

What is this diagram?

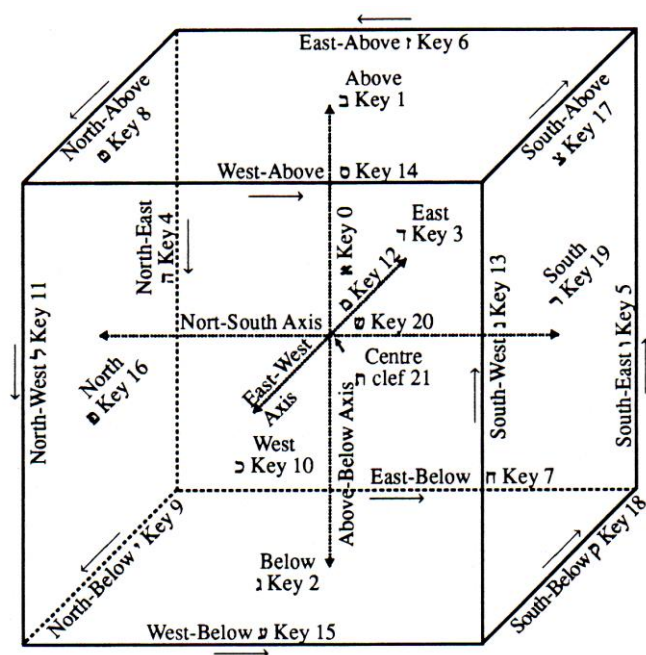
The cube of the space appears in our studies with the lesson 18 of the course entitled "Tarot Fundamentals"

This diagram can seem new. It is as interesting on the Qabalistic level as the Tree of Life. However, we found fewer literatures about it.

It remained a very long time a hidden symbol to the public's awareness.

The sages who decided to do so had certainly good reasons.

Presentation of the diagram



Now we are fortunate to be able to study it. It would be a pity to miss out on various pretexts such as: it's too complicated, I can not imagine the tree-dimensional figures, ... These are only hurdles that can be easily overcome.

Complicated yes, the cube is a little complicated if you look at it only without the studying it

By looking a little closer, we discover that nothing is set randomly; everything is harmonious and therefore much simpler than it seems.

The fact is that the cube is a tree-dimensional volume, and it is true that we may have difficulty imagining it in relief from a representation on a flat sheet of paper.

To help us to visualize it, we can build it in 3D, by folding a drawing of the cube prepared for this purpose.

With this cube in our hands we can better see the relations between its various elements.

On this cube many symbols appear. These symbols are the Hebrew letters associated with each key of the Tarot. For example, the top, we have the letter Beth who is associated with Key 1, the Magician.

This cube will be used as a map in which you can move your attention and walk mentally.

The Sefer Yetzirah

What is the origin of this cube of space? We find very little trace in the literature. As we are told in the lessons, it came from an ancient Hebrew text, the Sefer Yetzirah or Book of Creation.

We only have to find this book to get a little more explanations. We discover that this book which is one of the oldest books of the Hebrew esotericism is attributed to Abraham. A surprise quickly appears. There is not a book, but several or rather several versions of the original book while the original text is not discoverable!

The oldest manuscripts existing today are from the 10th or 11th century. Indeed, it is around this time that the text passed from oral tradition to written one. This explains the many existing versions.

The main versions we come across are known as Short, Long, Saadia, and Gra or Gra-Ari.

This last version named "Gra-Ari" appeared near 1550. Rabbi Moshe Cordevero condensed the ten best manuscripts available, choosing what adhered most closely to the tradition of Qabalists and the Zohar. Few times later, this text has been improved by one of the best Qabalists of all times, Rabbi Yitzchak Luria named "The Ari". The final text was finally produced and edited in the 18th century by Rabbi Eliyahu, also called Gaon of Vilna or "The Gra".

This is the version most often used as a support in esoteric studies and therefore the one that will be used for the extracts of Sefer Yetzirah that we will see today.

The cube of the space, its origin

The Sepher Yetzirah explains the creation and structure of many things, including the Tree of Life and the Hebrew letters, the Zodiac, ...

A part interests us more particularly. It is the one talking about the cube of space, explaining how it was created.

Notice that in this part of the Sefer Yetzirah, we can notice significant differences between the versions of text. As a precaution, we will use the version Gra-Ari with also a quick look at the other versions.

Thus, we will take advantage, again, to look beyond appearances and look for the essence, the principle beyond the text.

This book begins by presenting the Hebrew alphabet and its constitution.

1.2) Ten Sefirot of Nothingness and 22 Foundation Letters: Three Mothers, Seven Doubles and Twelve Simples.

This paragraph speaks of ten Sefiroth and then of the Hebrew alphabet, the letters of foundation which are divided into three major groups.

- Three Mothers letters: Aleph, Mem, Shin.
- Seven Double letters: Beth, Gimel, Daleth, Kaph, Peh, Resh, Tav.
- Twelve Simples letters: Heh, Vav, Zain, Cheth, Teth, Yod, Lamed, Nun, Samekh, Ayin, Tzaddi, Qoph.

As we know, to each letter is associated with a particular Tarot key and as various meanings and attributions.

The first paragraph describing the cube is:

1.13) He choose three letters from among the Simples in the mystery of the three Mothers Aleph Mem Shin And He set them in His Great Name and with them, He sealed six extremities.

Five: He sealed "above" and faced upward and sealed it with Yod Heh Vav.

Six: He sealed "below" and faced downward and sealed it with Heh Yod Vav.

Seven: He sealed "east" and faced straight ahead and sealed it with Vav Yod Heh.

Eight: He sealed "west" and faced backward and sealed it with Vav Heh Yod.

Nine: He sealed "south" and faced to the right and sealed it with Yod Vav Heh.

Ten: He sealed "north" and faced to the left and sealed it with Heh Vav Yod.

Direction	Gra-Ari	Short	Long	Saadi
Up	Y H V	Y H V	Y H V	Y H V
Down	H Y V	Y V H	Y V H	Y V H
East	V Y H	H Y V	V Y H	H V Y
West	V H Y	H V Y	V H Y	H Y V
South	Y V H	V H Y	Y V H	V H Y
North	H V Y	V Y H	H V Y	V Y H

When we compare the four versions we find that the direction "up" is always assigned to the same combination of three letters of the Great Name, YHV; for the other directions the distribution varies between the versions.

The center

As we can see from the text, the cube is constructed from one place. This is the point at which the One defines all directions of space.

The Axes

Let's compare the letters combination for pairs for opposite directions in the columns.

Look at the column labeled Gra-Ari:

For the Up-Down axis, we have YHV, HYV, the V is in 3rd position.

For the East-West axis, we have VYH, VHY, the V is in the 1st position.

For the South-North axis, we have YVH, HVY, the V is in the 2nd position.

One thing remains constant: on an axis, one of the letters remains in the same position. It is also true for the other versions; there is a link between the two sets of letters assigned to an axis.

It is this constant element that units the two directions and thus form the axes.

The three mother letters Aleph, Mem, and Shin are, as the text says, the letters associated with the Great Name.

We are told that he set them in his Great Name, but not told how.

Since, there is a letter that does not move for each axis, we can deduce that it is the one that defines the axis and therefore the letter associated with the parent axis.

Continuing our reading of the Sefer Yetzirah, we find:

3.4) Three Mothers, Aleph, Mem, Shin, in the Universe are air, water, fire.

What clearly confirms the associations of mother letters and elements that we know. The cube begins to be built: the axes are now defined.

The air with Aleph, Key 0, for the Up-Down axis.

The water with Mem, Key 12 for the East-West axis.

The fire with Shin, Key 20, for the South-North axis.

The three mother letters are as it is said attached to the axes.

The Faces

As we have already seen, each face is sealed by a different word that characterizes and defines it. The Up and Down faces are strongly linked to air, as they come from an air axis associated with the Key 0 and the letter Aleph.

The differences of nature between the Up and Down faces come so form the swapping roles in the two other components that are fire and water.

We found the same kind of relation for the other axes.

Thus each face is differentiated from others by the order of the elements in its inner composition. The paragraphs defining the faces are the following:

4:2) Seven Doubles: BGD KPRT their foundation is Wisdom, Wealth, Seed, Life, Dominance, Peace and Grace.

4:3) Seven Doubles: BGD KPRT in speech and in transposition.

The transpose of Wisdom is Folly

The transpose of Wealth is Poverty

The transpose of Seed is Desolation

The transpose of Life is Death

The transpose of Dominance is Subjugation

The transpose of Peace is War

The transpose of Grace is Ugliness.

4:4) Seven Doubles: BGD KPRT Up and Down, East and West, North and South And the Holy Palace precisely in the center and it supports them all.

4:5) Seven Doubles: BGD KPRT Seven and not six, Seven and not eight, Examine with them and probe with them make each thing stand on its essence and make the Creator sit on His base.

These paragraphs outline the role of double letters and therefore of the associated keys in the construction of the cube of space. These letters BGD KPRT or Beth, Gimel, Daleth, Kaph, Peh, Resh, and Tav are associated with the faces and the center.

The first line gives us the positive meaning associated with each double letter.

The second explains the transposition of the positive meaning into its complement, the negative sense of the letter.

The third line represents the face associated with the letter.

And the fourth brings them together, encouraging us to study them and put the One at the center of everything.

The Edges

Paragraph 5.2 explains how the edges are made:

5:2 Twelve Simples Heh, Vav, Zain, Heth, Teth, Yod, Lamed, Nun, Samekh, Ayin, Tzaddi, Qoph their foundation is the twelve diagonal boundaries:

The east upper boundary

The east northern boundary

The east lower boundary

The south upper boundary

The south eastern boundary

The south lower boundary

The west upper boundary

The west southern boundary

The west lower boundary

The north upper boundary

The north western boundary

The north lower boundary

They extend continually until eternity of eternities and it is they that are the boundaries of the Universe.

Thus the single letters are attached to the boundaries between the faces. These are the lines formed by the meeting of two faces. This leads us to the deduction that each simple letter is the result of the interaction between two particular faces, the combination of their properties, and of their energies. This can surely help us understand the nature of these letters as well as the nature of the Tarot keys associated with them. We are told that the cube is extended and it represents the limits of the universe so the universe is expanding.

Let us think that we had to wait until the 20th century before the scientists began to think that the universe is not fixed but expanding.

Paragraphs 5.3 and 5.4 specify the association of the simple letters with the constellations and the zodiac.

Thus was formed the cube of space. As the paragraph 6.1 summarizes it.

6.1) These are the Three Mothers Aleph, Mem, Shin. And from them emanated Three Fathers, and they are air, water, and fire. And from the Fathers, descendants. Three Fathers and their descendants. And seven planets and their hosts, and twelve diagonal boundaries.

A proof of this true witnesses in the Universe, Year, Soul and a rule of twelve and seven and three: He set them in the Teli (the Dragon), the Cycle, and the Heart.

Thus the three initial components, the three mother letters, generated the next seven which are the seven double letters, and these in their turn generated the twelve simple letters. So, the cube was built, the three axes projecting the faces and creating in their intersection the center. And when the faces met they generated the edges.

The paragraph 6.6 concludes on the formation of the universe using the 22 letters constituting the cube.

6.6) These are the twenty-two letters with which engraved *some divine names* and with them He made three Books, and with them He created His Universe, and He formed with them all that was ever formed, and all that ever will be formed.

It is in this way that the Sepher Yetzirah gradually reveals the existence and structure of the cube.

Regarding the Final letters, they also have a role and a special place.

The final versions of the letters Kaph, Nun, Peh and Tzaddi form the diagonals that connects each of the internal corners to their opposite corner of the cube through the center.

The final letter Mem is at the center of the cube.

Relations between the faces and the edges

Now look closer at the relationship between the faces and the edges.

For example, the relationship between the Key 6, the Lovers, at the Upper East edge of the cube, which is associated with discrimination and the Key 1, the magician, on the Upper face which is associated with attention and concentration. In order to differentiate between two things, we must focus our attention on them. It seems that attention is a necessary component of discrimination.

Similarly, look at the Key 9, the Hermit.

Through its location on the cube we see that it is the conjunction of the Key 2, the High Priestess and the Key 16, the Tower.

If we look at the correspondences of these keys, the link becomes clearer.

Key 2	Lower face	Memory
Key 16	North face	Wakening
Key 9	The Lower North edge	Answer, Union of the opposite

Don't the answer we seek often come from a certain awakening of memory?

Simple properties

Let's start with the vertical axis and the Upper and Lower faces. The relevant keys are the Key 0 for the vertical axis, the Key 1 for the Upper face and the Key 2 for the Lower face. We recognize there the three kind of consciousness: the Key 0, the superconsciousness; the Key 1, the self-consciousness; and the Key 2, the subconsciousness.

When we compare the Upper and lower faces, a peculiarity becomes apparent. Between the value one of the five keys located on the upper face and a key just below that on the lower face, we still have difference of 1. For example: on the top we have the Key 8 and below the Key 9.

Another oddity: the cards with images of the archangels and the Adam Kadmon, or primal Human, are oriented along the same axis, North - South.

In the center we find the letters Tav and Final Mem forming the hebrew word Tum which means innocence, simplicity, sincerity, perfection, integrity.

The sum of these letters in gematria is: $100 + 900 = 1000$ which is the value of the Final Aleph.

The Currents

Currents of energy or consciousness can ride through the axes, edges and diagonals of the cube. All these are lines have a particular orientation; so the cube of space looks like sort of "subway map" where the faces and edges are the stations where different lines are connected.

Thus, if we look on the Lower face, we see that in order to ride through the Key 9 going from the Key 18, we have to go around the Key 7.

We can, for example, go through upper of the Eastern face. Taking this route, we move through Keys 18, 5, 6, 4, and finally through the Key 9.

We see that as with finding one's way around a town or on the subway, when we wish to browse the cube, it is better be familiar with the map and know what path we can follow from one point to another.

Note that two faces have particular currents.

Upper and East faces have a special property. We can go around by following it currents. And more, these faces touch each other and allow browsing them together to form an eight-shaped figure, like the one above the head of the Magician.

The Upper face

Let's start with the Upper face, the Key 1, and its edges the Keys 17, 6, 8, 14.

The Key 1 is associated with self-consciousness, concentration, attention. It partakes of the nature of the four key of the edges around the Upper face.

We begin with Key 17, which is associated with meditation, revelation.

We continue to rotate through the Key 6, discrimination.

Then we go through the Key 8 associated with digestion and the suggestion.

We continue with the Key 14, the verification.

And finally we complete our loop by returning to the Key 17.

This particular cycle depict here is related to human learning.

Indeed, when we try to solve a particular question, we first think about it or rather meditate on the subject, and this gives us ideas, revelations. In this process of meditation, revelation, we recognize the Key 17.

Then we sort the ideas; this is the phase of discrimination, the action associated with Key 6.

We absorb these ideas, a process of digestion; as we do this, possible answers begin to flow, and this phase is the suggestion. as we know digestion and suggestions are related to the Key 8.

Then with the Key 14, we check these answers and finally we get a valid answer. This response is itself a revelation. We are back at the Key 17: the circle is complete. As we can see each of the key have used our attention, our focus in a different way.

The East face

The East face can be studied in a similar way. It depicts a different cycle, this time involving the creative imagination. The four keys surrounding the face are assigned to smell, sight, speech and hearing, which indicate these senses have a strong connection with the imagination. Imagine a word that's what we do when we read "in our heads" as the children say. The musicians also imagine and hear music when they read a music score.

The loop around the Key 3 is composed of the keys 4, 7, 5 and 6 which give us reason, receptivity, intuition and discrimination.

As for the Upper face, this loop correctly describes one of our inner working cycles.

With reason, Key 4, we choose a topic of interest.
We are receptive to its nature, to the One Will, Key 7.
It comes one or more intuitions, Key 5.
We sort through discrimination, Key 6.

This cycle depicted here is an intuitive operating cycle often used by artists, when they say they work at feeling, at the emotional.

The 8 combination of Upper and East sides

When these two cycles of Upper and East face work together, we obtain the following sequence of keys: 17, 6, 4, 7, 5, 6, 8, 14 and 17.

This larger cycle refines the digestion phase of the cycle of the Upper face by replacing the Key 6 with a loop around the Key 3. This improves the result of digestion which is strengthened by the contributions of the reason, the receptivity and the intuition.

These examples illustrate how the cube of space can help us to better understand how we function. The cube of space describes the manifested universe and also our constitution.

Through the study of the Cube of Space, we will surely discover many other valuable understandings of our real nature.