

## CINNABAR TAROT COURSE

### Lesson #1: Introduction to the Tarot

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#### INTRODUCTION

Welcome to the Cinnabar Tarot course. In this lesson, we will introduce you to the Tarot, and also to concepts which will be at the core of future lessons. If you have worked with the Tarot before, some of this material will probably be familiar to you; but some of it will be new, and all of it is necessary grounding for further work. As you should do with each lesson, please be sure to master this material thoroughly before you move on to the next lesson. If you have questions or comments, please write to us. Any letters that we receive before we mail your next lesson will be answered with that mailing; or, if you wish to hear sooner and/or have an urgent question, a letter sent with an enclosed SASE (self-addressed, stamped envelope) will be answered at once. If some of the material in a lesson seems odd, stale, or even irrelevant, please be patient: we are trying to help you develop a particular way of looking at and handling the cards, and it will all come together in the end.

Each lesson in the Cinnabar Tarot Course will consist of two parts, Theory and Practice. The Theory section will present and explain information about certain aspects of the Tarot. The next section, Practice, will give you techniques and/or exercises that are designed to help you to apply what you have learned to the cards of the Tarot. The exercises involve hands-on work with the

cards, and are visually oriented. The exercises ought to be done at least twice before the next lesson arrives, unless otherwise stated, but will never need to be done more often than once each week. Most of the exercises will take between 30 and 60 minutes to complete, but two are more complex and will take up to two hours. These two are each presented alone, however --- they will be the only exercises in the lessons they are attached to.

As you may have realized by now, the coursework requires a Tarot deck. If you don't have one, you will need to buy one. The course was developed around the Rider-Waite deck, but the course methods are transferable to other decks, so almost any deck which uses a single, coherent symbolic theme can be used. We do not, however, recommend the use of decks such as the Daughters of the Moon, Motherpeace, Thoth, Masonic, Poet's, Magickal, or Golden Dawn decks; firstly, because they were designed with quite specific aims apart from the mainstream of Tarot, and secondly because they use symbolic systems which are less flexible and thus less suited to our methods. For the exercises in this course, the best decks are the Rider-Waite, Hanson-Roberts, Renaissance, Mythic, or other decks of the "full illustration" tradition, which include scenes or events on each card. The decks based on the older, "geometric" tradition, such as the Marseilles, 1JJ Swiss, and Prediction decks, limit the illustrations on the number cards to geometric figures made up of the suit symbols. These decks may be used for this course, but the lack of full illustration will make some of the exercises more difficult, and the course method can only be fully applied to the other half of the deck.

In selecting a Tarot deck for use in this course, the first concern must be choosing a deck that you feel you will be able to work comfortably with. If you can't or don't want to work with the Rider-Waite deck, don't worry. If you aren't comfortable with any of the full illustration decks, let us know; we have added material to the exercises in each lesson to help you adapt the exercises to your needs, but if your deck is from one of the

more unusual of the older traditions, you may need additional assistance. In any case, do settle on a deck that you like, or you aren't likely to make much progress. (More on that later in the lesson.)

Most Tarot practitioners keep their cards wrapped in silk, and many also put them into a box or bag. This keeps the cards clean and secure. The purpose of the silk, traditionally, is to protect the cards and keep them psychically "clean", silk being a material which neither holds nor transmits psychic energies. Whether or not you opt for a silk wrapper, you ought to keep your cards in a secure place where they will not be disturbed. One of the best places is a bureau drawer, especially if it contains soft clothing (such as socks); this will protect the cards from being damaged if they slide around, and also keeps them among things that you are in constant contact with. If you do get a silk wrapper, choose a color that seems appropriate for your deck. Tradition dictates purple, white, or black, depending on which authority you read, but we have found that any color you feel is suitable will in fact work. Handle and examine your deck before you go shopping for the silk, and you will probably find a piece of silk in a color that you think will work with your deck. That's the one to buy. Import markets are often an excellent source of silk; they stock scarves from India and China, ranging in size from small to enormous, and available in as many as a dozen solid colors. If you don't find one to your taste, white silk will always work. Many people avoid black, since it has some negative associations with the dark side of the occult. Incidentally, a silk wrapper will also provide a handy surface to lay the cards out on, as well as protecting them while they are out of use.

You will need one other thing for this course: a journal. We recommend an empty-book because of durability, but a spiral notebook or a three-ring binder stocked with paper would be fine. The purpose of this is to keep a record of your Tarot work. Each

time you do anything with the cards, write it down. Note the date, what you did, what you thought of or learned, or what happened. If you read a book or article about the Tarot, write down the title, the author, and what you learned from it or what you thought of it. Though you don't need to write down every tiny bit of what happened, go into a fair amount of detail; if you assume that you'll remember it later, you may well find that you don't recall some or all of it, and be sorry that you didn't write a clearer account. This journal will be a valuable record of your learning and progress: you will have a way to trace the development of skills, ideas, and insights. Please be entirely honest in this journal; it is for you alone, and you won't need to cover up, make excuses, or try to look good to someone else. These are private pages in which you can be open and aboveboard. If you get nothing out of an exercise, or forget to do one, you should write that down, too, without fear of criticism. You may need to remember it some day, and no one but you need ever know.

One last comment on your Tarot journal --- be especially careful to write down in detail any insights or ideas you have about the meanings of cards. Every Tarot reader builds up a set of personal interpretations, based on intuition, experience, and disagreements with other readers (you can learn as much from a person you disagree with as from a respected teacher, especially if you think about why you disagree). Flashes of insight may be gone the next day if they aren't recorded, and this is one of the most important sources of interpretations for your cards. You may also want to keep detailed records of any readings that you do, for future reference and/or study. This could help you to develop a broad range of subtle shades of meaning for each card, based on meanings that have turned up in readings. If you are concerned about keeping a reading confidential, you could change, encode, or leave out the name of the querent (questioner). And, lastly, such a record of card meanings could be of invaluable help to you if you decide to make a book of meanings for your cards, as many readers do; all your knowledge will be ready at your fingertips.

The last thing that needs to be discussed before beginning the Theory part of this lesson is how the Tarot works. Just as every Tarot reader develops his or her own understanding of what each card means, so will each reader develop a theory of why or how the Tarot works, and what it does. These theories often follow general schools of thought. Some of these broad theories are: that the Tarot is the remnant of a set of Egyptian sacred images, or is the pages of a book written by Thoth, the Egyptian god of magic and writing; that the Tarot represents the distilled magical wisdom of a group of scholars and sages who met in Fez, Morocco, in 1300 A.D., and needed a means of preserving their learning; or that the Tarot consists of pictures that portray the universal archetypes later identified by the psychologist Jung, which in theory any person will understand. There are, of course, many more theories than these, and a few more will be touched on later in the lesson. It is possible that one, or more than one, of the various theories is correct, or that none of them are. In this course, it doesn't matter which are right or wrong; we don't intend to endorse any of them. What is important for our purposes is that the Tarot does work.

If you have handled the Tarot before, you already know that it works. If you are new to the cards, you will soon learn how accurate the Tarot can be. Most readers have at least one story about a querent who was completely floored when a reading revealed correct, detailed knowledge about some aspect of their life that the reader knew nothing about. It happens again and again, regardless of how or why. Although it can be dangerous to credit the cards with the power to absolutely foretell the future (which, after all, is fluid and can always change or be changed), it is safe to treat the Tarot as a wise and trusted adviser. The Tarot is a means of revealing hidden elements of a situation or the foundations of a matter; explores possibilities and probable results of actions and situations; and can bring to light a range of alternatives for you to evaluate. The future has not yet

happened, and can only be guessed at, but the Tarot provides a possibility for making an educated guess.

## A --- THEORY

### History

The early years of the history of the Tarot are filled with uncertainty, and the later ones with guesswork and speculations. The middle years are largely silent, except as a chapter in the long story of card games.

In 1377, in Bredfeld or Brefeld, Switzerland, a monk named Johannes wrote an essay in which he mentioned a popular new game --- that of cards. This game, he said, depicted the social structure, and could be used for moral purposes to teach people their proper place in life. Brother Johannes did not know where this game had come from, who had invented it, or how old it might be, which is a pity; his essay is the earliest surviving mention of cards, and he dates their arrival in Switzerland as the year in which he wrote. He makes no reference to anything resembling Trumps, but discusses four suits, so it is likely that his deck of cards was not a Tarot deck. The first known Tarot cards, the Visconti deck, was painted in 1415 for the ducal family of Milan, Italy. Between these two dates, a few references to cards were made (few, that is, that have survived), but no evidence exists to place the Tarot earlier than 1415.

For more than three centuries after the Visconti deck was painted, Tarot was used entirely as a card game --- and in fact the game Tarocco is still played in Europe, with cards that are quite different from divination decks. It was in about 1750 that playing cards were first turned to divinatory uses. There is no evidence as to just when this change occurred with the Tarot; Tarot cards were only used for this purpose after the pastime of cartomancy (divination with cards) first became popular. The earliest book on cartomancy was published in 1770 by Joseph Alliette, who wrote under the pseudonym "Etteilla".

This how-to book, which was very popular, used cards of the type meant for the game of piquet.

Then, in 1781, Antoine Court de Gebelin burst on the scene. He published a book, Le Monde Primitif (The Primitive World), in which he claimed that the Tarot was the remains of an ancient Egyptian book of wisdom. He was the first to publish this theory, and the first to claim that Gypsies had spread the Tarot through Europe. (His version of this claim, based on the belief that the Gypsies came from Egypt, is incorrect; Gypsies came from Hindustan and did not reach Europe at all until at least 1417.) He also claimed that the cards had come to Europe by way of Imperial Rome, the Saracens, the troops of Charlemagne, and the Catholic papacy. There is some evidence that he got these theories from secret societies --- he belonged to at least two --- and didn't invent them himself, even if he did publish first. He wasn't a scholar of Egyptian history; no one was at that time, the Rosetta stone which provided the key to hieroglyphics not yet being discovered (let alone deciphered, a feat not accomplished until some 60 years later). However, there is no evidence to either support or deny the claim of Egyptian origin for the Tarot; probably, we will never know.

People were ready and willing to accept a mysterious origin for the Tarot, and Le Monde Primitif was a huge success. The floodgates of speculation were opened (and haven't closed yet). Within a year, Etteilla was claiming that he had known about the Egyptian origin of the cards since 1757; he published a series of pamphlets describing his version of the origins of the Tarot, and followed these up in 1783 with a "corrected" deck (one version is still available as Le Grand Tarot Etteilla), which he had altered to fit his theories. An increasing number of people followed his lead, but of the many swept up in the growing enthusiasm only a few are still remembered today. Foremost among these few is Eliphas Levi.

Writing in the 1850s and '60s, Levi abandoned Etteilla's deck and returned to the more traditional Marseilles Tarot. He believed

the Tarot was the Book of Hermes, and that it descended from the Biblical patriarch Enoch. It was Levi who linked the cards to Hebrew mysticism and the Qabala (a link which was retained by many later scholars and esoteric societies). He matched the 22 Tarot Trumps to the 22 letters of the Hebrew alphabet; linked the four suits to the four letters of the holiest Name of God, the Tetragrammaton; and assigned the ten number cards of each suit to the ten Spheres on the Qabalistic diagram called the Tree of Life. (Again, this lead was followed by many.) He also decided that the court cards represented stages in the human life cycle, and he gave Trump 0, The Fool, a definite place between Trump XX and Trump XXI, Judgment and The World, instead of letting The Fool "float" through the Trumps as previous authorities had done.

Levi's work stimulated much interest among secret magical orders, and since then much of the growth and development of Tarot ideas has been in an esoteric, Hermetic (magical) vein. This is especially true of the secret English magical order, the Hermetic Order of the Golden Dawn. Founded in 1888, this group of eminent occultists produced its own Tarot deck, and several G.D. members (including A.E. Waite, Aleister Crowley, and Paul F. Case) later created their own versions of the Tarot, based loosely on the G.D.'s corrections of Levi. The G.D. placed The Fool as the first card in the Trumps, and rearranged Levi's attributions of the Hebrew letters to the Trumps. The G.D. also placed the court cards on the Tree of Life; changed the positions of the Trumps Strength and Justice, formerly XI and VIII respectively, so that Strength was now VIII and Justice XI; and altered some of the traditional designs to bring the images more in line with G.D. teachings.

In 1910, former G.D. member A.E. Waite published his own G.D.-based deck. He altered the images on the cards to suit his own esoteric beliefs and ideas, and for the first time added human figures to the number cards, creating scenes to express the meanings of the cards. This was the start of the full illustration tradition, and it has become very popular although the older way is



still thriving. Both Case and Crowley, Case in his B.O.T.A. deck and Crowley in his Thoth deck, used the older way; both also used G.D.-based symbolism altered to suit their personal theories. Case changed Waite's Trump designs, but Crowley created new Trumps based on his personal magical and philosophical beliefs.

Since 1970, the Tarot has entered a phase of popularity even greater than the one it enjoyed in the 1780s. Books and decks have been published in large numbers, and there is a deck available for almost every taste. It is perhaps the best time in history to work with the Tarot; though a nervous beginner may feel swamped by the wealth of Tarot material out there, like a child at a feast he or she will soon find what suits his or her tastes and needs.

#### Trumps & Suits: An Overview

You probably know already that the Tarot has 78 cards, and so forth, so we'll take that part as common knowledge and merely comment that a deck such as the Deva deck, with a different number of Trumps or suits, technically isn't a Tarot deck at all, and requires rather different handling than the standard Tarot deck needs.

The Trumps, usually numbered 0 through XXI, represent higher powers, outside forces, situations not of the querent's making, or events not under the querent's control. If you are a Jungian, the Trumps are the universal archetypes that speak directly to any person who sees them. Another way of looking at the Trumps is to see them as things which are at once human and beyond human, at once part of and transcending the human world. These are the molding forces, the ideals, the collective soul, of humanity. An extremely productive way of looking at the Trumps as a group is to see them as a story of human growth and development. Viewed in order, they tell the tale of the Fool's Pilgrimage. Beginning in a state of primal innocence, the Fool learns to relate to the world outside, then turns inward and repeats the process within him or herself. In the end, the Fool emerges, reborn, to a new state of being, at one with the universe. By following the path of the

Fool's journey through the Trumps, a student of the Tarot can come to a deeper understanding of the Trumps, and of the process of personal maturation. Afterwards, you can once again break up the group of Trumps into individual cards and re-examine each one in the light of the new information revealed by the Fool's Pilgrimage. (You will be given an exercise for that purpose at the end of the next lesson, and a more complex one at the end of Lesson #6.)

The suits of the Minor Arcana often carry alternate names, so we will list a few of them for your information. The suit of Wands is also known as Clubs, Batons, Arrows, Staves, Rods, Snakes, and Pipes; Cups as Chalices, Vessels, Bowls, and Pears; Swords as Blades or Arrows; and Pentacles as Disks, Coins, Shields, Stars, Money, Stones, and Deniers. The court cards also have a number of alternate titles. Kings may be called Chiefs, or in some esoteric decks Knights, in which case the "knights" are called Princes; Queens may be called Matriarchs or Dames; Knights are also known as Warriors, Princes, and Chevaliers; and Pages can go by Valet, Maiden, Princess, or Fante. The suits represent people, actions, situations, conditions, and emotions of everyday life. Among them you will find cards that represent fear, greed, generosity, poverty, restriction, labor, friendship, mourning, renunciation, sneakiness, power, solitude, and nostalgia --- among others. The suits are the things which are wholly within the influence and reach of ordinary people, the stuff of life as we all experience it. The court cards represent the characters and personalities of the people who inhabit this everyday world, the people with whom we all spend our lives. Although you may know very few people who exactly fit the card descriptions, and a lot who have some characteristics from several cards, everyone you know is here in one form or another. The Knights and Pages can also represent things instead of people: the Knights, events; the Pages, new interests or beginnings.

This discussion is a light overview, meant to lay the ground for in-depth work in future lessons. Now we need to turn to groundwork in other areas.

Images, Symbols, and Attributions: The Language of the Tarot

Tarot authority Gareth Knight has referred to the Tarot as "the Treasure House of Images" because the Tarot is so rich in imagery and symbols. It is one of the richest such stores that we have, which isn't surprising: the Tarot depends entirely on symbol and image to convey meaning, as does any visual art. Many of these symbols and images are very old, older than the Tarot itself --- three maidens dancing (the three Graces), the Juggler and his tools (one way of depicting the Magician), the sword and scales of Justice, the Veil before which the High Priestess sits, the Wheel turned by Dame Fortune, a heart pierced by swords. These speak more clearly than words, communicating much in a small space, touching the human mind and memory directly without needing translation. Even if you don't consciously recognize these images and symbols, they will speak to your mind and heart --- and your mind and heart will answer.

This is what is behind our earlier comments about not getting far with a deck you don't like. Taste in decks doesn't relate to the artist's style alone; it also involves the symbols used. If you don't like a deck, chances are that the symbols or the artist's handling of them aren't communicating to you. This will keep you from developing a rapport with the cards. You need to be aware that symbols may speak more clearly to one person than to another, or may even mean very different things from one person to another. An example of this is the dragon. In the Orient, the dragon is a creature of water and air, controlling the weather and all bodies of water. Oriental dragons are benevolent, wise, polite, learned, good-tempered, helpful to heroes, and only dangerous if treated badly. In the West, on the other hand, dragons are creatures of fire and earth, hoarding wealth in caves, greedy, brutish, sly, vicious, evil, and exceptionally dangerous. Similarly, then, any symbol may have different significance depending on who is seeing it. Among the myriad Tarot decks, most people will find one or several that speak clearly and pleasantly to them, which they can

develop a close and comfortable bond --- a rapport --- with. In the presence of such a bond, the Tarot practitioner can work very well with the cards; without it, the relationship will be one of essentially negative character, and work will be impossible.

Nearly everything on any given Tarot card can, and generally does, function as a symbol. A bird, a fish, a ship, a stream; a pair of scales, a veil, a pillar, the pattern on a robe: all of these things have meaning beyond the actual, physical item they represent. What do you think of in connection with a red rose? The most common symbolic link in this case is the image of passion, the gift to or from a lover. But each person will have their own private lexicon of things symbolized by a red rose. If this flower makes you think of perfume, gardens, June, a poem by Robert Burns, or allergy medication, then to you a red rose can symbolize these things. And so it is with the objects shown on a Tarot card.

All of these symbols blend with the image on the card to create a structure of meaning. One further thing adds to this structure, and that is the attributions of the card or suit --- things associated with it for symbolic purposes. The two most common types of attribution are elemental, using the four symbolic elements of Fire, Water, Air, and Earth; and astrological, using the 12 signs of the Zodiac and the 7 planets of traditional astrology: Mercury, Venus, Mars, Jupiter, Saturn, the Sun, and the Moon. (Uranus, Neptune, and Pluto weren't discovered yet, and Earth wasn't considered a planet since it didn't move, planets being by definition wandering bodies, according to the ancients; in this antique system, Saturn was an "octave" of Earth, resonating to the same celestial music, and thus handled Earth's influences.) When the element of Fire is attached to the suit of Wands, all of the things symbolized by Fire as one of the traditional elements are attached to the suit by this means, and this provides a frame of reference for dealing with Wands. Likewise, the attribution of the Moon to the High Priestess, or of the sign Virgo to the Hermit, brings to the card all the things that the Moon or Virgo carry with them in symbolic terms.

Please be aware that the attributions mentioned above are symbolic, and not to be taken literally. The actual stars in the constellation Virgo, or the actual substance we call water, have little indeed to do with the symbols of Virgo and of the element Water. It is the characteristics and qualities that tradition has associated with the four elements, the seven planets, and the twelve signs of the Zodiac, that are applied to the process of attributions. The things symbolized by Virgo --- purity, self-containment, unawakened potential, etc. --- and by the element Water --- emotions, the subconscious, etc. --- are not the physical substances of stars or water. Don't make the mistake of the Greek philosopher Aristotle, who decided that the four elements were identical to actual fire, water, air, and earth, and who decided that all things were made up of these four substances!

We will be dealing with symbols and attributes on a practical basis in the rest of the course. For now, turn to Tables 1-1 and 1-2 on the last pages of this lesson. These tables give the elemental and astrological attributions for the suits and Trumps, plus some miscellaneous attributions for the suits --- direction, season, colors, and so on. PLEASE NOTE: if your Tarot deck is designed with different suit attributions (the instruction book will tell you if it is) --- for example, if it gives Wands as Air and Swords as Fire instead of Wands, Fire and Swords, Air --- write these differences on the table, and learn the attributions that are proper for your deck. The attributions we give are standard but not universal, and some decks differ. Be sure that you learn the correct attributions for your own deck! (If you have any questions about this, please write to us; we'd be happy to help.) In any case, do, please, learn the attributions; they will come up again and again in future lessons, and you'll need to know them.

That wraps up the Theory section of Lesson #1. Now it is time for us to give you a few simple exercises which should begin to teach you the practical elements of the approach to the cards

that is at the heart of this course.

## B --- PRACTICE

In this lesson, the Practice section consists of four basic exercises, which you will find diagrams for three of at the end of this section, in front of the tables. (The fourth exercise doesn't need a diagram.) Each exercise will need to be done at least twice during the next month; however, you may do them more often if you wish. The first time you do them, you will want to do them in the order given, but when you repeat them you may do the individual exercises in any order desired --- if you find one or another exercise to be especially valuable, you don't have to go through the entire sequence to get to the one you want before you can do it again.

Set aside half an hour or so for each exercise, plus time to write them up. (Write-up will take longer at first, but as you get used to it it will take less time. The actual time needed will vary from person to person.) You may do all of the exercises on the same day if you wish, but be aware that you may end up retaining very little. Your mind will be absorbing a great deal with each exercise, so give yourself time to process the new ideas and information received before going on. We suggest 24 to 48 hours between exercises, but you'll soon find out how much time you need.

Try to arrange for quiet, private, uninterrupted time for the exercises. If possible, be alone in the room and take the phone off of the hook. (If you have a cat, you may need to chase it out of the room. Cats are fascinated with the Tarot, and will sniff, paw, stare at, walk on, and generally disrupt layouts.) If you can't get complete privacy, try at least to get quiet.

For your study area, you will need a comfortable place to sit, with a space at least three feet square to lay the cards out on. The best spot is the floor, or a king or queen-size bed, but if you need to sit on a chair, a low table --- no higher than your

knees --- may be used to lay the cards on. You need to be able to see the entire pattern clearly and from above, and to be within comfortable reach of the cards if at all possible.

You will also need this lesson, your cards, your journal, a pen or pencil, and your imagination. For all of the exercises in this lesson, you will be treating the Tarot as a sort of complicated children's picture alphabet book, and pretending that you can't read. The point is to look at the pictures. Forget what the cards mean, and concentrate on what the images say.

#### Exercise 1-A

Settle down in your practice space. Get comfortable, and take a moment to familiarize yourself with Diagram 1-A. Take a deep breath, clear your mind, and begin.

Separate the Trumps from your deck, and set the other cards aside. Lay out the Trumps in the pattern shown in Diagram 1-A. (If you use a silk wrapper, you could lay the cards out on it.)

Center your attention on the cards. Look at the entire pattern of images in front of you. Let it sink into your mind.

Next, look at each of the cards one by one. Begin with The Fool and end with The World. You don't want to concentrate hard on the card, just notice what the image shows. If you have any trouble doing this, murmur a description of the card to yourself, like this: (looking at the Rider-Waite Fool) "Zero, The Fool. A man, young. Tunic, hose, soft boots, hat with feather. Staff and satchel in right hand, rose in left. On edge of cliff. Dog behind. Snowy mountains in background, green trees below, sun in upper right." You don't have to go into great detail, describing the pattern on the man's tunic or the breed of dog, but on the other hand don't just say "Guy walking off cliff." Look at each card in the top row, left to right, then the bottom row, left to right.

At this point, stop and check the position of the Trumps Strength and Justice. In this course we will be using Strength as Trump VIII and Justice as Trump XI. This has to do with issues

involving symbols, attributions, image patterns, and relationships between cards. Throughout the course, unless told otherwise, you will need to treat Strength as VIII and Justice as XI even if they are the other way around in your deck. Before going on, please make sure that these two Trumps are placed as described above; if you need to exchange them, do so.

The next step is to look at each vertical pair of cards (The Fool and Justice, The Magician and The Hanged Man, etc.). Look at the first pair. Why are they paired? What do the two of them together seem to say? (Remember to ignore meanings and look at the images.) You don't need to go into any pair with great depth, since you'll be doing this exercise later in the course with more to go on; simply wonder a little, see if anything comes to mind. After about a minute, go on to the next pair.

The last step is intended to make you see the pattern in a slightly different way. Place The Fool at the end of the bottom row, next to The World, and place Justice above The Fool, at the end of the top row. Why do you think we had you do this? What do you think it means, how does it change the pattern?

Although we will normally be leaving you to draw your own conclusions and find your own answers --- after all, the point of the course is to try to teach you how to communicate with your cards by means of your own personal understanding of the symbols and images on them --- in this case, we will tell you our purpose. To succeed in some of the exercises and to better grasp some of the written material, you need to see the Trumps as a cycle. They aren't a line of progression from point A to point B. The Fool doesn't stop when he or she reaches The World; he or she becomes a new Fool, with new lessons to learn, and begins anew.

The exercise ends here. We will work more with the Trumps-as-cycle idea in the next exercise, once you've had time to let it sink in. For now, write up this exercise; and before you go on, think a little about what you learned in this one.



Exercise 1-B

As before, settle down and take a moment to look at Diagram 1-B. Take a deep breath, clear your mind, and begin.

Lay out the cards in the pattern from Diagram 1-B. As before, look at the entire pattern for a minute or two; let it sink in.

Next, study each vertical pair as you did in Exercise 1-A. How do these two cards relate to each other, what do they say when taken together? Spend about a minute on each pair. (Note: The central pair, The Hierophant and The Tower, are the same as in the last exercise. This is because there is an odd number of cards in each row, so when you reverse a row the central card stays the same. It's accidental, and there isn't any significance to it.)

When you've studied all of the pairs, pick up the cards and lay them back down in a circle, with the bottom end of each card pointing outward. Place Justice in front of you, upright, and The Fool about 3 to 5 card-lengths away, reversed. (This means upside down, not face down.) Place The Magician to the right hand side of The Fool, and so on until you have placed The Wheel of Fortune to the right side of Justice. Place The Hanged Man to the left side of Justice, and so on until you close the circle by laying The World on the left side of The Fool. Don't worry if the circle isn't perfect, as long as it's more or less round.

Look at the pattern for a moment, then shift your eyes to The Fool. Glance clockwise around the pattern until you have reached The Fool again, glancing at each card as you go. Get up, walk around to The Fool, and repeat the circle, this time walking all the way around and back to The Fool. As you pass each card, take a moment to locate the two cards that were paired with it in the lines; at The Fool, find Justice and The World, and so on. (This is meant to help you place each card in the circle as it relates to the other cards.)

For the time being, this is what we'll do to examine the Trumps as a cycle; in other lessons, we'll do more. For now, write up the exercise, and think over what you've learned before going on.

Exercise 1-C

Settle down, and look over Diagram 1-C. Take a deep breath, clear your mind, and begin.

Lay out the Minor Arcana in the pattern given in Diagram 1-C, and set aside the Trumps. Spend a minute or two allowing the whole pattern to soak into your mind before going on.

We will be considering the suit cards as a line, rather than a cycle, of development. It is rather difficult to do this with the court cards until you have gone over them in detail, but it is generally fairly easy to see the number cards in this way. So we'll be looking at the face cards one way, and the number cards another way.

Don't rush yourself in letting the whole pattern filter into your mind; this pattern is large and complex. If you are having trouble, try getting up and walking around it, looking at it from different angles; that should help.

When you have finished with the whole, look at the court cards. Start with the four Kings; look first at the King of Wands, then Cups, Swords, and Pentacles. See each image as that of a particular person, distinct and separate from the other three Kings. Repeat the process with Queens, then Knights, and lastly Pages. Then look at the four Wands royalty; see them as four distinct people, different but bound by the commonality of their suit-sign and suit-element. What holds them together; what do they have in common? Repeat with the Cups royalty, then Swords, then Pentacles.

At this point, you might want to stop and write up what you have done so far; when you begin on the number cards, you may forget what you've just learned.

Turn now to the number cards. Look at the Wands, Ace through 10. Move from image to image, trying to see each as a step in a line of progress, as a movement in a dance. It isn't always easy, but if you keep trying you'll probably get it all of a sudden. If you have a deck that lacks full illustration, you may need to use

the meanings of the cards to get full understanding of the way one card moves into the next. (Let us urge at this point that you get a full illustration deck if you possibly can. You will get much more from the course if you do so.)

When you have done this with Wands, move on to Cups, then Swords, then Pentacles. The entire process may take a little longer than half an hour. (If you don't have time to do the whole exercise, break it between the court cards and the number cards.) When you have finished, write it up; and as usual, think about what you've learned before going on.

#### Exercise 1-D

The purpose of this exercise is to help you develop an instinctive feeling for the pattern of the deck as a whole. It can be difficult to achieve this, so we have set no standards for success or failure. Don't get upset if you don't develop such a sense right away; some people can do so, but others take longer. Don't, whatever you do, grit your teeth and grind away at it; the best approach is to be as relaxed as possible.

Lay out the Minor Arcana as you did for Exercise 1-C, and the Trumps as for Exercise 1-A. The Trumps should be above the Minor Arcana, just touching. Sit at the bottom of the pattern by the Pentacles. (If you need to get up and prowl, or walk away from the exercise and walk back, feel free; some people get a lot of good out of doing just that.)

Begin by trying to see the entire pattern of images set out before you. You don't have to be able to focus your eyes clearly on it, just to keep it all in your field of vision. Look at the entire pattern in this way until you feel calm, still, and focused mentally on the cards. Hold this sensation for a minute or two.

Scan the cards in a random pattern, looking at a few at one time and moving on. Scan the entire deck. At intervals, return to looking at the entire pattern, then scan the cards a few at a time once again. Stop after 30 minutes; this exercise takes a surprising amount of energy and can leave you exhausted if you

overdo.

At some point, you will come to an instinctive realization that the Tarot has an overall pattern of which each card is a part. This isn't an intellectual conclusion, it's a gut feeling. Achieving this is the point of this exercise. If you don't get to this after two practices of the exercise, try leaving the cards laid out all day or even for several days (if possible) and come back to them for a few minutes every so often. Or think over the pattern during quiet moments. Sooner or later, something will give, and it'll fall into place. If it doesn't, don't worry; everyone has to get it in their own time and way. Don't fret; do something else, or write to us for suggestions (be sure to tell us what you've tried).

This ends Lesson #1. In about a month, you'll receive Lesson #2, The Trumps. In it, we'll be going into the Trumps in some depth, giving you more information and more complex exercises than we did here, beginning to build on the basics you've received in this lesson. If you have any questions or problems, write to us; otherwise, you'll hear from us next month!

Diagram 1-A

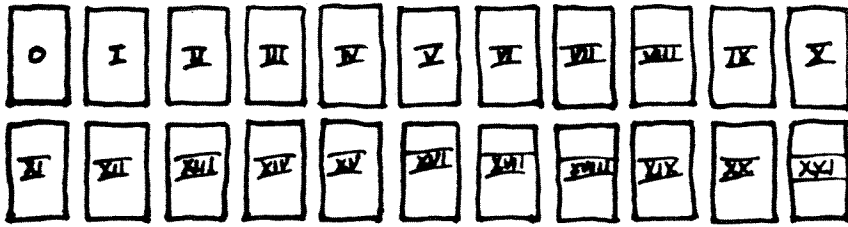


Diagram 1-B

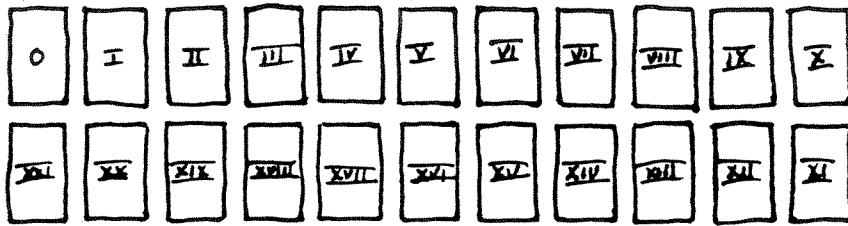


Diagram 1-C

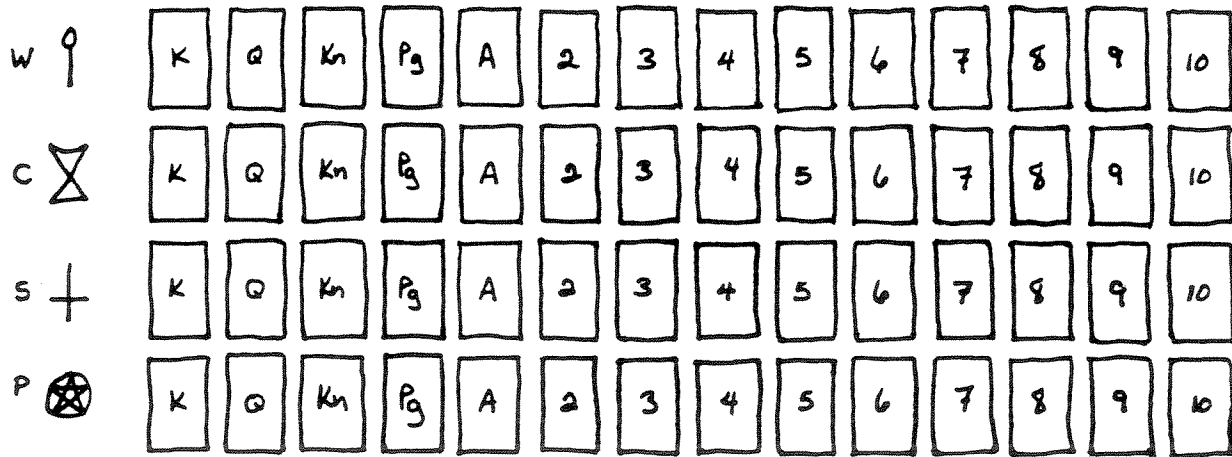


Table 1-1: Attributions of the Suits

Suit	Element	Elemental Symbol	Direction	Color	Season	Quality	Time of Day
Wands	Fire	♠	South	Red	Summer	Hot	Noon
Cups	Water	♣	West	Blue	Autumn	Cold	Dusk
Swords	Air	♠	East	Yellow	Spring	Light	Dawn
Pentacles	Earth	♠	North	Green, Brown, Black	Winter	Heavy	Midnight

Table 1-2: The Astrological and Elemental Attributions of the Trumps

Trump	Attribution	Symbol
0 The Fool	Air	△
I The Magician	Mercury	♿
II The High Priestess	The Moon	♁
III The Empress	Venus	♀
IV The Emperor	Aries	♈
V The Hierophant	Taurus	♉
VI The Lovers	Gemini	♊
VII The Chariot	Cancer	♋
VIII Strength	Leo	♌
IX The Hermit	Virgo	♍
X The Wheel of Fortune	Jupiter	♃
XI Justice	Libra	♎
XII The Hanged Man	Water	▽
XIII Death	Scorpio	♏
XIV Temperance	Sagittarius	♐
XV The Devil	Capricorn	♑
XVI The Tower	Mars	♂
XVII The Star	Aquarius	♒
XVIII The Moon	Pisces	♓
XIX The Sun	The Sun	☉
XX Judgment	Fire	△
XXI The World	Saturn	♄

## CINNABAR TAROT COURSE

### Lesson #2: The Trumps

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#### A --- THEORY

Here begins the central work of the course. In this lesson and the next two, we will be trying to help you learn --- or, if you already know them, to clarify and hone --- the meanings of your cards. We will discuss the attribution(s) of each card, and give examples of how to combine the attributions with the symbols and images on the cards and thus arrive at meanings and divinatory interpretations.

In Lessons 2, 3, and 4, we'll cover both common symbols and symbols and images which appear on the cards of the Rider-Waite deck. The specific details of the discussions may not match your deck, but you can still use the methods; also, some of the images and symbols may be familiar. We will also be giving meanings, and some divinatory interpretations. We don't expect you to take these as "THE correct reading", however. We give them as points of departure, and as examples. What we want you to do with the meanings we give is simply this: compare and contrast them with the meanings that you use for your own cards, and with the images on those cards. Think about what bits you agree with, what bits you disagree with, and why --- especially why. You can learn a great deal by thinking hard about why you agree or disagree with someone, and this is just what we hope to get you to do.

If you find yourself being startled, annoyed, or confused by a meaning that we give, you can get perspective on the issue by



comparing the Tarot to creation myths. All creation myths tell the same story --- how the world, or people, came into being --- but each myth tells a different version, stressing what was most important from the unique perspective of the culture that gave rise to it. And each listener brings his or her own emotions and experiences to the story, making it a different tale to each hearer. This is true of the Tarot as well.

Many people feel that the Trumps are the most important part of the Tarot. Books bear this out; any given Trump has as much written about it as do all 56 of the suit cards combined. Whether or not you agree that the Trumps are more important than the rest of the deck, you probably find them fascinating, complex, and enigmatic. If we extend the metaphor of creation myths, the Trumps could be classed as the miraculous heroes and heroines, offspring of gods and women, who appear on the newly-created Earth as kings and queens, priests and priestesses --- those who intercede between the divine and human worlds, who form the link between heaven and Earth.

0 The Fool. To this Trump is attributed the Element of Air. This Element carries associations with Spring, the direction East, the color yellow, lightness, and dawn. These convey the feeling of a Spring morning: early sunlight, breezes, a sense of freshness and new beginnings. Air is also linked to the mind, the intellect, thought processes, ideas. Combined, this gives an image of innocence, naivete, and detachment from the reality of Earth --- floating along, head in the clouds.

The symbols of the Fool are the staff and satchel, and the dog. The first two mark him as a pilgrim, a wayfarer. The dog represents the instincts that guard him against the hazards of the cliff at his feet.

The Fool, then, is an innocent, inexperienced wayfarer who is watched over by his instincts. The eternal Spring and the eternal child within us all, the Fool sets forth freely and

fearlessly into the unknown. (Consider these points, and the image and symbols on your own card. What are your opinions?)

I The Magician. This card is the first of the seven that are connected to planets. The planetary attribution of The Magician is Mercury. Its associations include speed, dexterity, and skilful manipulation of the material world. These skills may be used for honesty or for trickery; Mercury, like the Amerindian Coyote, was a trickster god. He was also the messenger of the gods, so Mercury is tied to communication, information, learning, and intellectual pursuits.

The primary symbol of the Magician is some set of objects --- jugglers or magicians tools, or the suit-symbols of cup, wand, sword, pentacle --- which indicates his ability to manipulate material objects and material reality. He also sometimes has about him an Ouroboros (a serpent with its tail in its mouth), symbol of eternity, and a lemniscate ( $\infty$ ), symbol of infinity.

The magician has learned to manipulate reality and the world around him; but beware! He may be a trickster.

II The High Priestess. Her attribution is the Moon. The symbolism of the Moon is complex, but it always represents that which is just below the surface of ordinary reality. The most important of these include dreams, visions, insights, and intuition; the subconscious; and anything which is hidden or half-seen, such as secret spiritual teachings.

The High Priestess has several symbols, the most common of which is a scroll, symbolizing the hidden or secret wisdom at her command. In older decks, this may be a book, often a closed one, in place of a scroll. In many decks, she is also accompanied by a waxing crescent Moon, symbol of her attribution and also of her power over the lunar type of wisdom. Lastly, she is sometimes flanked by a pair of pillars with a veil hung between them. The pillars are the pillars of the Temple of Solomon, Jachim and Boaz, symbolizing the twin poles of light and dark, positive and negative, force and form. The veil is another symbol indicating

that which is concealed, or that which conceals something secret.

The High Priestess, then, is the guardian of secret wisdom and the keeper of hidden things; she rules insight and intuition, dreams and visions. Her Temple is a metaphor of the subtle mysteries that she teaches, and the Veil of her temple conceals those mysteries from the profane.

III The Empress. The attribution of The Empress is the planet Venus. As any of you who are versed in Greek mythology will know, Venus (Aphrodite) is associated with love, pleasure, and sex. But the associations go deeper than that. Venus indicates not only love, but also the union of complementary opposites; not merely sex, but also all strong biological life-urges, of which reproduction is only one. Venus also is given rule over abundance and fruitfulness, which she shares with Demeter (Ceres).

The symbols depicted with the Empress are many and varied, and we will only give a few of the more common. She is generally shown holding a sceptre, symbol of rulership. She often wears a crown (material power) or a wreath (the life-force of growing things), and is accompanied by symbols of fruitfulness, such as pomegranates, acorns, and sheaves of wheat. Her shield shows her power to shelter and protect.

In sum, the Empress is a card of love, sex, reproduction, and the fruitful union of complementary opposites --- in a way, she is a Western equivalent of the Yin-Yang. She represents abundance of the material (for she is very much of the physical world), and the feminine creative power in all its forms. (Form is the key word here, for it is the woman who gives form to the growing fetus, and the giving of form or shape is thus considered a female power.)

IV The Emperor. Here we have the first of the twelve cards that have signs of the Zodiac for attributions. The sign of The Emperor is Aries, the Ram. Aries is the symbol of the Spring equinox, of irresistible force and eternal renewal. (If the first

doesn't make sense to you, think about whether it would be possible to stop the coming of Spring.) The ram represents power, force, virility, and sometimes war.

The Emperor himself is a symbol of worldly authority, of government. He is dominance personified. He wears the crown of material control, and carries the sceptre of rulership.

In the Emperor, we have an image of power incarnate; where the Empress is form, the Emperor is force. He represents the unstoppable force of renewal, and he symbolizes control over the material world and the affairs of its inhabitants.

V The Hierophant. The attribution of The Hierophant is the sign Taurus, the Bull. Symbolically, Taurus is associated with domination and with enduring power. The bull represents such qualities as stubbornness, stability, solidity, massiveness, and brute strength. If Aries is the original irresistible force, then Taurus is the original immovable object.

The Hierophant himself is an image of spiritual authority made manifest in the physical world. He carries some sort of staff, rod, or crozier, which is a symbol of authority; as an indication of his holy office, the staff is generally topped with a cross, or even the triple cross (✠) of the papacy. Another of his symbols is a key often the Keys of St. Peter (two crossed keys, one silver and one gold). The key represents the powers of opening and closing, binding and loosing, concealing and revealing. The Keys of St. Peter, in addition, indicate hidden doctrine, the spiritual and earthly powers of the church, and control over initiation into the mysteries of spiritual knowledge.

Altogether, the Hierophant is a remarkably powerful symbol of spiritual authority, and all that such authority implies. He is at once the keeper of the faith and ruler of the faithful, and he is as immovable as is the body of doctrine of the religion he administers.

VI The Lovers. To this Trump has been attributed the Zodiac sign Gemini, the Twins. Gemini symbolizes the union of opposites

who complete one another, once again the Western equivalent of Yin and Yang --- complementary duality, balanced polarity. The symbolism of twins is much the same, with the addition of a profound and unbreakable tie.

The symbols attached to the Lovers vary from deck to deck, but two things remain constant. There is always a young couple; in almost every case a winged figure, either Cupid or an angel, also appears. The couple themselves symbolize a pair-bond, love, sex, romance. The winged figure indicates that the bond between them is one arrived at by nonhuman paths; it was made by instinct and inspiration, not conscious choice. (Think, if you like, of the old phrase "a marriage made in heaven".) This card often indicates love at first sight.

The Lovers indicates one aspect of the broad significance of Trump III, The Empress: the specific matter of love and sex as a fundamental union between two people. The union of complementary opposites which Gemini represents is realized between lovers, created and cemented by their relationship.

VII The Chariot. Cancer, the Crab, is the attribution of this card. Cancer is a representation of the power of subtlety and indirectness; it is a water sign, which gives the quality of subtlety, and is the sign the sun moves into after the summer solstice --- when the Sun is moving away from the Earth, and yet is at its most powerful in the Northern Hemisphere. The crab itself is also a symbol of indirection, because of its sidewise movement; of tenacity, because of its grip; and of subtlety, because it is a water creature.

The Charioteer in his vehicle is a symbol of the mind or spirit governing and propelling the body. The chariot is drawn by horses, which represent the life-force, or sphinxes, which are symbols of the union of intellectual and physical powers. Often the creatures are moving in different directions, or are differently colored; this symbolizes conflicting forces (life, death; order, chaos; intellect, emotions) which are under the Charioteer's control. The chariot itself is a symbol of power,

struggle, and victory; the canopy that sometimes covers the chariot is a sign of kingship, the power to rule.

The Chariot is a card of power and control, but of power and control that are delicate, subtle, indirect, perhaps even unconscious intuition. (Cancer is ruled by the Moon.) With great skill and a light touch, the Charioteer controls his vehicle perfectly.

VIII Strength. This is another of the Trumps which are linked to Zodiacal signs; in this case Leo, the Lion. Leo is a symbol of the power of the will: determination, control, success through decisiveness. The lion itself symbolizes all powerful subhuman forces, and also the animal aspects of human nature.

There are two images for Strength, and they differ widely. One is a young woman closing the jaws of a lion; the other is of a muscular man (Hercules) wrestling with or strangling a lion. If the image is of Hercules, the symbolism indicates strength of the brute force variety which controls and dominates subhuman powers. If it is the image of the woman, the symbolism is rather different. Here is often found the lemniscate, symbol of infinity and of harmonious balance; in some cards it hangs over the woman, in others it forms the brim of her hat. In cards of this design, the symbolism is that of the higher self keeping the animal self in balance.

Thus the Hercules version of Strength signifies domination by main force over subhuman powers or the animal self. The other version is a symbol of the higher and animal selves in a state of gently-maintained, harmonious balance; strength which coaxes but does not compel.

IX The Hermit. Here the attribution is the Zodiacal sign Virgo, the Virgin. Virgo is associated with solitude and untapped potential. Virginity is a symbol of innocence, purity, unity which contains within itself the potential for duality, and creative ability which has yet to take form or awaken.

The Hermit himself generally has several symbols connected to him. Like the Fool, he often carries a staff and is thus a

pilgrim or traveller. He also carries a lantern, symbol of the seeker, and of enlightenment. He is wrapped in a cloak, which indicates his self-containment; the cloak is often grey, the color of neutrality, which neither shines forth as white does, nor absorbs light as black does. Lastly, he is frequently shown standing on a high mountain peak, symbolizing his separation from the rest of humanity.

So The Hermit is a precise and complete image of the solitary seeker. He travels alone, complete within himself, knowing that in him is the seed of great potential. He is an embodiment of the inward path to enlightenment, discovering that his Self is the cosmos in miniature.

X The Wheel of Fortune. This is another of the seven planetary cards; its attribution is Jupiter. This is the most benefic (helpful) of the planets. It symbolizes the assistance and goodwill of an established power, the kindly help extended to you by someone in a strong position.

The symbols associated with this card are myriad. The first is, of course, the Wheel itself, symbol of the ups and downs of Fate. In many cards, the Wheel is turned by Fortune herself, who is chance personified. At times, she is blindfolded, to symbolize impartiality; at other times, her eyes are free and open to point out that she overlooks nothing and no one. In most cards, there are figures riding on the turning Wheel. These range from humans to monkeys to winged snakes; they symbolize the rise and fall of individual fortunes. Often, a Latin motto is included: "Regnabo, Regno, Regnavi, Sum sine regno." This means "I shall reign, I reign, I have reigned, I am without reign." It is another symbol of the changeability of luck.

In brief, The Wheel of Fortune is a card of change, chance, luck. The luck is, on the whole, good because of the beneficent rule of Jupiter, but the card contains sharp reminders that fortune can go either way.

XI Justice. Justice has the attribution Libra, the Scales. Libra is a sign of decision, of action based upon knowledge. The

scales symbolize balance, judgment, evaluation, and truth.

The symbols associated with Justice by and large follow this set of ideas. She carries a sword, symbolizing the authority of her position, the means to carry out her judgments, and the keenness of her mind. In most cases, her eyes are free and open, signifying (as above) that she sees everything; in other cases, she is blindfolded to indicate her impartiality.

This card indicates judgment and evaluation, but also being judged and evaluated. It can also have the related meaning of taking the consequences of one's actions.

XII The Hanged Man. This enigmatic card is one of the three with elemental attributions. Its Element is Water. The symbolism of the Element of Water is unusually complex. As we pointed out in Table 1-1 in Lesson #1, Water is associated with the color blue, the season of Autumn, the quality of coldness, and the direction West. It is also linked to dusk, that brief time between sunset and darkness when the world hangs in a timeless neither-nor state; a half-light region where day and night alike do not exist. But beyond this, Water suggests life, regeneration, renewal. The source and maintenance of life, the Great Mother, is symbolized by Water. So is purification, the act of cleansing oneself physically or spiritually. Yet another significance of Water is that it is, like dusk, a symbol of something outside the normal world; water is the giver of life, and yet it also drowns and kills, and thus it represents a state of suspension between life and death, between this world and the next.

The image of the Hanged Man itself symbolizes sacrifice and suffering. (Many people deepen the meaning of this symbol by associating it with the Norse god Odin in his manifestation as the Hanged God, sacrificing himself to obtain wisdom.) In some versions of the card, the Hanged Man hangs from a doorway-shaped frame or scaffold, representing a passage from one world or state to another. In other cards, he is hanging from a Tau (T-shaped) cross, which is a symbol of regeneration, wisdom, and the key to supreme power.



Thus, The Hanged Man is a representation of suffering that renews, of sacrifice that gains something, and of hanging suspended between life and death, between this world and the next.

XIII Death. The attribution of this Trump is the Zodiacal sign Scorpio, the Scorpion. Scorpio symbolizes secretive and powerful forces, including death and resurrection, and it is deeply attached to the elemental powers of the world. The scorpion itself is a symbol of death, literal or figurative, and of the underworld.

The figure of Death symbolizes, of course, death, but it also represents a change from one state to another --- figurative, as opposed to literal, death. Sometimes Death is shown as a skeleton with a scythe, harvesting a crop of dismembered body parts from the tilled earth of a field. In other cards, he is the Pale Rider on his white horse, carrying a black banner emblazoned with a five-petalled Tudor rose. Before him are people representing different conditions of human life (youth, innocence, age, power, etc.). In either case, the images contain symbols of death and resurrection.

This card, then, represents an unavoidable and profound change --- the old giving way to the new, the casting off of the present for the sake of the future. (Please note: it's not really safe to interpret this card as actually signifying death. Even if true, such a prediction is truly devastating and harmful to the recipient. Please, please never predict death.)

XIV Temperance. To this card is attributed the sign of Sagittarius, the Archer. Sagittarius symbolizes the aim and control of power, and the perfect and exact use of the forces employed. The archer is a symbol of actions which cannot be undone or halted. Once the arrow is in flight, it cannot be arrested or (unless you have a shield) deflected.

The symbols most commonly associated with Temperance are a pair of vases with a stream of water flowing from one to the other. This represents the waters of life, and also the flow of

divine power from one vessel to another. The lack of spills is a symbol of the exercise of skill, care, and precision. The figure of Temperance is often an angel, symbol of divine power, enlightenment, spirituality, and the powers of the nonmaterial world.

The "temperance" of this card's name has nothing to do with Prohibition and Demon Rum; it's the temperance of tempering a sword --- plunging it red-hot into cold water to harden and strengthen the blade. This card is about the attainment of perfect control, of exact use of power; about what is achieved by care and patience and precision; about spiritual trials and training. The meaning is further amplified or refined by the presence of additional symbols, but here you are on your own. The fine detail of image varies considerably from card to card, and you will need to construct your own blend of symbol and image based on what your card looks like.

XV The Devil. This Trump is linked to Capricorn, the Mer-goat. Capricorn is a symbol of the Winter Solstice, and thus represents both the height of the powers of Earth and the waxing strength of the Sun. The Mer-goat symbolizes a dual nature which encompasses completely opposite qualities --- height and depth, Earth and Sea; thus it is at once Lord of the Abyss and of the Mountains.

The symbols associated with this card are many and varied. We can't cover them all, but we can and will explain the more common. The Devil himself is usually shown as a man-goat, like the Greek god Pan (probably the original source of the image); this symbolizes his animal nature, the goat being a symbol of animal brutishness and uncontrolled appetites. Sometimes, he is instead part vulture (voracity and destructiveness) or dragon (evil). In any case, he is horned, the horns being a symbol of power and rulership. His cubical throne or perch is a symbol of materiality, the physical realm; the inverted pentagram is a sign of the perverted supremacy of this material world over the realm of the spirit. The Devil is often shown as androgynous, to

indicate his power to reconcile opposites (this ties into the symbolism of the Mer-goat, above). Chained figures are another symbol of his power over the material.

In sum, The Devil is a card of the forces of the material world; the body, physical reality, hunger, thirst, lust: the demands and restrictions made upon us by the world we live in. Apparently irrational and animalic, these restrictions and demands are (or seem to be) inescapable. This card represents, also, nature as it was once represented by Pan --- wild, violent, inexplicable, inescapable; a set of forces and powers that are relentlessly physical, quite unavoidable, and utterly uninterested in human needs and concerns. (Please note: as with Death, this card doesn't literally represent its namesake. Like predicting death, claiming the presence of the Devil's hand in someone's affairs, especially if they are Christian, is devastating, damaging, and unjustifiable. Please don't do it.)

XVI The Tower. This card has the planet Mars as its attribution. Mars is the principle malefic (harmful) planet, the opposite number of Jupiter. It represents violence, force, destruction, collapse, upheaval, chaos, and war.

As with Temperance, the secondary symbols attached to this card are so variable that we will leave you to explore the ones that appear on your own card, and will here deal only with the primary image: the lightning-struck tower. Lightning is a complicated symbol. It represents both fertilizing and destroying elements: enlightenment and revelation, destructive force, the destruction of ignorance and sudden realization of truth, divine retribution or punishment, power that breaks down existing forms. The Tower is a symbol of human effort; it is also, because of the Tower of Babel, a symbol of arrogance, pride, and misunderstanding. Further, it represents physical and mental constructs, anything built up.

The Tower thus represents a bolt from the blue that punishes pride and arrogance; a shattering realization; or a moment of revelation that breaks down preconceptions and lays bare the truth.

XVII The Star. The attribution of this card is the sign Aquarius, the Water-bearer. Aquarius symbolizes the waters of life and renewal. The water-bearer is a symbol of refreshment and purification.

The primary symbol associated with the Star is, of course, a star. (The cards vary; there are from one to eight stars, or even more.) The star symbolizes hope and inspiration, light in the darkness, attainment, and eternity. A common background figure, a bird in a tree, symbolizes spiritual renewal. The primary card image is of a young woman who pours water from two vases. The streams of water may fall on land, in a pool, or both, depending on the card. The streams represent the pouring of the renewing waters of life. Thus, the image represents renewal and cleansing.

This Trump is a solid image of hope and renewal, the light that breaks through darkness and brings fresh reserves of vitality.

XVIII The Moon. This difficult and enigmatic card has for its attribution the Zodiacal sign Pisces, the Fish. Pisces is a symbol of a fluid, unregimented force; the two fish, swimming in different directions, symbolize cycles of nature, and can also represent a state of otherworldliness (remember that the cold, unbreathing, yet living fish was believed to be neither alive nor dead.)

The symbolism of this card is unusually varied; we will try to give the symbols in more common use. The synopsis at the end will be based purely on the card as it appears on the Rider-Waite deck.

The Moon itself is a symbol of subtlety and hidden things, of intuition and instinct, of dreams and visions, of illusions and things half-seen. The light of the Moon illumines but also deceives --- it changes colors and shapes, and gives the world a ghostly, unreal appearance. The equatorial crescent moon (☾) is neutral; the waxing crescent (☽) good; the waning crescent (☾) evil or dangerous. This card originally showed a waning crescent. The full moon represents the qualities of all three of these at once. The presence of a dog and a wolf, or two dogs,

indicates the dual nature of the Moon, that it is both positive and negative, tame and wild, good and evil. A pool and shellfish (crab, lobster, crayfish) symbolizes the subconscious mind and the things that arise therefrom: dreams, visions, nightmares, and so forth.

This card is thus representative of a slightly unreal place, a land of shadow and moonlight where things are half-seen, seen only in reflections or visions, or are illusory; a land where the evidence of one's eyes cannot be trusted, and where one must go carefully in order to find the right path; a land where intuition and insight count for more than do the usual five senses.

XIX The Sun. This is the sixth of the seven planetary Trumps, to which is attributed (logically enough) the Sun. The Sun symbolizes, among other things, enlightenment, spiritual radiance, success, attainment, perfection, culmination, and completion.

There are three basic images used for this card. The first is that of the Sun in glory --- a large, golden or yellow sun, with a human face, and many rays coming out from it. This is a symbol of the undiluted power of the Sun. The second image is of two youths or children in a walled garden, with the Sun shining on them. The children are innocence, purity, and rebirth. The wall symbolizes the point beyond which one cannot go and remain human, and also the fact that one can only go so far because one is human. The third image is that of a child riding a horse in the same walled garden, with the Sun above as before. The horse is another solar symbol, so the meaning of these two images is essentially the same.

The Sun is a card representing the highest level of success or perfection that human beings can attain; on a lesser level, it means achievement, success, attainment.

XX Judgment. This is the third and last Elemental card; its attribution is Fire. If you refer, once again, to Table 1-1, you will remember that Fire is associated with the color red, the direction South, the season of Summer, the quality of heat, and

midday. It also represents the human will and determination, and can be a symbol of purification.

The image of Judgment is relatively uniform. In most decks, it's much the same as the simpler images of the Christian Last Judgment. (There are exceptions, of course.) If you're not comfortable with the fairly overt Christian imagery, try to think of this Trump as symbolizing re-emergence into the world after a journey through the underworld. The image in its entirety is a coherent symbol of rebirth, and it need not be broken into its component symbols in order to be interpreted. (If you want to do this on your own initiative, it would be valuable experience.)

In short, this card stands for renewal, rebirth, re-emergence, and new beginnings. These may have been brought about by the exercise of the will, or by the underworld journey mentioned above, or by symbolically passing through the fire of experience represented by the Trump sequence XII, XIII, XIV, XV, XVI, XVII, XVIII, XIX. At the end of these exertions, one re-emerges new and purified, ready to begin afresh.

XXI The World. The last Trump has for its attribution the planet Saturn. This may seem odd, since Earth would be the more logical choice, but remember that the ancients believed the Earth didn't move and therefore wasn't a planet (which was by definition "a wandering body"). Saturn was the "octave" of Earth, resonating on the same frequencies, and was held to govern all influences that would otherwise have been assigned to Earth. Saturn is a symbol of limitations and restrictions.

As with Judgment, The World has a fairly standard image. Most cards show a female or hermaphrodite figure, nude except for a gauze scarf, dancing inside a wreath composed of anything from laurel leaves to stars to colored balls. The almond-shaped or oval wreath symbolizes a perfect balance between the physical and spiritual worlds. The figure holds in each hand a double-ended wand, which together symbolize the fourfold balance of the four Elements. This symbolism is repeated in the winged Tetramorphs (lion, bull, man, eagle) in the four corners.

The World symbolizes a state of perfect balance, and thus stasis, which yet has room within it for the Cosmic Dance. It represents working within limits and set restrictions, moving when all about you is still and yet not upsetting the balance.

You'll have noticed that the Element of Earth wasn't an attribution of any of the Trumps. The place of Earth is with the Minor Arcana. Earth, aside from the associations mentioned in Table 1-1 (North, Winter, midnight; the colors green, brown, and black; the quality of heaviness), is a symbol of the material world, the physical body, and the five ordinary senses. All of these things are part of the role played by the Minor Arcana, the role of everyday reality. We'll begin covering the Minor Arcana next month in Lesson #3: The Court Cards.

The point of this Theory section has been to get you to think about the Trumps, to compare your understanding of the cards with the meanings we've given, to notice and think about the symbols on each of your cards, to look hard at the images and consider the messages each conveys. The exercises in the Practice section are meant to keep your brain humming and your thoughts in the same channels while you go still further through this process. Before you go on to the Practice section, please be sure to think about the Trumps in the ways we've mentioned above, if you haven't already done so. It will enhance the value of the exercises, and, incidentally, make them simpler to do.

#### B --- PRACTICE

If we've succeeded in what we set out to do, the Theory section of this lesson will have caused you to change (at least a little) the way you look at the Trumps. Now we want you to use these changes to extend the process you've begun, and change still further. In all the exercises in this lesson, you'll be assessing the images of the Trumps in the light of what you learned in the

Theory part of the lesson. No longer are you to pretend that you are a small child with a picture-book; this time, be fully aware of meanings as you work.

### Exercise 2-A

As you should always do, settle down, take a deep breath, and focus your energies and attention before beginning. Take a moment to familiarize yourself with the patterns in Diagram 2-A.

Lay the Trumps out in the first pattern from Diagram 2-A. (Don't forget that Strength is VIII and Justice XI.) As you've probably noticed, this is the pattern from Exercise 1-A, and you will be doing much the same things with it --- but from a different perspective. The exercise should take about 45 minutes.

Look at each card in turn. Call to mind as much as you can easily remember of what you know about it. Try not to spend more than about a minute per card, unless you have lots of spare time on hand. When you are finished with this part, begin examining the vertical pairs of cards as you did in Lesson #1. Start with The Fool/Justice, and end with The Wheel/The World. As in Lesson #1, ask yourself: why are they paired? How do they relate to one another? What do they say when taken together? Spend about a minute on each pair.

Now, reverse the bottom line so that the cards match Diagram 2-A's second part. (This corresponds to exercise 1-B.) Repeat the pair-studying process, again moving from left to right. Again, spend about a minute per pair.

This exercise only has to be done once, but if you want to repeat it please do. If, when you repeat it, you build on what you've already done, you'll get rather far. Each time, dig a little further into each pair-relationship. You might want to take notes as you go, to preserve the maximum amount of your work.



Exercise 2-B

For this exercise, lay the Trumps in the pattern given in Diagram 2-B. This pattern is a metaphor for the three facets of the Trumps: Heaven, Nature, and Humankind. The World, in the center of the pattern, represents the synthesis of the facets into a unified whole. The base of the triangle, from The High Priestess through Judgment, represents Heaven --- the nonphysical elements: spirituality (II & V), karma (XI & XX), and the celestial realm (XVII, XVIII, & XIX). The right side of the triangle, from The Chariot to The Tower, represents Earth --- the nonhuman aspects: transformation (XVI & XIII), chance (X), supreme power and control (VII, VIII, XIV, XV). The left side, from The Fool to the Hanged Man, represents Humankind --- the human experience aspects: innocence (0), creativity (I & III), authority (IV), pair-bonding (VI), renunciation (IX), and sacrifice (XII). The threefold nature of the world as we know it: Heaven, Earth, and Humankind.

Examine each side of the triangle. You can begin with any one, and do them in whatever order you please. What sort of progression do you see, and in which direction does it move? How does one card flow into the next?

When you've completed this part of the exercise, look at each side in a different light. Do you see any other ordering of the seven within each side that makes sense as a progression from one card to another? If so, rearrange that side of the triangle, and consider it as you did in the first part.

This exercise will probably take 30 to 60 minutes. Do it at least twice; the more you work with it, the more it will yield (up to a point --- any exercise can be depleted). This is another exercise where you might want to take notes as you go, to avoid overloading your memory.

Exercise 2-C

We gave no diagram for this exercise because the pattern

you'll be using for the cards is a simple circle, like the one you made in Exercise 1-B.

Place Justice, upright, directly in front of you at the clock-face position "6:00". Lay The Fool, reversed, three to five card-lengths away at "12:00". Fill in the rest of the circle, with the cards in numerical order, running clockwise from The Fool to The World. All cards should face away from the center of the circle. (In other words, all of the figures except The Hanged Man should have their heads pointing in toward the center and their feet pointing away.)

The first time you used this pattern, you were looking at the Trumps as a cycle. This time, you're looking at them as a specific type of cycle: the Fool's Pilgrimage. This Pilgrimage can be approached in three different ways, depending on which you're most comfortable with. First, you can treat it as an allegory of the process of human growth and development, with the Fool as a newborn child who must first learn to cope with the material world, and who then must turn inward to learn about their inner world before re-emerging as a mature adult. The second way is to treat the Pilgrimage as the story of a spiritual quest, in which the seeker wanders the world in search of spiritual wisdom and then turns inward to find it within him or herself, by journeying inside his or her own inner self; the seeker then returns, enlightened. The third method is to see it as one of the quests common in mythology: the Fool must pass through some adventures aboveground, and then pass into the Underworld, Hell, the Realm of the Dead, or Faery; here are more adventures of a different sort, and here the quest is achieved before the Fool, successful, returns to the ordinary world. All three of these approaches are versions of the basic pattern of the Pilgrimage: an outer journey followed by an inner journey, ending with some sort of rebirth.

If you're uncomfortable with all three of these approaches, you can create your own, but be sure not to deviate from the basic pattern. Whatever you do, don't use a heroic quest myth

that ends in failure. Don't use Orpheus, who looked back too soon, or Persephone, who only achieved half of her wish, or any of the other such with which mythology abounds. The symbolism of the Trumps demands a successful quest. Any approach which doesn't assume this will leave you stranded in the middle of nowhere.

The purpose of this exercise is to help you to arrive at a deeper understanding of the journey of the Trumps. We aren't going to tell you what each card signifies, which step each card represents. We've given you a sketch map of the road; it is for you to fill in the fine detail. You'll learn more this way than we could teach you.

Having laid out the cards in the circle described on the last page, study each card separately. Recall to your mind everything that you know about it. Spend a minute or so on each card. Begin with The Fool; when you've gone all the way around the circle, begin again --- but this time, try to figure out what each card represents as a step of the Pilgrimage. Don't beat your head against the wall trying to come up with an answer; just let your mind spin. Wonder, be curious, follow possibilities. Don't forget to take into each step of the journey the way in which the card moves into and out of the cards on either side. Try not to spend more than about half an hour on this phase.

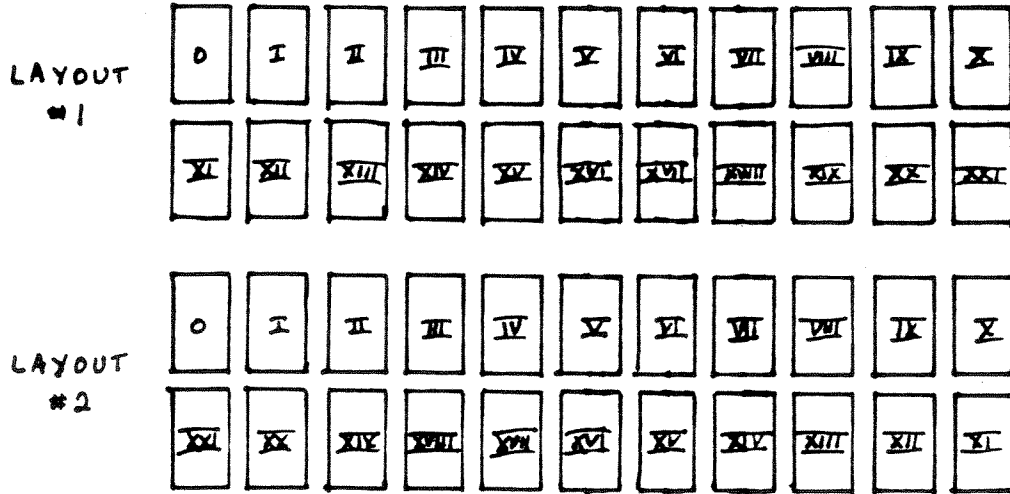
When you repeat the exercise, include the insights and ideas from your first practice during the recall phase; then, when you go on to sort out the path, build on what you've already done. You'll need to do the exercise a minimum of three times over the next month; even if you figure out the path of the Pilgrimage to your own satisfaction the very first time you try, you'll still benefit from repeating the exercise. Each repetition should take about an hour, although the more you do it the less time it may require.

This concludes Lesson #2. On about the first of next month, Lesson #3: The Court Cards will arrive. In it, we'll cover the four Elements in greater detail, and with new Tables of information

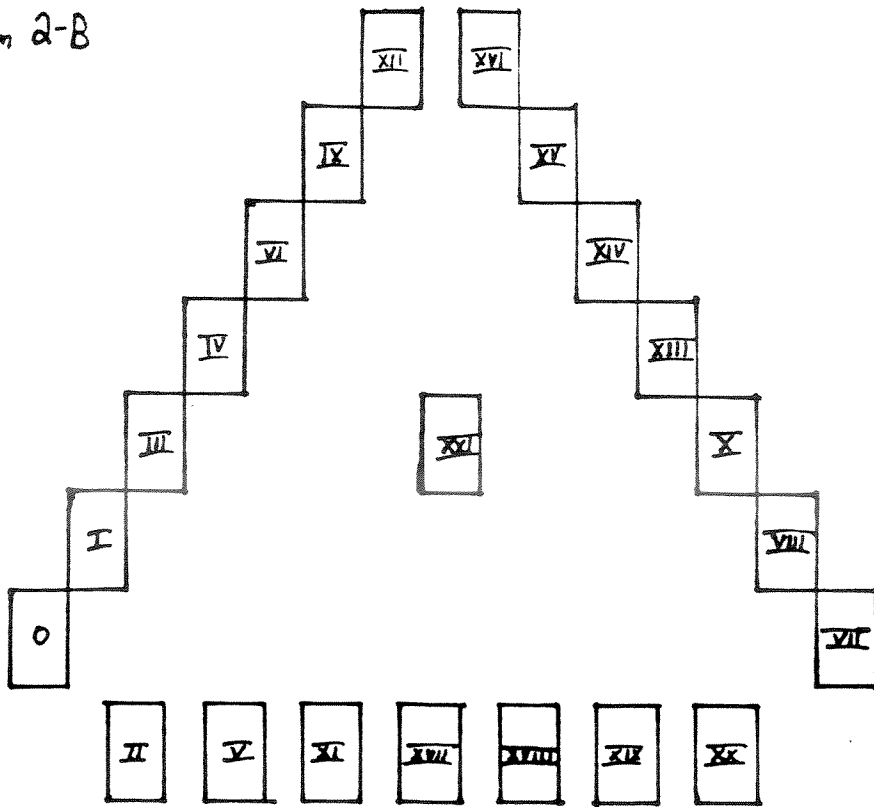
(including aspects of Elemental symbolism we haven't discussed yet). All this will be to help you build up a personality for each of the court cards based on the Elemental attributions that go with it.

Until next month, then, enjoy the Pilgrimage, and be sure to write if you have questions or comments.

# Diagram 2-A



# Diagram 2-B



## CINNABAR TAROT COURSE

### Lesson #3: The Court Cards

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#### A --- THEORY

In the process of discussing the Major Arcana in Lesson #2, we touched briefly on the tradition of the four Elements. In this lesson, we will be exploring that tradition more thoroughly. A sound understanding of the Elements is extremely useful in building a clear picture of the court cards of the Tarot. All too often, the court cards are, symbolically, silent. The figures appear stuffed, doll-like, for the most part devoid of personality or character. The images contain few symbols, and most of those few relate purely to the Element of the suit that the card belongs to. The practitioner has little to work with except the Elemental attributions. (There are Tarot decks where this isn't the case, but in our experience these are rare exceptions to the general trend.) In this situation, the Elements are an exceptionally helpful tool for establishing personalities and divinatory interpretations.

#### The Four Elements

The system of the four Elements dates back to ancient Greece, where it was developed by the philosopher Empedocles in the 5th century B.C. Originally, it was a simple cosmology, explaining the stuff of which the world and its inhabitants were made; but it was adopted by many cultures and many eras, and changed to fit the

needs of each. In the process, it became quite complex, and many contradictory versions developed. This has led to rival systems, much disagreement, and a seemingly ever-expanding list of items and categories attributed to each Element.

We have tried to boil all this down into a consistent, coherent, and relatively simple set of four Tables, one for each Element --- Tables 3-1 through 3-4, which you'll find at the end of this lesson. (Tables 3-5 and 3-6 will be dealt with later in this section.) As with card interpretations, this material isn't intended to be taken as definitive; it's one system, not the only "correct" way. We hope that you'll neither accept nor reject the specific details of these Tables without evaluating them in the light of your own perceptions, needs, and experiences.

Each of the four Tables of the Elements contains seventeen categories of things, characteristics, or states of being that have been assigned to the Elements. Some of these have been included to give you a better grasp of the Element itself; others were added specifically for their relationship to the personality connected to each Element. These personalities are the most important factor in using the Elements to understand the court cards, and discussions of them will form a major part of the Theory section of this lesson. Some of the categories that we present in the Tables may seem irrelevant to you, but we hope that on the whole you will find the material helpful. In studying these categories, keep in mind that all of the attributions are symbolic, and are intended to build in the mind an understanding of the fundamental aspect of reality that is expressed by the Element in question. Thinking in symbolic terms doesn't always come easily to someone raised in modern, scientifically-oriented cultures; the key lies in trying to understand as well as memorize, to seek the links and bonds between items within each Table, and to avoid overloading your mind and memory with too much material at once. You'll need to memorize the four Tables of the Elements, but don't be in a rush to do so. Learn them thoroughly rather

than "cramming" to learn them quickly; otherwise, you may find your mind full of disjointed bits of scrambled information.

To help you learn, understand, and make the most use of these Tables, we're going to spend the next few pages discussing and explaining each category. The first entry on each Table is the symbol of the Element. It's common practice to represent the Elements with simple geometric forms. These representations can serve many purposes, from forming part of a symbolic image to doing duty as a species of shorthand. Several systems of this representation exist side by side. We use the simplest of these, the four triangles. They're the easiest to remember and to write, and aren't complicated by colors. You'll already be familiar with them from past lessons.

The next four entries --- color, direction, season, quality --- are all tied into cultural traditions and into one another. Each Element was believed to rule a color, a direction, and a season, and to be summed up by a quality. These four things serve to form a vivid memory and sensory image of the fundamental nature of each Element. Once this basis is established, attributions can be added, and understood, more readily.

The sixth category, property, expresses the characteristic property of the Element. Fire has the property of purity, an ancient concept relating to the supposed cleansing and purifying properties of actual fire --- properties more called upon long ago than now, where they serve mainly to burn away impurities from metal ores and recycled metal and glass. Water has the property of fluidity; just as actual water is a liquid that flows, so Water shifts and changes. Air is subtle, in many senses of the word; it was linked to the soul and the breath, and its invisible presence gave rise to the belief that it was the abode of spirits, a thing apart from gross matter, to the medieval and Renaissance mind. Lastly, Earth has the property of stability, of being solid and unchanging, ever-present, enduring. Air, Fire, and Water are all shifting and unstable, but Earth is the source of consistency.

The temperament, humor, and humoric qualities are all part of the ancient medical and philosophical concept of the four



Humors. These substances --- blood, phlegm, black bile, and gall (also called yellow or red bile) --- were believed to be present in all persons. If they were present in perfect balance, the result was perfect health and a perfect personality. In theory, at all events; no such perfect person existed. If one humor, on the other hand, predominated, the result was the fostering of certain personality traits, summed up as a temperament, and the susceptibility to certain diseases. This process was governed by the qualities of each humor; for example, since gall was hot and dry, a person suffering from an excess of gall would be prone to (among others) diseases characterized by high fevers, and would be an impatient and hot-tempered person. In time, it came to be believed that every person was born with a humoral imbalance, and that steps must be taken all one's life to offset this problem; but this belief wasn't as widespread as the older, more general theory. The doctrine of the four Humors was the central theory of medical philosophy for many centuries, and was only supplanted in the 1800s, when the technique of bleeding a patient was at last discontinued. But even today, we speak of a cheerful person as "good-humored".

The categories time of day and stage of life relate back to the seasonal attributions, and also to the idea of Elements ruling phases of cycles. This was extended to include the four phases of each day, and the four phases of human life. These had already been assigned to the cycle of the four seasons, so the process of symbolically attaching them to the Elements was a short jump to make. These two categories add to the symbolic image, to the flavor and feeling of its fundamental nature, when you include them in the group of color, direction, season, and quality.

The human faculty is the part of human nature and ability that each Element relates to. Simply put, just as each Humor was held to govern one type of human temperament, so each Element was held to rule one type of human faculty. This rulership is, of course, symbolic in nature, but it nonetheless forms an important aspect of the Elemental attribution of the court cards, and also

of the personalities attached to each Element. We'll go a bit further into this, shortly.

Each of the four Elements is assigned to a Tarot suit, a rank of court card, and (with the exception of Earth) a Trump. We've covered the Trump and suit attributions; now we need to go into the attributions of the court cards. Each of the four ranks of court card is given an Elemental attribution: Kings are Fire, Queens are Water, Knights are Air, and Pages are Earth. This attribution, which for the sake of convenience we'll call the rank-Element, provides part of the nature and characteristics of each court card's personality. The other part comes from the suit-Element. It is the combination of and interaction between these two that results in the personality. We'll deal with this in more detail shortly; the main point is that each personality of each court card expresses both of the Elements. For example, the King (Fire) of Swords (Air) has linked to him the Elemental blend Fire of Air; the fiery nature of his rank is mingled with the airy qualities of his suit.

The source category is simply the part of the cosmos which the ancients believed to be the source of each Element and its energies. The Sun which lights and warms the earth also gives it the principle of Fire, the Sea to which all streams and rivers run provides Water, the Sky wherein the winds blow is the source of Air, and the planet beneath our feet is whence Earth derives its existence --- thus ran Elemental cosmology.

The last category, Elemental beings, refers to the creatures --- Elementals --- who were believed to dwell in each Element, drawing their existence and their life-energy from it. We give the traditional English-language names for each group of beings. We should point out that "salamander" was the name used for Fire Elementals centuries before it was given to the small amphibian (otherwise called a newt) which now carries it. Any fairly extensive dictionary will explain the change.

Before you go on, and certainly before you begin the Practice section, you should begin to memorize the Tables of the Elements.

You don't have to be able to recite every single trait with perfect accuracy, but be familiar with the basic nature of each Element; what follows from here on will be clearer and easier to learn if you're acquainted with the Tables. At this point, you should also check the Elemental attributions for the court cards and suits of your own deck; if they differ from the ones that we give, make the appropriate changes in the Tables before you learn them. If the instruction book from your deck doesn't specify the attributions, they'll be the standard ones that we give here.

Once you've learned the Tables of the Elements, the next step is to learn the personalities associated with each Element. These are easily explained, and fairly obvious if taken in context. If a particular characteristic doesn't make sense to you, get out the Table for that Element and compare the characteristic to the information in the Table. Remember that the human faculty is a strong influence on the personality --- forming the core of it, in fact. Pay close attention to this influence; it's a valuable key to understanding the personalities.

A Fire person is impulsive, impetuous, swift-moving, active, energetic, and vigorous; temperamental, unpredictable, wilful, determined, fierce, and intense. This person often goes in fits and starts, and is given to fevered bursts of activity. It is a personality of great heat, and often burns those with whom it comes into contact.

The Water personality is sensitive, changeable, tranquil, dreamy, and visionary. Such a person is prone to change according to their circumstances, and in response to their environment. They may be physically idle and languid. They are quiet and introverted, and tend toward deep devotion.

Air generates a character which is changeable, unstable, unpredictable, flighty, swift, sudden, energetic, and vigorous. Such a person is breezy, flippant, light-hearted (and sometimes light-headed), and at worst can be stormy in the extreme. Though an Air person can be shallow, more often they are subtle, rather

intellectual, and idea-prone. They are given to unexpected ideas or actions.

Earth, the most complex Element, gives rise to an equally complex personality. It produces a person who is stable, solid, practical, prosaic, sensible, and clever; hard-working, careful, painstaking, meticulous, and persistent. This person is good at material things, and has strong and accurate instincts; also, he or she is often generous, and tends to be content getting what he or she wants. At worst, however, the Earth person is greedy, grasping, ambitious, manipulative, and sneaky; or stolid, dull, superstitious, resentful, sense-oriented, and prone to addictions. Earth is very strong, and as a suit-Element its personality tends to dominate the personality of the other Element in the pair.

In dealing with the symbolic meanings of the court cards, you need to be familiar with the combination of Elements that is attributed to each card, as well as with the personality produced by each combination. Table 3-5 lays out the combinations of the cards, using the triangle symbols from the first four Tables. Take a moment to look over Table 3-5, and keep it out for ready reference while you finish the Theory section; most of the rest of what we'll be covering involves these combinations.

To understand the combinations, you need to know how the four Elements interact. The first point is that Fire of Air (the King of Swords) and Air of Fire (Knight of Wands) are two different personalities. (Be aware, by the way, that in all discussions of combinations, the first-mentioned Element is the rank-Element, and the second is the suit-Element.) The energies of the rank-Element are channelled and given form by the energies of the suit-Element; thus, Fire controlled by Air and Air controlled by Fire are two varying things, and while they may have some traits in common they more often than not differ from one another.

The second point is that Elements can interact in one of four ways. An interaction can be harmonious, which means that it fits at all points; this only happens with Fire of Fire, Water of Water,

and so on. An interaction can be good, meaning that the two Elements get along well, or neutral, meaning that they neither support nor disagree with one another. Lastly, an interaction can be ill, if the Elements are naturally opposites, and inimical to one another (Fire and Water, Earth and Air). These types of interactions can be seen at work in all sixteen court cards, and go a long way toward explaining details of their personalities. Table 3-6 gives the interactions, Element by Element; take some time to look it over, and as you've done for Table 3-5, keep it easily available for the rest of the Theory section.

Elemental interactions are more complex than Table 3-6 would indicate, however. You also need to consider the specifics of each reaction.

Fire with Fire is brilliant, intense, energetic, and unstable; it burns with great heat, and burns out swiftly. Fire with Air is well-fueled and energetic; it burns strongly, but is still rather unstable. Fire with Earth is stabilized, sometimes smothered, but still energetic. Fire with Water quenches both; there is no energy, no strength, merely mild amiable passivity.

Water with Water is subtle, deep, dreamy, changeable; it produces dreams, visions, and intuition. Water with Air is given new vigor, intensity, and direction; it is capable of more energy and movement, and of penetrating insight. Water with Earth is stabilized, even somewhat clogged, and Earth dominates. Water with Fire is steam --- energetic, flexible, very hot, and rather dangerous.

Air with Air is light, fluttering, quick-moving, intensely mercurial; it produces ideas, but no stability. Air with Fire may be consumed; there is impulse, vigor, and energy, but it can be unstable. Air with Water is rendered visionary, given emotional intensity. Air with Earth is robbed of instability, and has fewer ideas; Earth dominates.

Earth with Earth is solid, materialistic, sense-oriented; it can be dull, and is wholly worldly. Earth with Fire provides a solid base for burning determination, and is characterized by

one word: ambition. Earth with Water is less practical, less stable; emotions dilute the solidity. Earth with Air leavens practicality with subtlety, materialism with ideas; this produces analytic-destructive logic, the sort that dismantles a thing to find out how it works.

Now that we've given you a thorough run-down of the Elements, their combinations, and their interactions, we'll demonstrate the way all of this actually works in the court cards.

### The Court Cards

#### The Four Kings

King of Wands (♠ of ♠): He is proud and generous, impetuous and impulsive, fierce and active. He has tremendous enthusiasm, and ability where his interests lie even when he has no ability elsewhere; but his enthusiasm burns out as rapidly and abruptly as it catches fire. He is swift but unpredictable in action. He possesses no practicality, few sustainable resources, and no ability to make a second attempt where the first fails. Likewise, he seldom if ever has a second wind; when his first burst of energy fails, he has no more to call upon. At worst, he is cruel, bigoted, and brutal; in addition, he has no resources, and no ability to either plan an action or weather failure.

King of Cups (♠ of ♣): He is graceful, amiable, and pleasant; quick to respond to attraction, sensitive to external influences, he is often passive and shallow, subject to strong but unenduring passions; and although idealistic, he is often out of touch with his emotions. At worst, he is sensual, idle, incompetent, and untruthful; he may be a drug-abuser, a manic-depressive, or a schizophrenic.

King of Swords (♠ of ♠): He is skilful, subtle, and clever; active, fierce, and courageous. He is prey to ideas and sudden inspirations to which he gives little thought; he needs stability and discipline to balance this tendency. He is deeply committed

and seldom swayed, and tends to be harsh but scrupulously fair; thus, he is both feared and respected. He has firm moral convictions, and a passion for truth and justice. At worst, he has the same idea-prone cleverness, but no vigor, no decision, no purpose, no tenacity; he is suspicious, overcautious, and lacking in compassion.

King of Pentacles (♠ of ♠): He is patient, honest, hard working, and clever at material things --- especially at making. He has strong, accurate instincts, and though slow is not stupid; he is imaginative and dreamy in his own rather solid way. He is intelligent but not intellectual. He is generous, if perhaps over-materialistic, and is contented with getting what he really wants. At worst, he is stupid, surly, irritable, jealous, greedy, superstitious, and utterly lacking in foresight.

#### The Four Queens

Queen of Wands (♠ of ♠): She is kind and generous, and is possessed of calm authority and persistent energy. Though she is generally adaptable, she cannot cope with opposition, and cannot be courted; friendship and love must be on her initiative. She is capable of using her energies for varied pursuits. At worst, she is quick to take offense, and bears grudges even without reason; she is vain, easily deceived, stubborn to the point of tyranny, and is given to tantrums, depression, and brooding.

Queen of Cups (♠ of ♠): She is a chameleon, a creature of her environment, unconsciously changing to suit her circumstances. she is dreamy, tranquil, and very popular because of her sweetness and adaptability. She enjoys popularity. At worst, she is very manipulative, but easily influenced and therefore not really effective.

Queen of Swords (♠ of ♠): She is perceptive, observant, understanding, and fair-minded. Physically, she is graceful, nimble, and agile. She is possessed of great patience, and bears suffering with fortitude. At worst, she is cruel, sly, deceitful, and unreliable, using her keen perception for private ends; but she is still superficially attractive, and therefore dangerous.

Queen of Pentacles (♠ of ♠): She is affectionate, kind, and generous. She is quiet and intuitive; practical, sensible, and hard working. She can be quietly lustful, but this seldom shows on the surface. She knows what she wants, and is happy when she gets it. At worst, she is a dull, servile drudge, with a mechanical approach to life; she is incapable of improving herself or her situation.

#### The Four Knights

Knight of Wands (♠ of ♠): He is swift, vigorous, and impulsive; he has an excellent sense of humor, which covers a tendency to be romantic. He always examines both sides of an issue, and often champions the underdog. He cannot be hurried into a decision, and he invariably wins his battles. At worst, he is lazy, idle, cowardly, boastful, callous, intolerant, and prejudiced.

Knight of Cups (♠ of ♠): He is the typical Grail knight, completely ruled by a vision or quest, and impossible to shift from his chosen path. He can appear to be immoral or irrational because he follows a personal code of ethics that others may not perceive; he may be unable to work with those who don't share his vision. At worst, he is ruthless, without conscience, lacking in any sense of responsibility to others, overwhelmingly ambitious, even a psychopath.

Knight of Swords (♠ of ♠): He is purely intellectual, full of ideas but unstable of purpose. He is brilliant, mercurial, and shallow, though his mannerisms may make him appear to be very deep indeed. He is attractive, but so self-absorbed that he may ruthlessly hurt people through inattention. At worst, he is fickle, dishonest, impractical, unaware of consequences; and he is driven by brief, changeable appetites and addictions.

Knight of Pentacles (♠ of ♠): He is peaceful, gentle, patient, kind, and tolerant; he may appear to be stolid or bovine. He is capable at management; energetic, enduring, competent, trustworthy, cautious, and thoughtful. He always completes a task, selects achievable goals, and refuses to give up. At worst,



he is insensitive, stupid, grudging; wholly materialistic, and resentful of those who aren't.

In addition to people, Knights can represent events or situations. The Knight of Wands is a situation involving change; or, at worst, stagnation. The Knight of Cups is a situation requiring deep emotional committment; at worst, it is one of fickleness or self-interest. The Knight of Swords is an event of rapid, exciting onset and chaotic consequences; at worst, it represents a situation of confusion, disorganization, and ineffective activity. The Knight of Pentacles indicates a prolonged and apparently fruitless situation which is coming to a positive end; at worst, the stalemate continues.

#### The Four Pages

Page of Wands (  $\Delta$  of  $\nabla$  ): This person is individualistic, ambitious, and aspiring; he or she is given to loves, angers, and enthusiasms of a sudden, violent, and irrational nature, and is unable to forget an injury. At worst, he or she is cruel, superficial, shallow, false, theatrical, unreliable, domineering, and utterly convinced about his or her own rightness.

Page of Cups (  $\nabla$  of  $\nabla$  ): She or he is the perfect helpmeet. Dwelling in a dream-like world, she or he is kind, tender, and gentle, and likes nothing better than to take care of someone. At worst, she or he is selfish, indolent, and unable to tell the difference between fantasy and reality.

Page of Swords (  $\Delta$  of  $\nabla$  ): She or he is stern, firm, clever, aggressive, ruthless, strong-willed, and calculating. She or he thinks with analytic-destructive logic, is skilled at settling controversies, and has great practical wisdom. She or he has subtlety in material things, and is often good with her/his hands. At worst, she or he is vengeful, anxious, cunning but mentally slow, untrustworthy, and flattened by responsibility.

Page of Pentacles (  $\nabla$  of  $\nabla$  ): He or she tends to be wholly oriented to the material world and to physical sensation. He or she will entirely follow instinct and intuition, with implicit faith, even if the results are inconsistent, and even if this

means ignoring the needs or wishes of others. However, he or she has the ability to be careful, meticulous, and painstaking. At worst, he or she is drowned in material sensation; irrational, unthinking, reflexive, purposeless except in seeking pleasure.

Pages can also represent wishes, desires, and/or new possibilities. The Page of Wands can indicate new learning, or a desire for advancement and knowledge. The Page of Cups may be a desire to nurture and protect, or new feelings and attitudes. The Page of Swords can mean news or gossip, and a desire for more information. The Page of Pentacles might represent a desire for prosperity, or new financial possibilities. At worst, these desires and new possibilities are twisted into something harmful or unpleasant; for example, gossip would become malicious and backbiting.

These are the basic meanings produced by the Elemental combinations, the interactions of Elemental personalities, the human faculties governed by the Elements, and the temperaments. The images and symbols on the cards would of course temper these, reinforcing or altering the details. As an example, let's take the King of Cups. In different decks, different aspects of his personality are emphasized. In the Rider-Waite deck, he is on a throne which is held out of the water by a platform. Neither he nor his robes are in contact with the water, and in fact he looks very uncomfortable. This reinforces the possible interpretation of a person out of touch with his emotions, even uncomfortable with them. In other decks, he is smiling happily as the water flows over his feet; in these decks, the reading of being out of touch with his emotions wouldn't be valid.

Aside from relating these readings of the cards to the images and symbols (if any) in your deck, you should assess and consider the personalities based on your own understanding and experience. Having done this, and done the exercises given in the Practice section, you should begin to reach the subtler aspects of these sixteen exceedingly complex cards.

Before we close the Theory section, we want to give you a simple exercise of a kind unlike those you've had so far. This exercise is separate from the actual cards, and doesn't involve them at all; it's an exercise of the four Elements. To do this exercise, you'll need to have access to a park or garden. If you can't reach either, close your eyes and imagine yourself in a parklike or rural setting: trees, grass, flowers, birds, etc. This may also be necessary if you're doing this exercise on a snowy winter day; it works best in spring, summer, or autumn. But if at all possible, the real thing is better than a mental image.

Concentrate on your surroundings. Try to perceive the presence of the four Elements in the things around you, and in yourself. The sun, the daylight itself, and the warmth of your body are Fire; the breeze, the air in your lungs, the nearby butterfly are Air; the dew on the grass, the blood in your veins, and the fishpond or reservoir are Water; the grass, the trees, the squirrels, and your body are Earth; and so on. Try to feel the presence of all of these things, and try to feel their connections to the Elements. Do this practice twice (four times if you can manage it) in the next month.

We gave you this exercise in the Theory section because it's intended to strengthen your grasp of the theory of the four Elements. You should try to do it once before you begin the exercises in the Practice section, even if you have to do it with a mental image; it'll help with the coming exercises.

This closes the Theory section; now, let's turn to exercises using the court cards.

B --- PRACTICE

Before doing the following exercises, remember to make any needed changes if the Elemental attributions of your deck differ from the ones given in this course!

Exercise 3-A

As always, settle yourself comfortably into your practice space, and center your mind; then lay out the court cards in the pattern given in Diagram 3-A.

At first, concentrate on the entire pattern. Try to develop a feel for the court cards as a whole within the greater whole of the deck. What is their role? What do they represent; what function do they serve? Next, narrow your focus and work on perceiving the court cards as a whole made up of sixteen parts. How do they work as a unit, and what is the place of each card within the whole?

Now narrow your focus still further. Study the four Wands cards. How do they interact, and how do they express the aspects of their suit? How do they contain and communicate the four personalities of the Elements as these are controlled and given direction by Fire? Repeat this process with Cups and Water, Swords and Air, Pentacles and Earth.

Lastly, consider the four vertical rows: Kings, Queens, Knights, Pentacles. How do the four Kings express the nature of Fire as controlled and directed by the four Elements? In the same manner, examine Queens and Water, Knights and Air, Pages and Earth.

This exercise will probably take about an hour to complete. It cannot be broken up into its component sections; experience has proved that it works best as a whole. However, you only need to do it once; even if you don't notice any results, it will have done its work.

## Exercise 3-B

This exercise is one of intuition and perception, and uses a lot of visualization, so you should do it when you feel calm and alert. Tiredness, lack of energy, or emotional upset will keep you from really doing a decent job of the visualizing.

This exercise will require a square area of floor space, between three and four feet on a side (depending on the size of your cards). Lay out the cards in the pattern given in Diagram 3-B, making sure to leave enough space in the center for you to comfortably stand and turn around in. If it is at all possible for you to orient the cards to the compass directions given in the diagram, please do so; if not, do the best you can. It isn't absolutely necessary to get the directions correct, but it helps and it's symbolically significant. If you don't know which way is North from your practice space, try to orient yourself with a street map of your neighborhood; or take a compass reading.

Stand in the center of the pattern, facing South (Wands). Look at the four Wands royalty receding away from you. Think of the color red, and of an August day at noon --- blazing heat, and relentless sunlight. Try to see these things, and still see the cards. Feel the sensations as clearly as possible. Hold this for a minute or two; then close your eyes and clear your mind.

Turn to face West (Cups). Look at the four Cups royalty receding away from you. Think of the color blue, and of an autumn dusk --- cool air, rain, the scent of fallen leaves. See and feel these things as clearly as possible, while still seeing the cards. Hold for a minute or two, then close your eyes and clear your mind.

Turn to face North (Pentacles). Look at the four Pentacles royalty receding away from you. Think of the color black, and of a winter midnight --- intense cold, black sky with sharp frosty stars, dark tree trunks, frozen black earth under snow. Feel and see this while seeing the cards. Hold for a couple of minutes, then close your eyes and clear your mind.

Turn to face East (swords). Look at the four Swords royalty

receding away from you. Think of the color yellow, and a spring sunrise --- clear new colors, pale light growing brighter, a fresh breeze. See and feel these things while seeing the cards. Hold for a minute or two, then close your eyes and clear your mind.

This exercise will take about half an hour, and should be done at least twice, unless you are extremely adept at the type of visualization used --- and even then, the extra repetition won't hurt.

### Exercise 3-C

Lay out the cards in the pattern given in Diagram 3-C. This time you don't need to leave any space at the center, but try to orient them to the compass point as you did for the last exercise.

The first part of the exercise is for you to determine why the cards are ordered the way that they are, based on their Elemental attributions. Consider the Elemental progression in each case.

Stand to the South of the pattern. Look at the Wands cards receding North away from you, and look across the center to the Pentacles stretching off in the same direction. Focus on the Elemental progression as it moves from South to North.

Move around the pattern to the West and repeat the process with Cups and Swords, progressing from West to East; then move to the North and repeat the process with Pentacles and Wands, moving from North to South; lastly, go to the East and repeat the process with Swords and Cups, moving from East to West.

Having completed this observation, consider whether or not you would change the positions of any of the cards; if so, make the changes and assess the differences that result.

Now lay out the court cards in the pattern given in Diagram 3-D. If you made any changes in the ordering of the previous pattern, repeat them here.

Study each horizontal row, then each vertical row. What

patterns do you see that you didn't see in the previous layout pattern? What do these patterns communicate to you?

This exercise should take you between a half an hour and an hour to perform. It should be done as a unit, and not broken up, but it only needs to be done once (unless you want to repeat it).

This ends Lesson #3. We'll be working with Elemental attributions next month in Lesson #4: The Number Cards, applying the information you've learned here to the rest of the suit cards. We'll also be dealing once again with issues of symbol and image, and we'll offer suggestions for working with the lack of symbols in the number cards of decks that don't have "full illustration".

Table 3-1: Fire

Symbol:  $\Delta$   
Color: Red  
Direction: South  
Season: Summer  
Quality: Hot  
Property: Purity  
Temperament: Choleric  
Humor: Gall (yellow bile)  
Humoric Qualities: Hot & Dry  
Time of Day: Noon  
Stage of Life: Youth (teens)  
Human Faculty: Will, Energy  
Tarot Suit: Wands  
Tarot Court Card: Kings  
Tarot Trump: Judgment  
Source: The Sun  
Elemental Beings: Salamanders

Table 3-2: Water

Symbol:  $\nabla$   
Color: Blue  
Direction: West  
Season: Autumn  
Quality: Cold  
Property: Fluidity  
Temperament: Phlegmatic  
Humor: Phlegm  
Humoric Qualities: Wet & Cold  
Time of Day: Dusk  
Stage of Life: Maturity  
Human Faculty: Emotions, Subconscious  
Tarot Suit: Cups  
Tarot Court Card: Queens  
Tarot Trump: The Hanged Man  
Source: The Sea  
Elemental Beings: Undines



Table 3-3: Air

Symbol: **A**  
Color: Yellow  
Direction: East  
Season: Spring  
Quality: Lightness  
Property: Subtlety  
Temperament: Sanguine  
Humor: Blood  
Humoric Qualities: Hot & Wet  
Time of Day: Dawn  
Stage of Life: Childhood  
Human Faculty: Intellect, Ideas  
Tarot Suit: Swords  
Tarot Court Card: Knights  
Tarot Trump: The Fool  
Source: The Sky  
Elemental Beings: Sylphs

Table 3-4: Earth

Symbol: **V**  
Color: Green, Brown, Black  
Direction: North  
Season: Winter  
Quality: Heaviness  
Property: Solidity (Stability)  
Temperament: Melancholy  
Humor: Black Bile  
Humoric Qualities: Cold & Dry  
Time of Day: Midnight  
Stage of Life: Old Age  
Human Faculty: Physical Body, 5 Senses  
Tarot Suit: Pentacles  
Tarot Court Card: Pages  
Tarot Trump:  $\emptyset$   
Source: The Earth  
Elemental Beings: Gnomes

Table 3-5: Elemental Attributions of the Court Cards

	K(△)	Q(▽)	Kn(△)	Pg(▽)
W(△)	△ of △	▽ of △	△ of △	▽ of △
C(▽)	△ of ▽	▽ of ▽	△ of ▽	▽ of ▽
S(△)	△ of △	▽ of △	△ of △	▽ of △
P(▽)	△ of ▽	▽ of ▽	△ of ▽	▽ of ▽

Table 3-6: Relationships of the Elements

△: harmonious with △  
 good with △  
 neutral with ▽  
 ill with ▽

▽: harmonious with ▽  
 good with △  
 neutral with ▽  
 ill with △

△: harmonious with △  
 good with △  
 good with ▽  
 ill with ▽

▽: harmonious with ▽  
 neutral with △  
 neutral with ▽  
 ill with △

Diagram 3-A

	K	Q	Kn	Pg
W				
C				
S				
P				

Diagram 3-B

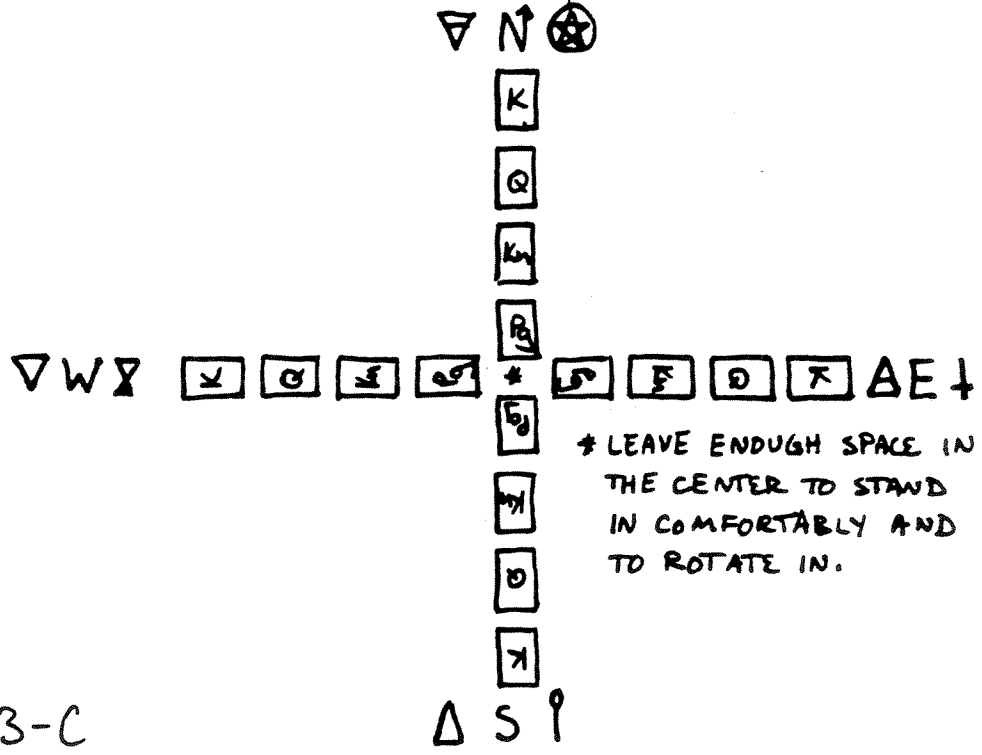


Diagram 3-C

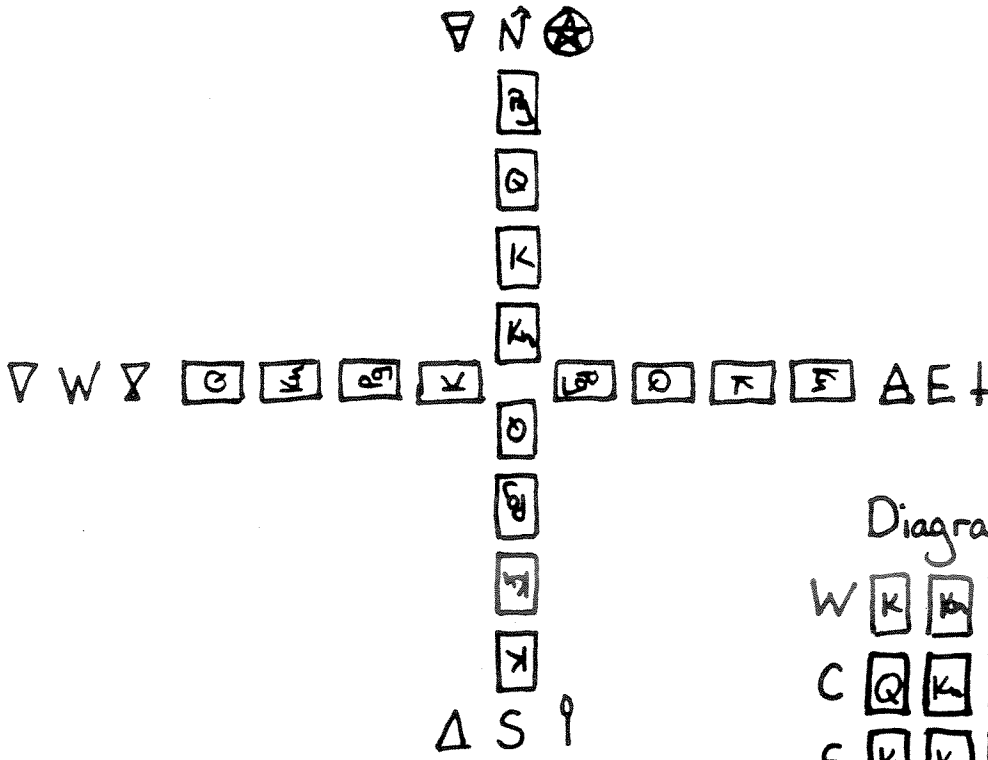


Diagram 3-D

W	K	Kn	Pg	Q
C	Q	K	B	K
S	K	K	Q	Pg
P	P	Q	K	Kn

## CINNABAR TAROT COURSE

### Lesson #4: The Number Cards

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#### A --- THEORY

In the last two lessons, we have focused strongly on the symbolic content of the images depicted on the Trumps and court cards, and on the symbolism of their astrological and Elemental attributions. The reasoning behind this lies in the fact that these images are abstract. The meaning of (for example) IV The Emperor goes beyond being merely the idea of power and control that the picture of a crowned, enthroned man conveys. Through the symbols that have been designed into the image, it is made into a greater and more profound thing than a representation of a human monarch; it becomes instead the depiction of a supreme and fundamental force that no actual emperor, however strong, could control. By the same method, the image of II The High Priestess, the sacred guardian and transmitter of ancient lore, is transformed into a figure representing the subtle, indirect nature of spiritual knowledge.

The symbols that bring about these changes, however, are only readable to someone who knows their meanings. These meanings do not lie in the physical reality or surface appearance of the symbolic items; the crescent moon of the High Priestess doesn't represent the real moon. The meanings lie in those things which are associated with the symbols, and unless you know at least some of the associations you can neither read

the symbols nor interpret the images. This is what we're referring to when we say that the images of the Trumps and court cards are abstract: their true meaning is symbolic rather than literal.

The images of the number cards, however, are in most cases much more concrete and literal. There is still symbolic content to these images, of course, especially the Aces, but at bottom they have a meaning which is much closer to the face value of the image than is the case with the Trumps or court cards. The bound, blindfolded figure hedged about with eight swords is quite easy to understand as an image of restraint, confinement, and so forth; the three women dancing with upraised cups clearly represent friendship and shared pleasure. Some of the cards are more abstract, especially (as mentioned above) the Aces, which after all represent the root and source of the powers of each suit --- in and of itself an abstract concept. The heart pierced by three swords is distinctly symbolic rather than literal, but the symbolism is not as intensely abstract as is that of (for example) XVII The Star; it is fairly open and accessible to interpretation.

The exception to the rule of the comparatively more concrete nature of number card imagery (and it's a big one) is the type of number card found in older, pre-Waite decks, and also in a few newer ones --- what in Lesson #1 we referred to as the "geometric" illustration card. A cluster of three swords is an almost entirely abstract image, with no surface meaning beyond its obvious inclusion in the suit of Swords. There is, of course, still a certain amount of rather stripped-down symbolism left in the image --- that of the swords themselves, and, if you choose to apply some sort of system of numerology to the cards, that of the number three --- but where the image of IV The Emperor conveys a certain amount of information in and of itself, apart from its symbolic significance, the image of three swords conveys nothing at all beyond the fact that it's a purely symbolic image. It lacks the rich complexity of Trump imagery,

and the meaning-laden wealth of symbol.

This is a good place to sidestep briefly and discuss the issue of numbers. Most traditional systems of numerology clash in part or in whole with the traditional meanings of the cards. Often, a student of the Tarot who wishes to work with the significances of numbers as they relate to his or her own deck is obliged to create his or her own system, based on personal understanding of the cards, or to use one created in a similar manner by a modern Tarot authority. (There are several good ones available.) But some people can't find a numerological system that is satisfactory for them, or for whatever reason simply choose not to use numerology. If such a person tries to work with a geometric deck using the symbol-related approach of this course, the symbolism of the Three of Swords is reduced to the single element of the sword itself.

In any case, whether or not the issue of number symbolism arises, the symbol content of the geometric deck's number cards is low. Some people have no difficulty in using these decks, but if you're approaching the Tarot as a set of symbolic images you'll run into trouble with a geometric deck. One of the most effective ways to overcome this is to construct groupings of number cards and tie each grouping together by means of something which is a common property to all of the cards in the group.

This method can also be a useful tool for practitioners who use either full-illustration decks or the small number of decks --- such as the Thoth --- that fall into a nebulous in-between category because they have had some symbolism added to them without quite becoming full-illustration decks. The easiest and most fruitful way of creating groups of number cards is to group them, logically enough, by number. Having grouped them, the next step is to study each group for the common thread that links all four cards. If you find what appears to be one,

evaluate it carefully --- how does it affect your understanding of the four cards? Does it clarify their meanings, or instead obscure them? Does it stand up to close examination, or does it go to pieces? If it doesn't work after all, does it lead in the direction of something that might? In this way, you can put together usable associations.

Once you've created an association for each set of numbers, you have a functional framework for dealing with the number cards in terms of clarifying or memorizing one aspect of their meanings; you also have a tool for beginning to comprehend their relationships when they occur in groups, which you will find a valuable skill in divination. If you can understand the ways in which a linked group of cards interrelates, then you can begin to grasp the interrelationships of a group of randomly assembled cards --- and this skill will make a unified whole of a reading.

Don't be surprised if you can't come up with good, sound associations for all ten groups of cards. Most people find one or two groups to be elusive and difficult to link together. It won't hurt your work if you don't succeed in all ten cases --- you'll learn as much from trying as from succeeding. Also, as we've said before (it bears repeating), the way in which you interact with your deck is unique; your perceptions will differ at least a little from someone else's. Another person may see links which you don't, and vice versa. Be aware of this if you find that you can't complete an association --- it may be that to your perceptions there are no links. If that's the case, then so be it. Don't fret, just accept your perceptions and go on to the next group.

To give you an idea of how associations work, we're giving you a sample set drawn up for the Waite Tarot. We expect you to study it to get the general idea of associations --- which, in the Practice section, you'll be doing for your own cards --- but as ever, we don't expect you to accept them as perfect.

The Aces are associated through their common quality of representing the root of the powers of each Element. They indicate pure, undiluted energies, and they possess the immense influence of all primal sources. The Ace of Wands, looked at in this light, combines these attributes with those of Fire as the source of the powers of the will; it represents volition, action, and outpouring energy. The Ace of Cups, with the more contemplative and changeable influence of Water, depicts the powers of the emotions and subconscious --- meditation, adaption, and receptive energies. The Ace of Swords partakes of both the subtle otherness of Air and the immense strength of the sword, and becomes an image of the penetrating, analytical power of the intellect --- powers which are invoked rather than innate according to some readings of the symbolism of the sword. The Ace of Pentacles, through the materiality of Earth, indicates the root of the powers of the physical world: the body, the senses, the matter of which the world is made.

Each of the Twos expresses an aspect of duality. In the 2 of Wands the duality is polarized, separated into its halves. The 2 of Cups expresses the union of the halves. The 2 of Swords depicts a duality held firmly in a static balance; the 2 of Pentacles is the opposite, a duality balanced through motion.

The Threes all express strength, or ways of achieving strength. Wands shows strength in activity or venture. Cups is strength through relationships and bonding. Swords indicates the strength that comes through suffering. Pentacles represents strength through skill and effort. In all four cases, strength must be developed; it is not a windfall, but rather a thing which grows.

The Fours show structure. In Wands, structure and the act of volition together give rise to peaceful productivity. Cups depicts the result of structuring the emotions: dissatisfaction



and rebellion. Swords, structure and intellect, indicates a retreat from the outer world into the ordered peace of spiritual contemplation. Finally, Pentacles shows the result of structure in the material: a dogged clinging to the world of the senses.

The Fives express disruption. Wands shows the dispersion and disruption of volition and energy. Cups is the disruption of an emotional state. Swords depicts the disruption of the intellect; Pentacles represents the disruption of the material ---wealth, the senses, material security all scattered to the winds.

The Sixes express harmony, and the fruits of harmony: in Wands, harmony of the will creates success; in Cups, harmony of the emotions gives rise to security; in Swords, harmony in the intellectual sphere fosters activity and communication; and in Pentacles, material harmony generates prosperity coupled with generosity --- someone in a secure position extending aid to one who needs it.

The Sevens all depict the consequences of success in the various spheres of the four suits. Wands points out that success in the will can lead to fighting, winning, and possibly also enjoying a vigorous battle against the odds. Cups is the result of success in the emotions: fantasy, daydreaming, and a certain amount of detachment from cold hard reality. Swords shows the aftermath of intellectual success: cockiness, arrogance, and unstable effort. Pentacles depicts the result of material success; here one experiences a brief breathing period between one period of hard work and another.

The Eights are linked by movement. Wands is swift movement, rushing forward. Cups is withdrawal, movement away from a thing or situation. Swords is restricted movement and physical restraint. Pentacles is slow but steady progress toward a goal.

The Nines, at least in the Waite deck, were impossible for our staff member to link together; the monkeywrench in this set

is the 9 of Swords, which is very different in character from the other three Nines. Wrestling with the attempt to find an association for this grouping is a very valuable exercise even if one fails, and every practitioner should at least try to find an association for every grouping in this exercise. If you do fail, at least you'll have the practical experience of closely examining all four of the cards in the group --- and this is of more use than you might think it to be.

The Tens express the manifestation into the realm of the material of the energies of the four suits; as the Aces are the purest form of these energies, so the Tens are the most physical and/or dilute forms. The 10 of Wands, manifestation of the will, results in shouldering burdens. The 10 of Cups, emotions made manifest, is the achievement of the heart's desire. The 10 of Swords, intellect in manifestation, represents the shattering of illusions and the shock of perceiving reality. The 10 of Pentacles shows the established prosperity of manifestation of the material.

As you've probably gathered from some of the foregoing remarks, the Elemental symbolism in the number cards isn't quite as vital for interpretation as it is for the court cards, but it is still important, especially with "geometric" decks. The Elemental attributions can be the key to many ways of looking at or working with the number cards. Part of this we will demonstrate in the second part of the Theory section, when we introduce you to the astrological attributions of the number cards. Another part we'll discuss in a later lesson, when we deal with interpreting divinations. Yet a third part of it you've already seen in our discussion of "geometric" number cards, for part of the symbolism of Wand, Cup, Sword, or Pentacle is the Element which it represents.

But beyond these, there are other uses. Some Tarot authorities prefer to view each suit as depicting each Element

progressing from its purest to its most corrupt form, or in a different perspective, from its most immaterial to its most material form. Many Tarot authorities also find that the Elemental attributions of the number cards help one to verbalize details of the meanings of the cards --- especially when dealing with readings for clients. For example, think of the picture of the Waite 6 of Cups: two small children, playing in a cottage garden, amidst six gigantic golden cups which are full of flowering plants. Add to this picture the Elemental attributions of the suit of Cups --- Water, the emotions; dusk, maturity, autumn --- and many nuances of meaning immediately appear: nostalgia, memories of childhood, a desire to return to childhood happiness or to relive youthful pleasures, a desire to re-experience childhood security, the return of an old friend or playmate, etc.

As you study and experience more and more with the Tarot, you'll find further, subtler uses for the Elemental attributions of the number cards. Keep them in mind while you work; you may be surprised by what surfaces.

Whether you have a geometric deck or a full-illustration deck, you can benefit by exploring the symbolism of your deck's number cards in a way which was apparently first developed by Aleister Crowley for his Thoth deck. Although he wasn't the first person to assign titles to the number cards, he seems to have been the first to assign one-word titles. This is an innovation worth copying. The point to a one-word title is that it forces one to distill the essential meaning of the card into a single appropriate word. This has two useful functions. First, it generates careful thought about each card; you need to decide which is the correct word, and evaluating possibilities requires consideration of the card's primary meaning. Second, it demands clarity. Fuzzy thinking won't distill --- you can't boil down "bad feelings" or similar vague definitions without coming to some sort of conclusion about just which "bad feelings"

are involved.

All of this sounds like a great deal of work, but it's actually fairly easy. People in modern industrialized nations are strongly oriented towards visual images --- thanks, in large part, to movies and television. In addition, the images on the number cards of most Tarot decks are, as we mentioned before, fairly easily accessible to interpretation. Thus, although titling the number cards isn't a job that can be done in five minutes, it isn't an overwhelming chore either. You're most likely to run into trouble while trying to find exactly the right word. A Thesaurus will help here --- although look up a word in the dictionary before using it! Many innocent people have ended up using a wonderful-sounding word from the good old Thesaurus, only to find that it doesn't mean what they thought it did. So if you use a Thesaurus, use a dictionary too!

The chore is also made easier by the fact that the Aces are exempted from the one-word titles (the word Ace, though, serves to sum them up in a single word). This eliminates the frustration of trying to condense into a single word the description of primal Elemental powers --- a task not unlike that of squaring the circle.

We've included a set of one-word card titles for you to examine; they're listed, by suit, in Table 4-1. These titles were developed for the cards of the Rider-Waite deck. They're given partly as an example for you to study, and partly to give you a starting-point for your own titles. Since the point of a one-word title is to give you the meaning of the card, Table 4-1 takes the place of the discussion of card meanings which was used in Lessons #2 and #3, and you should treat it the same way.

For the second part of the Theory section of this lesson, we'll be dealing with a very different way of interpreting the number cards. This work is based on the astrological attributions of all of the cards in the Tarot deck --- number

cards, court cards, and Trumps.

Each of the twelve signs of the Zodiac is divided into three equal segments of ten days apiece. These ten-day sections are called "decans". They represent the phases through which each sign passes; traditionally, each decan of a sign differs slightly in character from the other two. Think of them as a set of identical triplets: children of a single birth, yet with separate personality features.

The character of a decan is symbolized by the combination of the planet which is attributed to it and the sign to which it is itself attributed. For example, the three decans of Libra are, in order, Moon in Libra, Saturn in Libra, and Jupiter in Libra. Those of Aries are, again in order, Mars in Aries, Sun in Aries, and Venus in Aries. The combination of Mars in Aries produces a different effect than does that of Saturn in Libra, just as the effects of the Elemental combination of Fire and Earth differ from those of Air and Water.

This is a good place to stop and put in a word of caution. Please do not connect the character of a given decan as it is described in this lesson to the personality of a person who was born during that decan. Not everyone born during the second decan of Gemini has a personality related to the 9 of Swords, nor does a person born in the first decan of Virgo necessarily have the traits indicated by the 8 of Pentacles. Natal horoscopy is complex and delicate; the system which we're using here is by comparison crude and rudimentary. So don't thrill or depress your family, your friends, or yourself by making connections with the astrologically "appropriate" card; 'tain't that simple.

As you may have gathered from the foregoing paragraph, each of the decans is linked to a number card of the same general character. (To sum up the characters of the decans, refer to Table 4-1; the card titles given there apply to the decans of the cards as well as to the cards themselves.) However, there are 40 number cards, and only 36 decans: once more, the Aces

are left out. In this case, it's because each Ace, as the pure and perfect expression of the Element of its suit, rules an entire quadrant of the heavens around the poles. The Wheel of the Zodiac just isn't big enough to contain them. Therefore, the decans cover only the 2 through 10 of each suit.

The decans are assigned to the suits on an Elemental basis as well as on a character basis. The decans of the three Fire signs (Aries, Leo, Sagittarius) are assigned to the suit of Wands; Water signs (Cancer, Scorpio, Pisces) to the Cups; Air signs (Gemini, Libra, Aquarius) to the Swords; and Earth signs (Taurus, Virgo, Capricorn) to the Pentacles. Within the suits, as mentioned above, assignment is based on similarity of meaning between card and decan.

All of the foregoing, however, has merely been background material. The point of introducing you to the decan system is not to get you to use it itself, which we don't expect you to do, but rather to teach it to you as a basis for another way of looking at how the cards interrelate. (As with the associations exercise, this will give you skills that will assist you in divination.) The decans are not merely tied to the number cards --- and therein lies one of the primary points of this. (The other will come in Lesson #5.) The decans are also linked to some of the court cards and some of the Trumps, and so the decan system can be used to link specific groups of cards together for study purposes.

As the Aces are omitted from the decan process, so are four of the court cards and three of the Trumps. The Pages are traditionally set below the Aces as lesser rulers of the four quadrants of the heavens. The three Trumps which have Elemental rather than astrological attributions --- 0 The Fool, XII The Hanged Man, and XX Judgment --- are as a result of their Elemental attribution given different powers and spheres of influence than are the astrological Trumps. Therefore these seven cards, like the Aces, don't fit into the decan system.

Each King, Queen, and Knight rules over three of the 36

decans, but not over all three of the decans of any given sign. Instead, they rule over the last decan of one sign and the first sign of the next; and it's the second sign which is Elementally appropriate for the card's suit. Thus, the Queen of Wands rules the last decan of Pisces and the first two decans of Aries; the King of Pentacles rules the last of Leo and the first two of Virgo.

As with the court cards, the Trumps with astrological sign attributions each rule three decans of the 36. Unlike the court cards, each of the twelve Zodiacal Trumps rules all three of the decans of a given sign. The seven planetary Trumps each rule all of the decans which are linked to the same planet that the Trump is linked to.

The court cards are assigned to the decans in the same way that the number cards are --- a judicious mixture of character similarities and Elemental considerations --- but the Trumps are assigned based solely on their astrological attributions. IX The Hermit, with the attribute of Virgo, rules the three decans of Virgo. XVI The Tower, with the attribute of Mars, rules the seven decans which are given to the rulership of Mars.

These differences in assignment reflect the differences in rulership and nature between the Trumps and the court cards. The court cards are admixtures of the Elements, and in addition they represent earthly powers and personalities. The Trumps, on the other hand, represent undiluted Elements and higher powers, so their rulership is stronger and purer. They rank above the court cards in rulership, as the Aces rank above the Pages, and for much the same reasons.

Tables 4-2, 4-3, and 4-4 cover the decan attributions of number and court cards, Zodiacal Trumps, and planetary Trumps. You don't need to memorize them, but do learn them somewhat; you'll be using them in the Practice section. The decan-linked card groups provide much fruitful study, and they'll form the majority of your studies this month. Also, as we mentioned above, they will be of considerable help to you in divination;

they are yet another tool to help you understand the interaction between different cards.

This closes the Theory section of this lesson. Now, we'll move on to the Practice section and apply what we've discussed.

## B --- PRACTICE

### Exercise 4-A

For this exercise, you'll need pen or pencil and extra paper, as well as your cards and practice notebook.

Settle into your practice space. Separate out the forty number cards from the rest of the deck, and set the remainder aside. Group the number cards according to number --- Aces, 2s, etc. --- and place the groups in numerical order, Ace through 10.

Create and test an association for each numerical group of cards, using the methods described on pages 3-4 of this lesson. As we mentioned before, don't be surprised if you can't find functional associations for one or two groups; but if you can't find associations for three or more groups, regroup the cards in some other pattern and try again, or put the exercise aside and try it again another day. If you get really badly stuck, try doing Exercise 1-B first and then coming back to the number groups.

Try to do all of this exercise in one or two days, if at all possible; you need to complete it before doing Exercises 4-C, 4-D, and 4-E.

### Exercise 4-B

For this exercise, you will again need extra paper and a pen or pencil, as well as the usual paraphernalia.

Settle down in your practice space. Take out the same



cards that you used in Exercise 4-A, but remove and set aside the four Aces. Put the cards in numerical order by suit, 2 through 10 of Wands, 2 through 10 of Cups, and so on.

Lay the cards out one suit at a time, and develop a one-word title for each card, using the methods outlined on pages 8-9 of this lesson. Try to clarify and verbalize your understanding of the card's meaning, and try to select a single word that expresses the essential meaning of the card. Use Table 4-1 as a point of departure if you like. Remember here the potential assistance of a Thesaurus (and dictionary!).

Again, try to complete this exercise in one or two days; as with Exercise 4-A, you'll need to finish it before going on to the other exercises. And please, do this exercise even if your own deck already has titles printed on it; it's still of value to develop your own.

#### Exercise 4-C

For this exercise, separate out the twelve court cards and thirty-six number cards which are listed in Table 4-2. Set aside the rest of the deck (Pages, Aces, Trumps).

Sort the cards into the groupings given in Table 4-2, and place them into the order given. Study one group at a time, starting with the grouping Queen of Wands/10 of Cups/2 of Wands/3 of Wands, and ending with King of Cups/7 of Swords/8 of Cups/9 of Cups. In each case, look for the links between the cards in the group: what pulls them together? How (or why) do they all express aspects of the ruling court card?

You may break up this practice as desired, provided that you study at least two groups a day. This is necessary in order to complete the coursework before Lesson #5 arrives; you need to complete Exercise 4-C before going on to 4-D and 4-E. If you feel that you can do the entire exercise in one or two days, go ahead; but be sure not to take it too fast. If you start to get muddled or confused, take a break or even quit for the day.

This exercise demands a clear head.

#### Exercise 4-D

This exercise will be using the groupings from Table 4-3. Therefore, you'll need the twelve Zodiacal Trumps (remember that VIII Strength is Leo and XI Justice is Libra) listed in the Table, and the 36 decan-linked number cards. Set the rest of the deck aside.

Group the cards according to Table 4-3, and place them in the order given. Study them as you did the other groups in Exercise 4-C, one group at a time, in order; and look again for the links between them, and the ways in which all of the number cards express aspects of their ruling Trump. Also, try to spot the differences in nature between court card decan rulership and Trump decan rulership. (This last can be done in retrospect, after you've studied all of the groups.)

As with Exercise 4-C, you can break up this practice if you like. Unlike the previous exercises, however, this one doesn't have to be finished before you go on; you can do part of this and part of Exercise 4-E on the same day if you wish to. Just keep an eye on how much of the month you have left until Lesson #5 is due; it's especially important to complete this lesson before #5 begins, since Lesson #5 is the first of the two lessons on divination and it requires you to have thoroughly explored and mastered your cards before you begin divining.

#### Exercise 4-E

For this last exercise, we'll be using Table 4-4. You'll need the seven planetary Trumps (as given in the Table), and the same thirty-six number cards.

As before, group the cards according to the Table, and place them in order. Study them as above, using the same questions given for Exercise 4-D; and again, you can break up the exercise if you want to, or intercut it with Exercise 4-D.

Try also to spot the differences between the rulership of the Zodiacal Trumps and the planetary Trumps; this may give you some useful insights into the natures of the different Trumps, and into the differences in the ways in which they affect different small cards.

This ends Lesson #4. Although the text of this lesson is short compared to the preceding lessons, it should keep you as busy, if not more so, as did the others. Next month, in Lesson #5, we'll begin the first of the two lessons on divination, including discussions of methods, question patterns, and the ethics of divination. We'll include material that will show you another way to make use of the decan system, too. Until then, good luck in your work; let us know how it's going!

Table 4-1: Card Titles

Wands

2. Choice
3. Foundation
4. Completion
5. Struggle
6. Victory
7. Courage
8. Swiftmess
9. Strength
10. Burdens

Cups

2. Partnership
3. Friendship
4. Discontent
5. Regret
6. Security
7. Imagination
8. Withdrawal
9. Contentment
10. Attainment

Swords

2. Balance
3. Sorrow
4. Repose
5. Defeat
6. Movement
7. Instability
8. Restriction
9. Fear
10. Finality

Pentacles

2. Fluctuation
3. Mastery
4. Greed
5. Poverty
6. Benevolence
7. Hiatus (rest break)
8. Apprenticeship
9. Self-reliance
10. Establishment

Table 4-2: Decans

Decans	♈ ♉ ♊	♋♌♍	♎♏♐	♑♒♓
Planets	♂ ♂ ○	♀ ♃ ♅	♄ ♆ ♁	○ ♀ ♃
Court Cards	QP	Kn⊗	K†	Q♄
Number cards	10♄ 2♑ 3♑	4♑ 5♒ 6♓	7♒ 8† 9†	10† 2♄ 3♄

Decans	♈ ♏ ♏	♏♐♑	♐♑♒	♒♓♓
Planets	♃ ♄ ♆	♁ ○ ♀	♀ ♃ ♄	♆ ♂ ○
Court Cards	Kn ♑	K⊗	Q†	Kn♄
Number Cards	4♄ 5♑ 6♑	7♑ 8♒ 9♓	10♒ 2† 3†	4† 5♄ 6♄

Decans	♓ ♏ ♏	♏ ♏ ♏	♏♑♒	♒♓♓
Planets	♀ ♃ ♅	♄ ♆ ♁	○ ♀ ♃	♃ ♄ ♆
Court Cards	K♑	Q⊗	Kn†	K♄
Number Cards	7♄ 8♑ 9♑	10♑ 2⊗ 3⊗	4⊗ 5† 6†	7† 8♄ 9♄

- ♈ = ARIES
- ♉ = TAURUS
- ♊ = GEMINI
- ♋ = CANCER
- ♌ = LEO
- ♍ = VIRGO
- ♎ = LIBRA
- ♏ = SCORPIO
- ♐ = SAGITTARIUS
- ♑ = CAPRICORN
- ♒ = AQUARIUS
- ♓ = PISCES

- = SUN
- ♃ = MOON
- ♄ = MARS
- ♀ = VENUS
- ♃ = MERCURY
- ♆ = JUPITER
- ♄ = SATURN

- ♄ = WAND
- ♃ = CUP
- ♄ = SWORD
- ⊗ = PENTACLE

Table 4-3: Zodiacal Signs  
(Trumps & Number Cards)

Sign	♈	♉	♊	♋
Trump	<u>IV</u>	<u>V</u>	<u>VI</u>	<u>VII</u>
Number Cards	2♠ 3♠ 4♠	5♠ 6♠ 7♠	8♠ 9♠ 10♠	2♣ 3♣ 4♣
Sign	♌	♍	♎	♏
Trump	<u>VIII</u>	<u>IX</u>	<u>XI</u>	<u>XIII</u>
Number Cards	5♠ 6♠ 7♠	8♠ 9♠ 10♠	2♣ 3♣ 4♣	5♣ 6♣ 7♣
Sign	♐	♑	♒	♓
Trump	<u>XIV</u>	<u>XV</u>	<u>XVII</u>	<u>XVIII</u>
Number Cards	8♠ 9♠ 10♠	2♣ 3♣ 4♣	5♣ 6♣ 7♣	8♣ 9♣ 10♣

Table 4-4: Planets  
(Trumps & Number Cards)

Planet	♁	♃	♆
Trump	<u>XIX</u>	<u>II</u>	<u>I</u>
Number Cards	3♠, 6♠, 10♠, 4♣, 8♣	9♠, 4♠, 2♠, 7♠, 6♣	8♠, 3♠, 6♠, 5♣, 10♣
Planet	♆	♃	♁
Trump	<u>III</u>	<u>X</u>	<u>XXI</u>
Number Cards	4♠, 2♠, 7♠, 5♠, 9♣	6♠, 9♠, 4♠, 8♠, 2♣	5♠, 10♠, 8♠, 3♠, 7♣
Planet	♂		
Trump	<u>XVI</u>		
Number Cards	2♠, 7♠, 5♠, 10♠, 9♠, 3♣		

## CINNABAR TAROT COURSE

### Lesson #5: Divination, Part 1

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#### A --- THEORY

This lesson and the last, Lesson #6, will be entirely given over to a variety of material on the subject of divination. In this lesson, we will cover primarily the process of divination itself; Lesson #6 will deal mostly with formats, including a section on how to develop your own. In both lessons, the Theory section will be very long and the Practice section rather short --- these are the lessons in which you'll be receiving the two practices, mentioned back in Lesson #1, which are each presented alone.

#### The process of divination

In this section, which will be the bulk of the lesson, we will deal one by one with the stages involved in the actual process of divination. We have divided these stages into four: Preparation, Divination, Interpretation, and what we refer to as The Oops! Factor --- serious problems in a divination.

#### Preparation

The initial part of the process of divination is preparation. If you aren't properly prepared for the divination at hand, you'd be better advised to give up and go swimming; you'll be lucky indeed if the divination is of any value.

This need for preparation often leads diviners to develop a



little (or sometimes quite large) ritual, here defined as a series of specific actions, which they will perform almost religiously before any divination is done. These rituals serve a very real purpose; however, they can easily get out of hand. If this happens, the rituals are likely to come between you and your cards, or to become the focus of more energy than is the divination itself. There is nothing wrong with using a brief ritual to establish contact with the cards and to focus yourself on the coming divination, but if you elect to do so it's a good idea to work on the KISS principle (Keep It Simple, Stupid): limit yourself to a simple, preferably quick, ritual.

What are some examples of these? One of the most popular, especially among Tarot practitioners who work with several decks, is to riffle through the deck and glance quickly at each card. This isn't as time-consuming a process as it sounds; with practice, you can do it in a minute or so. You aren't trying here to study the cards, just to run your eyes over each one. The image reaches your subconscious mind a split second after your eyes fall on it, so only the briefest of exposures is needed.

Another popular method is to simply close your eyes and blank your mind. Again, with practice this can come to take only a few seconds. The point is to quiet your inner chatter and to eliminate unnecessary mental or visual images. One of the easiest ways to do this is to imagine yourself in a dark, silent, empty place. Your imagination doesn't have to be perfect. Even a few seconds of trying to imagine such a place will go far toward the goal of clearing your mind. This ritual is best performed as the second to last act before shuffling, immediately before filling your cleared mind with the question being asked. Many practitioners who use this one do it with their cards in hand, to make the best of the moment of clarity which follows the ritual.

A third ritual, frequently used by practitioners who have strong religious or spiritual beliefs, is a short prayer or

invocation. This can be directed to a deity, an angel, a guardian figure, or to what/whomever the practitioner wishes. The point of the prayer or invocation is to make a request --- for guidance, clarity, accuracy, insight, protection, blessings, or whatever. Like the second of the two rituals above, this is best done as the second to last act before shuffling. Unlike either of the others, it is only a workable method if one has the necessary beliefs to make it a substantive act rather than a formal one, to mean it wholeheartedly.

A fourth ritual, also popular, is to concentrate your mind on conscious awareness of your breathing pattern. You can do this in more than one way. First, you can simply be aware of the act of breathing, of the feeling of air coming into and going out of your lungs, of the movement of your muscles, and so forth. Or instead, if you prefer, you can choose to alter or control the breath in some way. You can make your breaths slow, deep, and even; or you can hold them to a specific pattern. One of the better known techniques of doing the latter is called the "Four-fold Breath". In this technique, you breathe in slowly while counting, also slowly, to four; hold your breath in while counting again to four; breathe out slowly for another count of four; and hold your breath out for a fourth count of four. Then you breathe in to a count of four again, and so on. (This is also a good general breath and lung exercise.) Either method is quite effective, especially after a little practice, and both take at most a couple of minutes.

As you've probably noticed by now, all of the above methods have (at the least) the function of clearing your mind and concentrating your awareness on the task at hand. This is the whole purpose of a pre-divination ritual, and is the most crucial element of the diviner's mental preparation. The type of pre-divination ritual to avoid is anything which fosters mental busy-ness or which takes more of your energy and/or attention than does the divination itself.

Basically, the most hindering rituals fall into one of two categories: the elaborate ritual, and the pointless ritual. The elaborate ritual consists of a complex series of actions which are often performed in a set sequence, and which make of the preparation process a rite rather than an ordinary act. An elaborate ritual might involve the diviner: washing his or her hands (not in and of itself a bad idea); lighting candles; lighting incense; laying out, often in a set pattern, a collection of power objects (crystals, stones, feathers, beads, amulets, talismans, statuettes, etc.); performing a banishing or invoking ritual, or a religious rite; and then performing the act of divination. In some cases these actions can be a normal or even desirable preparation for a Tarot reading, especially one with serious spiritual issues involved, but on a more ordinary basis this sort of process is counterproductive --- especially if the divination is for someone else, or if it involves a relatively minor issue.

The other counterproductive type of divination ritual will involve pointless activities; unlike the elaborate ritual, this one involves doing things for which there is no purpose. The most common of these involve checking the cards in some fashion: looking to see if all of the cards are present, placing all of the cards in some set order, making sure that all of the cards are upright. All of these are, to one extent or another, footling activities. If you aren't careful enough and/or aware enough of your cards (barring extraordinary situations) to know perfectly well that all of the cards are present, you probably aren't ready for divination. Ordering the cards when you're about to disorder them again isn't merely pointless, it can be actually harmful --- if you aren't fairly good at shuffling, or if your deck is a trifle limp (as well-used cards will get), this practice can ensure "clumping", the turning up of several cards in order. Lastly, turning all of the cards upright serves no purpose either. Either you use reversals or you don't; if

you do you'll just be reversing a number of the cards again anyway, and if you don't you ought to consider shuffling in a way that doesn't reverse the cards in the first place. (We'll be demonstrating one in Lesson #6.) So all of these activities waste time and draw your attention to concerns other than the act of divination. A functional pre-divination ritual should do neither.

The flip side of preparing for a divination is outer, rather than inner, preparation. This involves making choices about the upcoming divination: choosing the question, choosing the format or pattern (in this course the two terms are used interchangeably), and, if you work with more than one deck, choosing the deck.

Choosing the question is largely a matter of deciding what to ask and how to ask it. A vague or poorly-phrased question will in most cases generate a vague and poorly-phrased answer. A useful point in choosing the question and phrasing it is to keep in mind the fact that the Tarot, like the demons who appear in legend and folklore, is notoriously prone to take things literally. You've probably heard some variation on the story or joke about the demon and the careless college student. ("Make me a chocolate shake." "Okay, you're a chocolate shake.") This type of story has been around for centuries, and illustrates the very real need for clarity and precision when dealing with something outside of the standard scope of mundane life. Instead of saying "What should I do about choosing one of the two jobs I've been offered?", try saying "What would be the outcome of choosing to accept job A?" Or instead of saying "What should I do about my love life?", try saying "What would I need to do in order to establish the kind of relationship that I want?" The one exception to this rule is the question "Tell me about \_\_\_\_\_." This can yield a great deal of useful and valuable information if coupled with a format designed to reveal

or explain the whys and wherefores of a situation. (We'll be giving you a couple of this type of format in Lesson #6.)

In addition to considerations of phrasing, you also need to avoid or tone down certain types of question; we'll deal with this in more detail later in the Theory section, when we talk about ethics. For now, we'll simply mention one aspect of this issue: as you gain experience, you'll come to understand that your cards may refuse to answer, or may have difficulty in answering, some questions or types of question. For example, a member of our Tarot staff finds that none of her decks will answer questions couched with the phrase "What should I do?", although a rewording to "What do you advise that I do?" will get a clear answer. In this case, it seems to be the implication of "tell me what to do and I'll go right out and do it" that causes the problem. Other readers experience similar difficulties; many report that when they ask about issues that are not of sufficiently great importance to the querent, or when they ask one question too many about an issue, they get either a nasty answer (the gist of which often refers to passivity, weakness, foolishness, dependence, and so forth) or no answer at all. (We should perhaps explain that "no answer" refers to a situation where the reading is basically gibberish --- garbled and/or incoherent.) As you do more and more divinatory work, you'll learn about how such "problem questions" will or won't affect you. Not everyone experiences them, but you might.

If the format which you've chosen isn't suited to the question that you're asking, this too may produce a gibberish response. Even if the answer isn't that bad, it's not very apt to be clear and informative, no matter how carefully the question is chosen and phrased. You need to choose a format which contains card positions that will represent issues involved in the question. For example, if a man wants to know how to cure his insomnia, you'll need to select a format that contains card positions signifying his physical and emotional condition and his environment --- all of which may be making

contributions to his insomnia. Or if a woman comes to you for advice about a new job that she's considering, you'll want to select a format that has cards indicating several aspects of her life (environment, home, health, relationships, hopes/fears, etc.) that the new job is likely to affect; this way, you can give her information that will cover a wide range in explaining the probable results of the job change.

Lastly, you need to consider the deck, if you have more than one. Decks have personalities, and some decks are better suited to certain types of questions than are others. Which deck is better for what question is very much an individual judgment, however, and one that will develop with time; the only advice that we can offer here is to suggest that you keep your eyes open and experiment (carefully). You'll pick up surprisingly clear indications, in most cases, of how to handle this issue with your own decks. You're even likely to find that you have one deck which is pretty much all-purpose.

### The Divination

Having made the choices above, of question, phrasing, format, and deck, it's time to perform the act of divination itself.

Here, too, there are choices to be made. The essence of the act of divination is a series of actions that are in and of themselves simple: the querent states the question, one or both parties concentrate on the question, the cards are shuffled and perhaps cut, and the required number of cards is removed from the deck and laid out in the chosen pattern. The complicating factors are the questions of who touches the cards, who shuffles them, how they are shuffled, and how they are removed from the deck.

To a large extent, these choices are up to the diviner. Except in certain specific cases, which we'll discuss shortly, there are no hard-and-fast standards; many diviners have obtained accurate, informative readings using a wide variety of

techniques. It's a matter of what you are comfortable with, and what works for you.

Nonetheless, all of these questions are loaded ones. Diviners often tend to see their personal methods as The Right Way, and everyone else's as The Wrong Way. One authority will state that you must have the querent shuffle and cut the cards; another will tell you that you should never permit anyone else to touch your cards. It's enough to make a novice's head swim, but the solution is to find the techniques that are effective for you, and to use them. Also, don't be afraid to vary your chosen techniques, or even to abandon them for new ones. Many diviners, over the course of time, change their methods --- sometimes many times. Flexibility can yield excellent results if your style or needs change.

If you don't know which methods you prefer, experiment. Do the same thing for some set number of readings in a row, say five, and then try something else for another five readings in a row. Which readings were most accurate? Which were you most comfortable during the course of? Does it bother you to have another person touch your cards, or does it add to the reading? Did it work better to cut the cards, or not to cut the cards? Consider these questions and any others that arise, and then decide.

The "certain specific cases" which we referred to above are situations where you do in fact need to do things in a certain way, and these situations arise when you are learning a new divinatory format. Unless you developed the format yourself, or you have had enough years of experience to be able to accurately assess a new format without using it, you will need to follow the instructions as closely as possible for the first few times that you use the format. Stick to your decision about whether or not other people may touch your cards, but otherwise follow the directions. When you've grown used to the format and have developed a feel for it, you can tinker with it as much as you like.

One of the things that instructions for a new format may be quite specific about is how to shuffle the cards "correctly", either "correctly" in general terms, for all potential divinations, or "correctly" for this specific format. There are two specific aspects to shuffling, other than who does it --- how many times to shuffle, and whether or not to shuffle with some specific technique (for example, whether or not to shuffle so as to produce reversed cards).

Except in the learning situation, the question of how many times to shuffle is largely a matter of personal taste. Most diviners either choose a specific number of times to shuffle, or else simply shuffle until it "feels done". Some do both, depending on which format they are using. If you haven't yet developed a taste one way or the other, experiment a little and find what you prefer.

As to special techniques of shuffling, that's a little more complicated. Some people can't use special shuffles because their hands lack the dexterity or the physical ability to perform the necessary movements; others can't use normal poker-and-bridge style shuffling for precisely the same reasons. We all have varying aptitudes and levels of mobility. If you can't do a special shuffle, no big deal. If you can and the format instructions call for it, do; there may be a reason why the instructions require you to use it. For example, if the format doesn't use reversed cards, it may direct you to shuffle in one of the special ways that doesn't produce reversed cards. This is an eminently practical requirement, since it spares the diviner's attention to follow the developing reading instead of following the locations of reversed cards which must be restored to an upright position. Having to "fix" the cards once they're in the process of being laid out is an interruption and a waste of time, so anything to spare the disruption is a help.

And what if the format instructions tell you to select the cards from the shuffled deck by closing your eyes and pulling them out at random? If you're just learning the format, do it.



Most formats use the old standard method, where you take the topmost card and place it in the first position, take the next card and put it in the second position, take the third card and put it in the third position, and so on. But some formats have special techniques involved in them: cutting the deck into three piles and removing a specific number of cards from each pile; laying the cards out, face down, in a fan and selecting the necessary number at random; the technique mentioned in the first sentence of this paragraph; and etc. Usually, these are simple enough to be entirely usable, so use them. Even if they are elaborate and difficult, use them at least once; but if they act as a disruption to the divination process, scrap them. In any case, once you've learned a bit about the format you can do as you like.

### Interpretation

The next phase after laying out the reading is to interpret it. In order to do so, the diviner needs to evaluate whether each card is appearing in more positive meaning (relatively speaking) or its more negative meaning. There are two basic ways to do this: reversals, and what are called "dignities" or "aspects". (Actually, there is a third method, the so-called "gestalt" method, which includes both positive and negative meanings of each card whenever it appears in a reading. This method, however, is badly flawed, so we neither teach it nor advocate its use.)

The first of the two options, using reversed cards, is the simpler method of the two. When you shuffle Tarot cards in the same way that you shuffle ordinary playing cards, some of the cards will come out reversed. (Playing cards, of course, do this also, but since they're double-ended it's impossible to tell.) The reversals method assigns one meaning to a card when it appears upright, and a different one when it appears in reversal. The upright meaning is usually regarded as the basic

meaning of the card, and the appearance of the card in reversal signifies a change from this basic meaning. The reversed meaning can be the opposite of the upright meaning, but it could instead be something different from but related to the basic meaning. (This relatedness may not be easily visible, by the way; you may have to do some studying to understand how an upright and a reversed meaning are related.) For example, let's say that the upright meaning of the 9 of Swords is justified and reasonable fear. If the 9 of Swords appears in reversal, it could mean either unjustified, unreasonable fear (paranoias) or reasonable fear which has been blown out of normal proportions into panic or hysteria.

Of course, a card which is negative when upright can be, when reversed, either positive or more negative. Thus if the 9 of Swords means terror and apprehension when it is upright, then in reversal it could mean increased terror or it could mean relief from terror. By the same token, a card which is positive when upright could when reversed be either negative or less positive. For example, if the 6 of Cups when upright means nostalgia and happy childhood memories, then in reversal it could mean either paying too much attention to happy memories at the possible expense of the present, or something along the line of bad memories and present pain derived from past events.

The point of all of this is not to confuse you, although we may have done so; we're trying to demonstrate that although the system of reversals is simple, it isn't necessarily simplistic. While in the process of developing and working out reversed meanings for your cards, don't just say "This is a good card, so reversed it must be bad!", or "I don't see how this card could have the reversed meaning that it seems to have in this reading, because I don't see how this card could have this reversed meaning." Look at it more carefully, and let experience be your guide. Learn by doing; it will all come together in the end.

The second option, the dignities method, is subtler and more flexible, but also rather more complex. We'll teach it to you

in Lesson #6, after you've had time to work with reversals. (Those of you who already use the dignities system are not required to use reversals instead; use whatever you're most comfortable with. You can do the coursework for the lesson just as well with either method.) We've chosen to give the reversals method first for the benefit of those of you who are relative newcomers to the Tarot; the dignities system is harder to use when you're just learning how to divine.

Regardless of whether you use reversals or dignities, you'll probably interpret the reading in the same two steps: first card by card, and then in synthesis (as a whole). Many diviners find this combination of steps to be the most satisfying for producing a clear, coherent interpretation of a reading. If you first clarify the meaning of each card, and what it means in relation to its position, you can then do a better job of tying them all together into a unified response to the question. There isn't any special trick to this, although some people have a natural talent for it while others need to acquire the ability through practice. It does help to interpret the cards in the same order in which they were laid out, but that has more to do with the logic of the formats than with the act of interpretation. You simply need to get a clear look at each piece, and fit them together into a whole. As with so much connected to the Tarot, this is a situation where you learn best by doing. In the Practice section, we'll be giving you a simple reading format and teaching you how to use it, which will help you to learn the skill of reading interpretation.

Having interpreted the reading, you need now to write it up in your practice journal. This is something that we want you to do for at least the duration of the course. After that, you are of course free to stop if you wish. However, as we've mentioned before, this practice provides you with a valuable resource in the form of a record of your divinatory experience, so we suggest that you keep it up.

Exactly what you write up is entirely your decision. We do have some suggestions, however, based on our own and our students' experiences. It's a good idea to include the following elements in your write-up.

1. Date: day, month, year; day of week if desired.
2. Time: which can be rounded up or down to the nearest five minutes, or recorded exactly.
3. Querent: the querent's name, unless he or she has requested anonymity; if yourself, you can write "self".
4. Format used: here it's a good idea to include a sketch of the format, with the cards marked in in the appropriate positions; but if you aren't comfortable with this, simply jot down the format name.
5. Deck: which one you used (unless you have only one and won't be getting others).
6. Question: reproduced word for word if that's at all possible. (It's a good idea to jot it down before doing the reading; this helps your concentration.)
7. Card by Card: Each card, in the order laid out, plus its position and your interpretation of the meaning.
8. Summary: the synthesized interpretation of the whole reading.
9. Querent's Response: whether they liked the reading, felt it was accurate, learned anything from it, etc.

You can also add anything else that you think might be important --- what your starting ritual was (if any), the phase of the moon, whatever. At the very least, you ought to note the date, and the fact of having done a divination. If privacy is an issue to the querent, you can do many things to honor this while preserving some sort of record: omit or disguise his or her name, omit a record of the question, omit writing down what the cards were, etc. If you do many readings for other people, you're likely to find ways of your own to resolve this issue.

The Oops! Factor

Even the most seasoned and talented of diviners will once in a while have a problem with a reading. Perhaps the cards will foul during a shuffle, and require the process to begin again, or the cat will run across the reading (it's a good idea to shut the beast out for just this reason), or the phone which he or she forgot to disconnect will ring at the wrong moment. On the more serious side, a reading may end up being seriously flawed, or will fail to answer the question. These last two can be very real problems, and we want to discuss them so you'll have an idea of what has happened and how to fix it.

If the reading is flawed, it's probably due to poor concentration, poor preparation, lack of detachment, or fatigue or ill-health on the part of the diviner. If the cause is one of the first two, you can remedy the problem by repeating the divination and being more careful to prepare and to concentrate. If you aren't sufficiently detached from the subject of the reading --- if you have a strong personal involvement, if the issue produces strong emotional reactions in you, if you're too empathetic to the querent's problems --- you'll need to try for more detachment. This may not be possible, in which case you'll need to drop the divination. Too much involvement will prevent you from getting a decent answer. If, on the other hand, you're tired or sick, don't try to repeat the divination; wait until you've rested or recovered. You need to be awake and healthy to cope with the demands of divination.

But what if the reading is still flawed when you repeat it? The unpalatable truth is that this means that the whole thing is no go --- for whatever reason, the reading isn't going to improve. This just happens sometimes, and it can be for no apparent reason at all. The best option is to accept that you won't be able to complete the reading, and to go on to something else.

If the reading fails to answer the question which was posed

by the querent, it's likely to be due to unclear phrasing, wandering attention, uncertainty about which question to ask (on the querent's part), or the failure of the querent to ask a question dealing with the issue which is actually foremost in his or her mind. The first two, again, are easily remedied; rephrase the question or clear your mind, and cast the cards again. The other two will require a lengthy talk with the querent to clear up the difficulties and create an environment wherein the divination can be successfully repeated. However, if one of these last two factors is behind the problem, you may well wish to interpret the reading anyway; it may have answered the question that the querent decided not to ask, or the matter that was foremost in his or her mind, and thus the reading could be of value anyway. Also, this is a good technique for clearing up the matter before recasting the original question, and it may even give the querent the information he or she needs without you having to do another divination. It can definitely be worth your while to determine what the off-the-subject reading was actually talking about before you consign it to oblivion.

As with the flawed reading, sometimes the off-the-subject reading will stay off-the-subject when you repeat the casting. Here again, in this case you'd be well-advised to simply chuck the matter, because you're not likely to get anywhere.

Rarely, the diviner will run into a situation where he or she will produce a clear reading which answers the question quite well, but the diviner or the querent (or both, on occasion --- although very rarely) has a strong gut feeling that the reading is wrong, incorrect. If you are sure that this is a real feeling and not just an attempt to talk one's way out of an undesirable reading, respect it. Consider the reading to be invalid, and do it again. It can happen sometimes that the reading will be entirely wrong, without there being any obvious reason or cause. So trust this instinct, because it's probably correct.

### Ethics of Divination

Although divination, especially with Tarot cards, is often treated merely as an amusing pastime --- even as a game, or as a sort of party trick --- it nonetheless involves ethical obligations that need to be taken seriously. The predictions of a diviner often carry a surprising amount of weight, and even scoffers are frequently influenced by them (if only in the secrecy of their own heads). A prediction, even a silly one spoken in jest, may be taken far more seriously than the speaker expected or intended. Divination carries with it a very real demand for responsibility on the part of the diviner.

This responsibility may take many forms. The first of them is the responsibility to subdue your curiosity and/or your desire to be of help, and to never do a reading about another person unless you either have their permission or are directly involved in the matter. Otherwise, you would be invading this person's privacy; it would be not unlike having telepathic powers and going around deliberately reading other people's minds. Even if you have the purest of motives, don't do it.

Another area is the couching (phrasing) of predictions. We've already discussed predicting death, but there's more to the matter than that. Since a querent is likely to be strongly affected by what you say, you need to be careful not to phrase your interpretations in ways which will either frighten and upset the querent or raise up high hopes and aspirations. There are going to be some querents who are going to be either crushed or elated no matter what you do, because some people are like that; but, generally speaking, try to be as matter-of-fact as possible when interpreting a reading. If you have bad news, don't come across all doom and gloom; if you have good news, don't make like the audience on a game show. Be straightforward instead; be calm and sensible. This will save a lot of emotional wear-and-tear all around.

A third ethical issue involves questions or entire issues which you should avoid. You'll get frivolous querents who want to know if the horse of their choice will win the race, or if they ought to wear grey to their job interview, or whether the Seahawks will make it to the Super Bowl, or if their new system for blackjack will enable them to clean up in Reno. Others will want to know how to coerce a girl into having sex with them, or how to break up another person's relationship to get a clear shot at being the next one; and still others will want to find out the best way to get revenge on their ex-boss or do something nasty to the neighbor's poodle. AVOID ALL OF THESE, especially the spiteful or vengeful types. They are more trouble than their fee could possibly be worth.

The fourth question is that of overdependence. Sooner or later, you'll get a querent who comes in for readings all of the time, and who asks about the most trivial subjects imaginable --- Is this a good day to write to Auntie Mabel? Should I buy that new crossword puzzle book? Would it be better to tie my shoes in a sheepshank instead of a square-knot? This person is overly dependent on divination and/or the Tarot, and possibly on you as well. You'll need, sooner or later, to call a halt. If you can't get them to cut down and aren't willing to have them over sometimes just for tea and chat (companionship being about half of what they come to you for), you may need to refuse to do any further readings. If they are addicted to divination, or even to asking advice, don't feed their addiction! Any experienced diviner can tell you that it's bad for you both, almost as bad as more prosaic addictions.

Feeding the addiction of such a person is almost as bad for you as it is when you yourself become overdependent on the cards. And this can, and does, happen! If you find yourself doing readings on issues that, B.T. (Before Tarot), you would have made decisions on without any hesitation, you're getting overdependent --- and you need to do something about it. Try, at first, asking yourself if you really need the advice of the cards to make this



mild decision, or if you can in fact make it yourself, based on whatever basis you used to make decisions with before you began to use the Tarot. (The adjective "mild" may seem to be out of place here, but if the decision isn't a relatively small and unimportant one, you aren't severely overdependent. Doing a reading on a big or important decision isn't the problem; it's when you can't decide which movie to see that you're in trouble.) If this doesn't work, try more drastic methods --- put away your cards for an entire month, and don't even look at them unless someone needs your help. Break the addiction, or you won't be able to call your soul your own.

Lastly, you may need to make decisions about when to do or not to do readings, other than in the situations already covered above. These situations can arise in all kinds of issues. A few of the more common:

If you want a certain answer to a question and you don't get it, let it go. Don't keep doing readings until you get the one that you want. You can, in many cases, get it eventually, but it's dishonest --- and abusive of the cards. If you can't accept the answer that the cards give you, don't demand that they give you the answer that you want to hear. Accept reality, however unpalatable.

Likewise, if a querent insists that the cards aren't giving the "right" answer and it turns out that he or she has a very specific idea of what the "right" answer is, you should refuse to press on further, for the same reasons.

You may get a querent who really makes you uneasy. In this case, don't be afraid to refuse to do a reading for this person; you certainly can't do a good one if you're suffering from an advanced case of the creeps!

You may get a gut feeling that you just shouldn't do the reading. As with the reading that just won't come out, this happens sometimes. Accept the feeling.

Other situations may also come up when you have to decide to

refuse to do a reading, or to do a reading when normally you'd have refused to do one. In making your decision, treat yourself, your cards, and the querent with honesty and respect. Don't act out of pressure, guilt, snottiness, or anything else; expect your clients to treat you with decency, and do the same by them.

## B --- PRACTICE

### Exercise 5: Daily Divination

Your only exercise for this lesson is the Daily Divination. As might be clear from the name, you will need to do it every day without fail. It may take as much as half an hour at first, but with practice you may be able to reduce this time by quite a bit --- possibly to as little as ten minutes.

Turn to Diagram P, on the last page of this lesson. This diagram illustrates the format which you should use for your Daily Divination. (By the way, please be aware that in this lesson and the next, the terms "format" and "pattern" mean the same thing, unless otherwise noted. Don't be confused by the fact that we sometimes use one and sometimes the other.) This clear, simple format is quick to use and remarkably informative. The first card position represents the situation that the reading is describing. The second card position represents the querent's position, actions, behavior, or character traits which are involved with the issue. The third card position represents the outcome or result of the issue. The three together give a brief but reasonably complete explanation and summary of the matter at hand.

In the context of this exercise, the purpose of the pattern is to lay out a description of the events of your day --- what the environment is like, what your mood or actions or responses are, and the result of this combination. This sort of reading is a good one to use as a learning pattern, because it's easy to go back to it later and check the accuracy. Also, it gives the

student a serious look at the impact that divination has on the life of the querent. You'll learn first-hand how a prediction can affect your actions and responses, especially when a predicted situation occurs and you recognize it. It will allow you to learn that a prediction can be literal, or merely a cautionary statement (rather like a road sign, "slippery when wet", a cautionary can warn of trouble likely to occur; if you think that you've gotten a cautionary, try doing a second reading on the same format, with the question "How might I avoid this?").

The normal question that you should use for your Daily Divination is: "What do I most need to understand about the events that I experience this day?" The wording of the question has been carefully worked out, based on the experience from dozens of readings, so please don't change it unless you're quite sure of what you're doing. There are two permitted changes: 1) if you're doing the reading the night before the day to which it refers, replace "this day" with "tomorrow"; 2) if you're doing the reading last thing before bed on the day to which it refers, put "experience" into the past tense ("experienced"). Except for these, please leave it as is for the duration of this month's Daily Divinations, unless you have serious problems with it. (If that happens, write to us and we'll do what we can to help.)

By the way, you only need to use this specific question for this exercise; the pattern can otherwise be used with a wide variety of questions, and is a very useful way to get a quick look at a matter before going on to do a big divination on it.

To do this Daily Divination, select a time and place where you can have uninterrupted privacy (or as close to that as you can possibly get). You may do this at any time of the day or night that is convenient for you, and you can vary the time from day to day; you don't have to do it at the same time every day unless you want to do so.

Concentrating on the question, shuffle three times. Take

the top card from the deck, and put it down in the first card position; the next card, for the second position; and the third card for the third position. BE SURE NOT TO TAKE THE CARDS OFF OF THE DECK IN SUCH A WAY AS TO REVERSE THEM ARTIFICIALLY! (See Diagram P for instructions on how to avoid this.) Interpret the reading and write it up. At some point during the following day, take a moment to note how accurate the reading was or wasn't.

Be sure to do the reading every day!

To help you to get off on the right foot with your Daily Divinations, here is a sample. Jane, the diviner, laid out the following three cards: in position one, the 2 of Swords, Reversed; in position two, the Knight of Pentacles; in position three, the 6 of Wands.

The 2 of Swords, Reversed, indicates a situation which is normally one of balance and equipoise but which has been thrown out of kilter. This is in the situation position. The Knight of Pentacles indicates a person who is a steady, competent worker, and who is somewhat unruffled by events around them. This is in the querent position. The 6 of Wands depicts success and victory --- often, victory which is due to hard work on the part of the victor. This is in the outcome position.

Added together, this creates the following synthesized interpretation: Jane's day, probably specifically her day at work, is going to involve imbalance, chaos, and many unexpected changes. If she responds by behaving in a steady manner, working in her usual way without being thrown out of her stride by the chaos, she will get a great deal of work done (and probably get recognition from her boss for coping with the mess), and will reap the rewards of her hard work.

We've almost reached the end of this lesson. But before we go, we need to discuss a little advance work for Lesson #6. In order to understand the discussion of dignities at the beginning

of Lesson #6, you need to know two more sets of attributions: the Elemental attributions of the signs of the Zodiac and of the planets, and the planetary rulerships of the Zodiacal signs. These attributions are the same types as are those which we've covered before, in earlier lessons, even if these don't connect directly to any specific set of cards; rather, they influence the interactions between the cards. Just as a Wand, with the attribution of Elemental Fire, disagrees with a Cup, which has the Elemental attribution of Water, so do Jupiter (Fire) and Mars (Water) disagree. Likewise, just as the Trump XXI The World rules those cards which have connections to the planet Saturn, so does the planet Saturn rule those signs of the Zodiac which fall under its influence (Capricorn and Aquarius).

We've given these attributions in Tables 5-1 and 5-2. Please learn them for next month, just as you've learned other such Tables in previous lessons, and please also review the other card attributions when Lesson #6 arrives.

That's all for now; good luck with your Daily Divinations, and see you next month!

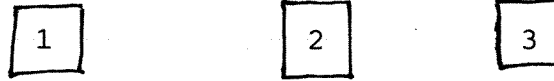
Table #5-1: Elemental Attributions  
of the Planets and Signs

Element	Planet(s)	Zodiacal Signs
△	♁, ♃	♈ ♉ ♊
▽	♂	♊ ♋ ♌
△	♀, ♄	♈ ♉ ♊
▽	♀, ♅	♈ ♉ ♊

Table #5-2: Planetary Rulerships  
of the Signs

Planet	Sign(s) Ruled
♁	♈
♃	♊
♂	♊, ♋
♀	♈, ♉
♄	♈, ♉
♅	♈, ♉
♆	♈, ♉
♇	♈, ♉

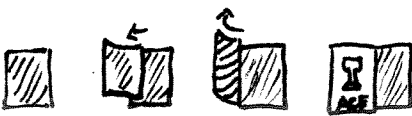
Diagram P



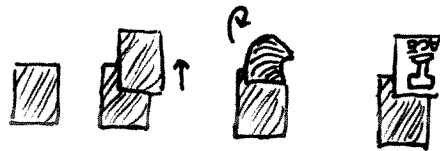
The 3-Card Pattern (Format)

1. The Situation
2. The Querent
3. The Outcome

Note: To remove cards from the deck while laying out a reading, take them off to one side or the other and turn them over at the same time. Do not take them off from the top, turning them over at the same time, since this artificially reverses the cards from the direction in which they originally faced.



CORRECT



INCORRECT

## CINNABAR TAROT COURSE

### Lesson #6: Divination, Part II

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#### A --- THEORY

In this last lesson, we'll be covering the rest of the course material on divination: the dignities system, several divination formats, and information on how to create your own formats. Then, in the Practice section, we'll be giving you the second of the longer, more complex exercises which we mentioned in Lesson #1.

#### Dignities

The dignities method of card interpretation is complex, subtle, and remarkably precise. Unlike the reversals method, the dignities method requires time and effort to learn, and also practice to perfect your handling of it. But to someone who is willing to make these investments, the dignities method provides rewards in terms of the increased flexibility and clarity of interpretation which it gives to the diviner.

In the dignities system, there are no reversed cards. Instead, the dignity of each card depends on the ways in which its Elemental and astrological attributions interact with those of the cards adjoining it. If these interactions are friendly, the card is well-dignified; if neutral, the card is neutrally dignified; and if unfriendly, the card is ill-dignified. Thus, in the dignities system any given card has three meanings: the



neutral meaning, which expresses the basic significance of the card; the well-dignified reading, which expresses its best or least bad aspects; and the ill-dignified meaning, which expresses its worst aspects. For example, the 5 of Wands in a neutral dignity would signify competition, struggle, and conflict. In a well-dignified position, the card would indicate light-hearted, friendly, possibly even fun competition --- a neighborhood ball game, an office pool on the sex of a baby, etc. If the card were ill-dignified, on the other hand, the competition involved would be hard-edged, nasty, acrimonious, possibly dishonest or even violent.

But the dignity of a card is not determined by all of the cards adjacent to it, depending on the format; that would be far too complex, unless the format is a straight line, and each card is near to only two others. Instead, where possible the dignity is determined by the two cards directly in contact with the card whose dignity is being calculated: those which flank it to the right and left, or top and bottom (but not both of these, unless the format demands it). If the card in question is at the beginning or end of a row, its dignity depends upon the one card adjoining it.

How do the cards which flank another card influence its dignity? The easiest way to approach this system is to look at it as a slightly more complex, or expanded, version of the Elemental relationships. Just as Fire and Water disagree, so also do Jupiter (Fire) and Mars (Water). These two different disagreements, Elemental and planetary, work in much the same manner. When you apply this sort of interaction to adjoining cards in a reading, it **both** gives you the relative positive or negative character of the card **and** indicates how the card is interacting with its neighbors (both in and of themselves, and in terms of the card positions in which they are located).

We'll demonstrate these interactions with a few sample readings, using the simple pattern that you learned in Lesson #5. This pattern calls for the simplest method of calculating

dignities, which we call the cluster method --- the technique which you use on groups of two or three cards. In the cluster method, the two or three cards are read as a single unit of meaning, and their dignities are not influenced by any of the other cards in the reading. We suggest that you use the cards of your own deck to lay out each sample reading as we discuss it, and follow along in this way.

The first sample reading is 1) VII The Chariot (♄); 2) 2 of Swords (♠ in ♌); 3) 3 of Wands (♋ in ♁). In this reading, all three cards have neutral dignities; the basic interactions between Water and Air, Air and Fire, are quiet and straightforward. But notice something about the relationship between the first two cards: the Moon rules Cancer. This gives the first two cards a strong relationship, even though their dignities remain neutral; it also implies that the querent's action, i.e. the 2 of Swords, gives them a little control over the situation, and thus allows them to "ride" the Chariot. Note, by the way, that although the dignities are neutral, the reading is strongly positive in meaning --- which underlines the point that a neutral dignity doesn't always mean a neutral reading. The 5 of Pentacles, neutral, is a relatively bad card; the Ace of Wands, neutral, a relatively good one. You need to be aware of this when interpreting a reading.

In the second sample reading, all of the cards are ill-dignified: 9 of Pentacles (♁ in ♋), King of Swords (♠ in ♏), 7 of Pentacles (♠ in ♏). The pattern here is Earth-Air-Earth, giving an essentially negative dignity all around. It isn't entirely bad, though: the planet Saturn is traditionally given to Air. Also, the King of Swords does rule one decan of an Earth sign. Note the link between the King of Swords and the 7 of Pentacles --- --- which tells that the querent's action brought about the outcome.

In the third sample reading, the cards are 9 of Wands (♋ in ♏), XIV Temperance (♁), and X The Wheel of Fortune. Here,  
(4)

all of the dignities are good; the common thread of Elemental Fire makes all of the associations strong and harmonious. In addition, the bond between the first two cards is strengthened by the common attribution of Sagittarius; and the bond between the second and third cards is also increased, because Jupiter rules Sagittarius. These three cards are in their highest possible dignities, and the reading interpretation is equally positive and powerful.

These first three sample readings have had cards of uniform dignity, but this only happens part of the time in reality. As often as not, readings involve mixed dignities, or a special type of dignity called "Pattern of Balance". We'll discuss the second one shortly; first, in the next two sample readings, let's cover mixed dignities.

There are two basic types of mixed dignities. The first kind involves two cards of like dignity and one of unlike. This is illustrated by sample reading #4: XII The Hanged Man ( $\nabla$ ), 5 of Cups ( $\♂$  in  $\mathcal{M}_4$ ), 9 of Pentacles ( $\♀$  in  $\mathcal{M}_2$ ). The first two cards are well-dignified --- in fact, very well, since both Mars and Scorpio are Water-attributed. The third card is entirely neutral, being Earth in planet, sign, and suit, and furthermore having no rulership interactions with the 5 of Cups.

The second type of mixed dignities involves three cards of unlike dignities. This is illustrated by sample reading #5: XII Death ( $\mathcal{M}_4$ ), 7 of Cups ( $\♀$  in  $\mathcal{M}_4$ ), and 3 of Wands ( $\odot$  in  $\mathcal{P}$ ). The first card is very well-aspected because both it and the second card are Scorpio and Water. The second card is neutral because it has a supporting card on one side and an opposing card on the other. The third card is ill-dignified because the only card near it is an opposing card, Water to its Fire.

The sixth and last sample reading illustrates the Pattern of Balance. (In this context, the word "pattern" has nothing to do with divinatory formats.) In this special situation, two hostile cards are balanced and harmonized in the reading by the presence of a card of a neutral suit. This balancing card must be either

the first or last card of the group of three; if it occurs as the central card, this is not Pattern of Balance. In the Pattern of Balance sample reading, the three cards are 8 of Cups ( ♃ in ♎ ), X The Wheel of Fortune ( ♋ ), and XVII The Star ( ♁ ): Water, Fire, and Air. Because of the harmonizing influence of the balancing card, all three cards in the Pattern of Balance are well-dignified. Harmonies of planet or sign can improve on this, but not alter it for the worse; Pattern of Balance is strong enough to override these lesser influences.

In all of these sample readings, there are other interactions which are influenced by, but do not influence, the dignities or the attributions. For example, in any Pattern of Balance reading there will be tensions between the opposing cards' aspects; but these tensions will be leavened by the aspect represented by the harmonizing card. For example, in a Pattern of Balance reading with the cards 2 of Wands ( ♃ in ♏ ), 6 of Cups ( ♀ in ♎ ), and 2 of Swords ( ♃ in ♎ ), this would indicate that the situation requires a decision to be made but the querent is more concerned with stability and security. The resolution which would harmonize this tension is to strike a balance between making the decision and striving for security.

And again, the planetary and other attributions can allow for more delicacy of interpretation. In the example reading just given, the tensions between Wand and Cup are not as severe as it might seem; the 2 of Wands has a Water planet (Mars) in a Fire sign, and the 6 of Cups has a Fire planet (the Sun) in a Water sign. There are links between the two, then, that may not be immediately visible. Certainly, the two are not utterly opposed; it would be possible for a choice to be made and yet some measure of security retained.

There is a more complex method of calculating dignities, which is used for readings with formats that don't permit the easy division into clusters that the three-card format does. This second method is called the sequential method. The task of

determining dignities with this method may look staggering to the reader who is new to the dignities system, because it involves reading the cards in a sequence of interlocking clusters --- a sort of chain-reaction with continually-shifting clusters of three cards each. This can be disorienting at first --- indeed, students have literally become dizzy while working over this method --- but you'll probably get used to it fairly quickly. Just keep in mind this trick: you're actually only figuring out the dignity of one card at a time.

Confused? We'll demonstrate with a sample reading. (Follow along with your own deck, as before.) You'll find that it's not so hard to cope with.

The sample reading is an arch-shaped layout of nine cards. (We invented this for the purpose of teaching the sequential method, so the card positions have no significance; the arch shape is used because students find it less confusing than a line of nine cards.) The first card, on the bottom left-hand side of the arch, is I The Magician (♃). The second card, ascending the left side, is the 3 of Swords (♠ in ♋). The third is II The High Priestess (♁). The fourth, at the top of the left side, is XIV Temperance (♁). The "keystone" or central card of the arch is the 4 of Wands (♋ in ♋). The top card on the right is 0 The Fool (♁). The next card down is the 4 of Pentacles (♁ in ♋). The third card on the right is the 5 of Pentacles (♁ in ♋). The fourth and last card on the right-hand side is the 6 of Wands (♋ in ♋).

The first card, I The Magician, is calculated using only the second card, 3 of Swords, and is thus well-dignified. The second card is calculated using the first and third cards, and is thus neutral, being between an Air card and an Earth card. The third card is calculated using the second and fourth cards, and is well-dignified --- being part of a Pattern of Balance, Air-Earth-Fire. The fourth card is calculated using the third and fifth cards, and is well-dignified. The process continues like this, ending with card nine being calculated with card eight only.

A third method for calculating dignities is used in formats where there is an intersection of some kind between different linear groups of cards --- for example, the cross-shaped section of the Celtic cross pattern and its relatives. We refer to this method as the skip method, which describes it quite well.

The focal point of this method lies in the idea that a card reader doesn't want to alter the dignity of a card when it takes a role in more than one grouping, unless (this occurs only very rarely) the two groupings are read as chains of events. In the more ordinary reading patterns, you'll want to give such an "axis" card its dignity based on its interaction with the cards that were laid out closest to it in terms of order. Then when you read the second line in which it takes part, you use the card to determine the dignities of the other cards in the line, but you skip the axis card itself.

Confused? Lay out five randomly-chosen cards in the form of a cross --- card one in the center, two to the right, three to the left, four below, and five above. Card one is the axis card, forming the center of two lines of three cards each. The dignity of the axis card would be determined by its relationship to cards two and three; then when you move on to dignifying cards four and five, you would skip card one, i.e. not recalculate its dignity.

To use the skip method with a reading that has more central cards, such as the Celtic Cross pattern, you calculate the dignities of the central cards in the cluster method, and use the skip method for both the horizontal and vertical axes. In this case, the card that you'd want to use as the central card for the axis would be the card representing the situation, usually called "cover". Confused again? Lay out seven cards --- card one in the center, two partly covering it, three on its side just below, four to the right, five to the left, six beneath, seven above --- forming the "cross" portion of a Celtic Cross layout. You would calculate the dignities of cards one, two, and three as if they were a cluster; then calculate cards four and five as if they

also were a cluster, with card two as the center, but don't alter the dignity of card two; then calculate cards six and seven as you did cards four and five. In the calculations for the two axes (4-2-5, 6-2-7), you skip calculating card two.

These three methods, between them, should cover almost any reading pattern usually used, and by the time that you find or invent more complex ones that require different methods you'll be experienced enough at dignities to invent a more complex method for that, too. For the time being, the methods outlined above should be enough.

In lesson #5, we mentioned that there is a special way of shuffling which will leave all of the cards upright. (Some of you may use this technique for shuffling playing cards.) Since it's so well-suited to the demands of the dignities system, we call it the "Dignity Shuffle". The technique is illustrated in Diagram S, the first diagram at the end of the lesson text. It's a fairly straightforward technique, and most people can do it once they get the hang of it.

To perform the Dignity Shuffle, hold the entire pack upright between your hands, cards facing left, with your thumbs on the top end of the cards. Break the deck into two smaller sections, one held in each hand. Transfer your left thumb to the bottom of the left-hand pack, turning it upside down as you do so, so that the cards of the left-hand pack face to the right. Shuffle the two packs together while holding them in this way. Square the deck and repeat as many times as desired. The special aspect of the shuffle is that the left-hand cards are upside down and the right-hand cards are right side up. When shuffled together, these two packs will produce an entire deck of upright cards.

If this technique seems hard at first, it's probably because you're unfamiliar with it. With practice, you'll find it easier; you may even end up naturally shuffling this way. (Since playing cards are double-ended, no-one will ever notice.) Good luck!

### Formats

In this section of the lesson, we'll be teaching you four divinatory formats --- one simple and three more complex ones. Each is illustrated by one of the four diagrams labelled "P-1" through "P-4", which you'll find right after Diagram S. For your ease of use, each diagram contains a brief listing of the card positions; this will enable you to use them without having to reread the text of this section of the lesson. We'll discuss the formats in more detail below.

### **The Latin Cross**

The name of this format derives from the name of its shape, the type of cross which was called the Roman or Latin Cross to distinguish it from the equal-armed Greek Cross (+). The format provides a wonderful quick sketch of the matter in question when the three-card format doesn't give enough information. It's especially good for issues where the querent isn't aware of everything that's involved. Card 1 is the situation, and provides a description of the issue involved. Card 2 indicates a facet of the issue which the querent is aware of. Card 3 indicates a facet of the issue which the querent isn't aware of. Card 4 is a sketch of the main influence on either the querent or the issue --- context will tell you which, or you may label the position beforehand to specify which one you want. Card 5 is the likely outcome.

To calculate the dignities of this pattern, treat cards 1, 4, and 5 as one cluster and cards 2 and 3 as another.

### **Markers**

This pattern is a variant on the basic Celtic Cross format, which has as many variations as a meatloaf recipe. It was created by one of our associates, Doug McCorison, and is used here by his kind permission. Each card position has a title, a



fairly common feature of Celtic Cross-derived patterns. The name --- like the pattern --- is Doug's invention.

Card 1 is the Significator, which may either be cast as the first card of the reading or be gotten by cutting the deck and using the card that this turns up. It shows the querent's attitude toward the question, their personality, or their actions in the issue. Card 2, Cover, indicates the querent's most immediate environment (in Doug's words, "Think of it as being like their aura."). Card 3, Cross, represents an obstacle or stumbling block. Card 4, Behind, represents the immediate or recent past. Card 5, Before, is the immediate future. Card 6, Beneath, shows the source or foundation of the matter. Card 7, Above, indicates the outcome.

Now we come to the truly unusual part, the "box" of four cards that surrounds the cross. Card 8, Home, indicates the querent's general environment --- sometimes literally their home. Card 9, Health, stands for the state of their health and their physical condition. Card 10, Heart, indicates the querent's emotional condition; card 11, Head, depicts their intellectual or rational state.

This pattern is useful for the same general type of work that any Celtic Cross variant is suited to. It answers slightly different aspects of a question than do most readings of this family, however, and is therefore especially good for questions which have the potential to affect the querent's health, home life, and so forth.

Calculate the dignities for this pattern with the same mix of methods that you'd use for any pattern of this family. Read cards 1-2-3 as a cluster. Read the axes with the skip method, 4-2-5 and 6-2-7. Lastly, read the four "box" cards in the same way as if they formed a line to the right of the cross segment, i.e. using the sequential method.

### **The Choice Pattern**

This is our own variation on a pattern developed by the

Tarot authority Rachel Pollock. Her pattern was designed to deal primarily with job-related issues. We changed the meaning of several positions, and altered the general thrust of the pattern so that it can be used in any situation where a choice needs to be made.

The first part of the pattern consists of a pair of cards. Card 1 gives an overview of the situation, and card two shows the primary obstacle involved. The core of the pattern is the second part, the row of seven cards. This row is repeated up to 10 times in the reading, and each row gives a description of one choice or course of action which is available to the querent. Card 3, the first card in the row, indicates the choice that this row will represent, the course of action that the querent could take. The second card in the row, card 4, indicates what result the querent expects from that choice. The rest of the row represents what will probably happen if this is the choice which is made. Cards 5,6, and 7 represent things which will occur or people who will be involved if this course of action is followed. The sixth card in the line, card 8, sums up what is most likely to result from this choice, and the last card, card 9, is the outcome.

This series of repeated rows will give the querent the opportunity to examine and assess his or her options. Often, the reading will contain very clear indications of which is or are the best possible action(s). Usually, the line indicating the worst option will be crammed with reversed, ill-dignified, or bad cards, and the line with the best option will have few or even none of these. As few as two lines may answer the question, but the more usual number is three or four. Seldom if ever will you need more than seven lines, but once in a great while you may need all ten for an issue of great complexity and no clear paths.

When you are interpreting this reading, it is often helpful to the querent if you try to roughly interpret each line as you lay it out; the one drawback to this format is that querents can

find it difficult to follow the interpretation with six or seven lines to keep track of. A brief outline of each line as it is laid down can ease this problem.

Calculating dignities for this pattern is simple. Cards 1 and 2, up at the top, are read as a cluster. Then for each line, the first two cards are one cluster, the next three are another, and the last two are a third. (This is why we showed them on the diagram as already grouped in this way --- to make it easier for you to remember the groupings.) Each row is an entity unto itself, so calculate each one separately.

### The Planets

This pattern has one card for each of the seven traditional planets, plus one for the Earth. Each card position symbolizes the personality and sphere of influence of one of the celestial bodies. It is a useful pattern for revealing the mechanics of a situation, and is capable of great subtlety of meaning. If you get along well with this pattern and use it regularly, you will probably come to find it developing layers of meaning which will take its potential farther and farther.

Card 1, in the center of the pattern, represents the Earth. It indicates the situation involved. Card 2, Saturn, symbolizes limitations and restrictions. Card 3, Jupiter, shows assistance or friendly influences. Card 4, Mars, symbolizes conflicts. Card 5, the Moon, indicates hidden or secret things --- i.e. aspects of the matter which are not readily seen --- or, in some cases, matters involving hidden wisdom, esoteric teachings, or the occult. Card 6, Venus, represents the emotions. Card 7, Mercury, represents ideas, attitudes, communication, and also intellectual matters (education, etc.). Card 8, the Sun, is the outcome.

For more flexibility of interpretation, the significances of the planets can be more broadly read according to the traditional meanings of the planets. Thus, Jupiter could mean pleasures, Venus sex, the Moon change, the Sun attainment, and so on. Only

the meaning of the Earth card remains the same. In addition, you can note the interactions of the planets with the astrological or Elemental attributions of the cards in the positions --- for example, XVII The Star, which is Aquarius, landing in Saturn, which rules Aquarius.

To calculate the dignities, use the sequential method, starting at the Earth (card 1) and ending at the Sun (card 8). Later, when you're used to the way in which the format handles, you can add in the Elemental interactions between planet and card (which won't alter the dignity of the card completely, but which could strengthen or weaken it somewhat).

### Developing Your Own Formats

As you gain experience with divination, you will probably begin to be at least a little bit dissatisfied with the formats that you know already --- the ones from books, from the pamphlet that came with your Tarot deck, the ones from this course. They don't really meet your needs, and you want to find something else. But you may not find it in books or courses.

Or perhaps you have a particular question that you ask a lot but you can't find a format that really works with it; or you have a one-off but important question and the same lack of a proper format comes up. Maybe you like to examine issues from a certain perspective, and you can't find a pattern that's really compatible with that perspective. Possibly you have a pattern that you mostly like, but you wish that some of the card positions were different, or represented different things.

On the other hand, you may just want to fiddle.

The solution to all of these problems is to develop your own formats. Even a relative beginner at divining can feel his or her way around designing a format to fit his or her needs; and as with other Tarot practices, you'll improve with experience, and are likely to develop an intuitive "feel" for it.

How do you develop a format? There are three parts to the

process, and you can start with any one of them. For the sake of a coherent discussion, we'll start with shapes.

What sort of shapes attract you in a Tarot format? Do you prefer formats that are circular? linear? cruciform? Are you attracted to patterns that resemble stars? wheels? trees? Or do you prefer complex, abstract shapes? Does shape even matter to you? Probably, you'll find that a certain shape or shapes, or perhaps a general type of shape, will appeal most to you --- though you may have no idea in the world as to why. Nonetheless, it is true that most diviners respond best to specific shapes of format. Examine your favorite formats, the ones that you most enjoy working with, and notice what shapes they are. These will in all likelihood be the shapes that you respond best to.

You don't have to have a shape before you go any further, though. Some people do work that way; for them, a shape will appear in their mind's eye and then they'll flesh it out. For others, however, the shape comes only later. As you work with format design, you'll come to get a sense of how you work best. Maybe you'll be one of the lucky few who can approach the task from any one of the three parts to the process, or from all of them at once.

The second factor is **card positions**. You need to decide what each card in your reading is going to signify, and where each position should be located relative to the others. What positions do you want in your reading --- health, finances, work, family, hopes, fears, relationships? All of these are entirely workable. And where do you want them located? Do you want to place hopes and fears next to one another, work and finances side by side, family and relationships in the same line?

You may find ideas drifting into your head, ideas in which you know what you want every card to stand for and where each one will be placed. On the other hand, you might begin by wanting to design a format that will answer your questions about the complex issues that have arisen for one of your querents who is about to become a first-time parent.

Don't necessarily expect, however, that you'll automatically know what positions you want, or that you'll get it all right the first time. Expect to tinker, to fiddle, to waffle and experiment while the format is evolving. No new format is set in stone, and you can alter it as you wish.

The third factor is **type of question**. You need, at some point, to come to an understanding of what question or type of question your format is going to work with, and you need to handle the format accordingly. You can begin by trying to create a format that will answer a specific question, or you can create a format and then ask yourself what sort of question it would answer. Just as certain formats work best with certain types of question, so too do certain types of question tend to generate specific needs with regard to a format. For example, let's take the mythical Julie, a professional musician. She wants to create a format that she can use before an audition, to give her an idea of what lies ahead. In this case, the format would need to have the capacity to respond to the kinds of things that are an issue for Julie when she has an audition. She has to assess just what about the audition she most wants to get information about, and to design the format with this in mind. If she fails to design a format that is capable of answering her question, she'll fail to get an answer.

A successful format design, then, has the capacity to bring forth the desired information. Whether the format is developed before or after the need for information arises depends on circumstance; you can do it just as well either way. And don't hesitate to develop a format that you may use only once; if the question is of any importance, the effort will be worthwhile. Besides, format design is good practice for a diviner. It sharpens your ability to see connections, and to ask the right questions.

B --- PRACTICE

Exercise 6

Your last exercise for the Cinnabar Tarot Course makes use of the material from the last two lessons. What we want you to do is to design your own format, following the guidelines laid out above and using your divinstory experience.

In preparation for this exercise, you should perform divinations at least once with each of the four formats that we have covered in this lesson. If you know or use other formats, you ought to do the same with them. Having done these divinations, you should next assess your divinatory experience with them. Ask yourself what it is that has satisfied you about the formats that you have used, and what has dissatisfied you; what are the strong and weak points, advantages and disadvantages, uses and failings of these formats. Make lists of these points.

From these lists, begin to develop a format. You may develop one to suit a specific question or type of question, or merely come up with what seems to you to be a good and useful format. Write up a list of card positions that you will be putting into your format. Also, begin to consider what shape you want the format to be, and in what locations you will be placing the card positions.

Don't hurry yourself in this exercise. Allow the format to take shape in its own time. When it has become more or less fully-formed, test it. Check it by using it, but also by looking it over carefully. Play with it, fiddle with it, adjust it until you're satisfied with it. Now you have your own format, and you can create others whenever you wish.

A Few Comments on Divination

By now, you have probably discovered that the act of divination, or at least the cards, can seem to have a mind of its (their) own. Cards will persist in developing meanings that are

entirely off the wall; they will answer, not the question you asked, but one two or three thoughts away; or a reading that will seem to be entirely clear and straightforward will turn out, in retrospect, to be saying something else altogether. It can be enough, on a frustrating day, to drive one out screaming into the streets. The only answer is to be patient and to persist in your practices. Most of the problems that you'll encounter will dry up and blow away if you can get to the root of them or can at least outlast them. The exception is the odd meanings; these are generally here to stay. An example is the 3 of Swords. In one tradition, the 3 of Swords, well-dignified, means singing --- which seems perfectly crackers. Yet a number of people have found, to their unnerving, that whenever the 3 of Swords, well-dignified, appears in the Environment position of a Daily Divination, many of the people encountered during the course of the day are in fact humming or singing. It makes no sense in the world, but there it is.

The upshot of these comments is that Tarot divination isn't a happy-ever-after pastime, but if you don't let the difficult days get to you, it's worth the effort. Expect, however, to be surprised, taken aback, or unnerved on a regular basis. It'll always happen.

This marks the close of the Cinnabar Tarot course. We hope that you've enjoyed the course, and learned from it. One month from the day that we mail this lesson to you, we'll send you a questionnaire for you to fill out and return to us. It is optional, unless you want a certificate of completion (which are available at no extra charge) --- in this case, you must fill it out. The point of the questionnaire is to find out what you liked or disliked about the course, what you learned from it, and how you might like it to be changed. We'd appreciate it if you'd fill it out and return it to us, since student feedback affects our courses. Good luck, and enjoy the lesson!



DIAGRAM S: The Dignity Shuffle

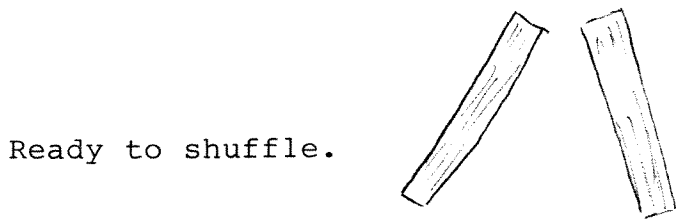
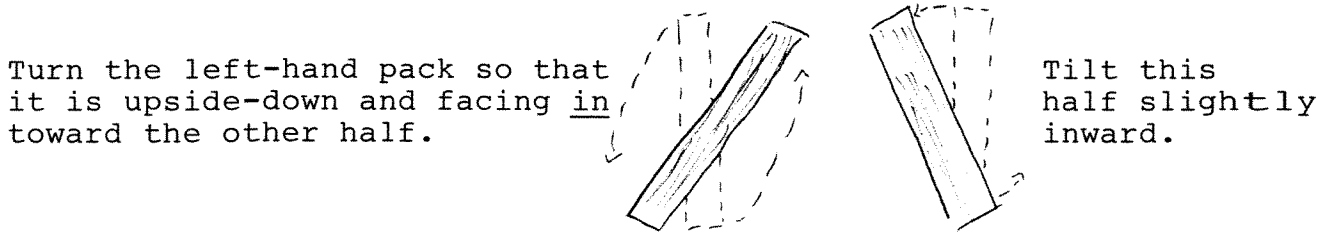
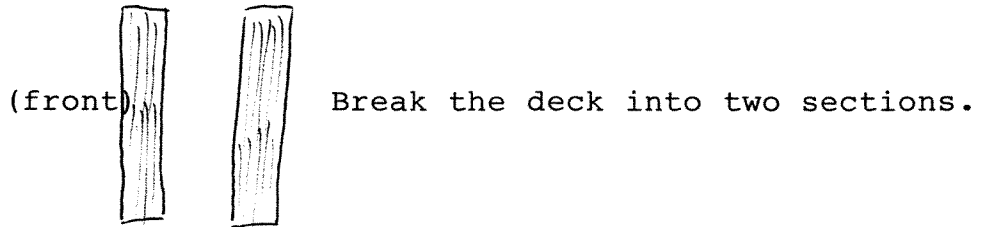
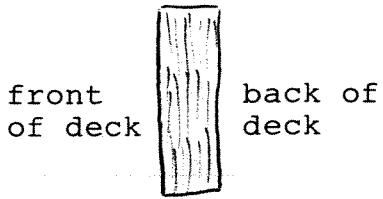
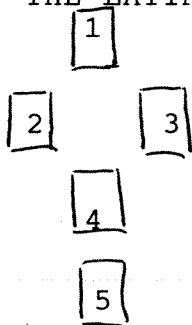


Diagram P-1  
THE LATIN CROSS FORMAT



1. Situation --- a sketch of the matter.
2. A facet of the matter which the querent is aware of.
3. A facet of the matter which the querent is not aware of.
4. The main influence on the situation or querent.
5. The outcome.

Diagram P-2  
MARKERS

1. Significator --- the querent or the querent's attitude/actions.
2. Cover --- the querent's immediate environment.
3. Cross --- an obstacle or stumbling block.
4. Behind --- the immediate or recent past.
5. Before --- the immediate future.
6. Beneath --- the source or root of the situation.
7. Above --- the outcome.
8. Home --- the querent's more general environment, or literally their home.
9. Health --- the querent's state of health.
10. Heart --- the querent's emotional state.
11. Head --- the querent's rational or intellectual state.

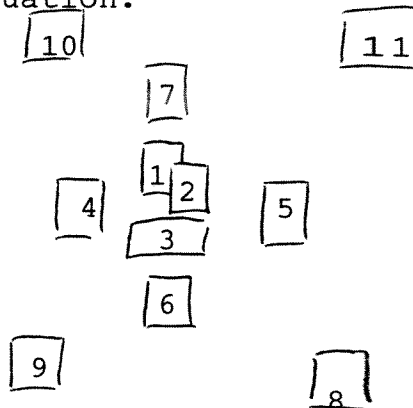
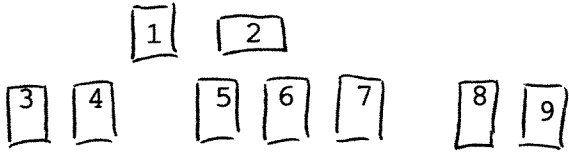


Diagram P-3  
THE CHOICE PATTERN



1. An overview of the situation.
2. An obstacle or difficulty blocking the querent.
3. The choice which this line will discuss; a particular course of action.
4. The querent's expectations for this choice.
- 5,6,7. Something which will happen or a person who will be involved, if this path is taken.
8. The most likely result from this choice.
9. The outcome of this choice.

Diagram P-4  
THE PLANETS PATTERN

1. Earth: the situation.
2. Saturn: limitations and obstacles.
3. Jupiter: assistance or aid.
4. Mars: conflicts.
5. Moon: hidden things, secrets; the occult.
6. Venus: the emotions.
7. Mercury: ideas, communication, etc.
8. Sun: the outcome.

