



QUAREIA—THE INITIATE

Module I—Core Initiate Skills

Lesson 5: Identifying Ritual Patterns

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WELCOME

Welcome to this lesson of the Quareia curriculum.

The Quareia takes a magical apprentice from the beginning of magic to the level of adeptship and beyond. The course has no superfluous text; there is no dressing, no padding—everything is in its place and everything within the course has a good reason to be there.

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So remember—in order for this course to work, it is wise to work with the lessons in sequence. If you don't, it won't work.

Yours,

Josephine McCarthy



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Lesson 5: Identifying Ritual Patterns

In terms of power and contact, a lot of the ritual and visionary work in the Initiate section is quite a leap up from the apprentice training. Because of this, before we move on to those lessons, I want to take a bit of time to look over ritual patterns, how they work, and why they're as they are. Once you know how the power flows through different patterns, then when you look at various different types of magic you will see what is doing what, and why. You will also be able to spot where magical rituals have been written without magical knowledge (and there are many out there).

Regardless of the type of magic used, flows of power are more or less the same: different sorts of magicians in different eras all tapped into the same power source: the power of what is around us. They all had different ways of expressing and connecting with those powers in their magical patterns, and they did different things with those powers, but the powers themselves are the same.

This is one way, as an initiate, that you can distinguish real magic from made-up magic that has not been worked with. You will also be able to spot the power forces used in religious temples by their layout and positioning in relation to the pattern of forces. The same is also true in tribal magic: if you look at the positionings, patterns, and directions used, you can figure out what powers they are working with and why.

This skill is one of the roots of being a solid magician, and why Quareia is written as it is: if you know the mechanics, forces, and foundations, then you can apply them to any magical style that you wish. You will see what is real and works, and what does not work.

So let us have a look at the various ritual patterns and what is behind them. This basic understanding will be put to the test pretty quickly in the initiate section, so make sure you fully understand this lesson before moving on.

Directions

By now you have done a lot of work with the directions on all different levels, which will have given you a foundation to stand on. You should be able to Google (or even go a library!) and find temple layouts of ancient cultures from all over the world and see what powers they were working with. You should be able to look up various different types of magical ritual and see what those rituals work with (...or not).

What you have not worked with very much are the cross-quarters. They are used in some magical rituals and temple layouts, and have very specific dynamics. The four-directional gate pattern gives you polarised Divinity (north, south, up, and down) and the flow of power into manifestation (east) and out again (west). You also have the tracks of time (south/future, north/past). This is a very stable flow that was used worldwide in temples and magical patterns, and it is still in use to this day.

The cross-quarters are *directions of action* that act as fulcrums for the directional powers. They are directions of power dynamics and also of specific types of beings. Let's have a look at them in a bit more detail. Just before we get to the cross-quarter powers, let us have a brief look at the circle.

The circle

The circle is used both in ritual movement and in the drawing of magical patterns.

In ritual, circling round the directions is the human power flow: by the magician's action of movement, the powers of the directions are triggered from static into movement. This causes the power that flows from the east, for example, to move on to its next direction.

Which direction that is depends on the direction the magician is circling. Clockwise unfolds to create; anticlockwise gathers up and closes. Deciding which way to circle is not an arbitrary choice:¹ it is deeply embedded in the ritual patterns and how they unfold.

When you circle a sigil, you enclose its power. The direction in which you draw the circle, if you are working in a contacted way, defines whether the magic is creative or destructive. When you see a magical seal encased in a circle, you know its magic is measured and contained to a specific, limited action, and cannot bleed out beyond its set pattern and intention.²

Just as a windmill gains power from turning, so too does a circle from circling. Remember this in your ritual and sigil work: repeated circling gathers power under tension.

So now let us look at the cross-quarters, which are also known in some magical systems as the *Bridges*.

¹"I prefer anticlockwise in ritual," someone once said to me...and then wondered why their magic never worked.

²Which is why you do not circle your magical cloth: you need that power to flow and extend, and not be limited by encircling.

Southeast

Power flows into a pattern or into the world from the east. It is mediated to the south via the southeast cross-quarter. This cross-quarter is a path that takes something to its pinnacle in the future.

So far in ritual you have mediated power from the east to the south via the central flame. Why? Because it is safe, stable, and you cannot control it. The central flame is the fulcrum of life itself, of all creation and destruction. By sending power through it you relinquish control. This dynamic is the first one you learned in ritual magic as an apprentice. Now we'll step forward a little.

Working with the southeast cross-quarter when working magic enables you to define the path the power takes to some extent. It lets you link that forming magic to a certain type of being who will oversee the magic's progression from formation to the height of its power/action. The quarter between east and south is like the teenage phase for a magical pattern: it is formed, it is maturing, but it has not quite yet reached maturity and the peaks of its power. During this phase, the magic is vulnerable and can be torn apart easily or interfered with.

Because of this, the magician either sends the magic through the central flame or they work with the cross-quarter and a being of that direction to oversee the magic to its full development. Or the magician maps out that path using patterned sigils that weave in the power of the cross-quarter in order to define its path.

The strength of working with the cross-quarter is that the magician has far more control over the magic's development and manifestation than if it is sent through the central flame. The down side is that it is more vulnerable to interference. Even with a cross-quarter being overseeing it, what happens will depend on the whim of that being, its integrity, and also its understanding of what you are trying to achieve. If the magic is plotted with a path through the cross-quarter, you can destroy it, break it up, or alter it if needed (as can someone else). Once it goes through the central flame, nothing can interfere with it. So each method has its pros and cons.

The beings who flow through the southeast cross-quarter, if a threshold is built there (not advisable in your temple), are faery beings/Djinn, and also angel beings. They are beings of air and fire.

The reason you do not want a permanent cross-quarter threshold in your temple is that it will be an open door for faery beings to flow back and forth into your house. It's like putting a faery cat-flap in your temple: you will not be able to control what comes back and forth into your space. However, you can (and will) learn how to open and close an access threshold in the cross-quarters.

So for example if you were working a piece of magic that involved sigils and patterns, once the patterning was done it would be placed in the southeast cross-quarter as a passive positioning, or with a being there to oversee it. All the temple's power would be focused on that cross-quarter until the magic rose to full power, at which time it would be swapped over to the southwest corner and the focus of the temple's power would be switched from one cross-quarter to another.

Just as a curious aside, there are a lot of cross-quarter thresholds at the Temple of Karnak in Egypt, a temple that was renowned for its magic.

Southwest

The southwest is the cross-quarter where the power has passed its peak and is beginning to wind down. This cross-quarter is used when the magician wants to speed up the dissolution of a magical pattern rather than wait for it to go through the normal composting route. When magic is left to its own devices, after the pattern has peaked in its power and done its job it drifts into the west to be broken down and then composted in the north.

But if it is important not to have the magic hanging about after it has done its job, it can be caught in the southwest cross-quarter and taken directly to the northwest cross-quarter, or even directly north in order to cease its actions immediately and remove all traces of it.

The beings or contacts in the southwest corner are usually human mystics (fire over water) or magical priests working in their own time who can cross time and work with future or past magical workings: they are living inner contacts, something that you will work with in your adept training. It is a direction of life being lived, life that is fully mature but has passed its peak.

Northwest

This direction is the bridge between death that can lead to new life, or death that is final. This direction, as well as the northeast cross-quarter, is where the *Keeper of the Threshold* can be worked with. The Keeper of the Threshold is an angelic being of massive proportions who acts as a gateway into and out of life. This angelic being is the bridge into the beginnings of formation (northeast) and the bridge over the Abyss when a living consciousness withdraws forever from life/manifestation.

If the magician has to store or bind a being out of manifestation, out of the world, it is held in this cross-quarter and the work would be done in this cross-quarter. The northwest axis is about binding, stopping an expression of power, putting something to sleep, or taking it out of the pattern of life/manifestation. It is a place of holding, storage, and imprisonment.

Besides angelic beings, this cross-quarter is the threshold for working with beings who operate in death, for the angel of death itself, and for scavenger beings (like parasites) who break things down.

Northeast

This cross-quarter is also governed by the Keeper of the Threshold. It is the cross-quarter of preparation for manifestation. It is the anchor-spot for the first output of consciousness before it forms a breath (east) which then travels into life and the future (south). This is Divinity before polarisation, power before expression, and magic before it has been set in a form: it is the corner of the idea, the inner pattern with as yet no outer vessel, and the build-up for expression.

The various angelic beings who operate to mould, filter, and prepare consciousness and power for life are found in this corner, as are the Weaver goddesses, the Fates, and the ancestral spirits who give assistance to the continuation of a blood line.

If the magician is creating something in solid form (an object) this would be the directional corner they would work in, drawing on those

early creative powers as they work. Once the object is completed, it would be placed in the east to receive the first breath of life.

Northeast is also the position to work in if you are meditating on a new course of action, the spark of an idea, or are preparing for a new birth.

Uses

These cross-quarters work in unison with the four directions and the central power flow (centre, up, and down). When magical sigils, glyphs, and patterns are laid down, they often incorporate these different directions. This tells you where the magic has come from in power terms, where it is going, and what type of power dynamic it is trying to achieve.

Just as each of the four directional powers have a relationship with the opposite direction (north and south are female and male, east and west are into and out of life for all manifest beings), so these cross-quarters have interconnections. The northeast and southeast cross-quarters are directions of life building up to a peak from the very beginning, and the southwest and northwest cross-quarters are the directions of power dissipating and vanishing.

They can be worked with in a direct line to create a square where the four directions are outside the square; they can be worked with as two straight lines (i.e. northeast to southeast) if a power pattern is formed in the inner worlds but is not to be physically manifested (which is why it bypasses east), or they can be worked with in a cross pattern to slow down the action of a large magical pattern.

By working across the quarters, one aspect is anchored and rooted in the opposing power. For example, a new magical pattern that has never been used before would be created in the northeast but would be ritually anchored in the power of the southwest (rise and decline).

This use of the cross-quarters not only anchors and slows the magic, but it also brings in opposing powers of manifestation and non-manifestation. The power in the northeast is still at its conceptual phase; anchoring it in the southwest corner gives it a long life as the southwest is maturity of substance with the wisdom of manifestation (the mystics) there.

Similarly, the direct of southeast is the path to maturity. To ensure the road to the magic's peak is not too long and does not build too much

strength, it is anchored in the northwest cross-quarter, which is binding and closing the door of life: its death is woven into its path of life, just as we are when we are formed.

These patterns mirror the Divine pattern of creation to ensure that all that is created has a birth, a path of development, a peak of power, a passage into maturity, a passage into death, and then a final binding out of existence.

These dynamics are very important when the magician comes to do magic of any real power that for one reason or other cannot be unconditional and must be controlled by the magician. The inclusion of the cross-quarter power dynamics ensures the magic's stability, gives it more subtlety than using only the main directional patterns, and keeps each phase of the magic's power balanced and accessible at any point in time.

At this stage of your training it is enough simply to recognise these dynamics in action: for obvious reasons you will not yet actually work with them. But by knowing about them you will begin to understand their subtleties of action in certain rituals, and the hidden meanings behind certain magical sigils, glyphs, and patterns.

This is also one reason why, at the very earliest phase of your ritual training, you learned to not do any micro-actions in your ritual actions: eventually, as an adept, you will learn to draw in cross-quarter powers, and also the divisions/polarisations of those cross-quarter powers, with ritual hand actions. If your hand movements are not accurate enough, you will draw in various powers without meaning to.

By looking closely at ritual seals and sigils, you can discover what powers are anchored with what dynamic, at what angle, and in what detail the magician is working in terms of beings and powers.

The cross-quarters can each divide in half for a polarised power working within one cross-quarter. In this case, the place where the cross-quarter is anchored will tell you whether its polarized power is negative or positive.

For example, say that a seal had a line that flowed to the southeast cross-quarter, but the line was anchored south of the southeast cross-quarter. That line would be tapping into the fire/south/active principle of the future path: the passage of the magic from east to south is defined as a path of fire. That in turn tells the magician exactly what cross-quarter

being is involved in the work and how the magic's passage to its peak will be defined and fuelled.

In the 16th and 17th centuries, grimoires appeared that made extensive use of directional power patterns, Hebrew text (usually badly written), and various known and unknown glyphs. As with all magical texts, some of these patterns were copied without understanding, some were added to for effect, and some were glamourised or just made up. Some were working magical patterns with lots of decoration added in the form of made-up glyphs to conceal the real magical pattern from curious and unskilled eyes.

Because there is no modern discernment between what is glamour, what is made up with no magical skill, and what are real, working magical seals overlaid with extra stuff to protect their use, it is up to the modern magician to know what it is they are looking at. You will find in some of these Renaissance texts that there are only three or four real seals buried under a load of mocked-up ones. This was not done to rip off the magician; rather it was done to deflect the curious and unskilled.

This is a very old way of protecting magic from those who would dabble, misuse, or misunderstand it, and as is always the case, the faked-up seals and faked-up reasons for using them are often used repeatedly in modern magic, while the real ones stay hidden from silly eyes.

Knowing how the directional power patterns work enables the initiate to know what power was being worked with, why, what beings it is using, how it is anchored, and how it is guarded. It will take you up to the adept level before you learn to figure a complete seal, but at this stage you can simply look at the power patterns and how they are constructed.

For the practical work of this lesson, we will look at different shapes and patterns and how they relate magically to the power directions. Specific shapes are often used in magic, i.e. geometric shapes, which when worked with magically act as circuit boards for power. Some magical systems used seals with these geometric patterns on them to tell the adept not only which power is being worked with, but what ritual pattern connects with the magic at hand.

Which brings me to a very important point, one usually missed in modern magic: *seals have different purposes.*

Some seals are put together to *emanate power* and affect everything round them: they are magical completion, an object that will change

whatever they touch in whichever way they have been programmed to. This is the most common use of seals today in magic.

The second use of seals, which is lesser-known these days, is as a *map of power*. This was a method used to send magical learning down through time in periods of oppression or when a ritual working/magical knowledge had to be passed on carefully or secretly. These magical seals are basically maps of magical workings. They show which directional powers to use, which order to use them, and which beings to call into the work. The overall design would tell the magician what the magical map was actually for.

A third use of magical seals is as *connectors or communicators*. A pattern is ritually constructed, infused with power, connected to certain beings, and then the seal lasts down the ages of time. When another magician comes across the seal, if they know how, they can tap into the original ritual pattern which puts them directly into that stream of magic.

This was used in sacred magic when magical priesthods would create these seals and the seal would survive beyond the lifespan of the priesthood. By doing this, the link between the inner and outer priesthods and the deep inner knowledge they carried would be passed down through the ages. Connecting through these seals also lets a magician connect into the deity structure linked with the priesthood: you can step into their timeless flow of sacred magic and work with them towards a common goal.

The seals with the geometric patterns that map out ritual power points are the easiest for us to spot, as are those that use certain deity names and planetary sigils. The tough ones are the ones that are not done through patterns but through words or hieroglyphs: these tell you which power, what directions, and “how to” by hiding the information in text.

To access and use these, you not only have to be able to decipher the words and images, but also to put them in context and understand the use of allegory in that culture.

So unless you are a code freak who wants to spend years breaking Old Kingdom Egyptian codes, it is best to focus on seals with geometric shapes. This was the most commonly used method in the Renaissance to make magical seals. The shapes were created either by way of the ritual actions, power points, and contacts; or a known geometric shape was used that fully expressed the power being used.

Note: While you are looking at various seals and shapes, remember that not all magic uses this pattern. It is not an orthodoxy; rather it is one of many methods used to work magic using shapes and lines. Also remember that some seals/shapes were about deities and Divine power, and others were about magic and ritual: the two can be very different, so keep that in mind.

Task: Analysing patterns

You will need paper, pens, and a ruler for this exercise. For all these tasks, write up your findings on computer as a summary, with the images.

You are going to look at various geometric patterns and compare them to the magical map of power that you work with.

The magical power map worked with in Quareia is not the only one, but it is the most prevalent one used in Western magic and in some Eastern magic. It is also the oldest one in terms of its use: it can be traced back over thousands of years and works with many different variants.

If you come across a magical power seal or pattern that does not seem to relate at all to the magical map you are working with, it does not mean it is not real: it could very well just be working with a different system. That system will be a vocabulary that explains the same power dynamics, just in a different way.

On a piece of paper draw out the pattern of the four directions and the centre point, and the points at the cross-quarters. Do this by drawing four small lines where the altars would be, and four arcs that are bridges in the cross-quarters. Draw a small line through each arc of the cross-quarters to divide them, so that the two sides/polarity of the beings in the cross-quarters are represented by the arcs. Mark a hexagram where south is (top) and an earth sign in the north (bottom), and draw a small pentagram in the middle with the flame at its centre. This is your reference map for your magical directional alphabet, a key you should know well by now. Keep it to one side to refer back to visually as you work.

First you are going to look at a some geometric shapes; then you are going to look at a couple of seals or patterns. Then you'll go on to do your own research.

Look at the patterns below.

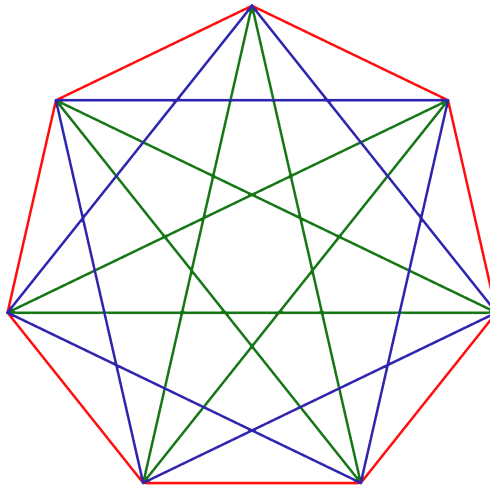


Figure 1: Heptagram.

The first is an obtuse heptagram with all its relationship lines marked. It has three layers in three colours. Starting with the red, draw out the red lines on paper and look at them in relation to the magical directions and bridges.

Then do the same with the green lines. Draw them out on their own (leave out the red and blue) and look at the interrelationships between the directions and the cross-quarter bridges. How do they relate to the centre? How do they relate to the male/south power? How do they relate to the female/north power? (Remember, south/hexagram is always at the top on magical seals.)

Now do the same with the blue lines: draw them out on their own and look at the pattern in relation to your directional key.

What you are looking for is:

1. What points of the shape touch a directional altar's position accurately?
2. What points of the shape touch a cross-quarter directly on the dividing line of its arc?
3. What points of the shape touch a polarised side of the cross-quarter?
4. What points of the shape seem to touch the spaces between the magical map points?
5. Most importantly, which directional altar position is bypassed by the shape?

Once you have looked closely at this shape, think about what powers it would draw in if it was used in a magical seal, and what powers would it not use. Then, once you have a list of the powers this shape could ritually pull in, think about what magical job a magician would potentially use it for.

Here is a breakdown of what to look for, both in geometric patterns and also in sacred or magical seals, using the above-listed questions:

1. The altar/directional positions, tell of Divinity (south and north, male and female), and of the flows of humanity (east and west). Plus there are all the power dynamics that you now know of that flow in those directions.
2. The cross-quarters when pointed to directly (a point touches the dividing line of the arc) tell of the action power of that cross-quarter and also the type of being in that cross-quarter.
3. will tell you if a polarised power of a cross-quarter is being used: i.e. if a point touches SSE, it is the fire side of that cross-quarter being, and if it is EES, it is the air aspect of a cross-quarter being.
4. will be related to specifics to the magical act, so just take note.
5. is an important one. If a seal has a geometric pattern which bypasses a particular direction, it tells you that the power of that direction is not used at all in that magic. This can be seen in magical seals that only use the power of Male Divinity or a male god, for example: there will be no anchor-point in the north/female deity position. Often what is missing from a pattern will tell you more about it than what is included.

Now do the same with this shape, a shape you already know well and have worked with a lot: the Hexagram.

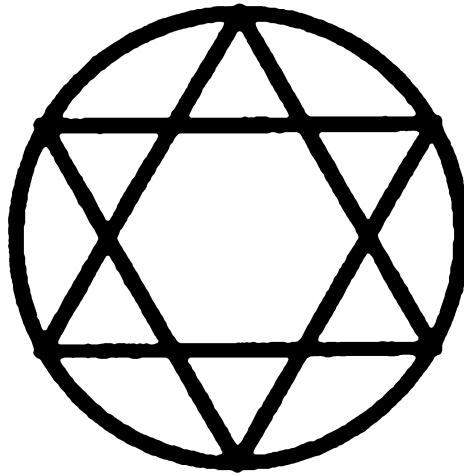


Figure 2: Hexagram.

As you look at the Hexagram in relation to the magical map that you have, you will immediately notice that it does not touch the 'human axis' of east/west at all. It has the male power of divinity anchored in two north cross-quarters, and the female power of divinity anchored in the south cross-quarters: all that is in the 'nothing' (void) flows into life (south/male), and all that is in life flows to the nothing (north/female).

Besides showing the obvious male/female combined power of Divinity, it also more subtly folds in the beings and consciousnesses of the cross-quarters: the angelic, faery, the mystical inner contact, and the beings of death and creation. But no living humans, and no power dynamic of human life. This is a balanced pattern that can be used powerfully to express the Divine as a holism, but not the human as an individual species or consciousness.

The understanding of these shapes in relation to magic tells us a great deal when we come across magical seals in Grimoires. When, for example, you see a hexagram pattern as the main body of a seal "for gaining money," you know that the person who drew it was an idiot who did not know magic. Whereas if you see the hexagram pattern used in a magical seal "for avoiding plague," then you know the magician was drawing in the powers of Divinity in order to hide from the powers of death and destruction.

Now finally look at this pattern, the Metatron Cube.

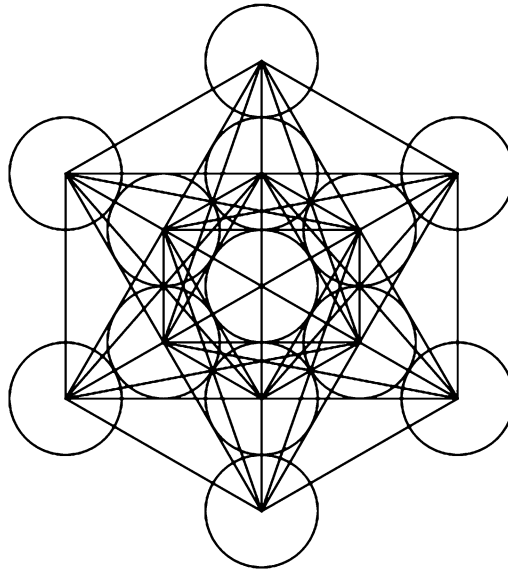


Figure 3: Metatron Cube.

You should be very familiar with this shape by now, and you should be able to draw it without a ruler. But for this lesson I will be nice and let you use a ruler.

As you look at the pattern, you will see many different shapes within the patterns and connections. Draw out each individual pattern one at a time. With each pattern, also mark out the directional and cross-quarter positions. Look at how each pattern relates to the directional/bridge patterns.

You will find a complex holism with all the powers of Divinity, the beings, the gates, and the central point of existence. There is no human focus, as this pattern is about the universe, not us. But the central point is the centre within all things, including us. The whole pattern can be broken up into units to be used ritually in relation to each other when the magician wishes to use certain aspects in polarity. This is sometimes done on back-to-back seals.

When magicians worked with magical seals, they would either create their own shapes based on the ritual actions and directional powers they were working with (you have done this through creating sigils from ritual patterns), or they would use known geometric shapes that fulfilled the ritual pattern. Using a known geometric shape, like a hexagram for example, holds more power, as it is more stable and has been used for thousands of years in the same way. So whenever you see a magical, ritual, or sacred seal, and it uses a known geometric shape, you know you

are potentially looking at something with real power in it. Conversely, also be aware that ‘fashion’ magic has been around for a very long time and fake magicians would often copy known signs and patterns in order to look like they knew what they were doing—something that sadly continues to this day.

Task: Looking at magical seals

Look in books and on the internet for different magical seals, sacred seals, flags, coinage, mandalas, etc., and see where you can spot the magical directional map in use. Look at how they are using it and why.

What is the most prominent power used? What is missing? What cross-quarters are used in a divided way, and which ones are not? In the divided cross-quarters, which direction is dominant? What sort of power do you think the pattern would generate? Does it have an anchor power, and if so, what? If you think it doesn’t, what aspect of the power lines is most at risk from not having an anchor?

Look at the images very carefully. Ignore the letters and words, just look at the shape itself. Answer the questions and then decide if this is balanced magic, imbalanced magic, or a glamour dud. By balanced or imbalanced, I mean, regardless of whether the power pattern would destroy, create, protect, bind, or attack, is it connecting power in a way that balances out so that it can work? If not, why?

Overleaf is an example of magical geometric patterns used in coinage. They are not magical seals, but the powers that they generate would influence that coinage and how it is used.

Note that one side has the balance of the male/female divinity on one side, and the other side shows the four gates of the manifest world. It also has a lion in the centre, which will relate to the creature most prominent in the religious or cultural pattern: it is there as a guardian and also in recognition of its power. See if you can figure out from the images (not from searching the image on the net) what culture it comes from.

Choose three different images/seals and work with them in depth to figure out what potential powers, directions, and flows of power could be expressing through them. Copy each image into your summary and save it as a Word file.

Note: When you look at complex patterns that could be recreated ritually, I hope now you understand why accuracy is paramount. Some of these patterns can get very detailed, and when reconstructed in ritual form the accuracy of movement, positioning, and mediation of power is most important. The slightest mistake would break the pattern or draw in the wrong powers.



Figure 4: Magical geometric patterns used in coinage.

QUAREIA

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