THIERRY DEPAULIS
The Tarot de Marseille – Facts and Fallacies   Part II

Now that we have set up a 'catalogue' of tarot packs made in Marseille[1] we can proceed to a closer analysis of their iconography and of the roots of the Tarot de Marseille.

The two types of the 'Tarot de Marseille'

A quick survey of the 25 or so tarot packs from the 18th century we have shows that most are very similar, particularly those which were made around 1760, by Conver, the two Bourlions, or Fautrier. They clearly used different woodblocks, but their designs are very close. However, the first two packs, by Joseph Chaffard and Jean-François Tourcaty *fils*, offer some substantial differences. It is certainly a question of detail, but a very consistent one, of the kind which would allow us to distinguish two standard patterns.

In fact these differences are not limited to Marseille. They can be observed throughout a larger corpus of 'Tarot de Marseille' packs made before 1800, in France, Switzerland, and Italy. These differences were first noted during the exhibition 'Tarot, jeu et magie' in 1984 (notably comparing Jean-Pierre Payen 1713 with Conver 1760), they became more obvious with the publication of Stuart Kaplan's second volume of *The Encyclopedia of Tarot* (1986). I summed them up in a book review of Kaplan II, which was published in *L'As de Trèfle*, no. 29, Dec. 1986.[2] In it I defined two types, which I called Type I and Type II. I have later expanded my observations, so they can be presented thus:

- Trump IIII (l'Empereur): Type I shows a 4 in Arabic figure in front of the Emperor, Type II has no figure here.

- Trump V (le Pape): Type I shows a crosier, Type II shows a papal cross.

- Trump VI (l'Amoureux): in Type I the winged Cupid is blindfold and hairless (he wears a kind of crash helmet), he flies from right to left; in Type II Cupid flies from left to right; he has open eyes, and a curly hair (he is more 'charming').

- Trump VII (le Chariot – often *le Charior*): in Type I the top of the canopy that covers the 'driver' is undulating, whereas in Type II the canopy is topped with a kind of stage curtain, making it more theatrical; it is clearly a later modification.

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[1] See Part I, in *ThePC*, Vol. 42, no. 1, pp. 23-43.

[2] My first reader was Detlef Hoffmann. See his "Die Familie des Marseiller Tarock", in Hoffmann/Dietrich 1988, pp. 11-12.

- Trump VIII (Justice): the figure has wings in Type I, whereas in Type II the wings have become the back of her throne.
- Trump XV (le Diable): in Type I the Devil has a human face on his belly, and his wings are large; while in Type II his belly is empty, and his wings are smaller.
- Trump XVI (la Maison-Dieu): in Type I the flames come out of the tower toward the Sun; in Type II the flames come from the Sun toward the tower.
- Trump XVIII (la Lune): in Type I the Moon is seen full face; in Type II it is in profile, as a crescent.
- Trump XXI (le Monde): this is the most significant change. In Type I, a somewhat androgynous central figure is standing up on her/his two legs, dressed with a kind of 'trunks' made of tree leaves and wearing a cape, whereas in Type II she is a young naked female, dancing, just dressed with a floating (red) scarf, her breast and hips are rounded, her left leg tucked up; she clearly is more 'attractive'.
- Lastly the Fool is called LE FOL in Type I, while in Type II he is called LE MAT.

There exist some variations, particularly in Switzerland. There are Type II packs where the Fool is called LE FOL (but Rochus Schaer's 1783 tarot mixes both types!); and a special design, mixing Type I and Type II, with a Hanged Man in profile, was popular in Geneva from the late 18th century (e.g. Gassmann). Also Solesio in Genoa made a tarot pack between 1815 and 1834 which is clearly Type I, but the World belongs to Type II, with a dancing female figure.

Type I has every chance to be older: the World card from the Castello Sforzesco, which is dated to the 16th century (more on this below), shows the same androgynous figure;[3] the tarots by Jean Noblet (*c.* 1660), Nicolas Rolichon (17th century), Jean-Pierre Payen (1713), Jean Dodal (*c.* 1705), Jean Payen (1743) are good examples of Type

Fig. 22: Two cards from a tarot made by Cosmo Antonio Toso (Genoa, *c.* 1730/40).

I. Type I tarots can be found in Italy, too, like the pack made by Cosmo Antonio Toso (Genoa, *c.* 1730/40)[4] and later 'Milanese' tarots.

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[3] It strangely combines the classic figure of Christ in majesty in a mandorla, surrounded by emblems of the four evangelists, together with an 'Ecce Homo' representation, though without the indispensable crown of thorns.
[4] See Kaplan 1986, p. 339; Collection Atger, Tajan Auction, 18/11/2000, no. 284 (dated

Three packs made in Marseille also belong to this type, Joseph Chaffard (dated 1747), Jean-François Tourcaty fils (*c.* 1750?), formerly Guiard Collection, and Joseph-Noël Icarden (*c.* 1755?). They share many features, including the small Bacchus on the two of Cups where the names and addresses should be. If the dating of the ex-Guiard Jean-François Tourcaty *fils* tarot is not mistaken, they both would mean that, in Marseille, Type I tarots were made before the cardmakers switched to Type II. (There is another tarot by Jean-François Tourcaty *fils*, certainly much later, clearly Type II, see list in Part I. Whether this cardmaker is the same is not sure – two Jean-François Tourcatys are recorded. So a same family may have started making Type I cards, before turning to Type II…)

It also becomes obvious that the variant called 'Tarot de Besançon' (on which more in a forthcoming article) is, save for some details, derived from Type I: same Love, same Moon, same World, and the Fool is called LE FOL (LE FOU in 19th-century versions). (However, the Devil is slightly different with a slimmer, hairy, 'insect'-like body.)

Type II is exemplified not only by the majority of tarots made in Marseille in the second half of the 18th century (Conver, Bourlion, Fautrier, the later Tourcaty, etc.), but also by Pierre Madenié (Dijon, 1709), his successor Jean-Baptiste Madenié (Dijon, 1739), and Claude Burdel (Fribourg, 1751), who slavishly copied the latter.

Type I is represented by earlier packs than Type II; we find it in Paris (Noblet), Lyon, Grenoble, and Avignon; it seems to disappear after 1750, not without giving root to the 'Lombard' tarot and to the 'Tarot de Besançon'.

Type II is not recorded before 1700; its earliest known example is Pierre Madenié (Dijon, 1709), but we find it too… in Besançon (by Tissot), in Switzerland, later in Marseille, where all tarots of this type, save Chosson, date back to the mid-18th century; after 1800 Type II reigns without rival. According to D. Hoffmann, the 'early' Piedmontese tarot (e.g. by Lando, in Turin) is derived from Type II (Hoffmann/ Dietrich 1988, p. 12). Type II appears as a more 'human', 'tempered' version of Type I: the Devil is less ugly, the central figure in the World is more feminine, even more 'sexy', with rounded hips and breast. In other words, Type II appears as a 'modernisation' of Type I. It is difficult to say where it was inaugurated. Dijon was a latecomer in card making. But the cards made by the Madeniés seem to have been widespread. They were clearly exported to and later copied in Switzerland. But how can we account for the success of Type II in Marseille?

"c.1770"), now in the coll. of André Beaune. Nothing could help dating the cards at the time, but we now know that Cosmo Antonio Toso first worked in Finale until 1730, and then moved to Genoa (M.G. Bellezza (ed.), *A Todos Alumbra. El semblante inédito de Finale, ciudad de naipes: las obras de los fabricantes Solesio, los maestros de Carlos III de Borbón*, Finale Ligure, 2009, pp. 142-3).

The tarot of Nicolas Rolichon

The tarot that can best represent what we could call the Type I 'Tarot de Marseille' standard pattern is one made by Nicolas Rolichon in Lyon sometime in the 17th century. Unfortunately, the present wherabouts of this pack are unknown. It was reproduced, in line engraving, in *Le Larousse mensuel*, no. 149, July 1919, where
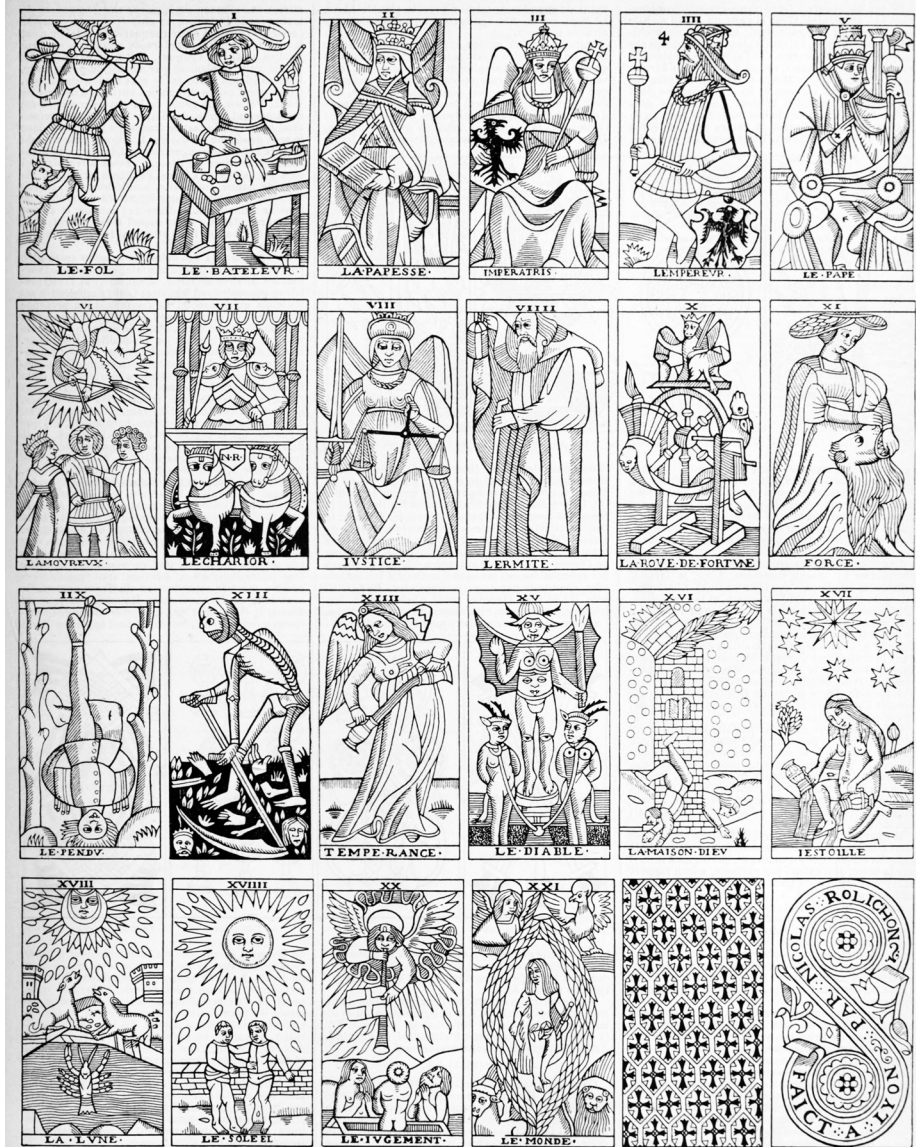

Fig. 23: Tarot of Nicolas Rolichon (trumps).

35 of its cards were used to illustrate an article on tarot reading by Henry Decharbogne (1870-1927), who does not seem to have been the owner of the pack. It was discovered by Jean-Marie Lhôte, who exhibited photographs of the cards in 1990 (see exhibition catalogue *Jeux de société, Géométries du désir*, Amiens, 1990) and later reproduced them in his great book *Histoire des jeux de société*, Paris, 1994.

The Rolichons were cardmakers in Lyon from 1570 to roughly 1670. There are two (!) Nicolas Rolichons, one active in the late 16th century (1572-83), the other in the early 17th century (1605-35). Because it strongly resembles the tarot made by Jean Dodal *c.* 1705, Jean-Marie Lhôte and I
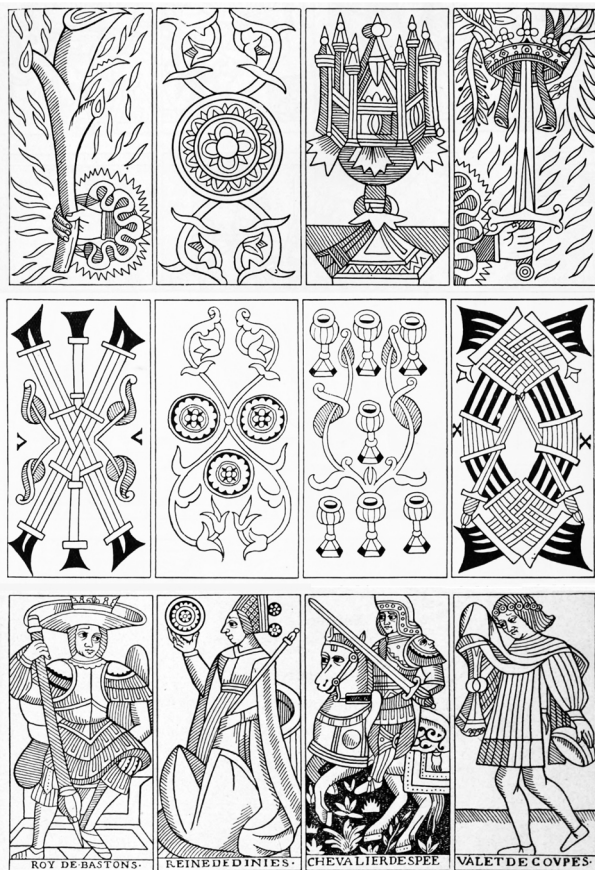

Fig. 24: Tarot of Nicolas Rolichon (pips).

find difficult to date the Rolichon tarot, as we see it, to the *early* 17th century (not to speak of an earlier date). Rather we would place it in the *late* 17th century, but we must admit that no 'late' Nicolas Rolichon has ever turned up from the records (while Jean and Philibert Rolichon are noted in the 1660s).

It seems that, in the 19th century, this very tarot did belong to the Paris art dealer Henri Delange (d.1878), who specialised (with his son Carle), in fayence and maiolica wares. In 1851 they sold antique objects of virtue at auction (*Catalogue d'une jolie réunion d'objets d'art et de curiosité du Moyen-Age, récemment apportés d'italie et d'Allemagne...* Vente 27 févr. 1851... / [expert] Roussel. Paris, 1851), where we find, under no. 201 (p. 26):

"201 — Un jeu de tarots en usage pour tirer les cartes. Il est composé de 78 cartes dont un grand nombre à figures. Sur plusieurs on lit : *Faict à Lyon, par Nicolas Rolichon*. Le style et la manière des gravures appartiennent au

commencement du XVIᵉ siècle. Ce jeu, parfaitement conservé, est fort rare. Il n'est point dans Bartch [sic] et manque à la bibliothèque des estampes."

I guess the expert meant the *Cabinet* des estampes of the Bibliothèque nationale, which indeed has (alas) no copy, and *Bartch* is of course Adam von Bartsch, whose celebrated *Le Peintre Graveur* (21 vols., Vienna, 1803-21) makes of course no mention of such a tarot pack. (*Le Peintre Graveur* was a catalogue of artists' works, not of popular prints like playing cards.) It is interesting (and tantalizing) to read it was "parfaitement conservé". Although this is not said, we may assume it was coloured. I have no doubt it is the same copy. Therefore the line engraving reproductions in *Le Larousse mensuel* may have been lacking something, they might even have been somewhat retouched. Without complete information it is hard to say, but we should not exclude the possibility that this tarot was made by the second Nicolas Rolichon in the first third of the 17ᵗʰ century. (Of course the early dating of the 1851 catalogue cannot be accepted.)

It would make it the earliest 'TdM'-pattern tarot pack so far!

Where does it come from?

Whatever its position in the 17ᵗʰ century, early or late, the tarot of Nicolas Rolichon is a good indicator of what the 'Tarot de Marseille' would have looked like before 1700. It looks even more standard than the tarot of Jean Noblet, whose small size and rather schematic design may represent a particular version. There is another piece of evidence for Lyon: Christian Rouleau owns a fragment of sheet of an Italian-suited tarot where the two of Cups displays A LYON PAR SIMON IOLY [Fig. 25]. Simon Joly was indeed a cardmaker who was active in Lyon in the 1680s (we have only one year: 1688). Of roughly the same time we have the two cards found in Marseille by Yves Reynaud (see Part I), and an inventory made in 1701 at Chalon-sur-Saône reveals that Jean Audibert had seven tarot woodblocks in his stock,[5] likely to have served for a 'Tarot de Marseille'. It is however difficult to go further back.

Fig. 25: fragment of sheet of an Italian-suited tarot with caption A LYON PAR SIMON IOLY, late 17ᵗʰ century (coll. of Christian Rouleau).

[5] T. Depaulis, "Un inventaire de 'moules' de cartier en 1701", *ThePC*, XXIII-2, November 1994, pp. 45-50.

The earliest French tarot pack, that of Catelin Geoffroy, in Lyon, dated 1557, although following the same order of trumps as the 'Tarot de Marseille', is not at all standard, with its fancy suit signs and its very elaborate design.

The only indication we have that something of this pattern was indeed made in France in the late 16th century comes from… Spain. In 1588 the Inquisition of Mayorca denounced the introduction of playing cards "estampadas en Francia", on which were represented the Pope with his tiara, a Popess, the Angel of the Last Judgment, Death, Cupid, *the four Evangelists*, the Moon, the Stars, etc.[6] As Ross Caldwell has remarked, "this must refer to the typical design of the World card in the 'Tarot de Marseille', which therefore existed by the 1580s in France." There is some probability that these cards came from Lyon. (Lyonese cardmakers exported their cards in great numbers to the Spanish Levant.)

a. Dummett's theory of the Milanese origin

One of the great contributions of Michael Dummett's *The Game of Tarot* (London, 1980) is the localisation of three main early (pre-1460) centres, where the new game matured and from where it spread. Of course these three centres are all Italian, and they can be spotted as early as the 1440s. They are Bologna (and Florence),[7] Ferrara and Milan. Since it is assumed that tarot had one birthplace – certainly one of these three centres – we consequently must assume it spread very rapidly from this birthplace to the other two places. In the process, minor modifications occurred in the order of the trumps, and in the iconography and general style. These modifications led Michael Dummett to determine three basic types ('orders', because they were based on the order of the trumps, particularly that of the three highest trumps and the place of the three virtues, Fortitude, Temperance, and Justice), namely A for Bologna (now Florence), B for Ferrara, and C for Milan.[8]

One thing that Dummett could conclude was that the order of the trumps in the Tarot de Marseille was significantly different from the orders of Bologna-Florence and Ferrara. Conversely the 'TdM' arrangement matches all lists of trumps from the Lombard-Milanese area. One of these, a poem called *Motti alle signore di Pavia sotto il titolo de i Tarochi*, is dated between 1525 and 1540. Although the order in which the ladies of Pavia are named is not exactly that of the trumps in the 'Tarot de Marseille', both lists concur in all relevant points. The celebrated jurist Andrea Alciato published another list of tarot trumps (in Latin) in his *Parergon juris libri VII posteriores*, Lyon, 1547. The list is almost the

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[6] J.-P. Étienvre, *Figures du jeu,* Madrid, 1987, p. 294, quoting Archivo Histórico Nacional, *Inquisición*, Book 846, f. 9r.

[7] In his two main books, *The Game of Tarot* (London, 1980) and *Il Mondo e l'Angelo: i tarocchi e la loro storia* (Naples, 1993), Michael Dummett pointed to Bologna as the centre of the 'A' group, but more recent research shows that Florence was more probably its very focus.

[8] See Dummett 1980, Chap. 20, pp. 387-417; Dummett 1993, Cap. V, pp. 171-9. For the Type C order, Dummett 1980, pp. 401 and 406-17; Dummett 1993, pp. 325-42.

same as the Pavia one. Alciato was born in Milan (in 1492) and died in Pavia (in 1550), so we may assume his list reflects what the arrangement of trumps was in his region. These are the only literary references we have to the C order; they are later than what we have for the other two orders, and they are almost contemporary with the earliest French tarot pack, made in Lyon by Catelin Geoffroy in 1557. From the twelve preserved trumps, all numbered, we can easily infer that Geoffroy's trumps were ordered exactly like in the 'Tarot de Marseille'. It seems there existed two variants of this C order: one, found in the Pavia and Alciato lists, but also in the trumps of the tarot by Jacques Viéville (Paris, mid-17th century); another slightly different order is observable in all 'TdM'-pattern tarots, in the 'Tarot de Besançon' variant, and also in the so-called (Italian-suited) Belgian Tarot. I call the first one C1, the second C2. The problem is that C1 and C2 are both present in the 16th century, no earlier, and that C2 is only known from French sources.

Here is a table of these lists:

C ORDER

PAVIA[9] (*c.* 1540) **C1**	ALCIATO[10] 1547 **C1**	Viéville *c.* 1650 **C1**	FRANCE+ (TdM)[11] 17th-18th century **C2**
XXI IL MONDO	21. Mundus	21. MONDE	XXI Le Monde
XX L'ANGELO	20. Angelus	20. TROMPE	XX Le Jugement
XVIIII IL SOLE	19. Phoebus	19. LE SOLEIL	XVIIII Le Soleil
XVIII LA LUNA	18. Luna	18. LA LUNE	XVIII La Lune
XVII LA STELLA	17. Stellae	17. LES ETOILLES	XVII L'Etoile
XVI IL FUOCO	16. Fulmen	16. LA FOUDRE	XVI La Maison-Dieu
XV IL DIAVOLO	15. Daemon	15. DYABLE	XV Le Diable
XIIII LA TEMPERANZA	14. Fama†	14. [Tempérance]	XIIII La Tempérance
XIII LA MORTE	13. Nex	13. [Mort]	XIII [La Mort]
XII IL TRADITORE	12. Crux	12. PENDU	XII Le Pendu
XI IL VECCHIO	11. Senex	11. VIELART	XI La Force
X LA RUOTA	10. Fortuna	10. [Roue de fortune]	X La Roue de fortune
VIIII LA FORTEZZA	9. Quadriga	9. FORCE	VIIII L'Hermite
VIII IL CARRO	8. Fortis	8. [Chariot]	VIII La Justice
VII LA GIUSTIZIA	7. Justus	7. YUSTICE	VII Le Chariot

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[9] Based on *Motti alle signore di Pavia sotto il titolo de i Tarochi* (see Dummett 1993, pp. 325-7).

[10] From A. Alciato's *Parergon juris libri VII posteriores*, Lyon, 1547. This was first unearthed by F. Pratesi, in *L'As de Trèfle*, nos. 47-48, 1992, pp. 10-12, and later revised by Ross Sinclair Caldwell.

[11] Note that the Latin-suited 'Belgian Tarot' follows the same C2 order, too.

VI L'AMORE	6. Amor	6. AMOUREUX	VI L'Amoureux
V IL PAPA	5. Sacerdos	5. PAPE	V Le Pape
IIII L'IMPERATORE	4. Rex	4. ANPEREUR	IIII L'Empereur
III LA PAPESSA	3. Regina	3. L'INPERATRYCE	III L'Impératrice
II L'IMPERATRICE	2. Flaminica	2. PAPESSE	II La Papesse
I IL BAGATELLA	1. Caupo	1. BAGA	I Le Bateleur
– IL MATTO	Stultus	MA	– Le Fol / Le Mat

In spite of these as yet unexplained variations, Dummett and his successors assume that they are only minor, and that the crucial points that characterise the C order are all there. To better justify the 'Lombard' origin of this particular order, Michael Dummett found more evidence in the form of actual playing cards.

b. Earliest material witnesses in Italy

In 1908, while restoring a part of the Castello Sforzesco in Milan, several old playing cards were rescued from a well. They range from 1499 to the 18th century. Most are Italian-suited, some are clearly tarot cards; others are French suited. The most striking card is a two of Coins bearing the name of the cardmaker and the date 1499.

• Two of Coins signed "PAVLINVS [DE] CASTELETO FECIT 1499", Milan, 1499, 93 x 48 mm, not necessarily from a tarot pack (its small size would point rather to an ordinary playing-card pack), but it at least testifies that a local pattern for pip cards, similar if not identical to the (later?) TdM pattern, was made in Milan. Paolino da Castelletto is documented in Milan from 1494 to 1513.[12]

• The Cary sheet.[13] (Fig. 26, following page) In his two books Michael Dummett placed the Cary sheet in first position, while its uncertain date should prevent us from drawing too much out of it. It is a fragmentary sheet of 20 cards, with 18 trumps, and two additional pip cards from the Batons suit. Some of the trumps (the Star, the Moon, the Sun) are strikingly similar to the 'Tarot de Marseille' corresponding trumps – though they have neither numbers nor captions –, some others seem to be the same too (the Chariot and the Tower, but they are only partially visible), while others are definitely different (the Empress, the Pope – with crosier… –, the Bagatto, Temperance, the Devil); Fortitude and the Wheel of

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[12] For the early cards of Milan, and particularly those found in the Castello Sforzesco in 1908, see F. Novati, "Per la fabbricazione delle carte da giuoco in Milano sugli inizi del secolo XVI", _Archivio storico lombardo_, IX, 1908, pp. 434-6; id., "Ancora di Mastro Paolino di Castelletto, fabbricante di carte da giuoco del secolo XV", _Archivio storico lombardo_, XIV, 1910, p. 281; A. Milano, _Carte da gioco milanesi dal XV° al XX° sec._, Milan / Lissone, 1980; M. Dummett, "Playing cards found at the Castello Sforzesco in 1908", _ThePC_, IX-2, 1980, pp. 33-49; IX-3, 1981, pp. 89-99; IX-4, 1981, pp. 133-6; C. Alberici, "Frammenti di carte da gioco appartenute alla corte di Ludovico il Moro", in Ead., _Leonardo e l'incisione_, Milan, 1984, pp. 175-88; Kaplan 1986, p. 289-96.
[13] See Dummett 1980, pp. 406-8 and pl. 14; Keller 1981, ITA sheet 3S; Depaulis 1984, no. 15; Kaplan 1986, p. 286-7; Dummett 1993, p. 328-31.

Fortune are perhaps variations, and the Emperor is not dissimilar. Even the two Batons – although taken from a separate sheet and mounted to appear as part of this sheet[14] – are exactly the same as one is used to find in any Tarot de Marseille. But the problem is that we do not know when and where this sheet was produced. W.B. Keller (1981), followed by S. Kaplan (1986), suggested "mid-sixteenth century", but Dummett was in favour of an earlier date, "tardo XV secolo" (in his 1993 book). Perhaps a date around 1500 would be better: the style of the woodcut looks too elaborate to be just "late 15th century" (which would mean it could date back to *c.* 1470…, and this seems unlikely), but, on the other hand, the lack of any numbering could point to an early stage. Here too, as Dummett remarked, "il viso pieno sulla Luna, il viso sul torso del Diavolo — suggeriscono che la versione

variante del Tarocco di Marsiglia rimase più fedele all'originale della sua versione definitiva" (p. 331-2). Indeed it had not escaped Dummett that the Tarot de Marseille had two variants (he must have read my Kaplan review of 1986 – he was a member of l'ACCART and got all issues of *L'As de Trèfle*), which he called 'la versione originale' (my Type I), and 'la versione definitiva' (my Type II), without entering in much detail. Indeed the face on the Devil's belly and the full-faced Moon are reminders of Type I (although the Devils are different).

If an approximate date can be found, the place of origin is much more difficult to define. Milan is an obvious candidate, but there is no certainty.

Fig. 26: The Cary sheet.
(From M. Dummett, *The Game of Tarot*, London, 1980.)

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[14] Comment added in Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Cary Playing Cards Database, Record ID 821 (http://brbl-legacy.library.yale.edu/carycards/SearchExec-CARY.asp?srchtype=&curpage=3), accessed 12/05/2013.

There were not many cities where playing cards were made in Europe around 1500. In Northern Italy, I only know of Mantua, Ferrara, Florence, Bologna, Venice, and Milan. Save Mantua, I see no reasons why these cards could have been printed in Ferrara, Florence, Bologna, or Venice. This leaves us with Milan (and Mantua?). On the other side of the Alps, two cities have to be taken into consideration, Lyon, and Avignon, both active in the card-making trade. From what we know of the playing cards produced in Lyon between 1480 and 1520, we can say the Cary Sheet is of a different style, it lacks the 'charm' and elegance of early French cards (most being from Lyon). But this should not be taken as a definitive conclusion. As we know, Milan had cardmakers in the early 1500s, not only Paolino da Castelletto, "maestro nella pittura delle carte", but we have records of Gaspare da Besana (1508) and Bartolomeo da Pozzobonello (1513). However, as Alberto Milano has remarked, "pochissimi sono i riferimenti diretti alle carte da gioco milanesi del 1500." (Milano 1980).

Fig. 27: Sheet of Italian-suited numeral cards. (Giuliano Crippa Coll., by kind permission).

• Giuliano Crippa owns an uncoloured sheet of early Italian-suited numeral cards (12 complete and three fragmentary cards of Swords, Cups and Coins), which was "found in the binding of a Piedmontese statute of 1534"; they have many similarities with 'Tarot de Marseille' pips, although less decorated.[15] The recent exhibition catalogue states the sheet is perhaps Piedmontese, but since there were no cardmakers in Piedmont at that time, it is possible that the cards were made in Milan or in Lyon. Their dimensions, 93 x 48 mm, exactly the same as Paolino da Castelletto's two of Coins, would better qualify these cards for belonging to an ordinary pack.
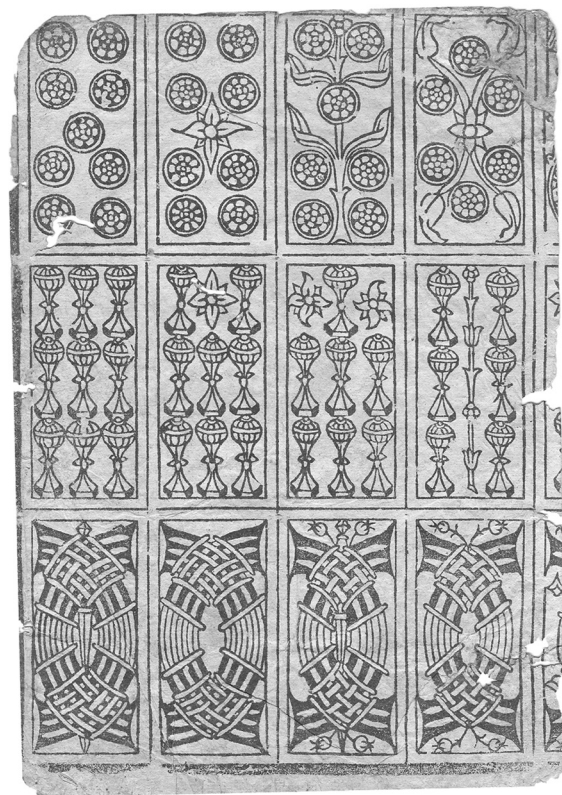
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[15] A. Milano (with G. Crippa). *Giochi da salotto, giochi da osteria nella vita milanese dal Cinquecento all'Ottocento.* Milan, 2012, no. 8. My thanks to Giuliano Crippa for providing the picture.

• Six cards from the Castello Sforzesco, some of which have backs with a scene from Ariosto's *Orlando furioso* (Ruggiero freeing a naked Angelica, at the beginning of Canto XI). Their size, ±139 x 68 mm, is rather large for printed playing cards, and better fits the size of tarot cards, although a little bigger. They are assigned to Milan by Dummett.[16] There are five pip cards and one trump, the World, all matching in detail the same cards of a 'Tarot de Marseille'. The World is numbered XXI (though unnamed), and corresponds perfectly to what I have defined as Type I.

While *Orlando furioso* was first published in 1516, it is clear that the scene on the backs is derived from parts added by Ariosto in the third, final edition of 1532. Although the cards are difficult to date with accuracy, Pr Stéphane Lojkine, Professor of French literature at the University of Aix-Marseille, who maintains a website devoted to the iconography of Ariosto's poem,[17] was kind enough to answer my questions. He not only confirms Francesco Novati's identification of the back design, but adds that it shows "a more canonical, more standardised representation". He thinks the playing-card engraver was inspired by the illustrations of the 1556 Valgrisi edition, published in Venice, which was immensely popular and was reprinted many times. Each canto begins with a large full-page woodcut. The plate at the beginning of Canto XI (p. 102 of the 1562 printing) shows the same scene, although with a different composition and

Fig. 28 (left): The World, card found in the Castello Sforzesco, Milan (?), 2nd half of 16th century. (Civica Raccolta delle Stampe Achille Bertarelli, Milan, by kind permission, photo Christophe Poncet)

Fig. 29 (right): Back of a six of Batons from the same pack, with a scene from Ariosto's *Orlando furioso*, Milan (?), 2nd half of 16th century. (Civica Raccolta delle Stampe Achille Bertarelli, Milan, by kind permission, photo Christophe Poncet)

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[16] M. Dummett, "Playing cards found at the Castello Sforzesco in 1908", *ThePC*, IX-2, 1980, pp. 45-48, fig. 22-25 + IX-4, 1981, p. 133-6; Dummett 1993, p. 339-42.

[17] http://sites.univ-provence.fr/pictura/Arioste/AriosteEditions.php

many more details, but it has, both in style and subject, a similar 'look'. Stéphane Lojkine is of the opinion that "the card is inspired by the Valgrisi woodcut, which it normalises for a more general usage".[18] This would mean that the Castello Sforzesco *tarocchi* would date to the second half of the 16th century.

The World card is of great importance, because it is the best evidence that the Type I 'Tarot de Marseille' pattern was known in Milan at an early stage. (All cards found in the same well that can be assigned to tarot packs, though later, some 18th century, belong to the 'TdM' pattern.) The specific design of the World card, with its central figure surrounded by a mandorla, and with the symbols of the four Evangelists in the corners, belongs only with the 'Tarot de Marseille' pattern. Neither the Bologna-Florence tradition ('A order'), nor the Ferrara tradition ('B order') show this composition. We have already seen that a Spanish inquisitor complained against tarot cards being introduced from France into Mayorca, mentioning the four Evangelists. The same can be applied to a Piedmontese book of 1565, Francesco Piscina's *Discorso … sopra l'ordine delle figure de tarocchi* (Monte Regale, now Mondovì, 1565). In it the author writes that "prima dell'imagine del Paradiso [meaning the Last Judgment, the highest trump card in Piedmont] [ha] fatto un ritratto d'essi quattro Evangelisti, intesi e significati pelle quattro insegne, Angelo, Bue, Aquila e Lione".[19] In their commentary the three modern editors remark: "…the design of the World card known to Piscina [1565] offered the symbols of the four Evangelists in the corners, as it does in the Tarot de Marseille." (But like modern Piedmontese tarot players, Piscina places the Last Judgment, which he calls 'il Paradiso', on top of the series of trumps, making the World second.)

There are many clues that lead us to a Milanese – or at least Lombard – prototype for the 'Tarot de Marseille', although not everything is so clear. One strange thing is that this Milanese prototype (and its French progeny) has nothing to do with the iconography and style of the great illuminated tarots that were painted by Bonifacio Bembo and his workshop for the court of Milan, for Filippo Maria Visconti, as well as for Francesco Sforza after 1450. This is not just a question of style and status – it has been observed (notably by Cristina Fiorini) that the hand-painted Rothschild tarots, now believed to be from Florence, and the Rosenwald printed sheets, which are clearly a kind of 'proto-minchiate', have many features in common in spite of their very different styles.[20] This may also

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[18] E-mail of 10/02/2013. My wholehearted thanks to Pr Stéphane Lojkine for his generous help.
[19] *Explaining the Tarot: two Italian Renaissance essays on the meaning of the Tarot pack*, ed. R.G. Caldwell, T. Depaulis, M. Ponzi, Oxford, 2010, p. 24 and comment p. 33, n. 17.
[20] C. Fiorini, "I tarocchi della Collezione Rothschild al Louvre: nuove proposte di lettura", *ThePC*, 35-1, Sep. 2006, pp. 52-63.

be the case, when comparing the 'Dick' cards[21] and the four known illuminated cards which are now firmly assigned to Ferrara around 1455:[22] they offer some similarities in design. We can trace links between the Beaux-Arts/Rothschild sheets of Bolognese trumps and some other hand-painted cards. But for Milan, there are no such relationships between the illuminated tarots and the Cary sheet or any of the other precursors of the 'Tarot de Marseille' pattern. As if there was some breaking.

Of course we must not forget that Milan had seen major political changes, with the capture of the city by the French in 1499, the arrival of the Swiss in 1512, their serious defeat in 1515, and the return of the French, then the terrible battle of Pavia in 1525, where the Imperial troops crashed the French army, opening Milan's doors to Emperor Charles V. By 1535, Milan and her Duchy became Spanish territory. Did this affect the design of tarot cards? What was the French influence on the local cards, which the Lyonese cardmakers were keen to produce and sell? – there were nearly 100 cardmakers in Lyon, so competition with Milan was rather unequal. Clearly Savoy and Piedmont, more or less under French control until 1562, were markets for the nearby Lyon.

All French tarot packs are assumed to be copied from Italian models. Michael Dummett has shown that Milan was the best candidate for the prototype of the 'Tarot de Marseille'. The French seem to have adopted it, adding captions with the names (in French) of the trumps and court cards. They perhaps changed minor details, but in the absence of a complete Milanese tarot of before 1700, we cannot be sure. To judge from the Castello Sforzesco World they probably were faithful to the original design. That this was done in Lyon – and not elsewhere – seems clear enough. It was *the* place where playing cards of all sorts were made. From Lorraine to Provence Lyonese cardmakers exported their cards to many French provinces and to foreign countries. With a Milanese-based tarot design, they just added a new line to their extensive range of products. This might have happened in the middle of the 16th century, since we know that tarot cards with the 'Four Evangelists' were being exported from France to Mayorca in 1588. It is probable that these early 'Tarot de Marseille' packs – one should rather call them 'Tarot de Lyon'… – were very similar to the tarot made by Nicolas Rolichon. It is of course my Type I.

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[21] These are 'archaic' printed cards, some clearly tarot cards. They have been assigned to Ferrara by Dummett. See Kaplan 1986, pp. 271-85; M. Dummett, "A survey of 'archaic' Italian cards", *ThePC*, XIX-2, 1990, pp. 43-51; XIX-4, 1991, p. 128-30 ("A correction"); Dummett 1993, pp. 190-203.

[22] A Chariot in the MFCJ, Issy-les-Mx, a knave of Coins and a queen of Cups in Warsaw (Polish National Museum), a queen of Coins sold at auction in Paris in 2005 (Christie's Paris, 17 March 2005, no. 301).

Conclusion

Thus we may reasonably suggest that around 1500 Milanese cardmakers were producing playing cards whose design followed a pattern very similar to the four-suited cards of a 'Tarot de Marseille'. It is assumed that tarot cards were also produced, although we have no evidence for that. When Paolino da Castelletto and his colleagues were making cards, Milan was under French rule, but we have no clue to whether the French had any influence on this local production. We know that Lyonese cardmakers were already selling cards in Italy. In 1480 '*carte da giochare franciose*' were imported into Rome,[23] and in 1559 the inventory of the *cartaro* Domenico di Biagio Bacchi's stock had 432 packs of "Carte romane fatte a Lion di Francia marcho di Moret" and 60 packs of "Carte romanesche larghe fatte a Lion fenite e ligate in carta bianca".[24] So it is quite possible that Lyonese cards were sold in Milan, too. I have hypothesised that tarots were made in Lyon as early as the first years of the 16th century, however nothing tells us how these cards looked like.

The earliest piece of evidence relies on the World card found at the Castello Sforzesco. The scene that illustrates the backs, taken from Ariosto's *Orlando furioso*, Canto XI, can be dated to the second half of the 16th century, not later, because the style of the woodcut is comparable to the illustrations of the Valgrisi edition (1556). The Cary sheet, which is obviously earlier, may bear witness of a previous stage, to be later modified, adding numbers to the trumps.

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[23] A. Esch, "Importe in das Rom der Renaissance. Die Zollregister der Jahre 1470-1480", *Quellen und Forschungen aus italienischen Archiven und Bibliotheken*, 74, 1994, p. 391 n. 68.
[24] T. Depaulis, "Playing Cards in Rome, 15th-17th Centuries", *ThePC*, 36-3, Jan.-March 2008, pp. 205-211. Moret is probably Antoine Moret (mentioned in D'Allemagne as "Lyon, 1557").