

Frequently Asked Questions

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How do you pronounce your name?

Komjathy is a Hungarian name. In Hungarian, it's pronounced something like comb-jha-tee. The Americanized pronunciation is com-e-ah-thee, with the "j" and "y" pronounced like an "e."

Were you really born as a dog?

I think so.

What other animals taught you?

Deer, egrets, horses, lizards, mountain goats, raccoons, and ravens, in no particular order.

What about trees?

California live oaks. And redwoods. Also cedars, willows and aspens.

How much time have you spent in the mountains?

Years. Lifetimes. Perhaps too much time. Long enough to see through and appear "insane." Deep retreat, solitude, and distance does this. To be outside. But I did learn two broadly applicable principles: "Abiding in the mountains" and "walking through." I also drank wild tea steeped in mountain spring water.

When did you begin studying Daoism (Taoism) and why?

When was I not studying Daoism? Technically speaking, I first became interested in Daoism in 1991, when I was 20 years old. I began more formal study and training in 1993, when I was 22. But there also were the recollections. Something like infusion or endowment. So, as to the why, I was always interested in aliveness and the underlying mystery of existence. The Daoist emphasis on practice, embodiment, and mountains spoke to me. As did the energetic views and commitment to cultivation, refinement, and transmutation. I increasingly understand Daoist practice-realization as cultivation/embodiment/transmission. And numinous pervasion of course.

Why did you begin shifting to Contemplative Studies?

I was searching for a deeper understanding of practice and experience. I also was hoping to find fellow travelers on the way, beyond conventional scholarship and beyond narrow religious identity and institutional parameters. In the process, I discovered other contemplatives, including new monastics, with whom I share affinities, commitments, and orientations. This specifically relates to what might be understood as "theologically-infused" contemplative practice.

Why did you leave mainstream academia?

Power, corruption, and lies. Because modern American academia is a degenerate corporation (excuse the redundancy) inhabited by politicians, technocrats and narcissists (or worse) masquerading as intellectuals and scholars. It's a failed project unmoored to authentic human(ist) values, including as expressed in its contemplative roots. Stated more positively, I want to explore human potential/actualization and to participate in an intentional community rooted in radical free and open inquiry. Thus, The Underground University (TUU).

Does The Underground University exist?

Perhaps. It is (was?) a secret school and invisible college. It's an *underground* university, a university *of and for the underground*. It appears where necessary, and perhaps when least expected or most inspiring.

Are you as dangerous as they say?

No comment.

What advice would you give to aspiring academics?

Don't trust system-agents. (And anyone can become a system-agent at any moment). Alternatively, keep your friends close and your enemies closer.

How can one identify system-agents?

Really? They're *system-agents*. They're in/of/from the system. Their purpose is to reproduce the system and to keep you in it. And when one control-system fails, another appears. The system-agents will be the same. As will the accompanying Stockholm Syndrome.

Don't you believe there's still a place for you in higher education?

Occasionally. Then not really. In an alternate past and alternate future. An alternate reality. As an endowed Chair in an authentic academic community. And a Contemplative Studies program and Interdisciplinary Contemplative Humanities Center. With committed teacher-scholars, engaged colleagues and students, and communal support. But enough with dreams (delusions?) for now...

Do you really think that Philip K. Dick wrote "science fact"?

Well, it does seem that we're living in the Roman Empire and that the Nazis won WWII. At the very least, perhaps I too died as a twin. I also wonder about electric dreams.

So, are we living in a slave colony?

Most likely. Or a slave planet. But I'm not sure who created it and whom the overlords are. Watch *The Matrix*, which is not only a philosophical reflection, but also a survival manual. Compare Blue Pill Reality (BPR) with Red Pill Consciousness (RPC). Then make your choice.

How can you be so sure?

Because of the blood rituals, especially animal enslavement, suffering, and sacrifice. And the mass delusion required for blood production, distribution, and consumption.

Did you really fight a demon in 2019?

I don't think it was singular, and the battle began much earlier. 2019 was just the culmination, and hopefully the conclusion. And, yes, there's no doubt, even if demonology is unfashionable. If it makes you less uncomfortable, you can think of it as a "parasite" or "virus." But it probably was a hybrid of all three.

Were the piercings painful?

Initially. Then the suffering became transformative. It revealed divinity.

How did you come to terms with the red triangle?

If you survive and escape, you begin to understand that systems of oppression always create scapegoats and villains, so being part of the resistance entails political persecution and banishment to some degree. Outlaws are not necessarily criminals, or criminality serves a socio-political function. Some type of branding, whether visible or invisible, is always involved. In addition, triangles may be turned into Xs, in the sense of anomalous, extra-ordinary, hidden, mysterious and unknown possibilities. (And it's no coincidence that they tried to turn a symbol of liberation into one of domination [Read 1984]. This is the fate of X-beings in consensus mind/reality.)

Was this Tantric?

In some sense, as far as I (mis)understand Tantra. It required breaking taboos and embracing transgression. It involved seeing that the opposite is true. It was indeed fast, difficult, and dangerous, but required a Dark Retreat. Complete dissolution. Then some type of re/transfiguration. Reconstitution. Not for the faint of heart, especially as the heart breaks. Down/open/through.

Did you see the room where they dispose of the failed replicants?

No. I only heard rumors and knew about "the disappeared." I also read some discarded fragments from secret correspondences, internal memos, and classified reports.

Are you a member of the Night's Watch or the Faceless Men?

It depends on the day and context.

Why is invisibility so important?

If you'd seen what I've seen, you wouldn't ask. (Though my invisibility may have led to such unanticipated infiltration and secret discoveries.)

Does the invisible, spiritual underground railroad exist?

Definitely. Its members took me in and transported me along mysterious and unexpected ways and byways. They turned barriers into doors. They nourished me when I couldn't take care of myself. And they kept reminding me of something else and something more.

Is there any remedy for the despair and loneliness and trauma?

Yes. Poetry. And love. And music and dance. Friendship. Circles of care. And summer evenings filled with laughter and fireflies. Following your dreams and vision. And above all, "Wait."

Is poetry really the underlying nature of reality?

Absolutely. There is a numinous (non)linguistic ecosystem and hidden cantata. It is documented in the "poetics of possibility" and disseminated through The Poetry Conspiracy (TPC). Some key voices include Vicente Aleixandre (1898-1984), e.e. cummings (1894-1962), Odysseus Elytis (1911-1996), Denise Levertov (1923-1997), Pablo Neruda (1904-1973), Mary Oliver (1935-2019), Rainer Maria Rilke (1875-1926), Jalal ad-Din Rumi (1207-1273), and Walt Whitman (1819-1892).

What are you researching these days?

Principles of aliveness, especially as expressed in contemplative and mystical modes of being, including but not limited to Daoist approaches. I'm also working to document the ways in which Daoism is a tradition rooted in transpersonal (non)identity and mystical participation, rather than a coopted system for perpetuating egoism and narcissism. This is Daoism as a way in/out. One of my current projects explores immortality-as-trans-temporality. I'm in conversation with some medieval Daoists.

What kind of art are you making?

Outsider-art. Primarily abstract photography and poetry-collages. But also performance art and some experimentation with metallurgy. Movement too.

What else do you do with your time?

Fix broken things. Take care of animals. Sit in nature. Listen to birdsong. Walk and think. Create contemplative space. Dialogue and conspire with other artists, contemplatives, intellectuals, monastics, mystics, outsiders, seekers, and theologians. Forget, imagine, dream.

What is the ultimate purpose of your life and work?

Awakening, transformation, and liberation. Without compromise or distortion.

Why Highland Park, Illinois?

There's a girl out there with love in her eyes and flowers in her hair.

Anything else?

In the words of Gary Snyder: *Stay together, learn the flowers, go light.*