

Journal of the Western Mystery Tradition
No. 3, Vol 1. Autumnal Equinox 2002

**The Tree of Life:
Filing Cabinet of the Western Mystery Tradition
and Methods to Recall the Information
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Introduction

The Tree of Life, one of the most recognized symbols of the Western Mystery Tradition is more than just a symbol or graph to understand the Divine Emanations that created the universe in Kabbalistic thought. The Tree is used as a means to place the various Divine Names, planets, Archangels, Angels, and metals in a logical order so that we as magicians can understand the universe around us. Most of us have looked at the information that is ascribed to each of the sephiroth of the Tree of Life and thought what a daunting task it is to learn all that information, and many of the beginning magicians are frustrated with trying to remember which of the sephiroth relates to the Archangel Raphael and which relates to the Sun.

So just what is the Tree of Life? Well, I think that one of the best definitions comes from Dion Fortune's The Mystical Qabalah:

It is a glyph, that is to say a composite symbol, which is intended to represent the cosmos in its entirety and the soul of man as it relates thereto; and the more we study it, the more we see that it is an amazingly adequate representation; we use it as an engineer or the mathematician uses his slide-rule, to scan and calculate the intricacies of existence, visible and invisible, in external nature or the hidden depth of the soul.^[1]

Ten circles arranged in a specific pattern and connected by a series of ten lines most often represent this glyph. The ten circles represent the Ten Divine Emanations, called the *sephiroth* (plural of the word *sephira*)^[2], and the lines symbolize Paths that connect the individual sephira to one another. The word sephira, literally means counting and is distinguished from the Hebrew word *mispar*, which means *numbers*. Even though the sephiroth are said to represent the ten basic digits, they are not numbers.^[3] In a more modern manner, the Tree of Life can be defined as:

The ten spheres or Sephiroth connected by the 22 paths of the Hebrew alphabet, form the Tree of Life (Otz Chaim), the central glyph of the Qabalah. The Tree of Life describes the steps between mundane consciousness (represented by Malkuth) and the divine (represented by Kether).^[4]

The basic form of the Tree of Life that is shown the most is as follows and depicts the ten spheres or circles (sephiroth) connected by the 22 paths of the Hebrew alphabet.



Colored Figure of the Tree of Life using Golden Dawn Queen Scale

The Tree can be used as a means to catalog the various information that is found in the Hermetic Traditions, a filing cabinet that can be used to sort through this information. Each of the Ten Spheres can relate to a certain amount of information from the color of the particular sephiroth to the various gods of the world pantheons that relate to the sephira in question. In the following text, we will go over the basic information that is normally attributed to the Tree of Life in the Western Mystery Traditions, and discuss ways to remember these attributions.

Basic Information on the Tree

Each of the ten spheres has a name that directly identifies the sephira and the idea that this sephira represents. The various names of the sephiroth are derived from Scripture. The first three of the sephiroth are named in Exodus 31:3:

And I have filled him with the spirit of God, in Wisdom, and in Understanding, and in the Knowledge, and in all manner of workmanship.

In the kabbalistic book, Sefer Yetzirah, this is explained as follows: the "*spirit of God*" refers to Kether, while "*Wisdom*" and "*Understanding*" refer to the next two sephiroth, Chokmah and Binah, as well as the hidden sephira Daath that follows these two sephiroth.^[5] The next seven sephiroth on the Tree of Life have their names derived from 1 Chronicles 29:11:

Thine, O Lord, is the Greatness, and the Power, and the Glory, and the Majesty: for all that is in the heaven and in the earth is thine; thine is the Kingdom, O Lord, and thou art exalted as head above all.

Here all the names of the lower sephiroth are defined. Most of the time the first of the lower sephiroth is called Chesed (meaning Love), rather than Gedulah (meaning Greatness), and the next to the last sephiroth is normally called Yesod (Foundation) rather than Kol (meaning All).^[6]

This is how all of the Sephiroth of the Tree of Life are named starting from the top, closest to the Divine, to the bottom, the Physical Manifestation of Divine Will. Kether (Crown) is the topmost sphere, followed by Chokmah (Wisdom), then by Binah (Understanding), Daath (Knowledge), Chesed (Mercy), Geburah (Severity), Tiphareth (Beauty), Netzach (Victory), Hod (Splendor), Yesod (Foundation), and finally at the bottom of the Tree, Malkuth (Kingdom). Each of the sephira is numbered from one to ten, also starting at the top (Kether as one) and ending with ten at the bottom (Malkuth as ten).

What follows is a basic discussion of the Ten Sephiroth with some of their attributions and names as they relate to the Western Mystery Tradition. These names and attributions are normally memorized by the practicing magician and used to relate to various aspects of magick and knowledge. After a brief discussion of the basic information on the Sephiroth, then we will go over some additional information that can be placed on the Tree of Life.

Kether

Starting with the top of the Tree of Life, we begin with Kether כתר (sphere number one), which is the closest to the Divine. Kether means the *Crown*, and relates to the top of the Tree of Life. There are also many additional titles of Kether; among these are *Arik Anpin* (meaning Long Nose in Aramaic), *Aur Penimi* (meaning the Internal Light), and *Elyon* (meaning Most High).^[7] Most of these titles are Aramaic and from the Zohar, a renowned book on the Kabbalah. These titles of Kether are not normally used to relate to Kether in the modern period, but were used at different times in several of the different esoteric schools that were found throughout the Eastern Mediterranean and in Spain.^[8] The color most used to represent Kether is Brilliant White, which comes from the Hermetic Order of The Golden Dawn's attributions of colors as they relate to the Tree of Life.^[9] The Divine name of Kether is Eheieh אהיה (meaning I Am); and the Archangel of Kether is Metatron מטטרון (meaning The Angel of the Presence), head of the Angelic Choir, Chayoth ha-Qadesh היות חקדש (meaning Holy Living Creatures), or the Order of the Seraphim.

Kether is also the sphere that contains all that was, is, or will be. It is the First Emanation and the sphere of pure spiritual being, the point of absolute Unity without division. As such one of the symbols of

Kether is the Point, and a Point is often placed on the Tree of Life in Kether to represent this idea of Unity. It is also the place on the Tree of Life that contains the Source of All and the Highest Divine Essence that we can conceive.^[10] This Source of All is sometimes described as the Primum Mobile or the First Whirlings of Manifestation, a phase that correctly describes the action of the cosmic energy at the creation of the universe. This Primum Mobile is sometimes shown by the symbol of a swastika or fylfot cross, which is another of the symbols relating to Kether.

Kether Correspondences

Kether כתר

Crown

White Brilliance (Queen Scale)

Eheieh אהיה (Divine name)

Metatron מטטרון (Archangel)

Chayoth ha-Qadesh היות הקדש (Angelic Choir)

Holy Living Ones (Translation of Chayoth ha-Qadesh)

Ambergris (Scent)

1st Whirlings (Planets)

N/A (Metal)

Diamond (Stone)

God (Creature)

Crown (tool)

Almond flower (Plant)

The Point (Geometric Symbol)

Chokmah

The next sephira that we come to as we come down the Tree of Life is Chokmah חכמה (sphere number two). It is the next closest to the Divine. Chokmah means Wisdom. Other titles of Chokmah are *Ab* (meaning The Father), *Abba* (meaning The Supernal Father), and *Kochmah* (meaning The Power of Yetzirah).^[11] The Divine name of Chokmah is Yah יה, and the Archangel is Raziel ריאל (meaning Secret of God), part of the Angelic Choir Ophanim אופנים (meaning The Wheels). The color of Chokmah in the Queen Scale of the Golden Dawn is grey.^[12]

Chokmah is the first sephira that develops a polarity and is placed at the head of the Pillar of Mercy, or the Right Hand Pillar.^[13] The energy of Chokmah is dynamic and outpouring, sort of a stimulator for the universe, relating to masculine principal. Some of the symbols that relate to Chokmah are The Line, and the Phallus. Also the Zodiac can be placed here to show the physical representation of Chokmah on the Tree of Life.

Chokmah Correspondences

Chokmah חכמה

Wisdom

Grey (Queen Scale)
Yah יה (Divine Name)
Raziel רזיאל (Archangel)
Ophanim אופנים (Angelic Choir)
Wheels (Translation of Ophanim)
Musk (Scent)
Zodiac (Planets)
N/A (Metal)
Star Ruby (Stone)
Man (Creature)
Inner Robe (Tool)
Amaranth (Plant)
The Line (Geometric Symbol)

Binah

The next sephira that we come to on the Tree of Life is Binah בינה (sphere number three), and means *Understanding*. Like Chokmah, Binah is the head of one of the Pillars on the Tree, in this case, the Pillar of Severity or the Left Hand Pillar. The forces connected with Binah as passive in nature and relate to the feminine. So like Chokmah, Binah has developed its own polarity, but a feminine one as opposed to Chokmah's masculine one. Other titles of Binah include *Ama* (meaning the Mother), *Aima* (meaning the Supernal Mother), and *Korsia* (meaning the Throne).^[14] The Divine Name for Binah is YHVH Elohim יהוה אלהים (meaning Lord God), and the Archangel is Tzaphkiel צפקיאל (meaning Contemplation of God). The Angelic Choir is the Aralim אראלים (meaning the Thrones or the Mighty Ones).^[15] The color of Binah in the Golden Dawn Queen Scale is black, and the scent associated with this sephira is myrrh or civit.^[16]

Binah is also the sephira that builds Form, another feminine function. To do this Binah receives the overflow of the dynamic or masculine energy built up in Chokmah and organizes it for the first time under the concept of Form.^[17] The concept of Form only exists at this point on the Tree of Life as a polarity, the basic capacity to build Form.

Binah Correspondences

Binah בינה
Understanding
Black (Queen Scale)
YHVH Elohim יהוה אלהים (Divine Name)
Tzaphkiel צפקיאל (Archangel)
Aralim אראלים (Angelic Choir)
Thrones (Translation of Aralim)
Myrrh (Scent)
Saturn (Planet)

Lead (Metal)
Pearl (Stone)
Woman (Creature)
Outer Robe (Tool)
Cypress (Plant)
Triangle (Geometric Symbol)

Daath

The sephira Daath **דעת**, meaning *Knowledge* is really a non-sephira or an invisible sephira. It is also known as the *Abyss* and is below Chokmah and Binah, between the other sephiroth of the Tree of Life. It is also on the Middle Pillar of the Tree of Life between Tiphareth and Kether. This invisible sephira has no attributions of Divine Name or Angelic Choir, and is often not shown on some representations of the Tree of Life.

There is still some information that is relevant to Daath. Daath is produced from the conjunction of Chokmah and Binah, which are Wisdom and Understanding. It is in this invisible sephira Daath (Knowledge), which Chokmah (Wisdom) and Binah (Understanding) combine with what is known as the Beautiful Path (Tiphareth). This is the concealed or hidden concept that which pervades the whole emanation.^[18] Another way to say this is that without Knowledge, the student can not have Understanding and Wisdom, as Knowledge helps to better understand a situation or thing, and to give the student a better opportunity in making the wise choice.

Chesed

The next sephira that we come to is Chesed **חסד** (sphere number four), the meaning of which is *Mercy*. This sephira is sometimes referred to as Gedulah **גדולה** (meaning Greatness). Chesed is considered the First Sephira of the Microprosopos, the manifested universe.^[19] This is the place where the energy that is formed in Binah is given a more concrete form. The Divine name associated with Chesed is El **אל**, and the Archangel is Tzadqiel **צדקיאל** (meaning Justice of God). The Angelic Choir is Chasmalim **חשמלים** (meaning Brilliant Ones), while the color in the Golden Dawn Queen Scale is blue.

Chesed is often referred to as a cohesive intelligence. This is because Chesed contains all of the holy powers, or energies that it has received from the Supernals, the top three sephira of the Tree of Life. It is in Chesed that the unmanifested power is gathered and the process of manifestation begins without diminishing the Divine Emanations on their way to materialization in Malkuth.^[20]

Chesed Correspondences

Chesed **חסד**
Mercy
Blue (Queen Scale)
El **אל** (Divine Name)
Tzadqiel **צדקיאל** (Archangel Name)

Chasmalim **חשמלים** (Angelic Choir)
The Brilliant Ones (Translation of Chasmalim)
Cedar (Scent)
Jupiter (Planet)
Tin (Metal)
Sapphire (Stone)
Unicorn (Creature)
Wand (Tool)
Rush (Plant)
Square (Geometric Symbol)

Geburah

Next on the Tree of Life we come to Geburah **גבורה** (sphere number five), meaning *Severity*. There are other titles for this sephira and they include *Din* (meaning Justice), and *Pachad* (meaning Fear). Geburah (Severity) is the polar opposite of Chesed (Mercy) meaning that an extreme is reached through harsh action.^[21] The Divine name associated with Geburah is Elohim Gibor **אלהים גבור**. The Archangel of Geburah is Kamael **כמאל** (meaning Severity of God), sometimes spelled Khamael or Camael, while the Angelic Choir is the Seraphim **סרפים** (meaning Powers)^[22], and the color linked to Geburah in the Queen Scale of the Golden Dawn is scarlet.

As can be seen in the previous two sephira, Chesed and Binah, the polarities of masculine and feminine are reinforced. Just as the energy of Chesed is the same as Chokmah on a lower level, Geburah has the same energy as Binah, but also on a lower, more manifest level.^[23] At this level of the Tree the masculine and feminine traits of the Divine energy and of each sephira is becoming more and more apparent, with Geburah seeming harsher than Binah on the masculine side of the Tree.

Geburah Correspondences

Geburah **גבורה**
Severity
Scarlet (Queen Scale)
Elohim Gibor **אלהים גבור** (Divine Name)
Kamael **כמאל** (Archangel)
Seraphim **סרפים** (Angelic Choir)
Powers (Translation of Seraphim)
Tobacco (Scent)
Mars (Planet)
Iron (Metal)
Ruby (Stone)
Basilisk (Creature)
Sword (Tool)
Cactus (Plant)

Pentagram (Geometric Symbol)

Tiphareth

The next sephiroth that is on the Tree of Life is Tiphareth תפארת (sphere number six), meaning *Beauty*. This sephira occupies the middle of the Tree of Life and is prominently seen on all the drawings of the glyph. Other titles of Tiphareth are *Zaur Anpin* (meaning Lesser Countenance), *Melekh* (meaning King), *Seir Anpin* (meaning Bearded Countenance), *Ben* (meaning The Son), and *Ish* (meaning The Man). Tiphareth is directly below Kether on the Middle Pillar of the Tree of Life. The Divine Emanations or Energies are mixed in this sephira from Kether, Geburah, and Chesed, and are perfectly balanced.^[24] The Divine name of Tiphareth is YHVH Eloah va-Daath יהוה אלוה ודעת (meaning Lord God of Knowledge). The Archangel is Raphael רפאל (meaning God's Healing). This is the more common Archangel linked to Tiphareth, but sometimes the Archangel is given as Michael מכאל. The Angelic Choir is the Melekim מלכים (meaning Kings). The Golden Dawn gave the color of Tiphareth in the Queen Scale as gold.

This is the sphere of harmony between the Mercy of Chesed and the Severity of Geburah, the perfect balance between the aggressive and benevolent energies of these two sephira. Because it is in a direct line with Kether, Tiphareth mirrors the purity of Kether, but in a more manifest level.^[25]

Tiphareth Correspondences

Tiphareth תפארת

Beauty

Gold (Queen Scale)

YHVH Eloah va-Daath יהוה אלוה ודעת (Divine Name)

Raphael רפאל (Archangel)

Melekim מלכים (Angelic Choir)

Kings (Translation of Melekim)

Frankincense (Scent)

Sol (Planet)

Gold (Metal)

Topaz (Stone)

Phoenix (Creature)

Lamen (Tool)

Sunflower (Plant)

Netzach

After Tiphareth, we come to the sephira Netzach נצח (sphere number seven), which means *Victory*. Netzach is the lowest of the sephiroth in the Right Hand Pillar or the Pillar of Mercy. It is in Netzach that the balanced forces of Tiphareth continue on towards manifestation in Malkuth. This energy can be expressed in art, dance, music, and poetry. The Divine Name of Netzach is YHVH Tzaboath יהוה צבאות (meaning Lord of Hosts). The Archangel name is Haniel האניאל (meaning Grace

of God)^[26] of the Angelic Choir Elohim אלהים (meaning Gods), and is also called the Order of Principalities^[27] The Golden Dawn assigned the Queen Scale color emerald green to Netzach.

Netzach is a dynamic energy or force that inspires and drives us. It is the reflection of the fiery energy of Geburah, but at the level of human personality, but is tempered by the balancing forces of Tiphareth. This way the fiery energy becomes desire and emotion.^[28] Netzach is the counterbalance of Hod.

Netzach Correspondences

Netzach נצח

Victory

Emerald Green (Queen Scale)

YHVH Tzaboath יהוה צבאות (Divine Name)

Haniel האניאל (Archangel)

Elohim אלהים (Angelic Choir)

Gods (Translation of Elohim)

Rose (Scent)

Venus (Planet)

Copper (Metal)

Emerald (Stone)

Lynx (Creature)

Lamp (Tool)

Rose (Plant)

Heptagram (Geometric Symbol)

Hod

The sephira after Netzach is Hod הוד (sphere number eight), which means *Splendor*. Hod is sometime translated to mean *Glory*. This sephira is at the bottom of the Pillar of Severity and symbolizes the intellectual, rational part of the brain, as opposed to the emotions that are represented in Netzach. The Divine Name linked to Hod is Elohim Tzaboath אלהים צבאות (meaning God of Hosts). The Archangel is Michael מכאל (meaning Who is as God)^[29], and the Angelic Choir is the Beni Elohim בני אלהים (meaning Sons of Gods), but is more often referred to the Archangels. The color associated with Hod by the Golden Dawn in the Queen Scale is orange.

The energy in Hod is a lower form of the energy in Chesed, but balanced by the forces in Tiphareth. In Hod the emotions and instincts of Netzach take on form and become action. This sphere is a counterbalance to Netzach because without the emotions of Netzach, the rational intellect of Hod is uninspired.^[30] Likewise, the emotions of Netzach need the discipline of the intellect provided in Hod.

Hod Correspondences

Hod הוד

Splendor

Orange (Queen Scale)

Elohim Tzabaoth אלהים צבאות (Divine Name)

Michael מכאל (Archangel)

Beni Elohim בני אלהים (Angelic Choir)

Sons of Gods (Translation of Beni Elohim)

Storax (Scent)

Mercury (Planet)

Mercury or Quicksilver (Metal)

Fire Opal (Stone)

Hermaphrodite (Creature)

Names (Tool)

Orchid (Plant)

Octogram (Geometric Symbol)

Yesod

After Hod, we come to the sephira Yesod יסוד (sphere number nine), which means *Foundation*. It is sometimes referred to as *Tzadiq-Yesod-Olam* (meaning The Righteous is the Foundation of the World).^[31] This sephira is directly below Tiphareth on the Middle Pillar. The Divine Name of Yesod is Shaddai El Chai שדי אל חי (meaning Almighty Living God). The Archangel is Gabriel גבריאל (meaning God is my Strength)^[32], and the Angelic Choir is Kerubim כרובים (meaning Angels). The color given to Yesod in the Queen Scale by the Golden Dawn is violet.

Yesod is the sephira on the Middle Pillar that contains the two completed forces of Hod and Netzach. Yesod is a basic building block on which further developments can be built. In many aspects, Yesod is much like a fully formed fetus in the womb.^[33] It is here that a new era begins and the old one ends.

Yesod Correspondences

Yesod יסוד

Foundation

Violet (Queen Scale)

Shaddai El Chai שדי אל חי (Divine Name)

Gabriel גבריאל (Archangel)

Kerubim כרובים (Angelic Choir)

Angels (Translation of Kerubim)

Jasmine (Scent)

Silver (Metal)

Quartz (Stone)

Elephant (Creature)

Scent (Tool)

Comfrey (Plant)

Enneagram (Geometric Symbol)

Malkuth

The last of the sephiroth on the Tree of Life is Malkuth מלכות (sphere number 10), which means *Kingdom*. Some of the additional titles of Malkuth are *Malkah* (meaning The Queen), *Kalah* (meaning The Bride), *Shekinah* (meaning The Divine Presence), *Shar* or *Throa* (meaning The Gate), and *Betulah* (meaning The Virgin).^[34] It is in Malkuth that the Divine Will or energy is made manifest to the Physical World. The Divine Name is Adonai ha-Aretz אדני הארץ (meaning Lord of the Earth). The Archangel of Malkuth is Sandalphon סנדלפון (meaning Co-Brother)^[35], while the Angelic Choir is the Eshim אשדים (meaning Flames). The Queen Scale color given to Malkuth by the Golden Dawn is different from the other sephiroth in that Malkuth is divided into four different colors divided by an "X". The top part of the "X" is colored citrine; the right, olive; the bottom, black; the left, russet.^[36]

Malkuth is the final receptacle for the combined energies of the Tree of Life. Where the other spheres are basically kinetic and mobile, Malkuth is stable and inert, and unlike the other sephira, it is not part of a triad.^[37] Malkuth is the Physical World around us, the Creation of the Divine.

Malkuth Correspondences

Malkuth מלכות

Kingdom

Citrine/Olive/Black/Russet (Queen Scale)

Adonai ha-Aretz אדני הארץ (Divine Name)

Sandalphon סנדלפון (Archangel)

Eshim אשדים (Angelic Choir)

Flames (Translation of Eshim)

Dittany of Crete (Scent)

Four Elements (Planet)

N/A (Metal)

Rock Crystal (Stone)

Sphinx (Creature)

Circle (Tool)

Lily (Plant)

Decagram (Geometric Symbol)

Advanced Information on the Tree of Life

The above information is the basic concepts and images that relate to the various sephiroth of the Tree of Life. In this section, we will discuss some different things that can be placed on the various sephiroth and on the paths of the Tree of Life. Some of these ideas will be the gods and goddesses of the various pantheons of the world, the Tarot, the Hebrew alphabet, and other lesser-known attributions. This part of the discussion on the Tree of Life will not cover every aspect of what is attributed to the various parts of the Tree, but will give an idea as to what can be placed where on the Tree.

The first thing that we will look at on the Tree is the placement of the Tarot. As we know the Tarot is

divided into two separate groups called the Arcanas, these being the Lesser Arcana which consists of fifty-six cards of the four suits and the Major Arcana which consists of the twenty-two cards of the trumps. The fifty-six cards of the Minor Arcana are arranged Ace through King in the various sephira, while the twenty-two cards of Major Arcana are arranged to one of the twenty-two paths of the Tree. The Golden Dawn developed this form of attribution of the Tarot to the Tree of Life. In the case of the Princes and Princesses, I have also included the common value attributed to these Tarot cards. This can be seen in the following chart.

Sephira/Path	Hebrew Alphabet	Tarot	Color
Kether	-	Aces	White Brilliance (QS)
Chokmah	-	Kings & Twos	Grey (QS)
Binah	-	Queens & Threes	Black (QS)
Chesed	-	Fours	Blue (QS)
Geburah	-	Fives	Scarlet (QS)
Tiphareth	-	Princes (Knights) & Sixes	Gold (QS)
Netzach	-	Sevens	Emerald Green (QS)
Hod	-	Eights	Orange (QS)
Yesod	-	Nines	Violet (QS)
Malkuth	-	Princes (Pages) & Tens	Citrine/Olive/Black/Russet (QS)
Path 11	א	The Fool 0	Bright Pale Yellow (KS)
Path 12	ב	The Magician I	Yellow (KS)
Path 13	ג	The High Priestess II	Blue (KS)
Path 14	ד	The Empress III	Emerald Green (KS)
Path 15	ה	The Emperor IV	Scarlet (KS)
Path 16	ו	The Hierophant V	Red-Orange (KS)
Path 17	ז	The Lovers VI	Orange (KS)

Path 18	ח	The Chariot VII	Amber (KS)
Path 19	ט	Strength VIII	Yellow-Green (KS)
Path 20	י	The Hermit IX	Green-Yellow (KS)
Path 21	יא	Wheel of Fortune X	Violet (KS)
Path 22	יב	Justice	Emerald Green (KS)
Path 23	יג	The Hanged Man XII	Deep Blue (KS)
Path 24	יד	Death XIII	Green-Blue (KS)
Path 25	טו	Temperance XIV	Blue (KS)
Path 26	טז	The Devil XV	Indigo (KS)
Path 27	יז	The Tower XVI	Scarlet (KS)
Path 28	יח	The Star	Violet (KS)
Path 29	יט	The Moon XVIII	Crimson (KS)
Path 30	כ	The Sun	Orange (KS)
Path 31	כא	Judgement XX	Glowing Orange-Scarlet (KS)
Path 32	כב	The Universe XXI	Indigo (KS)

In the Color section of the above chart, the KS refers to the King Scale of the Golden Dawn and the QS to the Queen Scale. The different scales help to show the distinction between the Sephiroth and the Paths.

Other attributions can be made to the Paths of the Tree of Life. This can be seen in the following chart. The attributions can be placed on a drawn version of the Tree of Life to better show their placement if the student wishes.

Path	Astrology	Animal	Plant	Stone	Scent	Tools
11	Air ♁	Eagle	Aspen	Topaz	Galbanum	Dagger
12	Mercury ☿	Swallow	Vervain	Opal	Mastic	Wand or Caduceus
13	Luna ☾	Dog	Almond	Moonstone	Camphor	Bow & Arrow
14	Venus ♀	Sparrow	Myrtle	Emerald	Sandalwood	Girdle

15	Aries ♈	Ram	Tiger Lily	Ruby	Dragon's Blood	Horns & Burin
16	Taurus ♉	Bull	Mallow	Topaz	Storax	Preperations
17	Gemini ♊	Magpie	Orchid	Alexandrite	Wormwood	Tripod
18	Cancer ♋	Crab	Lotus	Amber	Onycha ^[38]	Furnace
19	Leo ♌	Lion	Sunflower	Cat's Eye	Olibanum ^[39]	Disciplines
20	Virgo ♍	Virgin	Snowpop	Peridot	Narcissus	Lamp & Wand
21	Jupiter ♃	Eagle	Hyssop	Amethyst	Saffron	Scepter
22	Libra ♎	Elephant	Aloe	Emerald	Galbanum ^[40]	Cross of Equilibrium
23	Water ♒	Eagle	Lotus	Aquamarine	Onycha	Cup & Cross
24	Scorpio ♏	Scorpion	Cactus	Snakestone	Benzoin	Obligation
25	Sagittarius ♐	Centaur	Rush	Jacinth	Lignum Aloes	Arrow
26	Capricorn ♑	Goat	Hemp	Black Diamond	Musk	The Secret Force
27	Mars ♂	Horse	Rue	Ruby	Pepper	The Sword
28	Aquarius ♒	Man	Cocanut	Artificial Glass	Galbanum	Censer
29	Pisces ♋	Fish	Unicellular Organisms	Pearl	Ambergris ^[41]	Magick Mirror
30	Sun ☉	Lion	Sunflower	Crysoleth	Olibanum	Bow & Arrow
31	Fire 🔥	Lion	Red Poppy	Fire Opal	Olibanum	Wand
32	Saturn ♄	Crocodile	Ash	Onyx	Assafoetida ^[42]	Sickle

Next on the Tree of Life we can study the various world pantheons as they are placed on the Tree. The gods of these various pantheons are placed in the different sephiroth as they relate to each sephira, i.e. Venus (Roman) and Aphrodite (Greek) may be attributed to Netzach. These can be seen in the following chart.^[43]

Sephira	Greek Pantheon	Roman Pantheon	Egyptian Pantheon	Norse Pantheon	Hindu Pantheon	Voodoo Pantheon	Santeria Pantheon
Kether	Aither	Aether	Osiris	Ymir	Brahman	Dambhalah Wedo	Olofi
Chokmah	Uranus	Coelus	Thoth	Odin	Vishnu	Maraca	Obatala
Binah	Rhea	Magna Mater	Maut ^[44]	Frigga	Bhavani	Brigitte	Oddudua
Chesed	Zeus	Jupiter	Ptah	Balder	Rama/Chandra	Adoum-Guidi	Orunla
Geburah	Ares	Mars	Seth	Loki	Shiva	Ogou-Ferraille	Oggun
Tiphareth	Apollo	Helios	Ra	Thor	Indra/Surya	Ogou-Chango	Chango
Netzach	Aphrodite	Venus	Hathor	Freyja	Sita	Erzulie	Oshun
Hod	Hermes	Mercury	Anubis	Freyr	Hunaman	Legba	Eleggua
Yesod	Artemis	Diana	Isis	Sif	Lakshmi	Aida Wedo	Yemaya
Malkuth	Demeter	Ceres	Nephtys	Nerthus	Ganesha	Zaca	Orisha-Oko

The Celtic pantheon can be placed on the Tree of Life in a similar manner as above. It can be seen in the following chart derived from article, *The Incomplete Mythological Pantheons of the Golden Dawn* by Pat Zalewski.^[45]

Sephira	Celtic Pantheon
Kether	Nuada of the Silver Hand
Chokmah	Lugh
Binah	Dagda
Chesed	Lir
Geburah	Fergus

Tiphareth	Cuchulainn
Netzach	Fand
Hod	Ogma
Yesod	Bridget
Malkuth	Danu

Methods of Remembering the Information

The above two sections of this article deal with some of the information that can be placed on the glyph of the Tree of Life in the various positions. Some items can be placed in the Sephiroth, other on the Paths. The question is how can we as students of the Western Mystery Traditions remember all these diverse attributions as they relate to the Tree of Life. There are a couple of methods to accomplish this.

First of all, rote memory can be used to remember all the attributions of the Tree of Life. This can be done in a couple of different manners, or a combination thereof. Simply memorizing each Sephira, Path, and attribution that corresponds to the appropriate place on the Tree of Life through study of the various charts. Another method maybe to draw out multiple glyphs of the Tree of Life and place all the numerous related material in the corresponding location on these glyphs. This is a great manner to learn the information as it relates to the Tree of Life. There is a drawback to this particular method though, and that is that you will have a notebook full of drawings of the Tree of Life that you will have to go through over and over again.^[46] This can be a difficult process for the student.

Another method is one that promotes memory and is an old Hermetic method for remembering multiple and complex items. This can be a magickal method, if you will, to remember these items and other things as well.

Ars Memorativa (the Art of Memory)

Nowadays, surrounded as we are with dozens of ways to make up for the weaknesses of human memory, there is one thing that is still easy to forget: that life wasn't always quite so simple. In the Middle Ages, most of our modern methods of collecting and storing information hadn't even been imagined.

Forget about microfilm, memory chips and similar high-tech approaches; less complex devices like filing cabinets and index cards were completely unknown in the middle ages, and even paper, the bottom line of modern information storage, was unheard of in the West. Rather, parchment made from sheepskins was used, a material so expensive that it was often laboriously scraped clean after short-term uses so that something else could be written on the same sheet.^[47]

So, just how did a magician of the Middle Ages remember all the information that was required of him

to know. Well, he used a method of mnemonic recall to sort through all this information. The mnemonic method of Art of Memory held a special place in the practicing magician's repertoire. The Neoplatonic Philosophy of the Renaissance gave memory and the techniques mnemonics a vital place in the Great Work. This interpretation of memory gave rise to new understanding of the Art, turning what had once been the practical way of storing information into a meditative discipline calling on the powers of the will and imagination.^[48]

One of the questions is just how did this form of mnemonic recall come into being. There is no exact knowledge as to how this occurred, but there is a classical legend as to the origins of this method of Art Memory.

The poet Simonides of Ceos, as the tale has it, was hired to recite an ode at a nobleman's banquet. In the fashion of the time, the poet began with a few lines in praise of divinities - in this case, Castor and Pollux - before going on to the serious business of talking about his host. The host, however, objected to this diversion of the flattery, deducted half of Simonides' fee, and told the poet he could seek the rest from the gods he had praised. Shortly thereafter, a message was brought to the poet that two young men had come to the door of the house and wished to speak to him. When Simonides went to see them, there was no one there - but in his absence the banquet hall collapsed behind him, killing the impious nobleman and all the dinner guests as well. Castor and Pollux, traditionally imaged as two young men, had indeed paid their half of the fee.^[49]

There are many tales like this throughout Greek literature, but the above has an added moral to the story. When the rubble was cleared away, the bodies were too mangled to identify those whom had been killed. Simonides recalled to memory the order in which the guests were seated as he had last seen it, thus identifying the dead, and according to legend, he founded the first classical Art of Memory.^[50]

This framework continued in the classical world, through Hellenistic Greece into the Roman schools of rhetoric. There was a bit of difference between the Greek and the Roman version in that the Romans taught their students to memorize large buildings according to certain rules dividing the building into specific loci or places, then marking every fifth or tenth loci with a specific mark.^[51]

The next step came after the fall of the Roman world and the coming of Christianity. The Christian monk had to memorize great deals of material and to be able to recite them from memory. They used the same methods as were practiced in classical Rome.

With the disintegration of the Roman world, these same techniques became part of the classical heritage of Christianity. The Art of Memory took on a moral cast as memory itself was defined as a part of the virtue of prudence, and in this guise the Art came to be cultivated by the Dominican Order. It was from this source that the ex-Dominican Giordano Bruno (1548-1600), probably the Art's greatest exponent, drew the basis of his own techniques.^[52]

So now that we have looked at a bit of the beginning and history of the Art Memory, how do we apply it to the Tree of Life and the information that can be filed using the Tree of Life? Bruno's method is a dizzying complex combination of ideas, images, and alphabets, which require a great deal of mnemonic

skill to begin with. First let us look at an example of the method that Bruno gave us in his *De Umbris Idearum* (1582)^[53], the high-water mark of the Hermetic Art of Memory.

...the traditional image of the first decan of Gemini, a servant holding a staff, could stand for the letter combination be; that of Suah, the legendary inventor of chiromancy or palmistry, for ne. The decan-symbols are part of a set of images prior to the inventors, establishing the order of the syllables. Put in one locus, the whole would spell the word bene.^[54]

At first glance, the above system is very complex and would give the best magician a hard time trying to remember all the little details that are involved. But it is subtler than meets the eye.

The method has a great deal more subtlety than this one example shows. Bruno's alphabet included thirty letters, the Latin alphabet plus those Greek and Hebrew letters which have no Latin equivalents; his system thus allowed texts written in any of these alphabets to be memorized. He combined these with five vowels, and provided additional images for single letters to allow for more complex combinations. Besides the astrological images and inventors, there are also lists of objects and adjectives corresponding to this set of letter-combinations, and all these can be combined in a single memory-image to represent words of several syllables. At the same time, many of the images stand for ideas as well as sounds; thus the figure of Suah mentioned above can also represent the art of palmistry if that subject needed to be remembered.^[55]

Now let us look at a more modern example of Bruno's method that will shed more light on how to use the Art Memory.

To make sense of these strange techniques, it is useful to look over the shoulder of a student of the Art as he begins the construction of a set of memory places and images.

Imagine, then, a young Brother Anselm as he stands one evening in the cloistered garden of the Abbey of St. Quilibet. A novice, he has just started on the task of learning Latin; the Art of Memory is also part of the curriculum and he has resolved to use memory to make learning Latin easier.

He turns slowly around, staring at the old gray stone of the cloister arches, the tiled roofs above, the herbs and flowers all about, committing the whole image to memory. There are seven entrances to the garden; a Latin noun can take seven different cases, and remembering all of them has bedeviled his early lessons. He decides to begin with that.

First is the nominative case. He thinks of white-haired Brother Martin, easily the abbey's most devout monk, beginning the sign of the cross, "In Nomine..." That forms his first memory image; he imagines Brother Martin on his knees in the first entrance, eyes turned up to Heaven, to fix the picture in his imagination.

Next comes the genitive case. The first image that comes to mind makes Brother Anselm turn bright red; he murmurs a prayer against sinful thoughts, and replaces it with a picture of Adam and Eve, the

progenitors of humankind. This image he places at the second entrance.

The next two, the dative and accusative cases, are easy enough. Dative makes him think of the great calendar of saint's days in the abbey library; to suggest the initial letter, he puts it in the arms of thin and weakly Brother Daniel, who staggers under the burden. That makes him feel guilty although not quite guilty enough to change the picture and so for the accusative case he uses a lurid picture of the Devil, the accuser of humankind, pointing a clawed finger at him as if to remind him of his sins. And so on.

He runs through the images once again in his imagination, making sure he has remembered all of them, and then leaves the garden in time for Vespers. Every day thereafter, he walks through his growing collection of memory places in his imagination, noting the images to make sure that each one still calls its meaning to his mind. With practice, he finds that the images remain clear and meaningful for months at a time, even if he leaves them unvisited; he also finds that if he wants to use the seven entrances for something else the seven cardinal virtues, for example all he needs to do is construct different images in those places and visit that portion of his inner kingdom. By that time, though, he will be well on his way to mastering the Art. [\[56\]](#)

The above example sheds a little more light on just how to use the method of Art Memory to recall various ideas, thoughts, and images. There is a discussion by John Michael Greer in his paper *Ars Memorativa: An Introduction To The Hermetic Art of Memory*, which I would like to share at this point. Greer discusses a modern method for applying the above mnemonic methods. He uses the idea and imagery of gardens and gazebos to catalog an assortment of ideas and knowledge. He calls this method *The Garden of Memory*. The diagrams mentioned in the following article do not appear with the Internet version of this article that this information is taken from.

The Garden of Memory is laid out in a series of concentric circular paths separated by hedges; the first four of these circles are mapped in Diagram 1. Each circle corresponds to a number, and has the same number of small gazebos set in it. These gazebos -- an example, the one in the innermost circle, is shown in Diagram 2 -- bear symbols which are derived from the Pythagorean number-lore of the Renaissance and later magical traditions, and serve as the places in this memory garden. Like all memory places, these should be imagined as brightly lit and conveniently large; in particular, each gazebo is visualized as large enough to hold an ordinary human being, although it need not be much larger.

The first four circles of the garden are built up in the imagination as follows:

The First Circle

This circle corresponds to the Monad, the number One; its color is white, and its geometrical figure is the circle. A row of white flowers grows at the border of the surrounding hedge. The gazebo is white, with gold trim, and is topped with a golden circle bearing the number 1. Painted on the dome is the image of a single open Eye, while the sides bear the image of the Phoenix in flames.

The Second Circle

The next circle corresponds to the Dyad, the number Two and to the concept of polarity; its color is gray, its primary symbols are the Sun and Moon, and its geometrical figure is the vesica piscis, formed from the common area of two overlapping circles. The flowers bordering the hedges in this circle are silver-gray; in keeping with the rule of puns, which we'll cover a little later, these might be tulips. Both of the two gazebos in this circle are gray. One, topped with the number 2 in a white vesica, has white and gold trim, and bears the image of the Sun on the dome and that of Adam, his hand on his heart, on the side. The other, topped with the number 3 in a black vesica, has black and silver trim, and bears the image of the Moon on the dome and that of Eve, her hand touching her head, on the side.

The Third Circle

This circle corresponds to the Triad, the number Three; its color is black, its primary symbols are the three alchemical principles of Sulphur, Mercury and Salt, and its geometrical figure is the triangle. The flowers bordering the hedges are black, as are the three gazebos. The first of the gazebos has red trim, and is topped with the number 4 in a red triangle; it bears, on the dome, the image of a red man touching his head with both hands, and on the sides the images of various animals. The second gazebo has white trim, and is topped by the number 5 in a white triangle; it bears, on the dome, the image of a white hermaphrodite touching its breasts with both hands, and on the sides the images of various plants. The third gazebo is unrelieved black, and is topped with the number 6 in a black triangle; it bears, on the dome, the image of a black woman touching her belly with both hands, and on the sides the images of various minerals.

The Fourth Circle

This circle corresponds to the Tetrad, the number Four. Its color is blue, its primary symbols are the Four Elements, and its geometrical figure is the square. The flowers bordering the hedges are blue and four-petaled, and the four gazebos are blue. The first of these has red trim and is topped with the number 7 in a red square; it bears the image of flames on the dome, and that of a roaring lion on the sides. The second has yellow trim and is topped with the number 8 in a yellow square; it bears the images of the four winds blowing on the dome, and that of a man pouring water from a vase on the sides. The third is unrelieved blue and is topped with the number 9 in a blue square; it bears the image of waves on the dome and those of a scorpion, a serpent and an eagle on the sides. The fourth has green trim and is topped with the number 10 in a green square; it bears, on the dome, the image of the Earth, and that of an ox drawing a plow on the sides. ^[57]

The system given by Greer above can be very helpful in remembering items for each of the sephira of the Tree of Life. If you apply the idea of Circles to each of the Sephiroth and place within each of them the corresponding gazebo of the appropriate color. Then you can begin to file the information that relates to that sephira. As an example, we will look at the First Circle of the Garden of Memory and

apply it to Kether, the first sephira.

The idea that the First Circle relates to the Monad, or to the One, which is the number of Kether, helps a great deal here. Also, by looking at the color of the Garden, which is White and the white and gold trimmed Gazebo we can think of the Queen Scale color of Kether and to the closeness of the Divine. In this case Eheieh (I Am) is the Divine Name, this again alludes to the Monad. The Geometric Symbol of the Point is also reflected in the Monad. The images of the Archangel Metatron can be placed either on or in the Gazebo, along with the Angelic Choir. The path in the First Garden to the Gazebo can be made of Diamonds, the Stone associated with Kether. This path can be lined with flowering Almonds, the Plant associated with this sephira. An image of a Crown, the Tool linked to Kether can also be in the Gazebo, or if you like an image of God wearing a Crown can be seated in the Gazebo. To represent the idea of the First Whirling of Creation (Planet), perhaps a swirling mass of Ambergris (Scent) incense smoke before the image of God wearing a Crown.

The next step would be to move on to the Second Circle and Chokmah, filling in the various images to fit that particular sephira, and then on to Binah and the rest of the Sephiroth of the Tree of Life.

The Paths on the Tree of Life can be done in a similar manner by imagining them as garden paths with plants, animals, images and letters that connect the Ten large gardens of the sephiroth. An example might be Path Number Thirty that connects Hod and Yesod.

Perhaps the Path can be imagined as having a gate like the tarot card The Sun XIX, with the Hebrew letter r in the center of it as an Orange path leads to the next Garden. Sunflowers border the path with a bright Sun overhead. Along the path a Lion plays. On the Orange path is a Bow and Arrow made of Crysoleth.

This is just an idea of how to incorporate the method given by Greer in his *Garden of Memory* in our study of the Tree of Life. Can you think of other images to use to better remember the different groups of information assigned to the sephira of the Tree?

Conclusion

The Tree of Life is a valuable glyph for cataloging the various ideas, images, and knowledges associated with the Western Mystery Traditions. There are several ways to place this information on the glyph of the Tree and several ways to recall that information. The one that is best for the student of the Western Mystery Tradition, and particularly the Hermetic Arts is completely up to the student in question. How many ways can you find to use the Tree of Life as a source of information and a filing cabinet?

We can use the modern storage devices of paper, disk, or computer space as a neat filing cabinet to catalog and remember the information in this article. This works best for something like rote memory where the ideas, images and correspondences are dryly recited and remembered through repetition.

The other method is to use a method is to use a tradition that relates to the Western Mystery Traditions. In this case, one that relates specifically to the Hermetic Tradition. The older system given by

Bruno is a bit complex and can be confusing to the modern practitioner. The *Garden of Memory* presented by John Michael Greer gives the modern magical practitioner the means to easily remember the numerous images, ideas, and knowledges connected to each of the sephiroth of the Tree of Life.

It also has its practical side. The methods of the Art of Memory work so much better than ordinary rote memorization, that even a little experience with the Art can make a startling difference. Anything from shopping lists to class notes can be remembered quickly and efficiently, and you aren't likely to leave your memory at home when you go to take a final exam! So sit yourself down, close your eyes, and start putting to use this popular Medieval practice. ^[58]

Which of them that the student and practitioner chooses to use is completely up to the individual involved. Maybe the use of our mind to better remember may make us better magical practitioners. Try these methods to recall the diverse amounts of information that can be stored on the Tree of Life. See what works best for you.

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Notes

[1] Fortune, The Mystical Qabalah, p. 37.

[2] *Ibid*, p. 37.

[3] Kaplan, Sefer Yetzirah: the Book of Creation, p. 23.

[4] Whitcomb, The Magician's Companion, p. 209.

[5] Kaplan, Sefer Yetzirah: the Book of Creation, p. 23.

[6] *Ibid*, p.25.

[7] Godwin, Godwin's Cabalistic Encyclopedia, p. 162.

[8] A discussion of some of these esoteric schools can be found in the book, Meditation and Kabbalah by Aryeh Kaplan.

[9] The Golden Dawn attributed a certain color scale to each of the sephira and paths of the Tree of Life near the end of the 19th century. There are four different color scales that they used, the Queen-scale, the King-scale, the Princess-scale, and the Prince-scale. These scales relate to the Four Kabbalistic Worlds. The scale most seen is the Queen-scale.

[10] Cicero, Self-Initiation into the Golden Dawn Tradition, p. 61.

[11] Godwin, Godwin's Cabalistic Encyclopedia, p. 79.

[12] Kraig, Modern Magick, p. 102

[13] Cicero, Self-Initiation into the Golden Dawn Tradition, p. 62.

[14] Godwin, Godwin's Cabalistic Encyclopedia, p. 58.

[15] *Ibid*, p. 27.

[16] Civit is a musk that comes from the musk glands of a type of cat. It is rarely used anymore, with myrrh being readily available.

[17] Cicero, Self-Initiation into the Golden Dawn Tradition, p. 63.

[18] Fortune, The Mystical Qabalah, p. 47

[19] *Ibid*, p. 163

[20] Cicero, Self-Initiation into the Golden Dawn Tradition, pp. 64 - 65.

[21] Zalewski, The Kabbalah of the Golden Dawn, p. 65.

[22] Godwin, Godwin's Cabalistic Encyclopedia, p. 118.

- [23] Cicero, Self-Initiation into the Golden Dawn Tradition, p. 65.
- [24] Zalewski, The Kabbalah of the Golden Dawn, p. 66.
- [25] Cicero, Self-Initiation into the Golden Dawn Tradition, p. 66.
- [26] Davidson, A Dictionary of Angels, p. 134.
- [27] Godwin, Godwin's Cabalistic Encyclopedia, p. 213.
- [28] Cicero, Self-Initiation into the Golden Dawn Tradition, p. 67.
- [29] Davidson, A Dictionary of Angels, p. 193.
- [30] Cicero, Self-Initiation into the Golden Dawn Tradition, p. 68.
- [31] Godwin, Godwin's Cabalistic Encyclopedia, p. 341.
- [32] Davidson, A Dictionary of Angels, p. 117.
- [33] Zalewski, Kabbalah of the Golden Dawn, p. 69.
- [34] Godwin, Godwin's Cabalistic Encyclopedia, p. 185.
- [35] Davidson, A Dictionary of Angels, p. 257. Sandalphon is Greek rather than Hebrew. Metatron is likely Greek as well, as the two Archangels are two parts of the same being.
- [36] Kraig, Modern Magick, p. 104.
- [37] Cicero, Self-Initiation into the Golden Dawn Tradition, p. 70.
- [38] Onycha is the shell or cover of a species of mussel found in the lakes of India, which when burned produces a musky odor.
- [39] Olibanum is the ancient name of Frankincense.
- [40] Galbanum is from the Galbanum plant native to Persia. A resin from this plant is burnt to produce a scent.
- [41] Ambergris is the oil of a Sperm Whale. Now it is a synthetic oil rather than from the Sperm Whale.
- [42] Also spelled Asafetida. A plant from Afghanistan and eastern Persia. The resin is used to produce a scent.
- [43] Whitcomb, The Magician's Companion, p. 163.
- [44] Also spelled Maat.
- [45] Zalewski, The Incomplete Mythological Pantheons of the Golden Dawn. The Magical Pantheons: A

Golden Dawn Journal, Book IV , pp. 129-136.

[46] I personally have done this and have a notebook that has 53 different Trees of Life.

[47] Greer, *The Art of Memory*, Internet page at Western Esoterica - on Line Library.

[48] Greer, *Ars Memorativa: An Introduction To The Hermetic Art of Memory*, Internet page at Western Esoterica - on Line Library.

[49] *Ibid.*

[50] *Ibid.*

[51] *Ibid.*

[52] *Ibid.*

[53] *Ibid.*

[54] *Ibid.*

[55] *Ibid.*

[56] Greer, *The Art of Memory*, Internet page at Western Esoterica - on Line Library.

[57] Greer, *Ars Memorativa: An Introduction To The Hermetic Art of Memory*, Internet Page at Western Esoterica - on Line Library.

[58] Greer, *The Art of Memory*, Internet page at Western Esoterica - on Line Library.