

Eremiados Course Lesson Twenty-Eight



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Apostolic Guardian Church of Grace and Blessing
&
Templum de Octo Rosae Mysticus



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The Art of Memory and the Tarocchi

It is most unlikely that the game of Tarocco or the Triumphs were invented by occultists. It is most likely that, shortly after the cards came into common use in Italy, their potential for esoteric use was realised.

At the level of Low Magic, both ordinary playing cards and the Tarocchi were used for fortune-telling from as early as the late 14th or early 15th century.

Among High Magicians, it was realised that they could be used for the *Ars Memoria* or Art of Memory. This paper deals with the history and techniques of the Art of Memory.

Images in Places

The Art of Memory was originally a technique for memorising long poems or speeches, as well as lists of events, names and items of information. The technique was first used in Greece by actors and poets. It was invented by the poet Simonides of Ceos [556-486 bce]. It was well known in Rome, being taught as part of the Art of Rhetoric or effective speech-making by such famous lawyers and orators as Cicero.

In his book on oratory, Cicero set out the basic premise of the Art of Memory and attributed it to Simonides:

"Persons desiring to train in the Art of Memory must select *Places* and form mental *Images* of the things they wish to remember and store those *Images* in the *Places*. In this way, the order of the places will preserve the order of the things and the images of the things will denote the things themselves."

Taking a Mental Walk

Roman orators who used the Art of Memory would often use the rooms of their villas as the *Places*, and their contents as the

Images. They would tag the introductory section of their speech to the portico and entrance hall of the villa and relate the various points made in the introduction to the statues and furnishings located there.

The principal sections of the speech were allocated to the various main rooms of the villa, and their furnishings, murals and statues; while a transitional section of the speech, taking you from one main point to another, would be related to a passage and its contents.

As they delivered their speeches in the Forum or Senate, they would mentally walk through their villa. As the various rooms and passages with their statues and furnishings came to mind, the various parts of their speech would also come to mind in proper order.

Using the Art of Memory, they could make an elegantly constructed speech in the Senate or Forum for four or five hours, without referring to a manuscript or notes.

Medieval and Renaissance systems

In the medieval and renaissance eras, orators and scholars often used a cathedral or church with which they were familiar to supply the *Places* for their Art of Memory systems.

The stained glass windows and statuary of medieval sacred places were fruitful sources for the *Images* of their Art of Memory systems.

Prudence and the Art of Memory

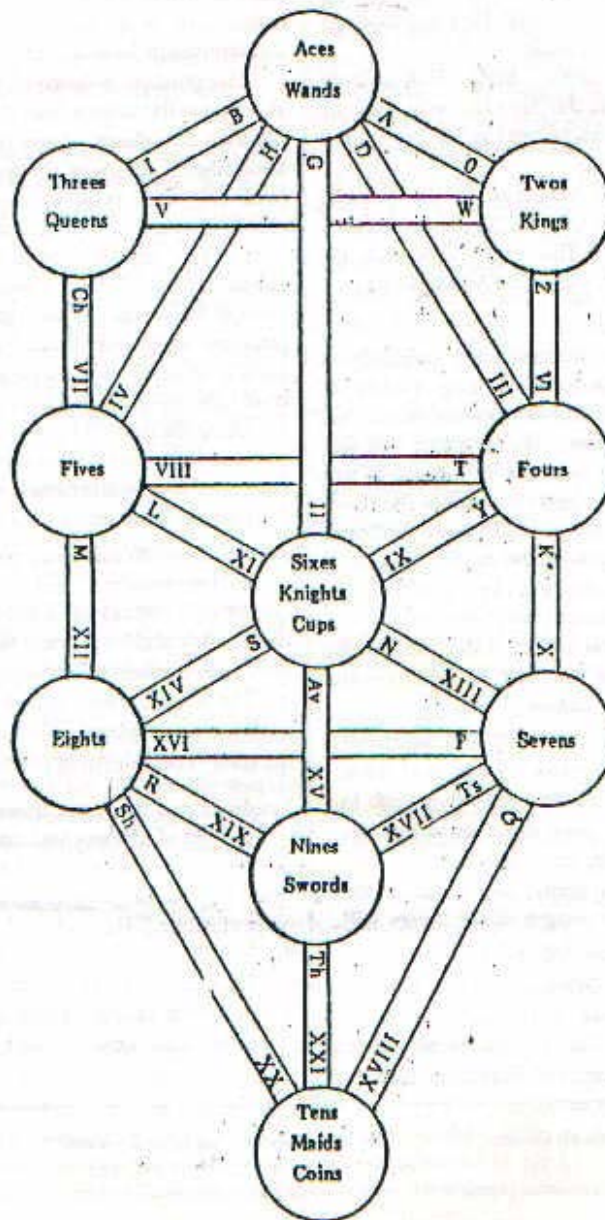
The Art of Memory was said to be ruled by the virtue Prudence. Cicero defined virtue as a "habit of mind in harmony with reason and the order of nature." He said:

- Virtue has four parts: Justice, Fortitude, Temperance and Prudence.
- Prudence is the knowledge of what is good and what is bad and what is

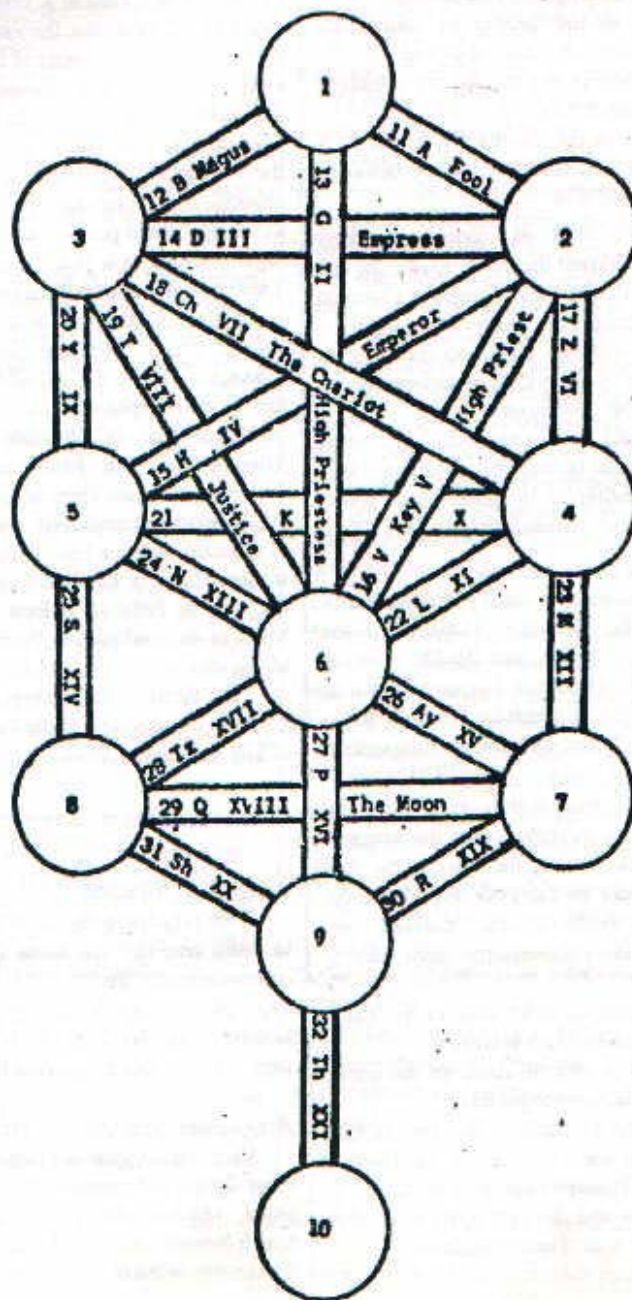
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Per the Guardians system



Associations as per the Guardian system - Jean

neither good nor bad. Its parts are memory, intelligence and foresight.

- Memory is the faculty by which the mind recalls what has happened.
- Intelligence is the faculty by which it ascertains what is.
- Foresight is the faculty by which it is seen that something will occur before it does occur."

Because the works of Cicero were among the few that survived the fall of Rome, the Art of Memory, i.e., the use of Images in Places to facilitate learning, was known and taught by the Church's scholars for hundreds of years from the time of the revival of learning at the beginning of the 12th century.

In the late renaissance era, the same techniques would be used by magicians, but with the intention of bringing things about, rather than merely remembering the past.

The Tarocchi as Art of Memory

There is no obvious set of Places for the 78 Images of the Tarocchi. However, many esoteric scholars believe that the Places are to be found in the Qabalistic diagrams known as the Trees of Life, in which ten Sefiroth, drawn as circles, are linked by various arrangements of 22 connecting Paths.

There is a saying within our Order, "The Minors are more important than the Majors." This is because, among the Minors, the four court cards refer to the Four Worlds of the Qabalists, 'Atsiluth, Briyah, Yetsirah and Assiyah; and the ten numbered cards refer to the Ten Sefiroth of the Tree of Life. The 22 Majors or Triumphs refer only to the Paths linking the Sefiroth. As it is written:

"The Minors refer to where we are going; the Majors to the ways to get there."

Because the 22 Paths of the Tree of Life are referred to the 22 letters of the Hebrew alphabet, the Triumphs can also be linked to Hebrew letters and through them to a wide variety of other lists of correspondences.

The correspondences between Tarocchi and Qabalah were set out in a Table in Knowledge Paper No. 2. Note that the magical number of each Triumph is the value of its corresponding Hebrew letter. The numbers before the Triumphs merely show their order. It is interesting to note that the traditional names of the Triumphs of the Tarocchi omit Prudence, although they do include the other Virtues. It is as though certain people were concerned not to draw attention to a possible link between the Tarocchi and the Art of Memory.

It is not appropriate, at this early stage, to discuss which Paths are referred to which Triumphs. While a few Paths are referred to the same Triumphs and Letters in all 35 of the Trees of Life in Weavers' Woods, most Triumphs are on Paths linking different Sefiroth in different Trees of Life.

Experienced magicians work with a variety of different Trees of Life. They study the shifts in significance of the Triumphs as they appear on different Paths in different Trees of Life. Much of the work in later Eremiados grades is of this nature.

The figures with this paper show how the Tarocchi are allocated to the Paths in the Trees of Life in Weavers' Woods.

Assignment No K8/1:

Your principal assignment for this lesson is to make sure that you know by heart all the correspondences in the Table in Knowledge Paper No. 2. One way to help you to do this is to copy it out very neatly by hand. Send your copy to me as your assignment for this lesson.

Assignment No K8/2:

Can you suggest any other diagrams, or other things, not mentioned in the knowledge paper, which might serve as the Places into which Images could be placed to make an Art of Memory system?

To the Apostolic Guardian Church Lay reader

This section of 28 Eremiados Lodge (of the *Guardians of Grace, Blessing and Sustenance*) is not a complete set. There are a few gaps in my collection which you will notice. This is why I have presented them from 1 to 28.

Jean de Cabalis