

INSTRUCTIONS FOR
ALEISTER CROWLEY'S
THOTH
TAROT DECK



BY JAMES WASSERMAN

Plus two essays written by
Lady Frieda Harris with commentary
and footnotes by Stuart R. Kaplan.

U.S. GAMES SYSTEMS, INC.
179 LUDLOW ST., STAMFORD, CT 06902 USA

The symbolism, traditional postures, attribution of the Cards and the planetary, zodiacal and elemental colours have been given to me by an expert who has studied the Tarot for forty years and to whom my thanks are due for his courteous co-operation.

*—Lady Frieda Harris
July 1942*

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ALEISTER CROWLEY'S THOTH TAROT DECK

"The Tarot could be described as God's Picture Book, or it could be likened to a celestial game of chess, the Trumps being the pieces to be moved according to the law of their own order over a checkered board of the four elements."

Lady Frieda Harris

The Thoth Tarot deck was designed by Aleister Crowley and painted by Lady Frieda Harris. The original intent was to correct and update the classic, medieval tarot, giving it a more esoteric aspect. However, the project grew into a restructuring of the traditional pictorial symbolism of the ancient wisdom. The three months of work anticipated extended for five years between 1938 and 1943.

Aleister Crowley is often described as the most advanced and influential occultist of the twentieth century. He was an extraordinary man whose ideas have profoundly affected modern occultism. His life's work was an attempt to synthesize the diverse teachings of the world's religions by extracting the essential kernel of truth shared by them and developing a system of attainment suitable to modern humanity's search for God-realization. He called his system "Scientific Illuminism" and coined the phrase "the method of Science, the aim of Religion" to indicate that, freed from all historical and cultural bias, the nature of truth is one. He left behind a voluminous body of writing, most of which is now available in published form.

Crowley poured the entire content of his magical mind into his tarot and incorporated the latest discoveries in science, mathematics, philosophy and anthropology. The tarot had been his daily companion since his initiation into the Hermetic Order of the Golden Dawn, an English Rosicrucian society founded in 1888 that offered an extremely lucid and systematic approach to the Western mystery tradition. The tarot played a prominent part in the Order's course of ritual, meditation and study. The membership of the Golden Dawn included such illustrious figures as William Wynn Westcott, S. L. MacGregor Mathers, W. B. Yeats, A. E. Waite, Paul Foster Case, Arthur Machen and many others. In addition to Crowley, both Waite and Case published decks whose symbolism is rooted in the Tarot of the Golden Dawn. Members of the Order were sworn to the most solemn oaths of secrecy regarding the Order's deck, which remained unpublished until 1978, when the deck, painted by Dr. Robert Wang under the guidance of Dr. Israel Regardie, was published by U. S. Games Systems, Inc.

Crowley was born October 12, 1875, and he joined the Golden Dawn in 1898, rising rapidly through the grades of the Order, which acted as a crucible for his occult development. On April 8, 9 and 10, 1904, the climax of his career occurred in Cairo, Egypt. On those days he received, via direct voice transmission, the first communication to humanity from the Hierarchical Forces ruling the earth during the present Age of Aquarius, whose opening the transmission heralded. Transcribed as *The Book of the Law*, the communication formed the cornerstone of Crowley's teaching and profoundly influenced the imagery of his deck. The book declared a new law, in which the quintessential godhead of every man and every woman is proclaimed, and the progressive realization of this truth by each individual becomes the sole criterion of evolution. *The Book of the Law* also influenced the kabbalistic attributions of the Major Arcana of Crowley's deck. To each of the twenty-two Major Trumps of the tarot is assigned, by tradition, a Hebrew letter and a path on the Tree of Life, as well as an astrological sign, element or planet. *The Book of the Law* announced changes in some of the traditional correspondences. These may be studied in more detail in Crowley's *Book of Thoth*.

Aleister Crowley's work is now beginning to receive recognition and appreciation for its depth, scope and clarity. Crowley died December 1, 1947, reviled by the English press as the wickedest man on earth, scorned by many who should have known better. His work was a testament to his genius, and his tarot deck, one of the last major projects of his life, bears eloquent witness to that genius.

Lady Frieda Harris (née Bloxam) was born in 1877 and died in 1962. She was married to Sir Percy Harris, a distinguished member of the British Parliament. Information on her life is scant, but it is clear that she had more to do with the actual design of the Thoth Tarot than has been commonly assumed. In spite of a meager knowledge of the tarot, she was in harmony with its essential spirit. Patiently she worked from Crowley's rough sketches and verbal descriptions, reading between the lines of the older decks and often painting the same card as many as eight times.

In letters to Crowley, she wrote that she considered herself driven by her Holy Guardian Angel to produce the finest possible deck. She feared that Crowley would scold her for bringing herself to the point of exhaustion by relentless work on the cards. Crowley wrote to her that had it not been for her artistic genius, he would never have gotten so deeply involved in the seemingly interminable process of creating a new deck; she forced him, he wrote, to realize each card as an individual masterpiece. The finished deck was the result of an expanded awareness on both their parts.

Neither Crowley nor Lady Harris managed to publish the deck during their lifetimes. It remained unpublished until 1969, when Major Grady L. McMurtry of Crowley's order, Ordo Templi Orientis, arranged for the photography and publication of the deck. McMurtry had been instrumental in helping Crowley publish the first edition of *The Book of Thoth* in 1944. The quality of McMurtry's reproduction of the Thoth deck was rather poor, far short of the excellence of clarity and detail envisioned by Lady Harris, who believed that no one but the official British government stamp mint could do justice to the printing of the deck.

In 1977, through the gracious help of Mr. Gerald Yorke and the able assistance of Mr. Stephan Skinner, the original paintings, which measure 10½" x 16½", were rephotographed. The present edition of the Thoth Tarot deck is a closer approximation to the designer's original wishes.

In order to maintain the integrity of the deck, a standardized border that was omitted in the original printing has been copied from the paintings and is included in this new edition.

With the assistance of Mr. William Breeze, two essays that were originally written as exhibition catalogs for London gallery showings of the paintings in the early 1940s have been located. The first essay was edited by Lady Harris solely from Crowley's writings. He is on record as having approved the contents of this essay. The second essay was her own interpretation of the cards and represents her only written public statement on the cards.

THE TAROT AND ITS APPLICATIONS

The tarot is a series of seventy-eight images that represent in pictorial form the energies and teachings of the kabbalah; it is a meditative discipline of the kabbalah whereby one may gain access to the higher planes of consciousness. The scope of the kabbalah is that of the universe itself. It has been called the yoga of the West. From it are derived astrology, numerology, magic, and so forth.

The Tree of Life, the essential glyph or outline of the kabbalah, summarizes all knowledge in its ten spheres and twenty-two interconnected paths of consciousness. A suggested reading list appended to this booklet will enable interested readers to explore this subject in more depth.

In using the tarot for divination, the reader develops an essential familiarity with the symbols as well as an affinity with the aspects of consciousness that the cards represent. One's psychic perceptions are stimulated and will develop through patient effort coupled with deeper meditative work and study.

Before beginning any divination, it is best to acknowledge the nature of the work. Traditionally, the reader makes an invocation which, on one level, is a prayer, a petition to the higher forces from whom one is seeking understanding through the cards. On another level, the invocation is an exaltation of personal ego consciousness to a higher, more universal and godlike state of mind. By affirming in advance an identity with the higher mind, one establishes what might be called "right relation," which sets the tone for all later interpretation and tarot workings.

The Golden Dawn invocation used by Crowley is as follows.

Take the cards in your left hand. With the right hand, hold the wand over them (or simply hold the right hand over them) and say:

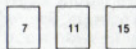
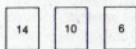
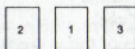
I invoke Thee, IAO, that thou wilt send HRU, the great Angel that is set over the operations of this secret Wisdom, to lay his hand invisibly upon these consecrated cards of art, that thereby we may obtain true knowledge of hidden things to the glory of thine ineffable Name. Amen.

Alternatively, one may imagine a sphere of brilliant white light immediately above the head pouring forth and bathing one in its radiance, purifying and exalting consciousness.

Numerous divinatory spreads or layouts of the cards have been suggested by various writers in the field. The Golden Dawn method given (with some modifications) by Crowley and Case, is a highly complex and involved layout requiring several hours to perform. The best description of this method was written by MacGregor Mathers and first published in Israel Regardie's *The Golden Dawn*. It has also been reprinted in *An Introduction to the Golden Dawn Tarot* by Robert Wang.

The layout presented in this booklet is a simpler fifteen-card spread which is very useful in that it provides rapid and reliable readings. Its advantage over the more popular Celtic Cross spread is that it makes more use of the relationships of the cards to one another. Thus a card may be well- or ill-dignified depending on the influence of the neighboring cards. The system of reversed card meanings was not used by the Golden Dawn.

After the invocation, shuffle the cards thoroughly, at least three times. While shuffling, the mind should be stilled as much as possible. One must remain calm and clear, centered on the question with an attitude of inner receptivity. Then lay out fifteen cards in the sequence shown in the diagram.



Card 1 represents the querent and the nature of the problem and primary influences. A court card (knight, queen, prince, princess) in this position sometimes refers to a dominant individual or influence in the querent's situation.

Cards 2 and 3 in conjunction with card 1, are the key cards describing the nature of the situation and the personality of the querent.

Cards 13, 9 and 5, and 4, 8 and 12 in the upper left and right indicate two potentials for the future. They may compliment each other, in which case the cards on the upper left are a development of the cards on the upper right. If they are in conflict, the cards on the upper right may be considered the direction the querent's life will naturally follow unless action is taken to change this course. The cards on the upper left would then be possibilities of alternative action.

Cards 6, 10 and 14 assist the querent in making whatever decision may be necessary. They indicate the psychological basis and implications of the issue.

Cards 7, 11 and 15 show forces operating beyond the querent's control—destiny or karma—to which the querent can adapt. In this sense they constitute advice as well.

Princes and queens most often indicate actual men and women connected with the matter. Knights may mean the coming or going of a matter, or arrival or departure, according to the direction in which they face. Princesses may show ideas, thoughts or opinions related to the subject. The court cards in general represent psychological states.

After laying out the cards, the first thing to look for in any layout system is a grouping or majority of cards. Wands indicate great energy; at worst quarreling or opposition; cups, love, emotions and pleasure, at worst intoxication; swords, at best intellectual matters, otherwise sickness, depression, trouble and death; disks, business

matters in general, possessions and material success or failure. A majority of Trumps indicates higher forces at work, querent not fully in control and strong indications of spiritual matters. Court cards indicate meetings in society and many people; aces, new beginnings, great energy and strength.

A card is well- or ill-dignified by the presence of neighboring cards on either side. Cards of the same suit strengthen. Cards of opposite nature weaken. Swords are hostile to disks. Wands are hostile to cups. Swords are friendly to cups and wands. Wands are friendly to swords and disks. A card falling between two contrary cards is not much affected by either.

The basic divinatory meanings of the seventy-eight cards should be committed to memory and amplified by personal experience.

0 THE FOOL. In spiritual matters, represents ideas, thoughts, spirituality, that which endeavors to transcend earth. In material matters may show, if ill-dignified, folly, eccentricity, even mania. It represents the original, subtle, sudden impulse coming from a strange and unexpected quarter.

I THE MAGUS. Skill. Wisdom. Adroitness. Elasticity. Craft. Cunning. Deceit. Theft. Sometimes occult wisdom or power. Messages. Business transactions. Ill-dignified: Learning or intelligence interfering with the matter in hand.

II THE PRIESTESS. Pure, exalted and gracious influence enters the matter, hence change, alternation, increase and decrease, fluctuation. May be led away by enthusiasm unless careful balance maintained.

III THE EMPRESS. Love. Beauty. Happiness. Pleasure. Success. Fruitfulness. Good fortune. Graciousness. Elegance. Gentleness. Ill-dignified: Dissipation. Debauchery. Idleness. Sensuality.

IV THE EMPEROR. War. Conquest. Victory. Strife. Stability. Power. Originality. Government. Energy. Ambition. Ill-dignified: Overweening pride. Megalomania. Rashness. Ill-temper.

V THE HIEROPHANT. Divine wisdom. Inspiration. Stubborn strength. Toil. Endurance. Persistence. Teaching. Help from superiors. Patience. Organization. Peace. Goodness of heart. Occult force voluntarily invoked.

VI THE LOVERS. Openness to inspiration. Intuition. Intelligence. Childishness. Attraction. Beauty. Love. Ill-dignified: Self-contradiction. Instability. Indecision. Union in a shallow degree with others. Superficiality.

VII THE CHARIOT. Triumph. Victory. Hope. Obedience. Faithfulness. Health. Success, though sometimes not enduring. Authority under authority. Ill-dignified: Violence in maintaining traditional

ideas. Lust of destruction.

VIII ADJUSTMENT. Justice. Balance. Adjustment. Suspension of action pending decision. May refer to lawsuits, trials, marriages, treaties, etc.

IX THE HERMIT. Illumination from within. Divine inspiration. Wisdom. Prudence. Circumspection. Retirement from participation in current events.

X FORTUNE. Change of fortune, generally good. Destiny.

XI LUST. Courage. Strength. Energy. Use of magical power. Control of the life force. Great love affair. Resort to magic.

XII THE HANGED MAN. Redemption through sacrifice. Enforced sacrifice. Suffering. Ill-dignified; Punishment. Loss. Defeat. Failure. Death.

XIII DEATH. Transformation. Change voluntary or involuntary, perhaps sudden and unexpected. Apparent death or destruction that is illusory when viewed from a higher perspective.

XIV ART. Combination of forces. Realization. Action based on accurate calculation. Economy. Management. Success after elaborate maneuvers. The way of escape.

XV THE DEVIL. Blind impulse. Irresistibly strong and unscrupulous person. Ambition. Temptation. Obsession. Secret plan about to be executed. Hard work. Endurance. Aching discontent. Materialism. Fate.

XVI THE TOWER. Quarrel. Combat. Danger. Ruin. Destruction of plans. Ambition. Courage. Sudden death. Escape from prison and all it implies.

XVII THE STAR. Hope. Unexpected help. Clarity of vision. Spiritual insight. Ill-dignified; Error of judgment. Dreaminess. Disappointment.

XVIII THE MOON. Illusion. Deception. Bewilderment. Hysteria. Madness. Dreaminess. Falsehood. Voluntary change. The brink of an important change. This card is very sensitive to dignity.

XIX THE SUN. Glory. Gain. Riches. Triumph. Pleasure. Frankness. Truth. Shamelessness. Manifestation. Recovery from sickness, but sometimes sudden death. Ill-dignified; Arrogance. Vanity.

XX THE AEON. Final decision concerning the past. New current for the future. Always represents the taking of a definite step.

XXI THE UNIVERSE. The essence of the question itself. Synthesis. The end of the matter. Delay. Opposition. Inertia. Perseverance. Patience. The crystallization of the whole matter involved.

Knight of Wands. Represents the fiery part of fire. A man with the qualities of activity, generosity, impetuosity, pride and swiftness. Ill-dignified; Evil-minded, cruel, bigoted and brutal man.

Queen of Wands. Represents the watery part of fire. A woman of adaptability, persistent energy, calm authority, with great power to attract, generous but impatient of opposition. Ill-dignified: A woman who is stupid, obstinate, revengeful, domineering, quick to take offense without good cause.

Prince of Wands. Represents the airy part of fire. A young man, swift and strong, impulsive, violent, just, noble and generous with a sense of humor. Ill-dignified: Proud, intolerant, cruel and prejudiced youth who may be a coward.

Princess of Wands. Represents the earthy part of fire. A young woman, individualistic, brilliant and daring with great energy, sudden and violent in love or anger, enthusiastic. Ill-dignified: Superficial, theatrical, shallow, false, cruel, unreliable, faithless, domineering woman.

Ace of Wands: *The Root of the Powers of Fire.* Energy. Strength. Force. Solar-phallic outburst of flame. Vigor. Natural force as opposed to invoked force.

Two of Wands: Dominion. Fire in its highest form. Energy initiating a current of force. Harmony of rule and justice. Influence over another. Boldness. Courage. Fierceness. Ill-dignified: Restlessness. Turbulence. Obstinacy.

Three of Wands: Virtue. Established strength. Success after struggle. Pride and arrogance. Realization of hope. Nobility. Ill-dignified: Conceit.

Four of Wands: Completion. Perfected work. Settlement. Completion after much labor. Rest. Subtlety. Cleverness. Conclusions from previous knowledge. Ill-dignified: Unreliability from overanxiousness and hurriedness of action.

Five of Wands: Strife. Quarreling. Fighting. Competition. Cruelty. Violence. Lust and desire. May be prodigality or generosity according to dignity.

Six of Wands: Victory. Energy in balanced manifestation. Love. Gain and success. Triumph after strife. Ill-dignified: Insolence and pride.

Seven of Wands: Valour. Energy feels itself at last gasp. Struggles. Possible victory. Obstacles and difficulties yet courage to meet them. Victory in small things. Ill-dignified: Quarreling.

Eight of Wands: Swiftmess. Speech. Light. Electricity. Energy of high velocity. Activity. Approach to goal. Letter or message. Rapidity. Boldness. Freedom. Ill-dignified: Too much force applied too suddenly. A flash in the pan.

Nine of Wands: Strength. Power. Health. Success after opposition and strife. Tremendous force. Recovery from sickness. Victory after

apprehension and fear. Illustrates the aphorism that "change is stability."

Ten of Wands: Oppression. Force detached from spiritual sources. Fire in its most destructive aspect. Cruelty and malice. Selfishness. Lying. Repression. Slander. Ill will. Can be self-sacrifice and generosity if particularly well-dignified.

Knight of Cups. Represents the fiery part of water. A man who is a graceful dilettante, amiable in a passive way, quick to respond to attraction and easily enthusiastic, exceedingly sensitive but with little depth of character. Ill-dignified: Sensual and idle man, untruthful, prone to melancholy and drug abuse.

Queen of Cups. Represents the watery part of water. A woman who reflects the nature of the observer, dreamy, tranquil, poetic, imaginative, kind yet not willing to take much trouble for another. She is much affected by surrounding influences, therefore more dependent than most other cards on good or ill dignity.

Prince of Cups. Represents the airy part of water. A young man whose characteristics are subtlety, secret violence, craft; an artist whose calm surface masks intense passion, caring intensely for power and wisdom and ruthless in his own aims. Ill-dignified: Intensely evil and merciless man with overweening ambition.

Princess of Cups. Represents the earthy part of water. A young woman, infinitely gracious, all sweetness, voluptuousness, gentleness, kindness, romantic and dreamy. Ill-dignified: Indolent, selfish and luxurious woman.

Ace of Cups: *The Root of the Powers of Water.* Fertility. Productiveness. Beauty. Pleasure and happiness.

Two of Cups: Love. Harmony of male and female interpreted in broadest sense. Perfect and placid harmony radiating intense joy and ecstasy. Pleasure. Warm friendship. Mirth. Ill-dignified: Folly. Dissipation. Waste.

Three of Cups: Abundance. Spiritual basis of fertility. Plenty. Hospitality. Pleasure. Sensuality. Passive success. Love. Kindness. Bounty. The good things of life, while they are to be enjoyed, are transient and therefore cannot be relied on.

Four of Cups: Luxury. Weakness. Abandonment to desire. Pleasure mixed with anxiety. Blended success and pleasure possibly approaching their end. Injustice. The seeds of decay in the fruits of pleasure.

Five of Cups: Disappointment. End of pleasure. Disturbance when least expected. Misfortune. Disappointment in love. Unkindness from friends. Loss of friendship. Treachery. Ill will. Sadness. Vain regret.

Six of Cups: Pleasure. Well-being. Harmony of natural forces without effort or strain. Ease. Satisfaction. Happiness. Success. Fulfillment of sexual will. Beginning of steady increase (but beginning only). Ill-dignified: Vanity. Presumptuousness. Thanklessness.

Seven of Cups: Debauch. Delusion. Illusory success. Drug addiction. Intoxication. Guilt. Lying. Deceit. Promises unfulfilled. Lust. Fornication. Dissipation in love and friendship. Vanity.

Eight of Cups: Indolence. Abandoned success. Decline of interest in anything. Temporary success but without further result. Instability. Misery and repining. Journeying from place to place. May mean leaving material success for something higher.

Nine of Cups: Happiness. Complete success. Pleasure and happiness. Physical well-being. Happiness almost perfect but perhaps temporary. Ill-dignified: Danger of vanity, self-praise, conceit and overindulgence.

Ten of Cups: Satiety. Pursuit of pleasure crowned with perfect success but incomplete. Matters arranged and settled as wished. Lasting success. Peacemaking and generosity. Ill-dignified: Dissipation. Debauchery. Pity. Waste. Stagnation.

Knight of Swords. Represents the fiery part of air. A man, active, skillful and clever, fierce, delicate and courageous but often unreflective. Ill-dignified: A man incapable of decision, deceitful, tyrannical and crafty

Queen of Swords. Represents the watery part of air. A graceful woman, intensely perceptive, a keen observer, subtle interpreter, an intense individualist, confident, gracious and just. Ill-dignified: Cruel, sly, deceitful and unreliable woman. Superficial attractiveness makes her all the more dangerous.

Prince of Swords. Represents the airy part of air. A young man, purely intellectual, full of ideas and designs, domineering, intensely clever but unstable of purpose, with an elusive and elastic mind supporting various and contradictory opinions. He slays as fast as he creates. Ill-dignified: Harsh, malicious, plotting, unreliable man; a fanatic.

Princess of Swords. Represents the earthy part of air. A young woman, stern and revengeful, with destructive logic, firm and aggressive, with great practical wisdom and subtlety, dexterous in management of practical affairs. Ill-dignified: Woman filled with low cunning and frivolousness.

Ace of Swords: *The Root of the Powers of Air.* Invoked force as contrasted with natural force (compare Ace of Wands). Represents great power for good or evil *but invoked*. Conquest. Whirling force. Activity. Strength through trouble. As affirmation of justice uphold-

ing divine authority, may become sword of wrath, punishment and affliction.

Two of Swords: Peace. Contradictory characteristics in the same nature. Sacrifice and trouble giving birth to strength. Quarrel made up and peace restored, yet tension remaining. Pleasure after pain. Truth and untruth. Indecision. Actions sometimes selfish, sometimes unselfish.

Three of Swords: Sorrow. Melancholy. Unhappiness. Tears. Disruption. Sowing of discord and strife. Delay. Absence. Separation. Mirth in forbidden pleasures. Deceit. Well-dignified: Singing. Faithfulness in promises. Honesty in money transactions.

Four of Swords: Truce. Rest from sorrow. Peace after war. Relaxation of anxiety. Refuge from mental chaos. Recovery from sickness. Change for the better after struggle. Authority in the intellectual world. Convention. Establishment of dogma.

Five of Swords: Defeat. Loss. Malice. Spite. Weakness. Slander. Failure. Anxiety. Poverty. Dishonor. Trouble. Grieving after pain. Ties. Separator of friends. A busybody, cruel yet cowardly, evil speaking.

Six of Swords: Science. Intelligence that has realized its goal. Labor. Work. Success after anxiety. Passage from difficulty. Journey by water. Ill-dignified: Selfishness. Conceit. Intellectual pride.

Seven of Swords: Futility. Unstable effort. Vacillation. Vain striving against opposition too powerful. Partial success by giving up on the brink of winning through lack of energy. Fascination with display. Journey by land. Untrustworthy person.

Eight of Swords: Interference. Waste of energy in details causing neglect of more important things. Lack of persistence. Sheer, unforeseen bad luck. Restriction. Great care in some things counterbalanced by equal disorder in others.

Nine of Swords: Cruelty. Agony of mind. Despair. Hopelessness. Worry. Suffering. Loss. Illness. Malice. Pain. Burden. Oppression. Subtlety and craft. Lying. Shame. Well-dignified: Obedience. Faithfulness. Patience. Unselfishness.

Ten of Swords: Ruin. Reason divorced from reality. Death. Failure. Disaster yet not entirely without hope. Disruption. Idle chatter. Clever, eloquent and insolent person, impertinent yet with mirth. Spiritually, may herald the end of delusion.

Knight of Disks. Represents the fiery part of earth. A farmer, patient, laborious and clever in material things, perhaps somewhat dull and preoccupied with material affairs. Ill-dignified: Avaricious, surly, petty, jealous, grasping man.

Queen of Disks. Represents the watery part of earth. A woman ambitious in useful directions, affectionate and kind, charming, timid, practical, quiet and domesticated. Ill-dignified: Dull. Servile. Foolish. Capricious. Prone to debauch and moodiness.

Prince of Disks. Represents the airy part of earth. A young man bringing great energy to practical matters. A capable manager and steadfast worker, competent, perhaps considered dull, somewhat resentful of spiritual types, slow to anger but implacable if aroused.

Princess of Disks. Represents the earthy part of earth. A young woman beautiful and strong, as if beholding a secret wonder, pregnant with all life. She is generous, kind, diligent, benevolent, preserving. Ill-dignified: Wasteful and prodigal woman at war with her essential dignity.

Ace of Disks: *The Root of the Powers of Earth.* Material gain. Power. Labor. Wealth. Contentment. Materiality in all senses. For Crowley, this card was an affirmation of the identity of sun and earth, spirit and flesh.

Two of Disks: Change. Harmony of change. Alternation of gain and loss, weakness and strength, elation and melancholy. Varying occupation. Wandering. Visit to friends. Pleasant change. Industrious yet unreliable person.

Three of Disks: Works. Business. Paid employment. Commercial transaction. Constructive building up. Increase of material things. Growth. Commencement of matters to be established later. Ill-dignified: Selfish, narrow, prejudiced, greedy person seeking impossibilities.

Four of Disks: Power. Law and order. Gain of money and influence. Earthly power but nothing beyond. Success. Rank. Dominion. Skill in the direction of physical forces. Ill-dignified: Prejudice. Covetousness. Suspicion. Lack of originality.

Five of Disks: Worry. Intense strain with continued inaction. Loss of money. Profession. Monetary anxiety. Poverty. Well-dignified: Labor. Land cultivation. Building. Intelligence applied to labor.

Six of Disks: Success. Success and gain in material things. Power. Influence. Nobility. Philanthropy. Somewhat dreamy and transitory situation. Ill-dignified: Insolence. Conceit with wealth. Prodigality.

Seven of Disks: Failure. Labor abandoned. Sloth. Unprofitable speculation. Promises of success unfulfilled. Hopes deceived. Disappointment. Little gain from much labor. Well-dignified: Delay but growth. Honorable work undertaken for the love of work with no expectation of material gain.

Eight of Disks: Prudence. Intelligence applied to material affairs. Agriculture. Building. Skill. Cunning. Industriousness. Ill-dignified:

"Penny wise and pound foolish" attitudes. Avariciousness and hoarding. Meanness. Over-carefulness in small things at the expense of the great.

Nine of Disks: Gain. Good luck attending material affairs. Inheritance. Great increase of wealth. Completion of material gain. Ill-dignified: Covetousness. Theft. Knavery.

Ten of Disks: Wealth. Material prosperity and riches. Completion of material fortune but nothing beyond final solidification unless there is devotion to creativity. Old age. Ill-dignified: Slothfulness. May mean partial loss, dullness of mind with acuity and profit in money transactions. Heaviness.

There are two additional cards included with the Thoth Tarot deck. One card is Crowley's personal magical seal, known as the Unicursal Hexagram, or Hexagram of the Beast. The other is the statement of the *Ordo Templi Orientis*, who may be contacted in care of the Publishers.

SUGGESTED READING LIST

KABBALAH

The Garden of Pomegranates, Israel Regardie
The Mystical Qabalah, Dion Fortune
A Practical Guide to Qabalistic Symbolism, Gareth Knight
777, Aleister Crowley

TAROT

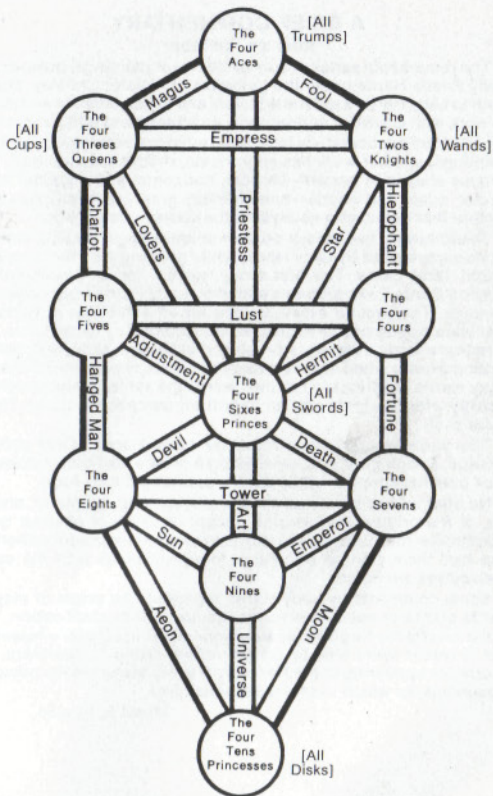
Tarot Divination, Aleister Crowley
An Introduction to the Golden Dawn Tarot, Robert Wang
The Tarot: A Key to the Wisdom of the Ages, Paul Foster Case
The Book of Thoth, Aleister Crowley
The Encyclopedia of Tarot, Stuart R. Kaplan

MAGICK

The Middle Pillar, Israel Regardie
The Tree of Life, Israel Regardie
Book IV: Parts 1 and 2, Aleister Crowley
Magick in Theory and Practice, Aleister Crowley

THE LAW OF THELEMA

The Book of the Law: Liber AL vel Legis, Aleister Crowley
Commentaries on the Book of the Law, Aleister Crowley
Liber Aleph, Aleister Crowley



THE TREE OF LIFE WITH TAROT ATTRIBUTIONS

[Attributions taken from Crowley's *Book of Thoth*]

A BRIEF COMMENTARY

from the Publisher

The remarkable series of surrealistic tarot paintings, prepared by Lady Frieda Harris under the guidance of Aleister Crowley, attests both to Lady Harris's unique art talent and to her patience and ability to work with Crowley, undoubtedly an intense and difficult mentor.

Lady Harris successfully integrated tarot symbols into her stylized paintings, and her work has an intricate, rhythmical structure. The diverse shapes in her art—vertical, horizontal and diagonal lines, circles, ovals, and whorls—combine with great precision into a fluid picture that becomes a catalyst to the viewer's imagination.

The following two essays provide unique insight into the impressions experienced by Lady Harris while painting Aleister Crowley's Thoth Tarot cards. The first essay, written for an "Exhibition of Playing Cards," was probably edited by Lady Harris from Crowley's writings. The second essay, written for an exhibition at Berkeley Galleries, appears to have been written entirely by Lady Harris. It is rare that a tarot artist, once brush and pallet are laid to rest, sets in writing a description of the imagery so carefully painted on canvas. Lady Harris describes in her own words the symbols she sought to portray. Her thoughts add an important perspective to the Thoth Tarot pack.

The card descriptions written by Lady Harris stand without change. Reading them is like making a private visit to her studio to look over her shoulder while each creative card took form.

No attempt has been made to correct spelling, grammar, and so on, of the original manuscript, except in cases of obvious typographical errors. Lady Frieda Harris's essays are reproduced here as she had them printed originally. Inconsistencies with the cards themselves are noted.

Some comments by Lady Harris regarding the origin of playing cards and tarot seem in error or require further clarification. The artist is certainly forgiven for any minor errors in scholarly research, but it would seem best to set the record straight. Therefore, the footnotes appearing in the Berkeley Gallery essay are my personal comments for which I assume responsibility.

Stuart R. Kaplan

EXHIBITION OF PLAYING CARDS

THE

TAROT

(BOOK OF THOTH)

78 PAINTINGS

ACCORDING TO THE

INITIATED TRADITION AND MODERN

SCIENTIFIC THOUGHT

WITH OTHER

OCCULT AND ALCHEMICAL DESIGNS

THE TAROT

(Book of Thoth)

The origin of the Tarot is unknown, but in all probability it was introduced into the Mediterranean Basin not later than the end of the 14th century. We have existing packs in the 15th century.

It is generally admitted that the cards were a classification or map of the universe. The material universe has always been divided in the first instance into four, and the number Four is the basis of the pack. There are four suits corresponding to the four elements, four quarters, four stations of the sun, four seasons and so on. And the other numbers involved in this classification are derived directly from it.

$$\begin{array}{rcl}
 1 + 2 + 3 + 4 & = & 10 \\
 1 + 2 & = & 3 \\
 3 + 4 & = & 7 \\
 3 \times 4 & = & 12
 \end{array}
 \left. \vphantom{\begin{array}{rcl} 1 + 2 + 3 + 4 & = & 10 \\ 1 + 2 & = & 3 \\ 3 + 4 & = & 7 \\ 3 \times 4 & = & 12 \end{array}} \right\} 22$$

The number of the Trumps (22) is accordingly that of the Atus, or Houses, or Keys. The subject of the cards and book (the Tarot is called the book of Thoth or Tahuti, the Egyptian Mercury) is the influence of the 10 numbers and the twenty-two letters on man, and his best method of manipulating their forces.

It appears from the classification that the system of the Tarot is

that of the Hebrew Qabalah. Qabalah means "received," i.e., a tradition received by means of initiation.

The Hebrew Qabalah claims to be based on the Egyptian Qabalah. It was supposed that Moses, the great magician of the Hebrews, had been initiated by the hierophants of that country. This theory is *confirmed by strongly marked traces of Egyptian figures and ideas* in the traditional designs themselves, but there is also manifold expression of the influence of Indian religions. In particular, the Indian God Ardhanari is represented with the four weapons of the four suits, Wands, Cups, Swords, and Disks.

It seems, therefore, probable that Egyptian and Indian adepts were responsible for the pack in its primitive form, which is now lost.

What is undeniable is, that it must have been put together in its medieval form by Hebrew Qabalists.

The general symbolism of the Atus is based on the ideas of Church and State current in those times.

This is manifest especially in the titles of such Atus as the Fool, the Magician (Conjuror or Juggler), the Female Pope, the Emperor, the Empress, the Pope, the Hermit, the Hanged Man, Justice, Death, the Devil, the Blasted [Tower], the Last Judgment.

There is certain evidence of Graeco-Roman influence, and possibly Assyrian or Chaldean, for in the old packs the Emperor was sometimes called Jupiter; and we have the astronomical triad of the Sun, the Moon, and the Star, while perhaps the Blasted Tower may be taken as a symbol of Agni, Fire or Lightning.

These mingled origins are, however, of no great significance. What is certain is that the pack, such as it was, was skillfully moulded by Initiates as a means of preserving and transmitting the tradition of the initiated wisdom; safeguards against the betrayal of the secrets were introduced, especially with regard to the attributions of the Atus or Trumps.

It is hoped that an important book on these subjects will appear shortly in conjunction with the reproduction of these pictures in the traditional form of a pack of cards.

The cards have been very famous for centuries. Hundreds of books have been written about them. They were used by the "Bohemians" or Gipsies for telling fortunes, and in a mutilated form are used for playing various games of cards in all Latin countries in both hemispheres. But these are degradations of their true use in noble contemplation of the Secret Energies of Nature.

THE TWENTY-TWO TRUMPS

- 1 **0. The Fool** is *Air or Vacuum or Puissant Innocence*. He holds the male element of fire, the female element of water, the sword of air, and the disc of earth.
He is the *Green Man of Spring, the great Fool of the Celts, Daluah and Parsifal*. He is also *Zeus Arrhenothelus, Dionysus Zagreus, Bacchus Diphues and Baphomet*.
- 2 **I. The Magician or Juggler**.¹ *Mercury, who is Wisdom. Will and Word*, by whom the world is created, symbolises the *fluidic basis of all transmission of activity*. Behind him and through him is the *Ape, Hanuman*, which is a Hindu conception. The Egyptian counterpart, *Thoth*, is also always followed by the *Cynocephalus Ape*.
- 3 **II. The Priestess**. She is *Isis, the eternal virgin*, and again she is *Artemis*. It is for this reason *she is clothed in the luminous veil of light, light being viewed not as the manifestation, but as the veil, of the spirit*.
- 4 **III. The Empress**. She is seated in traditional posture. This posture represents *salt, the inactive principle of nature*. The lotus typifies the *feminine or passive power*. The Bees on the robe may be compared with the *Fleur de Lys*, suggesting the French origin of the symbol; *the belt is the Zodiac*. The Pelican may be identified with the *Great Mother and her offspring*. It represents the *continuity of life and inheritance of blood uniting all forms of nature*. The *White Eagle* typifies *Alchemical Salt, and the White Tincture, of the nature of silver*.
- 5 **IV. The Emperor**. This card means *Government by means of two contrasting symbols*. These are the *Ram, which, when wild, is solitary and courageous, and the Lamb, which is docile and cowardly*, and is, in fact, the *Ram tamed by authority*. The posture typifies the *Alchemical Sulphur, the fiery element of the universe*. The *Red Eagle* represents the *Red Tincture of the Alchemists, which is of the nature of gold*.
- 6 **V. The Hierophant**. The reference in this card is to *Taurus the Bull* and its Indian equivalent, the *Elephant*. The pentagram with its dancing male child symbolises the *New Aeon of the child Horus, which takes the place of the Old Aeon that has governed us for 2,000 years*. The *Hierophant* moves only at intervals of *2,000 years*. The four masks are the *guardians of every mystery*,

¹ Lady Harris is referring here to a different version of The Magus card than is printed in the Thoth deck. The version to which she refers is reproduced in THE ENCYCLOPEDIA OF TAROT by Stuart R. Kaplan, page 243.

culminating in the Grand Mystery of the uniting of microcosm and macrocosm. The woman before the hierophant represents Venus, now armed and militant. The Wand with its interlaced rings shows the three Aeons of Isis, Osiris and Horus.

- 7 VI. The Lovers.** This specifically alchemical card is a symbol of procreation, the swords drawing attention to the process of division which actually takes place. Cain and Abel represent the refusal of God to hear the children of Eve until blood is shed. This seems to be the symbolisation of external religion. It was by means of the shedding of blood and of external religions that Cain was able to have contact with his fellow men. In that sense the meaning of the card is the giving of science to mankind, since the murder symbolises analysis and the subsequent contact, synthesis.
- 8 VII. The Chariot.** The four Sphinxes on this card, drawing the chariot, are the Bull, the Lion, the Eagle, and the Man, the whole representing the sixteen sub-elements. The function of the Charioteer is to bear the Holy Grail, in the centre of which is radiant blood, symbolising the presence of Light in Darkness.
- 9 VIII. Adjustment or traditionally Justice.** This card represents the Woman satisfied. This condition is symbolised by the scales, in which she weighs the universe; Alpha, the first, exactly balances against Omega, the last. These scales represent the two 'witnesses.' Each 'witness' is an authentic manifestation of Maya, the one fulfilling the other by a process of contradiction, for nature is not Justice—she is rather through her process of equilibrium "la Justesse." Finally, this Woman is the original Harlequin, for the wild blend of colour and of movement resolves itself into an equilibrium of all possibilities of sensation.
- 10 IX. The Hermit.** The letter, to which this card is attributed, is the letter Yod, the foundation of all the other letters of the Hebrew Alphabet. The symbolism is that of the Creator of Life and his representative is the Spermatozoon. For that reason the card is called the Hermit. In the same order of ideas the Hermit holds the lamp whose centre is the Sun. The Egg, surrounded by the coils of a snake, typifies the Universe, while the snake signifies the fluidic essence of light, which is the life of the Universe. In this card are traces of the legend of Persephone. The serpent Wand, here seen growing out of the Abyss, is the Wand of Mercury, the guide of the soul through the lower regions. The letter Yod means "a hand," and the hand is the centre of the design.
- 11 X. Fortune.** By the attribution of this card to the planet Jupiter, it is made to represent the Universe in its aspect of continual

change. The appearance of all sorts of celestial phenomena emphasises this. In the middle is the ten-spoked wheel, the accepted symbol of Fortune. The three figures attached to the wheel *symbolise the three forms of energy, expressed in the Hindu System by the term Guna*. At the top sits the Sphinx, typifying intelligence and balance (Sativas); Hermanubis, in the semblance of an ape, represents the restlessness of brilliant, unstable reason (Rajas); and at the bottom, almost falling from the wheel, is the reptile-headed Typhon (Tamas), the symbol of destruction, sluggishness, and ignorance. The alchemical attributes of the Gunas are Sulphur, Mercury, and Salt.

- 12 XI. Lust.** *This card was formally called Strength. It implies, however, not only strength, but joy in strength exercised.* The seven heads of the lion are, respectively, that of an angel, saint, poet, adulteress, warrior, satyr, and lion-serpent. The central figure is *the woman, who has surrendered herself to all the forces of creation and who rides astride of the Beast. In her left hand she holds the reins, as representing the passion which unites them, and in her right she holds aloft the Cup aflame with love and death. In this Cup are mingled the elements of the sacrament of the Aeon. In the background are the bloodless figures of the saints on whom this mirage travails, for their whole life has been absorbed into the Holy Grail.*
- 13 XII. The Hanged Man or Dying God.** The posture of the drowned or hanged man is of the greatest significance. *The legs are crossed so that the right leg forms a right angle with the left leg, and the arms are stretched out at an angle of sixty degrees, so as to form an equilateral triangle. This gives the symbol of the triangle surmounted by a cross, which represents the descent of the light into darkness in order to redeem it. The whole idea of sacrifice is a misconception of nature, and the element of water to which the card is attributed is the element of illusion.*
- 14 XIII. Death.** The alchemical sense of Death is not so much destruction as *change*. Thus we have, in this card, the Scorpion, representing *primitive energy always ready to commit suicide (according to the legend) when heavily beset, but prepared to undergo any transformation which will permit its continued existence in a different form. Thus potassium, thrown upon water, becomes ignited and accepts the embrace of the hydroxyl radicle.* The fish and serpent, here represented, have been objects of worship in cults which taught the doctrines of resurrection or re-incarnation. The central figure is executing the Dance of Death (skeleton and scythe are both Saturnian figures), and on his head he wears the crown of Osiris. The

influence of Saturn is expressed in the negative aspect of Death as representing those essential forms which are not destroyed by the ordinary changes of nature; the positive and creative side is seen in the sweep of the scythe, which calls into being bubbles, symbolising new lives. The highest aspect of the card is the Eagle, which represents exaltation above solid matter.

- 15 XIV. Art, formerly called Temperance.** The highest achievement of alchemy was the affecting of change, the transmuting of objects, qualities, colours and so on, into their opposites. Thus in this card the red lion has become white, the white eagle has become red. *In the main figure, the black and white personages which were the Lovers in Card VI. are now interchanged and fused into an androgyne figure.* This is the consummation of the Royal Marriage.

The rainbow symbolises another stage in the alchemical process by the *aura of many-coloured lights rising out of putrefaction.* Putrefaction itself is shown by the raven perched on a skull on the cauldron. *The consummation of the whole art of Alchemy is proclaimed in the glory with its inscription "VISITA INTERIORA TERRAE RECTIFICANDO INVENIES OCCULTUM LAPIDEM."* The counsel to visit the interior of the earth is a recapitulation (on a higher plane) of the first formula of the Work. The important word is RECTIFICANDO, it implies the right leading of the new living substance in the path of the True Will.

- 16 XV. The Devil** is here represented in the traditional form of the Goat. The cult of the Goat represents *the impulse to reckless creation without any regard for result.* Behind the Goat stands the *Tree of Life, which pierces the Heavens in a medley of fantastic forms,* recalling the markings on the planet Mars, always associated with the fiery material energy of creation. In the transparent roots the sap is seen, seething and leaping in every direction. The ring at the top is one of the rings of Saturn or Set, the Ass-headed god of the Egyptians. *The spiral shape of the horns is an allusion to the highest and most remote things. Zoroaster defines God as "having a spiral force."*

- 17 XVI. The Tower or the Blasted Tower, or the House of God.** *This card is attributed to the Hebrew letter Pé, which means a mouth.* The card, which admits of two interpretations in one, is a manifestation in its rudest form, of pure destruction, *the destruction of the old-established Aeon by lightning, flames, and engines of war.* The other interpretation is drawn from the cult of Shiva. At the top of the card appears the Eye of Shiva. According to this, the card represents perfection, *the perfection of annihilation by emancipation from the prison of organised life.* The

dove and the serpent represent the feminine and masculine impulses. In the language of Schopenhauer, "The Will to Live and the Will to Die."

- 18 XVII. The Star.** Every form of energy in the card is spiral; this is in anticipation of the present Aeon, that of Horus, the crowned and conquering Child, successor to the "dying god," Osiris. The departing Aeon is shown in the rectilinear forms of energy issuing from the lower cup. These forms stand for the now abandoned Euclidean geometry. The figure of the goddess may be taken as a manifestation of the surrounding space of Heaven.
- 19 XVIII. The Moon.** This card represents the state of impure horror, hidden darkness which must be passed through before light can be reborn. The Moon is, therefore, the most universal of the planets, partaking at once of the highest and the lowest. At the bottom of the card moves the Sacred Beetle, bearing the Sun through the darkness of night. Above is the evil landscape of the Moon. A stream, or path of Serum, tinged with blood, flows between two barren mountains. On the hills are dark sinister towers. On the threshold stands the jackal-headed god, Anubis, in double form; at his feet are the jackals waiting to devour those who have fallen by the way.
- 20 XIX. The Sun.** This card represents the Lord of the new Aeon, the Lord of Light, Life, Liberty and Love, and the complete emancipation of the human race. The green mound represents the fertile earth, but the presence of a wall shows that the new Aeon does not mean the absence of control. The twin children are represented as dancing outside the wall, because they typify the new stage in human history, the stage of complete freedom from the restrictions imposed by such ideas as sin and death.
- 21 XX. The Aeon, or the Angel, or the Last Judgment.** The card is girt about with the body of Nuit, the star goddess, representing unlimited possibility. She surrounds the globe of fire, her mate, Hadit, standing for eternal energy. In the middle sits their child, Horus, also a solar deity, who is the incarnation of the New Aeon. The left hand, extended and empty, reminds us that the God has destroyed the old Universe, but is, as yet, too young to form its successor. At the bottom of the card appears the Hebrew letter, Shin, that is attributed to this card. The three Yods are occupied by three human figures arising to partake of the Essence of the New Aeon.
- 22 XXI. The Universe.** This card is attributed to the letter Tau. Together with the first card, the Fool, the word Ath is spelled, meaning Essence. Thus all reality is comprised in the series of which these two cards are the beginning and the end. The letter

Tau symbolises a fourfold extension, applicable to the transcendence of space and time by a continually self-compensating change. The letter is further attributed to Saturn, the slowest of the planets, and on that account associated with the element of Earth. Saturn is the old god, the god of fertility. The presence of the letter Tau upon the Tree of Life indicates a state of equilibrium between change and stability. The glyph on the card, therefore, symbolises the completion of the Great Work. The image of the Universe is a maiden, the final letter of Tetragrammaton. She is represented as dancing with the Great spiral-forming Serpent or Sun. She is surrounded by ten symbols. About her is an ellipse composed of seventy-two circles for the quaternaries of the Zodiac. At the corners of the card are the four Kerubim, showing the established Universe. In the centre is the Wheel of Life, initiating the form of the Tree of Life, which is visible only to those of pure heart. On the lower part of the card is the late J. W. N. Sullivan's well-known map of the chemical elements.

WANDS

- 23 Ace of Wands** represents the essence of the elements of fire in its inception. The flames are Yods, arranged in the form of the Tree of Life. It is *primordial Energy manifesting in Matter*.
- 24 Two of Wands** = Dominion. Chokmah in the suit of Fire. Mars in Aries.
Here are two dorjes crossed. The dorje is the Tibetan symbol of destruction. *But destruction may be regarded as the first step in the creative process.*
- 25 Three of Wands** = Virtue. Binah in the suit of Fire. Sun in Aries.
The Wands take the form of the Lotus, and *represent the establishment of primeval energy.*
- 26 Four of Wands** = Completion. Chesed in the suit of Fire. Venus in Aries.
The Wands are headed by the Ram sacred to Aries, and, at the other end, the doves of Venus. *The original Will of the Two has been transmitted through the Three, and is now built up into a solid system of order, law, and government.*
- 27 Five of Wands** = Strife. Geburah in the suit of Fire. Saturn and Leo.
These Wands are of *the Chief Adept or Caduceus, second Adept, or Phoenix, third Adept, or Lotus. Five double flames show balanced energy. This is purely active force.*
- 28 Six of Wands** = Victory. Tiphareth in the suit of Fire. Jupiter and Leo.

Three Wands of the three Adepts in arranged order. Nine flames burn as lamps. *Energy, and its reception and reflection by the Feminine, are typified.*

29 Seven of Wands = Valour. Netzach in the suit of Fire. Mars in Leo. *The Adept's Wands are relegated to the background; in front is a crude, uneven club; the flames are dispersed. This shows degeneration of initial Energy, and departure from equilibrium.*

30 Eight of Wands = Swiftmess. Hod in the suit of Fire. Mercury in Sagittarius.

This card represents the Light-Wands turned into electrical rays constituting matter by their energy. Above this restored Universe is the Rainbow, representing interplay and correlation. It also shows the energy of high velocity.

31 Nine of Wands = Strength. Yesod in the suit of Fire. Moon and Sagittarius.

The Wands have become arrows, eight in number, and one Master arrow which has the Moon for its point, and the Sun for the driving force above it. This card gives the fullest development of the Force in its relation to the Forces above it.

32 Ten of Wands = Oppression. Malkuth in the suit of Fire.²

The Wands are crossed, showing the powers of completed energies of Fire, but they have lost their patents of nobility. In front are two dorjes lengthened to bars. This card shows the Force detached from its spiritual sources.

33 Knight of Fire [Wands] = fiery part of Fire.

This card represents a warrior in complete armour on a black horse.

Note—No description of 33.

34 Queen of Wands = watery part of Fire, *its fluidity and colour.* The card shows a Queen with a crown of the winged globe.

She is seated on a throne of flame, ordered into geometrical light by her material power. She carries a Wand topped with a fir cone, suggestive of the mysteries of Bacchus.

35 Prince of Wands = airy part of Fire, *with its faculty of expanding and volatilising.*

He is seated in a Chariot of Flame and holds the Phoenix Wand of Power and Energy.

36 Princess of Wands = the earthy part of Fire, or *the irresistible chemical attraction of the combustible substance.*

² Astrological attribution for the Ten of Wands, which Lady Harris did not include, is Saturn in Sagittarius.

She has the plumes of Justice streaming from her brow, and holds a Wand crowned by the Sun.

CUPS

37 Ace of Cups = *the element of Water in its secret and original form. It is the feminine compliment of the Ace of Wands. This is a primordial card in the essential form of the Holy Grail.*

38 Two of Cups = Love. Chokmah in the suit of Water. Venus in Cancer.

The card represents two cups overflowing on a calm sea. These are filled from a Lotus, floating on the sea, twined with two dolphins, *showing the harmony of the male and female interpreted in the highest and broadest sense.*

39 Three of Cups = Abundance. Binah in the suit of Water. Mercury in Cancer.

The Cups are pomegranates, bountifully overflowing in a calm sea, typifying *the fulfilment of the Will to Love.*

40 Four of Cups = Luxury. Chesed in the suit of Water. Moon in Cancer.

The four Cups stand upon the sea, no longer stable but ruffled. The Lotus has a multiple stem. *The Energy of the element, although ordered, has lost the original purity of the conception.*

41 Five of Cups = Disappointment. Geburah in the suit of Water. Mars in Scorpio.

The Cups are empty. They are arranged in an inverted pentagram. They symbolise *the triumph of matter over spirit.*

42 Six of Cups = Pleasure. Tiphareth in the suit of Water. Sun in Scorpio.

The Lotus stems are grouped in an elaborate movement. Water gushes into them; they are full but not overflowing. *This shows the influence of the Sun on Water. His fierce but balanced power operates on a type of putrefaction which is the basis of fertility.*

43 Seven of Cups = Debauch. Netzach in the suit of Water. Venus in Scorpio.

The Lotuses have become poisonous; green slime issues from them. They are arranged in two descending triangles, with a lower cup much larger than the rest. This shows *external splendour and internal corruption.*

44 Eight of Cups = Indolence. Hod in the suit of Water. Saturn in Pisces.

The Lotuses droop, the Cups are shallow and old, and are arranged in three rows. The upper row is empty.

45 Nine of Cups = Happiness. Yesod in the suit of Water. Jupiter in Pisces.

The nine Cups are perfectly arranged in a square. They are filled and overflowing with water. *This is the most beneficent aspect of water.*

46 Ten of Cups = Satiety. Malkuth in the suit of Water. Mars in Pisces.

The Cups are arranged as in the Tree of Life, but they are unstable and spill the water from the great Lotus that hangs over them. This typifies *the disruptive and violent force which, inevitably, attacks every supposed perfection.*

47 Knight of Cups = fiery part of Water, *or water's power of solution.* The card represents him as a warrior in black armour, with white wings, on a white horse. In his hand he carries the Cup from which issues a Crab, sign of water in aggression. The peacock symbolises the brilliance of water.

48 Queen of Cups = watery part of Water, *or its power of reflection and reception.* She is enthroned on still water, and carries a shell-like Cup containing a cray-fish. In her other hand she holds the Lotus of Isis.

49 Prince of Cups = airy part of Water, *or its elasticity and volatility, and the energy of steam.* In this card he is seated in a chariot, surrounded by clouds and drawn by an eagle. He carries a Lotus and a Cup from which issues a spiral serpent.

50 Princess of Cups = earthy part of Water, *or its faculty of crystallisation, also its power to give substance to idea, to support Life, and to form a basis of chemical combination.* She is represented as a dancing figure, and has a crest of a swan with open wings. She carries a Cup with a tortoise. The dolphin symbolises the power of creation.

SWORDS

51 Ace of Swords.

This card represents *the first of the mixed elements, and is the result of the Union of Water and Air.* In the centre is a sword implying kingship, which pierces a crown with twelve points for the twelve signs of the Zodiac.

52 Two of Swords = Peace. Chokmah in the suit of Air. Moon in Libra.

In this card are two crossed swords united by a blue rose with five petals, which emits white rays producing a geometrical pattern which suggests *energy beyond the onslaught of the disruption of the intellect.*

- 53 Three of Swords** = Sorrow. Binah in the suit of Air. Saturn in Libra. The card represents the Great Sword of the Magician, point uppermost, cutting the junction of the two short swords. The background shows crystallisation and storm. This is *the darkness of the Great Sea*.
- 54 Four of Swords** = Truce. Chesed in the suit of Air. Jupiter in Libra. The four swords in this card are at the corner of a St. Andrew's Cross. Their points are sheathed in a rose of forty-nine petals. This represents the establishment of *dogma and convention in the realm of intellect*.
- 55 Five of Swords** = Defeat. Geburah in the suit of Air. Venus in Aquarius. The hilts of the swords form an inverted pentagram and are diverse, the blades broken and crooked, typifying *intellect enfeebled by sentiment*.
- 56 Six of Swords** = Science. Tiphareth in the suit of Air. Mercury in Aquarius. The ornamental hilts of the Swords form a hexagon in the card. Their points touch the outer petals of the red rose upon a Golden Cross of six squares. *The perfect balance of mental and moral faculties, hardly won and impossible to hold*, interprets the idea of Science.
- 57 Seven of Swords** = Futility. Netzach in the suit of Air. Moon in Aquarius. The card shows six Swords with their hilts in crescent formation. Their points impinge on a much larger upthrusting Sword. *Here vacillation and compromise are depicted*.
- 58 Eight of Swords** = Interference. Hod in the suit of Air. Jupiter in Gemini. The centre of the card contains two long Swords pointing down, while six smaller ones suggesting Eastern weapons cross them, three on each side. The card suggests *lack of persistence in intellectual matters and accidental interference*.
- 59 Nine of Swords** = Cruelty. Yesod in the suit of Air. Mars in Gemini. The nine Swords are of different lengths, pointing downwards, poison blood drips from their jagged points. The background is studded with tears and crystal forms. In this card *intellect is replaced by heartless passion*.
- 60 Ten of Swords** = Ruin. Malkuth in the suit of Air. Sun in Gemini. The Swords are arranged on the Tree of Life, but the points one to five, and seven to nine, shatter the central Sword which represents the Sun, the Heart. The background is a flame with

explosive destruction. This card shows *reason run mad and a riot of soulless mechanism*.

- 61 Knight of Swords** represents the fiery part of air, wind and storm; the *violent power of motion applied to a manageable element*. He is represented as a warrior with a helmet bearing a revolving wing, and mounted on a maddened steed. He carries a Sword and a Poniard.
- 62 The Queen of Swords** represents the water part of Air, that is its *elasticity and transmissive power*. She is throned on the clouds, and her helmet carries a child's head. In one hand a sword, in the other a head of a man. She represents *the clear perception of an idea, the Liberator of mind*.
- 63 The Prince of Swords** = the airy part of Air.
This card typifies the Intellect. The Prince is seated in a chariot drawn by child-like fays.
- 64 The Princess of Swords** = the earthy part of Air; the *fixation of the volatile, or the materialisation of the Idea*. She appears in this card in front of a barren altar, and has a helmet of Medusa on her head.

DISKS

- 65 The Ace of Disks** represents *the last of the feminine symbols; it is the twin sister of Air, and its bride. It is not only Earth, but matter as such. Per contra, the Disk is the whirling symbol of Space. The Disk is winged to indicate its spiritual origin*.
- 66 Two of Disks** = Change. Chokmah in the element of Earth. Jupiter in Capricornus.
The card represents the two pentacles, one above the other, and are the Chinese symbols Yang and Yin. About them is a green Serpent; he forms the figure 8. This card *symbolises the doctrine: Change is the support of stability*.
- 67 Three of Disks** = Work.³ Binah in the element of Earth. Mars in Capricornus.
This card represents a pyramid viewed from above. The base is formed of three wheels which typify Mercury, Sulphur and Salt, Sattva, Rajas, and Tamas, Aleph, Shin, and Mem. This means the *material establishment of the idea of the universe*.
- 68 Four of Disks** = Power. Chesed in the suit of Earth. Sun in Capricornus.
The Disks are very large and solid, and suggest a fortress. This

³ Card title actually reads, "Works."

card symbolises *Law and Order, maintained by constant vigilance.*

- 69 Five of Disks** = Worry. Geburah in the suit of Earth. Mercury in Taurus.

This represents the five Disks in an inverted pentagram. The general effect is one of *strain, yet the symbol is long-continued inaction. Its natural meaning is intelligence applied to labour.*

- 70 Six of Disks** = Success. Tiphareth in the suit of Earth. Moon in Taurus.

The Disks are in a hexagram. The planets are arranged in their usual attribution, in the centre the Sun as Rose and Cross. This typifies the *harmonious establishment of the energy of the Element.*

- 71 Seven of Disks** = Failure. Netzach in the suit of Earth. Saturn in Taurus.

The Disks are arranged as in the geomantic figure Rubeus. This card represents *enfeeblement and blight.*

- 72 Eight of Disks** = Prudence. Hod in the suit of Earth. Mercury in Virgo.⁴

The Disks are arranged as the geomantic figure Populus, and represent the fruit of a great tree. It signifies *intelligence applied to material matters.*

- 73 Nine of Disks** = Gain. Yesod in the suit of Earth. Venus in Virgo.

The Disks are arranged as an equilateral triangle of three, apex upwards, surrounded by a ring. Six larger Disks form a hexagon. This signifies *the multiplication of the original Word, the mingling of good luck and good management.*

- 74 Ten of Disks** = Wealth. Malkuth in the suit of Earth. Mercury in Virgo.

The Disks have become coins, and are arranged on the Tree of Life, the tenth Disk being larger. The image indicates the *futility of material gain.*

- 75 Knight of Disks** = the fiery part of Earth. *Mountains, earthquakes, also gravitation, and the activity of Earth as a producer of Life.* He is clothed as a warrior, and his helmet is crested with a stag. He is armed with a flail, carries an exceptionally solid Disk, and is mounted on a shire horse.

- 76 Queen of Disks** = watery part of Earth or *fertility.* She is throned amid vegetation and crowned with the spiral horns of the

⁴ Astrological symbolism on Eight of Disks card actually reads, Sun in Virgo.

Markhor. Her sceptre is surmounted by a cube, and she holds her proper Disk—a sphere of circles and loops. She typifies *ambition of matter to take part in the work of creation.*

77 Prince of Disks = airy part of Earth *or the florescence and fructification of that element.* He is seated in a chariot drawn by a bull. His helmet is crowned by a bull; and he holds a Disk resembling a globe and marked with mathematical symbols. In his other hand he carries a sceptre surmounted by a cross. The card symbolises *the function of bringing forth from the Earth the vegetation which is the substance of the Spirit itself.*

78 Princess of Disks = earthy part of Earth, *or the element on the brink of Transfiguration.* She is standing; her crest is the head of the ram; her sceptre descends into the earth where its head becomes a diamond. Behind are a grove of trees, and an altar resembling a wheatsheaf. She carries a Disk in whose centre is *the Chinese ideogram denoting the twin spiral force of Creation in perfect equilibrium.*

BERKELEY GALLERIES

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EXHIBITION

of

78 PAINTINGS

of the

TAROT CARDS

by

FRIEDA HARRIS

WEDNESDAY, JULY 1st, 1942

THE TAROT

The History of the Tarot has been obscured by writers who have not distinguished between the Tarot in its higher aspect, as the record in symbols of what man has discovered about his relation to the Universe, and the Tarot in its lower aspect, as a pack of cards used for divination and card-play.

The higher aspect is chiefly shown in the twenty-two Trump cards, the lower aspect in the remaining fifty-six court and pip cards of the four suits; but it should not be concluded that there is any incompatibility between these two aspects. The essence of a symbol is that it should convey to each as much meaning as study and native intelligence enable him to grasp. It is therefore to be expected that the Tarot should contain, in addition to the cards which have a special significance for initiates, the lesser cards adapted to the same uses as the modern playing cards which derive from the Tarot.

It is possible to trace with some certainty the origin in Europe of certain packs of Tarots and the historical periods at which these have been in general use. The various attempts, however, to assign a date to the creation of the Tarot and to attribute its invention to particular persons and races is beside the point and fated to be inconclusive. The Tarot represents, in symbolical form, an inheritance which is universal. It is the knowledge which man has inherited concerning the world in which he lives and the forces at work in it.

The history of comparative religions shows that, allowing for variations due to climatic and other local causes, man's conception

of his relation to God, the Life-Force, or whatever term we may safely employ, has followed the same broad outlines among all peoples. The Tarot is a record of the spiritual journey of Man and the rituals by which at each stage those capable of understanding the sign-posts are admitted to initiation. It is not therefore to be supposed that a tradition common to the human race can be ascribed to any particular nation or epoch. All that can be described with assurance is the way in which the Tarot has been used at different times by different people.

The general tendency to derive the Tarot exclusively from ancient Egypt was begun by Count de Gebelin, who in 1782 completed the publication of *Le Monde Primitif*. The ready acceptance of this theory was in part due to the fact that the Tarot was long-known to have been in the hands of the Gypsies, who had reached Europe in the early 15th century and were believed to have come from Egypt. From this false supposition the English word "gypsy" derives; the French word "Bohémien" comes from the old French word "Boem" meaning "sorcerer." The Gypsies so generally used the Tarots for divination¹ that the cards become known as the Tarot of the Bohemians and also the Book of Thoth, the god in the Egyptian pantheon, corresponding to Mercury.

More profitable than following the history of the Gypsies is to trace the introduction of the cards into Southern Europe. An Eastern origin is suggested by deriving the words used in Italy, Spain and Portugal, "Naibi," "Naïpe," from the Arabic word "Nabi," meaning a prophet or interpreter, and hence the "way" propounded by the prophet.² The word appears to have taken no root in the English language, unless it may be associated with "Jackanapes," which begins to be current in the 15th century in the sense of "knave" or "varlet."

In an 18th century History of Viterbo, the date 1319³ is given as marking the importation of this game into Italy by the Saracens. This date corresponds to that at which Jacquemin Gringonneur painted his famous pack for the entertainment of Charles VI of

¹ There is no evidence to support the belief that fifteenth-century gypsies popularized tarot cards.

² The Arabic word *na'ib* (lieutenant) suggests the further possibility that the early Spanish name for cards, *naipes*, derives from an Arabic source, such as Mamluk cards.

³ Feliciano Bussi, in 1742, relates in his *History of Viterbo* that in 1379 there was introduced into Viterbo the game of playing cards which previously was not known in the city.

France during the time of his madness.⁴ Of the few remaining cards from this pack, all but one are Trumps, but there are remnants of a Tarot of Venice, which is believed to be contemporaneous, comprising court cards of the recognised suits. The invention of Tarrochino, the card game for which the Tarot was first used in Italy, is attributed to a Prince of Pisa, who died in 1419.⁵

Hitherto familiarity with the Tarot had been virtually confined to Court circles and to the Gypsies; it is from the discovery of printing in Europe in the middle of the 15th century that we may date the wider and more popular dissemination of the cards. By the time of the Renaissance they are generally known: "Le Tarau" is one of the games which, according to Rabelais, was played by Gargantua; Michel Angelo is said to have invented a game in Sienna played with the Tarot for the purpose of teaching arithmetic.⁶ This story, even if apocryphal, is of interest as it emphasises the numerical properties of the cards; each of the twenty-two Trumps is ascribed to a letter of the Hebrew alphabet, in which each letter has a numerical equivalent. In England there is a sermon by Latimer, in which the use of the word "triumph" for the modern word "trump" in connection with a game of cards, establishes this derivation. The French counterpart "Atout" probably designates a card superior to others, or "bon a tout." Neither the English or the French derivation of the word throws light upon the relation between the Tarot Trumps and the lesser cards of the four suits.

At this time the names of the traditional suits were well established, although variants were common in packs, mostly those of German make in which hearts, bells, acorns and leaves appear. In western

⁴ The three packs of cards in gilt believed to have been painted in 1392 by Jacquemin Gringonneur for Charles VI of France are lost and probably were not tarots. The seventeen so-called Gringonneur tarot cards housed today in the archives of the Bibliotheque Nationale in Paris are probably the remnants of a fifteenth-century Venetian tarot pack and had nothing to do with Gringonneur.

⁵ The word *tarocchino* means shortened or little tarot and the sixty-two-card shortened tarocchino deck probably derives from the earlier seventy-eight-card pack. The invention of the Tarocchino of Bologna pack is often incorrectly credited to Prince Fibia of Bologna who died in 1419 before the earliest extant full-size tarot packs are believed to have existed.

⁶ There is no evidence that Michelangelo used a *tarot* deck to teach arithmetic, although some writers have suggested he used a deck of cards for educational purposes.

Europe the suits came to be named in accordance with the French piquet pack which remains in common use. In the Tarot, Cups or Chalices correspond to Hearts; Swords to Spades, a variant probably based on a mistranslation of the Spanish "Espada"; Wands or Batons to Clubs, and Deniers or Disks to Diamonds.⁷

The Tarot suits are attributed to the four elements Fire (Wands) Water (Cups) Air (Swords) and Earth (Disks) and this number is repeated in the court cards, of which there are only three in the modern pack of playing cards. The usual designations are Knight or King, Queen, Prince and Princess or Valet.⁸ In the pack now exhibited, the name Princess has been used as it gives a greater emphasis and describes the balance of the male and female principles.

If, as has been stated, the Tarot preserves an ancient tradition, it may be asked why the present pack shows certain changes both in design and nomenclature. The answer must be that, although basic verities do not alter, the symbols through which they are made known are corrupted in the course of time and misrepresented by those who understood them imperfectly. Moreover a symbol which is appropriate to one historical period becomes in another a mere curiosity or archaism. For example the Trump called the Priestess in modern Tarots was formerly called the Female Pope, recalling the mediaeval tales of Pope Joan, which have by no means the same associations to-day as they had for the people of that time.⁹

⁷ To carry the correspondences of suit signs one step further, early suit signs are thought to represent the four divisions of the populace in medieval Europe: swords (spades) for knights, nobility and the aristocracy; staves, wands or batons (clubs) for peasants and the lower classes; cups or chalices (hearts) for the clergy and other ecclesiastical groups; and disks or coins (diamonds) for the commercial class and tradesmen.

⁸ Early tarot packs were without number or titles on the Major Arcana and Minor Arcana cards and the titles Prince and Princess do not appear. The four court cards were likely designated king, queen, knight or horseman, and page, knave or valet.

⁹ The association to Pope Joan is quite plausible. The Priestess or Junon found in modern packs appears as *La Papessa* (The Popess) in the earliest known list of trumps, a late-fifteenth-century manuscript of sermons. Interestingly, in the manuscript, The Popess is designated card number 4, whereas today she appears as card number 2.

Two other cards, Justice¹⁰ and Temperance,¹¹ contain ethical ideas foreign to the material world of the modern scientist; these cards have been re-named Adjustment and Art, which respectively suggest the state of equilibrium produced by forces nicely opposed, and the balanced mental condition in which artistic unity is created. Similarly, in design the new Tarot, while preserving the important features of Egyptian symbolism, introduces significant elements from the mysticism of other races, for example the dorje of Tibet which figures in the 2 of Wands, and the Grail of the Arthurian legend, which figures in the Ace of Cups. The Renaissance costumes, which fortuitously became associated with some cards, have been largely discarded.

This Tarot¹² is, in essence, the same as that with which Tarocco was played in Renaissance Italy, and is still played to-day in parts of Southern and Central Europe. The pictures of these cards, which are exhibited here, are original in the sense of variations on an old folk tune; they are intended for the purpose for which the cards were first designed, to stimulate reflection and meditation.

THE TRUMPS

The Twenty-two Trump cards are governed by the seven Planets, the twelve signs of the Zodiac and the four Elements.

They are numbered in Roman type.

The Fool is No. 0 and the last card No. XXI. The Universe is ruled by the planet, Saturn and the element earth.

Each Trump has one of the twenty-two Letters of the Hebrew alphabet allotted to it and is coloured according to the four

^{10, 11} *La Justicia* is designated card number 20 and *La Temperentia* is designated number 6 in the late-fifteenth-century manuscript of sermons, compared to 8 for Justice and 14 for Temperance found in modern tarot packs. In the Rider-Waite pack, Justice is designated number 11.

¹² *Tarot* generally refers to the seventy-eight-card tarot fortune-telling pack; *tarock* is the fifty-four- or seventy-eight-card pack used for playing the game of tarock or tarocco. The words *tarocco* and *tarocchi* are often used interchangeably, although the word *tarocchi* is actually the plural of *tarocco*.

For further details on the early history of tarot cards see *The Encyclopedia of Tarot* by Stuart R. Kaplan, 1978, 387 pp., illustrated.

traditional colours attributed to the planets, signs of the Zodiac or the elements.

The four suits Wands, Cups, Swords, Disks, consist of fourteen cards, Ace, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10 and the Knight, Queen, Prince and Princess.

The Ace represents the Force in its purity and all the other cards show its degradation through multiplicity, alternating with a transient stability derived from the planet, sign and number governing it.

The four court cards are forms of the elements, fire, water, air, earth, in different aspects; that is generative, passive, material and rotating.

The Hebrew names allotted to the small cards are the stations on the Cabalistic Tree of Life.

CATALOGUE

1 O. The Fool. Air. Aleph.

The Fool is Air, Emptiness, also Potential Purity. He holds the Wand of Fire, the Cup of Water, the Sword of Air, and the bag of planetary Disks.

Round him is the rainbow issuing from and returning to his heart, he wears the fool's cap, the horns of Bacchus, he stands on Harpocrates, the Egyptian symbol of adolescent Fertility, he is unconscious of the tiger tearing at his side, he is the Green Man of the Celts, Daluah and Parsival. This is the moment of divine consciousness.

2 I. The Magician or Juggler.¹³ Mercury. Beth.

He is Mercury, the messenger of God, and juggles with the four symbols of the elements, and the papyrus or Word, the pen or Will, the wand or Wisdom.

He represents the creative force in action.

As Thoth in Egyptian tradition, his attendant and shadow is the Cynocephalus Ape.

3 II. The Priestess. The Moon. Gimel.

She is a spiritual Isis and a virgin Artemis. With her veil of light, she is weaving the crystals and fruits of the Earth. She carries the huntress' bow and the musical sistrum.

¹³ The description of the picture seems to match the version of The Magus included in the reproduction of the Thoth Tarot, although the title is different.

4 III. The Empress. Venus. Daleth.

The Empress is seated in the traditional posture symbolising alchemical Salt.

This is woman in her all-embracing receptivity, incarnate womanhood, holding the lotus, wearing the belt of the Zodiac, surrounded by her Venus birds, the pelican of self-surrender and the heraldic white eagle of salt.

5 IV. The Emperor. Aries. Tzaddi.

Again he is seated according to tradition.

His legs form a right angle, typifying rule through unyielding law and order.

The goats behind him show he is governed by Aries, creative dominating force. The bees on his costume may have originated from French tradition, but more probably they typify the bees of the Secret Doctrines in the Indian Upanishads. The heraldic red eagle is the fiery sulphur of Alchemy. The lamb is, possibly, a reminiscence of the Knights Templar.

6 V. The Hierophant. Taurus. Vau.

The Hierophant is seated on his governing sign Taurus, the elephants are the Indian form of the same.

The pentagram with a point upwards and the dancing child shows that he has the heart of a child; in the reversed pentagram the meaning seems to suggest he has dominion through will; the final pentagram again points upwards, showing his acceptance of a governing cosmic law. The four masks are the Cherubim, man, eagle, lion and bull.

His votary the woman, stands with her sword pointing downwards signifying, perhaps, that woman in the future will draw fresh wisdom by the use of her subconscious.

7 VI. The Lovers. Gemini. Zain.

This is an alchemical card illustrating the marriage or union of two opposites, thus we have the prince and princess holding the wand and the cup. Cain and Abel, Lilith and Eve. The swords at the back suggest the intellectual process in the uniting of two elements. The figure of the Creator blesses this deliberate synthesis. The alchemical white eagle of salt and the red eagle of sulphur, the Egg of wisdom and the winged wand of Osiris are at the bottom of the card.

8 VII. The Chariot. Cancer. Cheth.

Held by the charioteer is the Cup of Indian, Egyptian and Arthurian tradition and it contains the blood of voluntary sacrifice. The charioteer (spirit) is seated in the chariot of the

body and is drawn by sphinxes, who represent the sixteen sub-elements of the emotions.

9 VIII. Adjustment. Libra. Teth.¹⁴

Traditionally called Justice, the new name is a literal translation of the French "Justesse," that is Equilibrium. She is balancing from the headdress of Isis the scales in which are the bubbles of Maya, illusion, typifying the transitory quality of human justice. The whole picture represents balance by opposites. The diamond patterning foreshadows the balancing Harlequin of the Commedia del l'Arte.

10 IX. The Hermit. Virgo. Yod.

Here we have, in the hand of the Hermit, the Lamp or Sacred Wisdom. It contains the Sun which is hidden beneath the surrounding darkness to fructify the earth. The Hermit is looking at the Egg (Universe) which is surrounded by the snake, a symbol of life. The hounds of hell endeavour to snatch the *sacred light* and the little *Homunculus*. The wheat is in the masonic tradition.

11 X. Fortune. Jupiter. Kaph.

On the Wheel of Fortune at the top is the Sphinx meaning intelligence and balance (Hindoo=Sattvas).

On the left is Hermanubis the Ape who is unstable brilliant reason (Hindoo=Rajas).

At the bottom of the wheel is Typhon who expresses ignorance and sluggishness (Hindoo=Tamas).

Here we have the implication to be found on all these cards of possible regeneration in all circumstances, for Typhon holds the Ankh of salvation with one hand and in the other the hook with which he snatches the soul.

The eclipse of stars at the top of the card generates in forked lines the circle of the wheel.

12 XI. Lust. Leo. Teth.

This card was called Strength. It means joy in desire. The lion has seven heads, an angel, a saint, a poet, a warrior, a bacchante, a satyr and a lion-serpent. The woman has given herself to the forces of life. She holds the Cup or impregnated womb. The horns surrounding it represent the male element. The figures under the feet of the lion are the martyrs to whom this path towards Union is an empty dream. The reins which are held by the woman are the passion which unites her to the Beast.

¹⁴ Hebrew letter shown on the Adjustment card is actually *lamed*.

13 XII. The Hanged Man or Dying God. Water. Mem.

This figure is Osiris or Christ and shows redemption through suffering. He is drowned in the waters of affliction, the attitude is traditional and involves a right angle and a triangle. His foot is bound to the Ankh of Immortality by the serpent of life. The complete symbol is a triangle and a cross.

14 XIII. Death. Scorpio. Nun.

This card means redemption through putrefaction, the seed in the ground decays, but rises again to new life. Death, crowned with the headdress of Osiris, is raising from his scythe the reincarnating bubbles of life. Behind him is the eagle, symbol of immortality, and below him are the embryonic amoeba.

15 XIV. Art. Temperance. Sagittarius. Samech.

This is the second alchemical card, in which the Lovers are united in an androgyne figure, the Prince becoming white and the Princess black, the red lion white, the white eagle red and the cup is lighting the torch. There is a crucible engraved with a raven standing on a skull which holds the seething elements whose iridescent bubbles are reflected by the rainbow overhead. All these typify the destruction of two elements at the birth of a third. The inscription on the rainbow is the alchemical mandate "Visita interiora terrae rectificando invenies occultum lapidem."

16 XV. The Devil. Capricornus. Ain.

As this card is governed by Capricornus, we have the traditional goat. On his forehead is the Eye of God, his curved horns represent the spiral force in nature, that is wanton creation, and his abandonment is emphasized by the bacchanalian bunch of grapes. Beneath him are his votaries in two dividing cells, stressing the doctrine that all sin is division. The background is designed from the marking on the planet Mars. The Goat is supported on the Caduceus. At the top of the Tree of Life at the back of the card is the ring of Saturn.

17 XVI. The Tower or Blasted Tower or the House of God. Mars. Peh.

Here is purification through fire, lightning, flames, war. The open mouth at the base of the card alludes to the Hebrew attribution Peh meaning a mouth, the eye is the Eye of Shiva. The card is designed on the form of a carbon crystal, the figures falling from the tower are made of carbon, the serpent on the right is the symbol of the active will to live, the dove on the left is passive resignation to death.

18 XVII. The Star. Aquarius. Daleth.¹⁵

¹⁵ Hebrew letter shown on the Star card is actually *heh*.

This is built up as a design on a spiral to show the rising force of a new age. The woman holds two cups, the north and south poles of magnetic attraction. Above her a new star is rising, beneath her are the crystallising dogmas of a former Age.

19 XVIII. The Moon. Pisces. Koph.

This is the most sinister card. Through sorcery and witchcraft it is possible to get an understanding of the universe, but the path is dangerous. On each side of the picture are dark fortresses, the Anubis the gods of death are ready to seize the soul of the aspirant and jackals wait to devour those who have fallen by the way.

The Sun is held by the Scarabeus Sacer under the water.

The design on the card is planned on the movement of the tide whose ebb and flow is governed by the Moon.

20 XIX. The Sun. Sun. Resh.

This card shows the simple human approach to the mysteries. The Sun is the lord of life, liberty, light and love. The children are dancing with butterfly wings. They are surrounded by the signs of the Zodiac, showing the different houses through which the Sun passes.

21 XX. The Aeon or Angel or Last Judgment. Fire. Shin.

In the centre of the card is the child Horus, who is the incarnation of the New Age. His left hand is open, signifying that the old universe has been destroyed and he is too young to formulate a new one. He is surrounded by the figure of Nuit, the Star goddess, and beneath him is the winged point Hadit.

22 XXI. The Universe. Saturn. Earth. Tau.

The universe is represented as a maiden dancing with a great spiral serpent. She holds the Moon in her hand and the Sun is merged in the Eye of God. These two planets typify the positive and negative forces. Behind her is a geometrical solid by Moebius. Around her are all the stars of the Zodiac, the curved seventy-two lines stand for the quaternaries and are also an attempt to convey movement and to give the fourth dimension of time. Beneath her is Sullivan's map of chemical elements. At the four corners are the Cherubim or Winds of Heaven, the bull, the lion, the eagle and the man.

THE SUITS

WANDS

23 **Ace of Wands.**

The flames are the Hebrew letter Yod, and are arranged on the Tree of Life. This is the primal condition of the element of Fire.

24 **Two of Wands** = Dominion. Mars in Aries. Chokmah.

Two dorjes crossed, meaning destruction as a beginning of creation.

25 **Three of Wands** = Virtue. Sun in Aries. Binah.

Three lotus wands representing creation.

26 **Four of Wands** = Completion. Venus in Aries. Chesed.

The wands are headed by rams and at the other end doves. The number four conveys the introduction of order into creation.

27 **Five of Wands** = Strife. Saturn in Leo. Geburah.

The wands are the Caduceus, the Phoenix and the Lotus. Their disproportionate size indicates that, following the coordination of spirit, disunion has begun.

28 **Six of Wands** = Victory. Jupiter in Leo. Tiphareth.

Caduceus, Phoenix and Lotus wands are in arranged order, the warring and the peaceful opposites are balanced.

29 **Seven of Wands** = Valour. Mars in Leo. Netzach.

The wands are covered by a club. Valour implies fear as well as courage.

30 **Eight of Wands** = Swiftmess. Mercury in Sagittarius. Hod.

The wands have turned into electric energy, above is a rainbow. Here we have the acme of restless force.

31 **Nine of Wands** = Strength. Moon in Sagittarius. Yesod.

The small wands are the arrows of Diana, the master wand has the moon for its point and the sun for its base. This shows the combined swiftmess and heat of fire.

32 **Ten of Wands** = Oppression. Saturn in Sagittarius. Malkuth.

Eight plain wand sticks, dominated by two dorjes lengthened into bars, show the slow smouldering of an exhausted force.

33 **Knight of Wands.**

This is the purely male creative force in fire or spirit.

34 **Queen of Wands.**

This represents the receptivity of fire, its movement and colour.

35 **Prince of Wands.**

Here is shown the airy quality of fire, smoke and expansion.

36 Princess of Wands.

The material aspect of fire is suggested, such as creeping flames liable to burst into a violent conflagration.

CUPS

37 Ace of Cups.

This is the heart of the element of water and love. It is the Holy Grail receiving the impress of divine inspiration.

38 Two of Cups = Love. Venus in Cancer. Chokmah.

Two overflowing cups filled from a lotus and twined with the dolphins of Venus. *This is the harmonious union of male and female.*

39 Three of Cups = Abundance. Mercury in Cancer. Binah.

The pomegranate cups are filled by wreathed lotuses to show the happy fruition of love.

40 Four of Cups = Luxury. Moon in Cancer. Chesed.

The roughened surface of the sea on which the cups and the lotuses are balanced explains that an element of excess has entered into love.

41 Five of Cups = Disappointment. Mars in Scorpio. Geburah.

The cups are arranged on the stalks of the lotus in an inverted pentagram. Love has lost its first glamour.

42 Six of Cups = Pleasure. Sun in Scorpio. Tiphareth.

The cups are full but do not overflow, here is love for personal gratification.

43 Seven of Cups = Debauch. Venus in Scorpio. Netzach.

Here the effort to increase pleasure has ended in corruption. The lotuses have become poisonous and the cups are chipped.

44 Eight of Cups = Indolence. Saturn in Pisces. Hod.

The power is now spent, the water is turned to slime, the flowers droop, the cups are broken.

45 Nine of Cups = Happiness. Jupiter in Pisces.

The nine cups are perfectly arranged, they overflow but this is an ordered possessive aspect of love partaking of a ritual.

46 Ten of Cups = Satiety. Mars in Pisces. Malkuth.

The cups are arranged on the Tree of Life and a great lotus overshadows them. Exhaustion, which comes from expended energy, is expressed.

47 Knight of Cups.

He is the strength and energy of water, the ocean. The peacock

in the waves stands for brilliance, the crab for the aggression of the flood.

48 Queen of Cups.

This is the passive and receptive quality of water. She is almost invisible as she is enveloped by shadowy reflections.

49 Prince of Cups.

This card shows elasticity or steam of water. He is seated in a Chariot surrounded by vapour and drawn by an eagle to suggest a volatile aeriated element.

50 Princess of Cups.

Here is snow. Round the princess's dress are water crystals, beside her is a dolphin of Venus; the tortoise is an emblem of earth to show the solidification of water in mud, ice and snow.

SWORDS

51 Ace of Swords.

This card is a picture of the intellect in its best and most controlled aspect.

On the hilt of the sword is written Thelema or Will. There are two moons and three suns on the handle, the expanse of sky behind it suggests the other meaning of the suit, the element of air.

52 Two of Swords = Peace. Moon in Libra. Chokmah.

The two swords piercing a rose or lotus shows, in the symbol, the intellect restrained by love.

53 Three of Swords = Sorrow. Saturn in Libra. Binah.

A magician's sword and two short ones are tearing the rose to pieces. This suggests the confusion and darkness of the intellect which is emancipated without a guiding principle.

54 Four of Swords = Truth.¹⁶ Jupiter in Libra. Chesed.

The formality of the design of the swords, the cross, and the rose denote intellect bound by rigid convention.

The surrounding crystals, as in all these sword cards, contain the hidden names of their guardian angels worked out in numbers on squared paper. It was thought that air was formed of crystals according to Pythagoras.

55 Five of Swords = Defeat. Venus in Aquarius. Geburah.

The swords form an inverted pentagram. They are crooked and broken and the roses are falling. The condition shown is intellect weakened by sentiment.

56 Six of Swords = Science. Mercury in Aquarius. Tiphareth.

The points of the swords centre in a rose and cross. They are

¹⁶ Card title is actually "Truce."

lying on a fencer's diagram (14th century) which was worked out scientifically to show the positions in which a fencer can stand and be invulnerable. The card suggests by its symmetrical design a perfect balance of intellect and principle.

57 Seven of Swords = Futility. Moon in Aquarius. Netzach.

The hilts of the swords form a crescent, but the card is a tenuous design to show that the mind is confused and undecided.

58 Eight of Swords = Interference. Jupiter in Gemini. Hod.

The arrangement of these Indian swords covered by two long ones tells of outside obstruction and consequent inability to concentrate the mind.

59 Nine of Swords = Cruelty. Mars in Gemini. Yesod.

These jagged swords are dropping blood and tears, and represent mind dominated by insatiable desires.

60 Ten of Swords = Ruin. Sun in Gemini.

Again the design is the Tree of Life on which the swords are arranged, the centre one is the heart or Sun which is broken in fragments. The mind has let go all control and whirls in tormented madness.

61 Knight of Swords.

Dashing through the air this knight embodies all the winds of heaven.

62 Queen of Swords.

The placing of the cruel queen on columns of clouds is intended to suggest rain and the consequent darkening of the skies.

63 Prince of Swords.

The prince conveys two ideas, one simply hail, the other the restriction of the scientific outlook, which uses but limits the imagination which is shown in the harnessed fays.

64 Princess of Swords.

This is air in the earth, the oxygen which promotes the growth of plants and the warlike rush of the figure of the princess is the incarnation of dynamic irruption.

DISKS

65 The Ace of Disks.

This is primitive earth, both as a whirling planet and a substance. The movement of the planet is suggested by the wings. The Greek inscription is "to the mark of the Beast" and implies the earthy element.

66 Two of Disks = Change. Jupiter in Capricornus. Chokmah.

Here are two pentacles, the Chinese Yang and Yin. The crowned serpent surrounds them as they revolve. The card suggests that the universe is sustained in space by its rotating action.

67 Three of Disks = Work.¹⁷ Mars in Capricornus. Binah.

A Three-dimensional pyramid is looked at from above. It is placed on three wheels on which are the signs for mercury, sulphur and salt, a fundamental analysis of the components of earth according to the alchemists.

68 Four of Disks = Power. Sun in Capricornus. Chesed.

Four square disks engraved with the signs of the elements form the towers of a fortress surrounded by a moat. The design is intended to show the perfect government of the universe by law and order.

69 Five of Disks = Worry. Mercury in Taurus. Geburah.

Five disks in an inverted pentagram. They are surrounded by other disks which are bent and torn by strain. The picture shows suppressed action and the binding of celestial forces to mechanical purposes.

70 Six of Disks = Success. Moon in Taurus. Tiphareth.

The disks form a hexagram and represent the seven planets with the sun in the centre as a rose and cross. These indicate the harmonious movement of the spheres.

71 Seven of Disks = Failure. Saturn in Taurus. Netzach.

The disks are in the geomantic figure Rubeus. They now represent only the one planet Earth and are engraved with the signs of Aries and Saturn. The conception suggests the binding conditions of earthly life.

72 Eight of Disks = Mercury¹⁸ in Virgo. Hod.

The geomantic figure Populus forms the position of the disks which appear as flowers on a great tree protected by the leaves. The possession of the fruits of the earth brings its own responsibility.

73 Nine of Disks = Gain. Venus in Virgo. Yesod.

Six disks stamped with the pictures of the deities of the planets form two equilateral triangles and the remaining three are interlaced in the middle. These with their beams of light show a condition in which chance and management give an increasing good fortune.

¹⁷ Card title is actually "Works."

¹⁸ Astrological symbolism on Eight of Disks card actually reads, Sun in Virgo. Card title is Prudence.

74 Ten of Disks = Wealth. Mercury in Virgo. Malkuth.

The disks have now definitely become coins and are arranged on the Tree of Life. They are stamped with different renderings of the signs of Mercury. This mercurial signature is intended to show that though they appear solid, they are, in reality, fugitive.

75 Knight of Disks.

The knight is being drawn into the soil. He represents the generative property of earth.

76 Queen of Disks.

Every symbol in this picture suggests the fertility and warmth of earth.

77 Prince of Disks.

The prince in a chariot, drives an impetuous bull, he is a symbol of the fruits and seeds of earth.

78 Princess of Disks.

Here we have an attempt to translate into a picture the spiritual quality of earth, eternally pregnant and containing in its fertility the unwritten cypher of cosmic lore.

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