favor mixing the methods of the two paths. Likewise, the Experience can decode the Catalyst in ways that favor one path, or in ways that mix the two paths. The variability is key, because the coding and decoding process muddies communication between Matrix and Potentiator, specifically

along the dimension of morality. The Potentiator reveals its choice genuinely and intelligibly to the Matrix, but the morality in the message is a matter of interpretation.

This whole system of experience and the veiling medium through which the change made by the Potentiator is recorded in the Matrix is the Significator. This is the self considered as a whole. We are Logoi making changes in our experiential continua through a veil that requires coding and decoding. Because the intermediary mechanisms (Catalyst and Experience) between the Matrix and Potentiator can be of variable moral polarity, the Significator can also be of variable moral polarity. But a Significator cannot change itself. So one might think that one is only as morally polarized as one's processes of Catalyst and Experience. And this is true. But there is also a mechanism for switching out one's Catalyst and Experience processes for more polarized (or morally upgraded, if you will) versions. This is called Transformation. Transformation is just a further mechanism, outside the Significator, that can remove the Catalyst and Experience mechanisms that are currently in the Significator and exchange them for a new, more morally pure set of Catalyst and Experience mechanisms. This allows the Significator to gradually improve in its moral polarity by changing its very nature.

The Transformation reveals the kind of free will that we think of as the ability to do otherwise. Because the Transformation is outside the Significator (which is what we think of as ourselves), it cannot be activated or chosen by the Significator. That means that becoming something different from what we are is not something we can do on our own. But, if free will is expressing our unique selves as they are, then the ability to do otherwise is just the ability to become a different unique self from the one we are. The unique self that we are cannot be anything but what it is, so something outside the unique self must cause that change. The Transformation mechanism itself does not cause the change; it is merely the means by which the change happens. What causes the change is the subjective self that can take a perspective of distance from ourselves as we are. The possibility of desiring to be something different from what we are is exactly the kind of distance in perspective that we need if we are to have the ability to choose how we will be. This is the subjective self which observes and identifies with the objective self. It is the observer that enters into the story to change the elements of that story. This is the Choice. The Choice is the one who has the ability to switch on the Transformation. Note that Ra says "implicit in the veiling or separation of two archetypes is the concept of choice" (79.31).

The Choice is the subject who witnesses, the Potentiator is the source of creative potential, and the Matrix is the stage on which the creation plays out. Each has free will. Only the Potentiator and Matrix can present themselves as two unique sides of the same entity. Because these two modes of free will exist in the same way, they are in conflict: the Matrix and Potentiator are always on opposite sides of the veil. The Choice, however, is a form of free will that does not compete with the Matrix and Potentiator. The Choice cannot decide present itself uniquely in any way except to effect Transformation. The Matrix and Potentiator are varied and subtle, with lots of nuances to be discovered. By contrast, the Choice is a drab personality; it has no flavor on its own but expresses its identity by choosing between different flavors on offer. It does not create; it only chooses how the creation will go. *Choose Your Own Adventure* books capture this form of identity expression accurately, if childishly.

Finally, the Great Way archetype is outside of both the Significator and Transformation. It is the axis along which one can transform, the direction in which one is heading in choosing to transform. This context provides purpose to the choices made by the Choice.

I subdivide each of the three cycles into two groups, which I call the lesser cycle and the greater cycle. The lesser cycle is composed of the first four archetypes of the cycle and the greater cycle is composed of the last three archetypes of the cycle, plus the Choice. There are many reasons for this further subdivision. The first reason is that the lesser cycle represents the internal movements of the Significator, while the rest of the archetypes represent the archetypal movements whose scope is at the level of the Significator or higher. The second reason is that the archetypes of the lesser cycles are gender-valenced (that is, they belong distinctly to either the masculine or the feminine), while the archetypes of the greater cycles are not (they are either gender-neutral or gender-balanced). The third reason is that the archetypes of the lesser cycle are concerned with the original conception of free will (unique expression), while the archetypes of the greater cycles are concerned with the new conception of free will (choice between the two moral polarities). The fourth reason is that Ra, in 89.26, suggests this division when they say that “a proper understanding...of Archetype Twenty-Two is greatly helpful in sharpening the basic view of the Significator of Mind, Body, and Spirit and, further, throws into starker relief the Transformation and Great Way of Mind, Body, and Spirit complexes.” And the final reason is that, to my understanding, the archetypes of the lesser cycle represent our moral experience *prior* to engaging in a self-reflective consideration of what we think of the events playing out; while the archetypes of the greater cycle represent our moral experience *after* raising the question of whether we want continue on as we always have. In other words, the difference is that the greater cycle introduces a perspective on our experience which is outside of the experience as it has occurred thus far. The Choice, as an observing subject, occupies the position of the audience observing the story as it plays out. But the mechanisms of greater cycle allow the audience to enter into and become part of the story. Thus, the greater cycle breaks the fourth wall, so to speak.

The Lesser Cycle

The Matrix and Potentiator desire interaction with each other. Ra says that the Matrix “reaches” for the Potentiator, just as intelligent energy reaches for the Logos. And the Potentiator, “through free will” initiates “experiments in novelty” within the Matrix in response to this reaching. So (in the mind complex) the Matrix invites the Potentiator and the Potentiator answers the invitation.

The kind of free will embedded into the relationship between Matrix and Potentiator is the same kind of free will that was available to human beings before the Veiling (a phenomenon the Christians refer to as the “Fall”). This concept bears some explanation. According to Ra, the One Original Thought of our universe did not explicitly contain the opposition between Good and Evil within it. The potentials for this opposition were implicit in the One Original Thought, but not yet discovered. That is, the One Logos did not plan for the drama of the right-hand path versus the left-hand path, but was surprised by it. The reason this opposition was not yet imagined was that third density beings, in the early days of our universe, did not experience themselves as hidden from themselves. Their minds had direct and immediate access to everything they had previously experienced, including previous incarnations and previous transitions from one incarnation to the next. The laws of the illusion were known to them. But, Ra says, this created a problem for the third density experience: the entities within it had no desire to progress; they persisted in enjoying the experience just as it is, without reaching for the kind of discipline that grants entry into the next density. The experiential continuum, in other words, was very inefficient and produced very little of the variety that the Creator set out to experience. One particularly

ingenious Logos came up with a solution to this problem: construct mechanisms in the illusion that hide the Potentiator of the Mind from the Matrix of the Mind. This veiling made it much more difficult for the experiential continuum and the sub-sub-Logos to make contact with each other. But the difficulty inherent in making this contact also, it turned out, generated sufficient desire within these veiled entities to develop the discipline necessary for graduation.

The Veiling also opened the possibility of choosing the left-hand path instead of the right-hand path. Prior to the Veiling, there was no inkling that another path of return to the Creator was even possible, because the Law of One was known to everyone as the fundamental nature of reality. But the Veiling hid the nature of the fundamental reality from us, preventing us from seeing that we are inherently unified with others. Suddenly, the illusion of separation felt very real, and elevating the self over others seemed a viable path for gaining novel experience. Ra calls the ability to choose between the right-hand path and the left-hand path “free will, in the full sense.” Before the Veiling, third density beings had free will, but not in the full sense of being able to choose between the two moral paths.

Now I will return to my point about the free will of the Potentiators. This is not “free will, in the full sense,” because the Potentiators are not the part of the self that chooses between the moral polarities. The Matrices and Potentiators represent the part of the self that is not yet influenced by the choice between polarities. A Matrix is a part of the self that wants to gain experience and a Potentiator is a part of the self that has all the potentials for experience within it, without any particular bias for one moral path or another. This remains true of us, no matter how much we evolve. The Potentiator, then, represents the infinitely unique depth of self that has no choice about what it is. We are not free to be anything but ourselves, so the free will of the Potentiator is only the freedom to be what it is. It makes no choices; it only acts as it desires in the only way it ever could.

Once a Matrix is potentiated, there is a reaction in the experiential continuum. This reaction presents information to the self that the self, if disciplined, can work with. Remember that the Veiling caused evolution to become difficult. A simple change in the experiential continuum could not by itself generate the discipline necessary for graduation. The reaction of the Matrix to potentiation is what Ra calls Catalyst. Catalyst is the change in the experiential continuum *as it presents itself to us*. Contact between the Potentiator and the Matrix of any given cycle sparks changes that are not always apparent, but the aspects of those changes that are apparent to us are the Catalyst for our evolution. How we respond to this Catalyst will determine how successful our efforts to progress are.

Just as our Logos built into our illusion mechanisms of Catalyst that give us opportunities to evolve, so it also built into our illusion mechanisms of processing that Catalyst which, through discipline, allow us to make constructive use of the opportunities that the Catalyst present. Ra calls these mechanisms Experience. When we successfully employ the mechanisms of an Experience archetype, a change is recorded in the Matrix. Now that the Matrix has changed, its desire to be potentiated also changes and the possibilities for experience change. With the lesson now learned, the Potentiator may, through free will, enact a new experiment in novelty. Thus, the cycle begins anew.

Let me now sum up the first four classifications. The Matrices are the personas that reach for and desire novel experience, but lacks the resources to produce that novelty. The Potentiators are the personas that have the resources for novel experience and, when invited, act to change the experiential continuum of the Matrices. The action of a Potentiator generates a reaction in its Matrix. This reaction produces new phenomenal experiences which offer an opportunity to for the Matrix to undergo a long-

term change in its configuration. The Catalyst personas are these new phenomenal experiences. The Experience personas work with the Catalyst personas to integrate and process the new experience they offer. If the integration is successful, then the completion of the cycle causes a change in the Matrix. With the lesson learned, the Matrix, having changed, now judges that the frontier for new experience is different from before and reaches for experiential novelty in a somewhat new way.

I think of this cyclic process that characterizes the first four classifications as the “Lesser Cycle.” Conversely, the last three classifications in a cycle (plus the Choice) are what I think of as the “Greater Cycle.” I have chosen these names because it takes many iterations of the Lesser Cycle to prepare an entity for undergoing a change according to the Greater Cycle. Another reason I call it the Lesser Cycle is that I believe the kind of free will that is active in this cycle is still the pre-Veiling kind of free will. Even though the Catalyst and Experience archetypes express moral duality (that is, there are good and evil versions of them, unlike the Matrices and Potentiators), these expressions of moral duality are still only expressions of a self that cannot be anything but what it is. “Free will, in the full sense” is only available to us in the process that allows us to become something besides what we already are, a process Ra calls “transformation.” But transformation is the characteristic feature of the Greater Cycle.

The Greater Cycle

As I mentioned earlier, as a consequence of the Law of One, the Archetypal Mind has many unifying archetypes within it. The first and foundational unifying archetype is the Choice. The next set of unifying archetypes is the Significator classification. Ra tells us that a Significator describes the very nature of the mind complex, body complex, or spirit complex. These are the personas that represent each of the three basic parts of an entity as a whole. Moreover, the previous four classifications in a cycle represent the moving parts or organs within the Significator. The Significator shows the holistic relationship between these four parts and so gives a kind of summary of the previous four archetypes in the cycle.

Ra says that the Significator identifies the repository of all the biases we have acquired in our previous lives. The Significator represents a mind, body or spirit complex as a unified whole, so the evolutionary functioning of that complex will be characterized by its biases. A Matrix has biased desires for certain kinds of novelty; a Potentiator has biases concerning what the appropriate lessons of the moment are; a Catalyst has a biased tendency to present itself to your awareness; and an Experience has biases about how the Catalyst should be processed (but remember, as always, that you don’t *have* a Matrix, a Potentiator, etc; the archetypes law out the laws that structure the lived experience—so you have a part of self that is governed by the Matrix archetype, the Potentiator archetype, etc.). All of these biases come together to form the unique functioning of the complex as a whole.

According to Ra, “free will, in the full sense” came from one ingenious Logos’s attempt to imagine the Significator of the Mind as complex, which resulted in the Significators of Spirit and Body becoming complex as a consequence. This complexifying of the Significators just is the Veiling: the hiding of one part of the Significator from another part. Thus, the Significator classification became “what it is not” (that is complex, rather than simple) and had thereby to be “granted the free will of the Creator.” The ability to choose between the two moral paths, then, belongs to the Significator.

But how does this choosing happen? The ability of the Significator to become what it is not does not end with the primordial complexifying of the classification. The Significator is able to become what it is not again and again. This is what it means to transform: the Significator stops being what it is and becomes something different. I believe that the Choice archetype came about as a means for the Significator to transform. It is not, I think, by accident that Ra called this archetype the Choice, pointed out that “free will, in the full sense” comes from the Significator becoming what it is not, and then recommended that we consider the Choice and Significator archetypes in paired relationships. I believe the relationship between the Significators and the Choice represent the moment when we become aware of ourselves as something that we either want to be or not be. Unless we have the ability to step into the persona of a witness that is distinct from the mind, body, or spirit complex as a whole, we cannot examine those complexes critically and ask ourselves whether we want to be who we are. The Choice, or the Fool, is a traveler whose home is everywhere and nowhere. The Significators, on the other hand, are the home within which the Fool dwells. If the Fool does not want to stay, he will collect his belongings and go somewhere else: wherever the Fool decides to go is what becomes the new Significator. This relationship, I think, is key to understanding the mechanism of transformation.

“But,” you might say, “there is already a Transformation classification!” Yes, the next classification is the Transformation. This classification, however, does not explain how the choosing happens. Transformation archetypes are essentially and fundamentally transitional personas. They are states of mind that revolve around an event, which means that each Transformation persona has a before-state and an after-state. The desires and abilities of these archetypes are all oriented toward successfully passing through the transformation from one Significator to the next, but none of these archetypes explains why the transformation comes about in the first place. The reason is simple: the transformation comes about because the Choice is tired of the Significator as it is and wants a change. This new awareness or moment of reflection activates the Transformation archetype within us, sending us into the before-state of the Transformation. At this point, our success in transforming depends on two things: (1) our resistance to the process due to fear of what will be lost in getting to the after-state and (2) the degree to which we have purely identified with the associated Great Way archetype.

As the Transformation archetypes are fundamentally transitional personas, the Great Way archetypes are the very opposite. These archetypes describe universal personas. Let me explain what I mean by this. The Great Way is the overarching path of spiritual evolution; it lays out the environment within which the Significator transforms. The unique contribution of the Great Way archetype is that it provides the Transformation archetype with direction. The Significator does not transform in an ungrounded, unpredictable way. It is true that one cannot imagine what the after-state of a Transformation archetype will be like while in the before-state. However, the entire process is still guided by the Great Way. So the Great Way archetypes describe the part of the self that does not change from transformation to transformation. These archetypes depict the deep, abiding, persistent desire that each of us has to walk a path of life according to a particular quality, with a small set of unchanging values. Thus, the Great Way archetypes are the final set of unifying archetypes. As the Significators unify the organs of the mind, body, or spirit complex, the Great Ways unify the total evolutionary path of the mind, body or spirit complex. And because the involvement of the Choice is central in the transformational process, the Great Way archetypes depict a unification of the objective self with the subjective self, which is especially suitable considering they describe the path of return to the Creator.

Summary of the Classifications

The Matrix is the imperfect self. It is pure, newborn and unevolved. It is the experiential continuum in which the dramatic sequence plays out. The Matrix characteristically lacks and desires experience. It knows neither what it is nor what it could be. The Matrix represents the outermost stage of separation from the One Creator.

The Potentiator is the perfect self. It is the sub-sub-Logos that chooses how and when the experiential continuum will be altered. The Potentiator characteristically has all available information within itself: it is the all-knowing, all-wise, all-powerful self whose generative presence is the source of all potentials into which the self may evolve. The Potentiator represents the ultimate and eventual union of the self with the One Creator.

The Catalyst is the phenomenal self. It is the affective self, heralding all the moving and meaningful events that occur in life, whether within or without. The Catalyst is characteristically visible or apparent as a meaningful aspect of the experiential continuum. The Catalyst represents the opportunity to move the imperfect self closer to union with the One Creator.

The Experience is the integrating self. It is the self that carefully processes and situates all the moving and meaningful events that occur in life. The Experience is characteristically disciplined and engaged with the experiential continuum. The Experience represents the ability to make use of opportunities to move the imperfect self closer to union with the One Creator.

The Significator is the objective self. It is the total self that we see when we examine ourselves. It is characteristically an organic whole of moving parts that we typically refer to when we speak about ourselves. The Significator represents the self as a holistic entity that strives for reunion with the One Creator.

The Choice is the subjective self. It is the witness that observes the whole dramatic sequence and identifies with the objective self. This is typically the self that does the speaking when we refer to ourselves. Its role is to choose what the objective self will be. The Choice is the persona of the unified self and so is the persona of personality, where I understand a personality to be a perspective in which one can move smoothly from one persona to another.

The Transformation is the transitory self. It is the self that gathers, purges and transitions from one objective self into another. It characteristically has a before-state and an after-state divided by a threshold that is difficult to cross. The Transformation must characteristically release a cluster of substance and attachments that do not belong on the other side of the threshold. What makes Transformation difficult is the price that one must pay in order to complete it; we often avoid Transformation so we can hold on to whatever must be abandoned when we cross. The Transformation represents the ability to approach the One Creator in leaps and not tiny steps.

The Great Way is the enduring self. It is the adaptable self that is consistently oriented toward a path of maturation. It is a fully permeating approach to life. The Great Way is characteristically durable. It gracefully handles surprises by never losing focus on what is most important. The Great Way represents our ability to clearly see what it means to move closer to the One Creator.

Distortion and Holography

The Archetypal Mind for our third density illusion describes the nature of all possible energy expenditures in this density. Everything that has significance to us in our experiences of living on Planet Earth follows the pathways on the circuit of the Archetypal Mind. The structured laws that govern our illusion cannot be broken, but they do leave space for an infinite variety of experience. They are the boundary beyond which we cannot step, but within which we have free reign to explore. The Matrix of the Spirit, for example, can only be potentiated in one way: a sudden flash of new awareness. But the process of potentiation can occur with variable efficiency and thus variable distortion of the Logos's plan for efficient (and "elegant") acquisition of experience. If, for example, a person refuses to admit that the sudden flash of awareness is an undeniable truth, then the potentiation process will produce catalyst that encodes this basic confusion.

The reason that the archetypes can be manifested (or expressed, or "become," etc.) in more or less distorted ways is this: the personas they describe have functional roles within the illusion. Each persona serves a purpose. But anything that serves a purpose can be (and is) measured against standards for how well that purpose is served. For example, a knife serves the purpose of cutting. But this means that there is such a thing as a good knife and a bad knife. A good knife serves that purpose well and a bad knife does not. Some of the standards that we measure knives against to decide their quality are durability, sharpness, and shape. A bad knife can be one that degrades quickly; or it can be one that is just dull; or it can be one whose shape is not useful for cutting. Since the 22 archetypal personas each carry out a function, they also each describe what it looks like to carry out that function well. In other words, the archetypes show us what a *virtuous* persona is. Moreover, for the archetypes that have dual moral expressions, there are *two* ways of manifesting that archetype virtuously: I think of them as virtuous good and virtuous evil. And between these two virtuous manifestations, there are countless ways to manifest the archetype in a distorted or less-than-virtuous way.

In addition to the virtuous and distorted expressions of the archetypes, there are also different holographic levels of archetypes. The Law of One requires that the universe is holographic, which means that the smaller parts of creation are themselves reflections of the whole. This is why everything in the universe is a Logos with an experiential continuum. However small the levels of creation get, the total structure is still repeated on those smaller levels. Likewise, when entities at the smaller levels form a collective larger level, the same patterns will repeat at that larger, collective level. Thus, there are microcosmic and macrocosmic levels at which the archetypes can manifest.

The smallest level of microcosmic manifestation of the archetypes is the individual. Every human being has all 22 personas within themselves. These 22 personas inhabit a community in which they interact. The mind of a human being is both singular and plural (which reiterates the First Distortion: the one is many). On this level of manifestation, the archetypes are the internal mechanisms of psychic functioning, as well as the internal interacting community of different aspects of self. This personal level is the primary level on which the dialogue between Don and Ra remains. They discuss the archetypes almost exclusively as elements of the personal psyche.

But because the archetypes are personas, we should expect that they manifest on the interpersonal level as well. All of the same individual functions and relationships contained in the Archetypal Mind are

also available in interpersonal interactions. In our meaningful interpersonal interactions, we commonly manifest (or instantiate or become) some cluster of archetypes with some degree of distortion and we stand in relation to someone else who, if all goes well, manifests a complimentary cluster of archetypes with some degree of distortion. Through these interactions, we serve each other by acting out roles for each other that might not be as easy for the person to manifest on the individual level. I might need my partner to act out the Catalyst of the Mind for me so that I can use our interaction to become the Experience of the Mind. In using our relationship this way, I am more likely to succeed in discovering the details of the Catalyst through their outward manifestations in our interpersonal relationship than I would be if I only used my own personal resources. We engage in these archetypal interpersonal interactions every day, without even thinking about what we are doing.

The archetypes can also manifest on a social level. Individuals and groups who become prominent in the collective mind are typically acting out some archetype or cluster of archetypes in relation to the other parts of society who will take on the complimentary archetypes. On the social level, just as on the individual and interpersonal levels, whatever carries significance and feels meaningful manifests an archetype in some way, though that manifestation may be very distorted.

Sex and Gender

Before we examine the archetypes individually, there is one final feature of the structure of the Archetypal Mind that demands attention: gender. Many of these archetypes are gendered, which means that they represent either a masculine or feminine persona. Ra's distinction between the masculine and the feminine is rooted in the opposition between the active and the passive. For Ra, what makes an archetype feminine is that it expresses the passive side in a relationship with another archetype that expresses the active or masculine side.

This distinction might strike some as offensive. After all, the problem of sexism in our world can be described as the problem of thinking about women as passive objects and men as active subjects. Ra, however, states that each person is both masculine and feminine, regardless of biological sex. Each of these archetypes is within us, influencing us from their position deep in our unconscious minds. Ra also does not endorse the harmful presumption that men should be masculine, and women should be feminine. According Ra, we should just be ourselves. But Ra does indicate that men tend toward masculinity and women toward femininity. I will say more about this idea, but I think this claim should not be taken in a way that is controversial. Nor do I think it should be controversial that Ra indicates that the source of this tendency is linked to the nature of the biological body.

The sexist construction of our world is not merely in the demand that men be masculine, and women be feminine. It is also in the judgment that masculinity is inherently better or more valuable or more honorable than femininity. Or, to use Ra's distinction, this sexism lies in the judgment that it is fundamentally better to have an active role than a passive role. Considering that in each gendered relationship each needs the other, this value judgment is silly. However, this sexist judgment is, I think, characteristic of the left-hand path. And I think this will become apparent as we examine the archetypes in more detail.

It is not always clear exactly which archetypes are masculine and which feminine. However, we can draw strong conclusions about most. Ra tells us outright that the Matrix of Mind is Masculine and the Potentiator feminine. Ra also tells us that the reverse is true in the body. Additionally, the Matrix of the Spirit is characteristically passive, just as the Potentiator of the Spirit is characteristically active, so I think this is an easy judgment as well. In one off-hand comment about catalyst, Ra indicates that the Catalyst of the Body is more active than that of mind or spirit, so I think we should conclude that the Catalyst of Body is masculine and the others are feminine. Because these archetypes enter a relationship with the Experience archetypes, the genders of the Experiences will be the reverse of the Catalysts. The Significators, however, represent a whole that incorporates both masculine and feminine, while the Choice is a unifying archetype. So I believe that we should think of these archetypes as having both genders within them—or else without gender altogether.

This leaves the Transformations and the Great Ways. Some of the *Tarot* cards strongly suggest a gender (like the Great Way of the Mind or the Great Way of the Spirit), but others do not (like the Transformation of the Mind and the Transformation of the Spirit). Moreover, because the Great Ways are unifying archetypes, it would seem that they, like the Significators, should not represent only one gender. Despite my efforts to classify these six archetypes according to gender, I have found that there is no easy way to think of either the Transformation or the Great Way archetypes as gender-valenced. Because these archetypes represent the dynamics of moving from Significator to Significator, it is appropriate that they should contain both a masculine and a feminine side, so I conclude that only the first four classifications have gender valence, while the others are either gender-neutral (contain neither) or gender-balanced (contain both).

Before moving on, I want to consider the relationships between sex, gender, and the archetypal masculine and feminine in more detail. In 87.27, Don asks Ra why the energies exchanged in sexual contact between a person with a male body and a person with a female body are different. Ra's answer is that the Matrix of the Mind and the Potentiator of the Body were attracted to the male while the Potentiator of the Mind and the Matrix of the Body were attracted to the female. This is noteworthy for two reasons. First, the "attraction" here is an attraction of the archetypal to the physiological. I take this to mean that having either a male or female physiology makes it inherently easier to express masculine or feminine archetypes. The experiences of trans persons who undergo hormone replacement therapy bear this out. Scientific experimentation does not support the claim that either chromosome allotment or hormone chemistry are fully and completely determinant of physiological gender. However, our understanding of the many interlocking functions of the human body suggests that having XX chromosomes is functionally meant to produce feminine hormones, and feminine hormones are functionally meant to produce both a feminine physiology and a feminine psychology. Because the chromosomes affect the hormones, which in turn have a more direct role in producing either masculine or feminine physiology and psychology, simply affecting the hormones directly should have this same effect. And, in fact, it generally does. While there are exceptions to every rule, the general theme reported by those who undergo hormone replacement therapy is noteworthy: both body and mind holistically tend to convert from one gender alignment to another. Increase feminine hormones and suppressed masculine hormones not only feminize the body, they also heighten sensitivity to emotions, change the experiential nature of sexual desire, and produce a more cooperative and less competitive mentality. Masculinizing hormone replacement therapy produces corresponding results.

But there is a difference between a male body, a male gender identity, and masculinity as such, just as there is a difference between a female body, a female gender identity, and femininity as such. Because Ra consistently associates the feminine with darkness and the masculine with light, I believe that the two sides of the veiling capture the features of femininity as such and masculinity as such. Ra also characterizes the feminine as passive and the masculine as active. These two conceptual distinctions, then, will be the primary touchstones that organize my consideration of the masculine and feminine energies.

So where does this leave things with regard to biological sex and gender identity? Biological sex is a hazy cluster of physiological traits that correlate with, but do not perfectly match, the more important scientific phenomenon of reproduction. In human beings, biological sex is significant insofar as it identifies the kinds of bodies that can generally get pregnant as opposed to the kinds of bodies that can generally impregnate. Obviously, there are complications, since some human bodies can do neither. But this distinction is not important where archetypes are concerned. The more important physiological distinction is between the kinds of bodies that incline toward a masculine experience and the kind that incline toward a feminine experience. Often, trans persons feel disoriented and uncomfortable until they begin to experience the *psychological* changes associated with hormone replacement therapy. This suggests that there was a part of them that felt the need to have a differently gendered experience, *from the inside*. This shows that gender is not the very deepest core of the self (a fact suggested by the gender-neutral Choice archetype and the gender-balanced Significator archetypes). It also shows that gender identity is not directly tied to either gendered physiology or gendered psychology. This is an interesting mystery all on its own, but it is not the central point I want to make. The take-home message here is that there are certain bodies that more easily produce the experience of masculine archetypes and certain bodies that more easily produce the experience of feminine archetypes, and this difference is very closely related to hormone chemistry.

Having said all this, there is no reason to think that some bodies *ought* to express feminine archetypes and others *ought* to express masculine archetypes. We are beings of free will who get to decide for ourselves how we will express ourselves. While it is true that certain bodies more easily express one set versus another (which suggests that it is very hard to express them all with equal skill), the goal of a serious student of the archetypes should be to develop the ability to express them *all* with relative ease. Sexual physiology, then, is little more than a talent for one set of archetypes as opposed to the other.

A Brief Note About the Apparent Feminism of the Right-Hand Path

In 85.19, Ra says that “The primary veiling was of such significance that it may be seen to be analogous to the mantling of the Earth over all the jewels within the Earth’s crust...After the veiling, almost no facets of the Creator were known to the mind. Almost all was buried beneath the veil.” The veiling, as I understand it, hides the feminine from the masculine: the feminine, who is the primordial other, is hidden from the masculine, who is the primordial self. This quotation shows us, then, that all the jewels seem to be buried within the mystery of the feminine, the mystery of the other who is unknown to the self. The left-hand path is an inversion of the right-hand path, so all the truths of the right-hand path take on their opposite appears in the intentional illusion or pursuit of falsity that the left-hand path represents. However, Ra’s words in 85.19 tell us, in no uncertain terms, that as we walk the right-hand

path, we will discover for ourselves that the beauty and glory of the creator is nestled within the feminine. My own exploration of the content of the archetypes reinforces this thought, as the reader will discover. The right-hand path seems to be, as far as I can tell, a thoroughly feminist perspective. This approach does not so much devalue the masculine as it glorifies the feminine. There is, of course, more to be said, but this point alone is remarkable. I am aware that this feature of my work will be a turn-off to some. But I make no apologies: these are my considered conclusions.

On the Possibility of One-to-One Correspondences Between the Tarot, the Tree of Life, and Astrology

Ra tells us that there are three available systems for studying the archetypal mind: the 10 spheres and 22 paths on the Tree of Life, the 10 planets and 12 signs of astrology, and the 22 major arcana of the Tarot. Ra asserts that there are 22 archetypes and that they fall into a system of classifications in which there are 3 groups of seven and one unifying archetype. Ra recommends choosing only one tradition and studying it, which I also recommend. I have chosen the Tarot and I expect my readers will do the same. However, the question of whether there are one-to-one correspondences between the three systems is an important one, because the answer will reveal to us whether there is any benefit in attempting to translate from one system to another.

The Kabbalists have historically asserted that there are direct, one-to-one relationships between these systems. A Google images search for “kabbalah tree of life” will reveal some examples. However, I believe that the Kabbalists were hasty and careless in their efforts to draw these correspondences. For them, the Tree of Life was the foundation and the lens through which they understood the other two systems. Because of this, they did not attempt to understand the other two systems on their own terms.

When the Kabbalists discovered the Tarot, they mapped the images onto the Tree of Life in the order they found them. It seems preposterous that they should have thought that the numbering of the Tarot images should just so happen to match the numbering of the paths on the Tree of Life, but this is exactly what happened. There are many variations on this mapping, but the differences between them are very small; almost all of them begin at the top of the Tree and progress to the bottom, in roughly the traditional order of the major arcana. The result is that many of the images are interpretively forced to fit the energy of the path to which they have been assigned. In light of Ra’s treatment of the Tarot, though, this mapping is unhappy. The top of the Tree of Life is concerned with the experiences of the spirit, while the bottom is concerned with the notion of self-identity. For this reason, we should expect the mind archetypes (1-7) to be at the bottom and the spirit archetypes (15-21) to be at the top: the exact opposite of the Kabbalistic tradition.

It is especially interesting to note that the traditional switching of arcanum 8 (Justice) with arcanum 11 (Strength) was purely motivated by the result that came about when the images were mapped to the Tree following the traditional numbering of each. With the arcanum 0 (Fool) as the first path, Justice should fall into the ninth path and Strength the twelfth. But the astrological sign of the ninth path is Leo and the sign of the twelfth path is Libra. How absurd that the image with scales should correspond to the sign Leo and the image with a lion should correspond to the scales! The mismatch was so obvious that they Kabbalists switched them. But note that the switching was entirely a consequence of their own muddled attempts to force the Tarot to fit the Tree! It did not originate from an attempt to understand

the Tarot on its own terms. From the perspective of Ra's articulation of the archetypal mind, switching the two is obviously a mistake, since the order of the images corresponds to membership in a classification and a cycle. It does seem plausible that there are one-to-one correspondences between the Tree and the Tarot, but I do not think that the correct correspondences have yet been articulated, and I strongly recommend setting aside all historical attempts. Perhaps an expert on the paths of the Tree will read my work and recognize which energies belong where on the Tree.

The issue of correspondence is even more complicated in the case of astrology. While 10 plus 12 equals 22, it does not seem appropriate to me to attempt to draw straightforward correspondences between this set of 22 and the others. Consider, for example, the correspondences of the planets. In 74.4, Ra links the planet Mars to the sphere Geburah and Jupiter to the sphere Gedulah (or Chesed) on the Tree of Life. This affirms that there are planetary correspondences to the spheres on the Tree. But if the planets correspond to the spheres on the Tree, how can they also correspond to the paths on the Tree? This is precisely what the Kabbalists assert, but it is a nonsensical assignment. The spheres are not identical to the paths; they are different kinds of things. So the planets should correspond to either spheres or paths. Since Ra tells us they correspond to spheres, then I believe we should accept that this is what they correspond to. But now we have a problem: there are only 12 signs and not 22. Moreover, these 12 are divided into a three by four grid of classification, not a three by seven grid, which is what Ra asserts.

I believe the answer to this conundrum is in the paired relationships between the archetypes. Ra tells us, in 88.24, that the intended program of study requires us to examine the 22 archetypes in pairings. As Ra describes these pairings, there are a total of 12 pairings. Moreover, these pairings map to a three by four grid of classification. In other words, the most natural correspondence between the astrological signs and the major arcana is a one-to-one mapping of signs to *pairings* of major arcana.

A unified system, then, would look something like this: there are 10 spheres or planets. These spheres or planets have energies that flow between them, pairing two spheres or planets together. These 22 pairings of spheres or planets are the pathways or major arcana. Additionally, the pathways or major arcana can be paired with one another in 12 archetypal relationships. These archetypal relationships are the 12 astrological signs. Thus, there are three levels of complexity at which the archetypal mind can be considered. The lowest (least complex) level is the 10 planets or spheres; the middle level is the 22 pathways or major arcana; the highest (most complex) level is the 12 signs or relationships between major arcana.

I will offer no attempt to articulate these correspondences. I will leave them to the consideration of experiences in either the Tree or astrology. It would be best, I think, if they read this book and then attempt to work out the correspondences in a way that does justice to all systems rather than forcing one to fit another.

6. The Recurring Symbols in the Tarot Images

Objects:

Human figure – The self. When Ra discusses the symbols on the images, they are often considered in their relation to the human figure or figures within the image. Even the two moral paths are named after the right and left sides of the human figures within the image (not the perspective of the viewer).

Because each archetype has a persona, and because Ra refers to the symbols from the perspective of a figure within the image, it is apparent that the persona itself occupies the perspective of a figure within the card. Usually, this perspective is carried by a human figure, but sometimes it is not.

The gender of the human figure is just as important as its presence. The meaning of the male and female figures is consistent across the *Tarot*: they represent the two sides of the veiling. The feminine is the hidden side and the masculine is the transparent side.

Square or box – The physical illusion. The physical illusion is the realm in which the incarnative body complex exists. This illusion includes both the body itself and the physical environment of which the body is a part.

Orb or wand – “Magical” ability, where magic is understood to be the event of conscious penetration of the unconscious. When the orb is glowing this represents successful magical action: the orb’s glow sheds light on the space around it, revealing its nature. The orb’s circularity indicates the “spiritual nature of the object of the will of one wishing to do magical acts within the manifestation of [third] density.”

Bird – The spirit complex. The bird may be resting with both wings down, preparing for flight with one wing up, or in flight with both wings outstretched. These different positions represent the mind’s success in using the spirit complex to connect with the Creator. Note that the bird is capable of flight, allowing it to metaphorically traverse the distance that separates the Earth (the physical illusion) from the Sun (the Logos).

Clothing – Protection. This might be protection from harm but it is also protection from knowledge.

Pillars – Structural support. They also represent the duality or polarity that is built into the structure of third density. The two pillars represents the two moral polarities, which we might call good and evil, but they the more general interpretation is that they represent two opposite valuations: true and false, comfort and discomfort, or apparent good and apparent evil.

Fruit – Lessons that may be gleaned from experience. Can also mean the pleasures of the physical world.

Circle – The unified creator. Can also mean the spirit complex, since this is what connects us to the Creator.

Ankh or Crux Ansata – This is a complicated symbol. Notice that it is composed of three parts: a circle, a line extending down from that circle, and another line that divides the circle from the line extending downward. The circle represents the unity of all existence. The line extending from it represents both the entering of the infinite into the finite world and the return of the finite back to the infinite. The cross line represents the threshold that must be crossed to move between the finite and the infinite. The cross line also represents the necessity of balance, both in the initial act of Creation and in our effort to return to the Creator. When the ankh is upright, I believe this symbol represents spiritual evolution as a “strait and narrow path.” Notice the in the upright position, the ankh is in an unstable balance. It is hard for it to remain upright because it is top-heavy and rests on a single point. In the upside-down position, though, the ankh is in a stable balance. The weight of the symbol is at the bottom, so it is does not tip over easily. I take this to mean that in the upright position, balance is difficult to achieve and difficult to maintain. But in the upside-down position, balance is easy to achieve and difficult to avoid.

Right angle – The intersection of the physical and metaphysical illusions. The right angle communicates orthogonality. Two different dimensions are always orthogonal to each other, so the right angle represents the intersection of two distinct dimensions. When two right angles appear, I believe each right angle refers to one of these two dimensions.

Veil – Veils represent the veiling mechanism in our illusion that hides the conscious mind from the unconscious mind. This mechanism is also sometimes symbolized by a blindfold.

Sun – The Logos. I believe this symbol represents the Logos of which we are each a part, not the sub-sub-Logos that we are.

Black and white pairs of objects – Polarity. There is more than one kind of polarity, though. Sometimes this symbol refers to moral polarity (the right- and left-hand paths), but other times it refers to apparent polarity (things that seem good or seem bad).

Winged orb – The covenant of the spirit. This symbol represents the priority of the evolution of the spirit complex over the evolution of the mind and body complexes. The covenant is the promise that wherever the evolution of spirit leads the entity, the mind and body will still be taken care of.

Sphinx – The cyclic passage of time. Many commentators have observed that the sphinx is constituted by four different animals—human, eagle, lion, bull—representing the four seasons, as well as the four elements and the four phases of human activity. Since the sphinx is a combination of all of them, it represents the cyclical movement of time in the most important sense: the process of maturation over time.

Lion – The instinctive passion and aggression of the body complex. The lion represents the power and destructive potential of bodily cravings.

Snake at the forehead (Ureanus) – Wisdom. This symbol represents consciousness that, through faith, is able to manipulate intelligent energy.

Snake – ?

The Devil – The adversary. This is another complex symbol. The devil has a crocodile's mouth, representing cruelty. It has bat's wings, representing its association with the dark. It has both breasts and a penis, indicating that it is intersex (not trans, since hormone replacement therapy is new). I take this symbol to mean that the devil is infertile or incapable of bearing fruit, which would have been the most notable feature of intersex persons in the days when this symbol came about. The devil has a snake emerging from its navel, indicating unquenchable appetite. It has goat horns, which C.C. Zain believes indicates material ambition.

Tongue of fire – ?

Cup or pitcher – Emotional attachment. Water is a symbol of emotions. So the receptacle that holds water is a symbol of the emotions that we store within us.

Pyramid – The place of initiation. The Pyramid is a constructed temple. The human-made construction of the temple symbolizes our belief systems (which we construct) as a scaffolding for entering the spirit complex to contact the Creator. It also represents the ideal of spiritual seeking. The temple is outwardly a mental scaffolding, but inwardly a holy space in which spiritual work can more easily take place. Our

spiritual and religious beliefs do not constitute the spiritual space; they only hold everything else away from the spiritual space.

Body of water – The mysterious unknown.

Orientations:

Inside or between – When something is inside something else, I take that to mean that it is subsidiary to or enclosed by the outer object. The exception is when one human figure is surrounded by two others.

On top – When something is on top of something else, I take the object on top to have command or dominion over the object on bottom.

Behind a figure – When something is behind a human figure, I take the object to be hidden from the figure's view, or otherwise hard to see. The figure must look behind itself if it is to see it.

In a hand – When an object is held in the hand of a figure, I think this indicates tendency of the mind (conscious or unconscious, depending on gender) to use that object.

Part Two

1. The Choice

The Choice is the unifying archetype, the persona that expresses the holistic nature of the entire third density experience as planned by our Logos. It offers a summary of the whole Archetypal Mind. The Choice is also the beginning and the end; it represents the third density experience both in its earliest stages and in its culmination. Tarot commentators frequently attribute a dual meaning to the image on this card and I will follow them in doing so.

Ra calls this archetype The Choice in an intentional reference to the primary lesson of third density, which is the choice between the right-hand path (the path of love, compassion, acceptance and trust) and the left-hand path (the path of control, domination, repression and ruthlessness).

Symbols

A blindfolded human figure walks toward the ocean. A crocodile with mouth open awaits the approach of the figure. The figure walks forward next to a fallen column with writing on it and there is a solar eclipse overhead. The figure carries two bags on their left shoulder, one bag in front and one behind. In their right hand is a black walking stick. The figure is only partially clothed.

The ocean represents the unknown and the crocodile represents the dangers that lurk along the path into the unknown. The dangers of third density are not merely the possibility of loss of life and limb, but also the possibility of mental or even spiritual disfigurement. It is very possible to end one's life in third density in a much more confused spiritual condition than one began. It is even possible to achieve precisely the opposite of one's preincarnational intentions. Though the grand story has a happy ending, grave setbacks along the way are always a possibility, especially under the veiling.

The fallen column represents the mainstream social structures by which we are encouraged to live our lives; it is the popular conception of a good life. The column is fallen, which represents the failure of this popular path to satisfy the yearning of the figure's spirit.

The blindfold represents the figure's inability to see through the illusion to the reality. The solar eclipse echoes the darkness of the blindfold, but it also represents the choice between the two moral paths. The two bags represent the meager possessions that they have brought with them on the journey, some of which are known, some of which are hidden. These possessions are the tools the Traveler will need to achieve the great plan for their lifetime: contracts for experience with other souls and a set of non-negotiable core values. The walking stick represents their ability to stay upright on the road, an ability that is somewhat inhibited, since the stick is behind them. Finally, the figure's half-nakedness represents their vulnerability to the dangers of the path.

Character: The Traveler

I call this persona the Traveler. The Traveler is neither masculine nor feminine; they are pre-gender. This character is closely related to the protagonist in literary works and to Joseph Campbell's Hero. The difference between the two is that the Traveler is the audience who experiences life through the eyes of the protagonist (or the Hero). The Traveler exists beyond the confines of the story, while the protagonist does not. I consider this archetype to be gender neutral, but because gender neutral pronouns will

become confusing when considering the Traveler's relationships to other archetypes (which are also gender neutral), I arbitrarily use feminine pronouns.

The Traveler wants to know what the mysterious world she enters is like. As the archetype of the beginning, or the "spiritual neophyte," as Ra calls it, the Traveler steps forward into a mysterious world about which she knows nothing. She is driven forward by a sense of curiosity, by her faith that it will all somehow work out and her lack of awareness of the danger she is in. She cannot see the deeper nature of the world she enters and so must guess. No one has beaten the path that she walks; she must beat that path herself. And in doing so, she calls forth from herself a declaration of who she is: because no one beats the path she walks, she is ultimately the creator of and the ultimate authority on the nature of the path she will walk.

The highest macrocosmic interpretation of this beginning side of the archetype is the decision to enter the third density illusion. The blindfold represents the veiling that has caused her to forget everything she knew about who she is and what the world is like, prior to incarnating in it. As George Fatham suggests, it is helpful to think of the parable of the Prodigal Son in relation to the decision to leave the unity of the One Creator and enter this very confusing world. Many commentators on the Egyptian *Tarot* refer to this archetype as the Atheist or the Materialist. This is because the Traveler cannot see the spiritual nature of the illusion; she can only see its materiality. In this position of spiritual darkness, the Traveler sees no God and no magic. But because she has rejected the traditional norms of society, she has set herself on a path of discovering both the nature of the illusion and the divine immanent within it. This discovery, however, will not be knowledge. She cannot remove the blindfold, she her discovery of the truth of the illusion can only be based on faith and feeling.

The other side of this archetype is the completion of third density. On this ending side of the archetype, the Traveler is seen exiting the third density illusion and entering into the next density of experience. The eclipsed Sun represents the choice between light and dark that the Fool has firmly made. She walks forward confidently into the mystery, aware of the dangers that lie within it, but not worried because she is protected by the strength of her choice and the faith with which she has made it.

The basic lesson of this archetype is that we will live and die as fools. We will never know the truth of the illusion except in the conviction of our own hearts. The mysteries of the universe will not be revealed to us in this life. And we will never feel like we have reached enlightenment. As Carla Rueckert used to say, "We are all Bozos on this bus."

The dangers on the path, represented by the crocodile, are a produce of the illusion's convincing nature. In this illusion, the stakes are life and death, sanity, trauma and wellbeing. And in an apparently godless world, these stakes are as high as they could possibly be. Moreover, there are also spiritual dangers. The Fool can lose her soul, figuratively speaking, if her choices lead her down a path that, prior to incarnation, she had meant not to travel.

The Traveler, then is motivated by curiosity and spiritual longing. Her empowering capacities are faith and naivety. Her virtue is humility. She is a traveler without a home, which means that everywhere she sets foot is a potential home. She very little in the way of belongings. All she carries into this world is a handful of talents that she is aware of and a handful of biases that she is unaware of.

This archetype's function is to be a witness to the drama of third density evolution of mind, body and spirit. Her choice lies in her desire to either remain where she is or move on to something else. At each stop along the way, she observes the activities of the various characters, she identifies with some and not with others. She comes to her own conclusions about whether the drama she has discovered suits her and, in her own time, she decides when it is time to move on to something else.

Levels

On the inner level, the Fool is the subjective witness that is present to each and every moment. This element of our psyche is so close that we often fail to notice it. It is the eye that does not see itself and the hand that cannot grasp itself. Most of the time, our inner witness identifies with the various other elements of psyche that are active, but, on occasion, this witness steps back to observe the goings on in the mind and render a judgment about whether it wants to keep going on as usual.

On the interpersonal level, the Fool is the Traveler who joins others in their home, whether that home is mental, physical, or spiritual. The Traveler is usually welcome company because she can adapt to any circumstance; she is a jack of all trades. The Traveler, then, is often a chameleon who strikes others as both familiar and mysterious. She listens more than she speaks and she is careful to learn and respect the traditions of the home she has entered. The Traveler persona is unique because it can take on any of the other personas. This persona captures the totality of the human experience as a mind that moves from one persona to another. I think of human personalities as complex blends of many different personas that activate at different times and in different ways as needed in response to the circumstances of the moment. The Traveler, then, is the persona of personality. On the interpersonal level, the Traveler's choice manifests in her decision to remain where she is or pack up and go somewhere else.

On the social level, the Fool is the immigrant, the well-traveled newcomer. This is the person whose experience is more varied than those of the culture she has entered. Her travel through other countries and cities has granted her experience whose value others have difficulty comprehending, and her entry into a new environment requires her to take some time to get her bearings so she can begin to understand the place where she now lives. Because she is so accustomed to relocation and has seen so much, it is easy for her to understand a new environment. Some things remain the same no matter where you are. But, on the other hand, it can be hard for her to lay down roots, leaving her feeling always like an outsider or an interloper in someone else's intimate community.

Polarized Expression and Modes of Distortion

It is difficult to say whether, according to Ra, the Choice archetype has two polarized expressions, or even whether it can manifest in distorted modes of expression. Ra says that this archetype is "relatively fixed and single," whereas the other archetypes will appear to have "unique facets and relationships for each mind/body/spirit complex." But Ra had previously used the "Fool" as an example of the subjective harvest of studying the archetypal mind. Ra says that "[e]ach seeker will experience each archetype in the characteristics within the complex of the archetype which are most important to it," and then Ra gives the example of the Fool. I believe this tells us something about the subjectivity of the study. The archetypes are "constant in the complex of generative energies offered," but each seeker will access this complex differently. I think this means, as I have said previously, that the subject of study exists in more

dimensions than the mind can comprehend: it is not possible to hold them in mind in their objective natures—but they do have objective natures.

Another source of confusion on this question comes from the function of this archetype within the Archetypal Mind. The Choice archetype identifies the locus of “free will, in the full sense” within us; it is the self that does the choosing between the two moral paths. It seems that if any archetype is split into two polarized expressions, it should be this one.

What, then, does it mean for the Choice to be “relatively fixed and single”? I think this riddle encourages us to draw some distinctions.

First, the subjective yield of an studying an archetype is not the same as the potential of the archetype to be expressed in either polarized or distorted modes. The subjective yield is a matter of how a student makes contact with the pure (virtuous) energy of the archetype itself. The subjectivity of the study is a matter of how human beings are able to know the archetypes. The polarized and distorted modes of expression are not a matter of *knowing* the archetypes; they are a matter of *becoming* the archetypes. The possibility of a distorted mode of expression is rooted in the functional nature of archetypes. Because they describe parts of the illusion that perform functions, the corresponding parts of the illusion can perform those functions well, poorly, or somewhere in between. To perform an archetypal function in a less than virtuous way is to express the archetype in a distorted mode.

Though I think the distinction between modes of expression and modes of knowledge of an archetype is helpful, I do not think this distinction solves the riddle. Ra isolated the Choice as “relatively fixed and single” as opposed to the appearance of having “unique facets and relationships for each mind/body/spirit complex.” This opposition makes it clear that the fixedness of the Choice is a matter of knowledge and not of expression. I think the solution to the riddle lies in Ra’s qualifier, “*relatively*.” The Choice, like all archetypes, admits of subjective modes of knowledge, but there is not nearly as much possibility of variation in connecting to this energy as there is for the other archetypes. And, if I am right that the Choice represents the psychological function of the subjective witness, this is exactly what we should expect. The experience of being a witness to an objective world is more or less consistent across all human beings. We all experience the bare phenomenon of subjectivity in basically the same way, but the objective world that we experience strikes our subjectivity in dramatically different ways.

Now we must answer the question of dual polarized expressions of the Choice. Consider a second distinction: the responsibility for making a choice does not require that the *chooser herself* has dual expressions. It only requires that the *chosen* has dual expressions. It is true that the Fool chooses what she will be, but the self the Fool chooses for or against is the Significator, the objective self. The subjective self is the eye that cannot see itself, so it is not possible for the Fool to make a choice about the Fool. To put the point differently: because the Choice corresponds to intelligent infinity as an aware but unified principle, the Choice archetype cannot admit of dual expressions. The manyness of creation finds expression, not in intelligent infinity, but in intelligent energy. Hence, the only archetypes that should be capable of dual polarized expression are the objective archetypes.

So I believe that the Choice admits of distorted modes of expression, but *not* dual polarized virtuous expressions. Let us now consider how the Choice can be distorted in its expression. The virtues of the Fool are humility, faith, and bold naivety. If the Fool knew what she was getting herself into, she would think better of it. If she lacked the faith necessary to enter the unknown, she would not even begin her

journey, and if she was not humble, she would not be able to maintain her position as an observer of the world around her. The distorted Fool, then, can be arrogant and rash. She can be quick to judge that she understands a situation that she does not, in fact, understand. This rashness has a steep price, as the crocodile awaits her misstep. It is virtuous for the Fool to boldly enter a new world, but the vice of believing she already understands what she witnesses invites retaliation from the strange world she has entered.

The distorted Fool can be faithless. Her experience is characterized by a very convincing illusion that hides from her the very existence of an ultimately supportive Creator. It is easy, perhaps common, for a person to find herself energized by the Fool's desire to leave the beaten path that society lays out for us, only to find that she is too afraid of the unknown to carry on. The virtuous Fool is notably *not* courageous, though she will seem so. Courage is acting despite the fear one has. The virtuous Fool is fearless because she has faith that what she will find in the unknown will be nourishing, fascinating, beautiful, and empowering.

The distorted Fool can also be cynical. I believe that cynicism is derivative of both faithlessness and arrogance, but this aspect of the distorted Fool still bears mentioning because I think it captures the traditional conception of the Fool as the Atheist or the Materialist. The claim that God does not exist or that there is nothing but matter in the universe is empirically unfounded. An epistemically responsible person will admit that the evidence supports agnosticism about God and metaphysics. The spiritual cynicism that characterizes atheism and materialism is an expression of both the arrogance of rejecting the mysterious out of hand, and the refusal to consider the possibility that faith itself might be a virtue. In a world where knowledge is difficult to acquire and certainty impossible to attain, the cynical cling to the few morsels of empirical knowledge humans can acquire and declare that nothing else is epistemically valuable.

2. The Matrix of the Mind

The Matrix of the Mind is the archetype of the experiential continuum of the mind's relation to itself. In all instances of a conscious archetype, the persona is one that we are inclined to identify with as self (in contrast to perceiving self as other). Thus, this archetype is the mind's relation to itself as self unpotentiated. It is the stage on which the drama of mind will unfold, but before the act has begun.

Symbols

A male figure, wearing all white, holds a magical orb in his right hand and points to a box with his left. He wears a gold circlet on his head and an ouroboros around his waist. The box has thick, dark walls and cages a flightless bird. The bottom of the box has a checkered pattern.

The male figure represents the conscious mind. The whiteness of his clothing represents the emptiness of the conscious mind in this archetype. Here, we have the "unfed mind," the mind that is full of longing but has "no inwardness," no depth or content to be explored. The magical orb is an expression of the conscious mind's desire for experiences of thought and emotion; its circularity indicates the ultimately spiritual nature of the object of this desire. The pointing hand reiterates the conscious mind's desire, just as the bird reiterates the spiritual nature of the object desired. The bird of spirit is flightless and trapped, which symbolizes the restlessness of this archetype. The bird's enclosure in the box represents

the necessity of entering and working within the physical illusion to release the caged spirit. The thick, dark walls represent the impediment that prevents the conscious mind from releasing the caged bird: the unconscious mind through which he must first pass. The checked base of the box indicates the moral polarity that is fundamentally built into the physical illusion.

Character: The Magician

Commentators on the *Tarot* often describe the Magician as being full of creative energy. Rachel Pollack helpfully explains this concept as a kind of excitement over the possibility of manifesting something new, such as a project or a relationship. The Magician sees some particular possibility in the world. While he does not know what it would be like, he has fantasized that bringing about this new possibility will turn out to be the one thing that leaves him feeling fulfilled. He wants nothing more than to finally feel release from his bondage in a position of restless excitement. The Magician is frustrated in the sense of sexual frustration, and the feeling he desires but is frustrated from experiencing is equally sexual: release.

The Magician's eye has caught something in particular in the world. His desire is specific. Fulfilling that desire will require activity in the physical world, some kind of manifestation of what he has in mind that will satisfy him. The magician wants to have a love affair and the kind of desire he has for his lover is to know her intimately. The excitement for this new possibility is thrilling, or it would be thrilling if he had any way to bring it about. The Magician is a personification of *eros*. *Eros* is an ancient Greek word that is often translated as sexual desire, but its usage was much more general than our usage of the phrase "sexual desire." *Eros* is an intense desire for knowledge through experience, so sexual intercourse was only one of many different ways that *eros* could manifest.

The object of the Magician's desire is not only not known to him, but not at all clearly seen. There is something bizarre about the intensity of his desire: he wants something and doesn't really know anything about it. In fact, he is guaranteed to be surprised and, in some ways, disappointed by the experience, since so much that is hidden from him now will be difficult to deal with when revealed.

The Magician, as a character, is someone whom we readily identify with. It is well-known among fiction writers that the way to get a reader to see herself in a character is to introduce that character in a state of desire. The conscious mind, then, is a protagonist and this archetype is our very first introduction to that protagonist.

The Magician's empowering capacity is the intensity of his desire; it is his only tool. His virtue is focus. The reason this archetype is traditionally named the "Magician" is because the people who worked with the *Tarot*—magicians in mystery schools—knew that the activating force for magical activity is not saying the right words or making the right gesture; it is an intense and focused desire. I've heard many people say that the only common characteristic among all human beings who achieve something great is that they were determined and relentless in their determination. This is what it means for the Magician to have a focused and intense desire.

This archetype's function is to be a stable center of awareness through which experience can flow as a result of the focused desire that draws experience to it. The conscious mind thinks no thoughts; rather, it calls forth thoughts from the unconscious as a function of the intensity and focus of its desire. Take a moment with your own mind and you will see that every thought or feeling you have comes about in

one of two ways: seemingly out of nowhere or in response to a specific desire for a specific kind of thought or feeling. In both cases, the conscious mind is not really acting in the way the word “think” implies; it is only requesting action. The conscious mind calls for thought and then thinking happens.

Levels

I believe that from what I have said above it is easy to see the holographic levels of manifestation for this archetype. I will briefly describe them.

At the personal level, this archetype is the conscious mind, full of desire unsatisfied. It wants to know what it glimpses as a distant possibility.

At the interpersonal level, the Magician is intent on establishing a relationship with another person in order to know them. He is an Admirer.

At the social level, the Magician is an enthusiastic applicant seeking entry into a collaborative, creative endeavor. He’s excited for the experience, but he must first be accepted.

Polarized Expression and Modes of Distortion

This archetype, like all Matrices, does not have a polarized expression. The Matrices represent the objective self before the acquisition of biases of moral polarity. This does not mean that we stop expressing the Matrices once we acquire moral polarity; rather, what it means is that once we do acquire polarity, the Matrix changes so that its frontier of concern is the yet unpolarized aspects of the self.

The Magician’s characteristic virtues are intensity of desire and focus of desire. But note that the Magician is only what he is insofar as his desire for experience is intense. Whenever we enter into a state of excited desire for new experience, the Magician is activated. But if our excitement is somehow diminished or if we never really feel very excited even when we do desire a novel experience, then we have not so much expressed the Magician in a distorted way as in a weak way. In my experience, when intensity of desire is lacking, often there is some other archetype activated (such as the Transformation of the Spirit) that prevents novel possibilities from sparking excitement.

Lack of focus is the primary mode by which the Magician can be distorted. A focused desire is one that is specific and uninterrupted. All human beings experience desire for the manifestation of novel possibilities, but it is not especially common for us to remain fixated on one particular possibility. A short attention span is one common distortion of the Magician. In this expression, we experience focused desire, but it does not last long enough for the desired possibility to manifest. Something else catches our attention and suddenly it is the new most important thing in the world. This distortion of the Magician creates abortive experiences. We do not follow through on our initial interest, so there is no opportunity to learn any lessons. The story ends before it even begins.

Another common distortion is split desire. This form of lack of focus diffuses the intensity of our desires, thus preventing any of them from manifesting due to a lack of sufficient creative energy. As in the case of a short attention span, the desired possibility never manifests, leaving the Matrix unpotentiated. In both cases of distortion, the archetype’s expression results in an experience of both frustration and floundering.

An apparent distortion of the Magician is conflicted desire, though I do not think this is a distortion. Often, our desire to manifest a novel possibility coexists with a desire *not* to manifest that very possibility. This tends to produce confusing and self-sabotaging experiences. Because we wanted to know the possibility intensely, we attract it to ourselves. But because we also wished against it, we attract its removal from ourselves. This phenomenon is built into the Magician archetype. It is never so easy to get clear about what we desire. When we attempt to focus the intensity of our desire onto something that we think is the correct object of that desire, we often discover that we were wrong; it was not quite what we were looking for. That is why so much of the box in the image is hidden in shadow. What we do not know but come to know in the process of gaining experience helps inform us of what our desires are. The more clearly we see the world, the more focused our desires can become. The process of discovering what it is like to manifest the possibility we desired and how it was never really what we wanted is what it means for a change to be recorded in this Matrix.

3. The Potentiator of the Mind

The Potentiator of the Mind is the archetype of the sub-sub-Logos in mind's relation to itself. Its gender is feminine, so it is a passive archetype that awaits activation. Throughout the Archetypal Mind, the veiling hides the passive self from the active self, the feminine from the masculine. This event introduces the apparently sharp boundaries between self and other by sharpening the boundary between conscious (self as self) and unconscious (self as other). Thus, the masculine archetypes collectively present us with the total Primordial Self and the feminine the total Primordial Other. The Potentiator of the Mind, then, is the mind in relation to itself as unpotentiated other.

Symbols

A female figure sits atop a box set between two pillars. Her face is covered by a veil, her right side is covered by a shawl with fruit printed on it, her body is covered by a dress, and on her chest is the ankh or crux ansata. The pillar on her right is white (or red) and the pillar on her left is black, but the same image is printed on each, and the crux ansata is notably present in that image.

A human female figure, wherever depicted, represents that unconscious mind. The veil and garments each represent forms of protection. The veil hides her face from view, which represents the difficulty of recognizing our unconscious mind as our own. The veil also represents the mechanisms of veiling that hide the unconscious mind from the conscious mind. The dress prevents the conscious mind from easily accessing intimate knowledge of the unconscious mind: the conscious mind must put forth effort if the dress is to come off. And the shawl with fruit on it represents our Logos's bias for the right-hand path. It shows that the unconscious mind, when approached on the right-hand path, is more fruitful (i.e. is more satisfying and offers a greater yield of experience) than when it is approached on the left-hand path. The shawl also shows that the potentiation mechanism, when used on the right-hand path, is left susceptible attack than on the left-hand path.

The box she sits on represents, as always, the physical illusion. Ra tells us that she rests on it, not to show dominion over the physical illusion (though I believe this orientation does indicate that "the body is a creature of the mind"), but to show the unconscious mind's proximity to the physical illusion. The

mysteries of the unconscious mind are always right in front of us, waiting just beyond the illusion of the physical world.

The pillars represent the two paths themselves: good and evil, right-hand path and left-hand path. As always, right and left are attributed from the perspective of the figure in the image, not from the viewer's perspective. The pillars show that the construction of the veiled third density illusion rests on the foundation of moral polarity. Every aspect of our lives is infused with this binary, offering a wide array of experiences in both moral polarities.

The ankh represents the spirit manifest in the physical world and the mind's journey to return from the third density illusion back to the spirit. It is the strait and narrow path of return to the Creator. On the figure's chest, the ankh represents the unconscious mind's enduring link to the larger journey that spans many incarnations. We incarnate, attempt to learn our lessons, return, and then incarnate again. The unconscious mind contains all of this information, including the plan for this particular incarnation, and it knows the greater intentions and lessons that we programmed for ourselves in this lifetime. She is all-knowing. On the pillars, the ankh represents the viability of both the right-hand path and the left-hand path as a means of learning the lesson of third density. This shows us that the choice between the two moral paths is a genuine choice between right and also right, not a choice between right and wrong.

Character: The Maiden

Commentators on the *Tarot* seem to have little to say about the lived experience of this character. She is usually treated as a mysterious other and rarely as a perspective one can occupy. This, despite Waite's passing comment that the card can represent "the Querent herself, if female." But I believe that the reason for this is that the perspective of the High Priestess herself is an experience of being Other to another.

The name I like for this character is the Maiden. Other commentators have not used this name, but Fatham chose the name "Virgin," which is very similar. The Maiden is quiet and reserved. She has never had a lover and so is mysterious. Her inner world is extremely rich and vibrant, but it does not lend itself to verbalization or even depiction. Any attempt that she might make to express her inner world fails to capture the grandeur of it. She is aware of herself as a potentially rewarding person to know intimately: her modesty is not a function of timidity, but of her own sense of self-respect. The Maiden is very attractive, which means that many men are vying for her attention. Because of this, she enjoys the privilege of high standards: if one of her suitors is going to win her affection, he will need to prove that he is serious about it.

The Maiden must await someone else's interest. Her silence is a matter of her inability to formulate her inner world in outward terms. But because of her silence, she finds herself at the mercy of those around her who decide for themselves how she will figure into their worlds. This is what I mean when I say that her perspective is that of being Other to another. When we experience ourselves as Other to another, we occupy a passive role in which we must wait for someone else to actively approach us, granting us participation and agency.

While the Maiden is silent and mysterious, she is not invisible. One of the central features of this archetype is concern with being attractive. The Maiden wants to attract someone who will make an effort to immerse himself in her inner world, so she adorns herself in a way that will catch the eye of

such a suitor. While I have been speaking about this character in almost exclusively romantic terms, the persona is far more expansive in its scope than romantic relationships. It is just that the dynamics of romantic relationships are a fairly pure expression of the functions of the persona. If we want to be noticed and appreciated by someone else in order to bring about our inward fantasies—romantic or not—then we must make ourselves attractive to that person. Likewise, if the unconscious mind is to be noticed by the conscious mind, then it must present itself in an enticing way.

The Maiden desires to be known deeply. Her primary strength is to make herself attractive through subtle gestures that often go unnoticed but contribute to an overall enticing gestalt. Her virtues are the ability to catch attention through subtle means and a self-respect that allows her to judge when a suitor has satisfactorily demonstrated his focused interest.

Levels

On the personal level, the Maiden is the unconscious mind. Her subtle gestures of attraction are what we call intuition. Intuition gives us morsels of deep and far-reaching truths about ourselves that entice us to approach the unconscious mind asking for more.

On the interpersonal level, we express the Maiden when, in relation to another, we find ourselves in the powerful position of being both attractive to and unfathomable by them. In this moment, we are pursued intently by the other and reveal ourselves only very partially and very gradually.

On the social level, the Maiden is an extremely creative and imaginative individual who knows she is misunderstood by those around her, but is fully aware that nothing she says can clear up their misunderstandings. The only way her brilliance will be revealed is if others decide they are actually interested to know her.

Polarized Expression and Modes of Distortion

The Potentiator of the Mind, as all Potentiators, does not admit of polarized expressions. The only difference in the Potentiator of the Mind between the two paths is in the ease with which the unconscious mind is helpfully known. The Maiden, when approached on the left-hand path, is somewhat more barren.

One mode of distortion of the Maiden is lack of subtlety. Sometimes, when we have deep, nebulous knowledge that others might helpfully draw on, we find ourselves garishly broadcasting our availability. This phenomenon parallels the trope of young woman whose attempt at making herself look attractive backfires because she her makeup is too heavy or her clothing too tight. Her initial appeal is unattractive because her adornment is unsubtle, so suitors do not find themselves curious about what else she might have to offer. The distorted Maiden's lack of subtlety inhibits the potentiation process because it prevents the Magician from developing sufficiently focused interest in the Maiden to activate that process. This distortion can manifest in many ways. On the social level, for example, it often manifests as a jarring personal presentation that turns others off or triggers them to judge that our minds are unsubtle. Showing up to an interview decked out in punk/goth attire, for example, is likely to have this kind of effect.

Another mode of distortion of the Maiden is lack of self-respect. We express this distortion when our desire to be intimately known overwhelms our considered judgment about whether the person we are

attracting has demonstrated their seriousness. Sometimes, we are so excited to have attracted someone's attention that we open up to them too quickly, revealing too much of ourselves too soon. This often has the effect of scaring the attracted person off because they were not all that interested in the first place. This mode of distortion will also tend to inhibit the potentiation process.

4. Relationship #1

Character: Attraction

We experience the relationships between the pairs of archetypes as events. These relationships are dynamic moments or periods of time in which the two personas interact with each other and something happens as a result. Or, as Ra might say, an energy exchange occurs.

When the Magician and the Maiden meet (in their virtuous, undistorted modes), the intensity and the focus of the Magician's desire to know the Maiden is reciprocated by the Maiden's desire to allow the Magician to know her, giving form and expression to the abundance locked inside of her. For this reason, I call the relationship between the two of them Attraction. The event of potentiation is the energy exchange that occurs between these and its characteristics are, unsurprisingly, sexual. The Magician will have demonstrated to the Maiden through the consistency and sincerity of his interest that he is capable of activating what is locked inside of her. The Maiden will have seen his demonstration and judged that she wants to lift her veil and let him inside.

The moment he enters her mystery is the act of potentiation. In this moment, whatever the Magician had sought is granted to him. If he brought a question, then the answer presents itself; if he wanted to experience a role, then he does. What is significant about his experience is that it is a temporary moment of partial fulfillment. The Magician found what he asked for, granting him the desired moment of release, and presenting him with intimate knowledge of something that was wholly new to him. The Maiden, who carefully selected the aspect of herself that would be known, finds satisfaction in the feeling of being desired and giving a sense of release. But the Magician knows that he has only scratched the surface and the Maiden knows that she still has so much more to offer. Again, a sexual encounter is an excellent analogy. The first sexual encounter is a superficial experience compared to the gradual flowering of a long-term sexual relationship. This moment of first intimacy sets the tone or plants the seed for the further unfolding of the relationship, which we will see in the next two archetypes. Or, as Ra would say, the act of potentiation creates catalyst. The rest of the relationship is the inevitable outcome of the initial union between the two: they will become to each other what they always had to have been to each other. So we see that catalyst is a phenomenon that emerges from an initial event, a potentiation.

When to Become the Personas

The appropriate moment to become an archetype is when its complementary archetype is already online in relation to you. This could happen on any of the three levels of manifestation.

On the personal level, the Matrix of the Mind is a focused and intense desire to know oneself better. This will often manifest in a question that you persistently ask yourself, perhaps out loud or in passing, but with fervor and occasional brain-wracking. The persistence of the question shows that it is a focus of

the conscious mind, and the way the question dogs you shows that it is intense. In this moment, it is appropriate to become the Potentiator of the Mind. Repeatedly asking a question that dogs you shows that you do not trust yourself to provide the answer but are hoping that it will come from somewhere else. If you become the Potentiator of the Mind, you will enter into a quiet confidence that allows you to intuitively access a path toward the answer.

Ra helpfully explained the inverse of this relationship on the personal level. When asked when it would be appropriate to become the Matrix of the Mind, Ra says that one should do so when the mind is consumed by the most “abstruse and unthinkable of thoughts.” This condition of mind shows that you are already internally expressing the Potentiator of the Mind, since the abundance of this Potentiator is formless and unthinkable until it is activated or unlocked by the Matrix. When your thoughts, beliefs and feelings don’t make any sense or are barely coherent, the Potentiator is currently in its waiting state. This is the moment to become the Matrix of the Mind: admit your lack of knowledge, clear your mind, identify a specific question about yourself, and allow your desire to know increase in intensity. This will unlock coherent content from the Potentiator.

On the interpersonal level, we can see these relationships reiterate themselves. It is common, I think, for use to perceive another person as wholly incomprehensible to us; their actions and words seeming in complete conflict, so we seem to have no recourse but to throw our hands up and give up on making any sense of it. This is a moment when that person is expressing the mysterious Otherness of the Maiden. In that moment we can express the Magician by admitting our lack of knowledge to ourselves. This grants the proper openness for us to understand them as they are. But this is not the only time it is appropriate to become the pure persona of the Magician. In other situations, we find ourselves attracted to another person as the Magician is, but we have not recognized within ourselves the importance of the focus and intensity of the Magician in pursuing that attraction. Becoming the persona of an archetype is helpful, not only when the needed energy of that archetype is lacking within us, but also when the energy is present within us but not pure.

Conversely, on the interpersonal level, there are times when another person approaches us with the interest and attraction of the Magician, but we avoid them, perhaps because it is inconvenient. In this moment, the other person’s expression of the Magician persona invites us to express the Maiden. The benefit of entering the Maiden persona in a moment like this is that the Maiden enjoys the Magician’s effort to win her affection. Instead of finding ourselves annoyed by the dogged interest of another, we can enter this persona to learn to love the attention and to judiciously reveal parts of ourselves to that person.

And again, these same patterns repeat on the social level. One group cries out to be heard, but another group registers nothing but nonsense in the cry. When we see a group that holds an apparently nonsensical view, it is an opportunity to collectively admit that we do not understand and to ask sincerely what the other’s view is. Or, from the other direction, a group that begins to gain attention that it never wanted may attempt to shy away from the limelight, but this resistance is a missed opportunity for potentiating the genuine curiosity of the rest of the world.

Note that the way I have described the relationship between the Magician and the Maiden sounds rather like a relationship on the right-hand path. Being honest with ourselves about whether we really know what we think we know is a mark of good character. Likewise, opening up to others who are interested seems like the kind of generous act a good person would commit. But these ways of

comporting ourselves are virtuous regardless of which moral path we take. The falsity that the left-hand path embraces is the falsity of separation, not the falsity of wishful thinking. Opening up to another is an opportunity for energy exchange, but it leaves plenty of space for manipulation.

5. The Catalyst of the Mind

The Catalyst of the Mind depicts the mind as potentiated other. Here, the seed of potential experience has already been sown and presents itself to the mind as a pregnant opportunity for self-knowledge.

Symbols

A female figure sits atop a box, facing to her left, with her feet resting on a crescent moon. She wears a transparent blouse and on her head rests crown and a uraeus. She holds an orb in her right hand, while a bird begins to take flight from her left. Behind her the sun shines, while beneath her eyes open within a box that is neither black nor white.

The female figure represents the unconscious mind. The crown indicates that the unconscious mind is “ennobled” by the attention of the conscious mind, which activates the event of potentiation. The uraeus indicates spiritual wisdom, which tells us that the Catalyst of the Mind is an emanation from the sub-sub-Logos within. This same concept is reiterated in the sun behind her. The sun also symbolizes the spirit’s protection of this catalytic process by illuminating the environment of this archetype.

Illumination is protective in the sense that nothing can hide in the shadows when the sun shines overhead: the Catalyst of the Mind is the unconscious mind revealed in her truth, so we are assured that whatever we see in the Catalyst is really there in our minds. This will be an important point.

The orb in her hand is the magical orb, which, Ra tells us, indicates the that “each opportunity is pregnant with the most extravagant magical possibilities for the far-seeing adept.” The eyes in the box reiterate this concept because they symbolize the new vision with which we begin to see the deep spiritual significance of all the events we witness in the physical illusion. The bird that takes flight from her hand represents the beginning of the spiritual journey. Since the mind must be initiated before the body and spirit, the Catalyst of the Mind is the first archetype of potentiated activity; it signals the new discovery within us that everything we bear witness to in this world offers us a reflection of ourselves. This discovery is the first step of spiritual evolution.

The transparent blouse indicates that, although the catalyst is illuminated by the sun and revealed to the conscious mind, it is not revealed in its entirety; it is still obscured behind the veil. The grey nature of the box also reiterates this concept. In the physical world, black and white are not separated and distinct from each other; instead, the experiences we encounter reveal to us manifold shades of gray whose moral significance we must carefully explore. The human figure sits atop the box, indicating her proximity to the physical illusion; it also symbolizes the overriding nature of the mental environment over the physical environment. The Catalyst of the Mind presents itself to us both in our own emergent thoughts and feelings and the significance that we see in those with whom we interact. The crescent moon at her feet reiterates the feminine nature of this archetype, but it also indicates the availability of moral polarity in this archetype. Each opportunity for self-knowledge also offers us an opportunity for moral interpretation: the significance of an experience can suggest to us either that we ought to

accepting and forgiving of it or that we ought to be repressive and dominant over it. The figure faces to the left, which indicates that the left-hand path interpretation is easier to see.

Character: The Expressive

I do not think the name “Empress” is a particularly good characterization of this archetype—even Ra says it is “confusedly” so named. A better name, in my opinion, would be the “Girlfriend,” which captures both her relation to the Maiden and the characteristic sexual romance of the mind cycle. Another name I like is the “Expressive,” which correctly captures the energy of this archetype, though it is not a name I have ever seen used to identify a trope, which is a serious drawback. Despite that drawback, though, I will use the “Expressive,” because the corresponding “Boyfriend” concept does not have the same broad connotations as “Girlfriend.”

The Expressive, like the Maiden, wants to be known deeply and intimately. Unlike the Maiden, though, she is already in a relationship. This affords her the stability she needs for the gradual unveiling to continue. The Expressive is in a constant state of presenting herself to others to behold. She is full of feeling, emotion and passion. She laughs often and cries often. She wants to share the little details of her life and to revel in the particulars of this moment. Though she is brimming with ideas, she does not offer any serious theories, nor is she interested in sustained intellectual discourse: thoughts come too rapidly and too amorphously for her to have the patience for rigor. Whereas the Maiden’s fantasies were locked away and impossible to adequately express in words, the Expressive’s rich imagination is always on display. Most people who easily manifest the Expressive are artistically inclined in some way, whether via painting, music, crafting, theater, or some other mode. Superficially, she is chatty and has an air of whimsicality or even shallowness. But beneath that appearance, there is an endless depth of substance. She may not see herself clearly, but, when questioned, she certainly expresses herself clearly.

The Expressive treats her ideation as her own child. She nurtures it, pours attention onto it, and lives vicariously through it. The Expressive is generative and abundant, but her offerings are also holistic. The Expressive begets and shares mental and emotional substance by constructing and breathing life into thought-forms: clusters of concept and emotion that take on a life of their own as they enter the world at large, spreading and growing in unexpected ways. That is, the Expressive creates Works that spread and change as memes do on the Internet. What she creates, though, is not so much the outward expression that the Work takes on, but the inward understanding and emotional substance that it transmits from one mind to another. For this reason, we can also say the Expressive is generous and motherly. She lavishes attention onto those who strike her as under her care. She incubates her children, whether they are thought-forms or human beings, surrounding them with the nutrition of her mental and emotional expression. This child is a holistic instance of who the Expressive is as an individual.

The Expressive’s function is to offer the mind complex a constant stream of opportunities to gain more information about itself. She is motivated by the joy of self-expression and her expression is characteristically spontaneous. Her empowering capacity is her direct contact with the truth: whatever she expresses in whatever mode she expresses it, there is in that expression a deep, infallible and penetrating truth, though it is not a truth that she is self-reflectively aware of. She needs a partner if she is to reflect. Her virtues are diversity of medium (such as a large vocabulary) and depth of emotional feeling.

Levels

On the personal level, the Catalyst of the Mind is the thoughts and feelings that spontaneously flow through us. Everything that we think and feel, however superficial it may seem, is a rope-end that, if we tug on it, will lead us through a wild ride of imagination, emotion, and ideation. This includes thoughts and feelings that we have about ourselves as well as thoughts and feelings we might have about others.

On the interpersonal level, we express the Expressive whenever we use the safety of a relationship with another person to authentically share the emotional and fantastical aspects of our own minds. One of the reasons I like the name “Girlfriend” is because it has both romantic and non-romantic connotations. Women who are friends with each other will call each other “girlfriends.” The kind of sharing that women stereotypically engage in when they are in each other’s company is the characteristic mode of expression of this persona.

On the social level, we express the Expressive when we enter or seek out a space that is dedicated to authentic expression of thought and feeling, without the need for any particular agenda. Expression, for the Expressive, is not instrumental: it is an intrinsically valuable experience that is most enjoyable when it is not forced to serve a purpose. Protests and support groups, for example, often establish spaces in which people can recount their experiences without the need to work out a moral of the story.

Polarized Expressions and Modes of Distortion

The positively oriented (or right-hand path) Expressive allows herself to be vulnerable without reservation. She desires only to get at the truth, and she is neither ashamed of that truth nor does she want others to be ashamed of themselves. She does not dissemble, nor does she attempt to manipulate. Instead, she celebrates her own unique nature through the process of expressing that nature. She is not attempting to gain validation, but if her vulnerability is met with attack or shaming, she will judge that it is best not to share with that person.

The negatively oriented (or left-hand path) Expressive believes that her inner mental and emotional world should accord with the dictates of the authority figure in her life that commands her to be a certain way. She has so fully internalized this command that she is now its most vociferous defender. She is the Complicit. She has had her own values imposed on her from outside and subjected to shame and humiliation whenever she fails to live up to those values. In her internalization of this worldview, she enforces it on those whom she takes to be in her care, whether they are literal or figurative children. Shame and validation are her currency. In her view, certain traits are shameful to have, so she must present herself as lacking these shameful traits and possessing noble traits. While her expression is authentic, it is an authentic expression of what she understands it is desirable to be. Instead of expressing her deeper nature authentically, she authentically reflects a version of herself that she has come to learn is desirable. In her social manifestation, the Complicit sees herself in competition with others who also manifest the Expressive, since nobility of character, as she conceives it, is a comparative affair. In her relationship with her masculine counterpart, she seeks his validation for having correctly presented herself as the desirable Expressive. Like all manifestations of this archetype, the Complicit has a connection to truth, but she uses this connection to truth as a weapon. By playing on the desires and shame of others, she positions herself as dominant among competitors and outstanding as a mate for her masculine counterpart. In accepting the separation between the conscious and unconscious mind that is implicit in the subjugation of her own inner nature, she recreates that same separation within

herself. Now, internal to the unconscious mind, there are elite and non-elite contents. Likewise, in the world around her, there are elite and non-elite others. Regardless, her intention is to instantiate and identify with the elite and to humiliate the non-elite.

The above two characterizations of the polarized extremes available in this archetype. These polarized extremes are not any less distorted than the less polarized versions. Rather, the undistorted expression of this archetype (as well as all Catalyst and Experience archetypes) lies along a spectrum on which the above two characterizations lie at the far ends. Between these two poles are the morally mixed expressions. This is where we invariably will find ourselves.

The mixed Expressive attempting to polarize positive desperately seeks validation from others and feels deep shame about who she is, but she still puts herself on the line by expressing her deep self authentically. Because she is so desperate for validation and so ashamed of herself, she will tend to find herself in abusive relationships and she will be susceptible to manipulation by others. This version of the persona is often expressed by victims of domestic abuse who do not believe they deserve a better relationship. She wants to be loved just the way she is, but believes that her desire represents an impossible fantasy world that she needs to abandon. She chastises herself for being a silly romantic, but mourns each time she is subjected to further hostility just for being who she is. She has internalized the belief that she is not very valuable, but she also believes cannot help it. She accepts her condition of subjugation but cannot bear to inflict it on others, so she is stuck in the circumstance of the non-elite. Others tell her that she deserves better, but she cannot see it and only wishes it were true.

The mixed Expressive attempting to polarize negative wants to live up to the ideal of the elite as dictated by the authority in her life, but she is too fragile to live up to that ideal consistently. She happily enforces the acceptable ways of thinking, feeling and expressing on others whom she considers non-elite. She enjoys humiliating them for their failure to live up to the ideal. But she also cannot bear to suffer the same humiliation herself. She needs constant validation from the authority figure or else she will have an inner meltdown. Her meltdowns are a way of securing validation despite her inability to live up to the ideal she has internalized, but because they are meant to inhibit the withering criticism that will cause her to more closely instantiate that ideal, they are an expression of her own weakness and refusal to grow.

One distorted expression of the Expressive persona is the ditz. Like the left-hand path Expressive, she has internalized an outward conception of what it means to be desirable. But unlike the left-hand path Expressive, she lacks the depth of emotional feeling to present herself in a way that stands out to her masculine counterpart. Her capacity for self-expression is genuinely shallow: she is basic. This mode of distortion will tend to prevent integration of catalyst there is not very much catalytic material to work with.

A third distorted expression of the Expressive is the mute. We express this archetype when we have learned to be ashamed of ourselves as we are, but refuse to attempt to present ourselves as we are taught to be. Because there is no safe mode of expression, we will find ourselves completely stifled. This version of the Expressive will be timid and reserved in her relationships, no matter how enduring those relationships are.

6. The Experience of the Mind

The Experience of the Mind depicts the Mind's relation to itself as potentiated self. This archetype shows the conscious mind after it has made contact with the unconscious mind. In this state, it now beholds the catalyst offered through the sub-sub-Logos's choice to make a change in the experiential continuum.

Symbols

A male figure wears a crown and a uraeus on its head, its body covered in a garment that extends further on the figure's left than on his right. On his chest is emblazoned a bird in flight within a circle. His legs form a cross with one toe touching the ground, and in his right hand is a magical orb while his left hand is held palm-down and empty. The figure sits atop a box within which a house cat sits on the right side, facing the left side.

The male figure represents the conscious mind, the mind visible to the subjective witness and with which that witness tends to identify as "me." The crown he wears indicates his status as steward of the contents of the unconscious mind: he bears the responsibility of deciding how to integrate mental catalyst. The garment he wears shields him from the unconscious mind and, more broadly, from other human beings, preventing him from feeling fully unified either with his own unconscious or with others. The skirt extends further on his left side, showing that this feeling of separation is more profound on the left-hand path.

His crossed legs and the circle on his chest form a stylized ankh or *crux ansata*. As always, this symbol indicates spirit in manifestation that, through its manifestation, walks the path of gradual return to the Creator. In this case, though, the ankh is embodied. It is not a symbol he carries, but a symbol that he is. In particular, the crossed legs form a tau, which represents the "great cross of life," in which we must strike a careful and precarious balance through frequent sacrifice of our attachments. His embodiment of this symbol shows that the mechanism of the Experience of the Mind is a process of sacrificing such attachments for the purpose of striking a careful balance.

The bird in flight on his chest indicates that the caged bird in the Matrix has been released and now soars overhead. The bird represents the spirit complex, which indicates that successful processing of mental catalyst allows us to access and use our connection to the One Creator. The flight of the bird also indicates the sense of fulfillment that comes from using mental catalyst efficiently.

The orb in the figure's right hand represents the magical possibilities readily available on the right-hand path. Our Logos prefers the right-hand path, and so has made walking that path easier for us. Thus, it is easier to access the transformational power of that path than it is to access the power of the left.

The box, as always, represents the physical illusion. The figure sits atop the box to show both the proximity of the mind to the physical illusion and the overriding nature of the evolutionary mechanisms of the mind over those of the body. The commitments and judgments of our minds will condition and limit the significance of our physical experiences. Or, to put the point differently, we can only see in the world what our own beliefs and biases allows us to see.

The house cat within the box is a form of protection available on the right-hand path. Note that this is a house cat, not a large cat. It does not have overpowering strength. Rather, the house cat has the ability to see clearly in the dark and the instinctive desire to hunt pests, like mice and snakes, that threaten our homes and lives. The cat faces the left side, which indicates that it guards against interpretations of our

lived physical experience that would undermine our commitment to the right-hand path. Thus, the cat makes our mental homes impervious to the small and hidden dangers that might otherwise creep into our minds.

Character: The Judge

I have chosen to name this persona the Judge because this title captures the fundamental responsibility that this persona has. An alternate name for the persona is the Boyfriend, but I do not consider it to be as good a name as the Girlfriend is for the Catalyst of the Mind because the word “boyfriend” does not have as broad of a reference and use as “girlfriend” does.

Many commentators attribute to this archetype, traditionally named the Emperor, the responsibility of ruling. It is commonly treated as a persona focused on law and order for the sake of preserving justice. But I do not think this is an appropriate way to think of the archetype. The concepts of law, order and justice are central features of the body cycle, especially as these concepts pertain to action within the physical illusion. This archetype, though, is in the mind cycle, so its concern is not with action but with interpretation, with thought, emotion, and, most of all, the rules according to which we judge whether some aspect of mental expression is good or bad, acceptable or unacceptable. This archetype does not represent law as such; it represents authority, especially authority concerning matters of what it is acceptable to think, feel, and express. The Judge is the authority on the value accorded to the various contents of the mind.

The Judge has an abundance of information on his hands and he wants to fit all that information into a system of rules that establish a ranking of value. For the Judge, every facet of the array of mental phenomena available to him must be fit into its proper place within the moral order that he conceives. The Judge is an authority on what the mind is and ought to be.

The Judge’s responsibility is to establish the mental framework into which the fluid and often unwieldy content that the Expressive offers can be fit. This framework includes interpretation of the significance of that content as well as judgments about what, within that content, is good or bad, preferred and discouraged. Because of his responsibility for making value judgments about the content the Expressive offers, the Judge is so often associated with rule and dominion. This responsibility also explains the Judge’s close association with fatherhood. The Judge decides what the rules of his belief system will be and how he will integrate meaningful events into that belief system according to the rules he has established.

The Judge is deeply rational. His judgments about the value and quality of a mental expression pass through his rational faculties which allow him to make sense of the relationships between these expressions. Often, through misunderstanding of the nature of reasoning, we judge that an emotional expression is “irrational.” But there is no such thing as a fundamental opposition between reason and emotion. Emotions are action-motivating, affectively-valenced expressions of the relationship a person’s fundamental values have to the current situation. Human reasoning does not issue cold, value-free judgments. Or, if it does, the resulting output is never a value-judgment. Human reasoning must take in our fundamental values as inputs, pass them through rational assessment, and only then come to a conclusion about the relationships between these value judgments. Thus, there are two primary phases of the Judge’s activity: to assert a constellation of value judgements (or presuppositions) and then to rationally analyze the world in terms of those value judgments. The very concept of the opposition

between emotion and reason, then, fails to show a reflective awareness of the presuppositional nature of our constellations of value judgments. An emotion is only irrational when it does not align with our prejudgments about which kinds of thoughts and feelings are valuable.

The Judge is motivated by his desire for goodness and virtue. His empowering capacity is his ability to hold logical connections in mind and to see where and how there are conflicts in his proposed system of judgment. His virtues are the breadth of his ordering of values (no blind spots) and the consistency of his commitments (no contradictions allowed).

Levels

On the personal level, the Judge is the inner mental capacity to decide whether to accept or reject the various thoughts and feelings that spontaneously come to mind, whether in relation to our physical experience or not.

On the interpersonal level, we express the Judge whenever we help someone else make sense of their own thoughts and feelings, especially concerning judgments about whether those thoughts and feelings are good or bad, acceptable or unacceptable. As the Judge, we are the source of moral judgments in our relationship with another person.

On the social level, we express the Judge when we are engaged in a discipline devoted to working out how self-expression from other groups should be received. On the social level, the Judge is the moral authority of our society. Whenever a group is in a position to make proclamations about what the rules for acceptability are, that group is acting out the Judge in relation to the group those rules are being applied to.

Polarized Expressions and Modes of Distortion

The positively oriented (right-hand path) Judge is a Counselor or a Confidante. His primary approach to the rules of interpretation is that whatever the Expressive says is true, valuable, and valid. Thus, the rules that he establishes for interpreting information are supremely supportive and permissive. There is nothing that wrong or bad about any thought or emotion; every negative feeling indicates a valid response to some lived trauma; and each thought or emotion is to be accepted as it is. Instead of enforcing a set of norms on the Expressive, he uses his talents to help her discover ever more deeply what that content within her is. His deepest desire is to understand the Expressive as she is and to offer her a structured reflection of herself as a work of love. As the cat on the card indicates, this approach armors his mind against the small, hurtful thoughts that might otherwise inhibit his relationship with the Expressive.

The negatively oriented (left-hand path) Judge is a Patriarch. He has come to his own conclusions about what is acceptable and unacceptable in the Expressive and he does not hesitate to let her know when she is violating the norms he has established. The traditional interpretation of this archetype is rooted in concepts of authority that resonate most strongly with negative side of the persona. We see here the Patriarchy that subjugates not only women but femininity itself as a subservient energy whose expression must conform itself to the demands of the masculine.

Ra often refers to the two moral paths as “service to self” and “service to others.” The sense in which Ra means the phrase “service to self” is captured fairly well by the negative Judge, the Patriarch. On this

path, one raises one's own conscious mind on a pedestal in comparison to which the unconscious mind is a tool to be used as one will. Since the unconscious mind is the primordial other, service to self means that one serves the conscious mind at the expense of the unconscious mind. The "self" in the phrase "service to self" is not the total self, but the conscious self only—the self with which the subjective witness is inclined to identify as self.

The mixed Judge attempting to polarize positive wants to accept the Expressive as she is, but he can't get past his hang-ups about what she ought to be like. He is attached to his own beliefs about what it means for the unconscious mind (or another human being) to be virtuous, to be good, or even just to be good enough. This ideal leads him to reject parts of her expression (parts of who she is) as not good enough or in need of changing. But, unlike the Patriarch, this distorted Judge wants to love her the way she is; he just can't bring himself to do so unconditionally. Thus, his approach is hot and cold: sometimes he is deeply affectionate and supportive, but on other occasions he is disgusted by her and dismissive of her feelings.

The mixed Judge attempting to polarize negative wants to be the supreme authority to which the Expressive answers, he lacks the strength of conviction to weather the backlash he will receive when he attempts to enforce his will. The Patriarch maintains his position as an authority in virtue of the overpowering strength of his own will. As long as his will is stronger than those over whom he presides, he will maintain his position of power. But most of those who polarize negative will not attain to this strength of will. This mixed Judge will sometimes be sensitive to the suffering of the Expressive when she rejects his criticism, so he will make exceptions for her, allowing her to dictate the relationship. Though he wants to present himself as an authority, he is more commonly "hen-pecked." He exerts control where he can, but suffers humiliation in his private moments.

One distorted expression of the Judge is when he has blind spots. This Judge has disregarded certain mental contents as unimportant or not in need of ranking on the value scale. This is usually a consequence of his attachment to his own preconceptions and the threat that anomalous information presents to those preconceptions. The conscious mind is the self with which we identify as self. So because we can consciously access our own rules of interpretation, we are attached to these rules the same way that we are attached to our own conception of self. Without them, we are often not certain who we would be. If I allow new information to change my judgments about what is good and bad, then what grounds those judgments? Where is the stability of my own moral character? This distorted Judge suffers the existence of blind spots in his structural account of the contents of his mind because the alternative seems worse.

A second distorted expression of the Judge is when his rules for interpretation are inconsistent. I might judge that X is good but Y is bad. But then someone shows me that in fact, X and Y are the same kind of thing. If I am deeply attached to my preconceived rules of interpretation, then I will maintain my position and attempt to explain away the inconsistency. In this distorted expression, the Judge is a rationalizer. The Judge cannot suffer a contradiction; it is painful to him. So, when presented with a contradiction in his own judgments, instead of changing his judgments, he complexifies them to hide the contradiction from himself. Thus, he creates for himself an elaborate mental maze of justifications for his judgments.

7. Relationship #2

It might not be surprising to learn that the relationships between pairs of archetypes become more varied when the archetypes admit of two oppositely polarized expressions. Setting aside distorted expressions that tend to inhibit integration of catalyst or, as Ra says, cause a “souring” of the catalyst, there are four significant versions of the relationship between these personas.

Character: Exploration

These two personas, the Expressive and the Judge, are already in relationship with one another. The Expressive is in a constant state of sharing herself with the Judge, while the Judge is in a constant state of evaluating the content the Expressive shares. This relationship, like the previous, lends itself to the analogy of sexual union, though it is not limited to either sex or romance.

I will begin with the positively polarized sides of the Catalyst of the Mind and Experience of the Mind. The positive Expressive is the more spontaneous of the two polarized versions of this persona. The way she carries herself, the things she says, her moments of emotional overwhelm—all of these things are the content she shares with the Judge. He is her companion, her romantic partner. The enduring nature of this relationship causes them to become very familiar with each other. He knows her idiosyncrasies and her preferences. She, likewise, knows how he is inclined to judge what she shares with him.

Fortunately for them, this is a right-hand path relationship. He delights in the slow-burning relationship, the small surprises, and the new moments that arise between them. When she has a new idea, he gives her his attention and pricks up his ears, ready to revel in this new expression. He listens to her recount her troubles and affirms their validity, accepting her anger, her sorrow, her disappointment, or whatever other negative emotion is associated with her sharing. He listens to her recount her delights and also affirms their validity. Her enthusiasm, pleasure, and passion are all aspects of her that he judges to be acceptable and valuable. When they are together and she is sharing with him, they are engaged in lovemaking. His eyes are open to her as she is and he wants to know her in every detail, naked and without hiding. He wants her to reveal her most tender vulnerabilities to him, to feel safe with him, and to take joy in the care and affection he shows when she is at her most vulnerable. In the positively polarized expression of this relationship, safety and support are the most prominent features.

The popular idea that the emotional expression of the Expressive is often contrary to reason prejudices the fundamental values of the Expressive without first asking what they are. We cannot know the Expressive to be irrational unless we understand what she values and how those values relate to one another. Such prejudgment is a characteristic feature of the left-hand path, wherein the conscious mind molds the unconscious to his preferred system of fundamental values. On the right-hand path, the conscious mind (the Judge) inquires about the values of the Expressive, assumes that they are consistent with each other, and then works out what their relationships must be by using his rational capacities. In academic philosophy, this is called being “charitable.” Thus, the right-hand path relationship between these two archetypes is characterized by charitable exploration, or, as a conscientious hiker might think of it, exploration that leaves no trace of its presence in the natural environment.

The negatively polarized sides of these two personas present inverse of the positive relationship. The negative Expressive is the Complicit and the negative Judge is the Patriarch. As before, the two of them know each other well, but their dance with each other is a show of force in an attempt to enslave one

another. The Complicit knows how the Patriarch is likely to cast his judgment upon her and she has internalized this picture of herself as her own identity. The characteristic spontaneity of the Expressive does not disappear, but it becomes a spontaneous acting out of the particular set of traits that the Patriarch demands from her. The Patriarch, for his part, is utterly committed to his own value judgments about what is or is not an acceptable way for her to be. He has a vision of how the world best looks and this vision is of the utmost importance to him. If she does not match this vision, then he has no time for her. Her awareness of this vision and ability to inhabit it allows her to win his favor, which grants her status above all those whom he has not chosen. She is elite for having won the favor of the Patriarch. Having won this favor, she may now enjoy the privilege of using his favor for her own purposes or wielding that favor as a weapon against others. However, because she has internalized the value constellation of the Patriarch, she is ready and willing to use that very value constellation against him. If he should waver in his commitment to it, he will be the target of her scorn. At all times, she demands that he is impeccable in his dominion because if she does not do so, then she will not have lived up to his ideal. There is no pretense of safety in this relationship; each knows that the other is out for blood, but they remain in a relationship because they each believe that they have the upper hand. Thus, there is a positive feedback between them in which, through the threat of becoming non-elite, they hold each other accountable.

These are the extreme expressions of polarity in this relationship. However, by far the most common forms of expression of this archetypal relationship are the mixed expressions. In the mixed expressions, either the pair wants to be positively polarized but has nagging attachments to negative aspects or else they want to be negatively oriented but have similar attachments to positive aspects.

Consider the pair struggling for positivity. Here, the Expressive wants to feel safe in the relationship but does not. She loves the Judge and wants to reveal herself further to him, but there are certain subjects or certain emotional states that set him off into a judgmental fury. She learns to avoid these topics and modes of expression. She takes joy in the relationship however she can, but just beneath the surface there is a constant sense of his lack of acceptance of her. Because of the overriding Law of One, there are ultimately no private thoughts. Even if he never speaks his judgmental thoughts to her, she can sense them in his subtle body language. The Judge, on the other hand, wants his partner to be unconditionally lovable to him. But there are certain conditions that he cannot let go of; he has standards for the identity of the partner he chooses and he does not think he is asking too much of her.

Now consider the pair struggling for negativity. The Manipulative wants to live up to the Patriarch's expectations for her, but it gets exhausting. Sometimes she just wants to relax and not have to put on a mask all the time. She knows that when she lets her guard down, the Patriarch's judgment will leave her feeling ashamed, but she so fundamentally rejects the idea of being non-elite that she will sometimes retaliate against him when he criticizes her. Her fear that she cannot live up to the standards she has internalized constantly weighs on her and makes her a volatile partner. The Patriarch, on the other hand, is sweet on her but also afraid of her occasional retaliation. He sometimes lets her get away with disrespecting his authority because he does not want to deal with retaliation. He knows that this is a weakness of his and that she will probably continue to advantage of, but he does not have the strength of will to stand up to her the way he would need to if he were to put an end to it.

When to Become the Personas

In this section, I will not cover the negative versions of the archetypes because this book is not meant to provide practical advice to those on the left-hand path. When I describe the left-hand path, my intention is to use this inverse polarity to clarify and sharpen the nature of the right-hand path.

I will begin at the personal level. Whenever a thought has emotional charge, whatever and whoever the thought is about, that thought is catalyst for the mind. It might be frustration, anger, disappointment, excitement, giddiness, or any other emotion, and it might be about either oneself or another. Whenever an emotional charge like this appears, this indicates that the Catalyst is available to be worked with. In this moment, it is appropriate to become the Experience of the Mind. This entails engaging in the balancing exercises as Ra describes them in Session 5. Whatever the emotional charge is, the appropriate response is to allow it to be what it is, to find its fullest internal expression (without acting the emotion out), and then to accept the emotion and the various thoughts and judgments that surround that emotion just as they are. All of this is part of you. Then remember that the unconscious mind contains all possibilities within it, so whatever emotional charge you allowed to find expression also has an opposite that is waiting to express itself after the first expression is finished. In characteristic fashion for the right-hand path, the Experience of the Mind should not push the unconscious to reveal itself further or attempt to tell the unconscious mind what that opposite is; rather, it will reveal itself in its own time and in its own way as long as you, as the Experience of the Mind, make space for it. Frustration and anger will pass to reveal understanding and sympathy; disappointment will pass to reveal pride; excitement will pass to reveal coolness; and so on.

Sometimes we find in ourselves a hesitation to allow certain thoughts and emotions to find expression within us. We have learned that the outward resonances of these thoughts and emotions are unacceptable, that they are shameful or weak or unvirtuous. It is not that we have judged ourselves to be shameful and weak, but that there is a kind of threshold that we must cross internally before we can explore them. We can feel the power in these thoughts and emotions lurking just beneath the surface and we are not sure if it is safe to reveal them even to ourselves. The worry here is not that these hidden truths will have devastating consequences in our lives (that's a spiritual worry), but that we will reveal ourselves to ourselves as inadequate. So we will internally tend toward the Mute as a distorted expression of the Expressive. In this moment, the Experience of the Mind is active within us, inviting us to share our inmost thoughts to ourselves in a safe space. This is when it is appropriate to become the Catalyst of the Mind, allowing ourselves to enter an unrestrained flow spontaneous self-expression.

On the interpersonal level, we find opportunities to become the Judge when we are confronted by someone who wants to share with us. Here is a common heterosexual relationship trope: the woman in the relationship is feeling somehow uncomfortable or unhappy, and it is often about the man in the relationship. She tries to share her discomfort with him, but instead of listening and validating her feelings, he deflects or treats her feelings as problems to be solved. What he does not understand is that she is not trying to stop having these unpleasant feelings; she is only trying to express them. This, and any situation that resembles it, is an appropriate moment for becoming the Judge. The role of the Judge is not to solve problems, but to cast judgment on mental content. On the right-hand path, the judgment he is responsible for casting is affirmative validation. Becoming the Judge requires us to be vigilant about our own preconceived ideas about what is or is not acceptable and to intentionally set them aside for the sake of this other person whose expression is valuable. In the process, we will often find that our preconceptions are overturned, that the nature of rightness and acceptability is different from what we

thought. This discovery indicates a successful change in consciousness which will then be recorded in our Matrix.

Conversely, when, in relation to another person, we are invited to share our sincere feelings on a subject, we might hesitate. We might ask ourselves whether it is a trap, whether our act of revealing a vulnerability will be met with disapproval. Becoming the Expressive on the right-hand path demands courage. We must expose ourselves before the other, submitting ourselves to the tribunal of another's judgment, in the hope that our small act of expression will be met with acceptance and thereby change the consciousness of the other. Choosing to express ourselves as we are is catalyst for others; it is an opportunity to be of service to them by showing them something they had not yet imagined.

These same patterns repeat on the social level. It is common nowadays to be presented with the self-expressions of others. They broadcast their inmost thoughts, even if only on a social media feed. We might be tempted to react to the things they say, whether by pointing out that their beliefs are incorrect or that their act of speaking out is somehow harmful to others. But these two kinds of reactions belong to different archetypes (the Significator of the Mind and the body cycle, respectively). Regardless of the other archetypal resonances at play in such an act of exposure, we are called, on the right-hand path, to accept the truth of others as they are, to affirm that it is okay for them to be who they are, even if their beliefs are wrong or if their actions harm others. The right-hand path Judge, especially on the social level, must carefully circumscribe his responsibility. He is responsible only for his assessment of the acceptability of the identity of others. Everything belongs in the hands of another persona.

Similarly, we are called to express ourselves honestly to others, even, perhaps especially, in a social environment. It is okay to believe wrong things and it is not an indictment of one's identity to harm others. We can correct these missteps without sacrificing the baseline truth that we are acceptable and loveable just as we are. On the social level, it is appropriate to become the Expressive whenever there is an emotional charge attached to our self-expression. The more courage it takes to be ourselves, the more catalytic potential there is in choosing to do so.

8. The Significator of the Mind

The Significator classification is the first meta-classification. Ra says that it is "both actor and acted upon," that the potentiation reached for by the Matrix "is recorded by the Matrix but experienced by the Significator," and that to the Significator belong the "processes of Catalyst and Experience." The first four classifications, as I have said earlier, describe the organs within the total complex, which is itself described by the Significator. The total mind complex experiences itself through its cyclical processes of potentiation, catalyst, and experience.

In my treatment of the Catalyst and Experience of the Mind, I described the polarized versions of these personas and I even spoke of the right-hand path versions of them as if they are right or appropriate or to be recommended to any seeker on the right-hand path. But one cannot directly change these aspects of self. One cannot be more courageous and more transparent than she is. One cannot be more accepting and less judgmental than she is. In fact, these processes simply are as they are within us. No amount of willpower or effort will change these aspects of ourselves. It is important to understand that the mixed expressions of these archetypes are pure expressions of the archetypes. So in our efforts to

become the archetypes, we should not try to become the pure right-hand path Expressive and Judge. This purity will come in time, through the process of Transformation. Rather, we should simply try to be our own most honest version of the Expressive and Judge. There is no choosing in the movements of the Lesser Cycle; we are not free, in this dynamic process, to be anything but what we are.

The Significator classification, according to Ra, “is the harvest of biases of all previous incarnations.” Our mechanisms of potentiation, catalyst, and experience are inborn into us, and these play out within the Significator as a matter of course.

Symbols

A human male figure is attached at the hips to a box. He sits within a larger structure consisting of a foundation, pillars, and a roof. Above the structure there is a winged orb, and on the base of the structure, there are 8 cartouches which communicate a message that, according to Ra, is equivalent to “And you shall be born again to eternal life.” At the right and left of the central figure, there are two smaller human figures who hold their hands up to the central figure as if to offer something. The one on the central figure’s left is white and the one on the central figure’s right is black. The central figure wears a crown, makes a gesture of blessing with his right hand, and holds a sword planted in the foundation of the structure with his left.

The male figure represents the conscious mind. However, this archetype contains both the masculine and the feminine within it. It is noteworthy that this is the first card with more than one human figure in it. The two figures at the left and right of the conscious mind represent the catalyst offered to the conscious mind by the unconscious mind. Ra tells us that their colors are the inverse of the right- and left-hand paths because apparently negative (unpleasant) catalyst tends to result in recording experience in the Matrix that increases our right-hand path polarity. And the reverse is true of apparently positive (pleasant) catalyst. Thus, trauma is a common mechanism for polarizing positive and praise and validation are common mechanisms for polarizing negative.

The conscious mind’s attachment to the box indicates that there is no evolution of the mind that does not pass involve manifestation in the body. We incarnate in this physical illusion because if we did not, we could not progress along the path of return to the Creator. The larger structure within which the scene plays out is a man-made structure. This represents the mental construct that we build for ourselves and within which all our mental experiences are processed: it is our belief system. The mind is caged, not only within the physical illusion, but also within its own conceptual framework. Thus, the “harvest of all previous incarnational biases” exists within us as the foundational features of a belief system into which we would inevitably be born. Anyone with children knows that they have minds of their own. We can teach them our beliefs, but they will only accept them if they are receptive to them. And if they are not, then our teaching becomes, effectively, catalyst that is processed by them according to their own beliefs. Outwardly, we tend to remain within the basic conceptual structures imparted to us by our parents and our culture. But on a deeper level, we integrate all new experiences into our belief system according to a preexisting method that is unique to each of us. As we mature, this deeper method of integration will tend also to affect how we understand the outer features of our cultural belief system—it often even leads to a wholesale rejection of the system into which we were indoctrinated.

The message at the bottom of the structure indicates the nature of that structure: it is an explanatory system whose intention is to make sense of all experiences and to fit all those experiences into a spiritually satisfying description of reality. Part of being human is adhering to a myth that explains our relationship to the rest of the universe in a meaningful way. This myth is organized around the one primal desire that we all have: return to the One Creator. The spiritual orientation of the belief system is reiterated in the winged orb above the mental construct. Ra tells us that this winged orb represents the Significator's "covenant with the spirit." That covenant boils down to this: mind and spirit will move in the same direction. But how this covenant is used depends on one's choice of moral polarity.

The hands of the Significator indicate the basic nature of the choice between the two moral poles. The right hand gives its blessing to the unconscious (and the rest of the world) to be what it is; the right hand directs its energy inward to dictate to the unconscious (and the rest of the world) what it has decided it will be. Thus, the covenant on the right-hand path is the promise that if it gives itself over to the spirit, its deepest desires will be attended to. On the left-hand path, the mind seizes the resources of spirit to direct them according to its own intentions.

Character: The Storyteller

Commentators on the Tarot seem to be especially confused about the nature of this persona. There is little they seem to agree on, but one basic concept seems to be present throughout all commentary: this persona is concerned with *doctrine*. The traditional name, the "Hierophant," means "High Priest." I think this concept successfully captures two important aspects of this archetype: the subordination of the desires of mind to the pull of the spirit complex and the projection of a mythical description of reality. But I think there is too much baggage and too little familiarity in a term like the "High Priest." So I prefer to call this persona the Storyteller.

The basic nature of the mind and the mechanisms of self-discovery fundamentally involve the stories we tell ourselves. The uninformed desires of the Matrix flow forth from the beliefs we carry with us. The Potentiator's choice to reveal some aspect of itself to us depends on what we are ready to see. The limitations of that readiness depend entirely on what we believe about ourselves and whether we are ready to change those beliefs. Our ability to penetrate the deeper nature of the catalyst that presents itself to us depends on what we believe others have to offer us as well as our attachment to our own beliefs that the views of others might threaten.

The Storyteller exists in world of his own making. He tells a narrative about himself and how he, the protagonist, figures into that world. W.V. Quine, a philosopher, famously said that "any statement can be held true come what may, if we make drastic enough adjustments elsewhere in the system." Quine, I think, understood that the mind complex is foundationally structured as a self-reinforcing synthesizer of all experiential phenomena. Whatever experiences we tend to have, whether positive or negative, we learn to integrate into our existing belief systems in ways that reinforce the nature of that belief system. And because the very act of telling stories just is the expression of our deeper identities, threats to these stories are threats to our identities.

The Storyteller is idiosyncratic. He has a habit of telling a certain kind of story and this habit comes from the preincarnative biases that he brings with him into this world. Thus, his processes of catalyst and experience move in such and such away and there is no changing this, just as there is no changing the voice of a writer. The Storyteller's mode of telling stories is his signature.

The Storyteller is motivated by the joy of building and fleshing out the details of a carefully honed system of thought. The empowering capacity of the Storyteller is the capaciousness of mind that allows this persona to maintain a vision of the whole. The virtues of the Storyteller are breadth of scope (nothing left out) and sensitivity to new information (no blind spots).

Levels

On the personal level, the Storyteller is the voice in us that tells the story of our lives, regardless of what kind of story it is. It tells us that we were a victim in that one relationship, that a certain event was the most significant moment of our lives, that our religious beliefs are the truth, that we will only be valuable if we have traits X, Y and Z, that our father didn't spend enough time with us, etc.

On the interpersonal level, the Storyteller is the systematizer within us that seeks to fit every experience into its proper place and to communicate that system to others. We express the Storyteller in a relationship with another person when we share with them what we believe the world is like, why we think it is that way, and how they fit into it that world. Parents, for example, frequently enter into the Storyteller persona in their relationships with their children.

On the social level, the Storyteller is closely resonant with the traditional conception of this *Tarot* card: this persona is a teacher and purveyor of doctrines. He offers an explanation for every event in the world, and the explanation is fundamentally motivated by the classically human attempt to find meaning through myth. The primary role of educators is to be Storytellers who share with their students into a conception about the way the world is.

Polarized Expressions and Modes of Distortion

The difference between the right and left sides of the images on the *Tarot* cards indicates the nature of the oppositely polarized versions of the archetypes. It is possible and common to express an archetype without distortion but also without great polarization, because our expression of the archetype often draws upon both the positively and negatively polarized aspects of the archetype. Impure expression of archetypes is built in to the process of inner evolution, as the Transformation mechanism realigns these archetypal processes within us to become purer polarized expressions.

The positively polarized Storyteller integrates the narrative content of his experiences into a self-reinforcing, positively oriented story. He does this through careful conscious attention to and acceptance of the difficult feelings, the hurtful thoughts, and the tense interactions between himself and others. He listens to the story as it is told by others and by his own unconscious mind and accepts blessings that story as good and beautiful. In doing so, his concept of self expands. He grows in empathy because he can relate more and more to the hardships of others. He can see that the differences between himself and others are small; that while he is unique, he is not special. This narrative, however, is difficult to enter into because unpleasant experiences are hard to look at; we tend to avoid them.

The negatively oriented Storyteller constructs a mythic narrative that places the conscious mind at the center of the universe as exalted and deserving of a position of dominion. In this story, the conscious mind's attention is drawn to the uplifting and triumphant moments of life as evidence that reinforces his elite self-conception. In this mode of Storytelling, the conscious mind's focus on positive experiences leads him to judge that the negative experiences are lessons meant to help him discover and cut out the

vulnerabilities in his unconscious mind. This Storyteller has an endless need for the praise he feels he deserves.

The mixed Storyteller is attached to both modes of interpretation. He wants to feel exalted above others, so he fixates on whether his virtues measure up to the virtues of others. He will revel in praise and feel a need for it. But he also has not cut off his empathy. He wants to be gentle with the weaknesses and vulnerabilities of others because he can see his own struggles in them. But his ability to empathize is limited by his own harsh self-judgment: he wants to be able to accept in others what he cannot accept in himself. So he works this fundamental conflict into his own belief system. This Storyteller considers himself to be the exception to the universal rule of kindness and acceptance; others deserve mercy and care, but he must hold himself to a higher standard because he is special. His attempt to resolve this fundamental conflict, however, cannot prevent him from being callous toward the plights of others even though he wants it to. He secretly believes that others deserve the harsh treatment they sometimes experience, because they have not sufficiently shored up their own weaknesses. And despite his harsh self-judgment he also craves the unconditional acceptance of others because he, like everyone else, wants to feel accepted. He simultaneously loves and hates himself as he simultaneously loves and hates others.

The most common distorted expression of the Storyteller is the one whose narrative is not sensitive to new information. This Storyteller is in constant danger of the collapse of his story, but because his story is his identity, he must also constantly shore it up. When presented with information that conflicts with his story, he acts as if he did not even hear it. This Storyteller has determined that there is no new information to integrate into his belief system, so his mind becomes rigid and hardened, preventing any kind of change and thereby inhibiting movement toward Transformation. This is the person who has cognitively dug his heels in and cannot be moved no matter what kind of experience he finds himself in. He will always find away to reinforce his own beliefs and he has no qualms about rejecting anything that won't fit the narrative.

Another common distorted expression of the Storyteller is the one who passively accepts internal contradictions in the narrative. This person has no qualms with believing contradictory claims; logical coherence is not very important to this person. This kind of belief system is capable of enduring for a very long time because new information is not a threat to it. However, it the constantly shifting nature of the narrative prevents inner evolution because it hides from the Storyteller the difficult and unpleasant consequences of his own beliefs. His willingness to suffer internal contradiction in his belief system prevents him from seeing any needed changes in that belief system. As do all distorted expressions of the archetypes, this one will tend to prevent a person from seeing the need for making a choice between the two polarities. I believe this distortion is very common among people with personality disorders.

9. Relationship #3

For the sake of clarity in using pronouns, I will ascribe the feminine pronoun to the Traveler and the masculine to the Storyteller. This will help the reader understand which persona I am referring to whenever I use a pronoun. Remember, though, that this assignment is arbitrary because these archetypes do not have a gender alignment.

Character: Education

The relationship between the Traveler and the Significators is characteristically a hospitality relationship. The Traveler enters into the domain of the Significator to experience life as that Significator. In the case of the Storyteller, the Traveler is the Storyteller's audience. The Traveler listens as the Storyteller recounts his tale of self. The Traveler identifies with the conscious self's depiction of itself; the Traveler sees through the eyes of the Storyteller, allowing herself to be drawn forward passively through the story. The events that befall the Storyteller present themselves as events that befall the Traveler; the Traveler cheers for the good-guys and boos for the bad-guys.

Or, anyway, this is how it goes when all is well in the relationship. These archetypes are neither masculine nor feminine (or, alternatively, they are each both masculine and feminine), so neither persona is strictly passive or strictly active in the relationship. Only the smallest child will tend to act as a passive listener in the telling of a story, but even that child will ask questions, pursuing certain aspects of the story more than others. Although the Traveler finds the Storyteller's tale fascinating, she has her own interests and her own sense of value. The Traveler's continued presence in the company of the Storyteller is a matter of her continued curiosity over how the story will go.

But the Traveler is also a critic. Remember that the Choice archetype came about in response to the Logos's decision to complexify the Significators. The Traveler, then, is the persona that allows the mind complex to self-reflect. The very idea of self-reflection requires a mental twoness: one must be able to think of oneself and also be oneself at the same time. Thus, the Significator is the reflection and the Traveler is the observer who sees that reflection. The Storyteller alone does not have the proper perspective to raise criticisms of his Storytelling act. He himself is the central figure, the protagonist, in the story. So he cannot gain enough distance from the story to ask whether this is the kind of story he wants to tell. Even the imagery on the Storyteller's card suggests this: the figures all exist within the mental construct and have no way of leaving that construct. The Traveler's role in the relationship, then, is to provide the distance that the mind needs in order to evaluate itself.

Ra calls the Traveler persona the "Choice." Fundamentally, this Choice is between the right-hand path and the left-hand path; good and evil. So the Traveler's decision to either continue listening to the Storyteller or to pack up and leave is a matter of choosing between these two polarities. The Traveler's criticism of the story, then, focuses on the various aspects of the story that are morally conflicting. Eventually, the Traveler will get tired of hearing the same kind of story over and over. She will be familiar with the patterns that emerge, and she find that she has begun to lose respect for the characters in the story. Most importantly, she will have a more and more difficult to identifying with the protagonist because she does not believe that the protagonist is an admirable person.

Storytelling is a magical art. The magic of storytelling is captured in the concept of "suspending disbelief." When, in listening to a story, the Traveler's disbelief is suspended, she identifies with the characters; she feels what they feel; she worries for them and takes joy with them. But when the narrative elements of the story no longer strike the Traveler as believable, she will not be able to suspend her disbelief anymore. Suddenly, she will feel removed from the story—the critical distance grows and her act of self-reflection begins.

Because the Storyteller cannot be anything but what he is, the Traveler's only option is to stay or leave. But before the Traveler leaves, she will inform the Storyteller of the concern she has over the way the

story is being told. This concern will be moral: If the Traveler's free choice is to polarize positive, then she will complain that the protagonist is too cruel, too selfish, too dishonest, and not empathetic enough. If the Traveler chooses negative, she will complain that the protagonist is too weak, too sentimental, too honest, and not resolute enough.

One might think that a negative relationship between these two personas is characterized by propaganda. Propaganda is an attempt to cause a person to believe something for some reason besides the truth of the claims in question—propaganda, then, is characteristic of the relationship between the Patriarch and the Complicit. In that negatively polarized relationship, which I have called Exploration, the Complicit generates content that is meant to pass through the Patriarch's judgment filters, with the intention of inducing favorable behavior from the Patriarch.

In the present relationship, though, the Storyteller is communicating an entire worldview to the Traveler. The content of this communication has more in common with what Thomas Kuhn calls a scientific paradigm than it does with content on the news media. A scientific paradigm is a complete set of values, background beliefs, tools, and standards of judgment that allow a scientist to integrate new evidence as part of a research program. The content the Storyteller communicates to the Traveler is of the same nature, but its scope is broader: the Storyteller's paradigm encompasses the entire human experience, not just a scientific field. The Traveler attempts to see the world the way the Storyteller sees the world. The tools for integration that the Storyteller offers to the Traveler must pass through the Traveler's existing capacity for critical evaluation. Whether the Storyteller is positively or negatively polarized, the Traveler's suspension of disbelief is the governing feature of this relationship, one which builds up to the Traveler's eventual discovering of critical distance and subsequent evaluation. In other words, I do not think that this relationship admits of two distinct polarized expressions, though polarity is an important feature in it.

When the Traveler finally does choose to pack her belongings, she finds that she is torn. She has grown accustomed to this story and still indulges in its small joys. The Storyteller's tale has become, in a sense, a guilty pleasure. The Traveler's attachment to this kind of story gives her pause because she knows that wherever she travels to next, it will be a very different kind of story. Thus, in this moment of genuine criticism, the Choice archetype's dissonance with the Significator archetype causes the Transformation archetype to come online. Genuine Choice leads to the transformative tension that exists at the threshold between one configuration of the Significator and the next.

When to Become the Personas

On the personal level, the Storyteller is active when we fully identify with the stories we tell ourselves about who we are in relation to both ourselves and the world around us. When our belief system becomes identical to our own self-conception, it is rigid to the point that change threatens our inner Storyteller, since a change in one place will require changes elsewhere. The inner Storyteller is emotionally invested in our belief system because this is what it understands itself to be. When our belief system is rigid and leaves no space for a distinction between our identity and our personal narrative, it is appropriate to become the inner Traveler. This inner persona has the ability to step back from the stories to ask whether this is the kind of story she wants to entertain. The Traveler has the simultaneous ability to suspend her disbelief when listening to the Storyteller, but also to engage in her critical faculties wherever an element in the story does not seem to sit right with her.

Conversely, the inner Traveler is active when we find ourselves at such a distance from our own mental activity that we cannot bring ourselves to take any story seriously. As the subjective self, the inner Traveler's distance from the objective self allows her to avoid taking any particular belief, emotion, or thought too seriously. But because she is not giving her full attention to the mental world, she is not as invested in the stories as she might be and thus does not get as much out of them as she could. When the inner Traveler is active but too distant from the mental world, it is appropriate to become the inner Storyteller. This opens us to the mental energy needed to develop the subtleties and nuances of our own worldview. The Traveler's shrug when asked what she believes can then be met with the seriousness with which the Storyteller takes his work.

On the interpersonal level, this archetypal relationship tends to manifest as a student-teacher relationship. The Storyteller's great strength is his ability to weave information and evidence together into a logically coherent whole. When this ability is trained on a specific intellectual discipline (the humanities and sciences, but not crafts and technical skills), we consider such a Storyteller an expert. One appropriate time to become the Traveler persona, then, is when another person strikes you as a good teacher of some conceptual discipline that you wish to learn. More broadly, though, the Storyteller wants to share with others the holistic worldview he has developed. The Storyteller has a carefully devised means for making sense of the world in which he finds himself, fitting together the feelings arising from within and the events that occur without into a logically coherent whole that maintains space for meaningful engagement in human activity. The Storyteller offers a way of seeing the world that infuses it with purpose and significance. The most appropriate moment to become the Traveler, then, is when the other is a teacher of a holistic belief system that puts the entire life experience of human beings in context. This is why the traditional name for the Storyteller archetype is the High Priest. When we meet such a person, the energy exchange can occur as long as we step into the receptive mode of the Traveler. Then, as the story is told, we ask questions curiously, just as the Traveler would. And, finally, when we find the teacher has nothing more to offer, we pack up and leave.

Conversely, when another person takes on the characteristics of the Traveler in relation to us, especially when their interest is in our life experience and ability to help guide them through life, this is an appropriate moment to enter the energy of the Storyteller. Such a person is ready to suspend disbelief and has the patience to endure a long tale. In this moment, it is appropriate to keep in mind that the Traveler in relation to us as the Storyteller is looking for a worldview with which she can identify. She ultimately will develop her own view, but listening to our story will allow her to add embellishments to her story that might not have been available to her otherwise.

The social Storyteller is often expressed by the purveyors of the prevailing worldview. This is the literal Storytellers of our world, including the news media, public relations departments of our institutions, and the various public figures whose perspectives on reality have social influence. Whenever we see that there is a social demand for a new way of seeing things that only we can provide, it is appropriate to enter the public scene and share our stories. It can be difficult to find the courage to become the social Storyteller, because we will inevitably be subjected to the criticisms of the social Traveler. But for those Travelers who gain something for our perspective, it will have been worth suffering the criticism. Moreover, those Travelers who criticize in good faith will help us develop a more compelling story.

On the flip-side of this social relationship, it is appropriate to remember, when faced with a social Storyteller, that the Traveler must spend some time in suspension of disbelief before she can develop a

satisfying and honest criticism. It is often difficult to choose to become the social Traveler because we also have our own stories that seem to be in competition with those of others, so we attempt to be the Storyteller ourselves and drown out the sound of the competition. But this approach fails to make good use of the opportunity that presents itself when we stumble upon a social Storyteller. The Traveler asks the kinds of foundational questions a child would ask: Why would someone believe a story like this? What does this help explain? What motivates the Storyteller's judgments?

10. The Transformation of the Mind

The Choice's development of critical distance of from the Significator of the Mind moves the Fool's subjective awareness from a naïve identification with the Significator into a split identity. The Fool's awareness now straddles not only the current Significator, but the two new potential versions of the Significator that would offer the Fool a more polarized story. The split awareness of the Fool and her straddling of Significators causes the Transformation archetype to come online. The Transformation personas are liminal personas; they only exist in the transitory state immediately preceding and immediately following a distinct choice that is determinative of moral polarity.

Each of the previous personas and the relationships they bear to one another offer progressive avenues of self-discovery. Here, however, the persona represents an impasse. No forward movement is possible until the conscious mind musters enough energy to cross the threshold.

Symbols

A man stands in the center with a woman on each side of him. His arms are crossed in front of him as he holds a hand of each woman. The women point in opposite directions and the ground beneath them lays out two diverging paths to follow. The woman on the man's right is modestly dressed and wears a uraeus on her head, while the woman on the man's left is exposed and wears grapes on her head. Above them, a genie draws an arrow aimed at the path on the man's left.

The man represents the conscious mind, while the two women represent the unconscious mind. The attire of the woman on the right indicates that she is the unconscious mind when seen as "virginal." She is virtuous and deserving of respect. She wants to be courted and cherished, allowing the relationship to deepen in an intentional and protracted way. The attire of the woman on the left indicates that she is the unconscious mind when seen as "prostituted." The grapes, in this case, do not represent fruitfulness; rather, they represent the attractive appeal of base desires. Likewise, her exposure does not in this case represent diminished protection; rather, it represents her intentional activation of the conscious mind's baser desires as a means of attracting him to follow her down the left-hand path. The prostitute wants to be used and paid for her use. She is not interested in a deep relationship; she would much rather just give the conscious mind what he wants so she can get from him what she wants.

The crossed arms of the male figure are a stylized representation of the more general cross symbol. The cross represents the necessity of sacrificing for the sake of progressing along the path of spiritual evolution. The sacrifice, in this case, must be one of the two women whose hands he holds. He cannot walk down both paths. And if he tries to follow one of the paths while still holding the hand of the other woman, his effort will be abortive. Thus he must sacrifice one of them if his stagnant circumstance is to end.

The genie above the scene is not Cupid, as many commentators have thought. Rather, he represents a form of protection on the left-hand path. Ra says that “those who choose separation...are protected from other-selves by a strength and sharpness equivalent to the degree of transformation which the mind has experienced in a negative sense.” Commitment to the left-hand path requires abandoning the respect and concern for both one’s own unconscious mind and for others more generally. Loss of respect and concern for others cuts away the emotional attachment that might otherwise cloud one’s ability to judge whether another person is attempting to manipulate them. Those who have walked transformative steps on the left-hand path, then, are less naïve and less vulnerable than those on the right-hand path.

Character: The Conflicted

There is a fundamental twoness in the unconscious mind. As Ra says, the (unconscious) mind contains all things. The deepest significance of this claim is that all opposites of thought and feeling can be found within each of us; this hidden balance of opposites is put to heavy use in the right-hand path method of integrating mental catalyst, which I discussed in the section on the Experience of the Mind. In the Greater Cycles, the personas are not gender-polarized, so this persona, like all Transformation personas, emerges from a particular kind of relationship between the conscious and unconscious minds. Here, we have the character who is of two minds.

The male figure at the center offers us the perspective of this archetype in its transparent phase: the conscious mind is split between two opposite ways of relating to the unconscious mind, each of which is attractive. So, like Buridan’s ass, he remains stuck between the two, indecisive and hungry. And his indecision leaves the feminine side of the persona in a will-he-or-won’t-he frame of mind.

The twoness of the unconscious mind causes our own unconscious desires to be divided against one another, irrespective of our conscious desires. There is a part of my unconscious mind that wants to be treated as innocent, virtuous, and desirous of a deep and chaste relationship. This part of the mind wants to be loved for what it is and not for what it could be. But there is another part of my unconscious mind that wants to be treated as dirty and vicious. She wants me to see in her something that activates my own irresistible desirable to take what she has for myself. The unconscious mind can not only be treated as either maiden or prostitute; it fundamentally *is* both maiden and prostitute (remember the two pillars in the image of the Potentiator of the Mind).

The Innocent wants to be seen as an equal partner. She wants her relationship with the conscious mind to be characterized by gift-giving. She wants consensual interactions in which neither is attempting to take something from the other; rather, both want to give to the other in an effort to add to the relationship rather than extract from it. She wants to be cherished, to be seen as valuable and worthy. She wants him to be a True Friend to her. Unless she is granted this kind of relationship, in purity, there can be no forward progress in the relationship. It will be stuck. The Innocent, then, waits for a partner who has the will to walk along the path she prefers without deviation.

The Concubine wants to be seen as a transactional object. She does not want a deep and nourishing relationship. She knows what her potential partners want: they want a shallow, carnal experience with an outwardly attractive person who will mold herself to those desires. The Concubine wants to be seen as having only conditional or limited value. She offers the debased experience that her potential patrons seek because this is all she thinks she deserves. She knows her patron will not love her the way she is, so

her purpose is to present herself according to the desires of her patron. In return, she receives the pleasure of her own humiliation before someone whose value she will never equal. She offers something pleasing but not sustaining and in return she revels in the scorn she feels she deserves. What the Concubine wants is a Conqueror.

This persona reiterates the two polarized relationships that are possible between the Expressive and the Judge. The Innocent points the way forward to one perfectly polarized union of Catalyst and Experience, while the Concubine points the way forward to the other. The difference here, however, is that a mixed relationship between the two is no longer possible. The unconscious mind does not merely refuse to move forward until the conscious mind makes a choice; rather, it is not possible for the unconscious mind to move forward. This circumstance produces deep frustration for all involved.

Once the conscious mind makes his choice by letting go of one of the two ways of seeing the unconscious mind, then the two walk forward into a honeymoon experience. On the right-hand path, the act of letting go of the hand of the prostitute represents innocence reclaimed, which ushers in a new phase of intimacy and sharing that was not possible before. On the left-hand path, focusing only on the prostitute represents the conscious mind's doubling-down on its own egocentrism. Once the conscious mind abandons any effort for a loving, equal partnership, the potentials for shaping and controlling the unconscious mind expand, opening up new forms of pleasure in the act of taking what another has. On either path, the honeymoon phase eventually passes, of course, since the new Significator, now purified, will still have its own forms of moral impurity that must be explored through the Lesser Cycle until the Fool develops a new critical distance and another opportunity for Transformation presents itself.

The function of the Conflicted is to offer a test to the already developed conscious mind through temptation. The Conflicted is motivated by their desire to release the energy pent up by the impasse. Their empowering capacity is the depth of feeling and discovery available once a single path is chosen. The virtues of the feminine side of the Conflicted are resoluteness (refusal of the unconscious mind to lower her standards of expectation) and clarity of vision concerning the kind of story she wants to be a part of. The virtues of the masculine side of the conflicted are awareness of the significance of the choice (thus the time he spends deliberating) and his willingness to sacrifice something he values for the sake of something else that he values even more.

Levels

On the personal level, the Conflicted persona manifests as a crisis of identity. At some point in our lives, we all begin to feel that we cannot keep demanding of ourselves that we live up to our own criteria for acceptability. The story we tell ourselves about who we are and what makes us valuable begins to feel more and more intolerable. When we no longer have the energy to maintain the charade, forward progress within that mode of Storytelling has ceased and our unconscious mind is demanding that we commit to a purer kind of relationship with her. When no longer know who we are, we will have come to a crossroads at which we must decide who we are.

On the interpersonal level, we often express the Conflicted persona in a romantic relationship. In this expression, the person expressing the feminine side will have gradually come to realize that their romantic partner does not seem to see them as an equal or as deserving of equal respect. In retrospect, the signs of this failure were apparent, but ignored because other aspects of the relationship were appealing. But as the relationship continued, the masculine partner's view of the feminine seems to

have soured or become preoccupied with all the feminine person's perceived shortcomings. The relation exists in a state of impasse because neither of the two people constituting the Conflicted persona can see past this barrier in their relationship: when they are together it is all either of them think about. In this uncomfortable space, the relationship seems doomed to end unless the masculine partner decides they are willing to see the feminine differently, to see someone pure and virtuous rather than someone who is only worth the small amount of base pleasure that can be extracted from the relationship. This account, of course, takes the perspective of the right-hand path, but since my audience is on the right-hand path, it should suffice.

I should note that we can express the Conflicted interpersonally in any enduring relationship, not just a romantic one. The key characteristic of such a relationship (on the right-hand path) is that one person is often (but not always) viewed by the other person not as a full human being, but as an object for use. The one occupying the feminine side does not want to be subjected to the psychological damage of this conflicted mentality, and so demands to be seen as an equal deserving of respect. If the masculine side meets that demand, then the relationship can enter a new honeymoon phase, since successfully meeting that demand results in initiation. If the masculine does not meet the demand, then this usually signals the inevitable end of the relationship. The masculine side of this relationship, on the other hand, is faced with a decision that feels very difficult, perhaps even impossible. Letting go of the Concubine would mean that he passes over her flaws and weaknesses blindly. But this, he worries, is detrimental to her because he believes she needs someone to make her better by seeing her weaknesses and reminding her of their shameful nature.

On the social level, we express the right-hand path Conflicted when we find ourselves in a situation of exploitation or marginalization that manifests as a consequence of the power-wielding group not seeing the less powerful group as full partners or full human beings or as creative, resourceful individuals. In labor, we see employees doing menial work for little pay and few benefits. This, by itself, is not necessarily characteristic of the Conflicted, but the reason for this condition often is: the higher-ups do not see the value of investing in the creative potential of the underlings. Their lack of skill is a lack of value and so they deserve their lowly positions. When the less powerful become so fed up with being seen as valuable only insofar as they live up to someone else's standards and are willing to quit altogether, this commences the energy of the Conflicted. In this place, the less powerful are in a position to stand our ground, demand to be seen as valuable, and wait for the answer. The more powerful, on the other hand, will be faced with a moment of deliberation over whether they really are ready to see the less powerful differently.

Polarized Expressions and Modes of Distortion

I have already covered the polarized expressions of the Betrothed persona. They are so overtly worked into the symbols on the *Tarot* card that the expressions are hard to miss. But I will briefly name them here. The right-hand path feminine is the Innocent. She is angelic purity personified. It does not matter what trauma she has been through to arrive where she is; innocence cannot be corrupted by outward scars. Her counterpart is the True Friend. He is the positively polarized Judge, who wants to know and love the Innocent the way she wants to be known and loved.

The left-hand path feminine is the Concubine. She has no sense of reverence for herself. She lacks moral compunction of any kind and takes pleasure in her own debasement. The left-hand path masculine is

the Conqueror. His standards are impossibly high, so the Concubine could not hope to meet them, thus she submits her own identity to his will and vision, which he believes is superior to her own.

It is noteworthy, however, that I do not think that there is such a thing as a mixed expression of this archetype. The very nature of the archetype is a reaction to the mixed expression of the Catalyst of the Mind and Experience of the Mind archetypes, so there is not space in this Transformation (or any of the Transformations) for a mixed expression.

As with all archetypes, though, there are distorted expressions available. One distorted expression of the Conflicted is when, through lack of resoluteness, the feminine continues to allow the masculine to persist in his refusal to choose between the virtue and vice he projects onto her. She wants to be cherished and treated with dignity, but she is also lonely and afraid to be on her own. She knows that if she stands firm in her refusal to be sometimes seen as a valueless object, she might lose her relationship. This lack of resoluteness tends to delay Transformation over and over, making an explosive separation more and more likely with each delay.

Another distorted expression of the Conflicted is lack of clarity in the feminine's vision of what a pure story is. This is a person who has not been exposed to pure polarized expressions of the archetypes and so does not understand very well what the right- and left-hand paths are. She knows she wants something different from what she has but does not know what it is or else does not believe it is possible. She is effectively trapped inside of a story that does not allow her to meet her fullest potential. This distorted expression tends to prevent Transformation altogether, resulting in a life full of mundane, uneventful activity, in which the same roles are acted out over and over.

The Conflicted can also be distorted on the masculine side. One distortion is when the masculine does not appreciate the significance of the choice he is making. This person acts according to his conception of what is right, without ever facing the feeling of being in a dilemma. Because his choice is made hastily and in conformity with social norms, it does not carry the weight it normally would and so ends up being a false transformation: the same impasse will soon repeat itself.

Another distortion of the masculine side is when the masculine abjectly refuses to choose. This distortion prolongs transformation indefinitely and ossifies the relationship between conscious and unconscious mind.

11. The Great Way of the Mind

The Great Way of the Mind is the total environment within which the mind evolves on its journey toward self-knowledge. It depicts all the coordinating elements in their large-scale relationships to one another in the mind's relation to itself. The Fool (or Choice), having developed critical distance from the Significator of the Mind activates the possibility of a broader perspective with which the Fool, as the inner subjective witness, may now identify thanks to the veiling mechanism of third density. The Fool's act of breaking the fourth wall to interact with the Significator causes the transformational capacity to transition from one configuration of the Significator to the next. Thus, as Ra tells us, "the Great Way is indeed dependent upon its notable difference from the Significator," because "the Great Way of the Mind, the Body, or the Spirit draws the environment which has been the new architecture caused by the veiling process." So we see that because the Fool (subjective mind) can choose to identify with a different Significator (objective mind) from the one at hand, our capacity for free will is extended

beyond mere articulation of the Significator's nature. Now, the Significator can become something different entirely, and this process is depicted by the Great Way.

The Great Way archetypes, as Ra says, are not culminations of the processes shown in the preceding six archetypes. They do not show us the final product of inner evolution. If that were the case, then we could only ever become these archetypes at the end of the journey. Instead, these archetypes show the inescapable nature of inner evolution for each of the three domains. These archetypes, then, are universal. That is, we express them in an enduring and extended way. Anyone who embraces and pursues inner evolution expresses the Great Way archetypes to some degree, and they do so in away that never ends. In that sense, they are always on. Or, anyway, if we express them purely and without significant distortion, they will always be active. This stands in sharp contrast to the Transformation archetypes, which can only be expressed in short intervals of time.

Symbols

A male human figure stands inside of a cubic chariot whose roof is held up by four pillars. At the top of the roof in the front of the chariot, a veil hangs lower on the figure's left side than his right. On the front of the chariot there is a winged orb and on the sides there are wheels to allow the chariot to move. On his head is a helm and a uraeus, on his chest there are two mirrored right angles above a tau. In his right hand he holds a glowing orb and in his left a sword turned downward. Two sphinxes pull the chariot forward, a black one on the right and a white one on the left. Each sphinx has one front limb straight as if to walk and the other bent as if to rest.

The male figure represents the conscious mind. The veil above him is the veil between the conscious and unconscious. Thus, the environment beyond the chariot itself is the unconscious mind which the conscious mind will come to know. The cubic nature of the chariot and its four pillars indicate entrapment of the "caged mind" within the physical world. The mind moves through its own conceptual environment and comes to know itself by interacting with the physical world within which it is trapped.

The two sphinxes mirror the two servants in the Significator of the Mind image. In the Significator archetype, these servants represent the unconscious's mind's offering of catalyst to the conscious mind. Here, they remain in the same configuration (black on right, white on left), reiterating a basic theme of polarity: apparently positive experiences tend to catalyze us toward the left-hand path and apparently negative experiences toward the right-hand path. Ra also says that the sphinx is a "time-full" creature. C.C. Zain interprets the sphinx as a representation of the four seasons and so representing the passage of time. I believe they represent the passage of cyclical time. Thus, these sphinxes represent the apparently positive and negative periods of time in our lives that come about and recur in a cyclical way. The charioteer must choose which sphinx leads the ship forward through the sea of the unconscious mind, and this choice is tantamount to a choice of preference for the right- or left-hand path.

The skewed veil above indicates that there is a greater potential for lifting the veil on the right-hand path than the left, another sign of our Logos's preference for the right-hand path. As usual, the conscious mind is facing left, but the easier path is on the right. Thus, the left-hand path is easier to see but harder to walk. The orb in his right hand symbolizes the light he shines on the unconscious mind in his effort to see it in its natural truth and to bless it as it is. The sword in his left hand reiterates the sword in the Significator image: all that he sees is absorbed to serve his conscious purpose.

The winged orb represents the covenant with the spirit complex which assures the mind that as goes the mind so goes the spirit: they are partners on the journey. The purity of the mind's commitment to one path or another, represented by the objects in his hands, connects the chariot, through the spirit's covenant, to the forward motion of the sphinxes. On the right-hand path, the mind submits itself to the greater authority of the spirit, allowing the spirit to draw the mind forward; on the left-hand path, the mind subjugates the spirit to its own authority, moving the mind forward on willpower alone. The alternating straight and bent legs of the sphinxes indicate that forward motion must occur in phases. We cannot be always transforming; after each transformation, we must rest, to observe and become familiar with our new surroundings. This stop-and-go process reflects alternation between the Lesser Cycle and the Greater Cycle.

The two right angles represent the physical and metaphysical realms. They mirror each other to show that as we walk the path of inner evolution of the mind, the outward reality mirrors the inward reality. This mirroring also indicates that each other-self we meet mirrors back to us the contents of our own unconscious mind. The tau, which is the bottom part of an ankh, represents the careful and precarious balance that we must strike as the foundation for all mental evolution. It also indicates the necessity of sacrifice through choice: each choice we make is a choice both for one thing and against something else. This sacrificial choosing is a necessary feature of crossing the threshold from one kind of experience to the next.

Character: The Leader

As is the case with all Greater Cycle archetypes, this persona is not gender polarized: it has elements of both within it. The Great Way of the Mind is a Leader. The Leader has a clear sense of what they want and who they are. The leader is committed to guiding foundational principles. The helm that the figure in the image wears indicates protection of the conscious thinking processes. The Leader's conscious mind is strong and impervious to assault from any direction. Their ability to lead and guide others forward comes from a strong sense of self and an indelible commitment to pursuing deeper knowledge of that self through the moral path of their choosing. In this persona, we see the opposite of the previous: the conscious and unconscious minds are aligned in their efforts of forward progress.

As Ra says, each choice reinforces and powers the last, with the initial choice standing as the foundation for all activity. In other words, when we commit ourselves to a particular way of viewing both our own unconscious resources and the resources of others in a morally pure way, this choice becomes a foundation for future judgments. It carves a mental pathway for thinking about ourselves and others that, by its existence, makes us more likely to walk that path and deepen the groove. Choosing a morally polarized path, then, is a self-reinforcing phenomenon. Through the experience of accepting ourselves and others as they are and abandoning all effort to use them as objects, we become attracted to acting out that same choice again because it reaffirms the worldview that we have already accepted. When the masculine side chooses to see the feminine side as an Innocent, the feminine side responds with evidence that affirms to the masculine side her innocence. The Leader's worldview is thus self-reinforcing, making the Leader's commitment easier and easier as the mind moves forward.

What makes a Leader strong and charismatic is the depth of that leader's conviction: there is no internal conflict about who they are. All of that person's inner resources are oriented in the same direction and the power of this harmonic orientation commands admiration. It is not that the Leader already knows

themselves perfectly or that they never makes mistakes. If it were, then this persona would, contra Ra, be the culmination of inner evolution. Rather, the Leader's harmonic inner orientation is a consequence of their slow-burning desire to take up the path of inner evolution and never deviate from it. The Leader will surprise themselves as frequently as anyone else. What makes them exceptional is that no surprise can shake their determination to continue forward on the moral path of their choice.

In contrast to the Storyteller, the Leader's core system of beliefs is light. The Leader is ready to abandon any beliefs that do not serve them on their journey, but the beliefs that establish the chariot within which the Leader rides are indispensable: these beliefs are the network of foundational value judgments that enable them travel from scene to scene. These hard-won core beliefs are a direct consequence of the Fool's critical distance from the Storyteller. In developing this distance, the heavy weight of dogma drops off from the Storyteller's stone structure, leaving behind a set of loose commitments attached to a sturdy base of the Fool's critical principles. The chariot will include a personal myth, but it will not include the historical truth of that myth. It will include principles for accepting or rejecting a belief, but not the specific beliefs to be accepted or rejected. The Leader wants their mental constructs to aid them in their commitment to ever deepening self-knowledge, which includes the constant possibility that what once seemed true, no longer does. The Storyteller's downfall, then, is their tendency to think that they way they see themselves now is the way they will always be.

The Leader's function is to maintain a constant awareness of the appropriate direction of inner evolution. The Leader is a guide in the process of the mind's transformational relationship to itself. The Leader is motivated by their commitment to a consistent path of self-discovery. The Leader's empowering capacity is their unique mental endurance. Their virtues are imperviousness to the depolarizing efforts of others and fortitude in the face of the difficult truths that lie ahead.

Levels

On the personal level, we express the masculine side of this persona as an inner commitment to what we might call self-development or personal improvement. Within this persona we have a conscious recognition that our own mind can somehow improve and grow. With this recognition comes along the judgment that pursuing the recognized path of evolution is of the highest value. We express the feminine side of this persona as a natural reaction or response to the commitment of the masculine side. Our unconscious resources become an ally and a guide, pulling us forward on the moral path of our choosing. In the smooth cooperation between conscious and unconscious mind, there is silence: the mind is not set against itself. In this silence, one-pointed focus is possible.

On the interpersonal level, we see this persona in the commitment to the deepening and improvement of a relationship between two human beings. The masculine side does not give up on a relationship; they fight to hold on to it, refusing to let interpersonal difficulty and conflict prevent them from working things out as a team. The feminine side presents thoughts and emotions to the masculine without hesitation, recognizing that it will sometimes take some effort for him to work through his hang-ups about her view before moving forward. They cooperate in virtue of his commitment to interpreting her thoughts and emotions according to the method of a single moral path. She is the mental and emotional dynamo and he harnesses her power through the consistency of his attitude toward her. She is the muse and he is the facilitator of her genius.

On the social level, this persona is often expressed as a creative partnership. One party is the source of ideas while the other party, merely by virtue of focused attention, draws these ideas out. The feminine source of ideas will not recognize either the value or the consistent themes of those ideas; they are simply available. Moreover, she won't have access to them without the good faith of a partner who affirms value for her, drawing her forward from one idea to the next. The masculine facilitator is often expressed as a manager: he is not on his own creative, but his encouragement and ability to assess what is valuable in her offerings draws creativity out of her. Through his commitment to a consistent attitude about the value of her offerings (either they are acceptable as is or acceptable only insofar as they conform to his image of how they ought to be), the partnership is productive.

Polarized Expressions and Modes of Distortion

The right-hand path Leader attends carefully to the unpleasant feelings and unkind thoughts that pass through their mind. This Leader does not look away from this content, but embraces it as it is, loving themselves not despite their flaws and insecurities but amid them. The right-hand path expression of the Leader is gentle, encouraging, supportive, bold, and fearless. The fearlessness of the Leader on the right-hand path comes from the commitment of the masculine side to love and accept the feminine, no matter who she turns out to be. The right-hand path Leader is a living expression of the unconditional love that, if it is to be given to others, must first be given to the self. On the right-hand path, the Leader answers all identity crises with sheer openness and shamelessness: this Leader cannot be anything but who they are, and they are at peace with this. The masculine side of the Leader is loyal and devoted to those who accompany him. He is armed and prepared to fight for his friends. He is relentless in his efforts to achieve harmony, union and openness between himself and his friends. He is warm and approachable; he makes those around him feel safe. He prioritizes their wants and needs over his own personal ambitions, just as he prioritizes the small, gentle voice within himself over his own aggrandizement. Though this masculine side sounds like the totality of the Leader, the feminine side has as much control over the direction of movement as the masculine. Because her feelings are prioritized over his desires, she is usually the one who decides what will come next: for the right-hand path Leader, power is freely given to those who do not stand in the obvious position of authority. Socially, this is populism in its most benevolent form.

The left-hand path Leader is attentive to the unconscious expressions that meet with conscious favor. The strict judgments of the masculine side of this Leader keep the feminine side within the acceptable bounds of her expression. As the right-hand path Leader leads through love, this Leader leads through fear. The discipline, humiliation and punishment to which this Leader exposes their own weaknesses matches the attitude this Leader has toward any who should follow them. In either case, the Leader leads only because their own mental turmoil has been calmed, whether through acceptance or repression. The masculine side establishes the boundaries within which the feminine side may express her thoughts and feelings: she always has an outlet for expression, but she must abide by his command. In virtue of the masculine side's shameless gall and unbreakable will, he commands the admiration of those around him. He is intimidating and fierce. Anyone who exists in his presence will feel a desire to bend their narrative to his own. He takes over the minds of others merely through his strength of will and his perception of others' weaknesses. The feminine side is the source of mental creativity and emotional energy, but this source is carefully regulated. The feminine finds satisfaction in her ability to play a role in the Leader's dominion, and because he finds her passionate nature useful, she will have opportunities to express herself fully and completely. Whatever emotion there is in the unconscious

mind, the left-hand path conscious mind will intentionally keep it at bay until the moment arises when expressing that emotion is most helpful. Thus, the fire of hatred and anger can fuel the Leader's rise, as long as the masculine side can control its expression.

Modes of distortion...

12. Relationship #4

Character: Counsel

The relationship between the Transformation and Great Way archetypes is a relationship between two pairs. The archetypes of the Greater Cycles are not gender-polarized, but gender-balanced: with the exception of the Choice (which is gender-neutral), each has a feminine side and a masculine side. Thus, these relationships are often easiest to think about as relationships between more than two persons. The Transformation archetypes, for example, represent deep conflict within a single person, so they are very naturally as a conflicted relationship between two persons (one of whom expresses the masculine, the other the feminine). The Great Way archetypes, on the other hand, represent consonant relationships between the masculine and feminine, so while they contain both sides, they are more readily represented within a single person. Hence, trinary relationships are a common mode of expression of these relationships.

The Transformation archetypes represent the decision of a moment. They appear in our lives at a crossroads where great change is possible, but only through a conscious decision to sacrifice one thing for the sake of something else. By contrast, the Great Way archetypes represent the commitment of a lifetime. These archetypes appear on the stage of our experience, often in response to a galvanizing decision, and present to us a complete way of life to which we must commit ourselves each day if we are to enjoy the fruits of that path. The archetypes of the mind cycle present a story of romance: the masculine and feminine come into a relationship with one another, allowing the masculine to progressively know the feminine more and more intimately and allowing the feminine to progressively express herself more and more openly. It is a love story (or, on the left-hand path, a perverse story of romantic abuse). Thus, the Conflicted persona, when expressed by two persons in a romantic relationship, shows a romance on the razor's edge, in a dire moment where everything is at stake. By contrast, the Leader persona, when expressed by two persons in a romantic relationship, shows a romance that is thoroughly grounded in daily commitment and effort: a harmonious marriage. The essential difference between the Transformation and Great Way archetypes is indicative of a non-peer relationship: the Great Way has walked many steps down the path, while a Transformation is overwhelming, disorienting, and of the moment. Because of all these dynamics, I call this relationship Counsel.

In the case of this relationship, the Leader is a Counselor. The Counselor's role is to assist the masculine and feminine sides of the Conflicted through their crisis, to guide them toward the path of their own preference, or to help them amicably separate because their differences are irresolvable. Consider the positively polarized Counsel relationship. The Innocent only awakens from time to time in response to her discovery that her partner is not being a True Friend to her. Prior to this awakening of the Innocent, it seemed as if he was a True Friend. What is now clearly a moral contradiction in the attitude of her

partner was once not so clear at all. It is not that the masculine side of the Conflicted what it means to be a True Friend by facing the frustration of the Innocent's refusal to submit herself to the degrading way he often sees her. She demands respect. The way he learns is by her demand that he changes his way of seeing her into one that is purer than before. Marriage happens in repeated stages in which the original ceremony of commitment to intimacy is repeated, each repetition deepening the relationship and opening new avenues of mutual experience. The Counselor's role, then, is to present to the conflicted an example of a successful union in which the masculine and feminine work together to navigate transformation after transformation. It is crucial that the Counselor has been where the Conflicted currently is. On the right-hand path, the Counselor does not tell the Conflicted what to do. Rather, they present to the Conflicted a new paradigm, one in which love is more freely given, both sides are quick to compassion, and apparent weaknesses in the other are cherished as adorable idiosyncrasies. What makes the experience compelling for the Conflicted is that they find the Counselor's own relationship inspirational: seeing that there really is a different way to think about each other, a different way of being relationship, reveals possibilities that were previously unimaginable.

This archetypal sense of Counsel is not, of course, exclusively expressed through romantic relationships. The relation between the True Friend and the Innocent (as expressed within the Counselor) is the same whether there is sexual contact involved or not. All a right-hand path person ultimately wants in a romantic relationship is a True Friend at the most intimate level possible.

The negatively polarized relationship presents the union between the Concubine and the Conqueror in crisis (in the Conflicted) as it is confronted by the same union in commitment. The so-called Red Pill ideology of human romantic relationships is a fairly clear expression of this relationship. On this view, every woman (actually, every other person, as the archetypal story goes) is a Concubine who wants to sell herself to the man capable of wielding the most social power. That man is the Conqueror whose irresistible self-assertion causes those around him to cave to his conception of them. In the Concubine, the Conqueror sees someone he can repeatedly subjugate in new and interesting ways. The Concubine, for her part, sees in the Conqueror someone who is genuinely better than her. She refuses to accept a relationship with someone who cannot convincingly see her as his slave. She wants to be humiliated before him as a testament to his glory.

Note, however, that the above characterization is not meant to capture the various forms of sexual and relationship expression in the BDSM world. The kink world is broadly of a right-hand path orientation, since consensual relationships are the foundation of all activity. Rather, the left-hand path is characterized by the masculine taking command of the feminine by force, without regard for what she might want for herself. This is fundamentally a manipulative and abusive relationship in which the mind of the feminine side is molded into a Stockholm Syndrome-esque conformity and even pleasure in her debasement in the eyes of the masculine.

The Counselor enters into a relationship with the Conflicted on the left-hand path in roughly the same way as on the right-hand path, but the method is more manipulative. The Counselor stands as an example of what is possible in an attempt to blow the mind of the Conflicted. But instead of simply presenting themselves as an option to be chosen, the Counselor attempts to lure the Conflicted onto the left-hand path through enticement, intentional teasing and mystery, and an overarching program of propaganda in which the left-hand path is presented either as the only viable path or as by far the most

fruitful path. On the left-hand path, the Counselor pulls the Conflicted into their orbit because the relationship presents an opportunity for expanding the Counselor's circle of influence.

One of the most prominent features of this relationship is the process of entering a crisis of commitment and then passing through it. On the right-hand path, the Innocent finds herself in a position where, for the sake of her own sanity, identity, and self-respect, she must refuse to walk even one step in a direction that feels debasing to her. This refusal places the endurance of the relationship itself in jeopardy because her partner might not express the adamant persistence of the True Friend this time around. Being a True Friend requires him to accept that she is speaking the truth even if he cannot see it yet: after all, the subject in question is her very identity, which, on the right-hand path, belongs to her.

The negative relationship plays out the same stop-and-go dynamic, but morally inverted. The Concubine finds that she must refuse to walk a single step in the direction of support and kindness because the moment her partner allows affection to soften his grip on power, he reveals a critical weakness that breaks the spell under which the Concubine convincingly feels worthless before his majesty. She demands impenetrable strength from him because she is psychologically dependent on the feeling of humiliation and debasement.

When to Become the Personas

On the personal level, the unconscious mind is our Muse. It is the source of all inspiration, the origin of ideation and emotion. But our relationship to that resource is characterized by a mixed attitude toward it. We tell ourselves who we are, which traits are valuable, what a better identity would look like. Then we expect ourselves to live up to that identity. When this attitude becomes intolerable to the unconscious mind, it will cease to function as a source of inspiration. Writer's block or other similar creative impediments are a symptom that the unconscious mind has refused to go any further until the conscious mind changes its attitude. It is very common, especially for those who are personally invested in self-development, to push themselves in repressive directions. The mental space of self-development is overflowing with recommendations and methods whose moral polarity is mixed. There are countless available repressive techniques for combating one's own unproductiveness (such as attempting to apply the 80-20 rule as a razor to shave off the apparently useless 80%). Our enthusiasm for pursuing the path of inner evolution can blind us to the harmfulness of morally mixed techniques. We often find that we push ourselves into these techniques, moving forward by sheer willpower, despite the exhaustion we feel when doing it. The checklist of tasks grows, each feeling more and more like a chore rather than an exciting accomplishment. If we look for it, we will find within ourselves a voice that is crying out "Please, no more!"

In this kind of moment, the Conflicted is active, so it is appropriate to become the Great Way of the Mind. This means stepping back from the inner conflict of the moment to remember the broader scope of our intentions in our lives. We must remember our commitment to ourselves, a commitment to being gentle, accepting, nourishing, unconditionally loving, and endlessly supportive. This commitment to ourselves is akin to a set of marriage vows in which we promised to be a True Friend to ourselves and to see our unconscious mind as an Innocent. When a moment of inner conflict arises and we find ourselves attempting to push ourselves into something we are not comfortable with, remembering this commitment makes the choice easier.

Conversely, the inner Counselor is active when we are present to our own personal commitment to seeing ourselves as lovable, acceptable and valuable. But we can be in a state of awareness of this commitment without actually being able to access the feelings to which we aspire. To express the Counselor is, fundamentally, to aspire. But often what we aspire to feels painfully distant from us: we are keenly aware of our own failure to live up to the ideal and that failure weighs on us as evidence that our task is impossible. The inner Counselor wants to love themselves, but has forgotten how. In this moment, it is appropriate to locate the inner Conflicted. The inability of the Counselor to feel accomplished signals that the plateau of spiritual progress has ended and a sharp rise is approaching. It is now time to embrace the necessity of feeling the inner conflict and choosing according to the path of our commitment. Once we identify how we have been thinking of ourselves in a mixed way, how we have been secretly devaluing ourselves, the choice will be clear. After the choosing, the feeling of impossibility subsides, because we will remember that the path is made of small steps, each of which we can take, as long as we take them one by one.

Interpersonally, these same dynamics repeat. When a friend or family member stands up to our vision for who they are or who they ought to be, that person is inviting us to become the True Friend and to act as a guardian of their natural innocence rather than attempt to indoctrinate them into our conception of their best and most beneficial identity. Or, on the other side, when we find ourselves worn down and exhausted by the well-intentioned but identity-destroying nature of an interpersonal relationship, we become immovable and adamant in our own identity. Whichever side we express, the Conflicted is active. When this kind of conflict arises for us, it is appropriate to seek out a Counselor who can demonstrate to us a right-hand path friendship of love and acceptance. Likewise, if people we know reveal their conflicted relationship to us, it is appropriate for us to express the Counselor in relation to them. It may not always be possible to do so alone, since it is much harder to see the analogy of an interpersonal relationship in the inner dynamics of another. So the invitation may be for us to become Counselor in relation to another: a couple counseling a couple.

On the social level, oppression—which is in many ways a body cycle phenomenon—persists through its use of narratives that define and pigeonhole individuals into stereotyped groups. The thought Leaders of our world, even well-intentioned ones, communicate stories about who and what some other group is. If we find ourselves engaged in this act of assertion in the face of the avid protestations from the group we attempt to define, then we are being asked to become Allies (the social True Friend) by allowing our own narrative to fall away and be replaced by the self-proclaimed narrative of the other. If, on the other hand, we find ourselves worn-down by constant misunderstanding and beratement from those who claim to have our best interests in mind, then, assuming that these people are sincere about our best interests, we are being asked to inform them of the injury they commit against our very identities. The social Innocent must speak for herself so that the Allied group can see what they have done that, unbeknownst to them, has perpetuated violence to the identity of the social Innocent. Allies cannot discover how they have repressed the Innocent unless the very relationship itself is at stake. The heaviness of this moment communicates to the Allied group that this is a defining moment in the relationship and that there is clearly a wrong answer.

However, it is often not possible to choose Allyship unless we have a model for how it looks when one does so. From the perspective of the masculine in the Conflicted relationship, the request that comes from the social Innocent for Allyship can sound like a demand that he sacrifices his own identity for the sake of hers. He has the ironic belief that letting go of his derisive attitudes toward the social Innocent

will put him in a debased relationship to her. The masculine side of the social Conflicted is worried that letting go of the Concubine entails becoming the Concubine. In this moment, the social need is to present the Conflicted with a model Allyship. The masculine needs to see that it is not only safe and dignified to be an Ally, but that the social relationship between the two groups will be greatly improved by choosing Allyship.

13. A Note on the Egyptian Tarot

Studying the body and spirit cycles as taught by Ra is always a very different experience from studying the mind cycle. In the mind cycle we have a broad and nearly comprehensive set of confirmed symbols and interpretations of those symbols. In the body and spirit cycles, we are much more in the dark. Almost none of the symbols in these cards were explicitly discussed. Most of them that are discussed receive but a few lines of commentary from Ra. And the poor Significator of the Body receives no commentary at all. How do we know which symbols to focus on and which to disregard? And how are we to interpret them once we identify the correct compliment of symbols?

Don asks Ra, in 89.14 and 89.15, whether the Tarot deck they were using (the Brotherhood of Light deck made by C.C. Zain) was at least 95% correct in representing the images once inscribed on the walls of the Great Pyramid. Ra confirms that it is. We might leave the matter here, considering the images receive Ra's approval, but the history of the Tarot, and the Egyptian Tarot in particular, bears some consideration.

The first historically documented set of images that resemble the Zain deck used by the Ra channeling group was published by the French occultists Falconnier and Wegener in 1896. While there are "Egyptian" decks that predate this one, none of them resemble the Zain deck very much. This is significant because Ra confirms many features unique to this class of decks. For example, the caged bird in the Matrix of the Mind (Arcanum 1) receives Ra's endorsement, but this symbol is unique to the Falconnier/Wegener deck and later decks based on it. Conversely, the wand, knife, cup and pentacle, which appear on the same card in virtually every deck ever (Egyptian included), are rejected by Ra as later additions. Facts like these are surprising enough on their own, but what is even more surprising is that historians agree that the Falconnier/Wegener images are modelled after the descriptions in Paul Christian's book—yet the caged bird is not part of Christian's description for Arcanum 1!

The images used by the Ra channeling group date back in our historical record only to 1896. There is simply no denying this. However, rumors of *Tarot* images inscribed on the walls of a mysterious underground Egyptian temple had been circulating for many decades prior to the publication of this deck. Ra confirms this rumor: "those which were teach/learners after us first drew these images to the best of their ability within the place of initiation." Given Ra's commentary on the pyramids, the "place of initiation" would seem to be the Queen's Chamber in the Great Pyramid, but photographs show that the walls of this chamber have no inscriptions on them. I can only shrug at the mystery.

The oldest known *Tarot* images trace back to the fifteen century, but they are not drawn in an notably Egyptian style. They bear many similarities to the Egyptian images, notably the imagery of Arcanum 6 (Transformation of the Mind), but the unique details of Egyptian decks seem to appear on the scene in 1896 out of nowhere. One of the most prominent of the unique details in Egyptian decks is the array of

symbolic creatures surrounding the human female figure in Arcanum 8, commonly known as Justice. Because the Ra contact ended when it did, we have no confirmation concerning which of these symbols belong and which do not. Even worse, the recorded history of the *Tarot* reveals that commentators have few reservations about changing the images to suit their own understanding. If the *Tarot* images do date back many thousands of years, one might be justified in thinking that they have probably changed beyond recognition. And yet Ra seems to endorse the modern Egyptian deck and confirm it to be within 95% accuracy.

What are we to make of all this? I must conclude that the origin of these images will remain a mystery. Unless Ra makes a sudden reappearance, we will receive no confirmation about the specific imagery of the remaining cards. This might leave a student feeling like she is attempting to walk through quicksand. However, we have something which is perhaps sturdier and more foundational than even the images on the cards: we have the system of classification through which we can glean the heart of the concept complexes. As I said earlier in this book, the history of commentary on the *Tarot* reveals that the images alone are not sufficient to isolate a single, consistent interpretation. There are many ways to read the many symbols. I have found that study, not of the symbols themselves, but of the system of classification which underlies the symbols is much more helpful in reaching the deepest meanings of the images. Moreover, because Ra seems generally to endorse the images in the first seven cards, we are justified in thinking that the images in the remaining cards are close enough to the originals to be used as is.

In the remaining chapters of this book, my commentary on the symbols in the images will reflect my general uncertainty about which symbols Ra would endorse and what they mean. Some symbols are easier to integrate into the concept complex than others. And some are simply baffling.

14. The Matrix of the Body

Symbols

A human female figure wearing black and white stripes is seated on a sturdy throne, her feet resting on a pedestal. She is blindfolded and wears an iron crown with a uraeus. In her right hand she holds a sword and in her left she holds a balanced scale. Behind her stands a messenger bearing the feather of Ma'at. Above her there is a flying winged turtle and a canopy. Next to her a sphinx walks atop a walking lion.

The human female figure represents the unconscious body. The sturdy throne with a pedestal for the feet indicate the extreme stability of this archetype. It is not merely stable; it will automatically recover balance. The sword and scales in her hands reflect this same concept. The scales are already in balance, but if they are tipped, the sword is drawn and ready to strike. The unconscious body is responsible for coordinating all the automatic processes of the body. The coordination of these processes seeks out a stable, regular flow of energy: a homeostasis. The cyclic nature of this stable flow of energy is represented by the sphinx. The lion, on the other hand, represents the immense potential and danger of the body's instinctive drives.

The blindfold does not represent the veiling, since it is a female figure who is blindfolded. In standard veiling imagery, the female is hidden from the male. Instead, the blindfold here relates to the sword and

scales in her hands. Whatever tips the scales will receive her strike as consequence. That strike is indifferent to the source of imbalance; it does not respect the narrative descriptions that might explain *why* an imbalance was introduced into the bodily system. Her reaction to imbalance is purely a function of the degree of imbalance introduced. The iron crown on her head, a symbol of inflexibility, reiterates this concept. There are no exceptions to the rule of her reaction.

The messenger from Ma'at, who stands behind her, represents the support of universal truth: Ma'at was the Egyptian goddess of truth and justice. The action of the unconscious mind in coordinating the hidden motions of the body is informed by the laws of nature themselves, so the body's motion is neither whimsical nor personal. The unconscious body is a manifestation of the natural laws of cause and effect.

The winged turtle is a head-scratcher. Zain and Saint Germain both say that the winged turtle represents repentance for transgression. This seems backwards, however, since the turtle flies from behind her. She does not repent; those who transgress (or tip the scales) repent in the hope of receiving mercy from her. But the blindfold seems to contradict this interpretation. Perhaps the two can be harmonized by the interpretation that mercy is available if one attempts to atone, thus rebalancing the scales themselves rather than forcing her to do all the work. Even so, there is no obvious reason that a winged turtle should symbolize mercy for the repentant. Rather, it suggests to me that a slow spiritual flight (wings) is available only within the physical vehicle (the turtle who carries its own home). This interpretation connects appropriately with the Matrix of the Mind, which is why I favor it above the mercy interpretation.

I must confess that the meaning of the canopy eludes me, so I will pass over it.

Character: The Wild Woman

The Wild Woman does not think about what she does or why she does it. She is not interested in thought. Instead, she is motivated by her own instinctive desires and cravings. In her very body, she knows what she needs and when; each craving appears in its appropriate moment and she follows that craving exactly as it drives her. If she is attacked, she retaliates in proportion to the attack according to *lex talionis* (eye for an eye). She is the living manifestation of natural justice, but she has no regard to and no concern for human *legal* justice.

The justice of the Wild Woman is factual or empirical justice. There is no need to reason out what justice calls for or to follow the legal codes to the letter. Her instinctive drives are inherently just; everything she does metes out the naturally balanced compliment to any imbalanced intervention. She does what she does because, prior to any consideration, she must. The urge has built up within her and she cannot possibly hold it back, even if she wanted to. Thus, her justice is often in *conflict* with legal systems because such systems are so often instruments of injustice.

I have not yet spoken much about this character as a living expression of justice because she will only mete justice out in response to some form of conscious intervention. But conscious intervention is the responsibility of the Potentiator of the Body. The short version (the long version will come in my treatment of Relationship #5) is this: whatever action the Potentiator takes will affect the Wild Woman's habitual cycles of activity. The Wild Woman will counterbalance this intervention as a natural response, and this counterbalancing measure, whatever it is, is inherently just since it restores balance to the physical world.

The Wild Woman's empowering capacity is her direct attunement to the needs of the body. Her virtues are brazen audacity and...

Levels

On the personal level, we express the Wild Woman through intuitive awareness of and responsiveness to the needs of our bodies. This often manifests as the habitual actions we take without thinking about them, but it includes the automatic functions of the body, such as breathing, digestion and elimination. The inner Wild Woman is the routine operation of the body in maintaining itself as a vehicle for the mind to use. This archetype, like all body archetypes, also extends to the environments we inhabit. The body does not end at the skin; it extends at least fifty feet beyond the skin as our personal aura. So the motions of the Wild Woman also include our unconscious habits of interaction with the environments in which we dwell. Usually these environments are work and home, but they include any environment that becomes a second home.

On the interpersonal level, we express the Wild Woman through our unthinking patterns of interaction with others. We think of ourselves as constantly making choices about how we live our lives, but this is not really true. Most of our interactions with others are guided by the rote patterns of unconscious activity that guide us forward along the path of least resistance, patterns which we often never chose for ourselves but adopted through imitating parents and other authority figures. We do what we do because that's what we've always done. And we do this so frequently that we typically do not even notice it happening. We greet each other with our standard greetings, use our standard phrasings, make our standard jokes, and engage in our standard activities. And we do all of this with meticulous felicity to the details according to which we always do. The Wild Woman is a creature of rigid habit.

The social Wild Woman is the unplanned social interaction of human beings. It is the coordination that emerges when each person acts according to her own needs without aiming for any kind of social outcome. The social Wild Woman is powerful, since unintentional self-organizing social activity is difficult to subvert; but she is simultaneously *powerless*, since consciously organized social action can easily take control of unintentional coordination. The social Wild Woman has no significant foothold in any system of institutional power. She is the Masses who follow no code but their own personal habit and have no thought to the greater social significance of their activities. The Wild Woman is always at the bottom of the social totem pole. She is the Proletariat that is not yet conscious of itself.

Polarized Expressions and Modes of Distortion

As in the case of all Matrices and Potentiators, the Matrix of the Body does not admit of polarized expression. She simply is as she is.

One distorted mode of expression of the Wild Woman is insensitivity. In this distortion, the Wild Woman does not perceive attempted interventions in her habitual cycles of activity. To the stupefaction of those who had attempted to intervene, she simply carries on as if nothing happened. This distortion prevents potentiation entirely, since the event of potentiation alters the Wild Woman's activity.

Another mode of distortion for the Wild Woman is unintentionally arrhythmic activity. The body inclines toward predictable cycles of activity and the Potentiator of the Body depends on these rhythms so it can make intelligent judgments about how to intervene. But if the cycles do not resolve into predictable rhythms, then intelligent potentiation is not possible.

Note that both of the above forms of distortion border on insanity. Typically, when we enter this persona, we do so in a relatively undistorted way. By far the most common distortion in our expression of this persona is to avoid entering it at all. We have a tendency to think that the best or most appropriate actions are the ones that are carefully planned out. But this kind of thought denies the wisdom of the unconscious body unpotentiated; it denies the idea that natural justice is programmed into us on the instinctive level. We do not trust our own intuitive judgments about what our body needs; rather, we listen to what others tell us or try to figure it out for ourselves.

An apparently distorted mode of expression for the Wild Woman is an incommensurate (or unjust) response to intervention. This can either be a response of excess or insufficiency. *Lex talionis*, or “eye for an eye,” is the expression of natural justice. This does not literally mean that what was done to the Wild Woman will be reciprocated back; rather, what it means is that the response will be proportional to the action. But our expression of the Wild Woman often seems either exaggerated or nerfed through the trauma of our history. We remember previous events that mirror what has just happened, so our response to the intervention is colored by this traumatic echo. Either we respond sheepishly out of fear of repeating the previous event or we respond explosively out of a desire to settle all the historical scores at once in this moment. But this is not, in fact, a distortion of the Wild Woman. The Matrix of the Body is the storehouse of lived trauma; it keeps the score of all the interventions that either helped or harmed and the Wild Woman’s patterns of activity are shaped by this score. Thus, all response *is* commensurate, but it is a response, not merely to the intervention at hand, but to the *type* of intervention and that type of intervention’s historical effect on the body complex.

15. The Potentiator of the Body

Symbols

A human male figure stands with a walking stick in his right hand and a lamp in his left. He wears a square cape or cloak that partially hides the light of the lamp. He faces his own left and in front of him crawl two serpents, each wearing one of the two primary Egyptian crowns.

The male figure represents the conscious body. The lamp represents the brilliant truth of the inner sub-sub-Logos. This archetype, the Potentiator of the Mind, depicts the sub-sub-Logos, that “through free will, chooses to make alterations in its experiential continuum.” During incarnation, Ra tells us, we find ourselves “working in darkness with a tiny candle” to correct our imbalances. The lamp in this card is that tiny candle. This candle only reveals to us the next step that we must take on the path; this next step being the alteration in the Matrix chosen by the sub-sub-Logos within. Hence, the conscious body in this card walks in darkness with only a small lamp.

The squareness of the cloak symbolizes the physical world. So the physical world itself partially hides the light of the inner sub-sub-Logos. The body cycle is the domain of action and consequence, so the light of the Logos reveals not mental or spiritual truths, but actions that must be undertaken. The physical world, however, does not hide the light of the Logos from the conscious body itself; rather, it hides that light from everyone else. Thus, it represents the veil between self and other. The wisdom in our own actions and the intentions that drive them is not clearly visible to others; the light of the inner Logos is obscured to all but ourselves.

The crowns on the two serpents that precede the male figure indicate the outward and inward qualities of kingship. The serpents themselves represent wisdom, especially in their raised, uraeus position. So the conscious body follows along behind the outward wisdom, commonly known as prudence, and also the inward wisdom, commonly experienced as a clear sense of what must be done for the sake of some higher purpose.

Character

The activity of the conscious body is transparent to itself. We are aware of our conscious reasons for acting and we understand how these reasons fit together both with our conscious beliefs and motivations and with the circumstance in which we find ourselves. We rarely lack an opinion on what it is a good idea to do in any given moment and even more rarely do we lack a reason for thinking that such an action is a good idea. All of our beliefs and motivations are not transparent to us, of course. Most of them lie locked away in the hidden stretches of the unconscious mind, guarded by the High Priestess. But what little of ourselves is made available to us acts as a light that reveals the nature of the world around us. The confusing activity of the physical world follows patterns. The conscious mind is keenly attuned to patterned activity and so, after some observation, develops opinions on how to helpfully alter this patterned activity.

The name “Wisdom” is often applied to this persona—and it is even endorsed by Ra. This is not the worst name available, but I think it tends to mislead. The wisdom of this persona is not the far-seeing clarity of the wise old man; or if it is, this clarity is not as far-seeing as we like to think. Rather, the wisdom here is the deep wisdom of the sub-sub-Logos within, which has no regard for the petty concerns we might have for our own lives and how they play out. What may look to others like a grave mistake in judgment turns out to be a crucial experience, without which the individual may not have developed the proper sensitivity to the nuances of activity in his environment. As Ra says, “there are no mistakes.” This metaphysical truth is part of the identity of the Sage persona. It is also why this persona is sometimes called the Hermit. Following the hidden wisdom of one’s own small candle—a wisdom that does not explain itself fully to us—is an isolating experience. To others, the individualism of walking one’s own path of appropriate action looks like folly and causes us quickly to lose friends for fear of how our company will reflect on them.

The Sage is characterized by his willingness to do what seems to him like a good idea to do. As the Potentiator, this intervention in the Matrix will inevitably produce Catalyst, notably in the form of unexpected consequences. But this Catalyst does not make the original action unwise; on the contrary, the production of Catalyst is *why* the Sage’s activity is wise.

We might tend to think that the Sage generates plans of action through careful observation, but that he does not enact those plans himself. But I think this is incorrect. Formulating an appropriate plan of action causes within us a desire to enact that plan of action. It is irresistible. Even when we reveal our intentions to others and they tell us that our plan is a bad idea, we find ourselves doing it anyway, regardless of the consequences. The Sage is not a mere observer. He is the original actor whose conscious observation and consideration of the physical world around him lead him to judgments about what ought to be done, and these judgments motivate him all the way to action.

When a course of action produces such unpleasant consequences as to lead us to say, “I’m never doing that again,” we might think that it was the Sage who learned something. But that is not so. The Sage is

already informed by the light of the Logos. Rather, it is the even functioning of the Matrix surrounding us that has changed, which leads to a different judgment from the inner Logos about what it is a good idea to do. The experiment in novelty has been enacted; the results observed. So a new experiment is in order, thus: "I'm never doing that again."

The function of the Sage is to alter the habitual, cyclic motion of the physical environment. He is motivated by his desire to make better use of the physical world, his own body included. His empowering capacity is his ability to see clearly the kind of intervention that will further reveal the inner workings of the physical world. His virtues are...

Levels

On the personal level, the Sage is our awareness of what we consider to be useful ways of acting, which includes both the reasons we hold these judgments and the will to act on them. In this perspective, we envision a desired outcome that fits into our overall sense of how the world might broadly be improved by our action. George Fatham's drawing of this card incorporates the image of the Sage's intention as a shining city on a hill, toward which he trudges. I think this addition appropriately captures the way we consciously conceive of our intentions to act as fitting into an overall conception of the world as becoming better for our having acted.

On the interpersonal level, we express the Sage whenever we intervene in someone else's unthinking routine. This can have a trickster quality, as when we play a prank on someone who is just going about their day as normal. But it can also be a serious effort either to help or harm. Perhaps we are surprising someone at work with a delightful gift or with ominous legal paperwork. The interpersonal Sage interrupts the flow of normal life with a two-fold purpose: as an experiment to determine what kind of consequences this kind of interruption produces and in an effort to improve the flow of daily life through the expected outcome of the interruption. Above all things, the Sage acts in relation to others with a specific and conscious purpose: he has an agenda.

On the social level, a group expresses the Sage when it acts on behalf of a social agenda by intervening in the activity of those who have no social agenda. This often manifests as legal activity, as when legislation is passed, or a community is policed. In general, the Sage is socially powerful in relation to the other social groups with whom this social persona interacts. The social Sage has the benefit of organized, intentional, planned action as an attempt to augment what are socially seen as inefficient, unhelpful, or even harmful behaviors in the Masses. The social Sage is The Man.

Polarized Expressions and Modes of Distortion

One common distorted expression of the Sage is when there is a vice or breakdown in practical reasoning. The Sage's judgments about what it is a good idea to do depend on his ability to rationally locate the means to achieve outcomes that match his vision of how the physical world can be most fruitfully used. If he believes that his body needs more exercise, he must be able to rationally determine the course of action that would get his body the exercise it needs. This is called means-ends reasoning: the ability to determine the most suitable means to one's ends. So we express the Sage in a distorted way when our means-ends reasoning breaks down. Often, this happens through self-sabotage that manifests in the mind cycle. The course of action that strikes us as the appropriate means to our imaged end is just the opposite. When this failure to accurately predict the outcome of action is not due to the

unpredictability of the physical world, but to a simple lack of attention to the plan of action, our body cycle was likely overridden by our mind cycle. This overriding effect distorts the Sage's mechanisms of practical reason.

Means-ends reasoning is one side of practical reason; the other side is similar to perception. This side of practical reason is our ability to identify what is good for us. I do not mean "good for" in the moral sense, but in the sense of health. If the Sage no longer sees normal healthy actions as good for him (like eating whole foods, getting sufficient regular sleep, seeking out company and knowledge, attending to his own practical reasoning processes, etc.), then the body cycle has probably been overridden by the mind or spirit cycle. Hence, the significant distortions in our expression of the Sage come about through the seizure of the body cycle mechanisms by the higher evolutionary aspects of self.

Another distortion of the Sage is commonly called weakness of will. In this distorted expression, we can see what strikes us as good and we recognize the means to achieve that outcome, but we lack the will to act. This is a strange circumstance, since registering a good in the world and the means to acquire it seem to automatically produce a motive for action. But sometimes the Sage falls into a kind of depression that does not dim the light of his reason, but the energy in his feet. Again, this is a likely consequence of the overriding features of either mind or spirit. Lack of will to act is a characteristic symptom of spiritual activity.

16. Relationship #5

Character: Intervention

The Wild Woman is active, but habitual. She is also reactive in the sense that there is always a backlash to the interruption of a habitual cycle of motion. The physical world always attempts to reestablish homeostasis, which is the basic characterizing tendency of the Wild Woman. The Sage, on the other hand, is active, but intentional. He is in no way reactive; he observes the motions in the world around him and intervenes in the observed cyclic motion in an intentional and preconceived way. Thus, I have named the relationship between these two personas "Intervention."

One might think that it is generally better to be proactive as the Sage is than reactive as the Wild Woman is. I consider this thought to be fundamentally sexist (genderist?). Let us consider the problematic features of the Sage's proactive nature. There is nothing about his way of being that captures the smoothness and flow of a dancer or a musician or a slam poet. If this persona stands on stage to perform, he will register as awkward and robotic. His natural condition in relation to the rest of the world is away from the spotlight. One of his greatest virtues is his own awareness of the importance of silence. Understands the works of the causal world, acts with regard to them, but does not speak about them unless his act of speaking contributes positively (in his view) to that causal order. The Sage, then, has a sense of humility and restraint. Notice how far from the standard conception of proactiveness we have come.

Now consider the Wild Woman. She has no sense of preconception in her actions; she takes no thought to either planning or a higher agenda. She is governed by her own internal sensitivity to the balance of her own bodily systems and the dynamic environment in which those systems exist. Her sensitivity to this internal balance entails that her reactivity is perfectly proportional. She is not reactive in the

negative sense of the word; her very existence brings whatever counterbalance is needed, even if no one else recognizes that need. Her movements are fluid and at ease, even in a spotlight—unlike the Sage’s.

It might seem like the Wild Woman gains nothing from her interaction with the Sage. She is satisfied with her life as it is and his activity throws a wrench into that activity. But this is only a partial picture. The Sage’s intervention is often welcomed by the Wild Woman. His forethought has the power to pacify and calm her most destructive tendencies. For example, a person who lives a habitually slovenly lifestyle, thus expressing the Wild Woman, will be well adapted to being surrounded by trash and filth. She is not terribly bothered by it. Another person, expressing the Sage, may enter the scene and decide that she might appreciate a cleaner environment, so he begins to tidy up. He is respectful of her existing cycles, so he makes sure that she is aware of how he is tidying up and where her valuable possessions are going. Of course, things will not go perfectly, so she will become infuriated with him if he tidies without consent or places something she wants where she cannot find it. But through the process of his intervention, she might discover that his vision of a tidier lifestyle for her was something she also wanted for herself but did not know it or if she knew it did not have the energy to establish for herself. The Wild Woman wants to live a happy and satisfied life. The Sage wants this for her as well, but sees that many of her habits prevent her from living this way. Thus, he intervenes. So we see that there is a natural attraction between the two in a way that parallels the natural attraction between the Matrix and Potentiator of Mind.

Of course, the Sage’s intervention often does not go so smoothly. Every harm he inflicts upon her will be met with a proportional reaction. And it is characteristic of the Sage to cause harm. These personas represent ways of being that are prior to moral polarity (that is, they represent the parts of us that are not yet polarized), so the Sage’s intention will not be overly influenced either by malice or compassion. He is primarily interested in experimentation. But because he is experimenting, he will not be able to fully predict the outcomes. He expects to be surprised. Because choice between moral polarities is the centerpiece of the human experience, the most important kinds of surprises are the ones that turn out to be morally valenced. In her capacity as blind justice, the Wild Woman will retaliate if the Sage’s intervention is harmful to her. Conversely, she will reward him if his intervention is helpful.

At this point a question should have become pressing: how should we define “harm” and “help”? In the body cycle, these concepts relate directly to pleasure and pain; comfort and discomfort. The body’s pleasure and pain responses are affective feelings that confirm either the benefit or the harm of some bodily activity. It is normal for the Wild Woman’s experience to be a cyclical morass of both pleasures and pains. The Sage’s intervention will inevitably accentuate some of these pleasures and pains and reduce others. If the Sage’s intervention is more painful or uncomfortable on balance than it is pleasurable or comfortable, then she will retaliate. If the opposite, then she will reward.

Note, though, that what the Wild Woman considers helpful or harmful will not necessarily match the Sage’s conception. The Sage is interested in bringing about his envisioned ordering of the physical world. He has a picture of utopia and his actions are meant to bring about this utopia. He believes that achieving this vision will result in making the Wild Woman’s experience on balance much more pleasant. But his actions will be judged each step of the way based on the changes they introduce now, not based on his ideal.

The Wild Woman's response to the Sage's intervention becomes the Catalyst. This Catalyst, which issues forth from the unthinking self without agenda, is fundamentally just. It informs the conscious mind of whether its own behaviors are on balance comforting or discomforting.

When to Become the Personas

On the personal level, we sometimes find that our daily, unthinking habits of activity tend to bring us more discomfort than seems necessary. If we are certain that these less-than-helpful habits of activity are not related to either spiritual or mental catalyst, they present an opportunity for us to reflect consciously on whether some kind of interruption of these habits would be helpful. By interruption, I do not mean a large-scale, fundamental change. I mean a small augmentation, a little bit of pressure from one direction that might tip the scales to a more favorable condition. In this kind of moment, it is appropriate to become the Sage, since the vision of this persona allows us to see the potential direction of pressure that might be most helpful.

Conversely, our conscious agenda for bodily activity can become too pushy, overwhelming our bodies or physical environments with unpleasant changes. While the body will naturally react on its own to an overwhelming intervention, as when injury results from too intensive a program of exercise, it is helpful to enter the persona of the Wild Woman as a means of curbing bodily reaction to overstimulation. Doing so will allow us to relax into our own natural bodily rhythms, letting go of our agenda for our own behavior. In this way, we will be more able to freely act out counterbalancing measures and to put a quick end to our program of overstimulation.

On the interpersonal level, it is appropriate to become the Sage when the habitual action of someone with whom we have a relationship seems to be harmful to themselves. Notice that this kind of scenario is usually volatile. Intervention does not absolutely necessitate consent because we can often intervene in the life of another person without violating personal boundaries. Often this kind of intervention takes the shape of pulling a person aside to speak to them. When we have a relationship with another person, their trust in us and interest in whatever insight we might have is a kind of implicit invitation for small interventions if we see them engaged in self-harm. While it is appropriate in situations like these to become the interpersonal Sage, remember that one of the Sage's strengths is silence. It is easy to do too much, and it can take surprisingly little effort to interrupt a harmful habit. When becoming the Sage, remember that Catalyst will inevitably follow your intervention, so be prepared to accept the unpleasant consequences of your intervention, despite your feeling that it was an appropriate thing to do.

Likewise, when we find another intervening in our lives, it is appropriate to enter the balanced receptivity of the Wild Woman. On the one hand, she wants to live in a state of greater comfort and reduced discomfort. Sometimes, comfort only comes after an initial moment of discomfort. However, it is common for others to intervene in our lives in ways that, in their minds, are for our own good, but that cause us immense harm. The person who intervenes in our lives may see that harm as justified by the end result at which they are aiming, but remember that the Sage is not the bearer of justice; the Wild Woman is. Thus, it is appropriate, in times like these, enter into the natural rhythm of the Wild Woman and allow her, through our own actions, to act out the justice of the moment. When a person inflicts harm for the sake of some imagined end, that person has retaliation coming. Note that I do not mean physical violence. Rather, the Wild Woman has sole access to the amazing potency of *righteous anger*. Unleashing righteous anger, even if only in verbal form, is deeply Catalyzing. When someone,

despite good intentions, has crossed the line, they have earned the backlash of righteous anger. And in this moment, there is no spiritual prohibition against it. Remember that repression of emotions is a left-hand path phenomenon, so allow the emotion to find expression.

On the social level, the Sage appears in the form of politically aware or socially active institutions and groups. These groups might have the backing of the legal system (they might even *be* the legal system), or they might have the backing of ideologically motivated wealth. In any case, the social Sage has both means and an agenda. We appropriately enter the social Sage whenever we see in the world an apparently inefficient or harmful cycle of behavior within our society. Most political ideologies have a social Sage aspect to them, since they are motivated by the desire to bring about a more functional, fruitful, pleasant society. We often think of the purpose of government as making the lives of its citizenry better. This is an inherently Sage-like way of thinking. Wherever we see social breakdowns or dysfunctions that make life more difficult for regular citizens, it is appropriate for us, as the social Sage, to push for changes in social coordination that will improve these circumstances.

However, the danger of the Sage's intervention lurks on the social scene as well. When we use the means of coordinated, intentional activity to intervene in the lives of the Masses, our actions often produce myriad unintended consequences that make their lives harder in ways we did not expect. The prerogative of the Masses, as social Wild Woman, is to react to social interventions (usually by the government) through expressions either of gratitude or righteous anger. When a planned intervention backfires, the righteous anger of the citizenry is a manifest expression of justice itself, nevermind the legal system. Civil disobedience, protest, and even rioting are often expressions of blind justice, especially when they are responses to intentional intervention into the lives of those who had no social agenda, but whose plights were made dramatically worse through intervention. And the longer these unjust social interventions continue, the more extreme the justified backlash becomes. The lesson here is that the Wild Woman's righteous anger must be released, because without it there is no Catalyst and so no change to the unjust intervention of the social Sage. There is much more to say about this phenomenon, but I will discuss it more deeply in my treatments of the next two personas and their relationship.

17. The Catalyst of the Body

The Catalyst of the Body depicts the body as potentiated self. This is a perspective primarily of observation, encompassing all our sensory information. From this perspective, we identify with part of the physical world as ourselves, but not with the rest (consider how you identify with your car while you drive, as in exclamations like, "She almost hit me!").

Symbols

A wheel is held in place by two columns, at whose base there is a winged orb and two snakes rising on either side. The wheel has an inner ring and an outer ring, held together by eight spokes. On the left side of the wheel, Typhon or Set, an emblem of darkness, curses, depravity, decay, disruption, cruelty, and general vice rides the gravitational swing of the wheel downward. On the right side of the wheel, Hermanubis, an emblem of human ingenuity, forthrightness, prosperity, and general virtue climbs the

turning wheel upward. Above the wheel there is a circular platform on which stands a sphinx with a spear aimed at the right side of the wheel, just beyond Hermanubis.

Everything in the physical world with which you interact is part of the body complex. This is because your aura extends at least 50 feet out from your skin. Thus, wherever you are and whatever you interact with is within your aura. I suspect that this feature of the physical illusion even includes spaces on the Internet, though I have no easy way of framing the extension of one's aura through the Internet. Suffice it say that our interaction with the physical world reflects the basic relationship between the body's active processes and its passive processes. In the physical world, all is body acting upon itself.

With this conception of body in mind, the wheel represents the body complex and its energy web. The turning of the wheel is the constant cyclical motion of the body complex. Hermanubis and Typhon represent the energies and entities that are attracted to us based on the specific condition of our energy web. This attraction is akin to magnetism. Some of the energies we attract will be beneficial while others will be destructive. In bodily terms, these influences will bring with them either pleasure or pain, comfort or discomfort, fortune or misfortune.

The eight spokes represent the octaves of experience, notably expressed in the energy centers of the body and their manifestations as primal drives that lead us to activity in the physical world. Our bodily energy web is literally composed of the composite of these energy centers. It is noteworthy that the eight spoke is hidden from view behind the two pillars. This is because the eighth energy center, representing the beginning of the next octave, is also hidden from our experience. Our concern is with the seven experiential energy centers. I believe that the serpents at the bottom of the wheel are suggestive of the progressive activation of energy centers, though I am not fully confident in this interpretation.

The inner and outer wheel (or the "wheel within the wheel" from Biblical symbolism, and to which Ra makes brief reference) refers to the inner and outer natures of the body itself. The laws of physical motion and the workings of the body in general are pretty well hidden from our conscious awareness. We know that there is a deeper, hidden nature to the body and that we do not understand it very well. But we rarely guess that this deeper nature is ethereal, not physical in nature. Because we lack understanding of this ethereal body, our conceptualization of the body complex tends to remain on the outer level, in which causal physical interactions are most prominent. The wheel within the wheel suggests the attractiveness of materialistic explanations that cannot dig beneath the surface of the events we behold. But note that the manifestations of both fortune and misfortune are holding on to the inner wheel. We cannot understand why and how we have attracted fortune or misfortune until we understand the workings of the inner wheel.

The two pillars that hold the wheel up represent, as always, the third density illusion's foundational construction as a world of moral polarity. Experience with and choice between the forces of good and evil are programmed into third density in so fundamental a way that there is no possibility of escape. Here, the two pillars of good and evil support the entire energy web of the body.

The Catalyst of the Body is the first image in the *Tarot* series that lacks an obvious perspective of the persona of the archetype. One might think that the perspective of this persona is to behold the entire ensemble from outside, from our own position as observers. But then that makes this image out of step with all the previous images, since the perspective has always, until now, been represented *within* the

image itself. It would also switch the left-right symbolism, since the viewer's perspective is opposite that of an entity within the image. Another interpretation is that the wheel itself is the perspective. But because the archetype is a living persona, I do not think this is the correct interpretation either. So I conclude, somewhat uncomfortably, that the perspective of the persona is the sphinx.

There are two major reasons to doubt that the sphinx provides the perspective. The first is that it stands on a platform above the turning of the wheel. But since the body is part of the wheel of causality, one might think that it ought to be on the wheel. However, since the conscious body's relation to the unconscious body is to intervene in cyclic activity, I think the fixed position is not problematic. The second worry about my interpretation is that the sphinx already has a standard interpretation: the cyclical passage of time. I do not have a strong rebuttal to this objection, but I do think that this reason to reject seeing the sphinx as the perspective of the persona does not outweigh the reasons to think the sphinx does portray this perspective.

If the sphinx were not to represent the perspective, then the sphinx would have to represent the self beyond incarnation: the incarnative contract that protects us from certain kinds of fortune or misfortune because these were not programmed into the plan for life. However, I believe that the winged orb, sigil of the covenant with spirit, represents precisely this concept. So we do not need to interpret the sphinx this way.

Now that I have defended my view, here is my interpretation of the sphinx. The *Tarot* tradition makes heavy use in other drawings of this card of the four animals who compose the sphinx: the man, the bull, the eagle, and the lion. They appear prominently in each of the four corners of the Waite-Smith image, for example. These creatures represent the four elements and correspond to the four fixed astrological signs. But they also have a unique interpretation in the western magical tradition. They represent the four virtuous activities of the magician: to know (man), to will (bull), to dare (lion), and to be silent (eagle). The sphinx represents not merely the cyclical passage of time through the metaphor of changing seasons, but also the cyclical passage of time through intentional and conscious action which is productive in the manifest world. Note that these four virtuous activities characterize the Sage at his most virtuous: he is informed about the nature of the world; he has the will and attention to detail to make a consciously chosen change in the movement of the physical world; he has the courage to follow through on his intention; and he has the wisdom to know not to speak about the action since the action itself is enough. The sphinx, then, symbolizes the conscious body after the potentiating action: all that is left to do is wait for the intended effect.

The sphinx's orientation depicts the two polarized aspects of this archetype. He is facing his left, indicating, as usual, that negatively polarizing catalyst is easier to see (or, perhaps, easier to look at). He is armed against the left-hand side, indicating the importance of defense and attack on the left-hand path. On the right side, the sphinx is vulnerable; he has no weapon, no vision, and no obvious means of protecting himself against the events of the world. This indicates the importance on the right-hand path of disarming oneself in relation to the world. Finally, consistent with the theme of the Archetypal Mind, Typhon, emblem of misfortune, is on the sphinx's right and Hermanubis, emblem of fortune, on his left. This affirms that fortune and comfort in the physical world tend to catalyze us along the left-hand path, while misfortune and discomfort will tend to catalyze us along the right-hand path. Brothers and sisters of sorrow, indeed.

Character: The Affected

Catalyst is the offspring of a potentiated matrix. In this case, the catalytic activity is the Wild Woman's reaction to the Sage's action. This reaction is a pure expression of natural justice, which enacts a subtle reflection of the potential coiled up in the Sage's initial intervention. Everything the Wild Woman does in response to the Sage's action is the manifest fruition of the Sage's seed action. She reveals to him in minute detail the natural consequences of his actions. But this revelation is complex. Fortune and misfortune befall us in this world through various events that seem unconnected and random. It is not easy to trace the events one witnesses today back to a seed action that one performed days, weeks, or months ago.

The catalytic activity is part of the reaction of the Wild Woman to the intervention of the Sage. The persona of this third archetype in the cycle, the Catalyst of the Body, is presence to and understanding of the catalytic activity. He does not process the catalyst; he reveals its nature as interpreted through his own lens. Because of his relationship to the catalytic activity in the Matrix of the Body, I call this persona the Affected.

The Affected is the persona that we tell children to enter when, as part of their punishment, we tell them to "Think about what you did." The Affected is aware of the dramatic turn of recent events and finds himself as surprised as anyone that either fortune or misfortune have befallen him. He does not know what he did to earn this circumstance. But, in his virtuous manifestation (the one depicted on the card), he believes that some previous action or pattern of actions has caused him to end up in this situation. No matter how random or bizarre the event is, the Affected sets himself to the task of working out how he has brought it upon himself. Even inaction is action, as when we do nothing while someone calls out to us for help, so the Affected's responsibility for examining his past includes all forms of conscious action and inaction.

I should note at this point that there is a danger of misinterpretation here. The Affected is a person whose previous action was a conscious choice to intervene in some un-self-reflective cycle with an agenda in mind. While the good and bad events that befall a person can always benefit from interpretation as the product of a previous action with an agenda, we should not dismiss the importance of a person who is harmed by the agenda of another. The Wild Woman minds her own business; her affairs are changed by the action of another. Thus, the phenomenon of victim/victimizer is real: the victim had no agenda, while the victimizer did. The idea that every bad happenstance is just the product of one's own actions or preincarnative choices, while not incorrect in Ra's system, does not displace the responsibility of the victimizer, nor does it undermine the righteous anger of the Wild Woman whose boundaries have been violated. The same event can be both catalyst from one perspective and potentiation from another.

The Affected, in reflecting upon the events of his experience, the comfort or discomfort the situation has brought him, and his previous actions and inactions, will come to some conclusions about the causal relationships at play. This picture will not be perfectly clear, since so much is hidden from us, but it is informative enough that he will now have a sense of how his actions have brought about the circumstance and of what can be done differently next time he has a similar opportunity to act.

The function of the Affected is to allow the catalytic activity of the body to be known to and understood by the mind, in as detailed a way as possible. The clearer the Affected can get about the specific actions

he took and how they caused the outcomes observed, the more productive the processing of the catalyst will be. The Affected is motivated by his desire to calm the volatile and apparently random mechanisms of the physical world. His empowering capacity is his ability to hold in complex causal relationships in before his awareness all at once. His virtues are his conviction that every apparently random event has an explanation that can be traced back to his prior action and his ability to notice the minute details of an event.

Levels

On the personal level, the Affected examines his actions with respect to his own body and his own living space. The actions in question do not affect other people in any obvious or direct way; they primarily affect his own wellbeing. Physical ailments of all kinds will often have a metaphysical component: they are in some way precipitated by the configuration of our energy web which attracts to us certain kinds of experiences. On this level, it is helpful to consider whether, say, an intense headache was caused by smoking or drinking too much, or whether it was caused by thinking too hard about how to act in front of others, or whether there is some other cause entirely. The way we comport ourselves both to the world and with respect to our own bodies will invite or discourage certain ailments. Sometimes the cause will be obvious and easy to spot, but other times it will be very challenging to make sense of one's ailment. Positive physical sensations and conditions are, of course, equally susceptible to analysis about their root causes in a person's energy web configuration. On this level of experience, the Affected is focused on understanding as clearly as possible how his conscious actions may have caused a change in the condition of his body. While causal reasoning is part of the Affected's skill set, the experience of working out an explanation for the current situation is not experienced as a rational affair; it is more like exposing oneself without protection to one's own memories and present sensations. In this exposure, the proper explanation becomes clear, though it filters through a moral lens whose nature is decided by the Affected's polarization.

In our conscious awareness of the body, we see catalyst of the body in either a forward-looking way (left-hand path) or a backward-looking way (right-hand path). When looking forward, on the left-hand path, we see opportunity and threat emerging on the horizon as a consequence of our prior action. This suggests to our conscious awareness further action to either pursue the opportunity or quell the threat. We then double down on our previous action by attempting to navigate toward opportunity and crush the threats along the way. On the right-hand path, we look backward on previous actions to identify the actions that brought about both pleasant and unpleasant consequences. We accept responsibility for his actions as a way to change them in the future.

On the interpersonal level, the Affected must examine his actions in relation to other human beings. Some major change of fortune has taken place in relation to someone else: the other has either taken on a tone of excitement and elation or they have become angry and resentful. He has learned that these feelings are, in fact, targeted at him and that the other person believes his actions are responsible. The Affected, then, must work out what he did to merit this kind of behavior. In the case of excitement, he must have given the person something that made their lives better; in the case of anger, he must have violated one of their boundaries.

We express the Affected on the social level when we are part of a group that is experiencing either backlash or praise with respect to our past behavior. Protests are often an expression of the Wild

Woman's anger and outrage at the Sage's act of violating her boundaries. These kinds of protests offer the group that is being protested an opportunity to discover the causal relationship between that group's past behavior and the outrage and possibly even destruction that is currently playing out. Protest, though, is not the only way for catalytic action to present itself to the social Affected. Any kind of social response to a powerful entity's conscious action according to an agenda is catalytic action that offers this group an opportunity to discover the causal relationships that led to this response. It is a strange thing that we should so often act consciously according to an agenda and so seldom pay attention to ourselves doing just that.

Polarized Expressions and Modes of Distortion

In his right-hand path polarization, the Affected is Contrite. The kinds of events that tend to polarize us positive are unfortunate ones. Thus, when the Affected is confronted with the ways that his own behavior either failed to respect the free will of others or failed to serve others who called for help, he will feel remorse. He takes responsibility for each of his actions and will recount each boundary violation and each neglected chance for service, perhaps publicly, as an act of atonement. He does not attempt to defend himself in any way; rather, he has seen the righteousness of the Wild Woman's anger and understands it. The Contrite does not tend to have as much use for fortunate events. He will be grateful for the blessings bestowed on him by the world and by others, but he does not believe that he uniquely deserves blessing. He sees all human beings as deserving of blessing, so he allows fortune to enter his world without taking it as an indication of eliteness. The efforts of the Contrite represent enact our own inner attempt to balance the motivation of our unconditional love for others with wisdom about the nature of the causal world. His lesson is the light touch: he learns through his own past errors what it means to act in loving service to others, without exceeding the natural boundary of free will.

In his left-hand path polarization, the Affected is Emboldened. As focus on misfortune tends to polarize us positive, focus on fortune will tend to polarize us negative. When the Emboldened is subjected to a fortunate event, he examines his past behavior to look for some act on his part that brought about that fortune. His goal is to maximize his ability to bring fortune to himself, and his success in manifesting this good fortune affirms to him his own unique worthiness of that fortune. The Emboldened has much and his good fortune adds to what he already has. We will publicly take credit for his causal role in his good fortune as both evidence and proclamation of his own deservingness of the high privilege he enjoys. When misfortune finds him, he likewise examines his actions to determine where and how he miscalculated his actions. When he discovers a likely causal sequence, he commits to making his actions more subtle so that he is less likely to be caught and punished next time. He does not read his misfortunes as indictments of his character, but as opportunities to polish his discipline in action.

These highly polarized expressions are rare in practice. They are the ideals toward which we move with each transformation. Nearly all of us will fall somewhere between them, expressing these personas in their mixed forms.

The mixed Affected who attempts to polarize positive wants to have the courage to confess and own his sins, but he cannot bear to face the full weight of his actions. If he were to think clearly and carefully about how he has harmed other people or failed to help others when he had the opportunity, he fears he could never forgive himself. So he hides from himself, meeting an inner barrier each time he attempts to work out the causal relationships between the misfortune he experiences and his past

actions. He is also afraid of the consequences of taking responsibility for his actions. If he were to admit wrongdoing, he would have to own up to his own imperfection. But he secretly wants to feel elite. He wants to be a better human being than others and he judges his own value or eliteness in terms of his moral character. It is crucial that for the sake of his own feelings of self-worth, he must see himself as incapable of harming others.

The mixed Affected who attempts to polarize negative wants to have no remorse. He wants to be able to crush others underfoot and to bask in the accolades he receives for his strong presentation, but when he attempts to make sense of his moments of misfortune, he finds himself spiraling into feelings of remorse. He feels weak and pathetic because he can't seem to let go of his attachment to the wellbeing of others. He publicly takes credit for whatever accolades he receives, but he cannot seem to occupy a place of confidence in his deservingness. He secretly hates himself and tries desperately to hide from his own self-hatred.

One distorted expression of the Affected is the standard exoteric view that apparently random events really are random. In this distortion, catalyst rarely ever enters the mind for integration. In his relationships with other people, sometimes they treat him badly for no apparent reason. He sees no indication that there might be anything at all amiss in his actions. He persists as he always has, hoping to see more fortune than misfortune, but altogether unsure how to secure the one and avoid the other. In his mind, the larger movements of the world make little sense, so the best he can do is to make sure he has insurance against the misfortunes that will eventually occur.

Another distorted expression of the Affected is a lack of sensitivity to the circumstances as the present themselves. Catalyst of the Body is much more blatant and obvious to the mind than Catalyst of the Mind or Spirit. As a masculine archetype, the conscious mind has direct and transparent access to it. Physical sensations and outward fortunes and misfortunes are easy to notice and very hard to miss; they impress themselves on our awareness. Yet some people seem oblivious. Bodily symptoms of a physical ailment present themselves, but we downplay them or just don't pay any attention to them until they are crippling in their severity. A person may lose house, livelihood and spouse but fail to pay attention to any of the details of how the loss came about. In mysterious fashion, suddenly it was all gone, and he never registered any of the warning signs that the event was coming. This distorted expression is so common, it is tropey. The man in the relationship never pays any attention to anything his partner communicates to him; his denseness loses him the love of his life; he turns to the bottle because a Bad Thing happened for no good reason that he could see. This distortion of the Affected is simultaneously tragic and frustrating to behold.

18. The Experience of the Body

Ra says nothing useful about the Experience of the Body. Everything we have from Ra can only help us glean the content of this archetype from what Ra says about its classification and its counterpart archetype, the Catalyst of the Body.

Symbols

A human female figure stands facing to her right, wearing a long and heavy dress. In front of her stands a lion with its mouth open. With her right hand on the lion's nose and her left hand under the lion's chin,

she closes its mouth. She wears a uraeus and a crown on her head. Atop the crown, there is a pitcher and a bird.

Relative to the previous card, the imagery on this one is simple. The woman represents the unconscious body. The uraeus, as usual, represents the natural wisdom of the unconscious. Her thick dress indicates heavy protection from the influence of the opposite polarity.

The lion represents the volatility and danger of both the body's instincts and the physical environment in which the body exists. The lion represents a creature that can and sometimes does maim and kill human beings who, whether they run or fight, can do little to keep the lion from its intention. It is supremely dangerous, not merely for its power and strength, but also for its instinctive tendency to attack: lions are predators that feed on creatures our size. The lion represents the capacity of the physical world, and even the body itself, to overwhelm and destroy a person. One wrong move spells gruesome death.

The woman's ability to stand in front of the lion and close its jaws—without even tipping the pitcher on her head—reflects the grace, composure and, above all, power of the unconscious body. This one act demonstrates that all of the strength and ferocity of the lion is at her disposal; where others must keep their distance out of fear of the threat of the lion, she has tamed it and, presumably, can command the lion to attack if she pleases.

The pitcher, wherever it appears, represents our emotional biases. In this case, the pitcher stands upright, indicating that the emotions remain in place, contained within their receptacle: the unconscious body will not release any of its biases here. The pitcher's placement on her head indicates that these emotions are a guiding force in this archetype. The emotional disposition the unconscious mind has toward the physical world is the strength through which the unconscious body manifests the grace and authority to close the lion's jaws.

Finally, the bird, as always, represents the spirit. In this case, the bird is perched on her head next to the pitcher of her emotions. The bird is free, so, in contrast to the perched bird in the cage in the Matrix of the Mind, there is no spiritual struggle or frustration in this archetype. The spirit is restful rather than restless. The bird's equal stature with the pitcher of emotions shows fulfilment of the covenant with spirit: the spirit's presence affirms the polarized agreement between the emotional biases of the unconscious mind in its integration of bodily catalyst and the spirit complex.

Character: The Whisperer

The Experience of the Body is a persona who, in her relation to others, holds all the cards. I call her the "Whisperer," because she is the only one who can tame the inner beast in humanity. This inner beast is the raw, brazen, destructive capacity within human beings, especially in an emotionally excited and unthinking state. The Whisperer can, if she wishes, marshal this energy toward an intelligent purpose. But she must be won over to that purpose, not by reasoning or arguments, but by a demonstration that this purpose is worthy.

Many *Tarot* commentators have called her "Strength," because without her energy, nothing can be accomplished. If she is in agreement with the Sage's agenda, she multiplies its power by removing all the barriers to its enactment. If she is against the Sage's agenda, then she will make that agenda impossible

to accomplish. The Whisperer is a necessary ally; every path to manifestation in the physical world must gain her support.

The Whisperer is intimidating. Her piercing gaze will cow any person who is racked with guilt. Her composure comes not through control of her own emotions, but through the synergistic harmony of those emotions: she is not conflicted. Or if she is conflicted, it is about whether to give another chance to a person who has clearly committed an error of judgment. She is not conflicted about the error or about her own position of strength in relation to that person. Hers is the composure that comes from emotional intensity.

The function of the Whisperer is to integrate physical and sensory information into the existing cyclical activity of the body. She records changes in the Matrix by regaining homeostasis. Her judgment about how to regain homeostasis depends on the quality of the catalyst presented to her. She is motivated by her desire for reunion and her empowering capacity is the enormous power she has at her command: she wants reunion but is aware of her deep asymmetry in the relationship in which she wants reunion. Her virtues are...

Levels

On the personal level, we express the Whisperer when we hold ourselves accountable for the actions that cause our current condition. Our unconscious, or hidden, awareness within the body processes the conscious side's report of what we see. On the right-hand path, the hidden awareness must respond to a report on our conscious recognition of responsibility for our actions. The hidden self judges whether we have adequately apologized for errors or humbly attributed proper responsibility for positive results. On the left-hand path, the hidden self must respond to a report on the opportunities and threats that we consciously see in the outward movements over which the hidden self has control. If we consciously see a threat, then we double down on our oppression of that threat by punishing the unconscious self for allowing it to pass through. In response to this punishment, the hidden bodily self enacts a similar violence on the body's more violent capacities, choking them into submission. On the left-hand path, the unconscious body does not forgive, but steels herself into a more controlled state.

On the interpersonal level, we express the Whisperer when, in a relationship with someone else, we are in a position to withhold needed assistance or physical support from the other. On this level, the onus is on us to decide whether to reestablish rapport with the other person, based on whether that person has demonstrated that their intentions are in alignment with our own. We often express this persona either in response to a transgression that the other usually does not even understand they have committed, or in response to a boon that the other usually does not realize they have provided.

On the social level, we express the Whisperer when some social source of power needs our assistance to enact their agenda. They curry our favor either by attempting to acquire our trust or by offering a deal so good we cannot refuse. Here, we become the politically aware Masses who now understand that we are the power without which a social agent is impotent.

Polarized Expressions and Modes of Distortion

The positive Whisperer is the Absolver. She has the power to forgive a person's transgressions, which relieves the inner and outer torment, not of guilt, but of the physical punishment that follows guilt. She listens to the confession and in her heart weighs the sincerity and completeness of that confession. She

wants to be convinced that the aggression against her boundaries is understood well enough that it hopefully does not repeat. In her stance as the confessor listening to the sins of another, she keeps the dogs at bay while she listens. Her judgment can be seen through her handling of the inner beast. If the onslaught continues, then she has heard the confession and has withheld absolution: the confession was not sincere or not complete. But if she is satisfied, she will calm the beast and return the world to peace.

The negative Whisperer is the Accomplice. She marshals the will of the human beast through skill, fear, and threat. She has a watchful eye everywhere; not the smallest detail eludes her. She is technically proficient, but, her ability to position herself is her source of strength: she is always in the right place at the right time. This ability catches a person who lives out the instinctive animal spirit in humanity off-guard. This is how she whispers. But, as the Whisperer, she awaits a satisfying agenda to put her energy behind. Whoever would have her on his side must demonstrate to her that he can deliver what he promises. He must have already had some success maneuvering to consolidate power and be willing to share that power with her as a sign of his good faith.

The mixed Whisperer trying to polarize positive...

The mixed Whisperer trying to polarize negative...

One distorted expression of the Whisperer...

19. Relationship #6

Character: Conflict Resolution

I will begin with the right-hand path polarized relationship between these two personas. The Contrite is presented with the consequences of his actions. In the case that the Sage has acted in a way that honors the Wild Woman by demonstrating respect for her boundaries, courtesy for her energetic state, and being all around observant and attentive, the reaction from the Wild Woman will have been positive. He will have endeared himself to her and her reaction is gratitude. When the Contrite sees this display of gratitude, it presents an opportunity for him to bring his attention to the moral virtues she is confirming in him. His response will not be to overinflate his sense of virtue or to judge that her approval demonstrates his acquisition of manifest perfection; he will instead be humble. The Catalyst, in this harmonious, right-hand path scenario, is her pleasant response, which he will now associate with respectful, courteous, attentive behavior: she positively reinforces his behavior. If he manages to remain humble in the face of this showering of praise from the Wild Woman, the Absolver's heart will open to him further. She will let down her guard further, make herself more vulnerable, and become generally more trusting to his agenda. Through humility, he demonstrates to her that his agenda is one that always keeps her wellbeing before his mind. This makes her feel safe, not in the sense of preservation of identity, but in the sense of respect for her boundaries. In this place of safety, she becomes more receptive to a reorientation of boundaries. Their renewed closeness allows her to feel more expansive and more willing to entertain the Sage's plan of action.

In the case that the positively polarized Sage has acted in a way that violates the Wild Woman's boundaries, even in a small way, her reaction will have been severe. Her righteous anger will have stirred up a maelstrom of consequence that now rains upon the Contrite as a presentation to him of the

flip-side of the Sage's violation. The Contrite must now carefully examine his own actions to discover the causal source of the punishment. When he returns to the unconscious mind, now in her manifestation as the Absolver, he must offer to her a meticulous account of precisely the actions that he took which violated her boundaries. He must demonstrate that he understands what her boundaries are and also how his action violated them. His effort in discovering the causal relationship between his action and her reaction shows her that he will not so easily make this mistake next time because the error of the action is now present to him in a way that he is unlikely to forget.

The balancing exercises of the body, as described by Ra in session 5, are an expression of this relationship. Ra does not explain what it means to "understand the bodily polarities and accept them," and I think this vagueness can easily leave a student confused about the significance of this process. It seems as if this understanding and acceptance revolves around the body's appearance and tendency toward ailment. So understanding and accepting the body of another hardly seems like a central part of inner evolution. However, I think we should understand Ra more expansively here. The bodily polarities include the cyclic rhythms of the energy web, as manifested by the Wild Woman. They also include the apparent missteps and offenses of the Sage, whose wisdom is not moral wisdom but recognition of the specific kind of lesson we need here in this moment. It is as hard to accept that the body's habits are okay as they are as it is to accept that our past actions are also okay as they are. The same, of course, applies to the actions and energy webs of others. Here, we see that the balancing exercises of the body involve accepting and forgiving the actions of others. Notice also that the strictness and power of the Whisperer entails that, even on the right-hand path, there is no requirement that the aggrieved should reestablish harmony with the aggressor. She must be satisfied by his demonstration of contrition and understanding, and if she is not satisfied, that is her prerogative. The injunction to "forgive and forget," in this relationship (and in the body exercises) can become yet another boundary violation from the Sage after the Contrite's failed effort to identify catalyst.

Now consider the left-hand path polarized relationship between these two personas. The Emboldened is a kind of response to the Wild Woman's positive reaction to the Sage's action. If the Sage has acted with disregard for the Wild Woman's boundaries but has, through that violation, changed her experience in a positive way, her reaction will be to hunger for more. The emergence of the Emboldened as a possible way of being happens when the Sage acts in violation of the Wild Woman's boundaries but is still well-received. How does this happen? In general, this is a situation in which he has done something that is "for her own good," regardless of what she says she wants, but the immediate and pleasant effects of this action surprise her. This is a primal kind of reaction to a dominant masculine energy in a person who confidently takes what he wants without asking for permission under the auspices that, on a deep level, she wants to be treated this way. Clearly, we are dealing with an insidious kind of attitude, but not, I think, one that lacks empirical support. In order for it to make sense that no does not always mean no, one must already be within the mood of the negatively polarized Whisperer. The Accomplice does not want to be treated gently, nor does she want the Emboldened to have perfect respect for her boundaries. She wants him to be a manifestation of domineering potency. She wants him to be able to stand up to her power, but she also wants him to need her power.

The Emboldened will have a different kind of response if the Sage's violation sparks the Wild Woman's anger. She will unleash consequence in the form of righteous anger that manifests as misfortune for him. In his examination of the causal relations tracing back to his seed action, he will discover that there was some failure on his part to adequately enact his agenda. Perhaps he had allowed too much leeway

for the Wild Woman in his intervention, or perhaps he was too overt. He will feel no remorse for his transgression; rather, the lesson he will take away is about not getting caught next time. The Wild Woman must be controlled, and he must find a way to get her to go along with this control as if it was her choice. When the Emboldened faces the Accomplice, who now presides over the consequences meted out by the Wild Woman, he will double-down on the display of force that characterized the Sage's boundary violation. He informs the Accomplice that she won't have the chance to get back at him again the way she did this time. If his show of force impresses her by convincing her that she won't win next time, she will submit to him, call off the dogs, and realign herself with his agenda.

Before I transition to the mixed expressions, I want to note that this relationship characterizes not only the physical events whose causes are easy to identify, but also the most apparently random physical events. When the Affected confronts the Whisperer, he often does not know for sure what caused the fortune or misfortune. He has educated guesses, often more than one. So he feels much uncertainty about whether his way of handling this situation will meet the Whisperer's demands. He might not even be speaking to the right person or group. The Whisperer is often identifiable (since she will be an aggrieved party), but the haziness of the causal connections unearthed by the Affected's examination will leave him uncertain about whether he got the story and the identity of the Whisperer correct. Note that this uncertainty matches a common trope in heterosexual relationships: the woman is angry with the man, but the man does not know what he did wrong. She requires that he figures it out for himself. He makes an effort, apologizes for his best guess at the wrongdoing, and hopes she takes him back. Of course, in this trope, there is no guarantee that she will take him back and it is likely that his guess about his wrongdoing is much more superficial than what she is really aggrieved about. I recommend you extrapolate from this trope to other analogous events.

Now I will consider the relationship between the mixed expressions. Remember that these expressions are by far the most common. If we imagine a spectrum with the two polarized expressions on either end, and the two mixed expressions as characterizing the space between, we will almost always fall somewhere in the mixed region.

I will begin with the expressions that attempt to polarize toward the right-hand path. The Affected here lacks the fortitude to face the reality of his own actions. He secretly knows that he has brought misfortune upon himself but does not want to admit his responsibility, for fear that he will discover the self-centeredness and cruelty in his intentions and behavior. The Whisperer knows she needs to hold him accountable for his actions. She has seen the pattern of violation repeat itself over and over, but she is not convinced that he is wrong. She suspects that his agenda for her might be best for her after all. She secretly knows that it feels wrong and that her cowing to his repeated violations is poisoning their relationship, but she is not willing to face that reality because it would require her to stand up to him in a way that she never has before. So she sheepishly shows her anger when he hurts her and quickly takes him back when he apologizes no matter how superficially he has recognized his transgression. And she hopes, secretly knowing it is hopeless, that maybe this time he will respect her.

Finally, consider the mixed expression in which the two are attempting to polarize negative. The Affected wants to feel no remorse when the Sage transgresses against the Wild Woman. He wants ruthlessness and abject strength of position to be his defining features, but he is soft. He sometimes worries that he is being too hard on the Whisperer, and he instantly hates himself for this worry. He tries to assert his dominance before her, but the show is unconvincing. His attempt to look strong

results in a proclamation of his own weakness. The Whisperer sees the Affected's constant second-guessing of himself and despises him for it. She wants to respect him as unbendable in his will to gain and consolidate power, but she can't. She sees that he is pathetic, but she also does not have any better options. Her own ability to position herself on the strategic high ground is limited, which she hates about herself. She has no other option but to carry on in her existing relationship with the Affected, hoping that she can somehow propel herself into a better position at some point.

When to Become the Personas

I will begin with the personal level. When we listen to our own inner dialogue, we hear ourselves giving explanations for both the pleasant and unpleasant sensations we experience. If we have bodily ailments, we muster an account of the cause of those ailments. Sometimes, when we listen in on this inner dialogue, it strikes us as bullshit. This experience is not so much a conceptual judgment about the stories we tell ourselves—that would be a mental phenomenon—but a sensory discomfort with ourselves as we continue forward as if our actions were justified. In these moments, we can detect the falsehoods we tell ourselves about the seemingly benign nature of our own actions and the cruelty of world and body that would inflict such random hurts on us. This inner, self-applied bullshit detector is a sign that the inner Absolver is active within us. She calls out our own bullshit by refusing to accept our explanations of our intentions in acting. Where we have reaped righteous anger, we have sown harm. The inner feeling of discord transmitted through bodily sensations (shaking, sweating, queasiness, butterflies, etc.) that tell us that all is not well within our intentions. This is the unconscious body's method of letting us know that we need to enter the persona of the Contrite. Her suggestion is that we need to face our own misdeeds honestly and without looking away, so we can be unscrupulous in our understanding of how we have come to this situation we are in and merit forgiveness from the hidden body complex itself.

Other times, we find ourselves fixated on the minute details of our actions, agonizing over the potential long-term effects of this action or that action. We hold ourselves ruthlessly accountable, undergoing periods of self-flagellation for our errors, but never finding a satisfying end to the torment of our own memories. Each time we recall our own misdeeds, our body flares up with unpleasant affectations as if we were right back in the moment of offense. In times like these, the Contrite is active within us, begging for the Absolver's forgiveness. When there is no end to inner punishment and our pursuit of atonement, it is a good time to enter the persona of the Absolver, whose judgment about the sincerity and completeness of an apology carries real weight. Forgiveness is not, it turns out, a conscious choice; it is an unconscious activity that follows the Absolver's satisfaction with the Contrite. If our bodily ailments are the consequence of our own harmful actions, these consequences will persist until we find the inner authority capable of issuing forgiveness. The interface between the Contrite and the Absolver tends to iterate over time. Self-forgiveness is not of a single moment, but repeats over and over until the Contrite has gotten to the very bottom of each instance of foul action, identifying exactly which intentions caused bodily harm. It requires painful honesty about what our desires for sensation and action really are, without any sugar-coating.

Note that the Absolver is not capable of ending harmful addictions, because these phenomena are usually part of evolution in the spirit cycle. Rather, the forgiveness of the body-cycle is about actions that seemed like a good idea but had deeply harmful consequences. These actions are characteristically motivated in some way by a good or beneficial intention but marred either by a misunderstanding of the causal nature of the physical world or by a self-serving intention that is available for discovery but

obscured from conscious view. Additionally, our actions are almost always tied to our self-conceptions and our judgments about the identities of others, so the forgiveness of the Absolver is related to the acceptance of the Judge. I will explore this relationship in detail in a later chapter [that is not yet written].

On the interpersonal level, these same patterns, as always, repeat. When our explanations and defenses of our own actions with regard to another are consistently met with the other's frowning skepticism, the other's bullshit detector is activated. They are standing in the intimidated energy of the Absolver, waiting for us to become the Contrite and engage in a sincere and thorough examination of our own actions. Likewise, when, in a relationship with someone else, the other is desperately soul-searching in an earnest effort to repent and make a past boundary violation right, they are occupying the energy of the Contrite. All that remains is for us to break down the inner barriers that prevent us from granting forgiveness. If we enter the energy of the Absolver, we will be capable, in this place, of making an honest judgment about whether the other has satisfied the requirements of absolution, which lead to a reopening of the relationship and a renewed interpersonal warmth.

On the social level, the appropriate time to express these personas is related to the power differentials between various groups of people. Often, the dynamics of oppression relate to these personas. Constant boundary violation of one group by another generates the resentment and righteous anger of the violated group. Eventually, there will be a reckoning in which the violating group is faced with the unpleasant consequences of their own actions. If this group, the privileged group, does not satisfactorily own up to their participation in the violations of the other group, the oppressed group, then the oppressed group will not absolve the privileged group, and the relationship between these two groups will not become warm again. Here, the dynamics of bullshit explanations and stone-cold refusal despite an earnest apology characterize the moments of opportunity for one of these groups to become either the Contrite or the Absolver.

20. A Final Remark on the Lesser Cycle of the Body

I have thus far examined the Lesser Cycle of the body almost exclusively on its own terms. But, as Ra tells us, the body is a creature of the mind. And the mind is the conduit through which the influences of the spirit reach manifestation. Thus, there are two overriding evolutionary environments that can seize the movements of bodily evolution for their own purposes. In the body, we can see a reflection of all our mental impediments to acceptance of self and other. All of our value judgments play out in our actions, as the Potentiator of the Body, without our conscious awareness, imparts biases of mind and spirit into the world. The body cycle has the unique characteristic of vivid and unavoidable catalyst. What can be pushed away in mind and spirit cannot be avoided in body, thus the lessons of mind and spirit can use the bodily apparatus to make themselves seen.

I will examine these interesting relationships toward the end of this book, when I consider the archetypes in groups of three within a single classification. I understand that this reverses Ra's recommendation for study, but my book on the subject is not a program of study; it is a resource meant to assist in a program of study. [Note: I have not written this promised section yet, so it does not yet appear at the end of the book.]

21. The Significator of the Body

The Significator of the Body represents the total body complex as it exists at any given moment. In other words, the Significator captures the nature of the body complex as it relates to inner evolution. This card represents how a virtuous mind will think of itself in relation to its body. As a Significator, it presents a summary of the Lesser Cycle, revealing the relationships between the previous four archetypes.

Symbols

A man hangs by his right foot from a branch held up by two limbless trees. His left foot hangs, crossing his right at a 90 degree angle. His hands are bound together over his head, dropping four coins on the ground below. Fruit-yielding vines grow up both trees, but each vine remains on its own side, without contacting the other side.

The conscious or transparent awareness is a point of awareness within the broader field of the unconscious or mysterious. We see male figures more frequently in the images for the archetypes because the unconscious is easily represented by the space surrounding the conscious mind. In this card, that same pattern repeats. Here, the conscious body is bound, hand and foot. His ability to act is extremely limited: all he can do is drop the few coins (or perhaps seeds) that he holds in his hands.

It is easy to think of the Potentiator of the Body as expansive and broad in its capacity for action. But the free will of the Lesser Cycle is not freedom of choice; it is the freedom to be the unique self that one already is. The Potentiator of the Body can only act as it always would have acted and cannot do otherwise. Moreover, the Potentiator's action is so severely constrained that all he can do is expend the meager resources he has: attention and observation. We act as the Potentiator, not by carefully thinking out what to do (though it feels that way), but merely by bringing our awareness to the present moment as we act. In doing so, we pay the price giving our attention to this moment in the physical world; we could have given our attention elsewhere. And this price, once paid, is fruit-bearing. It brings catalyst that we may use to further clarify the nature of the self through its reflection in the physical body and environment.

The crossed legs and circular shape of the arms are a stylized ankh. Again, we see the symbol of the strait and narrow path of return to the Creator, which requires us to strike a careful balance. The conscious mind's payment and the crossed legs both signify the concept of sacrifice. However, I do not think we are dealing here with initiatory sacrifice, since that concept belongs to the Transformation of the Body. Here, we are dealing with the mundane, daily sacrifice embedded into the very nature of a physical existence in third density. Our time and energy is limited. In each moment, we must choose how to spend those limited resources and, in so choosing, sacrifice all other possibilities for expenditure.

There is a second form of sacrifice that is also expressed in this image. The fruit bearing vines rise up the two tree pillars on each side of the conscious mind. These vines are independent plants, which means that the conscious mind must choose which vine to plant and nourish and which vine to neglect. Here, we see the sacrifice of moral polarity enacted in the physical world. If we wish to follow the right-hand path, we must devote our efforts in service to the hidden and mysterious and to others around us. This comes at the cost of our potential effort to serve the conscious mind by coordinating the unconscious and the others around us into that service. We cannot walk both paths simultaneously. Thus, every

effort we make to enact service on one path is an act of neglect of the other. In this image, both vines grow because life in third density is inherently conflicted. Even though we must choose one of the two paths, we flit back and forth, sometimes acting in service to others, sometimes acting in service to our conscious mind alone.

Character: The Homesteader

The body complex is fundamentally a vehicle for discovering the nuances of our thoughts, feelings and intentions that are not available in mind alone. It is a physical home and, like all other homes, requires maintenance, attention, care. I call this persona the Homesteader because his (remember, this archetype contains both genders, but I will use “his” for ease of understanding in considering the relationship between this persona and the Traveler, who is non-gendered but will receive feminine pronouns) efforts are all bent toward establishing and maintaining a healthy physical environment, which extends to body, home, and any second home you he might have.

The Homesteader is focused on keeping a balance between the curated and the wild. Within the curated space, he spends his energy keeping it orderly and well-functioning. He is always aware of his own limited resources, so the mind, in this persona, is fixed on and attendant to the economy of energy expenditure. He exists only within a dynamic flow of events, constantly juggling each of the needs of the day, without the luxury of resting. It is hard, perhaps impossible, for him to think about living in a way that is any different from how he does. His resources are so limited that he ultimately uses everything that comes into his possession. At the end of the day, all of the things accomplished are exactly the things that could have been accomplished in that day.

Though his home is in constant movement, it tends toward stable balance. He is not unwilling to change; on the contrary, experimenting with change is part of his very nature. He wants the economy of his home to be maximally efficient, so he tries out little changes to his daily protocols, tweaking things here and there to see if the resulting flow of energies is more efficient than before. Rarely does an experiment go well the first time, but the process of experimentation allows his little tweaks to make a real difference. He finds ways to maximize the comfort and functionality of his home, reducing the energy he needs to spend on maintaining it in this or that way.

The function of the Homesteader is to offer a stable vehicle for experience and manifestation in third density. The Homesteader is motivated by his desire to economize his patterns of resource expenditure. His empowering capacity is his ability to adapt to the changing needs of the moment without significantly interrupting his own regimen. His virtues are

Levels

On the personal level, the Homesteader is the collection of biases we have in relation to the maintenance and persistence of our body and its environment. More specifically, the inner Homesteader, the Significator of the Body, is a static preference for engaging in the Catalyst and Experience processes in a certain way. We prefer to think about the cyclic use of our own physical resources and those of others in a very particular way. So we build for ourselves a way of life, a pattern of overarching activity in which we act out our values concerning ourselves and others on a daily basis. The inner Homesteader is our collection of biases about our own patterns of energy expenditure and how they can be most efficiently employed. This includes our judgments about the best use of time, the

best forms of nutrition, the best way to acquire more resources, etc. In asserting these judgments, we present our biases to ourselves as a kind of offering, a physical manifestation of that represents the best we have to offer.

On the interpersonal level, the Homesteader is a Host who offers his way of living to others as a space to occupy and participate in creating. The Host has an idea of what the good life looks like and attempts to manifest it and share that mode of manifestation with others. In Hosting, we recommend our way of life to others. We present to them our considered judgment about what it means to efficiently meet the needs of the day as well as our underlying moral values and obligations.

On the social level, the Homesteader is the collectively asserted cultural norms that dictate the power dynamics, the patterns of energy flow, and the acceptable methods for changes to those patterns. The social Homesteader is the Status Quo. It is amenable to reform but resistant to revolution. It is a perpetually moving machine that must be repaired and improved amid its own constant motion: a Neurathian ship, if you will. It is crucial because it ensures the continued nourishment of society (or the relevant group) more generally. But it is simultaneously a rigid impediment to change because the Status Quo cannot afford to stop the motion of the machine so it can be fully rebuilt.

Polarized Expressions and Modes of Distortion

The polarities of the Homesteader appear in response to the question “why?” To what end does the Homesteader maintain his home? The polarized right-hand path Homesteader is a Shelterer. He wants his home to be welcoming and nourishing to those who are in need. He treats his body and his home with loving care, not for the sake of his own pleasure, but for the sake of those who might be helped through his carefully established economy. He attends to his own needs as he attends to the needs of others, since needs are needs. That is to say, the needs of his unconscious mind, as demonstrated through his body’s physical capacities and ailments, are as important to him as the needs of others, because his ability to serve others depends on his ability to maintain his own body. He develops an ever-deeper sensitivity to the ways that his action or inaction affects other people, as well as his own internal balance. That is, he is sensitive to the demand for balance between the motivating feeling of unconditional love and acceptance and the limiting necessities of wisdom concerning the possibilities of action. He wants to make the world a better place and believes that his best means of doing so is to make his home as inviting and accommodating as possible to both himself and the others whom he is capable of assisting. The relationships he forms with others are not based on transactional demands in which he will profit, but on trusting relationships in which each gives what they have to offer. He does not need to demand payment from others because he trusts in the goodness of their own nature as he trusts in his own: gratitude motivates giving without the need for demand. But in those cases in which others seek to take advantage of his beneficence, he invokes the importance of his own boundaries. Those who cannot be trusted must, unfortunately, be kept at arm’s length.

The left-hand path polarized Homesteader is a Swindler. He engages in relationships both with his own unconscious mind and with others based on profitable transaction. His intention is not only to make a profit, but to leave others either indebted to him or otherwise dependent on him. He wants to own both the goose and the golden eggs it lays. His economic approach is meant to use his limited resources to leverage ever increasing power and influence over those within his domain and to expand the limits of that domain. He does not play fair, though he will maintain a reputation for playing fair because that

makes others easier to swindle. He is not interested in respecting the boundaries of others, though he is ruthless in retaliating against those who do not respect his. Whoever comes into his home comes under his command. Every change in the dynamic flow of resources within his body and household is meant to further establish it as a mechanism for appropriating for himself what was once another's.

As is the case in all the of the Catalyst, Experience and Significator personas, the polarized representations of these personas are the extreme ends of a spectrum. The reality for incarnate human beings is that we fall somewhere within the large mixed region of that spectrum. Only the perfectly balance are even *capable* of expressing the polarized personas. In other words becoming the Significator just *means* to become something that is mixed in polarity. The mixed nature of our expression of these archetypes is what creates the possibility of critical distance and eventually Transformation.

The mixed Homesteader attempts to feed both grapevines. He tries to help others out where he can because his conscience requires him to, but he also tries to situate himself in a position of advantage with respect to others. He simultaneously wants to improve the lives of others and also wants to ensure that he ends up at the top of the ant hill. His hope is that these two desires with somehow converge into something like beneficent selfishness: the capitalistic dream in which pursuing one's own self-interest just so happens to serve others. This mixed state of mind seems to be a rejection of the concept of sacrifice, but it is not. It is an expression of sacrifice because neither vine will produce much fruit at all. This Homesteader will lament the limitations of his ability to serve others, believing that the problem is the nature of third density: life is hard, people are selfish, and resources are scarce. He will wish for a better world or a better human nature, but spend little time thinking about this wish because the demands of the day call him. Those he steps on in his jockeying for power are unfortunate collateral. What else can he do? No one is offering to take care of his needs, so he must ensure, above all, that they are taken care of—and the only way to ensure this is to obtain and hold a position of power over others. So this Homesteader rules his little fiefdom, serves a few, garners little trust from others, and leaves the larger world more or less the way he found it. In his pursuit of comfort before all else, the mixed Homesteader sacrifices inner evolution.

One distorted expression of the Homesteader comes from a lack of attunement to the needs of the body and the home. This distorted Homesteader is a wreck, inside and out. He desires increased comfort and efficacy, like anyone else, but he misjudges the signals of his own body and misunderstands that meaning of untoward events in his environment. His diet is increasingly worse, his bodily ailments multiply, and the unpleasantness of his environment magnifies. His own inner methods of reckoning with the signals of the body fail lead him to sensible patterns of activity.

Another distorted expression of the Homesteader...

22. Relationship #7

Character: Lodging

The Traveler, throughout her travels, needs a place to stay. Her path of exploration and discovery in third density requires that she enters the physical illusion. But doing so entails that she, like everyone else, will need a vehicle, a home, base camp to return to at night. The Homesteader provides this camp for the Traveler.

This relationship, like all the Significator/Choice relationships, is a kind of teaching relationship. The Homesteader has developed an interlocking set of methods for efficiently handling all of the physical needs of third density, in the service of the basic goals we set ourselves to. The Homesteader understands that everyone has their own purposes and that third density is a place to be appreciated. But his focus is on ensuring that his body and his home are properly outfitted in service to these deeper purposes. The Homesteader wants to share with the Traveler all the little tips and tricks he has learned along the way. The Traveler's persona is that of a chameleon, so in a sense she lacks personality. She has childlike wonder, curiosity, and surprise at the Homesteader's various systems of interpretation of and adaptation to the unexpected events of the physical world. She is fascinated by his technical prowess, attention to detail, and sensitivity to the many different meaningful signals of the body and the environment. The Traveler experiences the dynamics of the physical world through the eyes of the Homesteader, who gives her a framework with which to make sense of and respond to the physical world.

The learning phase of the relationship is akin to a master/apprentice relationship. The student who shows up to learn how to excel at some craft or technical art becomes the Traveler in the home of the Homesteader. She learns and adopts the systems and habits of the master craftsman, since those are the only ones the inexperienced Traveler knows. She is sincere in her effort to learn to see the world the way the Homesteader does because she wants to be able to manifest within that world as efficiently and effectively as the Homesteader does.

Eventually, however, the Traveler will begin to develop critical distance from the Homesteader. She will have spent enough time in the Homesteader's home, living her life as the Homesteader, to have achieved some degree of mastery over the discipline. In this place of budding mastery, the Traveler will begin to develop critical distance from the Homesteader's practice. She will begin to see aspects of the discipline that do not sit well with her. She will object to the mixed nature of the Homesteader's patterns of activity. He will begin to seem either too self-centered in his behavior or too forgiving. The Traveler will begin to see how the Homesteader's tried-and-true methods of understanding and integrating catalyst unsophisticated or out of synch with the Traveler's own preference. She will get tired of living out these same patterns over and over with no change. In short, the Traveler will see that she has learned all she can from the Homesteader and that the methods of physical interaction that the Traveler longs for are not on offer from the Homesteader. Thus, she will pack her belongings, thank the Homesteader for everything she has learned from him, and continue on her way, looking for a new place of lodging and learning.

The Traveler's packing up to leave will not be without difficulty. She knows it is time to leave, but the Homesteader and Traveler have grown fond of each other. His home is comfortable and predictable, which gives her a feeling of stability that she knows she will miss when she continues her journey. The critical distance between the Traveler and the Homesteader, together with the Traveler's sorrow at having to leave will then activate the Transformation archetype so that the Traveler can identify a new place to call home.

When to Become the Personas

On the personal level, the distinction between Significator and Choice is the objective versus the subjective. We often find ourselves identifying with the objective bodily self, which includes our habits,

methods of interpreting bodily signals, and preference for integrating information about the body. We watch the actions and reactions of the body play out and, if we are fully identified with the objective body complex, we take these events as simple facts about the way the body works with no thought that it could be otherwise. A static perspective on the nature and functioning of one's own body complex indicates that the inner Homesteader is active, but the inner Fool is not. In this moment, it is appropriate to become the Traveler persona, by identifying with the inner witness instead of the objective drama that plays itself out in the body complex. Even though the inner witness does not, on its own, have the ability to change the events that play out, developing a distance from the constant cycles of the body by choosing not to directly identify with it allows us to have a healthier relationship to the body.

Conversely, those who are especially aware of third density experience as a process of inner evolution will sometimes tend toward a kind of ungroundedness that is harmful to our ability to interact with and use the manifestations of the body complex. We will tend to identify only with the inner witness and consider the body complex to be a mere artifact or outward shell of the third density world. This inner Traveler's preoccupation with the mental or spiritual Significators undermines its ability to grow because it causes us to ignore the catalyst of the body. This dismissal of the needs of the body inhibits us from developing along the path of inner evolution because it prevents the body from reaching a maximally efficient state. In this moment, the inner Traveler is active, but calls for the inner Homesteader. It is appropriate, here, to identify with the objective bodily self, to enter the sensations of the body and allow their subtleties to make themselves known. Instead of ignoring the needs of the body complex, we turn our attention to them in all their minute details. If the inner Fool remains homeless for too long, we might suddenly find ourselves in the most pressing state of physical discomfort, or else moving toward an early death.

On the interpersonal level, the Homesteader is a master or expert who wants to teach his skills to a student. When someone else is exhibiting a desire to impart their carefully honed skills to us, attempting to share their own worldly wisdom, that person is probably expressing the Homesteader persona. This is an opportunity to enter into the Traveler persona in relation to that person. Now it might seem like I am encouraging people to entertain mansplaining or enduring some other kind of pedantry. But remember that the Traveler is also a critical persona. Entering the Traveler persona in relation to someone who is expressing the Homesteader allows us to judge quickly and effectively whether the skill set and worldly perspective they are offering will be helpful to us. The Traveler knows where she has been and can quickly compare the other's offering to her experience to judge whether there is any value in sticking around to pick up the skill. If we do not enter the Traveler persona in these kinds of moments, we will not be able to correctly assess whether there is a genuine potential for learning in the relationship in question. The Traveler is willing and happy to be an apprentice. But our world celebrates not learning, but mastery. So, in our desire to live up to the values of our culture, we often resist entering the energy of the Traveler. But only within this kind of energy can we be honest with ourselves about whether the Homesteader before us offers a valuable lesson.

Conversely, in our interpersonal relationships, we will meet individuals who want to develop the skills we have. They ask us to be their teacher. The energy exchange of this relationship, especially for the right-hand path Homesteader, can feel largely one-directional. The Traveler shows up with a request and we have the opportunity to go out of our way to meet that request. The relationship is one of Lodging: we let the Traveler live in our home, through our eyes, engaging with the world the way we do. The Homesteader, like any teacher, takes joy in the experience of teaching. He learns more about his

discipline for having taught it to someone else. When someone asks for this kind of teaching, it is appropriate to enter the persona of the Homesteader, taking joy in the opportunity to share what we have learned and so deepen that learning for ourselves. But it is also appropriate to let go of the skill as we teach it. The Traveler will inevitably advance to a point at which she is ready to personalize the practice; she will outgrow her teacher.

All of the above dynamics also map onto social interactions between groups. Some groups need and want to learn from others. When we find ourselves in either of these situations, it is appropriate to be willing to humble ourselves if our group is offered teaching by another, or to accept the request if our group is pursued as a teacher by another. But, as always, the Homesteader will have his own judgments about whether and how he can afford to take on a student. Sometimes, the resources are just not available.

23. The Transformation of the Body

The Transformation of the Body depicts the process of transition from one configuration of the Significator of the Body to the next. Like all Transformation archetypes, this one has a *transitional* persona, one that appears at the threshold between two very different states of consciousness. It has two sides to its expression, a *before* and an *after*, the *after* presenting a mystery to the state of consciousness of the *before* expression. I understand this persona to be both masculine and feminine. Thus, the body transforms through reconstitution of both our conscious and unconscious approaches to the body, through an opposition between the two which is set in motion by the development of critical distance between the subjective witness and the mind's total conception of its body as a vehicle for manifestation. The tension between the Fool and the Significator enters into the dynamic interplay between conscious and unconscious mind as these two relate to the body as a vehicle. The Traveler then becomes aware of the roles that both the conscious and unconscious minds have played in deciding how to interpret the events of the physical world and reflects on what might now be different.

In each transformation image, both male and female figures appear. In transforming, we choose to polarize in one direction rather than the other, and in so choosing we reconfigure our processes of Catalyst and Experience to more closely approach the polarized ideal of those personas. Because the Catalyst and Experience archetypes in each cycle are oppositely gendered, they are both represented in the image.

Symbols

A skeleton uses a scythe to reap human hands, feet, and heads (both masculine and feminine). The skeleton faces its left, and behind the skeleton there is a rainbow.

The reaping skeleton, a classical image of Death, is the point of perspective in this archetype. He is the Traveler, the subjective witness whose nature is to be stripped of all nonessential attachments to the current details of his life. The Traveler has set aside their history, their aspirations, their worries, and their emotional biases. The Traveler's frame of mind is skeletal; they want to be the empty frame onto which a new way of existing in the world can be built. In this frame of mind, they turn their attention to an examination of the past, as represented by the heads, hands and feet.

Here, the heads represent our past mental approach to the events in the world. The mind interprets the significance of the events of the body. The male heads, representing our previous perspective as Catalyst, use these events to trace reactions back to previous action or inaction. The female heads, representing our previous process of Experience, use the understanding of the Catalyst to decide how to rearrange the energy flows of the body and the environment. The hands represent our previous actions as well as the consequences we have observed them to bring about. And the feet represent our previous holistic way of life, a symbol of the previous Significator as a whole.

The act of reaping is not a mere killing. Death is not destroying old ways, though Death has certainly shed them. Death is collecting them for examination so that they can sift out the useful from the useless. Death is harvesting and culling as they harvest.

Finally, the rainbow has two meanings, both of which are fairly obvious. The first is a symbol of rebirth, as rainbows can be seen after a destructive storm, reminding us of the beauty that still remains and of the fertility of the ground, freshly rained on. The second is a symbol of the seven energy centers, indicating that the rebirth of the body affects all levels of bodily concern, from our actions that seek to secure our survival to those that seek to discover the sacredness of each moment.

Character: The Disgruntled

The Reaper has come to see the error of their way. Their entire way of life has begun to seem unsustainable. The Reaper sees the harmful patterns of behavior in their life more clearly than ever before and he has concluded that small reforms in his approach here and there will no longer cut it. They need a deep and lasting change, a reconstitution of his way of life from the ground up. The Reaper wants to shut down the economy of their household, to tear the entire house down, rebuild and then restart the system.

The Reaper's method is negative. The Reaper draws upon all the various events in their life that have revealed to them what they do not want. They have had enough of the cyclical patterns of harm inflicted and harm returned. Their body and environment have become uncomfortable and unsupportive of the kind of life they want to live. Their environment is toxic. Whatever comes next will have to be something very different from this toxic way of living.

The Reaper is the body galvanized. Consider the masculine side. He is finally ready to face the full burden of responsibility for his past behavior. He understands that his body and his home have been poisoned through his own doing (or his own inaction) and he can now see that his previous refusal to admit his participation in the toxicity of his body and home has made matters even worse. He is sick of himself: he is tired not only of his own boundary violations and the harm they cause, but also of the constant, nagging feeling of guilt that he bears with him because the feminine side has never really forgiven him for his actions. This discord between the two sides clogs the moving parts of the body, inhibiting action by plaguing it with uncertainty about whether any particular course of action is acceptable. The conscious body is tired of feeling like there is no right way to act, like he is damned if he does and damned if he doesn't. He does not think there is anything he can do to win her over: she will never forgive him, never be kind to him.

Now consider the feminine side. She has had her boundaries violated over and over, whether through action or inaction, the masculine side has proven to her that he will continue to disappoint her. She can

bear no more. This time, it is no longer a question of forgiveness, but of redrawing the boundaries themselves. There is no kind of apology that will bring her back this time; she needs the entire relationship to change. She has new demands which he must accept if he wants a relationship with her to continue. The conflict between them is characterized by mistrust that emerges from consistent boundary violation. She does not think that there is anything he can do to prove he has really changed. As much as she would like to salvage the relationship, it seems broken beyond repair.

This unpleasant condition is the before-state of the Reaper persona. Somehow, these two must meet at the negotiation table so that they can discover that there is actually a contract of mutual treatment that they can both agree to, not as an unhappy compromise, but as a promising way forward. But the only way they will see this way forward is through stepping back to examine their relationship both as a corpse and as a whole. They must both consider their previous relationship to be dead, so that they can examine it with the kind of scrutiny and objective distance that comes from no longer being invested in its continuance.

The Reaper's function is to reconstitute the dynamic economy of both body and physical environment (where the concept of the "physical" extends also to the "subtle bodies" not detectable with scientific instruments). The Reaper is motivated by their conviction that there can be no further progress, no physical comfort, without a deep and lasting change in the even flow of daily life. The Reaper's empowering capacity is their ability to examine the past without letting their attachment to the way things have been influence their judgment about the way they ought to be. The Reaper's virtues are discipline in their commitment to change despite the inevitable discomfort of change and objectivity in judgment about the broad features of the past. The Reaper can look back on life and speak to both their traumas and their offenses without getting defensive about them.

Levels

On the personal level, we express the Reaper when the judgment hardens within us that our patterns of behavior toward our body can continue no longer, whether because we are tired of harming ourselves or because we are tired of feeling the consequence of self-harm. Within this energy, we often find the will to commit to a radical change in diet, exercise, hygiene, or household maintenance—depending on where we judge the source of bodily toxicity to be. Often, we enter this persona in response to some major event that shakes the inner witness (the Traveler) into critical distance from our standard habits concerning our body: an illness or injury might scare us into rethinking our relationship with the body complex. But, equally often (perhaps more often), we enter the energy of purging the toxicity of the body as a side-effect of a transformation in mind or spirit.

On the interpersonal level, we often express the Reaper when we renegotiate our relationships with other individuals. We become aware of how the patterns of behavior in the relationship itself have made it toxic. Instead of helping each other grow, we find that we are constantly antagonizing one another. Where previously the antagonism seemed like a useful source of catalyst, now it just seems like a constant drain of energy on both sides. The Reaper is ready to radically reconsider the relationship, including the possibility of ending it altogether.

On the social level, the Reaper is a Revolutionary. They are a person or group whose experience has galvanized within them the judgment that reform of some social system is no longer an option. The possibilities of tweaking the system as it exists are too limited in scope since the rot of the existing

system of social order is at the foundation. The entire system must be remade and to be remade it must first be torn down. On the social level, the masculine side is the side that has power, since this will be a group that is capable of violating the boundaries of another group. The feminine side is the side protests that boundary violation. When the situation escalates to the point of expressing the Reaper archetype, the two sides have come to the conclusion that the status quo is unviable, that radical change will be necessary. In practice, this might take the shape of large, long-term protests, mass revolt against an institution, mass resignations, or any other method of dramatic social disruption. The feminine side of this persona will make it known that things can go no further so that the masculine side can appreciate that real change is necessary.

Polarized Expressions and Modes of Distortion

The right-hand path Reaper commits themselves to a new respect for the boundaries of both self and other, as well as a new consideration for their own needs. This Reaper wants to let go of their need to enforce their will on others and to do so they must learn sensitivity to the threshold between action that does not violate another's free will and action that does. Likewise, they want to be responsive to calls for service from others, to answer them as they are, rather than as they want them to be. The Reaper wants to be the kind of person whose actions and inactions serve the greater good of all those around them. They want to act when and only when the action is needed and helpful, to be sensitive and responsive to the differences between avoidance versus respect and helping versus violating. The positive Reaper will achieve this change primarily through removal of temptations. The problem, as they see it, is not this or that type of action, but the habitual daily flow of activity that makes continued violations easy and comfortable. Both sides of the persona understand that they are responsible for boundary maintenance. The feminine must refuse to cooperate with reneging on the contract while the masculine side must purge his desires and cravings to act in ways that violate. If he wants to stop eating foods that damage his body, he will remove those foods from his house entirely. If, at work, he acts in ways that make him feel ashamed and wants to end the habit, he might decide he must quit the job. And if he wants to stop treating his partner disrespectfully, the relationship might need to end. Now, I've used the word "might" here, because the change may not need to be quite so dramatic. Ending a job or a relationship is often a very big decision, and the right-hand path Reaper does know the best way to reinvent their behaviors without the guiding influence of the persona of the Great Way of the Body. They only know that something needs to change and that they are too ashamed of and hurt by their own behavior to continue on as they always have.

The left-hand path Reaper takes stock of their actions and inactions in an effort to determine whether and how they have been failing their own aspirations. This Reaper wants to identify their weaknesses in the circumstances that make them soft and receptive to others, and to cut them out. The boundaries of others do not matter to the masculine side, except insofar as his transgression of those boundaries fails to assert dominion over either to his own body and behavior or that of another. The feminine side wants consistency. She refuses to continue humoring his weaknesses, as if she were his mother. She wants to see him take command of her, to act decisively, without hesitation, and without apology. The masculine side of the negative Reaper sees in himself a pattern of failed attempts to assert dominion over others. He wants to reinvent himself as stronger and more impervious to attack than ever before. Like the positive Reaper, he will realize this goal through eliminating and reconstituting parts of his bodily or environmental experience. If he is hopelessly kind to someone and cannot seem to help himself, he will assert discipline by either ending the relationship or aggressively reassessing his own boundaries with

that person. In any case, he will reconstitute the daily patterns in his life in an attempt to seal off the chinks in his armor that make him susceptible to dominion by another. The feminine side responds to this galvanization by tightening her grip on the previously wayward aspects of the body and the world around her. Where she was once afforded liberty to lazily indulge in bad habits, she now answers to the strict rule of unwavering discipline, a rule that energizes her in virtue of its strictness. She wants to live up to his demands on her by enforcing those demands on the workings of the body and the world around her.

One distorted expression of the Reaper is the undisciplined Reaper. This Reaper frequently attempts radical change in their life, whether in the form of attempting to reconstitute a relationship, finding a new job, changing dietary and exercise habits, or something else. But in each case, they find themselves too distressed in the new environment to stick with it until the change has become a new habit. This Reaper falls back on their old ways, which inhibit any transformation from completing. In this distorted expression of the Reaper, we attempt to start an initiatory experience, but we are not yet ready for it. Here, we try to enter the persona of the Reaper before we have developed sufficient critical distance between our inner Homesteader and Traveler. The lack of discipline in this distorted expression reinforces our own self-asserted stories about our impotence to make real changes in our lives, which hardens the Storyteller's self-picture further. Rushing initiation, then, will have a tendency to backfire. Initiation finds us as a mere function of critical distance.

Another distorted expression of the Reaper manifests as a failure in to correctly judge causal relationships. Causal relationships are hard to grasp and even harder to isolate. It is not at all obvious what causes us to have unhealthy habits of action. If we successfully express the Reaper, we observe these habits and can identify the context in which they arise. We then change the context, which allows us to sidestep the necessity of determining the exact causal links: it is enough to know the domain of the ill-health and to simply reconstitute the entire domain. However, even correctly identifying this domain requires successful judgment about causal relationships. If our framework for interpreting the physical world is distorted by our attachments to particular kinds of narratives (an overriding feature of mind), we will avoid even recognizing which domain in our physical experience is troubled. This distorted expression of the Reaper, then, reconstitutes all the wrong parts of themselves. They hold on to the unhealthy habits and eject everything else, in an effort to preserve both the narrative that guides their judgment and the unhealthy habits they are still attached to. This distorted expression of the Reaper is the mindset of a downward spiral. And its only resolution comes through either a spiritual or mental event, not a bodily one.

24. The Great Way of the Body

Symbols

An androgynous human figure with wings on their back and feet stands facing to their left. The figure holds a silver cup (or pitcher) in their left hand and a gold in their left, pouring liquid from the silver into the gold. The figure is clad only in a sash draped over the left shoulder. Behind the figure's head, the sun shines, and above their head there is a tongue of fire. The wings on the figure's back represent preparation for flight.

The androgynous human figure represents a union of the conscious and unconscious body. The veil is not lifted in any special way here; rather, the union represents perfect agreement between the two: they act as one.

The wings on the back of the figure represent the wings of spirit. Note the resemblances between this image and the image for Arcanum 3 (the Catalyst of the Mind): the unconscious mind holds a bird with wings in the same configuration and behind her head a sun shines. In both images, the Logos informs and acts through the mind, opening the way for the flight of spirit. The wings signify the spirit's incarnation into the physical world through its intimate contact with the mind. In this archetype, we become angelic messengers rather than mere recipients of the message. The tongue of fire reiterates this same concept.

The winged feet, reminiscent of the Greek god Hermes, represent swift movement. Fatham interprets this swiftness as a necessity due to the brevity of human life. I think Fatham is correct, provided we understand the relationship between swiftness and brevity of life to impart a sense of urgency to the persona of this archetype.

The sash is the protection the archetype enjoys. In this image, it is minimal, and heavier on the left side. Vulnerability is one of the dominant features of the right-hand path in the body cycle, and Ra affirms that "the seeker which has purely chosen the service-to-others path shall certainly not have a variant apparent incarnational experience. There is no outward shelter in your illusion from the gusts, flurries, and blizzards of quick and cruel catalyst."

In this image, I do not think that the right and left hands represent the right- and left-hand path, because the right and left hands of the unified body are the conscious body (right) and unconscious body (left). The liquid poured from one to another represents the "stream of psychic energy," as Paul Case puts it. It is mental content that, coming from the silver cup, has the characteristics of the mental states of the unconscious mind: emotion, image, and holistic concept. We are not dealing here with word and logic. Commentators generally agree that the pouring of the liquid represents the refinement and purification of crude and destructive desires and emotions into subtle and healthy emotional states. This purification happens because these energies have entered into the manifest reality and all the various consequences of these energies have played out.

Character: The Alchemist

Commentators have historically attributed two names to this archetype: Temperance and The Alchemist. Ra, when asked why the archetype is called "The Alchemist" replies, "you may see the body as providing the athanor through which the alchemist manifests gold." An athanor is an oven used by alchemists to accomplish the transmutation of lead into gold. This quotation not only reinforces the appropriateness of the concept of alchemy here, it also resolves the question of why it has been called "Temperance."

The virtue of temperance is generally understood to be a kind of self-restraint that favors moderate satisfaction of desires. But the image depicts no sense of self-restraint whatsoever: the human figure is among the freest and least restrained of all the *Tarot* images. We might conclude that temperance is not, after all, a kind of self-restraint, but rather freedom from desires that would lead us into excess. This cuts closer to the image, but still doesn't match it. In truth, the name "temperance" is a play on

words. It refers to the tempering of steel, a process that, through heating, reduces the metal's hardness but increases its durability by making it less brittle. Note that this concept matches Ra's description of the body as an "athanor." It also matches the basic meaning of the liquid that is poured from cup to cup (implicitly, back and forth). With each pour, the alchemist removes impurities from the liquid, further refining it into something that is both less harsh and more healthy. Ra tells us that "in third density the statue is forged in the fire." This archetype presents to us this very image, revealing that the statue is just the mental biases, emotions and constructs, and that the fire is the often harsh and unforgiving physical world of third density.

Like all the personas of the Greater Cycles, this is a compound persona: it can only be expressed as a particular kind of relationship between conscious and unconscious mind. The Alchemist's worldview is characterized by their approach to the manifest world. On this view, the body (and physical environment more generally) is to be molded into a vehicle for the Logos to shine from a peaceful unconscious mind all the way through to manifestation. Because the Great Way archetypes are personas that aspire to be more than they are, the process of molding the physical vehicle is not yet complete, and perhaps never will be. The Alchemist, after all, continues to pour the psychic energy back and forth between conscious and unconscious mind as it experiences, integrates, and reconstitutes the events of the physical world. Each iteration further purifies the mind in its relation to itself and to spirit. It also softens the prickly behaviors that would otherwise prevent the Alchemist from accomplishing their intentions as given by mind and spirit.

As Ra says, "the crown is already upon the head." The Alchemist both aspires to be and *already is* a messenger from the divine Logos itself. Imperfect though the Alchemist's current level of refinement of the body is, they will still fashion their daily life into a manifest expression of the higher truths of both mind (through authentic self-expression) and spirit (through inspired expression of the mysterious will beyond the personal self). Bodily manifestation of both mind and spirit allows us to discover and witness the hidden subtleties of our inner states in ways we could not otherwise do. Thoughts often make sense to us until we speak them out loud; what we desire often loses its appeal once we have it; a plan of action often seems like a good idea until it plays out; a path of spiritual activity often feels right until we follow it. The manifest world thus transmutes the rough into the subtle. With each discovery that we have somehow missed the mark, we get a more and more granular sense of what exactly the target is and how to hit it.

The Alchemist has a sense of urgency about their effort to hone the body into a vehicle for expression and purification of the mental and spiritual. The aspiration of this archetype is not to successfully transmute the mental and spiritual experiences, but to successfully mold the body into a mechanism that serves the purposes of this transmutation. The Alchemist wants their body to be comfortable, not merely as such, but as a vehicle to perform this important work. So often, the body gets in the way of the higher work to which we might want to put it. The processes of potentiation, catalyst, experience and transformation are the means by which we simultaneously use the body to follow our spiritual calling and achieve comfort within the body as a tool for this purpose. So the Alchemist's sense of urgency relates to the frustrations of the body as an impediment to mental and spiritual work. The Alchemist knows that the body must be an ally, but also wants to work through the various forms of rigidity, discomfort, and self-sabotage that originate not in the mind or spirit, but in our sheer lack of experience operating a third density vehicle. We are born clumsy, awkward and unsubtle, but, as Alchemists, we aspire to grace, fluidity, swiftness, and efficacy. This is the Great Way of the Body.

The function of the Alchemist is to uphold and maintain a constant view of the appropriate use of the body. This view is characterized by the body's role as "the instrument of manifestation for the fruits of mind and spirit." Thus, the Alchemist is motivated by a desire for constant improvement of the body's ability to serve as such an instrument. The Alchemist's empowering capacity is... Their virtues are...

Levels

On the personal level, we express the Alchemist as an enduring commitment to treating and maintaining the body (and environment) as an instrument for higher use. Within this perspective of self, we do not value pleasures and pains as intrinsically good or bad, but as instrumental to our higher purpose. The inner Alchemist is always mindful of their perspective as being in the world but not of it. This inner condition is not a forced sense of moderation (as the word "temperance" might suggest), but a deep prioritization of the values of mind and spirit over those of body.

We often express the interpersonal Alchemist as a Consultant. A Consultant understands the subtle movements of the physical world within their domain of expertise. The Consultant has their shit together, so to speak, and this is evidenced by their own capacity for success within that domain. The Alchemist, as a Consultant, has the unique ability to offer both insight and perspective, since the Consultant is always aware of the value priorities of the domain in question, and the instrumentality of the specific work. The Consultant wants to make a difference in the physical world by using the operation of the physical world to maximize whatever values we pursue through our activity in the world.

On the social level, we express the Alchemist when we interact with groups under the governing influence of our inner drive to place the mental and spiritual phenomena first and the material phenomena second. Whatever other conditions we assert before we decide to interact with or be a part of a group, one uncompromising condition is that the social pursuit, whatever it is, must be oriented toward something meaningful and not merely toward material success. The social Alchemist is not concerned with moneymaking, technological advancement, or hedonism and so will be unimpressed and unmoved by those social elements who do pursue the material above all else. The social Alchemist works against these material motivations by presenting an example of the greatness of living for something higher and using the material world in service to that end.

Polarized Expressions and Modes of Distortion

The right-hand path Alchemist is committed to the priority of honest self-expression and self-actualization over the comforts of the body. Each hardship is an opportunity to know the self (as unconscious mind) and the other a little more deeply. Each surprise along the way and each cycle of harm, consequence, repentance, forgiveness, and boundary establishment bring new discoveries that make the trials all worthwhile. The right-hand path Alchemist is vigilant about the relationship between belief and action, aware that each mean-spirited thought will express itself in the world, and supremely attentive to the importance of nurturing both body and environment so that they are supportive of the ongoing revelation of self to self.

The left-hand path Alchemist is committed to the priority of dominating and possessing the minds of others over the pleasures of the body. This Alchemist is not interested in reputation except insofar as it translates to influence. They are not interested in money except insofar as it translates to power. They

are not interested in sensory pleasure except as a conduit for enjoying dominion over self and other. The left-hand path Alchemist is also vigilant about the relationship between belief and action, which is why they are so careful to curate their habits: this allows wayward beliefs to present themselves clearly in action so they can be rapidly stricken down.

One distorted way that we express the Alchemist is...

25. Relationship #8

Character: Mediation

The Transformation and Great Way relationships are unique, because they offer relationships between a self that is already in relationship with itself. The last three archetypes in a cycle, Significator, Transformation, and Great Way, are compound archetypes: they represent personas that do not merely take the perspective of either the feminine or masculine self, but take the perspective of a particular relationship between the two. Thus, opposite experiences in a relationship between two persons can express the Reaper, but the same is not true of the Affected. There are not two sides to the Affected experience; only one. So if two people are to manifest the Affected archetype, they will do so by sharing a single perspective on it. In the case of both the Reaper and the Alchemist, the persona is constituted by both a conscious and an unconscious aspect to the dynamic. Thus, the relationship between these two archetypes is a relationship between four different perspectives.

The Reaper represents the Traveler's disgust over the way the cycles of physical interaction have been playing out. In expressing criticism of the Homesteader's economy of activity, the strife between Traveler and Homesteader—the subjective and objective selves in the body cycle, respectively—takes root within the objective self. This tension manifests objectively in a physical impasse between conscious and unconscious bodily tendencies. The Reaper is the total objective self who refuses to continue on as things are and so assesses the habits of both conscious and unconscious body in an effort to renegotiate the relationship. Here, the boundary concerns of the unconscious body are brought forward as are the past interventions of the conscious body. The Reaper brings the two parties to the table in an attempt to negotiate a new relationship and a new economy of energy expenditure between them. Each side will have its own offerings and requests: the conscious mind will offer greater cognizance and attention to his own actions and their potential effects, while requesting that the unconscious mind makes life more pleasant for him; the unconscious mind will offer quicker and more peaceable resolution to conflict, while requesting that the conscious mind respects the new boundaries that she is bringing to the table. In the Reaper persona, there is a fundamental dispute between the two parties.

The Alchemist, by contrast, has a far more harmonious relationship between its two inner parts. The conscious mind actively works with the unconscious in a collaborative effort to further purify themselves in their relationship to each other. The Alchemist is familiar with disputes, understands their difficult nature, and has plenty of experience resolving them as a means of polarizing the whole self further. In relation to the Reaper, the Alchemist is a Mediator and the Reaper is a Malcontent. The Mediator works with the Malcontent to help them resolve the apparently irresolvable conflict that has arisen.

Every decision we make is made in the context of our previous commitments. The Malcontent's conundrum is that they must make a decision about what the bodily economy will be moving forward. The Mediator's strength is that they understand the relationship between decision and commitment. Each decision contributes to the total nature of one's commitment, in an exponentially strengthening way: if I choose the right-hand path today, it makes the right-hand path easier to choose again tomorrow. But the choice of a particular path is difficult to maintain or even see without a commitment to that path which helps guide and encourage each choice. The context of my commitment to the body as an instrument for honest self-actualization in myself and others makes each moment of decision feel less difficult. When a decision figures into a greater context of overall commitment, the right decision is both easier to see and easier to accept. The role of the Mediator, in this relationship, is to help the Reaper see the greater context, thereby making the decision easier.

When to Become the Personas

Expression of the Malcontent archetype on the personal level is easy to spot. The Malcontent is never comfortable. Everything that happens around the Malcontent is a living reminder of exactly what the Malcontent is becoming intolerant toward. For this disgruntled expression of self, something's gotta give. When the cyclical repetition of events that perpetuate apparently unnecessarily difficult physical experiences, the inner Malcontent is signaling its need for the guidance of the inner Mediator. In this moment, it is appropriate to enter the persona of the Mediator, so we can feel and rest in the security of our steady commitment to inner evolution rather than outer comfort. This will make the needed change more readily available.

The inner Mediator's defining characteristic is their aspiration to become more than what they currently are. The Mediator's constant sense of both their own achievements and their own failure to live up to the ideal can lead to a burdened feeling of the impossibility of living up to one's own ideal. Each bungled interaction, despite the best of intentions, reveals in painstaking detail all the many weaknesses that remain. In this moment, the inner Mediator is active, but the inner Malcontent is not. It is appropriate to allow our sense of discontent with ourselves to find expression as discomfort and an accompanying refusal to keep perpetuating the discomfort. When the inner Mediator's commitment to inner evolution feels like an impossible task, that signals that it is time for a decision about one's own boundaries and habits of action which will reinforce the enduring commitment.

On the interpersonal level, we sometimes find ourselves approached by someone who is in an uncomfortable situation in which boundaries and behaviors need to be renegotiated. That person might occupy either gendered aspect of the Malcontent. If, for example, the person wants to put an end to the boundary violations and neglect that characterizes their relationship, this person is expressing the feminine side of the Malcontent. Conversely, if the person is overwhelmed by the way their own previous actions implicate themselves in a self-perpetuating cycle of unhappiness, then the person is expressing the masculine side of the Malcontent. It might seem like the appropriate response is to enter into one side or another of the Mediator, but the Mediator does not admit of this kind of splitting. The Mediator archetype is the perspective that the Traveler is most comfortable with, by virtue of its unity. The Mediator represents a harmonious union between the conscious and unconscious minds in relation to the use of the body, so each person who enters the energy of this persona will express some balance of both the masculine and feminine sides of the Mediator. However, this interpersonal relationship is most effective when the Mediator has contact with both aggrieved parties (as is the case in legal

mediation). The opposite situation is much easier to identify. When we are Malcontent in our relationship to another, a Mediator will help us work out the renegotiation of the relationship.

Socially, the Mediator/Malcontent relationship often plays out through the demands of revolutionaries (aggrieved, feminine) from the established power structure (aggressor, masculine) and the need of these two parties to be reconciled to each other in a way that preserves the primary values of both and allows a successful reconstitution of that relation.

26. The Matrix of the Spirit

Ra's words about the Matrix and Potentiator of the Spirit can be misleading. In his usual attempt to see things from all sides, Don questions Ra about the archetypal mind prior to the veiling of third density. In Christian terms, Don is asking about how things were before the Fall. Two of the most important characterizations of the Matrix and Potentiator of the Spirit emerge from this line of questioning—however, we must remember that Ra's description of these archetypes is not a description of our Archetypal Mind; rather, it is a description of the One Original Thought, of which our own Archetypal Mind is a refinement.

A second difficulty in thinking about the spirit cycle is that, according to Ra, "the nature of spirit is less motile" and so lacks "the characteristics of dynamic motion." Whereas the inner evolution of mind in relation to itself and to the body is a continuous process of ongoing change, the mind's relation to spirit occurs in sudden moments and lingering feelings. We do not reckon with the movements of the inner evolution of the spirit in daily life, even though they affect our daily life.

There is a third difficulty. Consider Ra in 1920: "the spiritual aspect serv[es] as a further complexity of fields which is of itself perfect but which can be realized in many distorted and unintegrated ways by the mind and body complexes of energy fields." The inner evolution of spirit does not happen by correcting or righting the imbalances of the spirit. Rather, it happens through righting the imbalances of mind and body, which then causes a realignment of spirit. However, influxes from the spirit have a powerful effect on the conditions of mind and body, since this is the environment of evolution that can override the other two. So the inner evolution of spirit commences through our direct exposure to the experiences of spirit; this exposure causes a reactionary adjustment in mind and body; that adjustment then causes another reactionary adjustment in spirit, which makes available new experiences of spirit.

The Matrix of the Spirit is the unpotentiated spirit. The heavy veiling of the unconscious mind from the conscious mind in third density, plus the inherently mysterious nature of the spirit complex, entail that this archetype describes the most hidden and poorly understood part of the self. Here, we behold the self as an incomprehensible other.

Symbols

Typhon stands in the center, trampling two broken pillars. Typhon has a crocodile head, a rhinoceros horn, bat wings, a pig's body, cloven feet, breasts, an erect penis, a snake emerging from the navel, a scepter in the right hand, and a torch pointing toward the ground in the left. In front of Typhon two human figures, one male and one female, kneel with one knee down and one up. They each wear a

goat's head mask and a loincloth, and they are chained together at the neck. One points up and the other points down.

This is a complex array of symbols. I will begin with Typhon. The crocodile head represents violence and cruelty. The bat's wings indicate that Typhon lurks in the night: a symbol of "primeval darkness," as Ra names this archetype. The torch in Typhon's hand is pointed down, which represents a source of light wasted: a spiritual power misused. The pig's body and tail indicate revelry in filth. The snake emerging at Typhon's navel symbolizes gluttony by indicating a blockage preventing activation of the higher energy centers. The erect penis further reiterates this concept of blockage and consequent unquenchable desire (a symbol confirmed by Ra at 84.19).

Previous commentators have said unfortunate things about the depiction of Typhon with both breasts and a penis. There was no such thing as breast implants or hormone replacement therapy when this image was drawn, so it does not depict a transgender person. Commentators agree that it depicts an intersex person, and they have often characterized such a person as "incapable of love." Setting aside the fact that other aspects of Typhon already cover this incapacity, such a characterization of intersex persons now seems ignorant and oppressive to people who are born into a society whose very construction makes it difficult for them to find a comfortable identity. In any case, I believe that the primary and consistent trait that the intersex depiction of Typhon must have indicated is not incapacity for love, but incapacity for reproduction. This is not to say that no intersex persons can reproduce, but that sterility is far more common among intersex than in those who fall more neatly into one sex or the other, and this tendency would have been noticed even in a previous age. Thus, Typhon also represents the inability to generate or to be fruitful.

The destroyed pillars are those of the Significator of the Mind, not those of the Potentiator of the Mind. They represent not the moral polarity built into the foundation of the third density experience, but our own conceptual separation of good from evil, right from wrong. The Storyteller constructs a belief system in which these two concepts are held apart from each other, and this distinction is the support that maintains the Storyteller's protection from the storms and gusts of third density life. We cling to our concepts of right and wrong as we take shelter in our homes during a storm. But Typhon, in this image, has trampled those pillars, leaving rubble, confusion, and vulnerability where there once was structure, order, and protection.

The two human figures are not always represented as male and female, but commentators seem to be in wide agreement that, however they are depicted in the images, they are, in fact, oppositely gendered. Thus, they represent the conscious (or transparent) and unconscious (or hidden) selves. Of course, these figures also represent self and other in the external world. The chain that binds them represents their captivity: they are stuck with each other. The goat's head masks show that they do not think for themselves, following spiritually unhelpful social norms instead: they do not know it, but this conformity places them, in fact, in the service of Typhon. They point in opposite directions, indicating a fundamental conflict between them. They want to move in opposite directions, but they are chained together and so neither has the ability to move in the desired direction.

Note that the human figures represent multiple aspects of this archetype. They represent the condition of being stuck in a prison with a servant of the Devil. They represent the condition of being a spiritual slave to society, which dictates what is and is not acceptable, regardless of who we are deep down. They

also represent the army of Typhon's adherents, who say and do apparently contradictory things because they are seized by the Devil.

Character: The Adversary

We experience the Matrix of the Spirit as an enduring part of the human condition. We take it as a baseline and inextricable feature of the world. This feature is our experience of living in a prison in which we are bound to the very people we despise.

Typhon, or the Devil, is the culmination of everything that we hate, everything that stands in opposition to what we believe. Typhon is the enemy, the Adversary. We do not merely disagree with the Adversary; we consider the Adversary to be a living expression of everything that is wrong with ourselves and with the world. The Adversary must be fought and defeated.

The goat's heads on the human figures indicate not only that the relationship between conscious and unconscious, self and other, is reciprocal, but that each treats the other as an embodiment of the Adversary. The mysterious realm of spirit is felt consciously as both powerful and terrifying. Our social norms, which represent social consensus about what is right and wrong, steer us away from this mystery because it has no regard for those norms.

Thus, we polarize into opposition camps, both internally and externally. The forces of apparent good are marshalled together to stand in opposition to the forces of apparent evil. The two cannot resist each other, so they lobby constant volleys against one another, living out an obsessive hatred of the opposite camp in which both sides are bound together in an eternal feud against each other.

Commentators have frequently gotten the character of this persona incorrect. They often judge this character to be either a hedonist or a black magician and so appropriately avoided. But Ra tells us that this is very matrix of the spirit, which makes it the stage on which all spiritual activity plays out. If we are to do inner work, this persona is to be pursued, not avoided. The key to a proper understanding of this persona is to recognize that it is *feminine*. The feminine archetypes depict the parts of ourselves that are veiled from us and so appear as other. We see ourselves through a glass darkly, as it were. Thus, the characterization of the feminine archetypes is always from the outside. We can, of course, experience the feminine archetypes from the inside, but we still do so through the lens of the outside. The feminine is always aware of how she is being seen, just as the masculine is always aware of what he sees. The veiling, in short, hides the feminine from the masculine, but it does not hide the masculine from the feminine.

The Adversary persona is not a living manifestation of cruelty, gluttony, chaos, and so on. Rather, this persona, especially on the interpersonal level, is the inner experience we have when we recognize that someone else considers us to be the Adversary. The Adversary persona, then, is the persona who is deeply, fundamentally, and inescapably misunderstood. To be an Adversary is to be an adversary to someone else. The hatred is not necessarily shared. In fact, the Adversary often finds the hatred of others amusing, enjoyable even. She might go out of her way to scandalize her haters because they are so disturbed by what, to her, is just her normal way of being. What others hate in the Adversary is her rejection of their established norms for right and wrong. She is unapologetically herself and feels no remorse for her actions because, to her, they are not wrong. The Adversary lives in connection with her

own spiritual power, but this power appears to others as dangerous, wild, and havoc-inducing. It is to be avoided and stopped at all costs.

But the Adversary is neither positively nor negatively oriented. She recognizes morality neither in others, nor herself. Rather, she is an expression of the deeper power available in a radically individualistic approach to rightness: if it feels right, it is right. All of the available channels back to the power of the Creator are available to her, but because many of those channels are morally opposed to one another, she lacks moral coherence: the Adversary is fundamentally capricious. She might be lascivious but honest; she might be generous but cruel. The moral valence or perceived moral valence of an action is insignificant to her; what she indulges in is the strength of feeling behind certain those actions. This strength of feeling comes from their moral valence, but she does not discriminate between one valence or another: actions that polarize us in either direction offer a pleasant feeling that encourages us forward in those kinds of actions. Though these pleasant feelings are very different from one another, she especially enjoys the ones that are also forbidden.

The spirit complex just is a channel or a conduit or a link to the One Infinite Creator. So the function of the Adversary, the Matrix of the Spirit, is to guard the power of that channel against any attempt to use it without proper preparation. The hideousness of the Adversary is the inner protection against opening a link to the infinite power of the Creator before initiations of mind and body have taken place. The Devil is what occultists and theosophists have called the Dweller on the Threshold. Once we have undergone such initiations, the Devil becomes less and less ugly. The Adversary is motivated by the inner storm that her very existence stirs up in those who see her as the Adversary. She knows that this storm is a necessary step in awakening to her true nature as an emissary of the Creator and not a mere Devil. As Ra says, Lucifer is the “true light-bringer in that the knowledge of good and evil...provided the impetus to move, to work and to learn.” The Adversary’s empowering capacity is her authenticity. Though hopelessly misunderstood, she makes no effort to control her image; on the contrary, she enjoys the misunderstanding because it signals to her that whoever sees her as the Devil is not ready for understanding. The Adversary’s virtue is her courage and willingness to face vitriol and threats on her wellbeing because of what she represents.

Levels

On the personal level, the Adversary is what Jung called the Shadow. This is the rejected self. All of our most hated attributes and inner truths are clustered together in the darkness of the unconscious, nurtured by their links to the deep truths and realities about who and what we are as living expressions of the One Creator. Because these rejected aspects of self have a life-sustaining link to the Creator, they are sources of hidden power within us. We feel the Shadow lurking beneath the surface, laughing in our faces, relishing our attempts to fight off these potent, hidden desires. We are afraid of who we might become and what we might do if we removed the shackles of the norms by which we allow our spiritual lives to be regulated. The Shadow self finds a disturbing satisfaction in doing what we consciously believe is wrong. In these dark moments, we act out exactly what we hate and enjoy it *because* we believe it to be wrong. Then we wonder what came over us as we attempt to further reinforce the prison in which we keep the Shadow self caged. Thus, we are prisoners to ourselves, shackled to the very thing we hate, unable to live as we believe is correct because this hidden self has an insatiable desire to trample our ideas of the good and the acceptable.

On the interpersonal level, the Adversary is a Rival. They are the living expression of the kind of person we hate the most. They are a mirror of ourselves, as we strive to be the exact opposite of them but inevitably end up acting in ways that are very similar, even if opposed, to the Rival. We cannot resist the Rival; we want to be indifferent to them, but we are far from indifferent. Our hatred of everything they represent attracts us in an unholy display of insults and attacks. Hence, when we ourselves become the Rival to another, we feel a similar attraction but without the sense of hatred. We are the Devil who enjoys doing the Devil's work. We laugh in the face of the insults and attacks because, insofar as they originate from a moral conception we reject, we are impervious to them. We rub our supposedly disgusting and evil practices in the faces of those who despise us, getting a wry thrill from their writhing discomfort. Note, in this context, that Ra asserts that marriages are often "adversary relationships" (31.16). Marriage is not fundamentally adversarial, but because our partner often reflects our own unconscious self back to us, we will tend also to see our own Shadow in that person.

On the social level, the Adversary is the Enemy. Note that she is not an iconoclast. The Adversary does not define herself in opposition to social norms; rather, she does whatever she wants and the prevailing social norms have identified her uniquely as the Enemy. Social and political life is always polarized into two opposing camps because we construct Enemies for our worldview from an inverted conception of that worldview. Whoever resembles the inversion of our worldview becomes the Enemy, and everyone else is unimportant in light of the existence of the Enemy. So our group crusades against the evils of another group, who is the living manifestation of everything we believe to be terrible and disruptive and threatening to our way of life and our aspirations for a better way of life.

Polarized Expressions and Modes of Distortion

One distorted expression of the Adversary is when, as Adversaries, we simultaneously attempt to live out our controversial truth but also to hide it from the rest of the world. This is the Adversary in the closet, so to speak. Though she does not see her lifestyle as wrong, she hides it from others to avoid the backlash that will follow their discovery of her truth. Because this Adversary attempts to act out her secret desires without being scandalous, she is so shielded from others that there is never an opportunity for potentiation.

The opposite distorted expression is when we become ostentatious in our presentation as the Devil. Not only do we relish the scandal that we create among those to whom we represent all that is hateful, we go so far overboard in trolling them that our efforts are no longer helpful and serve to shut down all possibility of potentiation—not to mention the danger we pose to ourselves as incarnate creatures.

27. The Potentiator of the Spirit

Symbols

A tower or pyramid is being struck by lightning. The capstone or battlement on top is dislodged and falling off. Two figures fall from the top, one male and one female.

The pyramid is the place of initiation. It—and any triangle we see in the Egyptian *Tarot*—does not represent the spirit, but the temple in which we attempt to use the spirit to contact the Creator. This interpretation matches another name occasionally used for this image, "The House of God." The temple

is an interesting concept, because it is constructed entirely by human hands. The constructed nature of the temple is reminiscent of the Significator of the Mind: in that image, the master of ceremonies (the Storyteller) sits within a temple of his own construction.

The capstone or crown on the temple symbolizes the pinnacle of holiness or moral rectitude, a place where the transparent spiritual self has made a dwelling for itself. In constructing our own moral and spiritual ideologies, we, as a rule, place ourselves at the top of this ideology: we see ourselves as instances of enlightened achievement of the goals of human life. Almost everyone believes they are morally better than most other human beings. Almost everyone believes that they have figured out the truth about human life and that they are living out that truth more correctly than most everyone else. If these views were not extremely common, we would not be as quick as we are to judge each other.

The lightning represents sudden spiritual awakening. Many *Tarot* decks have the lightning originating from the Sun. This is so far from the actual phenomenon of lightning, that it is hard to imagine previous deck creators made the mistake of believing that lightning comes from the Sun. On the contrary, since this archetype is a Potentiator, it represents the inner Logos, which is symbolized by the Sun. It is appropriate, then, that the Sun is depicted as the source of the lightning. This reminds us that we do not choose when spiritual awakening happens. It finds us in its own time.

Sudden spiritual awakening destroys the pinnacle of holiness in which we have made ourselves cozy, knocking both the transparent and hidden self out of the temple and crashing to the ground in abject humiliation. Some commentators believe that the tower represents material achievement. I believe this is incorrect. The tower represents the mental construct we have designed for ourselves as a means of securing for ourselves a favorable character arc in the narrative of our lives. Very often, part of that favorable narrative includes material achievements, but achievements are not a necessary part of the tower. The tower is a structure we have built for the express purpose of living our lives closer to the Creator. It is built out of beliefs and the lightning strike occurs because these beliefs have hardened into dogmas that keep us spiritually locked away from the Creator.

If I am right, then the destruction of the tower does not have to play out as an outwardly destructive event. Sudden spiritual awakening always causes our world to come crashing down: a mental phenomenon in response to a spiritual event. New spiritual awareness comes at the cost of a penthouse within our worldview, a penthouse we worked hard to get to. The loss of the penthouse can be entirely an inward event in which we discover for ourselves that we were not nearly so spiritually advanced or perfected as we had reckoned. But it can also manifest as the literal loss of a penthouse. What matters is the spiritual and moral value that this self-conceived achievement of status represents.

The two figures are typically represented, in the Egyptian *Tarot* as both male, one crowned and one uncrowned. This is usually interpreted as meaning that spiritual awakening and its devastating aftermath can happen to anyone, regardless of position. However, I think the capstone captures this same concept. Most other *Tarot* decks represent the two figures as male and female. I prefer this rendering because it keeps the symbolism of the image continuous with both the Devil before it and the Sun after it: The transparent and hidden selves (analogous to self and other) are in this adventure together.

Character: The Disgraced Priest

While this persona is masculine and so both active and transparent in our experience, we do not consciously choose when and how sudden spiritual awakening will find us. The active aspect of this persona is our construction of the tower itself. We invite spiritual awakening by building a lightning rod. In our conscious minds, we choose to see ourselves as already enlightened, already morally good, well polarized, mature, and all around virtuous human beings. We manage to do this by dividing our spiritual selves, one against another. We bury the Devil deep in the recesses of our consciousness, shoving it down with insults and penalties whenever it takes us over. After hiding the Devil from ourselves, we take up our throne at the top of the tower and look down on the rest of the world with the smug satisfaction that we are the best of them all.

An event suddenly awakens us to our own misjudgments about how morally developed we are and how close to the Creator we are. The event itself is not important; the illumination that it brings is where the central phenomenon of this persona lies. We suddenly see clearly that we were falsely enlightened, that we are no better than anyone else, and that our own character flaws are far more monumental than we had ever imagined. The story we had told ourselves about what is most important in our lives can no longer function for us the way it used to. Our entirely belief system seems to be in shambles, since everything we thought we knew about ourselves seems to have been a lie we were telling ourselves.

I call this persona the Disgraced Priest. He has not only been exposed to himself as having no greater connection with the Creator than anyone else; his inner demons are also exposed, as symbolized by the female figure falling from the tower. He is the living manifestation of hypocrisy and spiritual embarrassment. Not only does he not live up to his own standards for virtue; those very standards were constructed to hide his vices. The Disgraced Priest has nowhere to go for shelter; everyone in his inner circle has turned against him.

Levels

On the personal level, we express the Disgraced Priest whenever a truth about ourselves comes clearly into view, despite our previous efforts to hide it from ourselves. Lying to oneself is a strange phenomenon. The self, as I've accounted for it, is threefold: there is the conscious self, the unconscious self, and the witness. It is not possible for the conscious self to lie to the unconscious self: the conscious self is transparent and incapable of hiding. The unconscious self does not need to lie to the conscious self: it is already hidden from view and will easily take on the conscious self's preferred interpretation. Lying to oneself is a relationship between the conscious self and the witness concerning the nature of the unconscious self. The conscious self attempts to convince the witness that the unconscious is as the conscious self proclaims it is. The mounting evidence to the contrary causes the conscious self to construct more and more elaborate explanations to maintain its position in the face of the witness's potential skepticism. The inner Disgraced Priest is a conscious self that has successfully buried the truth and avoided rousing the witness's criticism. But despite all that effort, the truth has come to light in a way that the conscious self is incapable of denying.

On the interpersonal level, we usually express the Disgraced Priest through an explosive interaction with another person who is, in some sense, our Rival. In this interaction, we lash out at the other in all the ways we normally would, but the circumstances cause this instance to be explosive and revealing. It might be an embarrassing public quarrel with a lover, a workplace clash that leads to the penalization of both parties, a social media fight, etc. But the interpersonal Disgraced Priest does not need to manifest

through conflict. The characteristic feature of this persona, in its interpersonal expression, is when we discover the truth about our relationship with a person who represents the forbidden in a way that causes our self-conception to collapse. A brief spark of romantic chemistry with a forbidden partner can be enough to do it, as can a mere conversation with someone you are inclined to dislike.

On the social level, the Disgraced Priest has a literal meaning. We express this persona socially when a sudden turn of events leads to our fall from grace by revealing our secret affinity with the forbidden. The social Disgraced Priest is the stuff of scandal and intrigue for those of us who merely witness it, but for the person who undergoes the experience, it is earth-shattering.

Polarized Expressions and Modes of Distortion

28. Relationship #9

Character: Revelation

In the images for these two archetypes, the masculine and feminine spiritual selves both appear. For gendered archetypes, this is very unusual. However, I think the purpose for their appearance on both images is to highlight the partnership between them and the parallel experiences they undergo in the process of spiritual potentiation. The Devil is only a devil in relation to we who project our Shadow onto her. She is a living expression of the free-flowing power of the Creator and its intimate connection with the mysterious spiritual self. The unconscious spirit is always already in perfect contact with the Creator. So the influence of the infinite self on this side of the spirit is strong and their link inseverable. The Shadow self cannot be destroyed; it can only be buried.

The inner Priest—who is not yet disgraced—buries his own Shadow self for fear of the moral contradiction that this Shadow represents. Within us lies the full realization of everything we reject as bad, destructive, horrifying and wrong. In order to glorify ourselves as spiritually enlightened, as walking the path to the Creator, as being a good person, we hide these rejected parts of ourselves from conscious view: we avoid looking at the darkness within.

But the Devil and the Priest are chained to each other. He cannot escape his Shadow, no matter how deeply he buries it. It comes up for air from time to time, wreaking havoc in his private life, though he has learned how to keep the emergence of the Devil under wraps. The two figures chained at the feet of the Devil are Jekyll and Hyde. Both are false expressions of self, caricatures of our true nature that come into being by virtue of their fundamental opposition. Because we have forced ourselves into a particular conception of what is morally and socially acceptable, we have forced another part of ourselves into a particular conception of what is morally and socially forbidden. But these categories, like the goat's head masks, are not natural to us; they are thrust upon us by the conditions of our birth and the unexamined belief systems we have adopted. Jekyll hates and blames Hyde, who seems to desire only Jekyll's own destruction and disgrace. But they are stuck with each other, living out a miserable prison sentence in which they endure an uncomfortable stalemate, a compromise that both parties resent.

This is the Dark Night of the Soul, a condition of inner damnation and wretchedness in which the presence of the Creator cannot be felt, blocked off as it is by the Devil. This condition invites potentiation. In the Dark Night of the Soul, we do not think of the Devil as part of ourselves; we think of

it as an unfortunate burden thrust upon us by some evil outside force: we might consider the Devil to be our genetics, our childhood, a carefully planned conspiracy, a demon spirit that torments us from a metaphysical dimension, or any other outside influence. But all these factors, even if present, only encourage the formation of the Devil; they cannot *be* the Devil, since the Devil is constituted by our own hidden feelings and their relationships to the influxes of the Creator through the spirit.

In the midst of the Dark Night of the Soul, an event will happen—though its outward appearance is has no one distinct shape—that reveals the fundamental truth that the inner Priest has been avoiding the entire time: the Devil is not outside of him. This is a universal feature of the sudden awakening that comes with the lightning strike. I call this relationship Revelation, not because I believe that this is how Scriptures are brought into manifestation; on the contrary, I believe Scripture has a much closer association with the final archetype in the spirit cycle, the Avatar. Rather, I call it Revelation because I believe that when these potentiating events occur in our lives causing our whole conception of self to face re-examination, it feels like a sudden revelation, a message from God even, though the message is often painful and difficult to accept.

In the image on the Tower card, the two figures falling to the ground are not chained to each other. Potentiation, though difficult, painful and terrifying, is also liberating. We do not have to live our lives as Jekyll and Hyde. The only reason we were bound to imprisonment with our own demons is because we had accepted a belief system that cut our own minds in half and turned them against each other: be lovable, we had to see part of ourselves as unlovable; to be good, we had to see part of ourselves as evil; etc. The release of the beliefs that bound us together in chains is a relief. Upon falling from the tower, the conscious and unconscious minds have an opportunity to reimagine their adventure together in a way that makes them cooperative partners rather than adversaries.

The experience of Revelation is often difficult, uncomfortable and embarrassing. We are revealed to be hypocrites before ourselves at the very least, but often before others as well. The mental structures that allowed us to regiment and make sense of our lives within the confines of the moral and social norms that we had internalize are destroyed, which leaves us feeling ungrounded and in need of a new myth within which to imagine our progressive return to the Creator. But the shame of being exposed as a hypocrite is soothed by our abandonment of the self-conception that caused us to be so afraid of appearing as a hypocrite. In other words, the very event that exposes us is also the event that leads to a change in our values. It is surprising how soon after a lightning-strike event we can look back on our previous actions and laugh about own foolishness, pomposity and hypocrisy. Despite the difficulty of Revelation, it opens us up to a hope that we did not have previously: the hope that we can live free from the torment of our own guilty consciences. Revelation sets us up for a major reconstruction of our relationship to the spiritual influxes that had been blocked off by our rejection of the Devil who represented those very influxes. Thus, Revelation, however painful it might be, is also liberating.

When to Become the Personas

The question of when to become either of these two personas raises the question of how to precipitate revelation. I have characterized it as an unpredictable event: the moment that the inner Logos (or the personal divine spark, if you will) decides, freely and on its own, to change the experiential continuum of mind's relation to spirit. While this event is often unpredictable, it can be induced through a bold and

dangerous action: after all, did the Disgraced Priest fall out of the tower after the lightning struck, or did he jump out of the tower and cause the lightning to strike?

On the personal level, the Devil is active when we distinguish a pattern of vicious behavior, whose manifestation we are powerless to stop. The inner Devil appears in our consciousness as addictions, whether to behaviors, thoughts, feelings, substances, persons—we become psychologically dependent on something we actively believe to be harmful and perhaps even morally wrong. The vices on which we are psychologically dependent are the face of our own inner Devil. When we are in the throes of these vices, the Devil persona is active within us. In this moment, it is appropriate to become the inner Disgraced Priest. While we cannot simply bring about the sudden awakening of the Disgraced Priest, we can consciously unearth the Devil. The work of the inner Disgraced Priest, then, is to intentionally out ourselves, to expose the vices we've been shielding from both ourselves and others. We must confess our secrets to ourselves at least, but often also to someone else. This exposure allows new light to be shed on the Devil and, if done correctly, can disrupt the conceptual structure that kept us chained to the Devil in the first place. If our confession is a staged attempt to maintain our self-conception as enlightened, then the exposure is not broad enough. The purpose of exposure is to be humbled before self and other. Choosing to confess allows the potentiation to occur without as much devastation, since, without a confession, it will inevitably come to light on its own anyway.

Conversely, when we notice ourselves behaving and thinking as if we have reached the pinnacle of spiritual growth and are benevolently assisting the spiritual children around us with our graciousness and wisdom, then we can be certain the inner Disgraced Priest is active. False enlightenment is the trademark of the Disgraced Priest and occupying this state, even if only for a short while, leads inevitably to a humbling experience as payment for our hubris. If we notice ourselves in a state of false enlightenment, then it is appropriate to become the Devil. The most common way to take on the inner Devil persona is to be the devil's advocate. That is, to sincerely imagine what our ideological enemies might say about us. The Devil enjoys her work, so the hard part is identifying the energy of the Devil persona in the first place; staying within it should be relatively easy.

On the interpersonal level, the presence of a Rival, or a despised Adversary within our lives shows that someone is expressing the Devil in relation to us. The people who inevitably rub us the wrong way, almost as if their very existence is offensive to us, are inviting us to become the Disgraced Priest in relation to them. We will tend to attack these people, since they represent threats to our self-conception. Each of these attacks has the potential to be a lightning strike moment. In order to avoid major disruption to our lives, it is helpful to enter the persona of the Disgraced Priest the moment we notice ourselves attacking our Rival. This makes it more likely that we will see in the other a reflection of our own Shadow. Moreover, filling our minds with the embarrassment and hypocrisy of the situation is likely to have a long-term effect on how we think about people like the Rival.

Similarly, it is appropriate to become the Devil's Advocate in relation to someone who has all the symptoms of false enlightenment. This is not to say that it is best to aggressively antagonize people we think are wrong. Rather, it is an opportunity to help another person see the Shadow they have been hiding from. It is not important that this person already sees the Devil in us, since, if we are adept with these personas, we can become the Devil for them.

The social dynamics of this relationship closely parallel the interpersonal dynamics. Confession and the Devil's Advocate are the characteristic results of intentionally entering these personas. But self-induced

illusions are deep and difficult to penetrate. Public confessions are often ploys to reinforce one's own image of enlightenment. The way to be sure that one's confession is a real attempt to induce the lightning strike is if the confession is dangerous. Public admissions of wrongdoing can be parsed in a way that is safe, but a genuine confession baldly exposes one's hypocrisy for all to see. Likewise, while a social Devil's Advocate can help another group see the hypocrisy in their actions, there is a fine line between becoming the Devil and just being a troll. Often, we do not realize we have crossed this line until we are fully under the bridge.

29. The Catalyst of the Spirit

Symbols

A naked woman kneels with her right foot on land and her left foot on sea, her legs forming right angles. Her right hand pours liquid from a pitcher onto the land and her left pours liquid from a pitcher into the sea. She faces to her own left, while behind her a stem with three blossoms grows with a butterfly above it. Above her, a bright star shines with a white triangle above an inverted black triangle in the center of the star. Seven smaller stars surround the central star.

The woman represents the unconscious mind. The lodestar above her is the Logos shining through the dark night of the spirit complex into her awareness. The seven smaller stars around the lodestar represent the energy centers through which the Logos is able to express itself. These energy centers shine around the lodestar as lesser expressions of the central aspect of self. Some commentators refer to these stars as the seven "seals." That they shine here suggests that in this archetype, the energy centers must be open, unblocked, and minimally balanced so that spiritual work may be done without the inhibiting intrusion of mental or bodily work yet to be done.

The two triangles in the middle of the lodestar show that the right- and left-hand paths are mirror images of each other, and that the left-hand path is the shadow side or illusory image of the right-hand path. They appear together within the lodestar, which shows that one cannot behold the Logos in faith without exposing oneself to the availability of both moral paths. The polarity opposite of one's choosing becomes dimmer and dimmer within that lodestar as one progresses along the path, but it is always at least partially there, threatening to undo all the spiritual work accomplished thus far.

The woman's nakedness represents the unconscious mind fully exposed. The Revelation of the Potentiator has exposed all the elements of the unconscious mind that we have been hiding from. This is not to say that the veil has been fully lifted; rather, in this archetype, the inner demon has been revealed as a particular expression of the unconscious mind. The veil is only lifted insofar as a certain aspect of the unconscious mind controls the contact between mind and spirit. In fact, seeing her naked only magnifies the mystery of her link to the lodestar. Her desires, intentions and values are fully revealed, but why she feels as she does or follows the star as she follows it cannot be known.

The flower represents spring, which signals that the devastation is over and new life is flourishing. It also represents the reproductive capacity of acts of faith. The unconscious mind, here, allows the spiritual energy to flow through her and into manifestation, pouring these energies into the ground without ever looking back to see what grew from the seeds thus sown. The flower that springs up from the outpouring will pollenate and germinate other plants, with the help of the butterfly, and this process will

lead to even more flowers blooming next season. On the right-hand path, we see that faith, when flowing honestly and without attachment to outcomes, will heal and beautify the world. Notice also that the catalyst on the right-hand path is much more fertile ground for growth than the left-hand path, which seems to be an endless void. This follows one of the themes of the Archetypal Mind: the right-hand path is much easier to walk than the left-hand path, but it is also harder to see. The unconscious mind, here, is fixated on the emptiness and mystery of the left-hand path. She allows the energy of the spirit to flow through her and into a boundless void that hungrily swallows everything she has to offer without so much as gratitude in response.

The butterfly usually represents transformation. In this case, however, I think the butterfly refers specifically to the acquisition of wings. The butterfly was once an earthbound caterpillar, but, through the Potentiation of the Spirit, has sprouted wings and is able to fly. I believe that the reason the human figures represent the mind is because humans, in ancient times anyway, were earthbound. In the spirit cycle, the darkness (and thus the night sky) represent the veiled spirit complex. Ra says that “the shadow of hidden things is an infinite depth in which is stored the power of the One Infinite Creator.” Between the unconscious mind and the light of the Logos, there is a huge chasm of darkness that one’s inner witness must traverse if it is to make contact and reunite with the One Creator. This darkness shrouds the brilliant light that is available only when one learns how to see it. During the daytime, the sky is alit, the darkness dispelled. But revealing the brilliance of the darkness requires opening the window to the Logos more and more. The butterfly (and, elsewhere in the images, the bird) represents the ability of the inner witness to move closer and closer to the inner Logos. The mind remains stuck on the ground, so the butterfly or the bird is the messenger that bridges the gap between Logos and mind. In the Catalyst of the Spirit, we may finally enter the spirit complex as a Traveler to move from the limits of the earthbound mind to the limitless light of the star in the distance.

The two right angles formed by her legs represent, as in previous images, the proximity of the physical and the metaphysical. (but what does this really mean??)

The pitchers of liquid resemble the pitchers in the hands of the Alchemist. Whereas the Alchemist was refining the energies on hand without giving or taking any new energies, the Faithful (as I call the Catalyst of the Spirit) allows these spiritual energies to pour out from and through her. The energy mysteriously enters her from the distant star, through the chasm of the night sky, into her eyes, and out through her hands. The outpouring of spiritual and psychic energy also represents the shedding of moral and social norms that had kept her caged as a demon. On the right, she abandons the idea that the spiritual energies are evil or wrong, while on the left she abandons her own hopes and dreams for her herself: who she is does not matter anymore, so she empties herself out in preparation to be absorbed into the conscious mind’s preferred way of being.

Character: The Faithful

Ra names this archetype “Faith,” preferring this name to “Hope.” Faith is not the sort of thing that most people refer to when they use the word. The common understanding of the word makes it a kind of belief: when people talk about “their faith,” what they usually mean is the set of mythic beliefs that they hold and refuse to abandon regardless of what the evidence says. So the vulgar understanding of faith is belief without or even in contravention to evidence. But belief is a mental phenomenon. The manifestation of the spirit depends on (or emerges out of, or is a response to) our mental

configurations, so if we think of faith as a properly spiritual phenomenon, the limits of our beliefs really do establish the limits of our ability to have faith. However, faith is not simply a kind of belief, nor does it reinforce any particular myth. Faith extends far beyond the bounds of any conceptualization or mythic narrative. It is beholden to no myth and answers only to the mysterious Creator. To have faith is to accept the mystery and the indictment of all mythic belief that this mystery represents.

Faith is a kind of trust. On the right-hand path, faith is trust in the deep, sincere benevolence of the universe, the Creator, and the other human beings with whom we share the Creation. In faith, we behold the light, however dim, and take its warmth at face value. In faith, we open ourselves in our entirety to that light, allowing it in with no obstruction. As we do so, we do not search our experience for evidence that we have chosen correctly: this would be a faithless act. Faith is not blind; rather, its gaze is fixed on the light and so does not see the results of faith in manifestation.

Following the devastation of the potentiating lightning, the unconscious mind of Faithful is exposed and vulnerable. The trauma she has endured through the torment of her caged life as a demon has finally come to an end and she no longer has either the will or capacity to defend herself. She has collapsed onto the ground, grateful that it is finally over, and happily releasing the biases that have kept her in her cage for so long.

The faith of the Faithful, though, lies in the motivating influence of the glimmer of spiritual light that remains after the moment of Revelation has passed. The conscious mind's illusions about her nature have collapsed in on themselves: the flow of energy from the Creator into the mind was once blocked by the demon whose repulsiveness kept her from breaking that spiritual seal and entering fully into the freedom that the demon represented. A new spiritual energy is now available to the Faithful and the motivating influence of that spiritual energy is undeniable.

The star that appears above her is the guiding light whose hidden communication to her reveals her destiny to her. But that destiny is fraught. Within that star, she can see a positive, glorious expression of divine unfoldment that might flow through her as an instrument of the higher will; but she can also see the shadow side of this glory: the eternal emptiness and isolation of a universe that lacks a Creator entirely. The Faithful can see beyond the physical illusion, but she is uncertain about what she sees. The Faithful has doubts.

To be the Faithful is to live in and through one's own despair. Despair is not an abandonment of faith, but a mixture of positive and negative faith. Insofar as we see a benevolent Creator and the universe as that Creator made manifest, then our vision motivates us to open our hearts to the world, sharing the divine wellspring of love without stopping to see whether our efforts have any positive effect. But insofar as we see beyond ourselves a dark emptiness, devoid of love and intelligence, our faith will turn in upon itself, motivating our own conscious minds to occupy the position of the all-powerful. In this negative aspect of faith, the unconscious mind empties out what little hope it had for itself into the void, watching as she becomes a mere shell for the use of the conscious mind, strengthening the spiritual conduit that leads, not to the all-source beyond incarnation, but to the center of the incarnate self where, by the Law of One, the Creator lies waiting in the shadows. The doubt of the faithful is an experience of teetering between these two extremes. On the right-hand path, we want open fully to the light of the Creator beyond ourselves, but we fear that there is no such thing and that we waste our personal power in opening to it.

The new reality that emerges after the Revelation imparts to the Faithful a vision of the way things might be from now on and this vision guides her hand as she finally releases her own inhibitions, allowing the spiritual energy to flow through her and into the manifest world. That vision is impossibly distant from her: it is an unreachable image of complete fulfilment, boundless satisfaction, and ultimate union with the Creator. The star only guides the way forward. Her suffering has taught her that achieving the ideal is hopeless, but her escape from imprisonment has also taught her that faith in the eventual miraculous manifestation of the hopeless is something she cannot live without. Her faith is a necessary absurdity.

The spirit is not concerned with beliefs, values, intentions and so on. We see these elements in the spirit cycle because they are mental phenomena that are affected by the movements of the spirit. The domain of the spirit is fundamentally aesthetic in the sense that we choose the right-hand or left-hand path, not based on what is right or wrong, since rightness is not inherent to either, but based on what strikes us as fundamentally appealing. One side of the dual image in the star will strike us as more beautiful than the other. In the spirit, we behold the beauty of self and universe, seeing the Creator therein.

Levels

On the personal level, the Faithful is the inner motivation to act in accord with the deep feeling of rightness. In faith, we do not require moral goodness of ourselves or attempt to follow a rule that results in doing the right thing. Rather, faith is the wellspring of energy whose feeling fills us and affirms through its presence that it is the right way. When we are present to this sense-of-right, or “resonance,” as many call it, we feel impelled to act on it, regardless of how the outside world will think of us. Here, the inner nature of our hearts is revealed to us, but remains hidden to the rest of the world. The inner Faithful wants nothing more than to become a conduit for the flow of energy that has just been opened. In this persona, desperately want our inner state of being to envelop and fill the world around us.

On the interpersonal level, we express the Faithful in a relationship that has recently undergone Revelation. After the lightning strike reveals the deeper truths of the relationship and demolishes the mental structures that allowed that relationship to persist in its static condition separating the Priest from the Demon, we express the Faithful as a naïve approach to the possibilities for rebuilding that relationship. We know that it cannot continue as it was before, since the illusion holding it together has burst. But we feel simultaneously hopeful for a more beautiful relationship and fearful that it will never work out as we hope. In this context we, as the Faithful, want to make use of the new vision that our partner has of us: what once was offensive and repulsive now appears as an attractive possibility. Revelation has shown our partner in the relationship that the taboo is not inherently bad, which has made space for us to feel that we can relax and be natural conduits for our deeper energies without the fear of being demonized for it.

After an earth-shattering event reveals the hidden reality to the group consciousness (whatever the group might be), the revaluation of social norms changes how this group consciousness conceives its own internal elements that have habitually violated those social norms. On the social level, we express the Faithful when we are the representatives of this formerly rejected element of the group. Our newfound freedom as members of the group feels simultaneously liberating and daunting. We feel the weight of expectation to be more than what we feel ourselves to be, as well as an inner worry that the hope we now feel in our future possibilities as part of the group is unfounded.

Polarized Expressions and Modes of Distortion

The right-hand path Faithful is wholesome through and through. Having endured deep suffering, she emerges genuinely pure of heart. The parts of her that once seemed vicious and degenerate are revealed, underneath that horrifying illusion, to be youthful, pristine, vibrant, and flawless in their deep and unconflicted longing for a peaceful, supportive, loving world. The positively oriented Faithful is the unconscious mind reborn as an angelic state of mind, embracing the inner light as her only guide, living her life in service to the Creator she beholds.

The left-hand path Faithful represents the human will finally and fully broken. The last remnants of attachment to a sunny, storybook life have fallen away. She has turned to the dark side. This Broken Soul now understands the beauty and satisfaction of her utter helplessness before the will and dominion of her oppressor. She is no longer herself. All the biases and attachments that she once held in secret slip away, back into the undifferentiated void of their origin. In the moment of Revelation, she has seen through the mysteries of the universe to discover that there is no savior, no benevolence, no escape from the pit of isolation. She has no refuge from the overwhelming force of the demands the conscious mind places on her and so loses all desire to fight any longer. She hollows herself out to match the loveless malevolence at the center of the spirit and submits herself as a vessel to be used according to the whim of her oppressor.

As always, in the Catalyst and Experience personas, these polarized characterizations represent the opposite extremes of potential. They are the horizon toward which we move as we undergo transformation after transformation. Our experience with these personas will be mixed in some way as our transformations move us further along the axis, closer to the polarized ideal, but never full there.

These two opposite potentials are always available and, to some degree, present in the Catalyst of the Spirit. Reckoning with the power and potential of each as they simultaneously offer themselves is the stuff of faith. It is not easy, even on the right-hand path, to trust ourselves. After the lightning strikes, we are left in a very vulnerable position. The hidden self that we had abhorred for so long is now in view and we want to be able to trust this part of ourselves that we had once hated, but we also still wish for it to just go away. Our inner demons are far and away the hardest parts of ourselves to accept. We will tend to simultaneously wish to experience them as innocent children who just want to leave the cage, and also as frustrating pests who refuse to behave. The tension between these two motivations to releasing attachments produces despair. We despair over what we wish we were, what we will never be, and how we might never be comfortable being what we are. If, in the endless process of transformation, we were somehow able to achieve perfect balance and live as fully realized and enlightened beings, then there would be no despair in the Catalyst of the Spirit. But perfection is not the goal of third density. In the star, we will always see both darkness and light, and we will feel the conflict between these two even within the spirit complex. The light will pull us toward trust and submission to the higher will, while the darkness will pull us toward distrust and rejection of anything higher than the incarnate, conscious will. This tension manifests as despair, a deep unhappiness of the spirit, and the doom of human spiritual striving. Few, if any, will escape from the despair of the human condition. Faith does not require that we do not despair; it only requires that we are honest with ourselves about what we see in the inner lodestar. Over time, as the Transformation archetype awakens within us, we will learn how to choose to see one polarity over the other.

30. The Experience of the Spirit

Symbols

Two pyramids rise on either side of the scene, white pyramid on the left, black pyramid on the right. The white pyramid has a door, while the black pyramid does not. Between and above the pyramids, there is a moon in the night sky, obscured by clouds or mist. In front of the pyramids are two jackals facing each other, a black jackal on the left, white on the right. At the bottom of the scene, a scorpion crawls toward the black jackal and the white pyramid, enveloped by a circle of light.

The two triangles in the Catalyst of the Spirit image are now much closer. They have taken on the appearance of two temples, two palaces of spiritual initiation, one white and one black. Each temple symbolizes the a new and more helpful mental configuration for the purpose of doing spiritual work. This new temple will become the dogma that separates the acceptable from the rejected, thereby becoming the next iteration of the Matrix of the Spirit. We do not think of the temples as dogma, but as a new way of viewing our relation to the infinite which promises an escape from the previous dogmas that inhibited contact with the Creator. In the temple of our choice, what we see is a stable spiritual foundation from which we can gain new insight on ourselves and also become closer to the Creator. At the horizon of human experience, these temples also represent the Great Work that each of us has set about to do: to enter into the ultimate truth of this third density illusion and take our place as co-Creators with the One Infinite Creator. The temple simultaneously represents the future dogma in which we will feel one day trapped and the release from dogma that allows us to grow and build the spirit complex. The door on the white pyramid indicates, once again, that the right-hand path is easier to tread. Insofar as the temple represents the ability to ascend through spirit and contact the Creator as a source of inner power, the white temple is much easier to enter. One must cut a hole into the black pyramid to gain entry.

Again, as in the Catalyst of the Spirit, we have a night sky accompanied by a dim source of light. In this case, though, the source of light is the Moon, which is not fixed in the sky the way a star is. The Moon cannot offer an objective marker by which we can gauge the direction of our movement. Instead, it only offers dim light. This is the context of the veiling of the spirit in the Experience of the Spirit. The transparent side of spirit, represented by the light of the Moon, is a dim and diffuse reflection of the Logos itself. The hidden or veiled side of spirit, represented by the night sky and the environment itself, is filled with shadows, illusions, potential guides and hidden threats.

Even more disorienting in this card is the absence of a human figure. If we imagine our inner Traveler as riding the butterfly that soars from the ground to the star in the heavens, then the scene before us represents that path of travel. In the Experience of the Spirit, we leave the mind behind, since no amount of reasoning will help us in this environment. This is a masculine archetype, so it is characterized by transparency of experience as well as the capacity to activate inner evolutionary progress. What is transparent to us is not the nature of spirit itself, since that is as confusing as ever in this archetype; rather, in this experience, we are aware of ourselves as Travelers within a strange and terrifying world. Because there is no human figure in this image, there is no obvious point of perspective to use as a point of orientation. Perhaps the butterfly soars from behind the pyramids; perhaps it attempts to escape the scorpion; perhaps it flies from the Moon to the pyramid.

The scorpion, in ancient Egypt, was a major threat in the night. It is small, nocturnal, and deadly. The sting of the scorpion was known to be just as dangerous as that of the venomous snake, but there are no harmless scorpions the way there are harmless snakes. Additionally, because the scorpion navigates primarily through smell rather than sight, it is well equipped to hunt in the night. This symbol, then, represents the threat of a devastating attack from a spiritual hunter who feeds on the unsuspecting. The scorpion is aimed toward the right-hand path because this is where the easier prey is. The Faithful on the right-hand path are easily duped, easily snuck up on, and thus easily hunted.

Jackals are also nocturnal creatures. The Egyptians associated Jackals with the dead because they were often found at cemeteries feeding on corpses. Jackals do not hunt large prey unless it is diseased or injured. They either scavenge or hunt insects and arachnids. The jackal is a threat to both the scorpion and the butterfly, but the scorpion is easier for the jackal to catch. Thus, the two jackals represent guardians who can protect against threats in the night. But each jackal guards its own respective pyramid. The guardian of the black pyramid, for example, has no interest in helping the right-hand path Faithful; this guardian, who appears as the white jackal, ushers the Faithful to the pyramid as a living sacrifice to the master of that pyramid. The colors of the two jackals indicate the appearance they take on in the night. The white jackal is attractive to the right-hand path Faithful; its sleekness and apparently trustworthy comportment gain the trust of the naïve seeker and lead her to her own servitude at the wrong temple. The black jackal is unadorned, lacks sophistication, and makes no effort to present itself in a way that will lure the Faithful to itself. Its purpose is to assist those who request its help, but few will find themselves under this jackal's care due to the drabness of its appearance.

Character: The Watcher in the Night

The Experience of the Spirit is a Watcher in the Night, guarding the path through which the Catalyst of the Spirit moves. He remains outside the temple to ward off both the seductive spirits who would lead the Faithful to the exact opposite spiritual realization of their intention and the insidious spirits who attempt to destroy the faithful and feed on their broken corpses. The Watcher does not rely on his vision to interpret the presence of dangers, but on his subtle sensation of the polarities and intentions of the figures around. Like the scorpion, the jackal has a potent sense of smell.

The Watcher does not enter the temple of initiation; he only guards the path that leads to the temple. He is the bodhisattva who has sworn not to complete his own spiritual journey until all the souls remaining on Earth have also completed their own. He is ever vigilant about the threats of the spiritual path, but the price of his vigilance is that he cannot turn his eyes to the pure light the way the Faithful does.

On the right-hand path, the Watcher is not a creature of faith, but of worry and protection. He is the Guardian of the Temple. We see reflections of the Guardian in masculine protectiveness, especially a father's stereotypical protectiveness of his daughter. He lives his entire life exposed to darkness and danger so that others will not have to live that way.

On the left-hand path, the Watcher is a con-artist living life in his element. He is the Pied Piper. He uses the shadows of the night as props to conjure illusions that attract the unsuspecting into his trap. He feeds on the energy of the naïve who adore him as a spiritual champion, never suspecting that he will consume their spirits and assimilate them as servants to his own ever-increasing power. He is aware of threats from below: parasitic spirits from the lower astral realms that kill and feed on the weak,

regardless of the path tread. But because he is not afraid of the them or the darkness of their realm, they prefer to drain life from those on the right-hand path.

Levels

On the personal level, the Watcher in the Night is often subsumed into the superego. The inner Watcher is our presence to the importance of minding the dangers on the infrequently trodden path of faith: prevailing social norms cordon this path off as taboo for a reason. This inner self feels a sense of responsibility for ushering the fragile, trusting part of ourselves forward into its intended state of spiritual experience.

On the interpersonal level, the Watcher tends to manifest as a protector, a shield between the vulnerable and the outside predators that would take advantage of the vulnerable. The father's role in the family traditionally includes this protector role. The interpersonal Watcher does not attempt to make his partner less naïve or more hardened to the dangers in the night; rather, he attempts to preserve them as they are by hardening himself to the dangers in the night.

On the social level, we usually see the Watcher in the form of a Warrior, especially as it manifests in our police force. This manifestation is particularly instructive, since it reveals the morally mixed, or confused, nature of this persona as we typically express it. We see the police attempting both to be a shield against dangers in the night and acting as a predator that would take advantage of the vulnerable under the guise of a protector.

Polarized Expressions and Modes of Distortion

The right-hand path ideal of the Watcher is a selfless protector whose actions are oriented entirely toward the wellbeing of the vulnerable whom he protects. He makes no effort to win awards, attain status, receive accolades, acquire wealth, or adorn himself with any other outward suggestion of social merit. His singular concern is to be the selfless Guardian. In the image, this polarized version of the persona appears as a black jackal, indicating the apparent lack of merit that he will appear to have. He will have no great means, no great following, and no great fame. He will seem common and unremarkable to most observers, but his fidelity to the right-hand path will strike others as a hidden radiance. He is humble and sincere. His perception of the real threat posed by others is finely tuned, and he does not fight fire with fire. The Guardian knows that, as Ra says, "love is the great protector." His method of warding off the dangers of the light is primarily through the loving support system he establishes, like a chain of people holding hands along the path, preventing any entry. On the rare occasion he needs to fight, he never steps beyond the limits of absolute necessity, and he will willingly sacrifice his own life rather than even accidentally inflict harm on those he was supposed to protect.

The left-hand path ideal of the Watcher is a predator whose hunt is so subtle that the vulnerable often never realize that they have been taken advantage of by him. He is outwardly attractive and boasts the merits of society, including health, wealth, status, fame and accolades. The image he projects about himself is a shameless lie, but one he believes will never be discovered because he has hidden it so well by polishing his own image as a Guardian. He lures into his orbit vulnerable seekers who want to feel protected by a leader. He then establishes an unequal energy exchange between himself and those seekers, ensuring that he will be able to feed on their energy in an enduring way. Finally, he builds a conceptual cage for them in which they do not feel that there is any possibility of escape from his

influence, even if they do come to realize that they have been used. Thus, the black temple lacks a door for two reasons: it represents the impossibility of left-hand path initiation for the adherent (she will ever be a servant and not a leader); it also represents the impossibility of escaping the dominion of the left-hand path Watcher. The Pied Piper traps his victims in the pyramid and also prevents their initiation.

As a rule in the moral polarity of Catalyst and Experience archetypes, normal people will find that their expressions of these personas lie somewhere between these two ideals. This is, of course, difficult for us to admit to ourselves, but the difficulty of facing the unpleasant truth is part of what makes crossing the threshold of transformation so challenging—and so transformative.

The mixed Watcher attempting to polarize positive believes the lie that he tells about his role. He believes that he is genuinely concerned about the wellbeing of others, that his vigilance is warranted by the many dangers in the night, and that his attacks are earned by those threaten. But his vision is clouded. He mistakes the vulnerable whom he had sworn to protect as evil threats. He harms them in all the ways that he had sworn not to, acting out the role of a predator without ever realizing it. He seeks merit and accolade because he believes that he deserves these things for his selfless valor. He demands that others respect him because he plays the role of the protector, without understanding that his sincerity and commitment to the role would have earned him respect. He revels in the social recognition he gains for his apparent leadership and commitment to being a beacon in the night, while that very social recognition stands as a mechanism that would silence anyone who speaks out against him. Though his own well-meant intentions, he enslaves others.

The mixed Watcher attempting to polarize negative lacks the inner toughness and self-esteem to be successful in his scam. He displays his own insecurities any time he does not receive the accolades he believes he deserves. He is attached to the glitzy perception that he cultivates and cannot shake that attachment or reconceive it as instrumental to the greater purpose of siphoning spiritual power away from his adherents. His attempts to polarize negative win him too many enemies, make him too prominent a target, and often break the spell he had hoped to maintain over those he meant to lead into servitude.

One distorted expression of the Watcher is represented on the image: the scorpion itself. One way to interpret the scorpion is as mindlessly aggressive astral entities who have no particular agenda, but enjoy inflicting wanton harm on others. But this is a mindset available to human beings as well. The mixed Watcher attempting to polarize positive is attuned to these scorpions, because this is how he conceives his enemy to look. The Watcher who has become a scorpion has lost his own sanity by his exposure to the illusions of the night. He everything he sees is a threat; there are no vulnerable persons; there are only predators who would attempt to destroy him. So he is constantly on guard, ready to strike against anyone who moves too quickly.

31. Relationship #10

Character: Entourage

Consider the right-hand path polarized relationship between these two personas. The Faithful is newly open and accepting of what she sees her own destiny to be. The light in the distance draws her forward, opening a channel of contact between the Creator beyond the incarnate self (the divine spark, if you

will) and the unconscious mind who will become the conduit for the spiritual influx the Faithful has opened. She is beset neither by doubt nor by despair. Her view is filled with light, as it were, and this light pours out from her into the manifestation. The Guardian sees her approaching, beaming with light as she steps forward into the unknown. He recognizes her immediately as a friend walking a dangerous path. The light that draws her onward is too bright and too focal for her to see the enemies on the path or the snags in the road. So the Guardian choose to look away from the light and into the darkness. He takes her by the arm and ushers her forward using his knowledge of the path and her brilliance to ward off any foes—but he is also prepared for a battle if one should come his way. The Guardian, in this relationship, bears some resemblance to the entities who “have the honor/duty of standing in the small places at the edge of the steps of light/love so that those entities being harvested will not, no matter how confused or unable to make contact with their higher self, stumble and fall away for any reason other than the strength of the light.” (51.1)

This positively oriented relationship is similar to the shepherding that Jesus recommended in his gospels. However, in this relationship, the two aspects of self, masculine and feminine, are peers. The shepherd is not more advanced or higher than the shepherded; he simply plays a different role from hers. The Guardian needs someone to usher forward, just as the Faithful needs a guiding hand to help her find her way. Each finds fulfillment in their role. This dynamic of the positively oriented relationship is also reflected of heterosexual sacred sex: the potential for ecstatic heights is known by practitioners of tantric sex to be greater for the female body than it is for the male body. Even so, the male in the relationship finds fulfillment in ushering the female forward into those heights, even though he cannot know them himself.

The negatively polarized relationship, between the Pied Piper and the Broken Soul, is a union formed based on her vulnerability and desperation. He sees that she has suffered tremendous loss and no longer knows how to make sense of the world. To the Pied Piper, her loss leaves her receptive to his own decision about what her purpose is and how she will find satisfaction. He will take control of her, like a puppet master, and she will become an extension of him, fully dependent on him, and unable to conceive of a life outside of the significance his careful direction informs her with. She has no other source of fulfillment to turn to; she is nothing without him. He, for his part, encourages her to remain nothing so that she can be a vessel for his will, contributing her spiritual energy to his cause, becoming his willing slave. He will maintain his pristine and glowing image, only revealing his wrath when she attempts to become something more than what he is training her to be. He walks her forward to his storehouse, adding her to his harem of slaves, taking from her whatever he pleases.

Now consider the mixed (and therefore far more common) iterations of this relationship. The Faithful, attempting to polarize positive, has some faith, but many doubts. She has a glimpse of the destiny laid before her, but she despairs because she cannot yet accept that it is achievable: her beliefs about what is possible limit her capacity for faith in the apparently hopeless. She is spiritually weary and uncertain whether she has the strength to endure the path she cannot help but walk. The mixed Watcher, attempting to polarize positive, sees her in a state of weakness and rushes in. He believes that she needs him, but he is also grateful for her desperation, since it means that she will cave to his will easily. He tells himself that he does what is best for her and she is his first priority, but he also has a tendency to squelch her voice when she speaks up for herself in protest to the direction he is heading. She is not fully comfortable with the spiritual waters they are entering together, but she lacks the strength to speak up for herself. Ra warned about the temptations on the spiritual path “towards the aggrandizement of the

self [or] towards the flowering of the organization in some political, social, or fiscal way.” Even the slightest intention in these directions reflects a mixed approach, a tendency to be the white jackal rather than the black.

Finally, and perhaps most tragically: the mixed relationship, attempting to polarize negative. Here we have the Faithless. She is cynical and depressed. She no longer believes in anything or anyone and she sometimes fantasizes about her life finally coming to an end. She can’t keep pretending the way she used to before the lightning strike, but she also can’t bring herself to believe that there is a light at the end of the tunnel. She is not yet fully broken, because she does not really want to be possessed by another. She is bitter and resentful. The Watcher, mixed but attempting to polarize negative, finds her and hopes to take her as a prize since she seems so vulnerable. He uses bluster, pomp and show as he promises her the world, hoping to win her over. Not knowing what else to do with herself, she goes along with him, hoping that maybe she’ll be wrong about the emptiness of living. But her temperament does not suit the Watcher’s purposes. She attack him viciously and does not seem to be tamable even when he turns up the pressure to conform. The two of them walk a confused path together, zig-zagging as they repeatedly make unhappy compromises, souring the relationship further. They antagonize each other, they engage in the act that somehow holds them in the illusion of a functional relationship, but they each know that neither of them is fooling the other.

When to Become the Personas

On the personal level, the relationship between these two personas falls into the realm of fairly traditional notions of spiritual work. The Catalyst, or Faith, compels us to reach to the inner source of light, which often takes the form of a desire for meditative practices that involve, for example: visualizing a light above the head, attempting to contact intelligent but discarnate sources of energy and information, entering into the spirit world whether with or without psychedelic substances, and similar practices. The motivation to engage in these efforts to reach for the inner light reveal that the Faith persona is active within us, so the appropriate response is to become the Guardian persona. In cultivating the relationship between these two personas within us, we allow ourselves to walk toward the light, while simultaneously preparing the way with spiritual discipline and discernment. Dion Fortune’s small book, *Psychic Self Defense*, is a good example of the kind of concerns and efforts an active inner Guardian would make to keep the Faithful on the strait and narrow path toward the light. The group who channeled Ra for the *Ra Contact* developed their own protocols for protection in the attempt to reach for the light, including challenging and tuning protocols on behalf of the person channeling, and ceremonial protection rituals on behalf of the others. The inner Guardian prepares the way and remains vigilant as the inner Faithful steps forward into the light.

Conversely, we sometimes find ourselves preoccupied with the technical details of spiritual work. I do not mean intellectualizing the work; rather, I mean a focus on the procedures and protocols that are meant to protect the path toward the light, rather than on actually walking that path. The Guardian’s comfort zone is preparation and discriminating attention to the conditions of the spiritual environment. In this condition, we will be inclined to ready the way and go through the motions, but our attempt to actually engage in the spiritual activity will feel lifeless and cold. In this moment, it is appropriate to become the Faithful. She has the proper motivation to make use of the path that our inner Guardian has prepared. Once all the preparations have been made, the next step is to let go and allow the experience

of entering the light to fill us, trusting that the inner Guardian will still have one eye open the entire time, in case anything goes wrong.

As usual, these patterns will repeat on the interpersonal and social levels. In a relationship with another, sometimes the other feels that it is appropriate to engage in spiritual activity, some kind of inner (or meditative) work that reaches for unity with the Creator. If this person is expressing the Faithful, they will tend to be naively unaware of the dangers of doing this kind of work. The positively polarized Faithful wants to jump right in. In this moment, it is often appropriate for us to accept the invitation to become the Guardian in relation to the other's Faithful, minding the technical details that will keep the spiritual work properly focused and ward off unwanted guests. Likewise, when a friend acts out the other side of spiritual work, attempting to draw us into ritual ceremonies and careful constructions of a spiritual space, they are often inviting us to become the Faithful. In this moment, it is often appropriate (if resonant) to trust that the other has attended to the details and protections and to allow the feeling of being drawn into the light to take us over. That is, when another attends to the protections of the work, we are freer to allow ourselves to simply be overwhelmed by the experience itself. Notice, though, that resonance is the guiding light for both the Faithful and the Guardian. The Faithful must trust both the light and her partner in the seeking the light, just as the Guardian must be able to trust himself as a sincere protector.

Socially, there is no prominent example of the positively polarized Faithful and Guardian to point to. Social groups almost always fall short of this ideal. A group that acted as the Guardian would not be prominent in society, but hidden beneath a common appearance. Spiritual groups who express the mixed Watcher are easy to identify: nearly every spiritual organization falls into this category. Spiritual seekers, the social Faithful, flock to these institutions in an attempt to find guidance in their own spiritual journey. They feel the pull of the Creator but do not have a sense of direction for movement, so they look to spiritual organizations as a Guardian to help usher them in their path. But, almost as inevitably as clockwork, these organizations fall into the temptations of money, status and power. It is hard enough to do spiritual work on the social level, but it is ever more difficult to make a living doing that work without losing polarity and guiding the Faithful into confusion.

32. The Significator of the Spirit

From the perspective of Ra's attribution of the two viable moral paths to the Tarot images, this image is uniquely misunderstood among all the images of the Tarot. Except for the final image, Arcanum #21, the symbols on this image indicate the most positive and happy mode of experience of all the Tarot images. There is nothing dangerous or harmful or anywhere in the image. Thus, commentators, in their general presumption of the existence of only one viable moral path (the right-hand path), have taken the happiness of this image to be indicative of successful walking of this path. This tendency is compounded by the further, more recent, tendency to interpret the 22 images as a linear progression. Coming so late in the sequence, it seems appropriate that the Sun should represent the ultimate union of self with self, the alchemical wedding. I will not deny the happiness and joy expressed in the symbols, but, as Ra's teachings on the archetypes suggest, I will interpret the symbols through the two paths. Ra says very little about this image in the *Ra Contact*, but (in 80.17) they describe this persona as "that living entity which either radiates or absorbs the love and light of the One Infinite Creator, radiates it to others or

absorbs it for the self.” Hence, according to Ra, interpretation of these symbols will necessarily diverge from the Tarot tradition.

Symbols

A man and a woman stand in the center of a ring of flowers, man to the right of the woman and woman to the left of the man. They hold hands and look into each other’s eyes. On the man’s chest a bird in flight is emblazoned; while on the woman’s chest an ankh is emblazoned. Above them, the Sun shines brightly, with a lingham-yoni (sexual union) symbol inside it. The two figures are clothed, but only lightly. They are youthful in their physical appearance.

The male figure with a bird in flight on his chest is the same image as we saw earlier on Arcanum #4, the Experience of the Mind. Likewise, the female figure with an ankh on her chest is the same one as we saw in Arcanum #2, the Potentiator of the Mind. The imagery might suggest that these two figures are the conscious and unconscious minds. But I do not think they are: the experience available in this archetype is not mental; it is not characterized by concept, logical structure, or narrative relationship. The alternative interpretation is that these figures represent the two sides of the spirit complex, the transparent (masculine) and the hidden (feminine). They are the same figures as before, but these are the two sides of the veiled spirit, not the veiled mind. The bird in flight indicates that, through the activity of the masculine side of the spirit, the inner witness flies from the earth to union with the Creator. Likewise, the ankh indicates that, through the veiled incarnate experience, the power and abundant resources of the feminine side pass from the infinite abode of the Creator all the way into manifestation and back.

The circle of flowers is most obviously a spiritual circle. It delineates the boundary between the sacred space and the mundane space. The two figures stay inside of the spiritual circle to show that, from the perspective of the spirit complex, all of life plays out in the sacred space. It is made of flowers to indicate the natural beauty, fecundity, and grace of the spiritual experience.

These two figures join hands together in a sunlit, natural setting: they are having a picnic. I once asked a Sikh friend of mine what the purpose of life is, and his answer was “to boogie.” His rather flippant reply was meant to express that the experiential feeling of deep contact with the Creator feels like seeing all of life as a party. The very nature of the spirit complex is to indulge in life, to “feel alive,” as we sometimes call it. In this state, work is not burdensome, but fun. Interaction with others is not bland, but delicious. Here we see the primordial self and other (the masculine and feminine, the transparent and veiled) partying together.

Consider a quotation from Ra in (19.17): “Some love the light. Some love the darkness. It is a matter of the unique and infinitely various Creator choosing and playing among its experiences as a child upon a picnic. Some enjoy the picnic and find the sun beautiful, the food delicious, the games refreshing, and glow with the joy of creation. Some find the night delicious, their picnic being pain, difficulty, sufferings of others, and the examination of the perversities of nature. These enjoy a different picnic. All these experiences are available. It is free will of each entity which chooses the form of play, the form of pleasure.”

This quotation reveals that the picnic we see before us should not be interpreted as fundamentally an experience of the right-hand path, as commentators have so often done. We see here, two options,

each represented, as usual, by the two sides of the image. One temptation is to interpret the masculine as the right-hand path and the feminine as the left-hand path. But I find this interpretation does not reveal anything helpful. More helpful is a consideration of the previous four archetypes, the organs of the Significator. In those archetypes, we saw the feminine revealed and the masculine presented with the pure motivating force of the veiled spirit's faith. The decisive difference between the right- and left-hand paths, in the spirit cycle, is how the inner light emanating through the veiled spirit is used. On the right-hand path, the masculine (transparent spirit) accepts the direction of her movement and ushers her along the way, helping her move toward the vision of her own choosing. On the left-hand path, the masculine empties out and takes over the feminine as a vessel for enacting his own will. Thus, on the right-hand path, the masculine radiates his own light to assist the feminine; while on the left-hand path, the feminine sacrifices her own light to the purpose of the masculine.

The image of holding hands and looking into each other's eyes, then, has both a positive and negative interpretation. This body language signifies exaltation. To take the hand of another and look into their eyes is to exalt them above oneself without consideration for the self: it is an expression of losing the self in another. Since the masculine represents the primordial self, this imagery seems necessarily right-hand path in its nature. But if we reverse it, then, from the perspective of the left side, the primordial other (the feminine) loses themselves in exaltation of the primordial self. So we see that the two paths, in the spirit, are revealed to be fundamentally reciprocal to one another, the one a shadow image of the other. The exaltation of the feminine produces a world of harmony, acceptance, and love, due to the hidden truth that she carries within her: the Law of One itself. The exaltation of the masculine, on the other hand, produces a world of regimentation, control, and subjugation, due to the rejection of the hidden truth of ultimate contained within the feminine. To put it simply, exalting the feminine results in the equality between the two sides of the veiling, because the feminine is a living expression of the truth of reality which was hidden in the veiling. Exalting the masculine results in subjugation of the feminine *because* that very truth is hidden from the masculine. On the right-hand path, then, we exalt the feminine, who, in her exaltation, abdicates her throne because she prefers to be equal to the masculine.

Finally, the Sun on the image represents, as always, the Logos, both within and beyond. It shines in support regardless of which path we choose, offering its love and light to the third density experience pursued in purity, whether on the right- or left-hand paths. In either case, the ongoing spiritual experience is a continuous ecstatic union of the masculine and feminine sides of spirit.

Character: The Celebrant

The persona of the Significator of the Spirit is somewhat difficult to describe. Consider the experiential elements of the spirit complex as described by the Lesser Cycle of the spirit. The darkness of the feminine is kept intentionally hidden from view because it is forbidden. In this hidden state, the masculine and feminine sides of spirit are adversarial but stuck with one another. The light of the spirit suddenly reveals the true nature the forbidden to the masculine side, breaking the chains that kept them both in darkness. In response, the exposed feminine side of spirit feels drawn forward into a direction of gravitational attraction: she will either abandon pretenses and allow her true self to be seen or her spirit will break, leading her to give up and submit to whatever is imposed on her. Seeing the feminine side's condition, the masculine side will either take her arm and help her shine her inner light ever more sincerely or he will take advantage of her vulnerability and ensnare her in a scheme of servitude to himself. These are the dynamics internal to the Significator of the Spirit. They are also the

characteristic dynamics of drama at a party. When we let loose in a celebratory atmosphere, the revelry reveals our inner demons to everyone else, exposing the side we had kept hidden from ourselves and everyone else. We and our companions at the party can either be supportive of the vulnerable or take advantage of them.

The persona of the Significator of the Spirit is the self that is a living party, so to speak. Note that I interpret the word “party” broadly to include any gathering of individuals oriented toward indulging in pleasure together. A party always has a vibe. We can often tell what the vibe of a party will be as soon as we walk in. The vibe of a party will determine how the people at the party will react to the drama that unfolds when demons are exposed. If our friends and companions at the party are the loving, supportive types, then there is no inner demon we might reveal that could shake their love of us. Thus, the exposure brings the participants of the party ever closer together. They become naked before each other and then help each other just be who they already are as purely and intensely as possible. This kind of vibe prevents the participants from taking advantage of the vulnerable, not only because it is socially frowned upon, but because the vibe of a party is contagious, so the feeling of a supportive environment will further reinforce the supportive intent of those who attend the party.

The persona of the Significator of the Spirit, then, is best understood as having a characteristic and infectious vibe. I call this persona the Celebrant. This word generally refers to the minister of a ceremonial ritual, but I mean it more broadly as a state of being in which we celebrate the pleasures of living at each and every moment. There is no special task the Celebrant needs to do, no accomplishments that the Celebrant cares about. The Celebrant is here to boogie. They are completely focused on the present moment, and the people they draw in are interested in the Celebrant because of who the Celebrant is, not because of anything they do. The experience of pleasure and contact with the divine overlap for the Celebrant. This is not to say that every moment is sacred for the Celebrant, but that the sacred always takes the shape of the pleasant. Or, perhaps more poignantly, the sacred is identified through the guise of the pleasant. The Celebrant enjoys third density life and enjoys experiencing the light of the Creator through third density life. But this does not mean that the Celebrant’s vibe is purely polarized in either direction; it only means that the Celebrant has a vibe and enjoys it. A purely polarized vibe is something that must be hard-won through transformation. The Celebrant cannot change their vibe; they can only live it.

Levels

On the personal level, the Celebrant is our own personal vibe. This vibe is the resultant integration and manifestation of the light of the Creator as it passes through our processes of Catalyst and Experience of the Spirit. We each have a certain way of handling inner demons and their exposure and this tendency to handle these things constitutes the personal vibratory signature that each of us carries wherever we go. Just as the hidden thoughts of the unconscious mind cannot be completely hidden, even from others, so our own deeper nature, insofar as we have or have not polarized one direction or the other, cannot be hidden from others. Our moral quality as human beings is always on display, and others can feel it when they interact with us. This is our vibe. This is the Significator of the Spirit.

We express the interpersonal Celebrant when, in relation to another, we welcome them into our spiritual state of being. This often happens when someone visits us in our home. We cannot help but enter into and act out our normal way of being, revealing to others how we experience and take

pleasure in morally significant activity. Who we are as spiritual beings manifests in how we speak to and touch other people, how we treat small animals, how we adorn our dwelling, etc. Perhaps we sometimes take pleasure in inflicting harm on others; perhaps we sometimes take pleasure in helping others feel safe. Each has their own unique vibratory signature, with their own unique mix of various moral tendencies. All of this amounts to the vibe we give off to others, one that is usually morally mixed.

On the social level, we often express the Celebrant as the representative of a group or a society attempting to attract others to it, not by virtue of any particular outward action or shared belief or set of values or even curiosity, but by virtue of the relationship being a good energetic fit. That is, as a social Celebrant, we attract others to us (or repel them, as the case may be) because they enjoy (or dislike) being around us. A social Celebrant's role is to show others a good time.

Polarized Expressions and Modes of Distortion

As Ra says, the nature of this persona is to either radiate the love and light or the Creator or absorb it. These are the two polarized ends of the spectrum that is available to us in expressing the Celebrant persona. The right-hand path Celebrant is a Unicorn. They will cause others to feel more like themselves than they ever have before. Just being near the Unicorn is empowering, because the magic of the Unicorn's very nature infects others. The Unicorn's deep and thorough self-acceptance and capacity to radiate the light of the Creator outward induces others to match the Unicorn's vibration. The only people who are repelled by the Unicorn are those who have committed to the left-hand path, who find such thorough self-acceptance disgusting.

The left-hand path Celebrant is the Vampire (or Succubus, or Incubus, or Harpy, etc.). This persona is appealing on all outward levels: a perfectly polished person who is exactly who they mean to be. The Vampire is as alluring as they are terrifying. Those who enter the presence of such a person instantly feel the magnetic pull of that person. It induces them to release their own preferred vibratory state and enter into the Vampire's. Where someone once would not have indulged in the subjugation and harm of another, or even of themselves, the infectious energy of the Vampire aligns them with a perspective from which they can find pleasure in such things. Victims willing give themselves to the Vampire because the Vampire's pleasure somehow feels aligned with the pleasure of the victim to be offered up.

The mixed Celebrant, whether attempting to polarize positive or negative, is always at the center of a cult of personality: they are a False Guru. Here we see the general spiritual confusion that most people experience. They feel uplifted, loved, accepted and supported by the False Guru, but they also feel used, rejected, controlled and taken advantage of. These opposing feelings do not usually come together, but alternate in the experience of those who interact with the False Guru. This persona's spiritual expression is fundamentally mixed, sometimes positive, sometimes negative. Regardless of how mixed that expression is, it is still strong and influential. Those around the False Guru will tend to match that person's energy, propagating the same spiritual confusion, and perpetuating the same old patterns of abuse that keep people attached to the False Guru: the False Guru is love-bombing others one day and shaming others the next; lavishing gifts now and extracting servitude later.

Another way of expressing the mixed (or distorted?) Celebrant is through misery. This archetype is usually classified as an experience of joy, but joy is only representative of the right-hand polarized version. The Celebrant is a creature of spiritual pleasure. He indulges in life. But the pleasure of the Celebrant depends on his vibe. The phrase "misery loves company" describes a person who indulges in

spiritual displeasure or joylessness. The Celebrant who wallows in misery will attract to himself others who match that same vibration, spreading his vibe infectiously just as any other kind of Celebrant.

33. Relationship #11

Character: Company

The Traveler is never alone. Wherever she goes, she keeps company with the Creator through both self and other-self. The Traveler is always present to herself because she always beholds her objective self. In the spirit cycle, that objective self is the total resonant signature of the objective self and the environment it chooses. I call this relationship Company because the Traveler's visit to a spiritual domain just is keeping company with those in that domain. The Traveler is a guest at the Celebrant's party. Because the Celebrant's mode of sharing love and light is infectious, the Traveler, upon entering into the spiritual energy web of the Celebrant, takes that spiritual energy web on as her own. She lives within the same spiritual circle, the same attitude of reverence and irreverence, as is native to the Celebrant. The Celebrant just is who he is and he shares that fundamental nature with all those in his circle of company. The Celebrant shares his character of being with the Traveler, both showing her and encouraging her to indulge in the pleasures of life. Though I am using gendered pronouns for clarity of reference, this is not a gendered relationship. It is a relationship of identity that cuts across the veiling; it is not a relationship that, on its own, attempts to penetrate the veiling. The Celebrant wants to show the Traveler the joy of living life as he does: it is an almost evangelical relationship. Whether on the left-hand path or the right-hand path, the act of sharing one's fundamental perspective on living is a service, since greater numbers of comrades on the path, even on the left-hand path, make for an easier walk down that path. In this sense, the Celebrant is attempting to sell the Traveler on his way of being, to show why it is the superior way. Thus, as is the case in all the Traveler's relationships, this is a teaching relationship.

In the first phase of this relationship, the Traveler lives under the wing of the Celebrant. She understands the Celebrant's way of taking pleasure in life (whether through support, abuse, or, most commonly, some mixture of the two) to be the objectively correct way of taking pleasure in life. That is, the Traveler cannot imagine living her life any other way; she cannot imagine herself taking pleasure in life differently from the way the Celebrant does, because she takes his values as her own. He is experienced in the subtleties of enjoying the spiritual energies available to human beings; he shows her ways of taking delight in her experience in ways she had not imagined.

Eventually, the Traveler will develop a command over the vibratory signature the Celebrant imparts. She is no longer a stranger to it; she has her bearings in the Celebrant's spiritual domain. As she develops familiarity, the Celebrant begins to strike her as smaller with less imposing of a presence than when they first met. She begins to grow tired of his modes of entertainment, as the fundamental conflicts between his delights have begun to reveal themselves to her. She can see how his tendency to indulge in both free giving and cunning extraction in his relationship with others creates unhappiness within him. His mode of taking pleasure in life causes him pain in ways that would not be necessary if he only let go of one set of pleasures in favor of the other. But, because he can only be who he is, the Celebrant cannot change this about himself. Seeing this fundamental conflict and the insurmountable barrier it presents to the Celebrant's capacity for experiencing the natural joy of the Creator, she feels pity for him. She can

see the tragedy that characterizes his entire way of being, and there is nothing to be done about it. She then gathers her belongings and sets out once again on her journey.

As is the case in all Significator-Choice relationships, the Traveler cannot just up and leave, though she wants to. The journey from here to another Significator is arduous and the threshold between them takes some effort to cross. As her disappointment with the Celebrant grows, the Transformation archetype gradually begins to active.

When to Become the Personae

The Celebrant on the personal level is a stable tendency to engage in the processes of spiritual Potentiation, Catalyst and Experience in a certain way. When our demons are exposed through a blinding revelation, we will consistently respond to the event in the same way, and that response falls somewhere on the spectrum of moral polarization. This response is characterized by how we indulge in the pleasures available along that moral spectrum. The dramatic revelations characteristic of spiritual experience are an invitation to enjoy morally polarized states of consciousness. Any time we are in the midst of this dramatic unfoldment, we have a chance to observe where our moral pleasures lie. In this moment, it is appropriate to become the inner Traveler. Walking the path requires that we develop critical distance from ourselves over and over so that we can transform over and over. But the inner Traveler can only develop critical distance while we are still caught up in the events as they play out. The Traveler has the capacity to pay careful attention to the ways that we take joy in the world around us and can spot the inconsistencies in our characteristic approach. The Traveler is present to and attentive to what she is enjoying, which allows her to see what exactly she is coming to enjoy less and less.

On the flip-side of this relationship, the inner Traveler is the subject witness that is present to the spiritual phenomena that play out before its awareness. While development of critical distance from the objective self is a necessary part of growth, so is identification with the objective self. The Witness must first enter honestly into unity with the Celebrant's way of life so that there is no distance at all between "I" and "me." Then, after gathering all there is for the Witness to experience in the particular vibration of this iteration of the Celebrant, critical distance between the Witness and the Celebrant will develop naturally. However, if the Traveler never enters into its spiritual experience, then the process of growth and transformation never gets off the ground. If we find our inner Witness in a state of disconnection from the joys of human life, regardless of whether those joys are negative (like *schadenfreude*) or positive (like empathy), then this is an appropriate moment to become the inner Celebrant. The inner Celebrant indulges in these moral joys as part of its very nature; there is no effort or work in being present to these feeling states. If we are to continue our inner evolution, our Witness needs to open up fully to the lessons the Celebrant offers, trusting that critical distance will eventually develop somewhere along the way.

On the interpersonal level, sometimes another person strikes us as having such an alluring *joie de vivre* that we admire them for who they are on the deepest level and how alive they seem to be. This admiration signals a desire within us to identify with them, to learn how to feel alive as they feel alive. Provided we really do feel such admiration, then it is appropriate to become the Traveler in relation to the other. This sense of admiration for another's natural expression of the joy of living signals to us that we have something to learn from them, so entering the Traveler persona will allow us to become properly receptive to that lesson. The Traveler is inherently not conscious of herself, just as the eye

cannot see itself. Instead, the Traveler looks to the Celebrant to find herself. This is the frame of consciousness necessary if we really want to feel what it is like enjoy life the way another does.

Likewise, sometimes another person is attracted to us in virtue of the way we are, and not because of anything else. They feel more alive around us and want to continue feeling that way. It is easy to see such a person as an unwanted pest, since it is our personal energy they are enjoying. But if we enter the Celebrant persona, then the company is welcome because the Traveler's presence allows the Celebrant to magnify his own feeling states. The Traveler is the audience without whom the Celebrant's performance is less meaningful and so less moving.

On the social level, we can often see the Celebrant-Traveler relationship in artistic performances and spectator sports. In these cases, the Celebrant is not found in the storylines of the performance or the in the economy and causal relationships of the specific outward actions. The Celebrant is found in the overall vibe of the affair. Some live performances invite us to indulge in the suffering and subjugation of others, due simply to the collective vibratory configuration of the performers. Other live performances invite us to indulge in feelings of sharing and acceptance, again, due only to the moral orientation of the individuals involved. Whichever side of the performance we find ourselves on, it is appropriate to enter the respective persona. To become the Celebrant does not require that we are already morally perfect (i.e. purely polarized); it only requires that we honestly present our own deep feeling states associated with moral drama. Conversely, to become the Traveler requires that we allow ourselves to be deeply moved by the spiritual characteristics of the performance of others: our feelings become their feelings; our soul becomes a reflection of their souls. The social Celebrant creates a memorable experience for others through performance—not through pretense, but through embedding her own deep feeling states into her actions. The difference between, say, a musician becoming the Celebrant or not becoming the Celebrant is the difference between playing music with soul or music without soul.

34. The Transformation of the Spirit

Symbols

Three human figures emerge from an open sarcophagus, all of them wrapped tightly in burial cloth so that their limbs are immobile. The first to emerge is male, the second is female, and the third is a child. In the top left corner (from the perspective of the figures, top right from the perspective of the viewer) a winged figure with a tongue of fire above its head sounds a trumpet toward the lower right corner. Rays of light emanate from the trumpeter. In most older versions of this image, a square banner with a cross on it hangs from the trumpet. A scarab beetle adorns the sarcophagus.

Commentators offer basically two common interpretations of this image. One interpretation matches its traditional title, the Last Judgment. On this interpretation, it represents birth into a heavenly afterlife according to the Christian theology. Because this interpretation fails to represent anything *within* third density, I consider it to be the highest macrocosm of the image and also the least helpful way to think about it. The other common interpretation is that it depicts a spiritual rebirth. This second interpretation matches my own line of thinking.

The male and female figures represent, as always, the veiled and transparent sides of the human experience. The child represents the unified spirit into which the two gendered sides transform when

they finally merge with each other. The child is, of course, the offspring of the two parents, generated by their union. The three of them are bound and unable to move, which indicates that, in the energy of this archetype, there is nothing at all to be done. The only activity available is to stop struggling and just allow the process to occur.

The sarcophagus itself is rectangular in shape, representing the physical illusion. One might think that the opening of the sarcophagus and the emergence of the figures from it indicates leaving the illusion behind. Again, while I think this correctly captures the highest macrocosm of the image's meaning, I do not think it exhausts it. The physical illusion is an experience of limitation. The human body limits the capacity of the spirit, whose natural state is boundless freedom. We are bound by the frailty, incapacity, short lifespan, and the carefully planned illusion of separation, all of which characterize third density. The sarcophagus represents all these limitations. To emerge from the sarcophagus is not to leave limitations behind. This is the spirit cycle, so the figures that emerge are not bodies or minds—they are the spirit itself. The body remains a body, with all the same third density limitations it had before resurrection, but the spirit does not have to be bound by those limitations, it still has access to the undying influence of the One Infinite Creator. The spirit continues to ensoul the body but, upon resurrection, no longer feels trapped within it.

The square banner with a cross on it reiterates the above interpretation of the sarcophagus. The square is the physical illusion and the cross represents the necessity of sacrifice within third density. When we come to a crossroads, we can either turn right, turn left, or continue on as we were. Since choice between the two moral polarities is the basic theme of this existence, these three options are the only ones available, and in choosing one we reject the others. So even after resurrection, the necessity of choosing within a world of limitation does not disappear. After the sacrifice is made, we carry on with our work.

The scarab beetle captures the repeating nature of this archetype. A scarab beetle is a dung beetle. The ancient Egyptians associated this creature with renewal and resurrection because the dung beetle would lay eggs inside the lump of dung so that the newly hatched beetles would be surrounded by food on their birth. Thus, the scarab beetle's uniquely identifying activity is one that revolves around the cyclical process of birthing new generations. The Transformation of the Spirit is not a phenomenon that happens once and for all. It happens over and over.

The trumpeter calls from beyond; it is the One Infinite Creator itself reaching into the spirit complex and pulling up it toward itself. The rays of light illuminate the new world, filling it with meaning and purpose. The call of the trumpeter pulls the mummified bodies out of the tomb and lifts the lid off the sarcophagus. It is crucial that the trumpet is aimed at the right side of the card, because only those on the right-hand path will hear such a call. The left-hand path is shut off to any influences from beyond the self, since those have been rejected as either nonexistent or undesirable. On the right-hand path, we are called from beyond ourselves, but on the left-hand path, it is we who must call ourselves. This puts the left-hand path Transformation in a difficult place: how does one open the sarcophagus on one's own while bound to the point of immobility? Once again, we see the inherent difficulty of walking the left-hand path.

Character: The Prophet

The persona of this archetype is concerned with spiritual calling at the most profound level. Although the image on the card emphasizes the end result of transformation, the stage prior to the opening of the casket is equally important to understanding the archetype. The context in which spiritual call sounds is that of living death. Before we emerge from the tomb, we are enclosed within it, trapped and unable to escape. We are not physically or mentally dead, but to the spirit it feels like we are already entombed. Nothing is exciting, nothing is pleasing, no emotions stir us, we have little desire to accomplish anything, and our will to live is sapped. We lie in the spiritual tomb mere awaiting bodily death, often desperately wishing it finds us sooner rather than later. This kind of entombment can manifest as clinical depression, provided there is no underlying neurological or hormonal cause for the depression. There is often no obvious reason for the feeling of emptiness and pointlessness that characterizes this entombment. We just have no desire to do anything at all.

The tomb, recall, just is the physical world. Entrapment in the tomb is entrapment in the physical world. There are as many ways to feel entrapped in the physical world as there are human beings. Whatever the circumstance, we feel stuck with the limitations of the physical body, of our incarnation, of our irremovable obligations. There is no possibility that the limitation will fall away, so the question is how to go on living when we feel so trapped.

I call this persona the Prophet because of the isolation and torment that the Biblical prophets underwent. When we refer to a person as a prophet, we often do so in a retrospective way: we have only witnessed the end result, not the arduous path toward becoming widely recognized as a Prophet. In general, Prophets are not accorded either honor or even respect during their lifetimes. They are outcast as weirdos. The living death of spiritual entombment is the necessary beginning of a Prophet's career. For this initial stage of the persona, there is nothing left to lose, since nothing matters anyway. Everything the Prophet once took pleasure in no longer excites. The Prophet's desires have dissipated before their eyes, and a spiritual silence has overtaken them. The call can only be heard in a state of spiritual entombment because the noise of creature comforts and the pleasure of life would otherwise drown it out.

But the Prophet's troubles do not end with hearing the call. Once the call is recognized and understood, the next stage is rejection. The call requires a complete realignment of the Prophet's modes of taking pleasure in life: it calls them to greater purity either on the left- or the right-hand path. When the Prophet sees what is being asked of them, they will balk at it, because it flies in the face of socially acceptable ways of being in the world. To answer the call would be to invite social scorn. Moreover, the Prophet often judges that they are not equal to the spiritual call placed upon them. Biblical Prophets often objected to the Creator's call because they considered themselves unworthy to be servants of the Creator. The task required of them seemed well beyond their own power. The options presented in calling are not the left- and right-hand paths. Rather, the Prophet hears the call of one path and can either accept it or remain in the tomb (which is the middle way).

Heeding the call is simply a matter of continuing to listen. In terms of activity, all we need to do is go with the flow that carries us forward into what is calling us. In the image, the male emerges first because the masculine side of the spirit is the side most likely to inhibit the Transformation. This part of ourselves is keenly aware both of its own limitations and of the dangers of attempting dedicated spiritual work. The little slice of our own spirit to which we have transparent access will tend to resist the call by shutting it out or by attempting to resurrect our old way of life through old, familiar

pleasures. None of that works, of course. The Prophet must allow the transformation to happen. If they are successful, then the lid of the sarcophagus will open and a new world filled with new and fascinating pleasures will be revealed.

Levels

On the personal level, we express the Prophet as we come to grips with the aspects of our lives that are entirely unchangeable. This might be a physical disability, an insurmountable financial barrier, an unrealizable dream, or a permanent loss of something beloved. The physical illusion as a sarcophagus represents something that cannot be helped and cannot be changed. We might continue to pray for the miracle that changes it, but ultimately what will have to happen is that we learn love our lives even amid the unchangeable limitation. This isn't living joyously *despite* the limitation, but living joyously *through* the limitation. The inner Prophet must sacrifice its dependency on hoping for the hopeless. Whereas, in the Catalyst of the Spirit, faith in the apparently hopeless revealed the way forward; here, it is an impediment. On the inner level, we usually express the rebirth phase of this persona as a discovery of new sources of joy, new reasons for living, new purpose.

In an interpersonal relationship, we usually express the Prophet at a crisis point in the relationship. In this mode of expression, the two people in the relationship each express one side of the Prophet: one the masculine, the other the feminine. As is usually the case in the spirit archetypes, the relationship is deeply parallel: both sides experience an inability to enjoy the relationship like they once did and both sides are captive to their inability to escape the situation. The difference between the two sides is that one of them is holding the relationship back, keeping it in the tomb, while the other is stuck beneath the weight of the one who refuses to accept change. This is most prominent in loveless, joyless marriages that seem to endure merely because the two people depend on each other. It is not so much that they hate each other (as in the case of the Devil); rather, they're just thoroughly bored with each other. Everything is routine; everything is lifeless. The solution to their lifelessness is often not any kind of outward change—they do not need to separate. Rather, the solution is to allow their openness to the pleasures of life to change. Allowing themselves to be called forth out of their living death will cause the relationship (the child) to be born into something new and unpredictable.

The social level of this relationship is a large-scale version of the interpersonal. An organization that was once enthusiastic and indulgent in its work now plods forward, sleepwalking through the usual steps. The zest for life that was once available in the early days of the organization has now disappeared and everyone looks forward to the end of the whole ordeal, even though they are all dependent on its continued existence.

Polarized Expressions and Modes of Distortion

As suggested by the imagery on the card, the right-hand path Prophet awaits a call from beyond the personal, incarnate self. I should say more about this concept. Opening the self to a higher power is understood in left-hand path circles to be the distinctive characteristic of the right-hand path. Because of the veiling in third density, the inner witness (the Traveler) only ever sees reality from the perspective of the incarnate, personal self. The blindfold over the Traveler's eyes prevents her from seeing the wider truth that the self and the One Infinite Creator are literally one with each other. At best, the Traveler can *believe* in unity (through the mind) and *feel* the presence of the One Creator (through the spirit). However, as third density creatures, we will always be bound to our incarnate perspective, with only

occasional flashes of revelation. Experiences of perfect oneness with the Creator are famously temporary, regardless of what the purportedly enlightened might suggest. And even amid these experiences, the union of self with the Creator feels like losing the self in the immensity of the Creator. The very idea of losing the self in the Creator is an expression of right-hand path contact with the Creator and it captures the distinction between the perspective of the self (the inner Traveler) and the Creator beyond, despite the feeling of union that characterizes such a mystical experience. Insofar as it makes sense to talk about a Creator that one might lose oneself in, that Creator is the source beyond the personal, incarnate self from which the right-hand path Prophet awaits a call.

The right-hand path Prophet is helpless on his own. Personal will and drive have shown the Prophet that there is nothing special about his incarnate capabilities. He is creative and capable, like all other human beings, but all his own efforts are marred by both the limitations of his bodily skill and his mental acuity. Moreover, anything he attempts to accomplish on his own, using the resources of the personal, incarnate self, is infected with his own hidden desires. As much as he wants to be a model of moral purity on the right-hand path, all of his personal accomplishments seem to him to be an expression of his own mixed polarity. As Christianity would put it, he is perpetually living in sin, and there is no end to it. Faced with the impossibility of being what he wants with all his heart to be, the Prophet's experience of entombment is a kind of despair or depression over being who he is. All of his pleasure in life has collapsed into a cold mourning over the impossibility of living life as he wishes he could. In this place, as in the first three steps of 12-step programs for addiction recovery, he admits his own powerlessness and grants control over his life to the Creator beyond himself. Each of the Transformation archetypes involves letting go of something so the persona can move forward. In this case, the right-hand path Prophet must let go of any notion that he has control over his own life or that there is even any benefit in attempting to exercise control. Within the tomb, he must learn to trust the Creator completely. When he has found this trust, the call will sound, the tomb will open, and the higher will of the Creator will fill him, informing him with a new means of indulging in the joys of life. This trust in the Creator requires that the Prophet lets go of his feelings about the limitations about the physical world, to accept that these are the hard boundaries that will not fall away until the body complex itself falls away. There is an idiom that my aikido instructor's master used to say that, I think, captures the essence of the right-hand path approach to transformation of the spirit: when life hands you lemons, learn to love lemons.

The left-hand path Prophet has a somewhat more difficult road to walk. For him, there is nothing beyond the personal, incarnate self. There is no higher power, or if there is, he has no desire whatsoever to lose himself in that higher power. On the left-hand path, the experience of living entombment is not a feeling of personal incapacity and distance from the Creator. It is an intense festering of spiritual wounds that the Prophet has suffered at the hands of others because of his own weaknesses and inadequacies. The power others have exerted over him and the energy they have managed to drain from him thereby sit within him as a lump of anger and self-loathing. This spiritual festering will continue until the feeling galvanizes within him that something inside of him must die once and for all if he is going to end the cycle of self-loathing. His own will to crush the weakness within him and to manifest power greater than that of his rivals is what calls him out of the tomb. One can imagine the mummified masculine self tearing through burial wrappings and smashing his way out of the sarcophagus with a single devastating blow. It is noteworthy that this display of galvanized will to overcome and crush one's own inner weaknesses is often portrayed in literature and film as a heroic

virtue. Our idolization of left-hand path ideals without recognizing them as ideals of the left-hand path speak to the deep moral confusion of our world.

Exercise

The tomb is something you can't change about the physical world. It is the brick wall you keep beating your head against because you can't accept that it will only come down in its own time. It is the lemon life has given you whose flavor you refuse to accept as it presents itself to you so you keep putting sugar in it to make lemonade. The way toward hearing the call that opens the tomb is to admit that you're in a tomb. Only in stillness can you hear the call, which means you have to stop fighting against the immovable nature of the physical reality. The hard limitations of your life need to be something that you don't just tolerate but celebrate, and the method is to learn to like them the way you might learn to like a food: you focus all of your attention on it and learn to see it as appealing and pleasant rather than as repellent and offensive. This does not require you to lower your hard-won (or perhaps desperately needed) boundaries with others. The limitations of our lives are not directly imposed on us by the ill will of others. A permanent injury, even if caused by someone else, does not answer to that person once you have it. It is now something on its own that must be reckoned with. Learning to like the hard limitations of life is slow work, and changing one's own taste is a mysterious process. But that is nevertheless the work to be done. So what are your lemons? How have you attempted to make lemonade (tolerate the lemon) rather than just learn to enjoy the lemon as it is? What are your brick walls? What would happen if you accepted that you don't have the power to tear the brick wall down?

35. The Great Way of the Spirit

Symbols

A kneeling woman dressed in white plays a three-stringed harp. Above her a conjoined lingam yoni with wings soars in the sky. Around the lingam yoni there is a wreath of flowers, surrounded by the heads of the four creatures of the sphinx: human, lion, bull, eagle. In the Zain and Fatham images, the harp has the crowned head of a man on it; however, in the Falconnier-Wegener and Saint Germain images, the harp does not have this addition. I prefer the addition of the male head, but I admit it may not have been part of the original image as given by Ra.

In their comments on the mind cycle, Ra says that "the entire mood...of the Great Way is indeed dependent upon its notable difference from the Significator." I believe this same comment applies to both the body and spirit cycles. The Significator is the environment of inner evolution that existed prior to the veiling. After the veiling, the new concept of free will (viz. choice between the two polarities) required a new environment of inner evolution. That new environment is the Great Way. Here, the most apparent similarities are the lingam yoni above and the intimate cooperation between the male and female figures. In both cases, these symbols signify the importance of spiritual feelings (joy and despair, ecstasy and misery, enthusiasm and depression) and the ultimate union of the two sides of the veiling (masculine and feminine) in the process of spiritual growth.

Now consider the differences between the images. Instead of a Sun, we have the lingam yoni alone, but now with wings. The circle of flowers was on the ground in the Significator image but has been relocated from the ground to the heavens in the Great Way image. Instead of the perfect parallel between

masculine and feminine, in which they stand and gaze into each other's eyes in the Significator image, we see the feminine in a position of power over the masculine, plucking his strings like a harp in the Great Way image. Finally, we see the four creatures of the sphinx, which did not appear in the Significator image.

The lingam yoni indicates intimate sexual union, but this symbol should not be taken literally. On the contrary, we should understand sexual intercourse between human beings as a reflection of the primal sexual union. Here, we have the union between the primal masculine and feminine: the transparent and accessible self enters into the hidden and mysterious self, fecundating the pregnant darkness with brilliant light. In the spirit cycle, the darkness and the light are the Matrix and the Potentiator, or the experiential continuum of intelligent energy and the Logos whose free self-expression augments the continuum of intelligent energy. Whereas the initial act of Creation that spawned the universe generates the Logos out of the undifferentiated intelligent energy that mysteriously finds focus; this relationship reverses in our return journey back to the Creator. The sub-sub-Logos within us, the inner Creative Principle itself, through its native capacity for focus, generates changes in the intelligent energy field that is our experiential continuum. In the spirit, the experiential continuum is hidden and mysterious. It is the unknown side of the spirit that has a boundless capacity for life-changing feelings and influxes of energy. Though the mind and body must be attuned before we work in the spirit, once this work is complete, mind and body are, in many ways, at the mercy of the spirit. The experiences of the spirit are the most nourishing and profound of any experiences available to us. In the face of a spiritual event, everything else seems to pale in significance. The union of the lingam yoni, then, represents the successful completion of the Great Work of third density: a commitment to a single moral polarity that is pure and enduring enough to allow us to traverse the strait and narrow path all the way to union with the Creator. The wings on the lingam yoni, then, represent our ability, in this archetype, to fly up to the Sun itself.

The circle of flowers is no longer on the ground, but in the sky surrounding the flying lingam yoni. The circle of flowers represents the sacred circle within which spiritual activity is possible and protected. It draws the boundary between the holy temple and the mundane world. Before, the circle was fixed and immobile. The masculine and feminine had to remain inside its bounds in order to enjoy the picnic of the spirit. But now the sacred circle is mobile: it surrounds the lingam yoni wherever it flies. Thus, as Ra tells us, our daily activity, apparently mundane, becomes "sacramental" (49.6). Every part of the Creation is revealed as holy ground.

The woman plucking the three-stringed masculine harp symbolizes the masculine's free choice to turn over the reigns of spiritual evolution to the feminine side of the spirit complex. After the veiling, nearly all of the power that is natural to us as sparks of the One Infinite Creator has been hidden from us: it lies nestled in darkness and mystery. In the realm of the spirit, the power is locked away in the feminine and the masculine's role is to unlock it. The ultimate means by which this lock is finally opened is by allowing the small self to which we are present to be guided and governed by the mysterious self to which we are not present. Thus, the feminine plays the masculine as a musical instrument. The metaphor of music is significant because it shows that the great power of the infinite power of the Creator does not come through intellectual pursuit, physical discipline, or even through ritual ceremonies. The glory and wonder of music come from the feeling states of the musician: music without soul is barely even music. The Great Work is accomplished through rhythm and flow, through allowing oneself to be an instrument of manifestation for the great hidden power within. Mental and physical discipline are necessary, since

technical proficiency with a musical instrument is not possible without them. But they are not the core of the experience of music. The three strings of the harp represent, of course, the mind, body and spirit, all three of which are, in this Great Way, turned over to the governing power of the feminine side of the spirit.

Character: The Avatar

The personas of the Great Way classification are all, as I've said before, aspirational. When we become these personas, we are in a state of aspiring to be more than we are. The persona itself does not represent a state of being that is impossibly distant from our current state, though awareness of that ideal on the horizon is part of the persona. Rather, the vision of what we might one day become nurtures our commitment to spend all our days approaching that ideal, step by step. Paradoxically, in this particular persona, stepping closer to the ideal requires trusting that the ideal is already, in some way, realized within us. As Ra says, "the crown is already upon the head."

Due to the paradoxical nature of this persona, in which we both aspire to union with the Creator and also enter a frame of mind in which we already are united with the Creator, I have named the persona the Avatar. Various religious traditions have legends of Avatars, such as Jesus, Buddha, and Krishna. The distinctive feature of these figures is that they were simultaneously human beings and incarnations of the divine itself. They lived their lives aspiring to the same spiritual union that we all aspire to, but they were also present to the Creator's influence within them, perfect and without the need for any addition.

The Avatar lives within the constant flow of spiritual energy from the Creator itself all the way into manifestation. The Avatar neither doubts their connection with the Creator nor hesitates in acting out whatever expression is called for by the Creator through that contact. Experienced from the inside, the Avatar's personal, incarnate awareness allows itself to become an instrument through which the higher, more potent energies of the One Infinite Creator travel to shape and inform the world we all experience. The Avatar exists in a state of bliss, due to the intimacy between the two sides of the spirit: the sexual union between the masculine and feminine in spirit is both ever changing and ever ecstatic. The Avatar, thus, pursues the heavenly nectar of the Creator while simultaneously discovering that it is already here to be enjoyed.

We do not need to live up to the ideals of Jesus, Buddha, and Krishna to be able to become this persona. But we do need to have initiated both mind and body (according to their archetypal cycles) and to have done significant work in spirit, by facing our own demons. Once we have progressed this far, then the Avatar persona becomes accessible for the first time. Often, on the right-hand path, this persona awakens during a mystical experience that leaves us feeling full of light and inexpressible joy (note that this kind of experience is a Transformation of the Spirit). That feeling endures within us and we feel we have accessed a new and fundamental truth about all of reality: that the divine is already here within us, right this very moment. This kind of experience represents the initial and foundational affirmation of commitment to our moral path on the spiritual level. When we discover what it means to live in and through the Creator, we develop a slow-burning desire to live out that union as purely as we can, all the days of our lives.

Contact with the intelligent infinity of the One Infinite Creator usually happens at first only through the narrowest channel of influence. There is infinitely more out there, but our spirit complex is not yet fully built and capable of a strong and sturdy link between the Infinite and the little self now incarnate. With

each Transformation, the channel grows in strength and the signal gets stronger. The Avatar's great strength is not that they have already perfected themselves in mind, body and spirit alike; it is that they are fully and unequivocally committed to submitting themselves to the rhythm of the Transformations as they wash over the incarnate self, wave after wave. This persona, like all Great Way personas, is enduring and, once awakened within us, only very rarely shuts off. The bliss that characterizes the Avatar is not a product of looking away from the dark elements of life, nor is it a product of attempting to make pain and sorrow into something that they are not. Rather, the Avatar, more than any other persona, refuses to look away from the spiritual movements of life, whether positive or negative. They embrace these movements and in so embracing, feel the effortless contentment of the Creator dwelling within. The Avatar trusts that at the center of each experience, no matter how difficult, the Creator awaits, in peace and power.

Levels

The description above is an account of the Avatar on the personal level.

On the interpersonal level, we express the Avatar by acting out with another person the two gendered sides of the archetype. One person gives themselves over, body and soul, to the other to do with as she likes. He does not hesitate, nor does he fear the outcome. He trusts that she knows the best way to use his abilities and lets her decide how things will shake out. His perspective on the world feels small and shaky in relation to hers: her access to the mysterious power of the Creator is strong and direct, but his access is unreliable. He submits to her so that her fullness and mystery might breathe life into his awareness, making the himself and the world around him better for it. She, on the other hand, depends on him to link her to the manifest world. Without him, she is full of music that she cannot play. His choice to become ever more resonant and finely tuned in his states of awareness gives her more and more to work with as she plucks out the Creator's majesty. This relationship is difficult to bring about and challenging to maintain. I suspect it is roughly characteristic of the guru-chela relationship. But for those of us who spurn gurus, I believe it is most easily experienced in sexual intercourse. Once discovered, the energy can be brought into other phases of life as well.

On the social level, I believe the Avatar persona is most easily discovered in and through constructive anarchist social organization. The guiding principle of the kind of anarchy I have in mind is that the group itself knows best what is best for it. Each of the individuals in the group trust that only through the expression of the desires of the group will the highest and best realization of all their efforts and dreams come about. They are faithful servants to and instruments of the higher intentions of the group and there is no space for doubt that this attitude toward the group is right the way forward. It is easy to see, of course, how this kind of attitude can be perverted into cultism, but it is the ideal nevertheless.

Polarized Expressions and Modes of Distortion

Virtually the entirety of my description of the Avatar thus far has focused on the right-hand path expression of this archetype. There is not much more to say about it, though I will say a bit more. The masculine self (transparent awareness, presence to self as self) submits himself to the higher will as embodied by the feminine self (presence to self as mysterious other). He has come to trust in her completely, seeing her as the very hand of the Creator. He offers himself to her fully as her servant, to do with as she pleases, confident that a more harmonious world will come about than it would if he were in charge. He does not expect to fully understand her purposes or how everything fits together,

but that is not his place. She, for her part, is honored to be given the reigns. She is an embodiment of infinite love and tenderness—his trust is not misplaced—so with the authority she has given him, she works to realize all of his deepest desires in ways far better and more fulfilling than he had imagined for himself.

I must confess that I have never experienced this archetype on the left-hand path side, which is why my description tends to embody the right-hand path characterization of it. This does not mean that there is nothing to say about it; only that I am depending both on what I have heard from those who have walked the left-hand path and on my own judgment about what the opposite of the right-hand path must feel like. On the left-hand path, adepts talk about taming and training the Shadow. This is, of course, the feminine side of the spirit. On the left-hand path, the incarnate, conscious self is glorified over all other aspects of reality, but spiritual adepts are still aware that there is a great and infinite power within them that is locked away. On the left-hand path, adepts use the Lesser Cycle to empty out this Shadow and reorient it toward the conscious self's intention. The purpose is to take hold of the mysterious side of the self and to make it a faithful servant of the transparent self. This process, when it plays out interpersonally, is reminiscent of brainwashing through illusion, punishment and reward. The mysterious self must be broken of its own will (the higher will), and seized for the purposes of the incarnate, transparent awareness. On the left-hand path, the small, incarnate self wants power, dominion, subjugation, conquest. This incarnate self takes pleasure in the suffering of others, especially those who oppose its dominion, and it locates spiritual fulfillment in the energy it absorbs from the Shadow and from the rest of the world beyond the self. The incarnate self wants to be glorified as a god, commanding the abject servitude of all within its sphere of experience. The jealous gods of our religious myths are, in fact, expressions of the left-hand path adept.

In the persona of the Avatar on the left-hand path, a new and dangerous phenomenon occurs. The masculine spiritual self decides that the Shadow has been sufficiently tamed and reprogrammed as his servant. The ultimate goal, according to those on the left-hand path, is to release the Shadow into the world. He is so confident in the control he wields over her that he mounts her like a dragon. She is far more powerful than he is and could use that power to easily destroy him, but his control over her is so thorough that, despite her boundless power, she will not overthrow him but will instead act out his wishes. So, just as we saw on the right-hand path, the mysterious spiritual self transmits its power and energy through the transparent spiritual self as a musician through an instrument. But on the left-hand path, despite the masculine side's vulnerability in the relationship, his will is what is executed with that power and her will is merely to abide by his.

36. Relationship #12

Character: Salvation

How does the calling find its way to the Prophet's ear? One common way of thinking about the calling is that the divine is always speaking to us, but our minds and bodies are too busy to hear it and our spirits are too thwarted to open to it. This is the still, small voice view of calling. However, I think this conception of the connection between the human and the divine is more characteristic of the Catalyst of the Spirit. Transformation is a liminal state; it is momentous, but temporary. A transformative event

reverberates throughout one's life, making sense of what came before and acting as a milestone between what came before and what comes after.

The relationship between Transformation and Great Way archetypes is, as I've said before, a relationship between decision and commitment. The two inform each other. Commitment is not possible until prior decision opens the way to it; but decision is not coherent unless it fits into a larger context of commitment. Commitment without making costly decisions in favor of that commitment is no commitment at all; it is merely lip service. If we make decisions without intentionally deciding in favor of some commitment we have or at least want to have, then our decisions are apparently arbitrary. Why decide one way or another? When we line up such decisions alongside one another, there is no clear direction in which we are moving. These features of decision and commitment are even more prominent when we are dealing with moral matters, as the Archetypal Mind always is.

Devoted aspiration to an ideal is, itself, an ideal of the human experience. We aspire to aspire. The Prophet's condition of living death is a condition that awaits aspiration. In death, there is nothing to aspire to because everything is already over. The Prophet's hopes and dreams have come to an end, but their life somehow has not yet caught up. The Prophet trudges forward in this state, participating half-heartedly in the ongoing physical illusion, waiting for something to spark enthusiasm, but not at all expecting it.

Consider the right-hand path. When the Prophet stumbles upon the Avatar, the outward appearance and actions of the Avatar are of a piece with the rest of the Prophet's experience. The physical illusion appears as a closed system, through which no contact from beyond is possible. Their initial meeting will probably spark little interest from the Prophet, who has come to expect the entire world to be drab, lifeless, and predictable. But the Avatar's committed aspiration to be a living instrument in the hands of the Creator is a signal so strong that the physical illusion acts as a medium that vibrates in resonance with that signal. It is no accident that musical instruments appear in both cards. The woman who plays the harp is the same entity as the genie who blows the horn. She is a messenger from the Creator who uses the mind, body, and conscious phase of the spirit to communicate that message in the only way that it could possibly penetrate the walls of the sarcophagus: a resonant energy signature, a vibration. The conceptual content of the Avatar's words, though perhaps interesting, are not the point. The outward effects of the Avatar's actions are at best symptoms or byproducts of the message itself. The message is the joyous and life-loving condition of the Avatar. It has no pretense and no ulterior motive. The Avatar only sees someone who desperately wants to feel alive. This discovery strikes the Avatar as a call for service, so the Avatar appears in the Prophet's life to answer the call, thereby becoming a representative of the Prophet's own call to service.

Now consider the left-hand path. Arriving at a Transformation of Spirit is not something that simply happens to just any Traveling soul. The mind and body must be initiated on the path of choosing before the spirit can be coherently worked with. The cross on the banner hanging from the genie's trumpet in most renditions of arcanum #20 indicates a three-way split, but the condition of the spirit at the beginning of the Transformation reveals only two options: stay in the sarcophagus or emerge. The Transformation of the Spirit only offers itself as a choice between polarizing further along the path already trodden or else remaining in the condition of living death. The left-hand path Prophet, then, cannot hear the call of the divine beyond the self. The Prophet has only the option of calling themselves forth from the tomb. In this sense, it seems that there is no possibility for fruitful interaction between

the Avatar and the Prophet on the left-hand path, except on the inner level. But I believe that this is not the case.

The left-hand path Avatar is supremely self-possessed. This Avatar is constantly striving toward an ever expression of the hidden power within, controlled by careful and ongoing suppression of the rejected features of self, and released only once this control is complete. The left-hand path Prophet's condition is only one step removed from the Avatar's. This Prophet has suppressed the rejected self in all the same ways, but has not yet learned how to release the hidden power and trust that their own efforts at control are satisfactory. The tomb of the left-hand path Prophet is a product of their own fear and lack of confidence that the Shadow can be controlled. If the Prophet opens the tomb, the Shadow will emerge and there is no shoving her back in. It is a risk that the Prophet is not sure will pay off. If such a Prophet were to meet a left-hand path Avatar, one who has let the Shadow out and enjoys the fruits of the action, the Prophet will be struck with awe at the sight. To behold what it is possible to accomplish within a human lifetime is inspiring, even if one has no desire to follow the inspirational model.

Whether on the left-hand path or the right-hand path, the relationship between these two personas represents salvation from living death. On the right-hand path, the Avatar desires to be the instrument of the divine who, by according all control to the Creator beyond the self, shepherds the lost back into the fold. The right-hand path Prophet, recognizing the Creator dwelling within the humble instrument at hand, allows themselves to be drawn forward into a new spiritual world by the Avatar. On the left-hand path, the Avatar desires to be a living manifestation of divinity itself, striking awe and terror into the hearts and minds of those who have the eyes to see. The left-hand path Prophet, recognizing the accomplishment of the Avatar, finds their own motivation to fashion themselves into a god redoubled.

When to Become the Personas

I will begin, as usual, with the personal level. The inner Prophet is a condition of lifeless resignation to living out one's life in a sad and empty world. When we find that all the mirth and joy has disappeared from our lives, that we sleepwalk and lip-sync our way through the rote patterns of daily life, the Prophet has probably awakened with us. In this moment, it is appropriate to locate the inner Avatar, the crown upon the head. Deciding to allow ourselves to feel new in a world that registers as wretchedly old is difficult, but the surest way to do so is to remember our own spiritual commitment: to become instruments at the hand of the divine. The Prophet's burial is a result of having resisted the call of the divine for so long that everything is stripped away so that nothing remains but to follow the lead of the Creator's voice within. The Avatar, by contrast, is relaxed and accepting, not just of self and other, but of the entire condition of third density. For the Avatar, all is in its place, and the only thing left to do is release the self to the higher will, trusting that the music will thereby be more beautiful, more moving, and contribute to the greater masterpiece whose majesty may not be visible in any obvious way.

Conversely, we sometimes find within our experience that our own efforts to become the instrument of the Creator are hampered, not by any one thing in particular, but by our own growing difficulty in accessing the peace and the joy of the Creator. We can get so caught up in the desire to live in a blissful state of union with the All that we fail to recognize or fail to admit to ourselves that all is not well within us. In this moment, the Avatar within is active, but the commitment of the inner Avatar is waning and needs a new decision to bolster that commitment. This is a moment to become the Prophet. It is difficult to admit to ourselves that we are not, after all, happy. That life is burdensome, joy is feigned, and the

Creator feels distant. The Prophet's great strength is that they are not hiding from this deep truth. They are completely present to it and enveloped within it. When the inner Avatar's energy wanes, it is time to discover the tomb within which we are already buried.

Interpersonally, the Prophet is recognizable by their moroseness. When another person is expressing the Prophet, they will tend to be humorless and taken by a dull sadness. They will not be overwhelmed with emotion; on the contrary, tears are nearly impossible for the entombed Prophet to muster. When the Prophet is expressed by two people expressing the masculine and feminine sides, the coolness and lack of vitality in the relationship between them is the most obvious outward trait. There are no powerful feelings, whether positive or negative. In this moment, it is a service to the other to become the Avatar in relation to the other (or the other two). This entails, first and foremost, setting aside all attachment to outcome and all attempt to ideate a course of action. The Avatar is only a messenger. Moreover, the message itself is not expressible in words, though words are often the medium for the message. Becoming the Avatar entails walking through life as a living expression of the commitment to being an instrument for the work of the Great Beyond. Healing comes only *through* the healer, not from them. To become the Avatar in relation to the other as a Prophet entails being a living example exactly the element that is missing in the Prophet's life. The Avatar does not preach; they live their lives as testament to the glory of the Creator, trusting that those who are ready to see the Creator in the Avatar will do so without any explicit attempt of the Avatar to show it to them. To become the Avatar is to live in a state of trust in the supreme benevolence of the totality of existence.

The other side of the interpersonal relationship requires that we recognize when another person is expressing the Avatar in relation to us. This is not hard to recognize, since the Avatar has a knack for catching the attention of those who are ready to Transform. Interestingly, the other is often not aware that they have captured our attention as an expression of the Avatar: those who live their lives committed to a relationship with the Creator do not often get to see the fruits from the seeds they sow. When we register the Avatar in another, this is a moment when it is appropriate for us to discover how we do not live up to the commitment of the Avatar ourselves. It is easy to fall into the belief that the Avatar we see in another is an impossible ideal for ourselves; it is also easy to cast judgment on ourselves for not living up to it, as if we are inherently worse than the other. The tendency to see ourselves as static and incapable of change is, itself, a resistance to enter into the persona of transformation. In this moment, it is appropriate for us to enter the Prophet persona, unpleasant as that may be. When another appears as an Avatar in relation to us, they are showing us that we have lost our own joy, that life is a burden, and that we have forgotten the depth of feeling available in the human experience.

The social expressions of this relationship follow the same patterns as the interpersonal. The social Prophet is an entity that has lost joy, while the social Avatar is an entity that lives in commitment to serving the Creator as an instrument or messenger. An organization that draws to itself those who are in the desolate state of the social Prophet has a responsibility to become the Avatar, because this is the service that is being requested. Likewise, an organization that sees the Avatar elsewhere has a responsibility to admit its entombment, because this is the only way forward.