Evolution of a Manuscript

The following screen shots show the evolution of a manuscript, from the format it was in when I submitted it for consideration to the first round of copyedits, then the second round of copyedits (this applies only to the Holistic Tarot sample pages), the galleys for proofing, and finally, the advance review copy (or ARC) (again, applying only to Holistic Tarot samples).

I’ve also provided a second example, for my second book, The Tao of Craft. You’ll see how a snapshot of two page spreads from my manuscript submission evolved through the copyediting phase to the proofs sent back by the design editor.

Two sample pages are taken from Holistic Tarot, chapter 1, page 1 and chapter 3, page 2, and two sample two-page spreads are taken from The Tao of Craft, chapter 1 and chapter 2.

Oh, by the way…!

How amazing is it to have access to this nonfiction writing and publishing course! You know how you can do me a solid? Support me by buying a copy of Holistic Tarot and The Tao of Craft for your personal library. You can search for the titles at North Atlantic Books, Random House, Amazon, or Barnes and Noble. I’d be ever grateful for your patronage! – bell

CHAPTER ONE

WHAT IS TAROTANALYSIS?

Tarot is a practice rich with history and cultural knowledge. It is a science of the mind.

Through its development, tarot cards have absorbed the wisdom, the narratives, the philosophies, the cultural anthropology, and the moral lessons of many societies, many religions, and many schools of thought. It represents the spectrum of human archetypal conditions and personalities, which can be used by the modern day practitioner for psychological projective evaluation. Tarot helps us look within ourselves to understand our emotions, the reasoning behind our words and conduct, and the source of our conflicts.

This book will present tarot as a holistic tool, which can help us mine our own unconscious to find answers. You can learn to use tarot to make informed decisions and improve your future. The cards do not tell us what to do. Rather, they help us think about our problems through a different perspective and, like a diagnostics tool for decision-making, help lay out a roadmap for the solution. The typical analytical process we follow incorporates rational and emotional intelligence. Tarot adds a third dimension of spiritual intelligence.

I do not support fortune-telling and I do not believe in future-telling. My approach to tarot is not predictive. There is nothing psychic about my tarot readings. It’s analytic. The signs and symbols of the cards can help trigger creative solutions or illuminate another angle of a problem that we’ve been looking monotonously at. Tarot can offer just the breakthrough that is needed to go forward in a positive direction. I call it tarotanalysis.

When we study the imagery and symbols on the cards in a tarot spread, we activate our imagination. That imagination then activates our intuition, which often is the only instrument we have that channels a clear path for us to the truth of a matter. Tarotanalysis can be used to help extrapolate what is otherwise latent in our subconscious.
Chapter 1: Tarot Analytics: A Holistic Approach

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I do not support fortune-telling, and I do not believe in future-telling. My approach to tarot is not predictive. It is analytic. The signs and symbols of the cards facilitate retrieval of information from the unconscious and move it to the forefront of the conscious plane of the mind, which can then help us form creative solutions, present a different angle to a problem that we have been looking monotonously at, or offer the breakthrough that allows us to move forward. I call it “tarot analytics.”
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Chapter 1

Tarot Analytics
A HOLISTIC APPROACH

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critiques that we must be open to hearing. These messages help us make better decisions and improve upon our futures. When they appear in a tarot reading, they are conveying an important point that needs to be heard, needs to be heeded, so that our lives can turn out for the best.

The suit of swords represents human ambition, aggression, and force, which can lead to conquest, but more often lead to destruction. The cards warn of the latter, darker aspect. The Three of Swords shows strife and the storm of emotions and injuries to the heart caused by aggression. The Eight of Swords acknowledges a sense of imprisonment, feeling like there is no way out of a bad situation. However, the woman is just blind to her way out. She could use the swords around her to cut through her bondages. Thus the card reminds us to use creativity and inner strength to release us from duress. The Ten of Swords, another card that brings on people’s fear of death, does not indicate fatality in the literal sense, but represents the pinnacle of what aggression can do. It shows defeat, the result of jealousy from others, hatred from others, and retaliation. And yet the light in the horizon suggests that there is still the courage to rise again, this time improved with experience and wisdom.

There are many beautiful and glorious cards in the tarot deck as well, many in the suit of Cups, the suit of emotions. Cups remind us that is through the governance of our emotions that we will find happiness. On the other hand, cards from the suit of Wands reveal the success of human ingenuity, though the Ten of Wands reminds us to pace ourselves and to know our own physical limits. The Two of Wands indicates the start of fruition for artistic or scientific ventures and the Six of Wands shows victory and advancement in the arts and sciences.

Throughout history and even today, the tarot is looked upon as demonic and a violation of God’s command. Such fears are misplaced. The tarot is neither capable of being good nor evil. They are just playing cards. Sacramental wine is still drinking alcohol. Drowning your liver with vodka is also drinking
who build for their own hubris, ego, and pride. It warns of the consequences of vanity. These are important messages and critiques that we must be open to hearing. These messages help us make better decisions and improve our futures. When they appear in a tarot reading, they are conveying an important point that needs to be heeded, so that our lives can turn out for the best.

Comment [TRW7]: I thought I understood why you called The Tower, Death, and the Devil for the reader to inspect – they are more than what they seem. But here, going briefly on the suit of swords, and then cups, and then wands, but not pentacles, is a little odd to me – do you not want some mention of pentacles at all? More about two gahs elsewhere? Or if you want them here, can you explain why you mention these particular cards, in the context of the reader’s possible fear of the cards?

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ALLaying FearS And OFFering THEORIES

The Death card does not literally indicate death. It signifies transformation. It acknowledges difficulty and pain, but if you have confronted your fears and look upon the card long enough, you may also notice the bishop, symbolizing Faith. 'You may see the glorious sunrise above his head, and realize there is light.

The Devil card is a warning: Do not be bound to the material and the superficial. Do not give in to temptation. It is an alert that greater willpower must be exercised to overcome negative influences. Likewise, the Tower card warns of the inevitable destruction and downfall of those who build for their own hubris, ego, and pride. It warns of the consequences of vanity. These are important messages and critiques that we must be open to hearing. These messages help us make better decisions and improve our futures. When they appear in a tarot reading, they are conveying an important point that needs to be heeded, so that our lives can turn out for the best.
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non-action.

Exegetes Taoism: the philosophical approach to Taoist principles, in that it is how to act in harmony with nature, who does not act superfluously or interfere with its path or attempt to transform the course of fate. Thus, Tzuist philosophy teaches a profound way of cultivating inner peace and acceptance, to just let it be.

Taoism as a Chinese religion tends to merge indistinguishably with folk religions, venerating particular deities and integrating ancestor worship. Exegetic Taoism is often about social hierarchy, identifying oneself with a particular sort of religious Taoism, often one blended with Buddhism, Confucianism, and folk beliefs. That religious aspect of Taoism is also exegetic Taoism.

Philosophical and religious principles of exegetic Taoism derive the practice of exegetic Taoism, though the practice itself might be better aligned with Chinese shamanism, which predates Taoism. Relics of oracle bone divination from the Shang Dynasty (1600-1028 B.C.)  revealed a strikingly similar and shared ontology with Fu tzuism and exegetic Taoism. Shamanism was integral to the culture and governance during the Zhou Dynasty (1046-256 B.C.). The Zhou Dynasty also produced the philosopher Lao Tzu, credited with authoring the Tao Te Ching and establishing Taoism as a philosophy.

In contrast, exegetic Taoism is an active practice by Man, from the most simple principle of Heaven, Earth, and Man, which I will discuss in the subsequent sections of this chapter, where Man raises energy or power from Heaven and Earth. Heaven is representative of deities, immortals, or higher spirits, and Earth is representative of nature. In the practice of exegetic Taoism, Man, a practitioner of occult arts, seeks to direct and seduce forces from Heaven and Earth, a stark contrast from exegetic Taoism, which Man seeks to be like water, moving with the ebb and flow.
Evolution of a Manuscript

Tao of Craft, Chapter 1: Copyedits

other words, there is a tendency among scientists to direct their scientific practice by the
techniques they know best, rather than direct their practice by the critical appraisal of theory,
which might otherwise enable them to think more creatively. Kaplan's law of the instrument
applies to metaphysical practitioners as well.

"The more we know how to do something, the harder it is to learn to do it differently."  
When we can't think differently, we can't think creatively. When we aren't creative, we aren't
intuitive. In metaphysical craft, your intuitive ability is essential. Any limitations on that will
 hinder the success of your craft. Hence, this book strives to offer theory and not specific
methodologies because teaching specific methodologies will limit the practitioner. Theory, on
the other hand, provides the fertile soil for the practitioner's creativity to take root and sprout.

While this book will still offer foundational instructions on how to craft Fu, such
instructions is not to teach how to craft Fu, but rather to provide illuminated examples of one way
that Fu might be crafted based on the theories taught in the book. Thus, as you navigate your way
through this book, do not try to pick up on the "how", try to pick up on the "why". Once you
understand why, your own creativity and intuition will be your architects as the "how".

Exoteric and Esoteric Taoism

When I refer to Taoism in the context of this book's subject matter, I am focusing on exoteric Taoism,
which differs from the more canonical esoteric Taoism that is also known as philosophy
and religion. Exoteric Taoism includes both philosophy and religion. The Taoism I refer to
goes beyond philosophy because it presents occult cosmological doctrines and mystical rituals. It
also goes beyond the religious veneration of deities or other beings to address a more
inter-personal relationship, and direct communication with spirits.

Exoteric Taoism, which is what I mean in this context, is more popularly conveyed to the public, in
nature-based, "living in harmony" relationship with nature that conserves and revives energy, it is about
curbing ambitions and seeking peace. Exoteric Taoism is rooted in a way of
life that follows the principle of yin and yang, a principle of non-action. To understand what we
mean, look to two seminal texts on Exoteric Taoism, the Tao Te Ching (550 BC),
dated around 600 BC, and the Zhuang Zi (350 BC), dated around 300 BC.

According to the Tao Te Ching, we are not literally non-action, but rather, it is
balancing the extreme yin and yang and reducing the extremes of yin. Exoteric Taoism
emphasizes "return tot he image of the". Non-action is still action, though
the action is to be like water. Non-action also means no harm. "The sage also does not harm
people." In the Zhuang Zi, we read ""be the image of the". It is "return to
simplicity, humility, charity, kindness, wisdom, and non-action." Why these philosophical texts are
mentioned when this is not a book about Taoism and puppets to be ana focused on craft should
be taken as the example of the chapter's program.

Exoteric Taoism is the philosophical approach to Taoist principles that the West is more
familiar with. It cultivates an individual who lives in harmony with nature, who does not act
superficially to interfere with its path or attempt to transform the course of fate. Thus, Taoist
philosophy teaches a profound way of cultivating inner peace and acceptance, to just let be.

Taoism as a Chinese religion "tends to merge indistinguishably with folk-religions,
venomating particular deities and integrating various worship." Exoteric Taoism as a religion
is often about social blessing, or identifying oneself with a particular sect of religious Taoism, often
me blended with Buddhism, Confucianism, Legalism, and folk beliefs. That religion aspect of Taoism is also
exoteric Taoism.

Philosophical and religious principles of exoteric Taoism derive the practice of exoteric Taoism,
through the practice itself itself is better aligned with Chinese philosophy, which
proposes Taoism. Taoism is the sacred source of inspiration of the Han Dynasty (206 BC -
300 AD) and the juxtaposition of the Yin and Yang and exoteric Taoism. Shang and Zhou are integral to the culture and government during the Zhou Dynasty (1046
- 722 BC). The Zhou Dynasty also produced the philosopher Lao Tzu, credited with authoring the "Tao Te Ching" and establishing Taoism as a philosophy.

In contrast, esoteric Taoism as an active practice by Islam, from the tantric principles of Heaven, Earth, and Man, which I will discuss in the subsequent section of this chapter, and Man, which Man takes energy or power from Heaven and Earth. Heaven is representative of deities, immortals, or higher spirits, and Earth is representative of nature. In the practice of esoteric Taoism, Man, a practitioner of occult craft, seeks to draw and redirect forces from Heaven and
taught in the book. Thus, as you navigate your way through this book, do not try to pick up on the "how"; try to pick up on the "why." Once you understand why, your own creativity and intuition will be your instructors on the "how."

EXOTERIC AND ESOTERIC TAOISM

When I refer to Taoism in the context of this book's subject matter, I am focusing on esoteric Taoism, which differs from the more canonical esoteric Taoism that is recognized as philosophy and religion. Yet esoteric Taoism includes both philosophy and religion. The Taoism I refer to goes beyond philosophy because it presents occult ontological doctrines and mystical ritual. It also goes beyond the religious veneration of deities or otherworldly beings to address a more interactive relationship, and direct communion with spirit realms.

Exoteric Taoism, which is the Taoism that is more popularly conveyed to the public, is nature-based, seeking a harmonious relationship with nature that conserves and strives to avoid excess; it is about curbing ambitions and seeking peace. Exoteric Taoism is rooted in a way of life that follows the principle of wu Wei (無為), a principle of nonaction. To understand what wu Wei means, look to two seminal texts on Taoist philosophy, the Tao Te Ching (道德經), dating to around 600–501 BC, and the Zhuang Zi (莊子), dating to around 300–201 BC.

According to the Tao Te Ching, wu wei is not literally nonaction, but rather it is balancing the affronts of yang with the softness and submissiveness of yin. The Tao Te Ching advises: "Blunt the sharpness... Dim the glare." Nonaction is still action, though that action is to be like water.16 Nonaction also means do no harm. "The sages also do not harm people."17 In the Zhuang Zi, wu wei is "the stillness of the sages." It is "vacancy, stillness, placidity, tastelessness, quietude, silence, and nonaction."18 Why these philosophical texts are mentioned when this is not a book about Taoism and purports to be one focused on craft should become apparent as the chapters progress.

Exoteric Taoism is the philosophical approach to Taoist principles that the West is more familiar with. It cultivates an individual who lives in harmony with nature, who does not act superfluously to interfere with its path or attempt to transform the course of fate.19 Thus, Taoist philosophy teaches a profound way of cultivating inner peace and acceptance, to just let it be.
A Historical and Cultural Context

In the pantheon of deities and spirits called upon by this sect, the primary deity venerated is the Jade Emperor, the “Treasurer of the Tao” from The Three Pure Ones. Tao of Craft, Chapter 2: Submitted Manuscript

Evolution of a Manuscript

Figure 2B
Inner Cultivation Fu from the Shang Qing Perfect Immortals
Public Domain

Figure 2B shows three Fu signs from the Shang Qing Da Deng Zhai Jing (上清大洞真经), “or Perfect Immortal of Great Profundity,” a medieval esoteric Taoist text from the Shang Qing lineage, or the Shang Qing Perfect Immortals. The text sets forth various, much like mantras or invocations, intended for a practitioner to chant. Repetitions of these invocations will cultivate pure Qi energy within a practitioner. It is believed that these invocations self-entrance, or aid the body of toxins, impurities, and evil, or malignant energies. The invocations also invoke angelic beings into the body to help restore power and vitality.

The Shang Qing Perfect Immortals centers on invoking inner deities. The Shang Qing tradition expressed a pantheon of inner deities that dwelled within the practitioner’s body. These inner deities, when healthy, can establish a stronger direct and divine connection with celestial deities.

Inner deities serve as administrators of various regions of the human body, each region referred to as a palace. For instance, seven deities reside in palaces of the head, corresponding with the brain, heart, liver, lungs, spleen, and bladder, among other organs. As a result, these inner deities that a master practitioner would learn to invoke through Fu. These three Fu depicted in Figure 2B correspond with only three of such inner deities. Invocation of the inner deities was believed to assist with purification and cultivation of the physical body by cleaning it of metaphysical toxins, in effect ensuring a practitioner’s physical longevity. Doing so also allowed for a stronger connection or support between the inner deities and celestial deities, which was the practitioner’s pathway to immortality.

To empower the Shang Qing sigils, a complex, multi-step chanting process would be required. In the text, much of that instruction is coded in arcane language and not readily comprehensible to a lay reader. In broad terms, however, the ritual seemed to involve Qi energy transfer through the practitioner’s spittle and teeth during invocations.

Figure 2C
Fu of Lao Tzu for Physiognomy and Medicine
Works by physiognomy and medicine for amplifying their abilities and power.

Public Domain

Around the same era that the Shang Qing arose, these Taoist masters referred to as the Three Tao brothers birthed several magical lineages from Mount Tai. These magical lineages placed strong emphasis on the practice of Fu signs, among other arts such as alchemy and mining herbs to create elixirs for immortality.

Continuing in the Jin Dynasty, around 400 A.D., the Ling Bao lineage (靈寶) was founded. It was one of the most esoteric esoteric Taoist traditions and much of Fu sign chanting as it is practiced today can be traced back to the practices of the Ling Bao. The Ling Bao lineage blended Taoism with Mahayana Buddhism, reflecting these Buddhist concepts in 4th and 5th century Ling Bao Taoist scriptures.

The Ling Bao believed in an underworld, a prison on earth where those with bankrupted karmic accounts were held captive. Many of their practitioners worked with hungry ghosts, or the spirits of deceased humans who, during their lives, had suffered so profoundly that in death, their
Tao of Craft, Chapter 2: Copyedits

Evolution of a Manuscript
Tao of Craft, Chapter 2: Proofs

Figure 2.2: Inner cultivation Fu from the Perfect Scripture of Great Profundity

Scriptures. The text sets forth verses, much like mantras or invocations, intended for a practitioner to chant. Recitations of these invocations will cultivate purer Qi energy within a practitioner. It is believed that these invocations self-exorcise, or rid the body of toxins, impurities, and evils or malignant energies. The invocations also invite angelic beings into the body to help raise power and vitality.

The Perfect Scripture of Great Profundity explains invoking inner deities. The Shang Qing tradition espoused a pantheon of inner deities that dwelled within the practitioner’s body. These inner deities, when healthy, can establish a stronger direct and divine connection with celestial deities.

Inner deities serve as administrators of various regions of the human body, each region referred to as a palace. For instance, seven deities reside in palaces of the head, corresponding with the hair, brain, eyes, nose, ears, tongue, and teeth. There were deities for the heart, lungs, kidney, liver, and spleen, and other luminous spirits, for a total of thirty-nine inner deities that a master practitioner would learn to invoke through Fu. The three Fu pictured in figure 2.2 correspond with only three of such inner deities. Invocation of the inner deities was believed to assist with purification and cultivation of the physical body by cleansing it of metaphysical toxins, in effect ensuring a practitioner’s physical longevity. Doing so also allowed for a stronger connection or rapport between the inner deities and celestial deities, which was the practitioner’s pathway to immortality.

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Around the same era that the Shang Qing arose, three Taoist masters, referred to as the Three Mao brothers, birthed several magical lineages from Mount Mao. These magical lineages placed strong emphasis on the practice of Fu sigils, among other arts, such as alchemy and mixing herbs to create elixirs for immortality.

Continuing in the Jin Dynasty, around AD 400, the Ling Bao lineage (靈寶派) was founded. It was one of the most enduring esoteric Taoist traditions, and much of Fu sigil crafting as it is practiced today can be traced back to the practices of the Ling Bao. The Ling Bao lineage blended Taoism with Mahayana Buddhism, reflecting core Buddhist concepts in fourth- and fifth-century Ling Bao Taoist scriptures.

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