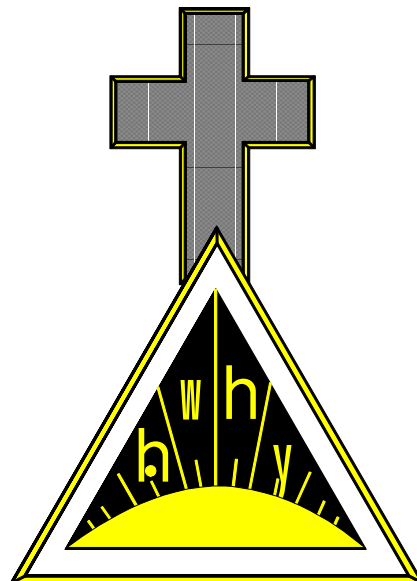


The Hermetic Order Of The
GOLDEN DAWN Intl.

MAJOR ARCANA SERIES

UNIVERSE / PATH OF t

**The Guide for Understanding
The Major Arcana**



THEORICUS 2=9

(The following description of the Universe Card is taken from the Theoricus Initiation.)

The Thirty-second path of the *Sepher Yetzirah*, which answereth unto the letter t, is called the Administrative Intelligence, and it is so-called because it directeth and associateth in all their operations, the seven planets, even all of them in their own due courses. To it, therefore, is attributed the due knowledge of the Seven Abodes of Assiah, the Material World, which are symbolized in the Apocalypse by the seven churches.

It refers to the Universe as composed of the four elements, to the Kerubim, to the Qlipoth, and to the astral plane. It is the reflection of the sphere of Saturn. It represents the connecting and binding link between the Material and Formative Worlds, Assiah and Yetzirah, and necessarily passes through the astral plane, the abode of the elementals and the shells of the dead. It is the Rending of the Veil of the Tabernacle, whereon the Kerubim and the palm trees are depicted. It is the Passing of the Gate of Eden.

These ideas are symbolically resumed in the representation of the twenty-first Key of the Tarot. Within the oval formed of the seventy-two circles, is a female form, nude save for a scarf that floats round her. She is crowned with the Lunar Crescent of Isis, and holds in her hands, two wands. Her legs form a cross. She is the Bride of the Apocalypse, the Qabalistic Queen of the Canticles, the Egyptian Isis, or Great Feminine Kerubic Angel Sandalphon on the left hand of the Mercy Seat of the Ark.

The Wands are the directing forces of the positive and negative currents. The seven-pointed heptagram or star alludes to the Seven Palaces of Assiah; the crossed legs to the symbol of the four letters of the Tetragrammaton.

The surmounting crescent receives alike the influences of hrwbg and Gedulah. She is the synthesis of the thirty-second path, uniting twklm to dwsy.

The oval of the seventy-two smaller circles refers to the Schemhamporesch, or Seventy-two fold name of Deity. The twelve larger circles form the zodiac. At the angles are the four Kerubim which are the vivified powers of the letters of the name YHVH operating in the elements, through which you have just symbolically passed in the preceding ceremony.

The fan, lamp, cup and salt represent the four elements themselves whose inhabitants are the Sylphs, Salamanders, Undines and Gnomes.

Be thou, therefore, prompt and active as the Sylphs, but avoid frivolity and caprice. Be energetic and strong as the salamanders, but avoid irritability and ferocity. Be flexible and attentive to images, like the Undines, but avoid idleness and changeability; be laborious and patient like the Gnomes, but avoid grossness and avarice.

So shalt thou gradually develop the powers of thy soul, and fit thyself to command the spirits of the elements.

Esoteric Information

The Universe card is the first card we meet on the Tree of Life. It is path thirty-two. We are on the physical plane ascending back to the higher spiritual plane. The

doorway for our ascension into the spiritual plane is the Universe card or t, path thirty-two. This path leads from t~~u~~klm, known as the Kingdom or the Earth, to d~~u~~sy, referred to as the Foundation.

The path color is indigo. The meaning of t is cross or equal-armed cross. It is a double letter which means power and servitude. The esoteric title of the Universe or the World card is the "Great One of the Night of Time". The planet of this path is Saturn, but do not let this mislead you. Actually, this path balances all energies and planets at one time. With that in mind, Saturn becomes a focal point of general meaning and workings. The Thirty-two Paths of Wisdom refer to path thirty-two as administrative intelligence. It is through this administrative intelligence that it directs the overall operation of all of the seven ancient planets. Symbolically, this path connects the Earth with the balanced power of the Microprosopus, represented by the hexagram.

The first letter of the Hebrew alphabet is a. t is the last letter. Between a and t rests the entire Universe. This is referred to in Christian and Greek terms as the Alpha and Omega, or the beginning and the end. The *Sepher Yetzirah* refers to t as the Palace of Holiness, sustaining all things. It is both power and servitude.

The center of the cube of space, as referred to in the *Sepher Yetzirah*, is the letter t, the cross. It connects a, m, and c, the three mother letters. This is the symbolic form of energy from which manifestation was created. The path of the Universe or the World is in fact the secret to all of this, because it falls at a point where a, m, and c all cross. This crossing point is where these primary energies are balanced. The key word for this path is balance. It is the Sanctum Sanctorum of the devotional Mysteries.

One symbol that we apply to both the Fool and Universe cards, a and t, the beginning and the end, is the Swastika. In rtk, it must be realized that its arms spin so rapidly that they merge and are in fact perceived as a unified point, or the primordial point. On the path of the Universe, the Swastika has slowed its spinning, so that each of the arms is perceptible and are seen to be perfectly balanced around a central point. This is the complete expression of the "One" in matter.

Keep in mind that when contemplating the Universe card we are really contemplating the world of matter. The Universe is a total balance and integration. Most of us think of ourselves as body and mind. Yet the Western Mysteries, and the Eastern Mysteries for that matter, have stated since almost the beginning of time that the Cosmos or the Universe is in fact an illusion, or basically all in the mind. With this thought in mind, we realize that the distinction between body and mind is one of perception, not of reality. In fact, in our path working experience, when we close our eyes and see visualization or pictures, what we are actually doing is witnessing the most refined forms of matter.

Behind the exterior of the Universe card, we must also realize that most of the physical world is actually unseen. To experience the path of the Universe is to be taken to the gateway of the Seven Palaces of Assiah. This is represented by the seven-pointed star.

As you enter the Holy of Holies, the Universe, you may experience forces in such a unique way that you are in them but not yet of them. Also, keep in mind that, opposed to other paths, the energies that you will experience in the Universe card, particularly in pathworking, are also in full expression and self-balanced. This perhaps is one reason why the equal-armed cross is considered one of the tools of the path of t.

To successfully travel this path, one must have some self-understanding and balance to begin with. This is very important. This path should not be traveled when one is out of balance, for your lack of balance on a balanced path that opens the doorway to higher realms of consciousness will do nothing but cause serious problems in the personality.

A word of caution, test all symbols with reason and understanding. This is the doorway to the Astral, into higher paths and planes of consciousness. Let us make sure we are not merely entertaining ourselves with extended fantasy. By doing this, we only deceive ourselves, and self-deception hinders our growth. The Universe, because it contains all things, is a path of discrimination. As you work this path, remember to be discriminating in the direction you choose to go on the path and the energies you choose to invoke within your consciousness. It is critically important that beginners on this path establish a sense of balance with the Lesser Banishing Ritual of the Pentagram. Those of us who at one time or another felt that the Archangels were merely fantasies have had our mind changed by invoking them through the L.B.R.P. on the path of t. Their extreme amount of brilliance and power is exemplified through the balance of this particular path.

Most Tarot cards have a wheel or oval-shaped wheel, a woman within the wheel, and the four Kerubim depicted on the Universe or World card. The symbolism behind this is that only through discrimination can we place ourselves in the administrative. Balance is symbolized by the dancing woman draped with a k shaped scarf (the letter attributed to the Wheel of Fortune) and surrounded by the animal symbols of the four elements.

The symbology here is quite Qabalistic in that it represents the four elements united by the fifth element of Spirit. It is the fifth element of Spirit that balances the four elements.

One of the primary principles of this path is to learn the edict, "As above, so below". In hnyb, hnyb of course attributed to the Great Mother and symbolized also by Saturn, we have the exalted supernal realm. We, also have what we call, "The Will to Form" or "The Will to Express". This is later expressed by the Universe card on path

thirty-two as actual expression, or final expression, or fullest expression of the Great Mother. This Great Mother can be represented by the Empress or Isis or Aimah Elohim. She is hnyb; she is Saturn; she is all the principles behind what we perceive as matter; she is the Cosmic Dancer as depicted on the Universe card who administers and balances the four elements. Most of the Tarot decks, as pointed out earlier, agree that the female figure should be surrounded by an oval shape of some sort. In the Golden Dawn Tarot, the oval shape is surrounded by seventy-two little dots or stars. These seventy-two little dots or stars represent the Schemhamporesch, or the seventy-two fold name of God. The oval shape gives reference to the womb. It is through the womb of the human female that we pass from gestation unto birth. It is through the Great Womb that we pass from life into death. It is also through this womb that we pass from the physical plane of tWkl m into the astral plane of Foundation, otherwise known as dWsy.

The woman in the Tarot card of the Universe, as pointed out earlier, is dancing. She is in movement, swirling and revolving, rather than as a more settled form of energy, as depicted in the Empress card where she is placed solidly on the Supernal Throne. This energy, or spiral force of Nature, is directed by the wands which she carries. The wands represent both active and passive energy, each one having two poles. In many cards, one wand is black and the other wand is white.

Some might consider the path of the Universe a dark cave filled with treachery, danger and tunnels. But remember that through this Darkness and through this treachery, we are led to the pathway of light which leads inevitably through dWsy into trapt. Let us also remember that it is through this pathway that we end up in the realm of the Qlippoth. Therefore, our own personal balance is heavily stressed. One must be in the right frame of mind and balanced by the Lesser Banishing Ritual of the Pentagram to begin their higher realm workings.