



The Secret of the Merchant Priesthood

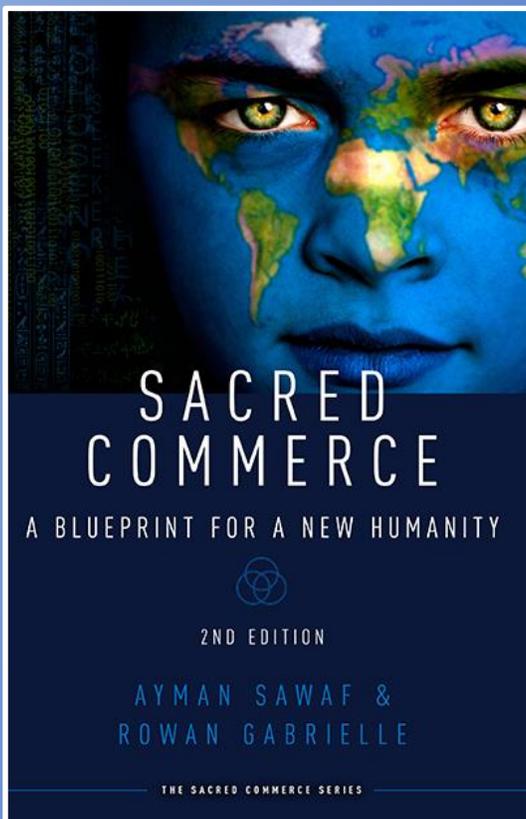
excerpts from the book
Sacred Commerce
2nd Edition

AYMAN SAWAF
ROWAN GABRIELLE

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Excerpts from:

Sacred Commerce, 2nd Edition
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The Merchant Priesthood

We first learned of the Merchant Priesthood while in Egypt almost twenty years ago in the area known as “the Jewel of the Nile,” when we briefly separated from our group. Out of nowhere, two Egyptian men walked up to us and, in broken English, asked if we wanted to have our picture taken next to a nearby square stone, upon which a figure was carved. “Here, please, stand here,” he added, pointing again to the square stone. After taking our picture, the men then handed the camera back to us and disappeared.

On the way out, we told our guide about this odd interaction involving the two men and showed him the stone where we had posed for the picture. Knowing we were both entrepreneurs, a big smile spread across his face. “That’s not just any stone,” he said, “look again. Do you know who that is?” We spoke together, saying, “No.” “This is the Egyptian god, Bes, the god of commerce,” explained Kevin. “He is the god who oversaw the Merchant Priesthood.” We both smiled and looked at each other, filled with curiosity and wonder.

Merchant Priesthood? Neither of us had ever heard of a Merchant Priest. We’d known that there were Temple Priests, Healing Priests, and Celebration Priests, but Merchant Priests?

What fascinated us from the start was the idea that commerce could be a vehicle to raise consciousness, as well as a spiritual path towards self-realization. Could commerce — that intrinsic and basic function of exchanging information, goods, and services — actually lift a culture to a level of sacredness that might otherwise not be attained, as well as put those who practice it on an accelerated growth trajectory? This idea made perfect sense to us and rang through our minds like a clarifying bell whose echoes are as bright and clear today as when we first heard it sing.

We hope you enjoy the following excerpts from Sacred Commerce that further elucidate the secret connection between emotions and whatever it is in your life that you are wanting more of.

In joy,
Ayman Sawaf and Rowan Gabrielle

The Gift

Revered as a spiritual path, commerce emerged long ago as a tool to advance mankind. Among the Merchant Priesthood of old Egypt, it was viewed as a gift from the Goddess, sacred and balanced by its very nature. It was seen as a solution or a map to deal with the issues of survival, security and community and as an ally in the process of conscious evolution.

So what happened to the Gift of Commerce? Up until the current era, evolution has marched humanity along for the most part unaware and for the past 2000 years, this slow trudging forward has taken a chauvinistic course. With the rise of chauvinism, dominion was all but lost and an authoritarian stance emerged that stripped humanity, and indeed commerce, of its sacred and feminine context, leading us to the unconscious exchange of goods and services that we experience today.

Although the Gift of Commerce has been corrupted, it luckily has not been destroyed. It has created a positive impact on both the alleviation of poverty and the promotion of peace and, as the feminine and sacred values are reawakening and resurfacing within ourselves and our world, humanity is reaching a level of emotional maturity, whereby the Gift of Commerce will be able to deliver on its sacred promise as never before.





Sacred Commerce was, of course, the domain of the Merchant Priest. Many people studied with the Merchant Priesthood purely to learn the skills of Emotional Intelligence or as they called it, “Inner Commerce.” Inner Commerce is the Commerce between you and your unique personal Resonance and all its constituents, such as your emotions, your beliefs, thoughts, choices, and decisions.

Emotional Alchemy was a prerequisite for the Merchant Priests on their Hero’s Journey, as well as in their practice of Sacred Commerce. It was necessary for them to understand and practice Inner Commerce, before they applied the principles outwardly in their service to humanity through business.

Training in the Merchant Priesthood involved many, many years of study, learning about Emotional Alchemy. This knowledge and understanding deeply infused the Priests’ commercial dealings and daily lives.

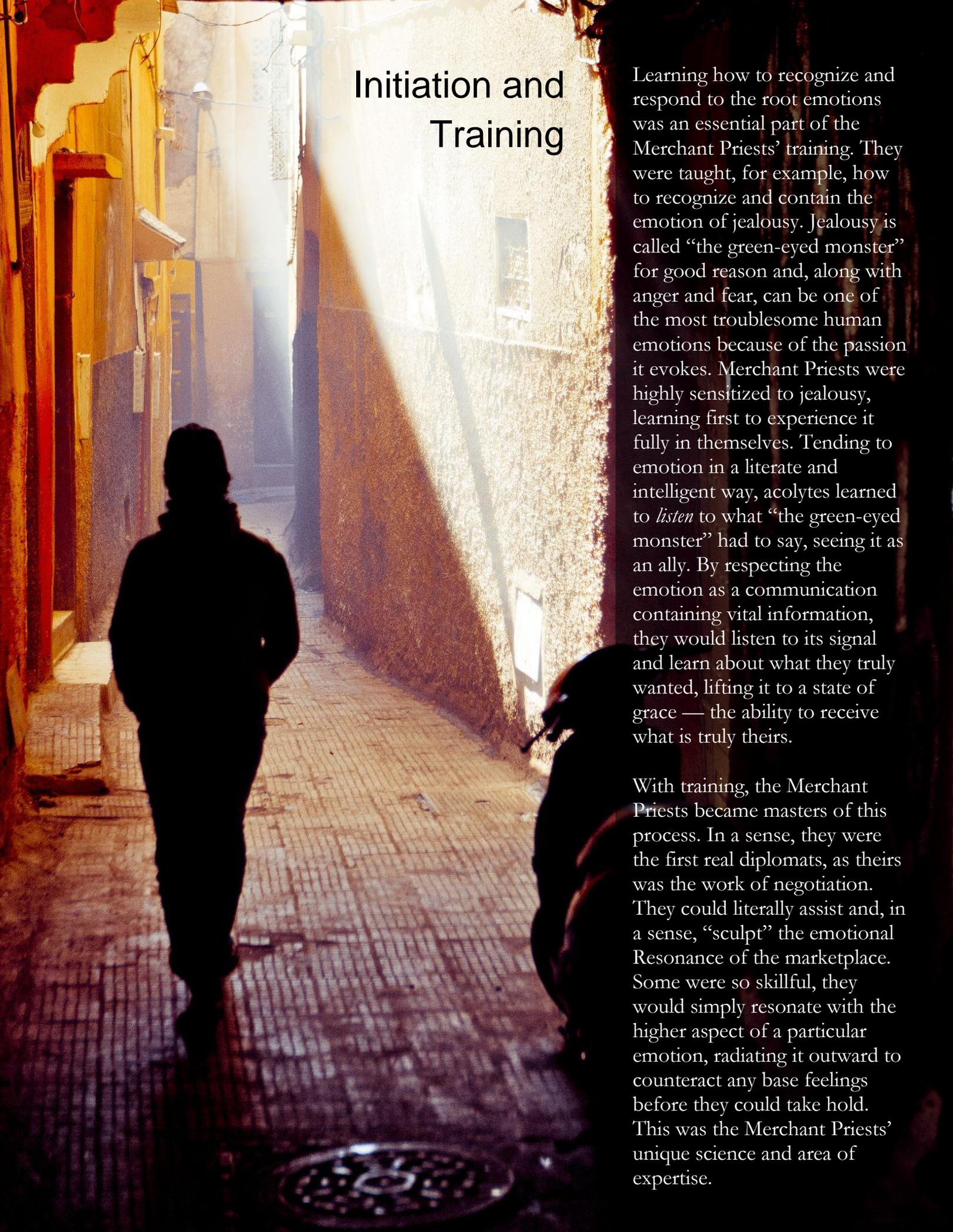
The Merchant Priesthood of the Ancient World

The old business paradigm looked at the bottom line in terms of *return on investment (ROI)* – i.e., monetary gain, **profit** earned. The *What*, which is to say money, was the primary concern. The conscious business model, which became concerned with the *How*, which is to say means, added the second and third bottom lines of **people** and **planet**. Self-esteem, integrity, trust, character, and caring for the Earth and the environment became priorities. Higher awareness and consciousness entered the picture.

Sacred Commerce evolves these principles even further by introducing the concept of reality of the Fourth Bottom Line, the *Why*, which becomes our first and primary concern. This means the return to the spiritual Self, the part of us that is in tune with the Pulse of all things.

Sacred Commerce and the Fourth Bottom Line





Initiation and Training

Learning how to recognize and respond to the root emotions was an essential part of the Merchant Priests' training. They were taught, for example, how to recognize and contain the emotion of jealousy. Jealousy is called "the green-eyed monster" for good reason and, along with anger and fear, can be one of the most troublesome human emotions because of the passion it evokes. Merchant Priests were highly sensitized to jealousy, learning first to experience it fully in themselves. Tending to emotion in a literate and intelligent way, acolytes learned to *listen* to what "the green-eyed monster" had to say, seeing it as an ally. By respecting the emotion as a communication containing vital information, they would listen to its signal and learn about what they truly wanted, lifting it to a state of grace — the ability to receive what is truly theirs.

With training, the Merchant Priests became masters of this process. In a sense, they were the first real diplomats, as theirs was the work of negotiation. They could literally assist and, in a sense, "sculpt" the emotional Resonance of the marketplace. Some were so skillful, they would simply resonate with the higher aspect of a particular emotion, radiating it outward to counteract any base feelings before they could take hold. This was the Merchant Priests' unique science and area of expertise.

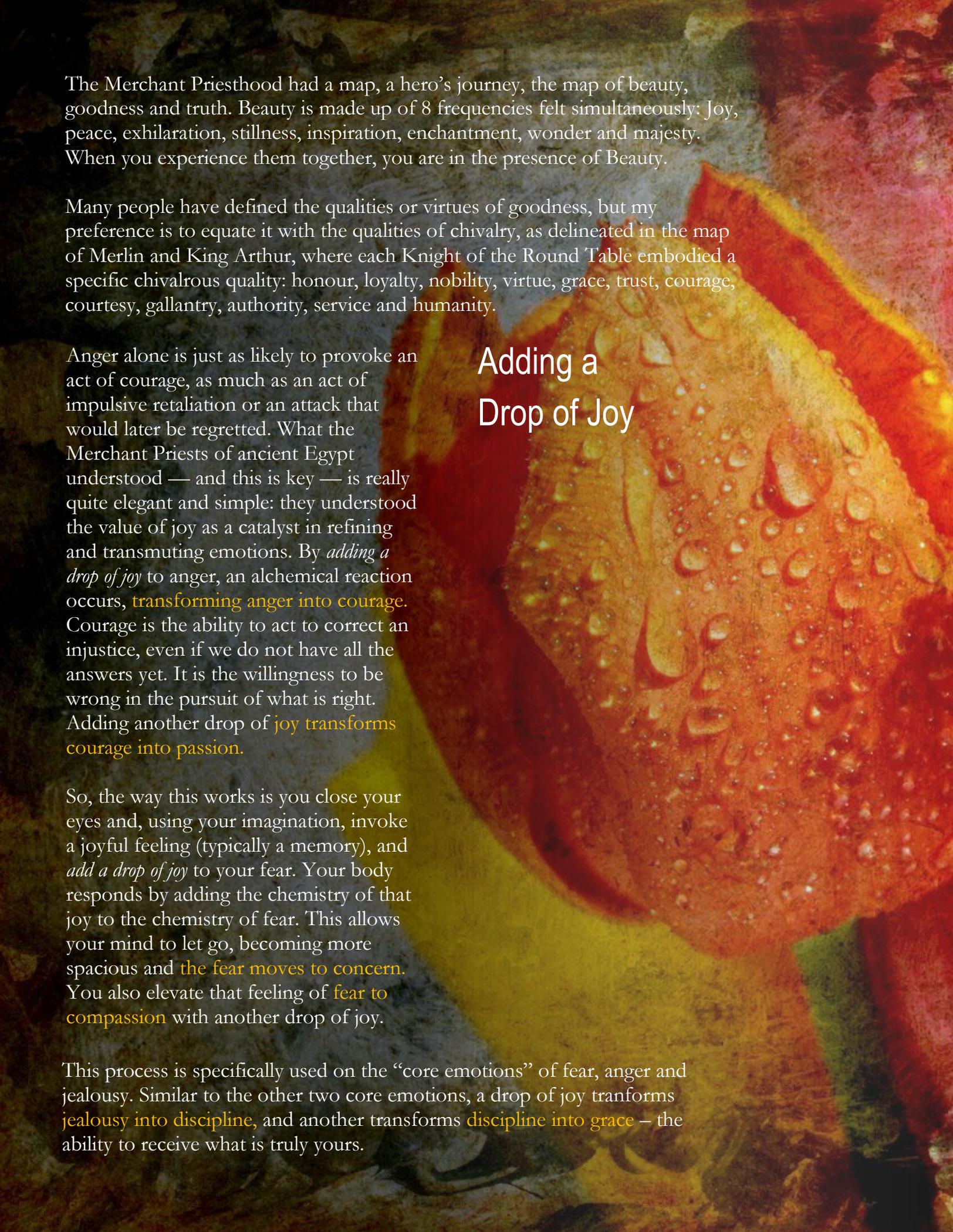
Emotional Alchemy

The Merchant Priests' greatest skill and challenge was to be able to take their inner training into the marketplace, rather than preserving it for the safe and serene environment of the temple. It is one thing to be able to hold a stable, radiant presence when protected by temple walls, but quite another to be able to sustain the Resonance of harmony and flow, while in the thick of daily transactions and emotions.

The **Fourth Level** of Emotional Intelligence is called **Emotional Alchemy**. Here, we are on the accelerated slope, beginning to actively, consciously create our futures, where we achieve a rarefied state of intuitive flow and spiritual self-mastery.

Although there are many nuances and levels of Emotional Alchemy, there is one “pocket remedy” that we will share with you here that you can use to transform a situation in an instant. The Merchant Priests called this basic operation “adding a drop of joy.”





The Merchant Priesthood had a map, a hero's journey, the map of beauty, goodness and truth. Beauty is made up of 8 frequencies felt simultaneously: Joy, peace, exhilaration, stillness, inspiration, enchantment, wonder and majesty. When you experience them together, you are in the presence of Beauty.

Many people have defined the qualities or virtues of goodness, but my preference is to equate it with the qualities of chivalry, as delineated in the map of Merlin and King Arthur, where each Knight of the Round Table embodied a specific chivalrous quality: honour, loyalty, nobility, virtue, grace, trust, courage, courtesy, gallantry, authority, service and humanity.

Anger alone is just as likely to provoke an act of courage, as much as an act of impulsive retaliation or an attack that would later be regretted. What the Merchant Priests of ancient Egypt understood — and this is key — is really quite elegant and simple: they understood the value of joy as a catalyst in refining and transmuting emotions. By *adding a drop of joy* to anger, an alchemical reaction occurs, **transforming anger into courage**. Courage is the ability to act to correct an injustice, even if we do not have all the answers yet. It is the willingness to be wrong in the pursuit of what is right. Adding another drop of **joy transforms courage into passion**.

So, the way this works is you close your eyes and, using your imagination, invoke a joyful feeling (typically a memory), and *add a drop of joy* to your fear. Your body responds by adding the chemistry of that joy to the chemistry of fear. This allows your mind to let go, becoming more spacious and **the fear moves to concern**. You also elevate that feeling of **fear to compassion** with another drop of joy.

This process is specifically used on the “core emotions” of fear, anger and jealousy. Similar to the other two core emotions, a drop of joy transforms **jealousy into discipline**, and another transforms **discipline into grace** — the ability to receive what is truly yours.

Adding a Drop of Joy

The Rise of the Global Citizen

Today's Merchant Priests may not know themselves by that name, but they are men and women changing the face of society and humanity by leveling the playing field in new and innovative ways.

Throughout history, the Merchant Priests — whether men or women, grouped in religious orders, monastic warriors, secret societies, or as individual renaissance dreamers — have shared a similar vision. They imagined a global economy that empowers local economies around the world — from the largest to the smallest — to prosper and flourish with dignity and equality, creating a global marketplace, where the spirit of Partnership and responsibility transforms emotions of anger, fear, and jealousy into passion, compassion, and empathy.

Many of you reading this book already see yourselves as social inventors or engineers. You are the heralds, the people bringing meaning, ethics, emotion, and caring into business, education, and government institutions. We are revolutionizing the way business gets done, the way we interact with each other, and the way we think.

The secret is out: *party-cipation* in the pursuit of Beauty, Goodness, and Truth IS the blueprint for a new humanity.





Beauty, Goodness and Truth

Today's Merchant Priests know that Heaven and Earth are one and the same, just as they know that form and the formless interpenetrate each other and are also one and the same. The Merchant Priests, both the ancient and the modern, served and serve something infinitely greater than themselves: greater than anything that can be given a name. Yet at the same time, they are completely at home in the everyday affairs of human exchange and interaction. They know we are all in this together, that nothing is separate from anything else and, therefore, everything — every single word, gesture, transaction, thought, and feeling — matters.

Beauty, Goodness, and Truth are Resonances, which, when combined, create something far greater than the sum of their constituents: ecstasy, a state of being that accompany enlightenment, the pinnacle of the Hero's Journey.

As we pursue Beauty, Goodness, and Truth, we begin to feel and experience instances — explosions — of ecstasy, which, as we progress along our journey, become more and more frequent. The steps of getting there are the qualities of being there.

Finally, we are entering the era of spiritual adulthood. What a joy and a privilege it is to have been born to *party-cipate* in this remarkable time and to witness the birth of a new humanity.

The Authors



Ayman Sawaf is an international visionary entrepreneur, published musician, and best-selling author. He is one of the original creators of the discipline now known as Emotional Literacy (EL). He is also an early pioneer in Emotional Intelligence (EI or “EQ”) as co-creator of the Four Cornerstone model and its application in business — as illustrated in *Executive EQ: Emotional Intelligence in Leadership and Organizations*, which Ayman co-authored with Dr. Robert Cooper. He has spent the last twenty years building the evolutionary foundation for entirely new systems and industries that will monetize the ability of these perspectives to optimize human capital; by providing new maps to evolve our relationships with ourselves, our family, and the workplace.



Rowan Gabrielle is a visionary artist, entrepreneur and philanthropist with 20+ years experience in the conscious marketplace. She is the founder of OrganicLeather.com, a company focused on Eco-Fashion and revolutionizing our relationship to animals and the clothes we wear. She is deeply passionate about spirituality and inter-species communication, a connector with deep relationships across many subject areas. She is also a special event producer and a photographer.

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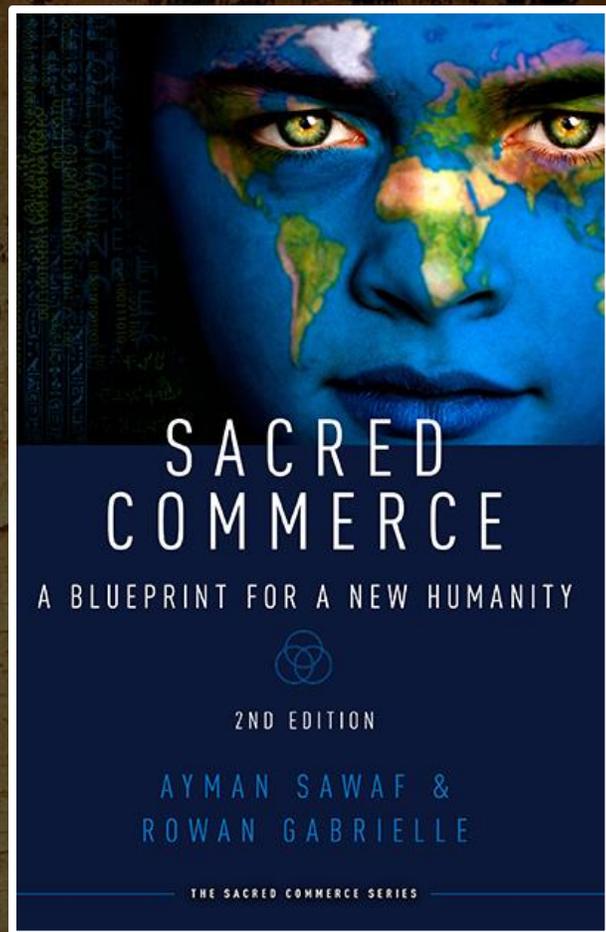
“Yesterday I was clever. I wanted to change the world. Today I am wise. I am changing myself.”

— Rumi

People the world over are moving toward a new spirituality — a unique relationship and partnership with the Divine. They are moving away from a narrow definition of humanity centered around religion and nationalism to one that celebrates global citizenship and stewardship. These global citizens are now coming together to co-create a new world: a new democracy, a new mythology, a new economy, and a new spirituality.

Sacred Commerce introduces the concept of the Fourth Bottom Line and explores a new Hero’s Journey that is sourced in Emotional Alchemy, Resonance Causation, Conscious Evolution, and Beauty, Goodness, and Truth — the transformational ingredients necessary to step fully into your purpose as a creative presence in our emergent planetary culture.

Explore the history and mystery of commerce in this widely anticipated follow-up to *Executive EQ*, the international best-selling book that introduced and pioneered Emotional Intelligence and the Four Cornerstone Model in the business world.



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