

LESSON 92

INTRODUCTION TO THE  
ROYAL ARCANA

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The 16 Court Cards are quite unique in the sense that they separate the Minor from the Major Arcana. Although the Court Cards have been placed in the Minor Arcana category they in fact belong to the Royal Arcana. For the sake of convenience they have been allotted a dual association to the Sephiroth with:

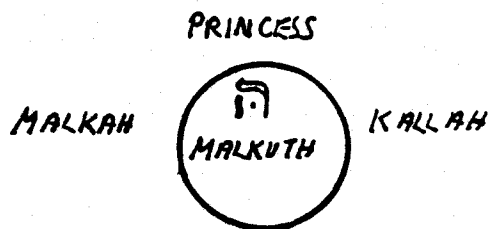
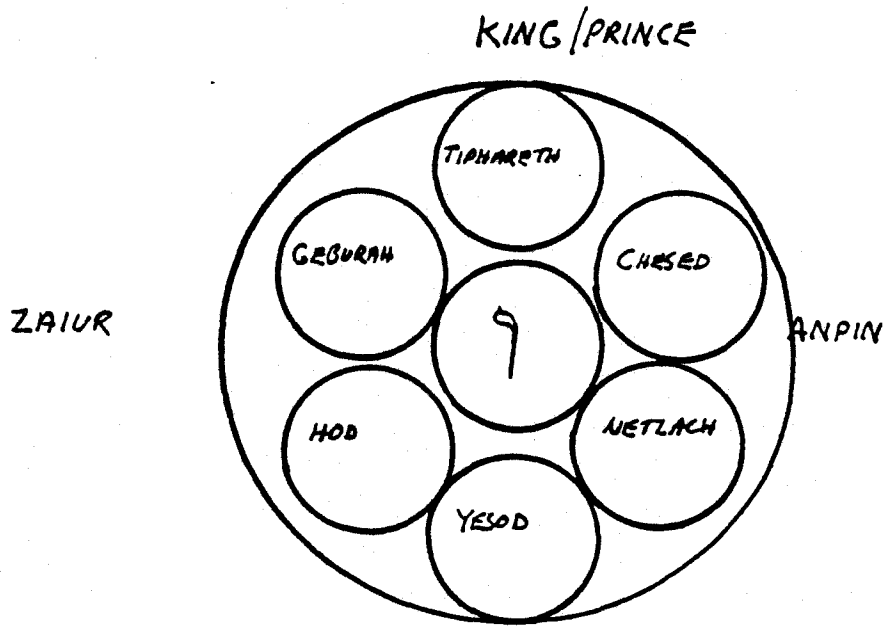
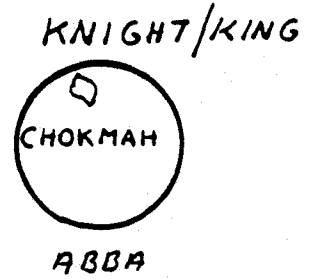
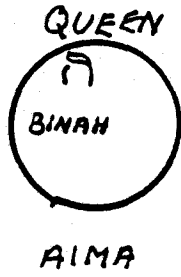
Knights:	Chokmah
Queens:	Binah
Kings:	Tiphareth
Princesses:	Malkuth

The above Kabbalistic association to the Tree of Life is to a certain extent a false representation of the cards, for Mathers stated: "The Court Cards in fact are placed beside the Sephiroth of the Tree and not on them." By this he meant that the Court Cards relate not to the Tree but to the Arikim Anpin, i.e. the Macroprosopus, a title of Kether. This is in fact formed into Abb, the Supernal Father, and Aima the Supernal Mother. These two unite and become the parents of Zaiur Anpin, the Lesser Countenance which becomes the Son. Though his seat of power is analogous to Tiphareth, he in fact governs the 6 Sephiroth from Chesed to Yesod. Malkah, the Queen and Kallah the Bride are titles of Malkuth and are considered the Spouse of the Microprosopus or Zaiur Anpin. (For a more in-depth explanation of the Arikim Anpin see the Introduction to "the Kabbalah Unveiled" by Mathers and subsequent chapters concerning the formation of the Macroprosopus).

When the Royal Arcana were originally drawn there was no doubt that the elaborate Kabbalistic associations were never considered, but with the advent of more informative study being available today newer areas can now be opened up, and the Court Card Kabbalistic association is but one small example where synthesis occurs on a far greater level than ever before.

One area that has always been a point of confusion is the dual title association with the Knights being Kings and the Kings being Princes. Crowley added a footnote worth repeating in his Equinox description of the G.D Tarot: "The Kings are now called Knights and the Princes are now called Kings. This is unfortunate, and leads to confusion....Remember only that the horsed figures refer to the Yod of Tetragrammaton, the charioted figures to Vau". When Francis Regardie consulted with Wang over the

THE ROYAL ARCANA APPLIED TO THE MACROSPHOSOPUS  
- ARIN ANPIN AND THE TREE OF LIFE



titles he opted for the Yod force to be called Kings outright so that confusion would not develop. The real reason for the dual titles is simply that the Court Card associations are used on more than one level. Many occultists have used the principle of the Knight marrying the Queen to produce a son, who marries and starts the sequence all over again.

One particular paragraph from the Zohar, "Book of Concealed Mystery" which also may help show the complexity, (and also the clarity of the Dual tarot association) says: '(Whilst the spouse, the Microprosopus) was at first alone (he was standing by, whilst the letter V, Vau, occupied the first place, then was he separated from his bride). But all things returned into the unity. (That is, not only were father and mother conjoined into one, because the two letters, I, Yod and H, Heh, were combined; but also the microprosopus returned to his Bride, whilst V, Vau, was placed next to I, Yod, in the Tetragrammaton, IHVI, Yahevi. For) V, Vau, descendeth (when in the word VIHI, Vayehi, "and it was done," it occupieth the first place; but in the proposed metathesis, it descendeth into the third place, in order that it might be IHVI, Yahevi). And they are bound together the one to the other (male and female, V, Vau and I, Yod, the Path of beauty and the Queen), namely I, Yod, and H, Heh (by which are shown wisdom and knowledge, Father and Mother), like unto two lovers who embrace each other. (By two lovers are understood either V, Vau and I, Yod only - that is, at the end; or I, Yod, and H, Heh, together: that is, at the beginning).'

To some this quotation may appear cryptic but it is worth persevering with for it unfolds an entirely different scheme of Kabbalistic thought applied to Tetragrammaton.

In the section on Enochian Chess in "the Complete G.D." we start to see the wide ranging effect of these dual titles when they are applied to the Chess pieces, which function on an entirely different plane than the tarot and associate to a different order than Fire, Water, Air and Earth. While it is not our intention to go into a detailed discussion of Enochiana it may give a brief indication of the use of these titles on different levels. For those of you who wish to see the Royal Arcana from a different perspective we have no hesitation in recommending Crowley's "Book of Thoth" and for a general summation Alfred Douglas in his small book, "The Tarot", which has an excellent historical section and bibliography.

When relating to the component parts of the self the Knights represent the Anima, the masculine kernel of the self and also the Chiah, while the Queens relate to the Amimus and the Neshamah, The Kings to the Ruach and the Princesses to the Nephesch. By association to the four worlds one has;

Knights:	Aziluth
Queens:	Briah
Kings:	Yetzirah
Princesses:	Assiah

From this it can be determined that the Knights show the initial impetus, the indefinable idea. The Queens relate to creative ideas and input. The Kings show the reasoning process in defining actions. The Princesses show the physical aspects.

For the purpose of divination the Royal Arcana have always been something of a point of conjecture, but within the Golden Dawn system they represent exactly what they are purported to be, archetypes that we will eventually meet. Mathers is extremely clear on this point and says: 'The Court-Cards, and especially the Knights and Queens, may be taken to represent persons; in this case their additional meaning should not be read.' In the divination section following the function of the individuals represented by the Royal Arcana placed in different house positions is discussed together with how we should deal with them.

The elemental association to the Royal Arcana is an extremely strong one, and while the figures always have the predominant say another viewpoint now emerges, and that is, how the figures perform through the elemental houses. This shows us one element acting through the framework of another, which though complicated has been produced in a simplified format.

The I'Ching association given to each Court Card must be considered as arbitrary. Again an overlapping factor emerges when the elemental and Chinese archetypal associations do not entirely fit neatly with the western ones. Considering the ancient Chinese view of the Celestial Stems (the astrological system of the I'Ching), the Pre heaven (Macrocosmos) and the Later Heaven (Microcosmos), the current association given here is a mixture of both archetypal and elemental, which cross-cuts both the Pre and Later Heaven attributions in an endeavour to meet our western associations half way.

For those of you who are familiar with Royal Arcana from other decks the G.D terminology does not always match. For example, taking the Waite deck as a case in point. The Waite King is not as swift as the G.D Knight/King (on horseback) but he is stronger and lacks the initial thrust of the Yod Force. The G.D King/Prince is more powerful than the Waite Knight though not as fast. The Queens of the G.D deck do tally with other Queens. Generally speaking the Princesses of the G.D Tarot are more stronger than the Pages of other decks and show more growth. The Knight, Queen, King, and Princess terminology used in the G.D are

for the most part different from their counterparts. For divination purposes the Royal Arcana of other decks would not match the GD deck with the exception of the Queen. The best way is to forget previous associations from other decks and reorientate ones thinking towards this tarot in the form of YHVH.

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