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Abstract

Extended study of Tarot imagery in Williams' *The Greater Trumps*, with examination of Eliot's possible influence on Williams through his earlier use of Tarot symbolism in *The Waste Land*. A substantial portion traces the history of Tarot and the evolution of its symbolism through several important decks, then looks at Williams's interpretation in his novel. Also examines the Roman triumph ceremony and the figure of the Fool for their surprisingly rich interconnections with the Tarot and *The Greater Trumps*.

Keywords

Eliot, T.S.—Influence on Charles Williams; Eliot, T.S. *The Waste Land*; The Fool in literature; Tarot—History and origins; Tarot—Symbolism and interpretation; Tarot in Charles Williams; Tarot in T.S. Eliot; Triumph (ceremony); Williams, Charles—Mysticism; Williams, Charles. *The Greater Trumps*

THE TRIUMPH OF LOVE

Interpretations of the Tarot in Charles Williams' *The Greater Trumps*

by Nancy-Lou Patterson

Kind nature first doth cause all things to love:
Love makes them dance and in just order move.

Sir John Davies, *Orchestra* (1596)

1. The Greater Trumps

The Age of Aquarius has been prefigured repeatedly, and just as scholars now find the Renaissance in the twelfth century, and before that in Charlemagne's time, and so on back to the Hellenistic world from which it was born, so the contemporary fascination with the occult has enjoyed periodic rebirth. C.S. Lewis documents the attention to magic in the sixteenth century. It was "A vigorous efflorescence of forbidden and phantasmal arts" of "high magic, not concealed but avowed," for which the term "medieval survival" is inadequate. "We might reasonably call eighteenth century magic, if there is any, a 'survival' from the seventeenth century." And the nineteenth century inherited this passion for the occult as part of Romanticism. A cold bath of mid-nineteenth century realism gave way to the arts and letters of the fin-de-siècle Symbolist movement, and in the days of Charles Williams' (and C.S. Lewis') youth, a fascination with the occult was again in style, as will be seen below.

Today Charles Williams' novels are found on the shelves of occult book shops, which have sprung up like mushrooms (*Amanita muscaria*, of course) in the past few years. Each of his seven novels deals with a specific occult motif, and in the present atmosphere their excitement is more easily understood than at any time perhaps, since they began to be written.⁴ Each of the themes has been enriched by Williams' use of it, and perhaps none so greatly as that of the Tarot in *The Greater Trumps*, first published in 1932. William Lindsay Gresham, who was the first husband of Joy Davidman, C.S. Lewis's wife, and who has used the Tarot theme in his own writings, says of *The Greater Trumps* that "it has transformed the Tarot for the modern student."⁵ Edmund Fuller explains:

He makes a brilliantly original contribution to an old cryptic tradition in his treatment of the Tarots. They have fascinated innumerable writers who have tried to take something out of them. Williams instead has brought something to them. Few of his inventions are more stunningly fine than the table of the little golden dancing figures, the moving center of which the cards are but illustrations and talismans.⁶

How wide-ranging is the influence Williams has exercised can be seen in the following statement by Richard Cavendish, a British journalist who has played a significant role in popularizing the occult. In *The Black Arts*, he writes of the Tarot in terms which are based directly upon Williams' own invention:

There is something extraordinarily fascinating about the Tarot. It opens strange windows into a world in which things are never quite what they seem, can never quite be grasped, a sunlit medieval landscape of tiny figures moving like marvellous toys--the Fool with cap and bells, the Emperor and Empress with a glittering cavalcade, Death at his reaping, the Hermit with staff and lamp, the Hanged Man swinging from his gibbet, the pale Tower falling. If they could be fully understood, occultists believe that these figures would reveal the secret of the inner mechanism of the universe, the hidden rhythms of the Dance of Life.⁷

There could scarcely be a better *précis* of the novel's theme, and the whole idea of the "tiny figures moving like marvellous toys" is Williams' own. How accurate his intuition is in the matter is the theme of the present essay.

The Greater Trumps is a typical Charles Williams novel. It begins in a banal family setting, introduces the occult theme, escalates the events to a supra-normal level (Carlos Castaneda would call it a state of "non-ordinary reality"), and finally relieves the tension, most of which has been created not only by the confrontation of good and evil but by the strain upon the original "ordinary" reality, through a eucatastrophic resolution. It is typical, that is to say, of his first five novels. *Descent into Hell* and *All Hallows' Eve* are more deeply dramatic because the confrontation between good and evil, the sense of "real" danger is much more deeply felt, and because there is damnation as well as salvation for the characters in them. In the earlier books, as Gunnar Urang says, "the focus is not only on the energy of the human imagination but also on certain objects...which become centers of power."⁸ Urang finds that "the novels of Charles Williams raise in us higher hopes than do those of C.S. Lewis, but they disappoint us more."⁹

This is so, he states, because "the power of fantasy claims attention in its own right."¹⁰ Williams, Urang says, lifts our visionary apprehension that "existence itself may be Christian" entirely "beyond our grasp in a supratemporal, suprapersonal vision of the whole. About to demonstrate the proposition that the power of being itself is the energy of Love, he instead projects a vision of power such as to inhibit the freedom, temporality, and concrete individuality without which love is merely empty form."¹¹ But love on a supratemporal and supra-personal level is not merely empty form: it is the exact nature of the Holy Trinity which is, as C.S. Lewis has said, "Beyond Personality." The vision of power as Williams evokes it in novel after novel, resembles that exhibited by God in his answer to Job. Urang concludes his criticism with the somewhat wistful statement that "When the fantasy leaves us incredulous, we discover that what we have found unbelievable is not...the world of gracious possibility as such, but what has now become for us the other world of the *Consolation of Philosophy* or the *Summa*."¹²

What Urang implies is true, as Edmund Fuller attests: "Thus Williams brings the Tarots into what is in fact, though he deliberately chooses not to name it, a Christian symbolism."¹³ As Gresham says, "In *The Greater Trumps* we have the Tarot of a Christian mystic, gifted with uncanny insight."¹⁴ This is the root of his interpretation, and of the very traits which disturb Urang. Alice Mary Hadfield explains Williams' method:

In his experience, the extraordinary always used the commonplace, and once the extraordinary was recognized in the situation one's sights were raised and all extraordinary developments could be accepted and assimilated in the manner of the commonplace.¹⁵

In another study, she quotes a letter from Williams to Thelma Shuttleworth: "Once Love is believed to be actual and present, ...powers entirely beyond our own are at work."¹⁶ If the Tarot cards are used, then, "they are not brought in as trimmings or make-weights, but because C.W. grasped their particular point and glory, and saw what a remarkable tale could arise from it."¹⁷ Hadfield states categorically of the novels, "They are not fantasies."¹⁸ T.S. Eliot explains, "Williams is telling us about a world of experience known to him,"¹⁹ and "For him there was no frontier between the material and the spiritual world."²⁰ This is the point which is the most important to understand, and which so often confuses Williams' critics.

The story of *The Greater Trumps* is that of two ways of using power. On the one hand "the evil attempt at unlimited power centres on possession of a power-giving object"²¹--"Aaron" and Henry desire by the possession of a magical thing, the pack of Tarot cards, union with the power which creates and controls the matter of life."²² As George Winship describes their function: In *The Greater Trumps* there is the same Tarot pack which fascinated Eliot when he wrote *The Waste Land*, the cards that reflect or direct the Great Dance of all that is. These are the true cards, not the truncated pack of our bridge, poker, or gin, not the greasy cardboard of a fortune-teller, but the originals, with a cunningly-wrought automaton to match; the whole device, cards and machine, is powerful not in mere divination but in control of wind and weather, life and death.²³

The climax of the novel comes when Henry Lee, the betrothed lover of Nancy Coningsby, tries to kill his future father-in-law, Lothair, because he will not give up the Tarot pack he owns to allow it to be matched with the automata, owned by Henry's uncle, Aaron Lee. The method is a magical snow storm produced by manipulation of the Tarot deck, and specifically by the suits controlling wind and water. It is at this point that goodness wields power:

Sacrifice is the act by which evil is turned into good; he who, under God, performs the act is sacrificed. Williams' clearest illustration of this has...

been described in terms of Nancy's confrontation with the storm in *The Greater Trumps*, where she draws upon herself the supernatural energy of the storm, and transmutes its magical power into natural energy.²⁴

As Mrs. Shideler has explained, "Evil was converted into good by Nancy's passionate love, as simply as the direction of a ball is changed by impact with a surface."²⁵ The secondary theme of the book, that of Aaron's mad sister Joanna's obsession that she is Isis, is resolved when she finds her lost child, Horus, to be Nancy. When Nancy's father Lothair protests that Horus is a boy, Sybil (Nancy's aunt) explains, on the very last page of the book:

"No," Sybil said, "I mean Nancy. Much matters about girl or boy. She thought her child was Messias."

"Oh!" Mr. Coningsby said, "And is Nancy Messias?"
 "Near enough," Sybil answered.²⁶

This conflation of girl and Saviour would offend R.J. Reilly as much as does Williams' interpretation of the role of Beatrice for Dante in *The Divine Comedy*: "he loved both woman and God at the same time in seemingly the same way. Eros and agape merge: a single human affection may encompass both God and man."²⁷ He finds this to be bad theology, because "Even if we distinguish as carefully as the Athanasian Creed does between substance and person, the identification of Beatrice and God seems hardly avoidable."²⁸ I make this comparison because Reilly mentions the Athanasian Creed, which Williams makes the second major symbol of his novel after the Tarot itself. Reilly objects that Williams' novels do not "clarify romantic theology," though "the girl in *The Greater Trumps* who created matter did so because she was really in love."²⁹ (Nancy, before meeting the storm with her own body, cooperated with Henry in creating earth by means of the Tarots). Reilly is distressed because "where one might hope to find some sort of explication of the particular duties of the romantic lover acting in accord with the Beatrician vision, one finds . . . sheer power."³⁰ He seems to agree with Urang: "the 'occultism' of the novels prevents their being taken seriously as examples of romantic theology or of theologized true love."³¹

But this is precisely the point: in Mary Shideler's words: . . . love is like that figure among the Greater Trumps of the Tarot which . . . is called the Fool, because mankind finds it folly till it is known. It is sovereign or it is nothing, and if it is nothing then man was born dead." It may be that man was and is born dead. Or it may be that Williams is right when he declares that love is sovereign.³²

II. Occult and Unconscious

So far I have placed emphasis upon Charles Williams' personal experience of the "other world" (whether occult or Christian) and it is time to document this. Williams was most of all a great Christian mystic, one of the greatest of twentieth century Anglican writers. His early experience of the occult only served to prepare him for this later role, for "His is a mysticism, not of curiosity, or of the lust for power, but of Love,"¹ as T.S. Eliot says of him. His theology has been discussed extensively by a number of writers, including theologian Mary McDermott Shideler, and it is not my intention to add to these studies. I only propose to explore his use of occult imagery in the novels, in particular the Tarot of *The Greater Trumps*.

In fact, I do not want to promote the use of the occult or other romantic materials for religious purposes as such, for as Williams so feelingly put it,

It will generally speaking--be an unfortunate day for Romantic Theology if it ever gets into the hands of the official ministers of the Church. The "stupor" [sense of astonishment at the Beatrician vision, the unbidden epiphany of the godhead in direct experience] will, with the best intentions, be hideously organized and encouraged. The covenanted mercies are their concern. This, uncovenanted, rides in our very nature--within and without the Church; say, rather, this is that ancient covenant which reveals what all the others support. "My covenant shall be in your flesh."²

What was the experience of Williams with the "uncovenanted" mercies? Anne Ridler thinks that he belonged to the "new Rite"³ by which in 1914, A.E. Waite had replaced the Isis-Urania Temple of London, itself taken over by Waite from W.B. Yeats--who had headed it as a dissident form derived from the Order of the Golden Dawn. Williams' wife was sure that he did not make contact with the order until after their marriage in 1917, which would mean that he could not have been a member of the Isis-Urania Temple version of the Order of the Golden Dawn, so, . . . it would seem (according to the date given by Mrs. Williams) that it must have been to this later unnamed Order that Charles Williams belonged. Yet he always spoke of himself as having belonged to the Golden Dawn.⁴ In any event, all of the above-mentioned Orders derived from nineteenth century studies of Rosicrucianism. His secretary, A.M. Hadfield, says,

He had learnt something of one of the great approaches to such a contemplation in his study of the Rosicrucian Order and the writings of A.E. Waite. He had touched the fringe of knowledge of occult sciences, of centres of hidden knowledge or mysteries, and the discipline and practise required of learners.⁵

Anne Ridler reports that Williams "took pleasure in memorizing what had to be said [in the ceremonies of the Order] so that he could celebrate with dignity."⁶

Williams made several close friends in the order, including a Church of England clergyman named, interesting enough, since the name appears in *The Greater Trumps*, Henry Lee.⁷ Williams did not see Waite in later years, but continued to be

influenced by him, especially by The Secret Doctrine in Israel (1913) which examined the Zohar and showed the Sephirothic Tree as a frontispiece.⁸ These matters and Williams' use of them will be detailed below. Anne Ridler thinks the book was the foundation of "his lifelong attempt to develop an adequate theology of marriage--and in this last, the influence of Waite can be distinguished from that of the Golden Dawn in its original form, for the subject of sex played no part in its teachings."⁹ The influence of the entire experience--of his acquaintance with and study of A.E. Waite, and his actual membership in a magical Order--was, Anne Ridler concludes, "considerable--witness the symbolism used in his novels (for instance the Tarot cards. . .)"¹⁰

Williams has not been the only twentieth century writer to deal with the Tarot, as we have already seen. The most famous, and certainly the most widely influential use of it is in *The Waste Land* (1922) by T.S. Eliot. The poem predates *The Greater Trumps* (1932) by ten years, and some examination of it is in order, to establish whatever influence it may have had upon Williams. The famous passage is as follows:

Madame Sosostris, famous clairvoyante,
 Had a bad cold, nevertheless
 Is known to be the wisest woman in Europe,
 With a wicked pack of cards. Here, said she,
 Is your card, the drowned Phoenician Sailor,
 (Those are pearls that were his eyes. Look!)
 Here is Belladonna, the Lady of the Rocks,
 The lady of situations.
 Here is the man with three staves, and here the Wheel
 And here is the one-eyed merchant, and this card,
 Which is blank, is something he carries on his back,
 Which I am forbidden to see. I do not find
 The Hanged Man. Fear death by water,
 I see crowds of people, walking round in a ring.
 Thank you. If you see dear Mrs. Equitone,
 Tell her I bring the horoscope myself:
 One must be so careful these days.¹¹

Eliot's note on the symbolism of this passage--the footnotes are really part of the poem--details his interpretation:

I am not familiar with the exact constitution of the Tarot pack of cards, from which I have obviously departed to suit my own convenience. The Hanged Man, a member of the traditional pack, fits my convenience in two ways; because he is associated in my mind with the Hanged God of Frazer, and because I associate him with the hooded figure in the passage of the disciples to Emmaus in Part V . . . The Man with Three Staves (an authentic member of the Tarot pack) I associate, quite arbitrarily, with the Fisher King himself.¹²

Reams of paper have been devoted to commentary on these few lines, but the following is a very recent and evocative interpretation by Anthony Burgess who reports that he read the poem at the age of fifteen and promptly memorized it:

We now have to meet Madame Sosostris, famous clairvoyant. An age that has rejected fertility has naturally rejected religion, which has its roots in ancient vegetation magic, and has to make do with such feeble substitutes as cartomancy. Madame Sosostris (her name seems to come from Flaubert's *Temptation of Saint Anthony*) tells fortunes with the old Tarot pack. This, with its strange pictures of the Hanged Man and the Day of Judgement and the Tower Struck by Lightning, is of very venerable origin, being tied up with the grail legend and the myths of death and purification and rebirth that underlie it. Now the cards have been debased to serve a superstitious end, a forbidden prying into the future. Madame Sosostris is herself a debased seer--she has a bad cold and cannot speak very clearly--but she sees certain truths: the crowd of people walking around in a ring, making their own hell; the beautiful woman who is reduced to ruling over barren rocks and managing empty social situations. She does not find the Hanged Man among the cards she deals, for the Hanged Man is Christ, or the sacrificed seer-king who will restore water to the parched land. She is very direct in telling her client to "fear death by water."¹³

One of the pioneer critics of the Oxford school of mythopoeic writings is Charles Moorman. His comments on Eliot's Tarot may be compared with those of Burgess:

In Eliot's presentation of Madame Sosostris, the fortune teller (ll. 43-59), the Tarot deck of cards, which once played a part in ancient fertility rituals, is here seen as a mere fortunetelling device used, significantly, by a society fortuneteller who has a "cold," which is generally in Eliot a sterility symbol. The characters as they appear on the cards also become symbols connected with the basic fertility-sterility image pattern that dominates the poem. The "drowned Phoenician sailor" is later connected with the Phoenician merchant who suffers "death by water" and so becomes, as Brooks suggests, a "type of the fertility god whose image was thrown into the sea annually. . ." "Belladonna [symbolically a modern poisoning of the image of the Blessed Virgin] the Lady of the Rocks" is a denial of the Divine Mother-

hood, hence motherhood itself, in terms of the waste land. She has become simply the "lady of situations," a phrase that would seem to carry connotations of illicit sexual relationships. The "man with three staves" is associated by Eliot himself with the maimed Fisher King; the one-eyed merchant later becomes associated with the homosexual Mr. Eugenides, who represents another kind of sexual sterility; the Hanged Man of the Tarot deck is associated by Eliot with Frazer's Hanged God and so directly with Christ and indirectly with the Grail. Thus again, the emphasis of the scene is directed to the principal themes and symbols of the Fisher King myth--sexual sterility and the saving power of the Grail.

Jessie L. Weston, whose *From Ritual to Romance* formed one of the basic influences upon T.S. Eliot's *The Waste Land*, offers "evidence that these four objects [cup, dish, lance, and sword: the "Hallows" of the Grail] do, in fact, form a special group entirely independent of any appearance in Folk-lore or Romance. They exist today as the four suits of the Tarot."¹⁵ She documents A.E. Waite in support of this thesis, and lists the following correspondences, as they appear in Waite's *The Holy Grail*:¹⁶ the Cup (Chalice, or Goblet), which equals the modern Hearts; the Lance (Wand or Sceptre), which equals Diamonds (the point of the lance); the Sword, which equals Spades, and the Dish (circles, "Pentangles"), which equals Clubs. She quotes a number of sources for the Tarot including Egypt, China, and the Gypsies (because of supposed Eastern orthodox images in the clothing of the Trump figures), and "Sanskrit, or Hindustani" influence,¹⁷ and concludes with a private letter from W.B. Yeats:

(1) Cup, Lance, Dish, Sword, in slightly varying forms, have never lost their mystic significance, and are today a part of magical operations. (2) The memory kept by the four suits of the Tarot, Cup, Lance, Sword, Pentangle (Dish), is an exoterical notation for fortune-telling purposes.¹⁸

She concludes that there is no evidence of contact between the Grail Legend and the Tarot, and suggests that

... while the Lance and Cup, in their associated form, are primarily symbols of Human Life energy, in conjunction with others they formed a group of "fertility" symbols, connected with a very ancient ritual, ...¹⁹

and this is exactly how Eliot has used the Tarot, as both Burgess and Moorman demonstrate.

A final commentary on Eliot's use of the Tarot is provided by Gertrude Moakley, in pointing out the following significance of A.E. Waite's *The Pictorial Key to the Tarot*, which she says

... will be useful to anyone who is curious about the imagery of T.S. Eliot's great poem, *The Waste Land* and who refuses to let his curiosity be inhibited by Eliot's recent disparaging remarks about "wild-goose chases after Tarot cards." The "traditional Tarot" which plays so great a part in this poem must have been Waite's and it is all to Eliot's credit that his imagination was kindled by it in the second decade of the twentieth century. One of the cards Eliot mentions in the poem is "the Man with Three Staves," a very good title for the Three of Wands in Waite's Tarot, and a very poor title for that card in any other Tarot. And it is only in this Tarot that the Hanged Man is a noble figure, capable of reminding anyone of the Hanged God in Frazer's *Golden Bough*, as Eliot says this card did.²⁰

The foregoing series of quotations from critical writing about Eliot shows something of the range of images which appear in (or can be applied to) the Tarot. To it could be added mention of William Lindsay Gresham's *Nightmare Alley*, where the Tarot is used in a carnival setting and emphasis is placed upon the Hanged Man as a menacing image.²¹ Williams' *The Greater Trumps* differs from both Eliot and Gresham in making the Tarot of the true subject of his novel, not merely a symbol, whether one of many, as in *The Waste Land*, or the central motif, as in *Nightmare Alley*. The Tarot and its members become characters in Williams' story, most particularly the Fool. In *The Greater Trumps*, mention of the Tarot or one of its components occurs on some 145 out of its 268 pages: more than fifty per cent.

But what exactly are these cards called the Tarot? Williams calls them "the magical leaves,"²² which are the symbol of our origins,²³ containing "up to seventy-eight degrees of knowledge,"²⁴ especially "the one and twenty revelations of the Greater Trumps."²⁵ His characters wonder "if the strange and half-mystical signs and names of the Greater Trumps had meaning and life,"²⁶ or "if indeed the Tarots and the images had no power in themselves and were but passive reflections of more universal things."²⁷ He suggests "But if the Tarots held, as had been dreamed, the message which all things in all places and times have also been dreamed to hold, then perhaps there was meaning in the order as in the paintings,"²⁸ and states most pregnantly, "If isn't the time behind them, but the process in them that's important."

In referring to the cards, which because they are the dreamed-of original deck, are "pieces of painted papyrus,"³⁰ he frequently calls them leaves: "the translucent painted leaves,"³¹ or "the leaves of the presentation."³² In one visionary passage, when Nancy handles the cards, he writes of them:

They were huge things now, as if the great leaves of some aboriginal tree, the sacred bodhi-tree under which our Lord Gautama achieved Nirvana or that Northern dream of Igdrazil or the olives of Gethsemane, were drifting downward from the cluster round which her hands were clasped.³³ We see here the influence of Waite on Williams' interpretation, for the tree is the *Sephiroth* or Tree of God, of Kabbalist lore. In the *Zohar*, which represents "a Jewish form of theosophy,"³⁴ according to Gershom Scholem (Christian theosophists would be Jacob Boehme and William Blake), the world of the divinity, the gnostic *pleroma*³⁵ is expressed in the "spheres" or "regions" of the *Sephiroth*.³⁶ While "the Hidden God, the innermost Being of Divinity ... has neither qualities nor attributes,"³⁷ (this is called *En-Sof*: the Infinite),³⁸ the *Sephiroth* consists of ten attributes, variously conceived as the crowns, faces, garments, or stages of descent of God, which form the "mystical Tree of God or tree of divine power."³⁹ In Kabbalism the *Sephiroth* are equally often seen as forming "the symbolic figure of Adam Kadmon, the primordial man,"⁴⁰ but the image of the tree is the one usually used by occultists in finding Kabbalist content in the Tarot. Williams alludes not only to the Kabbalist motif, but to two other common attributions of the Tarot's origin, to the Egyptians on the one hand, and the Gypsies on the other. In doing so he is in a grand tradition, as we shall see.

In outlining the history of the Tarot and its interpretation, we can begin with two of the most famous clues offered by major scholars, Steven Runciman and C.G. Jung. Runciman writes, "the only occultist product of Christian Dualism may lie ... in the symbolism of the Tarot Pack."⁴¹ He points out that "generations of fortune-tellers have handed down the doctrine that the Devil betokens the direction of affairs in this world and have seen in Pope Joan, the High Priestess, the token of the Gnosis. But other of the Tarot interpretations are clearly begotten of a different tradition."⁴² Enlarging upon this theme, he adds in an Appendix:

There seems to me to be a trace of Dualism in the pack, but it has since been overlaid with debased Kabbalistic lore. It shows in the antithesis of the Emperor and the Empress on the one hand and the Pope and the Priestess or Pope Joan on the other, in the traditional interpretation of the Devil as betokening natural forces--he is shown holding a naked man and woman in chains--and in the card betokening disaster, the *Tower Struck by Lightning* or *Maison Dieu*, which suggests the heretics' view of a Catholic church. The Priestess is also reminiscent of the Gnosis-Goddess of the Gnostics. But the evidence is far too slight to allow of any definite pronouncement.⁴³

Jung's mention of the Tarots occurs in a discussion of the archetypal symbolism of transformation and his remarks shows his characteristic approach:

If one wants to form a picture of the symbolic process, the series of pictures found in alchemy are good examples, though the symbols they contain are for the most part traditional despite their often obscure origin and significance. An excellent Eastern example is the Tantric *chakra* system, or the mystical nerve system of Chinese *yoga*. It also seems as if the set of pictures in the Tarot cards were distantly descended from the archetypes of transformation. ...⁴⁴

Of such symbols, Jung offers the following combined definition and caution:

... the process itself involves another class of archetypes of transformation. They are not personalities ... [but] like the personalities, these archetypes are true and genuine symbols that cannot be exhaustively interpreted, either as signs or allegories. They are genuine symbols precisely because they are ambiguous, full of half-glimpsed meanings, and in the end inexhaustible.⁴⁵

A.E. Waite's definition of the Tarot lies close to Jungian thought: "The Tarot embodies symbolical presentations of universal ideas behind which lie all the implicits of the human mind, and it is in this sense that they contain secret doctrine, which is the realization by the few of the truths imbedded in the consciousness of all."⁴⁶

III. Origins of the Tarot

With these analyses in mind, we will survey the history of the Tarot. Catherine Perry Hargrave, in whose *History of Playing Cards* every student of cards in North America resorts, states that playing cards and all other games of chance derived from divination.¹ Various original sources (previous to their appearance in Europe) have been suggested. Proponents of Chinese origin for the cards relate the four Chinese suits of coins, strings of coins, myriads of strings of coins, and tens of myriads of strings of coins to the four suits of early Italian cards. Proponents of Indian origin point out that the composite Siva/Devi holds in his/her hands, among other things, a cup, wand, sword, and ring, and that Hanuman (the monkey-god son of a nymph and the wine god) holds a cup, sword, ring,

and sceptre. But Indian cards have ten suits.² Needless to say, considerably more evidence is marshalled to defend these various sources, along with more to support a Near Eastern source (see below), but in concluding the arguments, Roger Tilley says, "It seems possible, even probable, that they are the product of European genius."³ He gives the following timetable of the appearance of cards in Europe: the first cards, 1370 (a 52-card pack; a more precise date is given below); the Tarots, 1470 (as "a distinct entity"); and a marriage of the two in the games of Tarocchi of Venice (78 cards), Tarocchino of Bologna (62 cards), and the Minchiate of Florence, (96 cards).⁴

In 1377 a German monk, Johannes, living in a Swiss monastery, wrote a Latin account of which the following passage is especially intriguing:

Hence it is that a certain game called the game of cards (ludus cartorum) has come to us in this year, viz the year of our Lord M.CCC.LXXVIIJ. In which game the state of the world as it now is is excellently described and figured.⁵

The description of the game as given by the "holy friar" makes no mention of the Greater Trumps. Playing cards are not mentioned in descriptions of dice or other games of chance in 1363, nor against gaming in 1369, and most significantly, perhaps, they are not mentioned by Petrarch (1304-1374).⁶

A history written in 1480 suggests that numeral cards first appeared in Italy in 1379: Covelluzo in his Istoria della città di Viterbo states that cards were introduced into Viterbo "in this year of great troubles" and that the game "came from the Saracens and was called Naib."⁷ Hargrave states that the Hebrew word for sorcery is Naibi. In 1393, the Florentine Jean Morelli recommended as a game for young men (instead of dice) "games which are for children...les naibis."⁸

In the so-called Tarots of Charles VI, painted in 1392 by Jacquemin Gringonneur, there is a Juggler with a string of balls; numerous children play at his feet. Three pairs of lovers are the prey of two cupids in a cloud above them. The World, with sceptre and orb, stands astride a globe with a landscape inside. The three Virtues are women; Strength breaks a column. Two astronomer/astrologists point to the Moon, and a woman spins (?) on the Sun card. A knight stands on the Chariot and the Hermit (Time) holds an hourglass. The Hanged Man holds a bag of gold in each dependent hand. Death rides a horse (as he is not to do again until the A.E. Waite-P.C. Smith pack) and strikes down many with his scythe. The Tower is falling in ruin on one side, and many are resurrected by a pair of trumpeting angels.⁹

In 1415, Marziano da Tortona, who lived at the court of the Duke of Milan, Filippo Mario Visconti, painted a set of what are identified as minchiate. They show some noticeable differences as well as remarkably similarities to a deck of slightly later date which I shall discuss in greater detail below. The Empress and Emperor sit facing us, and each has four attendants flanking the central figure. The Empress has her shield with its eagle. The Emperor is seated with crossed legs on a high throne, and bears a sceptre. Fortitude is a lady with a lion, rather than the Hercules with a club that Gertrude Moakley makes much of (see below). The lovers meet under a stately canopy while Love flies overhead with his hands upraised. The Last Judgement shows at least four angels aloft. The Chariot has white horses and a lady passenger. The King of Swords has crossed legs, and the World is an elegant lady emerging from the thighs up out of a cloud which surmounts a sphere in which a very elaborate landscape may be seen, full of cities, rather like Nancy's vision of the Western hemisphere in The Greater Trumps.¹⁰

St. Bernadine of Siena preached a sermon at Bologna in 1423, and made no mention of anything except the four suits and the court cards.¹¹ In c. 1450-70, however, a Franciscan Friar of northern Italy denounced among other "instruments of gambling" the four-suited pack and "the twenty-two variously called Tarots or Tarocchi or attuti or trionfi in Italy andabouts in France on the grounds that they triumph over all other cards."¹² Tilley quotes the 1450 sermon as follows, and it is most interesting for an understanding of the theory of Gertrude Moakley, to be given below: "Concerning the third class of games, that is 'triumphs.' There is nothing in the world of gaming so hateful to God as the game of 'triumphs.' For everything that is base in the eyes of the Christian faith is seen in 'triumphs.'"¹³ The preacher rages on:

In it not only are God, the angels, the planets, and the cardinal virtues represented and named, but also the world's luminaries, I mean the Pope and the Emperor, are forced, a thing which is ridiculous and degrading to Christians, to enter the game.¹⁴

Perhaps the time-lag between the early hand-painted cards and the public record and clerical condemnation of them is due to their appearance in the meantime in printed form and only thus becoming available to the populace. Early in the fifteenth century, woodcuts were printed in Europe. The earliest extant are religious prints, protective prayers against the plague, and New Years' greetings. The earliest preserved is the St. Christopher woodcut of 1423. But playing cards may have ante-

dated these woodcuts.¹⁵ The earliest date of precise record for woodblock-printed cards is 1430, by an artist who also printed images of saints.¹⁶

Douglas McMurtrie reports records of bans on playing cards in Germany in 1377, at Nuremberg in 1380, at Ulm and Paris in 1397, at Augsburg in 1400, and--for clergy--at the Synod of Langres in 1404. By 1441 the blockprinting of cards had become a sufficiently powerful industry for an embargo on importation to be enacted.¹⁷ The oldest actual cards preserved are dated c. 1455. The printing process made holy pictures and playing cards available to everybody, and at the same time. Marshall McLuhan thinks that the introduction of printing produced a revolution in European thought; it is interesting to know that the Tarot was intimately involved in this development. It may be that the relative stasis of the Tarot deck, with its quite minimal changes in structure or appearance, are due to their being fixed so early by the printing process.¹⁸

It was certainly in the popular and widely-disseminated form that the Tarot pack made its impact upon occult thought in the eighteenth century. Count de Gebelin, an anthropologist-Mason, just before the French Revolution published Monde Primitif, in which he declared that the Tarot was "The remnants of an Egyptian book."¹⁹ His conclusion was drawn in the context of his period, when "the Nile was beginning to loom largely in the preoccupation of learned thought."²⁰ It was de Gebelin who saw Isis in the High Priestess, the Moon, the Star (he identified it with Sirius),²¹ and he called it the Book of Thoth. Waite demolishes this thesis effectively, though there may be an element of Egyptian imagery in the Tarot, via the Renaissance. Erwin Panofsky points out that Petrarch's Africa, written in 1338, contained passages describing Egyptian art and symbolism,²² based upon the poet's reading of the Saturnalia of Macrobius (C. 399-422).²³ As he describes it, "the dark and remote sphere of the Egyptian or pseudo-Egyptian mystery religions . . . had vanished from sight in the Christian Middle Ages, dimly emerged above the horizon with the beginning of Renaissance humanism toward the middle of the fourteenth century, and became the object of passionate interest after the discovery of Horapollo's Hieroglyphica in 1419."²⁴ He continues, "this discovery not only gave rise to an enormous enthusiasm for everything Egyptian but also produced . . . that 'emblematic' spirit which is so characteristic of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries."²⁵

The passion for things Egyptian developed in Roman times with the increased interest in mystery religions: the religion of Isis, which Williams makes a motif in The Greater Trumps, is most vividly preserved from the past in The Golden Ass of Apuleius, where her worship is wonderfully evoked, especially in the description of the triumphal procession of the goddess and her devotees. This atmosphere favoured and accompanied the early dissemination of Christianity.

The Renaissance was thus genuinely renewing a preoccupation of classical times. Vincent Cronin makes their particular use of it clear--he emphasizes that "the early humanists were Christians,"²⁶ and states that:

The humanists formulated the view that [virtuous men born before Christ]. . . had attained salvation because they "foresaw" the truths of Christianity. They put great emphasis on the elements they believed to be common to both paganism and Christianity: vestal virgins foreshadowing nuns; Mercury, the angel Gabriel; Jupiter, Neptune, and Pluto, the Trinity. Much of the painting of the period, culminating in Raphael's School of Athens, is a statement of the view that there exists a body of truth common to both pre-Christian religions and to Christianity. Indeed, it was held that this common body of truth had been adumbrated in Egypt, then passed to the Hebrews and Greeks, and finally to the Christians.²⁷

It is exactly this catholic view that is symbolized by Charles Williams in his novel, when he relates his Tarots to a fictional set of golden images, stating that "this hidden secret of the gipsies had been borne about the world." Aaron, the old adept, muses that

One band of all those restless companies possessed the mystery which long since some wise adept of philosophical truths had made in the lands of the east or in the secret houses of Europe: Egyptian or Jew or Christian heretic--Paulician, Bogophil [sic], or Nestorian--or perhaps still farther off in the desert-circled empire of Abyssinia, for there were hints of all in the strange medley of sign-bearing images. . . .²⁸

A.E. Waite, having disposed of any direct relation between Egypt and the Tarots, discusses the association of the cards with the Gypsies (and with their origin as nomads in India). He thinks the idea was first formulated by Boiteau in 1854.²⁹ Perhaps in part due to a long-standing notion that the Gypsies themselves were Egyptian (hence the name by which they are called), the Egyptian origin stuck. As Waite describes it, Eliphas Levi, the greatest of nineteenth century occultists, and one who "openly regarded charlatany as a great means to an end"³⁰ took the Tarot, and with it "de Gebelin's hypothesis . . . into his heart of hearts, and all occult France and all esoteric Britain, Martinists, half-instructed Kabalists, schools of

sol-disant theosophy--there, here, and everywhere--have accepted his judgement about it."³¹

Waite says of the relation between Gypsies and the Tarot, "not that they brought them into Europe but found them there already and added them to their stock-in-trade."³² He cites the first report of Gypsy cartomancy with Tarots as 1854. Waite concludes his discussion by dating the cards, whether as a game or as "Secret Doctrine," from the fourteenth century.³³ Jean-Paul Clébert, a recent writer on the Gypsies, attributes the idea that "Gypsies alone have the primitive game intact" to Gérard Encausse (Papus).³⁴ Clébert documents Gypsy use of the Tarot in some detail. He says that since there is a record (discussed above) of the cards (called "Naib"--"the game of cards") for Viterbos in 1379, and the Gypsies are not mentioned in Italy until 1422, this probably shows that they did not introduce the cards.³⁵ He continues:

In any case, the Gypsies have used the Tarots for a very long time in support for their divination. It is difficult to say which pack of cards was first used. Between the Egyptian Tarot in which Solomon, Moses, and Judas reigned [he is describing a very corrupt occult version of the eighteenth century] and the Marseilles Tarot, whose symbols are occidental, the Gypsies have been able to make their own choice in accordance with the routes of their migrations.³⁶

William Lindsay Gresham writes from his youthful experiences in the carnival world that the Gypsies "know the archetypes of humanity's fears, desires and dreams,"³⁷ and thinks that they combined this knowledge with their cards to do what is called "cold reading"--that is, the application of basic psychology, empathy, and intuition, to the fact that most people have the same problems and desires, and will pour these out in perfect confidence to anyone who will listen.³⁸

It is time to discuss the theory of the Tarot which the present writer holds, since it is bound to colour my analysis of Williams' book. I base it upon the consensus of Waite, Tilley, and in particular of Gertrude Moakley, examined in detail below: the Tarots originated in the fourteenth century. They combine many motifs in the images they contain, usually in medieval dress or in a Renaissance version of Roman or Greek dress, and they are based upon a Renaissance preoccupation with the past and in particular upon one special summary of one element of that past. Briefly; they are based on the Roman triumph as allegorized in Petrarch's poem *I Trionfi* and as expressed in actual Renaissance triumphs, both on historic occasions and as a part of the Lenten (or other seasonal) carnival processions. The argument is as follows.

IV. The Visconti-Sforza Tarot

A set of tarocchi dating to the middle of the fifteenth century has been painstakingly analyzed by Gertrude Moakley. Her introduction to a new edition of A.E. Waite's famous occult book on the Tarot was published (1959) shortly after the article¹ in which she first set out her interpretation of the cards' original meaning (1956), and traces of this interpretation appear in her Notes in the same book on the playing of the game (this will be discussed below). This set, not the only one preserved from the period, is the work of Bonifacio Bembo, painted some time after the betrothal of Francesco Sforza and Bianca Maria Visconti, perhaps in the year 1450.² The magnificently illuminated cards, executed in colours and gold on heavy cardboard, are lacking four of their original cards, and contain six by another hand than Bembo's. The Trumps are neither numbered nor titled. Moakley proposes the following order and titles for them, based upon two fifteenth century sermons and a verse series describing the tarocchi of the same period.³ The list she gives contains titles from the versified list. I give it together with the list from Hargrave which was one of her sources: in each case, the first title is the one used by Gertrude Moakley⁴ and the second (in parentheses) is quoted by Catherine Hargrave.⁵

I. Il Bagatino	1. (El Bagatella)
Le Coppe	
II. L'Imperatrice	2. (Imperatrice)
III. L'Imperadore	3. (Imperator)
IV. La Papessa	4. (La papessa)
V. Il Papa	5. (El Papa)
VI. La Temperanza	6. (La Temperentia)
VII. Il Carro	7. (L'Amore)
VIII. L'Amore	8. (La Caro Triumphale)
IX. La Fortrezza	9. (La Fortez)
I Bastoni	
X. La Ruota	10. (La Rota)
I Danari	
XI. Il Gobbo	11. (El Gobbo)
XII. Il Traditore	12. (Lo Impichato)
XIII. La Morte	13. (La Morte)
XIV. Il Diavolo	14. (El Diavolo)
XV. La Casa del Diavolo	15. (La Sagetta)
Le Spade	
XVI. La Stella	16. (La Stella)
XVII. La Luna	17. (La Lune)

XIX. L'Agnolo	19. (Lo Angelo)
XX. La Justicia	20. (La Justicia)
XXI. Il Mondo	21. (El Mondo ave diò padre)
Il Matto	22. (El mato)

Moakley says that "in modern packs the Car follows the card of L'Amore, but in all the fifteenth-century lists it precedes it."⁶ The order given in Hargrave is as I cite it, however: I cannot account for this anomaly and presume that Moakley was able to examine the original manuscripts.

Moakley interpolates the four suits into her list because of her theory of their meaning. She believes that the cards are based upon the tradition of the Triumph (hence, Trumps)--that is, the triumphal procession, and in particular upon (first) the allegorical use of the Triumph theme in Petrarch's *I Trionfi*, and (second) the pre-Lenten procession which is also based upon the Triumph tradition. This latter concept enables her to identify the card *Il Bagatino* (Williams' "Juggler") with the Carnival King, being led to his death as "The Dying God" of Sir James G. Frazer's *The Golden Bough*,⁷ and *Il Matto* (Williams' "Fool") with "the personification of Lent" who "is on the point of claiming his seven-week kingship."⁸ William Willeford, whose ideas concerning the Fool I will discuss in detail below, cautions, "A . . . mental adjustment must be made by anyone who for any reason reads earlier anthropological literature in the hope of gaining something,"⁹ and the reader should be aware that this part of Moakley's thesis, for which she admits, "I have no direct authority,"¹⁰ may have been given excessive emphasis, perhaps due to an undue faith in Frazer which, coupled with an equal emphasis on Freud, gives Moakley's book a certain period flavour, or at least a very definite bias, not, as we shall see, without what is a sound intuition.

She proves the association of the Tarot with the allegorical use of the Triumph theme most conclusively, and it may be the ancient Dionysian element in that theme, to be discussed below, which makes her think of Frazer (Dionysus was a "Dying God") and Freud (the cult included a phallic element). She suggests the charming simile of "the cards given away with bubble-gum"¹¹ implying that the Tarot set was a pictorial version of a Triumph. If that is so, then the cards are another example of the Triumph as a motif, influenced by the allegorical tradition, and also by the actual Triumphs, including the Carnival Triumphs as such: The game itself is an example of the motif, one of many forms taken by it, not necessarily a one-for-one record of a particular procession. The Bembo deck does seem to have particular application to the specific family for which it was painted.

The other aspect of Moakley's theory is her identification of the suit cards with the four Virtues. These identifications are as follows: The Cups of Temperance, The Staves of Fortitude, The Coins of Prudence, and the Swords of Justice. She places them as attendants of the virtues within the trump sequence, to support her notion of them as recording a carnival procession. The cards themselves never seem to have been placed in such an order, and her "original order" (listed above) thus contains some imaginative expansion. Moakley quotes Giorgio Vasari's opinion that "it was the Florentine painter, Giorgio di Cosimo, who first adopted Carnival masking to the character of a triumph. . . by introducing the long trains of men all dressed to suit the character of a particular triumph."¹² This is her reason for placing the suits within the context of the Trumps. Again, there is a sound intuition here regarding the importance of the Virtues as controlling or reinforcing the structure of the Trumps, and this matter will also be discussed below. I will only say here that the Virtues (those three which actually appear in the early deck) are not in the same order as the one they later take. They do seem, in the Bembo deck, as Moakley says, to be placed in association with the particular car or triumph most appropriate to them: Temperance and Fortitude escort the Car of Love, and Justice follows the Last Judgement. Prudence is absent.

The final element in Moakley's thesis is the one she has most effectively proven: its relationship to the allegorical Triumph and the influence upon it of Petrarch's poem, "the main outline of which supplied themes for a decorative art and triumphal processions and finally for the game of Triumphs played with the tarocchi."¹³ In the poem, *I Trionfi*, there are six Triumphs, each of which, as it were, triumphs over the one it follows. First Cupid triumphs over men and gods alike, including Jove himself (he is the prototype of the "Heirophant" and retains his identity, which is not merely a euphemism for Pope or Priest, in some decks), and over Petrarch, who is in love with Laura. The four high personages in the beginning of the Tarot are thus Love's captives, both sacred and secular. Then Chastity (Laura's) triumphs over Petrarch's Love. Chastity does not appear in the Tarot, but one of her captives (along with Love) was Fortune, who is central or significant in her own right in the fifteenth-century deck--given added emphasis by Moakley who lets the company of Coins escort her. Third is the Triumph of Death, because Laura died in the Black Death. In the poem, the Love of Petrarch (Cupid) is a captive of this triumphator, along with the Chastity of his lost Laura. Nevertheless, Death himself becomes a captive of Laura's Fame, who forms the next Triumph; Moakley finds the trumpet of Fame at the lips of the Angel of the Last Judgement in the Tarot. The fifth Triumph is that of Time, who overcomes even Fame, and Time appears as himself in early Tarots, as II 5

Gobbo with an hourglass, and as the Hermit with a lantern in later decks. The sixth and final Triumph in Petrarch's poem is that of Eternity, wherein Petrarch and Laura are united. This is the car drawn by the Tetramorphs, depicted in the Tarot as the World, with the agents of Time--Star, Moon, and Sun--as her captives.¹⁴

A number of different games of Triumphs existed, related to these motifs, including several that are still used today. The most elaborate is the minchiate with its 96 cards, representing all six of Petrarch's Triumphs and following his themes more directly than the tarocchi do. Of note is the association of the three usual Tarot virtues with Chastity, whose absence from the Tarot frees them to find various positions of their own. Interestingly, Williams (who loved and understood chastity) re-unites them in his Tarot, in a position something like the original, giving them Fortune (Chastity's captive) as a companion, just as she is in the minchiate deck. Fame had Prudence, usually absent in the Tarot, and the three theological Virtues of Faith, Hope, and Charity as well: of these not a shred or feather is seen in the tarocchi.

The Tarot, then, contains an abbreviated version of Petrarch's Triumphs, in the following manner (the Triumphs present in Petrarch and absent or suppressed in the Tarot are given in parentheses):

Love, (Chastity), Death, (Fame), (Time), Eternity.

It will be seen that the Tarot preserves the prominence of the three most powerful motifs, and gives a remnant of position to Time, while allowing one of the captives thus freed (Fortune, captive of the absent Chastity) to assume a position central to the structure of the deck. This essential order is retained in all subsequent decks, though the surviving Virtues move about to lend a more aesthetic balance, perhaps, and there is one glaring problem not yet dealt with.

This is the presence of the Juggler and the Fool, the explanation for which is sought by Gertrude Moakley in the pre-Lenten procession, a version of the Triumph contemporary with the milieu which also produced the tarocchi. They certainly have a carnival air, and the Fool is very closely linked to the Saturnian Carnival which comes at the Winter Solstice. Il Bagatino or El Bagatello--the name means "Quarterpenny"--is perhaps ancestral to the little Juggler of the commedia dell'arte, which derives from the Carnival (he is a clown named Bagatino).¹⁵ The Fool becomes the Harlequin of the commedia dell'arte. In later decks, Il Bagatino, looking much the same but with varying equipment on his table, becomes "The Juggler," "The Cobbler," (because bagatt means both "chatterbox" and "cobbler" in Milanese dialect), and the card so designated shows a shoe and sometimes a complete cobbler's bench in some modern Milanese tarocchi cards, including the ones illustrating The Greater Trumps), and "The Magician" or "The Conjuror." Moakley tries to prove that the full deck is thus an actual Carnival procession: one need only think of modern parades with their free-running clowns, or modern carnivals with their shell games to see the emotional pull of her argument and the context of its appeal. Perhaps she is right. The Roman Triumph also had free-running (and phallic/scatological) clowns or fools who made fun of the triumphator. Moakley bases her identification of Il Bagatino as the Carnival King upon his sceptre which he bears in the Visconti-Sforza deck. He appears in the minchiate as well, and I really do not think that the secret of his identity has yet been solved. Perhaps it is just as well.

The minchiate cards include some wonderful images, such as the lamb in the burning bush (he is the element "Fire"), Prudence with her snake and mirror, the boat of "Water," the landscape of "Earth," the stars, birds, clouds, and mysterious beast of what I take to be "Air," and Diana with her crescent moon and hunting dog. One wonders why they were not taken up by the fortune tellers with the same enthusiasm as the Tarot. The minchiate includes, thus, as well as the "usual atouts" and the four suits, the full complement of Virtues, the four elements, and the twelve signs of the Zodiac.¹⁶ The presence of the Elements probably accounts for their association with the four suits in the common occult interpretation of the Tarot, used to such great effect by Charles Williams.

The following analysis of the Visconti-Sforza Tarot painted by Bembo will help to show the changes which occurred in the development of the conventional exoteric Tarot of the Marseilles type, and help prepare the reader for an analysis of Williams' Tarot as he develops it in The Greater Trumps.

Il Bagatino (Quarterpenny, the Juggler):¹⁷ Gertrude Moakley says he is the King of Carnival on his way to be killed and replaced by the King of Lent, which she identifies with the Fool. In support of this theory, besides the appearance of Il Bagatino as a clown in the commedia dell'arte, which is probably descended from the Carnival triumphal procession, she cites the association of playing cards with Carnival (being forbidden otherwise), and the fact that that Visconti-Sforza set shows him with a sceptre in his hand. He has a table before him with a handle-less cup, two small disks (like coins) and a large "covered dish."¹⁸ He has no crown, and is rather plainly dressed. I have already discussed other versions of this card above; in the Waite-Smith deck he has become a magician with a table of marvels which seem to symbolize the four suits.

Le Coppe (Cups):¹⁹ This is the first of the four suits, which Moakley places in the context of the Trumps to show their presumed relationship to the Carnival triumph. The Cups in her interpretation herald Cupid's Triumph and refer to the "Love and drunkenness" of which the Carnival King is the "exponent". Cups are associated with Temperance elsewhere²⁰ and Temperance does follow in the set a little further on as attendant (with Fortitude) of Love's Charlot. Moakley makes Il Bastoni (Staves) follow this car, with all its other cards, so that the spread would look like this:

The Juggler
The Cups
Empress, Emperor, Popess, Pope
Love
Temperance, Love's Car, Fortitude
(all of the above in a single car)
The Staves
Fortune
The Coins
The Hanged Man
Time, Death, the Devil
Hell-Mouth
(all of the above in a single car)
The Swords
Star
Moon
Sun
Justice, The Universe, the Last Judgement
(all of the above in a single car)
The Fool
(who has been running about)²¹

The cups have a crowned King and Queen, a mounted Knight and standing Page, all bearing extremely elaborate cups. The Ace is placed after the Page because Cups is a feminine suit and in the early Tarots this was the consequent order. The Ace is a splendid fountain surmounted by a bird. The numbered cards of Cups are golden chalices.

In the first-known card games the suits alone are known, with the twenty-two Trumps joining them (as a separate suit) later. The relationship of the Virtues with the Tarot and the possibility of their association with the armed companies of the Suits is in accord both with the origin of the Virtues and with the custom of placing them in triumphal processions. Emile Mâle discusses their origins: "From primitive Christian times the Virtues took concrete and living form, and were conceived as heroic maidens, beautiful and simple. As early as The Shepherd of Hermas they appeared as female figures, a little later we see them as armed maidens."²² Later, the Psychomachia of Prudentius gave "concrete embodiment" to the "idea of an inner battle."²³ Prudentius' structure was developed by others until the most complete Gothic form, at Chartres, where "Prudence is opposed to Folly, Justice to Injustice, Fortitude to Cowardice, Temperance to Intemperance..."²⁴ The additional Virtues and Vices (Faith/Infidelity, Hope/Despair, and Charity/Avarice) are extended to include Humility/Pride. In the thirteenth century, "the Virtues... are seated women, serious, tranquil, majestic, who bear on their shields a heraldic animal in signs of their nobility."²⁵

L'Imperatrice (The Empress):²⁶ The second Trump is the Empress (unlike later Tarots, which put the Popess/Priestess here). She is crowned and seated confronting us, bearing upon her knee a jousting shield. In the Visconti-Sforza set her gown is adorned with devices associated with Milan. Some of the above motifs survive in the conventional deck.

L'Imperatore (The Emperor):²⁷ He is shown as Frederick III, according to Moakley. He holds an orb and sceptre, and has the huge flared hat under his crown which appears in many other playing cards. He sits and looks to the viewer's right, robed to match the Empress.

La Papess (The Popess):²⁸ This title, remember, is modern, chosen by Moakley from a 1917 Italian deck. There are no names on the Visconti-Sforza deck, and for that matter, no numbers. Moakley calls this card a Ghibelline gibe at the corrupt Papacy.²⁹ In this deck she is clothed in the habit of the Umiliata order: there was a Sister Manfreda, distantly related to the Visconti family, who had herself declared Pope. As we have seen, this sort of male-female equality appeared fairly frequently in Christian dualist and otherwise heretical sects, according to Runciman. The lady is robed in a habit but she wears the triple crown, and bears a cross on a tall staff, and a book. The developed deck has no such topical reference and the figure does not wear a habit, but ecclesiastical garb to match her heraldic companions.

Il Papa (The Pope):³⁰ There was an alternative fourteenth century deck with a Jupiter and Juno in these positions, which they still occupy in the Swiss Tarot. The hierophant has a triple crown, a splendid robe, and a cross-tipped staff. He is blessing us. The foregoing pairs are captive of Love, and each pair is opposed to the other (Guelphs and Ghibellines were groups siding with the opposing forces). In his guise as a planet, Jupiter wore ecclesiastical robes in a painting of c. 1420,³¹ and Moakley implies that the Papal image arose from this concept. As will be seen below, the triumphator of the Roman Triumph assumed the robes of Jupiter during his ride, returning them to the temple of the god's image afterwards.

La Temperanza (Temperance):³² She is a lady with two urns, from which she pours a stream of water back and forth; the traditional symbol of this Virtue. Moakley sees her as riding the Chariot of Love (with Fortitude) as a feminine symbol. The cards of Temperance and Fortitude in the Visconti-Sforza deck are not painted by Bembo but by a distinctly different hand. The association of the Virtues with triumphal cars can be seen in the Car of Beatrice in *The Divine Comedy* (to be discussed below), and in many drawings of imaginary (usually allegorical) Triumphs. Designs by Albrecht Dürer for the triumphal car of Emperor Maximilian include the Virtues standing upon pedestals, bearing wreaths.³³

Il Carro, (The Car):³⁴ Moakley says that fifteenth century packs have the Chariot ahead of its passenger, Love: modern packs place it after the Lovers. The Visconti-Sforza set shows a beautiful queen with an orb, driving two white, winged horses. Moakley thinks this lady is the same one who is seen as one of the lovers in the next Trump; they both have gowns with the same motif on them, but the lady lover has neither crown nor orb. The conventional deck replaces the lady with a male driver.

L'Amore (Love, the Lovers):³⁵ Cupid is blindfolded on a pedestal and before him are two happy lovers clasping their right hands. Cupid appears in the conventional deck, in flight and often in a cloud, taking aim at various numbers of lovers.

La Fortezza (Fortitude, Force, Strength):³⁶ This card is masculine, showing the Virtue in one of its three usual forms; the other versions are feminine. It is by the same hand as Temperance and not by Bembo. Fortitude is usually shown as a lady, with a column (as in the "Tarot" of Charles VI, 1392), or with a lion, as in the 1415 set painted by Marziano da Tortona. Male describes her traditional appearance in the cathedral setting as a mailed and helmeted warrior-lady in a long robe, "seated in an attitude full of repose and dignity,"³⁷ bearing a shield with a lion, the type of courage.³⁸ The male version is actually a Hercules with his club, and in his usual iconography he wears a lion-skin. The column of the lady is a reference to the strength of Samson. Moakley thinks the male Fortitude is deliberately of that sex, to suit Staves, which is a masculine suit with the Ace low. The fact that the two Virtues are by a different hand than Bembo's makes it difficult to prove what the original intention may have been. The sexual dualism of the suits is described below, in a discussion of the game played with these cards.

I Bastoni (Staves):³⁹ Moakley puts Staves here in association with Fortitude, and to herald Fortune. She erects an elaborate proof upon it for the ribald element, including the crossed legs of the Kings of Staves and Coins as signs of *chrysos* (gold)--X is "chi" with a hard "C" sound in Greek--implying that they relate gold to faeces. This would make Temperance's cups hold urine, if the Latin maxim that birth occurs "between urine and faeces" can be applied here. One may note that in the 1415 deck mentioned above, the King of Swords has his legs crossed too. The court card figures of the Staves bear long batons with large complex gold bulbs at the top (as well as sceptres for the King and Queen) and the numbered cards of Staves show similar batons with bulbs at both ends. As a masculine suit, Staves has the Ace low, as the very last card in the series.

La Ruota (The Wheel of Fortune):⁴⁰ Fortune is a splendidly gowned, winged, blindfolded lady in the centre of a wheel which bears four people being first raised and then lowered in worldly position (the highest, who proclaims, "I reign," has ass's ears, like Pinocchio). All the conventional Tarot decks have some similar arrangement of the wheel but Fortune herself is frequently absent. The Wheel of Fortune is another medieval symbol which was often carved on the outside of cathedrals around the same circular form which from the inside contained the rose window. Male quotes from *Somme le Roi*, a medieval work, "In these cathedral churches and royal abbey is Dame Fortune who turns topsy-turvy faster than a windmill."⁴¹ The idea appears in Boethius' *Consolation of Philosophy*: "I cause a rapid wheel to turn; I love to raise the fallen and to abase the proud."⁴²

The arrangement suggested by Moakley puts Fortune exactly in the centre, as the pivotal image. Thus, as she says, Love and Death are equated and related. Fortune is the enemy of Chastity (who is left out of the Tarot, though in this deck the Moon is borne by Diana, who also appears in the *minchiate*, and she is the goddess of a rather fierce chastity who sometimes rode in Renaissance processions).⁴³ She thus becomes a major figure instead of an attribute. Her position is reversed from that of the later Tarot, which puts the Hermit (Time) ahead of her.

I Danari (Coins):⁴⁴ The pivotal position of Fortune is further reinforced by Moakley in placing the Coins just afterwards. She relates them to the gold of the traitor (the Hanged Man holds bags of gold in some decks) and to the mirror of Prudence, who in some decks replaces him. Moakley states that the motifs on the Queen's robe in this suit match those of Fortune but this is not apparent from the photographs. Fortune's motifs are like those of the Pope. The Queen of Coins is facing to the viewer's left and the Queen of Swords faces the viewer's right. The coin the Queen bears--depicted as a very large disk of gold--does have a motif like those on Fortune's dress: so does the gown of the lady on the Chariot, as does that of the lady lover. As a feminine suit, the ace is high, and follows the Page. It shows an enormous disk. The name of

this suit shows considerable variation, from Coins (Deniers) to Pentacles; the association of it with Prudence (who isn't usually in the deck) requires the Coins to be interpreted as mirrors, while Waite's association of them with the Dish of the Grail Hallows requires them to become dishes. The conversion of the dish into the suit of Diamonds is problematical too, though Waite's suggestion that it became Clubs is even more forced. There may be no absolute relation between the Italian suits and the French ones from which our English suits derive.⁴⁵ This ambivalent suit inserts a note of doubt into most interpretations, and it is interesting that this is the one of which Williams makes the most use: it is mentioned twice as often as the others, by a rough count (seven times, to only three each for the other three suits). Williams makes it the means for creating earth, from which gold comes.

Il Gobbo (The Hunchback, Time, The Hermit):⁴⁶ He is an old hunchback who carries an hourglass. This later becomes a lantern and he becomes a hermit, but he continues to bear his staff. As already stated, Time had his own triumph in Petrarch's poem, and in the *minchiate* deck still has his signs of the Zodiac and the four Elements. Williams is in line with occult tradition in making the four suits represent the four Elements, though his order is not the same as the one given in occult books. The Hermit is sometimes seen in depictions of the Triumph of Death, as Moakley says. In later decks he no longer accompanies Death, but escorts Fortune instead. Williams associates him with the Lovers, as a type of the Way of Negation.

Il Traditore (The Hanged Man):⁴⁷ Traitors have broken the medieval allegiance based on land and military service, and mutual fealty between the levels of hierarchy. In the Renaissance these things could be bought for gold. The customary punishment of the traitor was to be hung upside-down and beaten: or if not caught, then to be painted in this ignoble attitude. Prudence is a dancing man in some packs (he does a balancing act) and the card is sometimes called "The Acrobat." Hargrave shows such a card, in an early eighteenth century French Tarot: he is a handsome youth in slashed sleeves and shapely stockings, standing on one foot with the other raised, arms akimbo as he balances. He is, as it were, the Hanged Man right side up.⁴⁸ Moakley thinks that only the Waite-Smith deck has a truly noble Hanged Man, and he does have the golden look of Balder upon his face, as he hangs from a single pole as from a cross, while all the others hang from a pair of posts with a lintel, suggesting the doorway, or the gibbet, or the swing. Moakley thinks "the hanged knight" may have been an acrobat who did tricks in the Carnival procession.⁴⁹

The association of the traitor with an inverted position is fully supported by Moakley. I would add that in the Hell of Dante's *Divine Comedy*, the devil has fallen from Heaven and plunged head down into the centre of the earth, where he sticks fast in a sea of ice, forever gnawing the heads of three traitors, right-side-up only from Hell's point of view. Satan is of course the ultimate traitor. The position of the Hanged Man (XII) next to Death (XIII) is the same in every deck: he is the most ambivalent card of all and it is typical of Williams to move him from position 12 to position 13, which in every real Tarot is occupied by the nameless Death. I will discuss below the effect this has upon the structure of the deck, but one can recall that Williams, like Eliot, associates the Hanged Man with Christ.

La Morte (Death):⁵⁰ Moakley quotes Vasari that Death was not associated with the Carnival until the sixteenth century, but here he is, and he is central to the Triumphs of Petrarch. Death is always XIII except in Williams, as we have seen. He is a semi-skeleton, with a bow in his hand and no dead but himself. He certainly resembles the Death of the medieval Dance of Death. Later decks give him a scythe and let him reap heads and limbs. Here he is crowned in a scrap of grave-cloth and grins macabrely. This whole section is his Triumph, and Moakley conceives him as sharing his car with the Tower and the Devil, the Hanged Man serving as his captive whom the Devil carries off to Hell.

Il Diavolo (The Devil):⁵¹ This card and the next are missing from the Visconti-Sforza set so we shall never know what they looked like as Bembo portrayed them. The Devil is part of Death's Triumph, bearing away damned souls; Moakley says that the conventional Tarot's winged Temperance (who became XIV) represents the Angel come for the souls of the saved. She suggests that the developed placement of the Virtues was arranged just to keep Death in position 13, but it is more symmetrical and elegant an arrangement than that. Moakley supports her identification of the suits with the Virtues at this point, with the following quotation from Saint Bernadino's famous sermon: "Consider the avarice of money, the stupidity or doggish ferocity of clubs, the goblets or cups of drunkenness and gluttony, the swords of hatred and war."⁵² The fifteenth century card chosen by Moakley to illustrate this position shows a horned, bearded, winged, bird-footed being with a second face over his genitals and a pitchfork on his shoulder. He has no captives.

La Casa de Diavolo (The Devil's House, the Tower):⁵³ Moakley says it is the Hellmouth of the medieval mystery plays. I wish I could find a Tarot card of any period where it possesses the fierce animal mask of open maw which the Hellmouth implies. The fifteenth century card she shows here to substitute for the lost Bembo original is a burning tower just as it is in the conventional decks. It may be a gate of Hell but it is no Hellmouth, for it

lacks a gaping bestial orifice. The famous setting for the Valencian Passion Play of 1547, which shows the "mansions" which formed the scenery arranged in a straight line, has, next to L'enfer (Hell) with its elaborate display of devils and the proper open jaws of a Hellmouth, a second flaming building. This is labelled "Le Limbe des peres"--The Limbo of the Fathers--depicted as a tower which burns vigorously and is just as conveniently located beside "La mer" as Moakley says Hell should be. This looks more like the Falling Tower than the Hellmouth does, but of course the date allows the influence to be the other way around.⁵⁴ In the Chester Cycle, one of the pageant wagons (an alternative to the stationary "mansion") showed the Tower of Babel, a playlet put on by the carpenter's guild and featuring a comic dialogue by the carpenters.⁵⁵ This is of course another country, so it cannot be used as proof either, but the case for equating the Tower with Hell as such is not perfectly proven.

Le Spade (Swords):⁵⁶ These figures are all in armour. Moakley puts them here because Justice is included in the following group, which is the Triumph of Eternity. As a masculine suit, Ten is highest, and the Ace comes at the end of the sequence. The King and Queen are crowned as well as armoured, and all bear swords.

La Stella (The Star):⁵⁷ This beautiful lady, by the same hand as Fortitude and Temperance, supports a gleaming star. The Star, Sun, and Moon are captives of Eternity, being carried away from their former allegiance to Time. The conventional deck puts the star in the sky without the aid of the lady, who kneels and pours out a stream of water with two cups.

La Luna (The Moon):⁵⁸ Since the moon looks larger than a star, it is placed next in order in all Tarots: the Visconti-Sforza deck shows Diana holding a crescent moon. Her bow is broken because she is a captive of Eternity. Later cards have the mysterious pair of dogs and the menacing lobster or whatever creature of the deep it is: the moon's relation to madness (howling dogs) and the sea being thus expressed. The "Tarots of Charles VI" (1392) give the Moon a pair of astronomer/astrologists as attendants: maybe a modern card should show a pair of astro-nauts.

Il Sole (The Sun):⁵⁹ A winged putto holds up a red sun-face, triumphing over the Moon by his size but himself a captive of Eternity in his turn. Perhaps the fat putto gave rise to the playing children of the conventional deck, though some of the decks make them a pair of adults.

L'Agnolo (The Angel, the Day of Judgement):⁶⁰ God the Father with crown and orb looks down over two angels with trumpets (perhaps Williams is punning on the word Trumps in his title to include not only the about-trumps but the Trump of Judgement as well). The three dead arise from a common tomb. The conventional deck shows only the angel and the rising dead.

La Justicia (Justice):⁶¹ I wonder if perhaps Justice is here in the early decks because so many medieval Last Judgements show St. Michael with his scales dividing the damned from the saved. In the Visconti-Sforza deck a knight in armour with a sword rides across the top of the card, and the feminine Virtue sits crowned, with a sword in one hand and a scales in the other (but she is not blindfolded as is modern Justice in representations of her on public buildings). The presence of the knight seems to offer special corroboration of Moakley's thesis that the suits represent the Virtues, for the suit of Swords shows all its court figures in armour.

Il Mondo (The World):⁶² This is, according to Gertrude Moakley, the Car of Eternity, shown in the Visconti-Sforza cards as a globe with the New Jerusalem depicted as a splendid mandala-castle, held aloft by two putti. In late Renaissance triumphal processions the Car of Eternity was supported, like the throne of God, with the tetramorphs, the four evangelical beasts, Lion, Ox, Eagle, and Man, according to Moakley, and these appear around the garland-mandorla of "the World" in modern cards. The soul of Carnival went to Heaven in a balloon in a procession of 1891, in latter-day support of the thesis that the King of Carnival died to give way to Lent. The appearance of the mandala form--it is constant in the cards, being a lovely globe with a city or a landscape in the early cards and becoming a dancing nude figure inside a wreath in later forms--suggests a truly universal application. This card is the symbol of completion in every sense: it completes the deck, it ends the procession, it reveals the triumphator of Petrarch's poem (Eternity), it exhibits a mandala which in C.G. Jung's thought is the spontaneous image of completion in all cultures and in the dreams of moderns as well. Williams lays emphasis on the singleness of the dancing figure, so that he too sees this card as an image of the One.

Jung writes concerning the mandala:

...it could even be called the archetype of wholeness. Because of this significance, the "quaternity of the One" is the schema for all images of God, as depicted in the visions of Ezekiel, Daniel, and Enoch, and as the representations of Horus with his four sons also shows. The latter suggests an interesting differentiation, inasmuch as there are occasionally representations in which three of the sons have animals' heads and only one human head, in keeping with the Old Testament visions, as well as

with the emblems of the seraphim which were transferred to the evangelists....⁶³

The early Tarot card for "the World" or "the Universe" is suggested in this passage:

The Heavenly Jerusalem of Revelation is known to everybody. Coming to the Indian world of ideas, we find the city of Brahma on the world mountain, Meru. We read in the Golden Flower ". . . In the purple hall of the city of Jade dwells the God of Utmost Emptiness and life."⁶⁴

Other mandala symbols are the wheel, sun, star, and circular formations:⁶⁵ the captives of Eternity include sun, star, and moon, while the wheel appears earlier in the deck. Jung is precise about the psychological meaning of this symbol:

As I have said, mandala means "circle." There are innumerable variants of the motif . . . but they are all based on the squaring of a circle. Their basic motif is a premonition of a centre of personality, a kind of central point within the psyche, to which everything is related, by which everything is arranged, and which is itself a source of energy.⁶⁶

He explains: "this centre is not felt or thought of as the ego but, if one may so express it, as the self."⁶⁷

Il Matto (the Fool):⁶⁸ He has no number. Moakley has him roaming about amongst the Trumps just as Williams does. He is dressed in the Visconti-Sforza deck as Folly, with feathers and torn clothes, and lacks his modern dog, though he has his club. In the developed Carnival, as in the medieval Feast of Fools, he was the Carnival King, for his associations go back to the Roman Saturnalia. E.O. James describes the mock-religious festival held on or about January first from the twelfth century onward, especially in France, which "was an occasion of excessive buffoonery and extravagance incorporating New Year and Saturnalian customs, some of which were borrowed from the folk plays."⁶⁹ He goes on to explain the function of the "Lord of Misrule:"

At Beverly, Vienne, Noyon and Besancon such a burlesque figure was actually called, and treated as, Mock King. In this context the Christmas Mummers' play is true to type. The leader of the mighty forces of evil there becomes a farcical figure. . . The reanimation of the slain or wounded hero is performed by a burlesque Doctor. . . and the masked personifications of the gods are now merely clowns with bladders, blackened faces and calves' tails. The all-important ritual marriage is performed in conjunction with the functionless Man-Woman or Boy-Girl character.⁷⁰

This description is of a folk survival in another part of Europe than the one which produced and actively preserved the Tarot cards, but the association of the motifs will be seen below to have perfect conformity to Moakley's thesis, or at least to the factors which lead to her interpretation. An Italian figure of "Lent," she describes as having feathers placed like legs, to be pulled out week by week, and she says that the Fool is dressed as a penitent in baggy clothes which are fore-runners of the modern clown's.⁷¹ She mentions the Folly of Giotto's Arena Chapel, who also has feathers. Emile Mâle describes the Folly who opposes Prudence at the Cathedrals of Paris, Amiens, and Auxerre, as

. . . a scantily-clad man armed with a club, who walks among stones and at times receives one thrown at his head. He almost invariably has some shapeless object in his mouth. It is obviously the picture of an idiot at whom invisible boys throw stones. This realistic figure which seems to be taken direct from everyday life, has in fact a popular origin. Following an old tradition, mediaeval representations of idiots showed them carrying a club--later to become a fool's bauble--and eating a cheese.⁷²

This particular personification of the Fool (as an idiot) is perhaps associated with the popular notion that the idiot's penis is unusually large, in compensation for his lack of brains. William Willeford quotes John Cleland's *Memoirs of a Woman of Pleasure* (1963) to this effect. The Fool's bauble, the club, the clown's bladder or slapstick, all represent both phallus and sceptre:⁷³ the triumphator of Rome carried a red-painted phallus as well as a sceptre.⁷⁴ The profoundly Dionysian symbolism of all of this will be discussed in detail below. Mâle's suggestion of the medieval idiot pursued by children helps suggest the origin of the pursuing dog in the conventional Tarot:

Hark, hark, the dogs do bark,
Beggars are coming to town;
Some in jags, and some in rags,
And some in velvet gowns.⁷⁵

Moakley makes "the ragged tramp"⁷⁶ move freely as modern parade clowns do in fact move freely along outside the regular procession of automobiles, marching bands, and floats. The Fool gradually acquired more and more elegant and royal clothes (one thinks of the "velvet gowns"). Apparently the court jester, the circus clown, and the playing card Joker are all related to this image. The Little Tramp of Charles Chaplin, the two tramps of *Waiting for Godot*, the Lenten penitent, the clowns of the *commedia dell'arte*, and the temporary Saturnalian King--the Lord of Misrule--are all united in it. In the mockery of Christ, His crowning with thorns, royal cloak (over a back covered with scourge-

stripes), and reed-sceptre (In bound hands), we see a Saturnalian practice carried out by Roman soldiers. In that case, Williams' equation of this card with the One who unites all the others-- Christ the Fool--is very close to the mark indeed. Ecce Homo: In the Fool we do indeed behold the Man, despised and rejected of men, the eternal outsider who makes all things new.

I conclude this review of Gertrude Moakley's profoundly significant work with her description of the early game of Tarots, from "Notes on the Tarot as a Game" in the 1959 edition of A.E. Waite's Pictorial Key to the Tarot. The oldest form of the game, she tells us, is played by three players (a fourth player becomes a dealer only). Each player receives twenty-four cards, the remaining six being set aside or traded in by the dealer for six of his own. The game proceeds with declaration of melds, playing for tricks (the Fool may be played as a Joker usually is). The game continues until the player scores 100 points. The structure of the scoring is especially interesting for the interpretation of the Tarot.

The five Greater Trumps (XVII-XXI, the cards which represent the triumph of Eternity): count 5 points for three of these, 10 points for four, 15 points if a player has all five.

The five Lesser Trumps (I-V, the cards which represent the captives of Cupid): count the same as the Greater Trumps.

The seven "Tarot Trumps," (I, XXI, Fool, and the Kings of the Four Suits): count 15 points for any three of these.⁷⁷

Moakley gives the following explanation of the masculine-feminine dualism of the suits: "The masculine suits of Swords and Staves rank from king high to Ace low. The feminine suits of Cups and Coins rank the same as the masculine from king down to page, but from there on the order is reversed: Ace is highest, then two, and so on down to ten."⁷⁸

For the aid of the reader in visualizing the concept of Greater and Lesser Trumps in the early deck, I give the following lists: I think she means them to be applied to a conventional deck of the sort developed in the eighteenth century so I give both the fifteenth century order and the modern:

Greater Trumps
"triumph of Eternity"

(15th c.)	Moon	XVII	Star	(18th c.)
	Sun	XVIII	Moon	
	Judgement	XIX	Sun	
	Justice	XX	Judgement	
	World	XXI	World	

Lesser Trumps
"captives of Cupid"

Juggler	I	Juggler
Empress	II	Popess
Emperor	III	Empress
Popess	IV	Emperor
Pope	V	Pope

The "Tarot Trumps" are set up in a combination of three and four: three from the arcana and four representing the four suits. The arcana are represented by their first and last card, (alpha and omega, as it were) and by the one which can play the part of any of them: the Fool. It is as Williams says: "till the confusion of all be abolished and the unity of persons be proclaimed."⁷⁹

V. The Traditional Tarot

Before going on to discuss Charles Williams' own version of the Tarot, I will outline the conventional deck, to bring out its traditional structure. It differs from the fifteenth century pattern in small ways, but not more than might be expected of five hundred years; in fact its relative fixedness is remarkable. It has followed the general rule of becoming more coherent, more rational and symmetrical in its form as it passed through various anonymous hands. The attempts of various occultists in the past two hundred years to improve upon this received order are not really very successful, and have a rather forced quality to an artist's eye.

Following the suggestion of Williams that the meaning of the cards lies in their order--"It isn't the time behind them, but the process in them, that's important"¹--and "perhaps there was meaning in the order as in the paintings"²--I have set them out in both linear and circular form. Gershon Scholem says in writing on the world of the Kabbalah, "In the chain of being, everything is magically contained in everything else," because, as a Kabbalist has written, "where you stand, there stand all the worlds."³

The linear order derives from the Tarot as a triumphal procession. It is an especially medieval sort of order, with its roots in deepest antiquity. Wylie Sypher says in discussing the Gothic style:

All these images from actuality [are] presented in a simple linear procession, like the story unfolded in the medallions of stained glass or in the statues arranged side by side within a cathedral porch or along a facade.⁴

He continues:

This simple linear arrangement of episodes, as in the mystery play, presented on pageant wagons--wagon following wagon past the same spot until the cycle of playlets is

complete. This one-dimensional form . . . has been called "processional".⁵

He concludes:

In contrast to . . . Renaissance unified time-space perspective, the medieval time-space seems linear and non-Euclidean, having a one-dimensional extension, unrolling like the episodes in a film.⁶

The circular form is suggested by the statement of Gertrude Moakley that sometimes a procession moved around a palace courtyard while the spectators watched from the windows. "It was then called a carrousel. Today our amusement park merry-go-rounds still have triumphal 'cars' and horses for the 'knights'--and are often called 'carrouseis'." I find that each arrangement is suggestive of meanings without contradicting the other, but in the circular form the Fool goes best in the centre, as Williams has him. Persons who have used the Tarot cards for divination will note that the following arrangements are not "spreads" to be used to receive the random fall of the cards which have been shuffled or otherwise ordered to induce the action of synchronicity. Rather, they are the orders used for contemplation, to make the inner relationships of the cards apparent.

The Linear Order

	Juggler	1.	
		2.	Popess
		3.	Empress
LOVE		4.	Emperor
		5.	Pope
	Lovers	6.	
	Chariot	7.	
		8.	<u>Justice</u>
	Hermit	9.	
	Fortune	10.	
DEATH		11.	<u>Fortitude</u>
	Hanged Man	12.	
	Death	13.	
		14.	<u>Temperance</u>
	Devil	15.	
	Tower	16.	
		17.	Star
ETERNITY		18.	Moon
		19.	Sun
		20.	Judgement
	World	21.	
	Fool	22.	

The Circular Order

ETERNITY	World 21.	1. Juggler	LOVE
Judgement 20.		2. Popess	
Sun 19.		3. Empress	
Moon 18.		4. Emperor	
Star 17.	0.	5. Pope	
Tower 16.	FOOL	6. Lovers	
Devil 15.		7. Chariot	
<u>Temperance 14.</u>		8. <u>Justice</u>	
Death 13.		9. Hermit	
Hanged Man 12.		10. Fortune	
	11.		
	<u>Fortitude</u>		
	DEATH		

The Virtues seem to perform a structural task in the deck. They are present as attendants, and hence do not have any specific symbolic function in their placement as such (so that elaborate mental acrobatics about their meaning in any specific position are unnecessary). Rather, they serve in the developed Tarot to set various parts of the deck apart. I cannot account for there being only three of them except to say that when an odd number--21--is being divided into four parts, it is helpful to do this with an odd number of dividers. None of the traditional Vices associated with Virtues is present except that of the missing Virtue (Prudence)--that is Folly, or the Fool, who plays quite a different role here. I am postulating that the Fool does not form part of the sequence.

In the standard Tarot, there are seven cards in the first sequence (Love), followed by the Virtue Justice (moved from its early position near the very end of the deck as an attribute of the Last Judgement). There follow two cards, then Fortitude, then two more cards, followed by Temperance. The latter two Virtues, which were originally attendants of Love, according to Gertrude Moakley, have moved over to complete the balance of the deck. In the deck designed by A.E. Waite and Pamela Colman Smith, these positions are the same but their order is changed to Fortitude/Justice/Temperance, in an attempt to make them mean something in particular. Another occult deck, that of Paul Foster Case and Jesse Burns Park, changes the order to Fortitude/Justice/Temperance for the same reason. These efforts suggest that the conventional order really is meaningless except for its structuring purpose, and that various attempts to place the Virtues in a more meaningful position are unnecessary.

If the Virtues are designated by a "V" and the other cards by the number thus separated, the sequence is 7-V-2-V-7, or, as becomes obvious, 7-7-7. The central set of seven cards includes the Virtues along with four profoundly ambivalent cards: the Hermit and the Wheel of Fortune in one part and the Hanged Man and Death in the other. In the first seven cards, Love is 9

the triumphator; in the second seven, Death triumphs; and in the last seven, it is Eternity who triumphs. The shift of the Virtues has only served to emphasize this structure more clearly.' Furthermore, there is a nice relationship between the placement of Love and his Chariot, at the end of the first sequence, and the Devil and his Tower at the beginning of the final sequence. They become Love v.s. Anti-Love. They are exactly balanced and when the cards are arranged in a circle this becomes especially clear. Moreover, the Juggler at the beginning balances with the Universe (or World) at the end, suggesting very strongly the relationship of Creator/Creation which Williams uses in *The Greater Trumps*. Between the Juggler and Love are the four captives of Love, made up of two pairs, one sacred and one secular, comprising the whole power structure of this world. Between the Devil and the Universe (Eternity) are the three celestial cards and the Last Judgement, all attributes of the other world. The central sequence is one of transition, or as Jung himself would put it, transformation, culminating in the pivotal thirteenth card, Death, whether the Hermit is Time or a contemplative as he accompanies Fortune, and whether the Hanged Man is a condemned traitor, or the acrobat of sudden reversals, or an image of Death's ultimate conqueror, as he accompanies Death.

Placing the Fool outside the deck (or central to it when the deck is made into a circle), enables him to relate to all of the cards in turn, since "everything is magically contained in everything else." There is in the Fool tradition, as we shall see, a special relationship between the Fool and the King, the Lover, the Saint, the Penitent, Fortune, Death, and the Devil, as well as with the primal One. Williams suggests that he is really identical with the Juggler-Magician-Creator as well.

As we have said repeatedly, the Tarot represents a Triumph, or series of allegorical Triumphs, based upon the Roman Triumph. The word "trump" is a corruption of the original name, "Game of Triumphs." The word "Triumph" itself, however, is even more significant. It was the special cheer--triumpe--with which the triumphator was hailed. The Latin word, *triumphus*, from which "triumph" comes, was equated by the oldest explanation of its meaning (that of the Roman writer Varro) with the Greek *ἑπισημειωσις*: *t(h)riambe*. According to H.S. Versnel, whose book *Triumphus* examines the matter in detail, the Greek word *triumphos* "is an epiclesis [invocation] and as the name of a song developed from the exclamation *ἑπισημειωσις*." As a song, a dithyramb, in honour of Dionysus, and an exclamation invoking his epiphany, the word *triumpe* came from Greece, both directly in Dionysian cult and by way of Etruscan processions from which the Roman triumph was derived. And before its arrival in Greece it came even earlier from Asia Minor, where Dionysus himself originated. Versnel says, "the cheer *triumpe*, which gave the triumph its name, was originally an exclamation by which a god of the 'dying and rising' type was summoned to epiphany."¹⁰ Linguistically, this exclamation "derived from a pre-Greek language has in Greek developed into *ἑπισημειωσις*, in Latin into *triumpe*. In both cases its function is that of invoking a god or gods and inviting them to manifest themselves. Etruria is the link connecting *ἑπισημειωσις* and *triumpe*, it being possible that a pre-Greek word was taken over by Etruscan and, independently, by Greek."¹¹

Versnel states that "the triumph developed after the example of a New Year festival in which the appearance of the reborn or returning god was accompanied with, sometimes identified with the annual investiture of the King."¹² There was in Rome the *Ludi Romani* (New Year Festival) which took place in September. The *Ludi* had a procession, games (competitions), and a banquet (similar to the Babylonian *atiku*; see below).¹⁴ Versnel says of these activities, "the New Year festival was, as we know, characterized by a renewal of the kingship by means of a re-investiture of the king, and at the same time by the epiphany of the great god in the shape of the king."¹⁵ This Roman festival, which the Triumph resembled, through its two elements: first, the Dionysiac call to epiphany *triumpe* (via Etruria) and the identification of the triumphator with the God Jupiter, came from Etruria. The Etruscans brought this New Year festival with them from Asia Minor, along with its centre, a god called Dionysos in Greece: he was "a figure of the 'dying and rising' type,"¹⁶ who, invoked by a cry which became *triumpe* in Greek, was represented on New Year's Day by the King. Dionysus himself came to Rome from Greece directly but he was known earlier in Etruria as well and was called *Tinia*, where he was associated with the sun and depicted as a "beardless, sometimes ivy-wreathed youth."¹⁷ Versnel notes that Zeus and Dionysus were to the Cretans different aspects of the same god: Dionysus may mean "Zeus-son" or "child Zeus."¹⁸ The Triumph itself identified the triumphator with Jupiter (who is the Roman Zeus) and hailed him with the cry of greeting derived from Dionysian worship.

In the *pompa triumphalis*, the Triumph of the victorious general, upon which the allegorical and actual Triumphs of the Renaissance are based, the procession came into the city of Rome ahead of the triumphator's chariot, bearing the spoils of war, pictures of battles and of conquered cities and peoples, gifts from the conquered ones (laurel wreaths), white oxen to be sacrificed to Jupiter, and trumpeters. Then came the prisoners

in chains (sometimes to be executed privately) directly before the *currus triumphalis*. The lectors in "red war dress" carried the *fascas*, a bundle of rods bound together with an axe. Then came the triumphator.¹⁹ His face was painted with red lead²⁰ as was the statue of Jupiter in his temple.²¹ Over his head was lifted aloft the *corona triumphalis* of gold oak leaves.²² The chariot upon which he stood was tall and two-wheeled, pulled by four white horses. It was decorated with laurel leaves and had a phallus fastened beneath it. Possibly bells and whips were attached as well. His splendid costume consisted of the special garments of the god Jupiter, the *vesta triumphalis*: these were the *tunica palmata* which had palm-leaves embroidered upon it in gold, and the *toga picta* which bore gold stars. Both garments were dyed purple. He wore a crown of laurel on his head, and carried a laurel branch in his right hand and an eagle-surmounted ivory sceptre in his left.²³ The slave who bore up the crown of golden oak leaves over his head said to him again and again, "*Respice post te, hominem te esse memento*,"²⁴ which is translated, "O conqueror, look behind you, and remember you are mortal."²⁵ Versnel says that various elements of the chariot including the phallus, flails and bells, and the iron ring which the slave wore were all "apotropaic means of warding off invidia."²⁶ Apotropaic objects "turn away" evil. William Willeford adds that the chariot of the conqueror was "surrounded by dancing gold-crowned clowns and satyrs, who made obscene gestures and coarse jokes," and that the conqueror himself held "a dried cockerel's comb as an amulet against the evil eye."²⁷

The triumphator was a bearer of good fortune to the city of Rome, Versnel says. He had "dynamism," that quality frequently called *mana*, a term which is under controversy, but which conveys the sense of numinous power.²⁸ "The victor has a power he can impart to others."²⁹ When he comes into the city, he brings with him a period of "prosperity, peace and welfare."³⁰ Here we see the relationship which Versnel postulates between the Triumph and the New Year's festival, and we will now see how he explains the significance of the relationship.

In Egypt there was "a sacred mystery play" in which the old king was given a funeral and resurrected "in the person of a new King."³¹ He was invested, installed, and banqueted. The new king (who was of course still the old king who had undergone a symbolic ceremony) was regarded as Horus, and the old king as Osiris (who had been killed by Set). There was a ritual fight between Horus and Set in the ceremonial drama.³² Horus was in fact the old god of the Nile Valley, and Set the god of Upper Egypt; the union of these two divisions of the Nile had formed the Kingdom of Egypt. In his person as Osiris the king carried the crook, the flail, and the sceptre.³³ The Heb Sed, as this drama was called, was a periodic rite, in which the death and "resurrection in death" of Osiris was enacted, on New Year's Eve, followed by the rejuvenation and ritual re-identification of the king with Horus.³⁴

In Mesopotamia, the "New Year Festival" was called the *atiku*, celebrated at the Vernal Equinox, in which the divine marriage was re-enacted.³⁵ The king enacted the part of the god while the role of the goddess was played by a priestess. New Year's Day in Rome occurred both at the Ides of March (the Vernal Equinox) and at the *Saturnalia* (January 1) from which our own New Year's comes.³⁶

The Greek *Anthesterion* was also a spring festival, of Dionysus. It consisted of three days; the first featured the opening of the wine casks, the second a drinking feast, and the third, the entertainment of the dead.³⁷ It was on the second day that Dionysus entered the city,³⁸ riding upon a *currus navilis* (a boat-shaped car) accompanied by a sacrificial bull and an entourage of revellers. Versnel remarks that Shrove Tuesday is "the New Year's Eve of the Christians"³⁹ and that its carnival customs have an origin in Dionysian rite, including the use of masks, phalloi, and street fights.

All of these "New Years" are thus spring (or pre-spring) festivals of new life, whether they renew the king's power by resurrecting him as a god, as in Egypt, causing him to consummate the divine marriage of a god as in Mesopotamia, hailing him in the wine, as in the Greek Dionysian *Anthesterion* procession or in the Etruscan procession, the *Ludi Romani*, and finally the Triumph of Rome. The echo of these motifs in the various cards of the Tarot will be apparent.

Robert Payne in *The Roman Triumph* gives a history of the many Triumphs of Rome, describing their various forms, both those of conquering generals and those of the Emperors. He describes the Triumphs of Christian Emperors and shows how the Triumph became associated with the Church as well, in peaceful processions over the centuries, especially in the Corpus Christi procession, where the Host--the Body of Christ--was borne along in honour. Renaissance paintings show this being done, and the practise continues to the present day. Payne also details the resurgence of the Triumph in the early Renaissance. According to his account, in AD 1037, Heribert, Archbishop of Milan, had made a battle-car with the city's patron saint and the banner of the commune, to serve as a "symbol to represent the unity of the people fighting for communal liberty."⁴⁰ We have already seen that the triumphator of Roman times brought his dynamism as a victor, and the captured dynamism of his enemies, sealed in their

blood and enshrined in their captured-war apparel, which was brought to the Capitoline Hill to remain there in honour of Jupiter the All-Powerful. Heribert himself identified his battle-car with the Ark of the Covenant, which after the destruction of the Temple came to be represented as travelling on wheels--it appears in that form at the early Synagogue in Capernaum and in the paintings in the Synagogue of Dura Europos on the Euphrates, both of which draw their symbolism from Hellenistic sources. The vehicle continued to serve as a rolling rallying point, and took on the significance of a triumphal car. The procession which accompanied the carroccio, as the battle-wagon was called, became known as a *trionfi*. The importance of the vehicle itself may account for the presence in the Tarot of a "Chariot" card which has its own identity.

As Robert Payne says, Dante saw Beatrice riding in a griffin-drawn chariot in a divine pageant. First came "Four living creatures with green foliage crowned; Each with six wings was plumed, their foliage lived/ All full of eyes;"⁴¹ -- these are the Tetramorphs which usually appear on the Tarot card, "The World," as we have seen--Dante writes, "But read Ezekiel, who's depicted them/ Even as he saw them . . ."⁴²

And in the space betwixt the four came on

A triumph-car, on two wheels travelling,⁴³

And at the shoulders of a Gryphon drawn;

Besides this magnificent steed, "golden of limb," and "all dappled red-and-white," (who represents the "twy-natured" Christ, in Charles Williams' interpretation, *The Figure of Beatrice*), there are three dancing ladies of red, green, and white, representing the theological Virtues (Faith, Hope, and Charity), and:

Four by the left wheel, clad in purple guise,

Made festival; and she who led the ball

Among them, in her forehead had three eyes.⁴⁴

These are the four cardinal Virtues which are so frequently associated with Triumphs in Renaissance art, three of which appear in the Tarot: she who bore three eyes was Prudence.⁴⁵ Dorothy Sayers points out that "in the Corpus Christi procession, the Holy Host would normally be carried under a canopy, but for the canopy, Dante has substituted a *carroccio*, or war-chariot, such as then belonged to every Italian city."⁴⁶

The Corpus Christi procession, the Papal processions, and the *carroccio*, were examples of Triumph tradition in a medieval context. Frederick II captured the Milanese *carroccio* and brought it to Rome as a spoil.⁴⁷ This marked a renewal of the older tradition, and the *condottiere* and emperors copied the Roman forms in this as in other ways. Petrarch wrote *Trionfi* as an allegory based upon this revival of Roman tradition. The Triumph was more and more frequently enacted, with Christian elements where pagan motifs no longer served, and the Triumphs of the past were depicted in art. In the sixteenth century the masque of the Triumph (as had been described in Dante) became popular, often designed by contemporary artists. The procession became more and more abstract and symbolic, and the depiction of imaginary processions continued as well. An eighteenth century example of the Triumph can be seen in the sculptured relief of Pierre Prud'hon, *Le Triomphe de la Revolution*, in which Revolution rides on a four-wheeled car with her Phrygian cap and staff, holding a level; she is drawn by Justice with her scales, Fortitude with a column, and a figure which, being nude, is identified as Truth, holding a mirror aloft. Ahead of them all is Fraternity with an up-rearing fasces, driving the forces of reaction (these include a figure holding a mask) before the triumphant Revolution. One notes that Temperance is conspicuously absent.⁴⁸

Many of the conventions of the Triumph passed into the theatre, and the public procession continued, still enshrined in its carnival form in North America, for instance, in the Mardi Gras parades of New Orleans, as well as in many other public events. The persistent association of the triumphal procession with Carnival, and with Dionysus in particular, brings us to the final element in our preparation for Williams' Tarot. This will be an examination of the "dying and rising" god himself. I will use Walter Otto's *Dionysus, Myth and Cult* as a source.

Seeking to understand the god's role, Otto says, "Plutarch gives us the answer that Dionysus, according to Greek belief, was the lord and bearer of all moist nature."⁴⁹ Associated with him are ivy, trees (especially fruit trees), the vine (hence, wine), the myrtle (associated with the dead), flowers (especially the flowers of the vine), roses, violets, the fig tree, and the pine. The thyrsus which his devotees carried was a tall staff wreathed in ivy and crowned with a pine cone,⁵⁰ and the phalluses associated with him were made of fig wood because of the shape of the fruit.⁵¹ Otto says of these associations:

. . . the sovereignty of Dionysus was not only to be recognized in the juice of fruits whose crowning glory was wine, but also in the sperms of living creatures. From this sphere of the god's activity [can be] traced the origins of the custom in which a phallus was crowned with wreaths and carried around in the god's cult.⁵²

In further emphasis upon the god's "moist" associations, Otto points out, "Dionysus comes out of the water and returns to it."⁵³ He emerges out of the sea, out of lakes, out of the damp forest, out of grottoes.⁵⁴

The chief animals associated with Dionysus are those whose

sexual traits are highly regarded by man: the bull,⁵⁵ which was sacrificed even in Rome, and the goat,⁵⁶ which we still see as an incarnation of Satan--he appears so in the Tarot. Also, associated with Dionysus in a lesser position was the ass,⁵⁷ who is often associated in medieval times with the Fool, who was sometimes depicted as wearing asses' ears, a motif which also appears in the Tarot.

Otto declares that Dionysus is "a god who is mad!"⁵⁸ As he says, "the visage of every true god is a visage of a world. There can be a god who is mad only if there is a mad world which reveals itself through him."⁵⁹ Dionysus is the god both of noise--pandæmonium--and of silence, a deathly silence.⁶⁰ A mask representing his face as a brooding bearded visage with an ivy crown (looking not unlike the Holy Face of Lucca) was hung upon a wooden column, and the wine was mixed before it and offered to it. The bearded face was enhanced by a long robe draped about the column,⁶¹ and twined with ivy and flowers: one thinks of the effigy or the scarecrow. He is thus "the god of confrontation."⁶² Otto says "it is his nature to appear suddenly and with overwhelming might before mankind;"⁶³ thus he is the god of "all moist nature," the "god who is mad," and especially importantly for the present paper, "the god who appears."⁶⁴

As Otto says:

The name *Epikambos* which was applied to a Dionysiac hymn and to the god himself (perhaps it is basically identical with *Epikambos*) is perpetuated, as we know, in the Etrusco-Latin word *triump(h)us*; and in the Roman triumphal procession, which has become historical; it is no accident that the triumphator, who took over not only the costume of the image of Jupiter but also its red make-up, reminds us of Dionysus.⁶⁵

Otto's definitive study of Dionysus is introduced with the following extraordinarily apt statement:

At the center of everything significant, in the center of every final intention stands the image of man himself--the form in which he wishes to see himself. It is asinine to say that he lent this image to the Almighty, and thus the forms of men's god came into being. It was in the godhead that this image first appeared to him. Before man was in the position to see himself, God manifested Himself to him. His image preceded the human image. What the form and nature of man could or should be, man learned from the appearance of the Divine.⁶⁶

I have quoted above Versnel's designation of the word *triumphus* "as an epiclesis," which "developed from the exclamation *Epikambe* [*trionpe*]," and Otto's statement that "the name *Epikambos* . . . was applied . . . to the god himself." In using the word "epiclesis," here, Versnel is borrowing a technical term from the vocabulary of the Christian Liturgy, *epiklesis*, which means "invocation." It is usually applied to that part of Eucharist called the Prayer of Consecration where the Holy Spirit is invoked, and the bread and wine are transformed into the Body and Blood of Christ in the Name of the Father.

Dom Gregory Dix in his classic study of the Christian Liturgy, *The Shape of the Liturgy*, refers to "that passage of Theodotus which relates the 'transformation of the Bread into spiritual power' to the 'hallowing by the power of the Name.'" He continues, "A similar notion lies behind the phrase of Irenæus that 'the bread receiving invocation (or 'naming', *epiklesis*) of God is no more common bread but eucharist.'" It seems, indeed, likely that the whole primitive usage of the word *epiklesis* in connection with the eucharist is intimately connected with this Jewish blessing of the Name in all food benedictions, obligatory on Jews and primitive Christians alike in their table-blessings.⁶⁷

In early Judaic Christianity, Christ was sometimes called "the Name of the Father;" Fr. Jean Danielou says that "the Name, which in the Old Testament signified the manifestation of God in the world, alongside but independently of God's Word, was for the primitive Christian community a designation of Christ as Word of God incarnate."⁶⁸ He quotes a second-century homily, the Gospel of Truth: "Now the Name of the Father is the Son."⁶⁹ The Name of God and the invocation which bring about his epiphany are thus the same thing; and the *epiklesis* is present in the Christian Liturgy, in the Dionysian rite, and in the name of the Roman procession. This Name is ultimately present, then, in the name of the deck of cards, the Game of Triumphs, the Tarot.

VI. Charles Williams' Tarot

We are now ready to turn to *The Greater Trumps* for a study of the Tarot of Charles Williams. We know already that it is a Christian Tarot, and that it embodies a process. The purpose of the uses to which the cards are put, Williams shows us, determines the end result and their effects not only upon the users but upon others as well. An English clergyman, writing on the occult, warns,

. . . there is a special danger for those who are serious practitioners of the Tarot. The devotee is called upon to pass through a mystical identification with each of the pleasant and unpleasant pictures on the cards. Even the dabbler suffers, and a student told me . . . of the sense of evil that was released when his fellow students continually consulted the Tarot for guidance.¹

The fifteenth century Italian Franciscan friar who declared that "the game of 'triumphs'" was "hateful to God" and "base in the eyes of the Christian faith" was only an early example of the long tradition of condemning the Tarot.

Williams is not unaware that the Tarot is a double-edged weapon. This is especially true of his interpretation of the four suits. The crisis of the novel is brought about by a misuse of their power, for "there is in these suits a great relation to the four compacted elements of the created earth."² When they are manipulated, they become ". . . innumerable shapes, continuously shifting, sliding over and between each other. They were in masses of colour--black, mostly, she seemed to see, but with ripples of grey and silver and fiery-red passing over them. Dark pillars of earth stood in the walls, and through them burning swords pierced, and huge old cups of pouring water were emptied, and grey clubs were beaten."³

These colours correspond to the "outlandish dress of four striped colours, black and grey and silver and red"⁴ worn by the Fool in Williams' deck. Williams relates "Earth, water, air, and fire," to "Deniers, cups, sceptres, swords."⁵ He thus sets up the following correspondence:

Clubs	=	grey	=	"grey clubs"
Deniers	=	black	=	"dark earth"
Swords	=	red	=	"burning swords"
Cups	=	silver	=	"cups of pouring water"

The entire deck, of which the suits are a part, are part of a dance, and "the Dance is . . . everything" he answered.⁶ "You'll see. Earth, air, fire, water--and the Greater Trumps."⁶ The Trumps themselves "are the truths--the facts--call them what you will--principles of thought, actualities of corporate existence, Death and Love and certain Virtues and Meditation and the Benign Sun of Wisdom, and so on. You must see them--there aren't any words to tell you."⁷

Williams' attempt to make us "see them" occupies a goodly portion of his novel, and I will now show how he envisages the cards. Of the suits we are given only occasional glimpses. The King of Swords is called "the crowned chieftain of fire,"⁸ whose weapon quivered and glowed as if in a flame.⁹ The Queen of Chalices is seen "holding her cup against her heart"¹⁰: she is a "crowned and robed woman bearing a crimson cup."¹¹ The Knight of Sceptres is invoked in the figure of Aaron, Henry's uncle and Nancy's future father-in-law: "the old man's walking stick was the raised scepter; the old man was young again, and yet the same. The skull-cap was a heavy medieval head-dress."¹² Because the suit of Deniers is most frequently mentioned, we are allowed to see two of them, first the King: "a hatted figure, with a four-forked beard, holding a coin--or whatever it was--in a gloved hand."¹³ Second, "the black and purple of the Esquire of Deniers showed for a moment before it was swallowed up in the cloud as a negro youth in an outlandish garment holding aloft a shining bronze coin."¹⁴ It would be splendid, in attempting to design a deck based upon Williams' Tarot, to make the figures of the Suit of Deniers into a magnificent African court, perhaps like that of an Oba of Ife, with his gorgeous entourage, of which we know much from the bronze sculptures of the period.

We turn now to the Greater Trumps themselves. I have said above that their order differs from that of any other Tarot. I give them below as Williams gives them together with the approximate number of times they are mentioned in the text, which I think reflects their importance for Williams:

Trump	Number of times mentioned
1. Juggler	14
2. Empress	10
3. Priestess	10
4. Priest	8
5. Emperor	12
6. Chariot	7
7. Lovers	10
8. Hermit	5
9. Temperance	3
10. Fortitude	3
11. Justice	3
12. Wheel	8
13. Hanged Man	11
14. Death	16
15. Devil	9
16. Tower	10
17. Star	3
18. Moon	4
19. Sun	8
20. Judgement	4
21. World	3
0. Fool	40

Some things spring out instantly from this arrangement. First, the Virtues are classed together and accorded only moderate importance. Second, the cards of Eternity are of secondary importance for Williams, except for the Sun. Third, Death, who is displaced to 14th position, is nonetheless very important, having the second greatest number of mentions in the whole deck. Between Death and the cards of low importance are a series of cards of about equal significance: the Empress, Priestess, Priest,

Emperor, Chariot, Lovers, Wheel, Hanged Man, Devil, Tower, and the aforementioned Sun. Leading these a little, and only just less frequently mentioned than Death, is the Juggler. A huge majority of mentions is accorded to the Fool, who is obviously by far the most important figure in the deck.

In Williams' structure, the Juggler leads, followed by the Triumph of Love with a series of equally important cards. These are followed by the Hermit and the Virtues, in the train of the rather significant Wheel, which, as 12th in place, introduces a series of important cards of which Death is most frequently mentioned; this is the Triumph of Death. There follows the Triumph of Eternity to which only moderate attention is given, followed by the Fool, who is altogether the most important. The deck thus has two halves: first we see this world, where Love is dominant, and the Virtues are attendants of his car. The first eleven cards are thus devoted to this Triumph, led by the Juggler who created this world. The second half of the deck is the other world--subdivided into two parts: first is the Triumph of death which has five cards, of which Death is the central one--Wheel, Hanged Man, Death, Devil, and Tower. Second is the Triumph of Eternity which also comprises five cards and gives preponderance of mention to the central card, the Sun. The sequence is--Star, Moon, Sun, Judgement, World. The Fool dominates the entire deck. Williams regards all luck as good, as he has shown in a lengthy passage in The Figure of Beatrice and in many of his plays, and in Thomas Cranmer he makes Death ("the Skeleton") a Christ-figure who identifies himself as "Christ's back." This series of Shiva-like figures who are both creator and destroyer, but always divine, will be discussed below. The shifting of Death to a less "unlucky" place demonstrates Williams' idea, and also gives that position--13th--to the Hanged Man, in line with modern fascination with that card, which has come a long way from being merely an ignoble traitor.

The Noonday Press edition of The Greater Trumps (and perhaps the original edition as well) has a set of illustrations of the Tarot cards in which the order of titles and numbers corresponds to that given by Williams in the text,¹⁵ where he first names and numbers the cards. Closer examination of these illustrations shows them to include Hebrew letters which do not accord, in their presented order, with the true order of the Hebrew alphabet. When they are placed in the order of the letters they bear, they revert to the order of the fully developed exoteric Tarot. Thus the drawings and their Hebrew letters come from a traditional deck (Italian and Milanese) which have been re-ordered, re-titled, and re-numbered to accord with Williams' construction of the deck. This seems to me to prove finally that Williams invented his order and did so deliberately.

The Greater Trumps contains a description, ranging from brief to lengthy, of every one of the Trumps. I have brought together the various descriptions and mentions of the cards (and in some cases of the figures of gold which match them in Williams' novel) in order to examine the full deck as Williams has conceived it. The cards, in Williams' order, are as follows.

The Juggler: the most characteristic trait of this figure is the set of golden balls he tosses; "the first . . . showed a Juggler casting little balls into the air."¹⁶ He is continually in movement: "the Juggler who danced continuously round the edge of the circle, tossing little balls and catching them again;"¹⁷ "He seemed to her to run swiftly, while still he kept a score or so of balls spinning over him and the air,"¹⁸ and "about him [the Fool] in a circle the Juggler ran, forever tossing his balls."¹⁹

When first seen as a card, he demonstrates Williams' conception of the deck as a whole:

It was a man in a white tunic, but the face, tilted back, was foreshortened and darkened by the brim of some black cap that he wore, a cap so black that something of night itself seemed to have been used in the painting. The heavy shadow and the short painted beard hid the face from the observer. On the breast of the tunic were three embroidered circles, the first made of swords and staffs and cups and coins, balanced one on the other from the coin at the bottom to the apex of two pointing swords at the top. Within this was a circle, so far as Nancy could see, made up of rounded representations of twenty of the superior cards each in its own round; and within that was a circle containing a figure, but that was so small she couldn't make out what it was. The man was apparently supposed to be juggling; one hand was up in the air, one hand was low and open toward the ground, and between them, in an arch, as if tossed and caught and tossed again, were innumerable shining balls.²⁰

The suits are peripheral here, represented only by their symbols. There are only twenty Trumps (because the Juggler is present in his own form, wearing images of the rest of his companions), and the central figure is presumably the Fool. The Juggler has neither table nor sceptre. Williams adds, "at the top left-hand corner of the card was a complex device of curiously interwoven lines." This device is mentioned once again, on the third of Williams' cards, the Priestess. Perhaps this "device" derives from the elaborate interlaced initials which the artist Pamela Colman Smith put on the deck she drew for A.E. Waite. Later Williams explains, "The cards were made with the images," he

answered, 'the marks in the corner of each of them is the seal of the bottom of each golden shape; seventy-eight figures, and as many seals on as many cards.'"21

Williams makes his interpretation of the Juggler perfectly clear:

"The Juggler--if it is a juggler?" she asked.

"It is the beginning of all things--a show, a dexterity of balances, a flight, and a falling. It's the only way he--whoever he was--could form the beginning and the continuation of the dance itself."

"Is it God then?" Nancy asked, herself yet more hushed.

Henry moved impatiently. "What do we know?" he answered. "This isn't a question of words. God or gods or no gods, these things are, and they're meant and manifested thus. Call it God if you like, but it's better to call it the Juggler and mean neither God nor no God."²²

The role of the Juggler as Creator (Yahweh? demiurge?) is made yet clearer:

She saw--and this more in her own mind--the remote figure of the Juggler, standing in the void before creation was, and flinging up the glowing balls which came into being as they left his hands, and became planets and stars, and they remained some of them poised in the air, but others fell almost at once and dropped down below and soared again, until the creating form was lost behind the flight and the maze of the worlds.²³

Even more explicit is this passage:

Strain and stress were everywhere; the latest name for matter was Force, wasn't it? Electrical nuclei or something of that sort. If this antique beauty was all made of electrical nuclei, there might be--there must be--a dance going on somewhere in which even that running figure with the balls flying over it in curves would be outpaced.²⁴

Clearly Williams relates the balls to the conventional diagram of the atom with its nucleus surrounded by spinning particles, which in its turn owes much to the conventional diagram of the solar system. He states his meaning most succinctly of all: "the hand of the Juggler has been stretched to cast and catch the tossed balls of existence."²⁵ These motifs are repeated when the Juggler and the Fool are united, but that will be examined below.

The Empress: Though he places her second in the deck, she is clearly related by Williams to the Emperor. In putting her second he follows the fifteenth century order of the deck, but he departs from it in the next place by putting the Priestess as #3. The variant orders of Love's captives are:

15th century (Moakley)

- II. L'Imperatrice
- III. L'Imperadore
- IV. La Papessa
- V. Il Papa

A.E. Waite

- II. High Priestess
- III. Empress

- IV. Emperor
- V. Hierophant

18th century (traditional)

- II. La Papessa
- III. L'Imperatrice
- IV. L'imperatore
- V. Il Papa

Charles Williams

- II. Empress
- III. Woman Pope-High Priestess

- IV. Pope-Hierophant
- V. Emperor

Clearly Williams is following the tradition of separating the sexes, but he reverses the order in each case: the primitive deck put the lovers in mixed couples--"the royal shapes"²⁶ of "the Emperor with the Empress".²⁷ In discussing the couples, Williams follows this earlier pattern. He describes the Empress:

... ceremonial robes; imperial head-dress, cloak falling like folded wings, proud, austere face lifted towards where in the arch of the gate, so that the light just caught it, was a heraldic carving of some flying creature.²⁸

This is actually his description of a large public effigy of a nurse which Nancy sees during her visionary ride in an automobile in Chapter Four, "The Chariot," and which she identifies with the Empress. The face is the diagnostic trait: "the clear cold face of the Empress."²⁹

The High Priestess, the Woman Pope: She is placed after the Empress, as in the fifteenth century deck, but retains the sexual division of two women preceding two men of the traditional deck. Williams calls her "the hierophantic woman,"³⁰ and compares her to Sybil Coningsby, the mystical co-heroine of the novel: "She's like the Woman on the cards, but she doesn't know it--hierophantic, maid and matron at once."³¹ Williams gives a complete description of this card:

It had been drawn sitting on an ancient throne between two heavy pillars; a cloud of smoke rolled high above the priestly head-dress and solemn veil that she wore, and under her feet were rivers pouring out in falling cataracts. One hand was stretched out as if directing the flow of those waters, the other lay on a heavy open volume, with great clasps undone, that rested on her knees. This card was stamped in the top left-hand corner with an involved figure of intermingled lines.³²

This lady owes much to the A.E. Waite and Oswald Wirth esoteric versions of the card, though the book she carries goes back to earliest forms. The stream of water may have developed from the flowing hem of her robe as Pamela Colman Smith drew it.

There is probably an element of this card in Joanna as well: her name parallels that of "Pope Joan" as this card is sometimes called, and in her final terrible wounding encounter with Nancy, she seems to function as a hierophant. Sybil's name, of course, means sibyl, or prophetic.

The High Priest, the Pope: Early and late decks put this card in position #5, fourth of Love's captives, but Williams does not. He placed him next to his companion: "the mitred hierophant with the woman who equalled him."³³ For description, he says only, "the hierophant, the Pope of the Tarots, took ritual steps."³⁴ I would suggest that Williams equates Aaron (which was the name of the first High Priest of Israel to minister in the Tabernacle: he was the brother of Moses) with this card.

The Emperor: This card is described directly by reference to "the white cloak of the Emperor,"³⁵ and "the crown of the Emperor:"³⁶ he is depicted as "a man in a great white cloak and a golden helmet with a crown around it."³⁷ But he appears in the most quoted vision of Nancy's "Chariot" ride, as the policeman:

... the Emperor of the Trumps, helmed, in a white cloak, stretching out one sceptred arm, as if Charlemagne, or one like him, stretched out his controlling sword over the tribes of Europe pouring from the forests and bade them pause or march as he would.³⁸

C.S. Lewis sees this vision of the world as "Order, envisaged not as restraint nor even as a convenience but as a beauty and splendour." Lewis continues wryly, "Perhaps no element in Williams' imagination separates him so widely as this from other writers. The modern world has planners and orderers in plenty, but they are not often poets: it has poets not a few, but they seldom see beauty in policemen."³⁹

It is possible that Williams echoes the importance of the male lover in the character of Henry, whose name means "Ruler," or "Ruler in the home." The placement of the above-listed four cards emerges as that of the hierophantic couple (side-by-side) flanked and escorted by the imperial couple whose function lies within the world, as below:

Empress; Priestess, Priest: Emperor
Nancy / Sybil / Aaron / Henry

The above and very tentative identification of Nancy with the Empress is based on her role as deflector of the magical storm: "She stretched out her arms, instinctively passionate to control the storm."⁴⁰ The name Nancy derives from Anne, which means "Grace" (from the Hebrew Hannah, the mother of Samuel). She becomes a vehicle of Grace in this act, and to her lover Henry as well: "The warm hands of humanity in hers met the invasion and turned it."⁴¹ Williams' own explanation of this group is as follows:

She saw, as the girl's excited voice rushed on, the four great figures between whom the earth itself hovered--the double manifestation of a single fact, the body and soul of human existence, the Emperor and the Empress, and diagonally opposite them, the hierophants male and female, the quadruple security of knowledge and process upon earth.⁴²

The Chariot: The appearance of this card as Williams describes it is clearly based upon the tradition of A.E. Waite and Oswald Wirth, for the emphasis is upon the sphinxes which draw it, and these do not appear in the traditional deck, which uses the conventional horses of the ancient Triumph. It is described as "the sphinx-drawn Chariot,"⁴³ which is "driven by some semi-Greek figure scourging on two sphinxes who drew that car."⁴⁴ The Chariot itself is not only, for Williams, the Car of Love, but becomes "the rushing chariot of the world,"⁴⁵ for as Williams writes, "Listen, among them is not the Chariot an Egyptian car, devised with two sphinxes, driven by a Greek, and having on it paintings of cities and islands?"⁴⁵ This is my source for relating the first half of Williams' deck to "this world." This is "the earth itself" which "hovered" between "the four great figures" of Empress, Priestess, Priest, and Emperor, just as the "other world" (which the World--Eternity--becomes) hovers between the four great supernatural figures of the Tetramorphs in the traditional Tarot. In Williams' interpretation, then, the four lovers are not the captives, but rather the attendants or escorts of the Chariot. The "Greek" driver may be derived from his traditional garb, which in both esoteric and exoteric deck is shown as Roman armour.

The Lovers: This card shows for Williams "the soul in its delighted society of terrestrial love."⁴⁷ As he describes it, ... she saw the two lovers, each aureoled, each with hands stretched out, each clad in some wild beast's skin, dancing side by side down a long road that ran from a far-off point right down to the foreground.⁴⁸

Together they form "that joined beauty of the two lovers."⁴⁹ Obviously this card is closely related to Nancy and Henry themselves. But beyond that (or rather an extension of that) they make clear the whole emphasis of the deck's first section: it represents the world of mankind, including the primeval pair, Adam and Eve, who outside of the Garden have turned from leaves to garments of "wild beast's skins"--or as Williams put it, "the Incarnation of Love," who is sovereign over the entire deck.

It is time to quote what may be the most significant passage in the entire novel:

"And what," Mr. Coningsby said, as if this riddle were entirely unanswerable, "what do you call the hypothesis of Christianity?"

"The Deity of Love and the Incarnation of Love?" Sybil suggested, adding "Of course, whether you agree with it is another matter."⁵⁰

The deck is divided into the Triumph of Love Incarnate (God in man made manifest) and the Triumph of Love as Deity ("God is love"). These twin Triumphs demonstrate, in other words, (those of St Athanasius) that "God and man is one Christ." The novel takes place during the days surrounding the Feast of the Incarnation--Christmas--and the church-going scene of Christmas Eve is not a mere nod at conventional Christianity but the precise presentation of the central theme of the novel:

The mingled voices of men and boys were proclaiming the nature of Christ--"God and man is one Christ"; then the boys fell silent, and the men went on, "one, not by conversion of the Godhead into flesh, but by taking of the manhood into God." On the assertion they ceased, and the boys rushed joyously in, "One altogether, not"--they looked at the idea and tossed it airily away--"not by confusion of substance, but by unity"--they rose, they danced, they triumphed--"by unity, by unity"--they were silent, all but one, and that one fresh perfection proclaimed the full consummation, each syllable rounded, prolonged, exact--"by unity of person."⁵¹

"They triumphed"--of course. The symbol of this doctrine is the embrace of Juggler and Fool, but that will be discussed below.

The Hermit: For Williams the Lovers demonstrate the form of Love Incarnate which had been most meaningful in his life: that of marriage. He is the great theologian of married love, and of romantic love in general. But he recognized and wrote also of the other kind of love, that of the contemplative, for whom God does not appear in the flesh of the beloved (as in the Way of Affirmation), but through the Way of Negation. This is why he pairs the Hermit, "the old anchorite"⁵² with the Lovers, both in his list of cards and in the following passage, which I quote here in full: "On one side went the Hermit, the soul in its delighted solitude of contemplation, and on the other, the Lovers, the soul in its delighted society of terrestrial love."⁵³

Temperance, Fortitude, Justice: Apparently the order of the Virtues is not important to Williams: he gives the one just quoted in his first listing of the deck, and another in the following passage, which is his only description of them: they are ". . . an image closing the mouth of a lion, and another bearing a cup closed by its hand, and another with scales but with unbandaged eyes--which had been numbered in the paintings under the titles of Strength and Temperance and Justice."⁵⁴ It will be noted that he gives Fortitude her common alternative name of "Strength" here, having used "Fortitude" previously. They are not mentioned again except in the summary (quoted above) in which Williams identified the Trumps with "the truths, the facts . . . principles of thought"--where he refers to "certain Virtues."⁵⁵ Clearly he thinks of them as a group and places them (as in the same passage) in association with "Love and certain Virtues and Meditation."

The Virtues complete the part of the deck representing Man, and especially Deity Incarnate in Man, the human nature of Christ. Mankind is represented as composed of body and soul, each of which has a masculine and feminine form, and as seeking unity with God in Himself and within Mankind, in the union of male and female. We now turn to the second part of the deck. Before doing so, and in order to understand perfectly Williams' brilliant invention, we will examine the portion of the Creed of St. Athanasius bearing upon the Incarnation:

Now the right Faith is that we believe and confess / that Our Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God, is both God and Man.
He is God of the Substance of the Father, begotten before the worlds; / and he is Man, of the Substance of his Mother, born in the world;
Perfect God; / perfect Man, of reasoning soul and human flesh subsisting;
Equal to the Father as touching his Godhead; / less than the Father as touching his Manhood.
Who although he be God and Man, / yet he is not two, but is one Christ;⁵⁶

These verses immediately precede those sung in the Christmas Eve service as described by Williams and quoted above.

The Wheel: Placed centrally in Williams' deck, the Wheel symbolizes the transition between the first part of the deck and the second, besides presenting a central mandala image. Williams describes it as a vision of Lothair Coningsby, Nancy's father (the ambitious civil servant). He sees it first as an image of futility, which as the Wheel of Fortune it obviously is: "as if bound upon a great wheel, spinning round, with lives bound to it . . ." ⁵⁷ and, "--as the wheel turned; it didn't go quickly, but it was always revolving, and he had been on it for so long, so many years," ⁵⁸ This is the wheel of Karma. Then by an intensification of his vision, he sees:

Wheels within wheels--there had been some phase of glory, angels or something, wheels full of eyes, cycles in

cycles all vigilant and intelligent, revolving. ⁵⁹

But the vision fades (as it had for Dante)--and he sees only "a vague wheel of innumerable hands, all intertwined and clasped and turning, turning faster and faster, turning out of mud and into the mist, heads falling from it, helplessly clutching."⁶⁰

This motif--"the helpless hands that formed the Wheel"--⁶¹ appears once more, briefly, as Nancy and Henry behold the transfiguration of Sybil Coningsby when she stretches out "a golden hand"--Williams compares it to "the hand of the Juggler" and "the hand of the Fool"--it is "the center of all things, the power and the glory, the palm glowing with a ruddy passion veiled by the aureate flesh--the hand of all martyrs, enduring; of all lovers, welcoming; of all rulers, summoning." The figures of the Tarot come rushing toward "the hand that, being human, was so much more than symbol."⁶² The hand of Sybil is revealed, briefly, as the hand of Incarnate Deity: as are all our hands, as is all flesh.

The Hanged Man: That revelatory card is followed immediately in Williams' deck by what for many modern readers is the most compelling image of the Tarot. He first describes the card of the Hanged Man as showing "two other shapes who bore between them a pole or cross on which hung by his foot the image of a man."⁶³ The "other shapes" are Williams' own invention. In a description of the dance of the Tarot images, as the Lovers moved, "before them rose the figure of the Hanged Man, and they disjoined to pass on either side and went each under his cross."⁶⁴ The "pole or cross" which is what supports the Hanged Man in Waite's deck but not in any traditional one, early or late, is identified with the Cross of Christ, and both Nancy and her father experience visions of this card. Nancy sees:

. . . there, with light full on it, thrown up in all its terrible detail, gaunt, bare, and cold, was a man, or the image of a man, hanging by his hands, his body thrust out from the pole which held it, his head dropping to one side, and on it a dreadful tangled head-dress. . . It was the wrong way up--the head should have been below; it was always so in the cards, the Hanged Man upside down.⁶⁵

Later she recalls it "as if it were a supernatural riddle, the shock of seeing the crucifix with its head above its feet, and the contrast with the Hanged Man of the cards."⁶⁶ This explicitly Christian image is contrasted with Lothair's terrible (but accurate) vision of Henry, in which the identification of the Hanged Man as a traitor is present, though Williams probably did not know directly of this early meaning of the card. Lothair Coningsby (his name means "famous warrior"--but since this is explained by Williams as an obsession of its bearer--"Names had for him a horrid attraction, largely owing to his own . . . disastrous name"⁶⁷ it probably has no symbolic content beyond a certain irony) sees that:

Henry was, in the ridiculous reflections of the mist, hanging in the void, his head downwards, his hands out of sight behind him somewhere, his leg--one leg--drawn up across the other; it was the other he was hanging by.⁶⁸

This is an exact description of the posture of the Hanged Man in the Waite-Smith deck and in the traditional deck as well.

Death: Displaced by Williams from his unvarying position as the thirteenth card to place #14, is "Death with his sickle."⁶⁹ This attribute--"the stretched sickle of the image of Death"⁷⁰--identifies him: "the swift ubiquitous form of a sickle-armed Death."⁷¹ He is always "the naked figure of a peasant Death, his sickle in his right hand."⁷² A naked peasant, not a skeleton: Henry asks Aaron in seeking to identify the original Tarot deck: "and Death--is not Death a naked peasant, with a knife in his hand, with his sandals slung at his side?"⁷³ There are certain images of Death used in Symbolist art (a style concurrent with Art Nouveau, which much influenced the style of Pamela Colman Smith's drawings) of which this would be a good description. The Visconti-Sforza deck makes him a dreadfully emaciated figure, and the traditional decks usually make him a frank skeleton. The Smith-Waite deck has no influence here, for it makes Death a splendidly-armoured skeleton on horseback. This is the only place where Death has a knife for Williams (unless he bears both knife and sickle, always a possibility for a peasant). When Aaron and Henry plot to kill Nancy's father, Aaron remarks drily, "Death is one of the Greater Trumps."⁷⁴ This is echoed by Nancy's agonized cry to Sybil about her father and Henry:

"There's just Death between them, and I'm in the middle of it."

"Then," Sybil said, "there's something that isn't death, at least. And you might be more important than Death, mightn't you? In fact, you might be life perhaps."⁷⁵ This summarizes Williams' attitude toward Death exactly.

The Devil: A similar refusal to treat a card as merely malign (or as ultimately and irreversibly malign) is seen in Williams' descriptions of "the devil, if it is a devil?"⁷⁶ He is called "the Devil" in some places, but he remains "a horned mystery bestriding two chained victims."⁷⁷ Becoming explicit, Williams describes him as "a more ominous form still, Set of the Egyptians, with the donkey head, and the captives chained to him, the power of infinite malice,"⁷⁸ and again, as "the fearful shape of Set who was the worker of iniquity ruling over his blinded victims."⁷⁹ Elsewhere he speaks of "the two victims who were dragged prisoner to the power of Set in the Tarot

paintings.⁸⁰ Set is the adversary and murderer of Osiris, the "corn god" who is resurrected year by year as Horus; the relationship of this pair of divinities to the King in Egyptian thought has been discussed already. By calling the Devil by Set's name, Williams relates him with his theme of Joanna as Isis distractedly seeking her son Horus; and as we know, she is to find him, in the person of Nancy, who bears a "gipsy name." The Devil, who is the Adversary, is always defeated in a fully Christian cosmology --or rather he plays his part (as in Job) and is ultimately incorporated into the necessary wholeness of divine action. The description given by Williams of the card corresponds to its traditional appearance, though the donkey-head seems to be Williams' contribution, for in the esoteric cards the Devil is goat-like (after Eliphas Levi's famous illustration) and the esoteric cards show him as a leering (but horned) visage (or two). The donkey is not a symbol of Set, but it is a symbol of the Fool, as it is seen in some versions of the Wheel, which in Waite's deck has one rather diabolical-looking donkey-headed figure falling from it.

The Tower: This card becomes an image of the purgatorial experience by which Henry is purified of his attempt upon the life of Nancy's father, so that he can be restored to her love. That passage, which is much too long to quote here, in its entirety is profoundly visionary:

... the Great Tower which reached almost out of sight, so loftily that it grew up and then always--just as his dimmed eyes strained to see the rising walls--tattered and swayed and began in a horrible silence to fall apart, but never quite apart.⁸¹

The motif of "the tower that fell continually"⁸² is its chief characteristic: it is "a tower that rose and fell into pieces, and then was re-arisen in some new place,"⁸³ and "a tower that continually fell into ruin and was continually re-edified."⁸⁴ Williams opens the novel with Mr. Coningsby's peevish phrase, "... Perfect Babel,"⁸⁵ and follows it with Nancy's pert rejoinder, "But Babel never was perfect, was it?"⁸⁵ He uses the identification of the Tower with that of Babel as a symbol of pride and conflict: "the Tower that each had raised--the Babel of their desired heavens--had fallen in the tumult of their conflicting wills and languages."⁸⁷ As an image of the defeat of overweening pride, or rather of the malign use of power and the desire to wrest from Heaven what can only be achieved by prayer and grace, the tower is the fit instrument of Henry's purgation.

The Star: The three celestial captives of Eternity are given unequal treatment by Williams; the Star is described only "the woman who wore a crown of stars."⁸⁸ The Waite deck shows the Empress as so crowned, but the context of the above description shows that Williams means the Star card by it. The traditional deck shows a kneeling woman pouring out water; her head is against a sky filled with large stars, so perhaps Williams' image is a poetic expression of this form.

The Moon: In his first mention of this card, Williams refers to "the twin beasts who had each of them on their heads a crescent moon."⁸⁹ There are two beasts--they appear to be dogs--on the traditional card, but their heads do not bear crescents. He gives a very complete description of the traditional card (which in the Waite deck is simply a re-drawing of the traditional form rather than an occult inflation as in many of the others): this is one of the most mysterious of all the real Tarot cards and Williams' explanation of its meaning is a profound one. The two towers, the two dogs, and the "other creature--in a coat of shell" are as he describes them:

For there, high between two towers, the moon shines, clear and perfect, and the towers are no longer Babels ever rising and falling, but complete in their degree. Below them again, on either side of a long and lonely road, two handless beasts--two dogs, or perhaps a wolf and a dog--sit howling, as if something which desired attainment cried out unprofitably from above; and again below, in the painting of mysterious depths, some other creature moves in the sea, in a coat of shell, clawed and armed, shut up in itself, but even itself crawling darkly towards a land which it does not comprehend. The sun is not yet risen, and if the Fool moves there he comes invisibly, or perhaps in widespread union with the light of the moon which is the reflection of the sun.⁹⁰

This card furnishes the title for Chapter 14, "The Moon of the Tarots."

The Sun: Similarly, this entitles Chapter 16, "Sun, stand thou still upon Gideon." In his description of the three celestial cards which includes "the woman who wore a crown of stars" and "the twin beasts who had each of them on their heads a crescent moon," this card becomes "the twin children on whose brows were two rayed suns in glory."⁹¹ The "two children" appear--they are of various ages including adult--in the traditional Tarot, though the Visconti-Sforza deck has them as two putti. Williams describes them in detail:

It was the nineteenth card--that named the Sun--and was perfectly simple; the sun shone full in a clear sky, and two children--a boy and a girl--played happily below. Sybil smiled again as she contemplated them. "Aren't they the loveliest things?" she breathed, and

Indeed they were--so vivid, so intense, so rapturous under that benignant light. . . .⁹²

The light is diagnostic for Williams: he describes "the two children playing together under an unshaped sun, themselves shedding the light by which they played,"⁹³ and in a visionary sequence in the chapter named for the card, he makes "the sunlight shed itself about the whole house, and in the sunlight seriously engrossed, two small strange children played."⁹⁴ He explains the meaning of this card too: "Sybil stood there, and from her the sun of the Tarots ruled, and the holy children of the sun, the company of the blessed, were seen."⁹⁵ Finally, in the summary of the deck which begins, "They . . . are the truths," he calls it "the Benign Sun of Wisdom."⁹⁶

The Last Judgement: The first image of this card emphasizes equally the trumpeting angel and the resurrected, who for Williams is seen as a skeleton: "the heavenly form of Judgement who danced with a skeleton half freed from its grave-cloths, and held a trumpet to its lips."⁹⁷ Apparently Williams has transferred the traditional skeleton image from the card of Death to the card of the Last Judgement, for to a Christian, the final word on the skeleton is that it is to be the seed of the new body of the Resurrection. He changes the image slightly in the following passage: ". . . he came to the pictures which were called (XX) The Last Judgement--where a Hand thrust out of a cloud touched a great sarcophagus and broke it, so that the skeleton within could arise."⁹⁸ Whose hand it is, he reveals soon after: "Yet a tomb lay in the path, and the Fool--surely the motionless Fool!--stretched out his hand, and from within it rose a skeleton."⁹⁹ It is Nancy who sees this early revelation of the Fool's identity. Williams' pun on the words "trumpet" and "trumps" is suggested in the following passage: "the trumpets cry in the design which is called the Judgement, and the tombs are broken,"¹⁰⁰ which precisely describes the conventional card. He follows the defeat of the supernatural storm with a summary of his interpretation of the Triumph of Eternity:

But if the Tarots hold, as has been dreamed, the message which all things in all places and times have also been dreamed to hold, then perhaps there was meaning in the order as in the paintings; the tale of the cards being completed when the mystery of the sun has opened in the place of the moon, and after that the trumpets cry in the design which is called the Judgement, and the tombs are broken, and then in the last mystery of all the single figure of what is called the world goes joyously dancing in a state beyond moon and sun, and the number of the Trumps is done.¹⁰¹

The World: We first see this card as "the single figure who leaped in rapture and was named the world."¹⁰² This describes both traditional and occult versions of the card; it is the singleness of the figure which is diagnostic: "and (XXI) the World--where a single singing form, as if of a woman, rose in a ray of light towards a clear heaven of blue, leaving moon and sun and stars beneath her feet."¹⁰³ This reveals to us Williams' conception of the structure of this part of the deck, as given in the passage quoted above. He refers finally to "the girdle of the woman who danced alone,"¹⁰⁴ and in both traditional and occult versions the nude figure does trail a flowing ribbon of cloth about herself. The Tetramorphs, which usually appear on this card, are not mentioned, and in some ways Williams' description calls to mind the very early cards where a lady surmounts a globe.

The Fool: The above-quoted summary of the last cards "among the one and twenty illuminations of the Greater Trumps"¹⁰⁵ is concluded as follows:

Save only for that which has no number and is called the Fool, because mankind finds it folly till it is known. It is sovereign or it is nothing, and if it is nothing then man was born dead.¹⁰⁶

As we have seen, the Fool, whether as a card or as the golden image, dominates the novel. He is neither mendicant, idiot, nor jester:

She picked up the last card, numbered naught, and exhibited it. It might have needed some explanation, for it was obscure enough. It was painted with the figure of a young man, clothed in an outlandish dress of four striped colours, black and grey and silver and red; his legs and feet and arms were bare, and he had over one shoulder a staff, carved into serpentine curves, that carried a round bag, not unlike the balls with which the juggler played. The bag rested against his shoulder, so that as he stood there he supported as well as bore it. Before him a dragon-fly, or some such airy creature, danced; by his side a larger thing, a lynx or young tiger, stretched itself up to him--whether in affection or attack could not be guessed, so poised between both the beast stood. The man's eyes were very bright. He was smiling, and the smile was so intense and rapt that those looking at it felt a quick motion of contempt--no sane man could be as happy as that. He was painted as if pausing in his stride, and there was no scenic background; he and his were seen against a flatness of dull gold.¹⁰⁷

This Fool is Williams' own, though it owes something to the

Smith-Walite version; he frees it of precipice and other unheeded menace: the dragon-fly appears nowhere else. The bag and staff are traditional. The attendant beast seems to be diagnostic of the card and the golden image alike, though the latter has its own traits, to be discussed below. "The Fool and his tiger,"¹⁰⁸ Williams writes: "the tiger's quite lifelike. So's the Fool."¹⁰⁹ He reveals something of its mysterious meaning very late in the book:

In the last of the Tarot cards, in the unnumbered illumination, she had seen something like that--a beast rearing against the Fool; it had not then seemed to be attacking exactly; rather it had seemed as if poised in the very act of a secret measure trodden with its controlling partner among the more general measure trodden by all the shapes. The Fool and the tiger, the combined and single mystery--¹¹⁰

As T.S. Eliot puts it in *Gerontion*, "In the juvenescence of the year / Came Christ the tiger."¹¹¹

"Unnumbered:" this is another major trait; ". . . that which has no number and is called the Fool, because mankind finds it, folly till it is known. It is sovereign or it is nothing."¹¹² Williams' Fool is above all sovereign. This is symbolized by the Fool as an image, first by its apparent stillness: "the motionless Fool"¹¹³ --"it was still, it alone in the middle of all that curious dance did not move, though it stood as if poised for running. The lynx or other great cat by its side was motionless also."¹¹⁴ But this stillness is only apparent:

"And the Fool who doesn't move?" she said after a pause.

"All I can tell you of that," he said grimly, "is that it is the Fool who doesn't move. There are tales and writings of everything but the Fool; he comes into none of the doctrines or the fortunes. I've never yet seen what he can be."

"Yet Aunt Sybil saw him move," she said.¹¹⁵

This is "the vivid figure of the Fool"¹¹⁶ which dominates the novel:

For a moment, as she ran, she thought she saw another form, growing out of the driving snow--a tall figure that ran down the white stairs of the flakes, and as it touched earth circled round the overwhelmed man. Before it a gleam of pale gold, as of its own reflection, since no break in the storm allowed the sinking sun to lighten the world, danced in the air, on the ground, on hands that were stretched out towards the victim. They seemed to touch him, as in the Sistine Chapel the Hand of God forever touches the waking Adam, and vanished as she reached it. Only, for a moment again, she saw that gleam of flying gold pass away into the air. . . .¹¹⁷

This is the moment of rescue, when Henry's plan to murder Lothair is set aside by the Fool, lightly, through the agency of an old lady (Sybil) and a kitten.

She knew where the golden light came from among the images; it came from the figure of the Fool who moved so much the most swiftly, who seemed to be everywhere at once, whose irradiation shone therefore so universally upward that it maintained the circle of light high over all, under which the many other rays of colour mingled and were dominated now by one, now by another. It had been, this afternoon, as if some figure--say, the Fool himself--had come speeding down from his own splendid abode of colour to her brother's side. . . .¹¹⁸

It is Sybil alone who fully understands the role of the Fool, insofar as he can be understood. She tells Nancy, ". . . never mind the storm; it's nothing, it's under the feet of the Fool--"¹¹⁹ This is Williams' own answer to the discomfort some critics have felt at the ease with which the most malignant difficulties are set aside in his novels, for to him, everything is "under the feet of the Fool." This is, perhaps, the meaning of the "Fool and his tiger, the combined and single mystery," for Williams' Fool is a whole, a union of opposites, that image of God for which Jung pled in so many of his works, and perhaps most poignantly of all in *Memories, Dreams, Reflections*:

The myth must ultimately take monotheism seriously and put aside its dualism, which, however much repudiated officially, has persisted until now and enthroned an eternal dark antagonist alongside the omnipotent Good. Room must be made within the system for the philosophical *complexio oppositorum* of Nicholas of Cusa and the moral ambivalence of Jacob Boehme; only thus can the One God be granted the wholeness and the synthesis of opposites which should be His.¹²⁰

That the Fool dances is essential to his being. This is of course not an invention of Williams': Gerardus van der Leeuw writes of the medieval concept of dance, "the most eloquent example of such a dance of mystic contemplation is the image of the dancing Christ, which was current in gnostic circles during the early centuries of our era."¹²¹ He continues, "Medieval mysticism takes up this theme and describes the whole life of the Lord in the form of a dance;" this can be seen ". . . in the Shrove Tuesday song of the fifteenth century:

Jesus, he must dance the lead,

And the Virgin Mary;
All must pay his rhythm heed
To reach God's sanctuary.¹²²

A contemporary theologian adds, "Modern theology has increasingly rejected the notion of an unmoved mover . . . and has come to speak of a dancing God, a God whose perfection is in process, whose life is involved in the relativities of relationship."¹²³ This understanding is of course no new thing in theology--to the Elizabethan mind, for instance, ". . . the universe itself is one great dance comprising many lesser dances," as E.M.W. Tillyard tells us, and "it was creative love that first persuaded the warring atoms to move in order. Time and all its divisions are a dance."¹²⁴ This motif is developed in the poem *Orchestra* by Sir John Davies, which several writers on Williams have suggested as a source for his dancing golden images of the universals, and a quotation from it appears as the epigraph of the present paper.

We have already seen how the Juggler is identified as "neither God nor not God"¹²⁵ --and Williams relates him directly to the Fool:

. . . of all the figures there was none left but the Juggler who appeared suddenly right under her eyes and went speedily up a single path which had late been multitudinous, and ran to meet the Fool. They came together; they embraced; the tossing balls fell over them in a shower of gold--and the golden mist covered everything.¹²⁶

This apocalyptic image is repeated as Nancy remembers her vision: "she . . . had lain awake for a long time, seeing only that last wild rush together of the Fool and the Juggler, that falling torrent of balls breaking into a curtain of golden spray, which thickened into cloud before her."¹²⁷

Nancy and Sybil alike are granted visions of the Fool and his dance, for they are "Ladies whose understanding is of Love,"¹²⁸ as Dante calls such women in *La Vita Nuova*. The Love they understand is that lord of terrible aspect whom Dante described:

I thought a flame-coloured cloud appeared in my room, and in it I saw the figure of a lord, terrifying to anyone who should look at him. He said many things to me, of which I understood little, amongst them being: "I am your Lord."¹²⁹

VII. The Sovereign Fool

The figure of the Fool is so complex, so rich in resonance, that I will bring to bear upon it the remarkable insights of William Willeford's *The Fool and His Scepter*, which might have been written as a direct commentary. Willeford is discussing Shakespeare's Fools and the great comic Fools of the twentieth century as specific examples, but he quotes and commends Charles Williams' use of the image.

According to Willeford, the traditional Fool wears feathers (as in the Visconti-Sforza Tarot) or as in the court jester's costume, because of the bird-spirit association,¹ thus suggesting their ultimate (if remote) origin in the shaman. The earliest representation of a shaman associated with a bird is thought to be the tableaux in Lascaux cave, which shows an ithyphallic man who not only bears a bird's head upon his shoulders, but has next to him a staff with a bird at the top of it.² Fools and clowns derive from "phallic ritual and ceremonies of Dionysus."³ Thus the Fool's "bauble" is probably a phallus⁴ but it is also a sceptre, which implies "that the fool has powers in some way equivalent to those of the king."⁵ I would suggest that these powers go back much before the development of the concept of kingship, and that the king's sceptre as an instrument of power derives from the shaman's staff or wand, an example of which is described above. The cock, whose comb sometimes adorns a Fool's head, is itself phallic, of course.⁶ We have already seen, and Willeford reminds us again, that the conqueror carried a phallus painted red, which he showed to the people.⁷

But there is more: the common baggy, big-bellied clown costume suggests that "lumpishness" which equals chaos--"shapeless yet material."⁸ The word *folles* is Latin for "bellows or windbag," Willeford tells us, as *folles* means "puffed cheeks," while in Italian, *buffare* means "puff."⁹ He calls to mind a relationship between spirit, wind, blowing, and the Fool, all of which motifs span a range from the shaman who performs his miracles by blowing or sucking, to the Holy Spirit who is "a rushing mighty wind." Again, the Fool's "motlely," made of "particoloured bits and pieces" is characteristic, especially familiar to us in Harlequin's costume where it reverts to a symmetrical pattern. The shaman's coat of rags, tags, dependent amulets, masks, and mannequins come to mind here--"The multifarious appendages are attached either to the shaman's coat itself or to the belt. Some of them are animal and human figures, considered to be the shaman's helping spirits; others are disks of copper or iron, small bells, strips of leather or the skins of small animals, ribbons, rods, etc. Each of these objects has a symbolic significance."¹¹ --or again, "The shaman's dress consists of the skin of a wild goat or reindeer; the outside is almost covered with a multitude of twisted handkerchiefs of various sizes, which represent snakes. . . ."¹² --these and other descriptions given by Andreas Lommel in *Shamanism, The Beginnings of Art* show the element of assemblage in shamanist garb. One thinks of the striped garb of Williams' Fool; Willeford quotes E.W. Ives: "checked, striped, speckled, pied, patches, or

parti-coloured coats were all admissible."¹³

Willeford speaks of the bells of the Fool (curious how little sound Williams uses in his books--his golden figures only hum). The bells for Willeford "present signs from another level of being,"¹⁴ as they do in the Mass or in Hindu temples. I can't help but think of the ephod or woven garment of the high Priest of Israel, which bore bells so that persons outside the Holy of Holies could hear him moving about within. The bells have been suggested (Willeford thinks this is somewhat fanciful) as coming from the same source. As the account in Genesis (28: 31-35) has it, And thou shalt make the robe of the ephod all of blue. And there shall be a hole in the top of it, in the midst thereof; it shall have a binding of woven work round about the hole of it, as it were the hole of an havergeon, that it be not rent. And beneath upon the hems of it thou shalt make pomegranates of blue, and of purple, and of scarlet, round about the hem thereof; and bells of gold between them round about: A golden bell and a pomegranate, a golden bell and a pomegranate, upon the hem of the robe round about. And it shall be upon Aaron to minister: and his sound shall be heard when he goeth in unto the holy place before the LORD, and when he cometh out, that he die not.

The relationship between this description and that of the shaman on the one hand, and of the belled and parti-coloured Fool on the other, is most tempting.

In keeping with the shamanist and Dionysian aspects of the Fool--which are expressed by Williams in his tiger companion, there are the animal elements--the asses' ears, cockcomb and feathers as already mentioned, foxtails, and calfskin. These Willeford relates to animal mummies and ultimately to religious ritual; Paleolithic representations of shamans in animal-skin costumes, accounts of Siberian shamans (like the ones given above), and images of Dionysus in his fawn-skin are well known. In *The Bacchae* of Euripides, the Chorus sings, "He wears the holy fawn-skin,"¹⁵ and, interestingly enough, Pentheus mocks the god by calling him "one of those charlatan magicians, with long yellow curls smelling of perfumes," and threatens "I'll stop his pounding with his wand and tossing/his head."¹⁶

Willeford goes on in a Dionysian vein to discuss the fact that both babbling and silence herald contact with the divine, or "possession."¹⁷ Wine was "essential to the Saturnalia"¹⁸ which took place during the intercalary period and hence was outside normal time, and sacrificial victims were "made drunk to show their transcendence of the profane condition and their connection with the gods."¹⁹ The babbling is that of the Fool as idiot, as Enid Welsford thinks he originally was:²⁰ Panofsky's relation of the Fool to the idiot have been discussed above.

Returning to the bauble, Willeford says it often was a mirror, an other-fool or double, an image of projection. It could argue with him, even stick out its tongue at him, breaking down the difference between reality and reflection.²¹ We have seen that at Lascaux, the shaman and his staff have matching bird's-heads. The bauble is thus the Shadow (to use a Jungian term), and paired clowns or twin clowns sometimes appear, suggesting the primordial pair of mythology, from whom the rest of creation evolves.²² We get a hint here of the embracing Juggler and Fool in their "shower of golden balls".

Willeford says the clown is "neither wholly real nor unreal"²³ (he is quoting M. Willson Disher's description of the clown)--as Williams says, "Neither God nor not God". Willeford speaks of imagination as "a radical reconstruction of experience in the interests of immediacy, totality, and a kind of meaning which is otherwise lacking,"²⁴ adding that such imagination is essential to symbolism in the Goethian sense. He quotes Goethe's saying in *Maximen und Reflexionen*, No. 1113:

Symbolism transforms the phenomenon into idea and the idea into image: in the image the idea remains infinitely effective and unattainable and even when expressed in all languages remains inexpressible.²⁵

Willeford recalls Jung's teaching that a symbol which crosses the threshold of consciousness has at first a numinous quality, but that this dynamism is lost in time, just as an experience of God loses its immediacy when it is turned into theology, only to be recovered by contact with new materials emerging from the unconscious.²⁵ One may see here again the Juggler (conscious order) and the Fool (unconscious?) embracing.

Willeford finds a relationship between the Fool and the Devil, Death, Fortune, the Saint, and Sexuality in medieval Christian drama.²⁶ But most especially he sees the Fool as symbolizing that "self" which for Jung is "the matrix and organizing principle of consciousness."²⁷ Following other writers, Willeford "sees magical phenomena as belonging to a field of energy deriving from the archetype; . . . sees this energy as constituting a dimension of experience and a characteristic mode of psychic functioning."²⁸ This is exactly what happens to Nancy when she rides in the Car--she has "fallen into such a magical field; with the dynamism of the archetypal constellation having usurped the controlling functions of ego-consciousness."²⁹ Readers who wish to check Williams' descriptions of alternative states of consciousness can find them validated and corroborated in either of Carlos Castaneda's books on his experiences as an apprentice to a Yaqui shaman. Castaneda's "led folly" by which he

is able to perceive or "see" the world, in various unforgettable passages in *A Separate Reality*. As Willeford says, "the fool . . . admits the magical power of chaos."³⁰ Magical seeing is a special kind of "apperception" which is that perception characterized by clearness, and by the relating of what is now present to previously acquired knowledge, Willeford says:

In one sense the modern Western nostalgia for "the primitive" is an expression of our cultural and psychological situation; in another it is extremely ancient. The notion of being completely in the world and not separated by the human condition with its burden of culture is an archetype as is the notion of being radically divided from the world. This condition of being in the natural world--and out of culture--is often conceived as primitive, and the fool is one of the recurrent figures in which it is expressed.³¹

As Williams says of the Fool, "He was smiling, and the smile was so intense and rapt that those looking at it felt a quick motion of contempt--no sane man could be as happy as that."

Willeford outlines magical thought into five categories: first is similarity, in which like produces like, an effect resembles its cause, and like things are identical. Second is contact or contagion, in which things once in contact remain in contact. Third is the concept of *pars pro toto*, in which a part of a thing is that thing (this is related to both the previous categories). Fourth is magical affinity, in which what affects one member of a group affects the others. Fifth is magical cause and effect, in which things can be influenced by super-natural and irrational events and thus set up a different sequence from that of natural cause and effect. Magic, in being based upon a universe operating according to the above principles, is "coercive;" it really can affect things. Willeford uses the term "fundamental apperception" for that "mystical participation" which deceives us into thinking that our everyday experiences are objective when they are really subjective. This causes "projection," the experience that our psychic life takes place outside of ourselves.³² The archetypes are the "transpersonal, unconscious factors that actively shape our experience."³³

It is as archetype, operating according to magical laws, that the Fool is identified with so many different roles. "The . . . fool is like a chunk of Chaos in which the archetypal divine child is present but unborn, his form and meaning hidden."³⁴ The medieval stage - devil's comic (fool) element was a preservation of pagan wholeness which included him as a part of "unconscious totality" rather than forcing him into the "dualism" which Willeford (following Jung, as we have seen) sees in official church doctrine which made the devil completely evil.³⁵ Thus in medieval drama the devil and the personified Vice--Folly is a Vice--competed comically, in a pattern which evolved into the two-comic routine of today.

As we have seen, the Fool is closely linked with Dionysian rites. Dionysus is the god of "the irrational and of natural fertility;" he is "a destructive but highly creative link between man and the sources of natural life."³⁷ Thus, Williams' Fool is at home in the storm, for it is "under the feet of the Fool." As Willeford says, "the disorder of which he [Dionysus] is spirit is largely contained in his show, he serves as the boundary."³⁸ The clown functions as a border between chaos and order--between waste land and kingdom--"like the triumphant who "enters" the city of Rome through an arch, a ceremonial door, and brings his dynamism in. "He [the clown] is impelled by the dynamism of chaos; they [his foils] are impelled by what they take to be the necessity of reinforcing the wall against the outside and of neutralizing what has broken through it into the world they govern."⁴⁰ Charles Williams makes the forcing of the door to Aaron's house by the irresistible snow a high point of chaos in his novel: "At last those crashing buffets had torn lock and bolt from the doorpost; the door was flung back, and the invading masses of snow and wind swept in."⁴¹ The invasion takes the form of a dance--"the floor of the hall was covered before anyone could speak; the wind--if it were not rather the dance of searching shapes--swept into every corner."⁴² Of course it is Sybil who succeeds in shutting the door again, at least momentarily, until finally the golden mist of the Tarots within and the snowy powers--also of the Tarots--without are united, and "The two powers intermingled--golden mist with wind and snow; the flakes were aureoled, the mist was whitened."⁴³ It is the climax of invasion: "Dancing feet went by; golden hands were stretched out and withdrawn. The invasion of the Tarots was fulfilled."⁴⁴

And yet this terrific and overpowering event is soon to be resolved by Nancy, and we are given foretaste of that as she muses, "the Tarots themselves were not more marvellous than the ordinary people she had so long unintelligently known. By the slightest vibration of the light in which she saw the world she saw it all differently; holy and beautiful, if sometimes perplexing and bewildering, went the figures of her knowledge."⁴⁵ No wonder critics find the resolution disappointingly easy; three chapters before the end, Nancy sees that "Nothing was certain; everything was safe--that was part of the mystery of Love. . . Nothing mattered beyond the full moment in which she could live to her utmost in the power and according to the laws of the dance."⁴⁶

The centre is both the "source of established order" and the source of "The mana which erupts spontaneously from it;"⁴⁷ like

the dynamism-filled triumphator who brought Dionysian mana into the city, having established and furthered its order. Willeford comments on "the coexistence of the cults of Apollo and Dionysus at Delphi."⁴⁸ We have already seen that Zeus (Jupiter) and Dionysus are really Father and Son, different aspects of a single god. Willeford compares this relationship of motifs to the meteorite (the uncontrollable natural event) set into the wall of the highly rational square Kaaba traditionally built by Abraham at Mecca.⁴⁹ I would add that Christianity as an established order "built by hands" is continuously disturbed and re-vivified by the action of the Holy Spirit.

This brings us to Willeford's theory on the relationship of the Fool to the King, which for him is central. He explains that "the title 'King' draws its resonance from an archaic pattern of belief, according to which the Kingship is only secondarily a political office and is primarily magical and religious."⁵⁰ This is "the context from which the fool draws his highest symbolic value."⁵¹ Perhaps we can find light here upon Gertrude Moakley's intuition of a relationship between Fool and King. Briefly, the King embodied the fertility of the crops, and his potency enhanced them. In some cultures (by no means all, as Frazer and others have thought), he was even killed to prevent his weakness from weakening the kingdom. In Egypt, as we have seen, he was re-crowned periodically to re-establish his power, with a ceremonial procession. In Mesopotamia (as described above) he re-enacted the marriage of god and goddess (with a priestess) and a procession occurred there too. "The King is not only the magician, prophet, and lawgiver; he is also the hero, sometimes meeting with a tragic fate."⁵² King David (and his son, King Solomon) embody this complex to Jews and Christians alike.

Now, when the triumphator, who was temporarily decked as a king--indeed, as Jupiter, the king of the gods--was hailed by the cry *trionphe* which was the name of a song for Dionysus' and perhaps the name of the god himself, he was being addressed by the invocation of that god whose primary trait was to manifest himself. He was then accompanied by scatological jesting and phallic revelry. The Fool is thus the King's "shadow," the "rest of him." In the corn festival of which Moakley is reminded, the Fool himself becomes a mock King who dies in the King's place--he is the King's double.

Willeford explains, "it is finally not the King as sun that is supreme but the planetary system that governs the rising and setting of the sun . . . the waxing and waning of the moon and all the figurations of the stars."⁵³ These motifs occur in the Tarot, of course, and in Williams' novel as well. Thus the magical character of jokes about the ultimate impotency--the human status--of the King, compared to the apparent all-power of his royal status are revealed in evocations of his place in the divine plan:

. . . the Roman conqueror habitually returned to Rome to receive a triumph. He rode in a chariot at the close of the procession, surrounded by dancing gold-crowned clowns and satyrs, who made obscene gestures and coarse jokes. . . while the conqueror held a dried cockerel's comb as an amulet against the evil eye, a gold-crowned slave holding the Crown of Jupiter Capitolinus above the victor's head whispered again and again, "O conqueror, look behind you, and remember you are mortal."⁵⁴

In the Quattrocento (the fifteenth century) this slave, Willeford tells us, was depicted in the jester's trappings.⁵⁵

The King's paraphernalia, whether he bears the spear or sword of a hero,⁵⁶ or the sceptre as a world tree or world axis with a flower or leaf at its tip,⁵⁷ is phallic, as is the Fool's bauble⁵⁸ (read Williams' description again: "a staff, carved into serpentine curves, that carried a round bag,"), although, according to Willeford, these motifs may contain a feminine element as well, for the Fool of the Tarot carries a bag (female) as well as a staff (male).

Willeford speaks of "the archetypal experience" in the way that Williams would use "the Beatrician experience," saying that its "numinosity . . . gradually fades."⁵⁹ These experiences become part of the "collective consciousness," to use Jolande Jacobi's term which Willeford borrows. Thus "the self [King?] and the ego [Hero?] compose a system by which consciousness is brought to birth and organized within the larger field of the psyche (which is unconscious as well as conscious) and within, and without this system the fool has a life-furthering role."⁶⁰ The Fool is thus the "archaic ego component"⁶¹ which precedes ego and draws it back to its origin, the self. This idea Willeford calls "a working hypothesis in the exploration of certain psychopathological states which are characterized by loss or diminution of the powers of the ego [stress, exhaustion, sleep, illness . . . and the very beginning and ending of life] and by the emergence of kinds of psychic functioning that we can crudely describe as magical."⁶²

Willeford continues, ". . . the fool is finally as much a symbol of the self as the King is, the fool presenting us with the dynamism and meaning that exceed our grasp of the totality and centrality of the self that belong to the self nonetheless."⁶³ This is exactly what the Fool stands for in Williams' Tarot, and perhaps in all Tarots. Willeford states: "In the lore about the Tarot cards the fool is sometimes regarded as the first, and sometimes as being outside the sequence of the cards and forming

a link between the last and the first, making a linear arrangement of the cards into a wheel."⁶⁴ This, "the position of the fool card in the Tarot pack, positionless, hovering between an ending and a beginning,"⁶⁵ is for Willeford an image of his entire interpretation of the role of the Fool and of his meaning, just as it is for Charles Williams. Willeford concludes his book by describing Christ, tormented by the Roman soldiers and garbed in the mock robes of the Saturnalia, as the ultimate Fool, who is also God.

In the final vision of his novel, Charles Williams makes the meaning of his Tarot clear:

The chaos of the hall was a marvel of new shape and colour; the faces of those who stood around were illumined from within. It was Christmas night, but the sunlight shed itself about the whole house, and in the sunlight, between Sybil and Joanna, seriously engrossed, the small strange children played. The mystery which that ancient seer had worked in the Greater Trumps had fulfilled itself, at that time and in that place, to so high a point of knowledge. Sybil stood there, and from her the sun of the Tarots ruled, and the holy children of the sun, the company of the blessed, were seen at least by some of the eyes that watched. For Amabel saw them and was ignorantly at peace; and Aaron saw them and was ashamed; and Nancy and Henry saw them, and Nancy laughed for mere joy of seeing, and when he heard it Henry felt his heart labour as it had never done before with the summons and the power; and Sybil saw them and adored, and saw beyond them, running down the stairs between herself and Nancy as if he were their union, and poised behind Joanna as if he supported and protected her, the vivid figure of the Fool. He had come from all sides at once, yet he was but one. All-reconciling and perfect, he was there, ⁶⁶ running down the stairs as he had run down the storm.

"He was but one"--"all reconciling and perfect"--"One altogether, not by confusion of substance, but by unity of person." As Walter Otto writes, "at the beginning stands always the God. By Him first are created the goal and the road to that goal; by Him, too, the suffering He is supposed to alleviate. It was not because man had wishes that a God appeared to man to grant him fulfillment, but the needs and the wishes, like the granting of the needs and wishes, flowed from the reality of godhead."⁶⁷

Nancy, her finger pointing to the first of those great verses, [Rise to adore the mystery of love] whispered a question, "Is it true?" Sybil looked at the line, looked back at Nancy, and answered in a voice both aspirant and triumphant, "Try it, darling."⁶⁸

In Williams' Tarot, as in his world, everything is under the feet of the Fool.

Nancy-Lou Patterson
Whitsuntide, AD 1972

FOOTNOTES

1. The Greater Trumps

1 C.S. Lewis, English Literature in the Sixteenth Century, excluding Drama, Oxford University Press (London: 1954), p. 6

2 ibid., p. 7. 3 ibid., p. 6

4 The present essay is an attempt to repay a great personal debt to Williams: The Greater Trumps was the very first-read of his books for me, and it introduced me to him and to the Tarot simultaneously. I first thought to outline his use of occult motifs in all his novels, but chose his Tarot as a specific example. The path on which this choice has led me has been one of continual astonishment and ever-deepening respect for his amazingly subtle and complex mind and for the riches of his novels, which this paper cannot begin to exhaust.

5 William Lindsay Gresham, Preface, Charles Williams, The Greater Trumps, The Noonday Press (New York: 1962), p. viii.

6 Edmund Fuller, Books With Men Behind Them, "Many dimensions; the images of Charles Williams," Random House, (New York: 1962), p. 210.

7 Richard Cavendish, The Black Arts, Capricorn Books (New York: 1968), p. 100.

8 Gunnar Urang, Shadows of Heaven, "Fantasy and the Ontology of Love," United Church Press (Philadelphia: 1971), p. 52.

9 ibid., p. 92. 10 ibid. 11 ibid. 12 ibid., p. 170. 13 Fuller, op. cit., p. 210. 14 Gresham, op. cit., p. ix.

15 Alice Mary Hadfield, "The Relationship of Charles Williams' Working Life to his Fiction," in Mark R. Hillegas, ed., Shadows of Imagination, Southern Illinois University Press (Carbondale: 1969), p. 126.

16 Alice Mary Hadfield, An Introduction to Charles Williams, Robert Hale Ltd. (London: 1959), p. 81.

17 ibid., p. 86. 18 ibid.

19 T.S. Eliot, "Introduction," Charles Williams, All Hallows' Eve, Bard Books, Avon Books (New York: 1969), p. xii.

20 ibid., p. xi.

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21 W.R. Irwin, "Christian Doctrine and the Tactics of Romance: The Case of Charles Williams," in Hilligas, *op. cit.*, p. 140.
 22 Hadfield, *An Introduction to Charles Williams*, p. 79.
 23 George P. Winship, Jr., "The Novels of Charles Williams," Hilligas, *op. cit.*, pp. 113-114.
 24 Mary McDermott Shideler, *The Theology of Romantic Love*, Harper and Bros. (New York: 1962), pp. 159-160.
 25 *Ibid.*, p. 634.
 26 Charles Williams, *The Greater Trumps*, The Noonday Press (New York: 1962), p. 268.
 27 R.J. Reilly, *Romantic Religion*, University of Georgia Press (Athens, Ga.: 1971), pp. 183-184.
 28 *Ibid.*, p. 184. 29 *Ibid.* 30 *Ibid.* 31 *Ibid.*
 32 Shideler, *op. cit.*, pp. 175-176.

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1 Eliot, *op. cit.*, p. xiv.
 2 Charles Williams, *The Figure of Beatrice*, Faber and Faber (London: 1943), p. 188.
 3. Anne Ridler, "Introduction," Charles Williams, *The Image of the City*, Oxford University Press (London: 1958), p. xxiv (quoted from A.E. Waite, *Shadows of Life and Thought*, Selwyn and Blount, p. 229).
 4 *Ibid.*
 5 Hadfield, *An Introduction to Charles Williams*, p. 79.
 6 Ridler, *op. cit.*, pp. xxiv-xxv. 7 *Ibid.*, p. xxvi.
 8 *Ibid.*, p. xxv: A major authority on Jewish mysticism, Gershom Scholem, writes, "In English literature on the subject, A.E. Waite's 'The Secret Doctrine in Israel' represents a serious attempt to analyze the symbolism of the Zohar. His work... is distinguished by real insight into the world of Kabbalism; it is all the more regrettable that it is marred by an uncritical attitude toward facts of history and philology [Waite had no Hebrew]": Gershom G. Scholem, *Major Trends in Jewish Mysticism*, Schocken Books (New York: 1965), p. 212.
 9 Ridler, *loc. cit.* 10 *Ibid.*, p. xxiv.
 11 T.S. Eliot, "The Waste Land," *The Waste Land and Other Poems*, Harcourt, Brace, and Co. (New York: 1934), oo. 43-59, pp. 30-31. Timothy Foote writes archly in *Time* (December 6, 1971): "It does not take a Tiresias to see that in the Age of Aquarius Madame Sosostris has gone public," (p. 82).
 12 Eliot, *op. cit.*, "Note on line 46," pp. 47-48. The "hooded figure in the passage of the disciples to Emmaus" is described in II. 360364 (p. 43):
 Who is the third who walks always beside you?
 When I count, there are only you and I together
 But when I look ahead up the white road
 There is always another one walking beside you
 Gliding wrapt in a brown mantle, hooded
 13 Anthony Burgess, "The Waste Land Revisited," *Horizon* (Winter, 1972), p. 106.
 14 Charles Moorman, *Arthurian Triptych*, University of California Press (Berkeley: 1960), pp. 138-139, his brackets.
 15 Jessie L. Weston, *From Ritual to Romance*, Doubleday Anchor Books (Garden City, N.Y.: 1957), p. 77.
 16 See A.E. Waite, *The Pictorial Key to the Tarot*, "Waite's Last Word on the Tarot," pp. VII-VIII.
 17 Weston, *op. cit.*, pp. 78-79. 18 *Ibid.*, p. 79.
 19 *Ibid.*, p. 80.
 20 Gertrude Moakley, "Introduction," Waite, *op. cit.*, pp. XVI-XVII.
 21. By a nice piece of synchronicity, I saw both the film of *Nightmare Alley*, which used the Waite deck, and a rather inferior recent film, *The Hanged Man*, which used the Swiss deck in a Mardi Gras setting, during the period when I was preparing this article.
 22 Williams, *The Greater Trumps*, p. 160.
 23 *Ibid.*, p. 207 24 *Ibid.*, p. 177. 25 *Ibid.*, p. 262.
 26 *Ibid.*, p. 163. 27 *Ibid.*, p. 175. 28 *Ibid.*, p. 226.
 29 *Ibid.*, p. 47. 30 *Ibid.*, p. 163. 31 *Ibid.*, p. 178
 32 *Ibid.* 33 *Ibid.*, p. 89.
 34 Gershom B. Scholem, *Major Trends in Jewish Mysticism*, Schocken Books (New York: 1965), p. 205.
 35 *Ibid.*, p. 207. 36 *Ibid.*, p. 206. 37 *Ibid.*, p. 207.
 38 *Ibid.*, p. 208. 39 *Ibid.*, p. 214. 40 *Ibid.*, p. 215.
 41 Steven Runciman, *The Medieval Manichee*, The Viking Press (New York: 1961), p. 187.
 42 *Ibid.*, p. 179. 43 *Ibid.*, p. 187.
 44 C.G. Jung, *The Archetypes and the Collective Unconscious*, *The Collected Works*, Vol. 9, Bollingen Series XX, Second Edition (Princeton: 1968), p. 38.
 45 *Ibid.* 46 Waite, *op. cit.*, p. 57.

III. Origins of the Tarot

1 Catherine Perry Hargrave, *A History of Playing Cards and a Bibliography of Cards and Gaming*, Dover Publications (New York: 1966), pp. 1-2.
 2 Roger Tilley, *Playing Cards*, Weidenfield and Nicolson (London: 1967), pp. 15-16.

3 *Ibid.*, p. 19. 4 *Ibid.*, pp. 29-30.
 5 Quoted from the translation given in an article by E.A. Bond, Chief Librarian of the British Museum, *Athenaeum* (January 19, 1878), in Tilley, *op. cit.*, p. 26.
 6 *Ibid.*, p. 22. 7 Hargrave, *op. cit.*, p. 224.
 8 *Ibid.* 9 *Ibid.*, Plate 32. 10 *Ibid.*, illustration on p. 226. 11 Tilley, *op. cit.*, p. 29. 12 *Ibid.*
 13 *Ibid.*, p. 32. 14 *Ibid.*
 15 Douglas C. McMurtrie, *The Book: The Story of Printing and Bookmaking*, Oxford University Press (New York: 1962), p. 102.
 16 *Ibid.*, p. 103. 17 *Ibid.*, p. 102.
 18 I am indebted for this idea and for McMurtrie as a source, to Mrs. Stephanie Walker.
 19 Waite, *op. cit.*, p. 43. 20 *Ibid.*, p. 44.
 21 *Ibid.*, p. 45.
 22 Erwin Panofsky, *Meaning in the Visual Arts*, Doubleday Anchor Books (New York: 1955), p. 155.
 23 *Ibid.*, p. 153. *Ibid.*, p. 152. 25. *Ibid.*, pp. 158-59.
 26 Vincent Cronin, "The Humanists," *Horizon*, (Winter, 1971), p. 89.
 27 *Ibid.* 28 Williams, *The Greater Trumps*, pp. 176-177.
 29 Waite, *op. cit.*, p. 52. 30 *Ibid.*, p. 53.
 31 *Ibid.* 32 *Ibid.*, p. 55. 33 *Ibid.*, p. 56.
 34 Jean-Paul Clebert, *The Gypsies*, trans. Charles Duff, Penguin (Harmondsworth: 1963), p. 156.
 35 *Ibid.*, pp. 156-157. 36 *Ibid.*
 37 William Lindsay Gresham, "The Romany Trade," *Monster Midway*, Clarke Irwin Co. (Toronto: 1953), p. 116.
 38 In 1967 I went to a Tarot reader--at that time it was difficult to obtain a deck of Tarots and I had never seen one--I cut the cards and she arranged them, according to a spread which I was then too ignorant to recognize. She told me to ask questions, which she answered on the basis of the spread before her. One question turned on my sister's marriage and because of the presence of the Four of Staves (she was using the Waite-Smith deck, because I remember that the card showed a group of women dancing around four staves between which garlands were suspended) she interpreted this as a card favourable to marriage. Her answers were all general and all based upon my questions, to which she related the cards. She was not a Gypsy, but a devout Roman Catholic born in Waterloo County. I think it only fair to report that her interpretations proved to be correct.

IV. The Visconti-Sforza Tarot

1 Gertrude Moakley, "The Tarot Trumps and Petrarch's *Trionfi*," *Bulletin of the New York Public Library* (February, 1956).
 2 Gertrude Moakley, *The Tarot Cards Painted by Bonifacio Bembo for the Visconti-Sforza Family: An Iconographic and Historical Study*, The New York Public Library (New York: 1966), p. 10. I am indebted to Professor Virgil Burnett who introduced me to Gertrude Moakley's ideas and brought her book all the way from France so I could read it.
 3 *Ibid.*, p. 62. 4 *Ibid.*, p. 61
 5 Hargrave, *op. cit.*, p. 227 (this is the page given by Moakley, *The Tarot Cards*, p. 62, as her source).
 6 Moakley, *The Tarot Cards*, p. 76.
 7 *Ibid.*, p. 63. 8 *Ibid.*, p. 113.
 9 William Willeford, *The Fool and His Scepter*, Northwestern University Press (n.p.:1969), p. 75.
 10 Moakley, *The Tarot Cards*, p. 63. 11 *Ibid.*, p. 52.
 12 *Ibid.*, p. 44. 13 *Ibid.*, p. 45.
 15 *Ibid.*, p. 62. 16 Hargrave, *op. cit.*, p. 226.
 17 Moakley, *The Tarot Cards*, pp. 62-63. 18 *Ibid.*
 19 *Ibid.*, p. 64. 20 *Ibid.*, p. 35. 21 *Ibid.*, pp. 13-16, "Undocumented Prelude".
 22 Emile Male, *The Gothic Image*, Harper Torchbooks (New York: 1958), p. 98.
 23 *Ibid.*, p. 99. 24 *Ibid.*, p. 104. 25 *Ibid.*, p. 108.
 26 Moakley, *The Tarot Cards*, p. 70. 27 *Ibid.*, pp. 71-72.
 28 *Ibid.*, pp. 72-74. 29 *Ibid.*, p. 72
 30 *Ibid.*, pp. 73-74 31 *Ibid.*, p. 74.
 32 *Ibid.*, pp. 74-75.
 33 Leroy F. Vaughn, *Parade and Float Guide*, T.S. Davison and Co., (Minneapolis: 1956), p. 29.
 34 Moakley, *The Tarot Cards*, p. 76. 35 *Ibid.*, p. 77.
 36 *Ibid.*, p. 78. 37 Male, *op. cit.*, p. 121.
 38 *Ibid.*, p. 122. 39 Moakley, *The Tarot Cards*, pp. 79-80.
 40 *Ibid.*, pp. 86-87. 41 Male, *op. cit.*, p. 95.
 42 *Ibid.*, p. 96.
 43 Phyllis Hartknoll, *A Concise History of the Theatre*, Thames and Hudson (London: 1968), illustration showing *The Triumph of Isabella*, Brussels, 1615, with Diana riding in a car of 4 wheels, attended by her nymphs, fig. 37, pp. 42-43.
 44 Moakley, *The Tarot Cards*, p. 88.
 45 The French suits developed in the early fifteenth century: they are *Coeurs* (Hearts), *Carreaux* (Diamonds), *Trefles* (Clubs), and *Picques* (Spades), looking just like the familiar suits. See Hargrave, *op. cit.*, p. 41. Waite relates Cups to Hearts, Wands to Diamonds, Swords to Spades, and Pentacles to Clubs: see Waite, *op. cit.*, p. VIII. Eden Grey gives a more convincing series: Cups (Hearts), Wands (Clubs), Swords (Spades), Pentacles

57 Williams, *The Greater Trumps*, p. 238.
 58 *Ibid.*, 59 *Ibid.*, 60 *Ibid.*, 61 *Ibid.*, p. 264.
 62 *Ibid.*, 63 *Ibid.*, p. 29 64 *Ibid.*, p. 116.
 65 *Ibid.*, p. 63. 66 *Ibid.*, p. 103.
 67 *Ibid.*, p. 8. Lothair thinks of Nancy as a "gipsy name"; (p. 8.) Williams attributes Lothair's and Sibyl's names to their godmother's liking for Disraeli. Perhaps Williams is suggesting that Nancy is the bearer of a Gypsy (Egyptian) name: Horus. In *Memories, Dreams, Reflections*, Jung describes the African sunrise, in which the first brilliant irradiation of the darkness is the moment of God's presence, the epiphany of Horus. This image of enlightenment may be related to the concept of Grace, which is what Nancy's name (it is a diminutive of Anne) literally means.
 68 Charles Williams, *The Greater Trumps*, p. 242.
 69 *Ibid.*, p. 136. 70 *Ibid.*, p. 262. 71 *Ibid.*, p. 29.
 72 *Ibid.*, p. 90. 73 *Ibid.*, p. 26. 74 *Ibid.*, p. 99.
 75 *Ibid.*, p. 164: See *Song of Solomon*, 8:6 -- "Love is stronger as death."
 76 *Ibid.*, p. 110. 77 *Ibid.*, p. 29. 78 *Ibid.*, p. 90.
 79 *Ibid.*, p. 178. 80 *Ibid.*, p. 212. 81 *Ibid.*, p. 193.
 82 *Ibid.*, p. 178. 83 *Ibid.*, p. 29. 84 *Ibid.*, p. 116.
 85 *Ibid.*, p. 3. 86 *Ibid.*, 87 *Ibid.*, p. 139.
 88 *Ibid.*, p. 29. 89 *Ibid.*, 90 *Ibid.*, p. 226.
 91 *Ibid.*, p. 29. 92 *Ibid.*, p. 17. 93 *Ibid.*, p. 262.
 94 *Ibid.*, p. 265. 95 *Ibid.*, pp. 265-266.
 96 *Ibid.*, p. 110. 97 *Ibid.*, p. 29. 98 *Ibid.*, p. 112.
 99 *Ibid.*, p. 116. 100 *Ibid.*, pp. 226-227.
 101 *Ibid.*, 102 *Ibid.*, p. 29. 103 *Ibid.*, p. 112.
 104 *Ibid.*, p. 262. 105 *Ibid.*, p. 226.
 106 *Ibid.*, p. 227. 107 *Ibid.*, pp. 18-19.
 108 *Ibid.*, p. 82. 109 *Ibid.*, p. 83.
 110 *Ibid.*, pp. 232-233.
 111 T.S. Eliot, "Gerontion," *The Waste Land and Other Poems*, Harvest Books, Harcourt, Brace, and Co. (New York: 1934), p. 19.
 112 Charles Williams, *The Greater Trumps*, p. 227.
 113 *Ibid.*, p. 112. 114 *Ibid.*, pp. 29-30
 115 *Ibid.*, p. 111. 116 *Ibid.*, p. 266
 117 *Ibid.*, pp. 145-146. 118 *Ibid.*, pp. 155-156.
 119 *Ibid.*, p. 161.
 120 C.G. Jung, *Memories, Dreams, Reflections*, Vintage Books (New York: 1963), p. 338.
 121 Gerardus van derLeeuw, *Sacred and Profane Beauty: The Holy in Art*, Holt, Rinehart and Winston (New York: 1963), p. 29.
 122 *Ibid.*
 123 Sam Keene, "Manifesto for a Dionysian Theology," *New Theology No. 7: The Recovery of Transcendence*, ed., Martin E. Marty and Dean G. Peerman, Collier-Macmillan Ltd. (Toronto: 1970), p. 94.
 124 E.M.W. Tillyard, *The Elizabethan World Picture*, Chatto and Windus (London: 1967), p. 97.
 125 Williams, *The Greater Trumps*, p. 123.
 126 *Ibid.*, pp. 116-117.
 127 *Ibid.*, pp. 119-120.
 128 Dante Alighieri, *The New Life*, William Anderson, trans., Penguin (Harmondsworth: 1964), p. 64.
 129 *Ibid.*, p. 40.

VII. The Sovereign Fool

1 Willeford, *op. cit.*, p. 3, also p.239, n. 1.
 2 Andreas Lommel, *Shamanism: The Beginnings of Art*, McGraw-Hill (Toronto: 1967), pp. 128-129.
 3 Willeford, *op. cit.*, p. 11, quoted from Thelma Niklaus, *Harlequin, Brazillier* (New York: 1956), p. 18.
 4 Willeford, *op. cit.*, p. 240, n. 6.
 5 *Ibid.*
 6 *Ibid.*, p. 12.
 7 *Ibid.*, p. 251, n. 16. 8 *Ibid.*, p. 16.
 9 *Ibid.*, p. 10. 10 *Ibid.*, p. 16.
 11 Lommel, *op. cit.*, p. 112. 12 *Ibid.*
 13 Willeford, *op. cit.*, p. 242, quoted from E.W. Ives, "Tom Skelton--a Seventeenth Century Jester," *Shakespeare Survey 13*, Cambridge University Press (Cambridge: 1960), p. 103.
 14 Willeford, *op. cit.*, p. 23.
 15 Euripides, "The Bacchae," William Arrowsmith, trans., *The Complete Greek Tragedies*, Vol. IV, Euripides, ed. David Greene and Richard Lattimore, p. 548.
 16 *Ibid.*, p. 552.
 17 Willeford, *op. cit.*, pp. 28-29. The noise and silence are typical of mushroom cult behaviour but obviously the drug effects of the mushroom are desired because they cause these certain signs of possession.
 18 *Ibid.*, p. 29. 19 *Ibid.*
 20 Eric Welsford, *The Fool: His Social and Literary History*, Faber and Faber (London: 1968), p. 55.
 21 Willeford, *op. cit.*, pp. 37-38.
 22 *Ibid.*, pp. 41-42.
 23 *Ibid.*, p. 54, quoted from M. Willson Disher, *Clowns and Pantomimes*, Constable (London: 1923), pp. 28-29.
 24 Willeford, *op. cit.*, p. 65. 25 *Ibid.*, p. 113.

26 *Ibid.*, p. 117.
 27 *Ibid.*, p. 120, quoted from C.G. Jung, *Aion*, R.F.C. Hull, trans., *Collected Works*, Vol. IX, Part II (Bohltingen Series XX), Pantheon (New York: 1959), p. 198, par. 310.
 28 Willeford, *op. cit.*, p. 112. 29 *Ibid.*
 30 *Ibid.*, p. 114. 31 *Ibid.*, p. 79. 32 *Ibid.*, p. 109.
 33 *Ibid.*, p. 112. 34 *Ibid.*, p. 121. 35 *Ibid.*, p. 124.
 36 *Ibid.*, p. 131. 37 *Ibid.*, 38 *Ibid.*, p. 133.
 39 *Ibid.*, p. 134. 40 *Ibid.*, p. 135.
 41 Williams, *The Greater Trumps*, p. 210.
 42 *Ibid.*, 43 *Ibid.*, p. 219. 44 *Ibid.*, p. 220.
 45 *Ibid.*, p. 221. 46 *Ibid.*, pp. 221-222.
 47 Willeford, *op. cit.*, p. 143. 48 *Ibid.*, pp. 143-144.
 49 *Ibid.*, p. 14. 50 *Ibid.*, p. 151. 51 *Ibid.*
 52 *Ibid.*, p. 153. 53 *Ibid.*, p. 161.
 54 *Ibid.*, p. 162. 55 *Ibid.*, 56 *Ibid.*, p. 167.
 57 *Ibid.*, p. 168. 58 *Ibid.*, p. 170. 59 *Ibid.*
 60 *Ibid.*, p. 172. 61 *Ibid.*, 62 *Ibid.*, p. 173.
 63 *Ibid.*, 64 *Ibid.*, p. 212. 65 *Ibid.*, p. 217.
 66 *Ibid.*, pp. 265-266.
 67 Otto, *op. cit.*, p. 29.
 68 Williams, *The Greater Trumps*, p. 123.

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Addenda

I. The Greater Trumps

add to Footnote #4:

The courtesy of Dr. Daniel Luzon Morris who sent me my first exoteric deck, the Marseille Tarot, and of Gracia-Fay Ellwood who sent me my first esoteric deck, the Waite-Smith Tarot, are hereby acknowledged and thanked as well.

II. Occult and Unconscious

footnote #4

4. *Ibid.*, Yeats himself left the Isis-Urania temple and "followed Dr. Felkin, who founded the order of the Stella Matutina," (*Ibid.*, pp. XXIII-XXIV) Waite himself adds, "I put an end to the Isis-Urania or Mother Temple...Of the new Rite which arose...there...is no story to tell...May that most sacred centre give up no outward form." (Quoted from A.E. Waite, *Shadows of Life and Thought*, Selwyn and Blount, p. 229, *Ibid.*, p. XXIV). This is the "new Rite," or "later unnamed order" to which Anne Ridler refers.

V. The Traditional Tarot

footnote 54 between line 6 and 7

(Robert Graves, "Mushroom," *Man, Myth, and Magic*, pp. 1905-1910)

Continued from page 6

actual crude, bloody, absurd European Dark Age a sort of archetypal grid. They created, in the words of another modern writer of romance "a land... wherein human nature kept its first dignity and strength; and wherein human passions were never in a poor way to find expression with adequate speech and action."¹⁷ This world of brutality and poetry, and of wildness and bombast, all covering bottomless deeps, this Jungian world of the subconscious provides an author with the means of showing forth man's potentialities in a way that fiction of the mundane cannot do. For Tolkien the world of Middle-earth is a stage on which is played the never ending battle of resistance to evil. Supported by their vision of this the Hobbits can rise above their physical heritage and themselves become heroes.

Continued on page 36