

LESSON 109

THE FOOL

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THE FOOL

The Tarot Trump 'Fool' in its Golden Dawn format is one of extreme complexity and depth. Aleph is the Hebrew letter associated to this card and by virtue of its shape relates to a plough. In agricultural terms the plough is used to till fertile ground so that crops would grow and hence feed the farmer. This is the cyclic existence where man provides nourishment for himself with the elements as his teacher. Also it must be remembered that a plough is a symbol of things to come, through patience and effort. In this card we see the tree blossoming, one of which the young child is about to pick. Here the child, a product of man, obtains nourishment from the blossoms, the product of the tree and hence the entire aspect of human existence is reduced to its primal concept. The child in fact stands in the shape of the letter Aleph to indicate that he, as man, will benefit from the fruits of the earth and as such stands for potentiality.

The symbolic shape of the child is also reminiscent of the fylfot, which is the instigator of the powerful currents whirling off into the logos. This current, represented by the child as a combined force, is the Gassillum or 'wheels'. It is through Chokmah towards the brilliance of Kether that the child looks to discover the cause of its own ignorance.

The geometric shape of the blossoms of the tree is that of the main stars of the constellation of Lepus the Hare. Of this, Ptolemy says that the stars of Lepus are like those of Saturn and Mercury, giving a quick wit, timidity, circumspection, fecundity and defiance. The magical influence of this constellation is madness. Some of the stars are Nibal (the mad), Rakis (the bound) and Sugia (the deceiver).

The nakedness of the child shows his exposure to the elements, relying on nothing but divine innocence which holds the wolf in check.

The tree and leaves are painted in the colour of Pale Yellow of the King Scale which is also analogous to Atziluth. This reflects the symbolic structure that the child must grasp, before he can transcend to a higher state of awareness by eating the forbidden fruit, or blossoms (shaded in the complementary Violet). For when united with the blossoms its secret (forbidden knowledge) will be released. The wolf is coloured in the Pastel

Grey of the Queen Scale and represents the negative area of the card being held under restraint. The madness under control is also a main point of difference from the Fool when associated to other tarot decks, though it is still there, lying dormant for the right trigger. The sky is coloured Greenish Grey of the Prince Scale and shows the limitless concept of the intellect and also the astral light, that area where karmic patterns are formed. Here, rather than reach for the sky the child has opted for growth through the organised structure of the tree. The child is painted in the colour of the Princess Scale, Pale Greenish Grey rayed with Yellow, as is the ground also. The whole concept is the pale yellow of the tree reflecting on the child and the terrain.

The child is here the protoplasm known as man which in archetypal terms is the infant state, a universal concept for anything just born. It is here, more than any other card, that the hope for the future in terms of potential growth is shown. But there are also dangers as well; the negative aspect of this theme, so aptly described by Carl Jung, is that the dog and the youth represent madness. This hits extremely close to home with the Order concept of this card, though there are a few vital differences. The wolf is the negative aspect of the unconscious which is held in check with a leash by divine innocence of the child, showing that he is under the protection of the godhead in Kether, before he manifests to maturity. The Order influence of this card when compared to other decks is 'control by will'.

Carl Jung noted four archetypal concepts relating to the child myths which have a direct bearing on this card.

1. The abandonment of the child: the dangers the child is exposed to after its birth.
2. The invincibility of the child: an aspect of survival against all odds with divine help.
3. The hermaphroditism of the child: this shows the pre-sexual state of the child, implying innocence.
4. The child as the beginning and the end: the pre-conscious state of man, his beginning.

The psychological mode of consciousness that this card represents shows the awakening, when one has completely broken through old structures and now find themselves in an entirely new area of development. In many respects the esoteric concept of illumination applies here, as a state of superconsciousness. It shows a complete remodelling of the psyche, hence the old saying

'like a new born babe' can be equated with this Trump. This state of mind goes with tremendous intuitive insight that in many cases can defy reasonable explanation.

The old title of this card was 'Spirit of Air' when the trump was associated to the element of Air. The new title given here is the 'Spirit of the Awakening'. This refers to the young child, as humanity, starting to realise the presence of the powers beyond as the dawning of a new Age approaches.

By numbering the first Trump zero, one has a near perfect balance of infinity. Zero is the unexpressed monad while the monad is the sum total expressed. This shows not only potential growth but growth itself in the first stage of manifestation - a blueprint of the Microcosm. As a glyph, zero is circular and cyclic in nature and is the point between birth and death. In ancient cultures the circle was used to symbolise the egg, the divine spark descended into matter, but still unexpressed until birth. By numbering the Fool zero, one shows the divine seed in an unmanifested form. In Kabbalistic terms, zero would be the Zelem, the hidden spark behind the phases of the Kabbalistic Soul.

Zero is also perfection and is associated to the Divine because of its perfect symmetrical form which we, as man, cannot hope to understand its fullest meaning. For once we understand it, it is corrupted because of our own imperfect comprehension. The Fool in this context is very much the epitome of zero for he has reached the scope of human expression (by way of ascent) to understand. From this context we can begin to note that the viewpoint of the card and not the card itself is the thing most likely to be corrupted.

The Fool in simple alchemical terms is the Spiritus Mercurius in its volatile state. It is not yet stabilised and hence takes on many of the characteristics of the Trump. Mercury is the untamed essence within the Primea Materia. We know it is there but in its volatile state it has not been yet released, though it has been isolated enough to know of its existence so that it can be identified, but still it is too volatile to use. The child of the wilds is very much in line with this theme and must be approached with caution. This Trump shows the extreme beginning of its manifestation, for any incorrect move on the part of the alchemist will activate the wolf, the negative aspect which has so far shown no sign of eruption or exploding. If approached badly the wolf will in fact bite the child and possibly devour it once the equilibrium of its world has been disturbed.

The tree in the card also represents the Oak, mother to the

infant mercury and symbol of the hidden knowledge. In earlier Tarot decks, the Fool was depicted as a Court Jester or a wandering vagabond. In both instances he often wore a multicoloured tunic. In alchemy, this multicoloured stage of the Great Work was often referred to as the Peacocks Tail - a complete cycle of the experiment. As the wandering fool he is analogous to Quicksilver, bitten by the rabid dog (the actions of a solvent), part of the stage of transmutation to a stabler self. It also should be noted that in a great many of these earlier tarot packs not all of the designers worked to a central alchemical theme where the Order pack does. Also, another reason why the Fool is Zero is that as Mercury, it is the divine spark behind every card. All the Trumps in fact show Mercury in different stages of its alchemical journey.

The Alchemical text "Inroitus Apertus" by Philaletha says: "This chameleon is the infant hermaphrodite who is infested from his very early cradle by the bite of the rabid Corascene dog, whereby he is maddened and rages with perpetual hydrophobia; nay, though of all natural things, water is closest to him and yet he is terrified of it and flees from it. O fate yet in the grove of Diana there is a pair of doves which assuage his raving madness (note: this aspect is missing from the G.D. theme of the card which hints that Mercurius is a bit more stable than previously thought). Then will be the impatient swarthy dog, that he may suffer no return to his hydrophobia and perish drowned in the waters (note: of the abyss or matrix - shown in the Fool of other packs) come to the surface and blows keep him at a distance and darkness will disappear. When the Moon is at full give him wings and he will fly away as an eagle leaving Dianas birds dead behind him".

The earlier astrological association to this card was the element of Air, but this was before the discovery of Pluto which was the last of the three outer planets discovered, which then could be balanced on the Paths of Aleph, Mem and Shin. Before this elemental symbols were used due to their association to the Sepher Yetzirah and the Mother Letters. These were hardly adequate and since the Elements were represented by the Court Cards the dual association to the paths was something of an overkill. The use of the association of Uranus to this card shows more of its depth and is more in line with the Order concept of its root meaning.

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## DIVINATION

ON MATTERS OF Selfhood; Self Projection; new ideas; new beginnings; reactions to outside stimuli; the life force; first encounters:

The Fool in this position shows the beginning of an entirely new concept of development, far outstripping any previously motivated concept of thought, it is the dawning of a new age of development. Upheavals of a previous structure are apparent, which in macrocosm can apply to governments, corporate bodies etc; new thoughts and ideas are being studied with far reaching ramifications. In the microcosm, expect sudden and radical changes whether they be good or bad as this depends on your capacity to handle your environment. There are strong hints of patterns forming from karmic lines of development.

ON MATTERS OF possessions and personal attitude towards such; personal estate and resources both physical and material; principles and feelings; management and projection; commerce, personal, commercial, governmental and national financial affairs directly relating to the self:

The Fool in this position shows a lack of or disregard for the old ideas. There appears to be a total lack of impetus towards acquiring material values. Also, fluctuations appear on the material side of things, high gains and losses appear with frequent rapidity. The seemingly endless random patterns with their lack of staying power shows that this is bad for permanent situations, but good for the entrepreneur. Be prepared to meet the unexpected and try to have insurance against the negative aspects of this situation.

ON MATTERS OF short journeys; communications; relationships; brothers, sisters, neighbours; humour; identity; early education; books; correspondence; enlarging ones field of activity:

The Fool in this position shows an area of development almost without limit. The limits are there of course but they are beyond our comprehension to understand them at this point. There are also indications of movement, travelling with governmental or corporate backing. On the negative side of things one should watch for deceit or disruption of plans with little indication of result in the foreseeable future. On a mundane level problems develop that prevent any type of harmonious relationship.

ON MATTERS OF the end of one stage and the commencement of another; the home and private life; buildings; land; parents; security; emotions; significant shifts in life's directions; concerning the soul; the occult in its practical terms; divination:

The Fool in this position shows development and experience continually being sort after in new areas of development. Possibly, mystical or psychic manifestations begin to emerge which cause a great deal of uncertainty and concern. Turmoils and upheavals are indicated with a heavy influence from those in power, who have held their positions for many years. In this instance we plan for the future, possibly to take over a growing concern on the death of another. There are also indications of matters coming to an abrupt and often dramatic conclusion, possibly from a foreign place.

ON MATTERS OF love given; creativity of selfhood; the creative will; children; entertainment; recreation; speculation; sports; the arts; gambling; fulfilling potentiality:

The Fool in this position shows us the perfect example of the overkill situation and is not a good position for you to be in. The present situation eventually gives way to extremism which could easily be interpreted as a type of perversity. It shows strong independence and a genius for fulfilling potential drinking, gambling and other speculations without being able to stop until it has run its full cycle. There are also indications of attracting strong publicity which would bring a great deal of good fortune your way.

ON MATTERS OF sickness (generally due to work problems); employment; employees; relationships within the work environment; conflicts; service; one's sense of service; the acquiring of skills; psychology:

The Fool in this position shows the susceptibility to strange and rare diseases that come upon one quite suddenly. These diseases are more often than not connected with the nervous system. The way to defeat this is to have a good diet, exercise and try to keep one's emotions intact. The Bach Flower remedies may help with the latter. There are also indications that those under you may try some form of deceit or trickery (possibly while you are convalescing). A great deal of correspondence is also indicated by the Fool in this House. Types of eccentric clothes are also apparent here.

ON MATTERS OF marriage and divorce; contracts; the other party;

competitors, adversaries, and known enemies; partnerships; public relationships; social interaction; the law of compensation; what is lacking; the workings of karma:

The Fool in this position indicates that a marriage or partnership may be under threat. This could probably be due to one partner being the complete opposite of the other. In the above matters there appears to be no smooth path and a constantly changing situation is apparent. There are also indications of the possible demise of one partner. The Fool also is an impulsive individual and because of this there arises marriage or partnership problems; more consideration should have been given.

ON MATTERS OF death and rebirth; accidents; effects of others; crime and retribution; legacies; wills; others estates and finances; joint resources; moods; sex; spiritualism; rejuvenation; mysticism; transformation; psychotherapy:

The Fool in this position shows strong occult tendencies and a very intense study of mysticism etc. A preoccupation with those beyond the living also shows the Fool's strong spiritual drive. There are possibilities of money being received through legacies but there is little likelihood of holding on to what has been received. There is a good chance that taxes and debts will swallow the money up. The Fool is preoccupied with attaining access to the lofty heights of the astral and as such tends to neglect the physical.

ON MATTERS OF religion; metaphysics; philosophy; higher study and education; legal systems; morals; institutions of learning; long distance travel; exploration; public communications; the collective mind:

The Fool in this position shows a person completely in touch with his inner feelings. He knows and recognises the dictates of his Higher self and strives to reach it through various modes of hermetic and religious philosophy. It shows more than an intuitive grasp of these feelings and clearly relates to use of a structure to attain this type of inner rapport. There are indications of prophecy (through dream or direct voice) and forewarnings (against possible accidents while travelling). Also there is a possible reform of a hermetic structure indicated, so that it will be more palatable.

ON MATTERS OF public honour; status; ambitions and goals reached; achievements; profession; the other parent; causes for disgrace; recognition; identity:

The Fool in this position shows public honour and status coupled with backing, but it also shows employees who are having a hard time of it. This indirectly affects your own course, the external ups and downs that will be part of your career. The advice here is to cut all ties with troublemakers and start fresh. It would be better to find employment in a huge governmental or corporate body that is not at the mercy of trends, as your current employer may be. Indications are clear that employment will give you problems. It would be best to find something that benefits from sudden changes.

ON MATTERS OF friends; income; social alliances; legislation; ones attitude; group activities; government, counsellors; love received; spiritual and intellectual aspirations; ideals; fulfilment; what you yield and how you benefit others:

The Fool in this position shows associations with eccentric friends of like mind. This can also become very volatile due to ego inflation, and because of these flare-ups are more than likely. At this time the group you are associated to are dealing with metaphysical subjects quite beyond the normal scope of thought. Some friends however will be of a low type of character though their spiritual experiences will be similar to your own.

ON MATTERS OF responsibility and contribution to others; humanistic concerns; karmic debts; unresolved problems; hidden resources; the unconscious; sorrow; health afflictions; secret enemies; hospitals; secret societies; self undoing; total identification:

The Fool in this position brings an isolation of sorts, and warns gainst deceit and treachery. There are strong undercurrents of secrecy that appear to be directed at you, so be cautious in your dealings. Also indications show an association to hospitals, prisons and the like in far flung areas. Narrow escapes manifest when it appears that you have come to the end of the road. Deal only with people who are "above board" and are "straight as a die", for any dealings with unsavoury individuals with the Fool in this position could be fatal.

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MEDITATION ON THE FOOL:

Let the Student first study the overall picture of the card, then study each detail: Each symbol and image. Study the colours.

Now let the Student look at the card and feel its vibrations.
Write down your overall impression.

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exercise

Now paint this card with the above described colours. An  
outlined drawing is supplied with this lesson.

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