

## **The First Seven Trumps of the Major Arcana (and the Fool) as Patterns for Pagan Leadership: Past, Present and Future**

Keynote Address to the Cascadia Pagan Leadership Conference

Fritz Muntean  
October 20, 1995

About ten years ago, at Lammas, when I had only recently become involved in Seattle-area Pagan activities, I attended a wonderful minifestival with the interesting name of The Solitaries' Convention, that was hosted by Brandy and Alex Williams and held at the Aquarian Tabernacle. On that occasion the keynote speaker was Leon Reed, and the subject of his address was "The Elder as Solitary" In the course of this speech, Leon announced his retirement from active community involvement and coven leadership in order to pursue his own magical practice and continuing education as a Solitary Elder.

I had only just met Leon, and I could tell that he was someone I really wanted to work with, so my first reaction to this announcement was disappointment. But on further reflection, I realized that Leon had reminded me of something I'd learned in my early magical days with NROOGD in San Francisco in the middle 60s, and that had lain fallow, even been effectively forgotten, during my back-to-the-land years in the Kootenay Mountains and during my subsequent stint with the Reclaiming Collective in the early 1980s.

This idea, which turned out to be very important for my own Wiccan career as it evolved after Leon's 'Elder as Solitary' speech, was that retirement from coven leadership was an admirable, even required, step in a person's advancement in the Craft. Back in the 60s, we NROOGDies were trying to merge what we knew of Gardnerian 'Lord & Lady' Witchcraft with Robert Graves' version of the Divine Feminine as we had it from his *White Goddess*, and as were fond of saying, if Gerald or Doreen had ever answered any of our letters, NROOGD would have been Gardnerian from the very beginning. But all we had to go on in those very early days was rumour from across the water, and a couple a Gerald's works of fiction. One of the most persistent rumours was that the British Wiccans required their Priests and Priestesses to train younger apprentices in the skills of leadership and to retire in their favour at an early age in order to ensure that

those in the position of coven leadership possessed the vigour of youth. This fit well with our own readings, especially those involving Frazer's connection between youth, fertility, and the sacred stewardship of the Land, and with Mary Renault's notion of the sacrificial king. As a result, in the NROOGD system, the first degree — the white cord — is the student or apprentice, the second degree — the red cord — is the High Priest or Priestess, and in order to qualify for the third degree — the Green Garter of the Elder — the leader must resign all coven authority to a qualified trainee and gracefully retire from an active leadership role.

Imagine our surprise when, in 1971, Lady Sheba published the *Wiccan Ordains* and we found out that what Gardner had actually decreed was that his *Priestess* was obliged to retire in favour of a younger woman, so that the coven — and Gerald — could enjoy the youth, beauty, and quite possibly, the naiveté and pliability, of a Priestess who, like the picture of Dorian Grey, would remain forever young while her High Priest grew ever more aged. The issue of Gerald Gardner as a dirty old man aside, from the point of view of Pagan Leadership it's most interesting to note the early appearance here of covert leadership as a Pagan standard of behaviour. By nominally placing all power and authority in the Coven in the hands of the High Priestess, and by simultaneously requiring her office to be rotated into the hands of younger women, Old Gerald could exercise covert authority while avoiding overt responsibility.

We'll return shortly to this issue of covert leadership in the Craft, but suffice to say that we NROOGDies were suitably shocked by this, and several other revelations from across the water, and decided that we had been well served by our own enlightened interpretation, and continued — to this very day — to practice — both women and men — retirement from active leadership as a requirement for third degree and Elder Status.

Looking back on those earliest days, I think that the main influence on our model of coven organization (and the consummate path to magical enlightenment) was our study of Tarot. We had noticed, early on, that the beginning of the journey through the Major Arcana, the first seven cards, was populated by Priests and Priestesses, Emperors, Popes, and Kings setting forth in Chariots — all representatives of temporal powers and authorities — and that only by passing through these, as if through an early but necessary stage of development, could one proceed on to the second flight of seven, the Realm of Earthly Reality and Equilibrium, and to the final row, the Realm of Heavenly Illumination and Self-Realization.

I'd like to structure this talk around those first seven cards of the Major Arcana (eight, including the Fool) as prototypes or patterns for Pagan Leadership, keeping in mind as we look at them, that like all temporal organizations of an enlightened nature, they represent conditions that must be transcended, but at the same time cannot be bypassed on the road to Wisdom. More important still is the understanding that the male and female figures here in the Tarot represent not men and women, but the masculine and feminine aspects of the divine existing in all of us regardless of our reproductive plumbing or sexual preferences. Let's think of the Fool, the Magician, and the High Priestess as models of Pagan leadership Past, as stages we've passed through on our way to where we are today. The Empress and the Emperor will then be seen as the models for the ideal leadership of the present, and the final three Trumps, the Pope, the Lover, and the Chariot will become the patterns and paths for our Pagan future.

### **The Fool**

We've all met this fellow. He's in such close contact with his instinctual side that he doesn't even need to look where he's going — in a very literal sense. He can let his Inner Child (that's the little dog) guide his steps. He's Parsifal, and his disregard for conventional good manners and the advice of his elders leads him —almost accidentally it seems — to ask the one simple question needed to heal the King and redeem the Waste Land. He believes, along with William Blake, that “If a man would persist in his folly, he would become wise,” and that “The Road of Excess leads to the Palace of Wisdom.”

The Fool is the enemy of rules and regulations, of hierarchies and principles, and even (as we can see) of safe paths through the mountains. He believes, and rightly so, that he can achieve magical results with no adherence to doctrine or discipline, but his near-complete neglect of magical standards only produces magical results that defy evaluation.

The Fool has also been known to write books — which Llewellyn dutifully has been known to publish. These books are easy to read and often entertaining, and many find the ideas in them to improve self-confidence, and to be ‘empowering’ to the reader. But their low standards of scholarship only seem to blur the distinctions between fiction and fact, between polemic and research, and between hypothesis and conclusion.

Like the Navajo trickster God, Coyote, the Fool is accorded a special role in the social order. But it's important to remember that Coyote can lie in wait for the unwary. He sometimes plays a trick so outrageous and violent, that it destroys the well-being, the sanity, and even the life of its victim. And all that remains is an edifying story of human folly to be told 'round the campfire. The Fool nowadays often finds his human counterpart in those who have used drugs unwisely but too well in order to blast their way out of a too-rigid cultural prison only to find themselves stranded helplessly on the other side.

As far as his potential for leadership goes, it's probably best for us to visualize the Fool with a bumper sticker across his butt that reads: "Don't Follow Me — I'm Lost!"

### **The Magician**

Here we have the Fool come to rest, at least temporarily. As the Magician, the magic wand he holds aloft connects him to his ancestor, Hermes, god of revelations, the great communicator, the maker of boundaries and the mercurial crosser of borders. He creates both the illusion and the self-awareness that dispels it. He knows The Secret: that All is One, all manifestations are one, all elements, all energies, all Power, all are whole and all are Holy.

In the Rider deck, the Magician's table has been tidied up. Articles such as dice, balls, and other items of dubious purpose have been swept under the table. The Magician's hand holds aloft a wand indicating that his powers are under conscious control and are dedicated to the heavenly spirit above. With his left hand he points earthward, (as above, so below). Both the poles of his wand are white. The masculine spirit is doubly emphasized, whereas the dark feminine yin is excluded.

The Magician is not fixed firmly to the spot, when his performance is finished, he will move on to other fields. He's about to perform some tricks. He calls them tricks, and that is exactly what they are. He welcomes our attendance at his magic show, sometimes even inviting us on stage as his accomplices. (Just imagine what could happen is every living human being 'imaged' peace and directed his energies toward its realization! 'We' magicians could indeed work miracles.)

The Pagan Leader represented by the Magician is usually someone who has become overly impressed with the ‘magical’-looking coincidences of everyday life. He’s developed an inflated notion about his own magical abilities and has begun to feel rather precious and special. If you find yourself dealing with a Magician, a light touch and a playful attitude will come in very handy.

### **The High Priestess**

The High Priestess is Pope Joan, the Female Pope, the feminine aspect of the Divine. The Magician’s magic, like his sex, is out in front. The Priestess’ magic is veiled and hidden. She’s the family matriarch, the Pope’s wife, she’s had her children, but they’re grown and gone. She’s the Virgin Mary, she’s Isis. She says ‘No man has unveiled me!’”

The scroll she hold is the book of the Law — she has the rules and she’ll teach them to you. But these are the *real* rules — the rules of nature — and you *have* to obey them intuitively and flawlessly — even as you learn them. Birth, death and rebirth are hers as well, but like the Law, they are not under her conscious control. The nature of her magic is hidden even from herself.

Compared to the Popess’ comfortable body and wise old eyes, Waite’s HPs seems young and pure and somehow untouched. In spite of the complex symbology of her setting, she seems a passionless figurehead, remote from her surroundings and disconnected from her body. Her gown flows to the earth and becomes water. This is a stream that will follow the line of least resistance, adapting itself comfortably to the contours of the earth, flowing slowly but steadily ever downward.

Since 1980 or thereabouts, the Female Pope has been a standard feature in the world of Pagan Leadership. Charismatic and visionary, she emphasizes the immanent nature of the Goddess and encourages us to seek inspiration from the divinity within ourselves. She enters our presence trailing clouds of glory from the farthest corners of the universe and from our most remote human origins. She also trails the odd wisp of anti-authoritarianism and untidy scholarship from her long affair with the Fool, and an unshakable confidence in her own magical abilities resulting from her apprenticeship with the Magician.

The possibility that these inner voices she hears, these divine ‘revelations’, may simply be mistaken — a lesson from history that should come through

loud and clear — is denied by the very pious and ascetic nature of the High Priestess' demeanor. Under her leadership, a lack of self-criticism is combined with an anti-authoritarian belief system that rejects hierarchies in favour of egalitarian social structure. Now it's certainly true that very small or very short-lived groups can function, often quite adequately, without leadership hierarchies. But in longer-lasting organizations, such as covens, circles, and groves, or in larger associations or collectives, the only real leadership choice is between overt and covert authority.

Covert leaders often insist on some version of the consensus method of decision-making, knowing (often only intuitively) that in all those societies which practice consensus as against majority rule, such as the Plains Indians, the Quakers, and certain Japanese corporate bodies, consensus functions as a more-or-less subtle method of intimidation; bringing everyone present into at least nominal agreement with the will of those in charge. This can have a beneficial effect if the people wielding authority are mature, compassionate, attentive to the opinions of others and responsive to the long-term needs of the organization. Unfortunately, people who believe that all their own ideas are divine (since they come from within, and that's where the Goddess dwells, right?) and who have the High Priestess' unshakable confidence in their own magical abilities to make everything right, can easily do great harm to organizations which practice consensus without firm and responsible (as well as overt) leadership.

The goals of organizations like this are usually stated as vague idealistic prescriptions for society as a whole. Such claims are often made in the context of a belief system that negates the relevance of objective accountability, while positing a vision of the Goddess that excludes all darkness and evil as something outside the divine, and therefore outside the group. When an organization projects its shadow needs and agendas away from itself and onto an enemy, especially when the enemy is portrayed as an opponent of society in general, a perilous context has been created, since demagogues have always found the link between politics and religion to be a fertile field.

Of course we should ideally build our political principles on spiritual foundations, but when we try to derive our spirituality from a system of belief that is essentially political in nature we court serious difficulties. For one thing, being attuned to one's inner voice or higher self may well lead to spontaneous acts that defy the logic of ideological consistency, and as a result, political ideologies will always place a ceiling on the height to which

one's consciousness may be raised. In addition, when there's too tight a fit between politics and religion, it takes a saint to not give in to utter self-righteousness; and judging from the amount of self-righteousness in the realm of the Female Pope, saints are clearly in short supply.

## **The Empress**

The Empress represents the transition from Maiden to Mother. She's luck, abundance, a sheaf of wheat. She's May Day! She's fresh, excited, she's pregnant, and most important, she's really really busy!

In contrast to the Female Pope, the Empress cares more for the power of love than the love of power. She's Venus, Goddess of Love. And love is the unifying and regenerative force that connects yang and yin, spirit and flesh, heaven and earth. Reintegrating opposites in creative embrace, the Empress brings liberation and transformation. She bridges the gap between the Mother World of creative inspiration and the Father World of logic and ideas.

The Empress is feeling and emotion, wisdom and love, and the subtle intelligence of dreams. The instinctual drives which ensure the necessities and fulfillments of life are the Empress' domains. Her power is dark, visceral, primitive, and vastly powerful. When the High Priestess is unified with the Empress, as passion — and compassion — warm the pontifical figurehead of the High Priestess, ideologies collapse in the heat of an embrace which recognizes the 'Other' as the 'Self', and the High Priestess is transformed. That which does not serve the Empress' primal mission of Love evaporates into meaningless, and what emerges from this union is the dark, mysterious, and thoroughly frightening figure of the Witch.

The Witch, like all the other Goddesses and Gods really, is not concerned with our conventions, nor our need for safety or security. She allows us access to unconscious mental processes that exist very close, but not quite inside the normal limits — not only of acceptability — but of any hope for complete control. The successful wielding of Witch energy therefore requires training, restraint, humility, and — above all — compassion. Whitewashing the Witch, even in the laudable name of 'pagan public relations,' serves only to trivialize the powers involved, and the denial of this darkness and the destructive energies inherent in the Witch can only allow undirected Witch energy — which will not be denied — to take on a magical life of their own, and invade entire communities. The well-known

tendencies for even minor conflicts in the Wiccan community to get immediately out of control might give responsible persons in position of leadership pause to reexamine some of their more reflexive behaviour patterns.

By somehow rendering conscious and acceptable these subterranean aspects of the Empress—the suppressed underground powers of the Witch—we can legitimate her demonic and destructive powers as having rights of their own on the strength of their therapeutic potential. But we must clearly understand that we do so at our own peril. Edward Whitmont suggests that from a psychological point of view the main purpose of magic may be to provide solidly-crafted containment for the conscious and intentional *enactment* of forbidden Witch behavior: the erotic and ecstatic as well as the violent and destructive — all of which is instinctual material which we repress at our peril, but cannot release in polite society with any degree of safety. The greatest danger is our tendency to consider some aspects of the divine as good, benevolent, or intentionally helpful, and other aspects as distinctly different—as malevolent or evil. A more cautious way of regarding the Empress is to think of her as loaded with power for regeneration — we can profitably suppose that that is her purpose. But the same power that can give us rebirth can also drive us mad. The powers of the Empress are potentially volatile, and certainly difficult to manage, without the inner resources conferred by serious long term training, great restraint, deep humility and enormous compassion.

### **The Emperor**

As we can see by the decorations on his throne, the Emperor is ruled by Aries. From the armor he wears beneath his robes, we can tell that he is recently returned from war. One of my earliest Tarot instructors told me that the Emperor wears armor because everyone knows who he is and where he lives. He's not a wandering star. He's not trying to lead from inside the broom closet.

The Emperor and the Empress are a wedded pair. Neither can function creatively without the other. The Empress' feminine, feeling side is refined and shaped by the critical masculine Emperor to create the finished product. Together they are the creators of something new: civilization.

The Emperor wields power. Real, temporal, physical power. Power is something we're all a bit tentative about having, or using, especially in the



interconnected and personal world of the Pagan community. Power, in the world of the Primitive Masculine (I like that term so much better than “the patriarchy”) was the right and privilege of kings and bishops, soldiers and police. Power — used to rule, conquer, repress and punish — was forbidden to the ordinary person. The deliberate use of psychic power was condemned as magic, sorcery, and heresy. Small wonder then, in view of this heritage, that the idea of power has for us become suspect, even reprehensible. We automatically associate power with its misuse.

Honest folk like ourselves are very wary of deliberately trying to live with and manage such power in our personal lives. Even seasoned magical practitioners scurry to ground the energy every time they make a move of any consequence in Circle. But leadership requires the conscious awareness of power. Otherwise, there’s no possibility of choice or decision, and so, no question of responsibility. And as a result, power is left to be used by those who claim it for their personal satisfaction, and who are largely unconscious of their selfish motivations. By making honest and positive use of power, we can build a humane and sustainable Pagan community. And the Emperor provides us with the pattern.

The Emperor represents the Wise Old Man, the Shaman, the Spirit Guide, and the Psychopomp that stands behind the Wiccan High Priest and Priestess. He’s the link with the numinous energies of the God-forms, and the technology of contacting the divine without identifying with it. The seductive power of the divine is enormous, and it can totally overwhelm our critical powers more than most of us modern types can usually understand. Coven members need someone who can lead them into the presence of the Old ones safely — and safely lead them back out again. They need a Priest or Priestess who are not themselves overwhelmed by their contact with the divine. And that’s a tall order. There’s so much pressure on the Wiccan Priest or Priestess to think of their own self aggrandizement, rather than the welfare of the Circle, because it’s impossible to be coming from the grandiosity of divine inflation and have any ethical sense at all. If you look at that honestly, then it’s amazing how much good work actually does happen!

On the other hand, the covener ‘kind of has to’ project this Emperor/Empress energy onto the Priest & Priestess in order for the magic to really work. If you’re in a magical relationship and there’s nothing happening, if there’s no real feeling of this kind of numinous energy opening up for you, then the magical transference is not happening. Now

this could be because of your own wounds, and your capacity to trust. If somebody as really failed you early in life, say, it'd be harder for you to project this energy onto your Priest and Priestess and successfully hold it there. The successful leader needs to be aware of this as an issue and be willing to patiently work on issues of trust. It helps, if you're the leader, to keep in mind that this magical transference really has nothing to do with you personally. It's necessary, but only for the time and duration of sacred space. Patience and humility and an almost Zen-like detachment is required of the leader, but within reasonable bounds. We know that you can go on for a long time without the Emperor/Empress energy, where nothing deep is really happening, but eventually boredom sets in, and destructive energies are sometimes released.

One of the forms this reaction to the tedium of superficial spirituality takes is the rise of the charismatic or prophetic leader, as a self-styled agent of change, or radical social transformation. Because of this shadow Emperor's other-worldly naïveté and his unstable points of reference between the transcendent and the mundane, these movements are often too easily infiltrated by those seeking political or economic gain. The darker elements of the psyche, such as the Rebel, the Victim, and the Martyr, may manifest enormous authority in the mundane world, but one of the defining aspects of shadow power is that it cannot be shared — it cannot be used to build a community or a religious movement — but can only accrue to the individual wielding the shadow energy.

Nearly all religions have as one of their goals the improvement of society. This often takes the form of social action in the broader community ('good works,' advocacy, etc.), or the modeling of an ideal society by the religion itself (monasteries, communes, etc.), both of which certainly have political overtones. Under ideal circumstances, however, the call to political action is generated by compassion. This compassion ideally derives from discriminating wisdom, which in turn is the result of the kind of enlightenment which is most usually arrived at through contemplation of the divine. Wisdom without enlightenment is trapped in narrow confines and cannot perceive whole systems. Discrimination without wisdom is divisive, territorial, and separatist. Compassion without discrimination is doomed to failure. And political action without compassion is self-serving at best, and at worst it can destroy entire societies. Discriminating wisdom is at the center of this equation, and this is not a characteristic of the Prophet, but of the Emperor.

## **The Pope**

This Trump is the first one in which we see other figures — of human size. While the Emperor looks out over distant horizons, his eye encompassing the totality of his empire, the Pope looks directly at the individuals before him. He communicates with them. The Pope is the outer organization that contains all inner workings, the arbiter of moral questions, the one who must determine the ultimate authenticity of all mystical experience. Religion, like sex, aims to unite the opposites. As a symbol of this unification the Pope is androgynous, uniting in his person both the masculine and the feminine. He represents the magical nature of organization, of property, of the Land. Venus brings forth fecundity, but the Pope underlies it and fertilizes it.

As Pagans we have a lot of resistance to the idea of any kind of organized container for our religious activities. We believe in inner workings, in the esoteric, but we're highly suspicious of what many of us feel to be the unnecessary and limiting outer framework, the exoteric components that put the organization in Organized Religion. Technically speaking, however, mystical experience and esoteric insight need to be grounded in core values, and these values are part of the exoteric structure of a religion. Since the mid-60s, we've been increasingly surrounded by the wreckage of esoteric religious systems that have become disconnected from the structure of their exoteric value systems and have quickly devolved into venues for self-empowerment, self-forgiveness, and self-deification. As Pagans, we're just beginning to develop the first traces of these problems ourselves, as the occasional self-initiated and self-appointed person begins trying to speak for all of us.

Lacking any sort of authorizing exoteric structure, Paganism has become host to an ideological sub-cult in which critical judgment and leadership accountability are discouraged and where a kind of funky fundamentalism — complete with a paranoid world-view and an opportunistic political agenda — have, in some areas, nearly overwhelmed our original spiritual content.

Lets assume then, that we need some kind — and obviously not just any old kind — of religious structure in order to contain, protect, and preserve our esoteric workings. The Pope provides — or in the case of Neopaganism let's say that the Pope of the Tarot may hopefully someday provide — an

adequate container for our religious passions and a structure that will allow our mystical experiences and esoteric insights to outlast our own lifetimes. The Pope will someday die, but he will always have a successor. How many of us can say the same thing. The big question of everyone's minds is this: OK, but who's going to be the Pope? Any volunteers?

Our Pagan deities are considered to be transcendent in so much as they are universal, eternal, and can be found everywhere. We mainly think of our Goddesses and Gods as being immanent, and this concept impacts heavily on the issue of leadership. If the divine is everywhere, and is accessible to everyone, then anyone can reveal truth. This belief system, compounded by a wide-spread rejection of the authoritarian religious systems of the past in which the few — the called and the chosen — controlled the many, has caused most practitioners of Wicca to be inherently suspicious of leadership in any form. In the most extreme cases, this has led to a kind of fundamental egalitarianism that often ends up militating against any form of authentic human worth. Abraham Maslow is often quoted for support of this anti-authoritarian position, but between the 1964 publication of *Religions, Values, and Peak-Experiences*, and its second edition in 1970, his views underwent some interesting modifications:

“The rejection of a priestly caste who claimed to be exclusive custodians of a private hot line to the sacred was, in my opinion, a great step forward in the emancipation of mankind, and we have the mystics—among others—to thank for this achievement. But this valid insight can also be used badly when dichotomized and exaggerated by foolish people. They can distort it into a rejection of the guide, the teacher, the sage, the therapist, the counselor, the elder, the helper along the path of self-actualization and the realm of Being. This is often a great danger and always an unnecessary handicap.”

So there is my answer: The organizational power that the Pope of the Tarot represents will be found among the guides and the teachers, the therapists and the counselors, the sages and the elders of the Pagan community. Our job is to identify these people and to empower them.

### **The Lover**

This is the Trump of the path not taken. The old Tarot version is particularly instructive. In the Rider deck, called interestingly enough, The Lovers, the path to unity has already been chosen and a heavenly celestial being blesses

the pair. On closer examination, we may notice that although the man's attention is directed toward the woman, she only has eyes for the angel. The Edwardians were surely a peculiar lot.

By way of contrast, the Lover in the Marseilles Tarot is seen standing between two figures, an older and a younger woman. And instead of a glorious angel overhead we have Cupid, the imp with the poisoned arrow. Is the Lover a young man who is having to choose between a young Wife and his old Mother? Or is he a man in mid-life trying to decide if he should stay with his Old Wife or run off with a New Cookie? Of course he can simply choose not to choose. He can continue to live with his mother (or with his Old Wife) and see the young woman with whom he is so obviously enamored on the side. But that stops the process right here and the rest of the Trumps must, of necessity, go unexplored.

He must choose in order to proceed, and in a very real way it doesn't matter what choice he makes as long as he does choose, because in the realm of the Lover the path not taken is as important as the path taken. Any attempt to eliminate the stresses and tensions of this triangle will cause the Lover to lose an initiatory rite of great importance in the development of human consciousness. Only by becoming aware of our conflicts, by making clear and firm decisions and then by facing the results of those decisions and suffering through all their consequences, both for ourselves and for the others involved, can genuine growth and progress can be achieved.

All thoughts of choice and rational processes aside, it's also important to notice that a colorful *deus ex machina* is already making the Lover's decision for him behind his back.

So what are these important landmark decisions that we as Pagan leaders must make in order to get on with the real work of spiritual development? We have, for the last thirty-odd years (and some of them very odd indeed) been wrapped up in a process — one that's very common to emerging New Religious Movements — called radical inclusivism. In order to generate the kind of enormous numbers we seem to feel that we need in order to justify our existence to ourselves and to others, we have uncritically included under the ever-broadening rubric of Neopaganism everyone who would stand for it, and quite a large number of those who would not if they had any idea that we were doing it. The definitions used by organizations like CoG are necessarily vague in the extreme, since everyone involved is painfully aware that any distinction at all between what is or isn't a Pagan would instantly

cause half the membership to disappear, and any further distinction would cut the remaining membership by half again. It's true, of course, that Afro-Caribbean religions, The SCA, emerging First Nations' Spirit movements, the celebration of the Eleusinian Mysteries, Women's separatist organizations, Trekkies, Unitarians, Wiccans, Wotanists and Tantric Buddhists all have some things in common with one other, but their points of commonality are fairly superficial, and in any case are not their most subtle, their most powerful, or even their most interesting features.

I have a very strong feeling that, at the time in the — I hope — not too distant future when we do decide just what path Paganism is really on and live with our decision — including coming to terms with all the paths not chosen that we have left behind — not only will our numbers demonstrate some genuine growth, but our festivals will start being a lot more focused than they have been in the last five or ten years.

### **The Chariot**

Here we have a powerful figure. He's a King, a Warrior, a guiding force, but he's drawn to human proportions. All the powers and patterns of the external figures that have gone before have been brought together and internalized as guiding principles within this one character. He's setting forth to seek his fortune and establish his identity in the larger world, freeing himself from containment within the family of leadership prototypes we've been looking at. He has within him the seed for future growth and the potential for complete self-awareness, and he's getting ready to take his show on the road.

Of course, nobody's perfect. He still bears the wound from Cupid's dart, and he still needs his armor and his vehicle and his horses and all, and if he was totally enlightened and completely together all he'd really need would be a small satchel and maybe a little dog. That's right, if he was really enlightened he'd look just like the Fool, and who knows, maybe the Fool really is as totally enlightened and autonomous as he thinks he is. But in a less than perfectly-pulled-together universe, a good horse and a good cart, not to mention a good map, will do wonders for those just setting out on the journey through the rest of the Tarot that's represented by the Chariot. A journey through the next seven Trumps, the Realm of Earthly Reality and Equilibrium, and on to the final set of seven, the Realm of Heavenly Illumination and Self-Realization.

Here endeth the lesson. We've seen our own recent history and we tip our pointy black hats at the leaders of the past who have played out for our benefit the characters of the Fool, the Magus, and the Female Pope. We've caught a glimpse of the future and will be alert to such epiphanies of the Pope, the Lover, and the Chariot as will come. But most important, we now know a little bit more than we did before about the characteristics of the Empress and the Emperor and we stand a better chance of nurturing those attributes in ourselves and in others as we travel gaily forward toward our Pagan goal of humane and sustainable models of spiritual leadership.