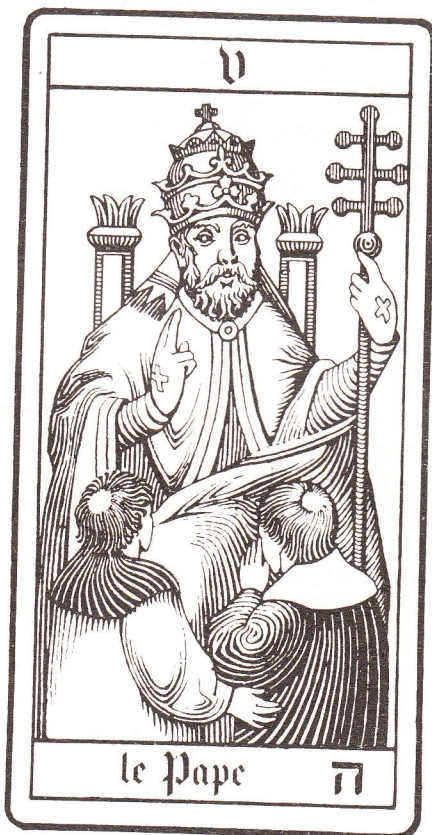


The Pope



The artists who drew the Tarot liked contrasts. Beside the young blond Magician they placed the dark Priestess seated and shrouded in mystery; then comes the Empress shining in heavenly light and giving a full front view to contrast with the Emperor with his severe profile and dark beard. The frowning expression of this sovereign makes us in turn, appreciate the Pope's face, jovial and full of charm. This pontiff with his bright complexion and full cheeks is, we feel sure, full of indulgence for human failings. He understands all, for nothing escapes the calm look of very light blue eyes, scarcely shaded by his thick white eyebrows. A short white and carefully trimmed beard, moreover, point to the age in which becalmed passions leave the

intelligence with all its lucidity to allow it to resolve complex and intricate problems without hesitation.

Indeed, it is the lot of the Pope to reply to the agonizing questions which believers put to him. When he dogmatizes he strengthens beliefs and he formulates religious teaching which is addressed to two categories of the faithful. These are represented by the two characters kneeling before the pontifical chair. One is stretching out his arm and raising his head as if to say: 'I have understood'; the other is leaning his forehead on his joined hands and accepts the dogma humbly, convinced of his own inadequacy in spiritual matters.

The first one is active in the sphere of faith; he is preoccupied with what is credible

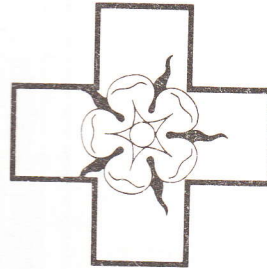
and does not blindly accept the doctrine taught. He does not dare, however, to break with the general belief and he tries to adapt it to his own enlightenment. In this way a broader faith is established which dogmatic authority would have to take into account and aim at a gradual broadening of the traditional teaching.

Unfortunately those who govern the churches are afraid of the believers who thirst after knowledge. Rather than these, they prefer the submissive and disciplined flock, ready to bow passively without question. Religion suffers because of this, for in this way it is paralysed in its right side, the active and life-giving side represented by one of the two uprights of the chair of the highest teaching. While it is related only to the left upright, teaching falters.

These firm uprights are related to an unshakable tradition, but their green colour wills that this tradition should be living and that by remaining faithful to itself, it should be able to stay in harmony with the life of faith. The symbolism of the binary is clarified for the initiated in the mysteries of the columns Jachin and Boaz of Solomon's temple. Their contrast marks the limits within which the human spirit moves as it is apt that they flank the throne of the Priestess (2). The uprights of the pontifical chair represent in a similar way the two opposite poles in the sphere of faith: an anxious search for religious truth and confident adherence to the beliefs which are held respectable.

Seated between these two columns and speaking to listeners of two different mentalities, the Pope is called to reconcile a quarrel of linked opposites. Keeping the middle way between tradition on the right (rational theology) and the demands of the left (the feelings of pious souls) the Sovereign Pontiff adapts religious knowledge to the needs of humble believers. He also has to make the highest truths accessible to simple people, hence his central position in regard to Four (right and left, high and low); he represents the rose in bloom at the centre

of the cross, the flower identical with the Star of the Freemasons which is a Pentagram on which is inscribed the letter G, meaning Gnosis (knowledge, initiating instruction). To conform to the pattern which the Rose-Cross outlines here, the Pope must enter into communion with all those who think and feel in a religious way, in order to draw towards him the light of the Holy Ghost, for divine goodness shares this light out generously among the minds which search after Truth and the souls who are sensitive to selfless love.



He who formulates the highest teaching makes himself receptive to the diffused light of the surroundings, and by the fact that he concentrates them he is transformed into the shining lighthouse *urbi et orbi*. It is at this point that he enlightens the Church intellectually and morally, in the manner of the Star of the Wise in the centre of the Masonic Temple.

This star instructs those whose task is to confer instruction in initiation. Its soft light does not dazzle like the Sun's or even the Moon's, but a penetrating light emanates from the Star familiar to the Initiated. Its rays do not stop at the surface of things, for it reveals the Esotericism sought by those who abstract the most subtle element from



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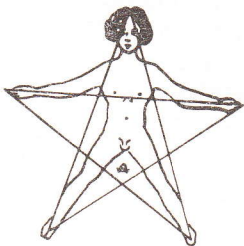
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all matter. The Pope is ignorant of nothing in this respect, since his mission is to make known intelligible reality which hides behind the mask of the illusion of the senses. He occupies the fifth rank in the Tarot so as to mark the following progression:

1. *Magician* — the mathematical dot without dimension.
2. *The Priestess* — the one-dimensional line.
3. *The Empress* — surface with two dimensions.
4. *The Emperor* — the three-dimensional solid (cube).
5. *The Pope* — the contents of the form, the conceivable quintessence, and although imperceptible, the sphere of the fourth dimension.



The number five is, moreover, that of man when seen as the mediator between God and the Universe. By virtue of this the human figure is inscribed in a pentagon, for the head dominates the four limbs, as the spirit rules in the four Elements. Thus is formed the Star of the microcosm which is the symbol of the will.

Common magic has illusions about the power of this sign which in itself confers no power at all. The individual will is only powerful in as much as it harmonizes with a more general power. The more noble a force is, the less right one has to use it in an arbitrary way. Everything comes within a hierarchy: the right to command implies responsibilities. If we aim at exercising this right as we please it will be taken from us: the soldier who misuses his command is dismissed or demoted. It is useless to covet magic power. It is conferred automatically on

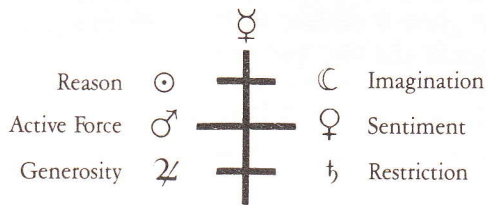
whoever deserves it, whereas the ambitious person may aspire to it in vain. Let us not seek to develop the will by artificial means and try to transform ourselves into 'athletes' of the will. To display strength, one must be the master of it, and know how to control it. To stop oneself from wanting what is inappropriate is the great secret of those who are called to exercise their personal influence at the decisive moment. What they will have accumulated in the way of unused will-power will make their volition in some way dynamic; still they must act according to an order sent from above, for to be obeyed one must oneself obey, since all is contained within the Unity of things.

The Pope is wearing white gloves to show that his hands remain pure, and are never contaminated by contact with earthly affairs. Each glove is marked with a blue cross, the colour of the soul and of faithfulness, for the action of the Sovereign Pontiff is exclusively spiritual, and it works on three levels as is suggested by the three crowns of the papal tiara and the three transverse lines of the pontifical cross.

The tiara weighs heavily upon the Sovereign's head which would be crushed under its weight if he did not have the benefit of superior brain-power as befits this chosen man. Nothing related to religion and faith must escape him; so he could not legitimately wear his first crown, the one that encircles his forehead and shines with the loveliest and most precious stones, if he were ignorant of the smallest detail of the holy mass with its traditional liturgy, its impressive show and its moving ceremonies. But the exterior, the expression and body have no value except through the soul, symbolized by the second crown superimposed on the first. No less rich and slightly wider, it is related to the complete knowledge of the divine law which allows the Pope to judge accurately the actions and feelings of men. As for the last crown, the highest but also the smallest and the simplest, it alludes, in its austerity, less to the ordinary theology than to the

discernment of abstract truths which are imposed upon the human spirit and report universal belief which form the basis of a religious doctrine. This leads to the complete Catholicism whose head will be the true Sovereign Pontiff of the whole of the Christian world.

If the supreme authority of the Pope is reflected in the tiara, then the sceptre of his spiritual power is a cross with three transverse lines. Out of the ternary comes a septenary formed by the round ends of the transverse lines and at the rounded top of the cross. Now seven is the number of harmony and also of secondary causes which direct the world: these causes correspond to the planetary influences or to the seven notes of the human scale.



It is for the Pope to govern by opposing the innate tendencies of man in order to give them harmony and balance so that not one of them degenerates into vice. When left entirely to ourselves and to the instinctive energies of our nature we fall under the yoke of the seven deadly sins.³⁵ By helping us to exercise control, spiritual power keeps us in possession of ourselves and makes us participate in the communion of free and virtuous men.³⁶ The Pontifical cross also reminds us of the Tree of the Sephiroth which has already been discussed.

Like the Priestess, the Pope is clothed in the priestly colours of blue and purple (ideality and spirituality). Of the two faithful kneeling before him, the one on the right is in red (activity) and the one on the left in black (submission, receptivity, passive credulity). No symbol in the sky could be directly likened to the Hierophant, but he

makes you think of the high priest of Jupiter-Ammon, the god with the ram's head. We think therefore that we can make



arcana 5 correspond to the Aries of the Zodiac which marks the spring equinox, the sign of Fire and the exaltation of the Sun. The fire with which we are concerned here is the fire of life and intelligence, the ancient Agni which came down from heaven to burn in the centre of the vedic cross, called the Swastika, when the rites are being performed. 'Agni' became 'Agnis' and it is thus that the 'agneau pascal', the Pascal Lamb, brings us to the mysteries of a prodigious antiquity.

The Jupiter which the Tarot of Besançon puts in the place of the Pope is the master of the celestial Fire, the giver of life, intellectual and moral as much as physical. It is he who keeps the conscience awake in order to make order, justice, affability, goodwill and kindness reign over the earth. The character of this god is therefore in harmony with arcana 5.

Divinatory Interpretations

Geburah — rigour, severity, Pec'had, punishment, fear, Din, judgement³⁷, the will which controls or governs the gift of life. Conscience, duty, moral law, inhibition, restriction, for one must abstain from evil-doing before devoting oneself to doing good.

Priesthood, religious knowledge, metaphysics, Kabbala, teaching, knowing how to (as opposed to being able). Authority, certainty, assurance, absence of doubt, influence or suggestion over the

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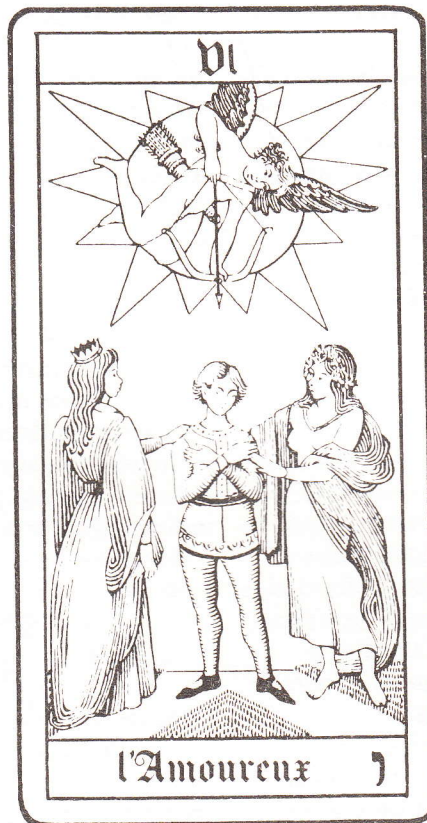
feelings and thoughts of others. Affability, goodwill, kindness, wise generosity.

A director of conscience, the doctor of the soul, moral advice, a sententious character. Absolute authority in his opinions. Function

conferring prestige. The influence of Jupiter in good and in evil.

Taken in a detrimental light: immorality, for faults take the place of qualities when an arcana becomes negative.

The Lover



Emerging from adolescence and having just finished his education at the school of the Centaur Chiron initiatory apprenticeship Hercules felt the need to reflect upon the use that he would make, in life, of his powerful faculties which he had so marvellously developed. When he was deep in meditation, two women of rare beauty suddenly appeared to him, each one enticing him to follow her. The first, Virtue, showed him glimpses of a life of struggle, ceaseless efforts, aspiring to find triumph through courage and energy. The other, Sensuality — rather than calling her Vice — urged the young man to enjoy life peacefully by giving himself to its pleasures and by making full use of the advantages it offers to the person who can limit his ambition.

Inspired by this mythological scene, the sixth key of the Tarot shows us a young man standing still at the meeting of two roads, with his arms crossed over his heart, his eyes lowered, uncertain of what direction to take. The Lover hesitates, urged (like Hercules) by an austere queen who only promises moral satisfaction and by a bacchante, the provider of easy pleasures. His choice is not decreed in advance, for he has not the heart of a hero destined to accomplish twelve labours. He is a weak mortal, open to all the temptations and divided in his feelings, as is shown by the alternating red and green costume (colours of blood, energy, courage, and of vegetation — passive vitality, languor, inaction).

Like the Priestess and the Empress, the

queen standing on the right (activity) is dressed in red and blue (spirit and soul, spirituality) whereas the bacchante is draped in yellow and green gauze (quality of matter, life-giving sap). As in the costume of the Lover, red and green alternate in the rays of the halo which floats above the three characters. It is an oval of light on which is outlined a Cupid with red and blue wings, ready to release an arrow aimed at the head of the bewildered young man.

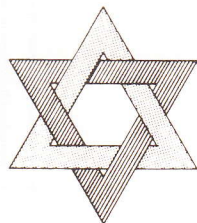
So arcana 6 as a whole illustrates the mechanism of the voluntary act of the sentient person portrayed by the Lover who is 'L'Homme de Désir' of Saint-Martin. This personality receives the impressions of the physical world thanks to his sensitivity (the green colour of his costume), then he reacts (red colour, propulsion). Now as it is not a matter of unconscious or automatic acts, called reflex, there is deliberation, choice before the releasing of the action is decided upon.

The decision is awaited by Cupid who above us accumulates the volitional energy which we will be able to have at our disposal. He shoots his arrow with more or less force as soon as we give him the signal, because we are willing it. But if we use our will-power thoughtlessly, without saving it, as arcana 5 teaches us to do, then our volitions will not be powerful.

For our will-power to allow us to compete with Hercules — an ambition which is not forbidden to us — we must involve ourselves, with no going back, in the harsh path of virtue, precisely so that our volitions are not squandered on pursuing pleasure and the little diversions of life. One might judge it wise just to let oneself live by savouring joys which come along without priding oneself on being heroic. This wisdom is not that of the Initiated who identify life with fruitful action, useful (Herculean) work. To live for its own sake is not their ideal for they feel that they are artists and consider that life is given to them with the view to creating a work of art.

As it is a question of the Great Work of

humanity to which only the workers of the Spirit can devote themselves, they must have learned how to 'will' and how to 'love'. The Lover is, in this respect, the Initiate whose apprenticeship is completed. If, by crossing his arms he puts himself in the rank of the 'Good Shepherd' known to the Knights of the Rosy Cross, the fact is that he tries to forget himself; he does not allow himself to desire his own personal benefit, but desires only that of others. It is the realization of this moral beauty which corresponds to the sixth Sephirah — Tiphereth — whose emblem is Solomon's Seal, formed by two entwined triangles. In this we must see an allusion to the marriage of the human soul (∇ Water) and the Divine Spirit (\triangle Fire). It is the star of the macrocosm, the sign of supreme magical power, acquired by the individual who, with complete self-



abnegation, puts himself in the service of the 'whole' To love to the point of existing only for others, that is the objective of the Lover.

In the Tarot this character is only a disguised form of active unity (Magician) intended to be represented in three aspects: the Lover brings us back to unity through love, for Man becomes divine by loving as God does.

Let us recall at this point the interpretations which connect the first six arcanas to each other:

1. The Magician — the thinking principle; thought seen in its centre of emission, hence as yet only potential.
2. The Priestess — thought-act, word (action of thinking from the thinking principle).
3. The Empress — thought, result, pure idea, concept in its original essence,

- unaltered by expression.
4. The Emperor — realizer, the principle of will.
 5. The Pope — volitive radiation, act of willing.
 6. The Lover — desire, aspiration, formulated will.

If one envisages the different modes of action of the will, the 'Emperor' exerts a compelling command, impetuous and of a harsh nature; the Pope emits a gentle and patient will which is imposed because of the strength of its moderation; as for the Lover, he is content to desire intensely with a feeling of deep affection. Love absorbs his will; he refrains from commanding, and while desiring he 'prays' in the initiating meaning of the word.

To find the astronomical correspondence of arcana 6 it is advisable only to remember Cupid's arrow, the weapon drawn in the sky in the constellation Sagittarius. The Chaldeans made of the archer in the sky a two-headed centaur in which the Greeks wished to recognize Chiron, the teacher of heroes like Hercules, called to find glory through deserving labours.

Certainly Eros who hovers above the Lover is not in harmony with a half-horse half-man with a scorpion's tail. For all that this

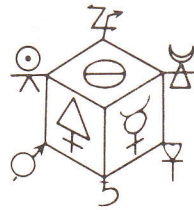
monstrous collection lends itself to an interpretation applicable to arcana 6 for the human part which bends the bow may correspond to the conscience entrusted to watch over our use of the will-power, while the horse is our organism, the animal with which we are associated. Finally the Scorpion alludes to the propulsions which spur us on with a view to action.

Divinatory Interpretations

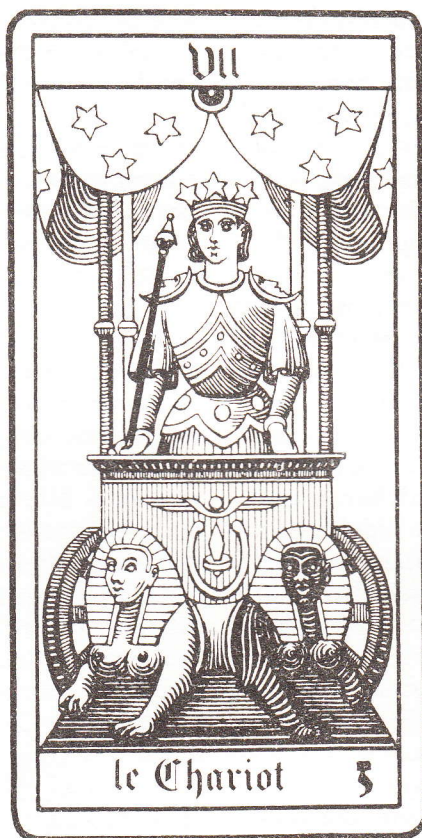
Tiphereth, moral beauty, love, bond uniting all beings, feeling; life sphere undergoing attractions and repulsions, sympathies and antipathies, pure affections, foreign to the sensual attraction.

Aspirations, desires on which depend the beauty of the soul, greetings, wishes; liberty, choice, selection, free will, temptation, trial, doubt, uncertainty, irresolution, hesitation.

Sentimentality, perplexity, indecision, matters held in abeyance, promises, unfulfilled desires.



The Chariot



One may wonder whether the title of a treatise on alchemy which appeared in Amsterdam in 1671 does not reveal the true significance of the seventh key of the Tarot. In this case the Chariot would become the triumphal Chariot of Antimony, the *Currus Triumphalis Antimonii* of Basile Valentin. What is certain is that Antimony is very strongly represented by the master of the Chariot. This young beardless youth, slim, fair like the Magician and the Lover, is wearing a breast-plate and is armed with a sceptre like the Emperor. He incarnates the higher principles of the human personality in order to represent the Intellectual Spirit (♁ Antimony)³⁸ in which are synthesized the thinking principle (The Magician), the centre of volitive energy (The Emperor) and

the centre from which affection radiates (The Lover). But in contrast with the Emperor who in his unmovable, fixed position, is seated on a motionless cube, the triumphant man journeys throughout the world in a vehicle whose form, it is true, remains cubic.

This shape always indicated bodily form. When applied to the moving throne of the active spirituality it suggests the 'idea' of a subtle body of the soul, thanks to which the pure spirit can manifest itself in a dynamic way. It is a question of an ethereal substance playing the role of mediator between the measureable and the imponderable, between the incorporeal and the tangible; it is, if you like, the sidereal or astral body of Paracelsus and the occultists, the *Corps aromal* of Fourier, the *Linga Sharira*, or, no doubt better,

the 'Kama rupa' of esoteric Buddhism.

There is nothing less simple than this mysterious entity. First of all one can make out the imperceptible web on which every organism is constructed. It is the phantom-like frame into which matter fits, the scaffolding allowing the body to build itself, but which lives to assure the preservation of all that lives, for without it everything crumbles. The cubic form of the chariot corresponds to this invisible support of all that is visible. Its ethereal nature is confirmed thanks to the winged globe of the Egyptians which decorated the panel of the vehicle. This emblem of the sublimation of matter figures on it above the oriental symbol relating to the mystery of the union of the sexes, as if to say that heaven can only act on the earth by uniting with her in love.

The phantom-like body, the Eidolon of the Greeks, is not in direct contact with material substance, therefore the Chariot does not touch the ground except by the intermediary of its wheels. These have red spokes in token of the whirls of fire which in the vision of Ezekiel support the Chariot throne of the Divinity, the famous Merkabah constantly commented upon by the Kabbalists. These wheels represent the vital heat which is maintained by movement and comes out of matter through friction.

The wheels contrast with the sky-blue canopy which is the image of the firmament separating the relative from the absolute. The amount of sky which our active spirituality can reach is limited; it shelters us and prevents a too ambitious flight of our thoughts, our feelings, and our aspirations. The triumphant charioteer drives his chariot and looks straight ahead of him, without becoming lost in the clouds of a sterile mysticism. Above his head shines the emblem of the Sun ☉ in the centre of stars which correspond to the planets.

The septenary was so constituted that they remind us of the chariot of David, popularly known as the *Ursa Major*, a constellation made up of seven principal stars, from which the Romans made the seven oxen, *Septem*

Triones, hence the name Septentrional applied to the region of the north.

From the angles of the Chariot rise the four uprights of the canopy. The front ones are yellow, and the back ones green. Those are the colours dear to the Bacchant of arcana 6. The quartet in which the triumphant driver occupies the centre is thus related to the attractions to which it must not submit. He is defended against them by his red breastplate reinforced by a triple angle shape arranged like a border pattern, held by five golden buttons.

Red expresses activity used in the pursuit of a specified aim (the road to be followed by the chariot); as for the angle pattern, it replaces the insignia on the breastplate of the Master who directs the work in a masonic workshop. This instrument controls the normal shape of the building to be constructed (the set square is called a *norma* in Latin). In order to be integrated in the social life the individual must adapt himself in a rectangular shape to his neighbour. Decorated with the triple angle pattern the Master of the Chariot pursues an ideal of moral perfection which applies to the mind, soul and body. He reconciles warring opinions and leads his enemies to understand each other, puts an end to intellectual discord and so brings about feelings of brotherly goodwill; moreover, he imposes equity even in the smallest actions, being always most careful to deal tactfully with others; in other words he watches over the maintenance of a delightful politeness, the mother of every true civilization.

The five gold nails of the angle pattern refer to the domination of the four elements by quintessence. In it five must lead four into the unity of command so that the master of the Chariot enters into full possession of himself and can direct his vehicle without being distracted by disturbing influences.

But if, in his solar fixity, he is not himself liable to be influenced, his directing action makes itself felt all the more forcibly on whatever is lunar and is hence capricious or

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changing. Thus the ebb and flow of the emotive tides are at the command of the triumphant driver whose shoulders bear crescent moons placed back to back as if to give to the right arm power over what grows and to the left arm over what wanes.³⁹

By knowing how to take into account the fluctuations of the human heart, the Master of the Chariot practises an art of government which wins him the diadem of the Initiated, surmounted by three gold pentagrams. These stars face three directions; those on the right and the left allow him to see the sides of the life-path, for, in order to direct one's way one must not be content with too narrow a view.

The lower pattern of the breastplate protecting the abdomen, in which resides the less noble part of us, contrasts with the three pentagrams shining above his head; this ternary suppresses the lower instincts, drives back the brutal impulses and curbs the silent rebellions of an uncouth atavism.

The expertise of the Initiate demands that all should be controlled in the person invested with the sceptre of wisdom.

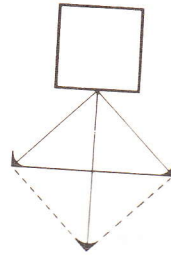


This insignia of command is only a simple wand with a group of egg-shaped spheres at the end which seem to emerge from each other, to indicate that the Master of the Chariot presides over the nascent virtues whose seeds all individuals possess. In the hands of those who direct the work of the Masons assembled in the Lodge his sceptre is replaced by the mallet. The President of the Workshop sits under a canopy decorated with stars, like the canopy of the Chariot; in front

of him a square altar completes the analogy with the character of arcana 7 whose breastplate is decorated with the corner stone, the distinctive jewel of the 'Venerable'.

But the comparison between the Lodge where constructive work is achieved and the 'Chariot of Progress' finally achieves importance if one considers the two Sphinx tractors as the forces which the columns of Jachin and Boas represent.⁴⁰

These are not separate animals, but one single one, a sort of Amphibian with two heads. Such a monster, being able to walk in two directions would become immobile if it were not for the middle part of his body, harnessed to the Chariot. The triumphant driver's merit is that he was able to harness it, for in this way he utilizes energies which left to themselves can only cancel each other out. It is a question of the fixing of the 'Mercury of the Wise' an operation accomplished by Hermes when, placing his wand between two serpents struggling to devour each other, he brought about the formation of the Caduceus. The mission of directing intelligence is to reconcile basic opposing factors. The art of governing is based, like the Great Work, on the capturing and controlling of opposing currents of the universal agent depicted in the *Azoth des Philosophes* by Basile Valentin⁴¹ in the form of a serpent going round the moon and the sun, and whose two extremities are a lion (fixity) and an eagle (mobility), coming together, subdued in their anger.



In arcana 7 the white sphinx symbolizes the good constructive will powers which aspire to the general well-being to be brought about peaceably and smoothly. The

black sphinx trembles with impatience and pulls strongly on the left; its efforts risk dragging the chariot into the ditch, but in reality only succeed in stimulating the white sphinx who is obliged to pull harder on its side. Thus the vehicle advances more quickly according to the mechanical law of the parallelogram of force.

Divinatory Interpretations

Netzah, triumph, steadfastness — active spirituality, conscious progress, intelligent evolution, constructive principle of the Universe, Great Architect.

Control, absolute domination over oneself, direction, government, full power of intelligence and tact, discernment in reconciliation, peace-bringing and civilizing harmony.

Talent, success thanks to personal merit, legitimate outcome, loyal diplomacy, the ability to benefit from adverse action, ambition, advance, the post of director or head.

In a negative sense: incapacity, lack of talent of tact, diplomacy or spirit of reconciliation; misconduct, bad government.

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Arcana 7 relates the first two ternaries of the Tarot to the 'unity of the first septenary which corresponds to 'Spirit'; arcana 8 therefore introduces the second which is related to the Soul as the third will relate to the body.⁴² Now the first terms of a septenary by necessity play a life-giving role. Just as the Spirit emanates from the First Cause (arcana 1) so does the Soul proceed from arcana 8 and the body from arcana 15.

But arcana 8 must also be seen as the second term of the third ternary which makes it passive in regard to the preceding arcana. Now since 7 represents the activating spirituality, the universal activating principle, 8 becomes the life-giving movement, the generator of order and of organization.⁴³ Justice is thus explained as co-ordinating and

organizing chaos.

Without Justice nothing can live since beings only exist by virtue of law to which they are subject. Anarchy is synonymous with nothingness.

In the Tarot, Thémis reminds us of the Empress with her hierarchical attitude, with her portrait presented full-face, with her blond hair, her red tunic and blue mantle, but she is no longer the Queen of the Sky, this star eternally young in her heavenly abode. The woman who holds the scales and the sword seems to have aged and her features have hardened. Now that she has come down into the sphere of action, she has lost her wings. Her throne is massive, solid and stable like the golden cube of the Emperor (arcana 4). It is not a chariot which

travels throughout the world, but a great seat fixed to the ground. The two pilasters which flank it are decorated with half-overlapping discs alternating white and green. By their shape these ornaments remind us of the multiple breasts of Diana of Ephesus, the giver of milk and nourishing sap. By analogy with the columns of Jachin and Boaz of Solomon's temple, the pilasters of the throne of Justice mark the limits of physical life, between them stretches the limited field of life-giving activity. In place of the shell-shape ends of the pilasters one might substitute half-open pomegranates, symbols of fertility as well as of harmonious co-ordination.

The action of Justice-Nature takes place in the double sphere of feeling and vitality, hence the blue and green of the sleeves of Thémis.

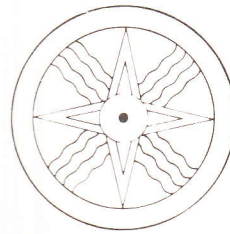
In connection with arcana 6 which occupies the middle place in the first set of the Tarot, 4 and 5 are homologous, thus closely connected in meaning.⁴⁴

In fact what would become of the Emperor if it were not for Justice? Law would remain theoretical and potential, if it were not applied in the practical sense in the sphere of the positive; it is the same with abstract mathematics which only becomes meaningful when it is applied. Personifying the principle of numeration, the Emperor would give out mathematics in vain if it were not for Justice who receives and organizes it. Receiving what God gives, Nature functions like the housewife who organizes and administers life, distributing everything in an ordered way following the law of numbers and measures.

As sanction to the close links which bind 4 to 8, a sign common to both decorates the Emperor and Justice: it is the necklace in the form of a plait, the emblem of the simple co-ordination of vital fibres which are linked by a cord which is stronger than a chain whose links are liable to break.

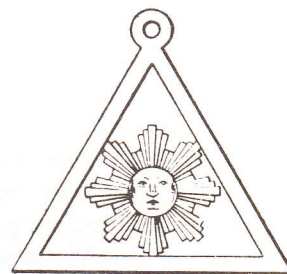
The magistrate's cap which Justice is wearing is marked with the symbol of the Sun ☉, for the spiritual Sun is the great co-ordinator who assigns his role to every living

person and to everything. The number eight is, moreover, that of Sun-Reason, the light of men, as is proved by the Chaldean emblem of Samas, the god of daylight. From a central point emanate four rays, doubled cross-wise, symbolizing light and warmth. Faithful to tradition the Freemasons decorate the F, the orator who is responsible for calling one's notice to the law, with a Sun with a cluster of eight rays.



Let us note also that in China the Qua, or trigrams of Fo-Hi under whose influence the world has taken shape, are of the number eight. (See further on in the chapter relating to the Instruments of Divination.)

Let us not forget either that the star formed by a double cross, vertical and oblique * is, in Assyro-Babylonian writing the definite article to divine names. The star with eight equal rays is, on the other hand, the symbol of Ishtar, the goddess of life, who in certain respects is reflected in Justice, but harmonizes more specifically with the symbolism of arcana 17.



A crown of lance-like iron finials surmounts the cap of Thémis. This is an allusion to the severity of law which is applied with the cold cruelty and the point of a javelin penetrating the flesh.

Moreover, in her right hand the goddess holds a terrible bared sword which is that of

fatality, for no violation of the law remains unpunished. Although there is no vengeance, the implacable establishment of any equilibrium which has been broken provokes sooner or later the inevitable reaction of immanent Justice to which arcana 8 is related.

But the instrument of atonement of faults committed is the scale, whose oscillations bring about a balance. Every action, every thought, every desire has an effect upon her beam; as a result there are accumulations which will have their fatal repercussion for good or for ill. The energies at work are stored; those which proceed from a generous kindness enrich the soul, for he who loves makes himself worthy of being loved. Now the feelings of love and sympathy are more precious than material wealth; no one is poorer than the egoist who refuses to give of himself. Let us learn how to give in order to be rich.

So that no-one is asked to give except in the measure of what he has, our destinies are weighed in the balance. Joys and pains are distributed fairly, in the sense that they are proportionate, for we can only appreciate by reason of contrast; so that to be happy one has to have suffered. Let us weigh carefully what we feel and we will see that everything in life is accurately balanced.

It is like this even in the workings of vital forces which are subject to alternating exaltation and depression. To illustrate this physiological law an ancient belief, which inspired Raphael in the decoration of the stanza of the Vatican, puts into the picture two Satyrs, one male, the other female playing on a see-saw near a basket, the holy basket which the initiated of Eleusis carried. This is an allusion to the rhythm of life and to the necessity of conforming to it in using one's energy to the full. Every phase of active excitement must be balanced by a compensatory passivity. It is to our advantage to prepare ourselves for an effort by resting, and to preclude brain work by sleep or inner contemplation.

To become excited by artificial means is an

error which Nature punishes (arcana 8) by imbalance which tends to become permanent.



Astronomically speaking Justice is Astraea, the Virgo of the Zodiac who holds the Scales of the autumn equinox. The columns of her throne represent, in this respect, the two solstices. Astrologers make of the Scales a sign of air which they place as a daily home to Venus. The activity of the day restricts the goddess to the calm and methodical work of life, so much so that she seems remote from the passions of the lover besotted with the handsome Adonis.

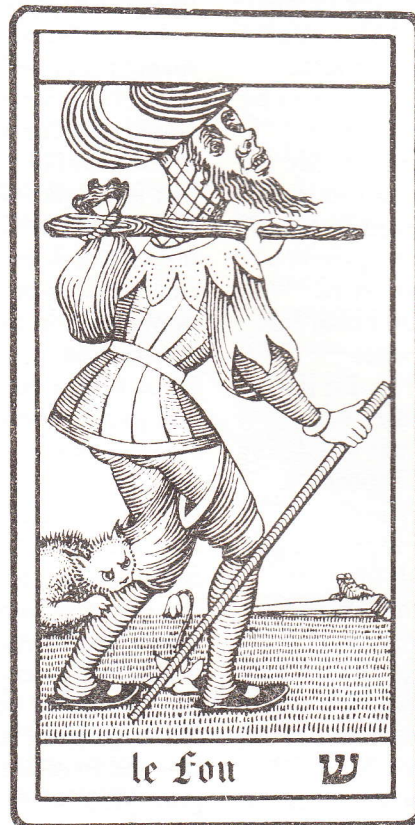
Divinatory Interpretations

Hod, splendour, glory, divinity manifested by order and harmony of nature, the conserving power of things. Law, equilibrium, life stability, logical and necessary procedure of ideas, of feelings and of actions. Fatality flowing from all that is accomplished, Immanent Justice, ineluctable consequences of all action.

Logic, sureness of judgement, impartiality, independence of mind, honesty, integrity, regularity, discipline, respect for hierarchy, submission to propriety and custom. Decree, decision, resolution, steadfast purpose, rules of conduct.

Method, exactitude, motion, work. An administrator, a manager, a judge, a man of law or an agent entrusted with the maintenance of order. A man of dialectic, quibbling and full of casuistry. Routine, conservative nature, fear of innovations. A subordinate knowing how to obey, but incapable of initiative.

The Fool



The order of the arcanas of the ancient Tarots is marked in numerals from 1 to 21; then comes the last composition which is different from the others in that it has no numerical mark. Its rank is the twenty-second, but its symbolic value is equivalent to nought, for the Fool is the person who does not count because of his lack of intellectual and moral existence. Insentient and irresponsible, he drags himself through life as a passive being who does not know where he is going and is led by irrational impulses. Not belonging to himself he is as a being possessed: he is alienated in the full sense of the word. His costume is many-coloured to show the multiple and incoherent influences which he constantly undergoes. The full crochet turban is red,

green, white and yellow, but the red is more like orange, the colour of destructive fire which suggests dangerous ideas. This is also the colour of the stick which the Fool holds in his right hand. It is a useless burden to him, for he uses it neither as a walking stick nor for support; in fact he uses it even less than the Hermit (9) does to sound the earth on which he is going forward. With his eyes lost in the emptiness of the clouds, the foolish man continues haphazardly on his way, following his impulses without wondering where he is going.

With his left hand the Fool holds on his shoulder a short, roughly hewn cudgel, from which hangs a bag, his treasure of odd and useless belongings. This sustains a wild idealism, hence the colour blue of the

second stick.

The Fool's yellow stockings are slipping off and reveal what they should cover. This unseemly exhibition makes us think of what happened to Moses who wanted to look at Jehovah face to face. Just as the Ineffable escapes us, so the indiscreet person has to be content with the view of creation which corresponds to the reverse of divinity. We must be sufficiently reasonable not to step outside the sphere which is bound by reason. The Infinite is not yet within our powers of understanding, so that when we try to approach it, we are in danger of a fatal loss of reason. So let us be careful when following the Fool, who, bitten on his left calf by a white lynx, must perforce walk continuously, for the course of the wandering Jew has no aim or objective. It is pursued indefinitely and is a complete waste.

The lynx with piercing eyes, is pursuing the insentient Wanderer towards an upturned obelisque, behind which a crocodile lies in wait, ready to devour whatever is destined to return to chaos, that is to the primeval substance from which the ordered world was born. As a symbol of conscious lucidity and of remorse for faults committed, the lynx would restrain a person capable of discretion; but far from stopping the Fool, the bite hastens his course towards his inevitable destiny.

It is not stated, however, that the Fool cannot recover his senses, for a deep-red-coloured tulip suggesting active spirituality, whose petals are not withered, grows at his feet. If this flower is not dead, this means that the spirit does not entirely abandon the innocent but irresponsible people. The Fool moreover, is wearing a valuable gold belt which clashes with the poverty of the rest of his clothes.

This belt is made up of plates, probably twelve of them, by analogy with the zodiac, for it encircles the body of a cosmogonic person of extreme importance. In fact the Fool represents all that is beyond the sphere of the intelligible, hence the Infinite outside the finite, the absolute enclosing the relative.

He is Apsou, the bottomless pit, the ancestor of the gods who were sent by these same gods outside the World when they resolved to create supreme power for themselves.

For Apsou was happy in his infinity and roamed there with delight, and refused to leave it. He would never have created anything if his union with the undifferentiated and primordial substance had not, unknown to him, made him father of the first divine couple. This first born pair holding each other, began to dance in a circle, that is they began to evolve in circular movements in the ether so creating in it the first generating movement of all things. But let us keep away from all anthropomorphism and picture the son and daughter of Apsou, for their nebulous form is related to that of ophidians,⁶⁷ and no doubt more especially to that of Ouroboros, the serpent who bites his own tail. The Fool's belt makes a very likely allusion to this. The circle formed by the belt may, moreover, be compared more simply to the Alchemists, Alum, whose sign is nought, an exact circle, O. Now Alum is the chief of all other salts, in other words, the immaterial substratum of all materiality. It is the so called nothingness which fills the primordial space from which all proceeds, a passive substance which the Fool personifies.

This foolish man puts us on our guard against digression which lies in wait for us as soon as we tend to pass the boundaries of what is real, which 1 and 21, Aleph and Tau, make the beginning and the end. The numberless arcana is related to what does not count, to the unreal phantom which we evoke in the name of nothingness, as opposed to the All in One, outside which no existence at all is conceivable. The wise man could not be made the dupe of words; far from aiming simply at a verbal rejection of this being, he seeks the Fool within himself, being conscious human personality, which counts for so much in our poor preoccupations. Let us learn that we are nothing and the Tarot will have instructed us in its deepest secret.

The constellation which best fits the

symbolism of the last arcana of the Tarot is that of Cepheus, king of Ethiopia, the husband of Cassiopeia (arcana 2 The Priestess) and father of Andromeda, the naked girl in arcana 17. This African monarch is black in colour, the colour which we give to the Fool, although the illustrators did not think of making him a negro, any more than they did not give a dark skin to the Priestess, who guards the dark shadows which hover over the abyss where intelligence is lost. As the daughter of a black father and



a mother who could strictly be white, Andromeda of arcana 17 ought at least to be dark and not fair. But comparisons with astrology which are easy for us, were scarcely within the reach of the authors of the Tarot

whose work remains to be perfected on certain points. In the sky Cepheus has his feet on the tip of the tail and the back part of the Little Bear, who therefore could not bite him unlike the persistent lynx biting the Fool's leg.

Divinatory Interpretations

Parabrahm, Apsou. The bottomless Abyss. The Absolute. Infinite. Ensoph. Whatever is beyond our understanding. The irrational, the absurd. Emptiness, Nothingness. Cosmogonic night. Primordial substance. Disintegration, spiritual annihilation. Nirvahna.

Passivity, impetuosity, giving way to blind instincts, to gross desires and passions. Irresponsibility, alienation, madness. Lack of self direction; incapable of resisting outside influences. Agency, subject to domination, loss of free will. Slavery.

Non-entity. The toy of occult powers. Unbalanced and easily influenced. A subject for hypnosis. Instrument of other people. Lack of consciousness. Unable to be initiated. Dragged blindly towards one's downfall. The foolish person prey to his own whims. Insensitivity, indifference. Nonchalance. Incapable of recognizing one's wrong doings and feeling remorse for them.