

Dame Fortune's Wheel Tarot

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Introduction

Dame Fortune and her Wheel

Throughout the Middle Ages the powerful Roman goddess Fortuna continued to be believed in, feared and propitiated, possibly even more than the divinity, on account of her well-known fickleness. Although she was dubbed "Dame Fortune" by the populace, the church fathers Lactantius, Aquinas and Augustine regarded her as little more than synonymous with the Devil himself. But by the dawn of the Renaissance she had devolved into a recurring poetic fiction, and as such she appeared as a character in the works of, among other writers, Dante, Boccaccio and Ariosto. In paintings and illustrations she was often depicted blindfolded to demonstrate just how capricious she was, frequently turning a great wheel to which all humanity clung, the poorest wretch at the bottom, the most powerful potentate at the top. The fact that her wheel revolved without stopping symbolized the flux and change of all things, especially the impermanence of wealth and status. She and her wheel featured in a variety of divination devices of the fifteenth century, and indeed she represents one of its central allegorical images of the trumps of the tarot deck.

Tarot cards and their use in divination

Inspired by imported decks of Middle Eastern playing cards, with suits of Polo Sticks, Scimitars, Cups and Coins, Europeans began manufacturing painted playing cards of their own for trick-taking games sometime during the fourteenth century. Although we cannot be sure which suit signs were first used, card play soon became popular in Europe, and by the early fifteenth century, northern Italy had evolved its own decks, with the puzzling Mamluk Polo Sticks now transformed into Batons, the Scimitars into Swords, while the Cups and Coins remained pretty much unchanged. Each suit now consisted of ten "pip" cards displaying from one to ten emblems, plus four additional "court" cards showing pictures of a Knave or Page, a Knight, a Queen, and a King, making fifty-six cards in all.

During the next fifty years French card makers began introducing the suit signs we know today as Diamonds, Spades, Hearts and Clubs. This innovation made stencil reproduction of the pip cards considerably easier. At approximately the same time they also began bestowing names drawn from popular medieval legends on their three court cards. Italian card makers, meanwhile, had not remained idle. To add complexity and interest to their own card games, they had begun adding a fifth suit of twenty-two allegorical picture cards known as "triumphs" or "trumps" to their decks. These new, fat, packs of seventy-eight cards came to be known as *tarocchi* in Italy, *tarots* in France.

The order and names of the twenty-two tarot trumps have varied over the ages, but relatively insignificantly. Whoever created them seems to have turned for subject matter to the world of what was then popular entertainment, to the imagery of medieval drama, Mystery and Morality plays, and to works of historical romance. We can recognize imperial and papal figures referred to by Petrarch and Boccaccio, characters like Pope Joan, Death and the Devil drawn from morality dramas and the Dance of Death, scenes like the Star and the Last Judgment from the Mystery cycles, and of course the ever-popular Dame Fortune and her wheel.

By the sixteenth century tarot trumps were being printed with roman numerals to indicate their rank in trick-taking games; by the seventeenth, they were being captioned with names too: I - The Juggler; II - The Female Pope; III - The Empress; IV - The Emperor; V - The Pope; VI - Love or The Lovers; VII - The Chariot or Fame; VIII - Justice; IX - The Hermit; X - The Wheel of Fortune; XI - Fortitude; XII - The Hanged Man; XIII - Death; XIV - Temperance; XV - The Devil; XVI - The Tower; XVII - The Star; XVIII - The Moon; XIX - The Sun; XX - Judgment; XXI - The World. The Fool though named, was left unnumbered, probably indicating his lack of rank. And as for trump XIII, the Grim Reaper's name was frequently omitted, a tactful

gesture perhaps, made for the benefit of fortune-tellers reading the cards. And we now know that by the sixteenth century Italian playing cards were almost certainly being used for divination as well as gambling.

Johannes of Rheinfelden, a Swiss Dominican monk writing in 1377, had stated that even humble, household things, such as playing cards, could be used as sources of wisdom and moral instruction. In 2005 playing card historian Ross Caldwell discovered a paragraph in *De Rerum Praenotione*, a text about divination published in 1507 by Gianfrancesco Pico della Mirandola, one of Savonarola's disciples, that includes mention of divination by "the images depicted on a pack of cards". We don't know for sure whether these cards were tarot cards, but the probability is high. Actual methods of tarot divination, however, were not set down in print until the late 1700s, in the writings of a professional Parisian card reader, Jean-Baptiste Alliette, or "Etteilla" as he styled himself.

Etteilla declared that his interpretations of the tarot pip cards, which he associated with the pips of the standard French deck, had been taught to him in the 1750's by three elderly diviners, who, by his account, had at one point been locked up by the authorities to protect them from the wrath of a pious mob, who suspected them of sorcery. On the other hand, although Etteilla denied it, his interpretations of the trumps appear to have been influenced by the imaginative speculations of his contemporary, aristocrat, would-be historian and Masonic illuminé Antoine Court de Gébelin. De Gébelin had published the notion in 1773 that the tarot enshrined the remains of a legendary, ancient Egyptian book of wisdom written by the god Thoth.

The tarot decks Etteilla initially practiced with appear to have been those now known to playing card historians as the Marseilles and Besançon designs. However, not content to leave the trumps alone, over the years Etteilla continued to reinterpret, redesign and rearrange the trumps to reflect his evolving occult beliefs.

During the nineteenth century, largely due to the speculations of Etteilla and de Gébelin, tarot began to receive closer attention from occult philosophers like Éliphas Lévi, and soon the Hebrew Kabbalah and gipsies were being added to the mix. The twenty-two trumps and fifty-six suit cards were dubbed the *Major* and *Minor Arcana*, Greater and Lesser Secrets respectively, by Paul Christian, one of Lévi's pupils, and in the early years of the twentieth century the occult philosopher Arthur Edward Waite employed the services of illustrator and fellow illuminé, Pamela Colman Smith, to create the influential Rider Waite Smith deck, melding Etteilla's interpretations -- some would say muddling them -- with more Kabbalistic and astrological lore. The hybrid "RWS" interpretations are currently those most widely accepted by Anglo-American cartomancers, and ironically Etteilla has for a long time been disparaged as a mere fortune-teller by many occultists, Lévi and Waite among them. However, setting aside Etteilla's unsupported Egyptian speculations and rearrangement of the trumps, the contribution he made to the art of tarot reading should never be underestimated. Apart from putting cartomancy on the map as a divination method, Etteilla provided what would henceforth become the "canonical" interpretations of the tarot suit cards in Europe, and it is to these interpretations that Dame Fortune's Wheel Tarot returns.

Directions for Use

Following the custom of nineteenth century divination decks, all the cards of the Dame Fortune's Wheel Tarot have been illustrated to aid the card-reader. The designs for the Major Arcana are chiefly based on cards from various Italian and French tarot decks that are both historically important and visually striking. Drawn from once popular medieval religious and philosophical allegories still comprehensible in fifteenth century Europe, the images represent matters of spiritual import, and this should be reflected in the way they are used for divination. They signify archetypal forces at work, not only in world, but also in the personality of individual consulting the cards. The cards of the Minor Arcana, on the other hand, represent everyday situations, or in the case of the court cards, people who have played, or will play, an important role in the consultant's life. The pip cards evoke the canonical interpretations of Etteilla with imagery to match the trumps, also drawn from medieval and early Renaissance sources. The court cards are portrayed as characters well known to medieval romance, melding traditional tarot designs with those of the French playing card pattern known as the standard pattern of Paris, as these cards also appear to have influenced Etteilla (or his teachers) in their interpretations. The Arcanas may be used separately or together, according to the judgment of the diviner.

Initial Steps

First, pick up your deck and choose the card you are going to use as your Significator. This is the card you decide will represent the person who is consulting the cards, or alternatively the matter which the consultant is consulting the cards about. For this you may either use the special Significator card provided with the deck, or choose a court or trump card to serve as a one.

In the Dame Fortune's Wheel deck, the pictorial Significator card is a variant of what Etteilla named "the Etteilla," an extra card he added to his decks. To quote Etteilla's reasoning for doing this: "One felt the necessity for a blank card ['the Etteilla'] when one reflected on the fact that, if a dark man were reading the cards for himself, and he chose the King of Trefoils [Clubs/Coins] which designates a dark man [to represent himself], he wouldn't be able to discover if a dark man intended to be of service or disservice to him." In other words, by using the extra Significator card, you freed up all the cards in the deck for divinatory use. It is an option that you may use if you wish. The design for the Significator in Dame Fortune's Wheel is adapted from a 16th century manuscript illustrating the astrological rulership of the zodiacal signs over parts of the human body, beginning with Aries at the head, and ending on Pisces at the feet.

If you choose not to use this extra card, and you are inquiring about a major problem, then select a Significator from the Major Arcana, a trump that seems to correspond symbolically with the subject of your inquiry. For example, if a love relationship is involved, select the Love trump. Where death or inheritances are involved, select Death. For legal matters, use Justice; and so on. On the other hand, if the consultant requires a general reading, the Significator must represent the consultant himself or herself, and may be chosen from among the court cards of the Minor Arcana: Kings for mature men, Queens for mature women, Knights for younger people of either sex, and Knaves for children or adolescents of either sex. Alternatively, diviners may use Knights for young men and boys, and Knaves for young women and girls. Simply pick the court card which most closely seems to resemble the consultant, matching the temperament or appearance of the consultant to the personage depicted on the court card that most closely resembles them.

Having selected your Significator, formulate the question or objective of the divination on behalf of the consultant and state it out loud. Cartomancers sometimes make a point here of writing the inquiry down on a piece of paper or in a notebook kept for the purpose. This helps to focus the diviner's mind and clarify the question. If you make a recording of your interpretations of the cards that show up, you can check on their accuracy later.

Now shuffle the deck well. If you are performing the divination for yourself, you will be responsible for the shuffle. If you are reading the cards for someone else, both of you should take part in it. Your object is to randomize the cards as much as possible. You also want to reverse some of them. You may make a pool of the entire deck, the cards facing downwards, on the table. The cards should then be stirred around by the consultant until they are well and truly mixed to the satisfaction of reader and consultant alike.

The cards should now be gathered up by the reader and the deck offered, still face down, for the consultant to cut. By tradition the consultant is supposed to cut the cards three times toward him or herself with the left hand.

You are now ready to "draw" the cards, as the old cartomancers would say. The cartomancer must now fan out the cards face down, and the consultant draw single cards from the spread one by one and hand them to the cartomancer with one end or the other pointing forward. On receiving the card and turning it face up, the cartomancer should take care to preserve its orientation exactly the way it has been given when positioning it in the layout. Reversed cards are frequently given a different, sometimes opposite reading, from upright cards.

Tarot Layouts

Selected cards placed by the cartomancer in a pattern known as a layout may best be compared to a filling in the cells of a chart or a spread sheet. Different parts of the pattern refer to different things, like past, future, hopes, fears, and so on. There are many of these patterns to choose from and every cartomancer has his or her favorites. Which works best for you can only be found out by trial and error. If you are new to tarot, begin

with one of the simpler variants you will find here. Build to the more complex as you gain confidence. You can invent your own when you feel confident enough.

Restricted Deck Layouts

When you're seeking enlightenment on one specific problem, a time-honored method of narrowing down the range of variables is to divine with a restricted deck of the Minor Arcana, using one of the simpler layouts. A restricted deck simply means using only the suits germane to the problem, either with or without the trumps, depending on how deep the problem is. If the query is a mundane one without deep involvement, leave the trumps out. For instance, if you require a specific answer to a question concerning a business transaction, you might use the combined suits of Coins and Swords and Batons; for a purely financial one, Coins only; an emotional one, Cups, probably with the addition of the trumps depending on the seriousness of the question. A problem at work or concerning the career in any form calls for Batons and Cups, maybe with the trumps included. Again, use your own intuition which suits play a part in the question. Knowing your deck will help you decide this. If you want to make sure you cover all bases, use all four suits.

Two Simple Starter Processes

The first, and simplest, tarot divination is the single card draw. This was said to be the basic type of sortilege or "lot drawing" practiced by Etteilla's instructors, and as such, it does not require a Significator. The consultant simply draws a single unseen card from the full deck. The diviner is to contemplate it, and treat it as a window opening onto an unexpected landscape beyond. Reflect on its traditional meanings, but also allow your intuition to guide the reading in the direction of any question that has been posed.

The secondary procedure, reputedly a gypsy method, involves three cards: the Significator (which you should have already selected) and two others which the consultant draws at random from the deck. But in this process, you must separate the Minor Arcana from the Major, and from the Minor cards use only the suit or suits that best represent the consultant's question if there is one. The consultant should hold this question clearly in his or her mind when mixing and cutting the cards. The first of the cards he or she draws represents the consultant's present predicament; the second, a situation or person he or she is about to encounter which will effect it.

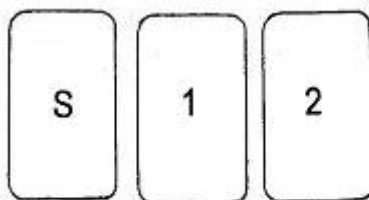


Figure 1

This simple layout may be elaborated by drawing yet a further card. In this instance the first card drawn will act as an indicator of the past, the second the present, and the third the future.

Now, if the question is one of great importance, the consultant may repeat the operation with the Major Arcana, and place three trump cards above each of the three Minor Arcana cards. The card or pair of cards on the left represents influences on the past, those in the middle the present, the right the future.

The Celtic Method

In the book Waite published in 1910 to accompany his celebrated deck, he introduced this method to the world as the "Celtic Method." The Celtic Method and its variants are probably the most popular layouts used by readers today. Waite claimed it was traditional to certain parts of Britain, and implied that prior to his writing about it, it had only been used with regular playing cards, reminding us of the common identity of the French suit signs and those of the Minor Arcana.

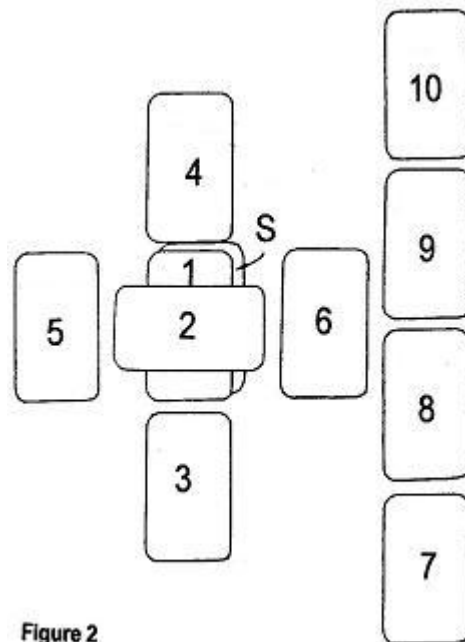


Figure 2

First, decide whether you want to leave the Major Arcana in or out of your reading. Now select the Significator from the deck, whether it is the Significator provided with the deck, a court card, or a trump, and place it before you on the table, face up. This represents the consultant, or the subject of the divination. Next, fan the rest of the pack, face down, on the table. The consultant must now draw a card from these cards, unseen, turn it over, and set on top of the Significator (card 1). The card represents the main influence acting on the consultant or the subject being inquired about, and is said to “cover” them or it.

A second card should now be drawn unseen by the consultant, exposed, and laid crosswise on top of the first. It is said to “cross” them or the subject, and represents any obstacles he or she is confronting at the moment, or any secondary issues applying to the matter. You may use the card’s upright or reversed meaning as the applicable one here, as your intuition dictates.

The third card is placed above the Significator, being said to “crown” the consultant. This is an indicator of his or her highest aim or goal in the matter, his or her conscious mind, if you like.

The fourth card is placed below the Significator and represents what is “beneath” the consultant, namely, the roots of the matter, the basis of the consultant’s present situation, what the consultant may have forgotten in the equation, what his or her unconscious mind has to say about it.

The fifth card is traditionally placed according to which direction the gaze of the Significator is turned in. If the Significator’s gaze is to the right, then the fifth card is placed on the left and vice versa; it represents the past and factors passing out of the question, that which is behind him.” Should the Significator not face in either direction but be presented full face, or have no face at all in the event it’s a trump card, then assume the left-hand side represents the past.

Similarly, the direction in which the gaze of the Significator is turned represents “that which is before him,” the near future, and approaching influences, and this is where the sixth card must be laid. Should the Significator face front, then this will be at its right-hand side. You have now constructed the basic cross of the layout. Four additional cards are usually selected now and placed in a column one above the other on the right hand side of the cross, beginning at the bottom.

Card number seven represents the present state of mind of the consultant, as he or she sees himself or herself.

Card number eight, his or her social environment at present, and how others see him or her.

Card number nine represents his or her hopes or fears concerning the situation, or sometimes a factor totally unforeseen that will rear its head.

Card number ten represents the final, overall outcome and the working out of all influences revealed by all the other cards. This is the card to which chief attention should be paid. If the answer is in any way ambiguous, this card may be taken and used as the Significator for another layout, either repeating the operation, or using another layout entirely. If it's a court card, it represents a person who will be largely instrumental in determining the outcome of the matter inquired about. If you feel like it, this card may now be taken and used as a Significator for a new layout, to reveal the nature of that person's influence.

A Horoscope Layout

If you are seeking specificity about a certain question you may wish to try a horoscope layout. There are many variants of these, but I shall describe an Italian one. This method requires the inclusion of the Major Arcana. The Significator should be placed centrally and the cards shuffled, cut, and spread out face down as usual. The consultant must now select 48 cards at random, making a pile of them, still face down, one upon the other. Deal the cards from the top of this pile, turning them face up now but making sure to preserve their up-down orientation exactly the way it is, into a circle of twelve heaps of four cards each, in the order indicated, building up the heaps in rotation.

This pattern will, of course, be familiar to students of astrology, being the chart of the twelve zodiacal houses that the sky is divided into. Each division, or House, governs a specific area of human experience. Beginning with House 1, lay the four cards in each House out on the table from right to left, then read them from left to right, bottom card first, melding the meanings of the cards to form a coherent sentence that fits the nature of the House.

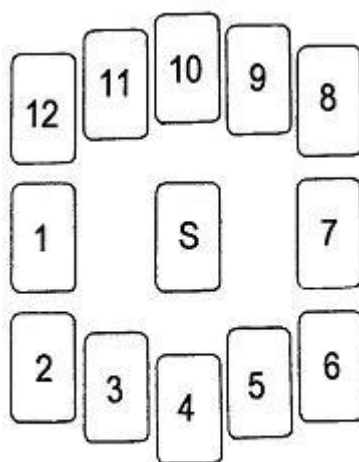


Figure 3

- House 1. The psychological state of the consultant.
- House 2. His or her possessions and financial affairs.
- House 3. His or her everyday intellectual activities; also neighbors, brothers and sisters.
- House 4. Home life, base where he or she lives.
- House 5. The consultant's pleasures, creativity, love-life, or children.
- House 6. The consultant's health and work.
- House 7. The consultant's marriage or partnerships, sexual and otherwise.
- House 8. Possessions gained through others; legacies or deaths.
- House 9. The consultant's more profound mental interests, deeper quests, travel to distant parts of the world.
- House 10. The consultant's career or method of self-expression in the world. Attainments.
- House 11. The consultant's connections, social contacts, public persona, objectives.
- House 12. The consultant's burdens, restrictions, secret fears, sacrifices.

Complex Layouts

Until you have the knack required in the previous layout of linking the cards with ease to produce a narrative or “sentence,” you should probably stay with one of the simpler layouts. However, when you are ready to link, here is a more complex variant to try.

A Forty-Two Card Layout

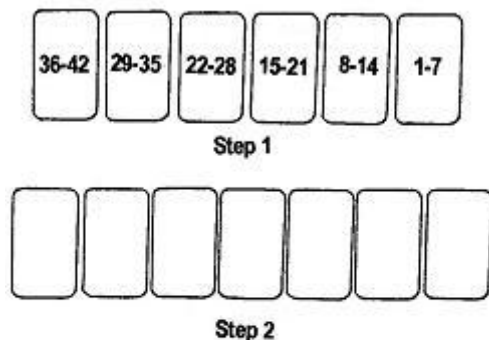


Figure 4

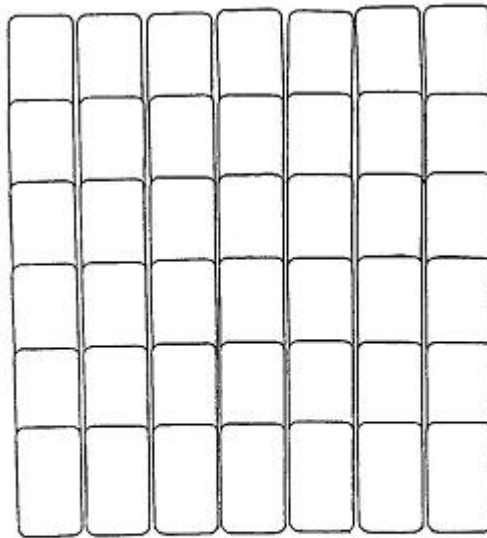
After you have prepared the cards in your usual manner, the consultant (not the reader) should select forty-two cards unseen and at random from the entire deck and form a line of six heaps, seven cards to each, right to left, face upward. Selected cards one through seven should be contained in the first heap on the right; eight through fourteen in the next, and so on.

Now you as the reader should take up the first heap on the right and lay it out, right to left. Take up the second heap and also deal it out right to left on top of the cards from the first heap. Repeat this process until the six seven-card heaps are exhausted and you are now confronted by seven six-card heaps.

Skim off the top card of each heap, shuffle them together and lay them out, right to left, as always, in a new line.

Take the next two cards from each heap, shuffle them and lay them out as two new lines under the first.

Gather up the remaining twenty-one cards, shuffle them and lay them out in three lines beneath your first three. Again, you are confronted by six lines of seven cards.



Steps 3, 4 and 5

Figure 5

Search for the Significator, either a court card you have chosen earlier, or the card provided with the deck, and begin reading the cards from right to left, linking the images together to form a narrative, as your intuition dictates. End the reading at the bottom left-hand corner. If the Significator does not appear on the table, abandon the reading and repeat the process, or use another method.

Interpretating the Cards

Interpreting the cards is largely a matter of personal intuition. The cards are basically pegs on which to hang your intuitions regarding the consultant or the matter being inquired about. However, if you are new to tarot, then simply look up the traditional meanings of each card that appears in your reading. These printed interpretations will act as scaffolding on which to build your intuitions as and when they develop. With practice you will ultimately come to evolve your own set of nuanced interpretations, your own interpretive tarot “vocabulary”, and lists of traditional meanings may be safely left behind.

You will notice that we have provided various interpretations with each card. Many of these are Etteilla’s contributions to tarot, and each illustrates an aspect of the card, sometimes with a synonym, or with another part of speech. If you are using a layout in which each “cell” is filled by only one card, then the general meaning will be fairly evident, although you will have to put your own spin on it to match it with the topic of the reading. However, if you are employing a more complex type of reading that produces sequences of cards to be read, then this is where the multiple synonyms and parts of speech supplied by Etteilla come in handy. In this instance, each card will affect the meaning of the card coming before it and after it. Note that all the cards are supplied with keywords to aid general memorization. These are followed in the text by the meanings of the card: those when it presents itself upright, and others when it presents itself upside-down, “reversed”.

We shall consider the Majors first.

Interpretations of the Major Arcana

Trump 0 - The Fool

Various series medieval and Renaissance woodcuts are extant entitled “The Children of the Planets.” They depict the rule of the seven planets over different types of people and their professions. The Fool frequently appears in these prints. He is depicted as a child of, and ruled by, the Moon. He is, in fact, a “lunatic.” In the tarot deck he carries no number, maybe because he stood outside the social order of medieval life. He is the homeless, placeless, often mentally ill person, cast adrift and left to beg for charity on the streets. The character of the Fool also played a popular and central part in German medieval drama where he was known as the *Narr*,

an idiot who frequently used his obtuseness to his own advantage. This probably accounts for his presence in the tarot trumps. Furthermore, despite their outcaste station in life, clever and witty fools found niches for themselves in the medieval and Renaissance courts of great lords, where they provided comedy and jokes to supplement the entertainment supplied by the periodic visits of jugglers and troubadours. Theoretically the Fool was the one person at court immune from retribution for quips he made at anybody's expense. However all too often he became a whipping boy for his master, in effect a scapegoat. Indeed, in tarot gambling games he is frequently known as the "Skys," the Excuse, an expendable card you can play if you want to save a trump you otherwise would be forced to sacrifice by following suit. The Fool depicted in the Dame Fortune's Wheel Tarot is based upon a design popularized in 1761 by Nicholas Conver, a card maker from the town of Marseille in southern France.

Keyword: Madness.

Upright Card: Mania, intoxication, infantilism, innocence, unpredictability, anarchy.

Reversed Card: Stupidity, nullity, apathy, sloth, or mental illness.

Trump I - The Juggler

Since the beginning of recorded history, the skilful juggler has entertained his audience with the "Cups and Ball" trick, which is depicted in this trump. The trick uses three inverted cups and a ball to misdirect its victims. The ball is seemingly placed under one cup, which is then switched around rapidly with the others. The unwary onlooker is now encouraged to bet money on which cup the ball is under, always to his detriment. The design of our card is based upon another fifteenth century illustration from "The Children of the Planets." The Juggler is at his table up to his old trick, baiting and switching, bamboozling gullible onlookers. This time the illustration features the rule of the astrological archetype of tricksters and wheeler-dealers, the planet Mercury, whose occult influence the Juggler falls under, as does the Juggler's pet monkey. Today we might see the Juggler as an entrepreneur, agent, sly lawyer or politician, fake psychic, or swindler, depending on his position and the cards that surround him. His appearance implies the application of some form of skill, cunning, dexterity or diplomacy, or maybe the consultant is being conned, depending on how the card is positioned, upright or reversed.

Keyword: Cunning.

Upright Card: Skill. Dexterity. Diplomacy.

Reversed Card: Deceit. Quackery. Swindling.

Trump II - The Female Pope

The seventeenth century tarot of Nicholas Conver provides the inspiration for this trump. Legendary Pope Joan reached her position of eminence through her erudition, symbolized by the big book in her lap. An ambitious woman who initially dressed herself as a monk for self-protective reasons, she attained high ecclesiastical office and was finally elected to the papacy in 855 as Pope John VIII. She was only unmasked when she gave birth to a child. In medieval religious dramas, she was portrayed doing rigorous penance for her audacity, and is ultimately saved from the jaws of Hell through the intercession of the Virgin Mary. Aside from her usurpation of the papacy, an exclusively masculine domain, Joan's greatest sin of course was her learning, represented by the large book she often holds displayed in tarot cards. Today many cartomancers see her as an archetype of feminist issues. Aside from this association, the wisdom of the Female Pope also implies new, radical and therefore "heretical" revelations, notions or theories that contradict the currently accepted views. She heralds new paradigms. When she appears reversed, however, her revelations may prove ineffectual, may not stand up in court, or to laboratory testing, or even to the test of time. Or they may simply be considered too off-the-wall and out of touch with reality.

Keyword: Revelation.

Upright Card: Radical theories. New paradigms. Astonishing revelations. Female spirituality.

Reversed Card: False revelations. Incorrect conclusions. Crackpot theories. False teachings.

Trump III - The Empress

The inspiration for this card comes from a tarot design found on a partial, uncolored, uncut sheet of fifteenth century, Milanese woodblock prints. As the wife of the Emperor, the Empress is one of the characters that feature in the medieval morality play “The Dance of Death.” She may also represent the Empress Irene, an account of whom follows Pope Joan’s in Boccaccio’s popular book, *De Claribus Mulieribus*, (“About Famous Women.”) On the other hand, if the Emperor trump represents Frederic III (a subject we shall explore in the next card), then the Empress may be his wife, Leonora of Portugal, whom he married in 1552. In terms of cartomantic significance, we may say that all the famous women rulers of antiquity are represented by this image. Today we might see her as an archetype of female secular authority, at work on the throne or behind the throne. She is generally considered a card symbolic of productivity and beneficence.

Keyword: Matriarchy.

Upright Card: Female authority. Beneficence. Plenitude.

Reversed Card: Waste. Vacillation. Overindulgence. Female authority abused.

Trump IV - The Emperor

The design of this card is based upon the same fifteenth century Milanese fragment as the Empress. Founded in 800 CE, the Holy Roman Empire was intended to be the secular counterpart of the Roman Catholic Church, a realization of the ideal of the *Imperium Christianum*, heir to the ancient empire of Rome comprising the European lands of Christendom. The Holy Roman Emperor portrayed in the trump may have been in power around the time the trumps came into existence, possibly the Emperor Sigismund who was crowned at Rome in 1433, or Emperor Frederick III, who succeeded him in 1452. In medieval and Renaissance iconography, the Emperor’s image symbolized secular rule as opposed to religious rule. His appearance in your layout brings stability, potency, protection and realization, benevolent authority and aid. Reversed or badly placed, he may indicate stubborn authoritarianism or the worst side of paternalism.

Keyword: Patriarchy.

Upright Card: Male authority. Stability. Potency. Protection.

Reversed Card: Abuse of male authority. Authoritarianism.

Trump V - The Pope

The Tarot of Nicholas Conver supplies the inspiration for this image. As the appointed successor of Jesus’ chief apostle Simon Peter, the Pope, whose title *Papa* means “Father”, was considered to be the head of the Roman Catholic Church throughout Western Europe. He was also believed to act as the “vicar”, or substitute, for Jesus himself, and was frequently depicted holding the symbolic “Keys” that Jesus was believed to have granted to Simon Peter to bind and loose men from the spiritual consequences of their sins. In cartomancy, the image of the Pope represents religious, as opposed to secular, authority, as well as philosophy and higher intellectual pursuits. As the *Pontifex* or bridge-builder between man and divinity, the Pope is the interpreter of the mysteries of the unseen, whether religious or what today we would call scientific. It may seem counterintuitive, but we should also include under this trump all research scientists as today’s interpreters of the mysteries of the microcosm and the macrocosm. The Pope may also represent a doctor, a spiritual adviser to the consultant, one to whom he or she would turn in times of perplexity or spiritual quandary, possibly a counselor, psychiatrist, father or mother-confessor or rabbi.

Keyword: Faith.

Upright Card: Religion. Science. Medicine. Orthodoxy.

Reversed Card: Dogmatism. Hypocrisy. Sanctimony.

Trump VI – Love

The design for this card is based upon a medieval illuminated manuscript depicting a marriage. The earliest tarot decks simply depict a pair of lovers, and always overhead flies the mischievous Greek boy-god Eros, classical emblem of all-conquering Love. Eros, or Cupid as the Romans knew him, possessed a golden bow and quiver full of arrows, some tipped with gold, others with lead. Those beings, mortal or immortal, struck by one of the love god's gold tipped arrows became infatuated with the first person they set eyes on, while those pierced by his one of his lead tipped arrows fled in loathing from the person they encountered. Later tarots changed the title of this trump from Love to the Lovers, and depicted a young man apparently torn in his choice between two female figures, which gave rise to another cartomantic interpretation of the card as "Choice."

Keyword: Love.

Upright Card: Union. Marriage. Partnership.

Reversed Card: Destructive partnership. End of a relationship or partnership.

Trump VII - The Chariot

The Chariot trump probably displays one of the pageant wagons that initially served as stages for medieval plays. The figure riding inside it varies from deck to deck. Sometimes a female allegorical figure of Fame is depicted, more often a crowned, armored male figure. In terms of its imagery, this trump may be viewed as having to do with matters concerning victory. If we consider one of the card's other names, "Reward of Victory," then the Chariot may be seen to represent fame. When reversed or positioned with bad cards, the looked-for fame or victory may be delayed or even overturned by superior force. Nicholas Conver provides the basis for our trump's design.

Keyword: Fame.

Upright Card: Victory. Success. Fame.

Reversed Card: Victory delayed. Defeat.

Trump VIII – Justice

Justice, one of the three Cardinal Virtues openly represented in tarot decks, is generally female. She is thought to represent Astraea, the daughter of the Greek deities Zeus and Themis. Astraea was said to have been born during the Golden Age before the Great Flood, when all humanity lived together in harmony in an Earthly paradise. As wickedness among men increased, she withdrew from the world and made her home in the heavens, where she may be seen to this day as the constellation Virgo. The design for this card is based upon a fifteenth century trump from a partial deck once known as the Gringoneur or Charles VI cards, now judged to possibly to have been created for the ruling Este family in Ferrara, Italy, or possibly in Florence. Like the other Cardinal Virtues – there are traditionally four of them -- Justice is often portrayed in Renaissance art with a polygonal halo, which indicates the figure's allegorical, as opposed to a sanctified, status. The word "cardinal" implies a principal virtue on which other moral virtues are hinged. Justice means learning how to analytically resolve a problem, how to weigh a matter carefully in the scales of wisdom before applying the sword of division or retribution. Sometimes portrayed wearing a blindfold, the trump counsels impartiality. Often it also implies the application of the law of cause and effect, of reaping the reward for ones actions materially, or through a system of metaphysical rewards and punishments. When this card appears reversed, the subject of the reading may feel the influence of perverted justice or bad laws.

Keyword: Justice.

Upright Card: Impartiality. Law. Due process. Virtue rewarded.

Reversed Card: Bad laws. Injustice. Corruption. Punishment.

Trump IX - The Hermit

The Este deck also provides the basis for the design of this card. The Hermit may have been included in the tarot as one of Death's victims in his Dance. Alternatively, one of the Hermit's other titles, "Devourer of Things," and other versions of his trump such as the one represented here that depicts him carrying an hour glass instead of a lantern, indicate that his true identity may be all-devouring Time, as portrayed in the image of the Greco-Roman god Kronos-Saturn. Warned by a prophecy that one of his sons would supplant him on the throne of heaven, Kronos began swallowing his children as soon as his wife Rhea gave birth to them, which is how he obtained his title *Rerum Edax*, "Devourer of Things." Rhea, however, finally foiled her husband's schemes by presenting him with stones wrapped in baby clothes to swallow. As a result one of the tyrant's sons, Zeus, grew to manhood, wrested the crown of the gods from his father, and banished him to rule the Isles of the Blessed.

Keyword: Prudence.

Upright Card: Slow deliberation. Contemplation. Caution.

Reversed Card: Delay. Obstacle. Apathy. Avarice.

Trump X - The Wheel of Fortune

As already noted, the Roman goddess Fortuna continued to hold a strong grip on the late pagan imagination. During the Christian middle ages she was renamed Dame Fortune, both feared and propitiated as the unpredictable power of fate. The gifts presented at the turn of the year to rulers by their subjects, to masters by their servants, were simply a continuation of the old pagan cult practice, although, more equitably, they were reversed in later ages. One of Fortune's most frequently encountered symbols is a large wheel. Illustrations frequently depict four figures riding it, often with words emerging from their mouths: *regnabo, regno, regnavi, sum sine regno*: "I will reign, I reign, I have reigned, I am without reign," which tell their own story. Dame Fortune herself turns the wheel, blindfolded to demonstrate just how arbitrary she is.

Keyword: Inconstancy.

Upright Card: The good, rewarding times at hand are only temporary.

Reversed Card: The bad, troublesome times at hand are only temporary.

Trump XI – Fortitude

Fortitude is the second of the Cardinal Virtues to appear in the trumps. The conventional Marseille deck portrays the virtue as a female figure either wrenching open, or forcing shut, the jaws of a lion. In this deck, however, we have followed the lead of the early, painted, Este trump, which depicts Fortitude breaking a column in two. Although the figure in the tarot is generally - but not always - a female one, the prototype was probably originally male: the biblical Samson, breaking one of the pillars of the Temple to which he was bound after his betrayal to the Philistines by Delilah.

Keyword: Fortitude.

Upright Card: A moral trial of strength. Resolve. Take courage.

Reversed Card: Foolhardy audacity. Overkill.

Trump XII - The Hanged Man

The painted Este deck of trumps provides the pattern for this card. The Hanged Man trump is usually depicted “baffled,” as the practice was named, hanged upside down by one foot, to signify that he is a traitor. Indeed, one of the Italian names for this card is just that, *Il Traditore*, “The Traitor.” Some have speculated that the figure originally represented Judas Iscariot. On the other hand another clue may be provided in the “Consolation of Philosophy” by the late Roman writer Anicius Boethius, a work still popular during the late middle ages and early Renaissance. Boethius alludes to the image of a man hanging upside down to illustrate the neoplatonist doctrine that, during the process of incarnation, the human soul is embodied in the world upside down, head-over-heels. If the card reader wishes to employ this concept, then the card advises the consultant to withdraw from worldly concerns - such as the bags of coins he clutches in his hands - and turn to more spiritual matters. Alternatively, if the reader wishes to employ the “traitor” identification, the card may carry similar meanings to those traditionally ascribed to horoscope house 12, warning of an act of treachery, unexpected troubles, restraints, exile, seclusion or secret enemies.

Keyword: Constraint.

Upright Card: Re-evaluation needed. Reversal of values. New insights.

Reversed Card: Treachery. Restraints. Enforced seclusion.

Trump XIII - Death

The figure of Death was an all too familiar one in medieval Europe, and stalked the art, drama and literature of the period, chiefly on account of several pandemic plagues that had swept the land. In the tarot Death makes his appearance at the end of a line of trumps, driving them on as it were, in a version of his terrible “Dance of Death.” This, the earliest of all morality plays, was a grotesque performance piece evolved by the medieval Church as a scary reminder to lukewarm Christians to return to the practice of their faith. The action of the drama was usually performed in a churchyard. Figures clad in tight-fitting yellowish linen suits painted with bones to look like skeletons would appear. One figure of Death would address someone dressed as a Pope, and invite him to accompany him to the next world. The invitation would be declined for one reason or another, but inevitably insisted upon. The Pope would be led away as a second fatal messenger would appear and grab the hand of the next victim, usually an Emperor, and repeat the performance, and so on down through the twenty four ranks of medieval society.

In many captioned tarot decks Death was frequently, either diplomatically or out of superstition, left uncaptioned; but almost always it kept its “unlucky” thirteenth position in the trump sequence. In traditional decks the skeletal figure is shown wielding his scythe, and all mankind falls before the sweep of his blade, all classes high and low, popes, prelates, emperors, and paupers. Our deck follows the example of the Este cards, depicting Death on horseback. In cartomancy the card does not necessarily refer to death itself but may indicate legacies or the financial affairs of one’s partner, or maybe to someone’s preoccupation with mortality. On the other hand, it can also mean change, not an idle change, but a purgative, deep-seated one, whereby the ego is stripped bare of old values preparatory to reinvestment with new.

Keyword: Change.

Upright Card: Legacy. Shadow of mortality. Major change.

Reversed Card: Cancellation. Annulment. Death.

Trump XIV - Temperance

Our card again follows the Este deck depiction of this trump. Temperance represents the third of the four Cardinal Virtues. The Catholic theologian Thomas Aquinas said a man possessed of Temperance fulfilled the condition of being “restrained within measure.” Temperance was also considered to be the virtue that defeated

the deadly sin of Wrath. In the tarot Temperance is today depicted as a woman pouring liquid from one container into another, maybe diluting wine with water. This was her standard iconographical form in Western art. Most likely she replaced the original figure of Ganymede, a young Trojan prince with whom Zeus fell in love and abducted to become his wine-pourer and cupbearer.

Keyword: Temperance.

Upright Card: Self-restraint. Moderation. Good combination.

Reversed Card: Excessive self-restraint. Anorexia. Bad combination.

Trump XV - The Devil

The Devil of Judeo-Christian legend was originally the powerful archangel Lucifer, who rebelled against Jehovah's authority, and as punishment for his pride was cast out of heaven to become the eternal enemy of the human race. In medieval drama the part of the Devil was played by an actor dressed up in a horned mask, and this is how he is depicted in some old tarot decks. The appearance of the Devil in your layout may indicate some kind of tyrannical if not malevolent destructive force exercised on the subject of the reading. The tyranny can be of any nature - biological, criminal, political, religious, military, financial, marital, parental, filial, sexual, or emotional. Of course, the strongest tyranny exercised over the consultant may be the tyranny of his or her own appetites. The Devil is an archetype of fate at its worst, of nature's dark side. Cartomancers frequently believe this image can be given a more hopeful interpretation when it appears upright, as contrasted to when it appears reversed.

Keyword: Adversity.

Upright Card: Relentless tyranny. Major force. Avoidable evil.

Reversed Card: Fate at its cruelest. Irresistible compulsion.

Trump XVI - The Tower

Trump number sixteen depicts a tower with its battlements set ablaze by a bolt of lightning. Early decks show bodies falling from the battlements or collapsing on the ground around it. Our depiction is based on a card from an uncut page of woodblock prints originating in fifteenth century Venice or Ferrara.

An alternative name for the card, *La Maison Dieu*, which appears in some seventeenth century decks, has led to speculation that the tower represents the Temple at Jerusalem, either the original built by Solomon, or the building destroyed centuries later by the Romans. However the word *Dieu*, God, may well be a corruption of *Diefel*, Devil, which appears in another deck. Moreover, in a poem about the tarot written around 1550, the Tower is clearly captioned *la Casa del Diavolo*, "The Devil's House." The fact that the tower has been struck by lightning may indicate that we are here witnessing the Devil's downfall as dramatized in the medieval mystery play known as "The Harrowing of Hell." The story was a popular one, used extensively by medieval poets and playwrights, and it forms a vital part of the Christian mystery play cycle. The Harrowing, which means "pillaging" or "plundering," occurs just before "The Last Judgment" in the cycle. It recounts the story of Jesus' post-crucifixion descent into Hell to blast open its gates and release the souls of the unbaptised from the tower of Limbo, an area considered by theologians to be within Hell's precincts. The blasted Tower is therefore the Devil's house, and the catastrophic destruction depicted is, strictly speaking, a blow directed against tyranny itself. In a tarot layout this card may well augur the downfall of tyranny or a tyrant who has the subject of the reading in his or her grasp; unless of course the subject of the reading himself or herself is the tyrant, which may or may not be something worth (tactfully) investigating.

Keyword: Catastrophe.

Upright Card: Downfall of tyranny. Release. End of bondage.

Reversed Card: Destruction, calamity.

Trump XVII - The Star

There are various sets of imagery used to portray the Star trump in the tarot. The imagery used in our card appears in the fifteenth century Milanese woodblock print of uncut trumps, and also, in modified form, in all subsequent Marseille patterns. It depicts a nude figure of indeterminate gender with flowing hair - in modern decks depicted as female - kneeling and emptying jars of liquid, water perhaps, into a river or pond. In the Milanese original, one jar is tucked under the figure's right arm, while the other is supported on its left shoulder. The figure closely resembles the male astrological zodiacal sign of Aquarius, the Water Bearer. Above the figure shines a large star surrounded by four lesser stars. A fifth star nestles on the figure's right shoulder. I have added a dolphin to the design, based on marks in the Milanese card which suggest to me a fish of some kind in the water. This would be consistent with a map of the constellations, where the streams of water from Aquarius' jars fall into the mouth of the constellation *Piscis Australis* or *Austrinus*, the Southern Fish, thought to represent the Babylonian fish-god Oannes, who was worshiped for having brought civilization to humanity. Another possible, allegorical, source for the trump's image, also a male one, may be the Morning Twilight, as described by the sixteenth century Perugian iconologist Cesare Ripa. In this event, the large, central star would be the planet Venus, the Morning Star, herald of the coming day. In either case, the traditional interpretation of the card as "hope" remains consistent.

Keyword: Hope.

Upright Card: Birth of hope. Rebirth. Healing.

Reversed Card: Lessened hope, but not an annulment.

Trump XVIII - The Moon

Based upon the Conver design, the Moon in this trump is depicted alone in the sky, letting fall drops of dew into a dew pond, out of which rises a crayfish or crab, the astrological symbol for Cancer, the zodiacal house ruled by the Moon. The Moon's positioning here in the trump sequence appears to indicate the imminent arrival of the Last Judgment, the final drama in the mystery play cycle. The prophet Isaiah alludes to this moment: "The moon shall shine with brightness like the sun's, on the day when the Lord binds up the broken limbs of his people and heals their wounds." Aside from being a source of moisture and lunacy, the Moon, like Dame Fortune, was also considered by Renaissance philosophers to be the force behind the phenomenon of flux and reflux, the ocean's tides and the red tide of the human bloodstream: anything in nature, like the Moon itself, that waxed and waned in a periodic cyclic.

Keyword: Fluctuation.

Upright Card: Imagination. Period of increase or betterment. Flood tide. Waxing moon.

Reversed Card: Delusion. Period of decrease or decline. Ebb tide. Waning moon.

Trump XIX - The Sun

Whereas the Moon rules the night, the Sun rules the day. This image forms a natural pair with the previous one, and they both seem to forecast the arrival of the mystery play of the Last Judgment. "The sun shall shine with seven times his wonted brightness, seven days' light in one," predicts Isaiah. In the Marseille pattern of trumps, which we follow in ours, the drops of water that surround the sun's disk represent moisture sucked up by its heat during the day, later to be let fall as rain or dew. Below, two children play together in front of a low wall. The design illustrates House 5 of the horoscope chart, the House of Children and Pleasure among other things, astrologically ruled by Leo and the Sun and frequently symbolized in medieval astrology by the figures of two playing children. The trump may accordingly be interpreted as an omen of good health, a heightening of creative powers, organizational abilities, abundant joy, the realization of the Star's hope, and maybe, quite literally, children.

Keyword: Health.

Upright Card: Good health. Creativity. Joy. Children.

Reversed Card: The same.

Trump XX - The Judgment

The final group of religious plays performed at the end of the mystery play cycle constituted the so-called *Judicium*, or Last Judgment. This event, based in large part on Jesus' account of the final cosmic reckoning in Matthew's gospel, brought the cycle to a spectacular climax. Humanity was judged, the good consigned to heaven, the wicked to hell, and the world and time brought to an end. The Marseille pattern for Judgment depicts an angel hovering in the heavens and sounding a trumpet. The words he is uttering, *Surgite ad Judicium*, may be seen illuminated in gold in one fifteenth century Judgment trump painted for the Viscontis, the ruling nobles of Milan. They translate "Arise, the Judgment is at hand!" With the angel's words in mind, when Judgment appears in your layout it indicates the final determination of some important matter, with the further hint of a new enterprise to follow. If reversed or surrounded by bad cards, it may imply a reluctance to come to a conclusion, or a hesitation resulting in delay or postponement. Above all it appears to be a card of resolution, signifying the last and final outcome.

Keyword: Judgment.

Upright Card: Final determination. Resolution. Outcome.

Reversed Card: Hesitation. Delay. Postponement.

Trump XXI - The World

There are several styles of design for this final trump card. Probably the best known is that of the Marseille pattern which displays a naked figure, in modern decks female but in earlier sequences probably male, draped in a floating stole, bearing in each hand a rod and surrounded by what looks like a laurel wreath. Positioned at each corner of the card appear a man, a lion, an ox, and an eagle, the standard representations in liturgical art of the four gospel makers, Matthew, Mark, Luke and John. The central figure probably originally depicted Jesus, wearing a cloak and carrying a scepter, appearing in glory to judge the living and the dead, the final tableau of the mystery play cycle. The oval wreath surrounding the figure in the tarot trump would seem to represent Jesus' mandorla, an almond-shaped nimbus of light that frequently surrounds the figure of the glorified or ascended Christ in liturgical art.

We find a second type of design representing the World not as Christ in glory, but as a landscape with buildings, as the material world in fact. That is how the fifteenth century Este trump depicts the World, and that is the image depicted here. Interestingly, this trump also includes a figure whose polygonal halo identifies her as a Virtue, standing on the customary wreath that surrounds the World's globe. She may be Prudence, the fourth and last Cardinal Virtue, usually omitted – at least openly - from tarot packs. In medieval symbolism Prudence was frequently portrayed holding a circular mirror in which she could see past, present and future. In her other hand she often grasps a serpent, whose symbolism derives from a Biblical verse in the gospel of Matthew, "Be ye wise [*prudentes*] as serpents." To the medieval moralist, Prudence was defined as knowledge of what was good, what was bad, and what was neither, whose parts consist of memory of the past, intelligence about the present, and foresight into the future. As to the trump's general interpretation in divination, this is a card of completion. Notions of eternity are also embodied. The neoplatonist Boethius defined eternity as "the total and perfect possession at once of endless life." Not surprisingly, many tarot readers have considered this the best card in the deck.

Keyword: Perfection.

Upright Card: Prize. Reward. Achievement. Long journey.

Reversed Card: Permanence.

Interpretations of the Minor Arcana

The Suit of Coins

The Coin and Mirror are emblems of the old Cardinal Virtue Prudence. In divination and fortune-telling this may imply caution in monetary matters, pausing to reflect, memory, wisdom; also exchange, either of finance or of information. In card games the Coin suit is considered a “feminine” one. Cartomancers frequently associate the Coin with the alchemical Element of Earth. “Pentacle,” meaning a talisman, was introduced as an alternative name for the tarot Coin by the occultist Éliphas Lévi in 1855, although he originally spelled the word “pantacle.”

Ace of Coins

The coin shown in the tarot deck began life in the prototypical *Mamluk* card decks from the Middle East as a *dinar* coin. Italian decks still refer to it as a *denaro* or *danaro*. For Etteilla and his school this corresponded to the Trefoil or Clover French suit sign that is referred to as a “Club” in Anglo-American decks. Above and below the Ace of Coins in our deck twine strands of clover, to remind us of this Coins-Clubs correspondence. Most cartomancers agree that the card represents physical contentment.

Keyword: Perfect Contentment.

Upright Card: The greatest fortune that one can aspire to. Perfect contentment, happiness, enchantment, ecstasy, marvel, entire satisfaction, complete joy, inexpressible pleasure, pure, accomplished. Abundance at all levels.

Reversed Card: Sum, capital, principal, treasure, riches, opulence, rare, dear, precious, inestimable.

Two of Coins

Here we see a messenger arriving at some scene of rustic festivity bearing an important letter or document pertaining to the celebrants, but unable to make himself heard above the din. An omen of embroilment and embarrassment calling for finesse; possibly, if reversed, involving some unexpected message.

Keyword: Confusion.

Upright Card: Embarrassment, obstacle, engagement, obstruction, hang-up, hitch, trouble, concern, emotion, embroilment, confusion, difficulty, prevention, entwinement, obscurity, agitation, disquiet, perplexity, solicitude.

Reversed Card: Note, writing, handwriting, text, literature, doctrine, erudition, works, book, production, composition, dispatch, letter, missive, character, literal sense, alphabet, elements, principles, letter of exchange.

Three of Coins

A mounted herald announces the arrival of an important person, a visiting noble, or maybe somebody about to receive an honor. From his trumpet flutters a clover-leaf emblem, the French corollary to the Italian Coin suit. A sign of celebrity, esteem and acknowledged skill.

Keyword: Importance.

Upright Card: Noble, of consequence, celebrated, important, large, major, extended, vast, sublime, renowned, famous, powerful, elevated, illustrious, illustration, consideration, greatness of soul, noble deeds, generous deeds, magnificently, splendidly.

Reversed Card: Puerility, childhood, childishness, frivolity, enfeeblement, abasement, diminution, politeness, paucity, mediocrity, pettiness, trifle, frivolity, baseness, cowardice, faint-heartedness, reject, little girl, puerile, feeble, low, groveling, worthless, abject, humble, abjection, humility, humiliation.

Four of Coins

Adapted from Cesare Ripa's Renaissance book of allegorical emblems, this card depicts a man in pilgrim's attire receiving gifts dispensed by the female figure of Plenty. A token of assured material gain.

Keyword: Benefit.

Upright Card: Acquisition of goods. Present, gift, generosity, benefit, liberality, New Year's gift, grace, offering, donation, gratuity, tip.

Reversed Card: Closure, termination, boundary, enclosure. Pregnant, circuit, circumvolution, circumscription, circumference, circle, circulation, intercept, obstruction, engorgement, monopolization, cloister, monastery, convent, arrested, fixed, determined, definitive, extremity, boundaries, limits, terms, end, barrier, compartment, rampart, hedge, partition, obstacles, bars, prevention, suspension, slowing down, opposition.

Five of Coins

Two lovers embrace, too preoccupied with each other to know or care about the gathering storm and the poverty of their circumstances. A card signifying infatuation when upright, chaos when reversed.

Keyword: Lover.

Upright Card: Lover, loving, gallant, master, husband, wife, spouse, boyfriend, girlfriend, fan, mistress, to love, to cherish, to adore, affinity, concord, convenience, appropriateness, suitability.

Reversed Card: Disordered, muddle, misconduct, disorder, trouble, confusion, chaos, damage, ravage, ruin, dissipation, consumption.

Six of Coins

The crane holding the stone in its claw was a recognized sixteenth century allegorical emblem of attention; the woman carrying a lamp and rod while ringing a bell, of vigilance. Many modern cartomancers interpret this card as "a present" as in "gift," although the original divinatory interpretation is "the present moment," as in "do it right now!"

Keyword: Present moment.

Upright Card: Actually, immediately, now, on the spot, suddenly, instantly, at this moment, today, assistant, witness, contemporary, attentive, caring, vigilant. Perilous situation may be improved or worsened, according to the neighboring cards.

Reversed Card: Desire, wish, ardor, zeal, passion, pursuit, cupidity, longing, jealousy, illusion. Overreaching ambition, delusions, greed.

Seven of Coins

The white-clad woman carrying a lamb was a recognized Renaissance allegorical emblem of Innocence; the money-lender at his table eyes her with suspicion. The card implies wealth combined with naivety when upright, suspicion when reversed.

Keyword: Money.

Upright Card: Money, riches, sum, coinage, silverware, whiteness, purity, candor, innocence, honesty.

Reversed Card: Disquiet, spiritual torment, impatience, affliction, chagrin, concern, solicitude, care, attention, diligence, application, apprehension, fear, diffidence, mistrust, suspicion.

Eight of Coins

A brunette girl shyly offers a bag of money to a young metal-smith, maybe for the purchase of a coronet she needs to wear to some great event. Cartomancers today interpret this card as a token of manual or commercial skill, when reversed, as a warning of embezzlement or extortion.

Keyword: Brunette.

Upright Card: A dark-haired girl or woman, passivity, the big night or great occasion.

Reversed Card: Embezzlement, avarice, usury, beware of greed or extortion. Great hope for wealth leads to mediocre results. Need for probity. Danger from usury. Venality may compromise profit. Spiritual vacuum.

Nine of Coins

A complacent lady in medieval court dress brandishes a large scroll, maybe the plans of the building she watches being constructed nearby. Upright, a card of accomplishment, reversed a warning of broken promises.

Keyword: Effectuality.

Upright Card: Result, realization, positive accomplishment, success. Need for prudence to maintain fortune.

Reversed Card: Flim-flam, swindling, deception, promises without result, vain hopes, aborted projects.

Ten of Coins

An apparently happily united couple and their two children survey the world from within the security of their walled domain. Financial security and the consultant's home are implied when the card appears upright; when reversed, this is compromised by some kind of gamble or unforeseen occurrence.

Keyword: Home.

Upright Card: House, home, household, household economy, savings, dwelling, domicile, habitation, manor, lodging, regiment, bastion, vessel, vase, archive, castle, cottage, family, extraction, race, posterity, lair, cavern, den. Neighboring cards indicate good or bad influences. The possibility of inheritance or liquidation of family assets. May refer to the family or grandparents.

Reversed Card: Lottery, fortune, game, unforeseen occurrence, gamble, ignorance, divination, fate, destiny, and fatality, happy or unhappy occasion.

Knave of Coins

The French-suit identification for this card is Lancelot du Lac, the handsomest knight in King Arthur's court. Son of King Bran of Brittany, but raised from infancy by one of the various enchantresses known as the Lady of the Lake, Lancelot was an extremely popular character in medieval romance. His guilty love for Arthur's

wife Guinevere was one of the main causes of the downfall of Arthur's kingdom. Cartomancers today may consider the Knave to represent a sensible younger person, male or female, when upright, a careless and crass one when reversed.

Keyword: Dark youth. "Lancelot."

Upright Card: A dark haired youth, study, instruction, application, meditation, reflection, work, occupation, apprenticeship, schoolboy, disciple, pupil, apprentice, amateur, student, speculator, negotiator.

Reversed Card: Profession, superfluity, largesse, luxury, sumptuousness, magnificence, abundance, multiplicity, liberality, benefit generosity, beneficence, crowd, multitude, degradation, dilapidation, pillage, dissipation. Degradation from love of wealth. Prodigality. Venality. Will do anything for money.

Knight of Coins

Early cartomancers often interpreted Knaves or Knights, representing as they do servants or dependents of the King or Queen of their suits, as their "thoughts." Otherwise the Knight of Coins may be considered to represent profitability when upright, stagnation and unemployment when reversed.

Keyword: Usefulness.

Upright Card: Usefulness, advantage, gain, profit, interest, profitable, interesting, advantageous, important, necessary, obliging, officious. A useful man, traveler, achieving results. Taste for adventure.

Reversed Card: Peace, inaction, tranquility, repose, sleep, apathy, inertia, stagnation, inactivity, unemployment, free time, pastimes, recreation, carelessness, nonchalance, indolence, laziness, idleness, torpor, discouragement, extermination.

Queen of Coins

A King or Queen is generally considered to represent either the subject of the reading, or a person with whom he or she is having, or will have, dealings. One of the popular titles for the French-suit version of this card is Argine, thought by some to be an anagram of *Regina*, Latin for "Queen," possibly representing Mary of Anjou, the wife of the French King Charles VII. Others have said she represents Marie de Medici, wife to Henry IV. Again, the mystery name may be a version of Argea, the daughter of Ardrastus, an ancient king of Argos in Greece. Another Argea, however, turns up in tales penned by the sixteenth century Ferrarese poet Torquato Tasso drawn from the popular chivalric romance "Amadis of Gaul." Here Argea is introduced as Queen of the Fays, sister to the enchantress Filidea and protector of the hero Floridante. The thirteenth century English chronicler Layamon introduces an enchantress with a similar name in his Arthurian Chronicle, notably Argante, "fairest of elves" and Queen of Avalon, who takes the wounded King Arthur into her care to heal him after his last battle. If Argine is Argante, then this would seem to make her an alter-ego of Morgan le Fay, Arthur's half-sister and frequent enemy. Some old French decks label this card *Tromperie* or "Faithlessness," which might be an accurate description of Morgan from King Arthur's point of view. Cartomancers in the past have certainly regarded this card as a dark lady, often with an evil tongue.

Keyword: Brunette woman. Argine.

Upright Card: A dark haired woman, wealth, riches, pomp, luxury, sumptuousness, assurance, surety, confidence, certitude, affirmation, security, toughness, liberty, frankness. A businesswoman, often wealthy. Fortune deriving from the influence of this woman.

Reversed Card: Unsure, doubting, uncertain, doubt, indecision, uncertainty, disquiet, fear, terror, timidity, apprehension, vacillation, hesitation, undetermined, irresolute, perplexed, in suspense.

King of Coins

The most popular title for the French-suit version of this card was Alexander the Great, King of Macedon. Alexander's fourth century BCE reign ushered in the Hellenistic Age. Pupil of Aristotle, conqueror Egypt and of Asia, superhero of the ancient world, he subsequently became a hugely popular figure in French medieval romances. According to these tales Alexander was fathered on his mother Olympias during the absence of her husband, King Philip of Macedon, by the Egyptian sorcerer-pharaoh Nectanebus, who made sure that the baby was born under favorable astrological aspects. Alexander grew up with hair like a lion's mane, eyes of different colors, and a prodigious strength belied by his short stature. Egyptian priests declared him to be the son of the ram-headed god Jupiter-Ammon, so he had himself depicted on Coins crowned with the ram's horns of the god. He was adored by his troops, maybe on account of the legendary largesse he doled out to them in captured booty, and it is undoubtedly for this reason that his name is linked with the King of Coins.

Keyword: Dark haired man. Alexander the Great.

Upright Card: A dark haired man, businessman, negotiator, banker, secretary of finance, calculator, stock market speculator, physics, geometry, mathematics, science, master, professor. Fortune procured through the benevolence of a rich and powerful man. A dark complexioned man.

Reversed Card: Imperfection, defect, weakness, defectiveness, defective construction, malformation, disordering, ugliness, deformity, corruption, fetid, vice, default, constitutional weakness.

The Suit of Cups

The Cup, Chalice or Amphora symbolizes the Cardinal Virtue Temperance and the alchemical Element of Water. They also represent receptivity, containment and incubation; in card games Cups are considered a "feminine" suit. Cup cards are also generally interpreted as having to do with the emotions, love, pleasure, comfort, civility, fertility, female sexuality, and are equated with the French suit sign Hearts.

Ace of Cups

The double fountain of wine displayed in this Ace of Cups design is adapted from a collection of fifteenth century painted Italian cards known as the Goldschmidt cards. The rose is an ancient symbol of love, the lily of purity, although the flowers were not part of the original design. Among other things the Cup was considered by cartomancers a symbol of nourishment, abundance, and passion.

Keyword: Table.

Upright Card: Table, repast, feast gala, regalement, nourishment, food, guests, invitation, prayer, supplication, convocation, host, hotel, hostelry, inn, abundance, fertility, the pleasures of the table, conviviality. Captivation by a passion stronger than reason. Risky passion.

Reversed Card: Mutation, permutation, transmutation, alteration, vicissitude, varieties, variation, inconstancy, lightness, exchange, barter, purchase, sale, market, treatise, convention, metamorphosis, diversity, versatility, reversal, upending, revolution, reversion, version, translation, interpretation.

Two of Cups

The double headed dragon-like plant, sometimes interpreted as a caduceus, is a traditional design element that appears in many Twos of Cups, and derives ultimately from cards of the prototypical Middle Eastern decks. Maybe we can think of it as a Tree of Life. Beneath it, a man and a woman stand united in friendship or love.

Keyword: Attraction.

Upright Card: Love, passion, inclination, sympathy, attractiveness, propensity, friendship, goodwill, affection, attachment, taste, liaison, gallantry, attraction, affinity. Union, devotion, loyalty, expression of love. That which can bring health and happiness.

Reversed Card: Desire, wish, vows, will, longing, lust, avarice, sensuality, jealousy, passion, illusion, appetite.

Three of Cups

A princess presents a crested helmet to a kneeling knight in recognition of his prowess. The design is adapted from a medieval manuscript; the upright card may be interpreted as an indication of a happy conclusion, reversed as a sign of expedience.

Keyword: Success.

Upright Card: Success, science, happy issue, happy ending, victory, suppression of illness, cure, relief, accomplishment, perfection. Realization of hopes, flourishing affections. Happy results.

Reversed Card: Expedience, dispatch, execution, completion, ending, conclusion, termination, accomplishment. Expedited project.

Four of Cups

A dissatisfied gentleman stands propped at a tall table, whiling away his time. Note the positive values of the reversed card. The design is adapted from a medieval housebook.

Keyword: Boredom.

Upright Card: Displeasure, discontent, disgust, aversion, unfriendliness, hate, horror, disquiet, worry, concern, affliction, difficult, annoying, unpleasing, worrying, afflicting. May be ameliorated by the arrival of some joyful event indicated by the surrounding cards.

Reversed Card: New instruction, new light, index, indication, conjecture, augury, prescience, presentiments, prediction, novelty, new acquaintances.

Five of Cups

A woman wipes away a tear as she opens a small casket, a jewel box maybe, perhaps to inspect the size of a recent inheritance. In old cartomancy parlance, this is a card indicative of a “fat sorrow” or some kind of gain with regrets attached to it.

Keyword: Inheritance.

Upright Card: Succession, legacy, gift, donation, dowry, patrimony, transmission, testament, tradition, resolution. Circumstances of the inheritance revealed in the neighboring cards. Also, luck in love.

Reversed Card: Consanguinity, blood, family, forbears, ancestors, father, mother, brother, sister, uncle, aunt, cousin, line of descent, extraction, race, ancestry, marriage, alliance, acquaintance, rapport, liaisons. May also indicate hazardous projects.

Six of Cups

A seated man is engrossed in the pages of a book on a lectern. Perhaps he is reliving events that happened centuries ago, or sunk in memories of his own.

Keyword: The past.

Upright Card: That which has passed away, faded, stale, long ago, previously, since the first instant, long since, in the past, age, decrepitude, antiquity. A minor card, referring to matters of the past. Also, may signify inconstancy of affections, a rupture in love or friendship.

Reversed Card: That which is to come, future, after, at last, afterwards, ultimately, regeneration, resurrection, reproduction, renewal, reiteration.

Seven of Cups

This design is adapted from a medieval woodcut. An astrologer contemplates the novel arrangement of Cups he has just evoked in his imagination. The flowers growing nearby are pansies, emblematic of thoughts and contemplations.

Keyword: Imaginary forms.

Upright Card: Thought, soul, spirit, intelligence, idea, memory, imagination, understanding, conception, meditation, contemplation, reflection, deliberation, view, opinion, sentiment. Happiness and friendship, success in love.

Reversed Card: Project, design, intention, desire, will, resolution, determination, premeditation.

Eight of Cups

A young blond woman enjoys herself sailing a boat on the ocean. This is a card often indicative of a change of direction and moving on, both in upright and reversed positions.

Keyword: Blond girl.

Upright Card: Honest, practical, discretion, modesty, moderation, timidity, apprehension, sweetness, consent.

Reversed Card: Satisfaction, happiness, contentment, gaiety, joy, delight, and rejoicing.

Nine of Cups

A young jousting champion on horseback receives a winner's wreath from the hands of admiring noblewomen. Again, the card is adapted from a medieval illumination. Traditionally considered "the Wish Card," it suggests that the consultant's wish will be granted.

Keyword: Triumph.

Upright Card: Victory, success, achievement, advantage, gain, pomp, triumph, trophy, preeminence, superiority, spectacle, trappings, attire. Prudence in desires and choice of ones affections is counseled.

Reversed Card: Sincerity, truth, reality, loyalty, good faith, frankness, ingenuousness, candor, open-heartedness, simplicity, liberty, science, impertinence, familiarity, audacity, ease, and disturbance.

Ten of Cups

This card depicts a medieval town. It indicates the consultant's roots.

Keyword: Home territory.

Upright Card: The consultant's town, city, homeland, place of origin, country, borough, village, place, site, dwelling, home, habitation, residence, citizen, burghers, townsfolk.

Reversed Card: Anger, indignation, agitation, irritation, ravages, fury, violence, uncontrollable rage.

Knave of Cups

One of the popular names for the French-suit version of this card was Paris, Prince of Troy - although cartomancers now interpret it, as they do all the knaves, as referring to either male or female. Paris was the clandestine lover of Helen, Queen of Sparta, reputedly the most beautiful woman of the ancient world. He stole her from her husband Menelaus, eloping with her, and thereby precipitating a ten-year siege of Troy by the Greeks that culminated in the destruction of the city. Reversed, this card may be considered to announce the influence of a stereotypical home wrecker.

Keyword: Blond youth. Paris of Troy.

Upright Card: A blond youth, studious, study, application, work, reflection, observation, consideration, meditation, contemplation, occupation, work, profession, employment. Treachery of all kinds from strangers and also professed friends. The messenger of love, the slave of infatuation.

Reversed Card: Leaning, propensity, inclination, infatuation, attraction, taste, sympathy, passion, affection, attachment, friendship, heart, longing, desire, charm, engagement, seduction, invitation, agreement, flattery, cajolery, fawning, adulation, eulogy, praise. A penchant which threatens ruin, and leads to final destruction.

Knight of Cups

Aside from the Knight's possible identity as an actual person, the consultant, or the thoughts of the King or Queen, this card also carries the sense of an imminent arrival, possibly of a friend with an offer of help. Be wary of the reversed card, however.

Keyword: Arrival.

Upright Card: Arrival, coming, approach, coming aboard, reception, access, reconciliation, conformity, advent, approximation, comparison.

Reversed Card: Chicanery, rascality, deceit, ruse, lies, artifice, slickness, cleverness, suppleness, trickery, subtlety, lawlessness, wickedness. Beware of tricks. Beware of a rival.

Queen of Cups

One of the most popular names for the French-suit version of this card was Judith, a beautiful widow who dwelt in the town of Bethulia in Judea while it lay under siege by the Assyrians. Out of patriotism, she steeled herself to seduce the Assyrian general Holofernes, and then behead him in his tent while he slept. In this manner she saved the day and caused a rout of the besieging Assyrian army. The apocryphal "Book of Judith" reports that Ozias, the governor of Bethulia, acknowledged her deed with the words: "All that thou hast spoken hast thou spoken with a good heart, and all the people have known thy understanding, because the disposition of thy heart is good," presumably qualifying her for her position as the Queen of Hearts. Nicholas Conver's tarot of Marseille depicts the Queen of Cups carrying a cup in one hand, and what may be a knife in the other.

Keyword: Blond Woman. Judith.

Upright Card: A blond woman, honest woman, virtue, wisdom, honesty. Liaison with a loving woman, discrete, dignified, to whom one owes ones happiness.

Reversed Card: A highly placed woman, of high rank, generous. Surrounded by bad cards, defect, dishonesty, depravity, disorder, corruption, scandal occasioned by her loose ways.

King of Cups

The enduring title for the French-suit version of this card is Charles, that is, Charlemagne, the first Holy Roman Emperor of the West. His name first appears on the King of Hearts in about 1480. Initially king of the Franks, Charlemagne was crowned Emperor in 799. Noted as a lawmaker, he was also known as a promoter of education, and by reason of his office as Holy Roman Emperor, protector of the Roman Catholic Church. He

and his paladin knights became the center of a huge series of medieval chivalric romances. Legend told that Charlemagne, truly named “Charles the Great,” was eight foot tall and could bend three horseshoes at once in his hands. He was buried at Aix-La-Chapelle but was said to be waiting for the day when, armed and crowned once more, he would rise to save Christendom and do battle with the Antichrist. Cartomancers, appropriately, have therefore considered this card to represent a man of law, business, divinity, equanimity, art, or science.

Keyword: Blond Man. Charlemagne.

Upright Card: A light haired man, an honest man, a man of probity, fairness, art, law or science. A powerful man, sincere in friendship. Beneficence on which one may count. A man who unites spiritual and secular roles.

Reversed Card: A highly placed man, a distinguished man. Neighboring bad cards may indicate the opposite, a dishonest man, usury, extortion, injustice, a bandit, a thief, a crook, corruption, scandal.

The Suit of Swords

In European iconography the Sword is a symbol of authority, and emblem of the Cardinal Virtue Justice. In card-play Swords are considered a “masculine” suit, and modern cartomancers also often link it with the alchemical Element of Air, although this can conflict with the traditionally rather gloomy cast of the suit. In traditional card-reading, the Sword suit generally is not considered a happy one, and signifies excess, legalities, lawsuits, division, struggle, misfortune, sorrow and disappointment. It may also represent the act of penetration or cleaving, of discriminating, discerning, and of making a judgment.

Ace of Swords

The mage Éliphas Lévi proposed that the tarot Sword represented the sword of David, king of Israel. This would make a certain amount of sense, as the French King of Spades is often considered to depict King David himself. After David used a slingshot to slay the giant Goliath, the giant’s huge sword was later hung up as a talismanic trophy in the temple built by David’s son, Solomon. Traditional cartomancers like Etteilla saw it as a phallic symbol. Today it is viewed as a card of excessive force, in love as in hate. Reversed, it may warn of a turbulent outcome.

Keyword: Fertilization.

Upright Card: Extreme, large, excessive, furious, ravaged by, extremely, passionately, excessively, vehemence, animosity, transport, ravages, anger, fury, rage, extremity, borders, confine, end, limits, final extremity, embroilment.

Reversed Card: Pregnancy, germ, seed, sperm, matter, enlargement, engenderment, conception, fructification, childbearing, childbirth, fecundation, production, composition, aggrandizement, augmentation, multiplicity.

Two of Swords

Two knights, maybe from opposing armies, greet each other in friendship here. Overhead, the sun shines warmly on their reconciliation. This design is based on a medieval woodcut depicting Lancelot greeting his long lost son Galahad. It can denote concord and truce when upright, duplicity when reversed.

Keyword: Friendship.

Upright Card: Amity, attachment, affection, tenderness, goodwill, rapport, relationship, identity, intimacy, conformity, sympathy, affinity, attraction. Protection from enemies, known or unknown. Political or social equilibrium.

Reversed Card: False, falsity, lies, imposture, duplicity, bad faith, calculated deceit, dissimulation, swindling, deception, superficial, skin deep, surface. Useless friendships, encumbrances, invasions, often fatal, time-wasting.

Three of Swords

A girl wearing a coronet sits weeping beside the dark water's edge. Perhaps she is feeling the loss of separation from her lover or parents. This is generally considered an unhappy card, of absence or loss when upright, distraction or confusion when reversed.

Keyword: Separation.

Upright Card: Distance, departure, absence, removal, dispersion, distant, delay, disdain, repugnance, aversion, horror, incompatibility, contrariness, opposition, unsociability, misanthropy, incivility, separation, division, rupture, antipathy, section, severance.

Reversed Card: Confusion, dementia, meandering, mental alienation, distraction, mad conduct, error, miscalculation, loss, detour, diversion, dispersion.

Four of Swords

Illuminated by evening sunlight, the tombs of a king and a queen illustrate one of the traditional meanings of this card. It often refers to retirement when it appears upright, the dark side of retirement, economic strictures or austerity maybe, when reversed.

Keyword: Solitude.

Upright Card: Desert, retreat, hermitage, exile, banishment, proscription, uninhabited, isolated, abandoned, derelict, tomb, sepulcher, sarcophagus. Dangers coming from all sides. Danger of abandonment leading to solitude. Perils leading to exile or banishment.

Reversed Card: Economy, good conduct, wise administration, prudence, direction, housekeeping, savings, avarice, order, arrangement, rapport, convenience, concert, accord, concordance, harmony, music, disposition, testament, reserve, restriction, exception, circumspection, circumscription, moderation, wisdom, sympathy, management, precaution.

Five of Swords

This sad image of a homeless and disabled woman is based on a medieval illustration of one of the Children of Planets, in this instance a child of Saturn. The card is traditionally considered a sign of lost hopes, upright or reversed.

Keyword: Loss.

Upright Card: Alteration, shrinkage, degradation, attrition, fading, destruction, deterioration, detriment, diminution, damages, reverses, prejudice, defect, tort, avarice, decadence, destruction, disadvantage, devastation, dilapidation, dissipation, misfortune, griefs, setback, reversal of fortune, ruin, defect, rout, debauch, shame, defamation, dishonor, infamy, ignominy, affront, ugliness, deformity, humiliation, thief, robber, rape, plagiarism, seizure, hideous, horrible, opprobrious, corruption, disarray, seduction, lawlessness. Danger of loss comes from paying heed to an impulsive urge or intuition.

Reversed Card: Grief, enfeeblement, affection, chagrin, spiritual torment, interment, obsequies, funerals, burial, and entombment.

Six of Swords

A man on horseback points out some landmark, their destination maybe, to the boy mounted behind him. The design for this card is based on a drawing from a medieval housebook. Upright, the card may be taken as indicating travel, perhaps on a route to success; reversed it has the implication of something revealed or declared.

Keyword: Way.

Upright Card: Journey, alley, road, course, passage, path, way, march, tract, voyage, kind attention, conduct, means, manner, fashion, expedient, course, race-track, promenade, example, trace, vestige, envoy, messenger. Alternatively, a great struggle against adversity.

Reversed Card: Declaration, revelation, declarative action, unfolding, explanation, interpretation, charter, constitution, diploma, legal manifesto, ordinance, publication, proclamation, ostensibility, poster, publicity, authenticity, notoriety, denunciation, census, enumeration, knowledge, discovery, unveiling, vision, revelation, apparition, appearance, avowal, confession, protestation, approbation, authorization.

Seven of Swords

Three youths huddle together, plotting a scheme. The flowers in the background are snowdrops, traditionally emblematic of hope. It generally implies some kind of planning; reversed, it counsels that the consultant be prudent.

Keyword: Hope.

Upright Card: Intention, expectation, aspiration, to rely upon, to overvalue oneself, groundwork, scheme, will, wish, desire, vow, longing, taste, fantasy. Surrounded by bad cards, warns of an approaching disappointment.

Reversed Card: Wise advice, good counsel, salutary warning, instruction, lesson, observation, reflection, note, thought, reprimand, reproach, tidings, annunciation, poster, consultation, admonition.

Eight of Swords

A careworn monarch delivers an admonishment, or maybe even pronounces sentence on someone. Upright, the card implies opposition; reversed, an accident or treachery.

Keyword: Criticism.

Upright Card: Censure, difficult position, critical moment, critical time, decisive instant, unhappy situation, delicate circumstance, crisis, examination, discussion, inquiries, blame, epilog, control, disapprobation, condemnation, annulment, judgment, scorn, sarcasm. Consolation for, or delivery from the results of, this criticism may be found in the adjacent cards.

Reversed Card: Incident, difficulty, particular circumstance, conjunction, event, accessory, unaware, obstacle, delay, hindrance, abjectness, contestation, contradiction, opposition, resistance, quibbling, unforeseen, fortuitous case, adventure, occurrence, destiny, fatality, accident, unhappiness, disgrace, misfortune, symptoms of illness.

Nine of Swords

This card seems to have earned itself a bad reputation over the years quite at odds with its traditional import. One of the traditional cartomantic interpretations simply indicates a minister or member of the clergy, thereby denoting honesty and good faith. Accordingly, this card depicts a medieval bishop or abbot wearing a miter and carrying his pastoral staff. However, he is hedged by nine swords, a veritable forest of troubles.

Keyword: Celibate.

Upright Card: Bachelor, celibate, virginity, abbot, priest, monk, hermit, friar, nun, temple, church, monastery, convent, hermitage, sanctuary, cult, religion, piety, devotion, rite, ceremony, ritual, recluse, anchorite, vestal. The state of virginity. This card may also be a warning of the plots of powerful and implacable foes.

Reversed Card: Justifiable distrust, well-founded suspicion, legitimate fears, mistrust, doubt, conjecture, scruple, timorous conscience, fear, timidity, bashfulness, disgrace, shame.

Ten of Swords

The image of Mary, mother of Jesus, as *Mater Dolorosa*, Grieving Mother, her heart pierced by one or more swords, has been an icon of grief in Roman Catholic lands from medieval times until today. As such it constitutes an appropriate illustration of this card's upright meaning. Note that the reversal of this card implies a contrary interpretation.

Keyword: Tears.

Upright Card: Weeping, tears, sobs, groans, sighs, wails, lamentations, grievances, affections, chagrins, sadness, dolor, jeremiad, tale of grief, desolation. Complete disaster, unless mitigated by surrounding cards.

Reversed Card: Advantage, gain, profit, success, grace, favor, benefit, ascendant, ability, empire, authority, power, usurpation. An outcome which may seem troublesome or disadvantageous, but in the end will turn to profit and advancement for the querent.

Knave of Swords

One of the most frequent identities bestowed upon the French-suit version of this card was that of the legendary champion Ogier the Dane, or *Hogier*, as his name was spelled in France. Ogier was chosen by Charlemagne to be one of his paladins or knights; he slew the giant Brehus and came to be regarded as the patron of hunting. Enchantresses were said to have attended his birth, among them Morgan Le Fay, who finally took him to live with her in Avalon, where, like King Arthur, he dwells immortally until the day he is summoned back to defend France against its enemies. Significantly, Ogier owned two Spanish swords of legendary excellence, named Sauvagine and Cortante. Possibly its Old French spelling, *Valet D'Espée*, may have something to do with the cartomantic interpretation *Espion*, "spy".

Keyword: Spy. Hogier or Ogier.

Upright Card: A curiosity seeker, an observer, an examiner, an amateur, a watcher, a supervisor, an examination, note, remark, observation, annotation, speculation, account, calculation, deduction, a learned man, an artist. Plot or conspiracy. An emissary from the enemy. A deceptive agent. Warning of sorrow.

Reversed Card: Unforeseen, sudden, suddenly, out of the blue, astonishing, surprising, unexpected. The necessity to extemporize, to speak without preparation, to compose or recite on the spot. Unexpected benefit.

Knight of Swords

The Knight of Swords is generally considered to be an iron man, in character and maybe by profession too.

Keyword: Warrior.

Upright Card: A military person, an armed person, a sword master, a duelist, a soldier, combatant, enemy, dispute, war, combat, battle, duel, attack, defense, opposition, resistance, destruction, ruin, collapse, dislike, hate, anger, resentment, courage, valor, intrepidity, bodyguard, mercenary. Armed force. Virulent hate, always ready to create trouble. Person in the police or military. Danger from war, revolution.

Reversed Card: Incompetence, ineptitude, foolishness, stupidity, imprudence, impertinence, extravagance, ridiculousness, trifling, swindle, larceny, crookedness, ignorance.

Queen of Swords

Pallas became a French name for the Queen of Spades as early as 1493, maybe earlier. Also known as Athene, Pallas was the incorruptible daughter of the Greek god Zeus. The virgin goddess of wisdom and crafts, Pallas-Athene championed the cause of the Greeks during the Trojan War, while Ares the god of war championed the cause of the Trojans. The poet Homer in his “Iliad” describes both deities battling together on the plain in front of Troy, Pallas finally triumphing over Ares, allegorically illustrating the power of Intellect over Brute Force. In her day chaste Pallas was referred to by poets as “the Maiden,” which also happened to be the nickname given to the French heroine Joan of Arc, whom this card was also sometimes said to represent. Card players also referred to her as “the Widow”.

Keyword: Widowhood. Pallas Athene.

Upright Card: Emptiness, privation, absence, penury, sterility, indigence, poverty, empty, vacant, unoccupied, unemployed, daring, free. Dangerous animosity from one or several women. A solitary woman, obliged to act by herself through force of circumstance.

Reversed Card: A destructive woman, malignity, malice, crookedness, finesse, artifice, deviousness, bigotry, prudery, hypocrisy.

King of Swords

As noted earlier, the name frequently bestowed on the French-suit version of this card was David, Old Testament king, psalmist and harpist, prophet, conqueror of the Philistines and vanquisher of their champion, the giant Goliath. While still a young shepherd boy David tamed the fits of madness of Saul, the first king of Israel, with his skill as a harpist, and eventually became king himself. David was considered to be emblematic of the justice of God, demonstrating how a humble shepherd boy could be raised by divine power to the highest honor in the land in recognition of his true nobility.

Keyword: Judge.

Upright Card: A man of the judiciary, a man of law, a judge, an attorney, an assessor, a senator, a businessman, a practitioner, an advocate, an agent, a doctor, a physician, a jurist, jurisprudence, a plaintiff, a legal inquirer. With bad cards, a formidable enemy. May refer to partnership with an older man or widower.

Reversed Card: Ill-intentioned, wickedness, perversity, perfidy, crime, cruelty, atrocity, inhumanity. Misdeeds of a destructive man whom one must guard against.

The Suit of Batons

The Baton, Rod, Cudgel, Wand and Pillar are all emblems of the Cardinal Virtue Fortitude. Modern cartomancers often attribute them to the alchemical Element of Fire, sometimes Air. In card games, Batons, like Swords, are considered a “masculine” suit, and in general the suit sign connotes energy, support, willpower and enterprise. They were equated by Etteilla’s school of cartomancy with Diamonds, the suit-sign known in French decks as “Paving-Tiles”. Possibly the quadrilateral allusion stemmed from the diamond-shaped holes that appear in the lattice created by the crossed Batons.

Ace of Batons

Éliphas Lévi stated that the Ace of Batons represented the miraculously flowering rod of Moses’ brother Aaron, a concept borrowed in part from the writings of the first scholar to bring the tarot to public attention, Antoine Court de Gébelin. De Gébelin however identified the Baton with the wonder-working rod of Moses himself. The Baton represented here is the type frequently encountered in Northern Italian card decks, and indicates creativity and enterprise. Reversed, it implies difficulties encountered in the enterprise.

Keyword: Birth.

Upright Card: Commencement, nativity, origin, creation, source, principle, supremacy, first-fruits, extraction, race, family, rank, house, line, posterity, occasion, cause, reason, first, premises. A well favored enterprise. May also refer to a newborn baby.

Reversed Card: Apparent victory, but without duration, risking catastrophic fall. Downfall, cascade, decadence, decline, fading, lessening, dissipation, failure, bankruptcy, ruin, destruction, demolition, damage, devastation, fault, error, mistake, weakness, dejection, discouragement, perdition, abyss, gulf, precipice, to perish, to fall, to sink, to derogate, profundity.

Two of Batons

A young lord leans on a balustrade on his estate, sunk in gloomy thoughts. Above him hang two Batons decorated with sprays of acorn-bearing oak, a tree once considered sacred to Jupiter, maybe on account of the ancient belief that it attracted lightning more than any other tree. A staff of oak was said to have been possessed by Hercules, himself one of the icons of Fortitude, the ruling Virtue of this suit.

Keyword: Sadness.

Upright Card: Chagrin, melancholy, affliction, displeasure, dolor, desolation, mortification, temper, disagreement, dark thoughts, sourness, anger, spite, or affliction, passing or permanent. It may also represent a child of two to four years old.

Reversed Card: Surprise, enchantment, thrilling, trouble, unforeseen event, unexpected happening, fright, emotion, fear, terror, dread, consternation, astonishment, domination, ravishment, alarms, marvel, phenomenon, or miracle.

Three of Batons

A mounted king balances a globe, representing the world, on the palm of his hand.

Keyword: Enterprise.

Upright Card: To undertake, to commence, to encroach, to take possession of, audacity, temerity, boldness, imprudence, enterprising, bold, rash, audacious, undertaken, encumbered, disconcerted, crippled effort, try, temptation. Generally a minor card, but it brings hope, demonstrating the beginning of success. Also may represent a male child of four to six years.

Reversed Card: Interruption of misfortunes, end of torments, of suffering, of travail, end, cessation, discontinuation, discontinuance, repose, influence, intermediary, intermission.

Four of Batons

The imagery for this card, that seems particularly appropriate here, has been adapted from the fifteenth century "Love" trump of the Este tarot. It represents a safe haven and circle of good friends.

Keyword: Sociability.

Upright Card: Society, association, assembly, liaison, federation, alliance, assembly, reunion, circle, community, mob, multitude, crowd, rout, crew, band, company, cohort, army, convocation, accompaniment, mixture, medley, alloy, amalgam, covenant, convention, pact, treaty. Favorable for anything concerning meetings, assemblies, associations. Eloquence. May also indicate a female child between six and eight years of age.

Reversed Card: Prosperity, augmentation, increase, advancement, success, thriving, good luck, flourishing, happiness, beauty, embellishment, progress.

Five of Batons

Ten Imperial crowns are depicted here, indicative of great wealth or luxury.

Keyword: Gold.

Upright Card: Wealth, riches, opulence, magnificence, sumptuousness, brilliance, luxury, abundance, fortune; physical, philosophical and moral sunlight. Chances favorable for success. May indicate a male child between eight and ten years of age.

Reversed Card: Trial, litigation, differences, wrangles, contestations, disputes, entreaty, instruction, pursuit, oppositions, discussions, chicanery, bickering, contradiction, inconsistency.

Six of Batons

A liveried servant hurries on an errand, maybe to deliver the message written on the scroll he is surreptitiously scanning. Etteilla's interpretations here are a reminder of the age in which he was writing, the latter half of the eighteenth century, when many of his consultants would have had servants at their beck and call.

Keyword: Servant.

Upright Card: Employee, servant, valet, lackey, attendant, mercenary, inferior, slave, courier, messenger, to manage, interior of the house, housework, family, all the house servants. Lacking resolve and tenacity, the enterprise will fail. It may represent a female child between ten to twelve years of age.

Reversed Card: Expectation, hope, trust, to lay the groundwork, to rely on, to entrust, to hope, reliance, foresight, fear, or apprehension.

Seven of Batons

The subject matter of this card is based on an illustration from a medieval housebook, a handwritten almanac that was kept on hand in your average castle containing useful information ranging from astrological advice, household remedies, recipes for gunpowder to advice about the maintenance of your cannons and arquebuses. Here, two young nobles discuss the contents of a document that the lady holds in her hands. They could be husband and wife, brother and sister, or simply rival cousins haggling over the details of a will.

Keyword: Discussion.

Upright Card: Parley, discourse, conference, colloquy, conversation, dissertation, deliberation, discussion, speech, pronunciation, language, idiom, dialect, negotiation, market, exchange, measure, commerce, traffic, correspondence, to speak, to say, to utter, to confer, to chatter, to chat, to sew discord, to babble, to blab. The card promises a successful endeavor. It may represent a young male student.

Reversed Card: Indecision, irresolution, uncertainty, perplexity, inconstancy, lack of confidence, thoughtlessness, variation, variety, diversity, to hesitate, hesitation, to totter, to vacillate, or versatility.

Eight of Batons

The same medieval housebook provides inspiration for the imagery of the next card. Here it illustrates the actions of folk governed by the influence of the planet Jupiter. A young man and his lady enjoy a day hawking in the countryside, accompanied by their pet dog.

Keyword: Countryside.

Upright Card: Field, plain, agriculture, cultivation, tillage, landed property, real estate, farm, farmhouse, garden, orchard, meadow, wood, grove, shade, pleasure, sport, amusement, pastime, merry-making, peace, calm, tranquility, innocence, rural life, forest, valley, mountain, field of battle. Matters may hover in the balance. A card of providence bringing harmony and stability in matters explained by the neighboring cards. The card can also represent an adolescent female.

Reversed Card: Interior dispute, examination, argument, misunderstanding, regrets, remorse, to repent, internal agitation, irresolution, uncertainty, indecision, inconceivable, incomprehensible, doubt, qualm, or timorous conscience. Also unresolved issues or faulty intelligence.

Nine of Batons

Another medieval housebook design depicts two wrestlers gripping each other, deadlocked, each waiting for the other to make a move.

Keyword: Delay.

Upright Card: Hindrance, intervals, separation, sending back, suspension, lengthening, slowly, slowdown.

Reversed Card: Something that thwarts or crosses, obstacle, prevention, opposition, disadvantage, adversity, toil, misfortune, unhappiness, calamity, shackles, or contradiction.

Ten of Batons

A snake lies coiled about the base of a tree of ten Batons. This could be the Serpent, coiled about the base of the Tree of Knowledge in the Garden of Eden, patiently waiting to tempt Eve.

Keyword: Treachery.

Upright Card: Treason, perfidy, swindling, cheating, ruse, surprise, disguise, dissimulation, hypocrisy, prevarication, duplicity, disloyalty, heinousness, falsity, conspiracy, imposture. Also sometimes a journey, or the intervention of a young woman.

Reversed Card: Obstacle, zeal, bar, shackle, contrarities, difficulties, toil, travail, inconvenience, abjectness, quibbling, objection, stumbling block, hedge, entrenchment, redoubt, fortification, retreat.

Knave of Batons

Another Trojan prince is depicted here, this time Prince Hector. Noblest and most magnanimous of all the Trojans, Hector was the elder brother of Paris, and the champion warrior of his father King Priam. According to Homer, after holding Troy for ten years against the Greeks, Hector was finally slain by the Greek champion Achilles to avenge the death of Achilles' friend Patroclus, whom Hector had mistaken for Achilles in battle. Hector was considered to fully embody the chivalric virtue of Prowess. In cartomancy he may represent the arrival of a reliable young friend of either gender; when reversed, not so reliable.

Keyword: Stranger. Hector of Troy.

Upright Card: An unknown person, something extraordinary, strange, unusual, unaccustomed, unheard of, surprising, admirable, marvelous, prodigious, miracle, episode, digression, anonymous. A remarkable person. A messenger for a powerful man. Servitude to another's ego or passions. Fruitless action or work.

Reversed Card: Announcement, advice, advertisement, admonition, anecdotes, chronicle, history, stories, fables, notices, instruction. Novelty, amusement, risk of servitude.

Knight of Batons

In the early hours of the morning and clad in the armor of a soldier of Troy, the Knight of Batons is mounted on horseback, ready for a march to foreign lands. Cartomancers frequently interpret this card as indicative of a departure of some kind.

Keyword: Departure.

Upright Card: Displacement, separation, absence, abandon, changing, flight, desertion, migration, emigration, transposition, translation, transplantation, transmutation and evasion. Activity and work. All labor will bear fruit. Maybe a dark haired youth.

Reversed Card: Disunion, discord, rupture, dissension, division, partition, separation, parting, faction, partisan, quarrel, severance, fracture, discontinuation and interruption.

Queen of Batons

The Queen of Diamonds and therefore Batons, was soon recognized as Rachel, a heroine of the Old Testament, whose hand in marriage was sought by the patriarch Jacob. Jacob had to toil for seven years in her father Laban's service to win her as his bride, and then another seven after wily Laban foisted off Leah, Rachel's elder sister, on him first. Rachel was considered "beautiful and well-favored," but also acquisitive and unscrupulous, something one suspects she may have learned from her father. This card almost always refers to an enterprising woman.

Keyword: Country lady. Rachel.

Upright Card: Mistress of an estate, chatelaine, household economy, honesty, civility, sweetness, virtue, honor, chastity. A woman skilled at bold and profitable enterprises. It can refer to the wife of the father.

Reversed Card: Good woman, bounty, excellence, obliging, helpful, serviceable, benefit, service, obligation, modesty.

King of Batons

Since about 1500, one of the titles for the French-suit version of this card has been "Cezar," that is, Caius Julius Caesar, the Roman general, consul and dictator. However the personage in the card is not the historical Caesar, but the Caesar of medieval legend, even as the other court kings are the legendary Charlemagne, Alexander and David. This Caesar was thought to be, not only the first Emperor of Rome, but a veritable pillar of early Christianity, even though the real Caesar died forty years before the birth of Jesus. Generally this card is interpreted as a friendly man, protective, reliable, though often austere seeming.

Keyword: Country Squire. Julius Caesar.

Upright Card: Master of an estate, a good and severe man, a well intentioned man, an honest man, conscience, probity, a farmer, a worker on the land, a cultivator. The chief. A man of determination. A protector.

Reversed Card: A good but severe man. Severity or intolerance. Bad luck associated with too close proximity to the male sex.