



THE CROWLEY TAROT

Excerpted from *The Crowley Tarot:*
The Handbook to the Cards

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The Special Characteristics of the Crowley Tarot

While the earlier Tarot cards illustrated their topic in the more or less simple form of a pictorial narrative, Crowley “abstracted” the motifs by expressing the meaning of the cards in complex symbolism stemming from the world of magic, astrology, alchemy, the Cabala, the traditions of Mediterranean cultures and Celtic peoples, and particularly also the secretive mythology of Ancient Egypt. His cards thereby gained a great power of fascination, but they became difficult for the layman to understand. Crowley’s book, in which he readily addressed dark allusions of the symbolism, was published at the same time, yet it did not do much to help the situation. The book raised more questions than it answered. The illustrations of the Minor Arcana that Arthur Edward Waite had introduced were not adopted by Crowley, since he had already rejected Waite’s work and liked to ridicule it. Instead, Crowley brought each card into close correlation with an astrological constellation. However, since the significance that he associated with them frequently diverges from the contemporary prevalent understanding of astrology, this access to interpretation frequently tends to be too confusing for the reader. This very popular contemporary Tarot is, then, among those that are the least understood.

Additional Changes

Crowley called the cards of the Major Arcana “Atu” and gave some of them new names: Justice (VIII) became Adjustment; the Wheel of Destiny (X), which had always been termed the Wheel of Fortune in the Anglo-Saxon usage is called Fortune; Strength (XI) became Lust, Moderation (XIV) became Art, Judgment (XX) became The Aeon, and The World (XXI) became The Universe. The only far-reaching change was in the twentieth card (Judgment), the old redemption topic of which gave way to a new age (The Aeon).

With the Minor Arcana, Crowley named the suit of coins Disks, a term that had already surfaced in the older Tarot suits. An illuminating, although unprovable explanation is the idea that the suit of coins was traditionally associated with the earth element, which in turn was considered to be a disk in the medieval picture of the world. In contrast, the renaming of the Court cards is more significant and creates considerably more confusion. The traditional order of King, Queen, Knight, and Page corresponds in the Crowley Tarot to the order of Knight, Queen, Prince, and Princess.

The Cabala and The Tree of Life

The Tree of Life is the central construct of the Jewish secret teachings, the so-called Cabala. Cabala is the name of the Jews’ secret teachings, (originally handed down orally) which gradually developed into its own school and literature. Its roots reach back to the 12th century and the first high culture in the Mediterranean region. In Egypt, there were famous sites of initiation into the mysteries. Even if the

origin of Egyptian knowledge is controversial up to this day—many esoterics see an Atlantic heritage in it—it can still be ascertained that the leading thinkers of all cultures were initiated into the Egyptian teachings and took the spirit of this consecration home with them. The best-known mediators who carried this knowledge into foreign cultures, thereby expanding the thinking of other nations, were without a doubt Pythagoras and Moses. Pythagoras was presumably the first to call the world a cosmos. He saw the nature of things in the number, the harmony of the spheres as the universal principal of order and unity, and advocated the teaching of reincarnation. Moses, raised as a foundling at the Egyptian court, is considered to be the creator of the (exoteric) Torah, the esoteric side of which is the Cabala. The first of the Five Books of Moses begins as follows:

In the beginning God created the heavens and earth.

The earth was without form and void, and darkness was upon the face of the deep; and the Spirit of God was moving over the face of the waters.

And God said, “Let there be light”; and there was light.

And God saw that the light was good; and God separated the light from the darkness.

Between Root and Crown

When we consider the light as the divine or spiritual (Kether) and the darkness as matter (Malkuth) into which the divine spark of light falls, then we recognize in these two separated halves striving to return to each other the spiritual idea of creation, the polar tension upon which the physical laws are based. Or, formulated in a more modern manner, a “perceptive model” that allows us to interpret reality. The spark of light that has fallen to the lowest level of matter naturally seeks to return to God. We are therefore

already in the middle of the Tree of Life; more precisely put, somewhere between the root and the crown representing the reciprocal exchange in the course of creation. For the Cabalists, the story of Creation was neither pure fiction nor did they take it literally. It simply served them as a map or timetable in order to consciously anchor the incomprehensible. In the process they assumed—probably inspired by Pythagoras—that only the more extreme abstraction is fundamental enough to comprehend the inconceivable, and that numbers are the closest approximation to the incomprehensible. In the Tree of Life, the “last reality” is consequentially symbolized by ten circles, which themselves do not form a direct statement but rather describe general cycles, the conception of which is only accessible when other levels of effect are added and combined with them. The Cabala, then, is not just some philosophical or religious system, but rather a model of the universe colored by Jewish tradition, the elements of which first appeared in the Pythagorean theory of harmony. Its foundation, however, can probably be found in the Oriental teaching of emanation. Papus, among the most important of French esoterics and author of one of the best books on the Cabala and one of the most controversial on the Tarot, wrote: “The Cabala is the science of the soul and of God and all relationships which occur between them. It teaches and proves that everything is in one and one is in everything.”

The Ten Sephirot

The Cabalists believe that reality is the result of a perpetual process of creation that incessantly connects the ten levels of effect like ten spider's threads with each other, “spinning” the woven pattern of destiny. For it is not the people who form destiny, but rather the collective spirit in humanity that runs through their deeds and at the same time becomes the punishment upon which the collective

conceptions (Zeitgeist) move. This network, which always expresses itself in that the human psyche relates beyond the contents of everyday life to a superordinate power working behind the scenes, is the form of the eternal that is adapted to reality and corresponds to the Sephira Kether (1) in the Cabalistic Tree of Life. We could also say that Kether is the elemental force from which everything else emerges. But since the forms of the eternal themselves remain invisible (0) and it is only our desire to sense the shadow of the spirit that thrones beyond the comprehensible expressed in all of our images, we want to limit ourselves to the statement that Kether is a symbol of reality that approximates the incomprehensible or the form of humanity that approaches completion.

The visible origin (1) of the invisible divine (0) now develops the self-awareness of the “form which recognizes itself” and thereby becomes Chokmah (2), the conscious, differentiative, and creative power. Chokmah corresponds to the “rib of Adam” from which God created “Eve” or Binah (3). Chesed (4), the expulsive form or fruit of the spiritual principle of creation (1, 2, and 3) in space, originates in this connection. Chesed is the power of growth and of stability. Geburah (5) is the power of destruction, since it is only through movement and changes in time that life can exist. Tiphareth (6), as the mediator between the two, is the harmonic balance and emotional mirror image of the spiritual Kether level. In the lower region of the Tree of Life, Netzach (7) and Hod (8) embody the contrast between dissolution and the legitimately organized structure. The Sephirot (6, 9, 10) in the middle pillar of the polarities are each an expression of the divine (0) on the corresponding level of being. Kether (1) is equivalent to the harmonic middle of the universe, the center of the soul Tiphareth (6). However, the middle point of the physical world image on the lowest level is formed by Yesod (9) as an expression of the belief in the sense of the creation (1), expressed in most strongly concentrated form by the root or Malkuth (10).

The Ten Numbers

(Sephilot and the Minor Arcana)

In the association between the Tarot and the Tree of Life, the Ten Sephirot are assigned to the Minor cards numbered from 1 to 10, which are in turn divided into four suits corresponding to the four elements (wands = fire, cups = water, swords = air, disks = earth). In this manner, the Ace of Wands is equivalent to the formula “Kether through fire” or, on a symbolic level, “the first creative spark as father of the creative idea”; the Two of Cups corresponds to “Chokmah through water” or “the polarization of the emotions”; the Three of Swords is equivalent to “Binah through air” or “the endogenous depression”; the Four of Disks corresponds to “Chesed through earth” or “the visible form,” etc.

The 22 Paths

(Hebraic Alphabet and the Major Arcana)

In the Hebraic alphabet there are 22 letters. This is the number of paths in the “Sephir Yetzirah” or the “Book of Creation,” the part of the Cabala that relates to creation and its secret laws. This book explains the creation of the world in analogy to the 22 letters of the Hebraic alphabet. There are three “mother letters” for the elements, seven “double letters” for the planets, and 12 “simple letters” for the zodiac. The 22 paths are trails connecting the ten numbers in the Tree of Life with each other. At the same time, these 22 connective paths in the Tree of Life are associated with the 22 Major Arcana cards of the Tarot. The Tree then becomes a multidimensional image in which the connection of various cultures into a common path is expressed. If, for example, we feel ourselves caught in the

ruling social structure (Hod) and our goal is the origin or new beginning (Malkuth), then we must choose the path between these two Sephirot, the “Path of Transformation”; a process illustrated in the Tarot by “The Aeon” card and in the Hebraic alphabet by the letter Shin. In the reverse case, “the Tower” and “PE” indicate the “destruction of hardened structures,” because they connect Hod (structure) and Netzach (dissolution) with each other: the stage is swept free for a new play through the destruction of old values. The paths are lines along which life develops. It is important to understand these lines in relation to their meaning in respect to the whole in which we are integrated. Human beings need models they can believe in, and the Tree of Life itself is a mirror image of the cosmos according to the Hermetic law of “as above, so below.”

Learning to Read With the Tarot Cards

The cards speak in images, and images are the language of the soul. Whoever wants to learn the language of the cards must—similar to those who interpret dreams—learn the language of the soul. The process of this development is similar to learning a new language; after overcoming a possible initial self-consciousness, we have our first spontaneous successful experiences. However, it is only the practice that leads us to growing security and a differentiated manner of expression.

The prerequisite for good interpretation of the cards is that the language of the image becomes that of everyday usage. In this respect, it is helpful to draw a daily, a weekly, and a monthly card, respectively. This is done as follows: draw a card in the morning of each day (in the beginning only from the 22 trump cards, later from all of the 78)

and additionally a card at the beginning of the week and/or month. Observe then where and how each of the themes is expressed for you within that time period. In doing so, you will recognize that, for example, “Death” can mean that you have lost something important (involuntary departure) or that “Art” shows you are successful in finding an important solution, that you have found the right attitude (the right connection, the right proportion in a mixture) in a sensitive matter. In this way, you will become playfully more familiar with the everyday language of the cards on the various levels through direct observation.

The key to the deepest meaning of the cards, however, lies hidden in the myths that humanity has told itself for thousands of years. An occupation with the old books of wisdom, with the oral and imagistic tradition of early cultures, leads to the encounter with archetypes of the soul and the Tarot.

A decorative border at the top and bottom of the page. It features a central vertical axis with concentric, semi-circular arcs. On either side of these arcs are numerous feathers, each with fine, parallel lines indicating the barbs. The entire design is rendered in a detailed, etched style.

The 22 Cards of the Major Arcana

o. The Fool

Instinct: Curiosity, interest in experimentation, search for change.

Goal: Setting out in life (a new loop in the spiral of eternity).

Guiding principle: Mystical union (striving for transcendence).

Light: Positive dissolution of structures and constraints, selfless idealism, boundless fantasy, cosmic sensibility.

Shadow: Negative dissolution of structures and compulsions, vagueness of goals, daydreaming, infantilism, irresponsibility.

Quality: Freedom from prejudice, astonished openness.

We see a demonic green figure entwined by four spiral-formed loops, which are divided into four circles (spiritual levels). Various symbols can be perceived on the rainbow-colored loops. The green Fool (Bacchus, Dionysus, the April Fool) dominates space, whereby the soles of his boots are pointing outwards. This shows that he has no direct contact with the earth. At first glance, it appears that he is holding onto the firmament with his raised and spread arms (the corners of the card symbolize endless space). His lustful facial expression is crowned by a pair of horns, between which a crystal-line diamond cone rises up, touching the tip of the pyramid of light surrounding him. His mad gaze goes past the observer (we cannot look the Fool in the eyes because his visual axis is slightly shifted). He holds an upside-down chalice in his right hand, and in his left hand there is a flaming pine cone with flares of fire creating an arc over his crown chakra. A plump cluster of grapes falls over his left shoulder; beneath it, coins imprinted with astrological symbols are raining down. Between his thighs there is a strange flower form, and in the center of the figure, at the focal point of procreative power, a sun is displayed.

Archetype—The world egg, the Uroboros, or the number 0 as symbol of original totality, or the paradox that nothing is something.

Astrology—Pisces in transition to Aries. On another level, also Uranus/Mercury in the sense of openness, curiosity, spontaneity, and craziness; in relation to Neptune as an expression of being guided.

Tree of Life—Kether on the threshold to Chokmah. Kether is the unity beyond all contradictions, and Chokmah is the positive, masculine power.

I. The Magus

Instinct: Assertiveness (will to act).

Goal: Self-realization.

Guiding principle: “I want!”

Light: Activity, strength of will, vital energy.

Shadow: Aggressiveness, egoism, misuse of power.

Quality: Drive, impetus, energy.

The focus of this card is a pleasant, youthful figure with great dexterity (on tiptoe) standing on the mountain of the unconscious and juggling with diverse symbols floating around it. His ankles are encompassed by a giant pair of wings (symbol of Mercury) balancing the youth in his enraptured, exaggerated pose. An enraged ape climbs up out of the lower region. A golden net of rays spreads over the entire card and disappears into the background. Behind the back of the figure is a triangular space left open, allowing a glance into the imagination beyond rational thought. The head of the youth is crowned by the turban-like figure of two snakes entwined within each other, developing into a winged symbol (Eye of Horus), with a dove (symbol of the Holy Spirit) in the middle.

Archetype—The procreating masculine or the heavenly father.

Astrology—Sun/Mercury in Aries. The Sun in the sense of strength and magnetism. Mercury in regards to agility and skillfulness.

Tree of Life—From Kether to Binah. “Mercury is the Path leading from Kether to Binah, the Understanding; and thus He is the messenger of the gods, represents precisely that Lingam, the Word of creation whose speech is silence.” (Crowley)

II. The High Priestess

Instinct: Longing for the inner sources.

Goal: Being guided, being touched, becoming one with the original cause.

Guiding principle: *Alma Mater* (mother of the principle souls), *Matris Spirituale* (spiritual mother), or the moon reflecting on the surface of the water as a symbol of feminine wisdom rising from the unconscious.

Light: Intuitive perception, spiritual wisdom, patience.

Shadow: Daydreaming, escaping from reality, moodiness, doubt, phoniness, existential dread.

Quality: Lunar consciousness, wisdom of the womb.

In the depths of the picture we see a secretive manifestation that holds a large veil. A fine mesh covers most of the picture, but collapses in the upper portion. The background reveals a part of the goddess loosening the veiling and showing herself to the observer. However, she still cannot be clearly seen since between her naked upper body and the eye of the observer there are “spheres of light” layered on top of each other and a three-dimensional lemniscate (infinity symbol) floats in front of her face. The crown on her head symbolizes the three phases of the moon: the full moon in the middle, and the waxing and waning crescents to the left and right. Behind this we see seven moon crescents. The highest transparency, however, is shown

in the elliptic-shaped lines that curve upwards, deepening the aura of the High Priestess in time and eternity. The lower part of the Priestess is completely covered by the net. There are a bow and arrow on her knee, symbols of the Egyptian goddess Neith, who was then named Isis of Sais. At the lower border of the picture (in front of the net) are various symbols: crystals, flowers, fruit, and a camel in the middle.

Archetype—The mystery of the feminine.

Astrology—Moon in Scorpio in the twelfth house. The Moon as an expression of our lunar consciousness, Scorpio as a sign of the power of the unconscious, and the twelfth house as the mystery of the unfathomable.

Tree of Life—The connection between Kether and Tiphareth. The path from Kether (“the eternal”) to Tiphareth (“consciousness and harmony”) correlates to Jacob’s ladder upon which the angels go up and down. The angels are symbols of the exchange between divine and human energy, representing the idea that is striving for form and expression.

III. The Empress

Instinct: Devotion and motherhood (“to open up and let oneself be penetrated...”)

Goal: Birth (“...and to create something new through the connection of the internal and the external”)

Guiding principle: Mother Nature.

Light: The positive side of the earthly mother: love, trust, growth, touch, merging, fulfillment.

Shadow: Stepmother or the destructive mother: greed, avarice, envy, self-indulgence, indolence, inflexibility.

Quality: Fondness of the body, sensuality, love of abundance, security, safeness, revealing that which is new.

The picture shows a crowned woman on a throne, the pillars of which are suggested by blue, serpentine flames. The observer notices the turned body: chest and arms are facing forward in comparison to the face and lower body, which are turned to the left side, contrasting her strong upper body (motherly strength), the rounded bottom (sensuality), and the blooming lotus (fertility) in her right hand. Crowley writes:

In her right hand she bears the lotus of Isis; the lotus represents the feminine, or passive power. Its roots are in the earth beneath the water, or in the water itself, but it opens its petals to the Sun. Perching upon the flamelike uprights of her throne are two of her most sacred birds, the sparrow and the dove; beneath the throne is a floor of tapestry, embroidered with fleur-de-lis and fishes. The heraldry of the Empress is two-fold: on the one side, the pelican of tradition feeding its young from the blood of its own heart; on the other, the white eagle of the Alchemist.

The two-headed eagle is an alchemical symbol of transformation and rebirth, describing the cycles of creation. It underscores the inner wisdom of the Empress that all life flows from the “sources of the mother” and makes its appearance (birth) when all of the prerequisites for it have been fulfilled. The pelican, which feeds its young with its own blood, is a symbol of boundless devotion and motherly love, even if this symbolism is quite easily explained. In order to cough up food for its young it bends its neck so much that the beak touches its chest. Since there is frequently still fish blood on the beak, its white feathers turn red, giving the impression that it has pecked itself bloody in order to feed the young on its own blood.

Archetype—Mother Earth, Mother Nature (the grain, the source).

Astrology—Venus in Taurus in the sense of fertility and growth, or the Earth as the true ruler of Taurus (in the horoscope the Earth is in exact opposition to the sun).

Tree of Life—The horizontal axis between Chokmah and Binah. Chokmah symbolizes the universal power and Binah represents the Goddess of Heaven, which shows the creation to be in a state of balance. Crowley writes: “Daleth is the path leading from Chokmah to Binah, uniting the Father with the Mother.”

IV. The Emperor

Instinct: Rulership (of the mind over nature).

Goal: Justice and order (as opposed to arbitrariness and chaos).

Guiding principle: The structuring red thread.

Light: Creativity, perception, stability, perspective, realism, objectivity, sense of responsibility.

Shadow: High-handedness, perfectionism, cleverness without intuition. The restriction of reality, rationality as a prison. Order as an end in itself.

Quality: Courage and leadership ability.

The card of the Emperor shows a mature, massive figure wrapped in majestic garments and framed by two large ram's heads that occupy the pillars or backrest of a crystal throne. At the same time, he is illuminated by an invisible source of light. His head is turned to the right. The crimson red mantle is embroidered with golden emblems, and there is a mighty crown upon his head. He holds a scepter topped by a ram's head in his right hand, and an orb surmounted with a Maltese cross rests in his left. The arms and head (from the elbows to the hairline) form an equilateral triangle, and the legs are crossed to form a right-angled T. His posture thereby corresponds to the symbol for sulfur, which in alchemy is the expression of fiery, masculine energy. A lamb and the double eagle of the Empress card rest at his feet.

Archetype—The father (the “controlled” world).

Astrology—Aries.

Tree of Life—The axis Netzach—Yesod. From anarchy to structure: from rampant chaos (Netzach) to fundamental strength (Yesod).

V. The Hierophant

Instinct: The search for hidden truth.

Goal: Knowledge and enlightenment as an experience independent of science and dogmatic religion.

Guiding principle: Priest, teacher, dignitary (representatives of spiritual laws).

Light: Search for meaning, revelation, search for truth.

Shadow: Intolerance, presumption, esoteric arrogance.

Quality: Belief, trust, illumination (guide to redemption).

At the central point there are various triangles set within each other, which we could call crystallized cells, forming the surface of the card into a labyrinth of time and space. Crowley called it the introduction of the birth of the new Aeon: the divine child Horus (see Atu XX). The complex geometrical forms in which the Hierophant is embedded are pentagons and five-sided stars, symbols of the quintessence and discovery of meaning. As a section from another dimension of time and space, as the flaming of sexuality in the pattern of repressed perception, or in the spirit of emotional untouchability, the dark goddess stands at his feet. Immersed in a beam of light in a brighter section of the card, she is the Great Mother who never lets go of her son. Crowley himself has associated the Hierophant with sadistic characteristics and thereby quoted the Devil who befouled the beard of God the Father.

There is a panorama of archetypal pictures around the figure of the priest: bull, elephant, and symbols of the four cherubim. In the

“snake of redemption” (kundalini), nailed around the head with nine nails like a halo, we find the spiritual mind that not only winds around the aura of his head with erotic pleasure, but also indicates the heavenly heights and presence of the gods at the end of the dove’s tail. Crowley writes: The symbolism of the snake and dove refers to this verse of the “Book of the Law”—Chap. 1, Verse 57: “There are love and love. There is the dove, and there is the serpent.”

Archetype—God’s representative. The pontifex is the bridge between human beings and God.

Astrology—Taurus. Crowley sees the Earth in its strongest and most balanced form in this card. This is why the throne of the Hierophant is surrounded by a bull and an elephant, through which the weight of matter is reflected particularly well.

Tree of Life—From Chokmah to Chesed. The invisible as reality: Chesed is growth and intensification, Chokmah the first manifestation of the invisible in the visible.

VI. The Lovers

Instinct: Devotion and unification of opposites.

Goal: Merging with totality; becoming one.

Guiding principle: Love as expression of totality and completeness.

Light: Avowal and free decision from the depths of the heart.

Shadow: Unattainable ideal of love, repressive neurosis, self-sacrifice, indecisiveness, inconsistency within oneself.

Quality: Courageous decisions.

The Lovers, a card of poetic beauty connecting the external form with creative contents, searches for meaning beyond everyday images within the veils of the Story of Creation and the Fall of Man. This

depth of focus is taken from the “Chymical Marriage of the Christian Rosicrucian,” where drowsiness drunken with desire is stylized into “being surrounded by love,” but behind which there is concealed a dozing off into “no longer existing,” corresponding more to the repressed soul part of dark spirituality. This card does justice to these circumstances by portraying one pole of the two lovers with dark skin color. In the middle of the picture we see the black or Moorish king (with the golden crown and red lion) who is promised to the white queen with the silver crown and the white eagle. This ardor of humanness expresses the attraction of opposites, the love relationship between man and woman, the striving to reestablish the lost unity in the universe: the condition before the expulsion from paradise. The corresponding Hebrew letter Zain means a sword, the instrument of division, and therefore a symbol of polarity. This is why the framework of the card consists of a dome of swords, beneath which the royal wedding takes place. Crowley compares the male and female rulers with acid and lye, with the inclusion of hydrogen and oxygen. The cloaked, powerful figure behind the two of them protectively holding its hands over their heads would, on this level, be the protean element carbon, source of organic life. Invoked by the great magician, visualized by Cupid, and materialized by the snake (around the winged “Orphic egg”), the Lovers could also be regarded as the materialization of the eternal, developing itself into the continuously new life seen in the two children.

Archetype—Eros.

Astrology—Venus/Mars (on a higher level Sun/Moon). The masculine planets Sun and Mars and the feminine planets Moon and Venus not only give insight into wishes and preferences in the relationship, but also show us our self-image as well as the image of what we are searching for and thereby describe how the union of the four should appear.

Tree of Life—The connection between Binah and Tiphareth. Crowley writes: “From this point of view, he is a symbol of inspiration (Binah), descending upon the hooded figure (Tiphareth), who is, in this instance, a prophet operating the conjunction of the King and Queen.”

VII. The Chariot

Instinct: Desire for conquest, spirit of adventure, daring.

Goal: The highest achievable good: the Holy Grail.

Guiding principle: The hero setting off.

Light: The forces setting off, the path that leads forward, the searching for and finding of one's own place in the world.

Shadow: High-handedness, megalomania, ultimate failure because of obstacles.

Quality: Victory over one's self: self-knowledge, overcoming one's self, victory.

The card of the Chariot shows us a charioteer in golden armor, absorbed within himself in a meditative pose (yoga posture). The entire power of this card, which stands out at first glance, generally seems to have come to a standstill under closer examination. However, even in the condition of repose there is still the expression of a mighty potential of power. It is a peaceful power that has gathered within itself and around its center, explaining the external condition of repose: the pull of the eternal (the concentric circles in the background), integrating human beings with all of their activities into the active plan of creation, and having its micro-cosmic equivalent in the perpetually revolving movement of the Holy Grail chalice at the center of the charioteer.

The enormous red chariot wheels are symbolic of the pure intention to act (I want!), relating the motivation to act to one's own actions. The four columns that carry the blue canopy (correlating to the night sky) are derived from the old worldview in which they support the sky, just

as the draft animals are four guardians of the heavens in the form of cherubim. This also shows that the movement within the card is extensive and goes in all directions of the heavens. It then correlates to the task of human beings to make the earth subject unto them.

The hero, who opens himself inwardly, holds out the Grail to the observer. Both (the golden knight is a reflection of the observer) are then given the opportunity to attain a feeling for the power of the center.

Archetype—The hero setting off; beginning of the search for the Grail.

Tree of Life—The path from Binah to Geburah. Crowley comments: Cancer is the cardinal sign of the element of Water, and represents the first keen onrush of that element. Cancer also represents the path which leads from the great Mother Binah to Geburah (movement), and is thus the influence of the Supernals descending through the Veil of Water (which is blood) upon the energy of man, and so inspires it.

Astrology—Mars (or Aries) in association with the Sun or Mercury. Mars as the symbol of assertiveness is connected with the Sun as the image of the will or with Mercury as symbol of the path of a mutual setting off of the forces.

VIII. Adjustment

Instinct: Perceptive will, finding harmony by mastering reality.

Goal: Taking responsibility for oneself, self-realization, objectivity.

Guiding principle: Justice and order (mediator function between idealistic expectations and earthly feasibility).

Light: Balance, fairness, discernment, greatest possible objectivity, reasonable decisions.

Shadow: Self-righteousness, hypocrisy.

Quality: Fairness, law, structure.

The fascinating, almost exaggerated picture of harmony, staged from its inner center and set into space, complements the image of the Fool and corresponds with the High Priestess. The Fool, who evades the contradictions of reality and flees back into the depths of the unconscious, is presented as the opposite of the trump VIII card. This card represents the completely controlled compensation that maintains this balance through concentration. We recognize a masked young woman standing on her tiptoes. She is adorned with the ostrich feathers of Maat, the Egyptian goddess of justice. The magic wand with which she balances her body is a magical sword that she holds between her thighs and turns into the ground. As she does so, her eyes are covered by a face mask. This means that she does not see the world externally, but rather creates for herself a picture of the world from within. The inner adjustment of the world is represented by two large weighing-scale pans, in which the “Alpha” and the “Omega” find their complete balance. Since these scales are also fastened to the crown of inner wisdom, we recognize how the entire figure is held by its inner balance.

Archetype—The judge; world harmony.

Astrology—Venus in Libra in the sense of fairness and balance with the “crystallizing” aspect to Saturn. This connection symbolizes the structure overlapping the harmony of Venus, which also well illustrates Crowley’s legacy: “Love is the law, love under will!”

Tree of Life—The connection between Geburah and Tiphareth. Geburah (movement) shows the course of time within which life “moves,” and Tiphareth symbolizes the balance between growth (Chesed) and destruction (Geburah). At the same time, it is a reflection of the higher divine spheres (Kether), which Goethe expressed in these words: “Only the law can give us freedom.”

IX. The Hermit

Instinct: Retreat from life, flight from the masses, withdrawal into oneself, introversion.

Goal: Truth, knowledge, finding one's self (disillusionment and self-discipline lead to clear discernment).

Guiding principle: The lantern as a guide; the inner light.

Light: Wisdom, enlightenment, emotional maturity.

Shadow: Narcissism, rigidity, hardness, alienation, bitterness, hostility towards life.

Quality: Inner depth and taking life seriously.

The card shows the perhaps best-known archetype of the old wise man (like Merlin or Abraham) as seeker and guide. The old man primarily embodies withdrawal, external repose, seclusion, and introversion as the imperative prerequisites for concentrating oneself on the essentials and on the crystallization of one's own personality. He therefore represents a phase in which—not distracted by the externals—we must become clear within ourselves, for it is his goal to devote himself to the inner origin of things and supplement the external knowledge of the Hierophant with that inner knowledge. Through his turning away from the world, he directs his interest to the origin of all things: to the world egg or “Orphic egg” embraced by the great snake Ophion. It is less a matter of finding the images dogmatically safeguarding the area of spiritual dominion, but rather of searching for the truth behind the images. This requires circumspection, concentration, asceticism, fasting, silence, withdrawal, going into oneself, and humility. The Hermit personifies powerful repose and inner concentration. Just as the Moon card—the cross-sum of which he forms—deals with the opening up of inner spaces, this card focuses on the exploration of spaces of consciousness. In doing so, he penetrates into the mysteries and into the deepest abysses (Hound of

Hell). In no way is this a matter of simple intellectualism. As Merlin, he is the servant of the Moon Goddess, whose holy number of three times three he bears as the ninth card. In his hand he holds a lamp in the form of an octahedron (having eight sides), its inner sun shedding light on the mysteries. The eight indicates two worlds flowing into each other. Eight-sided stars and octagons are considered the transitional form between the earthly square and the divine circle. They thereby show the utmost that we humans can achieve when we strive towards the divine (globe) from the earthly sphere (cube). The Hermit sees the secret of the origins of nature beyond its variety and lushness.

Archetype—The wise old man; the inner companion.

Astrology—Saturn as the “guardian of the threshold” or Saturn in Aquarius as the striving for wisdom and the preservation of independence.

Tree of Life—From Chesed to Tiphareth. From the thought form (Chesed = condensation, materialization) to the spirit of God. (Tiphareth is the perceptive consciousness, the longing for God—the reflection of the Kether sphere—transformed into the divine consciousness.)

X. Fortune

(Wheel of Fortune)

Instinct: Continuous growth and decay (eternal change, alternation, new beginning).

Goal: Acceptance of destiny, understanding the purpose in life, and the transformation of the lower into the higher.

Guiding principle: The wheel as symbol of the revolving heavens, the stars of which proclaim the fates of human beings.

Light: Unexpected turn of events (good fortune), perception of karma.

Shadow: Turns for the worse, fatalism.

Quality: Composure and high spirits through deep self-knowledge and acceptance of purpose in life.

The picture shows the (vertical) wheel in front of a background of energy swirls and lightning. The lightning bolts are associated with Zeus, who Crowley equated with Jupiter in this card. They emanate from the oval form (horizontal or divine wheel) at the upper edge of the card. The energy swirls are the result of its constant rotational movement. On the vertical wheel we find the images: Hermanubis, the shaping and initiating ape creature; Typhon, the destructive and retrospective crocodile; and, at the highest point, the connective Sphinx holding the polarities in balance. Together they represent the three energy forms that rule over the movement of events. These are best-known in the form of the three highest Indian deities: Brahma, the creator (Hermanubis); Vishnu, the preserver (the Sphinx); and Shiva, the destroyer (Typhon). This trinity that keeps the wheel of growth and decay in motion, makes it clear that heaven and hell not only battle with each other but also complement each other. The darkness is not the opposite of the light through which the light can

be avoided, but rather an aspect of the light. Evil is not what destroys, but rather what disturbs the balance of the cosmos. This can also sometimes be that which is good; and the good is not simply what gives life to the creation, but rather what keeps the creative order in balance, and this also includes destruction.

Archetype—Destiny.

Astrology—Saturn, Uranus, Neptune, and Pluto. The lords of karma!

Tree of Life—The axis Chesed-Netzach. Chesed means the realization, materialization, and potency of growth, and Netzach shows the vehement power of passing energy. The axis embodies the free play of the powers only in balance because of the impeturbable lawfulness of infinite changes.

XI. Lust

Instinct: Energy, passion, charisma.

Goal: Joy in life, initiation, sexual transformation (changing the animalistic nature through loving acceptance).

Guiding principle: Taming of the lion.

Light: Strength, power, vitality.

Shadow: Weakness, lack of fulfillment, depression (aggression, perversion, and addiction as a result of repressed instincts).

Quality: High spirits and vital energy.

This card reflects a central theme in the life of Aleister Crowley, and at the same time symbolizes a motif from the Apocalypse (Rev. 17.3-4). A beast with the number 666 is mentioned there, corresponding to the Antichrist, upon which the Harlot Babylon rides as the scarlet woman. Crowley identified himself with this animal early in life, and every one of his numerous lovers was given the honorary title of “scarlet woman.” The card shows her to be a woman enraptured in

the desires of the senses, riding on the back of a lion-like mixed creature. She symbolizes the sexual ecstasy pouring from every pore of her body. Her desire is more than just the presentation of naked skin, her lust is rapture and divine energy. No one can describe this better than Crowley himself: "She rides astride the Beast; in her left hand she holds the reins, representing the passion that unites them. In her right she holds aloft the cup, the Holy Grail aflame with love and death."

And he further writes:

There is in this card a divine drunkenness or ecstasy. The woman is shown as more than a little drunk, and more than a little mad; and the lion also is aflame with lust. This signifies that the type of energy described is of the primitive, creative order; it is completely independent of the criticism of reason. This card portrays the will of the Aeon. In the background are the bloodless images of the saints, on whom this image travels, for their whole life has been absorbed into the Holy Grail.

Archetype—The wild.

Astrology—Venus in Leo. The creative development of the libido leads to passion, desire, and erotic charisma.

Tree of Life—The connection between Chesed and Geburah. Chesed embodies materialization, condensation, and completion. Geburah is resistance, prevention, and war. Both are, however, in balance with each other on the horizontal axis. This not only means war and resistance, but also happiness through the power of life, as Crowley writes: "Lust through the joy of strength exercised."

XII. The Hanged Man

Instinct: Sacrifice and devotion (acceptance of destiny and search for deeper meaning).

Goal: Redemption, maturity, finding wisdom, the redemptive absorption.

Guiding principle: The yogi doing a headstand, the enlightened person.

Shadow: Standstill, resistance and self-sacrifice, being stuck, hanging in the air, not seeing any purpose in life.

Quality: New view of the world.

We see the Hanged Man stretched out with his head downward, crucified between life and death. The snake of life winds around his left foot, binding him to the ankh that appears out of the white light. This ancient Egyptian tau cross embodies vital energy. Head and hands, however, are turned towards the snake of death that rests beneath him in the grave. The background forms a lattice of small quadrants representing the table of elements, upon which all the names and symbols of the natural energies are listed. These quadrants and the crossed legs are symbolic of the number four, always an expression of earthly reality. However, the circles upon which the Hanged Man is nailed have the symbolic value of the absolute and divine, just as the number three expressed by the three nails represents the divine. This then reflects the most common form of the crucifix, where Jesus is nailed to the cross with three nails: the divine (3) is nailed to the earthly suffering (4), hung between the human basic values of life and death. The sense of this sacrifice is redemption. On the level of depth psychology, the ego sacrifices itself in order to be resurrected in the divine self. The indispensable experience for this transformation is the encounter with death (the following card), the central theme of the initiation rites of all mystery cults. The insight into one's own

narrow limitation allows the ego to become modest and entrust guidance to the Higher Self.

Archetype—The hanged god; the sacrifice.

Astrology—Uranus, Neptune, and the twelfth house. Uranus as the abolition and reversal, Neptune in the sense of sacrifice and enlightenment, and the twelfth house as a symbol of the transformation through isolation and deep insight.

Tree of Life—The path from Geburah to Hod. The way out of the impediment (Geburah), based upon the socially accepted patterns of behavior not wanting to be destroyed through new insights, leads to the birth of the self through a visionary reaction that turns everything upside down (Hod).

XIII. Death

Instinct: Dying and becoming, growing and decaying.

Goal: Transformation.

Guiding principle: The great letting go (death).

Light: Making room for the new.

Shadow: Fear (fear of death).

Quality: Inner wisdom; consistency.

The card shows the dance of death that embodies the eternal cycle of the “dying and growing” principle in its interplay. We see a kneeling skeleton wielding a scythe and harvesting all the withered forms that have fallen through fate’s woven pattern. The separation of the mortal threads lets bubbles rise up out of the muddy cesspool where new life is germinating. It climbs up on the threads of time like shining cotton swabs, continuously expanding itself into new formations of time and space. Death itself creates them by stirring them up out of the slag of the unfathomable. This instinctual drive of the eternal is symbolized

by a scorpion with a poisonous stinger, brooding between two dead swamp flowers, the lotus and the lily. Together with the snake, fish, and eagle it is a symbol of resurrection. The Teutons knew from their god Odin that he could take astral trips into distant, afterlife worlds if he changed his form before doing so. His body then lay there as if it was asleep or dead. However, he himself had turned into a bird or a wild animal (corresponding here to the perilousness of the scorpion), a fish, or snake. According to Crowley, this card illustrates the idea of putrefaction, the rotting fermentation in the alchemical process, which is the prerequisite and basis for new life or for a new push in development.

Archetype—The departure; death.

Astrology—Saturn in the eighth house. The planet of limitations, separation, and departure in the field of “dying and becoming.”

Tree of Life—The axis Tiphareth-Nezach. Tiphareth describes the condition of the creation in its most balanced form, and Netzach shows the passing of matter: The axis shows the path of the dissolution of things!

XIV. Art (Alchemy)

Instinct: *Solve et coagula* (dissolve and bind): the reunification of that which has been dissolved on a new level.

Goal: The philosopher's stone (*ultima materia*).

Guiding principle: Search for the innermost core (of being).

Light: The proper measure (proportionality and harmony).

Shadow: Excess (conflicts, dissipation), tendency towards extremes.

Quality: Fulfillment, peace, harmony.

The alchemists called their craft “art” (*ars perfectionis* or *ars philosophica*—the art of perfection or philosophical art), the main task of which was to combine opposites with each other on a higher level in order to thereby transform what is base into something more elevated. Within the four elements (fire, air, earth, and water), fire and water form the most extreme pair of opposites, so that their unification signifies the greatest art. This connection, represented in the card of the Fool above his head, now moves into the center of the picture. The fusion of fire and water is, however, not just an external, but also an internal process. The connection between the Emperor and the Empress, still just a self-reflection (because they do not look at each other but only see themselves in the picture), can now be completed. This card shows the fulfillment of the marriage represented by the Lovers. The two representatives are now merged into a single androgynous figure, derived from the Greek Artemis. Even the bees and snakes on her robes have united themselves. Lion and eagle have gained in size and also exchanged their colors. From our own phases of transformation we know that such changes do not take place without pain. All of the dark and ego-centered thoughts must die

before the individual can be reborn like the Phoenix from the ashes. This is also expressed by the vapors rising from the boiling kettle as they surge upwards in the colors of the rainbow and flow around the shoulders of the androgynous double person. An arrow shoots upwards into the center of this stream of light. The robe of the figure is green, the color of nature. Behind it there shines a giant sun with the inscription: VISITA INTERIORA TERRAE RECTIFICANDO INVENIES OCCULTUM LAPIDEM (visit the interior parts of the earth; by rectification you shall find the hidden stone). The alchemists based the word *Chyma* in the alchemy on the Egyptian word *kemet*, which means black, and as *materia prima* was equated with the black fertile Nile mud, the dark topsoil of life, or the body of Isis.

Archetype—The guide of the soul; the golden mean.

Astrology—Mercury as the ruler of Virgo and the sixth house. Balance and harmony or purification and transformation processes (sometimes on the level of a sterile repression of instincts hostile to the body).

Tree of Life—The fundamental power of Yesod (foundation) leads in a direct beam to Tiphareth (sun). The result of the alchemical operation rises like a stream of light from the kettle (Yesod) and spreads itself into a rainbow-colored flower (Tiphareth).

XV. The Devil

Instinct: Strong instinctive and suggestive power, lust for power, but also the fight against evil.

Goal: Black magic, ritualized sexuality, ego transformation through group rituals. Reversed: the Inquisition, which burned people (mostly women) as witches in the name of God.

Guiding principle: The encounter with the shadow, the sum of unlive possibilities.

Light: Perception of the true, complete self. Lucifer as the bringer of light.

Shadow: Fateful entanglements, (self-) destructive drives. Hell, darkness, dark powers, collective hysteria.

Quality: The power constantly wanting evil and continuously creating that which is good!

The principle of darkness (the creative energy in its most material form) is portrayed in the center of the card as a rock goat (Himalayan goat) with mighty sweeping horns. This represents Banebdjedet, the Egyptian goat god of Mendes, which the Greeks identified with the lustful vegetation god Pan (son of Hermes). His facial expression is sly because he represents the shadow, the dark instincts, or that which is unheard of, as well as being a key to unused chambers in the sources of the human psyche: You are only aware of the one instinct, you never get to know the other (Faust).

Crowley writes:

He rejoices in the rugged and the barren no less than in the smooth and the fertile. All things equally exalt him. He represents the finding of ecstasy in every phenomenon, however naturally repugnant; he transcends all limitations; he is Pan; he is All. We see him in front of a tree trunk, which thrusts into the heavens,

symbolic of the erect member growing into the yoni of the night goddess. The two spheres represent a cross-section of the testicles, within which new life germinates.

There is an elemental force at work here, the dark pole of creation, dangerous but essential to life. This is also represented by the staff with the winged knob and the Uraeus snakes (kings symbol of ancient Egypt), the shaft of which penetrates downwards into the roots. Concealed between the bird wings on the tip of the staff is the Egyptian symbol of the winged sun. It corresponds to the light in the darkness (the open third eye on the forehead of Pan) that arises knowingly out of the depths: "For pure will, unassuaged of purpose, delivered from the lust of result, is in every way perfect." (Crowley "Liber Al vel Legis" 42-4).

Archetype—The adversary as the dark side of God.

Astrology—Saturn's heirs in their forms of expression as dark powers (Pluto in the eleventh house or Uranus in the eighth house).

Tree of Life—The axis Tiphareth-Hod (with the predominance on Hod). We feel ourselves trapped in the compulsive structures of Hod and if our inner middle is our goal (Tiphareth = harmony), then we must place the experiences of the Devil, which confront us with the baser instincts in our own psyche, between the two Sephiroth.

XVI. The Tower

Instinct: Destruction of form, nullification and upheaval of values.

Goal: The truth, enlightenment or perception that strikes like lightning and destroys falseness and rigid ideas.

Guiding principle: “The eye of God” (lightning-like enlightenment).

Light: Overcoming one’s self (setting the soul free).

Shadow: Blind destruction.

Quality: Breaking open encrustations; passing through the pain to a new birth (every ending is a new beginning!).

The Tower stands for hardening and encrustations of the human soul or for a consciousness that has become stuck in rigid ideas. In contrast, lightning and fire embody the bursting power breaking down old boundaries or standards. The figures falling from the Tower have taken on geometric (uniform) shapes, which represent their being paralyzed by the external pressure to produce results. The eye of Horus shining upon everything corresponds to the Eye of Shiva, the opening of which would destroy the universe. Closest to the eye we see a dove carrying an olive branch in its beak, standing in opposition to the lion-serpent, an ancient Egyptian and Gnostic symbol protecting against evil. Every collapse can prove to be beneficial, in as far as the destruction is accepted as an opportunity for renewal.

Archetype—Lightning; upheaval.

Astrology—Saturn/Uranus (flaming perception) as the sudden eruption of encrustations and the related destruction of old values.

Tree of Life—From the flowing that lacks in contour and structure (Netzach) to the exaggerated, detail-obsessed structure of Hod. Between the imbalance of Netzach and the imbalance of Hod, the

breaking of the polarized matter must be reckoned with. However, it is precisely through destruction that this is frequently psychically transformed into a “higher balance.”

XVII. The Star

Instinct: Devotion to the moment.

Goal: Spiritual introspection, insight into the perfection of the cosmos, renewal, and rebirth.

Guiding principle: Star of Bethlehem (trust in a higher order).

Light: Creative hope (maintaining a conception of what is possible).

Shadow: Destructive hope (denial of the truth), illusion.

Quality: Carefreeness, trust in the future.

The Star is the card touching the longing in the depths of our unconscious, and this longing is equivalent to the longing of life for itself. For in the water of the unconscious that Nut or Isis pours over herself we recognize the spiral-formed energy around the seven-pointed star, which is an exact representation of the even-pointed star in the great firmament. We therefore see the creative impulse of the eternal in the waters of life, responsible for the births of humanity as well as the birth of the universe. This creative impulse is not only the original symbol of life, but also the hope that out of the rubble (the Tower) new life will grow time and again. The entire card is a vision of indescribable power, which we call the principle of eternal renewal. It marks a return to the fundamentals in which we recognize ourselves as part of the greater whole, and this greater whole is the impulse of life itself.

Archetype—The water of life.

Astrology—Jupiter in Aquarius (eleventh house) in the sense of

confidence and farsightedness, or Venus in Pisces (twelfth house) as an expression of longing for the unfathomable and the striving for God.

Tree of Life—Chokmah-Tiphareth: Chokmah's indescribable vision shimmers through the face of Tiphareth, in which the reflection of the indescribable is expressed, but this time as an inner vision. Chokmah (wisdom) stands for the first manifestation of the divine in contact with the psychical reality; Tiphareth (harmony) describes the condition of balance and is at the same time a reflection of the star plane (Kether sphere).

XVIII. The Moon

Instinct: Descent into the underworld, journey into the unconscious depths.

Goal: The eerie path into the depths of the soul, confrontation with the night, encounter with fears. Deepest self-knowledge.

Guiding principle: The scarab as symbol of the sun in the darkness.

Light: Devotion to intuitive knowledge.

Shadow: Illusion, hysteria, persecution complex, hallucinations, fear, drug abuse, flight from reality.

Quality: Mirror of the soul, or bridge between the inner and outer world.

The secretive Moon, connection between the unconscious desire (the Star) and the conscious striving (the Sun) encounters us as an axis between the inner and outer world. On the spiritual level it is the storyteller describing the image world of the soul. In the lower third of the card, we recognize the murky waters of the underworld, the middle point of which is the holy scarab as a symbol of resurrection. In its pinchers it holds the sun, leading it to the sunrise. Its

light is connected with the dawning of the half-conscious world, for we see the circle of light extending into the middle portion of the card as the beginning of the path that pushes into consciousness between the eerie watchmen and the dark towers. The sun symbolizes not only the unconscious longing (between the births) on the threshold to the light, but is also the symbol of resurrection and reincarnation. In the design of the card, interesting in the sense of perspective (the lower part is two-dimensional, the upper is spatially structured), we find the “bringing into relationship” of the inner with the outer world; and in the path winding out of the inner light (beneath the threshold) into the outer light of grace, we see the inner longing on the path to consciousness (the Sun) portrayed.

Archetype—The night.

Astrology—The Moon in Scorpio as dark knowledge of the depths of the soul; the Sun in the eighth house as descent into the underworld.

Tree of Life—The connection between Netzach and Malkuth. Crowley had the following comment about these spheres: The Moon, partaking as she does of the highest and the lowest, and filling all the space between, is the most universal of the Planets. In her higher aspect, she occupies the place of the Link between the human and the divine, as shown in Atu II (the Hierophant). In this trump, her lowest avatar, she joins the earthy sphere of Netzach with Malkuth, the culmination in matter of all superior forms.

XIX. The Sun

Instinct: Striving for the light.

Goal: Reconciliation with the shadow side and realization of the innermost (highest) self.

Guiding principle: The Sun as source of all life: as the generous principle that unconditionally spends all of its energy.

Light: Vivacity, acceptance of life, vitality, generosity, warmth, freshness, self-confidence.

Shadow: Self-satisfaction, personality cult, delusions of grandeur (blinding, scorching, parching).

Quality: The ascent to the light.

The Sun shining upon everything is an image of flames as a symbol of the power of life. It is the hub of creation, the rays of which penetrate everything and upon whose wings the human being can let himself be carried beyond himself, for his inner sun has here become the external source of light streaming through all levels. It also represents the enlightening powers of consciousness with which we achieve clarity and can overcome troubles, irritations, and uncanny fears. The nightmares of the previous card have receded, because the Sun is the power that constantly gives of itself without limitations or conditions, its light and warmth helping us to surmount our shadow. A rose blossoms in its innermost part as a symbol of the fusion with the light. The Sun as the center of the zodiac is symbolic of the divine ego. It is the goal of our journey to our selves and represents the conscious portion of the unfathomable mystery of life. Just as Apollo, the Sun God, was born of Latona, Mother Night, the butterfly-winged children have been created by the connection between day and night, from the red of the morning sky that greets the rising Sun. The blazing heat can, however, also scorch; we see this in the green hill, the top of which is enclosed by a red wall. It is dangerous to cross it without proper initiation.

XX. The Aeon

Instinct: Birth, renewal, awakening.

Goal: Realization of utopia.

Guiding principle: Cosmic renewal; birth of the new.

Light: Recognition of the great correlations, expanded perception and liberation of previously concealed abilities.

Shadow: False identification, self-delusion, megalomania.

Quality: Transformation.

The Star Goddess Nut, called “symbol of unlimited possibilities” by Crowley, in contrast to the seductive form of the “star fairy,” is not represented in the form of a figure here “but rather as a part of the heavens. The goddess of the heavens shows herself spatially as the luminous blue framing of an upside-down egg of light.” This characteristic nature corresponds to her hieroglyph, which at the same time means uterus or jug. According to Crowley, the egg of light that is upside-down and winged symbolizes the mate of Nut, whom he calls Hadit, the ubiquitous point of view: “He is represented by a globe of fire, signifying eternal energy; winged, to show his power of Going.” Departing from the common tradition, Crowley ascribes the child Harpokrates (= Horus the child) standing in the foreground to the linkage of Nut and Hadit. However, this child embodies not only the connection between concept (Hadit) and possibility (Nut) but is at the same time a longitudinal section through time, a connection between past and future). This is seen in the reduced but well-focused figure of Haroeris (Horus the elder) in the background, who rises up out of the past into the still undecided present, which in turn can become the future. The double deity Horus is on a deeper level a symbol for the beginning that creates itself from the end, and for the end that germinates in the beginning: the nature of time.

Archetype—Phoenix rising out of the ashes; the birth of the divine child.

Astrology—Jupiter/Saturn (“the disciplined vision”) in Aquarius as expression of the liberation and redemption.

Tree of Life—The path from Hod to Malkuth. The rational striving (Hod) exhausts itself in the earthly material level of Malkuth. At the same time, however, the spirit of the divine rises as a sign of the return to the spheres of the eternal.

XXI. The Universe

Instinct: Cosmic unification (symbiosis of Eros and spirituality).

Goal: Wholeness, completion.

Guiding principle: Paradise regained.

Light: Resolution of constraints, conclusion of karma.

Shadow: The street to nowhere, deceptive world of appearances, endogenous depressions.

Quality: Completion and return home (the wayfarer in front of the throne of God).

In the center of the card we see the virginal goddess dancing with the snake before the background of the heavenly wheel, which embodies the eternal becoming and passing as the turntable of the divine plan of creation. She is the naked goddess Eurynome, of which the Pelasgians tell us that she danced with the snake Ophion at the beginning of time and brought forth the world egg. Just as her dance constantly leads to new figures replacing what immediately preceded them and letting it disappear, so is all life subject to a continual process of transformation. The four cherubim in the corners of the card carry the opened cosmic vulva—or the Eye of Shiva. When considered from the horizontal viewpoint—from which a new

cosmos emerges, the closing of the eye also destroys the creation again. Equivalent to this is the opened eye at the upper edge of the circle throwing its light upon the snake. This last trump card shows us the goal, which constantly must pass again in order to come into being again.

Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth; for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and the sea was no more... and he who sat upon the throne said, "Behold, I make all things new...I am the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end."
(Rev. 21.1-6)

Archetype—The crowning of the hero; the Grail that has been found.

Astrology—Neptune (cosmic experience of unity, spiritual omniscience, the intermediate world of soul images) and Pluto (centrifugal power of creation, upheaval, spiritual will) as the process of unification through continuous transformation.

Tree of Life—The path from Yesod to Malkuth. The axis between the "idea of life" (Yesod) and the "principle of matter" (Malkuth) shows the "clockwork of the cosmos," which keeps life in motion through its biological rules (reproduction) and physical laws (time and space).



The 56 Cards of the Minor Arcana

Ace of Wands

The sparks of inspiration

Instinct: Energy, initiative, passion, willingness to take risks.

Goal: Self-realization, new goals.

Light: Courage, decisiveness, potency.

Shadow: Destruction through exaggeration, failure through arrogance.

Quality: Pioneer spirit—the ace is always to be understood as an opportunity that lies within us and wants to be put to use.

The picture shows a flaming staff (the “phallic” ace) as symbol of creative fire power that is the basis of all external endeavors as an invisible inner impulse. The torch symbolizes the inner creative power creating itself from itself, time and again rekindling itself on the world around us. We see an eruption of flames with power equal to the sun; this effusive violence can also cause its own form to burst when these energies are not directed into a constructive course.

Astrology—The fire signs.

Tree of Life—Keter (origin) through fire: the first spark of creation (Atziluth) as father of the creative idea.

Analogies—Adam, Prometheus, Lucifer, Zeus; “God created man according to his image.”

Image—The spark of the creation.

Keywords—Beginning, movement, development, power, idea, intuition, love of life, future potential.

Two of Wands

(Dominion)

The flames of the will

Instinct: Assertiveness.

Goal: Conquest and rulership.

Light: Impulse, courage to take action.

Shadow: Destructiveness.

Quality: (Creative) will.

The card presents to us the ambiguity concealed in every symbol. We see two crossed Dorjes or Tibetan daggers, which as thunderbolts signify the divine power of the destructiveness of good as well as of evil. They wear demon masks on their ends, expressing fear as well as magically overcoming it. On another level, the daggers are phallic symbols and show the procreative as well as the destructive power of sexuality. On each tip there is a pair of snakes, the poison of which can either kill or heal. The snakes connect life and death, the instinctual and the spiritual, and thereby proclaim the renewal emerging from previous destruction. There are six columns of flames darting out of the center of the crossed daggers, indicating energy and

strength, but also uncontrolled passion with destructive tendencies.

Astrology—Mars in Aries.

Tree of Life—Chokmah (energy) through fire: the spontaneous will.

Analogy—Expulsion from Paradise.

Image—The hissing of the flame as it ignites.

Keywords—Activity, masculinity, spontaneous power of decision; belligerence, impatience, little endurance.

Three of Wands

(Virtue)

The flames of development

Instinct: Creativity, self-assurance, new beginning.

Goal: Confidence, security, success.

Light: Solidified power and strength; trust, vivacity, and harmony.

Shadow: Moodiness and attention-getting behavior (overestimation of one's own energies).

Quality: Will and rulership in harmony with the cosmic laws.

We see three wands—two crossed and one upright—that have taken on the form of a blossoming lotus. The flames at the point of intersection form a fire star and represent the basis of creative energy. The visible exchange between the inner and outer awakening (garland of flames and flowers) characterizes the cosmic harmony of body, soul, and spirit. We find ourselves in a harmony that allows everything which emerges to blossom and thrive.

Astrology—Sun in Aries.

Tree of Life—Binah (form) through fire: the inner strength.

Analogy—God promises to Abraham to make his descendants as numerous as the dust upon the earth (Gen. 13.16).

Image—The bud (the sprout emerging from the seed).

Keywords—Animating plans, will to create, initiative, strong emotional impulse, enterprising spirit.

Four of Wands

(Completion)

The flames of things emerging into being

Instinct: Order (unification, completion, overcoming of opposites).

Goal: Control (the law of power).

Light: Completion, inner fulfillment, spiritual ideals.

Shadow: Overestimation of one's self, blasphemy, senselessness.

Quality: The inner order of the various forms of life as micro-cosmic expression of the cosmic order of creation.

On the Card there are eight ends of four wands (placed on top of each other to form two crosses) touching a circle; they therefore show to the same degree the completion as well as the limitation of the creative deed. This statement is underlined by the eight tongues of flames around the center. The eight-rayed figure is considered to be the connection between the earthly quadrant and the divine circle. It therefore represents the culmination of the human will striving from the earthly sphere (quadrant) to that of the divine (circle). One tip of the wand is decorated by a ram's head as an expression of the power of Mars, and on the other end we find a dove, the symbol of Venus. This corresponds to the balance between the sexes and the harmony of the powers.

Astrology—Venus in Aries.

Tree of Life—Chesed (condensation) through fire: the stabilizing energy.

Analogy—The creative order.

Image—The golden section (symbolic of inner connection between all creative things which are in relationship to each other).

Keywords—Concentration, stability, and summarization (energy + structure = foundation).

Five of Wands

(Strife)

The flames of dispute

Instinct: Challenge, tension, impulsiveness.

Goal: Release of tension (mostly through conflict).

Light: Proving ones own abilities (sporting competition).

Shadow: Recklessness (rash actions).

Quality: The settling and mastering of conflicts. “The dispute is the father of all things!” (Heraclitus).

The Five shows four crossed wands with the fifth one standing upright in the middle. Both of the upper crossed wands are crowned by the head of the Phoenix. This corresponds to purification through fire and rebirth from the ashes (see the Two of Wands). Both lower wands carry the lotus symbol of the creative energy of the Great Mother (see Three of Wands) causing everything in existence to blossom and thrive. The middle, thicker wand bears the uraeus sign, the king's sun-like symbol of ancient Egypt (Crowley speaks of the staff of the Chief Adept). In the Magus and the Devil cards, the uraeus staff symbolizes the greatest development (Atu I) and its chthonic roots (Atu XV). The staff is represented in the form of an Egyptian

scepter here, a symbol of highest solar power whose fork-like lower opening originally belonged to the shepherd's staff and served to catch snakes.

Astrology—Saturn in Leo.

Tree of Life—Geburah (upheaval) through fire: the opposing power or the correcting strength.

Analogies—The struggle of brothers who are hostile to each other (Cain/Abel, Gilgamesch/Enkidu, Parcial/Feirefis).

Image—Volcanic eruption or conflict as consequential release of pent-up tensions.

Keywords—Ambition, arrogance, destruction; comparison of strength, pugnacity, conflict.

Six of Wands

(Victory)

The flames of light

Instinct: Joy, optimism, victorious struggle.

Goal: Triumph and culmination, climax.

Light: Emotional warmth, sunny disposition.

Shadow: Presumption, excess of emotion, personality cult.

Quality: Belief in life, creative power.

On the card are wands of the lotus blossoms that harmoniously unite the Phoenix heads and the winged-sun disk with the uraeus snakes. Two groups of threes are crossed, and at their intersections burn nine luminous flames as expression of the stabilizing and flowing energy. This represents the spirit in its highest form. The spirit of God (Ace of Wands) is expanded with the material form and reflects the Creator

in the bringing forth of his creations.

Astrology—Jupiter in Leo

Tree of Life—Tiphareth (middle point) through the fire: the peak that radiates above everything else.

Analogy—The entry into Jerusalem or Nike, the winged goddess of victory.

Image—The light of the sun.

Keywords—Enthusiasm, trust, loyalty.

Seven of Wands

(Valour)

The flames of boldness

Instinct: Daring (attack from the defensive position).

Goal: Resistance against the external world.

Light: Bravery, courage, fighting spirit.

Shadow: Indecisiveness, ignorance, discrepancy between instinct (courage) and spirit (sense).

Quality: Heroic dedication of personality (daredevil behavior, rising above oneself, power of regeneration).

On the picture we recognize six wands, two with lotus blossoms, two with Phoenix heads, and two with the winged sun disc and the uraeus snakes; three are crossed with three. Their effect is to diminish and they form the background for a vertical, bent stick in the middle that has the shape of an unhewn club. This stick is the weapon of the hero (Mars in Leo) who wants to prove his bravery. Crowley writes: “The army has been thrown into disorder; if victory is to be won, it will be by dint of individual valour—a soldier’s battle.”

Astrology—Mars in Leo.

Tree of Life—Netzach (dissolution) through fire: the senseless resistance.

Analogies—David's fight against Goliath, Hector's battle for Troy.

Image—Duel under the sun; the red glowing fire.

Keywords—Challenges, difficulties and obstacles as well as the courage to encounter them.

Eight of Wands

(Swiftiness)

The flames of thoughts

Instinct: Ideas, movement, and (quick) communication.

Goal: Knowledge, progress, development (new paths), or digesting and/or processing old goals (problem solving).

Light: Flexibility, expansion, intellectual power.

Shadow: Vehemence, hastiness, superficiality.

Quality: Unexpected impulse; mental activity.

The card shows that the eight wands have transformed themselves into brain waves. They originate in the striving for freedom inherent in everything related to thinking: the urge for insight into the true course of things. It stands for overcoming the difficulties of the previous card (Seven of Wands). Crowley speaks of "The wands turned into electrical rays, sustaining or even constituting Matter by their vibrating energy." The two-dimensional square as a symbol for limitation gives way here to the three-dimensional octahedron, symbolizing the middle point between the earthly square (cube) and the divine circle (sphere). Above this body there radiates a rainbow symbolic of the spiritualization of fire.

Astrology—Mercury in Sagittarius.

Tree of Life—Hod (structure) through fire: the electrical vibrations (light) as the measurement of time.

Analogies—Hermes, Icarus, Pegasus, Prometheus. On the historical level, Archimedes “Eureka! I found it!”

Image—Lightning as a symbol of the electrifying idea.

Keywords—Spontaneity, versatility, thirst for knowledge, determination.

Nine of Wands

(Strength)

The flames of harmony

Instinct: Spiritual truth (the pressing search for that which is different).

Goal: “Marriage between heaven and earth” (unification of conscious and unconscious powers).

Light: Intellectual and emotional harmony.

Shadow: Contradictions, psychological injuries.

Quality: Cosmic networking (architecture of an esoteric image of the world).

The Nine of Wands have transformed themselves into arrows in the picture. They have penetrated from the idea (Mercury) through the brain waves (Eight of Wands) into the realm of intuition (Sagittarius), now reaching the original sources of the feminine. We see four arrows crossed over another four arrows, with their direction pointing downward as a symbol of integration into the unconscious (Moon). The vertical lance in the middle with its tip pointing upwards is the sign of the will to develop itself and thereby put into action that which is within us. Since the Sun reflects the urge of humanity to develop itself

in its creative power, it is connected with the uppermost tip. However, the deep secrets in which the Sun is grounded are to be found on the end of the lance representing the night side of the Moon.

Astrology—Moon in Sagittarius.

Tree of Life—Yesod (reflection) through fire: the spiritual fire as a sign of emotional abundance.

Analogies—The flames of the Holy Spirit or the Star of Bethlehem as symbol of inner fulfillment.

Keywords—Energy and tension created in the connection of the masculine and the feminine.

Ten of Wands

(Oppression)

The flames of self-determination

Instinct: Drive for power, (self-) righteousness, justice, and order (repressed aggressions).

Goal: Structured growth.

Light: Intellectual distinction of matter; crystalized deepening of reality.

Shadow: Dogmatism, fixation, authority problems (the unresolved issues of the father relationship).

Quality: Responsibility and self-determination.

On the card we see in the foreground the two dreadful Dorjes or Tibetan daggers already encountered on the Two of Wands, now having been extended into wands. However, although the others were connected with each other, these are separated from each other and form a defensive bar. The eight wands in the background are still crossed and indicate the enormous power of fiery energy, yet are

blocked by the vertical wands and cannot develop their life impulses. This is why the topics here are the rational processing of reality, structuring of life, and strategies to master everyday life. It is a matter of departing from pleasant self-delusions, from the dazzling illusions of the emotions, instead facing this radiant coldness of the crystalline mind that is often an initially bitter experience.

Astrology—Saturn in Sagittarius.

Tree of Life—Malkuth (origin) through fire: suppressed universal consciousness or the father complex.

Analogies—Jahwe as the hard and punishing super-father (symbol of patriarchal protective power of God).

Image—The fossilized God.

Keywords—Delimitation, rejection, ego-fixation; fear of life, difficulties in establishing personal relationships, problems relating to sexual drive.

Princess of Wands

The daughter of the fire flames

Instinct: Passion and sexual charisma (emotional extroversion).

Goal: Joy of life, love, high spirits.

Light: Enthusiasm, courage, beauty, power.

Shadow: Reduced intuitional grasp and ability to be devoted, sexual problems (moodiness, arrogance, and egocentricity).

Quality: Enthusiasm and passionate power of love.

The female form on the card characterizes the fire of passion as an expression of stormy, youthful amorousness. She is completely naked and dances in an undulating flame, reminiscent in its shape of the letter Yod. The flame symbolizes the blaze igniting male hearts, and her unclothed condition embodies the willingness for sexual

union. Her devotion, however, is ambivalent; anywhere she appears she causes unrest. She ruminates in the depths of other people, and provokes passionate entanglements without committing herself on an emotional level. The oversized feelers of her headgear (Crowley speaks of “the plumes of justice streaming like flames from her brow”) symbolize inner conflicts: the inability to have a true exchange concealed behind intense sexual desire. This is expressed in the image of the tiger indicating passion and a catlike suppleness, as well as the separation of instinctual drives from the life of the emotions. Seen psychologically, she personifies the sexual pleasure principle: the spontaneous, childlike impulse of giving way to instinctual drives without bothering about integration with the feelings. She is careless and insatiable in the choice of her methods of attaining her wishes; this requires a partner who can deal with heights. She is the master of a quick ignition of feelings that hiss upwards like a jet flame and envelop the object of its desire in blazing heat, at least until a new love is sparked. Then the old one is quickly rejected. Her emotional development is similar to the nervousness of a temperature curve. She is priestess of the fire that fans the flames on the golden altar of the libido (ram heads) and lets the energies flare up with a sun staff.

Astrology—Venus in the fire signs or fire houses.

Element—Earth in the element of fire.

Person—A lively, easily enthusiastic, and impulsive young woman who readily falls in love, but is also moody, headstrong, and egocentric.

Analogies—Adonis and Aphrodite; Amor and Psyche; the judgment of Paris.

Color of power—Fresh bright red, brilliant orange.

Stone of power—Red coral.

Queen of Wands

The mother of love and the sexual instincts

Instinct: Change and transformation, strong willpower.

Goal: Becoming conscious; matured love and sexuality.

Light: Independence, closeness to nature, dignity, and compassion (warmth, perseverance, loyalty).

Shadow: Intolerance, jealousy (the dominating woman).

Quality: Magnetic attraction and creative vision.

The Queen on her throne of flames symbolizes the connection of feelings that go into the depths. She is the mature form of the Princess, letting the “fire of the snake” rise on the spiritual level. From out of the “fire of amorousness” she draws the “flames of emotional fusion,” but on the vulgar level of experience she causes a “sexual conflagration.” The leopard beside her is a symbol of the drives and of strength. Her soft hand expresses a loving inclusion of the instincts in the emotional world of the feelings. The crown of rays with its winged lions head represents the potency of the creative power that we have already encountered in the previous card (Prince of Wands). However, in contrast to that energy that develops externally, we are dealing with an inner journey here (symbolized by the eyes closed in meditation). It is a journey of discovery into the inner regions of the soul, of which the external world is only a reproduction. The first-hand perception that love is the connection to the divine and sexuality is an expression of the creative will within us, and lets us enter into a condition of rapture bursting all of the limits of our imagination. In the fire of enlightenment, “when the soul loses itself in a wonderful ecstasy” (Master Eckhart), we experience ourselves as one with the one and only original power. “All you need is love,” is how the Beatles described it in 1967.

Astrology—21° Pisces to 20° Aries.

Element—The watery region of fire.

Person—An impulsive-passionate, dominating woman.

Analogies—Birth of Venus; God created Eve; Shakti, the elemental force.

Color of power—Pomegranate red.

Stone of power—Garnet; rose quartz.

Knight of Wands

The father of the creative imagination

Instinct: Expansion and vastness (claim to leadership).

Goal: The utilization of the individual potential.

Light: Humane ideals, intellectual activity (dynamic, ability to become enthusiastic, strength of will).

Shadow: Despotic nature, egotism, intolerance.

Quality: Claim of creator (becoming one with the inner images; identification with God).

The Knight personifies the fiery power of bringing forth the inner creative genius that is within oneself and igniting it in the surrounding world. This is expressed by the blazing torch in his left hand symbolizing new ways of looking at things to the world. His head (crown chakra) is decorated with a winged horse, symbolic of renewal and the power to head off to new goals, as he sits on the wild black horse rearing up in the air. The winged horse at the center of the head connects with the external horse, for the latter has the horn of the unicorn on its forehead, a symbol of tamed instincts. The horse is symbolic of the instincts; the unicorn in turn can only be captured when it flees to the lap of a virgin. However, the red mantle of the

king forming the flaming background in front of which he rides shows the figure that has creatively been brought forth out of itself. It is his karmic personal structure that has been woven into the background of everyday life, connecting the threads of his actions into the carpet of destiny upon which he simultaneously moves (“The traveler and the path are one!”). He is not dependent upon destiny, but rather is himself his own destiny, for the creative will of God is present in every part of him. As the mystics and physicists say in accordance with each other: “The cosmic law changes itself continually through the initiative of its parts.” The Knight of Wands therefore represents the “created creator” or the “creating creature” prepared to take on the responsibility for its goals.

Astrology—21° Scorpio to 20° Sagittarius.

Element—The fire of fire.

Person—The active man who pushes for development while being mature and benevolent.

Analogies—Zeus and all of the personifications of the Higher Self (God the Father).

Color of power—Red-gold.

Stone of power—Ruby; diamond.

Ace of Cups

The source of the soul

Instinct: Longing for union (affection).

Goal: Merging (devotion touching the “secret of life”).

Light: Receptivity, devotion, harmony.

Shadow: Vagueness, irrationality, hysteria.

Quality: “The mystery of love.”

The card shows a marvelous chalice (the yoni vessel) as a symbol of love and receptivity. It is thereby the feminine pendant to the Ace of Wands and represents the water element in its most feminine form as the ability to show devotion. Just as fire proclaims the creative power that “procreates out of itself,” water symbolizes the emotion of the heart as it “surges into the eternal.” The chalice is an image of loving openness growing up out of a white lotus, which in turn rises like a fountain from the depths and fills the chalice with the water of life from within. Conversely, the rays of light coming down vertically from above symbolize the creative spirit as it dives down into the “sources of love” where it unites with the rising spheres of the depths into that power that goes forth, originating in the collective unconscious and representing the desire of love for devotion and for merging with God. Crowley identifies the chalice with the Holy Grail, symbol for the highest good attainable by human beings. According to tradition, this chalice has a mysterious origin. Jesus and his disciples drank from it at the Last Supper. With it, Joseph of Arimathea caught the blood that flowed from Jesus’ spear wound after the Crucifixion and brought this relic to Europe. Since then it has been preserved in the legendary Castle of the Holy Grail (Montsalvat or Avalon). The wonder-working power of the chalice is renewed annually at Easter when the Spirit of God descends as a dove and sanctifies the Grail.

Astrology—The water signs.

Tree of Life—Kether (origin) through water: the source of life (Briah) as the mother of love and emotional devotion.

Analogies—The conceiving Eve, the Garden of Eden, the Islands of the Blessed, the Holy Grail.

Image—The sea of love.

Keywords—Boundlessness, freedom, blissfulness, light (the way to the heart as embodiment of the highest form of action).

Two of Cups

(Love)

The water of attraction

Instinct: Union of man and woman.

Goal: Emotional and physical exchange.

Light: Harmonious emotional emphasis.

Shadow: Disillusionment, separation, conflict of interests.

Quality: Happiness of love (balancing of the polarities).

The picture portrays two overflowing chalices in the foreground. In contrast to the previous card (Ace of Cups), they are no longer fed from within but externally. The first canalization (Chokmah) expresses the directionless flow of the original energy (Kether). The aimless love that was expressed as unimpeded in the Ace has now differentiated itself. The chalices are fed by the “split” lotus, from which a further lotus with two dolphins entwined around its stem, grows. (Crowley speaks of dolphins although they tend to look more like carp in the picture). The symbolism of dolphins is manifold. In relation to this card, however, its love symbolism comes to the foreground. Even the Egyptians already considered it to be the animal

of Isis, and the Greeks associated it with their love goddess Aphrodite, because the Greek words delphis (dolphine) and delphys (lap) sound alike.

Astrology—Venus in Cancer.

Tree of Life—Chokmah (energy) through water: the polarization of emotion and the principle of attraction that is then involved with it.

Analogies—Shiva and Shakti, the complete pair of lovers (the procreative and original force from which the gods and cosmos emerge).

Image—Garden of love (the arrows of Cupid).

Keywords—Love, sensuality, harmony.

Three of Cups

(Abundance)

The water of conception

Instinct: Procreation and conception (the receiving and returning of feeling loved by another person).

Goal: Inner-growth and fulfillment.

Light: Happiness (in love), joy, and harmony.

Shadow: Lust, hedonism, raw sensuality.

Quality: Fulfillment of love.

On the card we see three chalices made of pomegranates filled to the brim in the form of a triangle pointing upward. They are entwined by two lotuses with four flowers each. Every raised chalice has a flower leaning over it from each side, two of which pour their water into the lower chalices. In addition, the upper chalice as an expression of fulfilled love overflows its love into the two below it, which in turn flow into the dark, calm sea of Binah (Crowley), the spiritual original

source of fertility. The other four blossoms serve as a foundation for the chalices, one each for the two at the sides and one that grows out of the other as a basis for the center chalice.

Astrology—Mercury in Cancer.

Tree of Life—Binah (form) through water: the inner growth.

Analogies—The Muses or the three Graces as the light side of the three godmothers (Norns) who determine the destiny of human beings at birth.

Image—Joyful celebration (conception as an expression of happiness in love).

Keywords—Cheerfulness, bliss, and overflowing happiness.

Four of Cups

(Luxury)

The water of developed femininity

Instinct: Protective instinct, emotional strength, caring motherliness.

Goal: Domestic ideals (security, prosperity, emotional wealth).

Light: Love, feelings (emotional foundation).

Shadow: Possessive inclination (restricting another person through an excess of affection).

Quality: Stability of feelings and emotional domination (motherhood).

The energies have stabilized themselves—as we see in the balance of the order of the chalices. But at the same time, they have separated themselves from the source, for the “water of life” no longer flows from the two lower chalices back into the sea. The lotus sprouting out

of the water possesses a four-part stem upon which a mighty blossom thrones. It symbolizes the condensation of the Two achieving completion in the Four. However, to the same degree it also indicates the restriction because this stability rules out the possibility of a further development. The sea is restless, for the cycle has here reached its end point. However, the balance is (still) established through the stability of the chalices.

Five of Cups

(Disappointment)

The water of stagnation

Instinct: Disappointment and pain.

Goal: Parting, tears, new hope.

Light: Separation, disenchantment, great changes.

Shadow: Bitterness, desolation, remaining in the crisis.

Quality: (Painful) perceptions, new consciousness.

The wellspring is shown exhausted, the sea is dried up, and the crystal goblets are empty. We find ourselves in a condition of depression. The picture reflects the somber feeling of disappointment and loneliness. Scorpio, which is related to this card, suggests “in its worst aspect the putrefying power of Water” (Crowley) and thereby the alchemical process of fermenting transformation from which at some point life again germinates. The roots of the lotus shape a butterfly form, symbol of transformation to higher forms. However, this card first marks the beginning of the decline. The five chalices are in the form of an inverted pentagram, symbolizing the triumph of matter over spirit.

Astrology—Mars in Scorpio.

Tree of Life—Geburah (upheaval) through water: the fermenting putrefaction.

Analogy—Pluto steals Persephone and Demeter makes the earth unfruitful.

Image—The desolate land.

Keywords—Grief, despair, depression.

Six of Cups

(Pleasure)

The water of the joy of life and inner harmony

Instinct: Richness of feeling—deep and close emotional ties.

Goal: Emotional will and creative power. Balance and harmony through a return to the inner sources.

Light: Karmic rootedness, emotional (sexual) strength, strong suggestive charisma.

Shadow: Emotional imprisonment.

Quality: The inner center as the source of emotional power.

The card shows us stems grouped into a baroque arrangement with six lotus blossoms (Crowley speaks of a dancing movement), each of them bending over one of the six chalices. In its splendidly curved form we see the movement of a butterfly stretching itself in the light of the sun (represented on the Five as still in the roots). This is the new life that germinates from the putrefaction. The feelings are not portrayed as effusive abundance as in the Three or Nine, since the chalices are not overflowing. Yet in contrast to the previous card the water is again in movement, whereby the balance is restored.

Astrology—Sun in Scorpio.

Tree of Life—Tipharech (middle point) through water: the inner center.

Analogy—The Golden Age as an archetypal condition of paradise.

Image—The Mount of Venus as symbol of the mother's womb or the unfathomable wells of the Moon Goddess who leads into the inner world of dreams.

Keywords—Joy, fulfillment, and emotional renewal. Also wishes, memories, and nostalgia.

Seven of Cups

(Debauch)

The water of delusion

Instinct: Intoxication, longing, flight from reality.

Goal: Dissolution, stupefaction (“the search for the pot of gold at the end of the rainbow”).

Light: Warning against illusionary hopes and false promises.

Shadow: Lust, addiction (lapsing into the swamp of false pleasures), lies, and error.

Quality: The seductive sweetness of transitory joy.

On this card the lotus blossoms (Six of Cups) have turned themselves into tiger lilies and pollute the sea with their poisonous nectar (Crowley speaks of a “malarious morass”). The Seven then represents weakness because the balance is lacking, causing a corruption flowing from within to the external. Crowley calls this “external splendor and internal corruption.” He writes: “This card represents the delusion of delirium tremens and drug addiction; it represents the sinking into the mire of false pleasure. It is particularly bad because there is nothing whatever to balance it.”

Astrology—Venus in Scorpio.

Tree of Life—Netzach (dissolution) through water: “delirium tremens” or the dissolving reality.

Analogies—Circe, the Sirens, the Lorelei, or Pandora's Box.

Image—The poisoned apple, the enchanted garden, the will-o'-the-wisp, or the evil fairy.

Keywords—Daydreams, castles in the air, flight from the world.

Eight of Cups

(Indolence)

The water of resignation

Instinct: Renunciation, self-denial, resignation to one's fate.

Goal: Finding purpose and meaning in the depths of seclusion (spiritualization).

Light: Relinquishing control (letting go), transformation.

Shadow: Depression, suicide, self-pity.

Quality: Nullification of values; destruction of the form.

The indolent Eight, as a result of the poisonous Seven, shows a rotting sea whose last water is moldering in mud holes. There is the suggestion of a stench of fever swamps where contagious viruses lurk. Poisonous vapors rise to the heavens, and on the horizon a pale, sulfurous light is falling. The lotus is withered, and there are only two blossoms to be seen bending over the chalices, whose sides have cracks and the handles are broken. Although water still streams into the bowls and fills the ones below them, the fresh water is sucked up by the morass.

Astrology—Saturn in Pisces.

Tree of Life—Hod (structure) through water: the breaking of hope (phase of the decline).

Analogy—The fall of Sodom and Gomorrah.

Image—Dank swamps and cesspools, decaying matter.

Keywords—Melancholy and low spirits, contamination, swamp, congestion, or torture.

Nine of Cups

(Happiness)

The water of faith and the love of God

Instinct: The love that opens up everything: optimism and trust in the future; the search for fulfillment in the higher purpose of life.

Goal: The ideal of selflessness: resembling Buddha, redemption (Grail), or becoming one with God.

Light: Charity, inner and external happiness.

Shadow: Self-complacency, vanity, arrogance.

Quality: The inner profession of love; satisfaction and great joy in life.

In this picture we recognize nine chalices, all of them filled to overflowing. Above each chalice there hangs a flower from which water pours into it. The ninth card, corresponding to Yesod in water, reestablishes the stability lost in the seventh card (Netzach) and the eighth card (Hod). The chalices are now symmetrically formed into a rectangle, and Jupiter in Pisces is the expression of spiritual love and masculine devotion to the feminine emotions. Crowley writes: "It is the most complete and most beneficent aspect of the force of water. The wine is poured by Ganymede himself, unstinted vintage of true nectar of the Gods, brimful and running over, an ordered banquet of delight, True Wisdom self-fulfilled in Perfect Happiness."

Astrology—Jupiter in Pisces.

Tree of Life—Yesod (reflection) through water: the emotional depths

or the inner light.

Analogy—Amor leads Psyche to see absolute beauty.

Image—Eucharist (prayer of thanksgiving at the Last Supper).

Keywords—Love, joy, happiness, and fulfillment.

Ten of Cups

(Satiety)

The waters of completion and inner fulfillment

Instinct: Search for the path to inner completion.

Goal: Emotional fulfillment in intellectual ideas.

Light: Optimism, self-confidence, emotional warmth.

Shadow: Sentimentality, bathos, inner emptiness.

Quality: Longing for the eternal and the slow dawning of the end; the power to enjoy the culmination and let go.

On the card there are ten chalices arranged in the form of a Tree of Life. The strength of the Nine has not dissipated and the “Tree of Life” (lotus plant), on which the chalices hang like Christmas tree bulbs, gives witness to the intellectual rootedness in life, the inner fulfillment, or the mild dawning of the sunset’s glow. In the Ten, the work of the soul has been completed, and the greatest possible formation of the potential dormant in the power of the emotions (Ace of Cups) has been attained. The bounds achieved now begin to dissolve back into the unfathomable (we can see this in the instability of the chalices), and from the solidified earth (Malkuth) the feelings (the middle column) flow back into the infinite “ocean of love” (Kether).

Astrology—Mars in Pisces.

Tree of Life—Malkuth (origin) through water: the fruit of love or the

seed that sprouts time and again.

Analogy—The height of Atlantis with its foreboding of decline.

Image—The sun when it has passed its zenith. Or the Grail that vanishes again, and is eternally luminous but unattainable in life.

Keywords—Fulfillment, completion, (waning) elation.

Princess of Cups

The daughter of the floods

Instinct: Longing for union with the cosmos (divine union with the other; transcending sexual compulsions).

Goal: Exploring the inner worlds; fearless diving into the depths of the soul.

Light: Esthetics, fantasy, intuition, poetic charm, gentleness, sensibility.

Shadow: Misuse of love, deception, seductive spells, bubbles in the air.

Quality: The secretive, unfathomable depths and the quickened desires of our emotional and dream world.

An enchanting, dancing figure takes shape in a very transparent, cool light before our eyes. She has risen out of the water flood to bring into the world the archetype of deepest longing reflected in the irresistible ecstasy of her beauty and at the same time in the melancholy of her ultimate inaccessibility. We find the Princess wrapped in a flowing, waving gown with crystals that have formed along the hemline. She is the daughter of the inner world who represents the step into the external materialization (earth in the element of water). She dances on the foaming sea of the emotions and feelings in which a dolphin, symbolizing our perceptive and emotional world, enjoys itself. A swan with spread wings rises above her head (crown) as a sign of renewal

and rebirth. The turtle in her right hand is an embodiment of the protected inner world in the process of carefully opening up to the outside. The Princess symbolizes the exploration of the inner images and the deep diving into the unconscious regions of the self. It is as if she has transformed herself back into the source, in whose reflection all people encounter the image of their soul. At the same time, she is inwardly flighty and intangible; she is seduction and simultaneously the power to resist seduction. Something similar is projected by the lotus blossom in her left hand, for it is not the symbol of physical love but rather of divine union with the self. This is where the physical desire flows into the joy of the experience of deep relaxation and medial consciousness.

Astrology—Venus in the water signs or water houses.

Element—Earth in the element of water.

Person—An enchanting, scintillating, emotionally inaccessible young woman who is continually elusive.

Analogies—Mermaids, naiads, nereids, souls of the dead.

Color of power—Algae green, sea-foam white.

Stone of power—Aquamarine.

Prince of Cups

The son of transformation

Instinct: Self-sacrifice and devotion.

Goal: Connection with the Higher Self (crucifixion = “return to the father”).

Light: Love, sympathy, heartiness, warmth.

Shadow: Selfishness, lack of sensitivity, naivety.

Quality: Bridge between emotions.

We see a naked warrior with a winged helmet sitting upon a chariot drawn by an eagle. The eagle, representing elevation above the hardened condition of materialism, has taken the place of the scorpion here as representative of the water element (the liberated scorpion rises above everything earthly as an eagle). According to Crowley, this card illustrates the idea of putrefaction that is indirectly portrayed in the picture through the stagnant water of a pond into which heavy rains fall. The eagle is symbolic of the higher will or of that authority that knows our goals. It is the part of us extending into timelessness, which unconsciously leads us. By creating a bridge between the Mother (water) and the Father (the heavens), the Prince is the current that can turn the downward suction emanating from the depths to his advantage. By changing the regressive incest (desire for the mother) into an act of transformation and renewal (snake), he can reunite the archetypal energies (Adam and Eve). The lotus hanging its head downward shows that this step has not yet been completed. If it were to bloom upwards in full splendor, then it would embody the power merging the dark, muddy depths with the beauty of the bright heights. The Prince has not yet reconciled with the feminine (within himself); he is still possessed by the mating call of the Sirens (Princess of Cups) signifying the unliberated longings and wanting to draw

him back down to the original source. At the same time, he is already on the path to the Great Spirit, for the higher will (eagle) draws the shell-shaped wagon (“the eternal feminine”) liberated or unliberated out of the waters of the unconscious upwards into the “heavens of perception” (air in connection with water).

Astrology—21° Libra to 20° Scorpio.

Element—The air side of water.

Person—A charismatic, mysterious, and profound young man.

Analogies—Knight of the Holy Grail or other redeemers. Psyche’s redemption through Amor and her acceptance in Olympia.

Color of power—Blue-violet.

Stone of power—Lapis lazuli; amethyst.

Queen of Cups

The mother of the source and the inner mysteries

Instinct: Erasing the boundaries between dream and reality (the urge to cross borders and remove limitations).

Goal: Medial knowledge, inner wisdom (“ascending into nothingness”).

Light: Intuitive understanding, depth of experience (visionary sight, inner light).

Shadow: Vagueness, dreaminess, irrationality.

Quality: The wisdom of the feminine (the ocean of the collective unconscious).

On the card we see a secretive figure sitting on the water, drenched in a spherical blue light rising in elliptical arches from the original source, concentrating into a spiral form at the center of the top of

the head, and letting it appear noticeably smaller in proportion to the rest. The head is only partially visible behind the astral veils. Instead of grasping with the outer vision, we should much more sense it with the inner eye, for it rests in those mysteries concealed behind the appearances of the external world. The peaceful sea is a symbol of the unconscious, and in the mirror of the water's surface we perceive not only the collective dreams rising from the unconscious, but also the reflected field of power around the head of the woman. She is the oracle fairy who lives in constant connection with inner images, in order to let herself be inspired by her own depths and be guided by them. The heron to her right is a symbol of vigilance and circumspection. Similar to the stork and the crane, it is associated with the Sun principle. Yet, since it is at home in the world of water, it is the symbol for reincarnation. Shell and chalice (here the conch chalice) embody the feminine principle. The Celts favored the shell vessel as an object to put into the grave together with the corpse, because its similarity to the vulva made it a symbol of rebirth. The crab (Cancer) that crawls out of this conch chalice is astrologically assigned to the Moon and for its part is an expression of the archetypical feminine, motherly principle. The lotus blossoms here represent the beauty rising from the muddy source and opening itself to the light.

Astrology—21° Gemini to 20° Cancer.

Element—The watery region of water.

Person—A deep-feeling and unfathomable, sometimes also confusing, woman.

Analogies—The wise women of ancient times. (Moiras, the Three Fates, the Norns) Or the Virgin Mother archetypes of the Middle Ages.

Color of power—Milky green, smoky blue.

Stone of power—Jade, emerald green, and water opal.

Knight of Cups

The father of mercy and the inner enlightenment

Instinct: Self-sacrifice or renunciation of the instincts (detachment from the mother, desire for release from the erotic entanglements of guilt).

Goal: Self-redemption through renunciation.

Light: Intuitive understanding, sympathy, willingness to help, considerateness, wisdom.

Shadow: Seductibility, duplicity, instability, helper syndrome.

Quality: *Unio Mystica* (secretive union of the soul with God).

The Knight of Cups embodies as the fiery realm of water in our search for transcendental experience, redemption, and mystical union with the source, the Numinas, or however the language tries to describe what cannot be described. This association often has a paradoxical effect at first glance, because the water representing the feminine realm of feelings does not always harmonize well with the fiery energy of the King. However, when the water moves on a higher level (the Knight is carried upwards by the mighty wings of his spirit) and he enters into the eternal feminine with the eternal masculine, then the rays of the Grail in his hand shine from the merging of the water with the flames. From the Grail chalice there emerges a crab (Cancer), the cardinal sign of water and symbol of inner absorption, which comes to the fore, entering into consciousness. As a sea animal, it has a feminine-sexual significance like Pisces (expression of the life-giving and life-receiving power), yet its reverse motion and the concealed manner of life indicate the dark, inner mysteries. The chalice is the feminine vessel of transformation. The peacock at the bottom right corner of the card, considered by Crowley to be some reference to the phenomenon of fluorescence, indicates “Klingsor’s enchanted garden where Amfortas was made

willess by Kundry and overcome with his own weapon by Klingsor” (Parcival). It also relates to a sexual behavior that serves the satisfaction of self-complacency more than emotional-spiritual deepening.

Astrology—21° Aquarius to 20° Pisces.

Element—Fire in water.

Person—A sensitive, empathetic man who is often emotionally hurt and therefore has become profound (artist, spiritual adviser, therapist).

Analogies—Lazarus who rose from the dead, the dying Amfortas, or the tragic Lear, the injured Chiron, and all of the saints and guardians of the secrets (Grail).

Color of power—The resonance illumination of gases (the tail of the comet), or the reflection of sunlight.

Stone of power—Alexandrite, diamond.

The Ace of Swords

The roots of consciousness

Instinct: Mental activity (thoughts shared by feelings as the root of thinking, differentiating, separating, and organizing).

Goal: Perception, clarity, intellectual change.

Light: Objectivity.

Shadow: Restlessness, premature and subjective thinking, belligerence, hardening, weakness of will.

Quality: The ability of the mind to form and formulate ideas and convictions.

The card shows us a mighty sword pointing upward, piercing a crown. This symbolizes the mind desiring to thrust forward through

patterns of thinking to the eternal truth. The hilt of the sword is entwined by a snake and marked off by two half moons, indicating that the mind is more than just abstract intellect, that it is also namely the mediator of the emotions. On the blade the magical word for the will Θελημα (Thelema) is engraved, whereby the heavens in the background open and the gold of the sun appears like fire. Since the Sword represents the human mind, the sun stands for the divine spirit of nature. The golden crown consisting of twenty-two rays of sunshine signifies Kether, the highest principle in the Cabalistic Tree of Life. This picture expresses that the intellectual powers fed by the depths of emotion (Moon) can thrust forth to the very highest perception (crown).

Astrology—The air signs.

Tree of Life—Kether (origin) through air: the formative sphere (Yetzirah) or the foundation of thought.

Analogy—The sword (cognitive power) with which Alexander destroyed the Gordian Knot (the emotional entanglements).

Image—“...and there was light!” as expression of the creation becoming aware of itself.

Keywords—Openness, thirst for knowledge, purposeful thought, decisive power.

Two of Swords

(Peace)

The spirit of balance

Instinct: Dualistic thirst for knowledge.

Goal: Counterbalance through finding of knowledge.

Light: Reconciliation of differences.

Shadow: Unresolved conditions of tension (since there is a balance of the powers, the tension cannot be diminished).

Quality: Balancing justice.

In the picture we see two crossed swords that penetrate a rose. Since the first revelation of thought flows out of the bubbling springs of the archetypes (Ace) into the form-giving definition of the polarities (Two), this card embodies the calm before the storm (Three). It remains untouched by the external influences thanks to the balance of its inner opposites. On two small swords rest the Moon, symbol for the emotions, and the sign of Libra, representing balance. The two large swords meet in the center of the blue rose symbolically representing what is unattainable. The uniform white patterns streaming from this rose show how, despite the apparent impossibility, the dualistic mind can create and safeguard a balance of harmony and peace.

Astrology—Moon in Libra.

Tree of Life—Chokmah (energy) through air: the controlled peace.

Analogy—Hermes as symbolic of wholeness and the paradox of the self.

Image—Nature uniting opposites, including light and dark, feminine and masculine, the spiritual and the physical within itself.

Keywords—Balance, justice, impartiality.

Three of Swords

(Sorrow)

The spirit of dejection

Instinct: Grief, tears, helplessness, weakness, being at someone else's mercy.

Goal: Shrewd insights, even if they are painful.

Light: Perception, purpose in life, wholeness, and the present through renunciation.

Shadow: Disruption, separation, estrangement, and self-delusion.

Quality: Disenchantment, disillusionment.

The Three of Swords is a gloomy card because the storm breaks out and destroys the balance. Yet, since the storm ultimately comes from within and forces us to grow beyond our own form, as painful as it may be, this picture shows that a release of energy can be logical (right) within our own development. The green sword is the magical sword from the first card of this suit (Ace of Swords). Together with the two crooked swords it has here destroyed the golden rose, symbol of completeness, through a hefty thrust. The rose's petals fall off, and in the background a storm is brewing.

Astrology—Saturn in Libra.

Tree of Life—Binah (form) through air: the endogenous depression.

Analogy—The blind Oedipus.

Image—Drops of bitterness (cup of hemlock).

Keywords—Grief, sorrow, anguish, misery, distress, torment, worry, and pain.

Four of Swords

(Truce)

The spirit of contemplation

Instinct: Stabilization and keeping still.

Goal: Repose and peace (self-knowledge and renewal through the experience of suffering).

Light: Social justice, tolerance.

Shadow: Forced retreat (illness), isolation.

Quality: The lull in the fighting showing prospects of peace.

In this picture the tips of the four swords touch within the heart of a rose blossom, and with their hilts form the corners of a transverse St. Andrew's Cross, symbol of suffering and martyrdom. They thereby create a magical, dominating spatial form, a protected space within which the energies can be regenerated. The Four of Swords is the card of powerful inevitability, giving free reign to sorrow (Three of Swords), yet leading beyond it through self-knowledge and an understanding of the sense of the suffering. It is a time of painful liberation with subsequent healing, since the powers are concentrated, centered, and anchored into an intellectual vault of "being wrapped up in thought" through the position of the four swords (their tips supporting the rose heaven of 49 petals). Perception shows that unrepressed sorrow ultimately brings its own healing with it. The essence of this card is an inner concentration connected with the willingness to go through painful experiences in order to grow from them.

Astrology—Jupiter in Libra.

Tree of Life—Chesed (condensation) through air: the inner knowledge (the intellectual space).

Analogy—Barbarossa's enchanted sleep in Kyffhauser.

Image—The inside of the temple.

Keywords—The painful operation followed by recovery, recuperation, and perception.

Five of Swords

(Defeat)

The spirit of humiliation

Instinct: Passive endurance of the painfulness of a negative experience.

Goal: Recognition of one's own limits.

Light: Insight into the correlations leads to intentions of transformation.

Shadow: Harm, evil, turn for the worse.

Quality: Insight into necessity of giving aggressive impulses an appropriate form of expression before it's too late.

On the card the five swords form an upside down pentagram, the sinister symbol of black magic. The rose of the previous card (Four of Swords) has completely disintegrated and its 49 petals now mark the connective lines between the tips of the pentagram (hilts of the swords). This reversed pentacle signifies a precarious conflict, altercations, unfair blows, vileness, a curse, an aggressive phase of destructive thinking, or inexplicable things that the mind does not want to decipher and that directly touch our most primitive fears: the fear of loss, abandonment, being helpless at someone else's mercy, or deadly threats. Reality and delusion flow into each other and the trust in reality is increasingly destroyed. However, the white light penetrating out from inside the pentagram hints at the ability of the mind to accept the fright and transform even the tragedies of life into a fruitful learning process.

Astrology—Venus in Aquarius.

Tree of Life—Geburah (upheaval) through air: the fear of fear (the precarious conflict).

Analogy—Mysticism of the Passion (Jesus' humiliation and his being taken prisoner).

Image—Crown of thorns.

Keywords—Loss, fear, disgrace, betrayal.

Six of Swords

(Science)

The spirit of knowledge

Instinct: Search for truth (setting off for new shores and insight into the secrets of the world).

Goal: Balance between spirit and nature.

Light: Objective knowledge, justice, understanding, comprehensive perspective.

Shadow: Mistrust, skepticism, prejudices (for example, rejection of spirituality).

Quality: Holistic thinking; approaching the visible effects of the unfathomable.

In this picture the six swords are united into a hexagram (formed by two triangles pushed together), symbol of penetration of the visible and invisible world. Their tips touch a red rose in the middle of the heart that is at the center of the golden rosy cross made of six squares: symbolic of harmony and allegoric for the endeavor to win inner insights through external observations. This external striving (square) for the inner truth (circle) corresponds to the drive for freedom inherent to everything intellectual. It represents the longing for liberation through the knowledge of the inner laws of nature. The Six of

Swords embodies the scientific endeavor that has retained its respect for the mysteries of life.

Astrology—Mercury in Aquarius.

Tree of Life—Tipharech (middle point) through air: the intellectual balance.

Analogy—“Tabula Smaragdina,” the legendary emerald tablets with Hermes Trismegisto’s teachings of wisdom.

Image—The philosopher’s stone.

Keywords—Analysis, objectivity, extensive thought, creative intelligence.

Seven of Swords

(Futility)

The spirit of fluctuation

Instinct: Cunning or naivety and foolish trust.

Goal: Self-exposure or the unmasking of others.

Light: Shrewdness, slyness, clever surprise attack.

Shadow: Deceitfulness, intrigues, insincerity.

Quality: Craftiness (diplomacy), seduction, sorcery, or the “mercurial” amorality of the mind.

On the card we see six swords, the hilts of which are decorated with symbols of the planets. They are directed threateningly at a larger sword thrusting upward, bearing the symbol of the Sun, with its upwardly piercing tip embodying the penetrating mind. Its blade symbolizes the intellectual sharpness of separating and ordering, therefore making a clear and singular course of action possible. The small swords are the unconscious shadows of this power (trickery,

intrigues, shrewdness, untruthfulness, life's lies, and betrayal) that, when split off from the whole, turn against their own objective. Crowley calls this "a contest between the many feeble and the one strong." In reality, this image personifies our tendency to prefer the simple but deceptive answers to the true, more difficult solution steps. In the process, we try to fool ourselves and others.

Astrology—Moon in Aquarius.

Tree of Life—Netzach (dissolution) through air: the constant change.

Analogies—Odysseus' craftiness, Peter's denials, or Judas' betrayal.

Image—The Trojan Horse.

Keywords—Inner doubt and indecisiveness (fluctuation).

Eight of Swords

(Interference)

The spirit of restlessness

Instinct: Nervous disquiet and inner drive.

Goal: Insight into the total correlations (relativity of time and space).

Light: Variety of interests, dialectical talent, and quick intellectual grasp.

Shadow: Confusion and mental blocks (chaotic subjective or inorganic, rigid thinking).

Quality: Structuring of consciousness and memory.

The Eight portrays two parallel swords pointing downward, crossed by six smaller scimitars. The straightness of the two main swords is disturbed by the troublesome crosswise swords, indicating restlessness and confusion of thought (Gemini) that time and again distract people from the higher objectives (Jupiter). However, this is only a

matter of disturbances hampering or delaying the course instead of having the power to totally block the way.

Astrology—Jupiter in Gemini.

Tree of Life—Hod (law) through air: the restricting structure.

Analogies—The great eternal seekers and restless ones: Odysseus, the Flying Dutchman, or Ahasver, the eternal Jew.

Image—The Labyrinth.

Keywords—Fragmentation, turbulence, restlessness, and the wider the choice, the greater the trouble.

Nine of Swords

(Cruelty)

The spirit of the Inquisition

Instinct: Aggressive destructivity.

Goal: Despair, bleakness, and suffering.

Light: Fear as the guide on the path to maturity.

Shadow: Shame, guilt, terror, infamy, misery, hate.

Quality: Encounter with the shadow; martyrdom; the reign of terror by the Inquisition.

On this card we encounter nine jagged and rusty swords, all of them pointing downwards. The blood and poison running down their blades illustrate the pain and danger that occur in this situation. Tormenting fears, worries, or feelings of guilt penetrating into our consciousness and growing into nightmares are indicated by this card as well as real, external threats. Crowley writes: “Consciousness has fallen back into a realm unenlightened by reason. This is the world of the unconscious primitive instincts, of the psychopath, of the fanatic.”

Astrology—Mars in Gemini.

Tree of Life—Yesod (reflection) through air: the destructive trauma (the emotional shock).

Analogies—The Erinys/Furies, which are personified as pangs of conscience: Allekto (the unremitting), Teisiphone (the venger of murder), and Magaira (the envious).

Image—The nightmare, the curse, the Inquisition.

Keywords—Feelings of guilt, fears, “the demons of the night.”

Ten of Swords

(Ruin)

The spirit negating the will to live

Instinct: Departure, transformation, discontinuance.

Goal: Final stroke.

Light: Abandonment and separation as act of liberation.

Shadow: Adverse (arbitrary) end, ruin, catastrophe, violence.

Quality: Conclusion; end of a cycle.

In this card we recognize the form of a Tree of Life in the order of the ten swords. This means that the sword hilts occupy the place of the nine outer points (Sephiroth) and the tips pierce into the center point (Tiphareth). The tenth sword in the center of the figure, which has the symbol of the heart on its hilt, is shattered by the other swords. As it represents the center point and, in this function, the connection between above and below (the spiritual and material world), this card symbolizes ruin or, as Crowley says: “This card shows the disruption and disorder of harmonious and stable energy.”

Astrology—Sun in Gemini.

Tree of Life—Malkuth (origin) through air: the logical breakdown (the calculated departure).

Analogies—The Flood, submerged Atlantis, or the destruction of Pompeii.

Image—Solar eclipse, end of the world.

Keywords—Destruction, desolation, depths of depression.

Princess of Swords

The daughter of the altars of the air

Instinct: Impulsivity, tempestuousness, hastiness (the intention for the deed in a whirlwind of thoughts).

Goal: Self-realization (“the fixation of the volatile”).

Light: Clear-sightedness, insight, objectivity.

Shadow: Aggression, fragmentation, destructivity.

Quality: Rebellion, revolution (intellectual) renewal.

The Princess of Swords personifies the irrational purposefulness of the feminine power and represents the area of earth in the element air, “the materialization or fixation of the volatile” (Crowley). This young and irresistible life energy, manifesting itself in the energetic arm movements, is careless and too hasty. At the same time it is naive and innocent, comparable with a childlike self, corresponding less to the conscious will than the unconscious wishes, which actually encompass a greater part of the true goals than our rational mind. Crowley writes: “She stands in front of a barren altar as if to avenge its profanation, and she scabs downward with her sword.” This external attitude is in a certain respect a contradiction to the altar itself, which is a symbol of intellectuality, contemplation, and inner maturity, and generally indicates a spiritualized personality development far from all desires for revenge. Her combative posture is that of an Amazon (daughter of

the battleground), the sky and clouds are filled with anger, and on her head she wears a helmet crowned by the snake-haired Medusa. She is then a symbol of vehement impulsivity and represents the spontaneous reaction presenting itself directly into the world, the “inner child” perceiving the world through the right (unconscious) half of the brain. This impulse empowers the innate knowledge to not only react to surroundings but to also have a direct effect on them.

Astrology—Venus in the air signs or air houses.

Element—Earth in the air element.

Person—The youthful rebel.

Analogies—Amazons, Valkyries, Sylphs, or the priestesses of Athena.

Color of power—Sulfur yellow, ice-blue green.

Stone of power—Turquoise.

Prince of Swords

The son of the problem on the knight's move

Instinct: Erratic changes.

Goal: Search for perceptions and solutions.

Light: Cutting through bonds, overcoming obstacles.

Shadow: Hastiness, shortsightedness, destructiveness.

Quality: Inventive spirit (bubbling ideas and thoughts).

In the Prince of Swords we encounter the as yet unordered power of the thought principle, its unmethodical and changeable components, constantly moving back and forth between the goals without coming to a clear standpoint. This turbulence of spirit (the airy realms of air!) is characterized by the chariot. Its front side shows a double pyramid, a geometric pattern expressing analytical perception and thereby symbol

for the left (rational) half of the brain. The Prince is, however, incapable of keeping his thoughts going in one firm objective direction; this is represented by the winged figures that pull the wagon but do not obey the reins. Instead, they tumble around in all directions. So he jumps from one thing to the next and does not know what it was he wanted one minute before. At the same time, this card also expresses the intellectual approaches to new paradigms (leap into the Aquarian age).

Astrology—21° Capricorn to 20° Aquarius.

Element—The air side of air.

Person—The imaginative and the smart aleck.

Analogy—The flight of Icarus.

Color of power—Photoflash colors.

Stone of power—Pyrite (sulfuric iron ore).

Queen of Swords

Mother of light and divine wisdom

Instinct: Desire for freedom, self-determination.

Goals: Independence.

Light: Abundance of ideas and quick, perceptive intelligence.

Shadow: Calculating coolness, insuperable distance (the ice-cold woman and the phony).

Quality: Intelligence, wisdom, resourcefulness.

The Queen of Swords symbolizes the pure, extensive clarity of thought and represents the watery regions of air, “the elasticity of that element, and its power of transmission” (Crowley). We see a stern looking woman sitting on a mountain of clouds, her round breasts covered by a transparent silk cloth and dressed in a simple,

elegant skirt from the waist down. In the one hand she holds a silver sword, and in the other a large, bearded male head. This can be seen as an act of liberation through which she releases herself from patronage and subservience on the one hand. On the other, however, she is the woman described by Erich Neumann who “castrates the man in the area of his upper masculinity,” which means she silences him (in the area of the lower masculinity castration would mean that she refuses him). The crystals behind her head symbolize the flowing of ideas into the form; Crowley speaks of “the celestial dew, from which stream sharp rays of light”; the Sufis call it “the light of pure intelligence,” and the physicist David Bohm terms it “the potential of all things or the fundamental activity in which existence is based.” Above her (as helmet decoration) we see the head of a child as the symbol of renewal and creative life force. In it is embodied the spirit of the father set free as true inner wisdom through the innocence of the child.

Astrology—21° Virgo to 20° Libra.

Element—The watery region of the air.

Person—The cool woman who is committed to the intellect.

Analogies—Athena/Minerva (Goddess of Wisdom), Iris (rainbow), or Astrai (the one like the stars).

Color of power—The water of the air (rainbow colors).

Stone of power—Cut crystal (the divine light).

Knight of Swords

The father of perception

Instinct: Activity, astuteness, intelligence, thirst for knowledge, “the spirit of the storm winds.”

Goal: Intellectual strategies, keenness of thought that discerns things as they are and changes them.

Light: Enlightenment, scientific methodology, intellectual agility, good merchant mentality, eloquence, power of discernment.

Shadow: Too much emphasis on the mind, emotional coldness, biting and cynical criticism, dazzling ambiguity, fickle instability, the snare of thinking.

Quality: Mental power (intellect, intelligence, abstract thinking).

It is the Knight of Swords who explodes “the limits of the mind spontaneously” (Crowley), who represents the dynamic, imaginative, and objective dimension of air penetrating all of space. With a sword in one hand and a dagger in the other, he moves across the heavens on a wildly racing charger. The movement is so fast that he merges with the spirit of the storm wind and represents the “extended flame of the mind” (Crowley). It corresponds to the cosmic consciousness that connects everything belonging together, and in which everything visible is only a fleeting form that emerges and then again disappears. This air spirit stands for the stuff of which the images are formed, and simultaneously for that dimension of vision that would be in the position to comprehend the projections of a reality lying behind the objects of the visible. Yet, instead of exploring the truth concealed behind the projections, the Knight of the Air often wants to probe the truth with intellectual means, and overcome the feelings as projections of the instincts through conscious perception. We see this contradiction represented in the propellers on his helmet (symbol

of lofty thoughts), which carry the hero with his horse (animalistic instinctual energy) over the “ocean of devotion.” The three swallows symbolize the ability of the mind to rise high up into the air (perception). But since they fly just above the water (emotions), they are signs that the instinctual nature determines the direction.

Astrology—21° Taurus to 20° Gemini.

Element—The fire of the air.

Person—The imaginative, capricious man.

Analogies—Hermes, the trickster, and his “sons”: Odysseus, Sisyphus, and Icarus.

Color of power—The transparent blue of ether.

Stone of power—Tektite (decayed product of meteorite strikes, but also found in the surrounding field of atomic bomb tests).

Ace of Disks

The origin of matter

Instinct: The Earth energy pressing for realization.

Goal: Great happiness (the idea in physical form).

Light: Inner and outer brilliance.

Shadow: Materialism and stinginess as the vile side of affluence.

Quality: Wealth and power (the roots of the material as manifested, tangible forms of energy).

In the center of moving spheres—system of whirling wings and disks—we see a golden coin, the inside of which is inscribed with secretive signs. The innermost center of the coil is formed by three rings symbolizing the law of life, whereby it is only through the union of opposites (1 + 2) that new life (3) is created. In this we find the

“I” as the symbol of being at one with oneself, the unity, the world of archetypes, the world soul, the highest wisdom, or the source of all life (Ace). There is also the enigmatic and unfathomable “666,” termed the stigma of the Devil by many, but which Crowley himself considers to be the “number of dazzlement.” The three rings are surrounded by a heptagram, and these are framed by two interconnected pentagrams, their tips forming a ten-spoked wheel concluding in the shape of a decagon. This refers to the holy seal of the order A ∴ A ∴ (Astrum Argentum = the Silver Star) founded by Crowley. The number 666 in the middle relates to the great beast of the Apocalypse, which is equated with the Antichrist, with whom Crowley identified himself during his lifetime. The Greek inscription TO MEΓA ΘΗPION (To Mega Therion) means “The Great Beast” and was one of the many titles Crowley liked to use. If the number I above it is added to the 666, the result is the number of the Scarlet Woman who rides on the great beast, according to Crowley (see Atu XI. Lust).

Astrology—The earth signs.

Tree of Life—Kether (origin) through earth: the spheres of the visible form (Assiah).

Analogies—The great elixir, the Rhine Gold (Only he who refuses to give power to Love can force the gold ...).

Image—“Open, Sesame!”

Keywords—Power, success, the magic of money.

Two of Disks

(Change)

The power of opposites

Instinct: Change.

Goal: Transformation.

Light: Flexibility as the positive side of change.

Shadow: Instability.

Quality: Polarization (on a higher level, all opposites are only illusions or different outgrowths of the same energy current.)

The picture shows a huge phallic snake in the figure of the eight, biting itself in the tail as it forms the infinity sign with its body. This figure expresses the eternal exchange between two different, yet still connected areas. Similar to the polarity in the life and death snakes of the caduceus, this uroboros is a demonic-divine being connecting life and death, the animalistic and the spiritual, and indicating intellectual-emotional development, change, death, and rebirth. The two disks symbolize the original polarity, the fundamental pattern of the archetypal forces: yin and yang (feminine and masculine). As the expanding and contracting powers, the constantly opposing principles that together form a unity, they are portrayed here as two wheels turning in opposite directions. They show the truth that is the foundation of all being, that life constantly changes according to stable laws and the only constant is continuous change itself.

Astrology—Jupiter in Capricorn.

Tree of Life—Chokmah (energy) through earth: the polarizing vibrations.

Analogy—The uroboros, the snake biting itself in the tail and

procreating itself as a symbol of eternity.

Image—Heaven and Hell, day and night (yin and yang).

Keywords—New goals, new directions, the eternal cycle, the perpetually unstable.

Three of Disks

(Works)

The power of stabilization

Instinct: Manifestation through work; building up, materializing, and obligating oneself.

Goal: Development, recognition, self-realization.

Light: (Economic) growth.

Shadow: Senseless fervor; without direction.

Quality: Increase of the material (crystallization of the forces).

In the center of the card there is a pyramid of light on the three wheels of the trinity of body, soul, and mind (alchemically these are sulfur, salt, and mercury). The original polarity (Two of Disks) here turns into the three dimensions of our reality, in turn corresponding to the number four (symbolized by the pyramid made of triangles with four corners). This pyramid is “in the great Sea of Binah in the Night of Time” (Crowley) on the ocean of the eternal from which the visible forms representing our reality emerge, yet without being the all inclusive reality. The three wheels correspond to the three circles in the center of the Ace of Disks that here unfold their power and crystalize the forms of reality from the inexhaustible potential of the original source.

Astrology—Mars in Capricorn.

Tree of Life—Binah (form) through earth: the condensed oscillation (the materializing vibration).

Analogy—The parable of the sower (Matt. 13.1-9).

Image—The growing tree.

Keywords—Growth, progress, gradual development.

Four of Disks

(Power)

The power of stability

Instinct: Security, fixation, stability.

Goal: Completion of earthly power through condensation of strength.

Light: Imperturbability.

Shadow: Compulsiveness, stubbornness, stagnation.

Quality: The strengthening and all-dominating power.

In the picture the disks are portrayed as the four corner towers of a fortress, from a bird's eye perspective. The disks themselves are square and thereby embody the 'fourness' as a symbol of stability and earthly reality. That this is a living system is expressed by the symbols in the four towers, representing the four elements: ∇ water, \triangle fire, \triangle air, and ∇ earth. The motif shows the basic structure of the earthly city (the human living space), built in imitation of the "divine Jerusalem."

Astrology—Sun in Capricorn.

Tree of Life—Chesed (condensation) through earth: the visible form.

Analogy—Daedalus, forefather of the Greek sculptors and architects (built the Labyrinth for King Minos).

Image—The fortress.

Keywords—Status, rulership, earthly power.

Five of Disks

(Worry)

The power of anxiety

Instinct: Will to change.

Goal: Crisis.

Light: Upheaval, change, hardening test.

Shadow: Failure, collapse, despair.

Quality: Increase in experience through growth crisis.

The card shows five disks interlocked with each other and connected by a driving belt. In the middle of the circles we find the five Tatvas (triangle, square, circle, moon and ellipse) called subtle elements in Indian thinking. All of nature, including human beings, are subject to them in a type of vibrational condition. These powers are clamped together into a nightmare in the form of a pentagram standing on its tip, waking the sleeping fears and bringing feelings of meaninglessness to the surface. There is nothing as depressing as the desolateness we encounter in this card. The Five of Disks indicates a type of inner fear for which there is no external solution. It can therefore signify longer phases of insecurity and crisis.

Astrology—Mercury in Taurus.

Tree of Life—Geburah (upheaval) through earth: the destruction of form.

Analogies—Job's crises, Egypt's lean years, or the locust plague as grounds for penitence (Joel 1.2-20).

Image—The atomic threat and the insidious destruction of the environment.

Keywords—Misery, deprivation, narrow place, bankruptcy.

Six of Disks

(Success)

The power of abundance

Instinct: Overcoming crises, material gain.

Goal: Harmony and profusion (land of milk and honey).

Light: Charity, brotherly love, patronage.

Shadow: Dissipation (the golden goose of the fairy tale).

Quality: Happiness and prosperity (paradise-like condition).

In the picture we see the six disks in the form of a hexagram, grouped around a circle of light. The six-pointed star and the hexagon are symbols of a mutual permeation and indissoluble merging. The six circles here bear the symbols of the six planets: Moon, Mercury, Venus, Mars, Jupiter, and Saturn, illuminated by the sun in the center. The card thereby shows the harmoniously balanced concurrence of these principles. The entire inner portion is bright because the Sun, represented by the Rose Cross, illuminates the aura and transfigures the spirit. Usually only meditation and contemplation, when our mind is directed completely inwardly to the Higher Self, lead to such experiences. In this respect the Six of Disks is a card of the inner sun powerfully rising in the inner East, in the rosy dawn of self-awakening, for in the center of the picture glows the reddish luster of daybreak.

Astrology—Moon in Taurus.

Tree of Life—Tiphareth (middle point) through earth: the material happiness.

Analogies—The legendary wealth of King Solomon; Egypt's seven fat years

Image—The sweet porridge.

Keywords—Generosity, understanding, tolerance.

Seven of Disks

(Failure)

The power of disintegration

Instinct: Inner emptiness; resignation.

Goal: “There is no effort here ... the stake has been thrown down, and it is lost. That is all” (Crowley).

Light: Confrontation with collective primitive fears.

Shadow: Deep-rooted blockages.

Quality: Waiting (the time of results has not yet come).

The card reflects a condition of disintegration; after the rosy dawn of the Six of Disks, the Seven has now wasted into a breeding place of ruin. Crowley writes: “The disks are arranged in the shape of the geomantic figure Rubeus ☿, the most ugly and menacing of the Sixteen. This is of such evil omen that certain schools of Geomancy destroy the Map and postpone the question for two hours or more, when Rubeus (Mars in Scorpio) appears in the Ascendent.”

The growth is cut off here and we recognize a blueviolet shadow world in the vegetation in which the black plant skeleton produces the seven leaden death disks of Saturn, symbol of calamity without end or an unhappy ending not bringing redemption.

Astrology—Saturn in Taurus.

Tree of Life—Netzach (dissolution) through earth: the parched land.

Analogies—The cities that were destroyed because they turned away from God: Tyre, Samaria, Ninevah, and Babylon.

Image—Nuclear destruction.

Keywords—Epidemic, devastation, degeneration.

Eight of Disks

(Prudence)

The power of the overall view

Instinct: Conscientiousness and overall view, through putting things in order.

Goal: Recognition of detailed correlations.

Light: Self-discipline and weighing of details (economic methodology).

Shadow: Becoming paralyzed in formalism, not seeing the forest for the trees.

Quality: Adapting to the requirements of time (objective neutrality).

In the Eight, the order is reestablished, since the disks show themselves in an ordered pattern as flowers or fruit of a large tree rooted in the fertile earth. The chaos of the Seven appears to have been overcome for the fruit is in the form of the geomantic figure Populus ☶☶, the “doing in doing nothing,” “gain through retreat,” or as Crowley notes, “the waiting of the sower for the harvest.” The shamans call this the “strength through not acting.” Crowley comments: “Virgo is the secret seed of Life, and also the Virgin Earth awaiting the Phallic Plough and Populus, the secret withdrawing of Energy into the fallow Earth.”

Astrology—Sun in Virgo.

Tree of Life—Hod (structure) through earth: the gathering order.

Analogy—The parable of the weeds among the wheat (Matt. 13.24-30).

Image—The plate.

Keywords—Differentiation, order, self-criticism.

Nine of Disks

(Gain)

The power of growth and of external increase

Instinct: Material actualization, well-being.

Goal: Increase of affluence (growth as a synonym for material success).

Light: Joy, gain, financial luck.

Shadow: Avarice, deception, empty plans.

Quality: Satisfaction, security, material fulfillment.

In the picture we find nine disks divided into three groups of three, of which the upper and the lower six disks each show one of the six planetary signs. While the upper triangle, with its tip pointing upward, corresponds to the fire element and therefore idealistic striving, the water trigon pointing downward represents the depths of emotional experience and trust in the instinctual nature. If the background of the picture stands for the colors of the earth, water (green) and air (blue) are reflected in the merged circles in the middle illuminated by the sun disk (fire).

Astrology—Venus in Virgo.

Tree of Life—Yesod (reflection) through earth: the power of becoming (the principle of life).

Analogy—The wondrous increase of the fish and loaves (Luke 9.10-17).

Image—The magic table.

Keywords—Love, fulfillment, enrichment, happiness.

Ten of Disks

(Wealth)

The power of affluence

Instinct: Striving for gain, wealth, and security.

Goal: Solid foundation, dignified circumstances.

Light: Success and prosperity (solid ground under one's feet).

Shadow: Greed, avarice.

Quality: The completion of human goals or the peak of earthly happiness. This card is the culmination of the Disk suit and the Minor Arcana.

The card shows the ten disks as coins manifested in the structure of a Tree of Life, and thereby demonstrates that they are part of a larger, organized entity. As the last of all the cards of the Minor Arcana, it portrays the results of a continuous development, the primordial energy of the Divine manifesting in Matter. (Crowley) This process begins with the Ace of Wands, the ten flames of which are also arranged in the form of the Tree of Life. The symbols on the coins are magical signs corresponding to the respective qualities of the ten archetypal principles that form the Tree of Life.

Astrology—Mercury in Virgo.

Tree of Life—Malkuth (origin) through earth: material fulfillment (the golden cage).

Analogy—The fulfillment of King Midas' wish that everything he touch turn to gold; whereupon the king discovered to his horror that even his food turned to gold.

Image—Gold as the material consummation of the creative spark.

Keywords—Possession, abundance, splendor.

Princess of Disks

The daughter of Mother Earth

Instinct: Search for emotional security.

Goal: Physical union: pregnancy and birth.

Light: Sensuality, love, and emotional warmth.

Shadow: Hedonism, indolence, sentimentality.

Quality: Renewal, growth, and motherhood (the productive or creative and nourishing aspects from the contact with the Great Goddess, the Mother Earth).

In the Priestess of the Earth we encounter awakening feminine yearning for fusion and its form-giving creative power longing to let something come into existence in the world: the principle of pregnancy (we recognize her curved belly on the card). The tip of her spear that, penetrating deep into the Earth, has transformed into a diamond symbolizes “the birth of the highest and purest light in the deepest and darkest of the Elements”. (Crowley) The spear, about to penetrate the Earth, shows the act of physical union as diving down into the inner center, in that earthy darkness where eternal life germinates. The altar in the background is a place of worship and sacrificial site of the Mother Earth. The meditating Princess of Disks is a priestess of the earth and grain goddess Demeter. Her horned headdress and the cape of sheepskin, however, also connects her with Artemis, the ruler of the animals. The flower in her right hand is the rose of the Great Goddess Isis. In its middle there is the Taoist ideogram of the polarized elemental forces of yin and yang, vibrating in complete harmony. The union of the archetypal polarities, as the Holy Marriage, was the moving climax of ancient mysteries and magical fertility rituals.

Astrology—Venus in the earth signs or earth houses.

Element—Earth in the element of earth.

Person—The (pregnant) young woman who is strongly linked to the earth.

Analogies—The companions of the virginal Artemis; the priestesses of Demeter, the Earth Goddess.

Color of power—Skin colors; light earth colors; Venetian red.

Stone of power—Rhodonite (manganese); moonstone; rose quartz.

Prince of Disks

The son of agriculture

Instinct: Diligence, concentration, and endurance (perseverance and great bodily effort with a ponderous, sensual temperament).

Goal: Stabilization through work (growth, perseverance, maturity, and success).

Light: Reliability, imperturbability, purposefulness.

Shadow: Stubbornness, phlegmatic nature, stagnation.

Quality: The pragmatist who looks at the nature of people when doing business and measures the values and unworth of thought accordingly.

The Son of the Earth represents the airy realms of earth and alludes to the Great Mother. With his team of oxen, he embodies the necessity of opening up again to the deeper sense of the old earth religions and thereby also to an ecological consciousness. He again discovers the religion of the goddess, which does not come to us from the outside, but flows outwardly from deep down inside through a form that is compassionate and connected to the environment. It is thereby capable, for example, of creating an economic system based less on competition than cooperation, in the use of

our enormous and often violent riches of creation that would not only be a “step in the right direction,” but also an absolute necessity if we do not want to continue to destroy the planet: for we have not inherited it from our ancestors but borrowed it from our children. The team of oxen connects him on the mythological level with Pan, the Greek god of woods and shepherds, who not only expressed the rustic earth but also the burlesque and coarse humor of Mother Earth. (His surprising appearance during the midday tranquility triggered panic-stricken terror.) The globe in his left hand embodies the visible, tangible world, its revealed structures are the natural inner rhythms that form the basis of the external cycles. The scepter in his right hand represents the divine consciousness or the Great Spirit controlling these powers. The Prince, who indicates a transition from nomadism to a settled way of life, is related to the hunting nymphs of the goddess Artemis and represents a libido that is close to nature, manifested through body and senses. (Feminists can also identify with his worship of the Great Mother.)

Astrology—21° Aries to 20° Taurus.

Element—The air side of earth.

Person—A tenacious, persevering, and reliable young man who sometimes also makes an obtuse and stubborn impression.

Analogies—All earth and fertility gods including the gods of handicrafts.

Color of power—Graphite, ocher, and red iron oxide.

Stone of power—Jasper (garden pyrite).

Queen of Disks

The mother of growth and vigorous stamina

Instinct: Striving for material security.

Goal: The family as a stable and secure foundation.

Light: Femininity, opulence, over-flowing fertility.

Shadow: Witch (embitterment, hardening, infertility).

Quality: Solidified emotional life, solidarity with all forms of life, matriarchy.

The Queen of Disks sits at the edge of the desert on a pineapple-shaped plant throne. She observes with interest how a river winds through the landscape in the background, making the wide wasteland fertile. This symbolically reproduces on a small scale that great, divine current of life flowing in human veins as the cosmic creative power, connecting time and space with each other. It can be dammed and diverted, but never cut off and destroyed. The desert itself represents deprivation, meagerness, disappointment, and loneliness. On the other hand, the oasis with its abundant plant life illustrates the succulence of reproduction and life. The woman in the foreground represents the mother of growth and vigorous stamina. For it is the mother who is associated with the principle of life, even if paternal sperm is naturally necessary. The impregnated woman symbolizes the “longing of the creation for itself,” for “God takes delight in himself. He also finds in other creatures the same pleasure that he has in himself—not as creatures, but as God.” (Master Eckhart) The longing for the divine is the basis of the yearning for the heavenly mother, connected to the figure of the physical mother as the first formation of the divine. This principle is personified by the Mother of Disks who manifests the Great Goddess in human form. Her armor of small scales or coins underlines her material

striving and the security that surrounds her. On a globe in front of her stands Amalthea, another aspect of the Great Mother and the goat that suckled Zeus in Greek mythology. The motive of the goat horns is extended in the curved giant horns of her headgear and characterizes the Queen of Disks as an intensely instinctual woman, as a force that produces life and at the same time still also preserves the libidinous energies that symbolically devour men so that they can be born again. The scepter in her right hand is crowned by a glass cube within which there is a three-dimensional hexagram, symbolic of the trinities of the spirit and matter intertwined with each other. In her left hand she holds the sphere or three-dimensional disk that belongs to her. With its overlapping circles it portrays the natural cycles (menstruation, seasons, etc.) as symbols of the eternal and aspects of earthly totality.

Astrology—21° Sagittarius to 20° Capricorn.

Element—The watery region of earth.

Person—An earthy, emotional, experienced, sometimes also severe woman.

Analogies—Gaia, Hathor, or the cult of the Great Mother (Magna Mater).

Color of power—The luminous leaf and fruit colors.

Stone of power—Chatoyant, hawk's eye, and tiger eye; heliodor (green jasper with red spots).

Knight of Disks

The father of the harvest and the fructifying power

Instinct: Striving for possessions, security, and tangible things.

Goal: Duration, stability, and eternal values.

Light: Endurance, reason, strength, and patience (strict, authoritarian, weighty, and tenacious).

Shadow: Conservative, materialistic, dogmatic, and jealous of what they instinctively realize is the superior state of others.
(Crowley)

Quality: The patriarch (“master of the natural resources”) who controls, exploits, and subjects Mother Nature to his own needs.

The card shows rider and horse as a form that is heavy, bound to the soil, firmly rooted in life, and having a direct exchange with nature. The Father of the Harvest and the procreative power represents the fiery, fructifying spirit of Mother Earth. He cares for the animals and plants, which is why he carries a flail instead of a sword. We could say that he has replaced the “nuclear warheads” and the “missile sites” of the Knight of Swords with his earthy instinctual nature and procreative power, embodying the heir of God’s creative nature. His black shield in concentric circles is surrounded by luminous sunlight enveloping the background in a soft sea of rays. These circles are a mild luminous aspect of the spirit that comes down from the Creator to bless the Great Mother. At the same time, the massive armor of the Knight also expresses the limitations caused by his all too earthy instincts, separating him from the spiritual sources of light. This explains his often short-sighted behavior when, for the sake of material gain, he plunders Mother Earth through the clearing of forests, over-fertilizing of fields, or catching fish in great quantities, or torturing her four-legged creatures and confining

them. However, the pushed-back helmet topped by the stag's head shows the expanded perception and also the inner need and willingness to grow beyond the material limits.

Astrology—21° Leo to 20° Virgo.

Element—The fire of the earth.

Person—The patriarch personifying security, order, and structure.

Analogies—King Minos of Crete, son of Zeus in his bull form and of Europa, father of the Minotaur; or Dionysus, god of wine and of ecstasy.

Color of power—Wheat-yellow; rich earth colors.

Stone of power—Silex (impure fire-rock), red-brown quartz (smoke topaz), and volcanic glass (obsidian).

Finding Your Personal Cards

(according to a method by Aleister Crowley)

From the 22 cards of the Major Arcana, you can establish which ones are of particular importance for you. This is a matter of:

1. The personality card, which makes a statement about the appearance, behavior and external effect of the person concerned.
2. The character card, which illustrates the inner nature of the person asking the question.
3. The growth card, which changes annually and distinguishes the growth theme of the year.

In order to find these cards, three numbers are calculated. The cards of the Major Arcana corresponding to these numbers are the personal cards.

The Personality Card

The personality card results when the date of birth is added together: first the day and month, and then together with the four digits of the complete year. A cross-sum is then formed by adding together the four digits of this number. This means that the four digits of the number are added to each other, resulting in the personality number. If it is greater than 21, however, a further cross-sum must be calculated.

Example:

$$5/01/1948 = 5 + 1 + 1948 = 1954 = 1 + 9 + 5 + 4 = 19$$

The personality card is the Sun.

$$7/05/1952 = 7 + 5 + 1952 = 1964 = 1 + 9 + 6 + 4 = 20$$

The personality card is the Aeon.

$$3/09/1957 = 3 + 9 + 1957 = 1969 = 1 + 9 + 6 + 9 = 25 = 2 + 5 = 7$$

The personality card is the Chariot.

The Character Card

The character card results when a cross-sum is formed from the personality card. In the above examples, this only works in the first two cases: $1 + 9 = 10$ (the character card is Fortune). In the second case, the result is $2 + 0 = 2$ (character card is the High Priestess). In the third case, the number remains 7 and therefore the Chariot. This means that the personality card and the character card are identical.

The Growth Card

The growth card is calculated from the sum of the day and month of birth and the current year. In the year 1991, for the above dates this means:

$$5 + 1 + 1991 = 1997 = 1 + 9 + 9 + 7 = 26 = 2 + 6 = 8$$

The growth card is Adjustment.

$$7 + 5 + 1991 = 2003 = 2 + 0 + 0 + 3 = 5$$

The growth card is the Hierophant.

$$3 + 9 + 1991 = 2003 = 2 + 0 + 0 + 3 = 5$$

The growth card is the Hierophant.

The Ankh Spread

This nine-card spread explores causes, backgrounds, and prospects. This system of laying the cards is based on the old symbol of the Egyptian tau cross, the ankh, symbol of life. It consists of a circle and a cross. In accordance with the meaning of the circle, the cards laid in this area give an answer regarding the spiritual background and the deeper rooted causes, while the cards on the level of the cross show how the problem is concretely expressed and with what prospects we can reckon.

A total of nine cards are drawn and laid as below. They have the following significance:

1 + 2 = Two current impulses, energies, or attitudes that block each other. (This naturally only applies when this card-laying method—as is the rule—is used to establish the cause of a crisis. If you want to ask about the background of a welcome experience, these two cards show what harmoniously supplements the other.)

3 = Early causes

4 = Triggering causes

5 = Higher perception

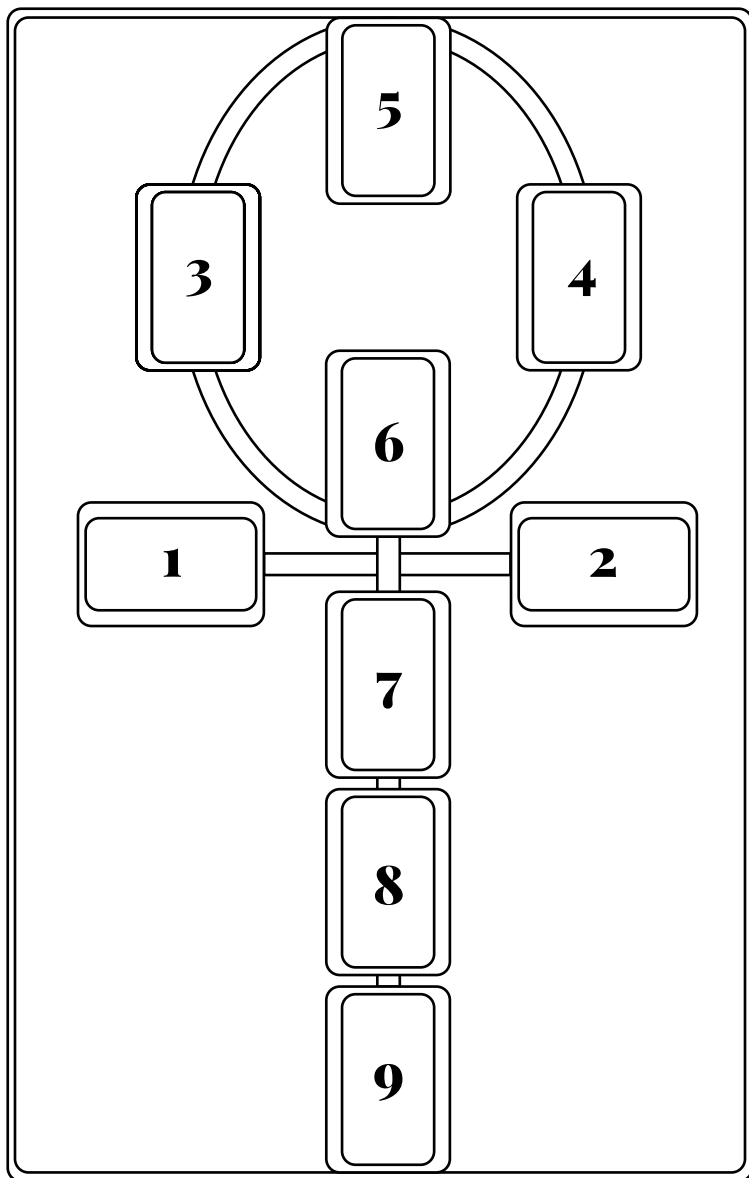
6 = Necessary conclusions

Under the assumption that the perception (5) has taken place and the conclusions (6) have been drawn, the following shows the further progression:

7 = The next step

8 = Surprising experiences

9 = The result



Notes

Notes

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