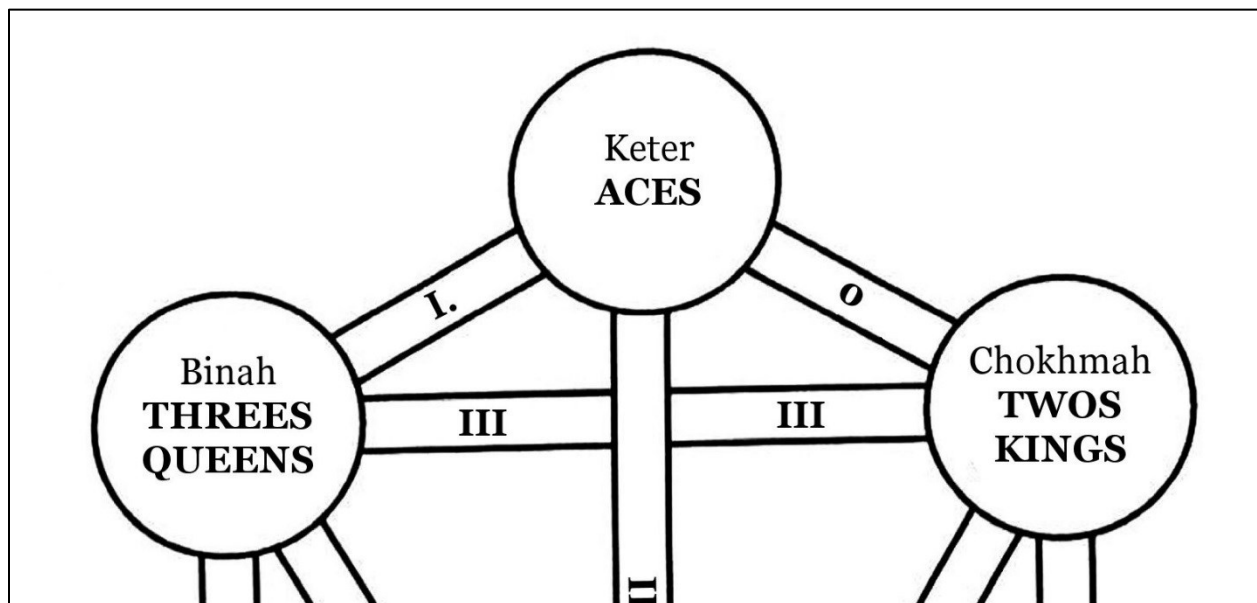


# Tarot Card Meanings with Benebell

## *A Seventeen-Part Video Lecture Series*

### **Part V: The Queens**

*The video length for The Queens became unduly long, so for those who might not be able to sit through and take notes during the entirety of the lecture, here is an illustrated transcript of that lecture.*



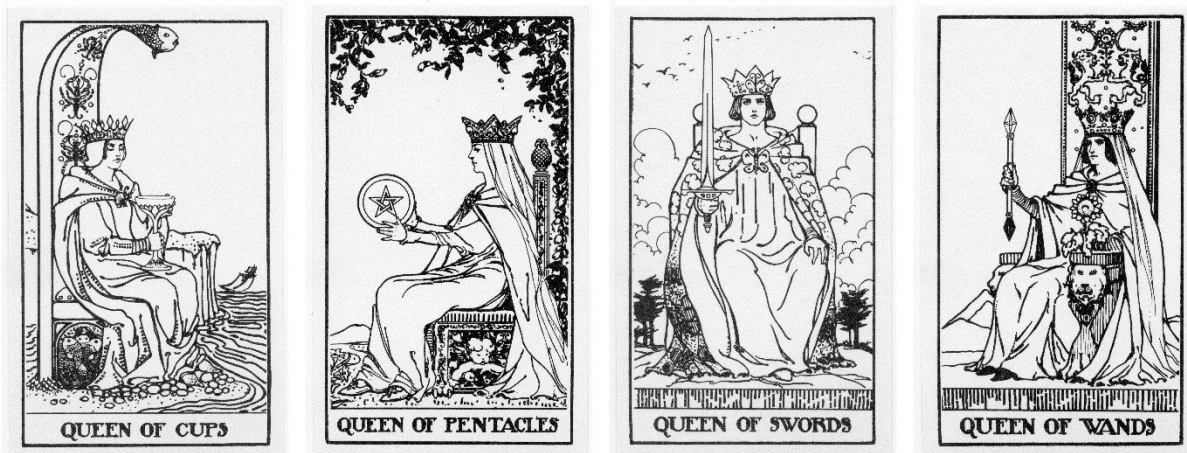
Let's review what we've covered so far in this video course. We started at the crown of the Kabbalistic Tree of Life, with Keter, and covered the tarot Aces. We then moved into Chokhmah for an overview of the tarot Twos. These are the first signs of growth along our life paths.

If we say that the Aces were seeds sown, then the Twos are the first sign of growth, and so even though this isn't the true beginning anymore, from our vantage point at the surface of the soil, we perceive the Twos to be the beginnings. That's the main discrepancy between the sephirah Keter and Chokhmah.

Then we continued on to Binah residence of the Threes. After that, instead of going to the Fours, we stayed on the pathways and returned to Chokhmah, where cohabiting with the Twos were the tarot Kings. Today's video lecture will continue in the Supernal Triangle, back to Binah to study the tarot Queens. In my hand-illustrated sepia-toned tarot deck, the Spirit Keeper's Tarot, the Queens are titled The Shields, and each feature a prominent shield of protection to signify their status.

If you're new here, welcome! You are watching Video 5 in a lecture series, Tarot Card Meanings with Benebell, a course in which I will prove to you that you are way smarter than you even realize,

because by the end of this series, you will have mastered proficiency with the Tarot de Marseilles, the Rider-Waite-Smith, the Crowley-Harris Thoth Tarot, and my deck, the Spirit Keeper's Tarot.



Recall the Kings from the BOTA Tarot by Paul Foster Case that we looked at in the previous video. Here are the Queens. In Paul Foster Case's 1947 *The Tarot: Key to the Wisdom of the Ages*, he attributes the following physical attributions to these Queens:

The Queen of Wands is a woman with darker features, a magnetic quality about her, and typically commands career success.

The Queen of Cups is a fair-featured woman, who is imaginative and poetic, and who possesses the Gift of Vision. She's the most intuitive, spiritual, and empathic of the four Queens.

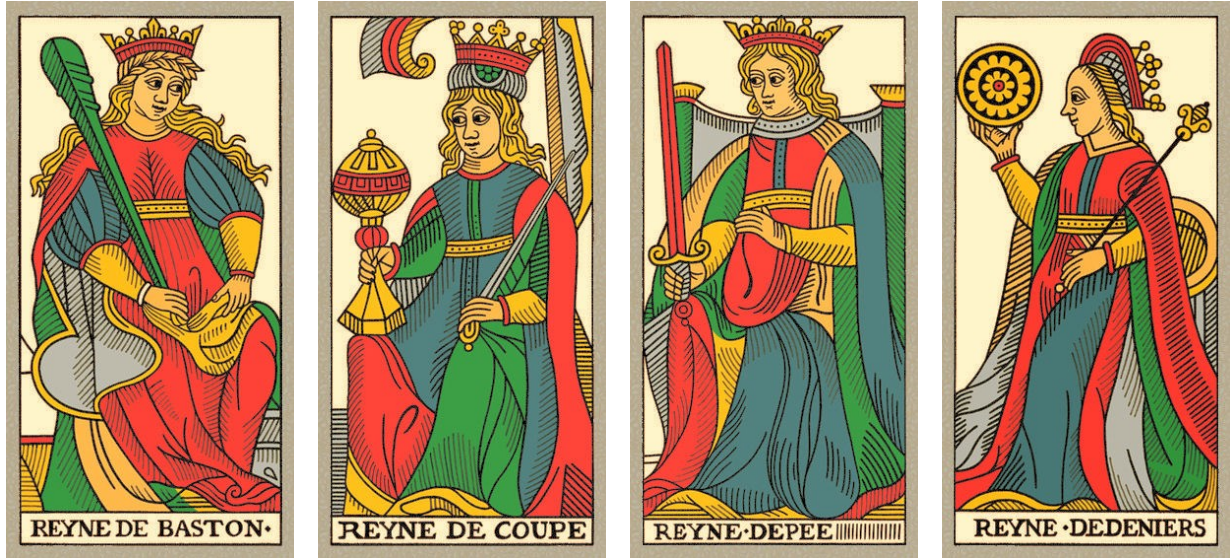
The Queen of Swords, you know, nobody likes a Queen of Swords, am I right? Like, never does she get treated fairly in any of the old tarot texts. Anyway, Case says she's a widow, in mourning, but hey, he acknowledges that she's a quick and perceptive woman. Oh, random: she's also fond of dancing, says Paul Foster Case. Later, Arthur Edward Waite will say the same thing in his *Pictorial Key*.

Post-production edit insert: Oops. Boo-boo. Not Waite. Crowley. Can't believe I mixed the two up. Eeks. Anyway, no. Not Waite. Crowley said the Queen of Swords is a good dancer. You'll see when we get to the Thoth Queens.

Finally, the Queen of Pentacles, a (quote) "moody married woman." Nevertheless, she's a charming, smart, and generous one.

Case's attributions are following Papus. The *Reyne de Baston*, or Queen of Batons is a woman with a darker complexion, dark hair and dark eyes, and a warm, charming personality. This is also the card of good advice.

The *Reyne de Coupe*, or Queen of Cups is a woman of fair complexion, light hair, light eyes, and like the Queen of Wands, she's also warm and charming.

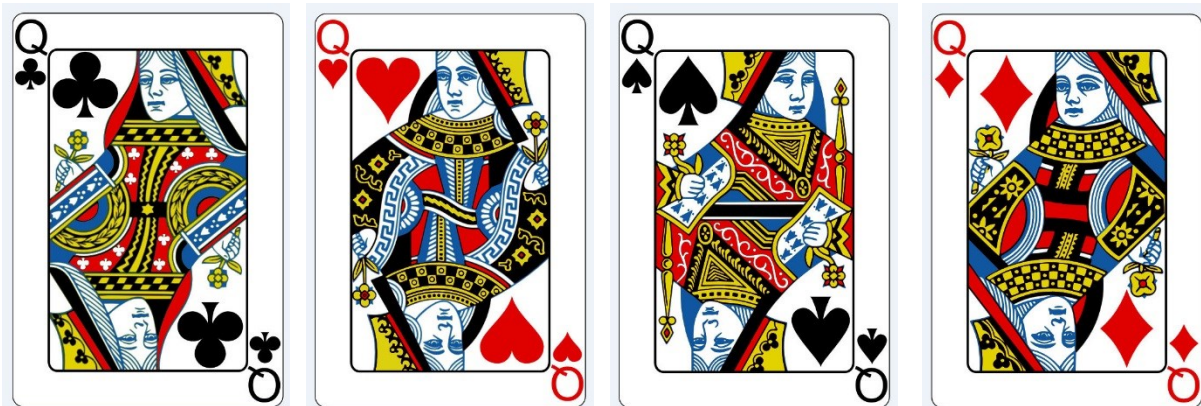


Oh, but now for the Queen of Swords. Like the Queen of Wands, the active elemental suits, Wands and Swords being active elementals, she's also darker in complexion, with dark hair and dark eyes, but unlike both the Queen of Wands and Queen of Cups, she's a bitch. No, really. The Queen of Swords has a malicious, unfavorable personality. Allegedly.

In classic fortune-telling tradition, so did the Queen of Coins. Greedy, money-grubbing, materialistic, gold-digging woman that she is. However, MacGregor Mathers might beg to differ. Mathers describes the Queen of Pentacles as (quote) "The Greatness of Soul." This is someone who is magnanimous. Papus, though, calls the Queen of Coins aloof, cold, and unfriendly.

Physically, the Queen of Coins has a fair complexion, light hair and light eyes, but like the Queen of Swords, she's got an unfavorable personality. The difference, though, is at least the Queen of Coins can be generous. She likes to show off her wealth.

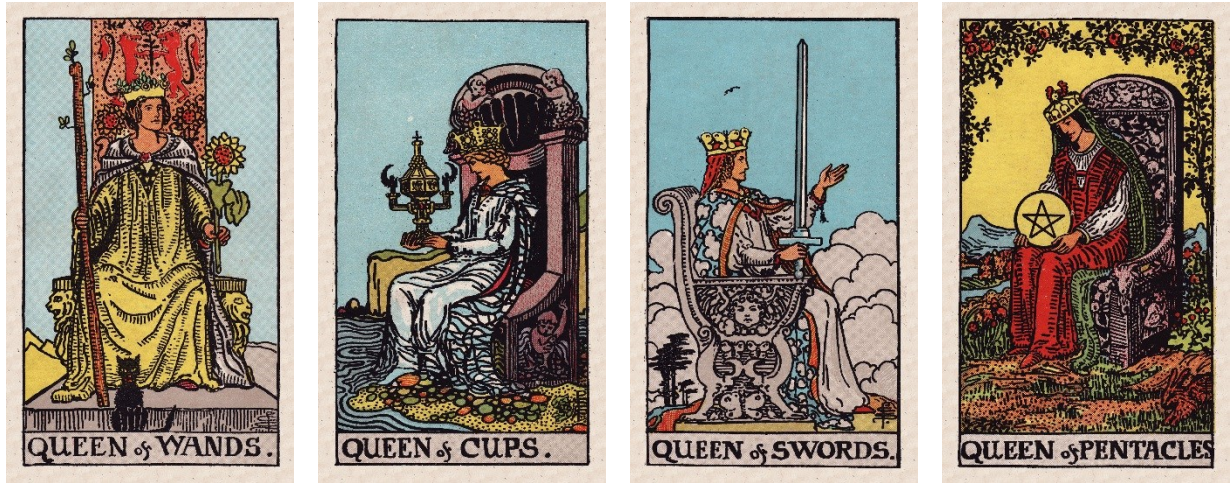
Where, might you ask, do these attributions of Wands and Swords being darker complexioned and Cups and Coins being lighter complexioned come from? Here's my hypothesis.



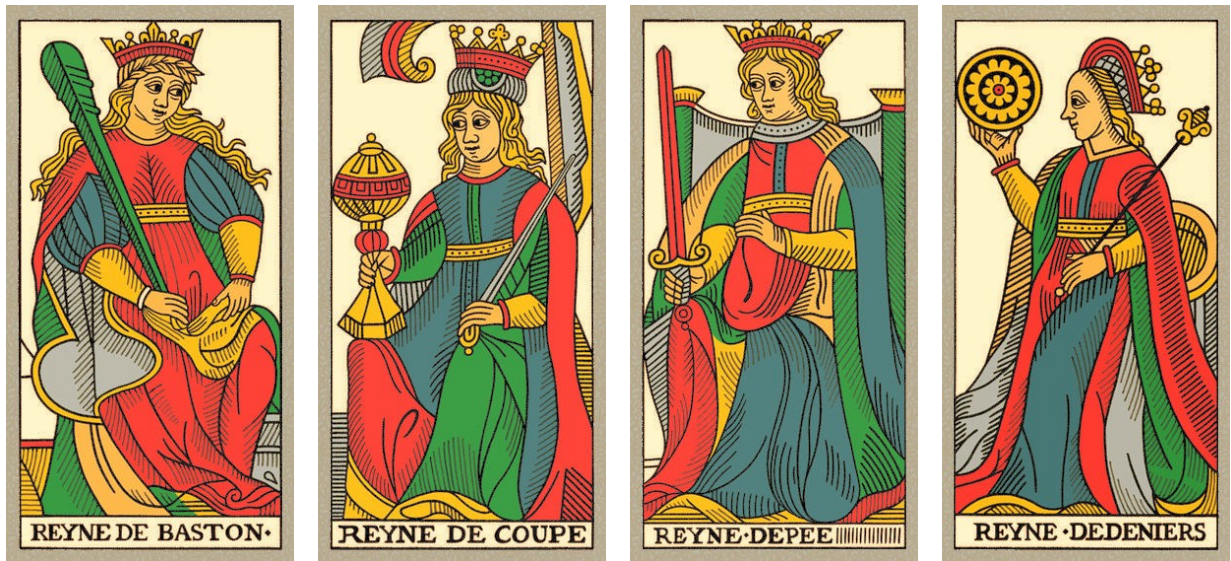


Playing cards tradition and the literal colors of the four suits, clubs and spades, the Wands and Swords, being literally darker, while the hearts and diamonds, the Cups and Coins, being literally lighter.

However, Eden Gray had slightly different physical attributions for the four Kings, keyed to the Rider-Waite-Smith deck. Now let's take a look at what Gray had to say about the Queens.



The Queen of Wands has blonde hair and blue eyes. So this is quite different from Paul Foster Case's attributions, who attributes the suit of Wands with darker features. Here, Gray attributes the suit of Wands with light features. The Queen of Cups has brown hair and hazel eyes, is dreamy, lacks common sense, but is deeply intuitive, even psychic. The Queen of Swords, well, Gray tells us she's a widow or childless or has lost a child, bears a lot of sorrow, but is a fiercely strong character. She has brown hair and brown eyes. The Queen of Pentacles has black hair and dark eyes, is smart, resourceful, but a bit moody, Gray tells us.





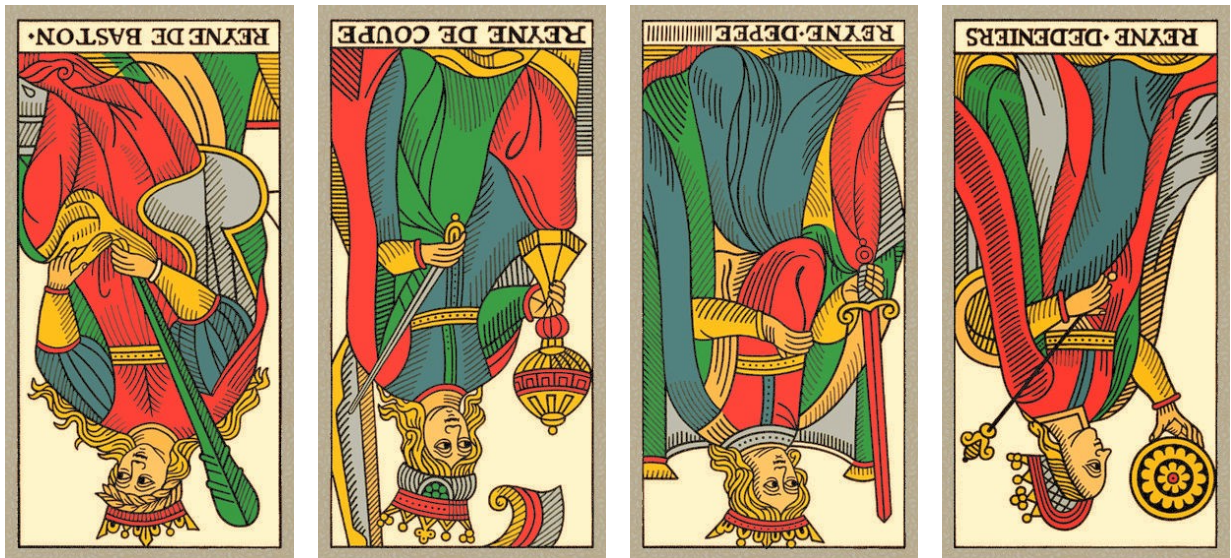
In the Marseilles tradition, the Queens aren't just personalities, though more likely than not, that's what they'll indicate. But they also indicate achievements and realizations that correspond with the areas of life that their corresponding suits indicate.

So the Queen of Wands can indicate achievement in work or career matters, a professional success. Something you undertook, like an enterprise, comes to fruition.

The Queen of Cups is about realization of a desire, something that brings emotional fulfillment. This is also a cultural or artistic achievement.

The Queen of Swords is a scholarly or scientific achievement. Since the suit of Swords in Marseilles relate to conflicts, disputes, and pain, the Queen of Swords can be a positive omen that you are the victor, you defeat your foes.

The Queen of Coins indicates financial success, gains in money, profit, or assets. This is getting access to the resources you needed to advance in your goals.



Now let's talk about reading Marseilles Queens in reverse. The Queen of Wands is a virtuous woman, but one who is holding you back, blocks you or challenges you from achieving your goals. This is someone you care about, who's for all intents and purposes good and well-meaning, but just in your way, opposing your aspirations or highest good.

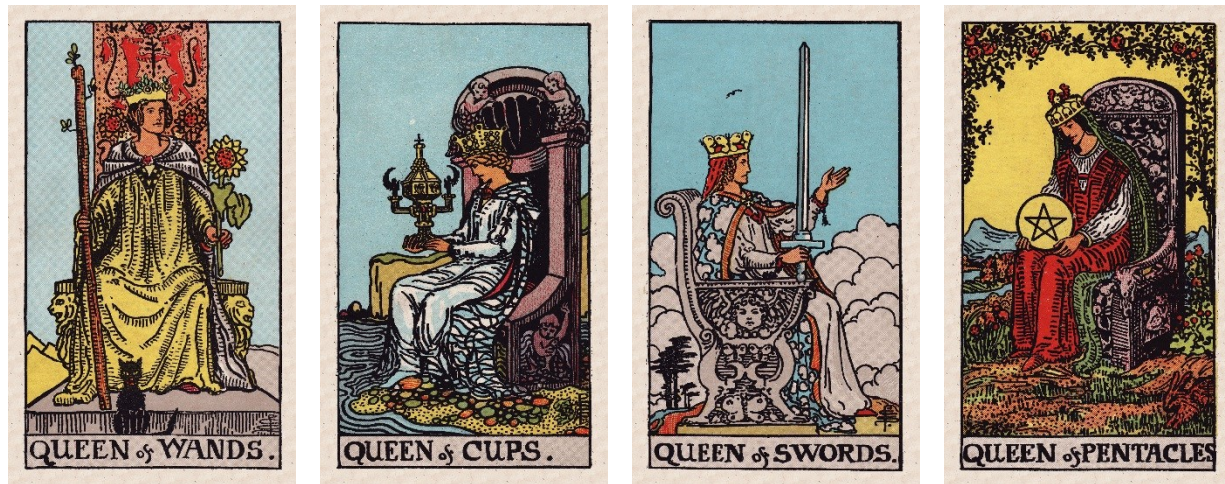
The Queen of Cups is a meddling woman. She's attractive, desirable, well-meaning, you like her, a lot, but she's interfering with your emotional or even spiritual well-being.

Papus further implies that the Queen of Wands is "The Wife" while the Queen of Cups is "The Mistress."

Now let's consider the Queen of Swords reversed. This card ill-dignified will represent oh look, the same thing as the Queen of Swords upright. I'm only half-kidding. No, but seriously.

Reversed, this is the indication of an ill-tempered, bigoted woman, but one with a lot of power and status, who is causing you trouble. A reversed Queen of Swords can also suggest miscarriage, the loss of a child, or infertility. It's "womanly pains." There can also be a sign here that a woman is defaming or slandering your good name. This is someone, probably a woman, being quite conniving against you.

The Queen of Coins reversed is an interference, something throwing a wrench in your financial health, something or someone who has a negative impact on your money matters. This card hints at deficiencies in your material prosperity, a hole in your bank, figuratively speaking, that you need to plug up.



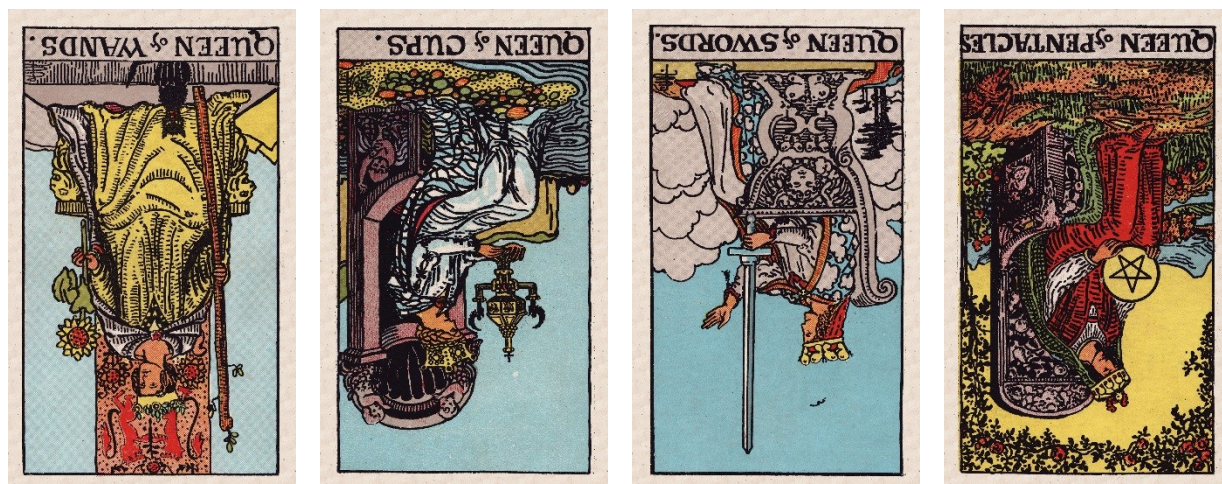
Now here are the tarot Queens most of you are used to seeing, from the Rider-Waite-Smith. In terms of astrological correspondences, one popular correspondence, which is the one I use when I'm working with a Rider-Waite-Smith based deck, is Fire signs, Aries, Leo, and Sagittarius to the Queen of Wands, and all the Wands courts for that matter, Water signs or Cancer, Scorpio, and Pisces for the Cups court, Air signs, Gemini, Libra, and Aquarius for the Swords court, and Taurus, Virgo, and Capricorn for the Pentacles court.

How you interpret the personalities and personas of these court cards will be based on how you interpret these zodiac signs.

The Queen of Wands is a woman or someone more feminine with striking, dynamic physical features. This personality is high energy, light, and lively. In the popular correspondences when working with RWS, we associate her with the Fire signs, Aries, Leo, and Sagittarius.

Waite also describes her as having darker features, and is similar in disposition to the King of Wands, which we covered in the last video, except female and friendlier. This is a countrywoman, or translated into contemporary terms, a big fish in a small pond. The Queen of Wands also indicates business success, or working the law of attraction in a way that draws money or money-making opportunities toward you.





Reversed, the Queen of Wands ill-dignified can suggest deceit, jealousy, or infidelity. The neighboring cards around a reversed Queen of Wands will indicate how that deceit, jealousy, or infidelity will play out. While objectively a negative circumstance, at least to the other person, the Queen of Wands in reverse can bode well professionally for you. A reversed Queen of Wands might suggest that someone of high status yields to you, so you win. Or it can mean that someone who held a higher professional title or rank than you steps down, resigns, or leaves, and you step up. Someone else’s professional loss becomes your professional gain.

Remember the salamander symbolism in the King of Wands? In the Queen of Wands, a key symbol to note here is the sunflower. In Greek mythology, the sunflower is associated with Apollo, or more specifically, a maiden who fell in love with Apollo. Sunflowers also symbolize good luck and good fortune in Medieval European lore, and here, represent the Queen’s personality traits: she’s honest and loyal.

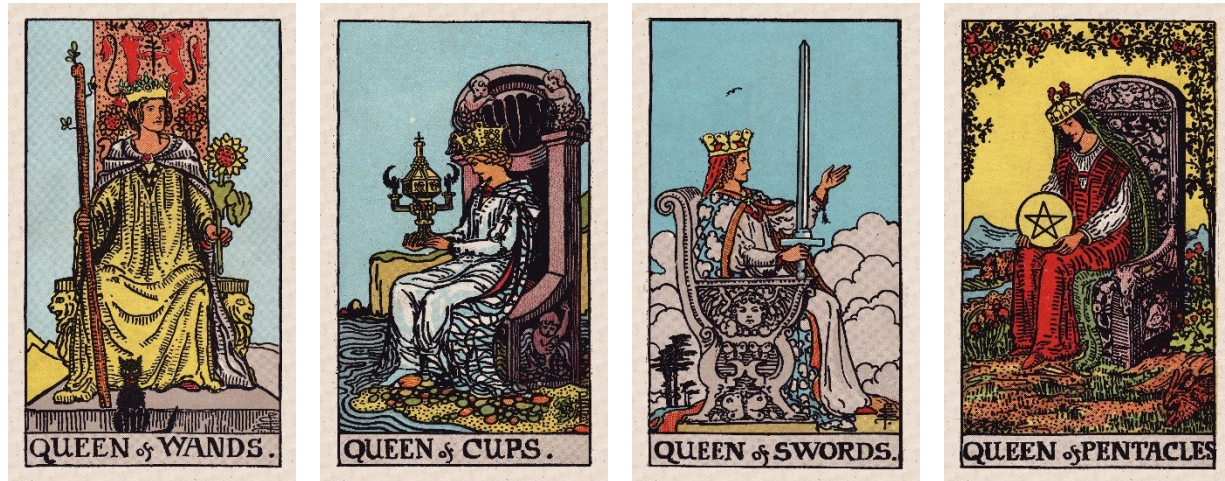
The black cat is placed front and center here, so we can’t ignore it. In Victorian England, which is the era just preceding the time of Arthur Edward Waite and Pamela Colman Smith, a black cat found at the entrance of your home was said to be an omen of prosperity and happiness.

Before moving on, a sneak peek at the Thoth Queen of Wands. Where there’s a black cat in the RWS Queen, there’s a leopard in the Thoth. Both the leopard and the cat are felids, from the same family tree per the animal kingdom, the Mammalian family of Felidae. Or, cats. Cats, then, are the animal spirit or animal guardian to the Queen of Wands.

Also note the relief of the two red lions holding a sunflower. In alchemy, red lions are the fiery awakening of kundalini and symbolizes the Sacred Fire. Its iconic equivalent in the Thoth is the Faravahar of Zoroastrianism, or the Sun Throne. With the golden rays emanating from the Queen’s crown, this is symbolic of the Sacred Flame, or using Zoroastrian terminology, the Atar, “the burning and unburning fire.” If you return your study to the two red lions on the Rider-Waite-Smith, the two red lions are the burning and the unburning fires.

The Queen of Cups will designate a soft, misty complexion, someone quite fair, with expressive features and full of grace. We’re also going to see personality correspondences to the Water signs,

Cancer, Scorpio, and Pisces. Here's someone with feminine qualities who is beautiful, dreamy, and who possesses what Waite calls the "Gift of Vision." The Queen of Cups also represents the perfect spouse. This is "The One" you marry. That's a little different from earlier Marseilles texts, which called the Queen of Cups the mistress. The Queen of Cups acts impulsively on her intuition... and on her feelings and emotions.



Pictured here in the RWS, we have a representation that reminds us of The Grail Maiden or Grail Bearer from Arthurian legend.

Reversed, we can't be entirely sure what the reversed Queen of Cups means. Waite says himself, "the accounts vary." This could indicate someone still honorable and distinguished, but it could also indicate someone dishonorable and perverse. Gee. Thanks. That's helpful.

In the previous Kings video, I addressed a general method for reading the reversed courts, compared to how you might read the personalities when upright. The same approach is applied here to the reversed Queens. Generally speaking, the reversed Queen indicates a person or a personality trait associated with the suit's elemental correspondence with a more feminine, passive, nurturing, or defensive nature that has a negative impact. Upright, it's positive or advantageous. Reversed, it's what's hindering you from moving forward.

Now the Queen of Swords, aside from the personality correspondences to the Air signs in the zodiac, Gemini, Libra, and Aquarius, this is someone of more feminine attributions who has a sharp look and demeanor, refined, alert in nature, and intelligent. Waite notes that the Queen of Swords is someone "familiar with sorrow." Historically, this court card is associated with widowhood and also childlessness.

Waite wants us to pay attention to her body posture. This is someone he describes as overly confident, arrogant even, who believes she wields a lot of power over others, but she actually does not. There's impotence here. (Quote) "She is scarcely a symbol of power," says Waite. Contemporary interpretations of the Queen of Swords today tends to sugarcoat all this and portray the Queen of Swords in a more positive light.



Reversed, the Queen of Swords is historically interpreted as even more negative, as if that were possible. This is to be utterly deprived of happiness, an omen of evil, sorrow, woe, and misfortune. The Queen of Swords reversed predicts harm to come. Given the Air attribution to the mental state, this can be anxiety, grief, emotional pain, and melancholy. Waite tells us this is an omen of deceit, artifice, or cunning, someone who is skilled at the art of trickery, using feminine wiles to bring a man down. Malice is afoot.

In the RWS Queen of Pentacles, we will see someone stern and serious, but grounded and calm. There's a classic look and a classic sense of style to the Queen of Pentacles. Waite describes her as having a "serious cast of intelligence." This is wisdom in a feminine state personified, the voice of reason, caution, sophistication, foresight, and prudence. There's also a down-to-earth look to someone who identifies as a Queen of Pentacles, and she'll have serious eyes but gentle, balanced features. She looks solid and well-poised. The Queen of Pentacles represents opulence, to be abundant in resources, to have access to all the material things you need. This is financial security, to have financial independence.

The rabbit is this Queen's spirit animal. Rabbits represent prosperity, abundance, and fertility, you know, because rabbits procreate like crazy and multiply? So when the Queen of Pentacles appears in your reading, this can be a sign of plenitude. As a significator, she corresponds with the Earth signs Taurus, Virgo, and Capricorn.

In reverse, the Queen of Pentacles can symbolize materialism or the mismanagement of resources, in particular money. If it's a person in the querent's life, she represents someone not to be trusted, to be looked on with suspicion, because she's motivated by money, profit, or self-interest. The Queen of Pentacles reversed suggests valuing material possessions over spirituality. Ideologically, the reversed Queen of Swords is the philosophy of physicalism, a belief that there is nothing spiritual or non-physical in this world. The only reality is the physical, materialized reality.

Before we move on, I'd also like to direct your attention to the red poppies pictured across the field of vision in this Queen [of Pentacles]. From a Greek mystical perspective, red poppies represent passage into death, almost like the canary in a land mine but here, it's between the living world and the underworld. This is also a symbol of eternal life. The poppy is associated with both Hypnos, God of Sleep, and Morpheus, God of Dreams.

Fun flower symbolism sidebar that's related to occultism and tarot. The red poppy is a symbolic polar opposite to the red pomegranate. Where the pomegranate symbolizes the seeds of life and fertility, the awakening of new consciousness, the red poppy is the last song before death, the talisman that takes you in to the underworld, into deeper consciousness.

The red poppy is a symbol of descent, of the Sacred Mysteries, and that's what Waite and Smith are hiding in plain sight when it comes to the significance of the Queen of Pentacles. And while you see the first offering of this significance in the SKT Queen of Pentacles, or Queen of Orbs, The Ebony Shield, I took this esoteric angle of the Queen of Pentacles from Waite and shifted it into my King of Pentacles. Why? For oh so many reasons, though one among them would be to express the fluidity of gender, and how the way we perceive courts through a gender binary have since evolved. Anyway, see the resemblances?



Doh! Sorry. One more thing. You see the garland of roses framing the top of the Queen? For those familiar with RWS tarot imagery, does that remind you of any other card? Yep. That's right. Key 1: The Magician from the Major Arcana. Is there another secret here about the powers and potential of this Queen of Pentacles being hinted at? By the way, this is another reason why there's a split in viewpoints about whether The Magician corresponds elementally with Air or Earth.

Also, study Key 8 in the Rider-Waite, the Strength card. There's a garland of roses wrapped like a belt around the maiden's waist. When we start talking about the Three Septenaries in the Major Arcana, we are going to see the fundamental relationship between Key 1: The Magician and Key 8: Strength, and one more reason why Waite changed the order of Strength and Justice.





One more reason why I made the switchy-switch of symbolism and esoteric meaning between the Queen of Pentacles and the King, my Archangel of Mysteries, King of Orbs, is because of this soul link to Key 1: The Magician, an earthly nature, though the Air quality is also embedded into the Archangel of Mysteries through Logos, the writing all over the throne, and the Fire of Key 8: Strength, because Kings in tarot occupy the World of Fire, whereas the Queens in tarot are the World of Water.

Now let's move on to the Crowley-Harris Thoth Queens. Crowley describes the court cards in tarot as being "descriptive, in a rough and empirical fashion, of diverse types of men and women." So as a general rule, he's telling us that these four Queens are going to indicate women in the querent's life. Who exactly? Understanding the astrological correspondences will help to identify who is who. Here in the Thoth, we're working primarily with sun and rising signs, so that's day of birth, meaning the degree the sun is positioned at, or hour of birth, the degree of the ascendant sign.

You remember Yod He Vau He from our Kings video. The Knights, or tarot Kings are Yod, the first letter of the Holy Name, corresponding with the element Fire.

Here, the Queens correspond with the second letter, the feminine complements to the masculine Knights (or tarot Kings). And correspond with the element Water. In other words, all four of these Queens are in the world of Water, but the Queen of Wands is the fiery part of Water, the Queen of Cups is the watery part of Water, the Queen of Swords the airy part of Water, and the Queen of Disks the earthy part of Water.



Before we get into Crowley's Book of Thoth, study the imagery of the four Queens and compare them to one another. Does it take you a moment longer to even find and see the human-like figure of the Queen of Cups? What's unique about each elemental Queen? For example, the Queen of Swords is the only one who is topless. The Queen of Disks is the only one who is not turning her face forward, looking you straight on. She's looking behind, over her shoulder. In terms of color palette, the Queen of Wands is the boldest, most striking.

If you're watching this lecture series to deep-dive into the Thoth, then pause the video here to study the Queens.

Make a mental note of your first intuitive impressions of them before we get into the lecture, and then compare your impressions with what we cover in the lecture.

In the Thoth, Crowley goes at great length about the astrological correspondences in the tarot, so from that, I infer that Western astrology is integral to understanding the form and function of these keys. On the screen you are going to see the three decan rulers corresponding with the four Thoth Queens, which as Crowley instructs to us, can denote either the degree positioning of the sun or the degree positioning of the ascendant.

In astrology, there are interpretations for each of these decans in terms of personality traits and most prevalent energies, and those interpretations are folded in to how these Queens in the tarot would be interpreted in the Thoth.



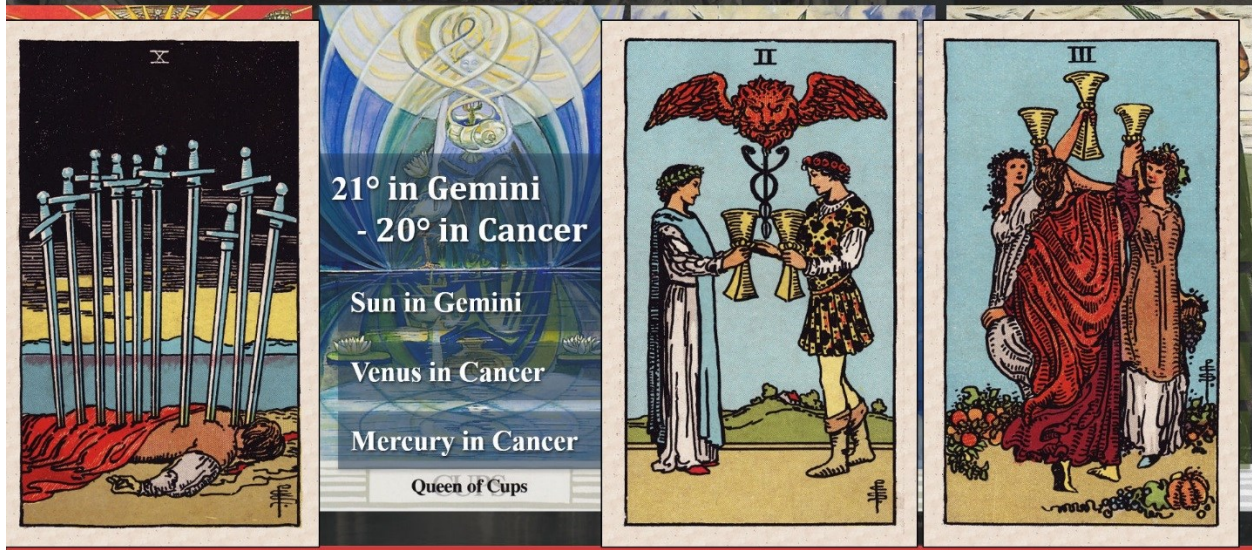
*Queen of Wands and its Pip Ties, Per Decan Rulers*

Continuing with Golden Dawn tarot and astrology correspondences, the Queen of Wands, given the governance of its decan rulerships, is also linked to the pip cards in the Minors with those decan rulers. Just because it's the more popular visual for the tarot, I'm going to use the Rider-Waite-Smith to show you. Mars in Pisces is the Ten of Cups, Mars in Aries is the Two of Wands, and Sun in Aries is the Three of Wands.

What are the attributions and traits, or prevailing energetic correspondences for this Queen? Well, these three cards, the Ten of Cups, Two of Wands, and Three of Wands, will tell you.

For the Queen of Cups, Sun in Gemini is the Ten of Swords, Venus in Cancer is the Two of Cups, and Mercury in Cancer is the Three of Cups. So even though in popular, common associations for the Queen of Cups, we don't usually account for Ten of Swords energies, if we're reducing the essential natures of the tarot cards back to their astrological roots, then there is nevertheless a link between the Queen of Cups and what the Ten of Swords bodes for us, along with, of course, the more obvious Two of Cups and Three of Cups.





*Queen of Cups and its Pip Ties, Per Decan Rulers*

The Queen of Swords by decan ruler association is related to the Ten of Pentacles by way of Mercury in Virgo, the Two of Swords through the Moon in Libra, and the Three of Swords through Saturn in Libra. How you might interpret this, what is basically a three-card reading, can be applied to the Queen of Swords. She is the reigning sovereign over these pip card energies and what they represent.



*Queen of Swords and its Pip Ties, Per Decan Rulers*

For the Queen of Disks, or in the RWS it's the Queen of Pentacles, this ruler holds dominion over the Ten of Wands through Saturn in Sagittarius, the Two of Pentacles through Jupiter in Capricorn, and the Three of Pentacles through Mars in Capricorn.





*Queen of Disks/Pentacles and its Pip Ties, Per Decan Rulers*

Working with the decan correspondences, the Queen of Wands is adaptable, physically attractive, and generous in spirit. These qualities are as described by Crowley in the Book of Thoth. She is also persistent, will likely be holding a position of authority, but her fiery temper makes her impatient. This is someone who initiates. She's the one who starts the fire.

The wand featuring a golden pine cone that she wields is symbolic of the Mysteries of Bacchus, or the Roman festival Bacchanalia. And so if you study the expression on the queen's face, Crowley tells us it's the expression of ecstasy and pure pleasure or intoxication. The Byzantine gold chainmail armor here represents protection from evil, a spiritual warrior. We mentioned the leopard before. Here it symbolizes the Queen's taming of the wild.

Reversed, we see a vengeful spirit, but be wary, because the punishment doesn't fit the crime. The ill-dignified Queen of Wands is obstinate, stubborn, and tyrannical in persona. But she can be deceived quite easily because she's so arrogant and full of snobbery that she doesn't have the wisdom to see through the deception. I like this quote from Crowley about the negative attributes of the Queen of Wands: "When she misses her bite, she breaks her jaw."

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Per the decan rulers assigned to the Queen of Cups, she is the Queen of Illusions and the master craftsman at glamor magic. She is well-loved, a very popular person, and has a dream-like quality to her nature. This is also the personification of Tranquility. Crowley calls her the Perfect Agent, because she can receive and transmit just about any form of energy onto herself, without that energy affecting her. She's the perfect conductor of energy.

Now study the imagery here. You can hardly make out the queen in the background of the card, because her image is of "infinite subtlety," Crowley tells us. This is extreme purity and extreme beauty, so much so that "to see the Truth of her is hardly possible." The Queen of Cups reflects the nature of the observer in Great Perfection.

Pay attention to the cup that the Queen is holding, which is in the shape of a shell. A crayfish is emerging and rising out of that shell. In her right hand, she holds the Lotus of Isis, symbolic of the Great Mother, Crowley tells us. Also note the curves of golden light around her and really, the sacred geometric curves emanating all around her. The Queen of Cups is beauty you feel and intuit, beauty that you can experience, and not just superficial, materialistic attraction.



Reversed, with the energies ill-dignified, these qualities of the Queen of Cups are degraded. All that passes through are thus refracted and distorted. Here's a close-up of the reflection in the lake when the Queen of Cups is reversed. It's a distorted refraction of the chalice, the Lotus of Isis, and even the stork, the sacred animal associated with the Queen of Cups, symbolic of the Soul in its Perfected State. In Egyptian mythology, the stork also symbolizes rebirth and self-creation.

Now we get to the Queen of Swords. Crowley's the nicest of the bunch about this Queen. He describes her as intensely perceptive, a keen observer. She's also an intense individualist. He calls her a gracious spirit, and another one of her titles is the Liberator of the Mind. This is free-thinking personified. We get into modern interpretations of writing and communications here when he

describes her as someone highly competent at recording and remembering ideas. She's a fearsome communicator. The Moon in Libra influence also makes this woman exceptionally well-balanced and a great dancer. Yep. Crowley says the Queen of Swords is a great dancer.



Crowley tells us that the queen is wearing a gleaming belt and a sarong, though yes, you noticed, too? She's topless. Think on how you might interpret that. What are the qualities in a woman that would empower her to be seen in such a manner? Crowley also directs our attention to the newly severed head of a bearded man that the queen holds in her left hand.

There's a classic association of Judith, from the Bible, to the Queen of Swords motif. The head she holds is that of Holofernes. Judith beheading Holofernes was a popular subject for classical paintings. A common depiction of Judith was of her topless, or baring her naked breasts, sword in one hand, and the head of Holofernes in the other. Here you see that inspiration in the Queen of Swords painted by Freida Harris.

Reversed, the Queen of Swords starts to show negative attributes, which is more than we can say for the Queen of Swords as interpreted under Marseilles or Rider-Waite-Smith. Ill-dignified, the ambition, power, ferocity, and strong will of the Queen is used for unworthy purposes. The reversed Queen can suggest someone cruel and cunning, someone who uses her keen perceptions or talent over words to manipulate others. She is a superficial beauty, and therefore dangerous, a femme fatale.

The Thoth Queen of Disks is an introverted, quiet woman. Crowley also tells us that she possesses a practical-minded ambition. She's capable and highly-accomplished, and seeks to be accomplished, but she's also realistic. She's practical when it comes to her goal-setting. Crowley describes her as hard-working, sensible, and kind, but, says Crowley, she's of mediocre intelligence. She's not the sharpest tool in the shed, but she's very resourceful, works really well on her instincts, and pretty much succeeds all of the time at getting what she wants.

Confession time. Initially, I thought these things all along the background of the card were windmills and was like, what the heck is the symbolism of all these windmills in the Queen of Disks? My bad. I'm an idiot. Crowley tells us quite clearly that they symbolize oases. That's oasis in the plural. They're budding fertile refuges in what had otherwise been barren land. Makes a



whole lot more sense when he explains it, right? The Queen is throned upon the life of vegetation. She's looking at a calm, winding river, which is what's fertilizing the otherwise sandy, desert land.

The scepter that the Queen of Disks holds in her right hand features a Merkabah star, a three-dimensional hexagram inside a cubic stone. For those with either the First Edition or Vitruvian Edition Spirit Keeper's Tarot, you're going to see both the cubic stone and the Merkabah star featured prominently throughout the deck's illustrations.

Now take a look at what the Queen of Disks is wearing—armor made of gold coins. She's also holding the great orb or disk of creation with the interlinked circles. Here we know we are looking at someone who makes things happen. She's not just ideas or feelings or waxing poetic about philosophy and religion. She gets things done.

Crowley also wants us to pay attention to her helmet, which features the great spiral horns of a markhor. The markhor is a species of *capra* (yes, like capricorn) from the Himalayas, which I speculate Crowley is using here to represent scaling great heights, achieving what others might assume to be the impossible.

And here are some hints as to where to look in the Spirit Keeper's Tarot for the Merkabah star and the cubic stone. In the Vitruvian edition of the Book of Maps, there's a whole section dedicated to talking about the relation between the six-pointed Merkabah star and the cubic stone, how it ties together numerology and astrology to explain formulas for the building blocks of our material world.

In the foreground is the Queen's animal totem, the goat, who is standing upon a sphere, Crowley tells us. He further explains that this is a reference to "the dogma that the Great Work is fertility." Fertility is the natural capability to produce offspring or to leave behind a legacy. Thus, offspring can be literal, as in human babies, or it can be more figurative.

Also take a look at the Queen's dress and robes, especially down the side along the right of the card image. You see it partially concealed by the leaves of vegetation along the left, too. Her dress bears the pattern of a pine cone, reminiscent of the Ace of Disks. Remember, we also saw the pine cone on the scepter wielded by the Queen of Wands.

Reversed, you might be surprised by what Crowley says the ill-dignified Queen of Disks represents. I mean, I'll admit it, I was. Popular interpretations of the Queen of Pentacles today is, well, very far from what we're going to find here. Pictured on screen, left to right, the Rider-Waite-Smith, Mother of Pentacles from *The Wild Unknown*, the Queen in the Morgan Greer, and the Queen of Coins from *The Fountain Tarot*.

The Queen of Disks is someone quiet and seemingly reserved, someone you might not realize is in fact quite lustful and even someone who might indulge in debauchery, says Crowley. So basically, you know that 2009 song "Nasty Girl" by Ludacris? "Lady in the street but a freak in the bed?" "She makes her own money, pays her own bills, always stays fly, keeps it so real. But behind those closed doors she's a nasty girl." Yep. That's the Queen of Disks.

She's also prone to drug and alcohol abuse, says Crowley. He describes the Queen of Disks as someone trapped inside of herself, where can't get over herself long enough to experience true happiness. Maybe her nose is so much to the grindstone that she doesn't know how to enjoy herself like the Queen of Wands. The expression on the Queen of Wands, Crowley tells us, is that of pure ecstasy and enjoyment of life. The Queen of Disks, in stark contrast, has a tough time in life learning how to be happy.

Ill-dignified, the Queen of Disks also means someone who is too mechanical, a person who acts more like a robot, who can't achieve greatness because she lacks ingenuity, creativity, passion, and zeal. Now that part of negative attributes for the Queen of Disks is probably more in line to what we're used to today.

So while the upright Queen of Disks is wealthy, resourceful, and financially secure, the reversed Queen of Disks is trapped in a cycle of personal insecurity, and probably operates with a scarcity mindset.

Now let's talk about the I Ching. The I Ching 64 hexagrams from the Taoist Book of Changes is featured prominently in Crowley's work. Like we saw with the Thoth Knights, he also assigns four of the sixty-four I Ching hexagrams to the four Queens, and here, the Queen of Wands corresponds with Hexagram 17. If you're following Crowley, then when the Queen of Wands comes up in your reading, featured in a prominent position of the spread, consult the I Ching Book of Changes and read Hexagram 17 as your additional divinatory message. The Queen of Cups corresponds with Hexagram 8. Crowley assigns the Queen of Swords to Hexagram 28.

And the Queen of Disks is attributed to Hexagram 31.

I went with a different approach to reconciling the tarot and the I Ching when I designed the Spirit Keeper's Tarot. The I Ching correspondences I use is based on trigram, not hexagram assignments.

So, The Golden Shield is the trigram Thunder. The Ivory Shield is Wind. The Scarlet Shield is Lake. And The Ebony Shield is Mountain.

Although the Queen of Cups is elemental Water, based on what we said about her in the Thoth, ineffable and the queen of illusion, an energy you can only experience, but not see, her energy is more Wind. Plus, I attribute the Chinese element Wind to the Western element Water. The two trigrams Water and Wind are both elementally Western Water.

In The Scarlet Shield, or Queen of Swords, the trigram attribution is Lake, which only seems counterintuitive if you're hung up on lake as in water. When you can move out of that space and understand Lake, which is associated with wind, as in air in motion, wind, not capital letter W wind for the I Ching trigram. I know. It's a little confusing.

In Christian angelology, Powers, also known as Authorities, are the angels who administer and safeguard the movements of the cosmos. They're warrior angels who can defeat evil and are commonly depicted as fully-armed with shields and weaponry.





In the Spirit Keeper's Tarot, their titles are The Shields, with the color of their shields named after their corresponding alchemical phase. The Shields only appear when you need to be safeguarded and protected in your present or future undertakings, to ensure that you're not going to be blindsided by a malefic force.

Thus, the Queens are your Shields and armor, your protectors. I'm reinterpreting the theme of nurture commonly attributed to the tarot Queens as defender and protector. Each of the four elemental and alchemical shields work with symbology and magical iconography from different cultures, all of which I explain in the companion book, *The Book of Maps*.

When a Shield appears in your tarot reading, it's here to say, "I am watching over you. You are safe. You are protected. I am present. I care about you. You matter and that's why I need to make sure you're okay."

Like the Archangels, the Shields present themselves as Divine Androgyne with perfected union of male and female, anima and animus. The Shields are a line of defense, iconic of divine protection.

The Golden Shield is divine protection over your Astral Body. This is the body of your psychic senses, in contrast to your physical senses, and it's your Qi, or personal energy. Quick and simple explanation: you know what the theory of reiki healing purports to balance inside of you? That's Qi and that's your astral body, which of course, is linked to your physical body, but we'll get to the physical later.

When the Golden Shield appears in your reading and you know it is a specific Divinity, Spirit, ascended master, or ancestor, you can strengthen your ancestral or astral connection to this entity with a charm bag you create comprised of angelica root, Ceylon cinnamon, and your intuitive choice of herbs or stones that correspond with Fire.

This card is a sign to block out external distractions that have been derailing you or sidelining you from your own goals and aspirations. This is the Shield that covers you so you won't be distracted while you explore and develop the depths of your own ingenuity, when you're deep-diving into creative endeavors.

When this card appears, do not seek outward to acquire something new, but instead, seek inward to strengthen or master what you already possess, and specifically, The Golden Shield is making reference to wisdom, career advancement, or a passion project, a creative work of some kind.

Also, when a Shield appears in your reading, it's not a time of expanding, but rather, it's a time of setting your boundaries. Instead of going wide, go deep, dig deep, look inward, seek out the depths.

The Ivory Shield, tarot Queen of Cups, the angelic power and authority of Water, appears in your readings when you need divine protection over your soul, or to be less dramatic and hyperbolic, your spiritual development. You're at a crossroads where life decisions bear significant moral, emotional, or spiritual implications. If it resonates with you, creating a small personal charm bag with dried chamomile, tears of myrrh resin, and other tokens that correspond with the element Water after The Ivory Shield has appeared in your reading can help strengthen Her presence, help to keep her close by.

The Ivory Shield appears when you need protection and safeguarding against ailments, physical or emotional, because I believe the two are inter-related and interconnected, infirmity, illness, disease, or forms of psychic toxins that threaten to derail you. She is the Shield that descends down into your world to cover you, especially during your most desperate times of emotional need or when you are feeling most alone or most isolated.

On her magical shield is inscribed: *Nam et si ambulavero in medio umbrae mortis non timebo mala quoniam tu mecum es.* Though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for You are with me.



The Shields are messages about not seeking outward expansion or trying to acquire something new or something you don't already have. It's about seeking inward to advance or master what you already have. In the case of The Ivory Shield, that's healing, taking some time out for personal purification, or ritual purification, and love or family, taking time out to focus on love and family.



In my design of the tarot Queens, the four elemental Shields, I wanted these cards to be special, magically that is, where they are openings, gateways created for the highest angelic and beneficent powers to come through, so that a Shield card will come up in your reading, in your life, when you most need that divine protection, when you need, well, a Shield to cover and safeguard you, because at this juncture point of your life, you're treading into threatening territory. These four cards, especially, are accessible gateways so that those in the Spirit Realm who most love you, most care about your safety and wellbeing, can rush in just in the nick of time to be there for you.

Moving on. Generally, as interpretation goes, Queens protect their Kings, and so to that effect, the Shields signify measures you're being called to take to ensure the achievement of your own highest Good.

Representing the Queen of Swords, or The Scarlet Shield, is a Shorn One, an elite order of warrior priests in Aztec society. This is the divine protection over your Mind, or a divine call for furthering intellectual development. Attunement and strengthening your connection to the Scarlet Shield can be cast through witch hazel, lemongrass, and other metaphysical Air correspondences. When the Scarlet Shield appears to you, it's time to take a stand, choose your battle, and prepare for combat. I don't necessarily mean violence, but I do mean assertion. You need to use the point of that blade to draw lines in the sand that mark your boundaries.

This is also a call to take arms, meaning to advance your training, to be more proactive about your own education and mental or intellectual development. This is the written word, the spoken word, and expression of the self, which in turn will be a greater expression of society.

The Scarlet Shield, Queen of Swords, is about strengthening or mastering your embodiment of heroism. It's a call of duty to others, or social justice. This is the development and cultivation of worldly knowledge. When The Scarlet Shield appears to you, there is a conflict or pain you need to confront. You need to name the pain. Figuratively, though also sometimes literally, this is the call for military strategy, the Art of War.

Recall that The Golden Shield, Queen of Wands, is divine protection over the astral body; The Ivory Shield is divine protection over the soul; and The Scarlet Shield is divine protection over the mind. The Ebony Shield, the Queen of Orbs, is divine protection over the physical body, which can also translate to health. Connect to her through a charm bag of apple, I like to use apple seeds, Cassia cinnamon, and Earth correspondences.

When The Ebony Shield appears, it's because right now, you need shielding and security around your material resources, your earthly dominion. This is a time for advancing, deepening, and furthering the development of a work product. Buckle down and work harder at completing that thing you've been working on for quite some time already.

More often than not, the Ebony Shield appears to you when you're feeling barren, when you don't think you have access to the necessary resources, but she's here to remind you to look around and conceive of an alternate, equally viable solution to your problems. This is going to be a time to dedicate focus and nurture to the Body, whether that is literally your physical body, your body of

Work, or the body of your home and hearth. I mean, like, just think Body of Christ and you'll get the metaphor I'm going with here.

This is also about devoting more time and nurture to mastery over the Sacred Mysteries. That is why The Ebony Shield holds the Apple of Knowledge and it looks as if she has pulled it out from behind her shield just to show you. This is also the personification of Industry. Industry is the production of goods, personal economy, and creating material works that advance society, culture, and civilization. Whatever you may think of the Apple of Knowledge, it is with that Apple of Knowledge that you possess what it takes to produce all that makes this material world go round.

In the SKT, when making reference to the Shields, or the four Queens from the Empyrean Court, they're Divine Androgyne and so the specific pronoun you want to use is really up to your unique, deeply personal connection to these Queens. They'll let you know how they want to be addressed. And it's going to factor in who you are, where you are in your life, and what it is you most need to see.

So don't listen to me using he or she and make assumptions. This is a spiritual, esoteric tarot deck and requires your presence, meaning it requires the factor of You. Without You, this deck is nothing. It's just pieces of cardstock. It is the Divine within your Higher Self that enlivens the deck. You have to first activate your Inner Divine for these cards to show themselves to you. That, by the way, applies to the Archangels, or the four Kings as well.

We addressed reversed Empyrean Courts when reading with the SKT back in the Kings lecture, and what we said there applies here as well. You do not need to read with reversals for the SKT deck, but if you choose to do so for yourself, then here are some notes for interpretation.



Reversed, the Shield is telling you that you have been shutting out Spirit, putting up a block or having blinders on so you aren't in spirit contact with ancestral lines, spiritual guides, or just any concept you have of your Higher Self.

There's the sense here that you haven't been in alignment with your own Higher Self, which is you amplified, you stronger, you at your most potent and powerful state, you at your most self-



aware and conscious state, or you at your most intelligent and wise. So the message here would be to take rectification measures so that those channels of divine communion, or activation of the Higher Self can be cleared.



Now let's review. For the Marseilles, we're working with the Conver deck from 1760, so this is the depiction of the Queen of Wands. Approximately 150 years later, Waite and Smith design this version of the Queen of Wands. Just over 3 decades later, we get Crowley and Harris's Thoth rendition of the Queen. And about 75 years after that, in the Third Millennium, this is how I express the Queen of Wands, as The Golden Shield.

We've covered some starting point attributions for the Queens. Now you'll want to pause the video on this frame and study the Queen of Wands. Based on how you connect to the imagery, thinking about what universal meaning can be culled from these cards, what cultural meanings you see, significant to you, and any deeply personal implications some if any of these symbols take on. Start to formulate, intuit, and channel your own card meanings for the Queen of Wands.



Perhaps your point of focus changes when the Queen of Wands comes out in reverse. Real life isn't always about getting to see the world right side up. Sometimes, your orientation is off kilter.



And so, too, with the tarot. How do you preserve your sense of perspective, grounding, and orientation even when what you're used to seeing one way goes topsy turvy?



Here we see the evolution of the Queen of Cups over 250 years of tarot card design and in this lecture we covered how the different traditions these card versions represent have interpreted the Queen of Cups. Now seeing these four cards in progression side by side, what are your impressions of Her?

Pause the video on this frame and take your time studying the symbolism here, reviewing everything we've said about the Queen of Cups, and auditing what attributions align with the way you connect to this Queen and what doesn't quite work for you. Start to intuit, formulate, and channel your own interpretations for this Queen.



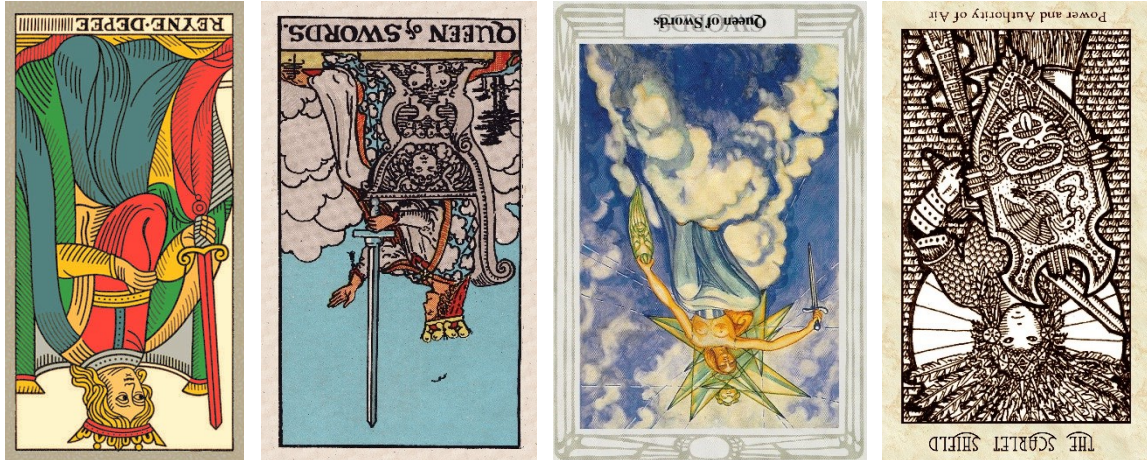
How do those attributions you hold for the Queen of Cups change when the energy is ill-dignified, when the imagery for the card turns up in reverse? Do any details now pop that you hadn't seen before?





On to the Queen of Swords. The face of a child-like cherub is presented along the side of the throne in the Rider-Waite-Smith Queen of Swords and sits atop the abstract, geometric throne in the Thoth Queen of Swords. Both heavily feature the symbolism of clouds. Pause the video on this frame and as you keep your gaze on the four cards, open your intuition, be receptive to what comes, and begin formulating your own interpretation and point of view for this Queen.

Even if you do not read with reversals, consider this quick mental exercise of scanning these upside-down images and lean in to your emotions, your feelings, and your sensing. Now that the images are upside down, is there anything that you now see, suddenly right-side up?



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And now the Queen of Coins, Queen of Pentacles, Queen of Disks, or as I call her, The Ebony Shield. What are the common core details across these cards but how differently does each artist reinterpret those core symbols? What essential energies do you intuit from this Queen? List out the key symbols for each deck style and take some time to think about what those symbols mean to you, or do a little research to see what those symbols have meant historically.

And as we come to a close, contemplate on the Queen of Coins, the Queen of Pentacles and Disks in reverse. [See top of next page.] How do the ill-dignified energies of this Queen make you feel, what do you sense from these images, and are you experiencing any intuitive or psychic shifts?

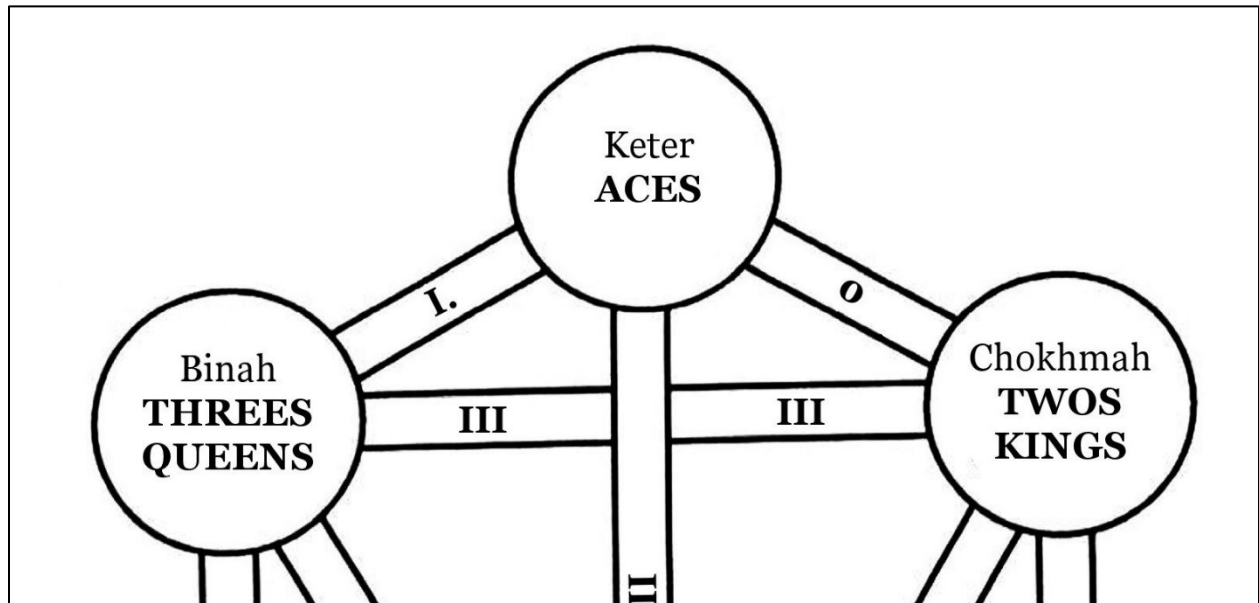
The tarot Kings, that's the Thoth Knights, arise from the World of Fire, born out of the First letter of the Holy Name, which you'll find along the bottom of the screen, the Yod of Yod He Vau He. On the Kabbalistic Tree of Life, Kircher version that the Golden Dawn uses, this is residence within the sephira Chokhmah. This, so far, should be a review of our previous video lecture on the Kings.



We just now covered the tarot Queens, who arise from the World of Water, born out of the Second letter of the Holy Name, which you'll again find along the bottom of the screen, the first He of Yod He Vau He. On the Kabbalistic Tree of Life, we moved from Chokhmah into Binah, now



creating the divine balance of masculine and feminine, active and passive, between Wisdom and Understanding.



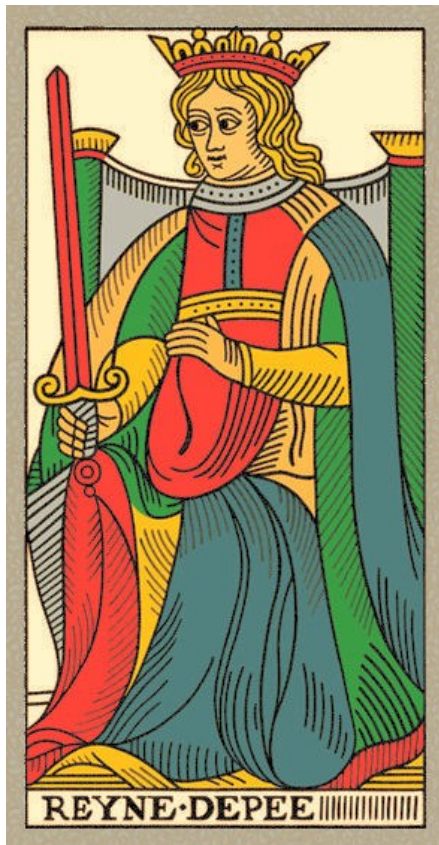
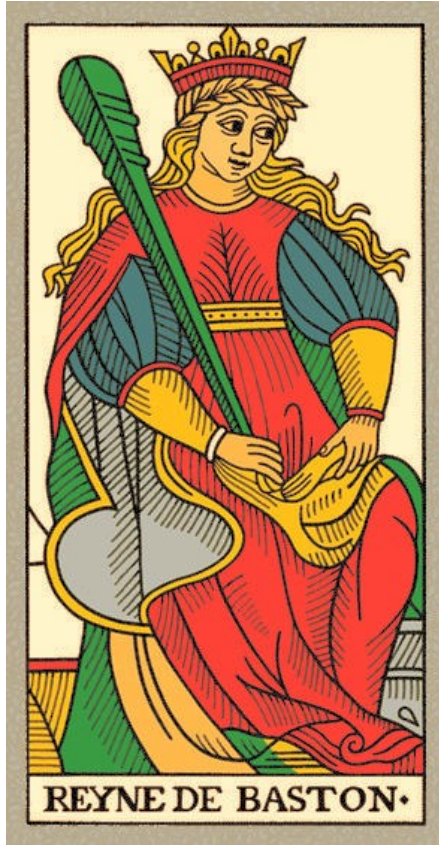
*The Supernal Triangle*

## **Tarot Card Meanings with Benebell**

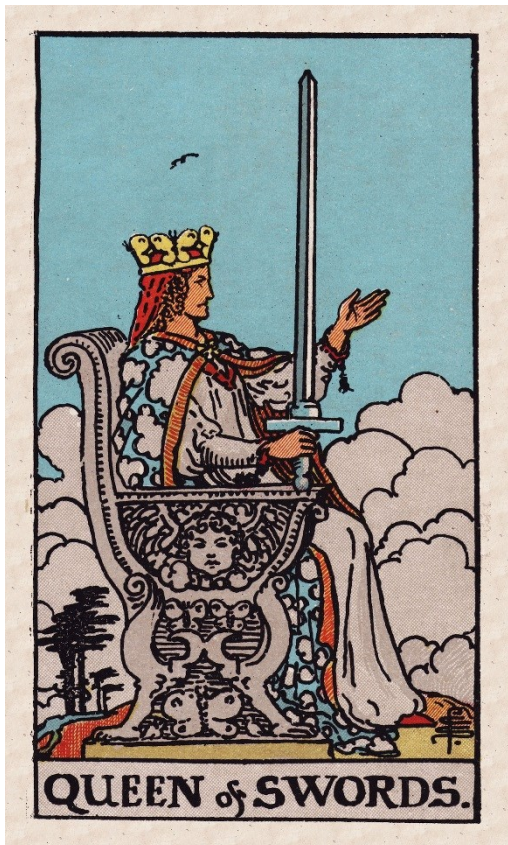
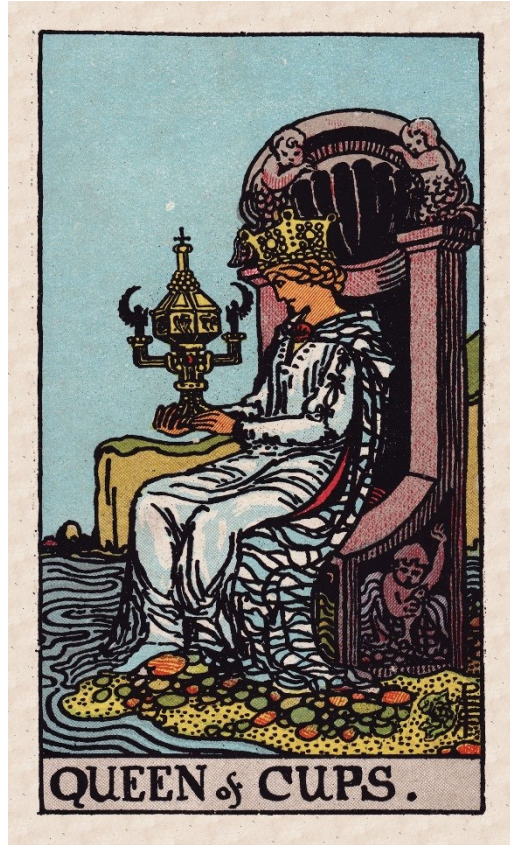
*A Video Lecture Series*

### P A S T L E C T U R E S

The Aces	20:02 minutes	<a href="#">Video</a>	<a href="#">Blog Post</a>
The Twos	34:41 minutes	<a href="#">Video</a>	<a href="#">Blog Post</a>
The Threes	22:15 minutes	<a href="#">Video</a>	<a href="#">Blog Post</a>
The Kings/Knights	42:40 minutes	<a href="#">Video</a>	<a href="#">Blog Post</a>
The Queens	53:26 minutes	<a href="#">Video</a>	<a href="#">Blog Post</a>











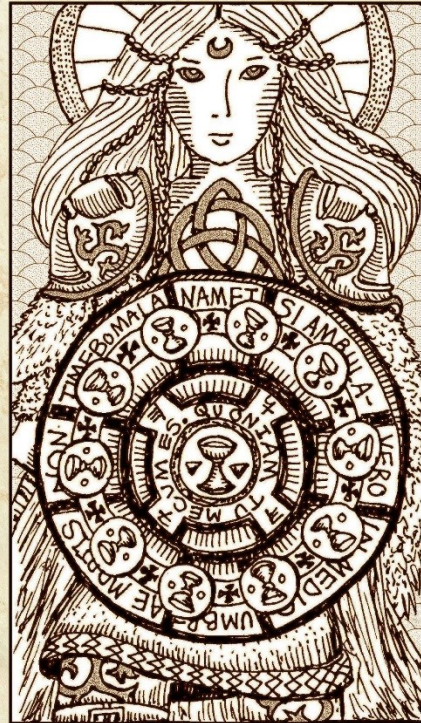


THE GOLDEN SHIELD



Power and Authority of Fire

THE IVORY SHIELD



Power and Authority of Water

THE SCARLET SHIELD



Power and Authority of Air

THE EBONY SHIELD



Power and Authority of Earth