

Chapter 4

The Oracle and the Elements

*"May you regard the Great Mystery
As through a window
Which stands open.
May you perceive
In the continuum of your own life
The signs and portents
Which mark the Way of Beauty."*

Saying of the Tsalagi
North American Plains

Intuition has been called the key for any inquiry into the qualities of time. Intuition may also be called the subconscious, better still: the depth-consciousness, and it is from there that an answering of consciously formulated questions is possible: the depth-consciousness answers its own questions. And so we find that the oracle lies within ourselves. The more perfect is our inner harmony, to reflect the universal harmony we see on Earth and in its station within the visible creation, the more an alignment of individual "movement" with universal movement - aspects of time and place - will reflect itself in the "outcome" of the oracle used.

The yarrow-stalks or coins of the I Ching and the shuffling and cutting of the Tarot-cards evoke the appearance of abstract symbols which our mind can adjust to confer an answer to a question or to elucidate unknowns of all types. A strong mental image of another person will serve to produce a symbolic psychogram of this person, and this is practically among the most common and banal responses the cards, coins or stalks can bring. Other subjects can be "looked into", though this normally requires an elaborate symbolic preparation. According to what qualities are taken into consideration - the physical, psychic-astral, mental-noetic, or an "arrangement" of planetary influences paired with their correspondences and symbolism, etc. - the I Ching and the Tarot have the faculty of penetrating the shadows, "looking behind veiled doors", gauging a future development, even on the other side of the globe, and these are actually the faculties of a developed ethereal astral body. Certainly, due to these possibilities, the Tarot (and the secret hidden correspondences of the I Ching, known also as the "Iron Plate Divine Number" of astrologic-

esoteric tradition) have been the subject of high secrecy and various types of falsification (thus rendering them unreadable to the not initiated). The Tarot have had the added "privilege" of being associated with the most profound "Black Magic", sorcery and evil machinations of all kinds, and this has led to the slandering ridicule accompanied with "seeing the future in the cards".

Yet it is the Tarot who are very obviously highly adapted to travel in the "magic" world of ethereal realities. Thus, when its links to the fifth element - Ether or more practically: Akasha - are clarified, and a person is willing and prepared to step beyond his or her physical limits, the divine protective agents of its ancient creators will serve as guides into the "unknown".

It is true that evil spells and other abominations have been invoked for its protection against misuse by unclean and evil hands, yet the "guardian-angels" predate these mystifications and the Tarot essentially stems from a time "when the word for weapon and war had not yet been invented". Any person, and especially any pupil of the mysteries must always keep in mind that: "Innocence is Man's only Protection".

As a final word with regard to number and symbolism, we may (again, yet from a different angle) ask why the Tarot consists of 78 cards, in variance with the easy symbolism of the $8 \times 8 = 64$ signs of the I Ching. 78, apart from its subdivisions into 22 Trumps and 56 Minor Arkana, must be seen in its cosmic relation to the holy number 72. Thus we find that 72 equals $2 \times 3 \times 12$ and 78 equals $2 \times 3 \times 13$. Therefore the low-dynamic element of the "static" 12 is replaced by the high-dynamic element of the "dynamic" 13.

Also, 72 is the number of "Genii of Mercury" or Mercury-intelligences, yet the first Genius of Mercury is named after Jehova, although written Vehuviah, which carries the numerical code Jod He Vau He, or 26 (2×13), which dynamically multiplies by 3 to give 78. Thus 72 equals 78, and the six missing numbers may be ascribed to the 4 elemental qualities of the "double-polar Earth", plus polarity and "primal creative emanation", as 2, reflecting the infinite variety inherent in Creation.

As regards the 22 Trumps or Major Arcana, they are directly associated with the Central Asian and Amero-Indian symbolism of 22 cycles of 52 years (1.144 years in all), which govern all microcosmic evolution and involution on planet Earth. Each span of 1.144 years is also divided into "13 Heavens" and "9 Hells", thus introducing the great numeric symbols of Dynamic Cyclic Change.






"Our epoch tends to deify matter. Humanity makes poor use of Mind. We use the divine "supersubstance" only for material ends, which frequently prove to be in excess of our needs - sometimes to a precariously dangerous level. We multiply knowledge unthinkingly and create situations which continually divert us from our true nature and make more difficult our attainment of perfection. "

Dr. Stylianos Atteshlis (Daskalos) The Esoteric Teachings.

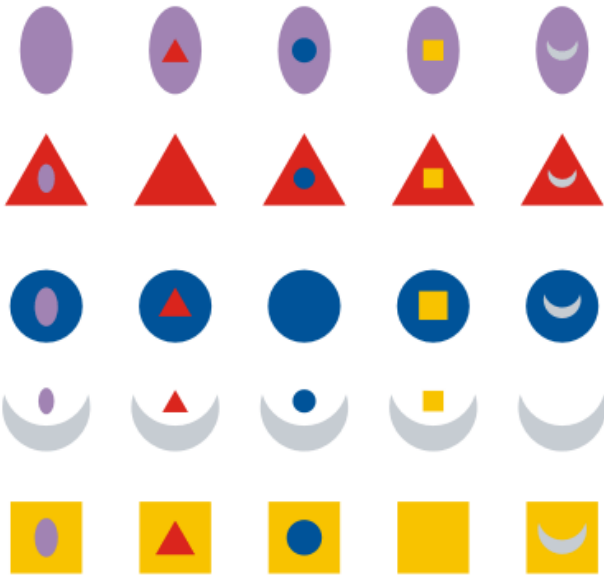
According to ancient Hindu and Hermetic teaching, the four gross elements - Fire, Air, Water and Earth - originated from Ether or Akasha.

Every human being has the inner eye of his dreams and imagination. Just as this inner sight is primary, and the sight of the material eyes is directed only towards the "outside" material creation, so also material Creation - the three-dimensional visible universe - is only the final outcome of ethereal, "divine" imagination, descended through mental-noëtic (Akasha) and astral-psychic spheres. The outcome, as can be seen in everything, from atoms, molecules, crystals, amoebae, plants, animals and finally man, is not only beautiful but also perfectly organised, all the way to the most extreme complexity. Akasha, the finest and most subtle element, is then to be taken as "creative quintessence", the universal magnetic "initiator" of Creation. Again, this means that mind-forms, the imagination of the spirit, precede any gross material manifestation, and may be called the original Light, of which the element Fire is the visible display on the material plane.

The most ancient sources easily available today are the Hindu descriptions of the elements, called Tattwas in Sanskrit. These are the symbols which describe the inner quality of any manifestation within terrestrial creation, and also their motions:

- Akasha : Ether 
- Tejas : Fire 
- Waju : Air 
- Apas : Water 
- Prithivi : Earth 

The Tattwas



Combinations of Tattwas.

Fire and Air tend towards an "upward" movement, Water and Earth "downwards". Akasha, as the sphere of their origin, encompasses all qualities and motions. The four elements are also connected to spiritual entities which act as living forces within their

respective elements. In the Tarot they find their equivalent as the four suits of the Minor Arcana:

Element	Shape	Colour
Fire	Swords	Red to Orange (Russet)
Air	Wands or Batons	Green
Water	Cups	Blue
Earth	Pentacles, Coins	Brown to Black

The above correspondences are consistent with all true Magic and in accordance with the basic logic of the Book of Wisdom. For an elucidation of the elemental qualities, see the individual descriptions below. Ether or Akasha does not appear as a separate suit, as it is inherent in all cards, especially within the "personality cards" of the Minor Arcana: King or Knight, Prince or Valet, Queen and Princess.

Akasha is an integral part of each Major Arcana, the Trumps. Within the Trumps, we will use a four-fold symbolism for Akasha, based of the fifth element: Ether.

Ether is divided into four aspects:

- **Chymic Ether**, associated with the "archetypes of form", thus corresponding to the ethereal agents ruling the generative system in Man. Vital Ether, associated with the "archetypes of universal life", thus corresponding to the ethereal agents ruling the vital or vital-emotional body of Man.
- **Vital Ether**, associated with the "archetypes of universal life", thus corresponding to the ethereal agents ruling the vital or vital-emotional body of Man.
- **Luminous Ether**, associated with the "archetypes of the wishes and emotions", centred in the heart, thus corresponding to the ethereal agents ruling the senses, the sense-objects, perception and the instincts, ruling over the psychic-astral body of Man.
- **Reflective Ether**, associated with the "archetypes of mind and reason", thus ruling over the mental-noëtic body and corresponding to the creation of ideas, to memory and conscience, and to intuition.

In Amero-Indian philosophy, Akasha or Ether, is defined by the "spiritual holy Fire", the "Fire of Wisdom", that reflects its "akashic" quality through the vibrational states, of the Sun, the planets, and the "Holy Crystal" of Earth.

The elements of the Tarot correspond to the I Ching and its astrology in the following way:

Fire	 snake	 horse						
Wood / Air	 rabbit	 tiger						
Water	 rat	 pig						
Iron	 monkey	 rooster						
Earth	 ox	 dragon	 sheep	 dog				

Elemental Correspondences of the I Ching.

Thus it appears that the Chinese were well aware of the quadripolar quality of Earth, and of the whole Earth-Moon-Sphere.

Iron may be seen as a special quality of Akasha, yet Akasha is the primal source whose closest relation is Kiän - Heaven. Wood/Air and Iron interrelate through the Tattwas as:

- Air/Water (Metal is considered as liquid) - the Reflective Ether
- Water/Earth (creating crystallisation) - the Luminous Ether
- Fire/Earth (liquefying metallic ore) - the Vital Ether
- Earth/Earth (as the crystal metallic liquid magma, etc.) - the Chymic Ether

This will become clearer through the description of the basic qualities of the elements:

Fire

The first element issuing forth from Akasha is **Fire**, thus "Fiat Lux", the creation of light.

The basic qualities of Fire are heat and expansion. On Earth, the quadripolar magnet, every element takes part of each other, in an active or passive way. And so, by applying the

Tattwas to the elemental qualities, in the case of Fire we have four possibilities or "intermingling qualities", either in accordance with the elements' own qualities or at variance:



Tattwa symbols for fire (from left to right):
Fire/Fire, Fire/Air, Fire/Water, Fire/Earth

The "Three Holy Fires" of America and Central Asia are:

- a) Will and Intent;
- b) Wisdom of Equanimity;
- c) Affirmation, Wisdom-Energy of Compassion.

Fire is also called the "electric fluid", thereby associated with all manifestations of electricity and its terrestrial aspects (e.g., thunder and lightning). Thus, Fire has an electric, impulsive vibratory rate. As the first element issuing from Akasha, Fire - by itself - may be seen as the Reflective Ether (though no single Ether, in this view, manifests alone, as stated above).

Air

Air is the element that is electromagnetic, therefore combining Fire and Water aspects. Air has impulsive and receptive qualities, and thus a variable electric and magnetic vibratory rate, depending on which quality prevails.

For this reason certain Tarot-decks have assigned the suit Swords to Air, for Air was associated with Akasha closer than Fire (as electro-magnetic), forgetting that Air does not "create" and is not the source of light. (Basically, these decks put the Air of Aquarius in place of Fire, and may also misinterpret Air as the Reflective Ether). Air is constantly varying between more fiery and more watery aspects. Yet, without an "associative element" no visible creation were possible simply through electric and magnetic opposites. Air is the third element of the quadripolar magnet. By itself, though all Ethers intermingle, Air may be

symbolised by the Luminous Ether, for it is Air that is pervaded by light (yet does not create light itself). Air may be dry and hot and also moist and cold, in varying degrees.

The Tattwa-symbols for Air are:

Air/Air,

Air/Fire,

Air/Water and

Air/Earth



Tattwa symbols for air.

Water

The opposite of Fire is **Water**, whose basic qualities are cold and contraction. It is also called the "magnetic fluid", which together with Fire actively furthers all growing and developing processes. Water, as also Fire, negatively destroys, though not by burning heat and dryness, but through all processes of decomposition, dissolution and fermentation. Therefore Water and Fire are called the "primal elements", for through their electro-magnetic interaction they give rise to the other two elements.

The Tattwa-symbols for Water are:

Water/Water,

Water/Air,

Water/Earth and

Water/Fire.



Tattwa symbols for water.

As the "magnetic fluid", Water has a magnetic, receptive vibratory rate. As the "lower" reflection of Fire, Water may be seen as the pure Vital Ether (as the prime life-giving agent).

Earth

Earth, as also Air, is electromagnetic. Through the influence of the other elements it has the special quality to be "bipolar electromagnetic" , and so, applied to planet Earth as one of its manifestations, is called quadripolar. It gives Fire, Water and Air their concrete form, the principle of solidification. Together with coagulation (the interplay of Fire, Water and Air) it represents the "Fiat", the visible creation. Earth, as has been set down in ancient wisdom, is quadripolar electromagnetic, yet is more in harmony with Magnetism than with Electricity. The electric phenomena , of which Fire is the purest manifestation, in this view stem from a pervading universal Magnetism, the "carrier" of Akasha. Thus, although combining all elements, Earth is more closely associated with Water, and the opposite may be said of Air, as being more closely associated with Fire than with Water.

Therefore the Tattwa-symbols for Earth are:

Earth/Earth,

Earth/Water,

Earth/Air and

Earth/Fire.

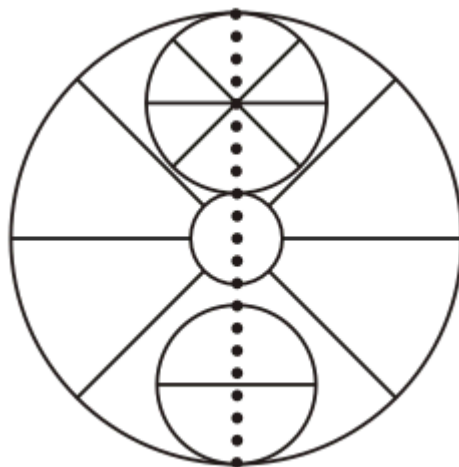


Tattwa symbols for earth.

The most dense manifestation of Earth is the solidified crystal, representing the **Chymic Ether**. Yet this is also its vibrationally most universal, most expansive and most "akashic" aspect. Therefore, as Russian scientists have affirmed and as Geodesy also assumes, Earth, as its whole physical manifestation - the planet Earth - is a crystalline body, resembling a blue-glowing crystal.

As last association between Tarot, Tattwas and Sino-Tibetan Astrology, the planets are interrelated with the elements as: Fire with the Sun and Mars, Air/Wood/Iron with Jupiter and Venus, Water/Iron with Mercury and Water alone with the Moon, Earth with Saturn (and with all planets, planet Earth, symbolic of the element, being one of their "sister or brother"). Thus, as an example, the opposing characteristics of electricity and magnetism are associated with the Sun and Mars "versus" Mercury and the Moon, the first hot and dry the latter cold and wet. Each Tarot-card carries a more or less pronounced Tattwa-symbolism, and this is part of the significance of their interplay.

Within the Tarot, reflecting the microcosmic and macrocosmic "body", a division is made between the spheres of the physical, psychic-astral and mental-noëtic. The physical body, in whose centre the living Self, the Soul, is placed, is represented by Trumps 1 to 8. The psychic-astral or vital-emotional body is centered within a "wheel" - a Rota - turning around Trump 11, from Trumps 9 to 13. The mental-noëtic body "turns" around Trump 17 and touches Trumps 13 to 21. Thus we find two Rotae of eight spokes (whereby the physical body does not move and therefore has no centre other than the space between Trumps 4 and 5), and one Rota of 5 spokes. Trump 0 forms an oblong - "double-luminous egg-like" - sphere around the three inner spheres.



It is evident, as a whole body is made of all its parts, and can only exist when all parts interweave, that Man's whole picture shows that each "spoke" and focus-point is connected with all others - yet as two-dimensional view the above diagram serves to delineate the main spheres of interaction.

This arrangement corresponds to the secret teaching incorporated within the Quabbala, called the Mercava or Mer-Ka-Ba. It is clearly of Egyptian origin and shows how Man may ascend the spheres beyond the physical body. This will be discussed within the symbolism pertaining to the single cards of the Tarot. What is pointed out here is that the "guardian angels", which in fact represent the 72 Genii of the sphere of Mercury, are also divided in like manner: 32 for the physical body and the preservation of the Soul, the divine spark of God, 12 for the psychic-astral body, and 28 for the mental-noëtic body. Thus the "32 paths" of the Tarot, reflecting the 32 paths on the Tree of Life, are based on the tangible physical being and his visible surroundings. The psychic-astral, "hidden" paths, amount to 12, thus realigning the Tree of Life to reflect an ethereal reality which is less "dense" and less complicated. The 28 mental-noëtic paths extend towards all planets of the solar system, and seen thus are much more rarefied by principle. So the symbolism points to Man's path as leading from dense complexity to ever more clear and simple ethereal principles within an ever-widening scope.

The "paths" of the Tarot within the Tree of Life may also be expressed by 36 paths "downwards" between the Sephirot, thus:

8 emanating from Chokmah,

7 from Binah,

6 from Chesed or Gedulah,

5 from Geburah,

4 from Tiphereth,

3 from Netzah,

2 from Hod and

1 from Yesod.

Thus, inversely, also 36 paths lead "upwards", in like manner. In this perspective, 8 is seen as simpler, more ethereal than 1, 7 "easier" than 2, etc. They all centre within Tipheret, the Heart. Both systems of 36 paths again add up to 72, the holy number of Space, Time, Man and the Solar System.