

TAROT OF MARSEILLES

Millennium Edition

♦ COMPENDIUM TAROLOGICUM ♦

◀ *A Little White Book* ▶



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• A Little White Book •

by Wilfried HOUDOUIN

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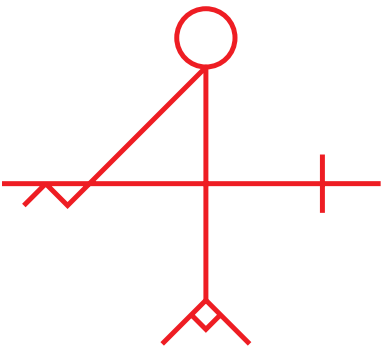
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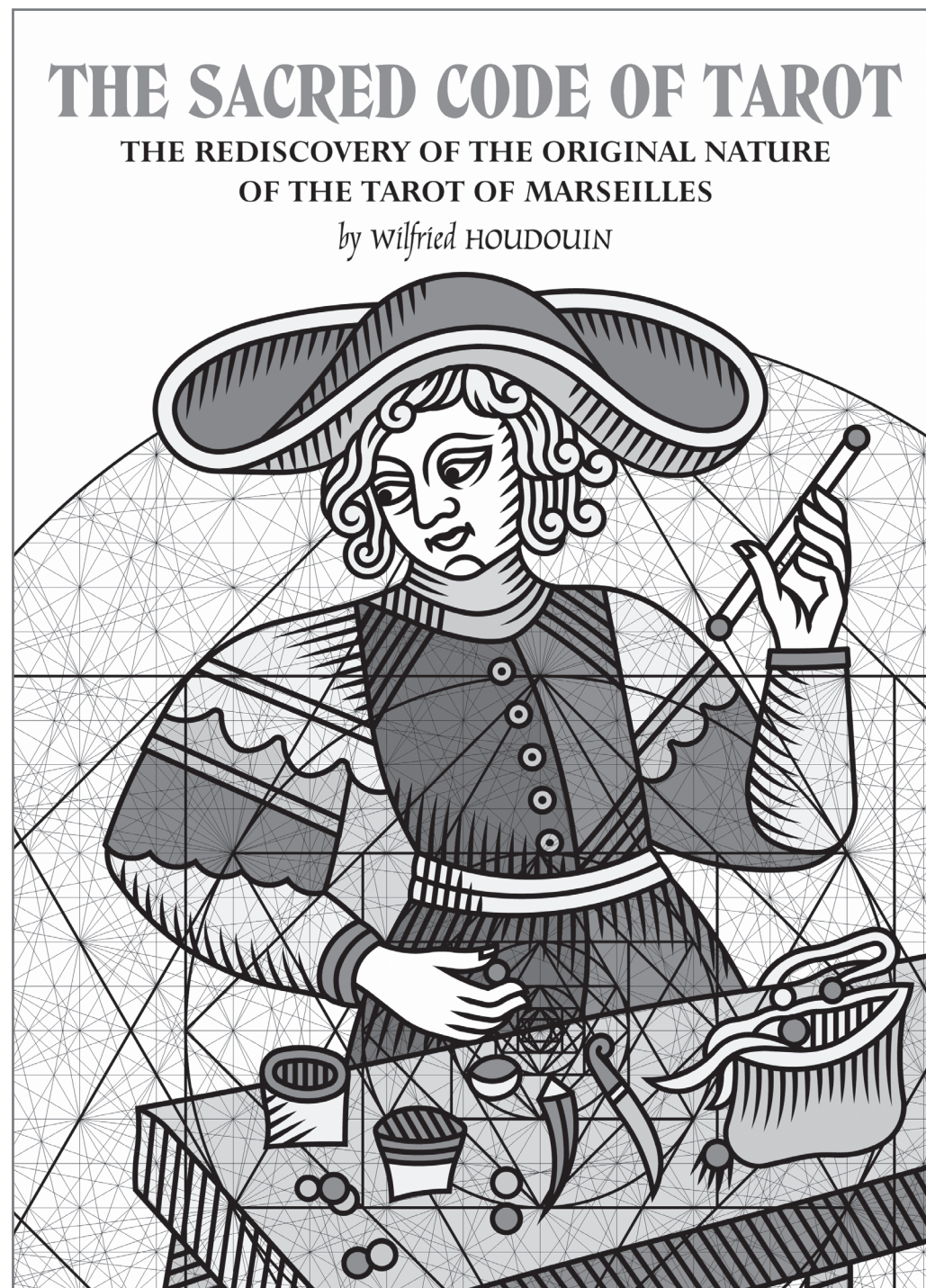
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The Tarot of Marseilles Millennium Edition is a realization by the author of the book :

THE SACRED CODE OF TAROT
THE REDISCOVERY OF THE ORIGINAL NATURE
OF THE TAROT OF MARSEILLES

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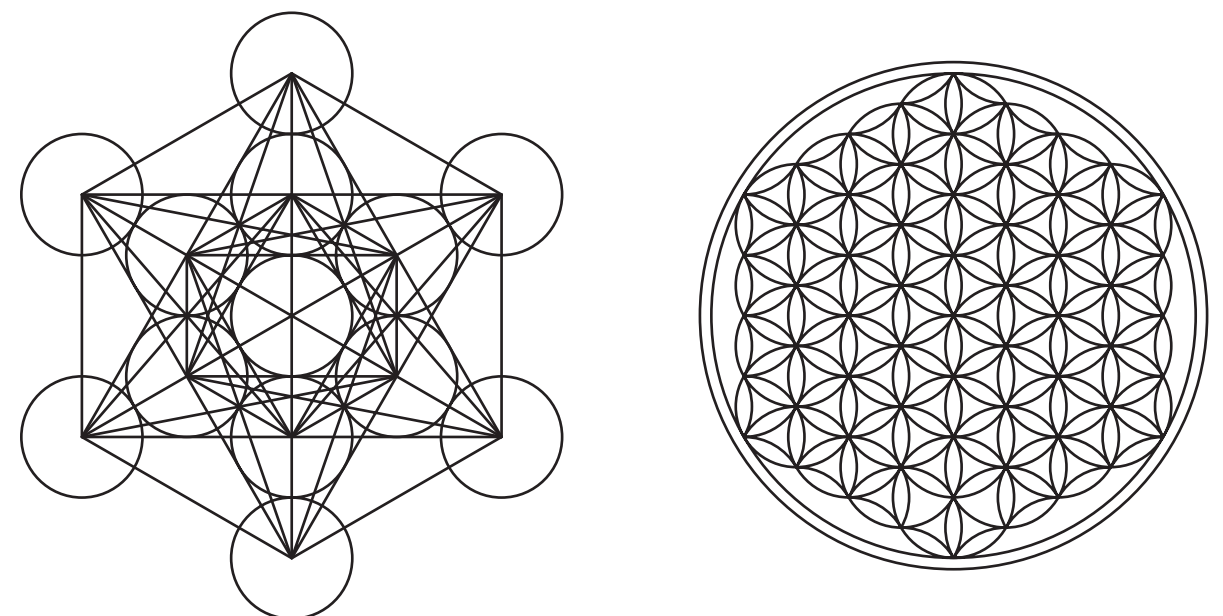
THE TAROT OF MARSEILLES

Millennium Edition

The Tarot of Marseilles Millennium Edition is the fruit of about thirty years of study dedicated to the Tarot of Marseilles, and of sixteen years of devoted research and graphic work on its traditional canon. It presents the exclusive regeneration of the 78 Arcana of this philosophical deck, restored to their original state as closely as possible, based on the best historical decks (most of them still mostly unknown to the public), and on the fundamental rediscovery of its sacred geometry Matrix – the sacred blueprint unknown to most of the late card makers, which had fallen into oblivion sometime during the late 18th century. These essential rediscoveries, coupled with the computing power of the 21st century and the mastery of the main graphic softwares, have made it possible to render the cards very close to how they were originally before many changes were made over the past three centuries to the details, precision, colouring and framing of the traditional icons of the Tarot of Marseilles.

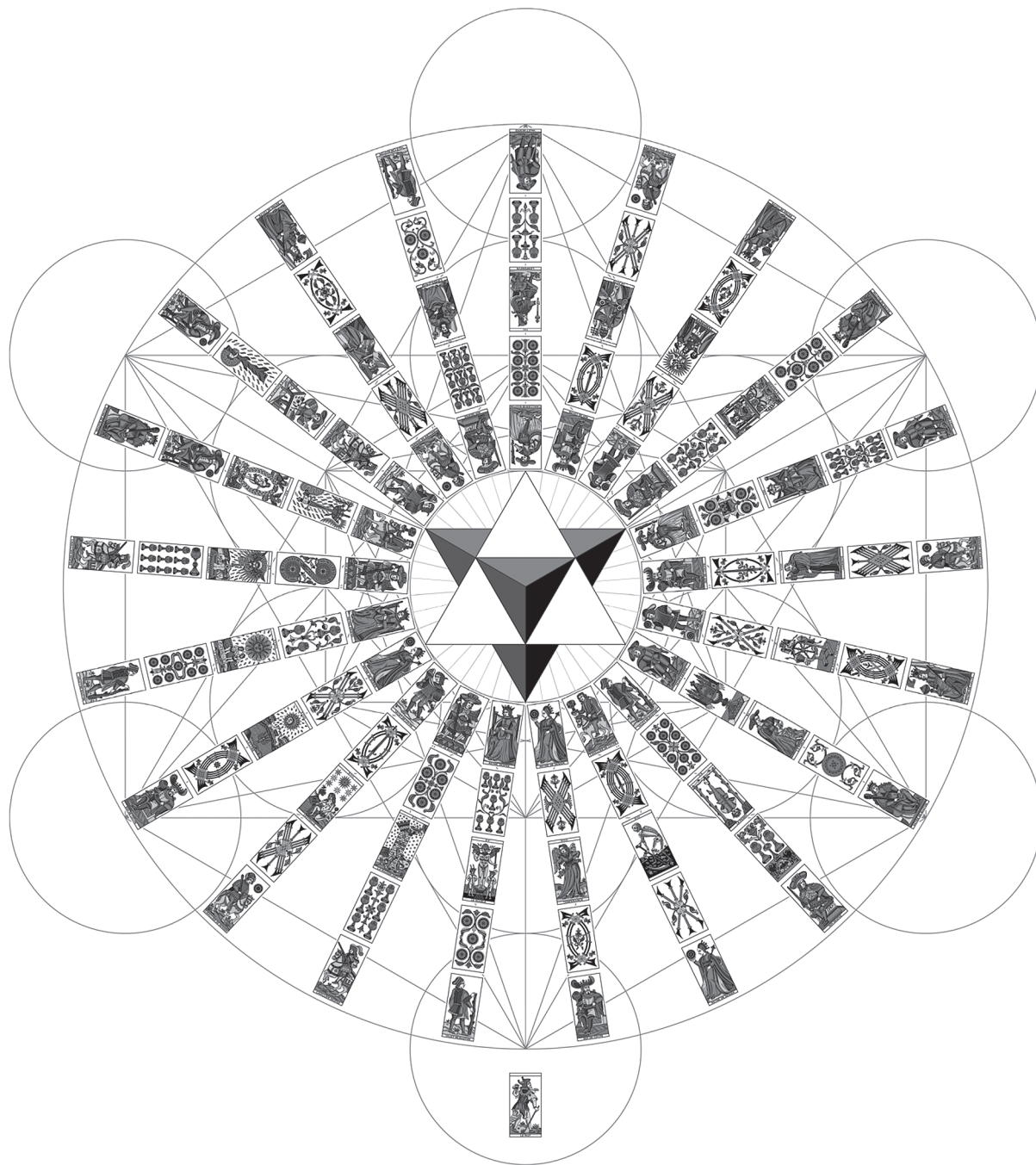
THE SACRED GEOMETRY OF THE TAROT OF MARSEILLES

As opposed to other models of Tarot, such as the Italian Renaissance decks (15th to 17th century), the “of Besançon” decks (18th and 19th century), or the non-symbolical modern decks, the Tarot of Marseilles (a similar model was also produced in Avignon, Lyon and Dijon, France, and in Solothurn, Mümliswil and Fribourg, Switzerland), proceeds, in its entirety from the geometrical matrix known as the Metatron’s Cube. Precisely overlaid onto the Flower of Life, which is the geometrical representation of the blossoming of the blueprint of Creation, this matrix has embedded within it all of the fundamental principles of the Universe, from molecular structures to DNA.

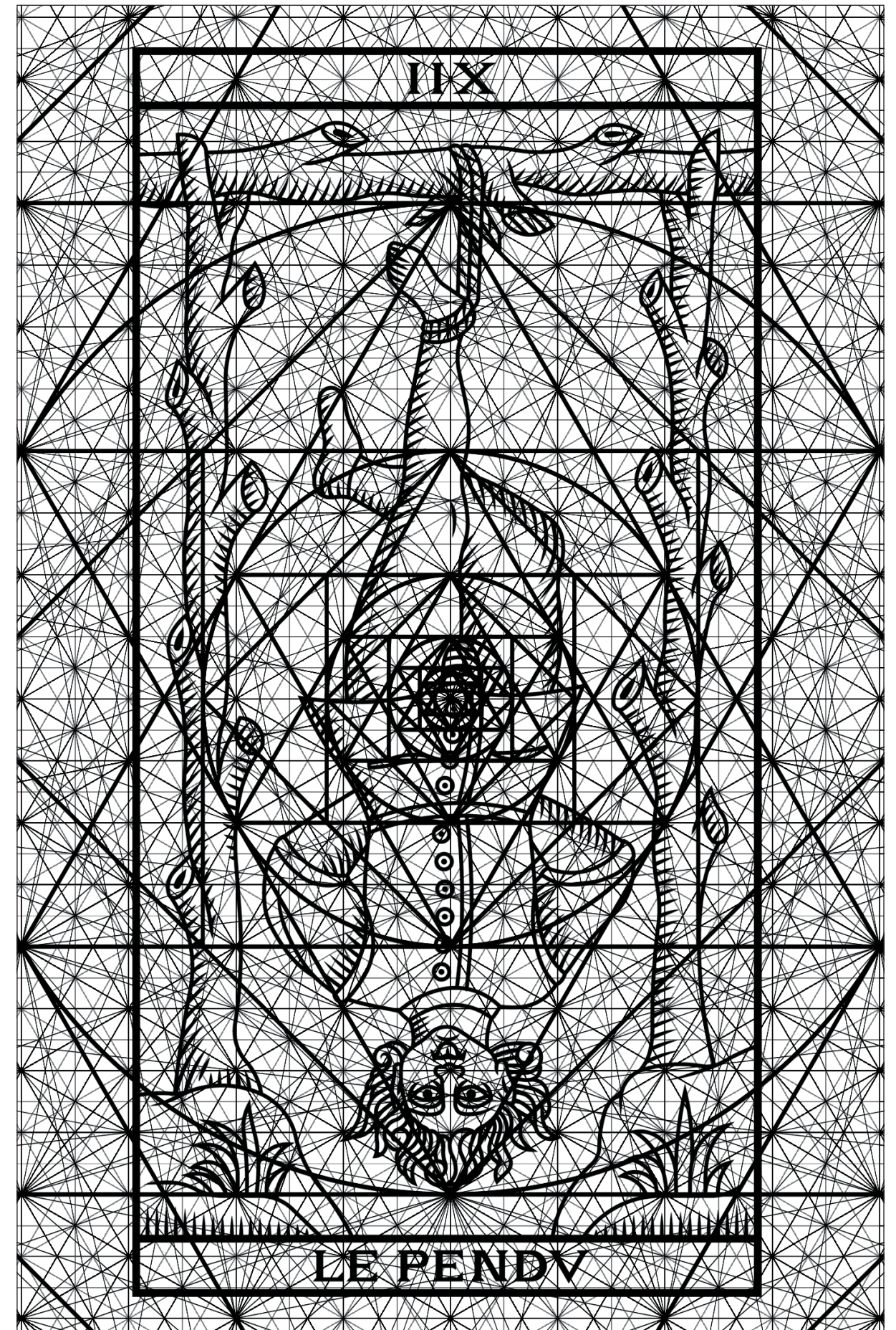


THE METATRON'S CUBE AND THE FLOWER OF LIFE

As the microcosm, the mirror of the macrocosm, the Matrix unfolds fractally, meaning that every part of the structure is a reflection of its whole, a dynamic unity perpetually mutating, renewing and regenerating itself. This continual cyclical process, this universal symbol of the Wheel, the *Rota*, is the internal organ, the creative force within the Tarot. The geometrical, mathematical and metaphysical aspects found in this cosmological matrix, which constitute the foundation of sacred art world-wide, as well as many ancient myths, have been known since High Antiquity. These principles were addressed most in-depth by Pythagoras (580-497 BCE), Plato (427-346 BCE), and Aristotle (384-322 BCE). Later, these same ideas were rediscovered and described by Leonardo Pisano (Italy 1175-1250), better known as Leonardo Fibonacci, famous for the “cube



The *Rota*, organ of the Tarot of Marseilles
the *Stella Octangula* being its dynamic core



XII LE PENDU in the Metatron's Cube sacred geometry Matrix

of Fibonacci” (mathematically similar to the graphical representations of the hypercube, the relation of which to the Metatron’s Cube is explained in “The Sacred Code of Tarot”) and the eponymous numerical sequence which express the sacred ratio referred to as the Golden Mean (or “divine proportion” according to Luca Pacioli, 1445-1517). Fibonacci demonstrated that this ratio, this structure inherent in all forms of Creation was the very same matrix of the five Platonic solids. These five geometrical volumes consist of the tetrahedron, traditionally associated with fire (producing, if inverted upon itself, the Stella Octangula or star tetrahedron which is the dynamic core of Metatron’s Cube), the octahedron, associated with air, the cube or hexahedron, associated with earth, the icosahedron, associated with water, and lastly, the dodecahedron which is associated with the ether, the fifth element, the all-permeating quintessence.

Rediscovering this sacred geometry which composes the core of the 78-card Tarot (the so-called “Venetian deck”) was the key to unlocking and deciphering the original structure and iconography of the Tarot of Marseilles, thereby making it possible to produce the present Millennium Edition, restoring its 78 Arcana in total accordance with the canon of the traditional historical decks. This master key, the cosmological matrix (Greek, *cosmos*, meaning “order”, “harmony”) of the Metatron’s Cube thus defines and dictates each and every aspect of the Tarot of Marseilles, both structurally and graphically. It rules each card’s drawings, colors, framing, even the letters in which their titles are written, provides the overall order and organization of the deck, and beyond the structural and visual level, imparts and defines the deck’s metaphysical philosophy. Contrary to the other models of 78 cards decks, the completeness of the said Tarot “of Marseilles” is so generated by this one and only matrix, a structure fractally embedded in each of its parts, which express it in their turn in the multiple aspects, through infinity. This is a quality that is unique to the Tarot of Marseilles – the fact that every part of the deck is a reflection of the overall whole, this fractal unfoldment is an exact reflection of the Universe, the Creation. Thus, the Tarot of Marseilles, with its very precise structure and iconography, if it is to function as the high philosophical instrument that it was designed to be, is required to be properly tuned. This is the primary reason, in light of the centuries of degradation of its known reproductions, as well as a few unsuccessful recent endeavours to restore it, that the present edition has been released. This Millennium Edition fulfills the need for a faithful restitution of the traditional canon of the Tarot of Marseilles.

THE SYMBOLICAL LANGUAGE OF THE TAROT

The interplay of disparate elements, whose unification can reveal multiple layers of meanings, and which is the very core of high intellectual thought, is the true meaning behind the word symbol (Greek, *sum-bolon*, to assemble, bring together, unify, integrate). Indeed, the original concept of the symbol was to analyze a part of the whole, in order to gain insight into the workings of the whole, and thereby interpret it more successfully. The symbol served as an icon for the bearers of broken parts, and served as means to convey deeper knowledge, by what the unification of the separate parts allowed one to conceive. Thus, symbolism, at its very root, is a dynamic concept. As is the tarot of Marseilles, whose functioning relies precisely upon the assembling and unifying of scattered, yet complementary elements (the cards), proving it to be a symbolical system *par*

excellence. As an intelligible model of the world, a universal symbolic translation system, it expresses, through the meanings of its cards and their sequencing, the various principles of the Universe and Creation, by virtue of the laws of analogy and correspondence, which is the very definition and foundation of symbolism, which rests on universal archetypes. The symbol serves as a mediator, dynamically linking the concrete/objective level to the purely intelligible/abstract and subjective level (accessible by the intellectual intuition), that is to say the metaphysical plane, thereby elevating the mind to higher and more profound levels of understanding, beyond what ordinary consciousness, so distracted and entangled in the phenomenal world of stimuli, can attain by itself. Since its very conception, The Tarot of Marseilles has been a repository of esoteric knowledge, encoding within it the Perennial Philosophy (said “natural” and “eternal”), the Initiatory Mysteries, as well as traditional science. This Tarot grants us access to the principles underlying the universal truth of our being and of the nature of reality, and allows us to grasp, internalize and integrate these concepts into our lives, allowing us the ability to truly govern this plane of existence.

Indeed, the Tarot was not intended for the purposes of mere amusement. It confers and translates, with its structure and the sequential combination of its archetypal icons, the universal principles underlying every aspect of our existence, codifying the whole human experience and evolution within the phenomenal world. This detailed cataloguing of instructions, situations, and possibilities explains why a Quattrocento deck (Italian Renaissance, 15th century) incorporating the concepts of Tarot was called “the game of ruling the world”. The set of instructions and ruling principles it contains in the form of archetypes – Greek, *arkhe*, the first cause, original instruction, purely intelligible ruling principle, the root of all things existing independent of space and time – underly the whole of Creation, the manifestation of the infinite in this material realm, at the center of which Humankind has his traditional place. Thus, far from being an entity tied exclusively to the past, the Tarot of Marseilles is rooted in our very present and is bound to the future, with its symbols and its cosmological nature being directly related to the infinite primordial source which lies beyond this temporal realm and its cycles of change, flux and transformation. With the meticulous restitution of its traditional iconography, and the restoration of its geometric purity (its language, its *logos*), the Tarot of Marseilles Millennium Edition reincorporates this previously-neglected dimension to this initiatic game, and as a direct consequence, all of its precision and efficiency as an instrument of *gnosis* – the higher knowledge of oneself, the world, and the Universe.

SUMMARY OF CARDS AND TAROT HISTORY

Of the history of the Tarot, only partial elements and facts are known, forcing us to speculate as to its origin. The common, prevailing history of the tarot refers to it as being nothing more than a plain game of cards, enriched with an iconography drawn from history and mythology. It would thus, by those standards, be merely a happy blend of entertainment and education, in a deck of cards which would have appeared as we know it around the beginning of the 15th Century in Northern Italy, most likely culled from Saracens (as the Mamluk’s from Egypt – the few cards preserved in Topkapi Palace in Istanbul, estimated to date from the 13th or 14th century), and imported in Italy via the trade routes connecting the Orient and the Occident, Venice being at that time one of the

most important seaports and commercial centers of Old Europe. According to historians, the Tarot would have evolved over time, absorbing the various cultural contexts in which it was produced, initially being lavishly enlightened cards destined for ruling families such as the Visconti and the Sforza, and rich merchant classes, and then progressively simplified as this deck and other types of decks were mass-produced to satisfy a growing demand from commonfolk ever-attracted to games and novelty. Based on this “official” history, and the reported, estimated dates of various types of Tarot as they appeared, the evolution and transformation of tarot across the centuries starts with the oldest known cards, considered to be the original or closest approximation, with the other Tarots that followed being adaptations and mutations of it. From this perspective, the recently known cards would thus naturally be a transformation of this presupposed original canon. Nevertheless, this rationalistic approach, with its swift, over-simplified conclusions that judge the evolution of the Tarot only in regards to the production dates of the scant number of known preserved decks, is built upon an empiricism unaware of the true structure and nature of what they’re actually dealing with in their classification, this awareness being a prerequisite for determining the anteriority or the posteriority of a model in regard to another, in spite of its actual date of production.

However, how can one really blame historians, who deal with the Tarot as they would with any other historical objects or events, which are used to determine truths from facts (and nothing more), and apparent relations between said facts? How could this methodology, disinterested with the process by which the tarot operates, and ignoring the traditional codes which define each and every original aspect of Tarot (that are those of the sacred art c.f. *THE SACRED CODE OF TAROT*, by Wilfried Houdouin, published in English end 2018), possibly be able to see beyond mere superficial appearances? How could such an approach appreciate that a deck can be a misrepresented copy of an earlier deck, and that this earlier deck that has not been respected can actually be reproduced and interpreted correctly by a more recent deck, that is respectful to the originals concept? As the French mathematician, physician and philosopher Henri Poincare (1854-1912) said: “One make science with facts as one builds a house with stones; but an accumulation of facts is no more a science than a heap of stones is a house.” To further this point, the words of French physiologist Claude Bernard (1813-1878): “Empiricism can help with the accumulation of facts, but it can never build a science. The experimenter who does not know what he’s actually searching for will not understand what he finds”. Lastly, French science and poetic philosopher Gaston Bachelard (1884-1962) : “As a matter of fact, empiricism begins with the recording of facts supposed to be evidence, and science then denounces this evidence, and discover hidden rules and laws... there’s science only in what is hidden... discovery is the only active means to actual knowing. Correspondingly, the knowledge of what is hidden be the only way to teach.”

The cultural degradation that has pervaded the end of the second millennium has indeed fostered a great deal of confusion within the hierarchies of traditions, namely those being defined according to forgotten principles which had formerly dictated all aspects of life within that sacred culture, structured according to the existing millennial traditional rules, of which the Tarot of Marseilles is a codified synthesis. As much as we can only speculate as to how far back in time the effective production of printed or painted cards commenced, an educated guess would be that they

originated in China, where they would have been used as a game at least since the 7th century, given the actual existence of cards produced dating from the 9th century. The Chinese, credited with the invention of *xylography* (printing from carved wood) around the 4th century, indeed employed this method to produce printed paper money. In China, the concept of *divination* (originally *devination*, from one who guesses) and game were not necessarily separate. Every aspect of life in China from that period was ruled by symbolic principles translated and decoded through many different types of divinatory instruments, such as synchronized wheels which symbolized the sky and the earth, the IChing, tortoise scales covered with text dating from the Shang Dynasty (1767-1122 BCE), as well as symbolic printed cards. It is also highly probable that some small plaques (blandes, strips) painted and adorned with images and figures were used in the Far East in ancient times as well, and likewise used both for game and divination. While it is reasonable as well to assume that a similar culture of printed symbolic cards existed in Sumeria, where tablets tell of the *Me*, “the tablets of destiny,” in Babylon and Chaldea, where the idea of divination was primordial, a science given to Man by the Gods as an act of good will, and in Egypt or the Indus Valley, for that matter, which also participated in trade with Persia and China, this would have been totally unknown to Europe before the 14th century.

It has been said of the Tarot that it preserved the sacred knowledge and wisdom of ancient Egypt, India, Persia, the Mithraic mysteries, etc., and was codified by a conclave of high initiates of all the great mystery traditions worldwide, who gathered in Fez, Morocco, around the year 1200. However, it is in the 3rd century BCE that the Mystery religion inspired by Hermeticism (the science of Thoth-Hermes Trismegistus, the messenger, the god of language, science and magic) spread throughout the Hellenistic and Roman empires. The city of Alexandria in Egypt, home to the legendary library and museum, was a cultural center, the crossroads of many traditions, and it attracted some of the most illustrious minds of both East and West. So, from the second century BCE, Greek thinkers such as Antiochus of Ascalon (130-68 BCE) and Romans such as Cicero (103-43 BC) or Seneca (4 BCE- 65 AD) practiced in Alexandria differing degrees of Stoic and Platonic philosophies. This movement, middle Platonism, was characterized by a return to the transcendent concept of the divine, and a practice of symbolism aimed at revealing the hidden Mysteries. This was the first step towards *theurgy*, the possibility of performing miracles through the integration of universal cosmological principles. This Platonic renewal of the operations of the mysteries constitutes a new development of Pythagoreanism. This sphere of influence, being both traditional (numerology, geometry and Platonic symbolism) and innovative (synthesizing many different religious, philosophical, and scientific backgrounds), were lead by initiates such as Alexander Polyhistor (Rome, active around 82 - 70 BCE, thus named because of his great erudition), Nigidius Figulus (around 98 -45 BCE), and Diodorus of Alexandria (25 BCE).

It is actually this movement to which could be attributed the development of the concept of the archetype (*arkhè* in Greek) as a universal ruling principle pervading all things. These great philosophers and metaphysicians of Antiquity sought to address and correct the complications inherent in trying to create a universal cosmological model which would incorporate all of the archetypal principles governing all aspects of the Universe and human experience, and which would

unify macrocosm and microcosm. Indeed, around 150 BCE, there still existed difficulties in linking all of the fundamental concepts from various fields of knowledge into one single intelligible model, and in defining a suitable relationship between the idea (*eidōs* in greek, *forma* in latin, associated with the notion of archetype as First Cause), the objective material phenomena (*hylē* in greek, *materia* in latin), and the icon (*eikōn* in greek) in order to more accurately decipher and understand the world, as conceived as emanating from a universal *logos*, that is to say, a universal system, an intelligible language. Thus, the Tarot of Marseilles, constituting such an instrument of converting the knowledge of the Universe by means of its symbolic icons and its precise structure, certainly had its theoretical basis and practical modalities precisely defined during this era and in the centuries closely following it, through the work of the Pythagorean mathematician Nicomachus of Gerasa (60-120 AD), and most importantly, with Ammonius Saccas (Alexandria, 3rd century, AD) and Plotinus (Rome, 204/5-270 AD), the two founders of Neo-platonism.

Transmission of the Neo-pythagorean and Neo-Platonist teachings proceeded through lineages of initiates both from East and West (most notably in Byzantium, a city renamed Constantinople when it became the capital of the Roman empire, where a Pythagorean and a Platonic revival did take place around 1000 AD), which conveyed and transmitted at their turn a whole corpus of knowledge which was received notably in Northern Italy as soon as the 13th century, where hermetic and mathematic manuscripts of Greek and Alexandrian origin, copied and thus preserved by the Arabs, were then translated into latin, along with some Jewish kabbalistic texts. From there, a direct transmission of this corpus of knowledge was made through the Cistercians, and this traditional metaphysical science showed itself operationally through the movement of the Builders of the Cathedral, supported in their efforts by the Knights of the Order of the Temple of Jerusalem. Many historians think indeed that the supposed base of the Tarot (the 56 minor Arcana), to be of Asian and Eastern origin, and would have been adapted for the West and completed with the 22 major Arcana in Venice, Italy, in the 14th or 15th century, although the 78 cards do actually constitute a whole, as it is demonstrated by the author in his book “THE SACRED CODE OF TAROT - The rediscovery of the true nature of the Tarot of Marseilles” that should be published late 2018.

Be that as it may, historical data seems to point toward an independent elaboration of the 78 cards in Northern Italy, known as the Venetian pack, the Piedmontese or Lombardy, consisting of 22 Trumps (trionfi in Italy, or major Arcana) and four series of suits : the Wands, the Swords, the Discs and the Cups, with each suit composed of ten cards named “numerals” and four cards named “court cards”. This is the model that has come to be known as the Tarot “of Marseilles” (named after the oldest city in France, established by the Phocéans, a Greek lineage, more than 2,600 years ago) whose characteristics became the standard around the 15th century. Although there seems to be evidence pointing to the origin of the Tarot as a 78-card deck as being Italian in the 15th century, the specific iconography of the Tarot of Marseilles 22 major Arcana had appeared for many centuries prior to that throughout Europe. For instance, Roman (11th - 12th century) and Gothic statuary (12th - 14th century) allude to such archetypes as that of XI LA FORCE (Fortitude), found in the Roman cathedral of Nivelles, Belgium, and in the Gothic cathedral of Chartres, France, that of XVI LA MAISON DIEU (the Tower) found in a bas-relief in Amiens cathedral, France, and

that of an equivalent of XII LE PENDU (the Hanged Man) and II of Discs, found in the Moissac abbey convent, France. The first definite historical reference to the card game would have come from Saint-Victor abbey in Marseilles. A specific mention of this was found by the French historian Charles du Fresne Du Cange (1610-1688), as he quotes a passage of the abbey’s status of the year 1337, dealing with games forbidden by the monks : “*Quod nulla persona audeat nec praesumat ludere ad taxillos nec ad paginas nec ad eyssychum*” – “That which nobody dares, or undertakes to play nor dices, nor pages, nor chess”. Du Cange explains the word paginas as being a “card game” or “page game”: *Ludos ad paginas nostris*. However, the abbot Rive, in his work entitled *Notices historiques et critiques de deux manuscrits de la bibliothèque de M. le Duc de la Vallière* (Historical and critical notices of two manuscripts from the Duke de la Vallière), published in Paris 1779, specifies : “The cards at least date back to the year 1330 ; and it is not in France, nor in Italy, nor in Germany that they do appear for the first time. We see them in Spain around that time, and far before we can find any trace of it in another nation”. Further, the Abbott Rive tells us that the very first Spanish piece of evidence that testifies to this dates from around 1332 : “These were the status of an Chivalric Order established at that time, where the cards were prohibited; this Order was called ‘Order of the Strip,’ which had been established by Alphonse XI, King of Castile. Those admitted in this Order swore not to play cards.” The Abbott adds : “We find them in Italy around the end of the same century, under the name of *Naibi*, in the chronicles of Giovan Morelli, dating from the year 1393.” The name *Naibi*, from the arab *naïb* meaning “Vizier” counselor or minister to the ruling Muslims (a meaning that attests to the relation between the card game and the “ruling of the world”), gives the hint that the very source of the Spanish game cards could have been the Saracens.

In Italy, a decree from the priors of Florence declares, on the 23rd of March 1375 : “Sirs priors, willing to fight nefarious principles, have heard of a certain game called naibbe which has taken roots in this country”. This Naïb game had spread so much that commerciality seized it : a March 1376 decree declared that a tax is to be collected. The Viterbi chronicle took notice, that in 1379 “there was introduced in Viterbi a card game by a Saracen named Hayl”, with the express mention that the cards would have had to have come from the East, where they could have arrived by sea. Besides, most significantly, Brother John, a 14th century monk from Breifeld in Switzerland, did write an essay on the game in which he stated : “A certain game called ‘card game’ has reached us in the year of the Lord 1377. Within this game is the state of world as it is today eloquently described and figured out. But as of when was it invented, where, and by whom, I am totally ignorant”. We also find mention of cards in 1381 in Marseilles, in the minutes of the French solicitor Laurent Aycardi, in 1397 in Paris, when the provost forbade playing the “palms, ball, cards, dices and skittle” during working days, or again in 1382 in Lille, France, with a magistrate’s prescription also forbidding the use of them. So, most of the historical references do result of Edicts banning the cards, up to the point that in certain cities (Bologna in 1423, Nuremberg in 1452), auto-da-fés were organized by the Roman Catholic Church. In 1387, an edict from the King of Castile also prohibits cards vehemently.

In Medieval Europe, games of cards could possibly have been mentioned around the end of the 13th century, but they are extensively mentioned throughout the 14th century. In 1392, one

of the account books from the treasurer of Charles VI, Charles Poupart, notes a payment on the behalf of Jacquemin Gringonneur, a painter, for three golden and coloured packs of cards lavishly ornamented, and provided to the King for his own amusement. The reign of Charles VI was one rich in the arts, and talented painters did benefit from generous sponsorships. In the Bibliothèque nationale de France sit seventeen well-preserved magnificent cards which had long been attributed to Jacquemin Gringonneur, though historians do think that these would be of Italian origin, and painted around 1470. Remarks about the card game in the 15th century have been documented as well. In 1404, a synod held in Langres, France, forbade the clergy various types of games, including cards. Superstition about the card game have raged at least since the 15th century. In 1423 the Franciscan preacher Saint Bernardino of Sienna denounced the cards as Satan's creation. We also know that this superstition persisted until at least the 18th century, when the Britannic Anglican priest John Wesley (1703-1791), founder of the Methodist Church, spoke overtly of the cards as coming from the Devil. Also, in Scotland during the 19th century, some pack of cards were commonly referred to as "Devil's books".

It is from the eve of the 15th century that the most ancient Tarots would be known, all of them coming out of Italy (with the exception of the Egyptian Mamluk cards, which were maybe a century older, and composed solely of the minor Arcana), amongst which stands out the Cary-Yale black and white printed sheet, and the illuminated Visconti-Sforza Tarot (this refers to incomplete sets of approximately 15 decks, now located in various museums, libraries, and private collections around the world), commissioned by Filippo Maria Visconti, duke of Milan, and by his successor, Francesco Sforza, around 1450. Besides that, in 1430, Amédée VIII, first duke of Savoy, wrote an article (*de ludis et lusoribus*) in which he forbade games, including cards, and in 1585, a synod in Aix-en-Provence (southern France, near Marseilles) refers to cards, naming them *pagellas pictas*, or "pictographed pages". But it is François Rabelais (1494-1553), the "Gai Savoir" poet (cheerful science) who, in the chapter XXII of Gargantua (first published in 1534), supplies us with the very first known literary reference to the Tarot. In it, Rabelais accounts for the games played by Gargantua, including among others *qui gagne perd*, (which wins, loses) *les marelles* (hopscoches) and the *tarau* (the Tarot). Rabelais, in this educative treatise, would even have proposed to play cards in order to "open the mind to arithmetic".

The most ancient known engraved French Tarots are the Catelin Geoffroy, printed in Lyon in 1557, and an anonymous deck, commonly referred to as the "Tarot of Paris", printed sometime during the 17th century, both of them being of an atypical canon though. The ancient French Tarot most closely resembling the "Marseilles" type we know of today would be the Jacques Viéville deck, published in Paris, around 1645. However, older packs which include the four distinctive suits, the Wands, Swords, Discs and Cups (Italian emblems), and carved in wood in the Tarot of Marseilles fashion (but not illuminated nor painted), have been preserved. These decks were produced in Spain and Germany in the 14th century. Besides these, a few cards printed in Italy during the 15th century, and most definitely of the Marseilles type (found at the bottom of a well of Castello Sforzesco in Milan), have been preserved as well. Besides, it is in the middle of the 17th century, in 1655, that the oldest Tarot rule known to this day was printed, but it unfortunately dealt only with the party game

aspect. This rule, as well as the three French Tarots referred to above, are preserved in the French national Library. The 18th century had to be reached in order for the Tarot to be openly considered as a noble instrument of knowledge, with the works of Antoine Court de Gebelin (1719-1784, France, in which Tarot was discussed in one of his nine volumes of his encyclopaedia *Le monde primitif analysé et comparé avec le monde moderne* "The primitive world analysed and compared with the modern world"), and that of Etteilla (Jean-Baptiste Alliette, 1738-1791, France, the first known professional "card drawer," who invented the word "cartonomancy", a word which finally became "cartomancy" after the publication, in 1788, of the book from the mysterious Count of P.) both relating to Freemasonry. Later on, renowned occultists such as Eliphas Levi (1810-1875), Helena P. Blavatsky (1831-1891), Papus (1865-1916), Stanislas de Guaita (1861-1897) and Oswald Wirth (1860-1943) did much to rehabilitate the reputation of Tarot within intellectual circles. This resurgence would serve as a prelude to its popular *triumph* during the 20th century, when its initiatic and esoteric dimension became increasingly acknowledged by the public at large, until, most recently, in this early 3rd millennium, its cosmological/philosophical aspects and its sacred dimensions would be rediscovered and revealed to the public for the first time by the present author in his book "The Sacred Code of Tarot - The Rediscovery of the Original Nature of the Tarot of Marseilles", as well as (though very briefly), in the first part of this booklet.

TAROTS OF MARSEILLES AND SAID "OF MARSEILLES"

As was mentioned in the first part of this booklet, the Tarot of Marseilles Millennium Edition rests both upon the rediscovery of the Tarot's original structure, and upon in depth analysis of the historical Tarot of Marseilles decks of reference. These reference decks can be classified by historians according to the categories "Tarot of Marseilles type I" (TDM I), and "Tarot of Marseilles type II" (TDM II), with the latter corresponding to the Tarot of Marseilles Millennium Edition. The TDM II category includes decks of which the oldest known are from the early 18th century, whereas TDM I includes decks of which the oldest known are from the 15th century. A few cards of the oldest known decks from this TDM I category have been found in the bottom of a well inside the Castello Sforzesco in Milan, the castle of the Sforza family, to which have been linked some of the oldest known 78-card Tarots. Among the lot of cards found in the well, which were printed from woodblocks similar to the Tarot of Marseilles, was a II of Discs (on which, traditionally, both the name of the card maker and the date of production are specified) dated 1499.

The TDM I category is related, among others, to the Jean Dodal Tarot, Lyon 1701, very similar iconographically to the cards discovered in the Castello Sforzesco well, albeit of a lesser quality of execution, and to the lesser known because republished for the first time in 2016 (By Yves Reynaud and the present author under the brand Tarot of Marseilles Heritage), Jean Payen Tarot, Avignon 1713. Besides, the Jean Noblet Tarot, Paris 1650, which is yet of another type, is classified in this category, completely arbitrarily. The TDM II category, which includes the Tarot of Marseilles Millennium Edition, is related to the most commonly known type of Tarot in the world today, of which the most renowned (wrongly so, due to the multiple alterations of the traditional canon) are the Nicolas Conver, Marseilles 1760, and the ancient Tarot of Marseilles produced by Paul

Marteau (heir to the Grimaud card factory) in Paris 1930. For reference, some people say that it was he who designated this specific type of Tarot as the Tarot of Marseilles, though Romain Merlin referred to this appellation in his book *Nouvelles recherches sur l'origine des cartes à jouer* (New researches on the game of card origin), published in 1859 : “Let’s take, indeed, the Tarots of Basançon, of Geneva and of Marseilles which best represent the ancient Venetian Tarot”. Papus made mention of it as well in his book *Le Tarot des Bohémiens, clef absolue des sciences occultes* (The Tarot of the Bohemians : absolute key to occult science), published in 1889.

The Paul Marteau Tarot, renowned in the whole world, is considered by many to be an actual historical deck, whereas no material printed with the woodblocks at the time of their engraving (18th century) has been preserved. It is important to state accurately that Paul Marteau realized this edition with a limited colour palette, which was wrongly appointed on the cards. In doing so, Marteau’s deck thereby based itself on the non-traditional colour canon utilized in the 1880 Nicolas Conver Tarot reissue (the original dating from 1760) by Camoin & Co, the house which merged in 1888 with Grimaud, of which Paul Marteau, nephew of Paul-Baptiste Grimaud, was the heir. These decks excluded some of the colours of the traditional palette, such as light blue, light green and fleshtone, passing from seven to four colours (the fleshtone colour was later reintroduced by Paul Marteau), in order to facilitate the cards’ production on new industrial machines, definitively marking the end of the secular artisanal tradition. The Tarots of Marseilles reference decks, on which the Tarot of Marseilles Millennium Edition is based, are :

- Pierre MADENIÉ, Dijon 1709
- Jean-Baptiste MADENIÉ, Dijon 1739
- François HÉRI, Solothurn (Switzerland) 1718
- François CHOSSON, Marseilles 1736 (there is disagreement about the year 1672, supposedly inscribed on the II of Discs, which doesn’t correspond to historical official records of this card maker, nor to this canon, which is typical of the 18th century)
- François TOURCATY Son, Marseilles 1727
- ARNOULT, Paris 1748 (the official date for the woodblocks used by Paul Marteau in 1930)
- Rochus SCHAR, Mümliswil (Switzerland) 1750
- Claude BURDEL, Fribourg (Switzerland) 1751
- Claude ROCHIAS, Neuchatel (Switzerland) 1754
- François BOURLION, Marseilles 1760
- Jean-Pierre LAURENT, Belfort ± 1760
- Joseph FAUTRIER, Marseilles ± 1760
- Nicolas CONVER, Marseilles 1760
- Antoine BOURLION, Marseilles 1768
- ARNOUX AMPHOUX, Marseilles 1801

Other decks, of lesser importance, that have equally been analysed, include :

- François CARRAJAT, Chambéry 1794

- André ARNOUX, Marseilles ± 1800
- Bernardin SUZANNE, Marseilles 1839

Of course, other models of Tarots and printed sheets have been analyzed as indispensable complements to research and study. In the course of studying of these Tarots of reference, there emerged the fact that of all the TDM II editions preserved dating from the 18th century (Pierre Madenié, Dijon 1709, being the most ancient known and one of the most important), their origins go back at least to the 17th century, and certainly far before. Indeed, on almost all the type II Tarots of Marseilles coming from a wide range of places and dates (from Pierre Madenié, Dijon 1709, to Bernardin Suzanne, Marseilles 1839), the name LESTOILLE (*l'estoille*) can be found on the seventeenth Arcana (the Star). This ancient Provençal word, according to the *Dictionnaire historique de la langue française* (the French language historical dictionary, Ed. le Robert, 2006), was exclusively employed between 1380 and the end of the 15th century, with the word étoile (the Star) having definitely replaced it at the beginning of the 16th century. This proven historical fact, in regards to the very rustic and purist Tarot of Marseilles iconography (as we can behold it in the Pierre Madenié, Marseilles 1709, and in the Tarot of Marseilles Millennium Edition, which is mainly based on this deck), which is characteristic of Roman (11th-12th century) and Gothic art (12th-16th century), and not at all typical of the Italian 15th or 16th century Renaissance, nor to any later period, asserts that this particular model of Tarot could have in fact been designed sometime during the 14th century, or, at the latest, the first part of the 15th century, between Northern Italy and Provence, as Occitania traded extensively with Italy at this time.

The clothing of the characters on TDM II cards corresponding to Germanic fashions of the 14th century, and Medieval armour found in a couple of cards dating from this same period, again seems to assert the correctness of this dating, just like the characteristic Roman numeration of the cards, such as VIII LERMITE or XIII TENPERANCE (instead of IX and XIV), whom we find on religious panels painted in the 14th century, such as those of Alberegno Jacobello (Polyptych of the apocalypse, 1375-97). Furthermore, the Tarot of Marseilles relates to the Neo-pythagorean school of thought initiated by Nigidius Figulus and Eudorus of Alexandria (1st century BCE), and to the neo-platonist philosophy, which, from the time of Plotinus, pervaded occidental thought until the 14th century, when it was supplanted by Aristotelian vision which characterized the second half of the Renaissance, and prefigured modern rationalism.

The fact that early in the 14th century, many stone-cutters (among them the “image tailors” masters of the stroke art) migrated to Italy (as well as to the East, and to Spain and Portugal, where some of the oldest woodblock printed cards originate) in the aftermath of the “great cathedral strike” which was declared due to the condemning to death of all Templars (who supported, along with the Cistercian order, the impetus of the Cathedral building from the 12th to the 14th century) asserts still the relation between the Venetian Tarot (Venice being a great Templar center before their demise) and the master craftsmen of the North, from cities like Strasbourg and Nuremberg. Besides, Germany, which formerly encompassed Switzerland and thus bordered Northern Italy on the south, used *xylography* (carved woodblock printing) extensively, most notably in Nuremberg, a great center for card makers as well (and printers, such as Johannes Gutenberg, 1400-1468, considered

by many to be the inventor of typographic printing) as early as the 14th century. Great artists from Germany simply could not miss the chance to pay a visit to Venice, “the Serenissima”, the city of splendours where every type of art and science flourished, in order to get the opportunity to meet fellow craftsmen from every horizon, due to the extraordinary exchange of Eastern and Western cultures occurring in Venice at that time. The Tarot “of Marseilles» could thus be considered to be the initiatic legacy of master Masons, in touch with Eastern currents of art and thought, and whose craftsmanship related to that of stone cutters and sculptors, but also to that of copper and wood engravers, poster makers, haberdashers, etc., all operated by the same traditional codes of the sacred art, and connected to the Neo-platonic tradition. The Tarot would not only have had direct oriental sources through Venice’s commercial exchanges, but also Spanish (Marocco-Andalusian filiation) and Germanic (Nordic), as well as specifically, the itinerant contribution of Sufism and Kabbalah; but most importantly, the Greek heritage of the empire of Alexander the Great, including Alexandria of course, along with a part of the East and India (Gandhâra), all constituting a cultural legacy without which the Tarot of Marseilles would probably not exist.

These Oriental, Indo-European and Indo-Mediterranean currents, which coursed through the West, carried with them, in the years between the 11th and the 16th century, the essential elements of the Wisdom of the Ages (the *sophia perennis*), resulting in a sacred (and secret ?) alliance between eminent representatives of these traditions, which eventually gave birth to the Tarot of Marseilles. Sadly, only a very small number of Tarots are preserved today. This rarity, surprising regarding the great popularity of the game, could be explained partly due to the fact that paper had been a very rare and expensive material for many centuries. Worn-out cards were thus recycled. But the small number of surviving symbolical Tarots is also probably due to the ostracism the image-makers and their creations had been subjected to from ecclesiastic and temporal authority, to the point that, as we’ve seen above, auto-da-fés were actually set in place. Consequently, the known historical Tarots of Marseilles are relatively recent creations, and their traditional canon has been altered to differing degrees over time. As a matter of fact, close scrutiny of the graphics of the best Tarot of Marseilles type II copies, after comparing their various levels of adherence to the sacred geometry matrix blueprint (which underlies all the aspects of the Tarot of Marseilles Type II, cf. “The Sacred Code of Tarot”), reveals definite evidence of alterations, from detail of line precision of the icons, colourization, some inversion of cards as if reflected in a mirror, to, most blatantly, framing, the cards being actually cut down by the reduction of the size of the frames. These are sure signs that these Type II prints, assumed to be originals when seen from an overly-simplistic historical perspective – one that forces superficial facts to comply with already presupposed conclusions – are thus, in reality, relatively late productions of a model far more ancient than any known copy. Overall, we notice a progressive degradation of the Tarot of Marseilles as we cross into the 18th century, during which the initiatic tradition that spawned the tarot and created its symbolism, and provided its geometrical structure and metaphysics are lost. Fortunately, the enlightened analysis has shown evidence that a couple of historical copies, the very first of which (though not exclusively) was of Pierre Madenié, Dijon 1709, François Chosson, Marseilles 1736, and François Tourcaty, Marseilles 1727, have, in spite of various alterations, still managed to preserve what the present author considers to be

the closest approximation of the original traditional canon and iconography. Among the altered Tarots of Marseilles copies, the Nicolas Conver deck, published in Marseilles in 1760 (and often mistaken for the original, or to be the recognized authority reference), is in fact a late production, which, in many ways, strays from the established tradition. We can see evidence of this in the significant alterations of some of the icons. One simply has to compare XI LA FORCE (Fortitude) or XVIII LA LVNE (the Moon) with older decks such as the François Chosson, Marseilles 1736 for instance (these historical Tarots can be viewed at www.tarot-de-marseille-millennium.com, the official website of the present work, and www.tarot-de-marseille-heritage.com) and the Tarot of Marseilles Millennium Edition to realize this immediately.

We can also notice important changes in the colourization of the Nicolas Conver edition, due to mistakes and excesses (for instance, disproportionate usage of light blue), but equally in the very names of the cards, updated in typical 18th century humanist fashion, with the letters V and I replaced by the U and the J, respectively. Moreover, though none of the older decks actually feature apostrophes, with all title words merged into one (as in VIII LERMITE (the Hermit) for example), some of the names were blatantly adulterated beyond the scope of the usual superficial modifications of the alphabet, thus dramatically altering the traditional naming we find in every earlier copy of the Tarot of Marseilles. It is apparent from the time of the Nicolas Conver edition, around 1760, that these alterations were made. Indeed, none of the Tarots of Marseilles Type II from the first half of the 18th century had been affected by these modifications. On the other hand, other Tarots from the second half of the 18th century, such as the François Bourlion, Marseilles 1760, the Arnoux & Amphoux, Marseilles 1793, or even the Bernardin Suzanne, Marseilles 1839, though very much altered iconographically, do still feature the traditional naming of the cards. There exist, however, “hybrid” cases, such as that of the André Arnoux deck, Marseilles, ±1800, whose names both contain apostrophes and do feature U instead of V on certain cards only, with the traditional naming of the cards being unaltered besides. What follows is a complete list of the traditional naming alterations of the 22 major Arcana:

- I LE BATELEVR became I LE BATELEUR
- III LIMPERATRICE became III L’IMPERATRICE
- IIII LEMPEREVR became IIII L’EMPEREUR
- VII LECHARIOR became VII LE CHARIOT
- VIII IVSTICE became VIII LA JUSTICE
- VIII LERMITE became VIII L’HERMITE
- XII LE PENDV became XII LE PENDU
- XIII TENPERANCE became XIII TEMPERANCE
- XVII LESTOILLE became XVII LE TOILLE (and not LE TOULE) then XVII L’ETOILE
- XVIII LA LVNE became XVIII LA LUNE
- XX LE IVGEMENT became XX LE JUGEMENT.

Only VI LAMOVREX and XVI LA MAISON DIEV have preserved, for reasons unknown,

their exact appellation, having certain researchers to believe in the existence of a digital code based on the roman numerals for these two cards only, leading them to many speculations, which rest, unfortunately, upon erroneous bases. The Tarot of Marseilles Millennium Edition, for its part, has restored integrally, besides the structural and iconographic canon, the traditional naming of all the cards. Thus, the appropriate creative combinations of both the names and the numbers of the cards can actually occur, subsequently allowing for multiple levels of interpretation due to *homonymy* (linguistically, word having a similar pronunciation and/or a written form identical to another, but of a different meaning), *paronymy* (linguistically, a word presenting, in regard to another, a certain phonetical analogy, but having a different meaning), or by *paronomasis* (in rhetoric, process consisting of using two or more paronyms). Thus, the combinatorial relation existing between cards produces phonetic plays with multiple levels of meaning. The language of the Tarot of Marseilles, in turns, becomes a cant – “a language of the birds”, which invokes the spirit of the “Cheerful Science”, thereby elevating the mind to higher levels of knowledge and illumination. Moreover, through this process, called *heteroglossia* (linguistically, the plurality of meaning that a specific statement can have), it is possible to read the words using phonetical transposition from one language to another. The Arcana LE MAT (the Fool) for instance, is characteristic of this : the word *mat* means “dead” (Persian) ; “entangle”, “plait”, “dull”, or “braid” (English) ; “food” (Swedish) ; “good” (Breton) ; “feeble” (German) ; “dull” and “twilight” (Vietnamese) ; “dull”, “mast” and “tree” (French)... A single word or a part of a word can have several other meanings, allowing multiple levels of understanding, according to the specific approach of the cards sequences at the time of the reading. By these indefinite possibilities, the absence of apostrophes and of even sometimes the separation between the name and its article (LIMPERATRICE, LECHARIOR, LESTOILLE...) finds all its justification. Accordingly, foreign editions of the Tarot of Marseilles which translate each card’s original name into another language is a grave mistake. These literal translations most definitely alter separate parts of the overall traditional form of the Tarot, in which each part is a reflection of the undivided whole, and is thereby unified in its entirety.

THE ESSENTIAL SYMBOLISM OF 78 ARCANA OF THE TAROT OF MARSEILLES

The Tarot of Marseilles consists of seventy-eight cards, including five sets distributed in two main groups. The first one comprises four “Elements” or “Emblems” : BASTON (Wands), ESPEES (Swords), DENIERS (Disks) and COUPE (Cups). Constituted each of fourteen cards, they form together the group of fifty-six cards called “minor Arcana”. These four sets of fourteen cards are themselves constituted of two groups : a series of ten cards called Numerals or Pips and four Characters, VALET (Page), le CAVALLIER (Knight), ROY (King) and REYNE (Queen), who are named for their part “Honors” or “Court Cards”. The second group, constituted of twenty-two cards (21+1) called “major Arcana”, is situated at the heart of the four Elements – symbolizing the universal forces – and they express the quintessence of the Tarot, which complies exactly with the traditional definition of the world in five Elements, that is four fundamental Elements (the Fire, the Air, the Earth and the Water) and one subtle element, the Ether, such as it is found in Greece,

in Asia Minor, in India, and, of course, in the West at the heart of the Hermetic philosophy, or Science of Thoth-Hermes, developed during the Renaissance era. In their hierarchical ensemble, the cards of the Tarot of Marseilles express all the facets of the the human experience and evolution, translating by its archetypal symbolic icons the articulation of the universal *Logos* (the Word or code-language of Creation). They so symbolize the phases of *kairos*, for the Greeks the sacred time of the evolutionary opportunities, qualitative and regenerative, at the opposite of *chronos*, the quantitative and corrupting time. The Tarot of Marseilles so constitutes a unified model of the Universe, binding the microcosm and the macrocosm in a quite undivided, dynamic and non-dualistic (beyond an irreconcilable good and evil) whole, thus being in conformity with the traditional doctrine according to which the Earth is the reflection of the Heaven, and “Everything is in everything”, the human being constituting in itself the epitome of the Universe, a microcosmic model of the “Great Arcanum”.

THE 22 MAJOR ARCANA

Constituting the heart of the Tarot of Marseilles, the 22 major Arcana present the essential principles governing all the fundamental aspects of the human experience and evolution. Considered in their linear suite however, from the first to the last card, they characterize the milestones of an initiation, the outcome of which being the fulfillment and the regeneration of the human being, by its harmonization with the Principle or Verb of the Creation. As the present author demonstrates in his book “The Sacred Code of Tarot”, the word tarot indeed comes from the Sanskrit *taru*, meaning “tree”, “plant” and “grass”. But this word also means “spear” in Thracian (symbolism of the pole, the axis of the World) as well as “return” in Sumerian, language used at the very origin of our historic cycle and civilization. By its ramifications, the tree is the very image of the uniqueness of the multiplicity of the World, its ground roots reflecting the celestial branches, and its trunk, the channel by which Heaven and Earth are connected and communicate, establishing the bridge or ladder connecting the whole universal manifestation.

By the loss and the recurrence of its foliage every year, the tree, bearing the fruit which carries the seed (*taru* means as well “seed” in Maori), which gives birth in its turn to the tree - this cycle beginning again perpetually - manifest also the cyclic regeneration of the World. In the current tongues, the *taru* word is also present. We find it in Finnish where it means “legend”, “myth”, and in Estonian where it means “hive”, meanings which send us back, by the hexagonal alveoli of which the hive consists, to the sacred geometry of the Metatron’s Cube, the very cosmological matrix of the Tarot of Marseilles. The 22 major Arcana’s general signification is presented here briefly. All symbols being ambivalent (and even multivalent), each card is presented with some of its negative counterparts.

I LE BATELEVR (The Magician)

Represents the creative impulse, the personal will, the power of unity, self-confidence, the mastering of every project/challenge, the unification and the utilization of opposite forces.

Negative counterparts : mischief, ambivalence, manipulation.

II LA PAPESSÉ (The Popess)

Represents the universal Mother, ancestral knowledge and wisdom repository, the spirit pervading mystery, the feminine principle, education, the initiation of life.

Negative counterparts : coldness, retention, totalitarianism.

III LIMPERATRICE (The Empress)

Represents the creative conception, the fertile and sovereign intelligence, The generative power of the ideas, realization in form and matter, providence.

Negative counterparts : inexperience, venality, greed.

IIII LEMPEREUR (The Emperor)

Represents the father, the chief, the assertion of the will, of authority and order, the material realization, stability, abundance, protection and security.

Negative counterparts : abuse of power, domination, strictness.

V LE PAPE (The Pope)

Represents the spiritual father, the mentor, the architect and keeper of the sacred, the coordinator of the spiritual life within the material plan of Manifestation.

Negative counterparts : occultation, dogmatism, manipulation.

VI L'AMOUREUX (The Lovers)

Represents freedom of choice and social emancipation, intellectual brilliance, the pleasure of self-fulfillment in the creative dynamic relation.

Negative counterparts : ambiguity, doubt, codependency.

VII LE CHARIOT (The Chariot)

Represents the domination of the oppositions, the spirit of conquest, determination, the exploitation of resources, the material power in the service of constructive developments.

Negative counterparts : shock of the oppositions, arrogance, aggressiveness.

VIII LA JUSTICE (Justice)

Represents universal balance, harmonization of antagonist forces, the evaluation of the consequences of one's actions, adaptation to necessity, demarcation of vital space.

Negative counterparts : intransigence, rigidity, inflexibility.

VIII L'ERMITE (The Hermit)

Represents internalization, latent potentiality, reflection, distancing oneself from the world, the precipice of change, the critical stage before an inevitable mutation.

Negative counterparts : decline, deceit, malpractice.

X LA ROUE DE FORTUNE (The Wheel of Fortune)

Represents the perpetual renewal, the creative impulse, the redefining of the being, alternation, transmission of the power, fluctuations in the existence, impermanence.

Negative counterparts : disorganization, chronic instability, frenzy.

XI LA FORCE (Fortitude)

Represents the assimilation and the unification of the natural forces, the stable strength, the domination of spirit over matter, cohesion, determination, virtue.

Negative counterparts : conflict, submission by force, inflexibility.

XII LE PENDU (The Hanged Man)

Represents both the teacher and the student, the ripening of the accumulated knowledge, detachment, the assimilation of things, the attentive listening before any decisive action.

Negative counterparts : obstacle, passivity, inability or unwillingness to act.

XIII LA MORT (Death)

Represents the total renewal of being, the test of the radical change, the breaking down of old concepts, questioning, the hinge between the known and the stranger.

Negative counterparts : devitalization, decay, devastation.

XIII LA TEMPÉRANCE (Temperance)

Represents the vital exchange, the harmony of opposites, the possibilities of change, adaptation to circumstances, the institution of a new cycle, mutation.

Negative counterparts : limitations, stagnation, wait.

XV LE DIABLE (The Devil)

Represents the hierarchical organization of a group, the dependence on a structure, instinctive drives, forces which stick to the passions, grasping for power.

Negative counterparts : perversion, subjection, sectarianism.

XVI LA MAISON DIEU (The Tower)

Represents the precipitated return to reality, the destruction of illusions, the discharge of material constraints, the liberation of vital energies, the regenerative process.

Negative counterparts : dissolution, turnover, disaster.

XVII L'ÉTOILE (The Star)

Represents some action reflecting an ideal, the expression of natural life and harmony, the listening of the internal voice, the spirit of the truth, the fulfillment of a destiny.

Negative counterparts : destitution, utopianism, deliquescence.

XVIII LA LVNE (The Moon)

Represents the catalysation of the dreams, hopes and internal resources, the pursuit in the overtaking of a condition, the tensional noose towards the fixed purpose.

Negative counterparts : critical phase, adversity, uncertainties.

XVIII LE SOLEIL (The Sun)

Represents happiness and natural harmony, the growth in community, unity and cohesiveness, manifesting ideals, unlimited possibilities of development.

Negative counterparts : dependence, purism, elitism.

XX LE IVGEMENT (Judgement)

Represents the reaching of the summit, the moment of truth and probation, the delivery of verdict, the end of tests, the result of efforts, the fulfillment of purpose.

Negative counterparts : indictment, extreme rigour, legal troubles.

XXI LE MONDE (The World)

Represents triumph, sensational success, the expansion of the vital force, the capacity to surpass oneself, the plenitude of being within the world.

Negative counterparts : over-estimating oneself, moral blindness, impulsiveness.

LE MAT (The Fool)

Represents the completion of a cycle, the quest of the absolute, the overtaking of the limits, the outcome, the crossing of the threshold of a new cycle, evolution on the march.

Negative counterparts : error, inconsequence, madness.

THE 56 MINOR ARCANA

The essential significations of the four Emblems of the Tarot of Marseilles (Wands, Swords, Disks and Cups) that symbolize the fundamental forces of the Universe, are presented here briefly, as well as that of the first ten Numbers and the four dignitaries constituting the 16 Court Cards which complement each of the denary Numeral Pip series. Along with the essential significations of the 22 major Arcana, the nature and symbolism of the minor Arcana clarified in this chapter, provide the essential landmarks in order to gain an elementary but correct understanding of the whole of the Marseilles deck, thus giving the benefits from this metaphysical knowledge and allowing an effective approach of the Tarot of Marseilles on a practical level.

• THE 4 ELEMENTS OR EMBLEMS •

WANDS

Primordial creative principle, fire of action, the Wand symbolizes the original impulse, the authority, the power and command (scepter), the means of conquest, the establishment of rules allowing the constructive development in any endeavor. It relates to power, fertility,

sexuality and regeneration, to the combative and creative impulse.

Negative counterparts : tyranny, violence, destruction.

SWORDS

Spiritual, psychic and mental principle, the Sword symbolizes the lightning action of the Word, the righteousness of the spirit, the discernment between truth and error, reality and the fantasy.

It gives evidence of the bravery and asserts the authority, the commandment, the definition of rules. It cuts through in a decisive way to open and clarify the evolutionary paths.

Negative counterparts : abuse of power, exercise of terror, perversity.

DISKS

Material and physical principle, the Disk symbolizes the plan of the objective, quantifiable reality.

It symbolizes any organized system, from microcosm to macrocosm. The Disk is the physical, passive receiver of the formative spirit symbolized by the Wand and Sword. As material manifestation of a superior order (gold), it establishes the support of any realization.

Negative counterparts : rationalism, materialism, inertia.

CUPS

Sacred spiritual and religious principle, the Cup symbolizes the receptacle of the Tradition, which

contains all the mysteries of the Genesis, life, death and resurrection. The Cup symbolizes the heart, considered to be the center of the being and the seat of the soul. It represents the universal matrix containing the essence of all life, the source of abundance and plenitude.

Negative counterparts : laziness, debauchery, self-complacency.

• THE 40 NUMERAL OR PIP CARDS, NUMBERS 1 TO 10 •

The group of the Numeral or Pip cards consists of four denary series, that is 4 x 10 cards, each being relative to one of the four Elements or Emblems of the Tarot. The first ten Numbers (1 to 10) are the root of all numbers and therefore all the possibilities of manifestation of each of the four Elements as universal forces are expressed symbolically by the 40 Pip cards. To clarify the significance of the Numbers 1-10, in this section is addressed their essential symbolism.

NUMBER 1

Number of the motivation, the enthusiasm, the creativity and the inspiration, the immanent spontaneity, the independence. It symbolizes the origin and the end of any thing, the precursor, the pioneer, the initiator, the potentiality.

Negative counterparts : individualism, arrogance, vindication.

NUMBER 2

Number of the complementarity and the dependence, it symbolizes the separation and the connection of two distant things, the opening and the balance. If 1 is the principle,

2 is the demonstration, the first real number, the unity added to itself.

Negative counterparts : passivity, opposition, corruption.

NUMBER 3

Number of the creativity, the concrete demonstration and the fertile developments, considered as the root of the Creation (3 x 3 giving all of the numbers). It symbolizes the spirit shining in the materiality, the adaptability, the originality and the spontaneous share.

Negative counterparts : impulsiveness, vanity, dispersal.

NUMBER 4

Number of stability, rational organization and safety. It symbolizes the objective reality, the four traditional elements, the logical and constructive organization, methodical application, solid base of any elaboration and any discipline.

Negative counterparts : intransigence, rigidity, obstruction.

NUMBER 5

Number of harmony and balance, the fifth subtle element, the spiritual consciousness, for the better and for the worse. It symbolizes the microcosm, the mediation, the channel, the animation of the material plane by the spirit, the freedom of movement and evolution.

Negative counterparts : destabilization, dispersal, subversivity.

NUMBER 6

Number of the equilibrium, beauty and love (sex = six), of the dynamic and creative relationships, and the link between all things. It symbolizes the union of the opposites, the creative freedom, the free arbitrator at the center of all the paths of possibility.

Negative counterparts : indecision, impatience, ambiguity.

NUMBER 7

Number of becoming and evolution, brilliance and plenitude, of the autonomy (six directions of space plus center), of the domination of the spirit (3) over the materiality (4). It symbolizes the domination of the antagonisms, the self-mastery and the control of all situations.

Negative counterparts : egocentricity, tyranny, irreducibility.

NUMBER 8

Number of the infinity, of perfectionism, of the demarcation and balance of the material and the spiritual plans. It symbolizes the perpetual regeneration, justice and equity, the qualitative and quantitative accumulation of resources, the productivity and the yield.

Negative counterparts : intolerance, inflexibility, intransigence.

NUMBER 9

Number of gestation, the very last which contains all the others, aiming towards fulfillment and reunification. It symbolizes the ultimate stage of the evolutionary and spiritual progress, the experience, the point of break, of crisis and opportunity, the passage and transformation.

Negative counterparts : transgression, decline, corruption.

NUMBER 10

Number of fulfillment, of the creative redefinition of things and being, 10 consists of 1 (self) and 0 (the indefinite), so expressing all the range of possibilities. It symbolizes the dynamic wholeness, the initialization of a cycle of undefined possibilities and evolution, a new start.

Negative counterparts : uncertainty, precariousness, impermanence.

• THE 16 COURT CARDS •

The group of the Court cards consists of four quaternary series, that is 4 x 4 cards, each relative to one of the four Elements or Emblems of the Tarot. The family of the Court cards consists of the Page, the Knight, the Queen and the King. Together, due to their archetypal specificities and respective offices, they represent the principles of proactive consciousness, coordinating the relationships with the universal powers, symbolized by four Elements.

VALET (Page)

In the 12th century, the word *servant* indicates a “prince”, a “royal son”, the idea of service being attached to the nobility. He is an officer of a royal or princely house. The Servant (of the Latin *vassellitus*, “servant”) symbolizes the humility and the worship in the work, in the service of the universal order. He acts as messenger and as herald in search of experience.

Negative counterparts : passivity, disdain, slavish obedience.

CAVALLIER (Knight)

The Knight relates to the righteousness of conduct, the moral elevation, the possession of the means necessary for the continuation of a pursued purpose. He embodies the gentleman (or gentlewoman, as some women were made Knight), the noble character, the mastery of oneself and the quickness of action. The rider is a messenger, a guide and an intercessor.

Negative counterparts : aggravated enthusiasm, impatience, showing off.

REYNE (Queen)

The Queen represents the feminine aspect of the sovereignty, individual or collective, expressing the capacity to perceive and to receive, to feel and to fathom in depth. She embodies the wisdom and the influence. The female is the carrier of life, she livens up the World (mundus-arcana), she presides over the birth, life and death, and so over the highest sacraments.

Negative counterparts : tyranny, abuse of power, self-indulgence.

ROY (King)

The King represents the male aspect of the sovereignty, expressing the capacity to act in a decisive way, to give or to take. He embodies the wisdom and the authority regarding law and judgement. The King of Arms is a very important officer who presides over the big ceremonies. He orders the Herald of Arms and has jurisdiction on heraldry.

Negative counterparts : tyranny, abuse of power, self-indulgence.

ELEMENTARY BASIS FOR USING THE TAROT OF MARSEILLES

Granting access to higher levels of understanding of the world and of its government, the practice of the Tarot is an act of sacred, metaphysical and méta-religious dimension, or, to say it more simply, spiritual, and appealing to the pure intelligence. It requires one to reach the most serene state of mind possible, and to neutralize one's personal prejudice, in order to allow an adequate condition for the reading to take place. The lecture or contemplation of the Tarot is both an introspective, intuitive and analytical process, operating on both hemispheres of the brain simultaneously and synergistically. It thus provokes the opening of the mind and the elevation of the consciousness, pulling the spirit out beyond the usual constraints of the ego and what it can actually perceive by itself, without referring to a definite reference system.

Of the many possible usages of the Tarot, the “spread” is the most renowned. Carried out for oneself or others, it proceeds by the selection of cards generally turned over. However, the reading can also proceed by choosing among fully displayed cards, which, corresponding to recognized or “felt” archetypes, allows them to be interpreted and researched, studied and analyzed in regard of a definite situation. The Tarot of Marseilles, indeed, is an archetypal symbolical translator, revealing the essential principles governing all things, and allowing an understanding of their complex logic. Thus it can serve as an instrument of knowledge in the broadest sense, according to multiple practical modes of use. However, practice always relies on the sequence in which the cards are read, and on their logical developments. Whatever the modality opted for by the user, the essential principles are presented in this chapter. Of all the uses of the Tarot, “pulling” (either with the cards face down or fully displayed) is that which deals the most with Mystery (one of the meanings of the word *arcanum*). An indefinite suite of effects (of causes and consequences, the cause being, for the Hindus, the effect of its own effect) influences the selection of certain cards instead of others at the specific time and place of the reading.

By the intervention of synchronicity, the face to face situation with the chosen or pulled cards invites one to think about the cards' sequence which reflects, by its very arrangement, universal principles underlying the aspects of human experience. As a transfiguring mirror, the cards' sequences reveal what forces are “in play” in one way or another at the time of their selection. It is up to the consultant as to whether to dare (or not) to penetrate, as he is invited to, the mysteries of the Arcana revealing different facets of himself and the world. In this regard, presented here are the two elementary types of spread : that which can be defined as “dynamic”, or simply, “live” (which is performed according to the natural language of the Tarot), and the well known “cross” spread, which, though “solidified”, is in agreement with the structure of the Tarot. These two modalities of spreads and readings will allow everyone, with the help of the succinct definition of the cards listed in the previous chapter, to begin practicing the Tarot of Marseilles, whatever their effective level of knowledge or experience.

If, in the examples of Tarot spreads below, only the 22 major Arcana are being used, once the essential signification of the 56 minor Arcana is integrated the same methodology is applicable with

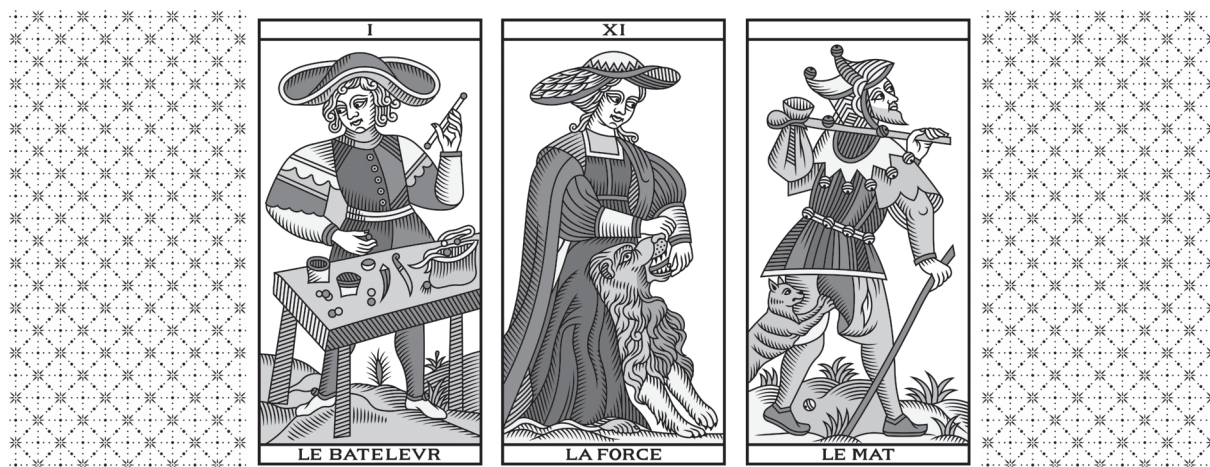
the full set of 78 cards. While the major Arcana reveal the essential principles which are “in play” in a given situation, the minor Arcana complete them and reveal its practical and concrete aspects. So, all the cards can be used to make the spreads presented below. To deepen the approach and understanding of the Tarot, the reader is invited to refer to the first book by the present author, “The Sacred Code of Tarot - The Rediscovery of the Original Nature of the Tarot of Marseille”, in which is presented for the first time the structure of the Wheel of the Tarot (the *rota*), the archetypal organization of the cards revealing the natural correspondences of the major and minor Arcana. So, sequences of cards integrating both major and minor Arcana become perfectly understandable, these groups of cards being approached together or in isolation. By means of this cross-reference table (Tarological Table), which constitutes an actual abacus, it is thus possible (and advised) to complete afterwards a sequence of major Arcana with the corresponding minors, and so to correlate the quintessential principles symbolized by the former with the universal forces symbolized by the latter, so revealing what connects those principles with the objective realities.

THE DYNAMIC, OR “LIVE” SPREAD

To begin, have the person for whom the reading is intended be relaxed and concentrating on the question which occupies his/her mind, and have this person mix the 22 major Arcana and spread them fan-shaped and face down in the direction of his choice. The actual reading commences with a base triplet of cards—the trinity being the root of any multiplicity and any creative principle operating in space and in time. The person for whom the reading is intended will thus place three cards face down arranged from left to right (in the direction emulating that of the emblematic Arcana, LE MAT - the Fool as he undertakes the quest) and then turn them face up taking care not to spin them 180°. So, essentially, we have the past (on the left), the present (in the center) and the future (on the right), or the present moment in tension between what was and what will be, albeit conditionally, and always opened to multiple possibilities, whether it is towards the outside (to the right) or the inward (to the left) aspect of things. This sequence of three cards will be developed according to the orientation of the characters, who either suggest (or not) for other cards to be placed to complement them, in order to constitute a finished set. This natural approach rests upon the cards themselves and their very language, which is, as we saw it, a symbolic function which



Sequence of the first reading which does not require additional cards



Sequence of the reading which requires the addition of an indefinite number of additional cards

proceeds in the accessing of disparate and complementary elements, from which a significant whole stands out. A finished spread can still be developed with additional cards, implicitly included within it. The significance of this is seen in the *arithmology*, the process which consists of the continual reduction of an algebraic sum by the addition of its constitutive numbers. This reduction shall not exceed the number 22 though, the latter being assigned by default to the Arcanum LE MAT (The Fool), the twenty-second and last card (and so first) of the series of the major Arcana. Thus, for example: $21 = 2 + 1 = 3$, or still $11 + 21 + 1 = 33 = 3 + 3 = 6$. The sequence can also be developed by the revelation of complementary cards through the archetypal structure of the *Rota*. For a deeper analysis and elaboration of these complexities both in the presentation and in the interrelation between the archetypes of the Tarot, please refer to the book “The Sacred Code of Tarot” by the present author. In order to deepen any given sequence, the aforementioned arithmologic reduction can be applied to highlight the principles at play at that moment, as suggested by a couple or a set of cards. For example, the arithmologic reduction of the couple I LE BATELEVR and XI LA FORCE, would be $1 + 11 = 12$, highlighting XII LE PENDV. Each spread can also be developed “triangularly” in order to express its very essence. On this type of spread, being precisely dynamic, interactive and “alive”, the logic of the reading remains fluid. It is also possible to place additional cards closely, or even above and below those directed, in the opposing direction. However, it is advisable to develop a spread gradually, so that the sequences of cards remain always understandable for the consultant and for the person for whom the reading is intended.

THE CROSS SPREAD

This well-known spread is based on a cross formed by four cards, with a fifth placed in the centre. The first card, placed on the left, represents the person selecting the cards, the passive part of what is taking place in the present, with regard to its purpose, in the contemplated situation. The second card, placed on the right, represents the reality that the person has to face, the active part of what needs to occur both inside and outside of the self. These two cards together constitute the horizontal branch of the cross, corresponding to the passive part of the spread, the overt facts. The third card, placed above, presents what the person has to assert, the determining factor which has

to be implemented. The fourth card, placed below, reveals the solution of the current process, the possibilities of evolution of the situation, what the person aspires to in the depths of himself. These last two cards constitute, for their part, the vertical branch of the cross, representing the active part of the spread, which reveals what is at stake. Finally, the fifth card, placed in the center, reveals the key of the process that’s taking place, that which is important for the person to understand and to *realize*, in order to attain the purpose and to constructively face the situation. This last card is obtained, not by selection, but by arithmologic reduction of the four cards comprising the cross, the sum of which must continually be reduced until it equals a number between 1 and 22, so that it matches a major Arcana. In the case of the number of the card obtained by arithmologic reduction



The five Arcana of the Cross spread

already being present in the cross, then this synthesis actually asserts the importance of this card and its situation in the Cross. Alternately, so that the first cards of the series of the major Arcana (such as I LE BATELEVR or II LA PAPESSSE) can come out at the center of the cross, the number 22 can be shielded from the sum of the four cards of the spread, and this as often as necessary to get a number between 0 and 21.

The Cross spread presents, contrary to the dynamic spread, inherent limits due to the fact that the cards are not really generated from each other, and that they are arranged according to a predetermined structure, but it is concise and effective, precisely by virtue of these strictly defined relations. The dynamic spread, for its part, remains open and free. It multiplies the angles of approach of the cards, and so better reveals and articulates exactly what forces are at work in the depths of the person, with each of the cards defining a touchstone on the path of personal realization.

EPILOGUE

This booklet presents here just a few elements of the mysterious and illustrious history of the Tarot, as well as providing an introduction to the fundamentals of practicing the Tarot of Marseilles. In order to fully realize the richness and complexity of this extraordinary instrument of self-knowledge, and of the world and the universe, the reader is invited to explore the book “The Sacred Code of Tarot - The Rediscovery of the Original Nature of the Tarot of Marseilles”, by the present author, that should be released late 2018. Also, please visit the website www.tarot-de-marseille-millennium.com, which supplies additional information on this edition, and which features a gallery of historical Tarots of Marseilles decks – realized in partnership with some national museums – among which some will be seen by the public for the first time in color.

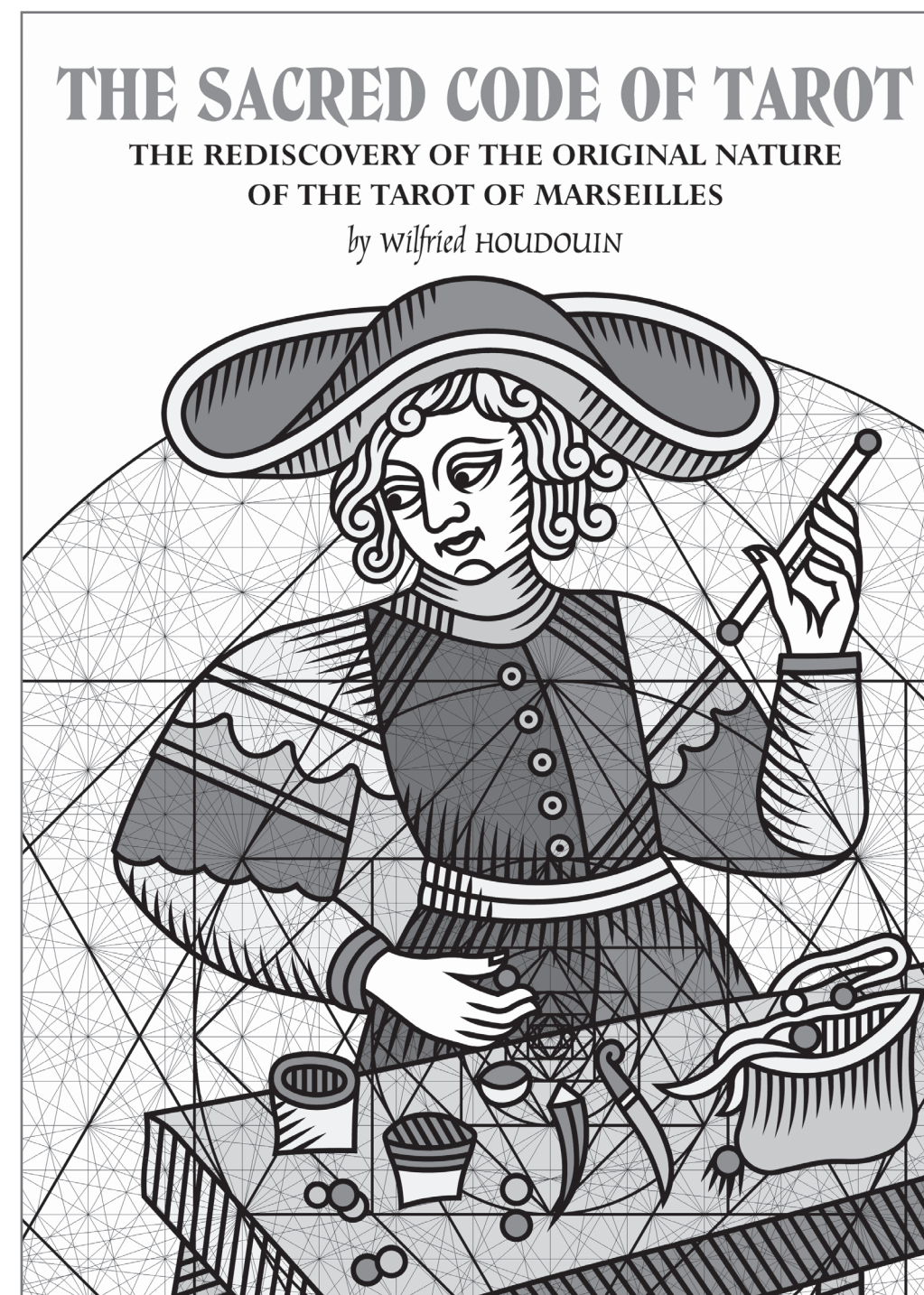
The reader is also invited to visit the web site www.tarot-de-marseille-heritage.com, created by Yves Reynaud in association with the present author. *Tarot of Marseilles Heritage* was created to protect the traditional inheritance of the Tarot of Marseilles, by the publication of exclusive facsimiles and republications of the most beautiful historic copies, respecting the size, the back and the envelope of origin. The *Tarot of Marseilles Millennium Edition* joining in keeping, in the 21st century, the multi-secular tradition of production of symbolic Tarots by Master Card Makers, *Tarot of Marseilles Heritage* is in charge of its production and its distribution today.

Sincerely yours,

Wilfried HOUDOUIN

Marseilles, 09th of August 2017

Full Moon



The Tarot of Marseilles Millennium Edition is a realization by the author of the book :

THE SACRED CODE OF TAROT

THE REDISCOVERY OF THE ORIGINAL NATURE
OF THE TAROT OF MARSEILLES

To be published in 2018

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